EDF in the world:
EDF’ strategy for international cooperation 2019-2022

Adopted by the EDF Board, February 2019

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Introduction

EDF has made a strong and positive change in the world, beyond Europe, since its creation. As a founding member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA), EDF was also an active participant in the negotiations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). EDF has always aimed to contribute to a diverse and effective disability movement globally. In all of our international work, we cooperate with IDA, which is the representative voice of persons with disabilities in the world; and is acknowledged as such by the United Nations system both in New York and Geneva. We are also currently actively involved in the Stakeholder group of persons with disabilities, working closely to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

The primary role of EDF is to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Europe. However, the CRPD, the European Disability Strategy, the EU budget as well as other European Union (EU) policies and programmes include international components which can be very effective in ensuring the EU plays a positive role as a leading international donor and partner. The EU plays an important role in the world in trade, development cooperation, humanitarian action and human rights and it is important that we use this opportunity to ensure the CRPD is incorporated. Our advocacy to ensure the EU takes a leading role in promoting the CRPD globally was already outlined in our 4-year organisational strategy. (Annex 1 - Objective four of [EDF Strategic Framework 2017-2021](http://www.edf-feph.org/edf-strategic-framework-2017-2021) on international cooperation).

There are some strong foundations for us to work from. The EU and all its 28 member states have ratified the CRPD. The “[Concluding observations on the initial report of the EU](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2FEU%2FCO%2F1)” (2015) by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were extensive on external policies and programmes, giving the EU, and EDF many points to follow-up on. (Annex 2 - Recommendations from the CRPD committee to the EU on Article 32). The EU is also the largest development donor and has just published its draft budget, for the period 2021-2027, devoting €123 billion for external actions. The “[EU Consensus forDevelopment](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/new-european-consensus-development-our-world-our-dignity-our-future_en)” (2017), which is the European strategy for international cooperation, will frame the spending of the external actions budget. It referred for the first time to persons with disabilities and the CRPD. The EU Consensus on Development is binding on both the EU itself but also on its member states.

Considering the above, we believe that EDF has an active role to play to ensure persons with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) are included in EU international cooperation.

The purpose of EDF’s strategy is to outline the scope of our work beyond the European region. Our strategy will serve the following purposes:

1. Clarify the role of EDF in international cooperation - within the international disability movement and towards the UN structures and EU policy initiatives;
2. Formulate clear objectives;
3. Communicate to our members and partners the scope of our international work;
4. Define EDF’s approach to international cooperation projects.

Because this area of work is under development, this strategy outlines our direction but also activities will be built up on the basis of available resources. Each year, an implementation plan will be presented for adoption. This will include the activities for the year, but also the resources which will be used.

This strategy does not include our work towards the Council of Europe in relation to the Oviedo protocol which is included [in EDF’s work on human rights](http://www.edf-feph.org/withdraw-additional-protocol-oviedo-convention).

The CRPD is the basis of this strategy, therefore, all policies and programmes EDF engages in will be aligned to the CRPD committee General Comments. This is important to note; EDF does not intend to support, and will actively challenge, any activities which would export outdated European practices, such as institutionalisation or coercive treatment.

# EDF’s work so far at the EU level in international cooperation

EDF promotes the implementation and monitoring of the CRPD towards the EU institutions, in particular Article 32 (international cooperation) and Article 4.3 (participation of persons with disabilities). We seek to mobilise the EU and ensure that persons with disabilities are included in its overseas policies and programmes. We emphasise the critical importance of meaningful involvement of DPOs in all policy matters that concern them.

Many members of EDF have a long history of capacity building of DPOs outside of the EU, including in the global south. They have developed an expertise in advocating to their governments to make their national international cooperation policies and programme accessible and inclusive to persons with disabilities.

EDF has focused on the following areas until now with several achievements:

* 2003: Contribution to the “[Guidance Note on Disability and Development for EU Delegations and Services](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-guide-on-disability-development-for-ec-delegations-services-200303_en_2.pdf)” in collaboration with the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)
* 2009: Inclusion of international cooperation in the “[European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:en:PDF)”
* 2015: Inclusion of EU external policies and actions in our monitoring of the CRPD, leading to EU recommendations in this field, and follow-up with the Commissioner for Development Cooperation in a face to face meeting
* 2015: Participation in the European Year for Development through organisation of the high-level dialogue on inclusive development cooperation in collaboration with the European Commission and IDDC
* 2015: Active role in negotiating the disability-inclusive [Sendai Framework for action on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](https://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework)
* 2017: Inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the [EU Consensus for Development](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/european-consensus-on-development-final-20170626_en.pdf)
* 2017 and ongoing: Ensuring the visibility of organisations of persons with disabilities in the European Development Days and the European Disability and Development Week.
* 2018: Contribution to the “[EU Guidelines on Non-Discrimination for EU Delegations and Services](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-guide-on-disability-development-for-ec-delegations-services-200303_en_2.pdf)”
* 2018 and ongoing: Advocacy towards the EU to include persons with disabilities in the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument in the present Multi- Financial Framework
* 2018 and ongoing: Cooperation, peer support and joint advocacy with the other five regional DPOs who are members of IDA (African Disability Forum, [Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities](http://www.aodp-lb.net/) - AODP, [ASEAN Disability Forum](http://aseandisabilityforum.org/digaleri/), [Pacific Disability Forum](http://www.pacificdisability.org/) and [Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons With Disabilities and their Families - RIADIS](http://www.riadis.org/))

# Objectives of EDF’s work in international cooperation

EDF will work more specifically around the achievement of the five following objectives:

## 1. Influencing the European Union

**The European Union becomes a global leader in disability inclusive development – adopting disability inclusive development policies, programmes and global cooperation agreements while overall promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.**

Our advocacy work will target:

* The EU external actions budget for the period of 2020-2027;
* The EU calls for proposals for international cooperation funding, including direct funding to DPOs, and fully inclusive development policies and programmes at the national and regional level;
* The EU regional and national overseas delegations support inclusive and accessible working processes and policies in all sectors. This includes accessible and inclusive civil dialogue with DPOs in their consultations and programming, supported by internal training for all relevant EU staff;
* The EU should have accessible overseas delegations, ensuring that accessibility and non-discrimination are included in all procurement processes, calls for tenders, and calls for proposals;
* The EU will use and promote the use of the OECD DAC code for disability;
* The EU next European Disability Strategy (2020-2030) to ensure the inclusion of international cooperation;
* The promotion by the EU of its work on the CRPD and international cooperation at the international level, including at the UN level, and during high-level events;
* The collaboration by the EU, in Brussels and in its overseas delegations, with DPOs in Europe and in low and middle-income countries;
* The promotion of EU leadership and national development agencies in member states to make all EU aid inclusive and accessible, including through the use of OECD DAC marker (a new marker adopted to measure the level of disability inclusive in development assistance) and active involvement in the [Global Action on Disability Network](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/global-action-disability-glad-network) (GLAD);
* The follow up of all recommendations made by the CRPD committee to the EU on Article 32 including adoption of a harmonised disability-inclusive development policy, strengthening of focal points, data disaggregation and to ensure that no EU funds are spent on segregation or institutionalisation of persons with disabilities.

It is of utmost importance that the EU does not invest in programmes and policies outside of Europe which are contrary to the CRPD. This was already included in the [CRPD committee recommendations](#_Annex_Recommendations_from) to an extent. Notably, policies and programmes should not exclude or segregate persons with disabilities, and where EU money is invested in perpetuating segregation, this funding should be withdrawn. An understanding of the CRPD and a human rights approach to disability is critical. Staff should be training and monitoring should be in place to ensure CRPD compliance. One example is the expansion of health services based on the SDGs- here it should be ensured that inclusive accessible health services are invested in. In all health programmes informed consent is a key right which should be upheld, while practices contrary to the CRPD, such as forced treatment, or deprivation of legal capacity must be avoided. Investment in all infrastructure, transport or ICT services should be fully accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities.

On global topics and issues like the GLAD and influencing the UN at the global level, EDF will work in close cooperation with IDA and its members.

## 2. Strengthening regional level advocacy among regional DPOs

**Regional DPOs will learn from each other, build their organisational capacity and work in partnership to influence policies at the regional level.**

DPOs work to defend the rights of persons with disabilities at all levels of governance, from the grass roots to the international level and they have many different functions. EDF as a regional DPO umbrella promotes the rights of persons with disabilities at the EU level and recognises the importance of promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in other regional integration organisations around the world.

Within IDA, EDF cooperates with other regional umbrella DPOs: Africa, Southeast Asia (ASEAN), the Pacific, Latin America and the Arab region. These regional DPOs promote the CRPD in their region and have in many cases comparable structures and objectives to EDF. In the past, EDF has engaged in initiatives to promote exchange, supported by IDA and EDF members.

EDF will aim to ensure interregional cooperation can be continued and developed in the following areas:

* Working within the International Disability Alliance to develop a platform for peer exchange and mutual learning between regional DPOs to build organisational capacity and enhance our ability to influence policy at the regional level. (This will also include selecting issues where extra guidance is needed in areas such as influencing public procurement, trade policies, political dialogue, etc.)
* Promoting the accession to the CRPD of the regional integration organisations in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Arab region (similarly to the EU which formally acceded to the Convention on 23 December 2010, the first legally binding core international human rights instrument to which the EU is party).
* Bringing a European perspective to the Conference on the State Parties, the High Level Political Forum on the SDGs, as well as other high-level or global events, emphasising cooperation with our regional DPO partners, IDA and the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities.

## 3. Advocating for evidence

**EDF will advocate for the collection and use of evidence to inform international cooperation policies and programmes.**

Collecting evidence remains challenging. In line with Article 31 (statistics and data collection) of the CRPD as well as Article 33 (national implementation and monitoring), it is necessary to ensure that policies and programmes are based on evidence so progress and achievements can be tracked and monitored. In particular, EDF will focus on:

* Promoting the importance of data to be disaggregated by disability using the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, as well as by age and gender in order to facilitate the identification of the most marginalised groups such as women and girls with disabilities and young and older persons with disabilities;
* Advocating for the use of additional data-collection tools to “obtain information on perceptions and attitudes and include those constituencies that the Washington Group leaves out” ([General comment 7](http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsnbHatvuFkZ%2bt93Y3D%2baa2pjFYzWLBu0vA%2bBr7QovZhbuyqzjDN0plweYI46WXrJJwcWaiM0nmhGY0g4wq%2ftSjyVbUftqbcjul4sUkn4mGHh), p. 17, 2018);
* Documenting best practices when it comes to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in international cooperation;
* Measuring the performance by the EU in the implementation and monitoring of its international cooperation’s policies, using data and studies (specifically focusing on elements which were highlighted in concluding observations to the EU by the CRPD committee).

## 4. Promoting the engagement of DPOs in international cooperation

**Persons with disabilities and European DPOs are actively engaged in international cooperation – not just as beneficiaries but also as experts.**

[Article 32](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-32-international-cooperation.html) (international cooperation) of the CRPD outlines the measures states parties must take to fulfil their obligations regarding international cooperation. [General Comment 7](http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsnbHatvuFkZ%2bt93Y3D%2baa2pjFYzWLBu0vA%2bBr7QovZhbuyqzjDN0plweYI46WXrJJ3MHZqEL5PhEJmdtaGCrlGCRXSVhYk32UnG2WCQn91e1) on articles 4 (3) and 33 (3), relating to the consultation and involvement of persons with disabilities clarifies what the CRPD Committee expects in terms of meaningful involvement of DPOs. DPOs have a similar nature around the world, as described in the General Comment, different sizes and mandates, different levels of resources. However, the capacity of peer-to-peer learning between DPOs should be enhanced.

We believe that the role of DPOs in international cooperation is not understood well enough by: many government development or humanitarian agencies, development NGOs, and by DPOs in general. Whereas there is a range of good practice demonstrating DPO involvement at all levels of development cooperation, from grass roots to policy, it is not documented. We are sometimes told that DPOs cannot be involved because they do not have the operational capacity to ‘do development’.

EDF proposes to bridge this knowledge gap. With this strategic period, we will aim to:

* Develop a set of tools and resources to document, build capacity and advocate for a strong role of DPOs in all elements of development cooperation with a focus also on diversity, youth and women with disabilities. This will be based on the experience of EDF members, with the aim to share widely in Europe to promote the engagement of DPOs in international cooperation;
* Ensure that any NGO, government agency or other partner will have a good understanding of what a DPO is (in line with the General Comment 7) and will have the tools and approaches to meaningfully include them;
* Ensure DPOs from low and middle-income countries engage directly with European decision makers to influence their approach to international cooperation both at the headquarters in Brussels and within the regional and national delegations;
* Support European DPOs and EDF partners to engage in high-level events such as the Conference of the States Parties and the High Level Political Forum on the SDGs, through the existing coordination mechanisms, i.e. the Civil Society Coordination Mechanism for COSP and the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for HLPF;
* Build the capacity of EDF and its members to engage in international work.

EDF will work with IDA, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, other agencies, civil organisations and the disability movement to promote the importance of engaging persons with disabilities and DPOs in international cooperation.

## Innovation and learning

**EDF will champion innovation by supporting creativity, ideas and challenges to engage in non-traditional international advocacy activities for EDF.**

EDF works actively with various partners to ensure all the articles of CRPD are implemented and monitored. EDF relies on the strength of our 98 members across Europe. Both partners and members are engaged in various and diverse work, which provides opportunities to engage in new, non-traditional advocacy activities for EDF. We will therefore, during this period investigate:

* Supporting the activities on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian aid, in coordination with existing global mechanisms for coordination of DPO engagement, with a particular focus on:
	+ the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines
	+ the Global Compact on Refugees
	+ the work of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
	+ and the participation of persons with disabilities and DPOs in all humanitarian actions (preparedness, rescue, management of camps, collecting data, monitoring);
* Cooperating with the neighbouring organisations linked to the EU (for instance the Union for the Mediterranean);
* Influencing new organisations (like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD) which would link EDF to similar organisations from the global north with comparable challenges;
* Monitoring of international trade agreements between the EU and the global south;
* Engage in new partnerships with international global actors such as companies, multilaterals, foundations, and more;
* Advocating for public procurement in international cooperation to be disability-inclusive in coordination with existing DPO-led global initiatives where they exist.

Resources

**Human resources**

Currently, EDF has few human resources dedicated to international cooperation which limit the scope of our actions. We have a project coordinator focusing on international cooperation through the “Inclusion in European’s Union Development Cooperation” project (namely the SDGs project) as well as the Director of EDF (5-10% of full time). Thanks to other project funding, we have had also in the past short-term project assistants and consultants.

Members of the Executive Committee engage significantly in external representation in this field, while two additional Board members are the focal points due to their areas of expertise (Thorkild Olesen for the SDGs, and Giampiero Griffo for Humanitarian Act and Disaster Risk Reduction).

To achieve the basic objectives of this strategy, it will be essential to build up the team, so that we can ensure a robust influencing of the EU, and our other planned activities.

**Financial resources**

Financial resources dedicated to international cooperation are mainly coming from outside our core funding:

* Staff time (presently 1 full time project coordinator)
* Travel and meeting costs for representation and collaboration
* Occasional consultant costs to assist with reports

Primarily EDF staff time comes from our SDG project. Our main donor for the SDGs project is a foundation (it will be ending, and ideally renewed in September 2019) as well as smaller additional funds received through projects with IDA and Sightsavers. We will also start a new project in April 2019 with Leonard Cheshire which will also contribute to the resources we have available .

It will be necessary to build additional financial resources to implement the current strategy.

**Technical and Learning resources**

This is another area where we need to strongly build our capacity in the coming years. Currently, EDF has developed:

* A human rights report entitled: “[The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs: A European perspective to respect, protect and fulfil the CRPD](http://www.edf-feph.org/sites/default/files/edf_-_sdgs_human_rights_report_final_accessible_0.pdf)” (2018)
* A series of webinars on regional advocacy
* A report on regional advocacy and the SDGs (2019 – to come)

The first priorities for technical and learning resources are planned for 2019 with a guidance document on the role of DPOs in international cooperation. A guidance for DPOs on engaging with EU delegations is planned for 2020.

**Organisational capacity**

In order to expand our work in this field, EDF will need to develop our own organisational capacity. This will be a priority in 2019/2020. Gaps which we need to fulfil now are:

* EDF Safeguarding Policy (this is an essential component in some projects to ensure EDF’s representatives pose no risk to children or adults)
* A more detailed system for allocating project costs and financial monitoring of project expenses
* Security Policy – as EDF representatives travel to meetings outside Europe a clear security policy should be put in place

Partnership

* EDF is a member of IDA. We engage with IDA in all international and global advocacy.
* EDF is actively involved in the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for activities on the SDGs.
* EDF aims to work closely, and cooperate as much as possible with our sister regional DPOs across the world, namely:
	+ African Disability Forum,
	+ [Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities](http://www.aodp-lb.net/) - AODP,
	+ [ASEAN Disability Forum](http://aseandisabilityforum.org/digaleri/),
	+ [Pacific Disability Forum](http://www.pacificdisability.org/)
	+ and [Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families - RIADIS](http://www.riadis.org/)).
* In our advocacy towards the EU, we collaborate with the International Disability and Development Consortium.

EDF cooperates within international development projects, primarily with our members, and our international partners. Currently, we partner in [four other international cooperation projects](http://www.edf-feph.org/current-projects), with the following organisations:

* IDA ([The catalyst program](http://edf-feph.org/catalyst-program))
* Spanish International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), three EU Member States’ development agencies: Austria (ADA), Italy (IADC) and Spain (AECID), as well as IDDC ([Bridging the Gap II – Inclusive Policies and Services for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities](http://www.edf-feph.org/bridging-gap-ii-inclusive-policies-and-services-equal-rights-persons-disabilities))
* Sightsavers ([Building Partnerships for The Sustainable Development Goals: Empowering Organisations Of Persons With Disabilities - India)](http://www.edf-feph.org/building-partnerships-sustainable-development-goals-empowering-organisations-persons-disabilities)
* Leonard Cheshire (UK Aid Connect on Employment)

Influencing the EU’s external human rights, development and humanitarian policies are a range of networks which need to be further explored to see how to develop synergies or develop formal linkages. These include:

* [CONCORD](https://concordeurope.org/)- The European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs
* [VOICE](https://ngovoice.org/about-us)- Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
* [Human Rights and Democracy Network](https://hrdn.eu/)- as the main civil society interlocuters for the External Action Service on Human rights issues.

Projects

EDF engages in projects in a range of fields. In the field of international cooperation, we will engage in projects which will assist us in achieving the objectives outlined in the strategy or support our close partners and members in their work to promote the CRPD globally. Projects must be financially viable, with EDF costs fully reimbursed. Projects may also serve the purpose of generating new knowledge and innovation or developing expanding important partnerships.

A full list of EDF projects in this field can be found here: <http://www.edf-feph.org/current-projects>.

Measuring results

Each year, EDF will produce a short implementation plan and a short report on the current strategy, outlining achievements in the different fields.

We will also closely monitor resources invested. We will also commission an external evaluation of this work in 2020 to review progress. These reports and evaluations will be shared with our members, partners and donors.

# Annex 1: Objective four of EDF Strategic Framework 2017-2021

The objective four of [EDF Strategic Framework 2017-2021](http://www.edf-feph.org/edf-strategic-framework-2017-2021) focuses on international cooperation: “Ensure that EDF uses it leverage to promote inclusive rights based international cooperation, influencing the EUs external policies and programmes as well as finding opportunities to collaborate with and support the Disability Movement globally”. In this four-year period, EDF will focus on:

* Ensuring that the EU and its Member States incorporate the rights of persons with disabilities in their approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and International Cooperation including the engagement of organisations of persons with disabilities at all levels;
* Engaging in the Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) regional mechanism on Sustainable Development to ensure persons with disabilities are systematically included for strong SDGs in Europe, in the UN ECE region[[1]](https://euc-word-edit.officeapps.live.com/we/wordeditorframe.aspx?ui=en&rs=en%2DUS&WOPISrc=https%3A%2F%2Fedfeph%2Dmy%2Esharepoint%2Ecom%2Fpersonal%2Fcatherine%5Fnaughton%5Fedf%2Dfeph%5Forg%2F%5Fvti%5Fbin%2Fwopi%2Eashx%2Ffiles%2Fb4e1c5d3586a4973bafacff9001e739e&wdEnableRoaming=1&mscc=1&wdODB=1&hid=b129ad9e-709a-7000-9a65-08646e3daace&wdOrigin=DocLib&wdHostClickTime=1545121712253&jsApi=1&NewSession=1&corrid=09154082-59ed-47aa-98cd-1b4119775722&usid=09154082-59ed-47aa-98cd-1b4119775722&instantedit=1&wopicomplete=1&wdRedirectionReason=Unified_SingleFlushFallback#_ftn1)and worldwide;
* Cooperating with the regional DPO networks of Africa, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Pacific, Latin American and Arab regions to strengthen their work and promote the CRPD and the SDGs both at the regional and international levels

Annex 2: Recommendations from the CRPD committee to the EU on Article 32

International cooperation (art. 32) 74. The Committee notes with concern the lack of a systematic and institutionalized approach to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities across all European Union international cooperation policies and programmes. The Committee also notes the lack of CRPD/C/EU/CO/1 10 coordination and coherence among European Union institutions and the lack of disability focal points. It is also concerned that European Union international development funding is used to create or renovate institutional settings for the placement of persons with disabilities, segregated special education schools and sheltered workshops, contrary to the principles and provisions of the Convention. 75. The Committee recommends that the European Union adopt a harmonized policy on disability-inclusive development and establish a systematic approach to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in all European Union international cooperation policies and programmes, appoint disability focal points in related institutions and take the lead in the implementation of disability-inclusive Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee also recommends that the European Union identify and put in place mechanisms to disaggregate data on disability in order to monitor the rights of persons with disabilities in European Union development programmes. It further recommends that the European Union interrupt any international development funding that is being used to perpetuate the segregation of persons with disabilities and re-allocate such funding towards projects and initiatives that aim at compliance with the Convention.

* Contributing to the work of IDA to promote the CRPD within the UN system and supporting IDA in its efforts to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are effectively promoted through the entire UN treaty body system;
* Taking advantage of opportunities to promote disability inclusive disaster risk reduction through the Sendai Framework for action and the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disability in Humanitarian Action.

There have been some relevant changes in context. There is some increasing attention to funding of disability inclusive development (notably through DFID) but a lack of recognition of the role DPOs can play in International Cooperation. In fact, some State Parties in Europe have increased or sustained attention to disability inclusive development while minimising social rights of persons with disabilities domestically. This calls for EDF to develop guidance/training/standards for DPOs involvement in international cooperation, and indeed to ensure international cooperation fully promotes the CRPD.

Another change in context is the increasing number of members with expertise in external actions joining EDF or inviting us to participate meaningfully in projects to enhance DPO involvement. This calls for us to make our role in projects more strategic so our project actions have sustainable added value.

The EU’s role in the world is also evolving, with new political, financing and trade initiatives which could bring benefits to persons with disabilities in the EU and globally, if we closely monitor and influence them.