

# Bridging the Gap:

European contribution to  
leave no one behind



2019





Editor: Bridging the Gap project  
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Pictures: Bridging the Gap

Cover page: Christian Tasso, with the support of CARE Ethiopia's SWEEP project

Page 28 and back cover: Christian Tasso



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## What is Bridging the Gap?

Bridging the Gap (BtG) is a project funded by the European Union (EU) under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), Thematic Programme “Global Public Goods and Challenges”. The project aims at increasing the inclusion of persons with disabilities at both the international and country level through more inclusive and accessible public policies and services.

BtG is a targeted thematic response to the requirement to make development cooperation accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities. This demand is an obligation for the European Union (EU) and Member States as parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and can have a significant impact in improving the social inclusion and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

The initiative rests on two mutually reinforcing parts:

### **Bridging the Gap-I**

The first component works at the global level and aims to develop tools to promote the rights, participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in line with the CRPD. This will be achieved through the development of:

- Human rights indicators for the CRPD
- Guidelines for policymakers on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) informed by the CRPD
- Guidance on data sources to help populate indicators
- Training material on the use of these tools.

This component is led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and includes consultation

with experts, UN agencies, civil society and academia. In addition, five countries, Ethiopia, Jordan, Moldova, Nepal and Paraguay, take part directly in the consultations and validation of the tools. Within these countries, the government focal points on disabilities, national statistics offices, national human rights institutions and organisations representing persons with disabilities are all included in the process.

## **Bridging the Gap-II**

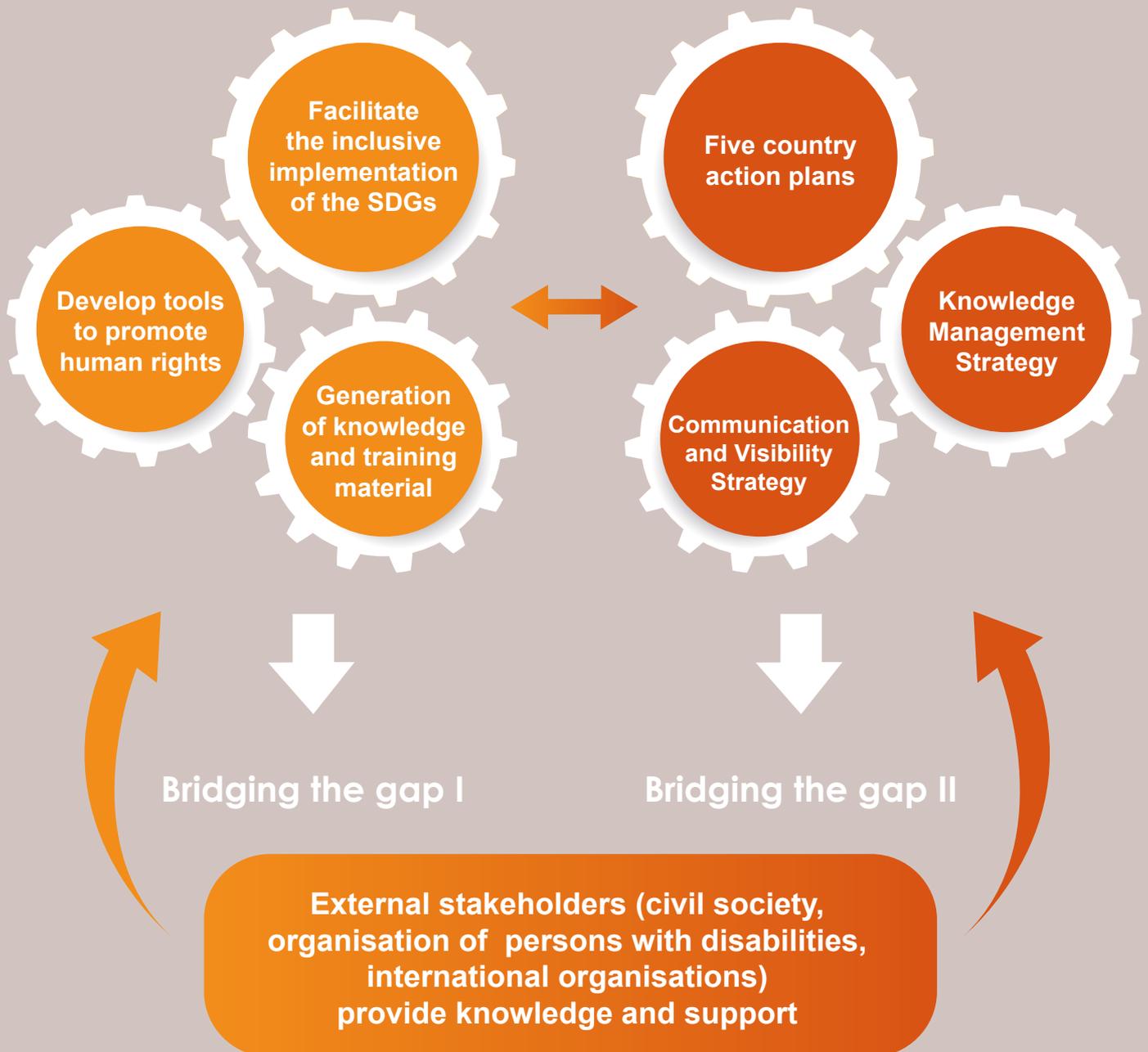
The second component focuses on strengthening the capacities of governments, national human rights institutions and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in five partner countries (Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Paraguay and Sudan), as well as mainstreaming disability in international cooperation.

Bridging the Gap-II supports the development, implementation and monitoring of disability-inclusive sector policies and services in a participatory manner and in line with the CRPD and the SDGs, namely in relation to: inclusive education, universal access to health and employment, livelihoods and social protection and data generation.

Based upon the country actions, the project advances a disability-inclusive development agenda by raising awareness and strengthening the capacities of development partners and civil society, in accordance with the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda. Critical issues such as the overall respect of human rights, universal accessibility, gender and social sustainable development are meaningfully incorporated into the project's work.

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

# Mutually reinforcing components



## Why persons with disabilities matter to the Sustainable Development Goals?

“Leave no one behind”. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes in its preamble the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of relevant strategies of sustainable development.

The link between the SDGs and the CRPD is strong and it is everybody’s responsibility to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda by pushing for more inclusive societies aligned with the spirit and letter of the Convention. The Sustainable Development Goals are designed to benefit everyone, and they consider persons with disabilities explicitly in five goals and seven targets, including commitments in relation to disaggregating data on disability.

People with disabilities are among the most marginalized groups in the world having poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than others. According to the World Health Organisation, lower-income countries have a higher-prevalence of disability than higher-income countries, and disability is more common among women, older people, children and adults who are poor, making them even more vulnerable to poverty and social marginalisation.

Removing the barriers that hinder full participation in society by persons with disabilities is therefore of paramount importance to ensure that no one is left behind and to reach the furthest behind. Joining forces to attain this goal and support the achievement of the SDGs is imperative and urgent, both at country and global level.



The importance of Bridging the Gap is first it interlinks the understanding and learning from the national levels and brings it up to the global level

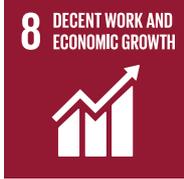
**Ola Abu Alghaib**

*United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD)*



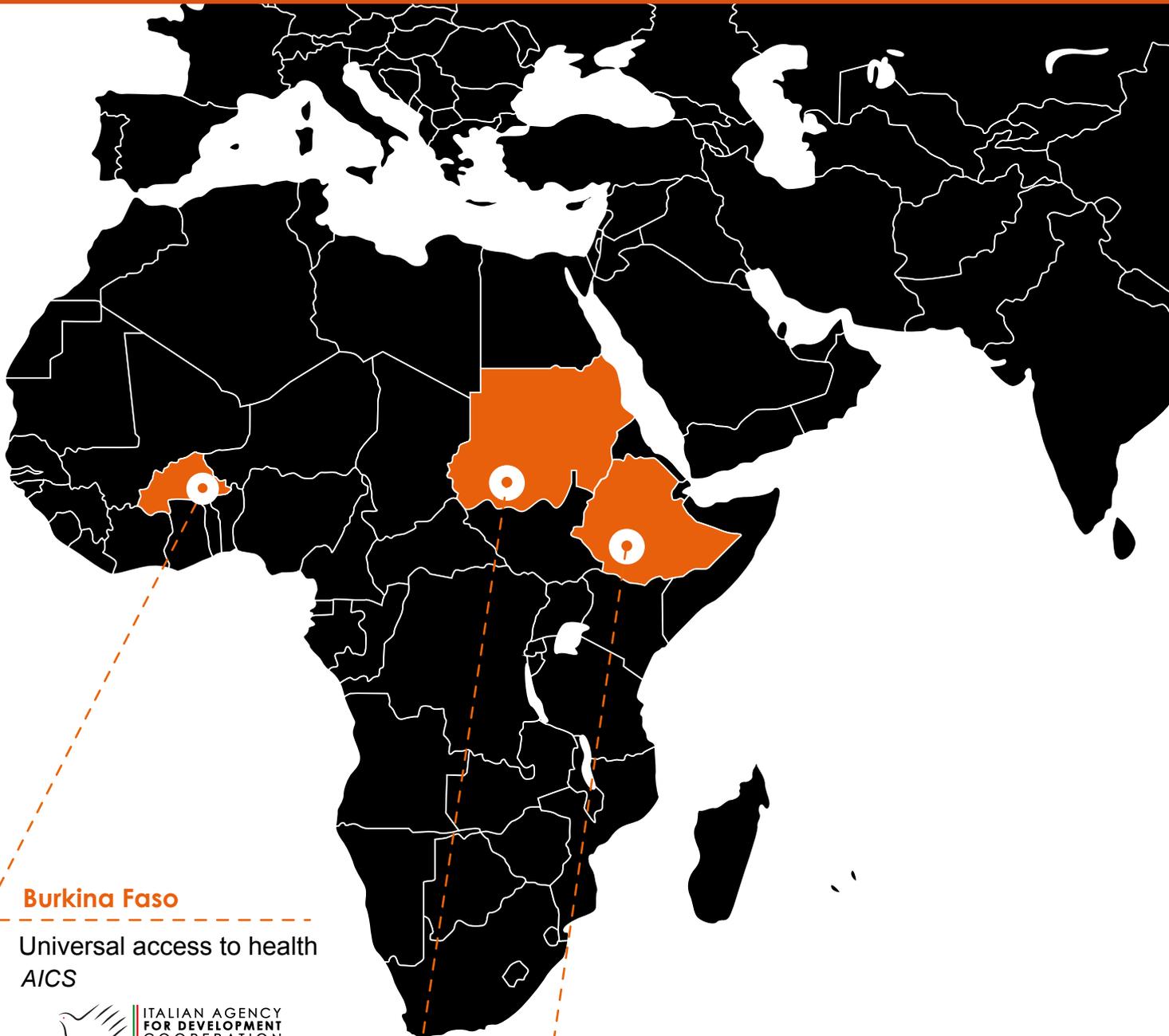
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a political momentum to push for the realization of the CRPD. Bridging the Gap works to support this momentum: follow us and join us on the path to inclusion!

## Link between the SDGs and the CRPD

 <p><b>1</b> NO POVERTY</p>	 <p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p>	 <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	 <p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	 <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>	 <p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>
<p><b>CRPD</b> Applies to all articles</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 28</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 10, 11, 23, 25 y 26</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 24</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Applies to all articles</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 28</p>
 <p><b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	 <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	 <p><b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>	 <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	 <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>	 <p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>
<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 28</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 27</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 9, 20, 21</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 5</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 9, 11, 19, 29, 30</p>	
 <p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p>	 <p><b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER</p>	 <p><b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND</p>	 <p><b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>	 <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>	
<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 21, 25</p>			<p><b>CRPD</b> Articles 4, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 29</p>	<p><b>CRPD</b> Article 32</p>	

## Beneficiary countries





**Burkina Faso**

Universal access to health  
AICS



**Ethiopia**

Livelihoods and social protection  
*ADA with support of MoFa Finland*



**Sudan**

Universal access to employment  
AICS



## How can we leverage the SDGs for persons with disabilities?

The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action to transform our world, but how can we ensure that these commitments turn into a transformation inclusive of persons with disabilities? How can the SDGs be leveraged to mobilise action to remove barriers, promote participation and reinforce the rights of all persons with disabilities?

The first component of Bridging the Gap is designed to develop the tools to facilitate this mission. It is directed to ensure that the heightened attention and investment galvanised by the SDGs effectively reach persons with disabilities, as well as ensuring that those actions effectively respect the human rights-based approach to disability as set out in the CRPD.



*Group photo of Bridging the Gap I consultation meeting held in Geneva in February 2019*

### Spotlight on human rights indicators on the CRPD

- **What are the human rights indicators on the CRPD and what is their purpose?**

The human rights indicators on the CRPD have been developed article by article to identify the core elements of each provision and provide a comprehensive table to guide and monitor implementation



of those elements. Following OHCHR's methodology on human rights indicators, the indicators are both qualitative and quantitative and relate to measuring the State's commitments, efforts and results in fulfilling the article.

The indicators seek to provide a framework for a common understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities based primarily upon on the CRPD and the CRPD Committee's jurisprudence.

- **How were they developed?**

The indicators have been developed with the participation of the CRPD Committee and other human rights experts, UN agencies, civil society, States, development actors, NHRIs, statisticians and academics. This year two further validation meetings were held to consult directly with actors representing the government disability focal point, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI), National Statistics Office and organisations of persons with disabilities from Ethiopia, Paraguay, Moldova, Jordan and Nepal, and a public online consultation was carried out.

- **Who can use them?**

The human rights indicators on the CRPD are for use primarily by States to gauge their progress in upholding the rights of persons with disabilities, not only for those States which are a party to the CRPD, but also those which have yet to ratify it. They are also a tool for other stakeholders – National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), organisations of persons with disabilities and other civil society, development agencies and other donors, to track and hold governments accountable.

- **How can they support inclusive implementation of the SDGs?**

The CRPD and SDGs are mutually reinforcing and should work in synergy to advance the rights of persons with disabilities. The human rights indicators on the CRPD can serve as guidance on how

to ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities across the Goals. For example, SDG 17 on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalising the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development can be informed by the indicators relating to Article 4 (General obligations), Article 31 (Statistics and data collection) and Article 32 (International cooperation).

In addition, while the indicators are specific to the CRPD, they incorporate the SDGs indicators where relevant, thus providing a comprehensive approach to realising the SDGs inclusive of persons with disabilities.



*Group photo of Bridging the Gap I validation meeting held in Geneva in June 2019*

For example, the SDG indicators relating to Goal 5 on Gender Equality are included under human rights indicators for Article 6 (women and girls with disabilities), Article 16 (freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse), Article 21 (freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information), Article 23 (respect for home and the family), Article 25 (health), Article 27 (employment), and Article 29 (participation in political and public life).

Another product by BtG I, guidelines for policymakers on SDGs implementation informed by the CRPD, are being developed. These guidelines will draw out the main policy measures for implementation of the SDGs inclusive of persons with disabilities and, together



with the human rights indicators, will form a package of tools to consolidate the synergies between the CRPD and SDGs.

- **How have the indicators served BtG thus far?**

Even ahead of their finalisation, the human rights indicators have been used as a resource in different contexts.

In Paraguay, the human rights indicators have informed the development of indicators for the 17 axes of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad - PLANADIS). A two day workshop was organized in September 2019 by BtG I and BtG II gathered public officials from different areas of government, including the focal point on disability issues, Secretaria Nacional por los Derechos Humanos de las Personas con Discapacidad (SENADIS), where the human rights indicators were presented and considered during the review of draft indicators for the PLANADIS, as a tool to bring the CRPD perspective into the national context.

In Ecuador, the indicators specific to inclusive education under Article 24 were discussed in a Bridging the Gap's International Forum in Quito in May 2019, where different experiences from the American continent were presented and compared. The use of the indicators is now under discussion in the country.

The indicators have also served organisations of persons with disabilities and NHRIs from all around the world in preparing their submissions for their country's CRPD review and Voluntary National Review on SDGs implementations. They have also been consulted by DPOs, UN agencies and others in reviewing draft laws and policies and broader advocacy efforts at the national level to ensure a human rights-based approach to the inclusion of persons with disabilities.



## SDGs 1, 2, 5, 10 and 16 - Bridging the Gap's contribution to the Global Agenda

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity which seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. The Agenda recognises that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

Disability and poverty operate in a vicious cycle. Poor people are more at risk of acquiring a disability because of lack of access to good nutrition, healthcare and sanitation as well as safe living and working conditions. And, people with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty due to discrimination and barriers to participation in all spheres of society that can help them escape poverty and break down prejudices.

Bridging the Gap contributes to breaking the cycle by contributing to the socio-economic inclusion, equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries through more inclusive and accountable institutions and policies, in line with the goals and targets of SDGs 1, 2, 10 and 16 and with the principles of the human rights-based approach.

In line with the principle of the SDGs, Bridging the Gap promotes inclusive social protection systems and nets, greater access to employment and livelihoods, equal access to affordable health care, inclusive education since the early age and consistent systems of disaggregated data collection for accountability. Furthermore, BtG works to ensure a consistent consideration of the disability dimension in international cooperation policies and initiatives also beyond the scope of the country actions, such as in the case of the analysis of the post-earthquake reconstruction in Ecuador or the production of a short set of recommendation for the inclusion of migrants with disabilities as output of a dedicated seminar at the Global Disability Summit 2019 in Buenos Aires.



*Virginia Tedeschi, EUROsociAL+, and Natalia Guala, Fundación ONCE, at BtG's event at the Global Disability Summit 2019*

All this through the lens of gender mainstreaming, as inequalities are still deep-rooted in every society. Women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination and that their voices must be heard to ensure the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as untap their potential as socio-economic leaders. Considering the gender dimension and making sure that policymakers, development actors and DPOs understand the importance of mainstreaming it in all their activities is essential to guarantee a transformative, practical change in BtG's countries as much as at global scale.

The gender dimension is thus present in every action of Bridging the Gap, and dedicated actions for the empowerment of women with disabilities have been implemented as well.

In Ethiopia, for example, the project trains and guides new female community leaders in collaboration with the CARE Ethiopia's SWEEP project, where in groups of around 25 women an average of 15% is now composed of women with disabilities.

“

Until Bridging the Gap came in, we had no women with disabilities involved in our activities. Thanks to the training received we have now included some of them in the groups and we hope to expand the number soon

**Sisay Mengesha**

*Team leader of CARE Ethiopia's SWEEP project for East and West Belesa*

”

In Sudan, around 150 women with disabilities were trained in agricultural and craftship techniques to ensure their capacity to be an active part of the work environment of the rural areas of Gedaref and Kordofan.



*Women from the Ethiopian woreda of East Belesa, Amhara region*

In Burkina Faso, Bridging the Gap's subgrants support the access to basic healthcare services to women with disabilities throughout the country and train the staff of 30 international cooperation programmes and projects on how to include them in their medical plans.



The project has also facilitated the presence of women leaders with disabilities in important international happenings and trainings, such as the European Development Days, IDA's BRIDGE-SDG trainings in Dubai and Beirut, the 2nd Global Disability Summit in Buenos Aires and the review of Ecuador from the CRPD Committee in Geneva.



## SDG 3 – Good health and well being

Sustainable Development Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to “ensure healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages”. To attain its targets, priority must be given to strengthening health systems and making them more equitable including by addressing gaps in coverage of geographical areas and key population groups.

The CRPD's shift from the medical and paternalistic approaches towards a human rights-based approach to disability – which considers persons with disabilities as rights-holders rather than as mere recipients of protection, rehabilitation or welfare – represented a major turning point in ensuring the right of access to healthcare in equal conditions.

Consultation with persons with disabilities and is crucial to guarantee that health policies and plans are CRPD-compliant (art. 25) and meet needs effectively.

Bridging the Gap supports disability-inclusive health policies in Burkina Faso, one of the countries with the lowest human development index. Since the launch of the project, and in spite of the complex situation in the country, BtG in Burkina has:

- trained over 100 representatives of the national ministries on CRPD compliance and disability-inclusive development, as well as over 30 members on advocacy and fund-raising strategies;
- produced and diffused information material on disability rights in local languages and in easy-to-read formats;

- promoted disability mainstreaming through the activities of the Italian cooperation agency in the country.



*Second BtG workshop on the CRPD addressed to executives and directors of the Ministry of Health of Burkina Faso*

Moreover, national DPOs have received three subgrants aimed at promoting small, targeted initiatives for the access to healthcare services by persons with disabilities throughout the country and whose activities will kick off in early 2020.

“

**Bridging the Gap’s activities have been conceived to ensure our inclusion in the healthcare system as well as to induce a change in how society sees us persons with disabilities**

**Évelyne Wenkon Hien**

*Chair of the Association of Women with Disabilities of Burkina Faso*

”

Throughout 2020, BtG in Burkina will work to guarantee the reinforcement of the services linked to the national “Disability card”, whose knowledge and diffusion in the country remains limited.



## SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

25 years after the signature of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, education for all remains an integral part of the sustainable development agenda. Nevertheless, ensuring that each individual has an equal opportunity for educational progress remains a challenge worldwide. Reaching excluded and marginalized groups and providing them with quality education requires the development and implementation of inclusive policies and programmes.

In this context, BtG promotes the design and implementation of inclusive education policies in Ecuador, in strong collaboration with the national Federations of Persons with Disabilities and the National Committee for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS). The project has facilitated the production of inclusive education material for children with disabilities of primary schools, as well as ensured its mainstreaming into the national policy of public education via a specific agreement with the Ministry of Education.

In addition, Bridging the Gap in Ecuador has undertaken research to assess the state of art of disability inclusion in the country and has launched an awareness-raising campaign coordinated with the national DPOs to mobilise the positive message on inclusion and diversity among the Ecuadorian society. Dedicated trainings for teachers on inclusive education are in the pipeline for 2020.



*Video frame of the awareness-raising campaign on inclusive education in Ecuador*

“

In Ecuador, deaf persons face difficulties because of the lack of diffusion of sign language. With Bridging the Gap we are working on a great tool [showing] how important inclusion shall be

**Silvana Moreno**

*Head of academic research of the Federation of the Deaf in Ecuador*

”

Yet education is not just about children. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a key element of economic empowerment, especially of those more at the margins of the job market. This is why Bridging the Gap in Sudan, focusing on the right to work and employment, has been promoting disability inclusive TVETs in collaboration with UNIDO and GIZ, joining forces to give everybody a equal opportunities.



**SDG 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

Decent work, employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue represent integral elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, crucial aspects of decent work are broadly rooted in the targets of many of the other 16 goals. Achieving the targets of SDG 8 demands building resilient and inclusive societies, with and for persons with disabilities, with immediate impact on the attainment of all other Goals.

In Ethiopia, as disability inclusion has not been much discussed or addressed on the resilience building agenda, Bridging the Gap decided to focus on this sector to support inclusion in livelihood and social protection interventions. BtG II chose to work through already existing resilience building programmes by supporting these programmes to become more disability inclusive. In particular, Bridging the Gap in Ethiopia works with CARE

Ethiopia’s “Water for Food Security, Women’s Empowerment and Environmental Protection” project (SWEEP), the Resilience Building and Creation of Economic Opportunities in Ethiopia (or RESET II) programme, as well as regional institutional partners in the Ahmara and Somali region and international cooperation actors such as the World Food Programme, UNICEF, the EU Delegation in Ethiopia and UK’s DfID.



*Participants to a Bridging the Gap training in East Belesa, Ethiopia*

At present, over 100 people from different organisational and geographical settings were sensitised and trained on disability inclusion and four products on disability inclusion – such as disability inclusion checklist for WASH programmes or questionnaire on gender and vulnerable groups for baseline assessment – were made available to local partners. For the next steps, BtG plans to support the Federal Government to ensure that its flagship social protection programme “Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia - PSNP” is in line with the CRPD.

“

**The discussion lead by BtG Ethiopia’s team on Inclusive Policies and Services for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities was very impressive with strong message for partners/participants to critically look at how their interventions properly consider this aspect**

**Berhanu Taye**  
*Programme manager at the  
Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia*

”

Promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth requires the safeguard and promotion of the realization of the right to work, as foreseen in article 27 CRPD. This is the objective of Bridging the Gap in Sudan, where the project, inspired by the ongoing historical democratic transition, helps empower national institutions and organisations of persons with disabilities on the path to universal access to employment. Among BtG's main results in Sudan, a major achievement has been the strengthening of the disability component in development cooperation which led to the creation of the "Group of Friends of Persons with Disabilities"- a group made up of international organisations and donor agencies serving as a unique space for exchange and collaboration with the national government and organisations of persons with disabilities.

Further, two Memoranda of Understanding between the project and UNIDO and GIZ respectively were signed to promote inclusive TVET.

In addition, over 200 participants attended BtG's trainings in Sudan, over half of whom were women with disabilities from the rural States of Kordofan and Gedaref, and three national organisations of persons with disabilities have been receiving financial and technical support to strengthen their reach out and technical capacities.



*Women at the Vocational Training Workshop for Women with Disabilities in the Kordofan States*



Access to employment for us women with disabilities is still limited in Sudan. Hence, we value very highly the work we are developing together with Bridging the Gap

**Akhyar Omar**

President of the Organization of  
Women with Disabilities in Sudan



At a wider level, BtG in Sudan is also currently engaged in the support to the government in the drafting of a dedicated report to the CRPD Committee at the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the ratification of the Convention by Sudan: the report shall eventually lead to a fully-fledged, first-ever strategy for disability inclusion in the country.



**SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**

Designing, developing and implementing inclusive and accessible policies and services require the definition of a clear, reliable database, in accordance with the principles stated under article 31 CRPD. Among its targets, SDG 17 aims “to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts”. The challenge is arduous but not impossible to overcome: this is why Bridging the Gap is committed to working side-by-side international and national institutions, and data experts to create and diffuse a better and more effective model for disability data collection and analysis.

Besides the work conducted under its component I, BtG in Paraguay has been infusing knowledge and tools to facilitate the creation of a CRPD-oriented set of indicators for the National Plan for the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with international experts, the national Ministry of Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities.

The project is also supporting the National government to consolidate its disability databases and is leading the efforts of the international development community in the country to mainstream disability inclusion through dedicated seminars and meetings involving 18 entities.



*Participants at the First National Meeting of Bridging the Gap in Encarnación, Paraguay*

“

The diversity of the actors involved in Bridging the Gap in Paraguay is a positive sign for building an increasingly inclusive society

**César Martínez**

*Minister of SENADIS Paraguay*

”

SDG 17 is not just about data and indicators. It is about fostering partnerships and collaboration, creating networks and contributing to existing ones to achieve the mainstreaming of disability issues as an integral part of the strategies for sustainable development. Bridging the Gap tackles disability mainstreaming through its Knowledge and Learning Management Strategy, which has so far brought to:

- three research studies (on disability inclusion in EU’s development cooperation, meaningful participation of PDOs and inclusion in post-earthquake reconstruction in Ecuador);
- five workshops on disability mainstreaming in different topics and contexts;



- a 12-session webinar cycle on disability and development in three languages;
- five in-person Disability Equality Trainings addressing development cooperation practitioners.



*Webinar 1: Introduction to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

The work so far has also led to establishing links for concrete actions with international partners such as, among others the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network (now integrated by two partners of the project consortium, FIIAPP and AECID), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Department for International Development (DfID) of United Kingdom and the EU-funded projects EUROsociAL+ and EVALÚA.

## Communicating disability inclusion

The CRPD introduced a paradigm shift in the way to look at persons with disabilities, from object of charity and medical treatment to human rights holders. This change must be reflected in how with communicate with and about persons with disabilities: we must get rid of the stereotypes and misconceptions on persons with disabilities.

Bridging the Gap promotes positives messages and awareness-raising on the socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities, in order to enhance the universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination. Besides making sure that this principle is respected in every communication product and initiative of Bridging the Gap, the project has promoted a culture of inclusive and accessible communication among its partners and stakeholders. BtG has thus formed part of the task group which the communication team of the 2019 European Development Days and has organised meetings and trainings on inclusive and accessible communication in Asunción (Paraguay) and Madrid (Spain) respectively.



*Inclusive and accessible communication training in Madrid, Spain*



Several accessible online and physical communication products form now part of the Bridging the Gap's e-library, and awareness-raising events were organised at the 2018 and 2019 European Development Days, the 2019 Global Disability Summit, as well as in all beneficiary countries. Bridging the Gap counts on a wide platform of online followers on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, where over 40 videos on disability and development matters are available.

“

The challenges are unique, but the way Bridging the Gap is presenting them in such a comprehensive way is really important to build this picture that we can all advocate together for inclusion

**Kate Turner**

*Policy Manager at Leonard Cheshire*

”

## And now, what comes next for Bridging the Gap?

Since 2017, Bridging the Gap has achieved important results at global and field level to reinforce disability inclusion in low- and middle-income countries as much as in international cooperation, joining forces with others in the effort. But our work is far from ending! Over the next year and a half, we will continue our activities and begin consolidating our results ensuring ownership by the final beneficiaries.

New trainings, workshops, discussions, publications will follow. But most of all, new opportunities and spaces for inclusion will be generated.

We aim to create the basis for more solid inclusive and accessible policies and services in low- and middle-income country, to foster a culture of public accountability and to set the ground for the European leadership in disability-inclusive development in the years to come.

We are ambitious and committed, and we will need everybody's support to ensure that by 2030 the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals becomes a reality for all, with no one left behind.



*Persons with disabilities in Quito, Ecuador*

## Who are we? Our contact details

**Bridging the Gap-I** is implemented by the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights.

The contact person is:

### **Ms. Victoria Lee Human**

Programme Manager

Human Rights and Economic and Social Issues

Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

E-mail: [vlee@ohchr.org](mailto:vlee@ohchr.org)

Tel: +41 22 9179217

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The contact person is:

### **Mr. Federico Martire**

Director

Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas, F.S.P.

FIIAPP - Spanish Cooperation

Email: [federico.martire@fiiapp.es](mailto:federico.martire@fiiapp.es)

Tel: +34 911 81 33 13

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