# ADDC Bulletin: March 2023 edition

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Welcome to our bulletin for March.

This month, members of the ADDC Executive Committee had the privilege of attending the [7th Pacific Regional Conference on Disability](#PacificConference) alongside members of the disability movement and representatives of INGOs, donor and multilateral organisations. Learn more below of the inspiring discussions and outcomes from the conference. ADDC also had the opportunity to meet this month [with the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Mr Pat Conroy](#MIDP), to discuss the development of the Australian Government’s new Disability Equity and Rights Strategy. Representatives of ADDC also [gave evidence at the Parliamentary inquiry](#Inquiry) into supporting democracy in our region last week, adding to our recent joint submission with CBM Australia.

However, this month saw our movement lose two incredible leaders who have significantly influenced disability rights to what they are today. Our thoughts are with the families, friends and colleagues of [Joshko Wakaniyasi](#Joshko) and [Judy Heumann](#Judith). We pay tribute to their lives and the legacy that have left. The impact of their work will continue to echo across the generations.

On behalf of ADDC, we thank you for being with us on this journey to a #MoreInclusiveWorld,

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# ADDC NEWS

## Meeting with Minister for International Development and the Pacific

ADDC’s Executive Officer, Kerryn Clarke, and CBM Australia CEO, Jane Edge, met with the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Mr Pat Conroy, to discuss the development of the new Disability Equity and Rights Strategy. This strategy, which was announced by the Minister earlier this year to be developed in 2023, aims to build on the advances made in disability inclusion over the past decade and place people with disabilities at the center of Australian aid.

During the meeting, the group discussed the significant opportunities now available for the government to advance disability equity and ensure that people with disabilities are fully included in international development initiatives. The Minister demonstrated that disability equity will be a pillar for Australian aid going forward, including within the new development policy to be released in coming months as well as the new disability equity strategy.

ADDC advocated the new Disability Equity and Rights Strategy needs to be ambitious in its goals, accountable with clear targets, and comprehensively resourced to ensure that progress is made. And emphasized the importance of placing people with disabilities at the heart of the new strategy, recognizing their expertise and experience as central partners in Australian aid. With the right approach, this strategy has the potential to make a real difference in the lives of people with disabilities in the Pacific and beyond, and to ensure that they are able to fully participate in development processes reaching their full potential.

## Inquiry into supporting democracy in our region

Last Thursday, ADDC with CBM Australia gave evidence to the Australian Government Joint Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade as part of its inquiry in to supporting democracy in our region.

ADDC Executive Officer Kerryn Clarke and CBM Australia Head of Policy and Advocacy Conor Costello spoke of the importance of building an inclusive society as an underpinning to a strong democracy. Foundational to this is ensuring all people with disabilities have their rights realised and the pre-conditions to inclusion are prioritised by governments and donor communities alike.

Their recommendations further included increasing Australian aid funding to civil society organisations, including organisations and networks of people with disabilities, continuing partnership with Pacific-led organisations to strengthen civil society such as the Pacific Disability Forum and increasing the scope of programs throughout our region supporting people with disabilities to participate in democratic and election processes.

[Read their joint submission](http://bit.ly/3Jms4t0).

[Read the transcript of proceedings](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p%3Bquery%3DId%3A%22committees/commjnt/26655/0000%22).

# ****IN THE NEWS****

## 7th Pacific Regional Conference on Disability

The 7th Pacific Regional Conference on Disability was held from 28 February to 3 March was a highly successful event, bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders to discuss key issues and developments in disability rights, equity and inclusion in our region. This was the first time the conference had been held in four years, having previously been held on a two-year cycle. The event was organized by the Pacific Disability Forum in close collaboration with the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Secretariat, and was spread across four days.

Participants at the conference included a strong contingent from the Pacific Disability Forum, as well as representatives from various organizations of persons with disabilities and their members. Government focal points for disability inclusion from across the Pacific were also in attendance, as were representatives from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and international organizations. The event also featured a video message from Minister Conroy and a speech from the High Commissioner for Fiji for Australia.

Throughout the four days of the conference, it was clear that disability inclusion has come a long way in the past 10 years. The movement is increasingly focused on achieving disability equity, which means ensuring that people with disabilities are able to participate in conversations on an equal footing with everyone else. Mr Seta Macanawai, CEO of the Pacific Disability Forum, highlighted the importance of preconditions for inclusion, such as accessibility of assistive technology, inclusive education, and health equity, in building a foundation for disability equity. These discussions on language and strategy are crucial for the ongoing advancement of disability rights in the Pacific and beyond.

[Read remarks by the Acting Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Dr Filimon Manoni on Tuesday 28 February 2023 at the conference.](https://www.forumsec.org/2023/02/28/remarks-acting-sg-manoni-remarks-at-7th-pacific-disability-forum-2023-nadi/)

[View the opening session of the conference](https://fb.watch/jy2hsydayw/).

[Read the keynote speech delivered by the CEO of CBM Australia, Jane Edge on Friday 3 March, 2023, at the conference in Nadi, Fiji](https://www.cbm.org.au/stories/jane-edge-ceo-cbm-australia-7th-pacific-regional-conference-on-disability-fiji?utm_source=blog&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=JE+pacific+blog).

## Vale Joshko Edward Wakaniyasi

The late Joshko Wakaniyasi exemplified the idea that not all heroes wear capes through his unwavering dedication to advocating for people living with disabilities. Wakaniyasi has been a pillar and tower of strength for the disability community in Fiji and across the 20 Pacific Island countries and territories. As an advocate, champion, and leader in the disability community, he managed several key focus areas for the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), including ensuring the availability of assistive devices and promoting preconditions for the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Wakaniyasi's contributions have been widely recognized, and he was awarded in 2019 at the 6th Pacific Regional Conference on Disability for his outstanding work. His portfolio includes leading the discussion for a regional procurement hub for assistive devices in the Pacific, which he has been passionate about since his time at Spinal Injuries Fiji. He also took charge of ensuring that buildings are accessible to people with disabilities, leading the access audit project and auditing UN offices and premises in Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Island, and Vanuatu.

Wakaniyasi pushed boundaries and shattered glass ceilings for people with disabilities, leaving a lasting impact on the community.

[Read the Fiji Village article about Joshko Edward Wakaniyasi](https://www.fijivillage.com/news/Wakaniyasi-a-hero-gone-too-soon-r8x45f/?fbclid=IwAR3AYRnWnNmbDaLFFsYlVupX2QOyj9IMS3JAuNdftMl1xApLAVdNEoHxsic#.ZBqE0x8m2Zk.facebook).

## Vale Judith Heumann

Judith “Judy” Heumann - widely regarded as “the mother” of the disability rights movement - passed away in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon of March 4, 2023. Judy was at the forefront of major disability rights demonstrations, helped spearhead the passage of disability rights legislation, founded national and international disability advocacy organizations, held senior federal government positions, co-authored her memoir, *Being Heumann*, and its Young Adult version, *Rolling Warrior*, and was featured in the Oscar-nominated documentary film, *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution*. The impacts of Judy’s life work will live on for generations to come.

[Read the press release about Judith Heumann’s life and legacy.](https://judithheumann.com/the-world-mourns-the-passing-of-judy-heumann-disability-rights-activist/)

## Summit for Democracy Disability Rights

One out of every seven people in the world has a disability, yet citizens with disabilities remain under-represented in political and public life. Participation of persons with disabilities in government institutions, public policy, and legislation provides the basis for promoting equality in all aspects of society by breaking down social stigmas and increasing accountability. Active engagement in elections can lead to tangible policy changes on issues such as inclusive education and accessible transportation. Research has shown that public pressure can create strong incentives for elected politicians to deliver public services and develop social protection policies that benefit traditionally marginalized communities, such as persons with disabilities. With the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and economic instability disproportionately impacting persons with disabilities, having a voice in governance is crucial.

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) are leading the 2023 Summit for Democracy Disability Rights Cohort. Cohort objectives are to:

* Support meaningful engagement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in democracy, governance, and public policy.
* Promote access to voting, political participation, and civic engagement locally and globally.
* Mainstream disability rights across all areas of public policy.

DFAT and IFES have committed to coordinating the cohort and funding, implementing, or contributing to at least one major program that contributes toward disability-inclusive democracy as outlined in the objectives.

[Read the Summit for Democracy Disability Rights Cohort Concept Note](https://www.ifes.org/summit-democracy-disability-rights-cohort-concept-note?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=8d084c9c-0186-4f9b-bb9c-0d5580eab556).

## Boosting field staff understanding of disability leads to better outcomes for all

People with disabilities are often excluded from income generation activities, particularly in poor or marginalised communities where there are limited opportunities.

Through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership response (AHP) in Bangladesh, Plan International is working with implementing partner, Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), to break down this barrier and support more people with disabilities to find meaningful work.

The AHP Bangladesh response is supported by the Australian Government, and implemented by a consortium of six leading Australian NGOs and their local partners.

[Read more about the AHP Bangladesh response](https://australianhumanitarianpartnership.org/field-stories/boosting-field-staff-understanding-of-disability-leads-to-better-outcomes-for-all?mc_cid=62dd672f1f&mc_eid=8efe41c761).

## Launch of report: The urgent case to save lives at a time of polycrisis

On 20 March 2023, the Help Fight Famine campaign, a collaborative effort bringing together a number of foreign aid organisations, released a new budget paper. *The urgent case to save lives at a time of polycrisis*, launched at Parliament, recommends a further $110 million in a Famine Prevention Package to stop a catastrophe in the worst-affected hunger hotspots in the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Afghanistan and Syria.

The report recommends raising the annual allocation of the Humanitarian Emergency Fund to $300 million and investing $200 million annually in a Global Food Security Strategy to fight the root causes of hunger.

It also calls for a commitment to raise the aid budget to 0.5% of GNI and for this target to be locked in legislation, as a matter of urgency.

Representatives of member organizations of the Help Fight Famine Alliance met with politicians last week to call upon decision makers to urgently heed these recommendations.

The paper notes that in the Horn of Africa around 20.2 million children face severe hunger, thirst and disease, compared to 10 million in July. One person is dying every 48 seconds in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

[Access the report](https://www.fightfamine.com.au/).

[Join the urgent call and email your MP.](https://www.fightfamine.com.au/#action)

# ****NEW RESOURCES****

## Australian NGOs enabling disability-inclusive disaster prep in Pacific

Research shows people with disability are disproportionately impacted by natural disasters like fires, floods and cyclones. In the Pacific region, work is underway to ensure that even in times of climate crisis, vulnerable communities aren’t left behind in the preparations, evacuations and rebuild.

Karen Alexander, advisor at CBM Global Inclusion Advisory Group, told Pro Bono News disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction (DIDRR) in the Pacific is facilitated by a number of partners.

[Read the Pro Bono News piece](https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2023/03/australian-ngos-enabling-disability-inclusive-disaster-prep-in-pacific/).

## Paper: Toward a Resilient Care Ecosystem in Asia and the Pacific

There is growing recognition that care work is both a ubiquitous and critical social and economic activity. Globally, care providers support over one billion people, including children, elderly adults, and people with disabilities. While some are paid for this work, most are women from marginalized backgrounds who are unpaid or poorly paid and lack the support needed to deliver high-quality care and maintain healthy, inclusive societies. Although interest in the care economy is growing, few examples of concrete action exist, particularly within the Asia-Pacific region. The region is home to diverse societies with different cultures and income levels, and understanding and solving the challenges of care provision and workers is critical. This is especially important following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, which exposed the fragility and inadequacy of the global care infrastructure, leading to an uneven economic recovery that remains highly vulnerable to future shocks.

Together with partners and experts from the region, The Asia Foundation led the development of a white paper to synthesize key insights that relate to the role of governments, markets and the private sector, civil society, and households and families in meeting care needs in the region. The paper delves into issues of paid vs. unpaid care, formal vs. informal care workers, and care infrastructure. By evaluating and elevating promising interventions for governments and other actors, this paper served as a foundation to foster evidence-based discussion at the Bali Care Economy Dialogue and a collaborative agenda for action to build a resilient care economy throughout Asia and the Pacific.

[Access the paper](https://asiafoundation.org/publication/toward-a-resilient-care-ecosystem-in-asia-and-the-pacific/).

## 2nd Global Report on the Situation of Persons with Deafblindness: Good Practices and Recommendations

The report seeks to build on the findings and recommendations of the first Global Report (2018) and consolidates evidence from different regions and diverse groups of persons with deafblindness and professionals. The report identifies good practices and case studies, as well as recommendations across thematic areas. The aim of this report is to serve as an advocacy tool for World Federation of the Deafblind (WFDB) members and their allies to stimulate collaboration and partnerships to advance the rights of persons with deafblindness and to inform stakeholders on how to foster the inclusion of persons with deafblindness.

[Access the full report.](https://wfdb.eu/wfdb-report-2022/)

## IDA-UNHCR Strategic Collaboration in 2022: Key Steps Towards Inclusion and Participation

This report provides a summary of the activities jointly organized in 2022 by the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to progress in the objectives outlined in their 2020 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

[Access the full report](https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/summary_of_activities_and_achievements_ida-unhcr_collaboration_2022.pdf).

## Discussion Paper: Exploring the intersectionality of International Refugee Protection and the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

This paper highlights the multitude of barriers persons with disabilities experience in obtaining refugee protection. The paper reviews the accessibility of asylum procedures for persons with disabilities, disability as an element in interpreting and applying the refugee definition under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 Refugee Convention), and protections provided under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) for asylum-seekers and refugees with disabilities, formulating key questions for further discussion.

[Access the discussion paper](https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/discussion_paper_crpd_and_refugee_law_for_publication_2023.pdf).

# WEBINAR RECORDINGS

## WWDA LEAD at CSW67 - Empowering Women with Disability in the Digital Age

On March 7, WWDA staff presented at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67). This event showed how through the Covid-19 pandemic, the WWDA LEAD team have worked in meaningful co-design to engage, build and allow capacity exchange between our community members online.

[Access the webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWv5t3QUd0M).

## 28th Session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The 28th session of the Committee of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held from 6th to 10th March 2023.  During the session, the committee reviewed the states’ reports and held public constructive dialogues. It also held a day of General Discussion (DGD) on Article 11 of the CRPD on situation of risks and humanitarian emergencies in the lead up to a new general comment and the reviews of Angola and Georgia.

[Access all the sessions](https://media.un.org/en/search?query=28th%20session%20of%20the%20CRPD&sort_by=relevance&page=1).

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## IDA/UNHCR webinar series towards an annual Consultation with OPDs

As part of the [strategic partnership between the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)](https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/node/3213), UNHCR and IDA launched a webinar series. The objective of the webinar series was to provide Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) as well as forcibly displaced and stateless persons with disabilities a platform to enhance their understanding and engage in an interactive dialogue on means to enhance protection and participation of persons with disabilities under UNHCR's mandate.

[Access the webinar recordings.](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6QxXqEB474apECMwWp2JK62_-sfH8405)

# ****YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED****

## Survey: Lived experiences on living through disasters

UNDRR is conducting a survey that has been designed for a person living with a disability or a caregiver to share their thoughts on living with disasters.

This is a 10-year follow-up to a 2013 survey done by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, to ascertain the needs of persons living with disabilities and disasters. Those [survey results](https://www.unisdr.org/2014/iddr/documents/2013DisabilitySurveryReport_030714.pdf) are still cited today.

In this new survey, UNDRR is again inviting persons living with disabilities and other members of society to express their concerns, needs and recommendations.

The background to the survey is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. It is the main international agreement aimed at reducing risk and harm from disasters and it mentions persons living with disabilities as key stakeholders.

The purpose of the survey is to review whether the one billion people who live with disabilities and disaster risk today are more involved in planning and decision-making processes to reduce risk or build resilience than they were in 2015, when the Sendai Framework was adopted.

The findings from this survey will be used to inﬂuence the remaining 7 years of the Sendai Framework’s implementation until 2030. In particular, it will help to inform a Mid-Term Review which is being done by countries, regional organizations and the United Nations.

The Mid-Term Review will conclude in May 2023 at a high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. Its outcome will be important for future implementation of the Sendai Framework and how much priority is given to the needs of persons living with disabilities. It will also feed into other United Nations meetings and summits on sustainable development and climate change.

The [survey](https://www.preventionweb.net/news/2023-survey-persons-disabilities-and-disasters) will run until 31 March 2023 and is currently available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Indonesian, Russian and Spanish.

Access the [survey](https://www.preventionweb.net/news/2023-survey-persons-disabilities-and-disasters).

## Centre of Excellence on Data for Children with Disabilities: Call for proposals

UNICEF’s Centre of Excellence on Data for Children with Disabilities just launched a call for proposals on data analyses to promote the use of data and the generation of knowledge on the state of children with disabilities.

This initiative is designed to build capacity for data analysis and to promote collaboration between skilled and early career researchers/data analysts, as well as collaboration among associated institutions. The recipients will have the opportunity to design and conduct innovative data analysis on topics relating to children with disabilities; the results will be published in a format to be determined by UNICEF.

A globally competitive process will be undertaken to select successful candidates. Applications from qualified candidates from low- and middle-income countries and/or who identify as having a disability are encouraged.

Closing date for applications is 1 May 2023.

[Access more information on the call for proposals](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Call-for-proposals-Data-Analyses.pdf).

# ****OPPORTUNITIES****

## Introduction to Digital Accessibility eLearning

Vision Australia | Self-paced e-course

[LEARN MORE HERE](https://learningstore.visionaustralia.org/product?catalog=1677636525SzZ62).

## Applications open for G3ict’s Digital Accessibility Rights Education (DARE) Academy Scholarship Fund

Applications open until April 15.

[LEARN MORE HERE](https://g3ict.org/news-releases/g3icts-digital-accessibility-rights-education-dare-academy-announces-call-for-applications-to-cycle-3-of-the-scholarship-fund).

## Programme Coordinator

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[LEARN MORE HERE](https://www.cbm.org.au/career/program-coordinator).

# ABOUT US

ADDC is an Australian, international network focusing attention, expertise and action on disability issues in developing countries; building on a human rights platform for disability advocacy. To join ADDC (membership is free) or find out more, please visit our [website](http://www.addc.org.au).

This bulletin aims to provide information on Disability Inclusive Development across organizations working to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities both here in Australia and across the world. Generic disability and domestic information will be included in our Bulletins when possible as part of our commitment to disability advocacy and strengthening partnerships; however, our focus remains on disability and development issues.

**Acknowledgment of Country:**ADDC recognizes the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We acknowledge their resilience, contributions and connection to land, culture and water. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and future. 45 per cent of Aboriginal Australians live with a disability or a long-term, restricting health condition. They are 2.1 times more likely to live with a disability than non-Aboriginal Australians, and 5 times more likely to experience a mental health condition. Aboriginal people with disabilities participate in cultural activities at the same rates as those without disabilities. We pay our respects to their enduring spirit and inclusivity.

**Disclaimer:** This bulletin is a compilation of other organizations’ articles and material. While every effort made is to validate content, ADDC does not endorse all opinions and views contacted within the Bulletin.