

# Disability & Start-Up

Civil society as protagonist of inclusive development in Liberia

## Diagnostic Study

On

Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPOs)  
& National Union of Organizations of the  
Disabled (NUOD)

2018

Easy to Read Summary Version



An Easy to Read summary of the Report of the “Diagnostic Study on Disabled Peoples’ Organisations (DPOs) and the National Union of the Disabled (NUOD)”, prepared by Dr. Sunil Deepak (consultant, AIFO/Italy), with support from Naomi B. Harris, (President, NUOD/Liberia) November 2018

*Disability & Start-up, Civil Society as Protagonist of Inclusive Development in Liberia* (Project AID-11516) - DASU project funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

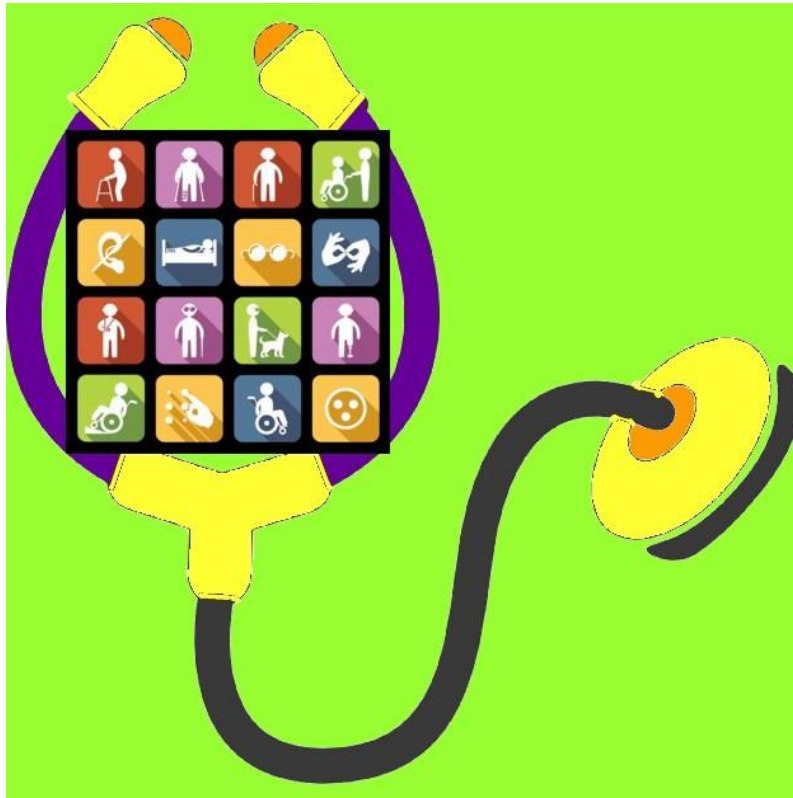
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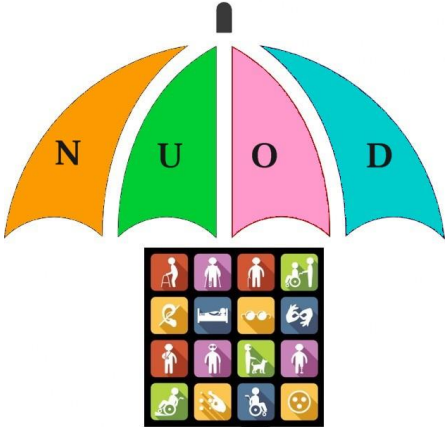


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## **A Diagnostic Study of DPOs: Objective**



A Check-Up of  
Disabled Peoples' Organisations (DPOs)  
In Liberia  
To  
Understand their Strengths, Weaknesses & Capacity  
Building Needs  
For Planning the  
DPO-Training

## Participants in the Diagnostic Study

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>National Union Of Organisations Of Disabled (NUOD)</b></p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DPOs in Monrovia</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cultivators for Users’ Hope (CFUH) &amp; Liberian National Association of Deaf (LNAD)</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>County DPOs</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>From Bong, Nimba &amp; Grand Gedeh Counties</b></p>	

## **County DPOs**

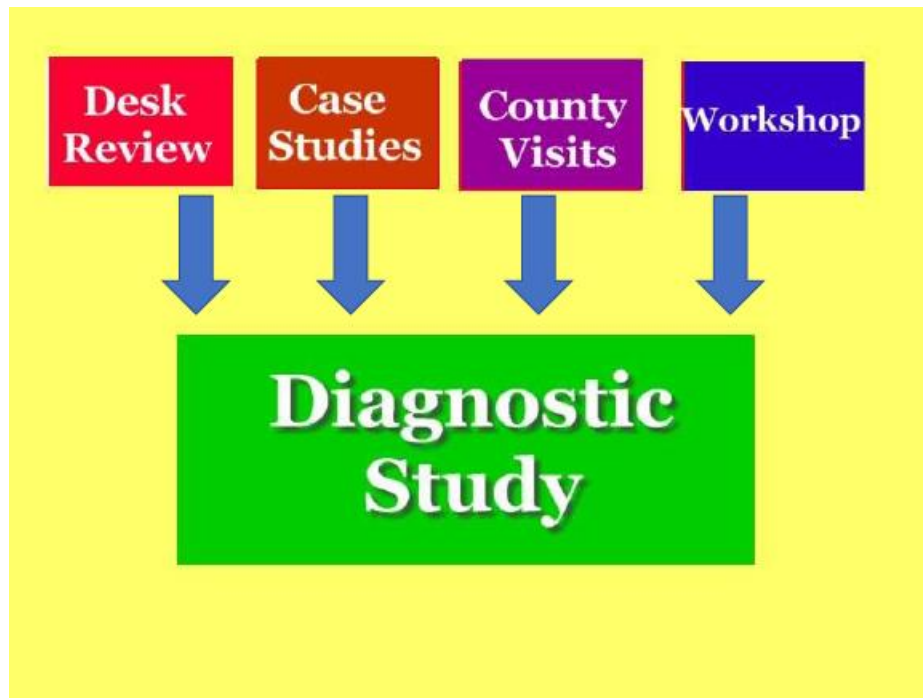
The following Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) from the counties participated in the Diagnostic Study:

**Bong County:** Christian Association of the Blind (CAB), Group of 77, National Association of the Blind (NAB) & Salayea Agriculture Project (SAPRO)

**Grand Gedeh County:** Grand Gedeh Association of Disabled (GGAD)

**Nimba County:** Group of 77 & Nimba Disabled Community (NDC)

## Study Methodology



### **A 4-Step Process:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Step – Desk review:** Reviewing printed and online reports, publications, news articles about Disability sector and about DPOs in Liberia to understand the situation.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Step – Case studies:** Collecting case studies from counties to see kind of income generation activities by the disabled persons.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Step – County Visits:** Visiting counties and meeting DPO leaders.

**4<sup>th</sup> Step – Workshop:** Discussions with representatives of NUOD and DPOs on their activities, strengths and weaknesses.

## Main Findings

During the Civil War, DPOs were mainly engaged in emergency support



**Civil War 1989 - 2003**

**Key Gains after the end of the Civil War:** DPOs became active and significant gains were made such as formation of National Commission on Disability (2005) and signing of United Nations Conventions on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007), which was ratified by Liberian Government in 2012.



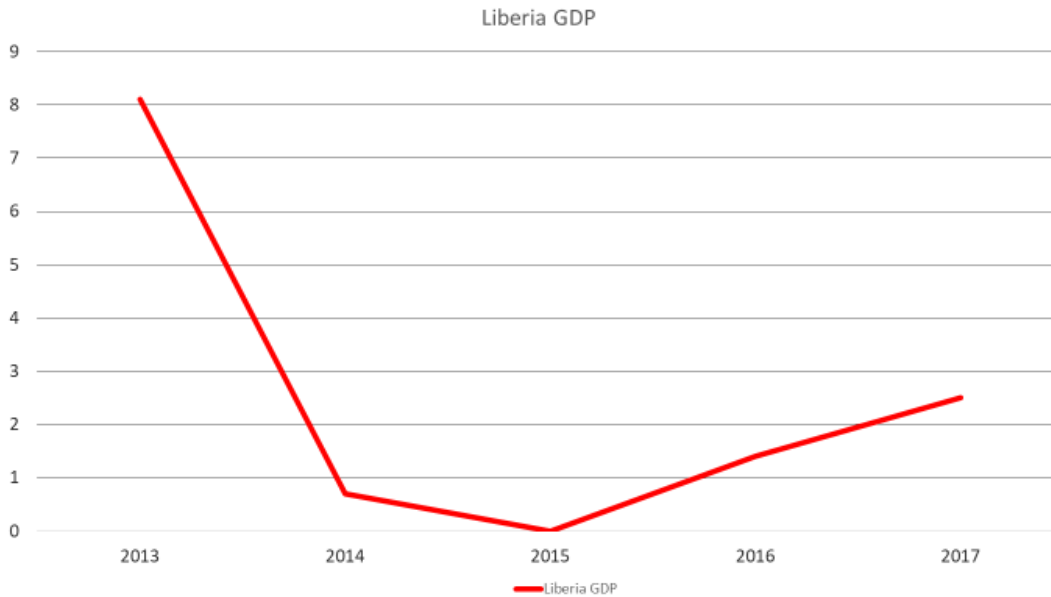
**Ebola Crisis 2014-2016**

**Ebola Crisis  
in 2014-2016  
had  
a Devastating Impact  
on  
Liberia**

**Due to the Ebola Crisis the whole Country  
Suffered**



## Impact of Ebola Crisis on GDP Growth of Liberia



In 2013, the GDP growth of Liberia was 8.1%. Due to Ebola crisis, it fell to 0.7% in 2014 and was zero in 2015. In 2017 it was 2.4% and is recovering slowly.

**After the Ebola crisis**, slowly there are significant developments in the disability sector including the approval of the new inclusive education policy in 2017 and validation of National Plan of Action for the implementation of Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2018.

The coming months and years will be important for the DPOs to launch strong advocacy for ensuring equal rights, access to health and social services, access to employment and support for self-employment.

DPOs will need good skills to ensure implementation of CRPD, strong advocacy skills, effective fund-raising and making stronger networks of persons with disabilities to fight for their rights with one voice.

As economic growth of Liberia decreased, there may be lesser funds and budget cuts – so strong advocacy is needed to ensure that Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are not left behind. It also means that gains may take time.

There can be many opportunities. For example, with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related programmes, with African networks, with new international partners. DPOs need new & effective skills to gain from these opportunities.

### **Key Findings of the Diagnostic Study**

- **NUOD** has developed into a dynamic organisation with experience of running projects. It has branches in the counties and is able to mobilize partnerships and action. It is a much stronger organisation today compared to five years ago. Its weakness is lack of sustainable funding for its activities. It needs stronger networking, project writing, sustainable projects that can continue beyond outside funding, advocacy planning and fund-raising skills.
- **County DPOs** in Bong, Grand Gedeh and Nimba present a variable situation. They all need upgrading in their networking, advocacy and fund-raising skills.

- In Bong, there are 4 DPOs but they are not united and do not speak with one voice.
- In Grand Gedeh, there is a network of 3 district groups united in one county DPO but it is just renewing and restarting in an active way. The county has logistic problems so regular communication between 3 districts is not easy. Programme priorities are not defined and funding is a challenge.
- Nimba has a good network of a county DPO with branches in 7 districts, with district groups and some self-help groups. It can speak in one voice and has good relations with county and district authorities. It needs to expand to remaining districts.
- **Monrovia-based DPOs:** This exercise included 2 DPOs from Monrovia (Cultivators for Users' Hope – CFUH, and Liberia National Association of the Deaf – LNAD). Both have dynamism and skills. LNAD has more experience in running projects, while CFUH is stronger in preparing reports and communication. Like the county DPOs, they will gain from skills in networking, advocacy planning and fund-raising.

# **Institutional Capacity Building Proposal for the First “Training of Trainers” Course Under Disability & Start-Up (DASU) Project**

## **4 Learning Areas for the Training Courses**



### **The Training Will Cover 4 Areas of Learning:**

**1 CRPD and SDGs**

**2 Networking**

**3 Advocacy**

**4 Fund-raising**

Some examples of issues that can be covered under the training on specific domains are provided.

## **Area 1: CRPD and SDGs**

Understanding Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for practical use in all the DPO Activities.

**For example**, using CRPD and SDGs for the following DPO activities:

- Participating in the national CRPD and SDG implementation and monitoring focusing on economic empowerment.
- Using CRPD and SDGs to strengthen networking with international partners and networks
- Using CRPD & SDGs in project proposals and fund-raising.

## **Area 2: Networking**

Understanding different aspects of networking for become more inclusive and stronger DPOs.

For example, strengthening the networking for the following DPO activities:

- Ensuring participation and inclusion of different groups of persons with disabilities in the DPO, including women, elderly persons and specific groups such as persons with mental health conditions & intellectual disabilities.
- Communication and social media skills for informing members, creating awareness, promoting advocacy.

- Exchanging views, creating synergies with different DPOs and federations in Liberia and internationally.
- Organisational management including human resources and office management.

### **Area 3: Advocacy**

Influencing decision-makers to promote rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their access to different services and programmes.

For example, strengthening the advocacy for the following DPO activities:

- Collecting and sharing information about persons with disabilities and their needs to influence decision-makers
- Using appropriate communication strategies for different disability-sector stakeholders to make them understand and support the needs of disabled persons
- Identifying advocacy priorities, deciding advocacy goals and making advocacy plans to reach those goals
- Coalitions of DPOs for more effective advocacy for CRPD implementation & using advocacy groups to influence local leaders & decision-makers

### **Area 4: Fund-Raising**

Finding resources to ensure sustainability of the DPOs and strengthen their activities.

For example, strengthening the fund-raising for the following DPO activities:

Uniting with other DPOs and bringing new members to be able to influence decision makers in districts and counties for supporting DPOs with funds

Identifying different kinds of funders, understanding the kind of activities they can fund, and preparing a fund-raising strategy.

Promoting savings and credit activities through Self-Help Groups with some contributions for the DPO activities.

### **First DPO Training Course**

A 4-day first training course is being planned in October 2018. It will be for “Training of Trainers”, with the goal of preparing capable persons with disabilities who can train other DPO members.

The participants in the “Training of Trainers” course will include persons from NUOD and from the DPOs through a transparent process of participants identification and selection.

The training will draw on experiences of DPOs in other countries.

After the Training of Trainers, training courses will be organised in each county to reach representatives of all the DPOs. Follow-up actions will include strengthening of the DPOs to practice the new learnings.