INCLUSION INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON ARTICLE 19
LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND
For persons who have an intellectual disability and their families, one of the most important rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is the right to live independently and be supported in the community (Article 19). All too often, persons who have an intellectual disability have been deprived of their liberty and prevented from making any choices in their lives because of being confined to institutions. Enormous pressure has often been placed on families of people with intellectual disabilities who have faced huge challenges to meet the needs of their disabled family member. In many cases, institutions have been the only option provided.

In order for people with an intellectual disability to be able to exercise all the other rights protected in the CRPD, they and their families require a range of supports and services. In some countries there is a need to close institutions and provide supports for the people who live in the community. In other countries, where institutions are not prevalent, there is a need to develop a full range of supports and services that respect the CRPD.

Inclusion International, along with its member organizations in over 115 countries, is launching a campaign to promote Article 19 of the CRPD, Living in the Community. Article 19 ensures that people with disabilities have the right to live in the community with the supports they require, with equal access to community services such as education, health care, transportation, etc. This commitment has significant implications for governments, communities and service providers. It requires that we collectively address the current reality of the lives of people with disabilities who live in situations of isolation, segregation, confinement and dependence, whether in an institution or in “institutionalized” living conditions.

‘INSTITUTION’ DEFINED
Some members of Inclusion International, including Inclusion Europe and the Canadian Association for Community Living, as well as other groups have adopted the following definition of institutions:

“An institution is any place in which people who have been labelled as having an intellectual disability are isolated, segregated and/or congregated. An institution is any place in which people do not have, or are not allowed to exercise control over their lives and day to day decisions. An institution is not defined merely by its size.”

This definition helps to illustrate that the experience of institutionalization is not related simply to location, but rather to life conditions. It provides a basis for thinking about what Article 19 of the CRPD is intended to address.

CAMPAIGN 19 GOALS
• Promote awareness of the isolation, segregation, confinement and vulnerability faced by people who have an intellectual disability who are excluded from their communities whether in institutions or in “institutionalized” living conditions;
• Share experiences and build understanding of the essential elements of community inclusion and community living; and
• Share strategies for national and international initiatives that move people
Global Campaign on Living in The Community 2010-2012

from “institutionalized living” to community inclusion

**ACTION PLAN**

Over the period of the two year campaign, Inclusion International will:

- conduct regional workshops in each of the five regions of II to identify and raise awareness of the issues impacting the social, economic and political exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities from their communities;
- support national level initiatives to promote living in the community;
- collect and share information about the current exclusion, isolation and institutionalization of people with intellectual disabilities;
- collect and share information and strategies for addressing exclusion and building inclusive communities;
- develop a global report on the current situation of people with intellectual disabilities and strategies used to advance and build inclusive communities;
- co-host with The Arc of the United States an International Conference on the Right to Live in the Community in November 2012 (Washington, DC)

**PARTICIPATE**

Individuals, families and organizations can contribute in this campaign in a number of ways:

- Share information and research
- Share stories and experiences
- Participate in regional and on-line forums
- Participate in the International Conference on the Right to Live in the Community November, 2012 (Washington, DC)

To learn more about this initiative visit: www.inclusion-international.org or contact: conniel@inclusion-international.org

**ARTICLE 19: LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND BEING INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITY OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES STATES**

States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;

b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.