

A photograph showing a group of approximately ten children and two adults in a vibrant, multi-colored wooden building. In the center, a woman wearing a green headscarf and a white shirt is smiling broadly, holding a small child. To her right, a young girl is laughing heartily. Other children are visible in the background, some standing and some sitting, all appearing happy and engaged.

# Global Alliance Global Vision 2016 - 2020

# Leonard Cheshire Disability Global Alliance Vision 2016 - 2020

54 countries

Over 200 services

All working towards improving the lives  
of people with disabilities

In September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were agreed at the UN. These goals and targets are shaping international development funding priorities and activities until 2030, replacing the Millennium Development Goals. The Millennium Development Goals helped to alleviate poverty and improve access to health and education for many. However many persons with disabilities have not benefited from the progress made so far, despite the strong links between poverty and disability.

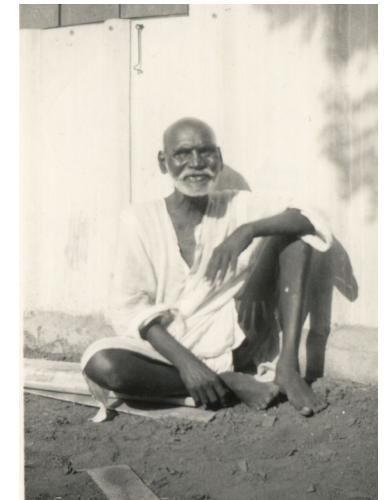
The Leonard Cheshire Disability Global Alliance has the knowledge and expertise to play a significant role in how disability issues are portrayed in the international context. We believe that now there is an exciting opportunity for the Global Alliance to become leaders in the world of disability and development. Working collaboratively, the alliance seeks a greater profile and, most importantly, more opportunities for the people we work with and for.

With a fast changing environment and the potential for disability to become more prominent in the international arena, Cheshire organisations around the world are looking to modernise in line with global perceptions of disability. This is an opportunity for the Global Alliance to expand its scope and strengthen the network. The alliance has been making a transition from a heavily centralised structure to one which is able to move forward strategically, sustainably and independently.

## 1. History of the Global Alliance

### A new international movement

In 1955 Leonard Cheshire travelled to India to set up the first Cheshire organisation outside of the UK. This was the first of what are now over 200 organisations across 54 countries. Each organisation was to be self-sufficient and not look to the UK for funding - becoming sustainable service providers to persons with disabilities. All these organisations are independently run with individual management committees. Having a shared founder has led to the Cheshire organisations seeing themselves as part of a wider family, with shared values and similar goals: offering persons with disabilities the care, security and basics to lead independent lives in a respectful home-like environment.



Pop - the first overseas resident

On the 4th July 1969 the first international Cheshire conference officially adopted 'The Singapore Declaration'. This was the first attempt to define the nature of a Cheshire organisation. An international secretariat was established in the UK, to play a central support function for the alliance globally. Ronald Travers became the first international director.

There are no clear records of an overall strategy moving forward but we can tell from archived International Committee meetings that the Leonard Cheshire Disability foundation funded a Self-Reliance Programme which covered various costs including grants for vehicles, building costs and the further development of new organisations in new countries such as Colombia.

## Developing new thinking

From 1988 the international secretariat ran an International Training and Development programme which supported Cheshire organisations through training initiatives for care staff and managers around the world. It was this programme that led to Training and Development offices being set up in six regions. These formed the basis of Leonard Cheshire Disability's current five regional offices.

Around this time thinking around disability had started to change, as reflected by the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) at the UN in 2006. This led to different funding availability and a new approach. In response, the international directorate moved from being a secretariat for a network of organisations to a serious provider of innovative solutions to the challenges persons with disabilities face around the world.

## Moving towards an alliance

As Leonard Cheshire Disability UK's (LCD UK) focus shifted, there was a general recognition that the network of Cheshire organisations should be strengthened. In 2006 LCD UK started to develop a properly constituted alliance of all Cheshire organisations, with a clear proposal that it should be a grouping with a purpose.

Given the importance placed on the independence of each organisation, country and region, it was vital to develop a process that was truly participative and that recognised that the UK is simply one of the 54 countries in which Cheshire organisations operate. Six meetings were held in different parts of the world over a period of 18 months, involving representation from almost all the countries with Cheshire organisations. The meetings provided a clear consensus on values, objectives, principles and processes for administration and membership termination. This led to the

creation of a constitution for the Global Alliance, which 40 of the countries signed up to at the first Global Alliance General Assembly at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May 2008.

The move to formally agreeing an alliance structure brought clear roles and responsibilities for alliance members within the new governance structure (see figure 1). Since the Global Alliance became a properly constituted body each region has moved in its own direction. Some regions have become autonomous and self-sustaining whilst others remain a loose network of organisations, with limited joined-up working. Most importantly the alliance remains committed to the legacy of Leonard Cheshire, and continues to work together as a family.

## Finding the vision

In Autumn 2015 various consultations were held with regional councils to explore the current experiences and challenges faced by Global Alliance members around the world. A phased approach of one-to-one interviews with regional chairs and focus group discussions enabled us to explore some of the perceived challenges and opportunities experienced by individual members and alliance structures.

To consolidate this piece of work, we invited regional representatives from six regions to London to further discuss the role and future of the Global Alliance. Over three days the regional representatives participated in a series of workshops and discussions with senior staff from LCD UK to seek solutions to some of the challenges faced by members and to identify synergies amongst the regions.

The concluding discussions led to the development of a framework for the Global Alliance's future direction, a global vision, which will inform the work moving forwards over the coming years.

Figure 1: Global Alliance governance structure



## 2. Vision for 2016 – 2020

The new Global Alliance vision will strengthen the Global Alliance network and increase the impact it has on improving the lives of persons with disabilities.



With increased communication and a better profile there is a hope that more partners will play an active role in enabling persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in society.

Through the consultation process the synergies between regions and alliance members were identified. Three core themes emerged. It was found that all Global Alliance members:

a) Share a commitment to delivering quality care and programmes for persons with disabilities

**Objective: Improved support and capacity building of partners**

Cheshire services around the world have varied mandates in terms of the services they deliver – including residential and day care services, community-based rehabilitation initiatives (CBR), livelihoods and inclusive education programmes. However all share the same commitment to delivering quality services for persons with disabilities. They are also all committed to sharing resources and providing support to other members.

To support this, the international secretariat has developed capacity building tools including the Quality Assurance Framework and the Global Alliance portal. The secretariat has coordinated the development of the tools, and over the next three years there will be a concerted effort within the regional councils to use, trial and contribute to the further development of this work.

b) Benefit from being part of a global network through increased communications (nationally, regionally and globally)

**Objective: Improved communications (external and internal)**

The consultations with Global Alliance members highlighted that there was little sense of common purpose and identity. It was made clear from these discussions that with a better-defined common identity, shared objectives and mutually beneficial activities there would be increased buy-in from members.

Internal communications will be focused on sharing updates, information and activities between alliance members, facilitated by the international secretariat. Having a better flow of information will help to coordinate activities, and demonstrate to members the benefits that being part of an alliance can bring. Focusing on coordinated activities will give the alliance a shared narrative, and enable a consistent portrayal of the alliance to key stakeholders. This should result in greater visibility both regionally and globally.

Based on feedback from national councils, we believe that being part of a global movement will enhance the work that Global Alliance members are able to carry out at the national level, providing a competitive advantage over other service providers.

### c) Have a desire to raise the Global Alliance profile and visibility

#### Objective: Increased profile through advocacy

Whilst the Cheshire brand is recognised around the world, this has been predominantly attached to the legacy of Leonard Cheshire. The heightened focus on disability which has come with the 'leave no one behind' ethos of the Sustainable Development Goals has raised awareness amongst key policy makers, national level governments and donors.

The global disability movement now has an opportunity to leverage resources to drive forward the change needed to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to fulfil their potential and live the lives they choose. We believe that the Global Alliance can be a key stakeholder in this movement and that members will subsequently leverage more opportunities to access funding, influence policy makers and scale up delivery of services for persons with disabilities. With better defined goals, the alliance will be able to focus resources and time on producing clear communications to influence long-lasting change.

### Looking to the future

A shared vision will allow the Cheshire Global Alliance to work together more effectively and fulfil its mission of changing attitudes to disability around the world. With a stronger alignment to the global development agenda and a renewed commitment to close collaboration with Disabled Peoples Organisations, the private sector, governments and global institutions, the alliance will have a stronger and more visible impact on the global disability movement.