



Bridging the Gap

Final Report – Narrative Section

Burkina Faso

October 2021



List of Acronyms

AICS	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
BtG II	Bridging the Gap II
CCI/Handicap	Coordination network of International NGOs engaged in disability in BF
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities
COMUD/H	National Intersectoral Council for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disability
FEBAH	Federation of Burkina Faso of Association of Persons with Disability
FIIAPP	International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Politics
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
MFSNFAH	Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Aid
MINEFID	Ministry of Economy, Finance and Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGOS	Non-Governmental Organisations
OPDS	Organization of Persons with disabilities
PNDES	National Plan for Economic and Social Development
ReNOH	National Network of Persons living with disability
SN 3PH	National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Person with disabilities
PAO	Operational Action Plan (of the SN 3PH)
UNAFEHB	National Organization of Women with Disability of Burkina Faso
UNICEF	United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund



Executive summary

Bridging the Gap II achieved its objectives despite the difficulties it has faced in its 4 years of implementation.

An overall review of the implementation strategy has been requested in order to respond to the deterioration of the security situation in the country and, later, due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Since the ratification of the CRPD, in 2009, Burkina Faso has included disability in its political agenda through the issuing of Law no. 12/2010 and Decrees no. 824/2021 and no. 828/2021 on the rights of persons with disabilities. At the beginning of the Project, the country had already drawn up a draft of the National Strategy on Social Protection (SN3PH), which for different reasons has not become effective. In 2017 BtG-II has launched the review of the SN3PH, in partnership with all the actors engaged in disabilities issues in the country, including the Ministry of Women, Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Affairs, and the Ministry of Health. In parallel, the Project took charge of the elaboration process of the POA, required for the effective implementation of the Strategy. Both documents were finally adopted in July 2021. The Strategy and the POA represent the starting point for the inclusion of disability in the future political agenda (2021-2023).

At the same, the Ministry of Health has received the support of the Project in the elaboration of the Guidelines for the Classification (*Referentiel*). The document provides information about the issuing of the Medical Certificate, necessary for the obtention of the Disability Card, as indicated in Law no. 12/2010 and Decree no. 828/2021. So far, only a limited amount of people has managed to gain access to the Disability Card; the *Referentiel* will undoubtedly facilitate people's access to the benefits offered. In this context, it's important to emphasize that the purpose of the Disability Card, isn't just about giving information on owner's disability, but it represent the gateway to the social security services. The introduction of the DC is clearly an encouraging sign that the more recent policies of Burkina Faso are in line with the HRBA of the CRPD.

In 2019 three subgrants were awarded to 3 OPDs: FEBAH, UNAFEHB and CNAPH. The grants were an opportunity not only to increase their administrative and accounting skills, but also to better understand the context in which these organisations are working. Through the three OPDs, the Project carried out many awareness activities related to access to health and special needs of girls and women with disabilities.

Since the beginning of BtG-II, AICS is promoting the mainstreaming of disability in its new programs. That approach is also demonstrated by the publication in 2018 of the "Guidelines for mainstreaming disability and social inclusion in aid projects", which would represent its commitment in these subjects. At present the Agency is implementing "Disability and Social Inclusion", a program completely dedicated to disability and implemented by the MFSNFAH;



additionally 5 other programs including disability: *JEM 2* which aim is to promote young entrepreneurship, *Cultivate the inclusion* and *Renaissance* to support vulnerable groups and *MPME TEELGO* focused on small and medium-sized enterprises.





This project is funded
by the European Union



Project results – Check against indicators (see attachements)

Description of the project activities carried out

Project Bridging the Gap II officially kicked off on April 3rd, 2017. The Country Coordinator took office in July 2017 and the local staff in September 2017. The first year Project was mostly dedicated to the Inception Phase, which included the drafting of the Country Action Plan focused on universal access to health, that was identified as primary sector of intervention in Burkina Faso. In this initial phase the steps taken to establish a partnership with the Ministry of Women, Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action and the Ministry of Health were crucial to carry out the planned activities in the following years.

The Department of non Transmissible Diseases was indicated as main contact partner by the Ministry of Health, while the National Multisectoral Council for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disability (SP/COMUD/Handicap) would be the main leader of the Project, as communicated on 14th June 2017 by the MFNSF. The Technical Agreement between FIIAP and SP/COMUD/Handicap was signed on 16th January 2018.

During the first year have been realised two visits, the first one of Ms Mina Lomuscio, Head of AICS disability desk, from 25th June 2017 to 1st July 2017 and the second one of Mr. Federico Martire, Bridging the Gap Director, at the end of August 2017.

Almost all the activities were carried out during the second, third and fourth year of the Project, as follows:

Outcome 1 International Development Actors are aware of CRDP and increase mainstreaming of disability in development programs as per CRDP Art. 3

Organization of Session on CRDP at the donor's coordination tables and participation to the social protection coordination table

At the beginning of the initiative the BtG Country Coordinator has been attending the coordination table on Labour, Employment and Social Protection but, in the third-year Project, due to the deterioration of the security situation in the Country, the attention of the group was driven to displaced persons and food security. Notwithstanding this, BtG attended all over the four years of implementation, the Gender Working Group, that was involved with the Ministry of Women and Solidarity and Family and represented a venue where to promote disability mainstreaming.

Promotion of Law 012 and mainstreaming of CRDP in Italian Cooperation development initiatives

The longstanding AICS commitment to inclusion of persons with disability is represented by the new “Guidelines¹ for mainstreaming disability and social inclusion in aid projects” issued in 2018 by the AICS head office. Moreover, inclusion was insured in different project stages: identification, formulation and implementation. Mainstreaming of development initiatives in the four years of the Project implementation was mainly focused on AICS interventions. Collaboration was actively pursued with the INGO CBM which implements an AICS funded





project for persons in condition of vulnerability, and contacts were made with CVCS an Italian NGO granted funding from AICS for the Project “Renaissance” on mental health. The Italian Agency is still pursuing the implementation by the Burkina Faso Government of a Project for the inclusion of persons with disability in the Centre East Region. Moreover, mainstreaming of inclusion of persons with disability, in addition to previous actions, was also ensured in CNATAC – Support to a Centre for rural artisans working in cotton transformation, in JEM/IOM Project, in SENO Project – Inclusion and Socio-Economic Stabilization of Youth and Women in the Province of Seno and in a newer program with the local organization AFP-PM.

Awareness campaigns/Webinars

Since the first year of Project AICS office was highly engaged in the promotion of the webinars. The information of the seminar has been disseminated among 100 contacts belonging to AICS, DEU, donors, members of Gender Working Group, Labor Employment Social protection coordination table, Italian NGOs, local DPOs federation and NGOs and government office. Webinars’ themes broadcasted in 2018 -2019 were:

- Introduction to CRPD ;
- SDGs and its references to disability ;
- Disability and inclusive development ;
- Project Cycle Management (inclusive and accessible) ;
- Accessible and inclusive communication ;
- Legislation and rights of persons with disability ;
- Inclusive education ;
- Universal access to work ;
- Universal access to health-care ;
- Advocacy to programs at local level,
- Women and disability ;
- Livelihoods.

Despite manifestation of interest, local conditions such as power cuts and poor internet coverage outside urban center, prevented from reaching all persons contacted as originally expected. It’s important to point out that the majority governmental office, including Project main partner COMUD/Handicap, even if dispose of the connecting infrastructure, do not have funds to cover the costs of connection and the price for an individual connection in the country is rather expensive.

However, the initiative was very interesting and innovative and became a good practice that have been replied during the outbreak of Covid-19. The translation of all material related to disability in French guaranteed the accessibility of documentation.

Other activities

- In June 2018 the Project took part in the first National Forum for the Rights of Persons with Disability organized by the Burkina Faso government and headed by the President H.E.M. Kabore and by the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity and



Family, Ms Ilboudo Marchal. Every region in the country selected a representation of person with disability and presented the main challenges faced.

- On 21st November 2019 took place in Ouagadougou a learning space on the subject access to health and disability, organized by AICS in partnership with FIIAP, as part of Project's KMLS. The event was attended by 50 participants, including the Project Director, representatives from World Bank, IOM, Gender Coordination Group, GIZ, Italian and International NGOs, local institutions and OPDs. The meeting was also attended by a representative of the Ministry of Health and a senior trainer of the international network MDH-PPH.

Outcome 2A Implementation of CRDP is boosted by: (i) the alignment of the National Strategy for the protection and promotion of the persons with disability with the SDGs and the national economic and social development program (PNDES), (ii) its approval and (iii) its implementation by government institutions

Drafting and editing of new National Strategy for Protection and Promotion of Persons with disabilities to align it with Sustainable Development Goals and PNDES and its approval.

The elaboration and approval of the National Strategy for Protection and Promotion of Persons with disabilities (SN3PH) and its Operational Plan of Action (PAO) represents one of the main successes achieved by the Project and should be interpreted as a clear political will to include mainstreaming of disability in the political agenda for the coming years. The elaboration process started in May 2018 with the reviewing of the National Strategy for Protection and Promotion of Persons with disabilities. The consulting company CTAO, hired in April 2019, has assisted the technical committee nominated by the MFNSF and the OPDs, in the revision of the document. This process has taken more time than the Project expected, due to external factors such as changes occurred at institutional level and to the implementation of the National Consensus and the first meeting of all parties engaged in the revision took place only in October 2019, followed by a second on 31st December. Finally, the SN3PH (2021-2025), was technically approved on 27th February 2020 by a large representation of experts from local ministries and participants from OPDs.

As requested by the MFNSFAH, the Strategy should be accompanied by an Operational Plan of Action (PAO) to become operational. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, only in July 2020 was possible to proceed with the selection of a technical assistance to assist the COMUD/H in the PAO elaboration process. The consultant facilitated the adoption of the methodology has been followed for the drafting which should be based on the instruction/guidelines provided by the law 034/2018 that regulates national processes for the formulation of strategies and plan of actions. In such a way the harmonization of local policies, strategies, plans of actions, etc. produced in the country was promoted.

The POA-related activities that took place during the third and fourth year of the Project were the following:

- a) Meeting for the establishing of the Drafting Committee (August 21st 2020);
- b) A one-day Workshop for the appropriation of the methodology by the representatives of institutions and DPOs took place on 31st of August 2020;

c) From 22nd to 26th of September 2020, a 5-day workshop for the elaboration of a draft document was organized by the COMUD/H, at the presence of two Minister's advisors, at the House of Women in Ouagadougou;

d) On 5th December 2020 a last meeting was realized and the focus was on indicators and financial matters.

The POA reflect all the initiatives which are foreseen to take place in the incoming three years (2021-2023), related to mainstreaming of disability of specifically targeted to PDs, already programmed or in phase of programming. The POA is also aligned to the Government's National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) which is harmonized with the Agenda 2030.

On 29th December 2020, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ouagadougou, in occasion of the annual meeting of COMUD/H, took place the Consensus Workshop on the adoption of the National Strategy 2021-2025 and the PAO 2021-2023. Representatives of COMUD/H, religious authorities, social society, international and local NGOs, CCI-H members and AICS took part at the workshop. Both documents were approved with reserve, waiting for the National Commission on Development Policies (CNPDP) advice, which began on April 2021. The SN3PH was definitively approved by the *arrêté conjointe* n. 2021/0047 issued by the MFSNFAH/MINEFID on 1st September 2021.

Organization of an information campaign through the printing of 500 copies, the braille version, the CD version with sign language of the new strategy

The SN3PH drafting process has gone on much longer than the Project anticipated.

Despite the document was approved in April 2021, the National Strategy 2021-2025 was endorsed by the MFSNFAH at the beginning of September only.

Since the Project has been closed on 2nd August 2021 AICS was enabled to carry out the activity.

Editing of simplified version of new strategy

Please refer to the above activity.

Training of Focal points and organization of follow up meeting

A 3-days training took place from 11th to 14th July and was replicated a second time with a different group from 15th to 18th July 2018 for (a total of) 76 members of the COMUD/Handicap on CRPD and SGDs. The training was carried out by Italian Experts on disability, Mr Michele Falavigna, representative from Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau (AIFO) and Mr Giampiero Griffo, President of Disabled People's International Italia Onlus (DPI). The participants included all country regional governors and regionals authorities, regional and national representation of organizations of persons with disability. The meeting gave the opportunity to promote the CRPD and the mainstreaming of its principals, it was also the occasion to inform the participants about the new AICS guidelines on Disability.

Elaboration of guideline for CRDP Monitoring



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A first workshop on CRDP monitoring took place from 22nd to 26th March 2021 at Women House in Ouagadougou, at the presence of 45 participants belonging to the Directorates of planning and statistics and different Ministries engaged in disability matters. The workshop has been the occasion to promote the adoption of 96 indications, which will serve as starting point to monitor the application of the UNCDPD in public policies and report to the OHCHR located in Geneva. Victoria Lee, human rights and disability adviser at OHCHR, attended the meeting in order to provide recommendations on the indicators' development. Since the activity has not been finalized a second workshop was carried out at COMUD/Handicap Office in Ouagadougou from 12th to 19 July 2021, with a participation of a restricted group of 16 persons. Considering the high number of proposed indicators, for the monitoring of the CRDP, the group held a total of 124, of which 112 directly related to a specific sector that will be adopted by the different institutions in charge of, and 12 cross-sections. The sectors that were taken into account are: education, health, employment, environment and agriculture, culture, sport and hobbies, communications, infrastructures, habitat and transportation, WASH, participation in social life and politics, justice, social action and animals and fisheries resources. Regarding the National Strategy for Protection and Promotion of Persons with disabilities 63 indicators (for outputs and outcomes) and 2 impact indicators on "access of people with disabilities to social services and social and legal protection" and "economic empowerment of people with disabilities" were adopted.

Exchange of experience between Burkina Faso CRDP actors and Italian CRDP Observatory

An exchange meeting was realized in July 2018 between Burkinabe DPOs and Italian Experts from AIFO and DPI. The meeting was attended by representative of two Burkina Faso Federations and main local organizations. During the meeting the organizations expressed their difficulties of working in a low-income country where the persons with disability do not benefit of non-contributory pensions or fix indemnities.

Outcome 2B Health sector policies are increasingly inclusive, quality service is provided, synergy of health services with other service provider is in place and accessibility to the rights provided by national Law 012 for persons with disabilities is granted thanks to a new protocol for the disability card

Training of official Leaders at Ministry of Health Departments and focal points ensure smooth coordination

Training sessions on the CRPD were organized from 7-9 May and 24-26 of July 2019 and were attended by a total of 30 high-level staff of the Ministry of Health. The trainings increased the knowledge of the rights of persons with disabilities in accessing health services, although greater efforts and support are necessary to have it fully considered in the Ministry's activities. Attendance of MoH staff revealed to be not as expected due to several external factors such as labor strikes, existing workload and number of engagements. To respond to their needs two rounds of the same workshop were organized. The Project Director attended the workshop which took place during his July mission.



Bi-annual coordination meetings with focal points

NOT REALIZED

Introductory workshop on the International Classification of Disease and Functionality (ICF)

On 22nd and 23rd of November 2019 a two days' workshop on the Classification of Disability were attended by around 30 participants, experts of Ministry of Health, COMUD/H, MFNSFAH and OPHs. Two international technical experts shared the experience of Senegal and the MDH-PPH an approach that operates within a framework originally close to that of ICF but which later evolved and has a major emphasis on environmental factors, the persons capabilities, living style and aspirations of the person itself. Senegal experience on the other hand presents a mix model where both ICF and MDH-PPH tools are applied.

Development of a certification system on disability/situation analysis and Establishment of a working group for the production of a simplified protocol for classification of disability

The development of the Guidelines for the Classification (Referentiel) should be considered as a major result attended by the Project. The elaboration process started on 4th of March 2020, during a one-day atelier that was attended by 29 participants.

The group reviewed the main obstacles linked to the issuing of the Invalidity Card and the specifics of the Medical Certificate which were identified mainly as the lack of specialists and their concentration in the two mains urban centers. The Medical Certificate is a preliminary document that should be submitted to require the issuing of the Invalidity Card. The participants agree that the Guidelines for the production of the medical certificate should be produced by a local expert under the guidance of a technical committee. As a result, a consulting cabinet (ASY) was contracted in August 2020 for the production of the aforementioned Guidelines (Referentiel). The Ministry of Health established a technical group to be associated to the Consultant. Some delays were registered due to the dense agenda of the Ministry of Health and a first meeting of the technical group was held only on September 21st when the methodology was presented to and endorsed by the technical committee. The Guidelines (Referentiel) was endorsed by the Technical Committee in December 2020 and by the Ministry of Health on 16th March 2021.

On 27th and 28th June 2021 an advocacy workshop for better access to health-care for persons with disability took place in Ouagadougou. At the meeting, organized by the Department of no Transmissible Diseases, attended 69 regional health directors from all over the country. The meeting represents an opportunity to review the Burkinabe's laws on disability and to present the Guidelines (Referentiel). Participants agreed with difficulties related the issuing of the Invalidity Card such as i) lack of identity documents, ii) lack of knowledge of the laws on disability and Guidelines by the health actors iii) lack of specialists iv) prices of specialist examinations often too high) communication and physical barriers.

Some strategies were defined in order to overcome these obstacles and guarantee the access to health service for persons with disabilities.

An awareness campaign was broadcasted in July 2021 on radio and television on the issuing of the Invalidity Card (see chapter visibility and communication for more details).

Annual Conference set for policy dialogue between state actors & OPDs civil society in the health sector

NOT REALIZED

Piloting of CRDP indicators in the health sector is carried out

Please see the activity *Elaboration of guideline for CRDP Monitoring*

Outcome 3 Organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), their umbrella organizations and local NGOs are trained and strengthened in their advocacy capacity, actively promote information on equal access to universal health, actively participate in action research and decision - making processes, and are trained in project management capacities participate in projects funded by BtG -II

Training sessions for Enhanced advocacy skills on the CRDP, SDG and increased membership in decision making bodies of OPDs and their umbrella bodies

A training on advocacy, lobbying and fundraising was carried out from 17 to 21 December and was attended by representatives of the main Federations, national organization and their members.

Organization of a workshop with the Italian and Burkinabé OPDs on the mobilization of resources and the lobbying regarding representation in decision-making bodies

NOT REALIZED

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 in Burkina Faso many restrictions were adopted in order to decrease the risk of virus spread. In this scenario BtG-II in person-activities were put on hold from March 2020 until spring 2021. The Project, having regard to the problems linked to the internet connection (high cost, unstable and slow internet connection) schedule the activity for the first available date during the last quarter of implementation. In June 2021 AICS resumed contacts with CCI/Handicap in order to implement the activity.

Unfortunately, due to a packed agendas of CCI/H member no dates has been identified and the activity was cancelled.

Organization of training sessions for OPDs on project management

The training was realized from 10 to 15 December 2018 and it was attended by 30 DPOs members. The training aimed to build the capacities of the local DPOs that are mostly composed by volunteer staff, with limited capacities on project formulation and management.

Training of OPDs on participatory action research and coaching

Organisation of emancipatory research to promote the self-representation of persons with disability and is based on accountability, social model of disability, objectivity, and experiential. The activity will involve members of the five umbrella organisations associated to the project and is expected to be implemented in collaboration with AIFO and CBM Italian chapter. AIFO is an Italian NGO/DPO which is at the forefront of the implementation of Emancipatory Research in Developing Countries. Terms of Reference have been finalized. The activity was put on hold because of COVID19.

OPDs were represented in all Project events and actively participated in and contributed to them.

Organization of a call proposals for women cooperatives/ mothers of children with disability, young graduates with disability and follow up

The Project envisaged the provision of grants to OPDs, with the aim of building capacities which these organization struggle to acquire despite numerous capacity building events. The three grants for a value of 20.000 Euro each represented the opportunity for OPDs to gain further operational experience and confidence which hopefully will provide access to funding.

The Project structured the beneficiaries' organizations selection in several stages. An information session for the launching of grant procedure was held on the 30th July 2019 at COMUD/H and was attended by representatives of FEBAH, UNAFEHB, CNAPH and AEEBH. A restricted call for proposal was opened shortly thereafter. Its three lots concerning: a) promotion of CRPD and local legislation at local level b) promotion of access to health for women and with disability c) evaluation of accessibility to health facilities for persons with disability in Ouagadougou. The evaluation committee approved three concept papers and invited the OPDs to submit their final proposals by the end of November 2019. Taking into account the difficulties in proposals elaboration and to ensure an efficient and proportionate reporting, the Project required the assistance of a consultant who should have accompanied the organization from the first stage until the end of the Project's implementation.

Finally, the three organizations qualified for the grant were FEBAH (Historical organization with national coverage), UNAFEHB (National Union of Associations of women with disability) and CNAPH (Coalition of National Association of PH). Contracts were signed at the end of December 2019 and funds released early February.

Due to the pandemic the implementation of the activities took off with important delays, and the initial phase of the grant projects was dedicated to building internal capacity of the OPDs and to the procurement of office items.

So far, the most performing organization has proved to be UNAFEHB, that implemented the project "Social protection: right to health care for girls and women with disabilities in Ouagadougou and surrounding areas". The main objective was to develop information and technical assistance services in order to increase the integration of the specific need of girls

and women in the development programs. Despite the delays accumulated during the early stages of pandemic, the organization carried out the 100% of planned activities and finalized the project on 15.04.2021 (the grant has been extended for 7 months and half). The activities that have been realized are:

- Elaboration and dissemination of 300 booklet on 5 national laws on disability; elaboration and distribution at health centres of 200 poster about the health right; 5 television broadcasting.
- a training for 77 law faculty students on the importance of inclusion of women with disability.
- advocacy meetings with the associates on menstrual health and hygiene; training to 100 girls and women (belonging to 15 member associations) on menstrual health and hygiene and contraceptive methods.
- a training for their members on rights of access to health for persons with disabilities.
- elaboration and dissemination of a booklet regarding the special need of girls and women with disabilities.
- Training for 22 public institutions and local ONGs concerning the special need of girls and women with disabilities.
- purchase and distribution of 150 kits to response to the Covid-19.
- Training of 30 families living with a girls or woman with mental disability in Ouagadougou.

FEBAH project “Concrete actions to promote the accessibility of disabled people to institutions and main health services in the city of Ouagadougou (Ministries, Hospitals, health centres, access ramps, accessible toilets, adapted transport, accessible desks and trained people) and existing barriers” carried out the 90% of activities, which ended on 15.04.2021 (the grant has been extended for 7 months and half). The main activity was the realisation of a disability audit on health facilities in Ouagadougou, the document was very appreciated by the Ministry of Health. In addition, FEBAH organized several advocacy workshops for 10 local institution and 33 health centres and 43 awareness sessions with reception staff and managers of health institutions and training.

The CNAPH project “Promotion of inclusive development in the Center region based on the application of article 4 of the CRPD, sections I (articles 4,6,7 and 8) and II (articles 9 a15) of the law 012-2010 and decree N ° 2012_828”, as the other organizations, required an extension until 15.04.2021. CNAPH was revealed to be the most fragile OPD, being the newest organization. Despite it the 80% of planned activities were carried out, such as:

- Training for 18 mayors, 18 responsible of education, 18 health centres chiefs and member of OPDs on special needs of persons with disabilities.
- Elaboration and dissemination of 150 educational guidance documents, including 42 translated into Braille, of 200 posters about existing barriers (for people with disabilities) and 300 posters on the application of the 4 articles of the CRDP.
- Elaboration and dissemination of 12 posters on Covid-19 and purchase of health kits.



Organization of a workshop with the Italian OPDs and Burkinabé on monitoring the implementation of the CRDP and law 012

NOT REALIZED

Please refer to the activity "Organization of a workshop with the Italian and Burkinabé OPDs on the mobilization of resources and the lobbying regarding representation in decision-making bodies"

Covid-19 pandemic

After the outbreak of COVID-19, several measures were put in place to prevent the spread of the disease, including the closure of Burkina Faso's borders on 21 March 2020. As a consequence, some activities were delayed and amendments were required, in order to ensure that all preventive measures were taken during the activity's implementation.

The 3 OPDs projects were put on hold due to the impossibility to carry out the planned activities and their actions were focused on the drawing up of an awareness campaign related to Covid-19 prevention only. Part of their budget was therefore allocated for the production of informative materials, which was distributed to OPDs members and health centers. UNAFEHB in particular, distributed kits against COVID-19 to girls and women, together with awareness activities directed to their families, in order to ensure that their rights and health are taken care of during the pandemic.

According to the government's measures, all face-to-face should be cancelled (or realized online), leading to a slowdown in the elaboration of the SN3PH, *Referentiel* and all activities in partnership with Italian OPDs and international NGOs. Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that the majority of expatriates left the Country right after the outbreak of the disease, including the Project coordinator that was absent from March 21 to July 13.



Communication and Visibility

- Production of simplified version of decrees on Disability Card (n. 824 and 828) and Law 12 in local languages (Djoula, Fulfulde, Moré and Gourmantchema) and braille versions were printed and delivered to the OPHs and COMUD/H in August 2021.
- 26 copies of CRPD in Braille are printed and delivered to the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity and Family.
- Both the full version and the easy-to-read version of the CDPH were printed in French and delivered to the OPHs and COMUD/H in August 2021. A leaflet containing essential information on CDPH and Burkina Faso's laws on disability was created and distributed during all the workshops carried out in July and August 2021, as well as during the closing event. The remaining material was delivered to the OPHs and COMUD/H.
- 8 short stories on the CRPD and the inclusion of persons with disability were produced and broadcasted by 6 local radios. The stories were produced by the Gambidi Cultural Space – a well-known centre for its engagement with the promotion of social issues, reviewed by COMUD/Handicap and the OPDs involved in the Project, and translated in 4 local languages: gourmantchema, djoula, moorè e fulfulde. The stories touched topics such as the CRPD, the Disability Card, Law 12/2010, education, access to healthcare, and the realization of the aspirations of persons with disability. In order to maximise reach and dissemination, the 8 stories were broadcasted by Radio Gambidi and Radio Savene (Ouagadougou), Radio Le Pays Wend-Panga (North Region), RTB Bobo (Haut Bassin Region), Radio Savane, Radio Tin Tua Fada (East Region). An estimated 400.000 person were reached through the radio awareness campaign.
- Production of 3 videos in sign language. In July 2021, SEM FILMS, a local enterprise engaged in the promotion of human rights, was contracted to produce 3 videos on the CRPD (principles, with a focus on the articles on health, education, humanitarian action, women rights and minors), on the issuing process of the Invalidity Card and on strategies to prevent the transmission of Covid-19. Two well-known local translators in sign language were contracted to act in the videos. All videos were published on AICS's YouTube channel and broadcasted, during the week of 23-29 July, on 4 television channels: Canal 3, Savane TV, BF 1 and RTB. The videos, which consisted of monologues and dialogues entirely acted in the sign language, represented the first release of its kind on the national TV – thus serving the purpose of decoupling the use of sign language as a mere accompaniment to official speeches.
- **Launch of the Project:** The activity took place on 22 February 2018 in Ouagadougou. The Project was launched by the Secretary of State of the MWNSF, joined by the Representative of DEU, the FIIAPP Project Director and the Federation of DPOs. In the presence of about 100 participants, among them representatives of the government starting from the COMUD/H, the DPOs activists, international NGOs engaged in the domain of disability and Italian development cooperation actors. The

activity was well covered by the media, which contributed to the dissemination of information on the forthcoming project. It is worthwhile to mention that an important role was given to the Persons with Disability, which intervened in the event with their representatives while the Women Organization UNAFEHB provided support staff for the secretariat and the hostesses.

- **Closing event:** on 2 August 2021, to celebrate the closing of the Project, the exhibition *Parcours Sensoriel* was realized at the International Conference Hall in Ouaga 2000. The artistic performance consisted of 7 artistic, theatrical and audio-visual installations that aimed at reproducing real-life situations or barriers that people with disabilities have to manage in their daily life. The idea behind the Project is to encourage the inclusion and understanding of disability in society through empathy.

The 7 installations were:

Langue... signes... points...: projection of the three videos in sign language and exposition of publication in braille;

Le chemin noir: a room that invited participants in a journey in the total dark, accompanied by people with visual impairment.

Théâtre déplacé : a performance from the Theatre of the Absurd, acted on a loop during the evening;

Lumière: a second theatre performance about disability;

Restaurant H: this installation reproduced the obstacles of people living with a motor handicap (inability to use hands and arms);

La route des roues : this installation reproduced the obstacles of people living with a motor handicap.

The performance was the first of this kind in Burkina Faso and received rave reviews by all participants.

The closing event was presented by Ali "Ponré Premier Traoré", a famous Burkinabé cabaret artist who made of disability the cornerstone of his comedy, and accompanied by the music of the award-winning musical group Solo Dja Kabako. During the evening, the main actors behind the Project took the floor; the director of AICS Ouagadougou, Domenico Bruzzone, reiterated the Agency's commitment to support the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities; Melissa Razzini, Project Country Coordinator, pulled the strings of the Project, thanking all the partners for the success of "Bridging the Gap II". The Permanent Secretary of COMUD-H, Harouna Kafando, underlined the importance of the Project on behalf of the Minister of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action. Finally, the presidents of two OPDs, intervened: Issa Palenfo, president of FEBAH, and Issa Sawadogo, president of CNAPH. During their speeches, they presented the work achieved thanks to the support of the Project, expressing the desire for continued support in the future. The activity was well covered by different media outlets and encountered favourable reviews in the following days.

Difficulties encountered and measures undertaken to overcome them (and eventual project changes)

The country context, coupled with the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the turnover of personnel in public institutions remained a major challenge.

Security

Since 2017, the spread of terroristic attacks across the country has produced a volatile security environment. The situation resulted in:

- Local government having to reallocate available resources to contribute to the fight against terrorism and provide a response to the growing humanitarian needs;
- An increase in the costs and barriers of all implemented activities due to tighter security measures – thus representing a further challenges for people with disabilities;
- Restricted travel opportunities for international experts, thus resulting in some activities being carried out remotely, by local experts or cancelled.

Government staff and partnership

- In the initial phase of the Project, it was expected that the cost of participation of government's officials to the Project's activities would be covered by the government. However, due to the Project's current arrangements, no amendments could be foreseen, thus the Project had to shoulder the allowance costs foreseen by the presidential decrees, the amounts of which could impact the resources allocated for the activities. As in many other countries, compensation incentives are destined not only to government staff, but also to the community of persons with disability who struggle every day to ensure a decent life. Indeed, the social system cannot provide sufficient support to PDs and this affects the participation of DPOs, because their members, in most cases, must ensure their income.
- Complicated relationship with the Ministry of Health throughout the Project implementation, due to chronic inefficiency and severe insufficiencies in staffing. At the beginning of 2019, following the government's reshuffle, a new Minister of Health was appointed, while the position of the vice minister for Social Affairs, Persons with Disability and Persons in condition of vulnerability was taken over by the Ministry. Turnover was significant for the undertakings with the Ministry of Health, which disposes of a small team. Attracting the participation remained a challenge due the number of activities, the limited size of the staff and the existing procedures.
- A difficult relationship with the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action was also reported during the Project implementation. The new Minister was appointed in 2018, but her attention for the Project was quite limited, even though disability remained one of the main themes of her agenda.
- The framework agreement established by the Project and COMUD/H helped set the ground for a productive partnership, despite COMUD's inherent organizational and financial limits.



Efforts were exerted to promote a collaborative environment between the Project, the COMUD/H and Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action.

Staff BtG-II

The Project registered some delays due to the sick leaves of the Country Coordination. Furthermore, the absence of the coordinator for long period did not contribute to establish warm and continuative relationships with partners.

Problems in the implementation of activities were registered in the work of the Coordinator's Assistant, who failed to meet the Project's needs.



Cross-cutting topics

The Project paid specific attention to the gender dimension, ensuring that women were represented in all activities. Nevertheless, their representation remained scarce even when women associations received attention from international NGOs: the weakness and financial fragility that characterize many of them, jointly with internal dynamics, largely limited their operations. Still, the Project has always prioritized giving voice to women. Since 2017, the BtG-II has regularly attended activities of the Gender working group in Burkina Faso and has introduced there the theme of Disability. The group had a substantial interaction with governmental institutions, especially at the MWNSF. In addition, the National Organization of Women with Disability of Burkina Faso is one of the Project partners and their participation is ensured throughout all activities. BtG-II has notably provided a sub grant to UNAFEHB, which have been implementing a project to support access to basic healthcare services to women with disabilities. The project supported activities on social protection to girls and women with disabilities in the city of Ouagadougou and surroundings, facilitating girls and women's access to health services, HIV and uterine cancer testing, and the fight against violence. Training to UNAFEHB members on project planning and management, including logical framework, monitoring and evaluation, reporting have been provided by BtG-II. Moreover, due to the efforts on capacity buildings, OPDs leaded by women are taking part in relevant decision-making activities in Burkina Faso, as a key pillar for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and their specific needs..

A further element to be taken into consideration was the lack of social protection for the most vulnerable groups among the persons with disability. The lack of pensions or financial benefits, even for those with severe disability, further hampers their lives. So far, some efforts have been made to have persons with disability be included in the identification of vulnerable households and in the database that the Ministry of Women, solidarity, family and humanitarian action was building. The Project has also attended meetings organized on social protection, but persons with disability are only of the many groups in vulnerable conditions.



Sustainability and replicability of the project activities

From the start, the Project envisaged the full involvement of all institutional actors in its implementation, e.g. participation to all meetings discussing the CRPD, strategy meetings, face-to-face consultations, thus contributing to fostering the sustainability of the initiative by promoting ownership of all realized documentation, including the National Strategy of Social Protection, the POA and the *Referentiel*.

Furthermore, prior to receiving BtG-II's support, COMUD/H, the Project's main partner, stood as a young, generally weak and under-funded institution that lacked the means to develop an effective approach in the field of promotion of persons with disabilities and exercise a clear impact on the reality of intervention. Through BtG-II's technical and financial support, the Project succeeded in turning the once weak institution into a major leader in the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities.

The ongoing process of institutional strengthening linked to the sphere of PDs, as attested by the aforementioned successes, prompts observers and the Project coordinator to rosier expectations about the future inclusion of disability within public policies and societal aptitudes in the coming years.

The process of mainstreaming disability within public discourse and policy can be observed also through the growing participation of OPDs in Project activities, i.e. negotiating tables, which attests to the positive trend towards inclusion within both society and politics. Different support initiatives, such as sub-grants, capacity-building trainings to OPDs, and other activities accompanying the implementation of OPD projects, were organized in order to improve the technical skills of OPDs' members and ensuring to improve their credibility to the eyes of wider society. Thus, the Project enabled PDs not only to access the negotiation tables organized in the framework of the Project, nor the specific decision-making process in itself, but to improve in a wider perspective their societal stance, acquiring the ability to advance rights and demands vis-à-vis society in the optic of future negotiations.

The mainstreaming of disability within public discourse is undoubtedly still at an early stage in Burkina Faso. Yet, important steps ahead in the process of the promotion the rights of PDs and the inclusion thereof within legislation can be observed through the spectrum of the Project's intervention and impact during its lifespan, which fosters hopes for an upward future evolution of the social and economic inclusion of PDs in Burkina Faso.

First, the recent adoption of the SN3PH (September 2021) completes the disability-related policy framework in Burkina Faso and represents the last step of a path that started in 2009 with the ratification of the CRPD.



The SN3PH, anchored in the principles of the CRPD and oriented toward the SDG-Agenda, seeks to amplify the effects of the CRPD by granting higher legitimacy to the organizations active in the field of social protection, therefore pushing the spread and realization of further programmes on the theme of disability.

Moreover, during the Project's lifespan, AICS engaged the MFSNFAH and the MoH in a round of fruitful negotiations to explore the opportunities for collaboration opened by the increasing openness of burkinabe political institutions towards the topics of social protection of vulnerable groups, and specifically of PDs - even though a certain degree of hesitance can be ascribed to the overarching priority of security situation in the country, which is rapidly deteriorating. Nevertheless, the elaboration of the PAO will grant Financial and Technical Partners the possibility to support the government in all action slinked to social protection, in line with AICS' engagement in the field of disability mainstreaming. Finally, the Referenciel's promulgation speaks to the increasing societal attention towards the wider needs and demands of PDs beyond their medical condition, thus shifting the focus of the societal discourse from their condition in medical terms to a discourse about human rights based on the CRPD.

These elements will contribute to push forward the fight for the promotion of the right of PDs in Burkina Faso and set the grounds for a more inclusive society.



Details on transfers

Country	Item	Cost	Transferred to	Transferred on	Rationale	Supporting evidence
Burkina Faso	Wheelchair	228.67 €	COMUD/H	12/10/2021	Transfer to Institutional counterpart	Certificate of donation/Annex
Burkina Faso	1 routeur for internet connection	51.03 €	COMUD/H	12/10/2021	Transfer to Institutional counterpart	Certificate of donation/Annex
	1 HP laptop	577.78 €	COMUD/H	12/10/2021		
Burkina Faso	Software for HP laptop	228.67 €	COMUD/H	12/10/2021	Transfer to Institutional counterpart	Certificate of donation/Annex
Burkina Faso	Braille Printer Index EVEREST DV5	5,136.20 €	Ministry of Women, Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action	Not yet transferred	Transfer to Institutional counterpart	Certificate of donation/Annex
Burkina Faso	Computer peripherals	1,467.32 €	Ministry of Women, Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action	Not yet transferred	Transfer to Institutional counterpart	Certificate of donation/Annex



This project is funded
by the European Union



TOTAL		7,689.67 €				
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