

DISABLED PEOPLES' INTERNATIONAL

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



‘NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US’



Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) is a global network of national organizations of people with disabilities which was established in 1981, the International Year of the Disabled. Headquartered in Canada, DPI has presence in over 130 countries across 7 regions: Africa, Arab, Asia-Pacific, CIS, Europe, Latin America and North America and the Caribbean. We draw our strength from our Member National Assemblies (MNAs) and have an unparalleled reach in countries of the Global South where 800 million people with disabilities live.

DPI's goal is to achieve full participation of ALL persons with disabilities in the mainstream, through promotion and protection of their human rights. DPI's focus is particularly in developing countries who form 80 percent of the world's 1 billion people with disabilities and 20 percent of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged people.

**DPI successfully transitioned under Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (CNCA) in 2014 and now has new By-Laws: <http://www.disabledpeoplesinternational.org/ByLaws>. DPI also changed it's full name from Disabled Peoples' International (Canada) Inc. to Disabled Peoples' International.*

Introduction

DPI saw an expansion of work across nations and at international platforms, promoting rights and entitlements of people with ALL disabilities especially on issues of inclusion and representation and a stronger movement towards Digital Inclusion.

The enclosed report is an end of the year brief, trying to capture some of the highlights of 2019.

Looking back at 2019:

DPI and The Nippon Foundation project on Leprosy and Disability

DPI and The Nippon Foundation entered into Year II of Phase II of the Leprosy and Disability project on 'Enhancing Relationship between the Disability Movement and People Affected by Leprosy' from 1st January, 2019 to 31st December, 2019 with interventions targeted in three countries – India, Bangladesh and Myanmar in partnership with The Leprosy Mission and Member National Assemblies as implementing organizations.

21st Session of the CRPD Committee

DPI supported the participation of representatives from the Leprosy and Disability sectors from



India, Bangladesh and Myanmar to the 21st Session of the CRPD Committee held from 8th to 11th April, 2019. Each delegation submitted a joint country paper between Leprosy and Disability sector and also read the statement from the floor on the situation of people affected by Leprosy and their relation with the mainstream disabled people's organizations before the UNCRPD Committee with discussions on specific Articles and their

recommendations.

Mr. Mohammed Kamal Uddin from Leprosy People's Empower in Partnership for Entitlement and Reformation Society (LEPER) and a person with disability, Mr. Iftekhar Mahmud from DPI

Bangladesh (Protibondhi Nagorik Shangathaner Parishad - PNSP) and for the Bangladesh country briefing during the 11th UNCRPD pre-session on 8th April 2019.

The Myanmar delegation consisted of persons with disabilities from Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities (MFPD) and a person affected by Leprosy, Mr. U Soe Win along with the TLMM Country Director, Dr. Zaw Moe Aung for Myanmar's country briefing on 10th April, 2019.



The delegation from India consisted of Mr. Arman Ali, Executive Director and Mr. Rajive Raturi, Director (Advocacy) from DPI India for the country briefings on 11th April. DPI India was also successful in partnering with ILEP and presenting before the full CRPD Committee on the thematic briefing on Leprosy on 4th April, 2019.

Committee of the Civil Society Mechanism to the Conference of State Parties

DPI continues to play an active role as a member of the Steering Committee of the Civil Society Mechanism to the Conference of State Parties. Thus, it had the chance to contribute to planning and organizing the Civil Society Forum that was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York each year in June.

DPI at Civil Society Forum on 10th June, 2019 at UN HQ, New York

A delegation of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) participated in the 12th Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that was held at the United Nations' Headquarters in New York, from 11th to 13th June, 2019. The delegation led by the Acting Chair of DPI Mrs. Henrietta Davis-Wray including a number of DPI board members (Ms. Sylvana Lakkis - DPI Second Vice Chair, Mr. Trever Carroll - DPI Information Officer, Ms. Eakete Judith Umoh, DPI Africa Regional Chair, Mr. Wilfredo Guzman Jara, Director and Mr. Alzouma Maiga Idriss, Director) also participated in the Civil Society Forum which is held one day prior to the Conference of State Parties on 10th June, 2019.



DPI representative at the Steering Committee, Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy was elected to address the audience at the closing session presenting the summary of the forum's discussion outcomes and recommendations to COSP General Assembly.

Meeting with DPI Member National Assemblies at CoSP, UN HQ, NY

DPI held an open meeting with its members who were participating at the 12th Conference of State Parties at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The members who attended this meeting came from all corners of the World representing DPI regional offices of Africa, Arab, Asia Pacific, Latin America, and North America and Caribbean, and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The meetings were dedicated to catch up with members, and learn about their recent



achievements and initiatives on the national and regional levels. More importantly, these meetings were an opportunity to give an update to DPI members about the preparation of DPI's World Assembly that has been decided to take place in Lima, Peru.

Side-event on Using Accessible and Assistive Technologies to Implement Article 24: Supporting Students with Disabilities for Inclusive Higher Education.

DPI co-sponsored a side-event on Using Accessible and Assistive Technologies to Implement Article 24: Supporting Students with Disabilities for Inclusive Higher Education at the United Nations Headquarters on 10th June, 2019 in New York. This event was organized by the Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) and co-sponsored by DPI and other organizations and entities, mainly the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations and focus on understanding some of the best practices and lessons learned in implementing CRPD Article 24 on inclusive education. It will identify how assistive, adaptive, and accessible technologies can be used to support students with disabilities in higher education. The session will include: (1) an overview of the multi-year, multi-country virtual master's program led by IDPP in the ASEAN

Region; (2) how university-based student support centers may be structured to support both faculty and students. (3) university-industry-city collaboration in support of students; (4) technological developments and frontiers to support students with disabilities. Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy DPI representative to the United Nations represented DPI as a speaker on the panel.

Side Event on Digital Accessibility: Strategies for Disability Inclusion in E-Governance Platforms (Best Practices from the Global North and Global South).

DPI organized this side-event on 11th June, 2019 in partnership with a number of co-sponsors, including: the Permanent Mission of Ecuador, the Australian Federation of Disability Organizations (AFDO), CBM, G3ict, Institute on Disability and Public Policies, World Blind Union (WBU), World Enabled, and the Zero Project. The event was chaired and moderated by DPI Acting Chair Mrs. Henrietta Davis-Wray. Mr. Trevor Carroll (DPI Information Officer) participated on the panel in his

capacity as the Vice President of the Australian Federation of Disability Organizations (AFDO). The panel included a number of experts and representatives from the co-sponsoring organizations, who presented their best practices on the subject matter of the event.



DPI was selected for speaking at the General Debate

DPI was selected for speaking at the General Debate, under the agenda item 5 (a), during the CoSP on 12th June, 2019. DPI Board Member and National Chair of DPI Peru, Mr. Jara Wilfredo Guzman Jara made a statement on the theme of Technology, digitalization and ICTs for the empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities from the floor.



Side Event on Implementing Article 19: Achieving Deinstitutionalization by Supporting the Independence and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Arab Region.

This side-event was organized by the Economic and Social Council of Western Asia (ESCWA) on 12th June, 2019 and co-sponsored by a number of organizations and entities in addition to DPI Arab Regional Office (Arab Forum for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - AFRPD), including: the Arab League, Inclusion International, and the Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities.

Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy DPI representative to the United Nations represented DPI as a speaker on the panel.

Side Event on a Human Rights-Based Approach to Address Stigma and Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities



DPI organized this event on 13th June, 2019 in partnership with The Leprosy Mission International, and with the co-sponsorship of The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), The Nippon Foundation (TNF) and Transforming Communities for Inclusion (TCI) - Asia-Pacific Region. Chaired and moderated by the CEO of The Leprosy Mission International, the event addressed the

different cultural and legal injustices being faced by people affected by Leprosy around the World, mainly Bangladesh, Nepal, Nigeria and India. The event was addressed by two representatives of the United Nations CRPD Committee, Mr. Samuel Kabue and Mr. Monthian Buntan and was also an opportunity to present the outcomes of DPI ongoing project on Leprosy that is sponsored by The Nippon Foundation. DPI was represented on the panel by DPI Africa Regional Chair, Ms. Ekaete Judith Umoh.



Meetings and Networking in New York

DPI delegation held a number of networking meetings with different participating organizations during COSP. These meetings aimed at exploring opportunities to building partnerships around different issues and initiatives concerning the themes of COSP this year, mainly in the areas of digital accessibility and technology. The meetings held included: representatives of the Zero Project, the Inclusive Policy Center, the International Telecommunication Union, The European Disability Forum, Disability Business International, among others.

DPI Re-unification meetings

Mr. Trevor Carroll and Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy our representatives on the DPI Unification Coordination Committee met with Mr. Jean-Luc Simon and Mr. Taisuke Miyamoto from the other group on two formal occasions and several informal sessions to continue the negotiations and discussions on unifying DPI. A number of draft proposals were discussed and finalized which will be put to the respective Boards for consideration and approval in the near future. The meetings and negotiation have taken a positive path towards unification and the Coordination Committee continues to meet by Skype to resolve all other issues of contention.

Alternate Representative of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities



Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy, DPI representative to the United Nations has been elected to serve as the Alternate Representative of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD) to the High-Level Political Forum for a term of two years where he will work alongside the Permanent Representative of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, Mr. Jose Vierato facilitate the public representation of the SGPwD and to provide strategic direction and guidance, to promote and coordinate the active participation of members in national, regional and global meetings related to sustainable development, and to conduct advocacy meetings in New York

and regional meetings on behalf of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, and to ensure coherence and synergies between the different Working Groups of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities.

DPI member selected for UN funds to attend the HLPF 2019

Mr. DavudRehimli, President, Union of Disabled People Organizations (UDPO) of the Republic of Azerbaijan (DPI Azerbaijan) was selected to be funded by the UN to attend the HLPF 2019. The HLPF Secretariat of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities had launched an application process prior to the event to identify UN-funded participants for the HLPF 2019 and forwarded the names of three people to the UN after which the UN selected Mr. Rahimli.



DPI at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)



Several members of DPI participated at the HLPF that took place from 9-18 July 2018 at the UN headquarters in New York representing their respective countries as well as the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD). The theme for the forum is "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" and the Goals to be

reviewed this year were Goal 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17. Further, the official side event of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities: "Reducing inequalities: a look at persons with disabilities" was moderated by Mr. Mohammed Ali Loutfy. Mr. Loutfy also attended a conversation held at the Baha'i International Community office with authors of the global Civil Society Report entitled "Reshaping governance for sustainability: Transforming institutions - shifting power - strengthening rights."

22nd Session of the CRPD Committee (26thAugust, 2019 – 20thSeptember, 2019)

DPI facilitated the 2nd time participation of the representatives from the Leprosy and Disability sectors from Myanmar to the 22nd Session of the CRPD Committee held from 26th August, 2019 to 20th September, 2019 in order to network and further raise issue of people affected by Leprosy at international disability platforms as well as holding the government responsible for their well being in the international community.

DPI NAC Regional Meeting

Disabled Peoples' International North America and the Caribbean, Inc. (DPI NAC) held it's 10th Regional Meeting on 25th August, 2019 in Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis, West Indies. Discussing regional matters, the members also elected the new Board of Directors of DPI NAC Region for a term of four years from 2019-2023:



- Mr. Merphilus James, President, St. Lucia
- Mrs. Isabel Hodge, Vice President, United States of America
- Ms. Harjinder Jutle, Secretary, Montserrat
- Ms. Irma Raymond-Joseph, Treasurer, Dominica
- Mr. Bernard Warner, Public Relations Officer, Antigua and Barbuda
- Mrs. Joseph Bergan, Director, St. Kitts and Nevis

First ever Summit Civil Society Forum was held at the High Level Political Forum- SDGs Summit from 24-25 September, 2019 at the UN Headquarters

The first Civil Society Forum during the SDG summit took place on 24 September, 2019 with Mr. Jose Viera and Mr. Mohammed Loutfy both presenting on behalf of the Stakeholder Group of



Persons with Disabilities featuring discussions on systemic analysis for the current state of SDG implementation, key proposals to unlock progress, and institutional arrangements that could facilitate implementation. Key takeaways included the need for enhanced cooperation among civil society groups, specific indicators and disaggregated data, equitable inclusion and participation for those furthest left behind, further engagement with youth, the role of local people as partners, and HLPF reform - that the HLPF should be more substantive in addressing key barriers to achieving the Goals.

DPI at the Contracts for Data Collaboration Workshop

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities attended the data collaboration workshop on 23rd September, 2019. Mohammed Loutfy participated as a speaker and talked about the importance of collecting disability data at the global, regional, and local levels in the global sustainable development framework and working in partnerships.

DPI-G3ict ICT Accessibility Survey 2019 and DARE Index 2020

DPI and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict), a digital inclusion and human rights advocacy organization has been collaborating for the past few years on collating data on digital accessibility vis-a-vis persons with disabilities around the world through the ICT Accessibility Survey which fed into the CRPD ICT Accessibility Progress Report. Data collated in 2017 had led to the development of the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index (DARE Index) in 2018 which is now being used as a resource tool by Advocates and Policy Makers around the world to benchmark progress in making ICTs accessible in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. DPI and G3ict have once again partnered this year to collate data for developing DARE Index 2020 from October to December, 2019.

DPI Nepal

DPI Nepal, National Federation of the Disabled (NFDN) participated and attended the Workshop on linkages between the CRPD and the SDGs implementation and monitoring to Nepali DPOs organized by Danish Disabled People’s Organization (DPOD) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) from 24 to 26 November, 2016. The three day workshop consisted of deeper discussions on the CRPD, intersectionality, disability inclusiveness in the SDGs and strategies for taking forward recommendations from UN mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD Cttee) as well as analyses of the Nepali Disability Act from the CRPD perspective and details on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) UN processes.



International Day of Persons with Disabilities

DPI members and associates held events and campaigns around the world in celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) which is observed every year on the 3rd of December. DPI supported its Member National Assembly in India, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) in the IDPD celebrations at India Gate, New Delhi on the theme of 'The Future is Accessible'. The event showcased stellar performances by people with disabilities themselves and concluded with a short 'Walk To Freedom', symbolic of the work that yet needs to be done to ensure inclusion of people with disabilities into mainstream society, allowing them to live their life with dignity and equality.

