



# Regional Conference

Disability in Commonwealth Asia

6 - 8 December 2008, Bangalore - India

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **THE COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION**

The Commonwealth Foundation is an intergovernmental organisation, resourced by and reporting to Commonwealth governments. Established in 1965, the membership of the Foundation is open to all members of the Commonwealth. The Foundation's mandate is to strengthen civil society in the achievement of Commonwealth priorities - democracy and good governance, respect for human rights and gender equality, poverty eradication and sustainable, people-centred development, and to promote arts and culture.

Following the 2007 People's Forum, the Commonwealth Foundation is bringing together civil society groups to mainstream disability and has launched the first ever Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum.

### **LEONARD CHESHIRE DISABILITY**

Leonard Cheshire Disability, a global alliance of more than 50 organisations, exists to change attitudes to disability and serve disabled people around the world. LCD supports over 21,000 disabled people in the UK and works in 52 countries. Campaigning for change and civil/human rights of disabled people are key activities of LCD's work across the world.

### **ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**

In December 2006, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was adopted in the UN General Assembly. Following this historic achievement, disability organisations are working to ensure that the governments ratify the Convention, and most importantly to see that all governments implement the changes needed to ensure that persons with disabilities have full and equal enjoyment of human rights. The Commonwealth Foundation through its Disabled Peoples Forum and LCD through its work in 52 countries are working towards ratification of UNCRPD in all Commonwealth countries. As part of this initiative, a "Regional Conference on Disability in Commonwealth Asia", was held at Bangalore (India) from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008. 33 representatives from Bangladesh, Brunei, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, UK and Sri Lanka attended the conference. (*Annex 1 – List of participants*)

### **THE CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES**

- To create a common understanding of challenges faced by disabled people in Commonwealth Asia (specifically related to health and rehabilitation, education and livelihoods)
- To understand the status and issues involved in implementation of UNCRPD
- To ensure cooperation, networking and convergence among all stakeholders in Commonwealth Asia for ratification and implementation of UNCRPD.

## II. CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

The 3-day conference was inaugurated by Dr. Mark Collins, Director of Commonwealth Foundation and Ms. Tanya Barron, International Director of LCD. *(Annex 2 – Agenda)*

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>
Registration, Inaugural Welcome Address	Disability and Livelihoods in Commonwealth Asia - The Policy Environment	Enabling Access to Health and Rehabilitation Services – the Current Context
Introduction to the Regional Conference	Livelihoods: Best Practices from the Region	Innovative Solutions in creating access to affordable health and rehabilitation services in Asia
Disability - Global and Regional Scenario	Disability and Education – The Policy Environment	Role of Self Help Groups and DPOs in reducing poverty
Introduction to UNCRPD	Education for All – The Case for Children with Disabilities: Lessons from the Region	Innovative practices in creating access to Education of children with disabilities
UNCRPD: Ratification to Implementation – Challenges and Progress to Date		Disability and Gender – Disabled Women Speak Out!
UNCRPD: Ratification and Implementation - Role of Civil Society		Developing Action Plans
		Conference Recommendations
		Valedictory function

### INAUGURAL SESSION



While introducing the conference objective, Dr. Mark Collins, Director of Commonwealth Foundation, said that the ratification of UNCRPD was one of the key issues the Foundation was working on. Out of the 64 Commonwealth countries, only nine have translated the Convention into their national law; India and Bangladesh are among these. He emphasised that it is very important for civil society organisations to advocate for ratification of UNCRPD.



In her address, Ms. Tanya Barron, International Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability, highlighted lack of opportunities and discrimination faced by persons with disabilities. She highlighted the low representation of youth with disabilities in the Adhoc Committee meetings of UNCRPD. She mentioned that experiences of young disabled persons are very important and they should be encouraged to bring about a change. Towards this, LCD is promoting a Young Voices initiative. She

also said that Education and Livelihoods are important issues for people with disabilities.

## PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

### **Theme: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

#### Disability – Global and Regional Scenario

Speaker: K.R Rajendra, Regional Representative, South Asia LCD



In his presentation, Mr. Rajendra gave an overview of disability in South Asia Region. With the help of statistics he explained the wide gap in school enrollment of children in general and that of children with disabilities. He mentioned that less than 5% of children with disabilities have access to appropriate education and less than 1% of disabled adults are currently employed, in spite of job reservations.

He added that, while there are many International and National Disability legislations, the problem lies with their implementation. In South Asia, only seven countries have signed the UNCRPD till date, two have ratified it and only one country has signed the optional protocol.

Dissemination → Perspective Building → Interpretation → Signing → Ratification → Amendment /enactment of National Legislations → Implementation

Rajendra concluded his presentation by mentioning the above sequence of events that need to be adopted to ensure that UNCRPD benefits reach to people with disabilities.

#### Introduction to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Speaker: Victor John Cordeiro, Manager-Advocacy and Campaigning, LCD-SARO



Mr. Victor introduced the UN Convention to the participants. He started his presentation with a quote from Albert Einstein - "Unless all countries and people realise that providing a decent living to all people is the obligation of all countries and people, till then, civilization has no meaning". He spoke about the general principles, obligations and the salient features of UNCRPD and gave an overview of the various sections in the Convention.

## UNCRPD: Ratification to Implementation – Challenges and Progress to Date

Speaker: Dr. Maya Thomas, Disability and Development Consultant



In her presentation Dr. Maya Thomas shared preliminary findings from a research conducted for Commonwealth Foundation on status of UNCRPD implementation. Based on responses from 19 organisations from nine countries, Dr. Maya spoke about the role of Civil Society in signing the Convention. She cited examples of NGOs and DPOs from various countries, who were involved in development of the Convention as well as signing, ratification and implementation.

She further shared that the Implementation is proceeding slowly, comprising mainly of examination of existing laws, setting up of committees, inter-sectoral meetings and discussions at different levels. Resource allocation for implementation is a major challenge. She concluded by presenting suggestions to speed-up the UNCRPD ratification and implementation process.

## UNCRPD: Ratification and Implementation - Role of Civil Society

Speakers:

- Atif Sheikh, President Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, Pakistan (presented by Babar Shezad)
- Pn Khatijah Sulieman, President, Selangor Cheshire Home, Malaysia
- Cyril Siriwardhane, Director - Motivation, Sri Lanka



Perspectives from Pakistan: Mr. Babar highlighted the lack of relevant disability legislations in Pakistan. He also mentioned that, there was a huge difference in the numbers quoted by INGOs and the government on disability prevalence. Through a video, he explained the work being undertaken by the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners in Pakistan. He concluded by saying that a joint effort was needed by the government and the NGOs

to cater to the needs of persons with disabilities.



Perspectives from Malaysia: In Malaysia, the government is sensitised and is taking several measures for providing better services and opportunities to persons with disabilities. The civil society and the corporate sector are also sensitised and proactive in extending their support to disabled persons. Pn Khatijah, quoted successful examples, such as, AirAsia

Malaysia – who are providing “ambu-lift” for persons with disabilities in their flights.



Perspectives from Sri Lanka: Mr. Cyril Siriwardhane shared that Sri Lanka has signed the UNCRPD; however, it is yet to ratify the Convention and sign the optional protocol. He mentioned that the Sri Lankan government was waiting for the enactment of the Draft Disability Rights Bill, before they ratify the Convention. He also spoke about the various programmes being undertaken by civil society organisations to create awareness on UNCRPD.

Discussion Summary: After the presentations, the participants came out with the following suggestions to make the UN Convention a reality -

- Creating awareness about UNCRPD –The Convention should be translated into local languages and widely distributed. Media should be sensitised on the provisions laid out in the Convention. Best practices in UNCRPD implementation should be collected from different countries and distributed to government departments.
- Capacity building - Civil society organisations should be trained on UNCRPD and UN systems. Capacities of DPOs, parents and persons with disabilities should be built to undertake advocacy on the Convention.
- Advocacy – NGOs should sensitise key parliamentarians about UNCRPD and encourage them to lobby with the government for its ratification and/or implementation. Letter campaigns, media etc. should be used to sensitise the public. To highlight violation of UNCRPD provisions, legal action should be taken.
- Networking and Collaboration – NGOs should work together to lobby with the government for UNCRPD implementation and provision of services to the disabled. An alliance of media personnel and lawyers should be built, who can support in UNCRPD advocacy efforts.
- Monitoring – An UNCRPD monitoring group with disabled persons should be formed. The group can monitor and regularly prepare progress reports on UNCRPD status and submit to the government and International NGOs.



## **Theme: Livelihoods**

### *Disability and Livelihoods in Commonwealth Asia - The Policy Environment*

#### Speakers:

- Bangladesh: Khandaker Jahurul Alam, Chairman- Asia Pacific Disability Forum (presented by Mahbub Kabir)
- Sri Lanka: Premalal Ratnaweera, Director – Planning, Ministry of Social Services

Perspectives from Bangladesh: Presenting on “Employment of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh in the context of UNCRPD”, Mr. Mahbub shared that Bangladesh has signed and ratified the Convention. Therefore, it is obligated to implement the provisions laid out in the Convention including the one on “Work and Employment”. He quoted other International and National legislations signed by Bangladesh, which make it mandatory for the government to ensure employment for persons with disabilities. In spite of this, the ground reality was stark; employment for the disabled continues to remain a neglected issue in Bangladesh.



Perspectives from Sri Lanka: Mr. Premalal Ratnaweera spoke about the various sectoral policies on livelihood in Sri Lanka. He shared details of a government scheme, which was focusing on – enhancing the condition of persons with disabilities, creating employment opportunities and barrier-free environment.

### *Livelihoods: Best Practices from the Region*

#### Speakers:

- Malaysia: Datin Ruhani Ibrahim, Faculty of Science & Allied Health, Malaysia
- India: Rajesh Mehta, HR Learning Head, IBM Global Services India Private Limited
- Brunei: Malai Hj Abdullah Othman, Founder and President, Society for the Management of Autism Related Issues – in Training, Education and Resources

Malaysia: Ms. Ruhani spoke about the importance of Independent Living and Livelihoods. She talked in detail about early learning, employability and livelihoods. She mentioned that employability of a person is the potential in a person that can be recognised, identified and assessed before and after skill training.

India: Mr. Mehta started by saying that - lack of awareness, information, willingness and accessibility makes a person disabled. He stressed on Role Transformation for persons with disabilities i.e. shifting from traditional trainings/ occupations to modern livelihood options. He also presented a 3-C Model for change - Consolidation, Collaboration and Changing the challenges.



Brunei: The presenter from Brunei spoke about lack of policy frameworks in the country to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. He narrated a personal experience, wherein, after his son was diagnosed with Autism, he realised the lack of information on the issue. He pointed out that while parents/caregivers face a lot of difficulties in caring for children with disabilities, there were no provisions to support them in the UNCRPD.

### Discussion Summary

Following the presentations the following comments were made by the participants –

- Successful persons with disabilities should be identified as role models and projected to the society and persons with disabilities.
- NGOs should emphasis on skill training of persons with disabilities and wherever possible, offer mentoring services.
- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), a network of South Asian countries should be sensitised on the issue of disability. Poverty funds allotted under SAARC should take into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities.

### **Theme: Education**

#### *Disability and Education – The Policy Environment*

##### Speakers

- Malaysia: MD. Kassim Bin Malek, Assistant Director, Ministry of Education Malaysia
- India: Anupriya Chaddha, Consultant, Ministry of Human Resource Development (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan)
- Pakistan: Khalid Nayeem, Directorate General of Special Education, Ministry of Social Services and Special Education (presented by Mohammed Waqar Azeem, Programme Assistant, Pakistan National Council of the Arts)

Malaysia: While talking about education for persons with disabilities, Mr. Malek shared that the Compulsory Primary Education Act, 2002, in Malaysia, guaranteed primary education to all children. As an outcome of the Malaysian Special Education Programme, the country was witnessing an increase in special classes and many other facilities for persons with disabilities. He also mentioned that in Malaysia, two types of inclusion were being practiced: partial inclusion, which is being implemented in mainstream schools with integrated programmes, and total inclusion, i.e., children are placed in mainstream classes.

India: Addressing the group, Ms Chaddha mentioned that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was a country-wide programme to achieve Universalisation of Elementary Education. SSA has a zero rejection policy and every child whether disabled or non-disabled is given an equal opportunity to learn. SSA also works on development of Individualised Educational Plan, community mobilisation, peer sensitisation, tackling attitudinal barriers etc. which support inclusion of disabled children. While mentioning the various challenges in implementing SSA, she quoted the example of Braille books - there was a huge demand for these books but, their supply was inadequate.

While the impact of Inclusive Education in India was good, she mentioned that there were few areas where more focus was needed, like, strengthening of identification procedures, creating awareness and inter-departmental coordination.

Pakistan: In his presentation, Mohammed Waqar Azeem, spoke about the need to increase enrollment of children with disabilities and focus more upon inclusive education programmes. He also mentioned that to raise awareness at the grass roots more campaigns need to be undertaken.

### *Education for All – The Case for Children with Disabilities: Lessons from the Region*

#### Speakers

- Bangladesh: Mahbub Kabir, Director Leonard Cheshire Disability Development Bangladesh
- Sri Lanka: Jeevan.K. Programme Manager Leonard Cheshire Disability Resource Centre

Bangladesh: Mr. Mahbub Kabir stated that, in Bangladesh children with disabilities were discriminated in education. Quoting few examples he mentioned – the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990 which categorises children with disabilities as a 'problem' in mainstream education. Also, there are no standards for education and employment of persons with intellectual disabilities and autistic children. Education services for deafblind are practically non-existent in Bangladesh.

In spite of these drawbacks, he mentioned that there was a strong and popular social movement in favour of persons with disabilities. Also, the vast experience of special schools which could be transformed to resource centres, the government commitment for change and the good government-NGO relationship could be leveraged for the benefit of children with disabilities. He concluded by saying that the signing and ratification of UNCRPD gave hope for a better future for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka: Mr. Jeevan started off with a brief background on inclusive education in Sri Lanka. He described in detail the activities being undertaken by LC Disability Resource Centre to ensure children with disabilities access to mainstream education. He cited examples of working with school managements and parents, training of teachers on disability, peer sensitisation, making school infrastructure accessible etc.

## Innovative practices in creating access to Education of children with disabilities

### Speakers

- Sri Lanka: Thanuja Navarathna, Advocacy Consultant, Sri Lanka.
- Bangladesh: Nazmul Bari, Director, Centre for Disability in Development, Initiative in Rajshahi Division of Bangladesh



Sri Lanka: Ms Navarathna spoke about some of the obstacles faced by children with disabilities in accessing education. She then shared the new measures introduced by the Special Education Unit of Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, to increase children with disabilities access to education. These measures include – starting disability assessment facilities in all district level education offices, establishment of district special education resource centers, appointment of specially trained experts for autistic children, creating physical accessibility in schools; conducting awareness programmes for parents in local communities etc.



Bangladesh: Mr. Bari gave an overview of activities being undertaken in Rajshahi division of Bangladesh towards education of children with disabilities. As a result of these activities, children with disabilities are today studying in mainstream schools and their functional abilities have greatly improved. To further improve inclusive education in Bangladesh, he suggested, incorporating disability issues into teacher training curriculums, greater advocacy with the government and enhanced participation of

persons with disabilities and their family members in education committees, policy bodies etc.

## Disability and Education: The Role of the Commonwealth

### Speaker

- Florence Malinga, Advisor (Education) - Commonwealth Secretariat, London UK



Ms Florence Malinga described the role of the Commonwealth in Disability and Education. Talking about education of children with disabilities, she stressed upon four points – collecting disability disaggregated data to identify and locate all children with disabilities, incorporating disability issues in planning, ensuring that the government adopts a human rights approach i.e. support for children with

disabilities should be grounded in human rights and raising awareness on disability through involvement of disabled people's organisations and parents of disabled children.

### Discussion Summary

Following the presentations on Education, the following comments were made -

- Emphasis should be laid on accessibility of schools and transport facilities.
- To facilitate inclusive education - special schools should be converted to resource centres, extra-curricular activities should be promoted among children with disabilities, parents/caregivers should be involved in education committees. Further, emphasis should be laid on teacher training and curriculum modification to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- Inclusive education for disabled children should be promoted not just in primary or secondary schools but upto post-graduation level.
- A clear link should be established between education and livelihoods i.e. education should prepare a disabled child for employment
- Focus should be laid on providing assistive ICTs, Braille scribes, Braille library, sign language etc. which facilitate disabled children's access to education.

## **Theme: Health and Rehabilitation**

### **Enabling Access to Health and Rehabilitation Services – the Current Context**

#### **Speakers**

- Maldives: Aishath Looba, Assistant Director, Care Development Centre
- Pakistan: Babar Shezad, Programme Manager, Disability Resource Centre



Maldives: Ms Looba mentioned that persons with disabilities who constitute 3.4% of the population in Maldives, was a largely neglected group. She spoke in detail about CARE Society, an organisation actively working for persons with disabilities. Some of the challenges faced by NGOs working for disability in Maldives were - limited disability expertise, lack of trained personnel, geographical structure of the country (working in scattered islands), lack of adequate therapy services, inadequate

government policies on disability and lack of coordination among NGOs in the field.

Pakistan: Mr. Babar started off with an overview of the disability scenario in Pakistan. He also mentioned challenges in disability work like – poor implementation of current policies, financial constraints, lack of accessibility, attitudinal barriers etc. Mr. Babar suggested consultations with persons with disabilities and effective use of print and electronic media for disability awareness as steps to improve the current situation.

### **Innovative Solutions in creating access to affordable health and rehabilitation services in Asia**

#### **Speakers**

- Sri Lanka: Dr.R.M.H.G.Gunarathna, Senior Vice President, Sri Lanka Council for the Blind
- Bangladesh: Rabiul Hassan, Director, Centre for Services and Information on Disability

Sri Lanka: Mr. Gunarathna mentioned that CBR (community based rehabilitation) was an effective tool in addressing the health and rehabilitation needs of persons with disabilities. Within rehabilitation, he emphasised on skill training and livelihoods for disabled persons.

Bangladesh: Mr. Rabiul gave a brief introduction to the topic of disability, rehabilitation and the bio-psycho-social model of disability. He mentioned that in Bangladesh for health and rehabilitation - institution-based, outreach and CBR, all three strategies were being practiced. He also discussed some of the challenges in disability work and suggested recommendations to improve health and rehabilitation services in Bangladesh.

## **Theme: Role of Self Help Groups and DPOs in reducing poverty**

### Speakers

- India: Victor J.C., Manager, Advocacy and Campaigning, LCD-SARO
- Bangladesh: MD Mahbubul Ashraf, Secretary, Association for the Welfare of the Disabled (AWDP)

India: Mr. Victor Cordeiro began his presentation by quoting few disabled people and asking the audience to understand their situation and what poverty meant to them? He compared this with the perspective of NGOs regarding the situation of persons with disabilities. Through his presentation, Victor emphasised that persons with disabilities wanted to enjoy rights like other citizens in the country.



Bangladesh: Mr. Ashraf spoke about the emergence and role played by Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and DPOs in Bangladesh. He highlighted that the SHGs/DPOs have united people with disabilities and have increased their self-confidence and esteem. Because of these groups, today, disabled persons have a vision for a better future with dignity and rights.

## **Theme: Disability and Gender – Disabled Women Speak Out!**

### Speakers

- Pakistan: Rehana Waqar, Producer Radio Pakistan
- India: Kuhu Das, Director, Association for Women with Disabilities, Kolkata
- Bangladesh: Anika Rahman Lipy- Co-ordinator Training, Centre for Disability and Development



Pakistan: Ms Waqar started her presentation by the statement – “The South Asian sub continent is the least gender sensitive region in the world, where men outnumber women”. She went on to describe marginalisation, lack of access to education, employment and barriers like negative attitudes that women with disabilities face in Pakistan. In conclusion, she recommended few strategies for change, that included – strong advocacy on rights of disabled women, changing societal attitudes, increase in opportunities for education and livelihoods for disabled women, increased access to health care and transportation.

India: Ms Das explained about the work being carried out by Association for Women with Disabilities in India. Talking about the various international legislations and declarations related to human rights, she mentioned that the status of women with disabilities has not improved. Disabled women are often marginalised and

considered invisible. She concluded by saying that, it is important to make the Convention a reality for women with disabilities.



Bangladesh: Ms Lipy spoke about the role gender plays in increasing disability incidence. She mentioned that in Bangladesh, women with disabilities were at a greater risk of abandonment and abuse. To ensure equal opportunities for women with disabilities, she suggested - raising disability awareness in the communities, creating favourable policies and forming alliances of disabled women for advocacy.



## **ACTION PLANS**

The participants were requested to divide themselves into five groups and develop an annual action plan for implementation of relevant articles of UNCRPD. The participants would be reporting progress against this action plan every quarter. Also, an e-group would be set-up for exchange of ideas/experiences among the participants. The group topics were -

1. Rights based Approach – Capacity building of DPOs and Carer Groups
2. Policies and Legislation
3. Education
4. Livelihoods
5. Health and Rehabilitation

Gender and Youth were considered cross cutting issues in each of the topics.  
(Annex 3 – Action Plans)

## **VALEDICTORY**

Two members of the Young Voices group that is being promoted by LCD, Ms. Tara (India) and Ms Sherlyn Lourds (Sri Lanka) shared their experiences with the audience. This was followed by the valedictory function.

As part of the Valedictory function, Ms. Anisha Rajpakshe, Programme Head, Commonwealth Foundation, presented the recommendation points that arose in the 3-day conference. The Honourable Minister of Transport for Karnataka state, Mr. Muniyappa, who was invited to the valedictory function, applauded the efforts of Commonwealth Foundation and Leonard Cheshire Disability in reaching out to persons with disabilities. He said that the Government of India is working hard to reduce disability incidence and to mainstream persons with disabilities. He also mentioned that in India, there were many programmes on disability run by the government and requested the Commonwealth Foundation to give him a list of the recommendations, so they could be incorporated into the government activities. He further promised to help present these recommendations to the Prime Minister of India for further action.



## ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>SNO</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>E-MAIL</b>
1.	Dr. Mark Collins	Director Commonwealth Foundation, UK	
2.	Tanya Barron	Director Leonard Cheshire Disability, UK	
3.	Anisha Rajapakse	Programme Head Commonwealth Foundation, UK	a.rajapakse@commonwealth.int
4.	K.R.Rajendra	Regional Representative Leonard Cheshire Disability, South Asia -India	rajendra@lcdsouthasia.org
5.	Dr. Maya Thomas	Disability & Development Consultant, India	thomasmaya@hotmail.com
6.	Pn Khatijah Sulieaman	President, Selangor Cheshire Home, Malaysia	selangor_cheshire@hotmail.com
7.	Cyril Siriwarddhene	Director – Motivation Sri Lanka	cyrils@dialogsl.net, dojf@sltnet.lk
8.	Premalal Ratnaweera	Director Planning, Ministry of Social Services, Sri Lanka	ratnaweeralal@yahoo.com
9.	Datin Ruhani Ibrahim	Faculty of Science & Allied Health, Malaysia	ruhaniiot@yahoo.com
10.	Rajesh Metha	HR Learning Head IBM global Services India Pvt. Ltd, India	rajeshmehta@in.ibm.com
11.	Malai Hj Abdullah Othman	Founder & President, Society of Management of Autism related issues Malaysia	bjak_smarter@hotmail.com
12.	En. Mad Kassim	Assistant Director, Ministry of Education, Malaysia	kassimmalek@jpk.moe.gov.my
13.	Anupriya Chaddha	Consultant, Ministry of Human Resource, India	Anupriya82@yahoo.co.in
14.	Mehbub Kabir	Ex. Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability, Bangladesh	mahbub.lcdbangla@gmail.com
15.	Jeevan.K.	Programme Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability Sri Lanka	pm@lcilanka.org
16.	Aishath Looba	Assistant Director, Care Development Centre Maldives	looba@caresociety.org.mv
17.	Babar Shezad	Programme Manager Disability Resource Centre Pakistan	babardrc@gmail.com
18.	Shivaram	Programme Head,	s.s.deshpande@lcdsouthasia.org

	Deshpande	Leonard Cheshire Disability India	
19.	Rabiul	Director, Centre for Services and Information on Disability, Bangladesh	csid@bdonline.com
20.	Dr. Gunarathana	Senior Vice President, Sri Lanka Council for the Blind	slcblind@sltnet.lk
21.	Victor.J.C	Programme Head, Action Aid, India	vjc1970@hotmail.com
22.	Ali Zakky	Advocacy & Campaigns Manager Sri Lanka	ulazakky@gmail.com
23.	Md. Mahbubul Ashraf	Secretary Association for the welfare of the disabled, Bangladesh	awdpbd@gmail.com
24.	Thanuja Navaratne	Advocacy Consultant, Sri Lanka	thanuja.navaratne@gmail.com
25.	Nazmul Bari	Director, Centre for Disability and Development Bangladesh	ccd@bangla.net
26.	Gopal Mitra	International Young Voices Co-ordinator, UK	gopalmitra@lcdisability.org
27.	Rehana Waqar	Producer Radio Pakistan	hoslaybulandapnay@gmail.com
28.	Mohammad Waqar	Pakistan	hoslaybulandapnay@gmail.com
29.	Kuhu Das	Director Association for Women with Disabilities, India	kuhudas@awwdindia.org
30.	Lipi	Training Co-ordinator Centre for Disability and Development, Bangladesh	cdd@bangla.net
31.	Florence Malinga	Advisor Education Commonwealth Secretariat UK	f.malinga@commonwealth.int
32.	Murali	India	murali_ability@rediffmail.com
33.	Meena Karimi	India	meenakarimi@gmail.com

## ANNEX 2 – CONFERENCE AGENDA

### 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008 - Day 1: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Day 1	SESSIONS
9:00 – 11:00	<p><b>Registration, Inaugural and opening remarks</b></p> <p><b>Welcome Address:</b> Dr. Mark Collins, Director - Commonwealth Foundation Tanya Barron, International Director - Leonard Cheshire Disability</p> <p><b>Introduction to the Regional Conference</b> K.R.Rajendra, Regional Representative – Leonard Cheshire Disability, South Asia</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Tea Break & Press Briefing (by invitation only)
11:30 - 12:00	<p><b>Disability - Global and Regional Scenario</b> Speaker: K.R Rajendra, Regional Representative, South Asia LCD</p>
12:00 – 12:15	Discussion
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch
13:15 - 13:45	<p><b>Introduction to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)</b> Speaker: Victor.John.Cordeiro, Programme Head, Action Aid, India</p>
13:45 – 14:00	Discussion
14:45 – 15:15	<p><b>UNCRPD: Ratification to Implementation – Challenges and Progress to Date</b> Speaker: Dr Maya Thomas, Disability and Development Consultant</p>
15:15 – 15:45	Discussion and Tea break
15:45 – 16:45	<p><b>UNCRPD: Ratification and Implementation - Role of Civil Society</b> Speakers: Perspectives from Pakistan: Atif Sheikh, President Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, Pakistan (to be presented by Babar Shezad) Perspectives from Malaysia: Pn Khatijah Sulieman, President, Selangor Cheshire Home, Malaysia Perspectives from: Sri Lanka: Cyril Siriwarddhene, Director - Motivation, Sri Lanka</p>
16:45 – 17:15	Discussion

## 7<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Day – 2: Livelihoods & Education

Day 2	SESSIONS
09:30 – 10:30	<p><b>Disability and Livelihoods in Commonwealth Asia - The Policy Environment</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Bangladesh: Khandaker Jahurul Alam, Chairman- Asia Pacific Disability Forum (to be presented by Mahbub Kabir)</p> <p>Sri Lanka: Premalal Ratnaweera, Director – Planning, Ministry of Social Services</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Discussion and Tea Break
11:00 – 12:30	<p><b>Livelihoods: Best Practices from the Region</b></p> <p>Speakers</p> <p>Malaysia: Datin Ruhani Ibrahim, Faculty of Science &amp; Allied Health, Malaysia</p> <p>India: Rajesh Mehta, HR Learning Head, IBM Global Services India Private Limited</p> <p>Brunei: Malai Hj Abdullah Othman, Founder and President, Society for the Management of Autism Related Issues – in Training, Education and Resources</p>
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	<p><b>Disability and Education – The Policy Environment</b></p> <p>Speakers</p> <p>Malaysia: MD. Kassim Bin Malek, Assistant Director, Ministry of Education Malaysia</p> <p>India: Anupriya Chaddha, Consultant, Ministry of Human Resource Development (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan)</p> <p>Pakistan: Khalid Nayeem, Directorate General of Special Education, Ministry of Social Services and Special Education (to be presented by Mohammed Waqar Azeem , Programme Assistant, Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Ministry of Culture, Islamabad)</p>
15:00 -15:30	Discussion and Tea Break
15:30 -16:30	<p><b>Education for All – The Case for Children with Disabilities: Lessons from the Region</b></p> <p>Speakers</p> <p>Bangladesh: Mahbub Kabir, Director Leonard Cheshire Disability Development Bangladesh</p> <p>Sri Lanka: Jeevan.K. Programme Manager Leonard Cheshire Disability Resource Centre</p>
16:30 – 17:00	Discussion

## 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Day – 3: Health and Rehabilitation

09:00 – 11:00	<p><b>Enabling Access to Health and Rehabilitation Services – the Current Context</b> Speakers Maldives: Aishath Looba, Assistant Director, Care Development Centre Pakistan: Babar Shezad, Programme Manager, Disability Resource Centre</p> <p><b>Innovative Solutions in creating access to affordable health and rehabilitation services in Asia</b> Speakers Sri Lanka: Dr.R.M.H.G.Gunarathna, Senior Vice President, Sri Lanka Council for the Blind</p>
11:00 - 11:30	Discussion and Tea Break
11.30 – 12.30	<p>Conti: Bangladesh: Rabiul Hassan, Director, Centre for Services and Information on Disability</p> <p><b>Role of Self Help Groups and DPOs in reducing poverty</b> Speakers India: Victor J.C. Programme Head, Action Aid India Bangladesh: MD Mahbulul Ashraf, Secretary, Association for the Welfare of the Disabled (AWDP)</p> <p><b>Innovative practices in creating access to Education of children with disabilities</b> Speakers Sri Lanka: Thanuja Navarathna, Advocacy Advisor – Save the Children, Sri Lanka.</p>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Drawing the Action Plan</b>
14:30 - 15:30	<p>Conti Bangladesh: Nazmul Bari, Director, Centre for Disability in Development, Initiative in Rajshahi Division of Bangladesh <b>Disability &amp; Education – The Role of the Commonwealth</b> - Florence Malinga, Advisor (Education) - Commonwealth Secretariat</p>
15:30 – 16:30	Tea Break & Discussions
16:30 – 16:45	<p><b>Disability and Gender – Disabled Women Speak Out!</b> Speakers Pakistan: Rehana Waqar, Producer Radio Pakistan India: Kuhu Das, Director, Association for Women with Disabilities, Kolkata Bangladesh: Anika Rahman Lipy- Co-ordinator Training, Centre for Disability and Development</p>
17:00 – 18:00	<p><b>Valedictory Function</b> Address by: Shri.K.H.Muniyappa, Ministry of State for shipping, Road Transport &amp; Highways, Government of India</p>

### ANNEX 3 – ACTION PLANS

Group: Rights Based Approach – Capacity Building of DPOs/ Carer Groups (Articles 3, 6)

Action/ Result to be achieved	By when? (time line)	Who will be involved?
Nodal person/s/ organisation identified in each country for the Dissemination/ Documentation of UNCRPD	3 Months	India - Murali SL - Zakky BGD – Ashraf
List of active DPO/ Carer Groups in the District/ State/ Division/ Province available	6 months	India - Murali SL - Zakky BGD – Ashraf
Simple Summary, user-friendly, appropriate form of the UNCRPD available in local languages with the DPO/ Carer Groups and other stake holders - keeping in mind the various needs such as rural, illiterate, children etc available	12months	India - Murali SL - Zakky BGD – Ashraf In collaboration with different NGOs/ INGOs in the country/ Alliances/ Networks
*Using/ compiling culturally relevant materials e.g. posters, street plays, wall-writings, illustrated materials to disseminate info on UNCRPD provisions	12 months	India - Murali SL - Zakky BGD – Ashraf
South Asia Network in place to share and disseminate progress on UNCRPD	On going	LCD/ CW Foundation/ National level Representatives
*Capacity building of Key stake-holders (DPO/ Carer Groups, disabled women’s groups,) and awareness of UNCRPD (Organising workshops/ conferences with)	On going	India - Murali SL - Zakky BGD – Ashraf

Group: Livelihoods (Article 27 – Work and Employment)

Action/ Result to be achieved	By when?	Who will be involved?
Organise a forum and workshop with other NGOs and DPOs to formulate strategy for advocating Article 27	3 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor
Organise a meeting with Public and private sectors reg. Article 27	5months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor
Publish and disseminate document on “Best Practices in employment of persons with disabilities”	6 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor
Minimum of 50 (10 Brunei) big companies to have “Code of Practice on Disability” as their policy document.	6 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor

Memorandum to be issued by SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor to relevant Ministry to ensure PWD have access to all categories of job in Public and Private sectors.	12 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor
Disabled persons are aware of UNCRPD and their employment rights (atleast 1 workshop)	12 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor
Situational analysis (based on secondary data) on employment status of disabled persons in a country conducted	12 months	SMARTER Brunei, LCD India, LCD Selangor

Group: Education (Article 24)

Action/ Result to be achieved	By when? ( time line)	Who will be involved?
CWD are studying in mainstream schools (500 LCD, 300 CDD)  5% increase in Malaysia	December 2009	LCD and CDD  Ministry of Education, Malaysia
CWD attending inclusive education identified. Current IE programme evaluated	December 2009  December 2009	Care Society, Maldives
Teachers trained in handling CWD (200 LCD, 80 CDD, 200 Malaysia, 20 Maldives)	Dec 2009	LCD CDD, Bangladesh Care Society, Maldives, MoE, Malaysia
Training module for the teachers for teaching Braille mathematics developed	March 2009	CDD, Bangladesh
Education Officials sensitised On IE(LCD 150, CDD 60)	Dec 09	CDD, Bangladesh LCD
Academic institutions (Teachers / Students) Sensitised  (LCD 5000, CDD 2000, Care Society Maldives 200)	December 2009	LCD CDD, Bangladesh Care Society, Maldives
Disability friends clubs promoted in academic institutions (CDD 10)	December 2009	CDD, Bangladesh
Secondary data on education status of disabled children compiled	December 2009	LCD India, CDD Bangladesh, MoE Malaysia, Care Society Maldives
Braille printing facility, production of	December 2009	CDD, Bangladesh



Braille slate set up for facilitating education of blind children		
Sign language manual developed for teachers to teach hearing impaired Students	Dec 2009	CDD, Bangladesh
Review workshop on education policy held	Dec 2009	CDD, Bangladesh

\*CwD - children with disabilities

Group: Policy and Legislation

Key Problem Area	Present Status	Action/ Result to be achieved	By when? ( time line)
Ratification of the convention & optional protocol	Bangladesh – done India – done excluding optional protocol Sri Lanka – Not yet	At least one workshop held for government/legislative members on UNCRPD and Optional Protocol  Atleast one campaign held (letter, signature, human chain etc.) to pressurise the government to speedily ratify UNCRPD and OP	December 2009
Amendment of existing Law and formulation of New Law, if needed	Bangladesh – already started the process of amending existing Laws and NGOs have proposed a draft law in light with CRPD	Inconsistencies between provisions in national legislation and UNCRPD identified and disseminated.	December 2009
People are not aware of the Convention	Same in all countries	Establish a Media Forum (Sri Lanka)  Involve Media/ Establishing media relationships, Continuous dialogue, writing (de-mystify) on Convention  A email group/forum established to create awareness on UNCRPD among disabled persons	Ongoing
Legal and Administrative barriers are there	Same in all countries	Start and process to propose an amendment of existing affairs of the Ministries and ensure inclusion of disability issues in the same (Bangladesh)	Ongoing

Group: Health and Rehabilitation (Article 26)

Action/Result to be achieved	By when? (time line)	Who will be involved?
A national resource forum established which has all information on health and rehab services available to disabled persons in the country (aids, appliances, government entitlements, capacity building, etc)	Dec 2009	India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka
Awareness workshop (atleast one) held for government officials/professionals on provision of services (certificates, identity cards, pensions, scholarships) to disabled persons, UNCRPD	Dec 2009	India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka
Disseminate information about UNCRPD to family members, community etc.	Dec 2009	India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka
A network established for professionals (doctors, therapists, educators) to ensure increased human resources for rehabilitation of disabled persons.	December 2009	India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka