ADDC Bulletin

October 2026 Edition



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Australian **Disability+Development** Consortium

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to the October edition of the ADDC Bulletin.

October has been a valuable month for connection and collaboration in ADDC. At the annual ACFID Conference in Canberra, ADDC was proud to co-host an engaging workshop with PSA Fiji, REMSI and CBM Australia providing an important platform to discuss partnerships with Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) and shifting of power dynamics. Discussion focussed on disability movement strengthening and creating authentic and equitable partnerships.

The conference also provided an opportunity for attending ADDC Executive Members to meet in person and further our strategic planning process currently underway. More on that below.

These opportunities to come together are particularly important in the current international environment. Recent analysis from the Disability Inclusion Helpdesk, led by Social Development Direct in the UK, found that while disability rights are rarely the primary target of anti-rights movements, they are increasingly affected by broader rollbacks in human rights, gender equality and inclusion.

Against this backdrop, gatherings such as the ACFID Conference remind us of the importance of solidarity, partnership and collective advocacy. Bringing together disability inclusion leaders, OPDs, development organisations and allies creates opportunities to learn from one another, strengthen our shared voice, and reaffirm our commitment to advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities in Australia and around the world.

We hope you enjoy reading about the many disability inclusive achievements, initiatives and insights shared in this month's newsletter.

In solidarity,

Kathryn Bloom
ADDC Executive Officer

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ADDC at ACFID Conference 2026: Shifting Power in Disability Inclusive Development

From 12 to 14 October, ADDC joined the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) National Conference 2026 in Canberra, putting disability rights, leadership and meaningful participation into conversations about the future of international development.

As part of the conference, ADDC co-hosted the concurrent session *Shifting Power, Not Just Capacity: Solidarity, Organisations of People with Disabilities and the Disability Rights Movement* with CBM Australia. Moderated by ADDC Chair Sally Cobb, the session brought together Sera Osborne from the Psychiatric Survivors Association Fiji, Agus Hasan Hidayat from the Indonesian Revolution and Community Education for Social Inclusion (REMISI) and Tamara Jolly from CBM Australia to share their experiences and perspectives on the importance of strengthening the Disability Rights Movement built on partnerships that OPDs define. The conversation at the workshop included:

- Build authentic and equal partnerships. People with disabilities must be recognised as experts, with lived experience valued as knowledge and decisions made together from planning through to evaluation.
- Invest in people, not only projects. Strengthening disability movements requires sustained investment in people and organisations, with support that extends beyond short term project funding.
- Look beyond participation to power. Progress is not simply about who is included, but whether people with disabilities have genuine influence over decisions, budgets, policies and systems.
- Build with us, not for us. Younger generations and emerging leaders need opportunities to participate, learn and lead as the Disability Rights movement continues to grow.

A clear message emerged from the discussion: don't just count participation. Look at where the power sits. Meaningful participation is about more than having people with disabilities in the room. It is about working together with OPD's defining what success looks like as well as recognising their expertise and supporting their leadership.
We thank our panellists, CBM Australia, everyone who joined the conversation and ACFID for creating space for this important discussion.



Left picture: ADDC co-hosted concurrent session at ACFID Conference

Right picture: Sally Cobb, Kerryn Clarke, Kathryn Bloom, Agus Hidayat, and Sera Osborne



Stronger Together at ACFID

The ACFID Conference provided a wonderful opportunity for ADDC Executive Committee members attending the conference to meet face to face and connect socially. Coming from organisations across the disability and development sector, members gathered not only as representatives of their respective organisations but also as leaders of ADDC, sharing ideas, building relationships and celebrating the strength of our collective voice.

On 11 November 2026, the ADDC Executive Committee will hold its annual in person meeting which will focus on the development of ADDC's 2027-2030 Strategic Plan. in Melbourne. The day will focus on reflecting on the current strategic plan, identifying priorities and emerging opportunities for the sector, and shaping ADDC's vision, goals and areas of impact for the next four years. Bringing members together in person meeting will provide valuable time for collaboration, discussion and strengthening our shared direction for the future.



ADDC Executive Committee Members standing in front of the sign "SAFER WORLD FOR ALL" at the ACFID Conference 2026 held last 12 to 14 October.

Deinstitutionalisation of People with Disabilities: 20 Years of the UNCRPD - From Rights on Paper to Community-Based Reality

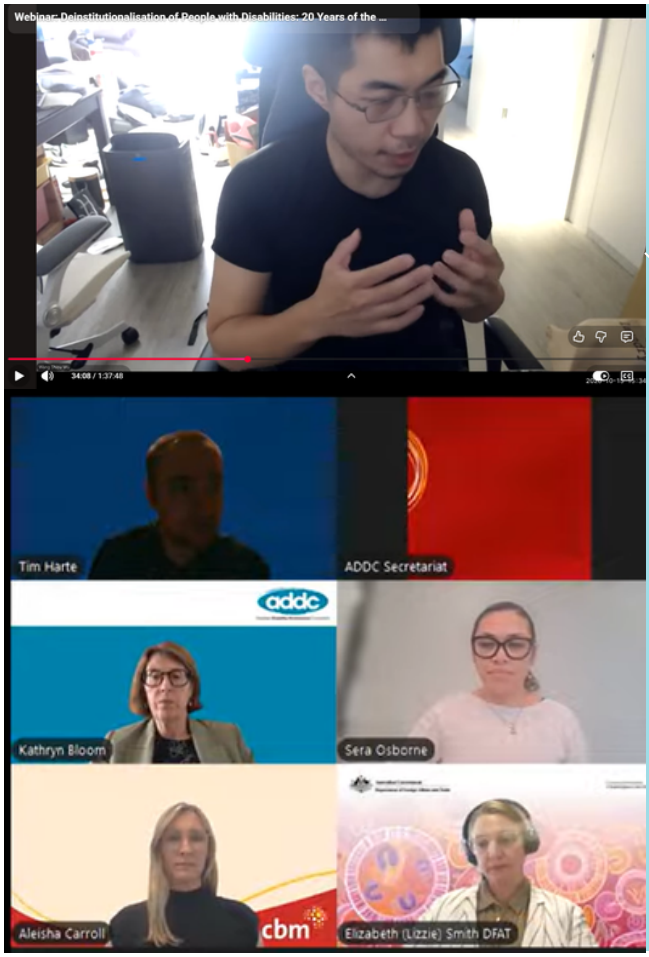
On 15 October, ADDC joined AFDO, CBM Australia and TCI Global to bring together OPD leaders, government and international NGO representatives to explore what it takes to move from rights on paper to meaningful inclusion in the community.
A key message emerged from the discussion: deinstitutionalisation is about more than closing institutions. It means creating communities and support systems where people with disabilities have genuine choice, control and opportunities to participate on an equal basis.

The panel highlighted the importance of community based support, peer support and supported decision making, while ensuring these approaches do not reproduce institutional control.

Central to this is the leadership of people with disabilities and their representative organisations, with lived experience recognised as expertise in shaping reform.

Missed the live session? Watch the recording and continue the conversation:

Webinar: Deinstitutionalisation of People with Disabilities: 20 Years of the UNCRPD - YouTube



Screenshots from the Youtube recording of the Deinstitutionalisation webinar.

GDF and CERF partner to advance disability-inclusive humanitarian action

The Global Disability Fund (GDF) and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) have announced a new partnership to strengthen disability-inclusive humanitarian action globally.

The collaboration aims to improve access to humanitarian funding, increase the participation of organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in emergency response, and ensure people with disabilities are included in preparedness, response and recovery efforts. The partnership reflects growing recognition that disability inclusion is essential to effective humanitarian action and that OPDs are critical partners in delivering equitable and locally led responses during crises.

Read more **here**.

UN experts warn people with disabilities cannot wait for peacetime to enjoy their rights

On 23 October 2026, experts addressing the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee warned that people with disabilities continue to face disproportionate barriers during conflicts, displacement, disasters and humanitarian emergencies.

Speakers stressed that disability inclusion must be embedded across humanitarian action and called for greater participation of people with disabilities and their representative organisations in decision-making processes.

Discussions also highlighted both the opportunities and risks of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, for advancing disability rights and inclusion.

Read the press release **here**.

Political Participation and OPD Leadership Under CRPD General Comment No. 11

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) has released a new resource exploring the implications of the CRPD Committee's recently adopted General Comment No. 11 on participation in political and public life.

The guide examines key issues including voting rights, standing for election, shaping laws and public budgets, and holding public institutions accountable. It also highlights the critical role of Oganisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) as independent representative bodies and explores the funding, accessibility and support needed to strengthen their influence in decision-making processes.

Access the analysis and the toolkit here:
https://internationaldisabilityalliance.cmail19.com/t/y-l-fiuila-hhuksmhl-y/

Free IDA Training on the Amman-Berlin Declaration

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) has launched a free online training on the Amman-Berlin Declaration, designed for OPDs. The self-paced course explains the Declaration's commitments to disability-inclusive development and provides practical guidance on engaging governments and donors. Five short explainer videos accompany the training.

Register here: Registration form for Online Course on the Amman-Berlin Declaration
View more courses here: Global influence and research center

ACFID Publication: From Fragmentation to Strengthened Sector Influence

Collaboration is already a significant part of Australia's development sector, with around 77% of ACFID members participating in shared Communities of Practice, alongside consortiums, joint programming and sector wide learning.

The final paper in ACFID's Reading the Signs, Shaping the Future series looks at what this changing landscape means for sector collaboration. It explores how greater collective agency, stronger shared evidence and a more coordinated voice could help the sector strengthen its influence while drawing on the diversity of its members.

Read the publication here: https://lnkd.in/p/gVjuDvu8

Disability Rights Under Pressure: New Report Examines Global Rollback

A new independent report by Social Development Direct for the Disability Inclusion Helpdesk, funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), examines whether disability rights are being rolled back globally.

The research finds that while disability rights are rarely the primary target of anti-rights movements, they are increasingly affected by broader rollbacks in human rights, gender equality and inclusion. Drawing on evidence reviews and interviews with disability advocates and practitioners, the report highlights the impacts of shrinking civic space, funding cuts, weakened accountability mechanisms and reduced social protections on people with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities and others facing multiple forms of marginalisation.

Download the report here:

Disability Inclusion Review – Rollback on Disability Rights | Social Development Direct

No One Left Behind: New Research on Disability, Gender and Climate in the Pacific

A new paper highlights the importance of placing people with disabilities at the centre of climate and gender research and action in the Pacific. Drawing on forums with disability advocates, researchers and community leaders from across the region, the authors argue that inclusive climate action must move beyond consultation and be genuinely led by those with lived experience.

The study introduces the OCEANS Principles (Ownership, Cultures, Equality, Accessibility, Networked and Sustainable), a practical framework for disability-inclusive climate adaptation and research. Grounded in Pacific knowledge, relationships and leadership, the paper offers valuable lessons for researchers, development practitioners and donors seeking to ensure no one is left behind.

Read:

Full article: No one left behind: towards disability-inclusive approaches for gender and climate research

International Day of Care and Support 2026

On 29 October, the International Day of Care and Support will shine a spotlight on the importance of building sustainable, inclusive and rights-based care and support systems. Under the 2026 theme "Building sustainable care and support systems through decent work," the day recognises that quality care and support and decent work for care workers go hand in hand.

With 381 million people employed in the global care economy, around 65 per cent of whom are women, the day is also an opportunity to highlight persistent challenges including low pay, inadequate labour and social protections, occupational health and safety risks, and limited voice and representation.

The International Labour Organization will bring together governments, workers, employers, UN partners and civil society on 29 October to explore how gender, disability and age responsive care and support systems can contribute to equality, decent work and quality support for all.

Date: 29 October 2026
Time: 13:30 to 15:00 CEST
Where: Hybrid, ILO Headquarters, Zoom and ILO Live
Accessibility: English, French, Spanish and International Sign Language interpretation, with live captioning

Register here: https://ilo-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_upEzfT9ERN-nQYETBwhpNg#/registration

Read more: https://www.un.org/en/observances/care-and-support-day

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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.

Registration is open until 25 November at this **link**.

Please see this **link** for more information.

Call for Submissions: What Do Disability Rights Mean to You? Win £100 for Your Writing

Disability Debrief is inviting submissions of up to 500 words on the question: What do disability rights mean to you? The competition is open to anyone subscribed to Disability Debrief (sign-up is free). Entries can explore personal experiences, advocacy, inclusion, disability justice, or reflections on what disability rights mean in your life and community.

All submissions will be carefully considered, with shortlisted entries going through an editing process. Peter Torres Fremlin and Celestine Fraser will select their five favourite entries, which will be published in an upcoming edition of Disability Debrief, with each contributor receiving £100. Submissions close on 2 November 2026.

Submit your entries: Writing Disability Rights

Call for Collaboration: Inclusive Flood Resilience Initiative in Nepal

The Socio Engineering Research Centre (SERC) is seeking partners for an Inclusive Flood Resilience Initiative in Nepal. The project will undertake a GEDSI-focused needs assessment across three flood-prone districts affected by this year's Bhotekoshi and Trishuli floods. Opportunities for involvement include technical collaboration, financial support, research partnerships, and co-design. Expressions of interest are open until 31 October 2026.

Call for collaboration: https://www.addc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/SERC_Call_for_Collaboration_Summary.docx

Learn more: https://www.preventionweb.net/vacancy/call-collaboration

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 contacted within the Bulletin.

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Connect with us

Australian **Disability+Development** Consortium

Advancing disability inclusion in Australia's international development work