

International Disability and Development Consortium

Annual Report 2020/2021

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Editor and Publisher: International Disability and Development Consortium

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Foreword by the Chair



The COVID-19 pandemic has tested all of us in a huge variety of ways. But most importantly, it has shone a clear and harsh light on the realities of discrimination and human rights abuses that persons with disabilities experience on a daily basis across the globe. If nothing else, this year has been a stark reminder that we have a long way to go.

Being realistic, COVID-19 is here, it is going to remain a part of our shared lives for some time to come, and affect us personally and organisationally. I hope that it also creates in the medium-term an understanding of the connectedness of the world, even as we see in Europe and worldwide an unpleasant nationalistic approach to the response in the form of border controls, vaccine squabbles, and even the naming of the virus. But for us, the key is that we use this crisis to bring us even closer together, in order to Build Back Inclusively by pulling people out of poverty and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. It means including all communities, in particular the most marginalised, and also tackling existential challenges such as climate change and protecting the environment. Only by addressing simultaneously social, environmental, and economic factors can recovery plans build sustainable resilience to current and future shocks.

This end-goal is within reach, as long as we continue working ever more closely together, as a network but also with key partners and institutions such as the International Disability Alliance (IDA), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU) to name a few.

As you will see when reading this report, that has certainly happened so far, and I am proud of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)'s critical engagement in the global response to the pandemic. Some highlights to point out - but more detail is included in the report itself:

- The COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor (DRM) collaboration was a really effective response to the growing nature of the pandemic, and the need for our advocacy on an inclusive response to be based on real evidence of the impact on people with disabilities, in their own words.
- The formal acknowledgement of the huge range of input and experience we bring to the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network, through our becoming full members alongside others who contribute knowledge, staffing, and financial resources to the movement.
- The new direct partnership with the United Nations (UN) Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PRPD).
- The concerted and collaborative campaigns together with IDA calling on all governments and international cooperation actors to ensure people with disabilities are included in COVID-19 response and recovery policies and programmes, in line with governments' commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

I am going to stop there and wish you and people with disabilities wherever they live as positive and productive a year ahead as possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dominic Haslam".

Dominic Haslam

Chair

International Disability and Development Consortium

About the International Disability and Development Consortium

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) is a network of 27 civil society organisations and 7 individual members, active in more than 150 countries around the world, coming together around a common objective: promoting inclusive international development and humanitarian action with a special focus on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by all people with disabilities.

IDDC in 2020/2021, we are:

35

Members

8

Task Groups

3

Projects

A broad consortium

Our membership includes organisations representative of persons with disabilities (DPOs), non-governmental development organisations, national networks, and international member-based networks. In this diversity, we find our strength.

Member-driven

Our activities are defined and run by members through thematic task groups. Partnership is at the heart of what we do and, as well as dynamic internal collaborations. We have built up a trustworthy reputation among disability organisations, donors and experts, many of which are close partners.

3 objectives for a common purpose

Through our actions and activities, guided by our core values and the principles of both the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we aim at promoting inclusive development internationally, with a special focus on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by all persons with disabilities living in economically poor communities in lower and middle-income countries.

To achieve this purpose, we:

- 1. Promote** the inclusion of the disability dimension, as well as appropriate disability-specific approaches, in all development policies and practices.
- 2. Improve** the practice of member organisations by collaborating and sharing experience about policies and practices.
- 3. Support** the exchange of information and knowledge about inclusive development, especially between people and organisations in economically poorer countries, by the wide distribution of information.

Our values

IDDC is committed to 4 key values which uphold inclusive ways of working, both internally and in all its development activities, seek the participation of all members and both encourage and respect diversity.



Human Rights for all



Inclusion & Diversity



Sustainable Development
& Social Justice



Partnership, Participation
& collaboration

About Inclusive Development

Promoting inclusive international development is at the heart of what we do, but what do we mean exactly by inclusive development?

- **Equity and equality**, with **no discrimination**
- **Leaving no one behind because** human rights are universal and apply to all.
- **Empowerment of persons with disabilities**, enabling them to speak up for themselves at every level, within their family, their community, their country, or at an international level.
- **Awareness-raising and capacity-building among authorities, civil society and the population** in general. Inclusive development cannot be achieved without the participation and engagement of everyone in the **community**.
- **Technical cooperation between donor and partner countries:** financial aid won't do much without **sharing experience, expertise and good practices**.
- **Coordination with all stakeholders** to ensure that development aid does not create undue barriers or finance inaccessible or discriminatory projects.

Highlights May 2020 / May 2021



March 2020 - May 2021. IDA-IDDC advocacy campaigns

Since March 2020, IDDC and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) have jointly launched a series of social media and advocacy COVID-19 related campaigns in order to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities.

- The **Accessibility campaign** called for public health information and communications around COVID-19 to be fully accessible, in particular those issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN.
- The **End-Discrimination campaign** called to raise awareness of examples of the discrimination that persons with disabilities experience in accessing services, and call the attention of the global community to the critical and urgent need to deliver disability inclusive COVID-19 responses at global, national, and local levels.
- The campaign **Rebuilding an inclusive future for all** aimed to build on the momentum in the run up to and during the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) to keep pressure on the UN and Member States to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are upheld in pandemic response measures, and to rebuild an inclusive future for all as the world recovers.
- The campaign **Persons with Disabilities and Access to COVID-19 vaccination** initiated advocacy at global, regional, and national levels to ensure maximizing prioritization, inclusion, and accessibility of persons with disabilities in the rollout and distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations.

These campaigns were successful and generated official responses from the United Nations and its agencies.



2 June 2020, IDDC becomes a full member of the GLAD Network

The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network is a coordination body of bilateral and multilateral donors and agencies, the private sector and foundations working to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in international development and humanitarian action. In 2020, IDDC became a full member of the GLAD Network, which is a considerable achievement and reflects the value put on IDDC member participation and expertise. IDDC participated in five inclusive education group on-line meetings to discuss priorities with donors, and advocated for increased focus on disability inclusion in the Global Partnership for Education's new strategy 2020-2025. IDDC joined the GLAD virtual Annual General Meeting on 25-26 February 2021. IDDC Inclusive Health Task Group organised in particular a session on the right to the highest standard of health for persons with disabilities.



23 June 2020. Launch of the UNESCO 2020 GEM Report Launch on Inclusion and Education

IDDC continued its ongoing collaboration with UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report throughout 2020, contributing to the chapter on COVID-19 and shaping the key recommendations. The report outlines the gap between the learning outcomes of learners with and without disabilities, and that those learners living in poverty, especially girls, are unlikely to complete their primary education. In addition, it acknowledges the effect COVID 19 has had on education systems worldwide, and flags the opportunity and urgency to take intentional and accelerated steps towards fully inclusive education systems in the wake of this pandemic.

Through its Inclusive Education Task Group, IDDC played a key role as a member of the UNESCO Advocacy Team, made a joint submission to the UNESCO 'Futures of Education' global consultation, and supported the UNESCO International Symposium, 'Ensuring the right to quality inclusive education for persons with disabilities: from commitment to action' in November, with inputs and presentations, resulting in statements by Ministers of Education in support of inclusive education.

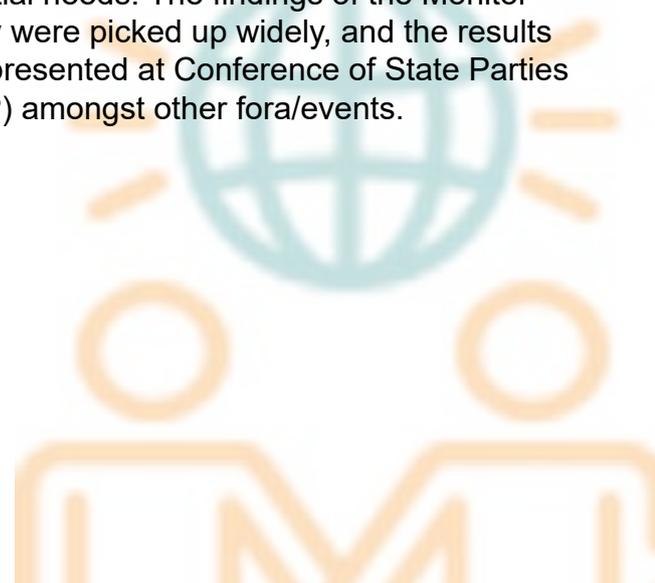
Disability rights during the pandemic

A global report on findings of the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor



22 October 2020. Launch of the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor Report

Together with six other organisations, IDDC launched the [COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor initiative](#) in April 2020. The four-month survey received over 2,100 responses from 134 countries. The outcomes were presented in '[Disability rights during the pandemic: A global report on findings of the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor](#)' was launched on 22 October 2020. The launch gathered prestigious guests including Prof. Gerard Quinn (Incoming UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), Danlami Basharu (Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), Dainius Pūras (Former UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health), and Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng (UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health), among others. The partnership also spearheaded advocacy actions targeting human rights violations in institutions, police violence, access to food and other essential needs. The findings of the Monitor survey were picked up widely, and the results were presented at Conference of State Parties (CoSP) amongst other fora/events.





2 November 2020. GQUAL Campaign, IDA and IDDC campaign for gender parity in the CRPD Committee.

Following their first partnership in 2018, GQUAL Campaign, IDA and IDDC joined forces again ahead of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' elections on 30 November 2020. While States Parties will elect 9 of the 18 members of the independent body of experts entrusted with the international monitoring of that Convention, gender representation within the committee has been extremely low. As the November elections provided a unique opportunity to fully achieve gender parity in the CRPD Committee if three women are elected, the GQUAL Campaign, IDA and IDDC successfully called on States Parties to the CRPD to use their 2020 vote to select at least three female candidates and to promote the representation of the diversity of disability constituencies and the equitable geographical representation.



12 November 2020. IDDC input for the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030 consultation.

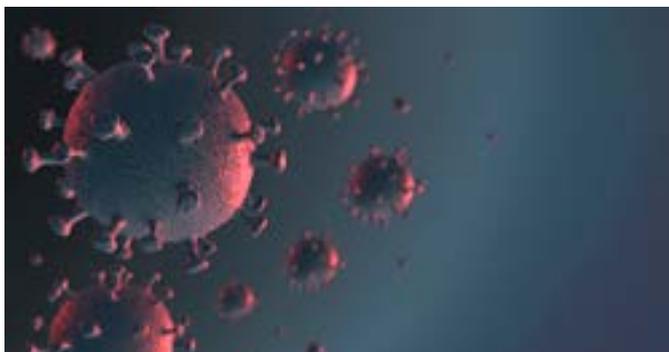
On 3 March 2020, the European Commission published the [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030](#). This document outlines proposals and areas of work aiming at the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Strategy is based on the CRPD and recalls the recommendations received by the EU from the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2015.

Earlier, the IDDC EU Task Group had provided [input](#) to the Strategy, making sure first and foremost that it includes a section on the rights of persons with disabilities within EU external action, and that it was fit for purpose. We provided the commission with key recommendations, such as the importance of: backing the strategy with the means to fulfil its ambition, through the next multi-annual European budget and its programming.

We highlighted as well, the necessity for both mainstreamed and targeted rights-based approaches to be used when addressing the rights of persons with disabilities; the systematic collection of disaggregated and globally comparable data; and also that the measures taken to address the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as global recovery include the rights of persons with disabilities.

You can find more information on a strategy [here](#).





23 November 2020. IDDC roundtable on the impact of COVID-19 and the state of disability rights worldwide.

The roundtable aimed at allowing participants to exchange on how the pandemic affected them, their ways of working and their partners, in particular the organisations representative of persons with disabilities, since the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic.



30 November - 3 December 2020. 13th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD.

The Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (CoSP is the main annual event bringing together governments, UN organisations and civil society to review progress and consider any matter related to the implementation of the Convention. This year, IDDC was represented at the in-person session at the CoSP and had an official speaker contributing to the round table on Disability and business: realising the right to work in open, inclusive and accessible environments for persons with disabilities.

In addition, IDDC moderated the Civil Society Forum event on the Future of disability-inclusive development: the power of data and partnership organised by the GLAD Network, IDA and the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for sustainable development. The network also contributed in four other side-events:

- “Building on the Bridging the Gap experience: strengthening policies and practices for inclusion and leaving no one behind”, a debate on the contribution of the EU-funded project Bridging the Gap to the implementation of the SDGs.
- “Inclusive education - a key driver for empowering persons with disabilities”. Led by Inclusion International, the side-event examined the findings and recommendations of the 2020 GEM Report and the growing momentum across the disability movement to adopt a comprehensive definition of inclusive education to achieve SDG 4. IDDC was represented by its Inclusive Education Task Group.
- “Building Back Better For All: Ensuring a Gender responsive approach to Disability Inclusive COVID-19 Response and Recovery”, which introduced the UN PRPD COVID-19 Programme.

“Mind the Gap: The Need for an Inclusive Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, a session that presented the main findings of the COVID-19 DRM (Disability Rights Monitor) Global Report.



Since November 2020. IDDC and IDA joint work on the World Health Assembly resolution “The highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities

In November 2020, through its Inclusive Health Task Group, IDDC initiated work to influence the drafting of the World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution dedicated to Health and Disability. This action has been carried out in close collaboration with IDA. After revising the first draft of the resolution, both organisations have been invited to participate in the Civil Society consultation meeting led by the Permanent Mission of Israel in Geneva. IDDC and IDA provided recommendations to strengthen the draft resolution, including a request to align the language of the resolution to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. [A reviewed draft of the resolution](#) was presented to the WHO Executive Board meeting in January under the new title “The highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities”. The resolution draft received the support of many of the Member States and it will be presented in May 2021 at the World Health Assembly for adoption. Together with IDA, IDDC will continue this influencing action throughout the months and will be present at the World Health Assembly.



25 March 2021. WHO-IDDC webinar “Is Telehealth accessible for people with disability?”

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, the use of telehealth services has increased substantially in many countries and telehealth has become a basic need for the general population, especially for those in quarantine, enabling people to access advice on their health problems in real time through contact with health care providers. While many countries adopted telehealth for service provision during the pandemic, the lack of standards and guidelines for accessibility led to many people with disability experiencing difficulties accessing and using such services, eventually leaving them behind. WHO and IDDC Inclusive Health Task Group joined and organised a webinar to discuss the use and potential of telehealth for people with disability, identify difficulties when accessing telehealth services and ultimately outline concrete solutions that healthcare providers and manufacturers of telehealth platforms need to ensure when delivering telehealth services.



26 March 2021. High-level exchange on EU Disability-inclusive International Cooperation and Humanitarian Action

On 26 March 2021, the European Disability Forum (EDF) and the IDDC EU Task Group organised a high-level exchange on EU International Cooperation and Humanitarian Action, which was hosted and moderated by Member of the European Parliament Radka Maxová on behalf of the European Parliament Disability Intergroup. The aim of the exchange was to inform Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) about policy developments and priorities on disability inclusion in EU International Cooperation and Humanitarian Action, how these policies can be effectively implemented, and the gaps that still exist. The discussion focused on the new EU Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its CRPD-compliant implementation in EU external action. It highlighted specific and mainstream approaches, linkages with the EU Gender Action Plan, the EU Human Rights and Democracy Action Plan, the upcoming EU Strategy with Africa, the EU ECHO (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations) Humanitarian Disability Guidance Note, and synergies with other tools, resources, and processes that exist both within and outside Europe.



Update on our projects

Bridging the Gap II



Bridging the Gap II (BtG-II) is a project funded by the European Union. The project aims at increasing the inclusion of persons with disabilities at both the international and country level through more inclusive and accessible public policies and services.

Bridging the Gap-II is implemented by a consortium led by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies and composed of the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation, the Austrian Development Agency, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the European Disability Forum and IDDC. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland also contribute to the initiative.

Together with EDF, we are responsible for the development and the implementation of the Knowledge Management and Learning Component of the project. All BtG-II can be found on [our website](#) and here is a glimpse of the 2020/2021 outcomes:

- The 3rd Stakeholder Conference which presented the results of its study on the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in development cooperation mechanisms in BtG-II Project partners.
- A webinar on COVID-19 response to support BtG-II country teams and ensure a coordinated and inclusive response through the dissemination of reliable and official information on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the response to the virus.
- A policy dialogue conference on the 'Social protection in Africa: a new path towards inclusion of persons with disabilities'. This event was organised in partnership with the UNPRPD / ILO (International Labour Organization) / UNICEF inclusive social protection program, IDA and the African Disability Forum (ADF).



BRIDGE CRPD-SDGs Training Initiative



The BRIDGE CRPD-SDG Training initiative is a unique capacity development initiative between the International Disability Alliance and IDDC, with the support from the Disability Rights Fund.

Launched in 2015, the initiative aims at supporting DPO activists to develop an inclusive (all persons with disabilities) and comprehensive (all human rights) CRPD perspective on development,

including the agenda 2030 and sustainable development goals (SDGs), and to reinforce their advocacy for inclusion and realisation of right of persons of persons with disabilities.

BRIDGE CRPD-SDG was devised to respond to increasing demands for training on the implementation of the CRPD and inclusive development, and how these link to achieving Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. It is a coordinated training investment, drawing from the resources and experiences of the IDA and IDDC networks and their members.

2020/2021 activities included:

- The implementation of Module 2 of the Bridge West Africa French-speaking countries, in Cotonou (Benin) in October 2020;
- The organisation of 3 BRIDGE webinars in December 2020 and January 2021 with the support of the IDDC OPD Partnership Task Group;
- The preparation of a National BRIDGE training in Iraq scheduled in 2021/2022.



UNRPD COVID-19 Programme

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNRPD) launched a global joint programme to ensure COVID-19 response and recovery is inclusive of persons with disabilities. The programme will develop guidance on joint analysis and planning, provide on-demand technical support, collect an evidence base of approaches and best practices, and develop case studies on a disability inclusive approach to address COVID-19. The programme gathers 10 UN entities as well as IDDC and IDA and is expected to run until July 2021. IDDC's role is to provide technical support to the UN entities and support the generation of new evidence on the impact of COVID-19, in particular on the civil society organisations. To this end, IDDC conducted a survey on COVID-19 impacts on disability programming in March 2021, which results will be presented in June 2021.

