

COMMONWEALTH LEAVES NO ONE BEHIND

**U.K. GLOBAL DISABILITY SUMMIT COMMITMENTS
ENSURE THE PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES IMPLEMENTING THE CRPD AND SDGS**

In 2018 the Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund (DRF/ DRAF) received a grant from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) to fund a limited re-granting initiative dedicated to supporting the actualization of government commitments made during the 2018 U.K. Global Disability Summit (GDS). Through the Commonwealth Leaves No One Behind project (the "CW Project"), DRAF/DRF are supporting national coalitions and special projects in select Commonwealth countries with grants and technical assistance for advocacy to government to actualize specific commitments. This grantmaking, with very limited exceptions, prioritizes support for country-level DPOs as another mechanism to increase participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes related to implementation of the CRPD and the SDGs. Increased visibility and participation of the disability community is critical to ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind in society, in policy, or when resources are allocated. The CW grants are made by invitation only, utilizing DRF/DRAF knowledge of the disability community on the ground.

**READ MORE ABOUT THE IMPACT OF
COMMONWEALTH GRANTS AT**

[http://disabilityrightsfund.org/our-impact/
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LEVERAGING THE GLOBAL DISABILITY SUMMIT COMMITMENTS TO ADVANCE IMPLEMENTATION OF CRPD CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

NATIONAL UNION OF DISABILITIES ORGANIZATIONS IN RWANDA (NUDOR)

With a membership of 13 affiliate organizations, one of NUDOR's key objectives is to support its members to advocate for the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. NUDOR also provides leadership in monitoring the government's implementation of legislation, policy and programs addressing persons with disabilities.

With DRF funding, NUDOR led the development of an alternative report and participation of persons with disabilities in the review of Rwanda by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Geneva in 2018-19.

Through a national consultative meeting, NUDOR also led input into the Rwandan government commitments presented at the July 2018 Global Disability Summit (GDS). Rwanda made multiple commitments in all thematic areas.

DRF's Commonwealth Leaves No One Behind grant is supporting NUDOR to follow up on the government commitment to revise the National Disability Law to align with the CRPD, as well as to advance data disaggregation by integrating Washington Group Questions into the next national census.

To launch this work, NUDOR convened a meeting in April 2019 with member organizations to develop strategies to monitor government's implementation of the commitments. At the end of the

meeting, a roadmap was officially submitted to the government through the National Council of Persons with Disabilities.

NUDOR will use the DRF/DRAF Grantee Convening in July 2019 to raise awareness among key stakeholders and to develop an advocacy strategy vis-à-vis the GDS commitments. A speaker will be invited to share lessons from the disability movement in Kenya and how they are using GDS commitments to leverage advancement of rights.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Skills and knowledge gained during the CRPD review of Rwanda have proved useful in holding the government of Rwanda accountable to the commitments made at the GDS and vice-versa. One key lesson for NUDOR in this process is the importance of building partnerships to support their advocacy agenda. They have built partnerships with mainstream civil society organizations such as Human Rights First Rwanda Association, the Rwandan Law Reform Commission, academia, and various UN agencies.



BANGLADESH

LEVERAGING THE GLOBAL DISABILITY SUMMIT COMMITMENTS TO STRENGTHEN CRPD ADVOCACY

At the Global Disability Summit (GDS) held in London in July 2018, the government of Bangladesh formally made eight commitments. Because their commitments for actions. Because the commitments outline specific actions and timelines, they represent a new and potentially powerful point of leverage to advance CRPD domestication in Bangladesh.

In April 2019, the 11th pre-sessional working group of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities considered Bangladesh's initial State report (as well as civil society reports, including an alternative report from a DPO-CSO Coalition funded by DRF) on national implementation of the CRPD.

This presented an opportunity to utilize the Bangladesh GDS commitments in the CRPD reporting process. The DRF/DRAF Commonwealth Project team made a grant to support a delegation of Bangladeshi DPO representatives to participate in the pre-sessional meeting.

Prior to traveling to Geneva, DRF staff started a dialogue with the delegation on the connections between CRPD advocacy and the GDS commitments. DRF staff worked with IDA to be included in the delegation's Geneva schedule, both as they prepared for their private session with the Committee and as they debriefed and discussed next steps. DRF staff also reviewed the Bangladeshi Alternative Report to lift out examples where leveraging

the GDS commitments could strengthen arguments for CRPD compliance.

In the debrief session, DRF staff worked with the delegation to think about how the obligations created by the GDS commitments could be leveraged to better spur to resolution the issues forthcoming in the Committee's List of Issues (LoI) for the Bangladesh government.



LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ The Commonwealth team quickly realized that many advocates had a superficial understanding of the Global Disability Summit and the commitments made by their government; and they had not been briefed enough about what to expect in Geneva or how to optimize the opportunity. Significant preparation was required in advance.
- ▶ There was not an immediate linkage for most between the GDS Commitments made by the Bangladeshi government and the CRPD review process. Coming to Geneva, the Commitments were seen as 'stand alone' targets.
- ▶ One of the most powerful moments was when advocates got that the Commitments were really there as "means" to fuel their advocacy for CRPD domestication.

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