Position Paper – Families

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the role of families in promoting the rights of people with disabilities:

“Convinced that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state and that, persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities”

Inclusion International believes that families play a critical role in the promotion of human rights and the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and that they require supports to fulfil this role.

BACKGROUND:
Families play a unique role in the lives of persons with an intellectual disability providing lifelong support and enabling relationships and inclusion in the community. Families also often experience discrimination because of their association with a person. This discrimination ranges from being denied access to public places, such as playgrounds and restaurants the economic discrimination of being excluded from the labour market because of the need to care for the family member who has a disability or restricted mobility because of exclusion from transportation or denial of visas.

Throughout the world it is families who are responsible for providing the bulk of supports to persons with disabilities, often with minimal or no financial compensation. Further, they provide an essential bridge to the realization of citizenship in the daily lives of children, youth and often adults, with disabilities.

STRATEGIES:
Inclusion International promotes and supports the role of families in advancing the human rights and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by advocating:

- Family friendly public policy
- Supports to families such as respite in-home care and income support
- Access to information and training for families