# ADDC Bulletin: September 2025 edition

[ADDC news](#bookmark=id.17dp8vu)

[In the news](#bookmark=id.3rdcrjn)

[New resources](#_heading=h.26in1rg)

[Webinar recordings](#bookmark=id.1t3h5sf)

[Your input is needed](#bookmark=id.lnxbz9)

[Upcoming events](#bookmark=id.35nkun2)

[Opportunities](#bookmark=id.1ksv4uv)

Welcome to the latest edition of the ADDC newsletter. This month has seen continued momentum in disability equity across the international development sector, with new strategies, events, and learning tools shaping a more inclusive global landscape. However, we also share the recently released Situational Analysis - Persons with Disabilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, commissioned by the Global Disability Fund. This report, released in August, demonstrates the dire need for humanitarian aid to be allowed to be provided in Palestine.

The PNG Government has taken the historic move to pass the Disability Services Bill 2025. National OPDs campaigned heavily for the legislation which is a significant step to greater inclusion and equality for the 1.6 million people living with a disability in Papua New Guinea. Please see [below](#_IN_THE_NEWS) for more information.

The Voices from the Region Report was also released by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in August. It is a summary of key messages from the International Disability Equity and Rights (IDEARS) consultations with, and submissions, from organisations of people with disabilities. Further detail is provided [here](#_NEW_RESOURCES)

In ADDC news, this month, we farewell National Disability Services as a member of ADDC’s Executive Committee. NDS has been a long-serving organisational member of the Executive Committee and provided valuable insight to shape our work. We have included an acknowledgement of NDS’s contribution in the ADDC news [below.](#_ADDC_NEWS)

Thank you for completing our membership survey. We have received many responses, particularly regarding priority issues in advocacy, which both affirm the current focus of our advocacy campaigns and suggest different issues that we could incorporate into ADDC’s advocacy strategy. We thank those members who took the time to complete the survey, which is an important way of incorporating the priorities of our membership base.

As always, ADDC remains committed to amplifying the voices of people with a disability and supporting disability equity in development across the region and beyond.

In solidarity,

Kathryn Bloom

ADDC Executive Officer

# ADDC NEWS

**Thanks to National Disability Services**

ADDC would like to thank National Disability Services (NDS), a peak Australian disability services organisation, for many years of service to ADDC. NDS has made a valuable contribution to ADDC advocacy by representing an Australian disability perspective across the years on many issues.

We would also like to acknowledge Emily Forrest, the Deputy CEO and Director of Policy and Advocacy at NDS for representing NDS in the Executive Committee. Thank you, Emily, for sharing your insights, experience and expertise with ADDC and we extend to you our gratitude for all you have contributed.

**ADDC Executive Committee members appointed to the Victorian Disability Advisory Council**

We would like to congratulate two members of the ADDC Executive Committee, Helen Freris and Tim Harte, who have been appointed to the Victorian Disability Advisory Council until July 2028 as part of the seventh council appointed since 2007 under the Disability Act 2006. The Council assists the Victorian Government continue its important work to make the state more inclusive and accessible. More information about the work of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council is available [here](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-disability-advisory-council).

**Invitation: Join us for a webinar on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in the Pacific**

Join us in mid-October to discuss disability inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction. The webinar will focus on two best practice projects in the Pacific. The speakers will share their experiences and insights with a particular focus on engaging with organisations of people with disability.

Live captioning will be provided at the event. Other accommodations upon request.

Speakers include Jay Nasilasila. Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation, Naomi Tai, National Disability Forum Solomon Islands and Claudia Bailey, CBM Global.

Invitation with registration link will be sent to your inbox soon.

# IN THE NEWS

**PNG Government passes Landmark Disability Services Bill**

Over a decade in the making with national OPDs campaigning significantly for the legislation, the PNG Government has taken the historic step to pass the Disability Services Bill 2025. This legislation is a significant move to greater inclusion and equality for the 1.6 million people living with a disability in Papua New Guinea.

Prime Minister Hon. James Marape praised Parliament’s passage of the landmark Disability Services Bill 2025, describing it as one of the most significant legislative milestones in Papua New Guinea’s 50 years of Independence. The Bill was passed unanimously with a vote of 67–0, signaling strong bipartisan support for inclusive development and long-overdue recognition of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

The Bill is the culmination of years of policy groundwork by the Department for Community Development and Religion, which led to the development of the National Disability Policy and nationwide consultations with stakeholders and advocacy groups. The Prime Minister shared his recent experience of meeting representatives of disabled persons from across the country, including from all 21 provinces and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

The Prime Minister also underscored the importance of honouring PNG’s obligations under the CRPD by ensuring the new law is implemented meaningfully through funding, policy alignment, and inclusion at all levels of government. “This Bill is more than compliance. It is a national commitment that no one will be left behind. It is our 50th anniversary gift to the most vulnerable among us — a law that protects them, involves them, and allocates resources to support them so they may live with dignity in their own country.”

Read more about the introduction of the legislation [here.](https://www.pmnec.gov.pg/prime-minister-marape-hails-passage-of-historic-disability-services-bill-as-a-50th-anniversary-gift-to-over-1-5-million-papua-new-guineans/)

**Kenya Launches Landmark Disability Inclusion Strategy**

On August 25, the Government of Kenya, in collaboration with 71 organizations and the UN, launched the Joint Disability Inclusion Strategy (2025–2027). Anchored in the Persons with Disabilities Act 2025 and aligned with the global UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), the three-year framework is built on five strategic pillars: Economic Empowerment, Political Empowerment, Digital Empowerment, Access to Facilities and Services, and Data and Statistics.

Key measures include enforcing a 5% employment and political participation quota, expanding assistive technologies, developing inclusive infrastructure using the AAA-Q Framework and strengthening of disability data systems to inform evidence-based policymaking. The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) will lead implementation. Read more about the strategy [here.](https://www.undp.org/kenya/press-releases/historic-joint-strategy-sets-new-benchmark-disability-rights-and-inclusion-kenya)

**CRPD Committee Opens 33rd Session**

From the 11th of August-26th of August the CRPD Committee undertook State reviews of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kiribati, Maldives and Finland.

IDA’s Senior Advisor on Human Rights, Juan Ignacio Pérez Bello spoke on behalf of the IDA in which he welcomed the CRPD Committee’s new initiatives, particularly guidelines around intersectionality. These guidelines address the multiple and intersectional discrimination against women and girls with disabilities.

Find the Program of work of the 33rd CRPD Committee session [**here**](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCRPD%2FINF%2F33rd%2F40107&Lang=en).   
All documents related to the session, including public alternative reports by organizations of persons with disabilities are available [**here**](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=2795&Lang=en).

Findings from the session [here](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/un-disability-rights-committee-publishes-findings-dprk-finland-kiribati)

**Pacific CRPD-SDG Bridge Program**

In early August, 24 leaders from across the Pacific gathered in Fiji for Module II of the Pacific CRPD-SDG Bridge Program – a transformative initiative led by the Pacific Disability Forum, co-hosted with the International Disability Alliance, with financial support from CBM Australia (module I) and Disability Rights Fund (module II).

This unique training, designed by and for the disability community, empowers leaders from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to significantly boost advocacy efforts for disability inclusion at both regional and national levels, translating CRPD principles into tangible change for persons with disabilities the Pacific.

# NEW RESOURCES

**Voices from the Region**

The Voices from the Region summary report (and Easy Read translation) has been published on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s (DFAT) website. It is a summary of key messages from the International Disability Equity and Rights (IDEARS) consultations with, and submissions, from organisations of people with disabilities.

DFAT undertook broad, inclusive, and accessible consultations to inform Australia's new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy (IDEARS), comprising in-person and online discussions with around 400 stakeholders in Australia, the Indo-Pacific region and globally.

The consultation process was led by the experience and expertise of people with disabilities. An External Reference Group (ERG), comprised of disability leaders and experts across the international disability rights movement, guided the process (see the ERG Terms of Reference). The in-person workshops in Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, and Papua New Guinea were co-facilitated with local disability advocates, in collaboration with longstanding DFAT partners the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund and CBM Australia. The workshops enabled DFAT to engage with, and hear the priorities of, local organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs).

The documents summarise the key messages received from the consultations and public submissions can be found [here](https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/global-themes/international-relations/disability-equity-and-rights/summary-consultations-new-international-disability-equity-and-rights-strategy).

**Situational Analysis - Persons with Disabilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

This situation analysis report was commissioned by the Global Disability Fund. It was coordinated and compiled by OHCHR and UN Women on behalf of the UNCT Palestine, with collaboration from partners including persons with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities, UN agencies, international organizations, national institutions, and civil society organizations. The full report may be found [here.](https://globaldisabilityfund.org/new/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/sitan-palestine-full-report.pdf)

**TCI Annual Report**

Annual report 2024 of Transforming Communities for Inclusion (TCI) has been released. TCI is a post-CRPD movement of people with psychosocial disabilities and its cross-disability supporters. It is a membership-based global OPD.

This report is a record of TCI’s work and activities, and also honours members, peers, and communities. TCI is guided by the CRPD and is committed to building what the world still refuses to imagine: justice, inclusion, and freedom for persons with psychosocial disabilities. The full annual report can be found [here](https://tci-global.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Annual-Report-2024.pdf?).

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ACFID National Conference 2025, 5-6 November

As ACFID marks its 60th anniversary, the 2025 Conference is an opportunity to reflect on the progress made across the development and humanitarian sector, and to look ahead to the challenges and opportunities that lie before us.

Held in Canberra on 5–6 November 2025, the event will bring together ACFID members, government, partners, and sector leaders to connect, share knowledge, and explore how we can continue to drive positive global change.

Day 1 will feature ACFID’s Annual General Meeting, networking, and side events.

Day 2 will include plenary sessions, member showcases, high-level engagement, and conversations with decision-makers.

Visit the [conference website](https://acfid.asn.au/members/conference-2025-2/) to find out more about the program, speakers, and everything you need to know.

**Pacific Regional Conference on Disability rescheduled**

The 8th Pacific Regional Conference on Disability (PRCD) has been rescheduled to a date to be determined.

# OPPORTUNITIES

**Join the Network of the WHO Disability Health Equity Initiative**

The WHO Disability Programme has announced that it is calling for membership applications to join the [Network of the WHO Disability Health Equity Initiative](https://www.who.int/initiatives/disability-health-equity-initiative/network).

This global Network will bring together diverse stakeholders committed to advancing health equity for persons with disabilities. Members will have the opportunity to contribute to one or more of the following transformative workstreams:

* Building leadership among persons with disabilities and their representative organizations
* Elevating health equity for persons with disabilities as a political priority in health
* Creating a disability inclusive health sector
* Establishing robust indicators, evidence and monitoring

Before applying, please review the [Network webpage](https://www.who.int/initiatives/disability-health-equity-initiative/network), which outlines:

* Purpose and role of the Network
* Terms of Reference of the Network
* Member profiles, roles and benefits
* Eligibility criteria
* Workstreams
* Membership application process and guidance

This first call for membership applications will close on 30 September 2025.

# 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 percent of Aboriginal Australians live with a disability or a long-term, restricting health condition. They are 2.1 times more likely to be persons with disabilities 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.