Monthly Newsletter | Issue 66

DRG NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026

Welcome to the DRG Monthly Newsletter!



Dear DRG members,

Welcome to the October edition of the DRG newsletter.

As we enter the final quarter of the year, it's a good moment to look back on what has been a challenging 2026 for disability-inclusive humanitarian action. The Humanitarian Reset is fully under way, and the impact of funding cuts is becoming clearer. Our recent report on funding cuts and policy shifts showed how disability inclusion work, and OPDs in particular, are being affected. All of us are working out how to operate in this new humanitarian environment, as individual OPDs, NGOs and UN entities, and as a collective through the DRG.

This month's lead article draws together one thread of that reflection: the role of OPDs in the Humanitarian Reset. Over the year, the DRG and the IASC held three webinars on the topic, bringing together OPDs and humanitarian actors for dialogue on disability inclusion in the Humanitarian Reset. One message came through in all three. Being consulted or represented is not the same as having influence. OPDs still too often lack the resources and decision-making power to shape humanitarian action. With the Reset committing to put local actors at the centre, closing that gap will be key in 2027.

This month's edition also includes coverage of the Special Rapporteur's presentation to the Third Committee, where she stressed that disability inclusion "cannot be viewed as an optional component" of humanitarian action. You'll also find a brief from IDDC on financing disability-inclusive education, a report on community perspectives on early flood warning and preparedness in Afghanistan, and a save-the-date for the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) 2027.

As always, we welcome your updates, resources and reflections for the coming issues.

Kindest Regards,

Nurten Yilmaz (UNICEF)
Ulrike Last (Humanity & Inclusion)
Gordon Rattray (International Disability Alliance)

DRG CO-CHAIRS UPDATES

ORGANIZATIONS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE HUMANITARIAN RESET



The Humanitarian Reset is an effort to streamline humanitarian action, strengthen accountability and reinforce local leadership. Its four pillars: **Define, Deliver, Devolve and Defend**, provide an opportunity to improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of humanitarian responses and a framework for considering how Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) can shape humanitarian priorities, responses and decision-making. The Disability Reference Group (DRG) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) convened three webinars in 2026 on the relationship between the Reset and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs). The discussions covered:

1. **Disability inclusion within the Humanitarian Reset**
2. **OPDs' access to humanitarian funding**
3. **OPD engagement in humanitarian coordination at operational level**

These webinars examined the gap between global commitments and practice, identifying the ways to strengthen OPD leadership, resourcing and influence. The central concern was consistent across all three webinars: OPDs may be consulted or represented yet still lack the resources and decision-making power needed to shape humanitarian action.

Together, the discussions highlight the need to strengthen OPD engagement and address the institutional and funding barriers that limit their role in shaping humanitarian action.

UPDATES AND USEFUL ARTICLES

DISABILITY INCLUSION CANNOT WAIT UNTIL A CONFLICT ENDS

by UN

Persons with disabilities face life-threatening barriers to humanitarian aid during conflicts and disasters, United Nations experts warned the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) calling for stronger protection and more inclusive emergency responses.

Disability Inclusion 'Cannot Be Viewed as an Optional Component' of Humanitarian Action

Heba Hagrass, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, warned that people with disabilities remain among those most disproportionately affected by armed conflict, forced displacement and climate-related disasters, yet are often overlooked in humanitarian planning.

Despite some progress, inaccessible information, evacuation procedures that disregard disability-related needs and shelters that cannot accommodate affected persons continue to impede access to assistance. "These barriers can have life-threatening consequences during emergencies and increase risks of exclusion, poverty and harm", she noted.

Read Article here

WHY FINANCING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MATTERS

by IDDC



From Commitment to Action: Financing Inclusive Education for Every Child

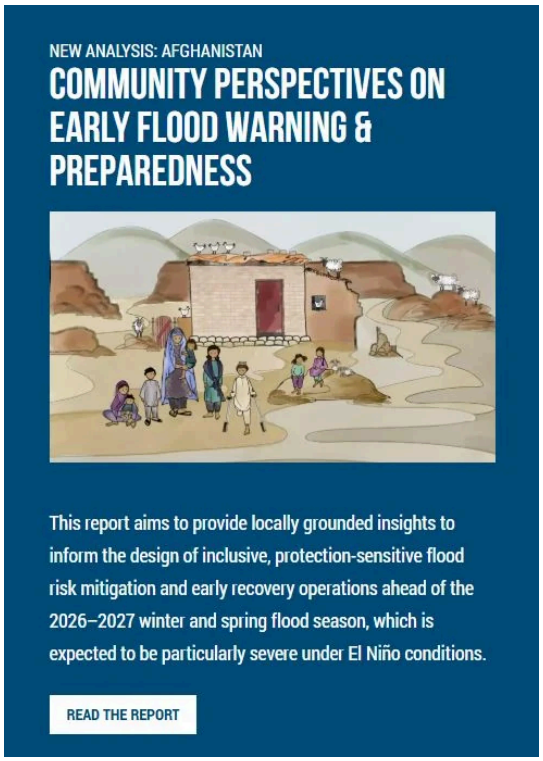
Around the world, 272 million children and young people are out of school, and children with disabilities are among those most likely to be excluded. Making education inclusive is both a fundamental right and an investment that benefits all learners. Yet disability-inclusive education receives just 0.65% of tracked global education spending. At a September 2026 webinar, advocates, policymakers and education specialists stressed that commitments must be matched by sustained funding, equitable spending and accountability. Evidence from country programs also showed that inclusive education can be made possible in challenging contexts and that better cost data can help counter the misconception that it is unaffordable.

To turn commitments into lasting change, governments and donors should embed inclusion in education plans and public budgets, track whether resources reach learners with disabilities, and combine accessible mainstream education with targeted supports such as assistive devices and specialized teacher training. Organizations of persons with disabilities and families must also be funded and included as equal partners in planning and monitoring. As global education resources remain under pressure, disability inclusion must be built into financing from the outset so that pledges lead to practical improvements for learners most at risk of being left behind.

Read the brief here

AFGHANISTAN: COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES ON EARLY FLOOD WARNING AND PREPAREDNESS

This report examines how people in four flood-prone provinces of Afghanistan access early flood warnings, their capacity to act, and the level of community



preparedness. Drawing on lived experiences and communities' expressed gaps, needs, and capacities, the report aims to provide locally grounded insights to inform the design of inclusive, protection-sensitive flood risk mitigation and early recovery operations ahead of the 2026–2027 winter and spring flood season, which is expected to be particularly severe under El Niño conditions. The analysis uses an intersectional lens, looking at how gender, age, disability, and displacement status shape access to early warning information and the barriers different groups face in acting on such warnings, with particular attention to gender dimensions.

Access the Report here

HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS WEEKS (HNPW) 2027

by OCHA

Save the date and join the 13th edition of the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW):

🌍 **22-26 February 2027: Virtual Week**
🤝 **2-4 March 2027: In-Person Days at CICG Geneva (with online participation available)**

Co-hosted by United Nations OCHA and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, HNPW brings together humanitarian practitioners and partners from around the world to connect, collaborate and innovate, shaping the future of humanitarian action together!

More on HNPW here

Send us your job opportunities!

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VIEW ALL NEWSLETTERS

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

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