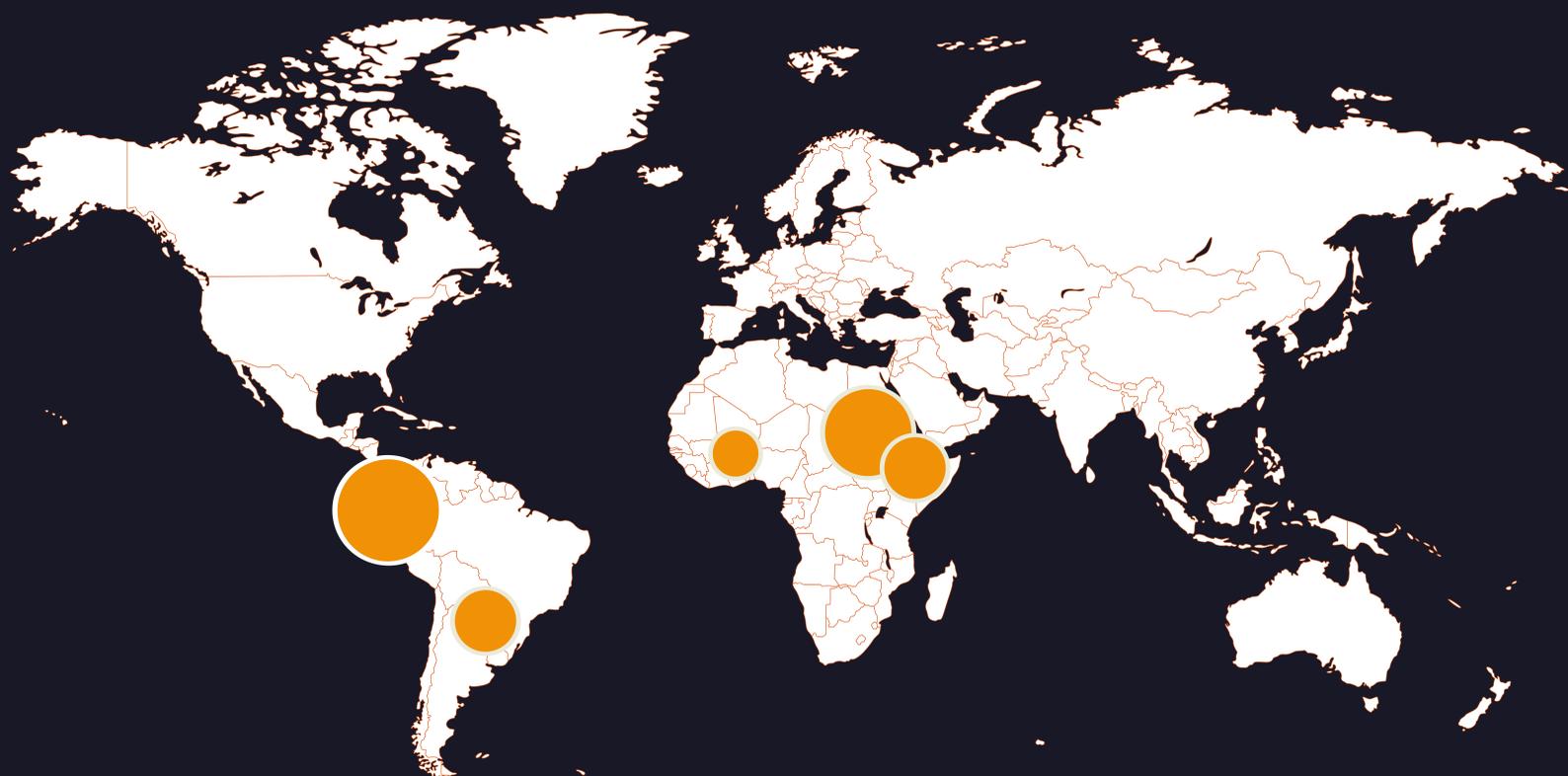


✓ WHAT HAS BRIDGING THE GAP ACHIEVED SO FAR?

Bridging the Gap (BtG), the flagship initiative of the European Union for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development cooperation, contributes to the implementation of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



GLOBALLY

Bridging the Gap leverages on the momentum for disability inclusion to make sure that no one is left behind. Since the launch in 2017, BtG has established strong synergies with UN actors, other EU-funded initiatives, the GLAD Network and International NGOs, thus reinforcing the project's contribution to disability-inclusive development and to key EU policy documents like the post-2020 Disability Strategy and the Gender Action Plan III. Building on the momentum for inclusion in development cooperation, BtG's Knowledge Management and Learning Strategy provides guidance and training for development partners to mainstream the disability dimension into existing and/or new initiatives.



BURKINA FASO

BtG has contributed to raise awareness on CRPD and national laws on disability inclusion among government stakeholders, thus enhancing their capacities to develop and implement inclusive public policies with a particular focus on health. The recent validation of the BtG-supported new National Strategy for Inclusion (SN-3PH), and its upcoming Action Plan, as well as an updated version of the disability certificate's baselines, combined with the overall reinforcement of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), are propping up CRPD implementation in the country, and ensuring better and more sustainable access to quality health services for persons with disabilities.



ECUADOR

Building on the national and international momentum for inclusive education, BtG in Ecuador has created a favorable environment for the participation of OPDs in the construction of inclusive public policies. Dedicated education materials, a first ever in the country, a reinforced partnership between the government and civil society, and the constant support of international cooperation actors, are the core drivers for BtG's success, even in time of COVID-19. The quick response to a pandemic-engendered shifting scenario has allowed continuity and reinforcement of inclusion in education, making use of digital tools to reach out a greater number of students and teachers.



ETHIOPIA

Operating through strategic partnerships with international cooperation actors, including Nobel Peace Prize recipient World Food Programme (WFP) or CARE International, as well as with the Federal and two regional governments, BtG in Ethiopia has been working on reinforcing social protection nets for persons with disabilities. Emphasis is too on the need for support to national and local OPDs, which BtG has been ensuring by providing 5 sub-grants benefitting 13 grassroots organisations. Perceived by national stakeholders as very relevant in terms of sectoral and geographical approaches, BtG in Ethiopia has also been tackling the gender dimension of social exclusion, fostering the support to empowerment of leading women with disabilities.



PARAGUAY

BtG represents an important turning point in Paraguay in the defense and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, having managed to capture and integrate the needs of OPDs and public institutions by enhancing better understanding of the CRPD, as well as fully participatory management and decision-making processes. The innovative nature and comprehensive scope of the development of indicators for the implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PNADHPCD) can generate an impact of enormous scope. In addition, BtG has been contributing to the overall strengthening of SENADIS as the public body in charge of upholding disability rights in the country's public policies, the simplification of data register procedures for people with disabilities, the design of accessible governmental websites and the of tools for inclusive education in the National Educational Policy (currently under reform).



SUDAN

BtG is widely considered a relevant project for the country in its entirety, not only for Sudanese with disabilities. Its objectives and design respond in general to the needs and priorities of persons with disabilities, OPDs and national partner authorities, as well as international cooperation partners in the country. The creation of the Group of Friends of Persons with Disabilities, the support to the 10-year CRPD report or the empowerment of organisations of persons with disabilities through subgrants and VET are vivid examples of the path towards inclusive employment policies BtG is paving in Sudan. With dedicated attention to the inclusion of women with disabilities, BtG is building upon the momentum for inclusive democratic transition, hence contributing to the country's most historical moment in decades.



WHAT ARE THE PRODUCTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT SO FAR?

GLOBALLY



- 48 global workshops, webinars, and trainings, plus 16 at country levels, to enhance disability mainstreaming in international cooperation, with over 1.500 participants in total
- 8 communication and visibility initiatives having gathered almost 400 people
- 38 publications (studies, analysis, contributions, technical assistances' results, communication products) entirely available online on the project's e-Library
- Established important synergies with other EU and implementing partners' programs (Evalua, EUROsocial+ and Socieux+), ensuring greater coordination for inclusion 17 existing or new initiatives now embed a clear disability dimension in their work.

BURKINA FASO	<p>AICS reinforced disability mainstreaming in its development programmes and projects, and among its stakeholders: 2 new projects and 2 new programmes are now disability-inclusive, and 6 coordination tables with local stakeholders and 3 CRPD meetings with Italian NGOs operating in the country took place.</p>	<p>National Government actors enhanced their capacity to develop and implement inclusive public policies: 69 focal points trained, 30 leaders trained at Ministry of Health, CRPD workshops, revision of the National Strategy SN-3PH.</p>	<p>Local OPDs and CSOs strengthen their skills and capacities: 3 grants awarded, support to project formulation via dedicated management trainings.</p>
ECUADOR	<p>AECID leveraged on the BtG experience to reinforce inclusive communication and the visibility of persons with disabilities in its projects and initiatives.</p>	<p>National Government stakeholders increased knowledge on inclusive education and steps forward have been consolidated: 70 public servants trained, 1st ever Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Education and national OPDs, over 1.000 teachers trained on inclusion of children with intellectual disability, 5.700 units of educational materials for children with intellectual disabilities, accessibility arrangements in 5 schools.</p>	<p>Local OPDs improved their participation in decision-making processes, in particular thanks to 4 grants awarded to national federations of persons with disabilities having increased their capacity to be meaningfully involved in the design and monitoring of inclusive public policies.</p>
ETHIOPIA	<p>ADA's Ethiopia Country Strategy 2019-2025 crosscut disability-inclusion perspective and fostered strategic collaboration with the agency's stakeholders with 204 development partners' staff trained on disability and inclusiveness and 113 in gender-responsive disability inclusion, disability inclusion checklists drafted for CARE's SWEEP project and WASH programs, a Letter of Understanding signed between WFP and ADA/BtG-II focusing on nurturing disability-inclusion.</p>	<p>National Government actors increased technical capacity to mainstream disability: 153 government staff and focal points from Amhara and Somali regions trained in gender-responsive disability inclusion and guidelines for the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are under finalization.</p>	<p>Local OPDs strengthened their skills through new opportunities to empower participation: 3 capacity building trainings, 2 gender mainstreaming guidelines for organisations of persons with disabilities, 13 local organisations (OPDs-CSOs) benefitting from grant mechanism, and dedicated sessions to empower women leaders with disabilities.</p>
PARAGUAY	<p>AECID reinforced disability-inclusion in development cooperation projects and programmes completing a dedicated national guideline and 3 workshops addressed international cooperation actors on inclusive development, ultimately bringing to 5 new disability-inclusive projects.</p>	<p>National Government stakeholders reinforced technical capacity to implement and monitor the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2015-2030 via technical assistances, and support in the definition and use of the Plan's Indicators. A new study to consolidate and reinforce data disability collection in the 2022 Census was also produced and distributed, and guidelines for data-driven inclusive education are on their way.</p>	<p>Local OPDs increased participation in public policy monitoring and improved capacity to influence public processes: 5 preparatory meetings to build the Operational Plan, 2 conciliation tables with public sector, participation in the elaboration of Paraguay's Human Rights Annual Report.</p>
SUDAN	<p>AICS strengthened coordination with development partners in mainstreaming disability and created connections with other development projects in 3 workshops in collaboration with the EU Delegation, 5 programmes include disability approach, and through the creation of the Group of Friends of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>National Government actors increased practical knowledge on CRPD implementation and improved technical capacity via a dedicated technical assistance to National Council of Persons with Disabilities bringing to 114 civil servants trained, 3 workshops on accessibility, 4 workshops for public sector officers.</p>	<p>Local OPDs strengthened capacities to cooperate with national institutions and benefitted of 4 grants, workshops, assessments and specific knowledge shared, 2 Vocational Training for over 150 women with disabilities in Kordofan and Gedaref States, 122 OPD staff trained, 101 persons with disabilities reached by subgrant beneficiary Sudan Autism Organisation on rights awareness and support to employment opportunities.</p>

BtG's inclusive response to the COVID-19 pandemic



Bridging the Gap has adapted both its workstyle and workplan to guarantee an inclusive, rights-based response to the pandemic. These are the highlights of our project action:

Globally: Accessible online communication and dissemination mechanisms were strengthened, also through dedicated staff training.

Burkina Faso: Around 1.000 kits of personal protective equipment were produced and distributed among persons with disabilities and their organisations.

Ecuador: Several activities were converted to the online format, such as all the training activities on inclusive education for Ecuadorian teachers. BtG also strengthened the Communication and Mediation Centre for Deaf Persons to meet the growing demand during the lockdown.

Ethiopia: Amharic and Somali Easy-to-read COVID-19 Prevention Guidelines were produced and distributed.

Paraguay: BtG facilitated a rapid assessment on inclusion in the Government's response to the pandemic, pushing for an ever-growing consideration of persons with disabilities in medical emergencies.

Sudan: A multi-platform communication campaign on anti-virus measures was launched and disseminated.

