



Atlas Alliance

An Inclusive Global Disability Summit

End of Project Report



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1 Introduction and background

This report describes the results reached before, during and after the Global Disability Summit 2022 (GDS 2022), in relation to the Atlas Alliance - Norad agreement 'An Inclusive GDS'. The agreement was signed in April 2021. In short, the agreement intended to mobilize civil society, first and foremost DPOs, to contribute to the GDS preparations and use the momentum of the GDS for their own human rights advocacy.

The GDS 2022 was the second in history, after the GDS 2018 which took place in London, hosted by the UK's development office (then "DFID"), the Kenyan government and the International Disability Alliance (IDA). Among the main outcomes then were more than 900 commitments and the [Charter for Change](#), which summed up the collective ambitions and commitments of all stakeholders and participants of the first summit.

The GDS 2022 was hosted by the Norwegian MFA (NMFA), the government of Ghana, and IDA, with the Atlas Alliance as a close civil society partner. Both summits called on donors, countries, and stakeholders to make all ongoing and future development- and humanitarian initiatives rights-based and inclusive of persons with disabilities.

This report outlines the Atlas Alliance's results against the agreement 'An Inclusive GDS'. It focuses on the following three areas, in accordance with the Atlas GDS Results Framework:

- 1) mobilization and advocacy,
- 2) ensuring an inclusive and engaging GDS, and
- 3) global youth mobilization, engagement and participation.

The objectives for the GDS 2022 set by the NMFA and IDA were as follows:

- raise global attention and focus on inclusive sustainable development building on the first GDS;
- showcase progress, and good practices, stemming from the first GDS;
- mobilize targeted and concrete commitments on disability inclusion and inclusive development;
- strengthen capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities in the Global South and their engagement with governments;
- mobilize for inclusion of persons with disabilities in line with the principle of leaving no one behind following the CRPD principle of "nothing about us without us"

The Atlas Alliance – Norad agreement supported the achievement of these objectives. This report describes how and concludes with a section on key learning points that can help create an even better GDS in 2025.

Summary and key results

The GDS 2022 consisted of three events, the High-Level Summit at 16-17.02, a Civil Society Forum at 15.02 and a Youth Summit – the GDS Youth – at 14.02, 2022. All three events were on-line.

The High-Level meeting covered five thematic areas: Meaningful Engagement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Inclusive Education, Inclusive Health, Inclusive Livelihoods, Inclusive Humanitarian Action.

The GDS Youth differed from the other two events both in duration and choice of online platform, where the co-hosts (IDA, UNICEF, the Atlas Alliance and Youth Mental Health Norway) decided to do a 24-hour Zoom-webinar to ensure inclusion of youth in all time zones.

Attendance

More than 11 700 individuals were registered for the four days of GDS (3029 for the GDS Youth, 1463 for the Civil Society Forum and 7112 for the high-level meeting). During the high-level meeting 16-17th of February, the top ten countries from which most logged on were (chronologically): Norway, US, UK, Ghana, Kenya, Bangladesh, Sweden, Switzerland, Nigeria and Mexico.

The Norwegian Strategy Equality for All

The most important result for the Atlas Alliance's continued work to drive the disability rights agenda forward, was the launch of the new Norwegian strategy for inclusive development – Equality for all. The close contact that was established between the Atlas Alliance, Norad and NMFA in the planning phase is a positive and important outcome, which already has benefited, and is likely to continue to benefit, the development work funded by these donors.

Commitments

The GDS 2022 brought about more than 1540 individual commitments (including updated ones from GDS 2018) by governments, multilateral donors, civil society organizations and others. For the GDS 2022 only, 1420 were submitted, of which 459 are from national governments (including 14 from local authorities).

There was a notable increase in commitments from 968 in 2018. The commitments were given by a wide range of stakeholders including civil society, multilateral organizations, national governments and the private sector. The exact breakdowns are available on the GDS secretariat's website's [Commitments portal](#).

The large number of commitments, and the many top-level speakers at the main GDS (16-17.02), clearly show the widespread support for the cause and that the level of engagement was high. The fact that 91 side-events were organized during the two days of the main event, predominantly by civil society actors, further proves the motivation within the disability rights movement - which increasingly includes mainstream NGOs.

Policy Documents for Change and Advocacy

Among the other concrete outcomes of the GDS were several policy documents (see annexes) that can be used for advocacy going forward, such as the Co-chair's summary, the Civil Society Statement, and the Youth Call for Action.

These documents state the intention and commitment of the participants to include persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in development and humanitarian work, as well as in national policymaking.

Nothing without us!

The GDS presented a shift towards a new demand for fulfilment of rights, namely “Nothing without us”. This is a powerful motto that could replace the “Nothing about us without us”, which is also used by other minorities.

Announcement of hosts for GDS 2025

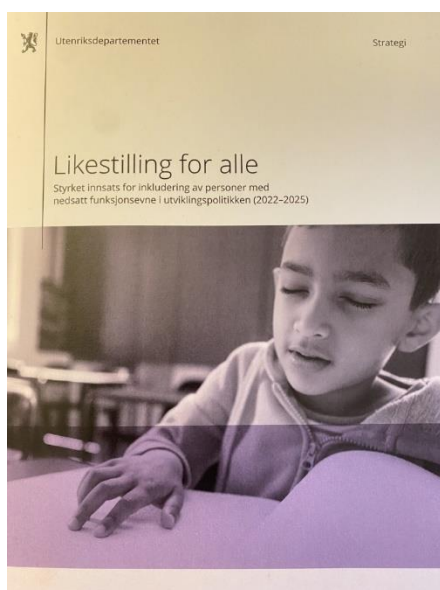
The announcement of the GDS 2025 in Berlin to be co-hosted by Jordan and Germany is a key result due to the signal it sends about disability inclusion being a global priority. The fact that we already know who the hosts of the next GDS are, will (if they start early) provide adequate time to plan well in a truly participatory and inclusive manner and secure speakers and contributors well in advance. The organizers could then also develop high quality plans for widespread consultative processes, ensuring representation of the most marginalized groups, and conduct a thorough situational analysis to base the event(s) on.

New and Improved Relations

The Atlas Alliance’s mobilization of DPOs and civil society in the global South, through simple and cost-efficient means in a relatively short time, proved effective and will serve as a useful foundation for the planning of the next GDS. The new relations in the global South achieved through this project, also has potential for new partnerships.

The cooperation between the Atlas Alliance and IDA was at times challenging, but generally experienced positive development during the GDS planning processes.

Quality Pre-Summits



Lastly, the high quality of the pre-summits, namely the one organized by WHO about Inclusive health, the one by Save the Children on Inclusive Education and the one on Assistive Technology, organized by AT Scale, is worth listing among the key results.

Photo; The cover of the Norwegian Strategy for Development Cooperation, Equality for All, launched at the GDS 16th February, 2022

2 Results achieved against the results framework

Goals and outcomes from the agreement 'An Inclusive GDS'

The overall goal, desired impact and outcomes of the agreement 'An Inclusive GDS' are as follows:

Goal:

Inclusion of, and active participation by, Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) in all relevant activities in the planning, implementation and follow-up of the GDS 2022.

Impact:

An inclusive and engaging GDS 2022 that delivers specific policy outcomes at global, regional and national level that benefit persons with disabilities.

Outcome 1: Advocacy and mobilization

DPOs advocate for the human rights of persons with disabilities through the GDS 2022 mechanisms (mobilization and advocacy).

Outreach by email and newsletters

The mobilization started by developing the mentioned strategy, after which a global mapping of DPOs was conducted. The Atlas Alliance contacted the DPOs mapped through e-mail, newsletters (23 in total) and Facebook Messenger, to encourage them to advocate towards their governments and make them engage and commit at the GDS.

DPOs in 84 countries in the Global South were identified in the mapping, however only 59 turned out to have functional contact information available online. These 59 DPOs regularly received updates and information. The recipients were invited to webinars, provided with advocacy tools and presented advocacy success stories for inspiration to advocate for their most burning issues (ref. Outcome 1.a).

The following groups were mobilized through regular communication from August 2021 until September 2022: DPOs identified through the mapping, members of the Together for Inclusion consortium, Atlas Alliance organizations and partners, Advocacy grantees and partners, and the organizations in the GDS Reference Group and their partners. In total 196 DPO / CSOs in 75 countries regularly received such updates. These organizations are referred to as the GDS target CSOs from here on.

Potential for new partnerships

The communication led to exchanges with DPOs new to Atlas, such as in Algeria, Bhutan, Sudan, Mauritania and Tajikistan. The regional evaluations of the GDS

mobilization done in the aftermath also brought about new DPO contacts in Vietnam, India and Bangladesh.

New, albeit short, partnerships were established with DPOs in Colombia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Palestine and Yemen with grants funded by this agreement (see chapter 3). All these new relations have the potential to be further built on going forward.

DPO-NGO collaboration

The GDS Reference Groupⁱ of Norwegian CSOs, was established in August 2021 to discuss partners' ongoing advocacy on country level as well as to share relevant updates from the GDS planning and to seek DPO input. This group comprised seven NGOs and seven DPOs. It was both an important source of useful feedback to the co-hosts, an eye-opener to members on collaboration in practice, and an arena for learning on disability inclusion and advocacy.

The GDS Reference Group met 18 times within the implementation period. The target for NGO-DPO information meetings was set at 20, but Atlas also organized an online training workshop on Human Rights Advocacy on the September 30th, 2021, a Southern DPO consultation with Norad on October 19th, 2021, and a hybrid event at Litteraturhuset counting down to the GDS on January 27th, 2022. Thus, a total of 21 information meetings was achieved.

Among the concrete achievements of the GDS Reference Group are their efforts to review the background documents written by Norad for each thematic area of the GDS and the draft Menu of Commitments. The group members further organized seven side-events at the GDS. One of these were co-hosted by the Norwegian Association of the Disabled, the Strømme foundation, Save the Children Norway and ADRA, in close cooperation with local DPO- and NGO partners.



Photo: The Norwegian Federation of Organizations of Disabled People (FFO). A group of participants at the national Disability summit in Mozambique organized by the Atlas partner FAMOD

Common approach to advocacy

The Atlas Alliance and FFO's regional partner in Southern Africa (SAFOD) developed an Advocacy Toolkit that was published and distributed in September, 2021. Those who received this were encouraged to follow the same approach to advocacy, but the Atlas Alliance did not receive confirmation from all recipients that they used the toolkit. Rather an online survey shared with the GDS target CSOs, indicates that 25 % of the recipients used the toolkit. 38 % of those who used it trained others (internally or external partners). Moreover, 50 % answered that their organization, to the best of their knowledge, did take part in at least one GDS planning process.

The GDS Reference Group and the members' partners had a common approach to advocacy and awareness raising (ref. Output 1.1.c), in the sense that their partners were encouraged to follow the method outlined in the Advocacy Toolkit.

The precise number of DPOs that advocated for GDS commitments (Outcome 1.a) as a result of Atlas' communication is difficult to say, as many emails remained unanswered, and far from all contexts were specifically evaluated. However, evaluations of the mobilization efforts were done in 12 sample countries in Africa and Asia. The evaluation reports show that in Africa in all six countries evaluated, the consultant was in touch with one or more DPOs that advocated actively for GDS commitments towards national authorities.

The majority of organizations interviewed in Africa said that they first learned about the GDS from international DPO networks, particularly TOFI, GDS reference group and GDS advocacy grants. This does not mean they had a common approach to advocacy – what we know is that at least 123 DPOs across six countries (Norway, Somalia, Kenya, Zambia, Sri Lanka and Colombia) have had network meetings about the Global Disability Summit where plans have been made, at least, verbally.

The regional evaluation reports show that fewer DPOs actively advocated for GDS commitments on national level in Asia than in Africa. The evaluation from the Asian countries shows that most of organizations asked did have some knowledge of the GDS. However, it concludes that there is a clear need for more to be done to mobilize Asian civil society ahead of the next GDS, and make them understand its value for their own advocacy.

Improved agency and opportunities

The GDS secretariat (IDA) and the Atlas Alliance sent out an evaluation survey to all participants registered for the GDS. 41,4 % replied that they found the experience of the GDS useful, positive and empowering. That equals 293 individuals. In the questionnaire sent to the Atlas Alliance's target CSOs the following question was asked to understand to which degree the GDS contributed to improved agency:

Do you feel that you have improved agency and/or opportunities from participating in GDS 2022? For example, has the GDS improved your knowledge and competence, changed your focus areas and/or the way you work, improved your results achievement, expanded your network, and/or lead to any other positive changes for you? 90 % answered 'yes' to this question.

Still, survey results indicate that many did not fully understand the potential the GDS had for their work. 25 % of the Atlas target CSOs responded that they found it “somewhat difficult” to grasp the concept and purpose of the GDS. In response to the participant survey 16 % say that they found it difficult to understand what the GDS actually was, along with 25 % saying the purpose of the GDS was “almost completely



clear”. Without clarity regarding the purpose and value of the GDS the relevance for own advocacy is hard to see. This explains why not more CSOs took the opportunity to advocate – they found the GDS confusing (more in Lessons learned).

Information campaigns

Through the mentioned evaluation processes and the project reports from the Advocacy grantees we know of at least 30 individual information campaigns in different contexts that were generated by Atlas’ mobilization efforts. These took place in, among other locations, Colombia (Barranquilla), Sri Lanka (Pamunugama), Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Vietnam, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, Niger, South Sudan and Somalia.

The Atlas Alliance, through reports, evaluations and exchanges with partners, have documentation of at least 140 organizations (mostly DPOs) that have received training on how to do awareness raising and advocacy campaigns. The exact number of countries reached by campaigns is difficult to say with certainty, but we know that local CSOs in 27 countries have campaigned for disability rights to be implemented in their national contexts during the project period. Yet tools, information and encouragement to advocate was shared with a total of 196 CSOs in 75 countries.

NGO staff were targeted for technical advice mostly during the Inclusion project’s webinar series, of which most events included components related to GDS. Please see the report on the [Atlas Alliance Framework Agreement](#).

Media and communications

The media coverage across the globe lifted disability rights to the forefront of public attention. The Atlas Alliance produced 23 newsletters mostly concerning the GDS, and a series of podcasts with 11 episodes where the GDS was among the topics of discussion. 23 news stories about the GDS advocacy work and preparations were published on the Atlas Alliance website, and five articles about the summit and its importance were published in the following newspapers: Vårt Land, Klassekampen, Dagsavisen, Bistandsaktuelt and Handikapnytt.

The Atlas Facebook page reached more than 12.000 individuals between mid-January and the GDS. Yet, there is significant room for improvement, particularly when it comes to mainstream media and “preaching outside the regular choir” (see Lessons learned). A list of international publications (not exhaustive) is available in this link: [Global Disability Summit - Global Disability Summit 2022 \(GDS22\) in the News.](#)

Outcome 2: Inclusive planning and implementation

GDS 2022 hosts ensure that planning and implementation processes, including development of GDS 2022 targets and strategy, are inclusive of persons with disabilities and reflect disability rights (inclusive planning and implementation).

The Atlas Alliance took on the role to prepare the ground in partner countries (and beyond), by catalyzing country level advocacy both through small grants for advocacy, and through existing and new networks. The activities undertaken to inform and clarify to our networks what the GDS is, and its purpose and value for the DPOs, were as follows:

- A mapping DPOs in the Global South where Atlas’ partners are not present;
- Development of an Advocacy and information campaign toolkit in close cooperation with SAFOD, which was shared this with 58 of the mapped DPOs, 28 DPO partners through the Atlas Norad Framework agreement, and the 16 DPOs in the TOFI consortium;
- Establishment of a GDS Reference Group of Norwegian DPOs and NGOs with DPO partners in Africa and Asia, which shared updates about the preparations for the GDS and worked on advocacy in partner countries;
- Online training workshops and hybrid mobilization meetings on topics like human rights advocacy, changing the narrative about persons with disabilities (and youth as agents of change);
- Disbursed advocacy grants (up to NOK 400 000 per country) to Norwegian organizations working with partners (mostly DPOs) in Africa and Asia (overview of grant recipients and local implementation partners will be shared with consultants);
- Spread awareness of the GDS through email, newsletters and podcasts, to the Together for Inclusion (TOFI), and Inclusion networks (mailing lists will be shared with consultants).

The success of these processes has been evaluated in 12 sample countries in Africa and Asia, as well as through two online surveys. The evaluations suggest that the Advocacy Toolkit was considered very useful and 25 % of Atlas’ target CSOs report to have

received and used it. 38 % of the 25 % who received it gave trainings based on it. The evaluations further show that many DPOs received the toolkit but did not use it due to lack of training. Even if they were invited to an online training workshop on human rights advocacy, the time dedicated specifically to this, did not suffice, according to the respondents.

The evaluations show that the Atlas Alliance did reach new DPOs who read the emails and newsletters. However, the distribution of information could have been more tailored to the needs of the target groups had we had the time and resources to conduct the mapping more thoroughly from the beginning of the project.

The evaluations also showed that the DPOs want to be consulted and included more actively in the run-up to the GDS 2025, and they requested more training and tools to fully participate in the planning and follow-up processes.

The partners of the Atlas Alliance organizations were included in the development of commitments for the thematic area “Meaningful engagement of OPDs”, through participation in workshops and consultations led by Norad and Atlas collaboratively. The 14 Norwegian member organizations in the GDS reference group (seven DPOs and seven NGOs) and their partners in the global South provided input to background documents and commitments for all five thematic areas of the GDS 2022¹, shared with the co-host Steering Committee by the Atlas Alliance.

The GDS had to be digital due to pandemic restriction. This had implications for the accessibility and inclusiveness of the event (both positive and negative). The opportunities that often arise from meeting in person, establishing or improving relations, were lost. However, the digital nature lowered the threshold for participating. All that was needed to see / listen to the GDS events was access to internet. There were no invitations, visas, plane tickets or hotels were required to “be there” at the GDS 2022, which enabled the sense of this being a truly global event (although it was streamed from a studio in Enebakk outside Oslo).

Many DPOs also reported having had difficulties joining the GDS due to lack of internet coverage and the insufficient support to cover the expense of credit for internet “dongles”. The Atlas Alliance communicated this to the NMFA on several occasions, urging them to encourage embassies to establish contact with DPOs to find a solution, i.e. gathering them in rented venues with live screening of the GDS. Although positively received it proved challenging to carry out due to the COVID 19-pandemic, but GDS screenings did take place in Kenya and Tanzania.

Moreover, due to the individual registration online, filtering with 100 % accuracy the participation from different civil society actors proved challenging. To measure DPO and NGO attendance respectively, these are the most accurate figures we have been able to obtain from IDA and Medvind:

For the high-level meeting 16-17th February: 844 individuals reported that they were representing DPOs OPDs and 992 represented NGOs.

For the Civil Society Forum: 236 attendees represented OPDs and 345 NGOs. How many DPOs and NGOs altogether we still do not know.

See Annex 2 for an overview of results against objectives in the results framework.

Lessons learned

Defining the GDS

The GDS was a concept some found difficult to grasp – in the sense that it was not the Conference of State Parties to the CRPD (COSP) and not a fundraising initiative. The GDS 2022 was only the second summit, following a first summit that was planned hastily with unclear goals, roles, and responsibilities.

CSOs, in Norway and the South, throughout the project period communicated that they found the GDS difficult to understand. Thus, there is a need for clear and easy definitions and explanations, widely communicated well in advance of the next GDS.

Accessibility

The GDS was for and by persons with disabilities and thus should be accessible to persons with disabilities, including registering and navigating the online platform, language interpretation and captioning, color contrasts should maximize visibility etc. All this without compromising the professional lay-out and view of the speakers. Moreover, written materials such as the agenda, should have been available as easy-to-read versions. Numerous DPOs in Africa, i.e. in Mozambique, also requested relevant documents in local languages.

These requirements were not fully realized. The final agenda was only made official the day before the High-Level meeting, and there was no easy-to-read version. Atlas had several meetings with the company providing the platform, but they did not consult Atlas with questions when setting it up, nor did they hire a consultant from the disability sector as Atlas suggested. IDA set up an accessibility testing group of DPO partners two weeks before the event. This was too late, as there was not enough time to conduct the needed changes. The registration portal had some functions that were inaccessible to screen readers and entering the portal with the individual passcode emailed to the registered some days in advance was reported by blind participants as cumbersome. Navigating the page during the actual event there was also described as complicated for blind audiences.

Despite all this the participant survey suggests that 25 – 30 % found all the accessibility features completely accessible and 30-35 % mostly accessible.

During the event there were sign language interpreters and captioning (white on black background), but the captioning frequently produced wrong content and was slow to be corrected. During the entire Civil Society Forum and the High-Level meeting only one person interpreted into IS, instead of alternating with another interpreter. This signals that the hosts do not themselves respect and abide by minimal standards of accessibility measures.

The co-hosts Steering Committee consciously decided against Norwegian sign language interpretation as other participating nations would not have their sign language represented. Rather the hosts decided on providing interpretation into International

Sign (IS) and American Sign Language (ASL) as these are the sign languages the largest number of deaf people in the world can communicate in.

All host countries of future Global Disability Summits will have to make this choice. However, for hybrid / physical meetings it will perhaps be more natural to provide sign interpretation to the national sign language where the event is taking place.

At the GDS 2022, the events from the 15th to the 17th of February were all simultaneously translated into all UN languages for the hearing audience. However, the decision to provide simultaneous translation was taken only two weeks before the event – had the communication been in different languages from the beginning, the level of engagement and number of participants would likely have been higher.

Inclusion efforts

The level of DPO participation in the planning phase could have been better. The members of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) were frequently consulted, through which the Atlas organizations were included, but the preparations hardly included any other DPOs, besides an online consultation extended to IDA members. The Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations (GFD) was involved after Ghana officially became co-host. Widening the range of participating DPOs should be priority for the organizers of the next GDS - especially involving the grassroots level.

The Atlas Alliance played an important role in ensuring that the Atlas organizations' partners in Africa and Asia participated in workshops and consultations that played into processes such as defining the formulation of commitments. Yet, the Civil Society Reference Group (chaired by IDA's GDS secretariat) that officially advised the GDS hosts' Steering committee, should include a wider range of national level DPOs from the global South.

During the High-Level meeting there were hardly any DPOs represented in the agenda. The GDS secretariat explained that they would get the needed speaking time at the Civil Society Forum, but also this event provided little opportunity for the grassroots. It was of course a difficult task to fit all relevant actors and their messages into the short time the digital event had been given, which was 3,5 hours each day (to accommodate as many time zones as possible). Atlas and other CSRG members had different opinions about the level that should be represented. The regional and disability specific global umbrellas, as well as UN agencies, were prioritized over grassroots DPOs in the end.

Hopefully, the 2025 GDS will be physical (or hybrid) and can encompass a wider range of civil society actors alongside high-level participants, state leaders and multilaterals. If not, one could consider adding another day of GDS and having them at different times on the different days, to accommodate all.

The commitments

705 people responded to the participant survey and 79 % of them report that although they attended the summit they did not place any commitments. This needs to be addressed in the next GDS. Instructions on how to commit, what reporting will be

required of those committing, and clearer instructions about the function of the menu of commitments should be provided.

While Atlas focused on mobilizing grassroots DPOs in the South to advocate towards their governments, the governments in the global North are crucial to loop in as well, if the Southern countries are to have resources in their state budgets to implement any commitments at all.

Several of the countries that have the largest financial resources, i.e. the OECD-DAC countries, gave few, if any, commitments. Their willingness to commit to expenditure tracking is almost non-existing. The highest number and broadest range of commitments come from the countries with the least financial resources. The fact that major European donor countries like Germany, France and the Netherlands have not themselves given any commitments – only through the EU – also needs to be addressed. Among the OECD countries there was a tendency to submit commitments listing what is already being done, for example Swedish SIDA.

For the mobilization phase ahead of the next GDS civil society should (including the Atlas Alliance) urge Northern governments to consult DPOs in aid receiving countries to prepare more useful and realistic commitments. In addition, Atlas will advocate towards the GDS organizers to disseminate better information about what type of commitments are helpful, and suggest the SMART¹ indicators as a minimum standard.

The thematic area that were given the most commitments was Meaningful Engagement of DPOs. This can be considered a success for DPOs worldwide, yet the implementation of these commitments will be hard to measure, as most are vague.



Photo: Screenshot from the recording of the GDS.

¹ SMART = specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound

From words to action

The many high-level speakers (more than 100 global leaders and 50 state representatives) did send an important signal about the crucial relevance of disability inclusion in development and humanitarian action. Still, several of the Heads of states who addressed the summit verbally with promises and mentioning of already achieved ambitions, i.e. Nepal and Slovenia, did not themselves submit any formal commitments in the GDS Commitments portal.

Thus, a learning point for the Atlas Alliance is to advocate for a requirement in the next GDS, which is that speaking participants have to provide written commitments as well. That way we will hopefully start moving from words to actions. Yet, the progress in implementation between GDS 2022 and 2025 will be a crucial indicator of how much weight the current commitments hold in practice. Among the 1544 commitments given in connection to GDS 2022, 95 % were new commitments. Encouraging stakeholders to build on their existing ones (from former summits), and ensuring their realization, should be more central in the plight for commitments ahead of GDS 2055. So should a clear focus on quality content and accountability.



Photo: Screenshot from the recording of the GDS.

His demands to the donors were ambitious – but the UN agencies now also have to start mainstreaming disability inclusion.

Outcome 3: GDS Youth Summit

Youth with disabilities and their organizations advocate for the human rights of persons with disabilities through the GDS 2022 mechanisms (Youth Summit).

Background

Youth Mental Health Norway (YMHN) was commissioned to represent the Atlas Alliance in the cooperation with IDA to develop a Youth summit. Their project plan included a significant part about an ambitious social media campaign. The aim of the GDS Youth was to raise ideas and concerns of youth with disabilities worldwide, between the ages 15 and 35.

In late October, 2021, UNICEF was brought onboard as a co-host of the GDS Youth. Around the same time, it was established that the GDS Youth would be a 24-hour event, which made it clear that the human resources available at YMHN would not suffice. Two staff members from the Alliance Atlas secretariat therefore got deeply involved in the planning.

Co-host cooperation

The cooperation between Atlas and YMHN was positive and constructive, but the dialogue and frequent contact with IDA was not always friction free. Atlas and YMHN frequently experienced information being held back, and the IDA team often came across as domineering and exclusive. UNICEF had a positive effect on the cooperation, in terms of three extra people, additional financial support, technical expertise and in terms of effectiveness and efficiency of the communications work.

YMHN developed the social media campaign “30 Days of Youth”. The Facebook and Instagram accounts reached 7,5 million individuals in the last couple of months before February 14th. However, producing the videos for the campaign would not have been possible without the communications- and editing support from UNICEF. The cooperation with UNICEF was also critical for the survey that laid the foundation for the Youth Charter / Call for Action. Although Atlas and YMHN developed up the survey, the gathering of data through Survey Monkey was done by UNICEF.

IDA did not originally want a Youth Charter / Call for Action, but agreed after many meetings discussing the purpose for such a document where Atlas and YMHN strongly argued for documenting the priorities of youth with disabilities in such an advocacy tool. IDA then took charge of the writing process after the data had been collected. However, how to collect signatures was never agreed.

The 24-hour journey

The GDS Youth lasted 21 hours in practice from midnight to 9 pm CET. It consisted of an opening and closing, and five regional sessions, each session moderated by youth with disabilities from the region. The sessions included panel discussions, video screenings, story-telling and thematic presentations.

The regional sessions were planned quite well in some regions and less so in others. Most regional working groups struggled to get their respective agendas finalized in time and most did not have time for a run-through with all the speakers. The content and agendas had all been decided by the regional working groups which consisted of 2-5 youth with disabilities from the regions in addition to co-host representatives. Most of the working groups were only formed at the very end of 2021, so the majority started planning their regional session in January 2022. This left roughly six weeks to plan the content of the GDS Youth summit.

The Africa group, although quite well prepared and after actually having had a run-through of their session, estimated too much time and finished two hours earlier than they thought they would. This left a two-hour gap in the event.

The IDA logistics team was responsible for the technical running of the 21 hours long Zoom meeting, including national language and sign language interpretation. Around midday CET Atlas colleagues found that it was no longer possible to register to join the event. Despite making the logistics team aware this it was sadly never responded to or fixed. It is likely that many more would have joined had it still been possible to register.

Zoom was chosen as the most accessible and easy-to-use platform. Among the downsides with this choice is the fact that it is cumbersome to analyze the attendance in each region as the entire event had only one link. Moreover, many will have logged on and off throughout the many hours of action. Thus, attendance data beyond the total number of participants (3029), have not been shared by the IDA logistics team.



Photo: IDA

Achievements against objectives

The original target for participants at the virtual youth summit, was 120 participants. The result thus went way and beyond expectations as the number of attendees was 3029. Nevertheless, there is no way of knowing who these participants were, so reporting on number on youth DPOs represented is not possible.

The objective to develop five videos was also exceeded magnificently with the 60 videos produced by youth with disabilities in 30 different countries, based on instructions from the YMHN. Similarly, were the objective to reach 100 000 views was exceeded by double with 205 000 views. The objective to reach 10 000 shares on the other hand we did not reach. Only 414 shares were obtained. It is worth mentioning that getting content shared on social media is one of the hardest engagements to achieve amongst social media audiences (the easiest is to receive a like or other type of reaction).

Lessons learned from GDS Youth

YMHN and Atlas should have defined the details of their partnership more clearly from the point when it became clear that one 100 % position would not be sufficient. Reporting lines were blurred by the active involvement of the Atlas secretariat and was experienced as confusing for both YMHN and the other co-hosts. With Atlas joining all meetings and processes, the other co-hosts tended to turn to Atlas for decisions, sidelining YMHN.

Conversations concerning the GDS Youth were held parallel to the GDS 2022, while they should have been a part of the GDS 2022 discussions. Information about GDS Youth came late, and a proper integration into the main summit was not achieved to its fullest potential. The integration into the main summit should have been a discussion from the very start of the planning process of the GDS Youth.

Never actually discussing the link between the two events properly may also have been among the reasons for the low number of commitments to youth with disabilities in the GDS 2022, as stakeholders saved their youth commitments for the youth summit, that had no commitments submission mechanism of its own.

The communication with those involved in the youth workshops at the GDS 2018 (specifically the UK based children and young people's DPO *Include Me TOO*) should have been involved from the onset and invited to support. The IDA Youth caucus could have been better presented to the co-hosts and would have been supplemented with youth from other networks in regional working groups, had proper information been provided. The information about who the caucus consists of remained vague throughout the cooperation.

The regional working groups needed more time. If the same format of 24 (or 21) hours is to be used next time, it is crucial to ensure participation of more youth with disabilities from the regions in the working groups, beyond the IDA networks. These groups should be established and have clear mandates at least one year ahead of the event, and the event would benefit from a proper test meeting in advance.

More priority in terms of time, funding and human resources should have been given to the planning of the video campaign and the management of the social media accounts. A plan to ensure the continuation of the Facebook and Instagram accounts for GDS Youth should also have been made, to capitalize on the momentum, rather than phasing out the communication gradually after the youth summit was finished. Participant data should also have been generated to learn which groups were and were not successfully mobilized.

Lastly, the Youth Call for Action should have been given more time and priority and a distribution and support seeking plan should have been developed. The side-event about this Call for Action at the COSP 2022 did provide such an opportunity, but lack of willingness to cooperate from IDA's end continues to be a challenge. As IDA is permanent host, more time is needed to nurture a relationship of openness for achieving common goals, between the co-hosts of the GDS Youth 2025. In the GDS Youth chapter of the Mobilization manual there are clear recommendations for concrete measures to be taken for a more seamless co-host cooperation.

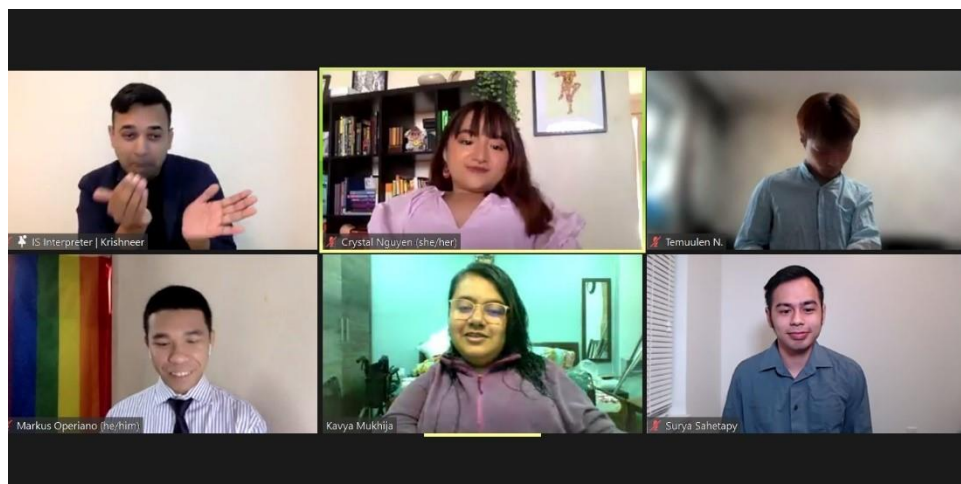


Photo: Screenshot from IDA's Twitter account.

Civil Society Forum

Background

The Civil Society Forum (CSF) was organized for the second time during the GDS 2022. It was hosted by IDA and the Atlas Alliance, ref. the MOU between the two alliances, and supported by the Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG)ⁱⁱⁱ.

The final agenda was only decided upon two weeks before the event. The speakers who were asked to join the panels were voted over in the CSRG. (In the same process the SCRG voted for civil society participants who would appear in the panel discussions at the top-level meeting 16-17.02).

Content and outcomes

The overall Civil Society Forum was moderated by the Atlas Alliance Project manager for inclusion. The Atlas Alliance was also represented by the international director of the Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD) who moderated the first panel debate, on creating synergies and partnerships.

The panels could have been more representative of the global South. One speaker from NUDIPU, Uganda, was part of the first panel discussion, but due to technical difficulties her entire contribution was lost. In the second panel, there was one African speaker representing IDA. He was also from Uganda.

The thematic focus of the first session was that the overlapping avenues between the disability movement on the one hand, and the gender movement, climate justice movement, and racial equity movement on the other. A key recommendation was to strive for a broad approach wherein organizations and individuals from diverse age groups, genders, nationalities, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds can come together and advocate for human rights for persons with disabilities and advocate for disability justice. It is time to integrate persons with disabilities and the agendas across all different social movements as persons with disabilities belong to all groups in society.

The second panel was about the future after GDS. This session was smoother in terms of technology and concluded that after the pandemic, we have a unique opportunity to reshape societies and reimagine a future fully inclusive of persons with disabilities. This is the collective responsibility for all as we sail together (“in the same canoe”) from the turbulent covid times to more inclusive future.

Lessons learned from the CSF

The key lessons learned from the CSF planning process, that we will emphasize for the organizers of the next CSF, are summarized below:

1. Ensure broader geographical diversity in overall planning group (the IDA led CSRG or equivalent).
2. Ensure grassroots level involvement in consultations and decision-making from the beginning.
3. Start planning earlier and initiate nominations and invitations of speakers earlier (no later than 1,5 years in advance).
4. Demonstrate more clearly the critical importance of civil society and therefore also this forum, by granting it necessary time to make the content useful, important, and engaging.
5. Ensure the discussions provide a realistic opportunity for surprising outcomes, allowing for the final Statement / Declaration to be shaped by the discussion. This might be easier in a physical event, or an event that lasts longer than 3,5 hours.
6. Developing the online consultation that ultimately sets the agenda and provides the background for the Civil Society Statement / Declaration should be a participatory process, including grassroots DPOs from the global South.
7. Ensure wider participation in the online consultation for the agenda and the Civil Society Statement and dedicate more time to analyze the outcomes.
8. Provide more time to developing the Statement / Declaration, to ensure the final product truly represents the opinions of the consulted parties.



Photos by: Atlas Alliance

3 The advocacy grants

2 out of the 5 million NOK provided to this agreement were spent on sub-agreements with four Norwegian organizations that applied for, and received, advocacy grants for advocacy and awareness-raising activities to be implemented in a total of nine countries.

The projects had in common that they all targeted government bodies through training civil society on advocacy and disability rights. Yet, they were different in scale and approach. Some took used the opportunity to build on existing projects, others developed new ones, but all have the potential for continued partnerships.

Save the Children

Save the Children Norway applied for four GDS advocacy projects and received support for all of them, one through TOFI² (being implemented in Somalia), and three through the GDS-agreement. These three took place in Yemen, the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) and Zimbabwe.

Yemen

In Yemen, Save the Children's partner Mwatana, a local human rights organization implemented a project called "Their Voice" to raise awareness of the growing number of people left disabled by the ongoing conflict, and how to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian action in the country.

Project country: Yemen
Project name: Their Voice
Total budget: NOK 349,810
Local organizations: Mwatana
Project Location: National
Project Goal: To document situations of persons becoming disabled as a result of war injuries and raise awareness of disability rights and the need for disability inclusion in humanitarian response
Target Group: General public, parties to the conflict, persons with disabilities and their families, humanitarian organizations, UN agencies, DPOs, local authorities.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Advocacy and awareness raising campaign, using social media, from February 14th to March 24th. The campaign started with a
- pre-planning session where 18 civil society representatives with and without disabilities were present.
- A Policy brief and research paper (in Arabic and English) published on Mwatana's website, reaching more than 400,000 individuals, including targeted and practical recommendations.

² The TOFI project also distributed GDS-related advocacy grants in Uganda, Mozambique and Somalia, and Niger, South Sudan and Ethiopia integrated GDS-advocacy in their already existing advocacy efforts.

- Good relations and continued collaboration with key national and local DPOs and NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies such as UNHCR and UNOHCHR.
- 70 cases of war incidents leading to disability documented from December 2021 to February 2022, of which 20 were investigated further and individual stories shared in research paper.
- Research paper and policy brief presented in findings discussion session in early February where 14 people were present, among them decision-makers as well as civil society, INGO and UN agencies' representatives, academics and persons whose stories were told in the research paper.
- Three GIFs, and the video "Amputated Life" produced about persons made disabled by the war.
- GIFs and video published on Mwatana's website, shared through social media, viewed by more than 500,000 individuals and reached 700,000.
- Five podcast episodes produced and published (in Arabic) about the consequences of war incidents leaving growing numbers of people disabled.
- 20 stories turned into media content made available at the "Khuyut" website which is a hub for information sharing by journalists and activists inside Yemen, providing a window into the harsh realities on the ground.
- Two additional advocacy meetings were held in February and March:
- The one in February included the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Resident Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs. Here Mwatana directed messages and recommendations to the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council.
- Recommendations from pre-planning and findings discussion session on how to mitigate the challenges and barriers encountered in Yemen by persons who have become disabled due to the war.

The recommendations for parties to the conflict, DPOs, NGOs and INGOs, persons with disabilities and their families can be accessed in the Policy brief, which has been published on the Atlas Alliance website: [Yemen: Policy brief by Mwatana for Human Rights on disability caused by armed conflict - Atlas-alliansen](#)

Zimbabwe

Project country: Zimbabwe
 Project name: Strengthening Advocacy and Inclusion of Children and Young People with disabilities (CYPD) in Zimbabwe
 Total budget: NOK 350,000
 Local organizations: Save the Children Zimbabwe, in close cooperation with five DPOs, including one formed and led by youth with disabilities and one formed and led by parents of children with disabilities
 Project Location: National as well as in Manicaland, Midlands, and Bulawayo
 Project Goal: The project's main objective was to strengthen contact and linkage between Government of Zimbabwe and Children and Young People with Disabilities to catalyze the realization of their rights.
 Target Group: Five national DPOs, the Zimbabwean Department of Disability Affairs, Department of Social Development, the office of the Advisor on Disability Affairs in the Office of the President and Cabinet, the Ministry of Health and Child Care and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The advocacy towards national and provincial duty bearers by children and young people with disabilities resulted in long lasting relationships, which promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in national processes in Zimbabwe.
- Evidence of the sustaining relationship include the invitation of children and young people with disabilities to the consultations on the Draft Children's bill which is meant to replace the existing Children's Act.
- Six national radio sessions aired on a national station with more than 300,000 listeners, highlighted the rights of children and young people with disabilities, to participation, health, education, assistive technologies. The programs also covered topics such as GDS, the SDG core principle Leave No One Behind, the work of DPOs, and the challenges of children and youth with disabilities.
- The radio sessions led to an increase in coverage of disability rights on radio and television nationally. One of the radio stations which partnered with Save the Children now runs a weekly one-hour program on disability rights. One of the young people who participated in the project is a co-presenter on the show.
- A toolkit for national level advocacy and communication was developed and continues to be used to engage duty bearers.
- The project trained and sensitized duty bearers in different government departments on the rights of children and young people with disabilities.
- The five DPOs partnered with government departments and legislators to drive the disability rights agenda at the highest level. This will contribute to the rights of children and young people with disabilities being remembered in policy making.



Photo by Save the children Zimbabwe

Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt)

Project country: Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt)
Project name: Support Persons with Disabilities/ Children with Disabilities better understand and demand their rights, entitlements by law and access to services
Total budget: 350 000
Local organizations: Qader for community Development (QADER) and Bihimitkom
Project Location: Gaza strip and West bank
Project Goal: Advocate for the rights and entitlements of persons, particularly children, with disabilities, and to contribute to political change and improved conditions for persons with disabilities in oPt
Target Group: The Palestinian Ministry of Health, local communities in general, and persons with disabilities (to engage them in advocacy for their own rights, and the rights of children with disabilities).

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Save the Children oPt in close collaboration with the Palestinian Disability Coalition (PDC) organized a media campaign about the right to health services and health insurance for persons with disabilities, and the new draft of the national disability law.
- The campaign is estimated to have reached almost 120,000 individuals.
- Videos, radio spots, talk shows, short documentary films, billboards and other media instruments were used to raise awareness of the disability law, health rights and health insurance.
- 12 radio spots were produced and broadcasted 180 times over a period of 45 days, on Rabea' and Ajyal Radio, which cover the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Content and messages were prepared based on deep review of the recently issued Health Insurance System for persons with disabilities. The review was done in consultation with PDC on key challenges to accessing health insurance and health services for persons with disabilities.
- Videos, documentary films, talk shows and radio spots were also shared on Facebook pages of QADER and PDC.
- QADER and Bihimitkom Society for youth with disabilities, determined selection criteria and formed a youth team of 12 youth with various disabilities, ages 17 to 25, 9 female and 3 male.
- The youth team received five days of training on advocacy, media campaigns, and digital marketing. The training also focused on disability rights and entitlements for persons with disabilities, the barriers that children and persons with disabilities experience in Palestine, and the importance of promoting inclusion.
- A pre- and post-assessment was conducted to measure the percentage of change in knowledge and demonstrated increasing in knowledge for all the participants.
- The project built these youth's capacity to advocate for disability rights. With their new skills they reached 2377 persons / children with disabilities or community members, demonstrating positive practices that enable persons with disabilities to integrate in society.
- Save the Children, QADER and Bihimitkom organized a national conference on the "The Health Rights of Persons with Disabilities" on 20th of July 2022 in Ramallah. Around 115 people attended the conference, among them representatives from DPOs and other CSOs, INGOs, UN agencies, international cooperation agencies,

Ministry of Social Development, and disability activists (around 10% of the conference participants were persons with disabilities).

- A policy brief was prepared to document the main recommendations of the conference and policy interventions that should be implemented to ensure implementation of the health insurance system and access to comprehensive health services for persons with disabilities.
- The project contributed to amplifying and expanding the advocacy and lobbying component of Save the Children oPt. The participation at GDS exposed the local partners to international experiences that can help them with future proposals and introducing new ideas to their communities.

The following challenges were reported:

- The Ministry of Health did not join the conference on July 20th
- Some members of the youth team were at times hard to motivate
- The security situation and the financial crisis made it hard to arrange physical meetings, especially when someone would have to travel between cities, so the youth team tended to meet digitally and arranged activities online

Norwegian Human Rights Fund

Project name: Promoting the rights of people with disabilities in outlying areas of Colombia, Indonesia, and Pakistan.

Total budget: NOK 800.000

Local organizations: Society for Special Persons (SSP) Multan (Pakistan), Foro Costa (Colombia), and in Indonesia - Kelompok Muda Peduli Hutan (KOMIU) and Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia (HWDI)

Project Location: Pakistan, Colombia, Indonesia

Project Goal: Raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and the struggles of disabled human rights defenders

Target Group: Local authorities, and persons with disabilities and their families in Baranquilla (Colombia), Multan (Pakistan) and 16 sub-districts in the forest area of Donggola regency (Indonesia).

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund applied for one project, implemented in three countries as well as globally through an online social media campaign.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- In addition to projects in three countries NHRF applied and received support for a global social media campaign.
- The social media campaign was called [Able to be \(me\)](#) and reached 53 000 persons on [Facebook](#), Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and newsletter) in a five-week period. It continues to be visited as it is still available online.
- The campaign featured six human rights defenders with disabilities, with their personal stories and photos. The individuals were chosen from NHRF's networks and are from South Sudan, Nepal, India, Pakistan and Colombia.
- The Able to Be campaign produced 2260 forms of engagement (likes, comments, sharing) between 27. April and 31. May.

- With the social media campaign NHRF showed the audiences worldwide what disability rights and inclusion mean in practice and how crucial the people who defend them are in creating a more diverse and inclusive world.
- The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Mary Lawlor, re-tweeted three of the posts, indicating their relevance and potential to influence policy.
- NHRF set up a reference group of advisors to the social media campaign, consisting of colleagues from NABP, NAD, Atlas secretariat as well as the UK based Disability and Development Partners (DDP).
- NHRF's website was made accessible to blind and partially sighted / visually impaired persons in the project period, and the content was made available for screen readers.

Pakistan

- Society for Special Person Multan conducted a number of activities, such as a CRPD awareness raising campaign called Encourage the Human Development (EHD).
- 250 persons with disabilities participated in two disability rights awareness raising sessions.
- 150 persons with disabilities participated in two interactive dialogues on disability challenges in Pakistan.
- The aim of the campaign was to include persons with disabilities in local politics and increase persons with disabilities' and their families' knowledge about their rights and what services they are entitled to.
- Between 400-500 people are registered with social welfare department including 90 families with persons with disabilities as members of their household.
- 3,000 brochures and information material in Urdu printed and distributed in communities.
- The main achievements in Pakistan that were reported include a shift in attitude towards persons with disabilities, from passive victims to active claimers of rights, in the local community where the SSP Multan is working.
- The project also persuaded local government officials to include persons with disabilities in the district assemblies in Punjab province by reserving seats in each district assembly. Punjab province holds 36 district assemblies. Up to two seats in each assembly are now assigned as "special seats for persons with disabilities". This means that a minimum of 36 persons with disabilities will be entering district assemblies in Punjab province in the time ahead, but SSP continues its advocacy - their goal is 50.

Indonesia

- Partnership between the human rights focused NGO Kelompok Muda Peduli Hutan (KOMIU) and the DPO Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia (HWDI) in 16 sub-districts of the remote villages in the forest areas of Donggala regency.
- 55 persons with disabilities (and 900 non-disabled persons) obtained ID cards, family cards and birth certificates, which directly grants them access to public services and COVID-19 vaccines. This has been important in promoting access and inclusion to a target group that otherwise suffer from significantly reduced access to public services due to the remote areas that they live in and the stigma that they face.

- By compelling these households to obtain registration documents, a space for dialogue has been established between these local communities and local government based on the rights that they are entitled to.
- Six information billboards promoting disability rights and inclusion installed at local government offices in Donggala Regency.
- Production and distribution of 1,000 information materials on disability rights and inclusion in local languages to 500 households.
- A national state-owned TV talk show (from around the 04:09:00 mark) conducted on social inclusion in ensuring the basic rights of PWDs conducted.
- Another key outcome is the collaborative working relationship between KOMIU, HWDI, the local ombudsman and the local social welfare department that has been established and will continue.

Colombia

- Foro Costa Atlántica coordinated a survey to 42 DPOs in the Barranquilla district, as well as seven interviews and two focus group discussions about the situation for persons with disabilities in the area.
- On Fora Costa Atlántica's initiative 15 of the mapped DPOs collaborated to organize a "Capacity Visibility Fair", showcasing their work to the public of Barranquilla.
- The capacity visibility fair was organized by 63 representatives from these 15 DPOs. Around 2 500 people are estimated to have attended the fair.
- The same 15 DPOs developed collective strategic plans of action which will guide their work moving forward to promote disability rights and inclusion and work collaboratively on this area at the local level in Barranquilla.
- Fora Costa Atlántica produced a research paper evaluating the needs and challenges of persons with disabilities, and the capacity of DPOs working in the district.
- Four virtual and five face-to-face training sessions for 120 representatives from 15 DPOs were conducted to develop organizational capacity to understand Colombian regulatory framework for disability.

In all three contexts the partners experienced that a good working relationship with local authorities was key to achieving the goal; increased accessibility of rights- based services in the communities.

Yglobal

Yglobal had two projects, one in Kenya and one in Sri Lanka.

Kenya

Project name: Bridging Hope for Persons with Disabilities in Kenya.

Total budget: NOK 400 000

Local organizations: Light for the World Kenya, Action Network for Disabled Youth in Nairobi (ANDY), Mombasa County Disability Leadership Forum (MCDLF) and the Kisumu Action for the Disabled Network (KADNET).

Project Location: Kisumu, Mombasa, and Nairobi counties

Project Goal: Enhanced capacity of CSOs and DPOs to effectively engage in Global, National, and County advocacy campaigns for the implementation of GDS 2022

commitments

Target Group: DPOs, youth DPOs and persons with disabilities in the three counties

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The project built the capacity of DPOs to advocate for inclusion and disability rights implementation.
- With the partnership and support of ANDY, YWCA formed a coalition of champions, CSOs, DPOs, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), and service delivery professionals to evaluate the implementation of the GDS commitments made in 2018.
- Persons with disabilities through their respective DPOs, coordinated by this project, advocated for a Mombasa Disability Policy and Disability Act. This led to the process of reviewing the Mombasa Disability Policy, which was drafted in 2018.
- The MCDLF and YWCA sent a letter to the local authorities in Mombasa, referring to their housing policy, and requested them to address inaccessibility of government offices, election polls and schools. The County Commissioner committed to address the issues by ensuring that the Independent Election and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) provide an alternative way to vote by setting up a small tent on the ground floor for wheelchair users and write a letter to the County Director of Education and seek more information on the issue of accessible schools.
- An advocacy statement was also sent to the NCPWD to address three key issues affecting persons with disabilities nationally:
 - Lack of proper and clear disaggregated data
 - Lack of disability assessment services in various health facilities
 - Lack of awareness and sensitization program regarding services offered by the government to cater for Persons with Disabilities at the grassroots level.

YWCA invited the county government officials to roundtable meetings to address these issues.



Photo: A poster with a smiling talk show host and his two guests, the Yglobal Advocacy grantees from YWCA, and ANDY – the Action Network of the Disabled who starred the show to talk about the upcoming GDS.

Sri Lanka

Project name: Upholding the rights of the Persons with Disabilities by creating awareness and advocacy interventions (Disability Inclusion)
Total budget: NOK 150 000
Local organizations: Panumugama YMCA and Sri Lanka Welfare Society for the Blind
Project Location: Pamunugama
Project Goal: Enhanced capacity of DPOs and CSOs for joint Advocacy Work
Target Group: Sri Lankan government and civil society

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The creation of the consortium, «The National Collective for Disability Inclusion», consisting of DPOs, CSOs, youth groups and media representatives. The Collective is a first of its kind in Sri Lanka, where DPOs and CSOs work together as a network as equal partners.
- 100 people, all in the Collective, met five times during the implementation period to discuss concrete actions to secure disability inclusion. They also organized seminars and dialogues, leading to acknowledgement by government officials that persons with disabilities have equal rights.
- A new Act on Disability is still at the proposal stage in Sri Lanka. However, the minister responsible for disability agreed to include suggestions proposed by DPOs and CSOs. The Government of Sri Lanka also agreed to closer links with DPOs and CSOs in formulating the Act.
- YMCA Sri Lanka was represented in the Asia panel of the GDS Youth with a presentation on youth with disabilities transitioning to employment.
- A National Disability Summit was held culminating in a National Declaration on Disability Inclusion.
- All the organizations in the Collective agreed to develop disability inclusion policies for their respective organizations.

The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports

NIF received funding to work on awareness raising about the rights of persons (particularly young persons) with disabilities in Zambia.

Project name: 'Act Inclusive Campaign' for Children and Youth with a Disability
Total budget: NOK 340 000
Local organizations: EduSport Foundation, Response Network and Sport In Action, Zambia Agency for Persons with Disability (ZAPD), and numerous local DPOs
Project Location: Livingstone, Kabwe and Lusaka areas, Zambia
Project Goal: Creating awareness of the importance of sport among children irrespective of their physical challenges, social background, gender and religion or ethnicity.
Target Group: Local authorities, DPOs, schools, persons with disabilities and their families.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 18 DPOs were identified and trained in advocacy strategies.
- Advocacy meetings and training sessions included representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare.
- 145 traditional leaders and school heads/teachers were trained in targeted rural and urban communities in advocacy and the need for children with disabilities to participate in sports.
- This resulted in schools enrolling 25 children (12 female and 13 male) into school, and the village headmen ensuring that children with disabilities were not left locked up during community activities.
- The project introduced inclusive physical education and sports in schools. This involved training selected teachers working with special schools and also local volunteers in order to strengthen the relationship between local activities and in-school activities. The consortium had training and workshops at 28 schools during the project, increasing the capacity among school administration and teachers on inclusion and physical activity.
- Instant outcomes include 28 schools now implementing inclusive sports activities and community traditional leaders encouraging community members to take their children to school.
- 18 paralegals (7 female and 11 male) were trained in the rural targeted communities. Since the training was done towards the end of implementation, the impact of this is yet to be seen. However, it is envisaged that, these paralegals will enhance the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities locally and ensure that sports activities in the rural areas are inclusive.
- Three action groups were formed in different communities with over 25 youth trained as trainers and engaging other youth in the community.
- Training for DPOs, youth leaders and other stakeholders in Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). This led to raised awareness on the right to accessing sexual reproductive health services from the hospital and clinics in the targeted urban areas and the rural target communities among children with disabilities.
- The youth groups reached over 300 children and youth living with a disability in their training for trainers-program.
- Over 2000 people were sensitized about the project and CRPD, using community drama and debate in open market areas. The project also targeted schools, and tournaments and workshops on inclusion were used to engage both children with disabilities and the rest of the school.
- Life skills sessions were provided in Livingstone, Kabwe and Lusaka, working with 20 schools and over 700 children with disabilities.



Photo by: Response Network.

4 Follow-up

The follow-up phase was initiated by commissioning two consultants to evaluate the Atlas Alliance's mobilization efforts in 12 sample countries, respectively six in Africa and six in Asia. The evaluators utilized qualitative methodology (mostly key informant interviews) and spoke to DPO and NGO staff in their countries of focus to find out how engaged they were in the GDS, whether or not they advocated, and how effective Atlas' mobilization had been. Some of the organizations interviewed had no knowledge about or relation to the Atlas Alliance – yet they had received information and tools from us through other CSOs that were in the mapping.

The evaluation reports informed the work on the handover document called the Mobilization manual. This document targets any CSO wanting to build up excitement for the GDS, use the summit to advance their own agenda, and mobilize their own and other CSOs to advocate for disability rights. It is a collection of the most valuable experiences and lessons learned from the Atlas Alliance's GDS project implementation, and culminates in a set of practical recommendations for the organizations that will be working on this prior to the next GDS.

Another exercise that informed the Mobilization manual were two online questionnaires shared with two different groups. One was focused on Atlas' mobilization and was shared with Atlas' target CSOs, and one was the participant survey that all registered for any of the GDS events received. These two surveys provided crucial information about the use of the advocacy toolkit, the level of understanding about the GDS and its potential for advocacy, and the experience of accessibility of the event itself. Results like these are instrumental for providing useful advice for the mobilizing DPOs and hosts of the GDS in 2025 and beyond.

Identifying key DPOs or DPO umbrellas to transfer learning to, mainly in the host countries of GDS 2025, has also taken up some time in the phase post-GDS, but IDA made it clear that they wish to initiate this communication themselves. The Atlas Alliance also tried to reach relevant government staff in the GDS 2025 host countries, to meet (digitally or physically) to present our findings and experiences, but they did not prioritize this at the time (three years prior to the next summit). The manual will be shared with the DPOs when the planning starts (hopefully early enough to properly implement the recommendations), and the dialogue with the German and Jordanian government will reopen once they are ready.

Some key recommendations based on Atlas' experience were presented in a [side-event to the Conference of State Parties to the UN CRPD \(COSP\) in June 2022](#). The Atlas Alliance developed a policy report that was launched in this side-event, for which a thorough analysis of the commitments from donor countries was conducted. The report concludes with recommendations for the future hosts of the GDS and the OECD-DAC countries.

5 What was not achieved and why?

From the Atlas Alliance results framework one activity was not conducted: Advocacy and information meetings in collaboration with Norwegian embassies. The Atlas Alliance suggested that the Embassies conduct civil society meetings, but the answer was that time did not suffice. They also pointed to the difficulty of gathering many people in one venue due to the lingering corona pandemic.

Nevertheless, partners reported that in some countries there was indeed close cooperation between the Norwegian Embassies and the DPOs in the run-up to the GDS, and in Kampala colleagues at NAD and their local DPO partners followed the GDS unfold from the inside of the Norwegian Embassy premises.

Moreover, outcome 2.1 and output indicator 2.1.a were not implemented as singular activities.

Outcome 2.1: Capacity development and technical advice to government duty bearers (GDS 2022 co-hosts) and NGO staff on disability rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities

of government (co-host) staff targeted for technical advice

The NMFA and Norad staff were repeatedly invited to events such as webinars and trainings hosted by the Atlas Alliance and partners, but due to other pressing tasks they were mostly unable to attend. However, the workshops for each thematic area of the GDS, which preceded the development of the menu of commitments were all attended by the Atlas Alliance to contribute thematic content and ensure the DPO perspectives were reflected.

Moreover, the dialogue between Atlas and government / co-host staff was both constructive and frequent in the run-up to the Summit. The Atlas Alliance continues to be available whenever needed and much appreciates the approachability throughout the execution of this agreement. Government (co-host) staff are always most welcome to request trainings or advise when needed.

6 Annexes

Annex 1: Documents for advocacy resulting from the GDS

Norwegian strategy: Equality for all

The strategy is [available here](#). This will be a very important document to continuously remind decision-makers within Norwegian foreign policy and development going forward about their promised path and ambition. The strategy outlines three strategic action areas for driving change towards disability inclusive development: Changing attitudes, increasing accountability and promoting meaningful engagement. It promises both mainstreaming the inclusion of persons with disabilities and targeted measures in a twin-track approach.

Although its wording could have been stronger and more concrete it is likely to accelerate a real shift in Norwegian development actors program activities, as long as it is repeatedly referred to, and actively used from the onset.

Norwegian DPOs will be instrumental in the monitoring of the strategy's implementation. The NMFA is currently developing the implementation plan.

The Co-Chair's summary

The statement following up the Charter for Change, called in 2022 the Co-chairs' summary is [available on this website](#). The document opens with:
Participants are committed to a human rights-based approach to inclusive development with a particular focus on gender equality. An intersectional and holistic approach is necessary for moving forward.

Like in the Charter for Change the Chairs' Summary states that:
Participants are committed to promoting meaningful engagement of OPDs through leadership and diverse representation of all persons with disabilities at the front and centre of change, as leaders, partners, and advocates.

It then continues to strengthen this commitment further by adding:
This includes the active involvement and close consultation of persons with disabilities of all ages and their representative organisations across all stages of programming and on all issues that concern them. For this to happen, participants made a commitment to support OPDs in developing their organisational and technical capacity to be able to play this role as strong counterparts.

The Co-chair's Summary can be used together with the Charter for Change in future advocacy endeavors.

Civil Society Declaration

This Civil Society Declaration set out a clear plan for the work of NGOs and DPOs. The first point is especially relevant. Download the full or shortened version of the [declaration here](#) and see the bullet points from the short version below:

We call on all of you here today to:

- *Promote the leadership of organizations of persons with disabilities in partnerships and actively seek such partnerships in order to accelerate commitments into change*
- *Collect and use appropriate, reliable and comparable data that is inclusive of the full diversity of disabilities*
- *Build the capacity of all stakeholders to implement the CRPD.*
- *Invest in OPDs in long-term plans and projects.*
- *Recognise the diversity of disability, through all life stages, and across the world. We are the World's largest minority group and also the most diverse.*
- *Protect children and adults, especially women, girls and young persons with disabilities from violence, exploitation and abuse.*
- *Recognise the enabling role of assistive technology and invest in assistive technologies.*
- *Promote Human Rights and combat Ableism*
- *Prioritize Inclusive Health and vaccinations for all, in the South and the North, in order to attain the SDGs.*
- *Promote inclusive employment, inclusive education and skills.*

Youth Call for Action

A 16 point document, based on approximately 1000 responses to a survey that was open for two weeks only, with answers stemming from a geographically widely spread audience in six different languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and Arabic), was produced by the GDS Youth co-hosts the week before the GDS Youth. Although it was written by individuals from Youth Mental Health Norway (MHU), IDA, Atlas and UNICEF, it was edited by the IDA led Youth caucus, ensuring youth were involved also in the development beyond responding to the survey.

The Call for Action has the title: *Youth with disabilities – from holding rights to exercising them*. Read or watch / listen to the entire [Charter here](#). Headings of the first five points below:

Action 1 - Increase decent work and easing employment opportunities

Action 2 - Make technology and assistive devices accessible, gender- and age-sensitive

Action 3 - Facilitate awareness-raising on disability rights, inclusion and human rights-based approaches to youth with disabilities

Action 4 - Ensure access to information, communications and services for all

Action 5 - Access the right to recreation and support sustainable friendships

The points in the Call for Action are listed chronologically according to the importance given to them by the youth who answered the survey. The only criteria to answer the survey were the ages 15-35 and having a disability. Assistants were allowed to fill it in as long as the answers reflected the views of the young person being assisted.

Speeches by Norwegian Prime Minister and UN SG

Jonas Gahr Støre's opening speech at the GDS 2022 is available in this link:

[Prime Minister's opening speech at the Global Disability Summit - regjeringen.no](#)

The speech by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, is available here:

[Secretary-General's remarks to the Global Disability Summit | United Nations Secretary-General](#)

Annex 2: Results Framework

Expected Results	Ind #	Indicators	Data Source	Targets	Achieved result	Comment
				2022		
Goal						
Inclusion of, and active participation by, Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) in all relevant activities in the planning, implementation and follow up of the GDS 2022						
Impact						
An inclusive and engaging GDS 2022 that delivers specific policy outcomes at global, regional and national level that benefit persons with disabilities						
Outcome 1						
1. DPOs advocate for the human rights of persons with disabilities through the GDS 2022 mechanisms	1.a	# of DPOs that advocate for GDS 2022 commitments	Partner reports, and regional evaluations	50	140	
	1.b	# persons with disabilities reporting improved agency and opportunities from participating in GDS 2022	Participant survey	250	293	
Outputs						
1.1. Advocacy and communication package for use at country level	1.1.a	# of DPOs/NGOs having received communication packages	Project report	50	196	
	1.1.b	# of information campaigns	Project report	25	31	
	1.1.c	# of DPOs having developed common strategies and/or action plans	Project report	25	120	5 in Zimbabwe, 15 in Somalia, 53 in Kenya, 18 in Zambia, 7 in SL, 7 in Norway, 15 in

						Colombia = 120
1.2. Training and mentoring for DPOs on advocacy strategies and coalition building	1.2.a	# of DPO staff and persons with disabilities trained	Training record	150	950	400 persons with disabilities took part in awareness raising sessions / dialogues in Pakistan, 120 representatives of DPOs in Colombia, 100 i SL, app. 60 in Zambia, app. 45 in Atlas HRA training, 12 youth in oPt, 55 in Indonesia, app. 160 in Kenya
	1.2.b	# of trainings provided	Training record	10	14	En fra Sekretariatet, 13 i Adv. grants landkontekster (Zim, Zam, Yem, Ind, Pak, Col, SL, Kenya)
1.3. DPOs participate in national, regional and global meetings and consultations	1.3.a	# of countries reached by strategy campaigns	Project report	25	27	Mottakere (land) i mailing-lista fra mappingen er 58, og legger vi på land vi jobber i via Adv. grants, TOFI og BU er vi på 75
	1.3.b	# of advocacy and information meetings in collaboration with Norwegian embassies	Project report	15	N/A	Some Norwegian embassies did conduct meetings information meetings, but without the involvement of Atlas and partners

	1.3.c	# of NGO-DPO information meetings	Project report	20	21	GDS reference group meetings, HRA webinar, hybrid event at Litteraturhuset, and DPO consultation with Norad
1.4. Small Grants for SDG 2022 advocacy and partnership between NGOs and DPOs	1.4.a	Narrative examples of achieved results	Project report	10	Se chapter on Advocacy grants	Plenty - see chapter on Advocacy Grants
Outcome 2						
2. GDS 2022 hosts ensure that planning and implementation processes, including development of GDS 2022 targets and strategy, are inclusive of persons with disabilities and reflect disability rights	2.a	# DPOs represented in GDS 2022 committees and working groups	Summit documents	10	15	7 in GDS ref. group, SCRG: 8 umbrellas and consortia
	2.b	# of DPOs represented at the GDS 2022 and the Civil Society Forum	Log in data	100	844 DPOs (GDS) 236 DPOs (CSF)	Numbers from IDA
Outputs						
2.1. Capacity development and technical advice to government duty bearers (GDS 2022 co-hosts) and NGO staff on disability rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities	2.1.a	# of government (co-host) staff targeted for technical advice	Project report	20	N/A	
	2.1.b	# of NGO staff targeted for technical advice	Training record	20	35	Har ikke disaggregering, men ca 90 deltok på HRA-session, hvorav litt under halvparten var fra NGOer
2.2. GDS 2022 decision making processes reviewed and revised to include DPOs	2.2.a	Narrative examples of active participation of the Atlas Alliance in GDS steering committee and other decision-making bodies	Project report		See chapter on Inclusive planning and implementation	See chapter on Inclusive planning and implementation
	2.2.b	# of videos produced showing best practices from the preparations and national activities	Project report	5	7	TOFI film + Foro Costa + Somalia + Pakistan + Sri Lanka + Kenya + Indonesia (not including all the recorded webinars)

Outcome 3						
3. Youth with disabilities and their organisations advocate for the human rights of persons with disabilities through the GDS 2022 mechanisms	3.a	Examples of priorities of youth with disabilities reflected in the concluding documents of GDS 2022	Summit documents	2	61	
Outputs						
3.1. Social media campaign influence and educate the public about disability rights	3.1.a	# of videos produced and distributed in partners' social media channels	Project report	5	61	Regional working groups produced videos in addition
	3.1.b	# of views	Project report	100 000	205 000	FB report
	3.1.c	# of times the videos are shared	Project report	10 000	414	See explanation in chapter on GDS Youth
3.2. Virtual youth summit carried out in conjunction with GDS 2022	3.2.a	# of participants at virtual youth summit	Summit documents	120	3029	Number from IDA
	3.2.b	# of youth organisations represented at virtual youth summit	Summit documents	30	184 (including 83 from the global South)	Numbers from IDA
	3.2.c	List of recommendations from youth summit to GDS 2022	Summit documents	N/A	Youth call for action, GDS Mobilization Manual (chapter on Youth summit)	
3.3. The perspective of global youth reflected in the GDS 2022 agenda	3.3.a	# of participants from youth organisations at the GDS 2022	Summit documents	120	Unknown number	
	3.3.b	# of youth organisations represented in GDS 2022 committees and working groups	Summit documents	2	30	YMHN estimate