



## **First Global Forum on Disability: Voice of Our Own**

Among the world's 1 billion people with disabilities, 800 million live in the Global South. The World Bank reports that people with disabilities comprise 20 percent of the world's poorest of the poor, in fact majority of them are in the developing countries that have been experiencing a higher risk of living in poverty, deprivation and neglect.

At the global level, unfortunately the voice of disabled people from Global South has not found sufficient resonance in the policy making and decision making processes.

This must be changed if we and the whole international community are committed towards ensuring an inclusive development agenda.

Disability is both human rights and development issue.

The world today is at a critical juncture. There has already been a lot of discussion within the UN for a post-2015 development agenda. Civil society organizations and DPOs from the South do have much to contribute to the ongoing processes leading up to 2015 and beyond.

Disabled People's International (DPI), the world's first cross-disability global disabled people's organisation, feels obligated to make a joint effort along with our friends and partners to achieve this goal starting with an initiative of organizing a Global Forum on Disability. DPI is uniquely positioned to anchor this event as we have an unparalleled reach in the grassroots disability community – in over 140 countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Arab, CIS, Europe, Latin America, North America & Caribbean.

As such DPI, together with World Disability Union (WDU), the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communications Technologies (G3ict), and the Global Alliance on Accessible Technology and Environments (GAATES), proposes to organize the first Global Forum on Disability Voice of our Own on 9th June 2014, in conjunction with the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of States Parties. In collaboration with Governments, United Nations system and national and international DPOs, the Forum will focus its discussion on strategic and practical ways and means to address the key challenges faced in implementation of the CRPD and share the voices and good practices in eliminating poverty, creating employment and decent work, promotion of accessibility including through appropriate technologies such as ICTs. Aspiration, experience and solutions from the South and international cooperation in the context of inclusive and sustainable development will be the highlights.

We welcome all DPOs and relevant CSOs to join our concerted effort to make this Forum a success.

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