



Academy for Educational Development, Inc.  
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009-1202



Academy for Educational Development, Inc.  
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009-1202

**Children with Disabilities:  
The World's Promise**

**A Global Workshop on  
Children with Disabilities**

**May 1996**

## Partnerships Across Systems for Children with Disabilities

*To design and plan this workshop, and to ensure the sustainability of its outcomes, the Academy for Educational Development (AED) has entered into a partnership with a number of representative organizations who formed the Planning Committee.*

### Planning Committee for the Global Workshop on Children with Disabilities in Developing Countries:

#### Sponsors:

- ◆ *United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services*
- ◆ *United Nations Children's Fund*
- ◆ *United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development*
- ◆ *Danish International Development Assistance*
- ◆ *Dole Foundation for the Employment of People with Disabilities*
- ◆ *Academy for Educational Development*

#### Collaborators:

- ◆ *African Development Foundation*
- ◆ *Confederación Mexicana de Organizaciones en Favor de La Persona con Discapacidad Intelectual*
- ◆ *Disabled Peoples' International*
- ◆ *The George Washington University*
- ◆ *Rehabilitation International*
- ◆ *United States Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau*
- ◆ *The World Bank*
- ◆ *World Institute on Disability*

## Table of Contents

I.	<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	1
II.	<b>A Discussion Paper</b> .....	2
	A. <b>Children with Disabilities in the Developing World: A Lot to Learn</b> .....	2
	B. <b>The World's Promise</b> .....	3
	C. <b>Services to Children with Disabilities: What We Know</b> .....	5
	D. <b>The Need for Coordination and Action: Establishing Partnerships Across Systems</b> .....	7
III.	<b>To Begin the Dialogue: A Global Workshop on Children with Disabilities in Developing Countries</b> .....	11
	A. <b>The Purpose of the Workshop</b> .....	11
	B. <b>The Role of the Academy for Educational Development</b> .....	12
	C. <b>Partnership to Plan and Design the Workshop, and to Ensure the Sustainability of Workshop Outcomes</b> .....	12
	D. <b>Workshop Participants and Steering Committee</b> .....	13
	E. <b>A Working Blueprint for the Workshop</b> .....	13

## I. Executive Summary

Children with disabilities remain perhaps the largest and yet most invisible and vulnerable segment of the world's "at risk" children. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that 140 million children with disabilities live in developing nations. "Their needs can be, and often are, easily forgotten, especially in poor countries," concedes a United Nations report.<sup>1</sup>

Before children with disabilities can participate in education and contribute to their societies, they must first overcome barriers that prevent them from participating fully in life: their near invisibility; physical or economic environments that cause and exacerbate their conditions; denied or limited access to society's institutions and activities; and attitudinal and cultural misconceptions about their ability to participate in and contribute to society.

To date, no comprehensive research exists on the actual size of this population, the prevalence of childhood disability by country and/or type, or the actual barriers that limit or deny their participation in society. In addition, no studies have been conducted to determine the extent or effectiveness of current interventions.

The agencies and member states of the United Nations have agreed that children with disabilities should have equal access to educational systems (World Conference on Education for All), and have also issued guidelines on the equalization of opportunities for all persons with disabilities (World Programme of Action for People with Disabilities). Within these documents are recommendations for integrating children with disabilities into educational, rehabilitation, and health systems; for increasing awareness and accessibility; and for addressing the needs of families. **Translating these words into comprehensive actions, however, has yet to occur.**

A number of disability and international organizations—UNICEF and Rehabilitation International, for example—have focused on children and adults with disabilities in the developing world. Yet it is our belief that significant change and meaningful action will occur only when a cross-section of agencies and individuals from the disability and international development communities agrees to establish "**partnerships across systems**" to work **together** to overcome the multiple barriers that limit or deny the participation of children with disabilities in developing nations.

Toward this end, the Academy for Educational Development proposes to convene a global workshop on children with disabilities. The purposes of the workshop are: (1) to

---

<sup>1</sup> World Conference on Education for All. (March 1990). Education for All. Purpose and Content. Jomtien, Thailand, p. 50.

serve as a catalyst for establishing collaborative partnerships across systems on behalf of children with disabilities in developing nations; (2) to identify sustainable activities that can be undertaken by and through these partnerships; (3) to identify the usefulness and components of an accessible knowledge base; and (4) to serve as a catalyst in efforts to identify and mobilize resources to fund these activities.

## **II. A Discussion Paper on Children with Disabilities in Developing Countries, and the Proposed Global Workshop**

### **A. Children with Disabilities in the Developing World: A Lot to Learn**

Little is known about the size of the global population of children with disabilities in the developing world, or of the prevalence of specific types of disabling conditions. Demographic studies funded by United Nation agencies or bilateral donors rarely focus on these children, who are labeled as “easily forgotten” in a UN report. Anecdotal reports from development specialists, research fellows, and others living or working in developing nations suggest that millions of children with disabilities are victims of abuse, neglect, and abandonment; that the vast majority of children with disabilities are isolated from their families and/or communities and denied access to basic educational and health services; and that girls with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse.

The best guess of UNICEF is that there are 140 million children with disabilities living in the developing world citation. The UN also believes that the incidence of disability has a strong link to poverty. In rural areas of the developing world, the UN estimates that as many as 10 to 20 % of the population may have a disability: a rate that would affect between 25 and 50 % of the entire rural population.

In addition, little is known about the degree to which children with disabilities in developing nations participate in everyday life. UNICEF estimates that only four percent receive necessary rehabilitation services, and only one percent receive education services. A 1991 World Bank study on education acknowledges that children with disabilities “remain on the fringe of the educational system. Although the extent of their participation in education in developing countries has rarely been studied.”<sup>2</sup>

The major barrier facing children with disabilities in developing nations is their invisibility: an invisibility that may lead to abandonment and death, abuse and neglect, and the misconception that children and adults with disabilities cannot make a valuable contribution to their societies. Policymakers from developing nations could strive to overcome ingrained cultural perspectives and attitudes that contribute to the isolation of

---

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. (1991). Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries. Washington, DC, p. 154.

people with disabilities, and the policies and programs that are based on these attitudes. Likewise, policymakers at international donor and service organizations could work to eliminate misconceptions as to the causes of disability. Instead, policymakers could concentrate efforts to focus on the capabilities of children and adults with disabilities and maximize their potential for contributing to the economic, social, and cultural viability of their communities.

Steps can be taken to overcome these barriers. The first step is to acknowledge these children with disabilities and make them visible. International agencies should conduct and support studies to determine the precise status and number of children with disabilities, as well as identifying what are the exact barriers to their participation in society. Based on the information from such studies donors and service organizations can commit resources to identify and remove the barriers which jeopardize the survival and independence of these children.

The second step is to begin to remove the barriers that limit the productivity of children with disabilities in developing countries, by establishing partnerships across systems. A wide variety of individuals and organizations need to become partners, including governments, donors, international service organizations, and advocacy and professional organizations for children with disabilities and their families.

## **B. The World's Promise**

Over the last few decades, the agencies and member states of the United Nations have taken steps to call for an end to discrimination against children and adults with disabilities and to encourage equal opportunities for them. In 1971, the UN General Assembly approved a declaration of rights of mentally retarded persons, followed in 1975 by a declaration of rights of disabled persons, and in 1981 by the Year of the Disabled.

As part of the UN Decade of Disabled Persons (1982-1993), the UN General Assembly agreed in 1982 to a *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*, identifying a comprehensive set of actions to be taken in order to integrate children, youth, and adults with disabilities into the mainstream of society. In 1989, the General Assembly highlighted the needs of children with disabilities in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, recognizing that these children require and have the right to receive special care, education, and training.

Building upon these resolutions, in 1993 the UN approved a broad range of "standard rules" to guide the actions of member nations and donor agencies alike regarding the "Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities." For children with disabilities, these guidelines call on member states to "recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities ... in integrated settings," and further encourage the provision of support services, the involvement of parent and



self-advocacy groups, and the establishment of policy statements, curriculum guidelines, and teacher training initiatives.<sup>3</sup> Most recently, at the Fourth World Conference for Women, the UN platform called for ensuring “access to appropriate education and skills training to girl children with disabilities for their full participation in life.”<sup>4</sup>

As a direct result of the decade-long focus on disability in general, the education of children with disabilities became a brief topic of discussion in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, when the executive heads of UNICEF, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank convened the World Conference on Education for All. At this conference, representatives of 155 governments agreed by acclamation to resolve that “basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults.” Included in their *World Declaration on Education for All* was the recommendation that nations “provide equal access to education to every category of disabled persons.”<sup>5</sup> In 1994, UNESCO led a global effort to apply the principles of “education for all” to children with disabilities, by convening an international conference on special education in Salamanca, Spain.

The great success of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All is that it has resulted in a reordering of priorities of donor organizations and recipient nations alike toward the expenditure of more resources for basic and primary education. At best, however, children with disabilities in developing countries have received only marginal benefits from this refocusing of attention and resources. According to anecdotal information referred to in a World Bank report on children with disabilities in Asia, advances for children with disabilities have occurred generally in those developing nations that can “afford” to focus on at-risk populations, such as in urban areas of a few Asian nations where universal primary education rates of participation already near 100%. A review of the state of these services suggests that the small handful of donor and service organizations active in this area are having only a limited affect on children with disabilities and on overall trends in donor aid.

---

<sup>3</sup> United Nations. (1993). The Standard Rules on the Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Rule 6). New York, pp. 23-24.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations. (Working document). Platform for Action (Section L, subsection 280(c)). New York, p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, and World Bank. (1990). World Declaration on Education for All (Article 3, subsection 5). New York, p. 5.

### **C. - Services to Children with Disabilities: What We Know**

Historically, church-related organizations were among the first to work with children with disabilities in the developing world. Much of this early work involved the construction and operation of orphanages and segregated schools for children with disabilities, particularly children who were blind or deaf. Many of these institutions, established in the early years of this century, have been absorbed by state educational or welfare agencies. However, many observers believe that the resources spent today to keep these facilities open would be better spent to enable children to live and participate in their communities or to assist families in caring for their children at home.

It was not until the 1980s, during the global Decade of Disabled Persons, that there were activities in many developing nations designed to increase the social integration of people with disabilities. In direct response to the Decade, and to facilitate participation in its events, nearly all developing nations established a national committee on disability to coordinate policy and communicate with global organizations.

In terms of service delivery, the 1980s also witnessed a notable increase in activities designed, at least in part, to focus on community-based approaches to serve people with disabilities. Many organizations, including the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and some bilateral donors (particularly from Scandinavia), have established solid track records in providing funds and technical assistance for the establishment of community-based rehabilitation (CBR) centers serving both children and adults. Among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), groups such as Rehabilitation International have led education and advocacy campaigns to build support for CBR.

Organizations of people with disabilities—for example, the World Institute on Disability, Mobility International, and Disabled Peoples' International—have also worked to increase global awareness and action during this decade, calling for the enactment of legislation in nations throughout the world to protect the human rights of people with disabilities, and for increased access to government buildings and programs. These activities, while in their infancy, have resulted in a greater awareness of the needs of people with disabilities in the developing world, with particular benefit to the population of adults with physical disabilities.

Actions and program resources for children with disabilities and their families, however, continue to lag behind. What little is known of services to children with disabilities must be culled from the scant research on the subject (including one World Bank report on children with disabilities in nine Asian nations), and from discussions with program officers at the handful of international agencies that do focus on this population.

Among multilateral agencies, UNICEF has the most coherent and comprehensive focus on children with disabilities. Many of UNICEF's field offices support community-based rehabilitation, early childhood services, and special and regular education programs that have a strong focus on children with disabilities. In addition, from its headquarters in New York, UNICEF is unique among donor organizations in that it has the capacity to provide technical assistance and guidance to its field offices and to other UN agencies and NGOs on issues affecting children with disabilities. The World Health Organization also has a global focus on children with disabilities — particularly those with physical disabilities — through its initiatives in community-based rehabilitation. Staff at UNESCO, another multilateral agency with a focus on children with disabilities, have been very active in developing and disseminating special education policies and practices, and in efforts to ensure that children with disabilities are a part of global educational initiatives, such as the conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990.

At nearly all other international development agencies, however, the issue of disability is almost always overlooked. Only one study on children with disabilities (in Asia) has been conducted by the World Bank, and that did not lead to any new funding initiatives. When disability issues are addressed at the World Bank, they are considered on an ad hoc basis by country desk officers responsible for education and/or health, who frequently have little contact with recognized experts in the field. This scattershot approach to service delivery was chronicled by the US General Accounting Office in a 1991 review of interventions by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and other US government organizations in support of children and adults with disabilities. In general, US Government Accounting Office (GAO) found that international development agencies made little, if any, effort to encourage cross-sectoral solutions to the multifaceted problems facing children or adults with disabilities.<sup>6</sup>

A review of annual reports on donor aid in five selected nations<sup>7</sup> suggests that some bilateral donors, notably from Scandinavia, have made an effort to provide overseas development assistance to benefit children with disabilities. These interventions, however, amount to only a handful of individual projects in any given country, with annual disbursements in the tens of thousands of US dollars. Such amounts are certainly not adequate to enable developing nations to significantly improve the lives of these children.

---

<sup>6</sup>Assistance to Disabled Persons in Developing Countries. GAO/NSIAD-91-82, 1991.

<sup>7</sup>A review of the Development Cooperation Reports (DCR) for China, Vietnam, India, Kenya and the Ukraine. DCRs are meant to provide a snapshot of overseas development assistance provided by all multilateral, bilateral, and NGO donors, and are compiled by field staff of the UNDP.

With the absence of any significant support from the donor community, it is not surprising that the NGO community has yet to become involved in this area of service delivery. The predominant service organizations for children (e.g. Save the Children and CARE) focus on basic health and nutrition issues, and on children at risk due to war, disaster, or their status as refugees. When these groups do focus on disability, their activities have focused primarily on children and adults who are victims of land mines.

Within the NGO community, church-related groups continue to provide what leadership does exist, while other NGOs such as Helen Keller International or the Christian Blind Mission are primarily involved in prevention programs. Those that are involved in service delivery (e.g. the Christian Children's Fund and certain regional offices of CARITAS) are under severe financial limitations and can generally only hope to develop a very small number of approaches to integrate children with disabilities into health or educational settings. When taken together, the actions and interventions of all types of donor and service organizations fall far short of the need.

Children with disabilities remain invisible, or are thought to be someone else's problem. This may in fact be the reason for the current lack of any identifiable structure of service delivery for these children. There are no databases available to obtain information about children with disabilities in the developing world; no research to identify best practices; no donors to replicate best practices; and, most significantly, no dialogue taking place across disciplines and programmatic jurisdictions to discuss who exactly is responsible for these children. The best of these interventions exists in a near vacuum, apart from the mainstream activities of the international development community.

**D. The Need for Coordination and Action:  
Establishing Partnerships Across Systems**

Any effort to focus attention and mobilize global resources to establish integrated, community-based opportunities for children with disabilities will require the involvement and commitment of organizations and individuals from varied disciplines. Included in this mobilization must be individuals and organizations from both developing and developed nations, including representatives of children with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who serve them; multilateral and bilateral donor organizations; international service organizations focusing on children and/or education; educators, researchers, and information providers; and government officials and policymakers.

These efforts will be successful, however, only if these individuals and organizations establish "**partnerships across systems.**" They must not only make a commitment to work on behalf of children with disabilities, but to work **together** on behalf of children with disabilities.

To demonstrate the importance of establishing these “partnerships across systems,” the Academy has committed to working in full partnership with a small number of core organizations in the planning and implementation of this workshop.

These organizations have experience in conducting public awareness and advocacy activities in developing nations for children and adults with disabilities (WID, DPI); experience conducting research on the status of children with disabilities, and maintaining and disseminating information to parent and professional organizations (UNICEF, AED); experience in developing model service delivery programs in developing nations for children and/or adults with disabilities (Danish International Development Assistance [DANIDA], UNICEF, WID); and experience designing and managing programs in developing nations in basic education and health for children at risk, including children with disabilities (UNICEF, DANIDA, AED).

### **Partnerships for Education and Advocacy**

Public education and advocacy campaigns are needed to change cultural and attitudinal misconceptions that neglect, isolate, and even harm children with disabilities. These campaigns should pave the way for new approaches to include children with disabilities in health, educational, and social settings. In essence they must be geared toward convincing developing nations and global organizations of the moral, political, and economic imperatives of such interventions.

Policymakers in developing nations, and at donor and service organizations, need to be aware that funds dedicated to the education and training of a child with a disability can lead to a lifetime of productivity. By the same measure, investment in education and training can eliminate a lifetime of dependency and the accompanying social and financial costs.

***Disabled Peoples' International:** DPI is the foremost global disability advocacy organization comprised of and managed by people with disabilities. It has affiliate organizations in 119 nations, with strong representation from developing nations among its elected leadership.*

Therefore, indigenous programs and laws for children with disabilities, along with programs and policies established by the international donor and service communities to help them, need to begin with the premise that the full inclusion in society of children with disabilities is morally and economically defensible.

*World Institute on Disability: WID, a leading global agency devoted solely to expanding rights and opportunities of people with disabilities, has proven experience in providing training in developing nations on issues of public awareness and advocacy.*

To accomplish this, disability advocates in the developed world must establish collaborative partnerships with their counterparts in developing nations to work with governments, donor and service organizations, and international educational exchange organizations to allow, encourage, and support the formation of numerous indigenous NGOs to advocate for the rights

and opportunities of children with disabilities. They must mobilize resources to conduct public education campaigns about the causes of disability and the capabilities of people with disabilities, and, ultimately, to convince governments to work with international organizations to expand and create new programs for children with disabilities.

Included in these indigenous organizations should be groups established to meet the needs and address the concerns of parents and families of children with disabilities; of persons with disabilities themselves; of teachers of children with disabilities; and of health care providers and other service delivery experts and professionals.

### **Partnerships for Research**

Basic research is needed. Studies need to be conducted to learn more about the size of the population of children with disabilities; their survival rate; the conditions under which they live; the attitudes of their families and communities; the opportunities they have; and the programs or interventions that help to create opportunities. These data are fundamental to enhancing understanding on the scope of the need, to committing commensurate resources to address that need, and to establishing measures to determine the effectiveness of programs and strategies.

Donor and service organizations should commit to support and undertake research to evaluate current field-based initiatives on behalf of children with disabilities and identify best practices in providing access to quality health, educational, and social services for children with disabilities in developing nations. Research is needed to determine the cost-effectiveness of these interventions. To establish standards for, and to implement, these evaluation studies, collaborative partnerships should be established among experts in service delivery for children with disabilities, representatives of donor and service organizations, advocates for children with disabilities, social scientists, and development economists.

Technical assistance is also needed. Donor organizations which fund or conduct demographic studies in developing nations should commit to building a census about children with disabilities. Technical assistance is needed for government agencies to design and implement census-taking surveys. Collaborative partnerships should be

established among relevant government officials, social scientists, demographers, donor agency representatives, and disability experts to design appropriate surveys about the presence and prevalence of disability.

Information and dissemination models are needed. All of this information needs to be organized and disseminated through information and referral clearinghouses. Information needs to be available in hard copy and electronically to advocates, families, professionals, donors, service organizations and others in both the developed and developing world. This will require resources to collect, store, print, and disseminate the data, as well as resources to provide technical assistance and build technical capacity to enable professionals, practitioners and advocates in developing nations to absorb and utilize this information.

**Academy for Educational Development:** *AED has a proven track record in providing current and complete information to parents, families, and professionals working with children with disabilities. AED also has 34 years of expertise in global basic education for children at risk, including children with disabilities.*

### **Partnerships to Develop New and Model Programs**

A successful public education and advocacy campaign is needed to secure commitments from donor and service organizations to expand their focus on children with disabilities and their families in developing nations. This expanded focus should include efforts: (1) to design new policies and programs specifically to provide legal rights and equal opportunities for children with disabilities; and (2) to screen existing interventions in the areas of child survival, health and nutrition services, and basic education to determine how these broadly defined initiatives can be adapted to include a focus on children with disabilities.

Donor and service organizations whose programs focus on child survival, health, and nutrition issues will need to establish collaborative partnerships with experts in the fields of early childhood intervention, medical professionals experienced in disability issues, disability advocates and professionals, and the families of children with disabilities, in order to identify appropriate methods of addressing the survival and basic health needs of children with disabilities in developing nations.

*UNICEF, without question, is the global leader in working with developing nations to expand services for children with disabilities, and in providing critical training in special education and early childhood education to policymakers, school administrators, teachers, and families.*

Donor and service organizations that focus on universal basic education need to establish collaborative partnerships with disability experts, parent and child advocates,

special educators, and program administrators to identify appropriate methods of integrating children with disabilities into primary educational facilities and programs.

International educational exchange organizations will need to establish collaborative partnerships with special educators and disability advocates to identify ways to: (a) support the development of special education and early childhood curricula for use in developing nations; and (b) encourage an awareness of the capacity of people with disabilities through their participation in these programs.

A most critical link in these partnerships is the involvement of disability advocates, families, and professionals from the industrialized world. These individuals and organizations, particularly those from the United States, have yet to become involved collectively to any significant degree in global efforts on behalf of children with disabilities in developing nations. This needs to change. These individuals and organizations must offer their considerable expertise to assist donor and service organizations to develop appropriate programs and policies. Further, they must use their considerable advocacy skills to bring about real and lasting change on behalf of children with disabilities and their families in the developing world.

### **III. To Begin the Dialogue: A Global Workshop on Children with Disabilities in Developing Countries**

#### **A. The Purpose of the Workshop**

To establish these “**partnerships across systems**,” it is first necessary to begin a dialogue among representatives of these systems. Toward this end, the Academy for Educational Development intends to convene a global workshop on children with disabilities in the developing world.

The purposes of the workshop are:

— To serve as a catalyst for establishing collaborative partnerships across systems on behalf of children with disabilities in the developing world.

— To identify sustainable activities that can be undertaken by these partnerships, and to establish an accessible knowledge base, including collecting and disseminating relevant demographic and program data; designing and implementing quantitative and qualitative research; designing and implementing public education and advocacy campaigns; and designing and implementing field-based programming initiatives on behalf of children with disabilities in the developing world.



— To identify and mobilize resources to establish sustainable, integrated, community-based opportunities for children with disabilities in the developing world.

#### **B. The Role of the Academy for Educational Development**

In convening this workshop, the Academy for Educational Development offers its considerable international and domestic experience in the design and implementation of programs to provide equal opportunities to populations at risk, and to provide timely and thorough information to families, communities, and professionals. On domestic disability issues, AED houses several of the most visible and viable technical assistance and dissemination projects funded by the US Department of Education which seek to assist families and professionals to improve outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. Around the world, AED has developed a solid track record in collaborating with a wide variety of donor and service organizations in working to ensure broader access and equitable treatment for girls and women, minorities, indigenous people, children and youth, and people with disabilities.

Serving as convener of a Global Workshop on Children with Disabilities in Developing Countries is a logical extension of AED's long-standing commitment to equal access to quality services for at-risk populations in the United States and worldwide.

#### **C. Partnership to Plan and Design the Workshop, and to Ensure the Sustainability of Workshop Outcomes**

The Workshop will be designed by a core partnership of organizations, consisting of representatives of organizations vital to creating new opportunities for children with disabilities in the developing world. These include disability organizations, global service delivery organizations, and multilateral donors. The core partnership is comprised of the US Department of Education, UNICEF, United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, DANIDA, AED, African Development Foundation, Confederación Mexicana de Organizaciones en Favor de La Persona con Discapacidad Intelectual, Disabled Peoples' International, The George Washington University, Rehabilitation International, US Department of Health and Human Services, The World Bank, and World Institute on Disability.

To ensure that Workshop outcomes are sustainable, and are carried out, the core partners have already agreed that their collaboration will be sustained following the completion of the Workshop. Toward that end, the core partnership will not only meet to plan the Workshop, but will also meet several weeks after its completion to agree upon a plan for implementing set forth by workshop participants.

It is also important that these activities be as inclusive as possible. Therefore, this core partnership will be open to other organizations willing to commit time and energy to mutually-agreed-upon goals and actions on behalf of children with disabilities.

#### **D. Workshop Participants and Steering Committee**

Workshop participants will include individuals from several developing nations who are advocates for children with disabilities and their families or providers of services to them; representatives of US-based organizations of and for children with disabilities and their families; representatives of multilateral, bilateral, and private donor organizations; representatives of global service organizations and NGOs that have a focus on children, health, or education; officials from agencies of the US government with jurisdiction over special education and early childhood education programs; special educators and program administrators; and representatives of global educational exchange programs.

#### **E. A Working Blueprint for the Workshop**

To assist the core partners in their work to design and plan the Workshop, and to guide prospective Workshop donors and participants, the AED task force that conceived and drafted this concept paper has also sketched the following "working blueprint" for the workshop. All of the suggestions provided below are, of course, subject to change.

Time, Place, and Duration: 5-7 February 1997, in Washington, DC.

Number of Participants: Approximately 75 invited participants. It is envisioned that organizations in the disability and international exchange and development communities would be represented by senior officials and staff, and that representatives of organizations from at least three geographically diverse developing nations will be present.

Type of Speakers and Sessions: It is expected that the keynote address would be given by the top-ranking official of an international development or donor agency, and that significant addresses would be given by senior officials from the US government, by US or international disability organizations, by international donor or service organizations, and by representatives of disability organizations and/or policymakers from developing nations. It is expected that break-out sessions would be held to develop suggested plans of action to establish "partnerships across systems" on behalf of children with disabilities in developing nations.

Workshop Outcomes: Important outcomes of the Workshop are expected to include: (a) publishing a document outlining the workshop proceedings; the agreed-upon or presented action steps; suggested interventions to be undertaken by various types of domestic and international organizations; and resources to fund these actions steps, and (b) establishing a mechanism to sustain the partnerships across systems, so that partners can continue to work together on behalf of children with disabilities in developing nations.

---

*This concept paper was prepared by the Academy for Educational Development with the assistance of senior consultant Jerome Mindes to stimulate thought on this issue and to attract sponsors to support convening a workshop to begin building partnerships to realize full participation in global economic and social development by children with disabilities and their families.*

---