

ADDC Bulletin

September 2026 Edition



Australian **Disability+Development** Consortium

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to the September edition of the ADDG Bulletin.



We are excited that ADDG and AFDO will be hosting a webinar on deinstitutionalisation in mid-October. The webinar was originally presented at COSP 19 and was extremely well received.

It was scheduled at a very unsociable hour in Australia so we thought that we would revisit the webinar at a better time in Australia so that ADDG's Australian based members could join the webinar. We thank Tim Harte, the Deputy Chair of ADDG and AFDO Board member for facilitating and organising the webinar. For more details on the webinar and how to register please see below.

Another feature of this Bulletin is Melinda Gabuya's report on her trip to the Philippines in August, when she took the opportunity to visit the CBM Global Philippines office and visit two local OPDs. Melinda has written two interesting reports on her visits with WOWLEAP, Inc and Las Piñas Persons with Disabilities Federation, Inc. Her reports describe the great work of both these organisations and I am sure you find their stories fascinating and inspiring.

Lastly, two historic milestones in the Pacific occurred this month with the Kingdom of Tonga ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as Pacific Islands Forum Leaders adopting the Refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Remarkable steps forward driven on decades of advocacy by Pacific people with disabilities and their representative organisations. Read more on both below.

In solidarity,

Kathryn Bloom

ADDG Executive Officer

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A CALLOUT TO MEMBERS

ADDC Member Survey

In September, ADDC launched a member survey to gather feedback on the organisation's future direction and priorities. The survey invites members to reflect on ADDC's work over the past three years and share their views on how the network can continue to strengthen its impact.

The survey findings will inform the development of ADDC's next Strategic Plan, which will come into effect on 1 January 2027. The new strategy will build on ADDC's current focus areas of policy and practice, knowledge and skills, partnerships and accountability, and strengthening ADDC as a collective voice for disability-inclusive development. The Executive Committee will use members' feedback to help shape the organisation's priorities, goals and activities for the years ahead.

To allow more members the opportunity to contribute, the **survey has been extended until Friday, 25 September**. If you have not yet completed the survey, we encourage you to take a few minutes to share your insights and help shape the future of ADDC.

Take the survey here: [ADDC Member Survey](#).

New Date: Webinar re-run on Deinstitutionalisation of People with Disabilities and the UNCRPD



Join us on **15 October 2026, 3.00-4.30 pm (Melbourne time)** for a webinar re-run of *Deinstitutionalisation of People with Disabilities: 20 Years of the UNCRPD - From Rights on Paper to Community-Based Reality*.

Originally held in June as a COSP19 side event, this session marks the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and examines why deinstitutionalisation remains an urgent and ongoing human rights priority.

The webinar explores the intersection of legal capacity, liberty, and independent living, highlights the lived experiences and leadership of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, and shares practical examples of policy reform and community-based alternatives from the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Organisers: Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO), Australian Disability Development Consortium (ADDC), CBM Australia, and Transitioning Communities for Inclusion (TCI) Global, with contributions from regional and international partners.

Speakers:

Wang Shiou-Wu, Taiwan Mad Alliance, TCI Member, Taiwan
Sera Osborne, Psychiatric Survivors Association (PSA) Fiji
Aleisha Carroll, CBM Australia
Elizabeth Smith, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

Facilitator: Tim Harte GAICD, MRACI, DLI

Register here:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bV81FXTwT_aFAub8jzrDOA

Voices for Inclusion: Spotlight on WOWLEAP Philippines

In August, ADDC Communications Officer Melinda Gabuya visited the Philippines and met with CBM Global Philippines office and two Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) supported through its programs: the Las Piñas Persons with Disabilities Federation, Inc. (LPPWDFI) and Women with Disabilities Leap to Social and Economic Progress (WOWLEAP).

CBM Global Philippines works alongside OPDs and local partners to advance the rights, leadership and participation of persons with disabilities. Through these partnerships, organisations such as LPPWDFI and WOWLEAP are strengthening their capacity to advocate for inclusive policies and services, foster community leadership, and ensure the voices of persons with disabilities are represented in decision-making processes.



ADDC and the CBM Global Philippines team at their office in Alabang, Metro Manila, Philippines standing together in front of a CBM logo.



Members and leaders of the Las Piñas Persons with Disabilities Federation, Inc. (LPPWDFI) pose for a group photo at the organisation's office, including two wheelchair users seated at the front.

This article highlights the work of **WOWLEAP**, a national organisation founded and led by women with disabilities. Established in response to the barriers many women with disabilities face in accessing education, leadership and participation opportunities, WOWLEAP empowers women through leadership development, advocacy and community organising.

During her visit, Melinda interviewed WOWLEAP President Carmen Reyes-Zubiaga to learn more about the organisation's journey, achievements and vision for the future. The conversation highlights the importance of women with disabilities leading change in their communities, supporting one another to overcome barriers and creating opportunities for future generations of leaders.

The visit also provided an opportunity to learn about the broader work of CBM Global Philippines and its OPD partners, including LPPWDFI, in advancing disability-inclusive development and strengthening the disability movement across the country.

Read on for a **Q&A with Carmen**, who shares her reflections on disability leadership, gender equality and the power of collective action to advance the rights and inclusion of women with disabilities in the Philippines.

Link: [In Conversation with Carmen Reyes-Zubiaga: Building a National Movement of Women with Disabilities Leaders](#)



WOWLEAP President Carmen Reyes-Zubiaga sits in a wheelchair on an outdoor terrace surrounded by greenery, wearing a colourful top and pink scarf.



Tonga Ratifies the CRPD in Historic Milestone for Disability Rights

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) has welcomed the Kingdom of Tonga's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), marking a historic step forward for disability rights in Tonga and across the Pacific.

The ratification reflects years of advocacy by Tongan persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, including the Lavame'a Ta'e'iloa Disabled People Association (LATA), with support from the Pacific Disability Forum and other partners. The Convention will enter into force in Tonga on 4 October 2026.

IDA described the ratification as both a moment of celebration and the beginning of an important journey towards ensuring persons with disabilities can fully participate in all aspects of life. As implementation begins, organisations of persons with disabilities will play a central role in shaping policies, monitoring progress, and advancing disability inclusion across the Kingdom.

Read more: [IDA welcomes the Kingdom of Tonga's historic ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | International Disability Alliance.](#)

Pacific Leaders Endorse Refreshed Disability Rights Framework

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders have endorsed the refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PFRPD) at the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau.

Developed through extensive consultation with Pacific governments, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), the Pacific Disability Forum, development partners and regional stakeholders, the framework reflects Pacific priorities and a shared commitment to disability inclusion across the Blue Pacific.

This milestone marks an important step forward for advancing the rights of persons with disabilities across the region. An accessible online version of the framework will be released soon, with the endorsed PDF version currently available through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

Access the report here: [REPORT: Refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat](#)

UN releases Guidelines on intersectional discrimination against women and girls with disabilities

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD Committee) has released new Guidelines on identifying and addressing intersectional discrimination against girls, adolescents, women and older women with disabilities.

Published in August 2026, the Guidelines outline how States can meet their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by addressing the interconnected forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities across areas such as health, education, employment, justice, community living and protection from violence.

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) has welcomed the Guidelines, highlighting their importance in closing the gap between disability inclusion and gender equality efforts. To support implementation, IDA has released an accompanying analysis and practical toolkit for OPDs, particularly those led by women with disabilities, to strengthen advocacy, monitoring and accountability.

Together, these resources provide valuable guidance for governments, development partners, OPDs and civil society working to advance equality and rights for women and girls with disabilities.

Download UN CRPD Guidelines:

tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2F7&Lang=en

Access IDA analysis and OPD toolkit:

[IDA welcomes new UN Guidelines on identifying and addressing intersectional discrimination against girls, adolescents, women and older women with disabilities | International Disability Alliance.](#)

The Lancet strengthens disability reporting in health research

The Lancet has introduced new guidance for authors to improve how disability is considered and reported in health research. Recognising that more than one billion people worldwide live with disability, the guidance encourages researchers to include people with disabilities throughout the research process, from study design and recruitment to data collection, analysis and reporting.

The recommendations emphasise the importance of collecting disability-disaggregated data, using validated tools to identify disability, ensuring research is accessible and inclusive, and avoiding assumptions that disability can be inferred from a medical diagnosis alone.

The guidance also calls for respectful, inclusive language and greater transparency where people with disabilities are excluded from studies.

This important step aims to strengthen evidence generation, improve health equity, and support more inclusive research practices across the health sector.

Read the guidance:

[The Lancet Group's new guidance to authors on reporting disability - The Lancet](#)

IDA launches new website and refreshed visual identity

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) has unveiled a new website and refreshed visual identity that better reflects its evolution, members, and the global disability rights movement it represents.

Designed to highlight the leadership of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, the new website offers greater visibility for IDA's members, easier access to resources, and a stronger showcase of the impact of disability rights advocacy worldwide.

Explore the new website and hear from **IDA Executive Director José María Viera** about this exciting milestone: [LinkedIn](#)

Climate-resilient education must include every child: Read Sightsavers' new article for Bond

In an article for Bond, Hamish Higginson, global technical lead for inclusive education at Sightsavers, explains why climate-resilient education must put disability inclusion at its core.

Drawing on evidence from climate-vulnerable regions, Hamish highlights the barriers children with disabilities face during extreme weather events and shows what inclusive climate action looks like in practice, from universal design in classrooms to home-based learning during floods.

Read the full article here:

[Scaling climate-resilient education: putting disability inclusion at the heart of sector adaptation](#)



New Online Course: Strengthening Financial Systems for OPDs

Strong financial systems are essential for accountable, sustainable, and resilient organisations. A new self-paced course, Strengthening Financial Systems for OPDs, is now available through the IDA Online Academy.

Across four modules, participants will build their understanding of financial literacy, key financial concepts and terminology, and the internal and external systems that support effective financial management. The course explores how stronger financial literacy can improve decision-making, risk management, transparency, and long-term organisational sustainability.

Funded by CBM UK.

Register here:

[Registration for Strengthening Financial Systems: A Practical Course for OPDs](#)

Inclusive Equality in Every Aspect of Life: New Toolkit for OPDs

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has adopted new guidelines on identifying and addressing intersectional discrimination against girls, adolescents, women and older women with disabilities.

The guidelines recognise how disability intersects with factors such as gender, age, race, Indigenous identity, migration status and poverty, creating unique experiences of discrimination.

To support implementation, the International Disability Alliance (IDA) has released Inclusive Equality in Every Aspect of Life, a practical toolkit for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), featuring ten tools to help advance inclusive advocacy and action. Access the new resources below.

UNCRPD Guidelines:

[Guidelines on identifying and addressing intersectional discrimination against girls, adolescents, women and older women with disabilities.](#)

Toolkit: [IDA](#)

Disaster Risk Reduction for Deaf Communities

Missed this webinar or want to revisit the discussion? The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) has shared the recording and resources from its Disaster Risk Reduction for Deaf Communities webinar, the first in a series marking WFD's 75th anniversary. Explore practical insights and resources to support more inclusive disaster risk reduction and share them with your networks.

Access the [recording and resources](#).

Your Voice. Our Future. A Global Call to Young Changemakers

UN Women is inviting young women, adolescent girls, gender-diverse youth, and youth-led organisations to contribute to global consultations for the 71st Commission on the Status of Women (CSW71).

Participants are encouraged to share their lived experiences, ideas, and recommendations on progress towards gender equality since the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, and what actions are needed to achieve gender equality by 2030 and beyond.

Insights gathered will help shape global recommendations, inform advocacy with Member States, and contribute to discussions on the future development agenda beyond 2030. Consultation reports can be submitted until 30 September 2026.

Access Guidance Resources:

<https://mygrcode.mobi/d537440b>

Submit Your Recommendations:

<https://mygrcode.mobi/f464f71d>



The poster features a vibrant geometric background in shades of blue, purple, and pink. At the top left is the CSW71 logo with the text 'COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN'. To its right is the UN Women logo with the tagline 'FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS'. The main title 'Call for CSW71 Global Youth and Adolescents Recommendations' is prominently displayed in white and yellow text. Below it, the tagline 'Your voice and agency matters' is written in a smaller font. A section titled 'Contribute to:' lists four bullet points: 'CSW71 Preparations', 'CSW Youth Forum', 'Multi-stakeholder Hearings', and '2027 Global SDG Summit'. A section titled 'Getting started with your consultation?' contains two QR codes. The first QR code is labeled 'Access Guidance Resources [here](#)'. The second QR code is labeled 'Submit your recommendations [here](#)'. To the right of the second QR code, the text 'Share your recommendations by 30/09/2026' is displayed.

CSW71
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

UN WOMEN
FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Call for CSW71 Global Youth and Adolescents Recommendations

Your voice and agency matters

Contribute to:

- CSW71 Preparations
- CSW Youth Forum
- Multi-stakeholder Hearings
- 2027 Global SDG Summit

Getting started with your consultation?

Access Guidance Resources [here](#)

Submit your recommendations [here](#)

Share your recommendations by 30/09/2026

ACFID National Conference 2026 — October 12 - 14

ACFID National Conference 2026 will bring the sector together in Canberra on October 12 - 14 to share ideas, challenge thinking, and strengthen collaboration.

With the theme Mobilising the Collective: Reshaping Systems for a Just Future, the conference is your moment to connect, get inspired, and be part of shaping what's next for the sector.

Explore more information on conference, program details, accommodation options and more [here](#)

Register [here](#) .

Australasian Aid Conference December 2-4

The Australasian AID Conference (AAC), will be held from Wednesday 2 to Friday 4 December 2026 at the Australian National University in Canberra. The AAC is held annually in partnership with The Asia Foundation, and it has become an integral part of the Australian and regional aid calendar.

The aim of the conference is to bring together researchers from across Australia, the Pacific, Asia, and beyond who are working on aid and international development policy (the AID in the conference title) to share insights, promote collaboration, and help develop the research community.

The call for paper is now open and closes on **21 August 2026 at 11.59pm**.

Please see this [link](#) for more information.



Consultancy Opportunity: Senior/High-Level Political and Diplomatic Adviser

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is seeking a Senior/High-Level Political and Diplomatic Adviser to support its engagement with the UN Intergovernmental Working Group on the Human Rights of Older Persons.

The consultancy is suited to a senior professional with extensive diplomatic experience, strong networks within the UN and multilateral human rights system, and a demonstrated ability to influence policy, negotiate outcomes, and build strategic coalitions.

Consultancy period: End September to 31 December 2026 (up to 45 working days)

Application deadline: 28 September 2026, 4:00 pm CET

IDA strongly encourages persons with disabilities to apply.

More information and application details:

[Careers and opportunities - IDA](#)



Do you have a resource, report, campaign, project, event or opportunity you'd like to share with the ADDC network?

We're always looking for member contributions to feature in our Bulletin. If there's something you'd like to promote or a resource you think would benefit our community, we'd love to hear from you.

Send your submission to mgabuya@addc.org.au.



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.

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.

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 contained within the Bulletin.

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Connect with us



Australian **Disability+Development** Consortium

Advancing disability inclusion in Australia's international development work