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# EDF Citi Foundation Ascend Three Pillars: Phase 1

## 1. Building Capacity on Communications

In recent years, and more so since COVID-19, people reply on finding information on their rights and opportunities online. Organisations, like members of the European Disability Forum (EDF), need to have robust, easy to use, accessible, internal communication platforms, in which to share information with their members. The websites of the member associations, their online documentation platforms and their means of information (via newsletter in particular) and communication are not sufficiently developed and workable by volunteers (salaried positions experienced in communication are either non-existent or rare).

The main objective of this part of the project is to help our members assess their internal communication systems and plan for improvements so that they can better communicate with their members, and with persons with disabilities in their country, on a permanent or sustainable basis.

## 2. Capacity building in EU and international policies and programmes

For most member associations in the CEE access to information on EU and international programmes and policies on disability rights is a crucial point for their growth and development.

Several barriers exist:

* The **lack of resources in the national languages** is a first barrier. Within national organisations, there are very few people in a position to do an adequate translation of the tools developed by EDF. The command of terminology in both languages (English and native) is not acquired by many people and English-speaking managers are often already caught up in many solicitations. This means important tools and resources are not made available to persons with disabilities in the general population in their country.

* **Lack of knowledge** of members on key issues which would assist them in their work. Skills gaps, and areas where training would be beneficial include the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), EU funding programmes, EU exchange programmes.

## 3. Capacity building in the field of youth leadership and opportunities

Access to education, vocational training and employment are all the more of a concern for youth with disabilities, including young women with disabilities, who face multiple barriers: physical and financial barriers to access jobs and universities. Quality, inclusive vocational training opportunities are rare. These elements are potentially overcome by existing EU funding and programmes but DPOs and youth with disabilities need to be strengthened in their abilities to access funding and supportive opportunities. Activities leading to increase support to youth employability could also be a great benefit for this invisibilised and excluded population.

This set of activities constitutes a **horizontal module of activities** within the programme. It should be dedicated to all CEE associated members to increase opportunities for youth with disabilities. During this first year of funding, the main aim would be to produce an overview of the priorities of youth with disabilities, including young women with disabilities, people with disabilities from different ethnic backgrounds, within the region and to strengthen the involvement of youth within the disability movement.