



A global gap for nonvisible Disabilities: Advocating for a global agency for PWDs

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FALL 2025 Professional Fellow



FELLOWSHIP Host Mentor

- Host Mentor Disability Policy Consortium (DPC)
 - DPC is Massachusetts' leading disability rights organization that redefines the role of government as it affects the lives of people with disabilities.
 - Credo: About Us, By Us
- Host Mentors
 - R
 - Samantha Fein



MIGHT Foundation

- **Founded:** 2016
- **Mission:** Supporting people with lupus and related conditions in Uganda
- **Key program areas:**
 - Story telling through documentaries,
 - Healthcare through doctor training and telemedicine, and
 - Policy advocacy including developing Policy fact sheet
- **Partners:** Lupus Initiative Uganda, Purple Butterfly Uganda, Bitone Art Reels
- **Website:** <https://mightfoundation.org/>



Experience during PFP

- **Paul W. Spooner leadership summit** – Thanks to R, Harry and Destiny at DPC, I attended the Paul Spooner Summit.
- Visited multiple PWD led organizations in Boston & watched the Crip Camp documentary
- I held talks and workshops with lupus researchers interested in lupus and people with lupus, who called me
 - To talk to Bill Gates, and the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, and
 - To raise awareness about lupus globally, since they lacked such connections



Paul W. Spooner Leadership summit



Caption: From L-R: Fall 2025 Professional Fellow Derrick Mpagi and his Personal Assistant Martha Mpagi during the Paul W. Spooner Summit



ISSUE

- **Challenge**

- Lack of global collaborations between people with disabilities

- **Root causes**

- Global Disability Fund focuses only on,
 - Global implementation of CRPD
 - Providing funds to PWDs in the Global South
- Committee on the rights of PWDs under Article 34 of the CRPD
 - Under staffed, i.e 12-18 members, to deal with global challenges of PWDs
 - Lacks support from a global champion of PWDs



Solution

- United Nations Persons With Disabilities (UNPWDs) Agency/Program/Fund
 - An agency that will focus on,
 - ✓ Acting as a global advocate for the rights of PWDs
 - ✓ Organizing global and regional conferences, training and fellowships
 - ✓ Involve PWDs in global programs, policies or conventions on PWDs like;
 - Resolutions strengthening the CRPD
 - For example, a resolution on the definition of disability in the CRPD under Article 1
 - ✓ Increase funding for PWDs and carry out research on best practices



Definition of disability in the CRPD

Article 1 Purpose

The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.



Definition of disability in Uganda (The PWD Act 2020)

“disability” means a substantial functional limitation of a person’s daily life activities caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment and environment barriers, resulting in limited participation in society on equal basis with others and includes an impairment specified in Schedule 3 to this Act;

Schedule 3 (Section 1)

Categories of disabilities

1. Physical disability caused by cerebral palsy, amputation of a limb, paralysis or deformity.
2. Hearing disability including deafness and hard of hearing disability.
3. Visual disability including blindness and low vision disability.
4. Deaf and blind disability.
5. Mental disability including psychiatric disability and learning. disability.
6. Little people.
7. Albinism.
8. Multiple disability.



Key takeaways

- As PWDs, we need to advocate a global champion, that will,
 - ✓ Be a global champion for the rights of PWDs
 - ✓ Support the committee on the rights of people with disabilities
 - ✓ Advocate for a resolution to strengthen the definition of disability in the CRPD
 - ✓ Strengthen global national laws on disability
 - ✓ Increase global exchanges between PWDs and their initiatives
 - ✓ Strengthen the participation of PWDs in global and national matters about PWDs, especially black people with disabilities



Partners and supporters

A big thanks to

- **PFP Program staff**

- Heike, PFP team, IDF and the U.S Department of State for the PFP program

- **DPC Mentors**

- R & Sam for scheduling my summit participation

- **Paul Spooner Summit hosts**

- Harry & Destiny for hosting me at the Summit
- Hezzy Smith, Director of Advocacy Initiatives, Harvard Law

About us, By us.



MWEBALE!

Thank You!