



Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities Paragraph 89 Report

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1. Background

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development (SGPwD) works to enhance the opportunity for persons with disabilities, their representative organizations (OPDs), and non-governmental and other organizations supporting the rights of persons with disabilities to advocate with a unified voice for their inclusion in all sustainable development related UN processes. Here, the SGPwD takes stock of its contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development since 2016.

The past six years have been marked by unprecedented commitments such as those taken by world leaders at the first Global Disability Summit, the newly launched United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, and the first UN Security Council resolution on persons with disabilities in armed conflict. Emerging mechanisms and networks are providing a solid foundation for discussing and strategizing the work towards realising development inclusive of persons with disabilities, and are ensuring OPDs space to influence decision-making at high levels. At the global level, the question is not **whether** to include persons with disabilities, but **how** to do this in all sectors, all regions, and contexts, for all persons with disabilities, including those most marginalised.

But this stocktaking is taking place in the context of a global crisis. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, persons with disabilities faced barriers in accessing their rights to services, information, education, and employment, among others. The pandemic has magnified these barriers. Crises put stressors on economic and social institutions like health systems, hospitals, support services, and social security systems. We rely on these systems and others for the realization of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). And despite the gains made toward implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the explicit inclusion of persons with disabilities in the SDGs, persons with disabilities have been disproportionately affected by the crisis.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, through its reviews of reports on the implementation of the CRPD, provides diverse recommendations, testifying to the range of issues that still need to be addressed to ensure non-discrimination and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities still face pervasive inequalities in terms of access to education, employment or health outcomes, which are experienced even more acutely by marginalised groups, such as persons with psychosocial disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with deafblindness, and women and children with disabilities. In specific

areas, there are also worrying trends of practices seriously contravening the CRPD, such as coercion and force in health care.

Persons with disabilities should enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others. Their participation, access to social protection, health care, food, employment and justice, along with many other facets of the SDGs should be prioritized as we build back better and smarter from the pandemic.

2. Summary

This Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities Paragraph 89 Report provides a background on the group and the crucial role of OPDs for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, and outlines the SGPwD’s contribution to the 2030 Agenda, its Co-Chairs’ and organizing partner’s contributions, as well as contributions of selected members.

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development (SGPwD) is integral to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Organized by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) with support of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), Disabled Peoples’ International, and other partners, the SGPwD operates in multifaceted contexts with diverse opportunities for collaboration.

The work of the SGPwD integrates the three pillars – social, economic, and environmental – into engagement at local, national, regional, and international fora. Over the last seven years, it has focused particularly on poverty alleviation (many persons with disabilities live in poverty); women and girls with disabilities (the intersectionality of marginalised groups often yields compounded discrimination), and accessibility. Progress depends on action from governments and institutional actors. The SGPwD continues to set forth substantial and substantive recommendations to guide its work.

3. Introduction

This Report

This submission provides additional inputs to the HLPF 2022 in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 89, which says, “The HLPF will support participation in follow-up and review processes by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in line with resolution 67/290. We call upon those actors to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Agenda.” This report portrays the context and objectives of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD) in its contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The SGPwD finds collective power through joint monitoring, positioning, assessment, and formulating of key recommendations.

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD)

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is the focal point for UNDESA, ECOSOC and the GA for all UN Sustainable Development policies. The responsibility of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities covers the Rio+20 outcome, including the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, the High-level Political Forum, regional forums on sustainable development, the global indicator framework process, Financing for Sustainable Development processes, and disaster risk reduction processes, at global and regional levels across the United Nations.

In addition, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities aims to cooperate closely with other constituencies. The SGPwD is a part of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism. Under the leadership of the International Disability Alliance and with the support of the International Disability and Development Consortium, Disabled Peoples' International, and other partners, persons with disabilities, their representative organizations, and allies provide coordinated inputs into sustainable development processes, demonstrating a high level of engagement with intergovernmental processes at the UN.

The International Disability Alliance (IDA)

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is co-organized by the International Disability Alliance (IDA). IDA unites 14 member organizations,¹ which represent over 1100 OPDs (including underrepresented groups) across 8 global and 6 regional organizations from 182 countries. The Alliance aims to promote the effective and full implementation of the CRPD worldwide, as well as compliance with the CRPD within the UN system, through the active and coordinated involvement of representative organisations of persons with disabilities at the national, regional and international levels.

IDA is working to ensure the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals are realized in line with the CRPD. IDA supports OPDs in engaging with UN human rights processes in Geneva and New York, including the Treaty Bodies, Universal Periodic Review and Human Rights Council. IDA supports OPDs at national and regional levels through trainings and disseminating resources and information. With member organisations around the world, IDA represents the estimated one billion people worldwide living with a disability.

With its unique composition as a network of some of the largest and most active organizations of persons with disabilities worldwide, IDA is the most authoritative representative voice of persons with disabilities and acknowledged as such by the United Nations system both in New York and Geneva.

¹ African Disability Forum, Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities, ASEAN Disability Forum, Down Syndrome International, European Disability Forum, Inclusion International, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Pacific Disability Forum, RIADIS, World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Federation of the Deafblind, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is co-organized by the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC). The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) is a grouping of civil society organisations 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.

Broad membership includes organisations of persons with disabilities, non-governmental development organisations, national networks and international member-based networks. This diversity engenders strength. The International Disability and Development Consortium partners collaboratively with donors and experts, and members define and run activities through thematic task groups.

4. Methodology and Process for Preparation of the Review

To prepare this report, the SGPwD conducted a desk review from relevant documents and reports. The sourcing of material and drafting involved regular dialogue and collaborative drafting. As the first paragraph 89 report from the SGPwD, it drew upon activities, accomplishments, and reports since 2016. Depth varies by initiative and country based on information publicly provided by the parties leading the initiative. Limitations include missing items due to time and resource constraints and missing updates. Since some of the reporting comes from prior years in which the SGPwD conducted the deepest analysis on a particular issue, more recent developments may not be captured in this report.

Resources

For additional information about the contents of this report, please reference the following materials.:

- [VNR reports](#)
- [SDG Reports](#)
- [Community-Driven Data for Persons with Disabilities Fosters Inclusion and Representation](#)
- [The experience of persons with disabilities with COVID-19](#)
- [Financing rights and social justice for persons with disabilities in the era of COVID-19 and beyond](#)
- [Towards inclusive social protection systems supporting full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities](#)
- [A Report on the Social Protection Response to COVID-19 for Persons with Disabilities, South Asian Region](#)
- [Regional Sustainable Development Forums & Regional Integration](#)
- [Disability Rights During the Pandemic: A global report on findings of the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor](#)
- [Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities Submission for HLPF 2021](#)
- [The International Disability Alliance's website](#)
- [The GLAD Network website](#)

- [The Bridge CRPD-SDG Program website](#)

5. Policy and Enabling Environment

5. (a) Creating ownership of the SDGs

Improving Data Collection and Verification

The SGPwD continues to face a lack of data on persons with disabilities, because it is too rarely collected in the first place. Policymakers cannot fully address serious challenges without it. Governments remain ineffective at disaggregating COVID-19 data by disability, according to research by the SGPwD.² These failures to disaggregate COVID-19 data by disability mean persons with disabilities are being left even further behind, increasing inequalities.

The role of OPDs and civil society organizations in filling data gaps is increasingly important because official disability data are largely not being gathered at the national level to measure the SDGs. Consequently, internationally comparable data is limited. Stakeholders have set forth recommendations for national statistical offices and policymakers to build capacity.

Persons with disabilities and allies have been:

- Advocating for disability data in the global indicator SDG framework;
- Monitoring continually to ensure disability data are collected and being measured to track the SDGs;
- Presenting and sharing key information during meetings of the UN's Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), the UN World Data Forum, and the UN Statistical Commission;
- Collaborating with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, international non-governmental organizations, and the UN system to ensure data are disaggregated by disability across policies and programs;³
- Developing a [disability data advocacy toolkit](#) for OPDs;
- Managing webinars and a listserv on disability data; and
- Carrying out trainings with UN partners for OPDs on data knowledge and advocacy.

Community-driven data can contribute to SDG implementation that includes persons with disabilities and assist in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. To realize this potential, SGPwD recommends that official statistical bodies collect and disaggregate data by disability using the Washington Group's short set of questions and the Washington Group and UNICEF Child Functioning Module to learn about barriers and to measure disability-inclusive programs, response, and recovery actions. Several key institutions and governments, including DFAT,

² <https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/community-driven-data-for-persons-with-disabilities-fosters-inclusion-and-representation/>

³ This section relays and summarizes commentary found at <https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/community-driven-data-for-persons-with-disabilities-fosters-inclusion-and-representation/>.

Finland, and the UK, have adopted the Washington Group Questions sets⁴, and others have committed to promoting their use⁵.

In addition, governments should:

- Involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in planning, implementation, and monitoring the CRPD, SDGs, and COVID-19 response and recovery efforts;
- Invest in data for disability-inclusive development and to build capacity in stakeholders, especially OPDs, to be better prepared to survey their communities, especially during future emergencies; and
- Support communities to gather community-generated data to complement traditional data sources and highlight information that cannot be captured in other ways.

[Direct Efforts to Collect and Disaggregate Data](#)

Organizations of persons with disabilities have initiated direct engagement in data collection and disaggregation efforts. In 2018, CBM and the International Disability Alliance conducted a survey on OPDs' experiences with collecting disability-related data. The [findings](#) suggested that the engagement of such organizations in data collection and disaggregation efforts remained critically missing.

To address this gap, in 2019, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities established a [Disability Data Advocacy Working Group](#),⁶ to provide a global platform for information exchange, learning and dialogue, sharing of good practices, and collaboration on disability data collection, disaggregation, and analysis. Through the Working Group, many OPDs have shared examples of collecting data about their members.

The Disability Data Advocacy Working Group serves as a global platform for information exchange, learning and dialogue, sharing of good practices, and collaboration on disability data collection, disaggregation, and analysis. The Working Group was created after an assessment of disability data at the national level in 2018. The findings suggested that OPD engagement in data collection and disaggregation efforts is critical and missing. To address this gap, DPOs need technical support, advocacy guidance, and the opportunity for periodical information exchange and learning. Membership in the Disability Data Advocacy Working Group is open to all persons

⁴ Global Disability Summit +2 Years. See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/commitments> (reports that DFAT uses the Washington Group Questions sets for monitoring implementation of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals; Finland now lists them as part of the minimum standards of all new aidfunded initiatives; and the UK uses them as well).

⁵ Global Disability Summit 2018 Summary of Commitments. See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/commitments> ("At least 3 bilateral and 12 multilateral organisations or bodies have committed to promote use of the Washington Group questions (including Australia, Finland, UK Department for International Development (DfID), World Bank Group (WBG), International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF, UNFPA, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), OHCHR, IOM, IRC, the Washington Group).).

⁶ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/data-advocacy-activities>

with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), non-governmental and other organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities, and non-governmental donors, researchers, and independent consultants working with persons with disabilities.

During the UN Virtual World Data Forum, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, the International Disability Alliance, and CBM Global Disability Inclusion officially launched the first comprehensive [Disability Data Advocacy Toolkit](#). This toolkit contributes to the growing global dialogue on the importance of data on persons with disabilities, specifically to provide some basic knowledge on data collection, analysis, and use of data for evidenced based advocacy to influence policy and decision makers.

[Adding data on the experience of persons with disabilities with COVID-19](#)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities carried out two phases of qualitative research to gather information on the experiences of persons with disabilities in the context of the pandemic and to complement existing COVID-19 research studies. The [first phase of research took place in 2020](#) with disability movement leaders from around the world and the second phase followed in 2021 exploring three countries in depth: [Bangladesh](#), [Bolivia](#), and [Nigeria](#).

Phase I Research: The Experiences of Persons with Disabilities with COVID-19

The initial phase of research over the experiences of persons with disabilities with COVID-19 was carried out in May and June 2020 with 93 leaders from the disability movement. The data were gathered around thematic units related to the pandemic and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Methods to gather data included online interviews with leaders from the disability movement. These interviews were carried out via different methods depending on the context, internet access, and video quality. Additionally, focus group webinars took place to collect testimonials from different regional groups within the disability movement via online platforms. Also, online surveys were shared with organizations of persons with disabilities in Bolivia, Colombia, and Guatemala to explore one region in more depth. Interviews were conducted with 28 people with disabilities in six languages, including Arabic, English, Hungarian, International Sign, Russian, and Spanish. Four regional focus group discussions took place in English and Spanish via an online platform using live captioning and International Sign interpretation. Participants stemmed from all regions from more than 54 countries and represented all types of disabilities. Specifically, 65 people with disabilities participated from 13 countries in Africa, 16 countries in Asia and the Pacific, nine countries in Europe and North America, 12 countries in Latin America, and eight countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

Key findings

The findings indicated that most persons with disabilities around the world have been adversely affected by the pandemic with additional or new barriers, including barriers in the recovery phase. The most common barriers that emerged from the research included: (1) lack of access to COVID-19 information for all persons with disabilities; (2) barriers in receiving social protection measures and employment (formal and informal, losing employment first, and accessibility barriers in the virtual

working environment); and (3) lack of disability inclusion in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts at all governmental levels, creating significant disconnections between national and local actions. In addition, three recurrent themes emerged from the research: (1) the role of organizations of persons with disabilities, (2) lack of access to healthcare facilities, and (3) lack of disability data.

Phase II Research: Case Studies in Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Nigeria

The second phase of research was carried out by local and regional researchers in Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Nigeria from February to April 2021. Data were gathered around thematic units related to the pandemic and the SDGs, particularly in the areas of health, social protection, employment and livelihood, accessibility, data, and access to vaccines. Methods to gather data included document analysis and key informant interviews with underrepresented persons with disabilities from different locations to gain in-depth views at the local level. The interviews were carried out in the local languages, including the national sign languages and via different methods and depending on the country's pandemic rules, internet access, video quality, and ability to travel.

Key Findings

All three studies indicated that the most significant barriers were: (1) lack of employment and social protection, (2) inaccessible healthcare facilities, (3) lack of access to information and data, and (4) lack of accessibility. Additionally, there were overlapping themes, including: (1) new barriers in the changing roles in extended family situations, (2) increased competition to find employment with overall high unemployment in society, (3) lack of resources to access information via phones and the internet increasing the digital divide, and (4) increased lack of security and safety.

Galvanizing CSO Impact of implementation and review processes

The Bridge CRPD-SDG Program⁷

Bridge CRPD-SDGs is an inclusive capacity development training initiative of an organizing partner of the SGPwD. This training initiative aims to support organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and disability rights advocates to develop an inclusive (all persons with disabilities) and comprehensive (all human rights) CRPD perspective on development, aligning the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, to reinforce their advocacy for inclusion and realisation of rights and persons with disabilities in many contexts. So far, more than 175 OPD leaders, staff and activists have been trained in South East Asia, Latin America, Indonesia, East and West Africa and the Pacific.

The coordinated training investment draws from the resources and experiences of the IDA and IDDC networks and their members. The BRIDGE CRPD-SDG curriculum includes SDG, inclusive development, core CRPD content, legal harmonisation, budget advocacy, data and indicators for planning, implementing and monitoring CRPD and SDGs. The Bridge CRPD-SDGs initiative has a strong impact on imparting knowledge to participants and supports them in related

⁷ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/bridge-crpdsdgs-training-initiative>

advocacy activities. Inclusive facilitation styles and tools engage the participants in different ways preparing them to identify and overcome — using the CRPD and SDGs — the challenges they face in their daily lives, at their workplace, in their homes, or in public.

[Guidance for empowering organizations of persons with disabilities \(OPDs\)](#)

The SGPwD developed two resources to support OPDs in their work to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in their countries: The 2030 Agenda - Comprehensive Guide for Persons with Disabilities⁸ and The 2030 Agenda - Introductory Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities. These resources present information about the 2030 Agenda and how it connects to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.⁹ The Comprehensive Guide explores potential entry points for persons with disabilities to influence and participate in SDG implementation, follow-up, and review. The Introductory Toolkit explores ways for persons with disabilities to influence and participate in how they are achieved.

[OPDs and Human Rights](#)

The CRPD commits States to allow persons with disabilities, and their representative organisations, to be involved and consulted in the official reporting process of their implementation of the CRPD. Article 32 on International Cooperation’s importance to the realization of the CRPD notes that States’ support could include ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.

The International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium successfully advocated for 11 explicit references to persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda and 18 indirect references since persons with disabilities are included among “vulnerable” people in paragraph 23.

As a member of the SGPwD, IDA provides long term coaching of national coalitions in the preparation of parallel reports, national and regional trainings for key OPD representatives and other stakeholders on the monitoring of CRPD, technical assistance, and facilitates interaction with UN treaty bodies, Universal Periodic Review and the Human Rights Council in order to influence their recommendations.

SGPwD members also engage through several UN processes.¹⁰ They provided input to an “Accessibility Guide to the Human Rights Council for Persons with Disabilities,” updated in 2018, and recommendations, which the OHCHR tracks publicly, to the HRC.¹¹

⁸ The 2030 Agenda - Comprehensive Guide for Persons with Disabilities.

<https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/activities/explaining-SDGs>

⁹ The 2030 Agenda - Introductory Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities.

<https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/resources/2030-agenda-introductory-toolkit-persons-disabilities>

¹⁰ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/utlising-crpd>

¹¹ For more information on this work, see OHCHR’s materials from the Task Force on Secretariat services, accessibility, and information technology, at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session23/Pages/TFOnAccessibility.aspx>

These efforts increase opportunities for OPD representation in global initiatives, including IDA's role with the GLAD network, Global Disability Summit, UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD), AT Scale, and the Inclusive Education Initiative.

Continuous Learning

Global Survey on the Experience of Persons with Disabilities Adapting to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the SGPwD have prioritized documenting violations of human rights of persons with disabilities and gathering evidence of any good practice in local, national, and global pandemic response and preparedness.

In 2020, IDA launched a survey on the Experience of Persons with Disabilities Adapting to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. To hold governments accountable to the disability movement, the survey documents various economic, social, and cultural consequences of the pandemic as well as experience of persons with disabilities who have contracted COVID-19. Members of the SGPwD invited all persons with disabilities around the world to answer it and to share it widely with their networks. Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations (including contributions of under-represented groups including women with disabilities, indigenous persons with disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities) developed the questions of this survey.

This survey was different from others on the COVID-19 situation because of its accessibility (plain language and International Sign); its exclusive focus on persons with disabilities (rather than for family members and support persons to document their experiences); and its authorship by persons with disabilities.

Global Survey on OPDs Participation in Policies and Programmes

The second Global Survey on participation of OPDs was launched in June 2021. The survey serves as a tool to capture OPDs' perceptions of their participation with national governments and international partners. It monitors that 'Nothing about us without us' and Article 4.3 and 32 of the CRPD and seeks to answer questions such as: Are OPDs meaningfully represented and included? Do women with disabilities, persons with disabilities from the most marginalised groups, such as persons with deafblindness, persons with psychosocial disabilities, Indigenous persons with disabilities, and others have equal opportunities?

The Second IDA Global Survey is hosted on iData, an online accessible survey platform developed and tested with persons with disabilities. It includes accessible features such as read aloud, activating video in International Sign, changing contrast or getting word definitions. The Survey is available in Arabic, Chinese, French, English, Russian, Spanish, and International Sign.

5. (b) Incorporation of the SDGs in frameworks

National frameworks

Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)

In 2017, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities published the Case Study on the Engagement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Voluntary National Reviews.¹² This global report raises awareness for OPDs and shares how to engage with their governments in the national consultation processes on SDG implementation. It features reports from Argentina, Bangladesh, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru, Sweden and Togo in the case study. The UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Database yields 60 results for VNRs since 2016 that reference “persons with disabilities.”¹³

The report highlighted thematic issues of poverty allocation, healthcare, women with disabilities, and accessibility. The information summarized was derived from OPDs and partners working at the national level on SDG implementation. To access the report, [please visit this link](#).

Examples

Ethiopia

Ethiopia conducted formal consultations for the 2017 VNR to plan SDG implementation and engagement within civil society. Persons with disabilities contributed to these consultations by giving official presentations and submitting their concerns about significant gaps in the national five-year plan. Persons with disabilities also contributed to a national plan prioritizing domestic needs like sanitation and education. Umbrella organizations of persons with disabilities provided accommodations to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities.

Nigeria

In April 2017, persons with disabilities were invited to the national stakeholders consultation. The umbrella organization, the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) engaged with the office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs to ensure that disability is included within ongoing consultation and the VNR process.

JONAPWD has increasingly engaged with other agencies and ministries within the government including the Office of the Statistician General, the Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of National Planning, to increase awareness and inclusion of persons with disabilities in national SDG implementation. In addition to meeting with the national government, JONAPWD has set up Technical Working Groups on SDGs—ensuring that relevant agencies of government are adequately represented – at state and national levels to produce a comprehensive report on addressing disability in implementing the SDGs in Nigeria. Further, JONAPWD developed a

¹² <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/global-report-vnr-processes>

¹³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/inputs/?str=persons+with+disabilities>

nationwide awareness raising workshop to engage a diverse cross-section of civil society and government on mainstreaming disability in SDG implementation.

As the Nigerian umbrella organization for OPDs, JONAPWD coordinated recommendations and inputs of OPDs to produce a shadow report on the status of persons with disabilities in SDG implementation and has officially written to, and has commenced engagement with, the Federal and state governments on the SDGs.

Sweden

Following the Swedish government's January 2030 Agenda launch in 2016, an umbrella OPD, representing a wide range of national OPDs, was invited to the SDG launch in January 2016, the hearing in November 2016, the launch of VNR preparation in January 2017, 1 of 4 consultations in March and the reference group for the VNR (HLPF 2017). OPDs participated in activities towards national level SDG implementation. Within the 2017 preparatory year, OPDs submitted and conducted materials about global indicators, local implementation of SDGs, press communications; positions on Sweden's national action plan and HLPF submissions.

They sought to promote inclusion, human rights especially related to health (3), education (4), work (5), equality (10), cities (11) and democracy (16). OPDs recommended: expanding the delegation with a representative from the main umbrella for the Disability Rights movement; enforcing human rights such that their practice exceeds "voluntary"; ensuring the existence of data and research to support reducing inequalities within SDG related to inclusion, presenting an example report on inequalities from the UK; and launching Universal Design as a tool for balancing power (empowerment) in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Peru

Peru's Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed a national plan for SDG implementation titled Monitoring System for Sustainable Development Goals to be implemented by the Strategic Planning Centre (CEPLAN) and the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics. Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were not involved in the development of the national plan. However, in May 2017, civil society organizations held a meeting with key government officials from CEPLAN, the government body responsible for preparing the voluntary report for the HLPF, and emphasized the need to have national consultations in order to contribute effectively to SDGs implementation. As a result, representatives of CEPLAN committed to developing national consultations

Togo

There have been formal consultations between the government and civil society on SDG implementation. In December 2015 in Lomé, the department of development planning organized the first francophone training workshop on the integration of SDGs into national development planning. Civil society, including the umbrella organization of persons with disabilities, the national federation of persons with disabilities organization (FETAPH), participated in this two-day meeting. In the consultations at the national level, FETAPH

participated via representatives on behalf of the community of persons with disabilities. At the regional level, some member associations were invited as well. During the discussions, persons with disabilities clearly expressed their challenges and vision.

Denmark

Denmark has conducted consultations between the government and civil society, however the space and opportunity for Civil Society Organisations, including OPDs to contribute has been limited. For example, OPDs met with the Ministry of Finance preceding the publication of the Danish VNR report. Danish OPDs, as part of wider civil society, have engaged with the government advocating for the inclusion of disability specific issues in relation to the SDGs. OPDs highlighted both national perspectives and perspectives from Danish Development Aid. The consultations with the government were in physically accessible facilities, and there were not any other accommodations provided or requested of the government.

Italy

In advance of its 2017 VNR presentation, the Italian government conducted a public consultation with civil society and other actors on the Italian strategy for SDG implementation in March 2017. DPOs were not involved in the consultation, however Disabled Persons International- Italy, the Italian network on Disability and Development and the Italian Federation to Overcoming Handicap, presented a document containing recommendations and inputs to mainstreaming disability within the Italian strategy on SDG implementation in April 2017.

Bangladesh

To effectively engage persons with disabilities in the full process of SDG implementation, monitoring and review in 2017, DPOs formed a collective platform “Disability Alliance on SDGs” that consisted of DPO Networks, NGOs and INGOs working with people with disabilities. The alliance took advocacy initiatives to ensure the engagement of persons with disabilities in the VNR 2017 process. The NGO Affairs Bureau and the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh jointly arranged a conference titled “Role of NGOs in Implementation of SDGs in Bangladesh.” The conference highlighted as a priority that marginalised groups such as persons with disabilities, Dalit and coastal and island people must be included at all levels to make progress towards implementing the SDGs.

Kenya

The Kenyan government created a roadmap for SDG implementation that involves civil society stakeholders. DPOs have been involved with this SDG roadmap, primarily through raising awareness and advocacy, contributing to resource mobilization, participating in budget processes, and social monitoring and reporting. The government did proactively engage OPDs in preparing for its 2017 VNR presentation. At that time, Kenya held multiple national-level consultations with civil society on SDG implementation that were inclusive of persons with disabilities. The government also held a forum specifically engaging national Kenyan DPOs. Civil Society as a whole organized themselves as a SDG Forum. DPOs, in particular United Disabled

Persons of Kenya, are members of this forum and coordinated the inputs on disability issues within consultations and reports, particularly with regard to Goals 1 and 17.

Regional frameworks¹⁴:

The SGPwD supports efforts at the five regional forums on sustainable development.

The UN regional commissions host sustainable development forums in each region. The SGPwD compiled experiences of the participation of persons with disabilities at the regional level and reported these observations in the SGPwD's 2017 Case Study on the Engagement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Voluntary National Reviews.

Many regional level fora have yet to establish strong civil society coordination mechanisms to engage in sustainable development processes. The Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM), models strong and well-established organization.

The SGPwD supports the improvement of civil society coordination mechanisms and the distribution of knowledge needed to navigate these systems. In 2019, the European Disability Forum (EDF) identified challenges DPOs face in engaging at the regional level. It reported that the UN regional bodies established to monitor the 2030 Agenda are organised differently from human-rights based processes they are familiar with. The EDF produced a report to prepare DPO's, partners, and supporters to advocate at these UN regional mechanisms so DPOs - both for monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the implementation and monitoring of the CRPD.¹⁵

In 2021, the SGPwD hosted a webinar on OPD engagement in Regional Forums open to members across regions to share information and discuss strategies to improve this engagement.¹⁶ While the SGPwD supports the improvement of civil society coordination mechanisms and the distribution of knowledge needed to navigate these systems, its members continue to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities alongside the realization of the SDGs.

Economic Commission for Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) convened its third session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD 2017) in Addis Ababa, in May 2017. Prior to the session, Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS), inclusive of representatives from OPDs, came together and prepared joint statements.

¹⁴ Chapter 4

¹⁵ Regional Sustainable Development Forums & Regional Integration. European Disability Forum. November 2019. https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/final_regional_advocacy_report-accessible.pdf

¹⁶ See, e.g., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ3_IS_gCT0&list=PL6QxXqEB474YzamKep7tNCTgx8NHk49av&index=1 .

Persons with disabilities participated in three high-level panels, each consisting of 7-9 government speakers and also a parallel session on different goals of focus on the HLPF. The agreed statement contains two explicit references in SDGs 1 and 9. The MGoS hosted a side event on the principle of ‘leave no one behind.’

Ahead of the Seventh regional forum, in 2021, African Disability Forum facilitated the engagement of organizations of persons with disabilities in the regional stakeholder group’s preparatory meetings.¹⁷ The recommendation of the group included gender and disability-disaggregated data, social protection, and labour protections for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Find more information:

- [The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(ARFSD\)](#)
- [IDA’s website](#)
- [African Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities](#) Communique to the Economic Commission for Africa

[Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#)

The Asia Pacific Disability Constituency (APDC) engages regarding regional SDG implementation and the Economic and Social Commission of the Asia Pacific (ESCAP) Sustainable Development Forum. The APDC is part of the Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism ([AP-RCEM](#)). APDC articulates its key objectives as: “to raise awareness, amplify advocacy efforts towards CRPD compliant SDG implementation, participate in regional UN and other processes and opportunities and build our community and raise awareness.”¹⁸

The AP-RCEM facilitates the participation of civil society, including SGPwD members, at the Forum. Persons with disabilities have the rights to intervene, submit position papers and documents, hold side events and engage fully as a civil society stakeholder at the ESCAP Sustainable Development Forum and related events. Persons with disabilities from the region convene in advance of the forum to strategize for the strengthening of regional networks for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sustainable development.

As reported in 2017, the Disability Constituency delivered speeches and interventions on environmental protection policies, disaster risk reduction planning and implementation, attaining and maintaining agricultural and land rights, maternal and reproductive health programs, and more issues salient to the Asia-Pacific region at the formal Ministerial segment of APFSD.

Find more information:

¹⁷ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/africa-regional-forum-sustainable-dev>

¹⁸ See APDC Terms of Reference, <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/blog/escap>

- [Asia Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Forum \(APFSD\)](#)
- [UNESCAP](#)
- [IDA's website](#)
- [Asia Pacific Regional CSO Mechanism \(AP-RCEM\)](#)

[Economic Commission for European Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(ERFSD\)](#)

The European Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ERFSD) creates a regional space to share policy solutions, best practices and challenges in SDG implementation and helps identify major regional and sub-regional trends. As an intergovernmental mechanism, ERFSD is convened by UNECE, in close cooperation with the regional UN system. It remains open to the participation of all relevant stakeholders. The European Disability Forum (EDF) representatives' participation at the ERFSD contributed to persons with disabilities being systematically mentioned as a group that needs to be meaningfully included for strong SDGs in Europe and in the UNECE region.

In recent years, the Constituency of Persons with Disabilities engaged with other stakeholders at the forum, and got multiple references on disability inclusion into the official regional forum report, *Regional Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities: Regional Sustainable Development Forums & Regional Integration*, published in November 2019.¹⁹

Regional monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides opportunities for OPDs to advocate for our inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals. This project report aims to provide information and learning about how we can best do this, using examples of current practices from different UN regions and their Regional Integration Organisations.

Find more information:

- [The European Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(ERFSD\)](#)
- [IDA's website](#)
- [UN Economic Commission for Europe](#)

[Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(LAC RFSD\)](#)

This multi-stakeholder Forum brings together Latin American and Caribbean governments members of the Forum, members of parliament, the UN System, financial institutions and Development Banks, regional and sub-regional integration organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia. The 2017 Forum included presentations of the annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, prepared by the ECLAC secretariat, presentations of various stakeholder reports, peer learning sessions for the member countries of the Forum presenting their voluntary national reviews,

¹⁹ Regional Sustainable Development Forums & Regional Integration. European Disability Forum. November 2019. https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/final_regional_advocacy_report-accessible.pdf

thematic dialogues related to the HLPF theme of that year, a Latin American and Caribbean civil society consultation, and multi-stakeholder side events.

In 2021, civil society organizations renounced violence against marginalised and vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, as well as data disaggregated by disability, and protection of the right to health of persons with disabilities.

Find more information:

- [Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (LAC RFSD)
- [IDA's website](#)

[Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#)

The Arab Regional Forum for Sustainable Development brings together Arab governments and sustainable development stakeholders to discuss progress and to share their experiences in the implementation of the SDGs in the Arab region. Forum membership is based on the Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Representatives from the Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities regularly address Member States emphasizing that for persons with disabilities accessibility and discrimination are the two main obstacles to full participation in society and further appealed to the Arab States to consider these issues when drafting their national implementation plans of the SDGs.

Find more information:

- [Arab Regional Forum for Sustainable Development](#) (ARFSD)
- [IDA's website](#)

[5. \(c\) Integration of the three dimensions:](#)

The SGPwD works to link the 2030 Agenda Review with integrations of the three dimensions: the economic, social, and environmental. Its efforts include inclusive education, social protection, climate action, SDG financing, employment, and development.

[Social Dimension](#)

See also, **Bridge CRPD-SDG Program**, discussed above.

[Inclusive Education](#)

Members of the SGPwD lead and participate in an Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG). Its overall objective is to strengthen partnership and collaboration for advocacy and action in inclusive education, in line with the SDGs and the CRPD. It operates with a cross-cutting principle of supporting an active and central role for people with disabilities and OPDs.

In partnership with OPDs and civil society organizations, IEWG: works with existing mechanisms to include in their strategic plans the education of persons with disabilities; and, advocate for a mechanism to track education sector system's-based results and associated budget/resource allocation for disability-inclusive education; advocates for and collaborates strategically with the World Bank, other multilateral development banks and UN Agencies, to accelerate and scale up initiatives and funding for education systems strengthening for disability-inclusive education and establish mechanisms to track results and budget/resource allocation for disability-inclusive education; and provides strategic advice and resources²⁰ to and supports GLAD members to mainstream inclusive education in their programmatic agenda and monitoring systems.

Social Protection

SGPwD members have signed the **Joint Statement “Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Supporting the Full and Effective Participation of Persons with Disabilities.”**²¹ The joint statement aims to build greater consensus on the importance of inclusive social protection systems supporting the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities. Meetings of those signing the joint statement also contributed to the first report of the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities to the UN General Assembly (September 2015), which highlighted the importance of disability-inclusive social protection systems. The Joint Statement sets out the specific risks and vulnerabilities faced by persons with disabilities and their families and how social protection systems can effectively protect them from livelihood shocks, reduce and prevent poverty and enable them to participate fully in society.²²

SGPwD also released **A Report on the Social Protection Response to COVID-19 for Persons with Disabilities, South Asian Region** in February 2021.²³ The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the social protection response and recovery initiatives by countries in the South Asian Region towards people with disabilities from the perspective of OPDs. The COVID-19 crisis has magnified vulnerabilities in the region and furthered the marginalisation of persons with disabilities.

The contribution by organizations of persons with disabilities to this report highlighted: Limited efforts to reach out to persons with disabilities; Lack of specific social protection measures for persons with disabilities in all countries of the region; Lack of responsiveness of the general

²⁰ See e.g., Inclusive Education infographic. 2019. <https://gladnetwork.net/search/resources/glad-infographic-inclusive-education>

²¹ A joint statement “Towards inclusive social protection systems supporting full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities”, 2018. https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/joint_statement_on_disability_inclusive_social_protection_final.pdf

²² <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProjectWiki.action?id=3209&pid=2840>

²³ https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/ida_south-asian-region-report_02-02-2021_2.pdf

measures to respond to the issues of people with disabilities; Inaccessibility of information and communication services; A lack of sub-national government initiatives which can pave the way towards a more inclusive social protection response and recovery; and The need to build better initiatives by addressing the pre-existing barriers and inequalities.

Environmental Dimension

Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action (TG-DRRCA)

The SGPwD established a Thematic Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action (TG-DRRCA) to support the engagement of persons with disabilities, their representative organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to the monitoring of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (within the 2030 Agenda framework), and also to ensure that the global and regional climate action is inclusive of and allows equal participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.²⁴

Climate Action Working Group

The Climate Action Working Group was established to support the active presence of persons with disabilities in climate change talks and processes, particularly in the COP26, which will be held in Glasgow, in November 2021. The World Bank, International Labour Organization and IDA, a SGPwD member, established and co-chair the Group. Its sub-working groups address: content Development of key messages, policy documents, position papers; and communications, events and information sharing, including social media campaigns and participation of OPDs in events leading up to the COP and beyond. This Group intends to fulfil its discrete mission with the conclusion of the COP26.

Economic Dimension

Financing for SDGs

The annual ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum) was established by the 2015 [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#) and the SGPwD has been actively involved in the annual FfD Forums. The SGPwD has advocated for the inclusion of disability references into the annual FfD Forum intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations that feed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the High-level Political Forum. The SGPwD also has fed into the annual the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development report that in part influences the FfD Forum outcome document. The SGPwD FfD advocacy papers [can be found here](#).

In the FfD process, the SGPwD also engages with the CSO Financing for Development (FfD) Group and persons with disabilities have been included in their collective papers. Its analysis of

²⁴ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sgpwd-drr>

the 2021 draft report is accessible at: <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/draft-report-ffd>. The SGPwD also submitted position papers, for example, its 2017 position paper.²⁵

The SGPwD has launched a briefing on “Financing rights and social justice for persons with disabilities in the era of COVID-19 and beyond.”²⁶ The briefing addresses how persons with disabilities have been hit particularly hard by the global pandemic, yet proposals for financing the response rarely include persons with disabilities. The briefing sets out some key considerations for ensuring that international economic policies that tackle the crisis always contribute to the enjoyment of human rights and social justice by persons with disabilities in their diversity, especially those in the Global South.

Employment

Members of the SGPwD²⁷ partner on the Inclusion Works²⁸ project. The focus of the Inclusion Works programme is “how can more people with disabilities be included in/access formal waged employment?” The programme aims to engage a wide group of stakeholders including a diversity of people with disabilities through their representative organisations, governments as employers and duty bearers, private sector as employers and influencers, as well as other key groups. The programme seeks to test models of inclusive employment practice and generate robust evidence and data which can be used to influence at a national, regional and global level.

Development

The **Making OPDs Equal Partners of Inclusive Development in Africa** programme aims to ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons from underrepresented groups of persons with disabilities, enjoy equal human rights and full participation in society in Sub-Saharan Africa. The programme, spanning November 2019 until April 2023, is carried out by IDA and its members and funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. The programme combines a strong focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and national level interventions, while also building connections with regional and global levels as critical levers for action to support civil society to play an effective role and implement a comprehensive accountability strategy.

Members of the SGPwD²⁹ partner together on the **Disability Inclusive Development (DID)**³⁰ Programme, a consortium program led by Sightsavers and funded by what is now the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom. The program is designed to

²⁵ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/FFD-forum>

²⁶ Financing rights and social justice for persons with disabilities in the era of COVID-19 and beyond, IDA, February 2021, <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/financing-covid19-beyond>

²⁷ For list of partners, see <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/inclusion-works>.

²⁸ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/inclusion-works>; see also <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/uk-aid-connect>.

²⁹ For list of partners, see <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/did-project>.

³⁰ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/did-project>

contribute to the long-term improved well-being and inclusion of all people with disabilities in low-and-middle-income countries. DID carries out a series of small-scale interventions around increased access to health care and education, improved livelihoods, and reduced stigma and discrimination, using new development approaches such as adaptive management and community-based consultation to deliver better quality of life for persons with disabilities and accelerate the realisation of their human rights. The programme creates a solid evidence base around what delivers positive results for persons with disabilities to scale up, as well as ensure this data and evidence is disseminated and informs the global community and governments.

Members of the SGPwD serve as advisors to and help implement **Bridging the Gap**, the European Union flagship program on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in international development cooperation.³¹

5. (d) Goals and targets:

SDG Reports³²

Members of the SGPwD and its members support OPDs to increase their capacities to engage with national, regional and international SDGs and human rights monitoring processes and to strengthen their advocacy through building robust evidence. Since 2017, IDA members at both the regional and national level have produced comprehensive, evidence-based reports and analyses about the alignment of SDG implementation with the CRPD. All six IDA regional members volunteered to develop reports, and national-level OPDs applied throughout their global or regional IDA members.

HLPF Submissions

Each year the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities comes together to write a submission around the implementation of the SDGs and persons with disabilities relating to the theme of the HLPF. The SGPwD convenes an open, transparent, accessible and inclusive call to initiate the establishment of a working group to draft the sectoral position paper. The SGPwD writes the submission through an open consultative process to create a strong statement from various organizations working to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. The SGPwD promotes widely its invitation to engage through providing input to the submission, representing the SGPwD, and serving as a committee member.³³

5. (e) Thematic analysis:

The SGPwD's operations closely reflect the annual HLPF theme, as observed in its annual position papers. This includes themes of past HLPFs, listed in the table below. Some of the

³¹ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/btg>

³² See Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Reports. International Disability Alliance. <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sgd-reports>

³³ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/2019-hlpf-report>.

most salient areas that the SGPwD has highlighted the past six years include: poverty alleviation (SDG 1), women with disabilities (SDG 5), and accessibility (SDGs 4, 8, 9, 10).

Year	HLPF Theme	SGPwD Submission
2021	Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development	SGPwD Submission to HLPF 2021 ³⁴
2020	Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development	“Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development for persons with disabilities” ³⁵
2019	Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality	“Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring their inclusiveness and equality with others” ³⁶
2018	Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies	“Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Societies and Persons with Disabilities” ³⁷
2017	Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world	“Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity for Persons with Disabilities” ³⁸
2016	Ensuring that no one is left behind	“Ensuring that no one is left behind” – Submission from Persons with Disabilities ³⁹

Goals 4, 8, 9, 10: Accessibility

³⁴ See

https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/stakeholder_group_of_persons_with_disabilities_submission_for_hlpf_2021.pdf

³⁵ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2020>

³⁶ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/2019-hlpf-report>.

³⁷ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2018>

³⁸ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/hlpf2017-submission-paper-final>

³⁹ See <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/resources/major-groups-and-other-stakeholders-discussion-papers-hlpf-2016>

Accessibility at the HLPF, UN, and international fora

SGPwD has long worked to advance accessibility for all persons with disabilities at the UN. In an effort to address accessibility barriers for persons with disabilities, SGPwD met with the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) during the 2016 HLPF. They agreed to work together to make future HLPF fora inclusive for persons with disabilities. Subsequently, the SGPwD has worked closely with the UN to ensure the HLPF and other events are accessible for all persons with disabilities.

The following accessibility outcomes resulted from recommendations that were compiled from consultations with the disability community, and have been implemented at the HLPF from 2017 onwards:

- Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services for all HLPF plenary sessions in the room on the screen and online;
- International Sign interpretation for some sessions of the Forum
- Captions for all of the HLPF sessions in the UN webcast live and recorded videos;
- Portable audio translation devices and sign language interpreters in the gallery for all the sessions;
- Specific seats for persons with disabilities and their personal assistants with ample space to maneuver reserved in all relevant conference rooms;
- The HLPF and sustainable development knowledge platform websites created accessible features, including Word documents and alt-text descriptions for images;
- Presentation materials, when possible, shared in advance with sign interpreters and CART providers;
- Braille copies of the HLPF agenda and presentations for speakers quickly provided;
- An accessibility walk-through well in advance of the HLPF;
- Security briefed on disability and accessibility awareness before each week of the HLPF, yielding positive feedback from participants about their encounters with security;
- Signage on the availability of plastic straws for persons with disabilities now visible at UN cafeterias;
- More time allotted to presenters with disabilities; and
- A temporary dog relief area designated for visitors with guide or service dogs (in collaboration with UN security and the K9 unit).

The 2021 HLPF marks the first HLPF in which an Easy Read version of the program was provided.⁴⁰

As result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SGPwD produced online accessibility guides for the UN. These include the [Checklist for making virtual meetings accessible](#) and the [Overview on Accessibility of Video Conferencing Apps and Services – that is periodically updated](#). The SGPwD is working with UN security staff to provide guidance on working with persons with disabilities.

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https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/28587Easy_Read_Document_for_the_HLPF_2021.pdf

The SGPwD continues to collaborate with the UN Secretariat and other UN entities in close consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure accessibility and inclusion in programming and engagement with the UN. The SGPwD periodically updates its accessibility recommendations and resources and welcomes all inputs and suggestions.

6. Means of implementation

Mobilization of Resources

2030 Agenda Trainings

National and regional trainings for OPDs on the 2030 Agenda using the [2030 Agenda Introductory Toolkit](#) for Persons with Disabilities, and carried out in collaboration with IDA, IDDC, DRF, and others. Trainings were offered in the following locations, where over 300 persons with disabilities took part.

- USA
- Kenya and East Africa region
- Malawi
- Thailand
- Mexico
- Egypt
- Morocco
- Rwanda
- Peru
- Panama
- Bolivia
- Switzerland
- Vietnam
- Online for the Asia Pacific disability constituency

VNR Toolkit

SGPwD members IDA and CBM created a VNR toolkit for organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) on the review and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation, at national, regional and global levels. The [VNR Toolkit](#) aims to provide step-by-step guidance, ideas, suggestions and templates for building successful advocacy campaigns and strategies to participate in the monitoring mechanisms of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Webinars

The SGPwD put on a series of webinars throughout the year and leading up to the HLPF.⁴¹ For example, leading up to the 2021 HLPF, members hosted and participated in a webinar series featuring these topics:

- Disability and Data: A moderated discussion on the role of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in data processes with a focus on key experiences and research findings from national and global levels
- An overview and discussion on SDGs 8, 10, & 16: Three speakers shared their contributions to the submission and their work that reinforces their statement. This event included a moderated panel discussion with an in-depth focus on SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, and SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions. The panelists will delve into the effects of Covid-19 recovery for persons with disabilities within the scope of these specific goals.
- An OPD discussion on the Regional Forums: A moderated discussion on the regional forums and experiences of organizations of persons with disabilities.
- COVID-19 research findings from Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Nigeria: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SGPwD carried out two phases of qualitative research to gather information on the experiences of persons with disabilities. The first phase of research took place in 2020 with disability movement leaders from around the world. This webinar focused on the second phase, which explored three countries in depth: Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Nigeria in 2021.

In 2020, members of the SGPwD hosted and participated in webinars focused on non-discrimination and accessibility of persons with disabilities in humanitarian settings; and the impact of the pandemic on the right to education for learners with disabilities, access to health and emergency services, and disability-inclusive social protection schemes.⁴²

The SGPwD held an open-platform webinar discuss participation in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in anticipation of HLPF 2018. Guest presenters introduced how to engage in the VNRs at the national level, including examples from Ireland, Senegal and Switzerland, which underwent reviews in 2018, and experiences of other reviews in 2017.⁴³

SGPwD co-chairs, the IDA Secretariat and IDDC, provided a live briefing on the SDGs and CRPD for youth around the world in October 2016.⁴⁴

Side Event Programming

The SGPwD regularly hosts conversations on the sidelines of the HLPF and multilateral fora at the United Nations. For example, the SGPwD held an event at the sidelines of the HLPF 2021. A panel of people from organizations of persons with disabilities all around the globe discussed the theme of “Building an Inclusive and Effective Path for Civil Society Engagement in the

⁴¹ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6QxXqEB474YzamKep7tNCTgx8NHk49av>

⁴² <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/ida-iddc-webinars-covid19>

⁴³ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/webinars>

⁴⁴ Id. (<https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/webinars>), linking to: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1136115959800321&ref=watch_permalink

HLPF.” At the 2019 HLPF, the SGPwD held an official side event entitled “Reducing inequalities: a look at persons with disabilities.”

These events, when in person, provide important spaces for the SGPwD to engage directly with member states, development organizations, and national-level government officials to further its agenda toward inclusion of persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD) remains necessary to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. Its work integrates varied methods to achieve goals, integrating the social, economic, and environmental pillars at local, national, regional, and international levels. It will continue to advocate for accessibility at meetings to ensure all persons with disabilities can participate in the HLPF and its forums.

The SGPwD continues to set forth substantial, substantive recommendations to guide governments and institutional actors. It recommends governments involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in planning, implementation, and monitoring the CRPD, SDGs, and COVID-19 response and recovery efforts; invest in data for disability-inclusive development and to build capacity in stakeholders, especially OPDs, to be better prepared to survey their communities, especially during future emergencies; and support communities to gather community-generated data to complement traditional data sources and highlight information that cannot be captured in other ways.

It recommends that official statistical bodies collect and disaggregate data by disability using the Washington Group’s short set of questions and the Washington Group and UNICEF Child Functioning Module to learn about barriers and to measure disability-inclusive programs, response, and recovery actions.

It recommends that the international human rights and development communities emphasize explicitly that inclusivity includes persons with disabilities, and ensure that programming is accessible for persons with disabilities.

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities will continue to engage with existing and emerging organizations of persons with disabilities, their families and allies to advocate for the implementation of rights-respecting sustainable development goals, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.