



This project is funded by the European Union




Bridging the Gap II

Final report

What the words mean. These words are in **bold** in the report

International Development Co-operation	This is when governments and people from different countries work together to share information and things, so the world is a better place for everyone.
UNCRPD	This is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

What is Bridging the Gap II?

	This project helps people with disabilities in poorer countries to have their rights and be part of community and public life.
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	<p>It is funded by the EU</p>
	<p>It started on 2017 and finished in 2021</p>
	<p>The partners who manage the work are from different countries in Europe.</p>
	<p>The 5 partner countries in the project are in Africa and South America. They are Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Paraguay and Sudan.</p>
	<p>This report tells the stories of the people who were involved in the project.</p>
	<p>It shows how people's lives have been changed and how the project has made a difference.</p>

Stories from Burkina Faso



My name is **Evelyne Hien Winkoun** I am a deaf person. I am an Education Inspector in Burkina Faso. I am also a member of the Association of Hearing Impaired Women of Burkina Faso (AFHA), which started in 2008. My difficulty has been trying to communicate with others. But I have got the government to recognise the human rights of people with disabilities.







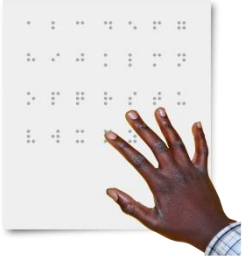
It is important to include people with disabilities in training about human rights.



People with disabilities are more included now in Burkina Faso. Women and girls get better health care. I want this to happen in all areas of Burkina Faso.



My name is **Souleymane Ouedraogo**, from Burkina Faso. I am a lawyer and researcher. I work in a government office that looks at human rights.

	<p>People with disabilities are not always treated well in my country. It makes us feel ashamed to have a disability. It can be difficult to get health care in Burkina Faso.</p>
	<p>Bridging the Gap II gave me good training about the UNCRPD and I now know the rights of people with disabilities so I can help others. Now other people understand our needs better.</p>
<p>Stories from Ecuador</p>	
	<p>My name is Diana Paola Banchón Mateo, I am from Ecuador. I work as a communicator. I am also Chair of the National Federation of Blind Persons of Ecuador (FENCE).</p>
	<p>People in my country don't understand what inclusion is.</p>
	<p>Bridging the Gap II helped us with equipment for blind children in schools. And with training for blind teachers and other people to help them with their daily lives.</p>



My name is **Xavier Mantilla**, I live in Quito, Ecuador. I am an office assistant.



I am a self – advocate. I speak up for people with intellectual disability. I am part of a national advocacy group. We speak up for people with disabilities to live independently.



We talk about the problems we have when we do not get the equipment that we need. We fight for our rights. People now listen to people with disabilities. When we were on our own people didn't listen to us. But now we are part of a group people listen.



Bridging the Gap II has helped with problems at school for children with intellectual disability. They made new equipment to help these children. They asked us what we thought about it. Things are now better for children than they were when I was at school.

Stories from Ethiopia



My name is Martha Zenebe, I live in Ethiopia. I work at Women with Disabilities National Association (EWDNA). I help with projects for people with disabilities. I have a physical disability. Every day I have challenges because of my disability and being a woman. People do not treat me the same as them.







In our society people thought that disability is a punishment for things that the family has done wrong. Things are getting better and people are starting to understand disability.







I speak up for other women with disabilities to have their rights.



I went on a Bridging the Gap II course to be a stronger leader. It was helpful to get information on social media. Now I can help more women with disabilities get their rights.

	<p>My name is Melaku Tekle Zengeta. I live in Ethiopia. I am a manager at a Centre for Disability. I am physically disabled. I have faced some difficulties but the big ones are physical spaces that I can't access.</p>
	<p>Some people in the country think that disability is a punishment from God. In the cities there is more understanding about being disabled.</p>
	<p>I help give training about how to understand people with disabilities.</p>
	<p>I worked with Bridging the Gap II to help people with disabilities be more included. It gives money to groups that help people with disability. It speaks up for people to be treated fairly and to get the support they need. It also helps women to become leaders.</p>
<p>Stories from Paraguay</p>	

	<p>I am Paola Amelia Duarte. I live in Paraguay with my family. When I was two years old, nobody noticed me crying until my uncle came to visit. My uncle told my mother that I couldn't hear. My mother didn't realise that I was deaf, that I couldn't hear. She took me to the doctor who told her I was deaf.</p>
	<p>I work in an office in the hospital and I am a university student. It is difficult for people with a disability in education. I had to pay for my own interpreter.</p>
	<p>Bridging the Gap II paid for training courses and has helped organisations of deaf people to be stronger.</p>
	<p>I want to be more involved in politics and stand up for women who are victims of violence.</p>



I am Mario Rubén Marecos. I was born and live in Paraguay. I have been working as a marketing manager for 13 years. I have a disability that affects my movement. I have helped with making the government give rights to people with disabilities in all areas of public life.



In my country Bridging the Gap II has helped to make the rights of people with disabilities better known to the government and to be included.



This includes the right to education. This gives people with disabilities more opportunities. When children with disabilities can go to schools with other children it helps them to feel included.



I speak out for the human rights of people with disabilities. When they have a voice it can change things and make them better.

Stories from Sudan



I am **Ekhlas Kamal Mohammad**, I am from Sudan. I am a person with intellectual disability.

I work as a baker, I make pastries with my mother.



The main problem for our family is being poor, as my father cannot work. There is no government care for people with a disability. There are no laws to protect us. People in the community do not really understand disability.



Bridging the Gap II has helped to tell the government that people with intellectual disabilities need jobs. They need to be included in their communities. It also helps families to know they have rights.



My name is **Mosa Mohammadain Adam**, I am from Sudan. I have a sight disability. We lived in Darfur but had to move to Western Sudan when war started in our area. My father left when we were young and my mother had to work to support us.



Bridging the Gap II helped me get training and paid work making things out of leather. I also learned about my rights. I sell my things in the market. I use the money to support my family.

Bridging the Gap's path towards inclusion.

Stories from people who work at the project partner organisations.



European Commission (EC)

I am **Marianna Lipponen**. I work for the European Commission. I worked with the Bridging the Gap II. Everyone worked together to help people with disabilities to be included.



Spanish Cooperation (FILAPP)

I am **Peggy Martinello**. I understand more now how people with disabilities are treated unfairly. Bridging the Gap II is making changes in the countries it works in, so people with disabilities have better chances for school and work.



Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

I am **Georg Huber-Grabenwarter**. I was the programme manager for Bridging the Gap II in 2020. We helped the government in Ethiopia understand more about the rights and needs of people with disabilities. In one area we helped get water and toilets in the schools.





Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)

I am Leticia de Guindos Talavera. I am the Head of the EU Area working with Latin America and the Caribbean Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). We helped to support lots of changes in Paraguay including schools for all children together.



Italian Agency for International Development Cooperation (AICS)

I am **Mina Lomuscio**. We must make sure all people have information in their own language and in a way they can understand it. We must continue to use more

	<p>technology. We should support our partner countries until we are no longer needed.</p>
	<p>European Disability Forum (EDF)</p> <p>I am Giampiero Griffo, president of the Italian Disability and Development Network. People with disabilities are not objects that need help. They want change so they can enjoy their rights and be full citizens in their countries. Bridging the Gap II helped to make this happen in the partner countries.</p>
	<p>International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)</p> <p>I am Monika Brenes. I work for the IDDC Board. Bridging the Gap II helped the EU organisations do good work in partnership with other countries. This happened at government level and in the communities. We all learned how to make sure people with disabilities can be included and enjoy their rights.</p>
<p>What is coming next?</p> <p>A message from the project director on keeping up the good work from the 4 years of Bridging the Gap's work</p>	



I am **Federico Martire**. Bridging the Gap II made good changes for people with disabilities. This is because governments and organisations talked and planned together to make these changes. The world is a better place when people with disabilities are included. We hope in the future there will be more working together so people with disabilities are always included.



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