

**Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum**

 **c/o World of Inclusion**

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**CDPF Brief Information on Implementation of UNCRPD Questionnaire.**

Will all DPOs supporting the Relaunch of the Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum and/or their delegates please ensure this form is completed and emailed back by 3rd June 2019. Delegates in their introduction of 3 minutes will be asked to summarise on 13th June General Assembly. Return to rlrieser@gmail.com by 3rd June 2019

1. Name of your DPO

People with Disability Australia

2. Name of your country.

Australia

3. Has your country ratified the UNCRPD and when?

Yes, 2008

4. What has your country done to Implement the UNCRPD?

Developed a ten year National Disability Strategy 2010-202o that outlines measures to be taken for CRPD implementation. This strategy is currently being reviewed with a view to the next ten years beyond 2020. Implementation through this Strategy has been patchy, with weak resourcing, accountability and measurement tools.

The most critical reform from this Strategy has been the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which provides individualised planning and funding for people with disability to choose and control their own supports. The NDIS will only benefit about 10% of people with disability following full roll out in 2022.

5. How much is your DP0 involved in implementation with the Government of your country?

PWDA plays a key representative and advocacy role to Government on implementation of the CRPD. We are working closely on the review of the National Disability Strategy and the implementation of the NDIS. We receive support to participate in international activities such as COSP and the CRPD review process.

However there are many issues were we only have tokenistic and ad hoc engagement with Government and / or where we are unable to convince the Government to take action, such as in relation to law reform to remove substitute decision-making regimes, end forced treatments and other medical interventions.

6. Has your DPO been involved in producing a shadow report to go to UNCRPD Committee and How?

PWDA coordinates, on behalf of Disabled People’s Organisations Australia, the production of the Shadow Report. The first review of Australia involved us coordinating a working group of DPOs, disability representative and advocacy organisations to produce the Shadow Report, to undertake domestic advocacy on issues arising from the report, and to send a delegation to the UN to appear before the Committee. Our participation was supported by funding from the Government and pro bono legal support.

The second review of Australia takes place in August 2019, and we are currently facilitating a working group, preparing a Shadow Report, seeking funding for a delegation to appear before the Committee and to prepare other lobbying factsheets and documents. We held a workshop for DPOs, disability representative and advocacy organisations in November 2018 to build knowledge and capacity of shadow reporting processes and to establish the current working group. We also provided a submission to the Committee in 2018 for its consideration of the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for Australia, and appeared before the Committee via videoconference.

PWDA has been involved in other NGO shadow reporting processes for the CRC, CEDAW, ICCPR, ICESCR, CAT, CERD as well as the Universal Periodic Review conducted by the Human Rights Council.

7. What progress has been made on implementing Inclusive Education?

Australia is going backwards in implementing Inclusive Education with more funding being allocated to establish or support ‘special’ schools rather than to genuinely support inclusive education. Inclusive education in mainstream schools can also consist of separate units and activities for children with disability rather than genuinely inclusive education. Some children do not receive the supports they need to fully participate in the classroom and may only be able to attend schooling on a few days per week or for half days.

Bullying of children with disability is also an issue that is frequently reported. The use of restrictive practices on children with disability is also rife and unregulated. This includes behaviour control practices such as separate, caged areas in the playground, locking children in ‘time out’ closets for hours at a time, tying children to seats, chemical restraints etc.

8. What progress has been made on social protection for PWD?

The NDIS is one of the biggest reforms in Australia that will enable eligible people with disability to receive funding to purchase their own disability supports. This reform has been and continues to be supported by people with disability and our representative organisations but we are also advocating for better implementation. There are people with disability, particularly people with intellectual and psychosocial disability that are not faring as well with the NDIS. People over the age of 65 years are not eligible for the NDIS so this also creates inequities for older people with disability.

Australia has a Disability Support Pension (DSP) that is an income support payment for people with disability who are unable to work. The Government has gradually made the eligibility criteria stricter so that many people with disability are removed or not eligible and are forced onto a lower payment with job obligations which is largely entrenching poverty for many people with disability.

9. What progress has been made in implementing employment opportunities for PWD?

There is no National Employment Plan for people with disability despite advocacy for such a plan over many years. The Australian Human Rights Commission has conducted an inquiry and made recommendations into this issue but very few recommendations have been implemented by the Government.

There continues to be a piecemeal approach with a focus on Disability Employment Services that have poor outcomes for people with disability. There is still government support for a sheltered workshop sector for many people with disability especially those with intellectual disability.

Employment rates for people with disability in Australia remain one of the lowest in the OECD countries.

10. What progress has been made on challenging negative attitudes and stigma to PWD?

There are ad hoc campaigns and events aimed at changing attitudes towards people with disability, although many of these are focused on International Day of Persons with Disability. However, they are often not strongly rights based and can still focus on “inspiration porn” activities.

There is no hate crime legislation that protects people with disability.

11. What progress has been made in achieving gender equality for PWD?

Concerted advocacy over many years, particularly by Women With Disabilities Australia has resulted in more attention being paid to gender based violence prevention and response for women with disability.

However, many disability policies and programs are not gender specific and many gender equality policies and programs are not disability focused.

Three of the four DPO Australia organisations female elected representatives with disability.

12. What capacity building does your DPO need? Identify areas.

In the Australian context, there is a need for DPOs, including PWDA to become better at ‘selling’ ourselves and our activities, particularly in relation to peer support activities and capacity building of people with disability and our organisations. This area has gained some attention in recent years through the focus of the NDIS and we need to build these activities to enhance agency and autonomy for people with disability.

Fundraising and corporate partnerships are also another area that is critical so that we are not as reliant on Government funding.

13. If you are the National Umbrella DPO how do you operate democratically with other DPOs?

PWDA is the only national cross disability organisation in Australia with its voting membership being people with disability from all States and Territories in Australia, and State and Territory DPOs from across Australia.

Some impairment specific DPOs are not members of PWDA but many of their individual members are PWDA members. We work as collaboratively as possible on common issues.

PWDA is also a founding member of [Disabled People’s Organisations Australia](http://dpoa.org.au/) (DPO Australia) which is an alliance of DPOs made up of PWDA, Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) and National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA). Our alliance is based on a Memorandum of Understanding agreed by the elected Presidents / Chairs of each of our organisations, regular CEO meetings to drive key collective activities, and a National Council made up of the elected Presidents / Chairs.

14. If you are an impairment specific, particular focus or regional DPO how do you work with Umbrella DPO?

PWDA is a cross disability organisation.

15. If there is no national umbrella DPO. How could one be built?

DPO Australia has been formed since 2015 and consistently looking at engagement with other DPOs.

16. How does your DPO get funded?

90% of our funding is through government agencies at the local, State or national levels. We receive some corporate and donor funding and also generate a small amount of income through various activities.

17. What training capacity does your DPO have?

We have a training program that enables us to generate our own untied income. We are also funded by government to provide some specific purpose funding. We have a Training Manager and a number of sessional trainers with disability.

18. What regular training do you provide for PWD?

We conduct regular peer NDIS Appeals training sessions, human rights training, a range of responding to violence and abuse training sessions and other training for specific purposes.

19. How does your DPO involve young PWD?

We seek funding to conduct specific programs and projects with young people with disability that has allowed us to increase our youth membership. This has meant that we have young people with disability elected to our Board and being involved in our activities. We have a strong focus on youth led activities for our project work, and we have coordinated youth delegations to the UN, including to the COSP.

20. Does your DPO have any experience working in a humanitarian disaster?

PWDA is on the Executive Committee of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium which has a strong advocacy role on disability inclusive development and disability inclusive humanitarian action. PWDA is also on the Executive of the Pacific Disability Forum and we work with our Pacific DPOs in addressing critical issues for people with disability including disaster risk management and climate change. We have been involved in the Asia Pacific region on forums and events looking at disability inclusive disaster risk reduction and management.