



COALITION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

ANNUAL JOURNAL
2014





WE ARE - „COALITION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING!“

1	League of Disabled
2	Association Anika
3	Association for Persons in Need of Special Care
4	Georgian National Paralympic Committee
5	Union Child, Family, Society
6	Rehabilitation Union of Children with Disabilities
7	International Association of Women with Disabilities
8	Association of Helping Children with Hearing and Speaking Disorders
9	Blind Union
10	Deaf Union
11	Association of Hemophiliacs and Donors of Georgia
12	Employment Union of the People With Disabilities
13	Gori's Club of Disabled
14	Parent's Bidge
15	Union of Warriors with Disabilities and the Wives of Killed Warriors
16	Library – Cultural Center for Disabled “Tanadgoma”
17	Studio ADC
18	Union “Rea”
19	Centre for Free Pedagogics
20	Union IA
21	Union Parents' Support
22	PARSA
23	Woman and Reality

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BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DISABILITY MOVEMENT IN GEORGIA

The disability rights movement in Georgia started at the end of the 80s when the wave of national freedom movement was all over the country. The disability movement at that time was mainly of the protesting nature.

Demonstrations (including hunger strikes) were held in front of the Parliament building, State Chancellery, Public Defender's Office and other state buildings. Disabled activists then were demanding respect for their rights, equal opportunities and conditions for dignified co-existence in the society.

As a result, early 90's saw establishment of alliance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focusing on different categories of disabled persons such as the blind, the deaf, wheelchair-users, parents of children with disabilities, disabled athletes, etc. These organizations were not happy with the government support of one or another particular service and were demanding provision of equal opportunities from the government.



At the same time CLIL itself is a member of local and international alliances and forums, such as:



Georgian Eastern Partnership
National Platform



WDU
WORLD
DISABILITY
UNION
World Disability Union (WDU)



European Network on
Independent Living (ENIL)



European Disability Forum
(EDF)



In 1997, under the leadership of the League of Disabled, a coordinating council of disability NGOs was established which was officially registered as Coalition for Independent Living in 1999. CLIL underwent a secondary registration in 2003 and today CLIL umbrella brings together 26 NGOs working on various issues of disability.

KEY CIL ACTIVITY AREAS

- Protect and advocate for the rights and civil interests of PWD.
- Initiate and support legislative changes; lobby for harmonization of Georgian legislation with international acts and standards;
- Influence state disability policy formation;
- Support accessible infrastructure and introduction of the universal design principles;
- Support social enterprising and employment of persons with disabilities;
- Empower and motivate persons with disabilities; provide independent living skills trainings;
- Raise public awareness on disability by means of training, public education events; sport and cultural events; etc.
- Promote inclusive education;
- Support capacity-building of disability organizations;
- Support creation of accessible voting environment for disabled voters;
- Promote accessible tourism;
- Support CIL member organizations.



CIL Chairman Giorgi Dzneiadze in the disability rights training with youth with disabilities

CURRENT AND PAST CIL PROJECTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Disability Advocacy Project



FUNDING: USAID

DURATION: 2012-2014

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi and the regions of Imereti, Guria, Samegrelo and Adjara

Project Goal: Strengthen disabled people's organizations (DPOs) in Tbilisi, Guria, Samegrelo, Imereti and Adjara to effectively include women, men and children with disabilities in current and upcoming development programs in their communities.

Target groups and geographical coverage: Central and local Government representatives and non-governmental organizations working on the issues of disability. Project covers Tbilisi and regions of West Georgia.



Current Project Achievements and Milestones:

- Young disabled activists from Imereti, Guria, Samegrelo and Adjara have been revealed and trained in advocacy, monitoring, proposal development and project management;
- More than 20 DPOs in Tbilisi and the regions of Imereti, Guria, Samegrelo and Adjara have been trained in advocacy, monitoring and project management;
- Network of DPOs and disability NGOs in has been created and is successfully operating west Georgia exchanging information, experience and resources;
- 2014-2016 State Action Plan on Providing Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities was developed with coordination from CIL and approved by the Government;
- The work on improving disability legislation in Georgia and developing a comprehensive and effective law against discrimination of PWD has been initiated;
- A series of public education events such as disability rights awareness seminars for various target groups, "lessons of kindness" at schools and other awareness raising events to mark June 14 - National Disability Day and December 3 - International Disability day have been organized across Georgia.



On November 30, 2013 Courtyard Marriott hosted a highly representative Disability Conference: "Persons with Disabilities - Current Situation and New Challenges", organized by CIL to mark December 3 - International Day of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Conference was representational of highest authorities from the Government of Georgia and the US Embassy/USAID Mission. Namely, the Conference was attended by Bidzina Vanitsvili, the Prime Minister of Georgia and Ministers of Education, Labour, Healthcare and Social Affairs; Justice; Regional Development and Infrastructure; Finance; The guests included US Ambassador Richard Norland, USAID Mission Director Stephen M. Haykin and leaders of disabled people's organizations, representatives of human rights organizations, Public Defender's Office, media professionals and other stakeholders. The purpose of the Disability Conference was to review the disability situation in the country, discuss and agree upon future strategies and cooperation with authorities, DPOs and stakeholder NGOs. The Conference started with a brief history of disability movement in Georgia narrated by Mariam Mikiasvili, young blind leader. The 4-minute video depicting major achievements and problems encountered by the disability movement over the last two decades can be viewed at: www.disability.ge



The November 30 disability conference was concluded by the Conference resolution identifying three goals for 2013 in terms of disability rights:

1. Announce 2013 as the Disability Rights Year
2. Support ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of PWD (UNCRPD)
3. Support the development and approval of the new 2013-2016 State Disability Action Plan.

All of the three goals in the Conference resolution have been achieved in 2013!



Thanks to CIL efforts, there is increasing number of radio and TV shows dedicated to disability issues



The making of social video at Tegeta Motors and Expo Georgia

GEORGIAN WHEELCHAIR PRODUCTION NETWORK

FUNDING: USAID
PARTNERS: World Institute on Disability – WID (USA)
DURATION: 2009 – 2014
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi, Gori and Zugdidi.



Project Goal: To provide international expert training and technical assistance to address four of the most basic problems affecting Georgian wheelchair users: 1) Lack of affordable and maneuverable wheelchairs; 2) Lack of wheelchair mobility training; 3) High rates of PWD unemployment; and 4) Need to remove architectural and attitudinal barriers to the full integration of persons with mobility impairments in the community.

Project Achievements and Milestones:

- Successful wheelchair production business in Tbilisi, which is producing an adult and children model of the Whirlwind Roughrider™ indoor-outdoor wheelchair, portable aluminum ramps, hand controls for vehicles and other assistive equipment since 2010;
- Small wheelchair repair shops in Gori and Zugdidi;
- Postural support seating evaluation, manufacturing and service provided by the trained occupational therapists and specialists at Neurodevelopment Center;
- Four, 5-day active rehabilitation and independent living skills training camp for men and women in wheelchairs - more than 60 wheelchair users have participated in these camps and have acquired independent living skills, knowledge of wheelchair mobility and maintenance, self-care, hygiene, etc.
- Professionals trained in providing individual assessment, fitting and adjustment of wheelchairs based on the individual needs and requirements;
- More than 100 seminars and mini film-exhibitions about the need for accessibility and barrier-free environment with various target groups such as: PWD, their friends and family members, local governments, teachers, media professionals, etc.
- About fifteen 1-day mobility skills training events for wheelchair users in wheelchair mobility, maintenance and self-care;
- More than 10 barrier-removal mini-projects in Tbilisi, Gori and Zugdidi as a result of which entrance ramps were built to schools, churches, municipal buildings, etc.



CL Wheelchair Production

The CL wheelchair production is one of the **most successful social enterprises** in Georgia employing up to **10 disabled individuals alongside non-disabled workers** and producing wheelchairs based on the individual assessment and adjustment model.



Rafik Hotchkiss, designer of Roughrider wheelchairs visiting CL wheelchair workshop



LIVE WITHOUT BARRIERS!

As of today the wheelchair production has produced and delivered more than 2000 active type wheelchairs which means that more than 2000 individuals have improved quality of independent living. The CL wheelchair business has delivered order for Armenia and Azerbaijan as well.

The same project has helped set up a sewing workshop at Gori Disabled Club where deaf specialists make pressure relieving cushions and parts for postural support seating system and the Tbilisi-based organization “Employment Union of Disabled Entrepreneurs” are making upholstery for wheelchairs produced at CL wheelchair workshop.

POSTURAL SUPPORT SEATING SERVICE IN GEORGIA – THE FIRST IN CAUCASUS

One of the biggest and the most important achievements of the project is the postural support seating production and service already in place and operated by the Neurodevelopment Center. The service in particular includes



- Evaluate and assess the needs of the beneficiary;
- Identify the condition of the wheelchair;
- Identify the measurements of the wheelchair and the beneficiary's body;
- Assess the capacity of the beneficiary to maintain balance;
- Identify the level of pressure and capacity of joints;
- Evaluate the risk of secondary problems and complications due to using wheelchair for a long time;
- Pressure sore prevention;

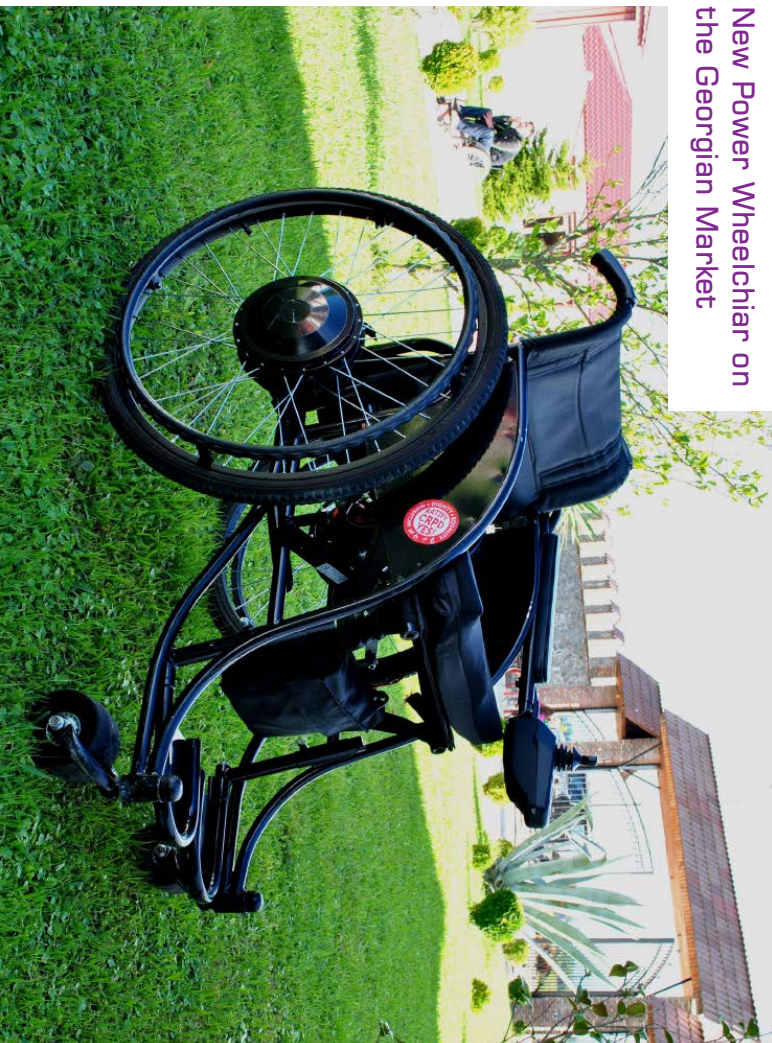
Based on the evaluation results, the specialists can provide wheelchair and postural support service of different level:

- Identify the measurements and type of cushion, with insignificant modifications;
- Modify the wheelchair seat and backrest using various equipment;
- Produce individually adjustable cushion;
- Depending on specific cases and circumstances, modification and adjustment of wheelchair;

As a result of the Wheelchair Production Network Project, Neurodevelopment Center and CLIL now have 16 certified specialists/trainers in wheelchair service provision trained and certified by the internationally recognized specialist, Jamie Noon. The Georgian specialists have already conducted trainings in basic, intermediate and advance wheelchair assessment and service for occupational therapists, social workers, disability organization staff and other stakeholders.

Since the introduction and development of this product and service, the project has provided service to 180 wheelchair users in Tbilisi and more than 100 wheelchair users in the regions. 100 individuals out of these people were given roughriders for free and others received service on their existing chairs.

New Power Wheelchair on the Georgian Market



CLIL is constantly working to improve the current products produced by the wheelchair workshop and introduce new designs. Periodically CLIL wheelchair workshop engineers participate in wheelchair technology training and research, jig-building and wheelchair design exchange activities with foreign engineers. Considering the great demand on power wheelchairs among

Georgian wheelchair-users CLIL developed a lightweight model of electric Roughrider with anti-tip wheels and quick release axles in 2013. The CLIL-produced power wheelchair is different from other wheelchairs with its light weight (it weighs only 36 kg, when power wheelchairs produced by other countries weigh more than 100 kg). The CLIL power wheelchair is compact and foldable, with removable rear wheels, which makes the wheelchair very easy for transportation. The wheelchair battery can last for 7 km when fully charged. Due to the specific design and features of the frame, the CLIL-produced power wheelchair is characterized with high security.

The lightweight power wheelchair is produced and adjusted individually. It is possible to install additional assistive equipment on the wheelchair (neck-rest, armrests, abductor, etc.) and place the remote control either on the right side or the left side, depending on the requirement of the beneficiary.

Aside from wheelchairs, the CLIL wheelchair workshop can produce other assistive equipment such as hand controls for vehicles, portable ramps (aluminium and steel), etc. The workshop has even made a special wheelchair for a pet.

EVERYTHING PRODUCED HERE IS MADE WITH THE BENEFICIARY'S INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS IN MIND!



The US Ambassador, Richard Norland and Healthcare Ministry officials attended the presentation of this unique power wheelchair on March 12, 2013.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING CAMP



Coalition for Independent Living conducts 5-day active rehabilitation and independent living skills training for wheelchair users annually, where camp participants are trained in the following:

- Wheelchair mobility;
- Wheelchair adjustment and posture;
- Wheelchair maintenance and repair;
- "Wheelee";
- Transfers (from wheelchair to a car, shower-chair, chair, bed, etc.);
- Self-care and hygiene;
- Sexuality and fertility;
- Legal and civil rights;
- Sports (archery, table tennis, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair marathon, etc.)
- Other independent living skills;



Since 2010 more than 60 wheelchair users have participated in the independent living skills training camps organized by CL.



In 2012 even the students studying social work have participated in the independent living skills training camp which will help them in their professional work with wheelchair users in the future.

ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS



FUNDING: International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES); Election Systems Development Reforms and Training Center
PARTNER: Central Election Commission
DURATION (of various projects on accessible election): 2008 – 2013
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi and various regions of Georgia

One of the priorities of CL is to ensure accessible voting environment for disabled voters. The disabled community of Georgia agrees that it is unacceptable for them to vote using mobile ballot boxes and prefer to make their choice by going to the polling station.

The projects implemented by CL in this direction have covered not only Tbilisi, but other towns of Georgia as well:

- Workshops with disabled voters aiming to raise awareness, motivate and improve voting culture among the voters with disabilities;
- Adaptation of 5 polling stations (located at public schools) in Tbilisi in 2008;
- Mobile team service (introduced in 2010) equipped with accessible mini-vans and portable ramps to help disabled voters vote by going to their polling stations. As of today, more than 200 voters with disabilities have benefited from this service and the majority of them have voted for the first time;





- Pre-elections survey during which about 100 interviewers selected by CIL visited and interviewed 8 532 voters with disabilities to identify their voting needs. Out of these 8 532 - 1902 were wheelchair users, 4 792 – blind and 1829 – deaf;
- Public education event: **"Independent Person – Free Choice"** prior to every election involving activists with disabilities, volunteers and students demanding accessible voting environment for voters with disabilities and motivating the society to be pro-active in this direction;
- For the first time in Georgia – accessible voting booths for wheelchair user voters introduced in 2012. There were 800 such booths set up at different polling stations in 2013;
- Awareness raising seminar for election management bodies about the voting needs of and communication norms with disabled voters;
- Other public education and communication campaigns;



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES – NATURAL AND RESPECTED GROUP OF SOCIETY

FUNDING:
Czech Republic Development Agency

PARTNERS:
Cartas Czech Republic;
Georgian Association of Social Workers; Georgian Employers Association

DURATION: 2012-2014

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE:
Tbilisi

- Project Goals:**
- Raise public awareness about disability among state actors, employers and broad society;
 - Prepare materials for legislative changes supporting the employment of PWD;
 - Support the establishment of labor relations between employers and PWD; motivate employers to hire PWD in their companies;

Project Achievements and Milestones:

The project will help raise public awareness about the labor capacities of PWD and develop materials for legislative changes. In addition, as a result of the project up to 20 persons with disabilities will work as interns at various businesses and will be eventually hired by the employers after the internship.

DISABLED YOUTH DEVELOP CIVIL DIPLOMACY

FUNDING:
OSCE Georgia, World Institute on Disability (USA), Perspektiva (Russia)

PARTNERS:
Aisi NGO (Abkhazia)

DURATION: 2004-2005

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE:
Tbilisi

Project Goal:

Identify and train disabled youth in conflict resolution; organize workshops and roundtables in Moscow involving youth from Abkhazia, Georgia and South Ossetia.

- Project Achievements and Milestones:**
- Skillful youth with disabilities trained as leaders and trainers. Most of them continue advocacy activities today;
 - Disability film "Open Windows" – the first film promoting barrier-removal activities;
 - Cooperation and friendly links with the disabled advocates from Abkhazia and Russia.

SUPPORTING ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT



Project Goal:
support creation of accessible physical environment at one municipality in Tbilisi and one municipality in Yerevan by means of enforcing local laws and regulations which in the end will ensure inclusion of PWD in the lives of these two capitals. Further objectives included strengthening local governments, mobilizing the society and businesses of these municipalities and informing them about various disability issues, including the need of accessibility.

Project Achievements and Milestones:
In frames of the project a situational analysis and review of the Didube-Chughureti municipality was conducted in order to identify the number of PWD living in this district, the number of educational, cultural and other public buildings and their statuses of accessibility. As a result of the project entrance ramps were built to several public buildings in Didube-Chughureti municipality

FUNDING: Black Sea Trust
PARTNER: Skarp NGO (Armenia)
DURATION: 2010-2011
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi, Didube-Chughureti municipality

Strengthening DPOs to Promote Equal Opportunities for PWD

FUNDING: Open Society – Georgia Foundation
DURATION: January 2012 – October 2012
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi

Project Goal:
Support the implementation of 2010-2012 State Action Plan on Disability and the ratification of UNCRPD by means of strengthening disability organizations.

Project Achievements and Milestones:
The project has helped improve coordination and cooperation within CL as well as with government agencies and other organizations. In frames of the project CL developed the 4-year strategic development plan of CL and supported capacity building of its member organizations and disabled youth initiative groups by means of providing training. A number of thematic meetings and workshops were conducted with Tbilisi and Kutaisi City Hall Councils on disability as a result of which the decision-makers have improved knowledge and understanding of the needs of PWD and there is enhanced cooperation between the decision-makers and disabled communities.

I PROTECT THE RIGHTS: DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING

CL cooperated with Movement for Accessible Environment (MAE) NGO in implementing the project "I Protect the Rights" supported by Open Society - Georgia Foundation. The goal of the project was to promote the rights of PWD to be protected everywhere, including parking lots. The key activity of the project was to conduct an advocacy campaign for this purpose: namely, PWDs, journalists, sportsmen, artists carried out a series of public education activities including radio and TV shows, publications, etc. to inform the society about the need for special parking places for the disabled drivers/passengers. At the same time, MAE and CL had workshops and meetings with Tbilisi City Hall decision-makers, which in the end resulted with the decision of C.T. Park to set up disabled persons' parking everywhere. Thus the project "I Protect the Rights" was one of the most successful advocacy projects implemented by disability organizations in Georgia.



CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES FOR THE RIGHTS OF PWD

FUNDING: Education Development Center (USA)
DURATION: 2008-2009
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi

Project Goal:
strengthen and build capacity of CL as the largest disability umbrella organization in order to promote the rights of PWD and carry out effective advocacy activities.

Project Achievements and Milestones:
CL formed two workgroups out of CL member organizations who developed two mini-projects for supporting employment of PWD and improving information referral service and received small grants from CL to implement the projects. As a result, CL as well as its member NGOs were strengthened in terms of promoting the employment rights of PWD and conducting referral services and surveys.



SUPPORTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

FUNDING: USAID
PARTNER: Save the Children
DURATION: 2006 – 2012
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE: Tbilisi and the regions of Imereti, Kakheti and Adjara

Project Goal:

The overall goal of the project is to foster the conditions for equal opportunities and full participation of people with disabilities (PWD) in the political, economic and social life of Georgia. Further objectives include promote coordination between state and non-state actors and international organizations in order to create effective policy and strategy responding the needs of persons with disabilities.

Project Achievements and Milestones:

- Capacity building of CL;
- Concept Paper on Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities – approved by the Parliament of Georgia on December 2, 2008;
- Prime Minister’s National Coordinating Council on the Issues of Disability – consisting of Ministers and representatives of Parliament, Public Defender’s Office and NGOs;
- The project has established the tradition of marking June 14 - National Disability Day by organizing large-scale disability exhibition fair forums involving tens of organizations and hundreds of people and presenting social enterprises, panel discussions, presentations, award ceremony, etc.;



- Every year CL organizes disability rights weeks and campaigns to mark December 3 - International Disability Day and improve coordination between state and non-state actors around disability issues;
- Young disabled activist and leader teams and initiative groups in three regions of Georgia: Kakheti, Imereti and Adjara;
- More than 200 seminars and training to architects, students, teachers, local governments, police, etc. reaching to more than 2000 persons;
- 6 social videos and one documentary film “Breaking the Wall” demonstrated during seminars, mini-film exhibitions and other channels (TV, festivals, etc.) and reaching to more than 100 000 persons;
- Publications and resource materials around disability.



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS DEDICATED TO DISABILITY RIGHTS DAYS

CIL has a tradition of marking December 3 – International Disability Day and June 14 – National Disability Day, which was established by CIL as the National Disability Rights Day in 2003.

Various public education events and campaigns, conferences and roundtables are arranged by CIL, organizations every year aiming to raise public awareness on disability and enhance cooperation between state agencies and local and international non-governmental organizations.

Wheelchair Race at Parliament Building

CIL organized a solidarity wheelchair sports event in front of the Parliament Building in Kuraisi in 2013. The event involved Georgian and Azeri wheelchair users and Members of Parliament (Tamar Kordzaia, Zaqaria Qutsnashvili, Gigi Tsereteli, Goga Khaachidze, Davit Lorkikiani, etc.) competing with each other in wheelchairs. The purpose of the event was to call for adequate understanding of the needs of the disabled and consideration of these needs in decision-making. The event was supported by USAID in frames of the Disability Advocacy Project.



Solidarity Train

CIL and the disability organizations under the CIL umbrella with the help from students, disabled activists and their friends organized a public education campaign “Solidarity Train” on December 3, 2011. The event involved more than 40 PWD and 100 volunteers and supporters who formed a symbolic train and marched from Chavchavadze



Avenue to Phlitharmonic with symbolic stops in between to talk about various disability issues such as: education, employment, accessibility, etc. The last stop was at Phlitharmonic where wheelchair users demonstrated wheelchair mobility and independent living skills by overcoming artificial wheelchair obstacle course. CIL also provided wheelchairs for volunteers and passers-by to try overcoming the barriers themselves. Aside from raising public awareness on the rights of PWD, the purpose of this event was to demand ratification of UNCPRD as well.



Disability Exhibition Fair Forum



CL hosted disability exhibition fair forums on June 14 - National Disability Day three times in a row.

Each year the fair forum involved about 45 local and international NGOs

The fair forum hosted more than 500 guests including officials, PWD, disability experts, etc.

Aside from presenting and selling products of social enterprises, the disability exhibition fair forums presents panel discussions on various disability issues involving state and non-state actors.

The fair forums are concluded with awarding ceremony of individuals and/ or organizations in various nominations including: best photo, newspaper/ online article, video, documentary, TV report, project and best disability rights advocate - selected by the Independent commission.



Awarded individuals walking down the red carpet in 2010



Giorgi Dzneladze being awarded with the certificate by the US Ambassador John Taft in 2009



Best disability rights advocate in 2010 - Irine Inasandze



Director of the documentary film winning the nomination for best documentary, Giorgi Gvishiani



Geccell - CL's longtime partner



Rustavi-2 Journalist Maia Lomidze awarded for the best TV report



Zatapkhaná joined the CL's support group in 2010



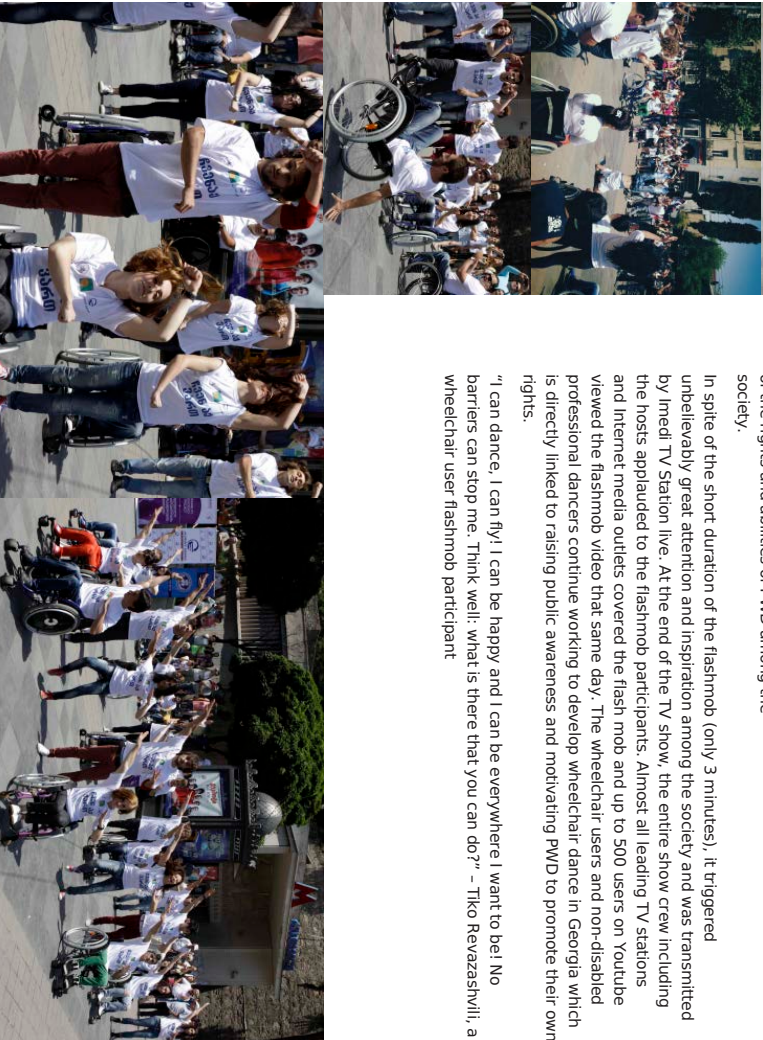
The First Ever Flashmob of Wheelchair Users in Georgia – Protecting the Rights by Dancing

CIL marked June 14 – National Disability Day in 2013 by organizing a dance flashmob of wheelchair users and professional dancers in wheelchairs near Rustaveli Metro Station dancing freestyle and calling for the recognition of the rights and abilities of PWD among the society.



In spite of the short duration of the flashmob (only 3 minutes), it triggered unbelievably great attention and inspiration among the society and was transmitted by Imedi TV Station live. At the end of the TV show, the entire show crew including the hosts applauded to the flashmob participants. Almost all leading TV stations and Internet media outlets covered the flash mob and up to 500 users on Youtube viewed the flashmob video that same day. The wheelchair users and non-disabled professional dancers continue working to develop wheelchair dance in Georgia which is directly linked to raising public awareness and motivating PWD to promote their own rights.

“I can dance, I can fly! I can be happy and I can be everywhere I want to be! No barriers can stop me. Think well: what is there that you can do?” – Tiko Revazashvili, a wheelchair user flashmob participant



CIL representatives were invited by Leadership, Management and Governance (LMG) Program supported by USAID to attend the National Council on Independent Living annual conference and the Leadership Training on International Disability Rights and Independent Living, which took place in Washington, DC during July 21-31, 2013. CIL were hosted by Management Sciences for Health in Washington.

The training brought together select participants from DPOs in six countries (Georgia, Albania, Kazakhstan, Haiti, South Africa and Paraguay) to Washington, DC to gain in-depth training in Independent Living (IL), peer-to-peer support and mentoring relationships, and practical leadership practices to support DPOs in applying what they have learnt in their countries. As part of the training, CIL also attended annual US National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) Conference on Independent Living, which took place July 24-27. CIL also participated in exchange visits to local Centers for Independent Living, networked and built linkages with key players in disability

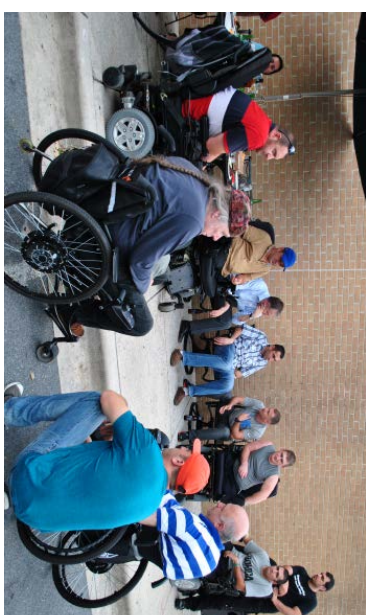


During the stay in Washington, CIL visited wounded Georgian soldiers from Afghanistan who are undergoing rehabilitation treatment at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC. Along with the Deputy Ambassador of Georgia and officials from the Georgian Ministry of Defense.



rights and independent living in the US, and reflected on how some key lessons learned from these experiences could be applied to the CIL work.

During the visit, CIL joined the US disability advocates and organizations in the march from Grand Hyatt to Capitol Hill carrying signs and supporting the disability rights. CIL marched the entire rally holding up the sing of “Georgia” and joining the American disability advocates and activists in demanding the ratification of UN Convention in the US.



ADVOCACY FOR RATIFICATION OF UNCRRP AND OTHER STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS



CL and CL member organizations regularly carry out advocacy activities in order to promote the rights and interests of PWD and enhance cooperation with local and international organizations and government on various levels. One of the targets of the CL organization advocacy efforts is the ratification of UNCRRP. At the same time CL is constantly working with decision-makers in order to ensure consideration of the rights and needs of PWD and their participation in the decision-making process.

Prime Minister's National Coordinating Council on the Issues of Disability



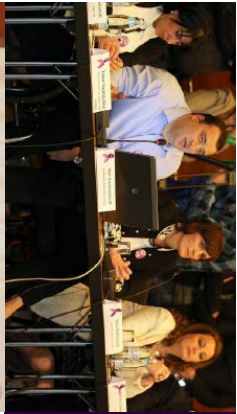
As a result of the years of efforts and work carried out by CL Georgia now has a National Coordinating Council on the Issues of Disability (NCC) established with the Prime Minister's office by December 15, 2009 Decree #231 issued by the Government of Georgia. In the beginning the NCC consisted of 7 Ministers and 7 individuals representing various disability categories, representatives of Public Defender's Office and Parliamentary Committee of Healthcare and Social Affairs.



Although established in 2009, the first NCC session took place on December 1, 2011 and acquired a regular nature in 2012. Individuals representing disabled communities in the Council are nominated and elected by DPOs. All of the disability categories are represented in the NCC. The National Coordinating Council with its nature is the Prime Minister's advisory body supporting effective and coherent disability policy formation, the implementation and coordination with the inclusion of state and non-state actors. **The purpose of the National Coordinating Council** is to support policy formation and implementation of state programs responding to the needs and interests of PWD **The NCC membership:** The Prime Minister summons and appoints the NCC members representing both government bodies as well as the NGO sector and requests attendance of independent experts.



May 21, 2013, Tbilisi, DPOs electing individuals to represent disabled communities in the NCC.



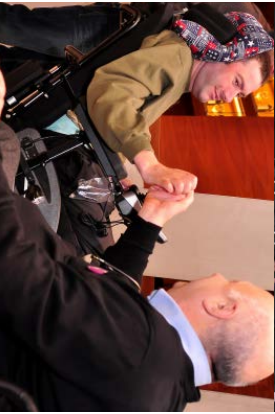
PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel hosted another event to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2013.

Many high-ranking officials and guests attended the event, including: Irakli Gharbashiwilli - Prime Minister of Georgia, Richard Norland - US Ambassador in Georgia as well as highest officials from various Ministries, Embassies, Georgian wounded warriors returned from Afghanistan, local and international organizations and media.

The event was supported by USAID through CLU's Disability Advocacy Project. On December 5, two days after the event the Government of Georgia adopted a new resolution on ensuring accessibility of public facilities for persons with disabilities.

According to the resolution, all of the public buildings and facilities must be made accessible in 5-years time.



Temur Sakhokia, a disabled war veteran, double amputee, was a flagman in the rally



MARCHING CAMPAIGN FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS

December 3, 2013 was also marked by a rally from Rose Revolution Square to Rustaveli Metro Station involving persons with disabilities, friends and volunteers and demanding improvement of disability rights protection and inclusion of persons with disabilities in everyday life.



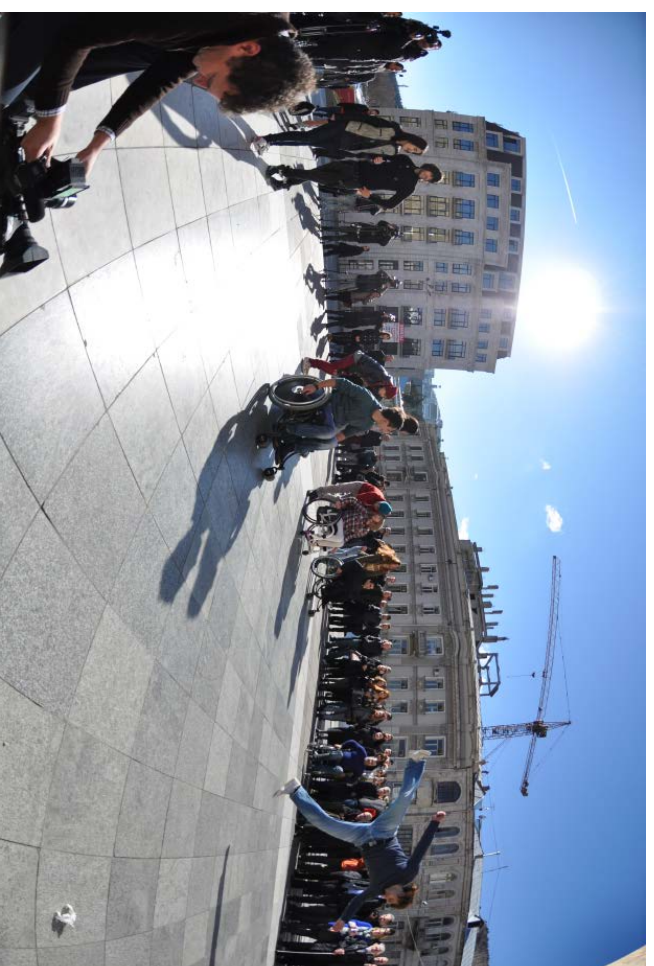
VICTORIA NULAND THANKS GIL DURING HER VISIT TO GEORGIA



Assistant Secretary of State for European and Euroasian Affairs at the United States Department of State was visiting Georgia in December, 2013. Along with the Prime Minister of Georgia and Minister of Defense, Mr. Irakli Alassania, Ms. Nuland attended the opening ceremony of the ramp installed at the entrance of the State Chancellery. The ramp was built by CIL with USAID support. Ms. Nuland attended

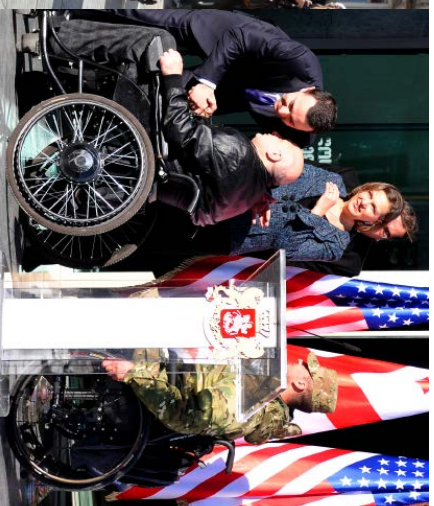


In her speech pronounced in front of State Chancellery, Assistant Secretary of State Ms. Nuland expressed special gratitude to CIL for years of active and hard work for promoting equal rights and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in Georgia.



After the ramp opening, young disabled activists at CIL performed a wheelchair dance in front of State Chancellery along with professional dancers in wheelchairs performing free style (hip-hop) dance.

On December 5, 2013 the Government of Georgia adopted a new resolution on ensuring accessibility of public facilities in Georgia, which must be achieved in 5-years time. CIL played a very active role in this success.





PLANS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

- Support the development of effective and comprehensive disability legislation in compliance with international conventions and treaties;
- Empower PWD (especially in the regions); provide independent living skills training and promote civic engagement and advocacy with PWD involvement;
- Develop/support the implementation of rehabilitation programs for people with spinal cord injury, including pressure sore prevention and care;
- Support employment of PWD by means of promoting social enterprising;
- Raise public awareness on disability by means of carrying out seminars, training, exhibitions, public education events, etc.;
- Support the development and implementation of inclusive education at all levels of education system;
- Promote accessible physical environment by means of enforcing laws and regulations as well as through advocacy and lobbying;
- Support the development and provision of assistive equipment, postural support equipment production and service through individual assessment and fitting;
- Influence policy formation and conduct monitoring of state programs targeting PWD.