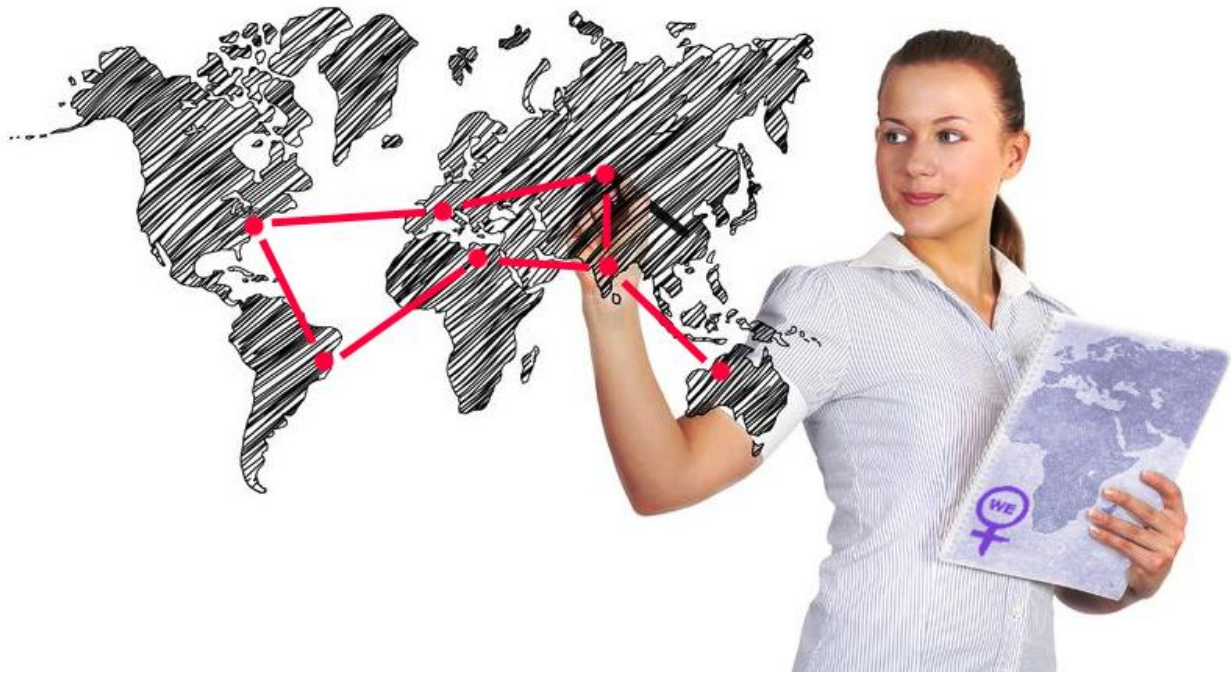


**ENABLING A GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT FOR
WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES:**
[Global Disabled Women's Rights Advocacy Report](#)



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ENABLING A GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES: [Global Disabled Women's Rights Advocacy Report](#)

March 8, 2016

“Women with disabilities are women too!”

Stephanie Ortoleva at UN Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) 2012

Acknowledgements

- Women Enabled International (WEI) thanks many for assistance in planning, executing, and supporting this historic survey and map of the global field of the rights of women and girls with disabilities including:
- WEI greatly thanks all of the hundreds of advocates for women and girls with disabilities who donated their valuable time in responding to the survey and participating in interviews.
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- WEI President, Stephanie Ortoleva, Special Projects Assistant, Meaghan McMahon, Legal Advisor Suzannah Phillips Former Senior Advisor Kimberly Otis, Web woman Amy Pace, Translator Emily Goldman.
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- Advisory Board members Harilyn Rousso and Jolly Acen.
- Ana Maria Sanchez and Anjlee Agarwal



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(Below, photo of a woman in a wheelchair with arms raised toward the sky)



Foreword

In my capacity as Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, it is an honor to make some introductory remarks to this important publication that contributes to increasing the global knowledge about women with disabilities and their contributions to their communities.

Women and girls with disabilities represent more than 500 million people (the population of the European Union) and they face, on a daily basis, violations to their human rights; including, forced sterilization, force abortions, violence and abuse, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services, among many others. However, despite their numbers and the grave human rights violations they experience, women and girls with disabilities remain invisible at all levels, their needs and concerns are not adequately reflected in the advocacy work of the disability community, or the women's rights movement. They are rarely consulted or engaged in public decision making, not to mention their lack of representation as holders of public offices.

For that reason, I see great value in a mapping of organizations working on the rights of women and girls with disabilities. It enables networking between identified groups in different countries and regions, enabling an exchange of experiences and knowledge, fostering the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities and their networks. This mapping exercise is also valuable for international advocacy, as it will provide information on the work of these women and bring visibility to their challenges.

Importantly, this publication will inform my work on gender equality; it will give us opportunities for cooperation and to further understand the pressing challenges these women face on a daily basis. It will allow us to directly connect with these organizations and groups of women and get their opinions on what actions are needed to guarantee that their rights are respected. One can't ever stress enough the relevance of direct participation and consultation of persons with disabilities in all matters affecting them.

Moreover, the publication will contribute to strengthen the national and international movement of women with disabilities; as it will help them to connect and create partnerships: there is an urgent need for collaboration among women advocates and leaders with disabilities from different regions. I am convinced that such processes of cooperation will also serve as catalyzers to empower women with disabilities and to strengthen their organizations, promoting their self -representation. Strong networks and organizations of women with disabilities will also result in stronger leaders that would serve as role models for other women and girls with disabilities.

This report will contribute to the efforts to make sure that policy makers keep in mind this important group of the population when they work to improve the quality of life and the rights of all human beings. My vision for the future is a strong movement of women with disabilities on national, regional and international levels with established collaboration and networking with mainstream women's rights groups. The movement will be able to advocate for their rights both at home and at an international level. In the long run I believe that it will lead to more systemic and inclusive human rights policies for all.

Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Below, photo of Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Catalina Devandas Aguilar".

Executive Summary of Report and Findings

Women Enabled International (WEI) received generous funding from an anonymous donor for a Survey and Mapping Project with a goal to foster a greater understanding of human rights advocates, both from within and outside the women's rights and disability rights movements, on the rights of women and girls with disabilities. Through an online survey launched on August 18, 2015 and interviews conducted in January and February 2016, WEI produces this comprehensive mapping report of the field of advocates for the rights of women and girls with disabilities globally and nationally, released on March 8, 2016, International Women's Day.

This first-ever report and map includes data, analysis and infographics of the leaders, venues, and locations where women's disability rights advocates and organizations are especially active, where the gaps are, and where there are opportunities for collaboration, and helps in achieving greater collective impact.

An overwhelmingly clear finding from the Report is that the growing number of disabled women and their organizations work for the rights of women and girls with disabilities is increasingly passionate, energetic and committed to this urgent effort. Furthermore, these women want to work collaboratively, share a desire to enhance their skills and demand their rights unequivocally. These finds form the basis for the development of enhanced mechanisms for collaboration and significantly increased funding for these organizations and this important work.

The responses to the WEI Mapping Project survey were widespread, with 281 respondents globally. We received 76 responses from North America, 10 responses from Central America, 8 responses from South America, 24 responses from Europe, 17 responses from the Middle East and Northern Africa, 69 responses from Africa, 43 responses from Eastern and Southern Asia, 10 responses from Southeastern Asia, 1 response from Central Asia and 23 responses from Oceania. A clickable map showing responses from each country can be found here:

<http://womenenabled.org/mapping-results.html>

The top three types of organizations that answered the survey were: Disability Rights Organizations or Coalitions, Women and Girls with Disabilities Rights and/or Empowerment Organizations and Non-Governmental Civil Society Organizations working on other human rights issues.

According to our survey responses, 90 organizations that responded identified themselves as being run by women and girls with disabilities. Of these 90 organizations, 82 listed their organization's date of founding. The founding dates for organizations led by women and girls with disabilities fell between 1944 and 2015. The majority of these organizations (57) were founded between 2000 and 2015, indicating that organizations led by women and girls with disabilities are relatively new and that perhaps this growth in the number of women with disabilities lead organizations flowed from the work disabled women did during the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Conference in Beijing, China in 1995, as well as heightened interest in the rights of women with disabilities as a result of the negotiations and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from 2004 to 2008.

A positive sign is that, for the 90 organizations that identified themselves as being led by women and girls with disabilities, 72 of the organizations also indicated that they had staff members. The majority of these organizations (52) had between 1-10 staff members. The range of staff size was between 1 and 300. Although the staff size generally is low, it is a positive sign that disabled women are being paid to work for the rights of women and girls with disabilities.

Approximately half of organizations led by women with disabilities listed their main funding sources as either international agencies, membership dues, The Disability Rights Fund and individual donations.

Government funding was received by only 9 of the 90 organizations women with disabilities led organizations, showing that greater national government support for this work is needed.

Of the 59 respondents who identified themselves as a women and girls with disabilities rights and/or empowerment organization, 36 provided their annual budget in USD.

Women and Girls with Disabilities Rights and/or Empowerment Organization

Average Annual Budget: \$100,850

Median Budget: \$70,000

The budget range for this type of organization was \$500 to \$450,000. We removed two organizations which listed very large budgets because, based on those organization's other survey responses, it seemed inconsistent for them to have such a large budget, e.g., the organization listed a very small staff size but listed a very large budget.

Of the 71 respondents who identified themselves as a disability rights organization or coalition, 33 provided their annual budget in USD. (We removed the two organizations that were service oriented rather than empowerment oriented)

Disability Rights Organization or Coalition Average Annual Budget: \$519,908

Median Annual Budget: \$31,145.87

The budget range for this type of organization was \$1,000 to \$3,500,000.

Of the 16 respondents who identified themselves as a women's rights organization or coalition, 9 provided their annual budget in USD.

Women's Rights Organization or Coalition Average Annual Budget: \$9,709,278

Median Annual Budget: \$2,000,000

The budget range for this type of organization was \$1,000 to \$22 million.

The relatively low budgets of organizations working on the rights of women and girls with disabilities presents a serious barrier to their effectiveness, despite their hard work and passion and thus this funding gap must be addressed.

Organizations indicated very similar concerns as to priority issues for action. The top five issues identified for addressing the needs of women and girls with disabilities were: Preventing and ending gender-based violence, Policy and advocacy, Sexual and reproductive health, education rights and support and access to quality of, health care and caregiving.

One of the most important findings of the survey was that, for the organizations led by women and girls with disabilities, 70 respondents of the 90 total or 78% indicated that yes collaboration is important. For the women's rights organizations or coalitions, 10 respondents of the 16 total or 62% indicated that yes collaboration is important.

Introduction

Description of Women Enabled International (WEI):

[Women Enabled International \(WEI\)](#) educates and advocates for the human rights of all women and girls, especially women and girls with disabilities, in collaboration with organizations of women and girls with disabilities worldwide. Founded in 2010, WEI focuses on human rights programming and training in developing, transition, and post-conflict countries, as well as advocating with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and international organizations to ensure the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in international policy and development program design and implementation. Through advocacy and education, WEI has increased the profile of the importance of addressing issues such as violence against women, sexual and reproductive rights, access to justice, and more, and their impact on women and girls with disabilities. Additionally, WEI takes these principles and implements them on the ground through in-country projects and collaborations with partners in developing and post-conflict countries around the world.

Description of Survey and Mapping Project:

WEI received generous funding from an anonymous donor for a Survey and Mapping Project with a goal to foster a greater understanding of human rights advocates, both from within and outside the women's rights and disability rights movements, on the



rights of women and girls with disabilities. Through an online survey launched on August 18, 2015 and interviews conducted in January and February 2016, WEI is producing this comprehensive mapping report of the field of advocates for the rights of women and girls with disabilities globally and nationally, released on March 8, 2016, International Women's Day.

WEI's **Survey and Mapping** project illustrates the scope and depth of the growing global field of disabled women's rights organizations and advocates, and serves as an empowering organizing tool to share strategies. This report includes a comprehensive analysis of gaps and trends in international and national legal frameworks and advocacy for the rights of women and girls with disabilities, including their sexual, reproductive health and rights, preventing and ending gender-based and sexual violence, education rights, employment rights, access to justice, legal capacity, and land rights and rights to financial assets, and more. This first-ever report and global map includes data analysis and infographics of the leaders, venues, and locations where women's disability rights advocates and organizations are especially active, where the gaps are, and where there are opportunities for collaboration. This report is posted on WEI's website, and has been distributed to survey participants and others and we hope it will be very helpful in achieving greater collective action and impact. Through this Mapping Project, WEI seeks to empower a Collaborative Partnership for joint actions among women with disabilities and their allies globally to push for more systemic and inclusive human rights policies and programs.

Mapping Project Methodology:

The survey was developed through discussions with several people working for the rights of women and girls with disabilities and through issues raised in on-line discussions among women and girls with disabilities relating to their concerns and their understandings of the movement of women with disabilities. The draft of the survey was shared for comments with some leaders in the movement and comments were

received from Silvia Quan, Ana Maria Sanchez and Anjee Agarwal and their comments were incorporated into the survey. Based on several requests, the survey was translated into Spanish. Regrettably, insufficient funds made translation of the survey into Arabic, French and other languages impossible. The survey was made available through Survey Monkey, an on-line survey platform available at:

<http://www.SurveyMonkey.com>. Survey Monkey is the world's leading provider of web-based survey solutions trusted by millions of companies, organizations and individuals alike to gather the insights they need to make more informed decisions. For those who had difficulties in completing the on-line survey, the English and Spanish versions of the survey were made available in Microsoft Word and WEI then entered this survey data into the Survey Monkey system (**Appendix I, Mapping Project Survey Questions**). By completing the survey, all participants indicated their consent for WEI to use their responses (exclusive of demographic data from answers to Question 30 and beyond, which will only be reported in aggregated form in **Appendix II**) for all related research reports, articles, presentations, database, and community workshops.

The methodology of WEI's Survey and Mapping project is based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis of online and written surveys completed by 281 key advocates and organizational leaders worldwide for the rights and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities. From the 281 online surveys received in the fall and winter of 2015, WEI chose a selected group of 12 women for interviews in January and February of 2016. WEI selected individuals from all geographic areas of the world and from a variety of organization types (i.e. women with disabilities led organizations, women's rights organizations, funders etc.) The hour long in depth interviews were conducted via the online video conferencing tool Skype and audio recordings were made for note taking purposes only.

Herstory and Context

There are approximately one billion people with disabilities worldwide, or about 15% of the global population. However, there are significant differences in the prevalence of disability between men and women in both developing and more developed countries: male disability prevalence rate is 12% and female disability prevalence rate is 19.2%.¹ Among the disabled population, women disproportionately face greater poverty, lack of opportunity, denial of political, social and sexual rights, violence and abuse.²

In the 20th century and before, the prevailing perspective on disability was either a medical one or a charitable one and the organizations working in the field were generally led by individuals without disabilities who provided services to disabled people. Parents and other family members also were active in the field. However, the 20th century also saw second-wave feminism and the evolution of a global women's rights movement and also increased engagement by people with disabilities for their human rights.

The Fourth World Conference on Women took place in Beijing in August 1995 and brought together 189 nations and 35,000 women, including hundreds of women with disabilities from more than 30 countries. For the first time in the twenty-year history of women's organized participation in UN conferences, hundreds of women with disabilities, representing the often overlooked constituency of disabled women worldwide, joined their non-disabled sisters in Beijing, China.

¹ THE WORLD BANK, WORLD REPORT ON DISABILITY (2011), available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2011/01/14440066/world-report-disability>.

² Janet Price, Association of Women in Development (AWID), *The Seeds of A Movement-Disabled Women and Their Struggle to Organize* 1-2 (2011), available at http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/changing_their_world_2_-_disabled_women_and_their_struggle_to_organize.pdf.



In the video “Disabled Women: Visions and Voices from the 4th World Conference on Women,” some of those disabled women attending tell their stories, describe their experiences and demonstrate their powerful presence engaging with governments and other NGOs.³ Susan Sygall, from the United States, one of the disabled women’s delegation organizers, is quoted in this video saying “We will achieve our rights and the respect we deserve as women with disabilities.”⁴ Another disabled woman participant is also quoted saying, “A disability can be endured but the lack of human rights, the deprivation of equal opportunities and the institutional discrimination cannot be endured and should not be tolerated.”⁵ According to the video, the Fourth World Conference on Women of the UN was an event where “...for the first time women with disabilities had a strong, organized presence. This was due to ten months of hard work by disabled women and several international disability rights groups.”⁶

This gathering of women and girls with disabilities from around the world was one of the largest gatherings of its kind at that time. Before the conference began, a one-day symposium on the issues of women with disabilities was held.⁷ During this event, according to the MIUSA video, “...women developed policy statements that they wanted to communicate to the nearly 25,000 non-disabled women and to the media at the non-governmental organization (NGO) forum and UN Conference.”⁸ The participants energetically discussed issues of particular importance to women with disabilities and developed strategies on how to address these issues worldwide.

In contrast to the positivity surrounding the Symposium, the treatment of disabled women at the NGO Forum during the following days demonstrated just how far the

³ Video: Disabled Women: Visions and Voices from the 4th World Conference on Women (Wide Vision Productions 1996), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adfHKfZdvzI>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Jennifer Kern, *Across Boundaries: The Emergence of an International Movement of Women with Disabilities*, 8 HASTINGS WOMEN’S L.J. 233, 247 (1997).

⁸ Video: Disabled Women, *supra* note 3.



world had to go. Disabled women continually fought discrimination at the NGO Forum, being denied access to many of the NGO Forum events because the rooms where the events were held were inaccessible, and essentially they were reduced to being second-class participants. From this negative treatment, however, came increased recognition from influential women's leaders regarding the difficulties disabled women face on a daily basis. The support from non-disabled women, as well as the strong connections disabled women formed with each other during this experience, became fundamental components of the disabled women's movement.⁹

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing Declaration), which was adopted at the Beijing Conference, contained numerous provisions on the human rights of women and girls with disabilities.¹⁰ The Beijing Declaration mandates inclusion of disabled women and girls and specifically states: "Strengthen and encourage the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities paying attention to ensure non-discrimination and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls with disabilities, including their access to information and services in the field of violence against women, as well as their active participation in and economic contribution to all aspects of society."¹¹ The Beijing Declaration represents a true advance in the organizing of disabled women and their new visibility internationally.¹²

Drawing on the disability-inclusive nature of the original Beijing Declaration itself, the 2000 Special Session of the UN General Assembly, reviewing the progress of the outcomes of the Fourth World Conference on Women, also addressed the concerns and role of women with disabilities by indicating that Governments should:

⁹ Jennifer Kern, *supra* note 7, at 250.

¹⁰ Fourth World Conference on Women, Sept. 4-15, 1995, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1 (1996), available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/Beijing%20full%20report%20E.pdf>.

¹¹ *Id.*, ¶ 178(j).

¹² Janet Price, *supra* note 2, at 18.



Adopt and promote a holistic approach to respond to all forms of violence and abuse against girls and women of all ages, including girls and women with disabilities, as well as vulnerable and marginalized women and girls in order to address their diverse needs, including education, provision of appropriate health care and services and basic social services.¹³

Furthermore, it also stated that Governments should:

Design and implement policies and programmes to address fully specific needs of women and girls with disabilities, to ensure their equal access to education at all levels, including technical and vocational training and adequate rehabilitation programmes, health care and services and employment opportunities, to protect and promote their human rights and, where appropriate, to eliminate existing inequalities between women and men with disabilities.¹⁴

The 21st Century also saw the adoption of a UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the first human rights treaty dedicated to the rights of people with disabilities. In an article by Rosemary Kayess, she examines how the CRPD represents the intersectional rights of women with disabilities, both as women and as persons with disabilities.¹⁵

UN member states largely agreed with the Republic of Korea's initial proposal that the CRPD include specific references to women with disabilities. The disagreement came in the implementation of the proposal: some states pushed for gender mainstreaming throughout the Convention, while others advocated for a twin-track approach (a

¹³ G.A. Res. S-23/3, ¶ 69(j), U.N. Doc. A/RES/S-23/3 (Nov. 16, 2000).

¹⁴ *Id.*, ¶ 83(d).

¹⁵ Rosemary Kayess, et al., *International Power and Local Action – Implications for the Intersectionality of the Rights of Women with Disability*, 73 AUSTL. J. PUB. ADMIN. 383 (2014).



combination of a stand-alone provision on women with disabilities and specific references to women throughout the Convention).¹⁶

The UN Ad Hoc Committee (which was negotiating the treaty at the UN) appointed Theresia Degener, a professor and advocate from Germany, who is a disabled woman, to facilitate a solution, and eventually the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the twin-track approach.¹⁷ The result was that CRPD Article 6 on Women highlights the urgent need to address the rights of women and girls with disabilities and throughout the CRPD, issues of women and girls with disabilities are specifically noted in other provisions, for example, CRPD Article 25 on Health specifically references the unique health concerns of women and girls with disabilities. Though the incorporation of gender within the CRPD was significant in advancing the position of women with disabilities, it remains merely a stepping-stone toward the ultimate goal. In order to keep things moving in the right direction, women with disabilities need to speak up for themselves and make sure countries recognize their obligations in the CRPD and continue to advance the rights of disabled women within their borders.¹⁸

¹⁶ Mi Yeon Kim, *Women with Disabilities: The Convention Through the Prism of Gender*, in HUMAN RIGHTS AND DISABILITY ADVOCACY 113, 120 (Maya Sabatello & Marianna Schulze, eds. 2013).

¹⁷ *Id.*, at 122-123; SIGRID ARNADE & SABINE HAEFNER, STANDARD INTERPRETATION OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD) FROM A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE: POSITION AND REFERENCE PAPER ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REFERENCES TO WOMEN AND GENDER IN THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 17-18 (2011), *available at* http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/disalliance.e-presentaciones.net/files/public/files/CRPD_interpretation-women-and-gender-provisions_nw3-de_2011%5B1%5D.pdf.

¹⁸ Mi Yeon Kim, *supra* note 16, at 129-130.



(Below, Logos from Beijing conference and CRPD)



Generally, policy makers fail to recognize the intersectional and multiple dimensions of the lives of women with disabilities. That is, women with disabilities experience unique discrimination resulting from the interaction between their gender and disability. Government policies, however, are generally gender or disability neutral and fail to account for the intersectional experience of women with disabilities. Unlike other policies or resolutions, the CRPD takes a “twin-track” approach that allows it to account for an explicitly gendered perspective. This unique perspective is the product of the participation of women with disabilities throughout the drafting and implementation process of the CRPD.¹⁹

Another highly significant event was the first ever report on violence against women with disabilities by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Rashida Manjoo, which highlighted the nature, scope, forms, causes, and consequences, of violence against women and girls with disabilities.²⁰

Despite the requirements of the Beijing Declaration and the CRPD itself, statistics on women and girls with disabilities are far too often missing in updating the status of and

¹⁹ Rosemary Kayess, et al., *supra* note 15, at 391.

²⁰ Rashida Manjoo, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo, violence against women with disabilities*, U.N. Doc. A/67/227 (Aug. 3, 2012), available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F67%2F227+&Submit=Search&Lang=E.

advocating for all women worldwide. 2015 marked the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration. Since 1995, the Commission on the Status of Women has played a central role in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in implementing the Beijing Declaration which is the most comprehensive global policy framework to achieve the goals of gender equality, development of peace in 12 critical areas of concern. The 59th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59) marked the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration (Beijing+20) and at this session progress toward achievement of the goals of the Beijing Declaration was assessed. A team undertook a review of numerous Beijing+20 government reports that revealed that the vast majority of country reports do not even mention women and girls with disabilities at all or what the State has done under each of the critical areas of the Beijing+20 Review process with respect to girls and women with disabilities.²¹

Such significant omissions are inexcusable, especially in light of the fact that most countries reviewed ratified the CRPD.

As an Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) article points out, "If women are to meet and organize politically, they have first to make contact, and have to then find spaces/places and contexts in which they can find a joint way of expressing their presence."²²

²¹ HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL—MAKING IT WORK, WOMEN ENABLED INTERNATIONAL, & SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, WHERE ARE WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES: AN ANALYSIS OF GOVERNMENT COUNTRY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 59 (Mar. 2015), *available at* <http://www.womenenabled.org/pdfs/CSW%2059%20Country%20REPORT%20REVIEW%20March%208%202015.pdf>.

²² Janet Price, *supra* note 2, at 5.

Mapping Project Results

“An international network seems necessary to lobby worldwide and get international support” –Survey Respondent (France)

“WEI should ... drive other disabled women to participate, especially disabled women in developing countries. Organize training workshops and seminars to educate our colleagues from these developing countries and help to build their capacity.” – Survey Respondent (Liberia)

A. Geographic Location of Respondents

1. Geographic Information of Respondents by Region and Country (**Appendix III A**)
2. Word Cloud below, the bigger the country name the more Survey Monkey responses from that location
3. 76 responses from North America, 10 responses from Central America, 8 responses from South America, 24 responses from Europe, 17 responses from the Middle East and Northern Africa, 69 responses from Africa, 43 responses from Eastern and Southern Asia, 10 responses from Southeastern Asia, 1 response from Central Asia, and 23 responses from Oceania.

We acknowledge that there were regions with low responses. Central and South America and East Asia were among these locations, possible reasons for this are discussed below in our Analysis and Recommendations section. Our **Appendix III A** also included organizations that did not respond to the survey but that WEI determined were important resources, they are denoted by a “*”. Furthermore, respondents who did not identify with an organization are included in the response county by country but their names are not listed.

[illegible]

Figure 1.1 below is a Picture of a Map of Survey Respondents Globally

Available electronically here: <http://womenenabled.org/mapping-results.html>



The clickable online map above allows individuals to click on a red pin to display how many survey responses came from that country and includes organization names if given. For more information, see **Appendix III A (Geographic Information of Respondents by Region and Country)**. For an alphabetical list of all organizations that responded to the survey please see **Appendix III B (Alphabetical Survey Respondent Organization List)**. For a list of organizations specifically led by women and girls with disabilities see **Appendix IV (List of Organizations led by Women and Girls with Disabilities)**.

“Collaboration is important as it amplifies our voices and concerns for the rights of women and girls with disabilities. The key challenges to effective collaboration is the lack of adequate financial resources. Attention in this area will overcome these challenges” – Survey Respondent (Bangladesh)

“We need collective action to get the message into the community that empowering women and girls is important for the individuals and good for society” – Survey Respondent (Australia)

B. Organizational Characteristics

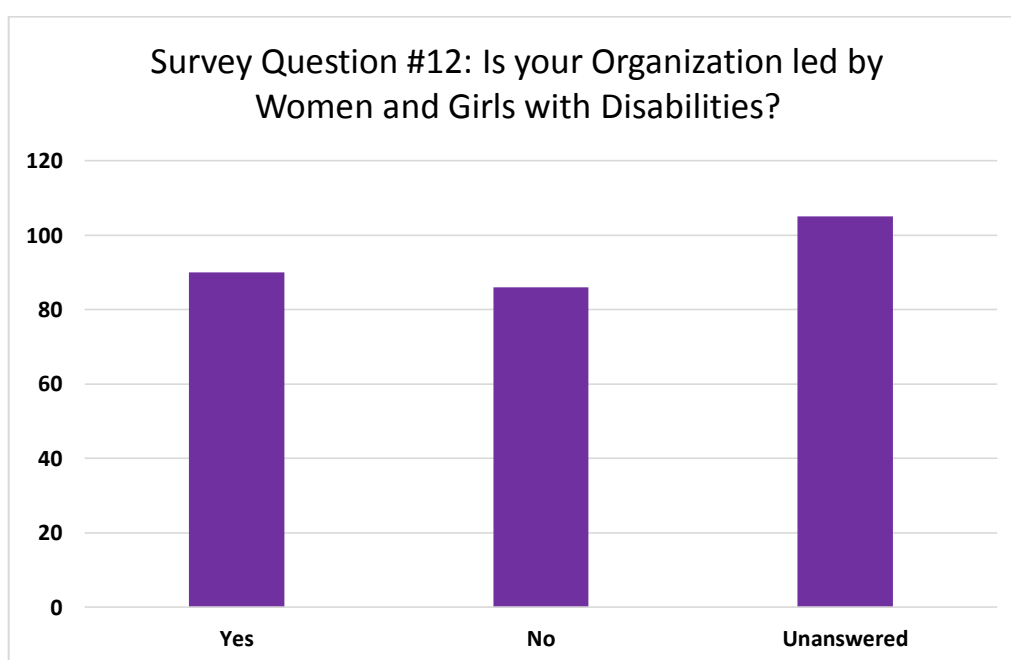
1. **Survey Question #12:** Is your organization led by women and girls with disabilities?

Yes: **90**

No: **86**

No Answer: **105**

Figure 1.2 below is a Bar Graph of the Number of Organizations led by Women and Girls with Disabilities



2. **Survey Question #13:** How would you best define your organization's type?

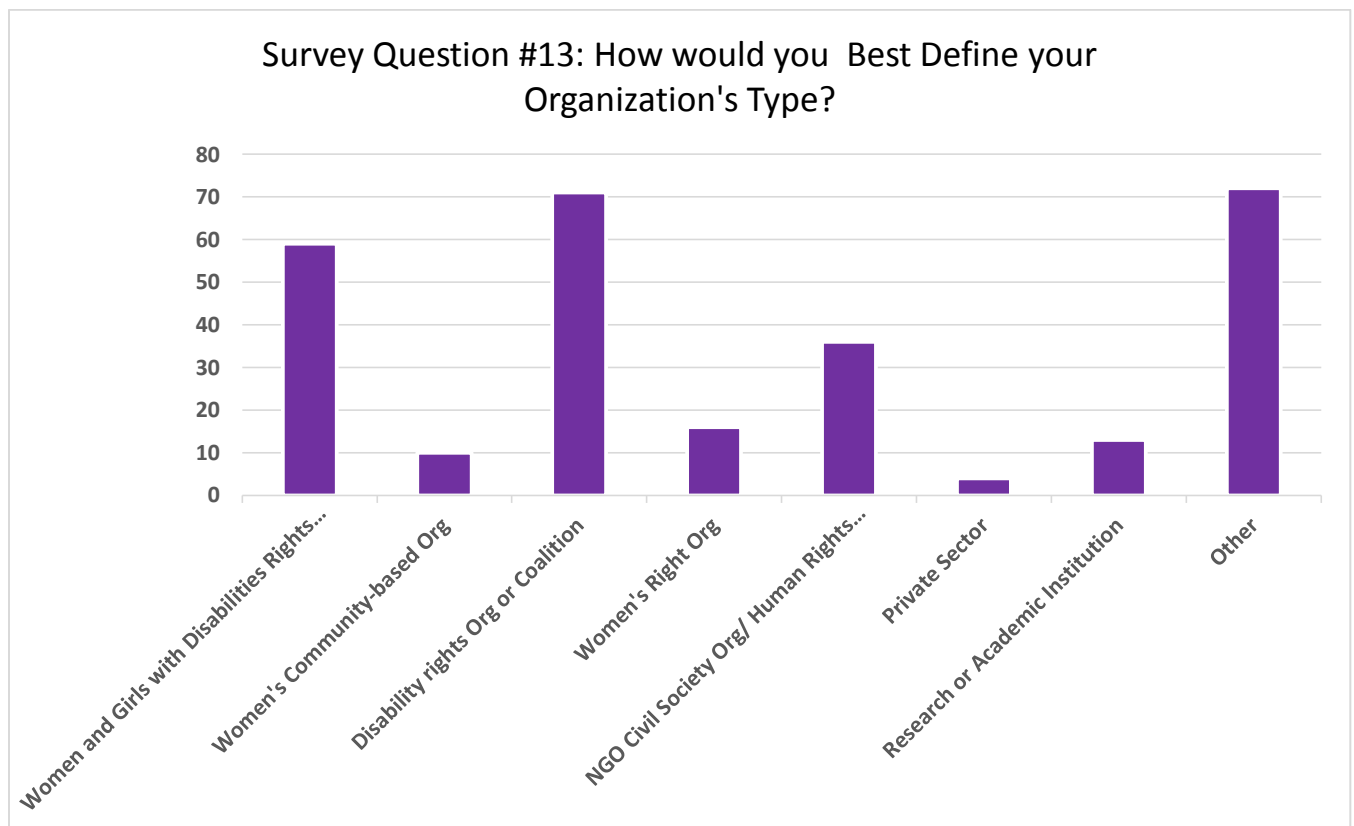
For this question we asked respondents to choose from the following types:

- Women and girls with disabilities rights and/or empowerment organization: **59**
- Women's community-based organization and association: **10**
- Disability rights organization or coalition: **71**

- Women's rights organization or coalition: **16**
- Non-governmental civil society organization working on other human rights issues: **36**
- Private sector (women-led or women-focused small and medium business) or social enterprise: **4**
- Research or academic institution: **13**
- Other: **72**

For those organizations which didn't indicate a type or appeared to have checked the incorrect type, WEI checked their websites to confirm their mission before the analysis took place.

Figure 1.3 below is a Bar Graph of How Survey Respondents Defined their Organization's Type



3. **Survey Question #15:** Number of survey respondents who work with staff only, volunteers only and those who use a mix of both.

Only Staff: **22**

Only Volunteers: **23**

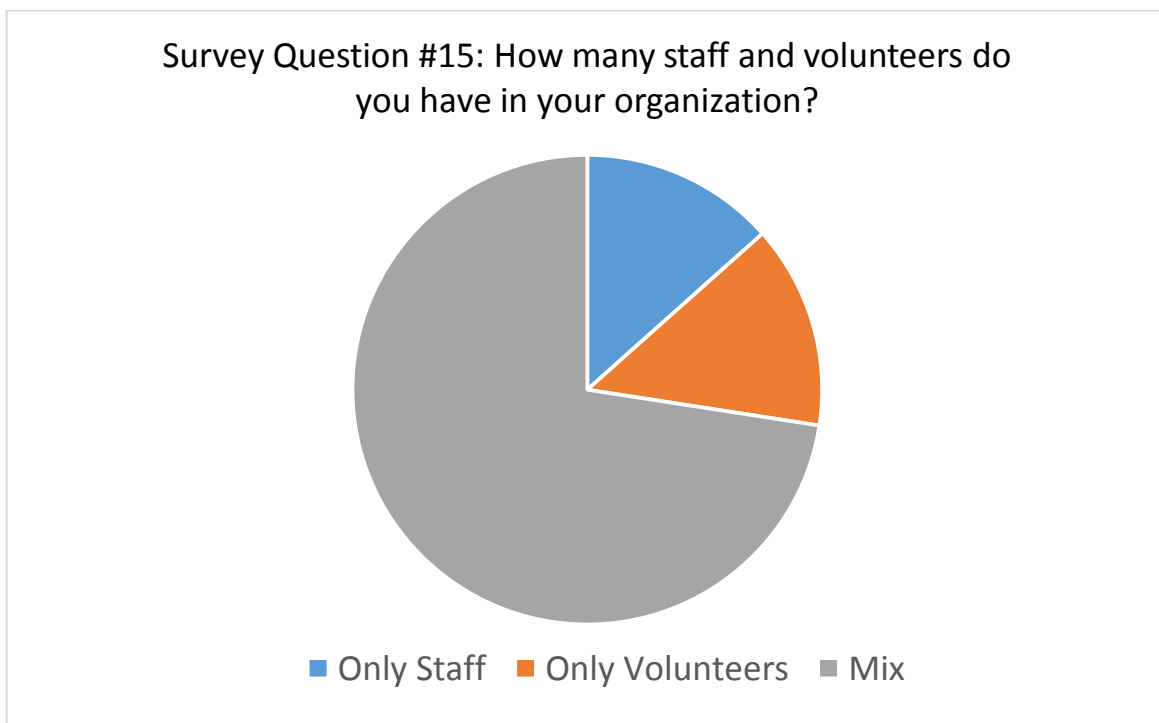
(This was NOT more true for women with disabilities led organizations, only 13% or 12 out of 90 organizations led by women with disabilities identified as having only volunteers.)

Mix: **119**

No Answer: **117**

For the 90 organizations that identified themselves as being led by women and girls with disabilities, 72 of the organizations also indicated that they had staff members. The majority of these organizations (52) had between 1-10 staff members. The range of staff was between 1 and 300.

Figure 1.4 below is a Pie Chart showing the Number of Organizations Reporting that they have only Staff, only Volunteers or both



4. **Survey Question #17:** From what areas are the women your organization works with primarily?

Rural Only: **29**

Urban Only: **27**

Semi-Urban Only: **30**

All three: **33**

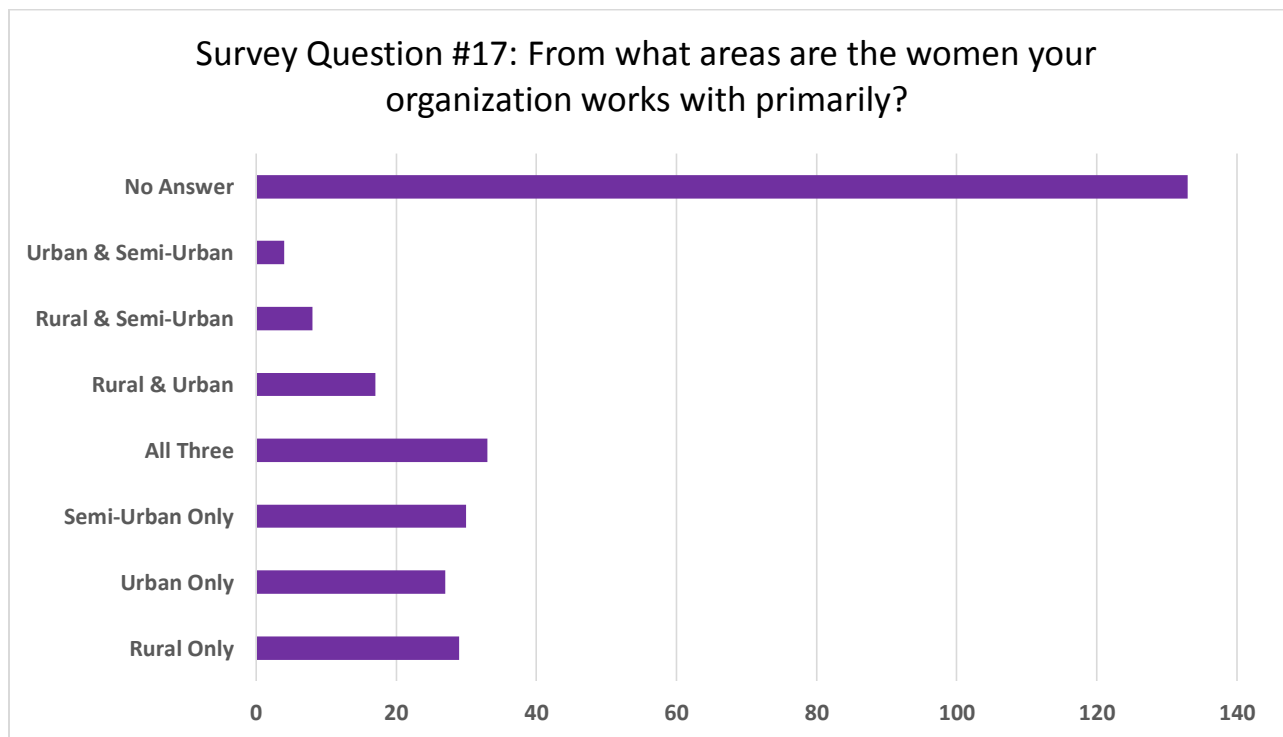
Rural & Urban: **17**

Rural & Semi-Urban: **8**

Urban & Semi-Urban: **4**

No Answer: **133**

Figure 1.5 below is a Bar Graph of Areas where Survey Respondents Work



“When you go alone you will go far but when you go together you will go faster is an African Proverb, networking, collaboration and partnership will fight our causes more than individuals.” – Survey Respondent (Nigeria)

C. Organization Lifespan

Of the organizations that responded to our survey, the oldest was founded in 1850 (Universidad de La Laguna in Spain) and the most recently founded was in 2015 (Region l'Association of Women with Disabilities in the Philippines).

One conclusion we can draw from this is that women with disabilities advocacy has been going on for a long time and issues are now gaining greater prominence and attention.

Of the 90 organizations that identified themselves as being led by women with disabilities, 82 list their organization's date of founding. Organizations led by women with disabilities were founded between 1944 and 2015. The majority of these organizations (57) were founded between 2000 and 2015, showing that organizations led by women and girls with disabilities are relatively new.

“Many organizations led by women with disabilities in the developing world have very poor capacity, and lack basic organizational skills or structures. There also aren't enough of them. Because of these issues, organizations of women with disabilities receive only 12% of our total funding, when the percentage should be closer to 50.” – Survey Respondent (The United States)

“We're hoping to get the funding to have... a drop in center once every month and slowly grow that.” - Survey Respondent (The United Kingdom)

D. Organization Budget

Survey Question #20: What is your organization's approximate annual budget (in US dollars)?

This survey question was an open ended question therefore survey respondents had the freedom to answer however they chose. Although we requested each organization's approximate annual budget in US. Dollars, many respondents provided the answer to this question either in other currencies or it was not clear what currency was provided.

1. Of the 59 respondents who identified themselves as a women and girls with disabilities rights and/or empowerment organization, 36 provided their annual budget in US Dollars.

Women and Girls with Disabilities Rights and/or Empowerment

Organization Average Annual Budget: \$100,850

Median Budget: \$70,000

The budget range for this type of organization was \$500 to \$450,000.

Of the 71 respondents who identified themselves as a disability rights organization or coalition, 33 provided their annual budget in US Dollars. (We removed the two organizations that were service oriented rather than empowerment oriented)

Disability Rights Organization or Coalition Average Annual Budget:

\$519,908

Median Annual Budget: \$31,145.87

The budget range for this type of organization was \$1,000 to \$3,500,000.

Of the 16 respondents who identified themselves as a women's rights organization or coalition, 9 provided their annual budget in US Dollars.

**Women's Rights Organization or Coalition Average Annual Budget:
\$9,709,278**

Median Annual Budget: \$2,000,000

The budget range for this type of organization was \$1,000 to \$22 million.

Thus, generally speaking, of the various types of organization respondents to the survey, the women with disabilities organizations had the lowest budgets.

Figure 1.6 below is a Bar Graph of Median Annual Budget (US Dollars) for Women and Girls with Disabilities Rights Organizations, Disability Rights Organizations and Women's Rights Organizations

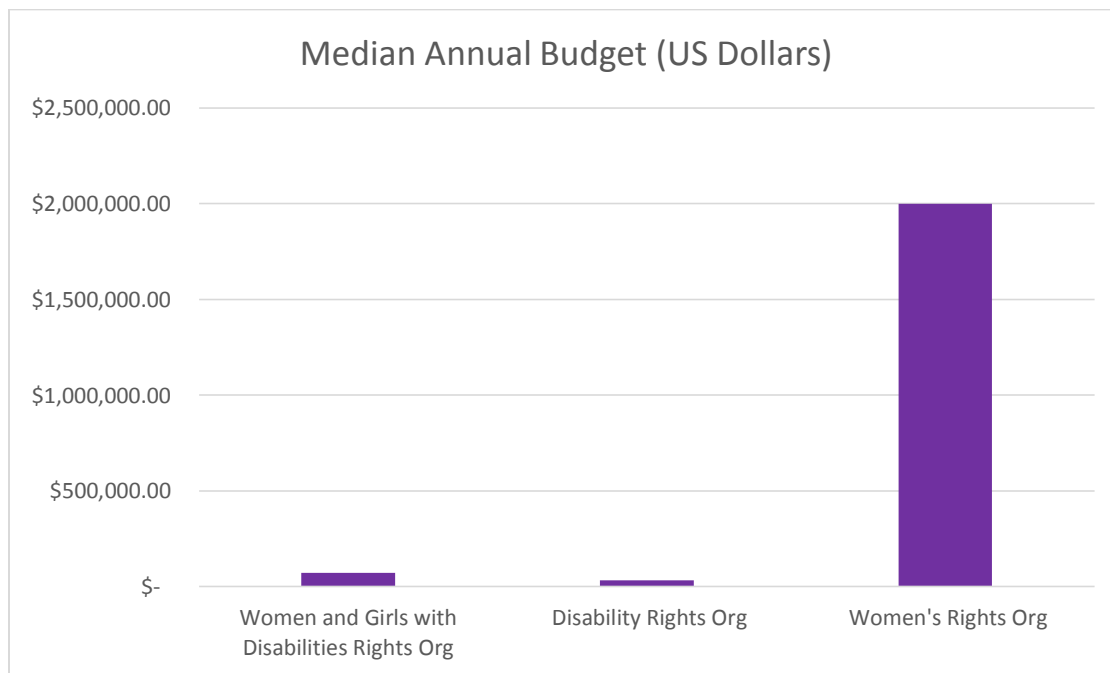
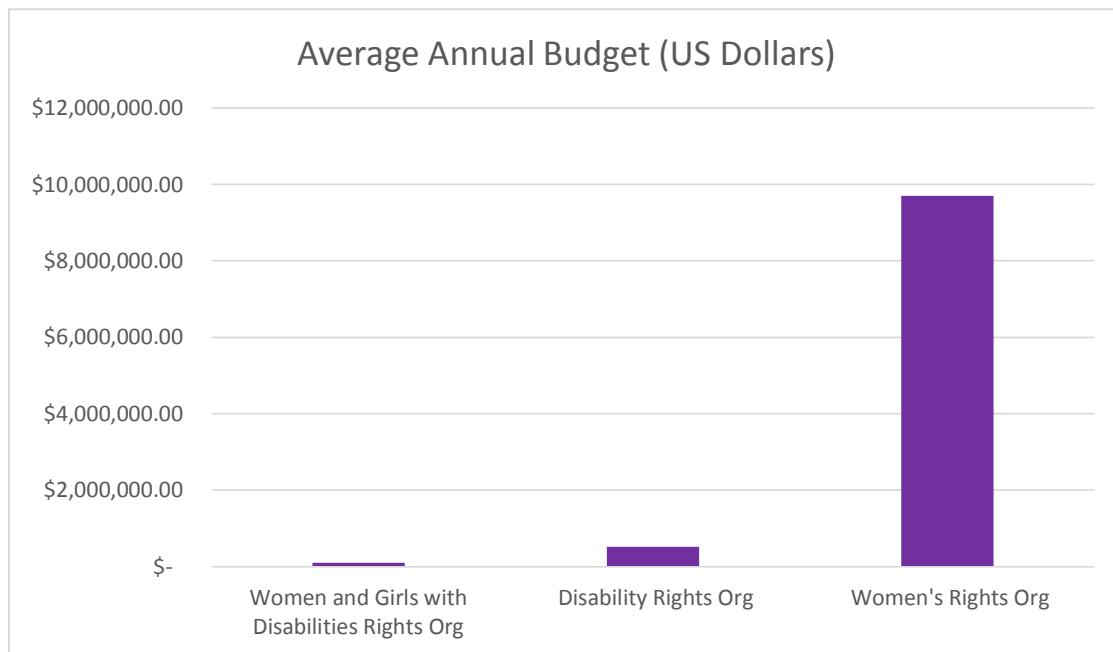


Figure 1.7 Bar Graph of Average Annual Budget (US Dollars) for Women and Girls with Disabilities Rights Organizations, Disability Rights Organizations and Women's Rights Organizations



2. Funding Sources

Survey Question #21: What are your organization's main funding sources?

For this question we asked respondents to choose from the following sources and they were able to select more than one:

Membership Dues: **21**

Individual Donations: **28**

Corporations: **4**

Foundations: **21**

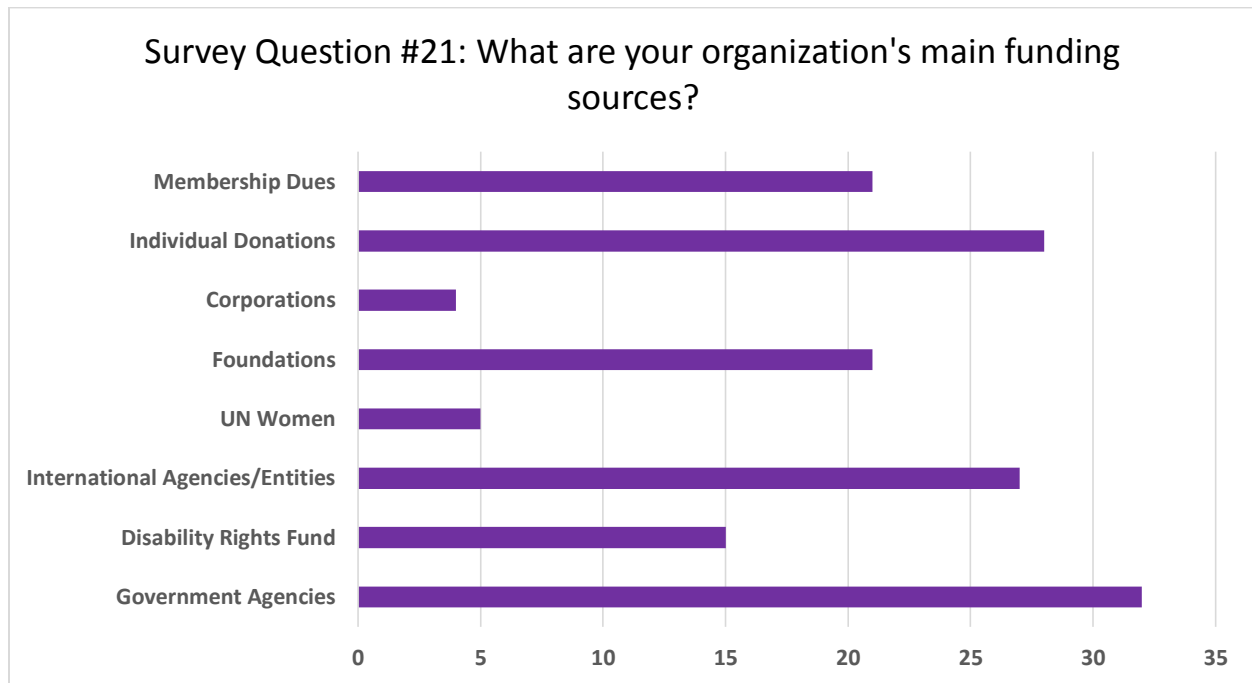
UN Women: **5**

International Agencies/Entities: **27**

Disability Rights Fund: **15**

Government Agencies: **32**

Figure 1.8 below is a Bar Graph of Main Funding Sources for Survey Respondents



Approximately half of organizations led by women with disabilities listed their main funding source as either international agencies, membership dues, The Disability Rights Fund and individual donations.

Funders who replied to the Survey Monkey questionnaire:

[Disability Rights Fund](#)

[The Abilis Foundation](#)

“Organizations of women with disabilities may not understand how to manage finances, or have sufficient boards or staffing structures. There is a lack of organizational capacity building at very basic levels in terms of how to run an organization and how to reach out for funding. All of that is really essential to women with disabilities organizations being able to exist and collaborate.” Survey Respondent (The United States)

E. Women and Girls with Disabilities Served

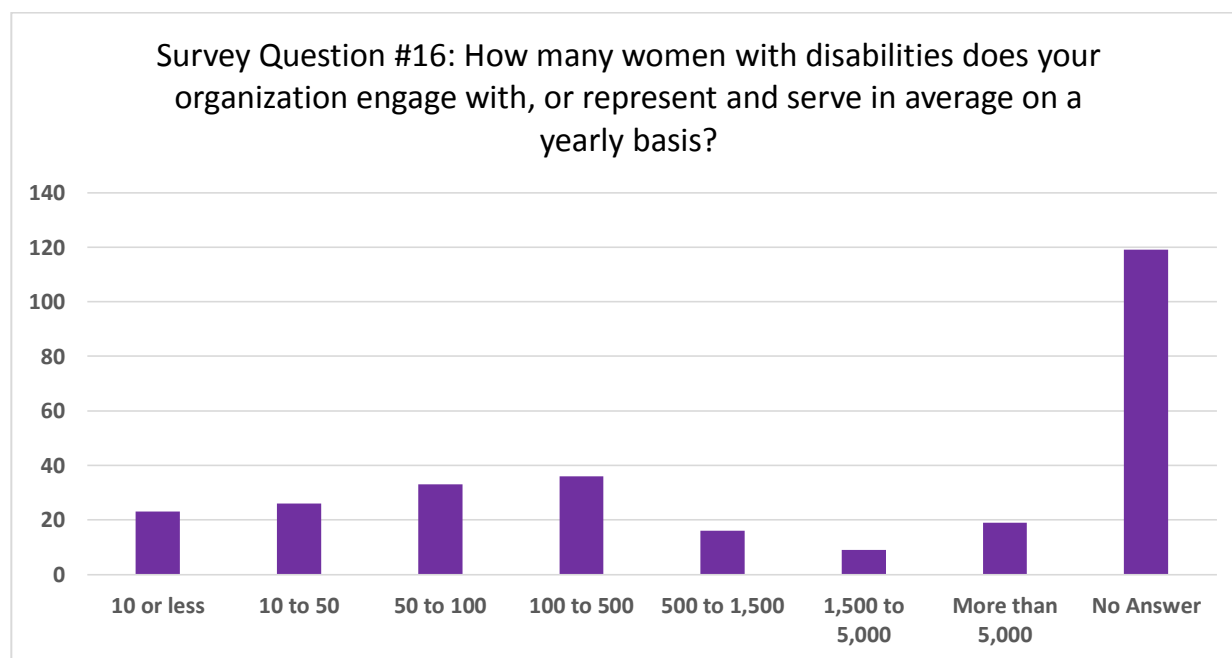
1. **Survey Question #16:** How many women with disabilities does your organization engage with, or represent and serve in average on a yearly basis?

Below survey respondents listed the average number of disabled women they serve yearly as follows:

- Less than 10 women: **23**
- Between 10 and 50 women: **26**
- Between 50 and 100 women: **33**
- Between 100 and 500 women: **36**
- Between 500 and 1,500 women: **16**
- Between 1,500 and 5,000 women: **9**
- More than 5,000 women: **19**
- No Answer: **119**

The majority of women with disabilities led organizations, 52 total, indicated that on average they were able to serve between 10 and 500 women and girls with disabilities annually. Because they have a small staff, women with disabilities led organizations are not able to serve as many women as those with more resources.

Figure 1.7 below is a Bar Graph of How Many Women with Disabilities Survey Respondents Engage with, or Represent and Serve in Average on a Yearly Basis



F. Key Organization Issues

1. **Survey Question #22:** What are the key issues you address in terms of women and girls with disabilities? Check all that apply:
 - A.) Sexual and reproductive health: **85**
 - B.) Preventing and ending gender-based violence: **91**
 - C.) Education rights and support: **81**
 - D.) Employment rights and support: **53**
 - E.) Microfinance and entrepreneurship: **38**
 - F.) Access to and quality of health care and caregiving: **58**
 - G.) Economic rights and ending poverty: **44**
 - H.) Land rights and rights and access to financial assets: **15**

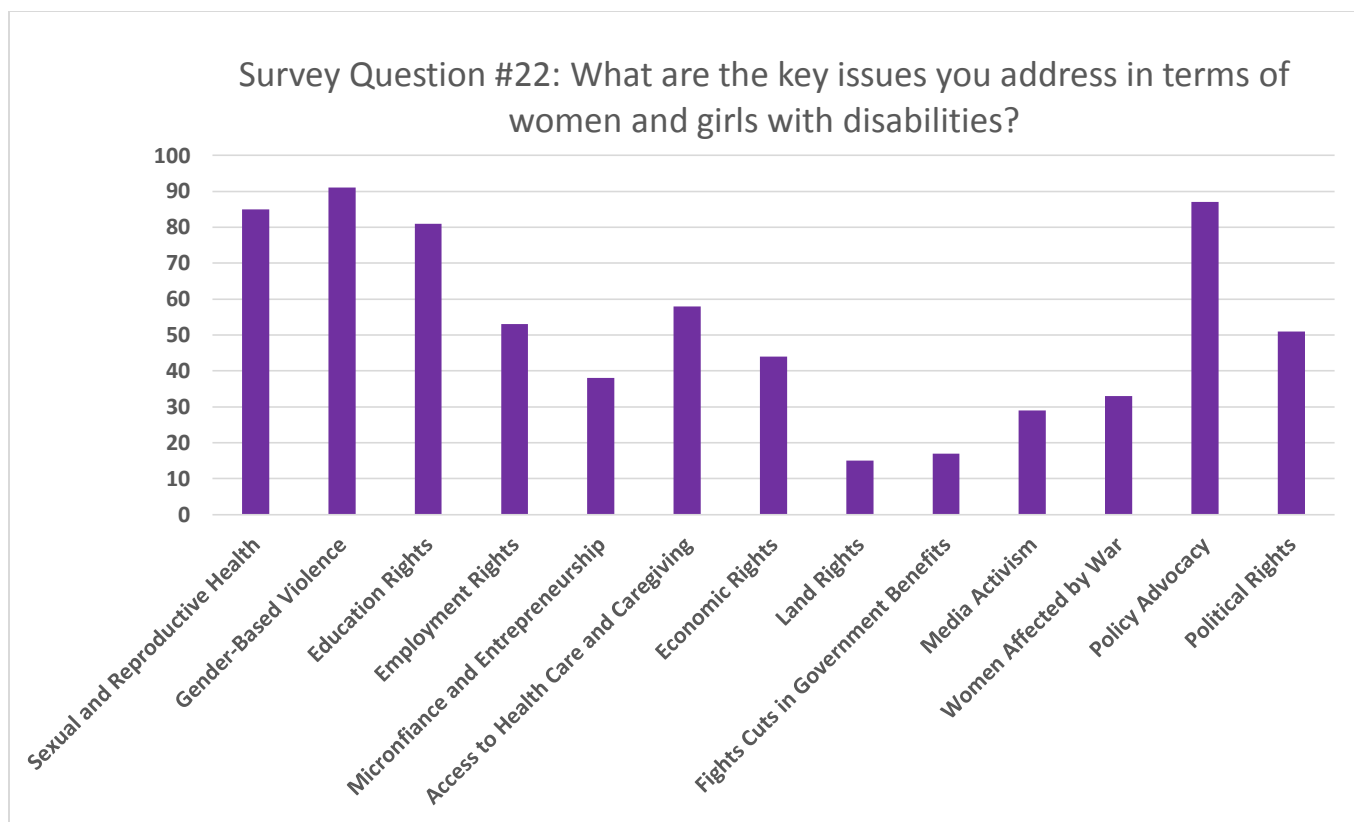
- I.) Fighting cuts in government benefits: **17**
- J.) Media activism: **29**
- K.) Women affected by war and conflict situations and natural disasters: **33**
- L.) Policy advocacy: **87**
- M.) Political and electoral rights and participation: **51**
- N.) Other, please name or explain

2. In addition to the key issues listed above, other issues mentioned by respondents included:

Access to justice including criminal justice
 Accessible technology, communications and accommodations
 Budget monitoring
 Caregiving, carers and parenting
 Data collection and research
 Independent living and Institutionalization
 Intersectionality and multiple identities
 Legal capacity and decision-making
 Land rights and farming

WEI attempted to identify the most commonly chosen issue areas in the interview and surveys and grouped those responses together in broad topic areas.

Figure 1.9 below is a Bar Graph of the Key Issues Addressed by Survey Respondents in terms of Women and Girls with Disabilities?



“We derive our mandate from Article 6 of the CRPD and other related articles. We promote the respect for humanity and dignity and our work is focused on rights realization and practicing.” Survey Respondent (Uganda)

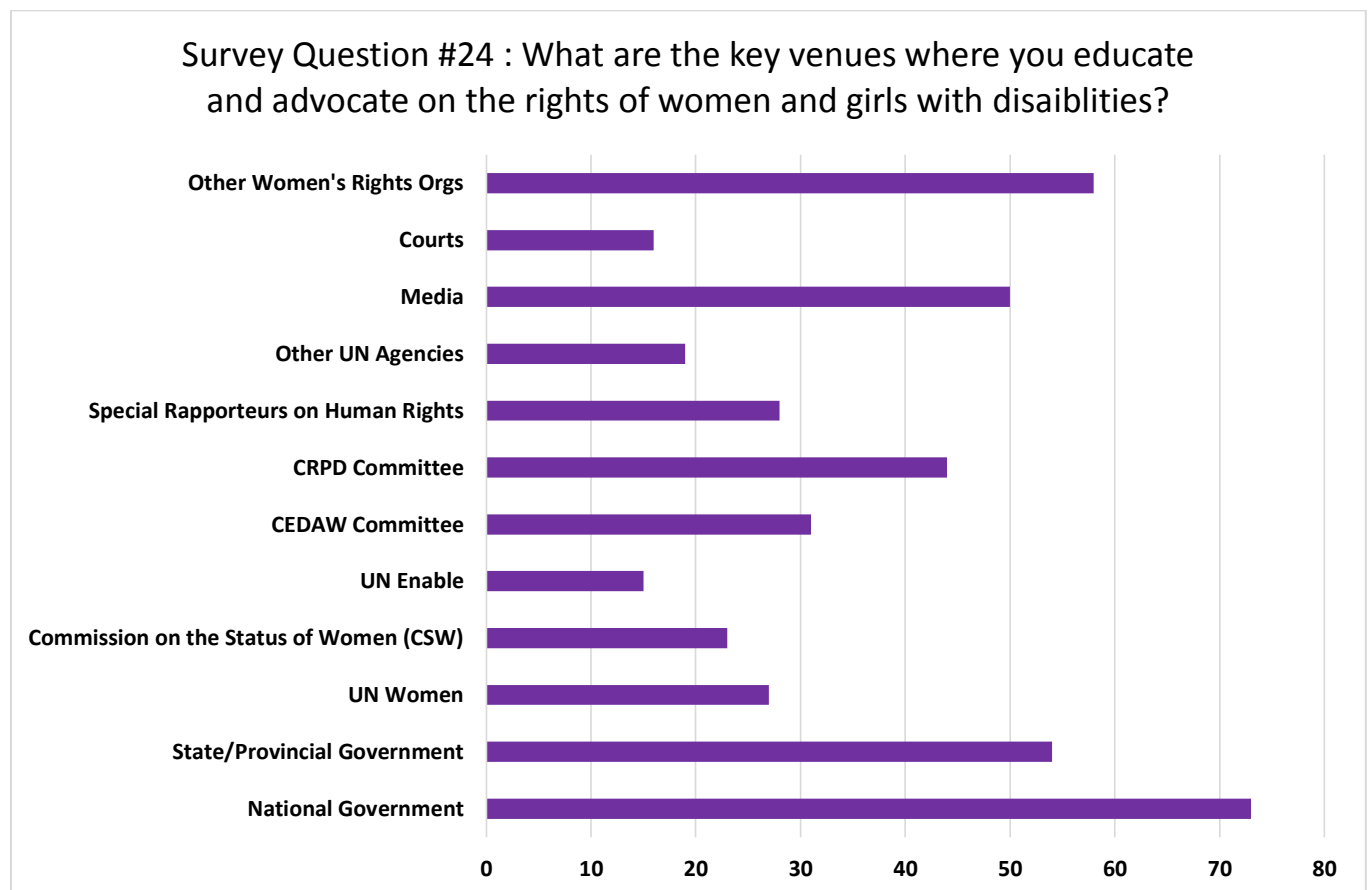
G. Top Venues for Advocacy

- Survey Question #24:** What are the key venues where you educate and advocate on the rights of women and girls with disabilities? Check all that apply:
 - A.) National Government: **73**
 - B.) State/Provincial Government: **54**
 - C.) UN Women: **27**
 - D.) Commission on the Status of Women: **23**

- E.) UN Enable: **15**
- F.) CEDAW Committee: **31**
- G.) CRPD Committee: **44**
- H.) Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights: **28**
- I.) Other UN Agencies: **19**
- J.) Media: **50**
- K.) Courts: **16**
- L.) Other Women's Rights & Empowerment Organizations: **58**

Survey respondents could check more than one area where they advocate.

Figure 1.10 below is a Bar Graph of the Key Venues where Survey Respondents Educate and Advocate for the Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities



Many respondents indicated several venues where they advocate. Also, many respondents also indicated other venues of education and advocacy, for example service providers, academic institutions, families, and the business sector.

“Working in partnership is essential to build a better understanding of key issues, share expertise and strengths and work together to have a louder, stronger advocacy voice and reach” – Survey Respondent (The United States)

H. Social Media Presence

Of the 90 organizations that said they were led by women and girls with disabilities, the number of respondents using social media tools was as follows:

Only Facebook: **36**

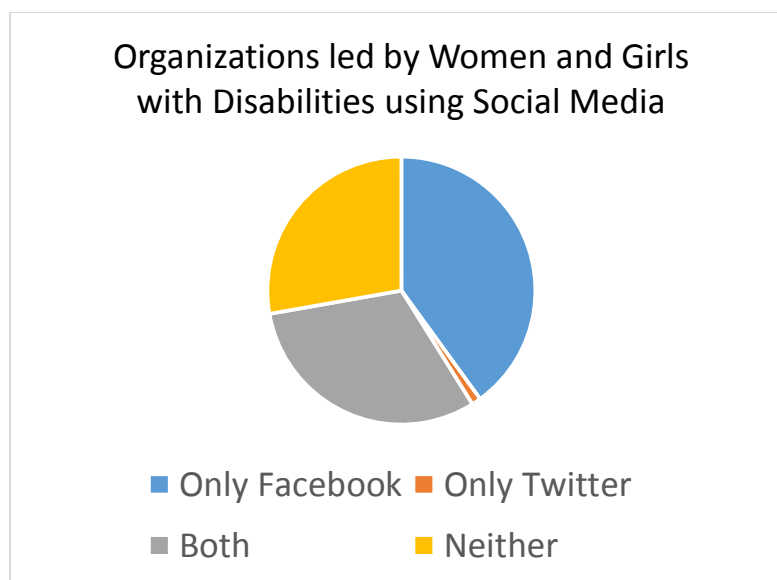
Only Twitter: **1**

Both: **28**

Neither: **25**

Therefore, 65 organizations said that they used some form of social media.

Figure 1.6 below is a Pie Chart showing Organizations led by Women & Girls with Disabilities that are using Social Media



"I would say that we have had the possibility to have other non-disabled women be more aware of the disability rights and be aware also of the specific forms of violence to women with disabilities and girls. I really think that that maybe 6-8 years ago these other organizations had no idea of this" -Skype Interview (Guatemala)

J. Collaboration

- a. A question during the Skype interviews was whether the interviewee thought collaboration was useful, what the barriers are to productive collaboration and how Women Enabled International might facilitate optimum collaborative strategies. Their insights are noted below:

From the Skype Interviews:

"I'm most interested in collaborating on international advocacy. Sterilization. Abortion rights. Institutionalization. Those areas need strong international allies. And issues of sexual diversity, gender based violence and discrimination" – Interviewee (Colombia)

"I'm interested in collaborating on normative work at the human rights bodies and building trust across communities" – Interviewee (United States)

"I'm most interested in collaborating on referrals and exchange visits" – Interviewee (Jordan)

"I would think that maybe one of the most important issues in my mind is violence against girls and women with disabilities and how to prevent and eliminate that and combat that" – Interviewee (Guatemala)

- b. In our Skype interviews, we found that the following items were talked about as barriers to productive collaboration:

Capacity
Communication
Competition
Funding
Language Barriers

Leadership
Qualified Staff
Time
Willingness to Collaborate

- c. In the online survey on **Question #27** WEI asked the respondent: **Do you think that collaboration and networking among advocates and organizations for the rights of women and girls with disabilities is important and why?**

For the organizations led by women with disabilities, 70 respondents of the 90 or 78% indicated that yes collaboration is important. For the women's rights organizations or coalitions, 10 respondents of the 16 total or 62% indicated that yes collaboration is important. Some respondents did not answer this question.

Several impactful quotes about collaboration from the Survey Monkey responses included:

"Collaborations strengthen and enhance your work. It serves as an added impetus in your quest to achieve an objective. It helps to make other key issues achievable by overcoming through collective efforts." - Survey Respondent (Liberia)

"Collaboration is crucial because we exchange our experiences and knowledge and work together toward the same goals." -Survey Respondent (Serbia)

"Because with collaboration and networking, we will have strong voice to address all the women and girls with disabilities problems and we can take best practices to address any issues from each others." -Survey Respondent (Indonesia)

- d. Skype interviewees also discussed the relationship between women's rights organizations and disability rights organizations.

"I would say women and girls with disabilities are very underrepresented in main stream women's movement in Guatemala. That is something we are also advocating for." -Interviewee (Guatemala)

"We are trying to find alliances with feminist organizations. It has been changing for the better in the past 3-4 years. There is more interest from them." – Interviewee (Poland)

"Ever since last year, we have had good relation with women's rights organizations and I could ask them whether in their service or work they include women with disabilities. Most of them don't. It's become more of a dialogue though." –Interviewee (Colombia)

"But now they are totally changed, they accept us and they are thinking that there is inaccessibility and how can we overcome the barrier. Break the barrier. Now we do not face barriers with women's rights organizations." –Interviewee (Bangladesh)

"Organizations led by women with disabilities in the developing world have very little access to education. Most of them have been stuck at home. They haven't had access to the community or to education. This is part of the reason there aren't enough organizations of women with disabilities and why the organizations have low capacity. It also contributes to their lack of involvement with the broader women's movement." - Survey Respondent (The United States)

I. Representation of Sub-groups of Women

In the demographic section of the Survey Monkey questionnaire, each question received varying levels of response rates. The most frequently answered question in this section was about gender. 173 respondents answered this question, and 150 of those people identified themselves as being female (**Appendix II, Aggregate Demographic Information of Respondents**).

25% of women who responded to the survey also defined themselves as indigenous.

During our Skype conversations, 7 of the 12 interviewees confirmed that they are working with young women and girls with disabilities. Some of their comments included:

“Some of our members are young women and girls with disabilities and we have mentored them to have their own organizations.” - Interviewee (Nigeria)

“We have several classes that involve them. And the project we did on sexual reproduction, one activity was to create an educational program for youth with disabilities.” – Interviewee (Colombia)

“We have quite a few young people. Our youngest is only 19. She is a steering group member so she has an equal say. She is pretty convincing public speaker so we will send her out when we have public events and she speaks for us. Pretty strong voice.” – Interviewee (United Kingdom)

Conceptual Analysis and Assessment of the Funding Landscape

In WEI's Survey, women with disabilities leaders and organizations worldwide highlighted an urgent need for greater collaboration and funding. Globally there are a few but a growing number of country-based organizations which focus on the rights of women and girls with disabilities, which are composed of and led by women with disabilities ourselves. As the "Enabling a Global Human Rights Movement for Women and Girls with Disabilities" report shows, many of these organizations were established at the dawn of the 21st Century, some 57 organizations out of the 90 surveyed were founded after 2000. In many places women with disabilities work in isolation for their rights, or are part of larger disability rights organizations often run by men. In these contexts, many women with disabilities find their issues are marginalized and do not receive sufficient focus, for a wide variety of complex reasons.

Additionally, women's rights organizations rarely include issues concerning women and girls with disabilities in their advocacy agenda and often women with disabilities do not feel welcome in such non-governmental organizations (NGO's), often because activities are not accessible or because some women's rights organizations do not consider issues concerning women with disabilities to be "women's issues," based on a variety of erroneous stereotypes. WEI's research also revealed that the experiences of women and girls with disabilities are frequently overlooked in both state and civil society submissions to United Nations (UN) treaty bodies, to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and to other UN mechanisms.

Despite these realities, fortunately, around the world there are a small but growing number of country-based organizations which focus on the rights of women and girls with disabilities and which are composed of and led by women and girls with disabilities ourselves. In those countries with such organizations, these organizations often struggle from a lack of funding, and as the "Enabling a Global Human Rights Movement for Women and Girls with Disabilities" report discloses, the average budget of a women with disability organization is approximately \$100,850 USD. Furthermore, these organizations also have limited resources on organizational capacity building, fundraising, and fiscal management, as well as minimal access to leadership skills training and technical assistance.

Because women with disabilities often have additional expenses to accommodate their disability, or if they depend on limited and ever-shrinking government benefits, in-country organizations focused on women with disabilities often have no or few paid staff and depend on volunteers who also have family and work responsibilities other than the goals of the women with disabilities' NGO itself. Moreover, for those women with disabilities who work with larger disability rights organizations which do not support their work on women with disabilities, they may need resources to assist them in their work. Some of these women with disabilities leaders may need support to develop additional

leadership skills, public speaking skills, and organizational management skills, especially through peer support and mentoring. And, rarely do women with disabilities' NGOs have funds to pay for travel, domestic or international, to engage with governments and/or international organizations, or to participate in global meetings and conferences.

As the “Enabling a Global Human Rights Movement for Women and Girls with Disabilities” report clearly demonstrates, funding of women with disability rights organizations is severely lacking. The funding gaps cited by disabled women’s organizations is further substantiated by several recent studies on global funding for women’s rights and disability rights.

Government Development and Gender Aid: There is a widening gap in reporting on gender, which has resulted in a “clouded picture of whether donor commitments on gender equality are being met,” according to a recent [report](#) from *Development Initiatives*.²³ The proportion of official development assistance (ODA) coded with a gender marker has declined from its peak in 2009 at 62% to only 50% in 2012, and only 3% of ODA was allocated to projects with a “principal contribution to gender.”

Another recent [report](#) on the anniversary of the UK Global Summit on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict shows that funding for ending sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) increased from \$93 million in 2013 to \$107 million in 2014, but this increase marked less than a third of the total increase pledged by donors.²⁴ Despite the rise in funding to address SGBV overall, it continues to be low, and only constituted 0.6% of total humanitarian assistance reported to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)’s Financial Tracking Service (FTS) in 2013, decreasing slightly to 0.5% in 2014.²⁵ While this may be underreported to the FTS due to gender mainstreaming efforts,²⁶ it also shows the need for much better reporting and funding of SGBV for women and girls globally, and especially for women and girls with disabilities, who experience gender-based and sexual violence at two to four times the rate of other women and girls.

As far as funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) with an \$11 billion annual budget, people with disabilities in general are very often excluded from USAID public solicitations, despite stated policies to the contrary, according to a September 2015 [report](#) supported by members of the Disability Working Group at

²³ DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES, TRENDS IN DONOR SPENDING ON GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT 1 (Sept. 22, 2014), available at http://devinit.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Gender-briefing_development_230914.pdf.

²⁴ Development Initiatives, *One year on from the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict*, <http://devinit.org/#!/post/one-year-on-from-the-global-summit-to-end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-have-pledges-turned-into-commitments> (June 9, 2015).

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.*

Interaction.²⁷ Although the presence and placement of language about people with disabilities in solicitations would have a profound and positive impact on whether or not people with disabilities benefit from resulting USAID-funded programs, this rarely occurs. The study found that only 20 percent of USAID solicitations required that people with disabilities be included throughout the project in the primary elements of the solicitation, and nearly half of the solicitations surveyed made no mention of people with disabilities (or only included disabilities in the standard regulatory language).²⁸ While USAID statements and official policies now promote a commitment to the inclusion of women and people with disabilities, this study shows that practices or actions are more effective than words at ensuring more inclusive bilateral funding since the requirements for inclusion of people with disabilities in USAID funded projects is, in fact, rarely required, despite USAID asserted official policy.

Funding from Foundations and Private Donors: Funding through grants from foundations and private donors for the rights of women and girls and for people with disabilities is also perilously low, as revealed in the new 2015 findings of the International Human Rights Funders Group in collaboration with the Foundation Center's Grant Craft program. Foundation funding focused on the human rights of women and girls increased over the past year from 19% to 26% or \$473 million out of \$1.8 billion for all human rights funding.²⁹ Of this 26%, the largest share at 32% goes to sexual and reproductive rights, followed by 24% for equality rights and freedom from discrimination, 15% for freedom from violence, and 6% each for general human rights and labor rights.³⁰ Other rights issues for women and girls, such as civic and political rights, health and well-being rights, environmental and resource rights, or social and cultural rights, each garner only 4 to 2% of the total.³¹ Regionally, the largest number of grant funding flows to North America at nearly 35%, followed by Sub Saharan Africa, global programs, Latin America and Mexico, and Asia and the Pacific.³²

Foundation funding for the rights of people with disabilities increased somewhat overall but its share of all human rights private support has fallen from 4% to 3%, or only \$50.8

²⁷ Anne Hayes, et al., *Inclusion of Disability in USAID Solicitations for Funding: White Paper 10* (Sept. 2015), available at <http://www.perkins.org/sites/default/files/perkins-school-usaid-study-white-paper.pdf>.

²⁸ *Id.*, at 11 (Graph 2).

²⁹ Foundation Center & International Human Rights Funders Group, *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking 2015 Findings: Populations: Women and Girls*, <http://humanrights.foundationcenter.org/populations/women/> (last visited Mar. 3, 2016).

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.*

³² *Id.*



million out of \$1.8 billion.³³ Of this meager 3%, the largest percentage at 37% is for equality rights and freedom from discrimination, followed by 19% each for general human rights and health and well-being rights, 10% for social and cultural rights, and 6% for access to justice/equality before the law.³⁴ Freedom from violence only represents 3% of this paltry 3%,³⁵ even though women and girls with disabilities are 3 to 4 times more likely to suffer from SGBV than other non-disabled women. Even more glaring, sexual and reproductive rights garner only 1% of the 3% of human rights funding for people with disabilities³⁶ despite obvious needs in this area. Again, North America receives the lion's share of funding for people with disabilities at nearly 30%, followed by Western Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Russia.³⁷

Moreover, most women with disability rights organizations do not have budgets sufficient for consideration by many of the larger private foundations funding programs serving women and girls. As is often pointed out in a recent [report](#) by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), the average income for women's rights organizations globally is only \$20,000.³⁸ In fact, large funders such as the Gates, IKEA, or UN Foundations are funding institutions with budgets similar to their own, such as UN agencies like the World Health Organization and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in addition to large international NGO's like Save the Children according to their websites. Many global corporations, from Nestlé to Johnson & Johnson to Exxon Mobil, are funding major programs focused on women's empowerment, but only 0.3% of corporate donations reaches women's rights organizations directly.³⁹

To help address these funding gaps, WEI is working to influence foundations, corporations, and other private donors to devote more funding to disabled women's organizations in order to enable disabled women's organizations to better advocate with national governments and international mechanisms. WEI is working to address both the lack of research and data, as well as the lack of ODA for all women and girls, and

³³ Foundation Center & International Human Rights Funders Group, *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking 2015 Findings: Populations: People with Disabilities*, <http://humanrights.foundationcenter.org/populations/disabled/> (last visited Mar. 3, 2016).

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ JULIA MILLER, ANGELIKA ARUTYUNOVA, & CINDY CLARK, *NEW ACTORS, NEW MONEY, NEW CONVERSATIONS: A MAPPING OF RECENT INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS 8* (2013), *available at* <http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/New%20Actors%20Fin%20Designed.pdf>.

³⁹ *Id.*

especially for women and girls with disabilities who represent 18% of the world's female population.

Survey Limitations

The Global Disabled Women's Rights Advocacy Report was groundbreaking and the first of its kind. Although the extensive results are very detailed and comprehensive, WEI recognizes that our survey and mapping project had some limitations, which we attempted to address.

Since the questionnaire on the Survey Monkey platform was initially only available in English, it limited our ability to obtain responses from those who use other languages. When we received several requests for the questionnaire in Spanish, WEI hired a translator to provide us with a Spanish version of the questionnaire and we circulated a Microsoft Word version of the Spanish questionnaire widely via email. We would have preferred to also translate the questionnaire into French and Arabic, but we did not have sufficient funds to do so, especially since we also would have had to translate the responses into English to analyze and incorporate the responses into the final report.

Additionally, because the survey was mainly distributed through the Survey Monkey online platform, there were people who couldn't access it if they had limited or no internet connection, computer access or skills. This concern was especially important because many disabled women have limited computer access globally due to their economic disadvantage and gaps in accessible computer technology and training for disabled women on using such technology.

Next, we relied on popular international distribution channels for the survey. However, although we asked people to share the survey with their local networks, we were concerned that there were likely more local distribution channels of which we were unaware.

Our inability to have the questionnaire in languages other than English and the possible limitations of distribution channels, may explain the somewhat skewed geographic distribution patterns of the responses. For example, only approximately 3% of the responses were from South America and 4% of the responses were from Central America and South Eastern Asia (both regions had ten respondents each). Thus, South America, Central America and South Eastern Asia were under-represented in the responses we received.

The Survey Monkey questionnaire we designed included a number of open-ended questions which meant that respondents could write in their own answers. While open ended questions are often useful to permit respondents to put responses in their own words, this led to slightly less reliable data analysis since we had to group answers and categorize responses to conduct an analysis in an efficient way.

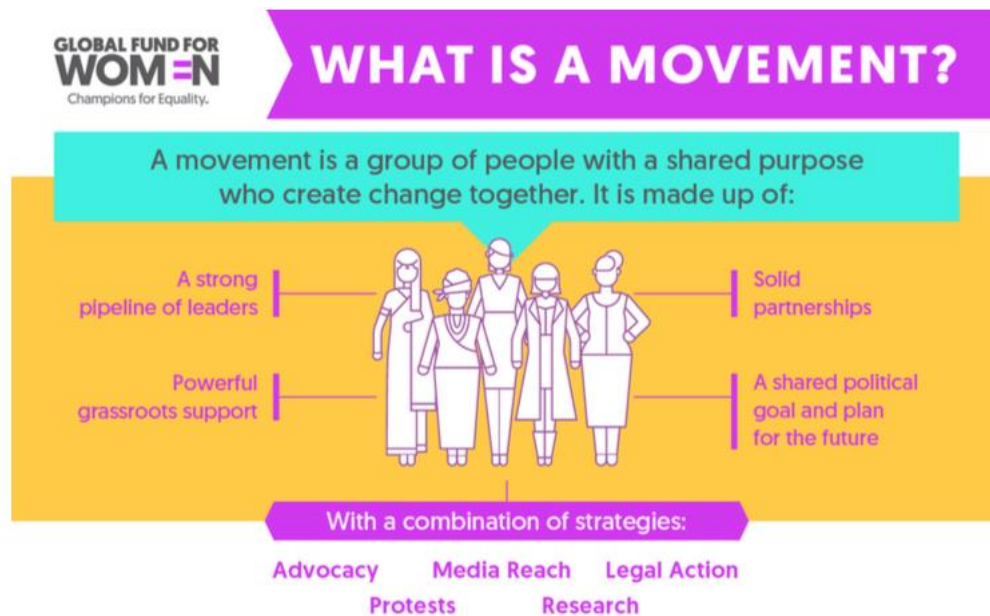
In the organizational budget section of our survey, we asked in an open ended question for respondents to provide their organization's budget in US. Dollars. However, we did not provide respondents with a conversion calculator to assist in their responses to the survey question requesting the amount of their organization's annual approximate budget. Many respondents therefore listed their budget in currencies other than US Dollars or they did not indicate the specific currency they were using. Furthermore, instead of using an open-ended, fill in the blank question format, it would have been better to use a multiple choice question format with different budget amount ranges from which to choose. Despite these difficulties, the budget results from our survey confirmed the information discussed in numerous articles concerning the funding status of disabled women's organizations, women's rights organizations and disability rights organizations.

These concerns also highlighted the difficulties of properly designing a survey to get accurate data which could be analyzed and compared and from which one could draw conclusions. For a future version of such a survey, it is important to ensure that there are sufficient funds to engage a highly experienced survey design expert to address such survey design and format issues.

However, the Survey Monkey platform is quite useful for such surveys as the system assists one in analyzing the data and, when used in combination with excel spread sheets, the system permits useful graphical representations of survey results.

In summary, we attempted to address some of the limitations and all-in-all this first of its kind survey provides much useful and exciting information to assist in future organizing and collaboration for the advancement of the rights of women and girls with disabilities and our organizations worldwide.

Next Steps



The [Global Fund for Women, Champions for Equality](#) Infographic pictured above states:

Global Fund for Women, Champions for Equality

What is a movement?

- A movement is a group of people with a shared purpose who create change together. It is made up of:

- A strong pipeline of leaders
- Powerful grassroots support
- Solid partnerships
- A shared political goal and plan for the future
- With a combination of strategies:

*Advocacy

*Media Reach

*Legal Action

*Protests

*Research

As we review the findings of this Global Disabled Women's Rights Advocacy Report, it is clear that the global movement of women and girls with disabilities working for our rights is such a movement striving to create change together and the survey respondents clearly indicated that they work to use all of the strategies noted above. Certainly, our movement is a group of people with a shared purpose, that is, our movement seeks to engage women and girls with disabilities worldwide to contribute to the struggle for our human rights.

An overwhelmingly clear finding from WEI's Report is that the growing number of disabled women and their organizations working for the rights of women and girls with disabilities is increasingly passionate, energetic and committed to this urgent effort. Furthermore, these women want to work collaboratively, share a desire to enhance their skills and demand their rights unequivocally. These findings form the basis for the development of enhanced mechanisms for collaboration, strategies for organization capacity building and significantly increased funding for these organizations and this important work.

These organizations are working to develop more powerful grassroots support and Solid partnerships. As an Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) article points out, "If women are to meet and organize politically, they have first to make contact, and have to then find spaces/places and contexts in which they can find a joint way of expressing their presence."⁴⁰

WEI's *accountABILITY* Toolkit

To strengthen global advocacy for the rights of women and girls with disabilities, WEI is developing an advocacy Toolkit for engagement on the international stage. This toolkit, entitled WEI's *accountABILITY* Toolkit, will contain information on the various

⁴⁰ Janet Price, Association of Women in Development (AWID), *The Seeds of A Movement-Disabled Women and Their Struggle to Organize* 5 (2011), available at http://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/changing_their_world_2_-_disabled_women_and_their_struggle_to_organize.pdf. (Janet Price, *supra* note 2, at 5.)



international system mechanisms before which one can advocate, with administrative requirements for each, as well as requisite strategic planning for such advocacy. This Toolkit fills a crucial gap on advocacy on behalf of women and girls with disabilities before UN international mechanisms.

As WEI's research has documented, and as this Report confirms, the experiences of women and girls with disabilities are frequently overlooked in both State and civil society submissions to UN treaty bodies, to the Universal Periodic Review and to other UN mechanisms as well as to regional human rights mechanisms. By facilitating engagement around the rights of women and girls with disabilities by both the disability rights movement and the mainstream women's rights movement, WEI's *AccountABILITY Toolkit* will help ensure sustained and regular reporting on these issues to grow and strengthen the body of human rights jurisprudence holding States accountable for their obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of women and girls with disabilities.

Through the comprehensive review of existing UN jurisprudence, the *WEI AccountABILITY Toolkit* serves the additional purpose of identifying gaps in existing standards. This mapping of normative gaps will help WEI and its partners develop targeted advocacy strategies to strengthen human rights protections for women and girls with disabilities.

WEI's *AccountABILITY Toolkit* project has begun with comprehensive research and analysis of existing UN standards on the rights of women and girls with disabilities. With the support of WEI's legal interns, WEI's Legal Advisor and President and several leading *pro bono* law firms, WEI is undertaking an exhaustive review of treaty language, general comments, individual complaints, concluding observations, and reports by special procedure mandate holders as the basis for developing the *WEI AccountABILITY Toolkit*. This review includes the jurisprudence of various human rights treaty bodies. The toolkit will consist of a series of briefing papers and will include (1) a brief guide to UN advocacy on behalf of women and girls with disabilities and (2), individual briefing papers analyzing and summarizing existing standards on different thematic issues pertaining to the rights of women and girls with disabilities and how these standards could be further strengthened.

The initial roll out of the toolkit will begin with a briefing paper on advocacy strategies and how to use the Toolkit, and other briefing papers will focus on three thematic areas:

sexual and reproductive health and rights; gender-based violence; and stereotyping and discrimination. With additional funding, future briefing papers will explore other thematic issues of interest to women and girls with disabilities, such as legal capacity; and living independently in the community and social supports.

WEI's AccountABILITY Toolkit will be available both in hard copy and electronically. The electronic version, which will be made available through WEI's website, and includes hyperlinks to the full text of relevant jurisprudence, to make it easy for advocates to draw on and apply the standards to their own UN submissions and to allow for more regular updates to the publication as standards develop over time.

WEI will distribute this Toolkit widely and is seeking additional grant funding to permit WEI to assist organizations of women with disabilities in their own advocacy efforts. To enhance the reach of the *accountability Toolkit*, WEI is seeking additional funding support to translate the Toolkit into Arabic, French and Spanish.

Convening

In July 2016, In Geneva, Switzerland, WEI will convene its first high-level meeting for a small group of international disabled women's rights leaders to better understand the scope and depth of the field of the rights of women and girls with disabilities and develop a proposed strategic action plan based on shared learning and collaboration.

This 4-day convening will bring together a small group of organization and academic leaders in the field of the rights of women with disabilities and girls globally to coincide with the meeting of the UN CEDAW Committee. Participants will be from different regions of the world and will represent various points of view. The agenda will be to review the mapping report of the field of global disabled women's rights leaders and organizations, to collectively define an agenda focused on the intersectionality of women's rights, disability rights, and human rights, and to develop a strategic action plan. Furthermore, the *accountABILITY Toolkit* will be distributed and participants will receive training on how to use the *accountABILITY Toolkit* in their own advocacy work and guidance on how they can train others in its use.

WEI hopes to hold additional small convenings in other parts of the world focusing on particular regions, but this effort is still in the early stage of planning.

Funding Gap

To help address the funding gaps for organizations and advocacy for women and girls with disabilities, WEI is working to influence foundations, corporations, and other private donors to devote more funding to disabled women's organizations in order to enable disabled women's organizations to better advocate with national governments and international mechanisms. WEI is working to address both the lack of research and data, as well as the lack of official development assistance (ODA) for all women and girls, and especially for women and girls with disabilities who represent 18% of the world's female population.

Conclusion

There is much work to do, but together we cannot fail!

Appendices

- I. Mapping Project Survey Questions
[Final drafts of survey in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)]
- II. [Aggregate Demographic Information of Respondents \(Survey Question 30 and above\)](#)
- III. A. [Geographic Information of Respondents by Region and Country](#)
B. [Alphabetical Survey Respondent Organization List](#)
- IV. [List of Organizations Led by Women and Girls with Disabilities](#)
- V. [Bibliography of Respondent Publications and Reports](#)

(Below, photo of the Women Enabled International promotional fan)



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