Global Disability Summit:
Inclusive Education Thematic Workshop

Thursday, January 20, 2022 | 9:00 am ET - 10:30 am ET

Speaker Bios

- **Refaat Sabbah**, President, Global Campaign for Education
- **Sue Swenson**, Board Treasurer, International Disability Alliance
- **Linda Etim**, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Development, Global Health, and Humanitarian Response, National Security Council, USA
- **Josh Josa**, Disability Inclusive Education Specialist, USAID
- **Alexander Bankole Williams**, Advocacy Chair, Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations
- **Penny Innes**, Head of Disability Inclusion Team; Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, UK
- **Dr. Magreth Matonya**, Director of Inclusive Education, Tanzania Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- **Alexandra Matei**, World Vision Syria Response Advocacy and Communications Director
- **Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo**, Global Disability Advisor, World Bank Group
- **Khansa Maria**, MPhil in Development Studies Candidate and Rhodes Scholar from Pakistan, University of Oxford
- **Jaime Cruz Juscamaita**, Self-Advocate (Peru), Inclusion International/Empower Us
- **Dr. Ernestine NGO MELHA**, Founder and Executive Director, Association d'Aide à l'Education de l'Enfant Handicapé (AAEEH)
- **Dragana Ciric Milovanovic**, Director, European Regional Office, Disability Rights International
- **Jennifer Rigg**, Executive Director, GCE-US and Co-Chair, Inclusive Education & Early Childhood Community of Practice
Refat Sabbah is the General Director (and founder) of the Teacher Creativity Center. The Center is part of a number of international initiatives, including the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP). Refat is the Regional Coordinator of Arab Campaign for Education for all. He is also the Chair of the Arab Network for Human Rights and Citizenship Education (ANHRE). He got an honor PHD from Almaref University for his work to support education in Yemen.

Refat completed his Masters degree in 2004 from Birzeit University, Palestine, in Women Development and Law. He completed a Diploma degree in adult training development from Toronto University Canada in 1999 in addition to his Bachelor Degree in Arabic Language, and a Diploma in Journalism from Birzeit University in 1997. He also has a master’s degree in Educational Management from Al Quds Open University.

Refat is the author of “Education and International Development” - a chapter in Introduction to International Development: Approaches, Actors and Issues (Oxford University Press 2008). He is also the Visa Chair of the Regional Support Group for the ED2030 with UNESCO. He was chosen as a member of the ED2030 steering committee led by UNESCO, and a member of the Advisory board for the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM). Refat was elected as President of the Arab House of Adult Education and Development (AHEAD). Recently, Sabbah was elected as a president of the Global Campaign for Education in November 2018, and as a member of the high steering committee for Education Cannot Wait.

Twitter: @RefatSabbah @GlobalEducation
Sue Swenson is the President of Inclusion International. Sue got involved with disability advocacy because her middle son, Charlie, had profound disabilities. Sue was very active in the Minneapolis schools as well as in State and federal advocacy while working as a professional services marketing director before being named a Kennedy Fellow in the U.S. Senate in 1996. There she worked for the chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy on both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Developmental Disabilities Services and Bill of Rights Act.

Sue has served the Obama administration in the U.S. Department of Education as deputy assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services. These two federal programs regulate and fund States to help them support people with disabilities in American schools and workplaces. She represented the U.S. Department of Education on the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Sue previously served as the commissioner for developmental disabilities in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Clinton administration, as executive director of the national chapter of The Arc, and as executive director of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation. She was educated at the University of Chicago (AB, AM) and earned an MBA at the University of Minnesota.

Twitter: @SDSwenson @IDA_CRPD_Forum
Linda Etim is the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Development, Global Health, and Humanitarian Response on the White House National Security Council for Development, Global Health, and Humanitarian Response. As an advocate leader with two decades of experience in national security, global development, and conflict mitigation, she passionately integrates her expertise in foreign policy and humanitarian response in the fight for equal dignity and rights of all persons. She is committed to inclusive development for social impact and empowering communities in creating a world where individual potential and freedoms are realized.

Most recently, Linda led the Biden-Harris Agency Review Team on global development and development finance and chaired policy volunteer efforts on the global COVID19 response, the pandemic’s second order economic and humanitarian impacts, and broader work on refugees and sustainable development. Prior to that, she served as a Senior Adviser for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Linda spent over 15 years in the U.S. government in a range of policy positions including as the Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Director for African Affairs in the Obama White House on the National Security Council, and senior roles in the defense department and intelligence community. Throughout her career, Linda has held numerous board positions. This includes her role as a senate confirmed board member for the U.S. African Development Foundation, Advisory Board Member for Women of Color in Peace and Security (WCAPS), Executive Board Member for the Millennium Institute and Memanatu Magazine for Girls’ Empowerment. Linda graduated from the University of Wisconsin with majors in International Relations, French, and Portuguese with concentrations in African studies and Agricultural Economics.

Twitter: @Etimisks @WHNSC
Josh Josa is a Disability Inclusive Education Specialist at USAID. He works with USAID’s Education Sector to ensure equity and inclusion in education programming as well as the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout USAID programming efforts.

He has a Masters from Gallaudet University in International Development and is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) from Kenya (2010-2012).

Twitter: @JoshJosa @USAIDEducation
Mr. Alexander Bankole Williams, is an Educationist and a disability rights activist with over 20 years of experience in disability and development work.

As a person with lived experience of blindness, Alex William is leading the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations as Chairperson of its national Advocacy committee which is working to promote effective implementation of Ghana’s Inclusive Education Policy. Professionally, he serves as Assistive Technology Manager of the University of Ghana where he is responsible for promoting the usage of various technological interventions to promote teaching and learning.

Alex Williams is a graduate of University of Cape Coast, and Syracuse University in New York, USA.

Twitter: @BankoleWilliam6 @GFDGhana
Penny Innes is head of the Disability Inclusion team in the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and formerly in the Department for International Development (DFID), a post she has held since May 2017.

She led the team responsible for organising the Global Disability Summit (GDS) in July 2018 and oversaw considerable progress on disability inclusion within DFID.

Penny was previously deputy head of DFID’s Human Development Department which leads on health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, water, sanitation and hygiene and nutrition policy. She has also led on multilateral effectiveness policy and results monitoring. Before joining DFID she was head of Profession for Statistics in the Department for Constitutional Affairs and has also worked in the Department of Health.

Twitter: @Penny_innes @FCDOInclusive
Dr. Magreth Matonya completed her Master’s degree in Education at the University of Dar es Salaam in 2008. In 2016 she was awarded the PhD in Education by the University of Jyvaskyla, Finland. Her research was on disability, gender and inclusive education. She was involved in the project Educated Girls and Women in Tanzania: Social Cultural Interpretation of the Meaning of Education to Girls/Women with Disabilities, financed by the Academy of Finland. She worked as lecturer for 12 years at the University of Dar es Salaam teaching courses on Disability, Special Needs, Inclusive Education and Gender. Currently she is working as Director for Special Needs and Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Twitter: @wizara_elimuTz
Alexandra Matei, World Vision Syria Response Advocacy and Communications Director, is responsible for overseeing all external engagement and advocacy initiatives for World Vision’s programs in Turkey, Syria and Jordan. She has been in various global and emergency response positions for the last 10 years in Middle East and North Africa, Southeast Asia, as well as with the European Union. Always driven by the commitment to respond to emerging crises and alleviate the suffering for the hardest to reach children, Alexandra has been a key player in driving influencing initiatives such as Spotlight Initiative, Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, and the Mixed Migration efforts across the Central Mediterranean Route. She is currently managing the portfolio of children on the move for almost two years. Alexandra wants to see positive change for every child, everywhere.

Twitter: @ale_matei @WorldVision
Charlotte V. McClain-Nhlapo is Global Disability Advisor of the World Bank Group. As Disability Advisor, she focuses on working with and supporting operational teams across the institution to ensure that Bank policies, programs and projects take people with disabilities into consideration. Before joining the World Bank, she served as USAID’s coordinator for disability and inclusive development, appointed by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2011 to lead the government’s efforts in disability inclusive development, from developing policies and country strategies to technical assistance for program implementation.

Prior to that, she worked as a Senior Operations Officer at the Bank to integrate disability inclusive development into operations in the East Asia Pacific and Africa regions. Earlier in her career, she was appointed by President Nelson Mandela to the South African Human Rights Commission focusing on social and economic rights, disability rights, and child rights. From 1996 to 1998, she also served as a project officer on child protection for UNICEF.

She holds a Master’s Degree in international law and administration from the University of Warsaw, Poland, and an LLM from Cornell Law School.

Twitter: @WBG_Inclusion @WorldBank
Khansa Maria is a Rhodes Scholar from Pakistan, pursuing an MPhil in Development Studies at Oxford University. Khansa is deeply passionate about advocating for the rights of people with disabilities and designing accessible communities in an effort to ensure inclusivity. To this end, she has organized and has spoken at various conferences on inclusion and inclusive policy. In her sophomore year, she was a recipient of a Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) Grant which enabled her to investigate the barriers impacting the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Qatari workforce.

At Oxford, she is the disabilities officer of her college and also an active member of the Rhodes Disability Project. In 2016, she established her own organization by the name of 'Hope for Tomorrow' which has launched various projects to build capacity for people with disabilities in Pakistan.

She has worked with various organizations including the US Embassy in Qatar to develop conversations around diversity, inclusion and promote regenerative discourse on prevalent socio-political issues.

Twitter: @khansaMaria2
Jaime Cruz Juscamaita is a young Peruvian self-advocate from “Sociedad Peruana de Sindrome Down. Jaime is an active self-advocate in Peru as part of “Autogestores SPSD.” The group is active in advocating for inclusion in Peru using the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and local laws as their advocacy tools. The group has had success campaigning on the right to vote and the right to access health and insurance.

Jaime is a previous fellow of Inclusion International’s global self-advocacy program: “Empower Us” and in this role led training on the CRPD internationally and spoke at UN 12th Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in New York to talk about article 30 of the CRPD and the right of participate in sports, culture and leisure.

Currently Jaime coordinates the Empower Us Latin American group of self-advocates. Jaime practices many sports and is also a well-known local actor.

Jaime is very active in social media networks, and from March 2019 he began to work at “Sociedad Peruana de sindrome Down” supporting the communications team.

Twitter: @InclusionIntl
A doctor in education sciences and qualified as a lecturer, **Ernestine NGO MELHA** specializes in education and training policies. She is the author of numerous publications, a researcher on inclusive education, and founder and executive director of the Association for the Education of Disabled Children (AAEEH).

She holds several university degrees and certificates in: economics (University of Yaoundé-Cameroon), educational, university and professional guidance (Ecole Normale Supérieure de Yaoundé-Cameroon), planning and management of education (IIEP-UNESCO, Paris -France), international cooperation in education and training (Paris 5 University, Sorbonne, Paris-France), management of international organizations (University of Geneva-Switzerland), gender equality by 2030 (UN Women training center, New York ).

She worked in the service of national education for more than fifteen years and she carried out missions for the French Development Agency (AFD), the international bureau of education (IBE -UNESCO, Switzerland) and IIEP UNESCO (technical roundtable on disability inclusion in education sector planning in French-speaking Africa).

She is an associate researcher at the National Higher Institute for Training and Research - Disability and Adapted Education (INSHEA) in Suresnes (France).

She founded AAEEH in 1998. With nearly 25 years of experience, she contributes actively and significantly to the advancement of the consideration of disability in various fields. In recent years, she has been heavily involved in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal agenda, in cross-cutting issues related to disability and particularly in the Beijing+25 process and the Generation Equality Forum.

**Twitter:** @AAEEH_ASS
Dragana Ciric Milovanovic is Director at Europe Regional Office of Disability Rights International. She is also a founder of Mental Disability Rights Initiative in Serbia (MDRI-S), an affiliate of Disability Rights International, founded in 2008 to support national advocacy movement of persons with intellectual, cognitive and psycho-social disabilities and perform oversight of their human rights in Serbia. Her work includes monitoring of and reporting on human rights of persons with disabilities, especially those placed in segregated settings, work on public policies, national, regional and world-wide advocacy, capacity building, and raising public awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities. Dragana is an author of numerous reports and publications on disability rights in Serbia.

Dragana has served as a consultant to national and international organization and institutions, including Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OSCE and the Council of Europe, on the human rights of persons with intellectual, cognitive and psychosocial disabilities, with specific focus on deinstitutionalization, inclusive education, equality before the law, and torture prevention.

Twitter: @DRI_advocacy
Jennifer Rigg is the Executive Director of the Global Campaign for Education – US (GCE-US). GCE-US, a coalition of over 80 organizations, promotes access to quality education as a human right and mobilizes the public to create political will in the U.S. and internationally to ensure universal access to quality education worldwide.

Jennifer brings over 20 years of experience, including international education and development, public policy, coalition building, strategic communications and public management. Previously, Jennifer was the Director of Policy & Partnerships and Interim Executive Director at the 1,000 Days Partnership, which advocates for increased funding and improved policies for women, girls, and young children. At Save the Children, Jennifer led policy and advocacy on education, early childhood development, nutrition and food security, livelihoods, microfinance, and aid effectiveness. Jennifer has also worked with CARE, United Way Worldwide, and the Nancy Bell Evans Center on Nonprofits & Philanthropy at the University of Washington. Jennifer started her career as an Americorps VISTA building capacity for nonprofit organizations.

As the parent of children with dysgraphia, dyslexia, and ADHD, Jennifer volunteered as a leader for Decoding Dyslexia in Maryland and the Prince George’s County Public Schools, one of the 25 largest school districts in the USA that serves a diverse student population. She has helped to pass statewide legislation, fund local pilot projects, and initiate community task forces to improve education for students with disabilities and better support teachers and school leaders to provide more inclusive education. Jennifer was born with a visual disability and co-founded the Inclusive Education and Early Childhood Community of Practice.

She received an MPA and graduate certificate in International and Community Development Policy and Management from the University of Washington, a certificate in Nonprofit Leadership and Management from the University of Wisconsin/Learning Institute for Nonprofits, and a BA in International Studies/Political Science from Emory University.

Twitter: @JennRigg @GCE_US