

2014 Annual Report

**Our Voices,
Our Rights,
Our Future.**

**Disability Rights Fund and
Disability Rights Advocacy Fund**

The Disability Rights Fund is supported by

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- The American Jewish World Service.
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Cover Photo By Morfi Jiménez Mercado

Two members of the Peruvian Society of Down Syndrome in their home.



A Word From Our Leadership



Diana Samarasan
Founding Executive
Director



Catherine Townsend
Co-Chair



William Rowland
Co-Chair

In this annual report, we focus on access to education. Why? Because in the developing countries where we work, over 90% of children with disabilities do not attend school - the lowest attendance rate of any group. And, we know how key education is to connecting with community and accessing opportunity.

With no access to school, global literacy rates among persons with disabilities are an appalling 3%, and among women with disabilities, only 1%.

With little education, it is no wonder that nine in ten persons with disabilities in the developing world are unemployed and make up a disproportionate percentage of the poorest of the poor.

A Word From Our Leadership

Our grantees – 101 of them in total in 2014 – work across the rights spectrum, addressing everything from access to education to right to vote to access to justice and more. In 2014, 11% of them addressed inclusive education specifically.

In Haiti, where the majority of schools rebuilt after the earthquake are not accessible, a grantee in Les Cayes partnered with the government to develop a groundbreaking inclusive education policy. In Uganda, only 9% of the 2.5 million children with disabilities attend school according to UNICEF. Two grantees sought to change that by working with school officials to increase the number of children with disabilities in mainstream schools and by developing a mobile sign language interpretation service to ensure deaf children could attend school in rural areas. In Indonesia, a grantee documented the number of children with disabilities out of school to build evidence for advocacy to the government for change.

These projects and many more are building momentum for a sea change in how people with disabilities are viewed by and participate in their communities. People with disabilities are leading this change.

A Word From Our Leadership

These leaders are people like Ugandan Chair of the National Union of Persons with Disabilities, Henry Nyombi, who was disabled in a car accident at age 12 and struggled to complete school and then university, and like Costa-Rican Catalina Devandas – who was a Disability Rights Fund Program Officer and is now the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities - and was viewed as ‘incapable’ by her schoolmates.

Too many children with disabilities are disabled by stigma, discrimination and exclusion. This needs to change. With your help, we can continue to support grantees working at local and national levels to ensure that education – and ultimately, society – is for **all**.

Thank you for all you do,



Catalina Devandas

2014 Annual Report

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Photo of Catalina Devandas-Aguilar + Paul Kanyinke Sena by Andy Isaacson

Devandas-Aguilar + Kanyinke Sena, former Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shaking hands at the 2013 UNPFII meeting.

Spotlight

“For me, it’s a matter of justice.”

Catalina Devandas-Aguilar - Costa-Rican human rights lawyer and former staff member of the Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund – took office on December 1, 2014 as the first Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to be appointed by the United Nation’s Human Rights Council.

While Catalina has been fighting her whole life for the rights of persons with disabilities, she could not always foresee this prestigious appointment. Born with spina bifida, which impairs physical mobility, Catalina encountered significant barriers in attending school in a context that lacked both institutional supports and legal mandates to ensure children with disabilities had the same opportunities as others.

**...school was physically inaccessible...
sometimes I had to walk from the entrance to
the end of the school...and attend classes on
the second floor...which meant that I had to
climb a flight of steps every day.**

The lack of accessible infrastructure in Catalina's school, a situation more common than not, set her apart from other students.

**I was isolated, perhaps because of the
presumption by other people including my
classmates that I was unable to perform tasks
in school. My classmates never played with
me, and I remained isolated until I got my first
friend at age of twelve.**

Through family support and her own determination, Catalina excelled academically and went to university and then law school, where the memories of her exclusion fueled her participation in the student and disability rights movements. Upon completion of her studies, Catalina joined a local Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO). She focused on communities that faced multiple levels of

discrimination and social exclusion – namely women and indigenous persons with disabilities.

**Unless women [and other marginalized
groups] with disabilities are present fighting
for inclusion as beneficiaries and main actors
for change, the change will not happen.
There need to be role models ... and also
real participation. Participation brings
change little by little.**

Through her career as a prominent disability rights advocate and change agent, Catalina has set an example for persons with disabilities across the globe to take leadership roles at all levels of policy-making. Catalina believes it is important that many staff of the Disability Rights Fund are persons with disabilities because this models the inclusion the Fund seeks to see in the world.

**For many local DPOs, there are a lot of
barriers and little hope. Seeing an empowered
[disabled] person ... offers them a role model
[and hope].**

Who We are

The Disability Rights Fund + The Disability Rights Advocacy Fund

The Disability Rights Fund and the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund share Catalina's vision of a world where persons with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities. The Disability Rights Fund supports organizations of people with disabilities to demand equality and full inclusion in their communities.

The Disability Rights Advocacy Fund supports the advancement of legal frameworks to realize rights. Both organizations incorporate persons with disabilities at all levels of operations, in support of the international disability slogan, **“nothing about us without us”**.

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Persons with disabilities are one of the most socially excluded and marginalized populations in the world, experiencing widespread discrimination, abuse and injustice. The Disability Rights Fund works to change that.



1 in 7

people have a disability.

That's over one billion people around the world.

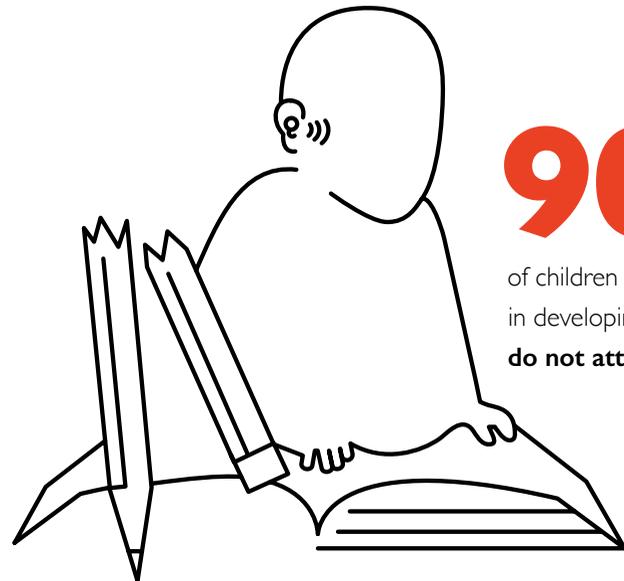
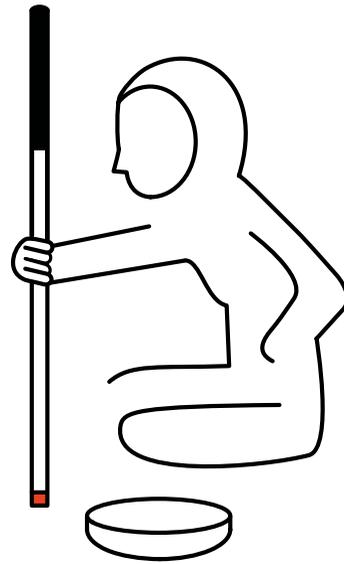


80%

of the one billion people with disabilities live in **developing countries**

20%

of the poorest people in developing countries are people with disabilities

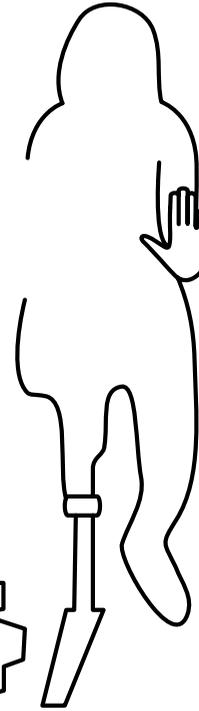
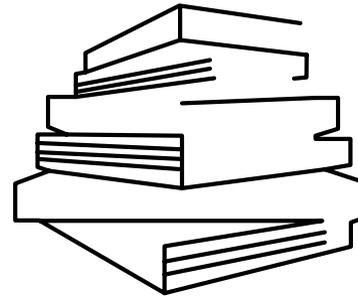


90%

of children with disabilities in developing countries **do not attend school**

1%

of all women with disabilities are **literate**



The **rate of violence** against women with disabilities is

3-4

times higher than for other women



Who We Work With

Mapping our Impact in 2014

In 2014, the Disability Rights Fund and the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund granted \$2,701,762 to 101 organizations in 21 countries.

Since inception in 2008, the Disability Rights Fund and the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund have given out over \$15 million in grants to over 250 organizations in 32 countries.

These grants support organizations of persons with disabilities to take the lead in advocating for rights, from access to school to access to justice to legislative change and reporting on rights abuses. See pages 19-24 for some examples. Grants are given to single organizations as well as coalitions of organizations for joint advocacy on rights.

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Disability Rights Fund Grantee List

Africa

Ghana

	Grant USD
Empowerment Through Community Volunteering	10,500
Future Hope International	6,800
Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled	11,000
Kekeli Foundation	10,500
Lakeside Cross Disability Self-Help Group	11,000
New Horizon Foundation of the Blind	12,000
Voice of People with Disability Ghana	39,000

Malawi

Disabled Women in Africa	50,000
Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi	60,000
Registered Trustees of the Forum for the Development of Youth with Disabilities	12,000
Visual Hearing Impairment Membership Association	12,000

Rwanda

Human Rights First Rwanda Association	20,000
Initiative for Refugees Living with Disability	10,000
National Organisation of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry in Rwanda	16,000
National Union of Disabilities Organisations of Rwanda	36,500
Rwanda Ex-Combatants and Other People with Disabilities Organization	10,000
Rwanda National Union of the Deaf	20,000
Uwezo Youth Empowerment	20,000

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	Grant
	USD
Uganda	
Action for Youth with Disabilities Uganda	20,000
Brain Injury Support Organization Uganda	17,000
Elgon Foundation for Persons with Albinism	15,000
Hoima District Union of Persons with Disabilities	37,000
Integrated Disabled Women Activities	20,000
National Association of the Deafblind in Uganda	20,000
National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda	20,000
National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda	20,000
Spinal Injuries Association	19,000
Uganda Albinos Association	15,000
Uganda National Association of the Deaf	14,000
Youth with Physical Disabilities Development Forum	20,000

Asia

Bangladesh

Disabled Child Foundation	10,000
Disabled Development and Research Center	10,000
Dishary Protibandhi Sangstha	10,000
Federation of DPOs Sitakund	20,000
Jatiyo Trinomul Protibandhi Sangstha	30,000
National Council of Disabled Women	20,000
Protibandhi Kallyan Songstha	12,000
SEID (Society for Education and Inclusion of the Disabled)	30,000
Society of the Deaf and Sign Language Users	20,000

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	Grant
	USD
India	
Network of Persons with disabilities Organizations	30,000
Indonesia	
Center for Improving Qualified Activity in Life	20,000
DPD Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia Sumatera Barat	10,000
Forum Komunikasi Kelluarga Anak Dengan Kecacatan Kabupaten Aceh Besar	10,000
Gerakan Peduli Disabilitas Dan Lepra	5,000
Gerakan Untuk Kesejahteraan Tuna Rungu Indonesia	20,000
Himpunan Wanita Penyandang Cacat Indonesia Sulawesi Selatan	10,000
Lembaga Sapda (Sentra Advokasi Perempuan Difabel Dan Anak)	20,000
Perhimpunan Organisasi Handicap Nusantara	14,000
Persatuan Penyandang Cacat Indonesia	18,000
Pusat Pemilihan Umum Akses Untuk Penyandang Cacat	20,000

Caribbean

Haiti

Association des Sourds D'Haiti	7,000
Association des Sourds de Leveque, Haïti	15,000
Association Filles et Femmes au Soleil	10,000
Centre Culturel et d'Action Pour les Personnes Handicapées	16,000
Federation Haitienne des Associations et Institutions des Personnes Handicapees d'Haiti	50,000
Organisation des Handicapes en Action pour le Progrès	11,000
Reseau Association National pour l'Integration des Personnes Handicapees	20,000
Reseau Association National pour l'Integration des Personnes Handicapees	40,000

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Middle East/North Africa

Lebanon

	Grant USD
Lebanese Association for Self Advocacy	20,000
Lebanese Universities' League for the Blind	19,000
Palestinian Disability Forum	49,900
Youth Association of the Blind	50,000

Pacific Islands

Cook Islands

Cook Islands National Disability Council	15,000
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Tuvalu

Fusi Alofa, Inc.	12,000
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Off-Docket Grants

These grants support movement building and capacity development through Grantee Convenings.

Ghana Federation of the Disabled	11,000
National Union of Disabilities Organisations of Rwanda	10,549
National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda	12,000
Action on Disability and Development	5,532
Socio Legal Information Centre	2,190
Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia	18,000
Federation Haïtienne des Associations et Institutions des Personnes Handicapées d'Haiti	9,000
All Ukrainian NGO Coalition for People with Intellectual Disabilities	3,041

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Special Opportunity Grants

These grants support current grantees to take advantage of critical opportunities for advocacy.

Ukraine

All Ukrainian NGO Coalition for People with Intellectual Disabilities	2,450
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Uganda Capacity Fund

These grants support organizational capacity building and strengthen working relationships with other human rights movements.

Action for Youth with Disabilities Uganda	8,000
Bududa Deaf Women's Organisation	5,000
Buganda Disabled Union	7,000
Gulu Women with Disabilities Union	7,000
Heartsounds Uganda	10,000
Lira District Disabled Women Association	10,000
Little People of Uganda	10,000
Mental Health Uganda	7,000
Mubende Women with Disabilities Association	7,500
National Association of the Deafblind in Uganda	10,000
Uganda Albinos Association	8,000
Uganda Association for the Mentally Handicapped/Inclusion Uganda	7,000
United Deaf Women's Organisation	8,000
Youth with Physical Disabilities Development Forum	6,000

Disability Rights Advocacy Fund Grantee List

Africa

Ghana

Inclusion Ghana

Grant

USD

37,500

Malawi

Registered Trustees of the Disabilities HIV AIDS Trust

20,000

Uganda

Lira District Disabled Women Association

20,000

Mbarara District Association of the Deaf

20,000

Uganda National Action on Physical Disability

43,800

Uganda National Association of the Deaf

56,000

United Deaf Women's Organisation

30,000

Youth with Physical Disabilities Development Forum

33,000

Asia

Bangladesh

Access Bangladesh Foundation

42,000

Access Bangladesh Foundation

30,000

Federation of DPOs Sitakund

40,000

SEID (Society for Education and Inclusion of the Disabled)

20,000

Turning Point Foundation

20,000

India

National Disability Network

40,000

Indonesia

Center for Improving Qualified Activity in Life

Grant

USD

40,000

Himpunan Wanita Penyandang Cacat Indonesia

30,000

Perhimpunan Organisasi Handicap Nusantara

35,000

Perkumpulan Orang Tua Anak Disabilitas Indonesia

20,000

Persatuan Penyandang Cacat Indonesia Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan

35,000

Pusat Pemilihan Umum Akses Untuk Penyandang Cacat

33,000

Latin America

Peru

Confederación Nacional de Discapitados del Perú

40,000

Federación Departamental de Personas con Discapacidad de Puno

40,000

Pacific Islands

Federated States of Micronesia

Pohnpei Consumer Organization

20,000

Fiji

Fiji Association of the Deaf

20,000

Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation

20,000

Psychiatric Survivors Association of Fiji

20,000

United Blind Persons of Fiji

20,000

Republic of the Marshall Islands

Marshall Islands Disabled Persons Organization

15,000

Page Seventeen

Solomon Islands

Disabled Peoples' Association of Solomon Islands

Grant

USD

20,000

Strategic Partnership Grants

These grants support cross-movement work and regional Disabled Persons Organizations networks.

Indonesia

ASEAN Disability Forum

75,000

United States

Creating Resources for Empowerment and Action, Inc.

71,000

Kenya

Deaf Queer Self-Help Group

23,000

Switzerland

International Disability Alliance

160,000

Special Opportunity Grants

These grants support current grantees to take advantage of critical opportunities for advocacy.

Mexico

Coalición México por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad

10,000

Uganda

Uganda National Association of the Deaf

40,000

Mapping Our Impact

Our Grantee Highlights

Africa + The Middle East

Asia

Caribbean + Pacific Islands

Africa + The Middle East – Grantee Highlights

Lebanon

DRF

Lebanese Association for Self Advocacy

Small Grant
Grant: 20,000 USD

Using video to advocate for inclusion of rights of people with intellectual disabilities in the larger human rights movement in Lebanon.

Ghana

DRF

Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled

Small Grant
Grant: 11,000 USD

Training the justice sector on access to justice for people with psychosocial disabilities and linking people with psychosocial disabilities to legal aid in the rural districts of Bolga, Tongu, and Chiana-Paga.

Uganda

DRF

Uganda Albinos Association

Small Grant
Grant: 15,000 USD

Advocating to national health authorities for access to health services, especially skin cancer services, by albino people.

Kenya

DRAF

Deaf Queer Self Help Group

Small Grant
Grant: 23,000 USD

Building organizational capacity on rights instruments in order to address discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and disability

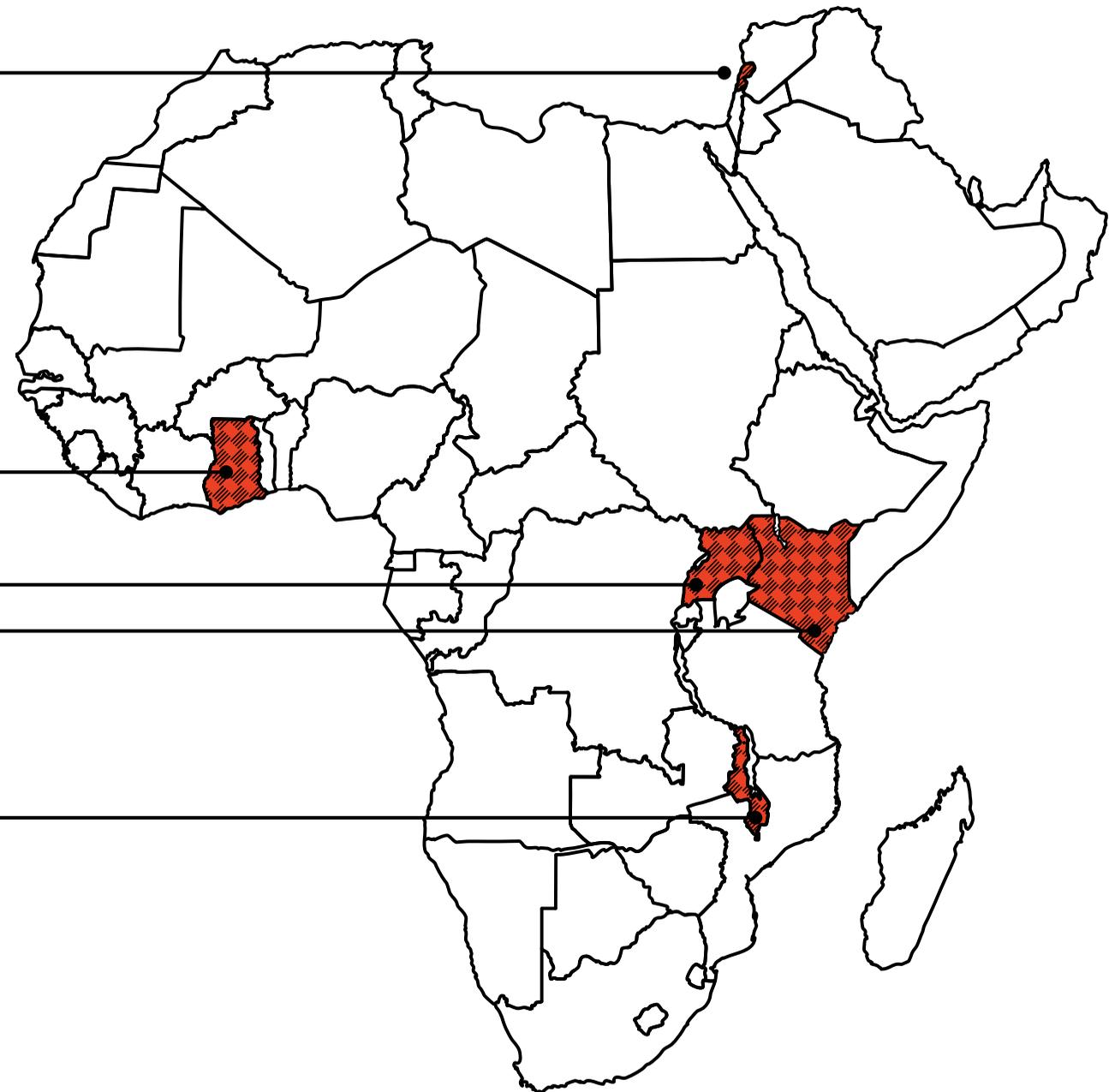
Malawi

DRF

Disabled Women in Africa

Mid-Level Coalition Grant
Grant: 50,000 USD

Advocating with police for better systems to address violence against women with disabilities.



Asia – Grantee Highlights

Bangladesh
DRAF
Federation of DPOs Sitakund
Mid-Level Coalition Grant
Grant: 40,000 USD

Advocating for disability inclusion in climate change and disaster risk reduction programming in Chittagong Division and across Bangladesh.

Bangladesh
DRF
National Council of Disabled Women
Small Grant
Grant: 20,000 USD

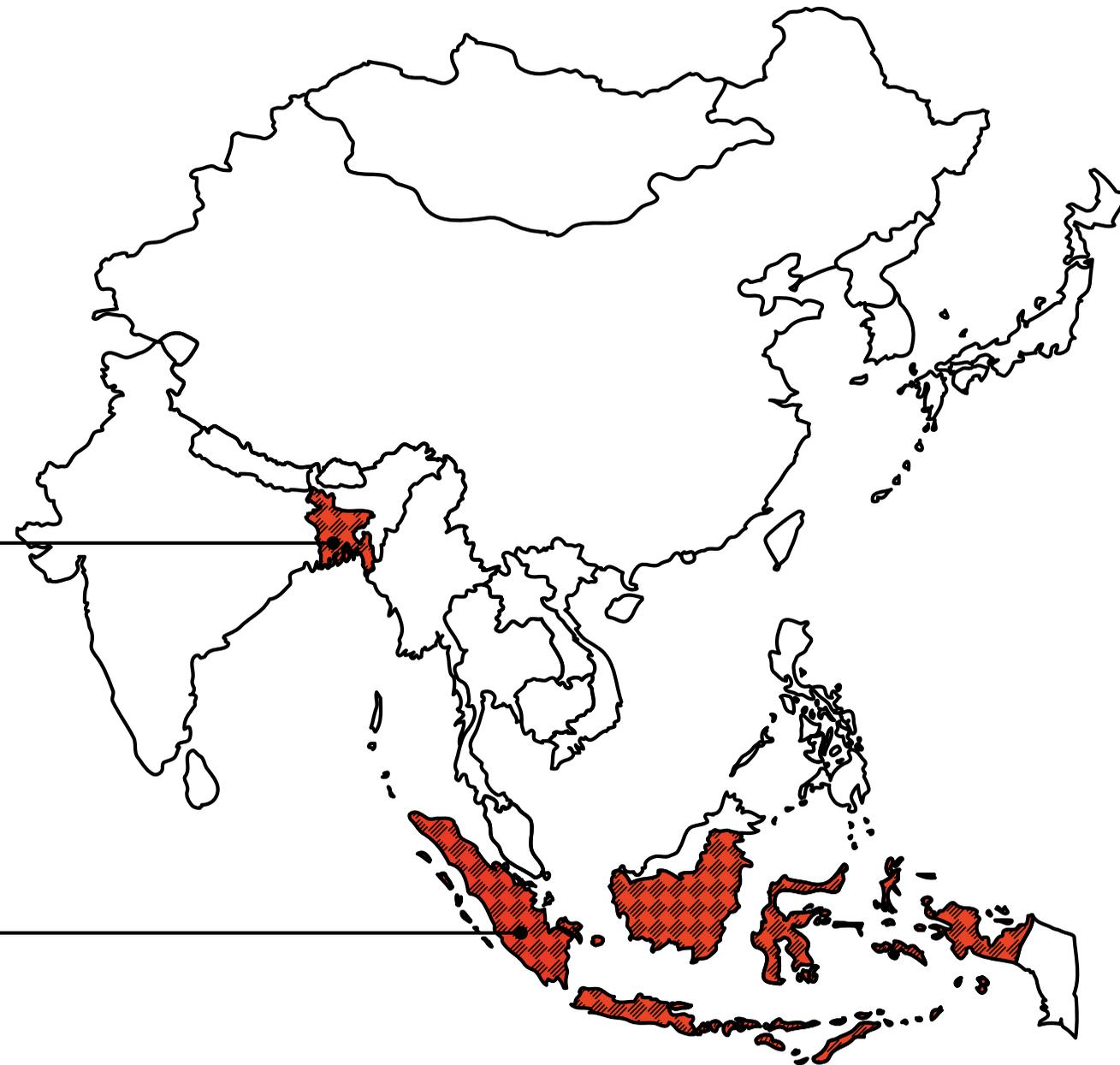
In partnership with the Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust, taking cases to court of discriminatory workplace practices against women with disabilities.

Indonesia
DRF
Center for Improving Qualified Activity in Life
Small Grant
Grant: 20,000 USD

Developing a tool for budget monitoring by Disabled Persons' Organizations to increase resources at government level for people with disabilities in Yogyakarta.

Indonesia
DRAF
Pusat Pemilihan Umum Akses Untuk Penyandang Cacat
Small Grant
Grant: 33,000 USD

Advocating for CRPD-compliance and passage of the draft national Bill on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



Caribbean + Pacific Islands – Grantee Highlights

Haiti

DRF

Association Filles et Femmes au Soleil

Small Grant
Grant: 10,000 USD

Promoting access of women with disabilities to sexual and reproductive health services and to services for survivors of violence and sexual assault.

Haiti

DRF

Centre Culturel et d'Action Pour les Personnes Handicapées

Small Grant
Grant: 16,000 USD

Carrying out advocacy on the right of youth with disabilities in segregated schools to live a life free of abuse and exploitation.

Federated States of Micronesia

DRAF

Pohnpei Consumer Organization

Small Grant
Grant: 20,000 USD

Building CRPD knowledge among members to increase advocacy by people with disabilities for ratification of the CRPD by government.

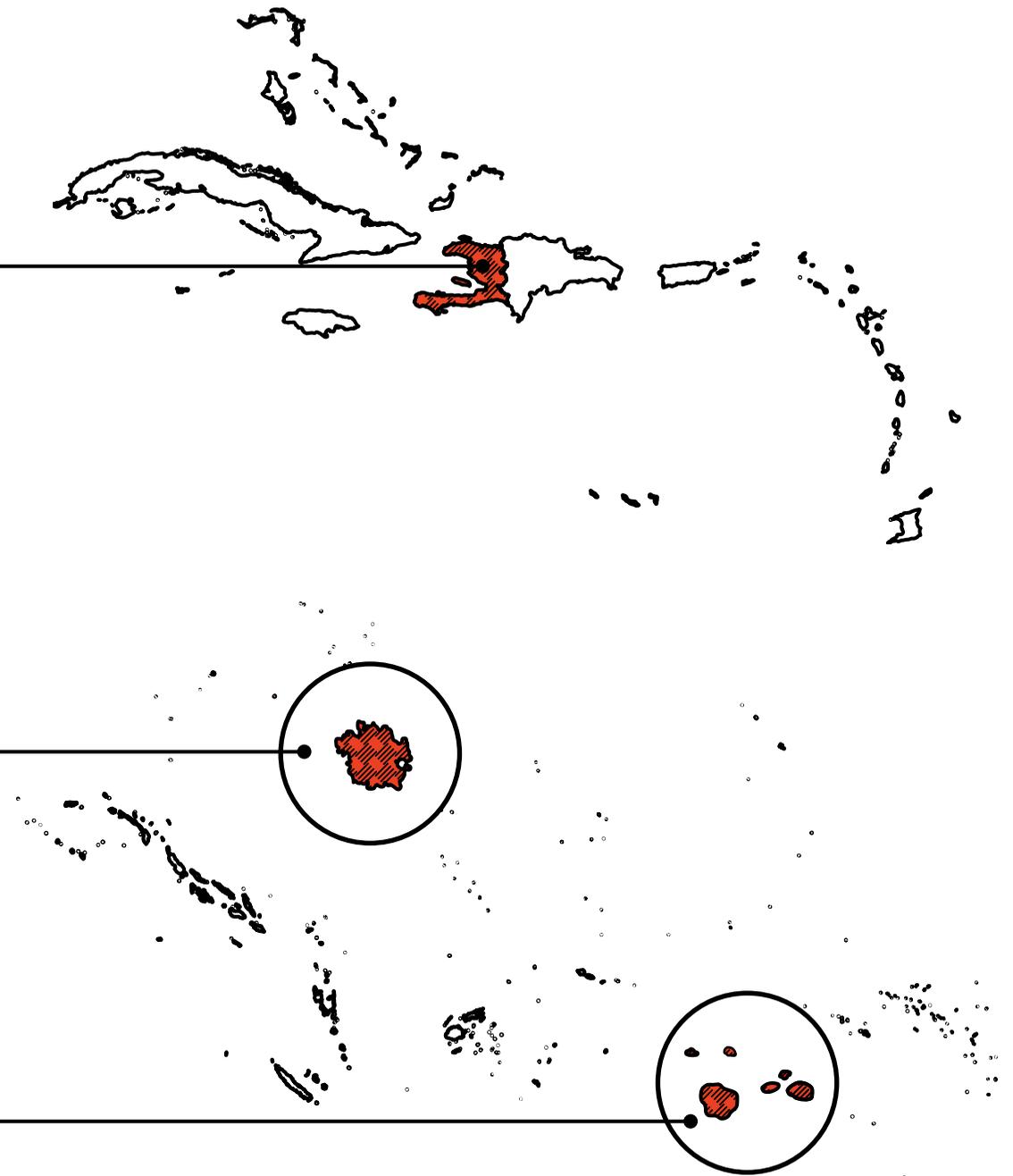
Cook Islands

DRF

Cook Islands National Disability Council

Small Grant
Grant: 15,000 USD

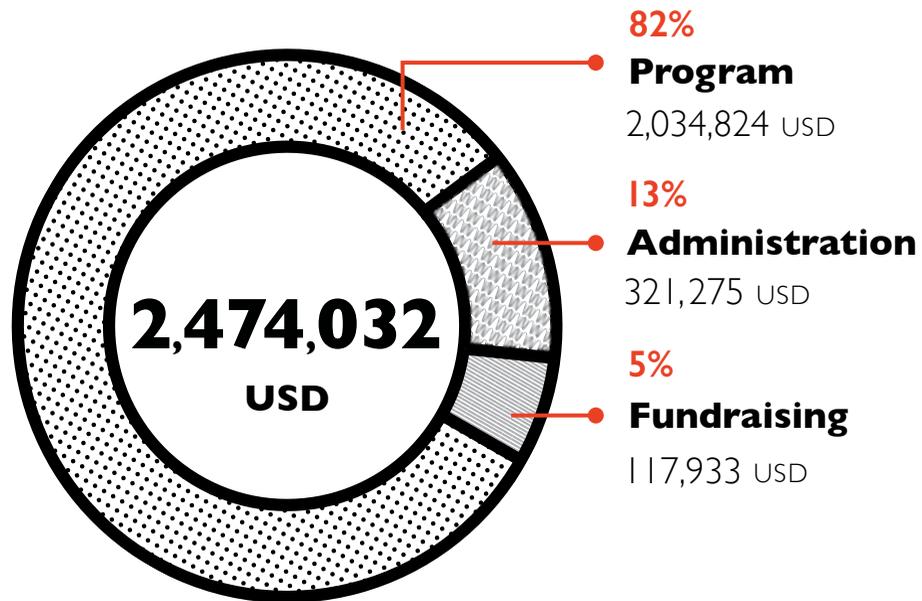
Building capacity of local government and communities to provide disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction services.



Our Financials

Disability Rights Fund

Expenditures



Revenue

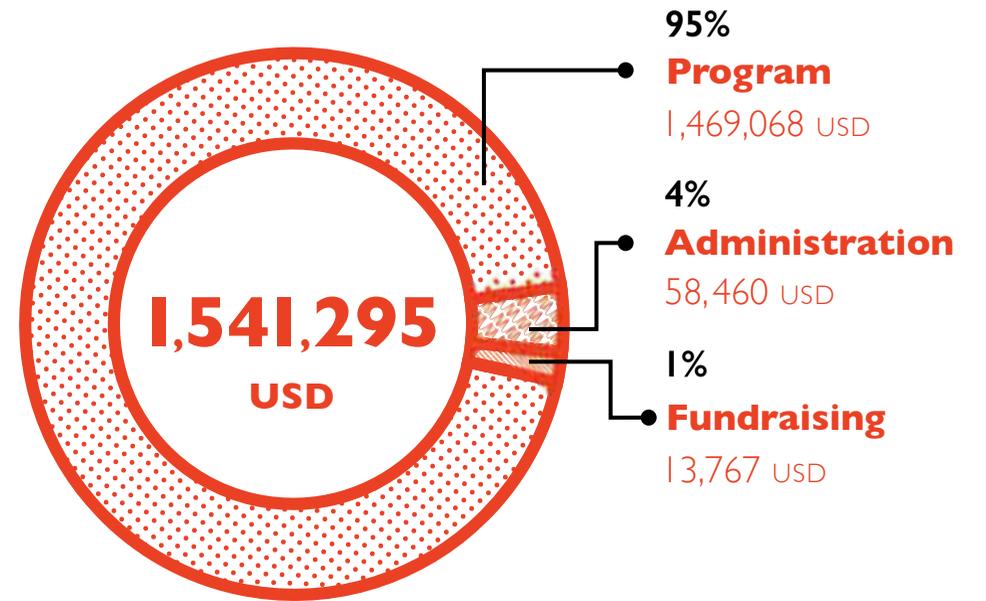
Public	926,255	USD
Private	622,852	USD
Government	901,901	USD

Total 2,451,008 USD

Our Financials

Disability Rights Advocacy Fund

Expenditures



Revenue

DRAF is supported by the Government of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). In 2014, DRAF received **1,498,367 USD** in funding from DFAT.



Photo of Med Ssenooba, Henry Nyombi, and Joel Musana

Ssenooba, DRF Program Officer; Nyombi and Musana, Program Coordinator at Little People of Uganda, outside of a DRF grantee convening.

Spotlight

“I will not rest until I see the lives of the most disadvantaged people change.”

Henry Nyombi - the Executive Director of the Youth with Physical Disabilities Development Forum (YPDDF) and the youngest-ever Chairperson of the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) – relays how his personal journey navigating Uganda’s discriminatory education inspired him to lead a fight for inclusive education.

According to surveys conducted by Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports between 2009-2011, only 9% of Uganda's estimated 2.5 million children with disabilities attend primary school, and only 6% complete their primary school education.¹

Like many other boys in his community, Henry spent his childhood years in the classroom or on the soccer field. Popular at an early age, his peers celebrated his eloquence in the classroom and his superior athletic ability on the field.

I was very self-confident and loved by everyone at school...By the time I was twelve years old, I was training and playing on the senior teams with men who were much older than me because I was too tall, fast, and skilled for my age group!

Henry's life was dramatically altered in a terrible car accident that would leave him paralyzed from the waist down. As a result of his paralysis, Henry's friends abandoned him.

¹Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), Uganda Education Statistical Abstract 2009, 2010 and 2011.



Photo of Henry Nyombi

Nyombi speaking at the DRF annual event in Boston.

Because of cultural beliefs, I lost all of my friends [...] people truly believed that I was punished by the gods and did not want my misfortune to befall them.

Shunned by his peers and unable to return to the school that refused to make accommodations for him, it would have been easy for Henry to lose hope. Yet Henry persevered to become a champion for children with disabilities.

The isolation and discrimination I went through had suppressed my self-esteem. I know that there are thousands of children with disabilities who are suffering the same fate. This is what motivated me to practice law: to add value and to give a voice to those who don't have one.

In 2002, Henry founded Youth with Physical Disabilities Development Forum (YPDDF), which is dedicated to promoting inclusive education and equal opportunity in employment as fundamental rights of Uganda's youth with disabilities. DRF has supported YPDDF in this fight, which, in 2014, resulted in the country's first District accessibility legislation with specific provisions on access of children with disabilities to mainstream schools. YPDDF's (and Henry's) efforts have boosted enrollment of children with disabilities, shifted teacher and parental attitudes, and removed barriers to school for children with disabilities.

Key Themes

Inclusive Education

The Disability Rights Fund shares Henry's deep passion and commitment towards ensuring that children with disabilities are able to attend school and have the same opportunities to succeed as other children.

In 2014, the Disability Rights Fund and the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund provided more than \$250,000 to 13 grantees across 4 countries to address access to education. These grantees worked with both national and local governments to change legislation and policies and create model programs to make education accessible to all.

Inclusion Ghana

Inclusion Ghana, whose mission is to reduce stigma and ensure full inclusion of all persons with intellectual disability and their families, led advocacy on Ghana's first Inclusive Education Policy. Their input came from an innovative scorecard they developed that assessed enrollment numbers and school practices nation-wide regarding children with intellectual disabilities.

To support their data, members of Inclusion Ghana shared stories on the challenges parents face when trying to enroll their children with intellectual disabilities in mainstream schools.

Many have been turned away, laughed at or met with suspicion and fear. Others who have been enrolled in school are not receiving adequate support to ensure the education is meaningful....the cost of supports has either been borne by the parents or by Non-Governmental Organizations...²

Inclusion Ghana is now working to develop an implementation and monitoring plan for the Inclusive

²Inclusion Ghana, 2015

Education Policy, in partnership with the national government's Special Education Division (SPED) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Réseau Association National pour l'Intégration des Personnes Handicapées – Les Cayes (RANIPH SUD)

RANIPH SUD, a regional branch of a national organization located in Les Cayes - one of Haiti's poorest regions - is dedicated to promoting inclusive education and social inclusion of persons with disabilities. RANIPH SUD works with families of children with disabilities and women with disabilities – two of Les Cayes' most vulnerable populations – to build collective capacity to fight for social justice. As part of this effort, RANIPH SUD helped to form Les Cayes' first association for parents of children with disabilities and also supported the formation of Association de Femmes Handicapées du Sud (AFHS), Les Cayes' first women with disabilities-led organization.

Their successes in building the capacity of families and women with disabilities supported their inclusive education advocacy campaign, which started with organization of the region's first forum on inclusive education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Southern Office of the Secretary of State for the Integration of Persons

with Disabilities (BSEIPH). This forum initiated an extensive inclusive education awareness raising campaign through national and local radio, television and print media outlets. It also enabled RANIPH SUD to address parents and teachers to make schools more accessible to children with disabilities. As Haiti's school system is comprised primarily of private schools, there is a need for school-by-school inclusive education advocacy campaigns. Through partnering with local government and private school entities, teachers, principals as well as parents and community members, RANIPH SUD succeeded in making five local schools accessible to persons with physical disabilities.

Forum Komunikasi Kelluarga Anak Dengan Kecacatan Kabupaten Aceh Besar (FKKADK)

FKKADK, a Disabled Persons Organization in Aceh Indonesia - which prepares parents and other family members of children with disabilities to become stronger advocates – collected data on school attendance and created programs for parents, schools and government authorities to come together to learn about the rights of children with disabilities and inclusive education. As a result, FKKADK now collaborates with local government agencies to amend education policies to promote inclusive schools.

Global Level

Expanding Our Scope

In recent years, DRF and DRAF have grown to meet the demands of the burgeoning international disability rights movement. To do so, we've also evolved in our ability to add value by finding new and creative ways to broaden our scope of work and provide support to organizations and individuals in emerging disability rights movements.

In 2014, we added a Mid-Level Coalition funding stream to support disabled persons organizations to collectively advocate for disability-inclusive policy, legislation and budgets at sub-national levels.

One example is a coalition led by Persatuan Penyandang Cacat Indonesia (PPCI) – South Sulawesi, which worked to develop a city ordinance to protect the rights of Makassar City's citizens with disabilities: the Major Rule of Makassar City on the Fulfillment of the Rights of Persons with Disability. Following the passage of this ordinance, the

coalition successfully negotiated city budget allocations to ensure its proper implementation. They also enabled specific provisions for persons with disabilities in the city's 2014-2019 Regional Mid-term Development Plan. Not stopping there, the Coalition collaborated with members of South Sulawesi's provincial government to begin the process of drafting a provincial regulation on the rights of persons with disabilities.

In 2014, DRF/DRAF also expanded our global presence by adding two new countries:

Myanmar

Emerging from economic and political isolation and oppressive military rule, the people of Myanmar have suffered civil strife, poverty and cataclysmic climate change. This is especially the case for persons with disabilities as well as Myanmar's ethnic minority communities, who have faced significant persecution from the government and society-at-large.

Myanmar ratified the CRPD in 2011 and its emergent disability rights movement is working on developing national legislation on the rights of persons with disabilities.



Photo of Chit Ko

Chit Ko, an English teacher, stands outside of a DRF outreach meeting at Shwe Minh Tha Foundation in Mandalay, Myanmar.

Recognizing the opportunity to support an emergent movement, the Funds opened grantmaking to Myanmar in 2014, starting with travel of the Program Officer for Pacific & Asia to the country in to build relationships and explain funding streams.

Malawi

More than half of the population in Malawi lives under the poverty line³. As is the case in many developing countries, persons with disabilities are especially vulnerable to poverty, lack access to education, healthcare, and other basic services, and face pervasive social stigma and violence.

Yet, Malawi is home to one of the most dynamic disability rights movements on the African continent. Following Malawi's ratification of the CRPD in 2009, the development of a Disability Act (2012) marked a significant step towards creation of a nationwide legal framework to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

Recognizing the need and the potential in Malawi, the Funds began supporting Malawian DPOs to address gaps in

³United Nations Development Programme, 2015

rights for persons with disabilities. In 2014, DRF and DRAF provided \$134,000 to four grantees, working on issues of gender equality, access to healthcare, inclusive education, and local and national level implementation of the CRPD.

Expanding the Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund's work is only possible with the support of donors who share our passion for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.



Photo of Karen + Jim Ansara By Richard Howard of the Boston Foundation

The Ansaras at their home in Boston.

Spotlight

“Charity is simply not enough”

No matter how many schools you build; wells you dig; and trees you plant, if there is no foundation of respect for human rights on the community and national-level, no progress can be made in creating substantive change for the world’s most disadvantaged communities. Charity is simply not enough.

Karen Keating Ansara is recognized for her outstanding commitment to ending poverty globally. Since 1999, the Ansara Family has invested their energy and resources in helping communities in Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua, Nepal, and Afghanistan address the root causes of poverty and social injustice.

Karen and her husband adopted five children from the United States of America and Ecuador, all of whom had learning disabilities due to malnutrition, lack of stimuli, and neglect. In this process, Karen became acutely aware of the challenges that lay ahead for her children, particularly in accessing quality education.

Before adopting my children, I had never imagined I would need to become a lioness in their defense. I had never imagined needing to study special education law, or wrangle with recalcitrant school districts that didn't want to spend the money to accommodate my kids

Afraid that her children would be left behind in school, Karen spent years ensuring that schools addressed her children's needs. Supported by existing US legislation – such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Karen was able to ensure that her children received individualized instruction that matched their educational needs. The Ansaras know, however, that millions of families across the world lack the legal frameworks and infrastructure to access even basic education.



Photo of Karen Ansara & Guests

Ansara speaks with DRF guests + advisors at the June event.

In my international work, I have seen how lack of legal infrastructures to protect the rights of the world's most vulnerable populations – namely children and women with disabilities - compounds the problems caused by poverty and social exclusion.

In 2014, the Ansara Family Fund partnered with the Disability Rights Fund to support emergent organizations led by and for people with disabilities in Haiti. These organizations include the first national organization for deaf and deaf-blind people; the first organization of parents of children with disabilities in southern Haiti; and an organization of now adults who grew up in residential schools in Haiti, where they experienced abuse, and who work to protect children and youth with disabilities living in such institutional settings.

The individuals and organizations who lead the way in promoting equality, social justice and dignity for society's most marginalized communities need the strength and capacity to do so. In many cases, however, the organizations who do not have the support they need, fail. It is time that we work together to change that.



Photo of members of Psychiatric Survivors Association of Fiji (PSAF)
Members of PSAF drink Kava together

Moving Forward

Let's Grow the Movement Together

As we move forward, we look to you to help us build on the successes of our current work. Join us in supporting the rights of persons with disabilities:

 Receive our next newsletter.

 Subscribe to our blog.

 Like us on Facebook.

 Follow us on Twitter.

 Join us on LinkedIn.

Donate now to ensure that children with disabilities in developing countries have access to an inclusive education.

Donate now to build on the successes of small, grassroots organizations to promote equality for all.



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**These lists reflect current DRF and DRAF stakeholders. For a complete list of previous Global Advisory Panel, Board and Grantmaking Committee members and staff, please see the Disability Rights Fund website*

www.disabilityrightsfund.org

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