

DRG NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2026

Welcome to the DRG Monthly Newsletter!



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Dear DRG Members,

The DRG has had a busy month, with our first ever annual meeting being held in March. This meeting marked 5 years of our collaboration and it was hugely motivating to hear from members about the value of bringing together OPDs, NGOs and UN entities for joint learning and action, as well as to be inspired by your ideas

on how to strengthen this collaboration even further. We look forward to continuing to work together and continuing to grow despite the very challenging circumstances we are now in. The DRG membership, including co-chairs, was also heavily involved in Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks (HNPW), which brought together humanitarian actors from around the world and was an important opportunity for dialogue on the Humanitarian Reset. A key conversation was on how localization efforts can be made truly inclusive, to ensure that OPDs and other local actors who are often left behind can be equitably engaged in decision making and leadership.

In this month's DRG newsletter we:

- Have [a report](#) of a recent meeting with OPDs to discuss the Humanitarian Reset;
- Invite your [feedback on our draft work plan](#) for 2025-26;
- Share some opportunities to input to upcoming reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on the very timely topic of inclusive humanitarian assistance in the context of the current reforms; and a report on the Application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Situations of Armed Conflicts;
- Have also included information about how you can engage in the upcoming Conference of States Parties (CoSP) to the CRPD; and finally
- Have some great updates from members of activities they have led and participated in in their countries.

We encourage you all to keep sharing updates like this, to stay connected and learn from each other.

PS. Don't forget the monthly DRG Monthly Call on Tuesday 14 April!

Join Zoom DRG Meeting April 14, 8.00 am CET

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81512691804?pwd=ip863d3NkbB9UJNRjcN1Sxb4EhO3oN.1>

Meeting ID: 815 1269 1804

Passcode: 212756

Kindest Regards,

Kirstin Lange (UNICEF)

Ulrike Last (Humanity & Inclusion)

Gordon Rattray (International Disability Alliance)

UPDATES FROM THE DRG

HUMANITARIAN RESET AND OPDS

MEETING REPORT

On 25 February 2026, the DRG hosted a meeting of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) from around the world together with the IASC Secretariat and representatives from UN OCHA. This meeting was part of a larger DRG initiative to strengthen the meaningful participation of local and National OPDs in the Humanitarian Reset. During the call, we had an overview of the Reset from the IASC Secretariat, followed by a sharing of experience from OPDs and OCHA offices in four countries. We then had a very active Q and A session. There were more than 80 participants from more than 15 countries.

[Access the report here](#)

HNPW 2026 Community Day: Inclusive Transition of Power

The [Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks \(HNPW\)](#) was held last month with the Community Day held on 11 March. The Inclusion Area of Common Concern (AOCC) hosted three interconnected sessions exploring how power can be transferred from international partners to national, local, and community actors in ways that strengthen inclusion. The sessions: Capturing Learning, Generating Actions, and Consolidating Outcomes, moved from exchange and reflection to concrete action and collective agreement. Participants examined how localized humanitarian action requires meaningful engagement with community, local, and national actors, especially those representing historically underrepresented and marginalized populations (including groups marginalized by gender, disability, age, ethnicity, refugee/migration status, and other intersecting identities). The discussion highlighted where localization efforts have supported — or failed to support — equitable participation and considered how the Humanitarian Reset presents both opportunities and risks for inclusion. More than 60 attendees were present both online and in person, and detailed report will come out in the following days.

DRG Draft Work Plan 2026 - 2027

The DRG co-chairs with DRG work stream co-leads worked together creating a draft [Disability Reference Group Work Plan for January 2026- December 2027](#). We are pleased to share it and receive from your any suggestions, feedback and thoughts by the 15 April.

[Access the DRG draft work plan](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS AND CALLS

COSP 19 registration Deadlines and Call for COSP Side Events

by UN DESA



[The 19th session of the COSP will take place at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 9 to 11 June 2026](#). The opening meeting on 9 June will be held in the General Assembly Hall. Meetings on 10 and 11 June will take place in Conference Room 4.

Themes and Sub-themes

Overarching theme: CRPD at 20: celebrating and consolidating achievements and shaping the next phase of implementation in a changing world

Sub-theme for Roundtable 1: Creating a world free from exploitation, violence and abuse for all persons with disabilities

Sub-theme for Roundtable 2: Resilient societies: strengthening care and support systems to ensure the empowerment, autonomy and independence of all persons with disabilities

Sub-theme for Roundtable 3: From participation to representation: enhancing accessible civic engagement, leadership and advocacy in political and public life.

The **civil society registration for the 19th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (COSP19) is now open**. Kindly take note of the following **important deadlines for civil society participants**:

- **2 April:** Application deadline for **new** non-governmental organisation (NGO) accreditation. This deadline does not apply for NGO's that have ECOSOC consultative status or were previously accredited to COSP. Organizations that do not fall under either of the above categories must fill out a form in order to register for future COSP sessions [at the link here](#).
- **10 April:** Application deadline for side event proposals. The application form is available [here](#).
- **8 May:** Deadline for registration in Indico for COSP19. All civil society attendees at COSP19 must register with their Indico accounts at the link [here](#). Participants must also be approved in Indico by their organization's conference focal point by the deadline.

More information can be found here

Call for inputs: Implementation of inclusive humanitarian assistance and safeguards for the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of current humanitarian reform processes

by OHCHR

The purpose of the call is to inform the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' next thematic report to the 81st session of the General Assembly

on the implementation of inclusive humanitarian assistance in the context of current humanitarian reform processes. Through this report, the Special Rapporteur intends to shed light on the practical challenges to implementing inclusive humanitarian assistance in line with the CRPD; and measures, safeguards, and good practices that can ensure that humanitarian reform processes, including the Humanitarian Reset, strengthen rather than undermine the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities. The Disability Reference Group will submit inputs based on survey comments and members contribution. **The deadline for submissions is 30 April 2026.**

[Access the Call here](#)

Call for inputs: CESCR Committee calls for submissions for a draft General Comment on the Application of the ICESCR in Situations of Armed Conflicts

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has published a call for submissions for a draft General Comment on the Application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Situations of Armed Conflicts. **The deadline for submissions is 15 May 2026.**

[Access the Call here](#)

ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES FROM DRG MEMBERS

Give to Gain: International Women's Day 2026 commemoration

by Inclusive Humanitarians Organization (IHO Ethiopia)



Inclusive Humanitarians Organization (IHO Ethiopia) organized the **International Women's Day 2026 commemoration** under the motto **"Give to Gain."** The event focused on highlighting the challenges faced by internally displaced women with disabilities and mobilizing humanitarian actors to support disability-inclusive humanitarian response.

The event was held at Chaina IDP Center in Debre Berhan and brought together internally displaced women with disabilities, humanitarian organizations, local government representatives, and community members. The program included advocacy presentations, awareness sessions, solidarity messages from humanitarian partners, and the distribution of dignity kits to 250 internally displaced women with disabilities.

The initiative also aimed to strengthen collaboration between local Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and humanitarian actors. The event successfully amplified the voices of displaced women with disabilities while highlighting the need for stronger inclusion within humanitarian response systems.

[The report can be found here](#)

Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls

by SDN Somali Disability Network



The International Women's Day 2026 meeting, organized by the Somali Disability Network, brought together representatives from disability organizations, humanitarian agencies, government institutions, and community advocates to discuss the situation of women and girls with disabilities in Somalia. The meeting, held virtually on 8 March 2026, was guided by the 2026 global theme, "**Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls,**" emphasizing the urgent need to protect the rights, safety, and well-being of women and girls, particularly those living with disabilities in crisis-affected areas. The discussions focused on the impact of drought, conflict, displacement, and humanitarian emergencies on persons with disabilities (PWDs) and the urgent need for inclusive, coordinated, and rights-based interventions.

Somalia SDIF meeting Humanitarian Aid and Emergency Inclusion

by Somalia Disability Inclusion Forum SDIF

Third Meeting of the Somalia Disability Inclusion Forum SDIF held in February was organized by SEDU (Somalia European Disability Network), facilitated by SDN (Somali Disability Network), and led by the National Disability Agency (NDA)

Chairperson. It also served as the National Disability Cluster meeting, led by NDA and coordinated by SDN.

Key Discussions:

- The overall situation of the estimated 3.5 million persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Somalia.
- The impact of the ongoing drought on PWDs, including increased vulnerability and limited access to essential services.
- The roles and responsibilities of OPDs in humanitarian and development work.
- Strengthening OPD participation in emergency response and coordination mechanisms.

Key Recommendations:

- Strengthen coordination between NDA, SDN, PDON, SEDU, and humanitarian actors.
- Mainstream disability inclusion in all drought and emergency responses.
- Improve disability-disaggregated data collection.
- Build capacity of OPDs for effective engagement in humanitarian action.

[More information can be found here](#)

JOB OFFERS

Share with us your job opportunities!

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Please share any feedback you may have on the content and format of this Newsletter with us. You can send any material you want to be included in the next

issues of the Newsletter by the last Monday of the month via email info@disabilityreferencegroup.org.

You received this email because you signed up through our [DRG Membership form](#).

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