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Bridging the Gap

Final Report – Narrative Section

Paraguay

August 2021



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Acronyms

AECID: Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation

CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Convention: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

CODEHUPY: Coordinator of Human Rights in Paraguay

CONADIS: National Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

DGEEC: General Directorate of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses (Current INE: National Institute of Statistics).

DIGEI: General Directorate of Inclusive Education

DGRC: General Directorate of Civil Registry.

FOAL: ONCE Foundation for Latin America

MEC: Ministry of Education and Sciences.

MSPyBS: Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare

MTESS: Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security

OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

CSO: Civil Society Organizations

PLANEDH: National Plan for Human Rights Education

PND: National Development Plan Paraguay 2030

PANDPCD: National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

RUE: Unique Student Registry of the Ministry of Education and Sciences

SAS: Secretariat of Social Action (Current MDS: Ministry of Social Development).

SENADIS: National Secretariat for the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

SENATICS: National Secretariat of Information and Communication Technologies (Current MITIC: Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies)

SIMORE: Recommendations Monitoring System

SPR: Results Planning System

STP: Technical Secretariat for Economic and Social Development Planning.

EU: European Union



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Executive Summary

The Bridging the Gap-II intervention proposal for Paraguay was formulated in 2017 and began in July 2018 under the delegated cooperation system in charge of the Technical Cooperation Office of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, AECID, in Paraguay. Its objective was to support the efforts of the Paraguayan State and civil society organizations (CSOs) to implement the Convention with the evolution of government institutions and organizations for the benefit of people with disabilities. The guidelines of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2015-2030) were used as the main point of reference.

The National Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SENADIS) and the CSOs of and for Persons with Disabilities (or Organizations of Persons with Disabilities [DPO]), both members of the National Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS), decided to support the use of significant and disaggregated data sets as a fundamental tool for the design and application of public policies (Axis 2 of the National Action Plan and Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

In this sense, the Project contributed to ensuring the inclusion of people with disabilities in the country's information systems. Public institutions were strengthened to improve data collection, so that they are relevant, accessible, reliable, quality, and disaggregated data that allow people with disabilities to be made visible and to plan public policies more easily.

Likewise, it contributed to the construction of indicators and goals of the National Action Plan that will allow the measurement of progress as part of a permanent monitoring process. Also, with the evaluation of other plans and programs, contributing to the creation of a culture of accountability in which evaluation is the basis for learning, in a continuous cycle of knowledge generation.

The use of these indicators will make it possible to provide information on the progress and challenges in relation to the State's obligations to respect, protect and enforce the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This will make the degree of realization of the rights and the impact of the implementation of their public policies visible, thus allowing the pertinent adjustments where necessary.

BtG-II Paraguay worked with the main public institutions specialized in gathering information. At the same time, in a focused way on the production of data related to





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the Right to Education, together with the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC). A pilot experience was implemented to strengthen inclusive education as a public policy, based on the improvement of the information and technology system (Axis 11. Right to Education of the National Action Plan and Article 24 of the Convention).

The development of the Project was focused on the effective participation of people with disabilities under the slogan "nothing about us without us", thus strengthening the mechanisms for participation and coordination with State Bodies. The interventions were raised from the need for equal rights and non-discrimination.

The awareness, coordination, and technical capacity of development partners to include persons with disabilities in mainstream development cooperation towards the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) in a way that is consistent with the CRPD (Convention for the Rights for People with Disabilities) was increased by new seven international cooperation projects including disability rights and cross-cutting consideration in general (including the consideration Disability People Organizations -DPO- for the report of disability rights at the Annual Human Rights Report of the CODEHUPY¹) and the Guidelines for inclusive cooperation in Paraguay is incorporated as a tool for the development in Paraguay.

The capacity of government stakeholders to develop and implement disability-inclusive sector policies and services while ensuring the participation of the organisations of persons with disabilities in the processes has been enhanced by the implementation of the Disability Rights Indicators of the National Action Plan for Rights of the Person with Disabilities and the generation of data for the decision making process made by evidence for the National Census, the Students Unify Registry, the Household Social Registry and the Integrated Health System. Additional support was provided for the strengthen of communicational tools as the Centro de Relevó (24/7 free service to facilitate the communication with deaf people), the Protocol for the Registration and Identification of Persons with Disabilities and the design and pilot implementation in SENADIS (National Secretary for the Human Rights of People with Disabilities) of a template for accessible websites of Public Services. The SENADIS was strength by key equipment and the design and implementation of missional and administrative procedures. The inclusive education core policy was support by the design and the implementation of the first Diagnostic report on the scope of the implementation of the inclusive education law. This allowed the development of an Operational Plan for the Implementation of that Law (including budgetary guidelines), Guidelines for the mainstreaming of inclusion at all

¹ National Network of Human Rights Organizations of Paraguay.



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levels and educational cycles, a self-training course for teachers, parents and administrative officials and a reform proposal of teacher training curricula. A campaign for the rights for education for people with disabilities was designed in a close collaboration with the MEC authorities and [launched on August the 2nd at the project closing event](#).

The capacity of Disability People Organizations (DPO) and Civil Society Organization working on Disability Rights (CSOD) to engage in, and influence policy development processes was enhanced by the promotion of the participation of DPO at national level, the support of the key representatives at the CONADIS (National Council for Disability) and the training in public policies lobbying, projects and basic administration tools. The participation of the design and promotion of new policies and legislation was supported (including the relation with agencies and international bodies) and the presentation of a shadow report to the CRDP and a national strategy to respond at the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Description of the project activities

Increased awareness, coordination, and technical capacity of development partners to include persons with disabilities in mainstream development cooperation towards the SDGs in a way that is consistent with the CRPD.

Seven new international cooperation projects incorporating disability rights in development cooperation and actions: COOPI-PLAN INTERNATIONAL - WHO / PAHO - EU / VAMOS and Educational Transformation – UNICEF, DRL-State Department-Saraki for the promotion of the right to work and World Bank-Paraguay AHORA for the promotion of the participation of young people in the development and implementation of public policies through three workshops for training sessions and seminars for consultation and normative review (2019-2020). The attendants of this workshops include at 46 representatives of Cooperation Agencies, Human Rights Networks and Human rights Organizations. As a result of this process, the document “[Guidelines for inclusive cooperation in Paraguay](#)”, inspired by the “[Guía para la inclusión de la discapacidad en proyectos de desarrollo](#)” (AECID, 2017) was presented in October 2020 with local and international interest, including from civil society organizations.

Enhanced capacity of government stakeholders to develop and implement disability-inclusive sector policies and services while ensuring the participation of the organisations of persons with disabilities in the processes.

The project contributes with the development Disability Rights Indicators of the National Action Plan for Rights of the Person with Disabilities and the generation of data for the decision making process made by evidence for the National Census (National Institute for Statistic), the Students Unify Registry (Ministry of Education and Science), the Household Social Registry (Ministry of Social Development) and the Integrated Health System (Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare) through one subgrant and five technical assistances between 2018 and 2020.

Additional technical assistances contributes to the generation of information and the access to services by the strengthen of the public interpretation service (Centro de Relevos) in 2018 to ensure the 24/7 free service to facilitate the communication with deaf people, the Protocol for the Registration and Identification of Persons with Disabilities (an intervention route that articulates the Civil Status Registry, the Identification Department of the National Police and the Ministry of Public Defence) and the design and pilot implementation in SENADIS of a template for accessible websites of Public Services, both in 2020.

SENADIS, as a governing body for the implementation of the National Action Plan for Rights of the Person with Disabilities and counterpart of the project in Paraguay





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was strength by key equipment which includes the administrative software to ensure transparency at the administration of services, IT equipment (including communication and ID printers to registry and identification of People with Disabilities as beneficiaries) and the design and implementation of missional and administrative procedures, including the support for the digitalization of the beneficiary files considerably reducing the care time from hours to minutes and avoiding the additional expense of patients for the provision of copies of background documents between 2018 and 2020. A proposal for an organic reform of the SENADIS to ensure a rights-oriented institution administrative law, and for the implementation of a certificate of employability were complete in 2020.

The inclusive education core policy was support by the design and the implementation of the first Diagnostic report on the scope of the implementation of the inclusive education law. This allowed the development of an Operational Plan for the Implementation of that Law (including budgetary guidelines), including basic education, high education, technical education, and universities. An additional guideline (education in hospital classrooms) was identified that was added to the process of generating materials to contribute to the implementation of the Inclusive Education Law through basic guidelines to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in initial education and basic, medium, professional and university. All the guidelines and the general course on Inclusive Education Law and the international regulations on which it is based were incorporated into the MEC (Ministry of Education and Science) educational platform and it has been operational to be used since February (return of the vacation period). The proposed Operational Plan for the Implementation of the Inclusive Education Law was completed and presented to high authorities of the MEC (Vice Minister of Education and General Directorates, including budget) and was very well received. The development of the curricular reform proposal for the teacher training network was completed. The generation of a promotional campaign proposal for the educational community was completed and is ready for implementation in the "Transformación Educativa" -the new national policy for education under EU cooperation-.

Enhanced capacity of OPDs and CSOs to engage in and influence policy development processes.

The capacity of OPDs and CSOs to engage in and influence policy development processes was enhanced by the promotion of the participation of OPD at national level, the support of the key representatives at the CONADIS and the training in public policies lobbying, projects and basic administration tools. The participation of the design and promotion of new policies and legislation was supported (including the relation with agencies and international bodies) and the presentation of a shadow report to the CRDP and a national strategy to respond at the COVID-19 pandemic.





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The process of dialogue and training for new leaders added 18 young people with disabilities and was articulated with the process promoted with the World Bank (Paraguay Now) that promotes the participation of young people in the generation and implementation of public policies.

With the confirmation of the implementation of accessible websites in the public sector (the SENADIS website was published on Friday, December 18), the incidence in three new laws or administrative procedures promoted by the project is completed. Inspired by the process of building the "Chapter on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" for the Coordinator of Human Rights of Paraguay (CODEHUPY) it was decided to complete and publish an independent report of those who are representatives in OSCCONADIS as a shadow report for the International System for the Protection of Human Rights.





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Paraguay	Main documents ² -outputs and outcomes-		
	Oc. 1 - Mainstreaming of disability in international cooperation	Oc. 2 - Strengthening inclusive public policies	Oc. 3 Reinforcing OPDs and CSOs
Finalized and published on the project e-library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guía para la inclusión de la perspectiva de la discapacidad en planes y proyectos de la cooperación al desarrollo en Paraguay Recomendaciones y lineamientos en el término de las obligaciones generales de la Convención sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad (<i>Guide for the inclusion of the disability perspective in plans and projects of development cooperation in Paraguay Recommendations and guidelines in the term of the general obligations of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documento de sistematización del proceso de elaboración del Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, sus indicadores y su línea de base (<i>Document of systematization of the process of elaboration of the National Plan of Action for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, its indicators, and its baseline</i>). Video accesible descriptivo del proceso de construcción del Plan de Acción Nacional de Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad (PANDPCD) con sus indicadores (<i>Descriptive accessible video of the process of construction of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with its indicators</i>). Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad 2015-2030 (<i>National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2015-2030</i>). Videos educativos sobre los principales ejes del PANDPCD recogidos por el proyecto: Indicadores y rendición de cuentas, Educación y Participación (<i>Educational videos on the main axes of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities collected by the project: Indicators and accountability, Education and Participation</i>). Adaptación al formato de video del Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de Personas con Discapacidad (PANDPCD) (<i>Adaptation to video format of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informe final Asistencia técnica para la facilitación y coordinación de encuentros de formación y diálogo en el marco del proceso de nuevos liderazgos de OPD, OSCD y OSC CONADIS (<i>Final report of the technical assistance for the facilitation and coordination of training and dialogue mitins within the framework of the process of new leaderships of OPD, OSCD and OSC CONADIS</i>). Informe Sombra para el Comité sobre Derechos de las personas con discapacidad. Situación de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad en Paraguay (<i>Shadow Report for the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Situation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Paraguay</i>). Análisis de la experiencia de participación de la propuesta de Ley de Salud Mental. Resumen de Informe de investigación (<i>Analysis of the experience of participation in the proposed Mental Health Law. Research Report Summary</i>). Plan Operativo de Incidencia al Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, validado por SENADIS y presentado a la CONADIS (<i>Operational Plan for Advocacy on the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons</i>

² The documents are presented with their name in the original language, Spanish. The proposed translation is for informational purposes only.



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica para la construcción de herramientas públicas para la generación de datos sobre discapacidad para la SENADIS, el MEC, MSPyBS y el MDS / STP (<i>Descriptive report of the process of the technical assistance for the construction of public tools for the generation of data on disability for the SENADIS, the MEC, MSPyBS and the MDS / STP</i>). Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica para el análisis de fuentes de generación de datos con comparabilidad internacional para Paraguay (<i>Descriptive report of the technical assistance process for the analysis of data generation sources with international comparability for Paraguay</i>). Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica para la capacitación a personal técnico estatal responsable de supervisión en la generación de datos para que sepan orientar a los captadores de datos de sus instituciones, específicamente, en la captación de datos estadísticos sobre discapacidad en la SENADIS, el MEC, el MSPYBS y el MDS (<i>Descriptive report of the technical assistance process for the training of state technical personnel responsible for supervision in the generation of data so that they know how to guide the data collectors of their institutions, specifically, in the collection of statistical data on disability in SENADIS, the MEC, MSPYBS and MDS</i>). Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica a la Dirección General de Estadística, Encuestas y Censos (DGEEC) para la incorporación de información sobre discapacidad en el CENSO 2022 y la Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (<i>Descriptive report of the technical assistance process to the General Directorate of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses (DGEEC) for the incorporation of information on disability in the CENSUS 2022 and the Permanent Household Survey</i>). Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica a MITIC y SENADIS sobre accesibilidad de los portales web, y capacitaciones en accesibilidad web (<i>Descriptive report of the process of technical assistance to MITIC and SENADIS on accessibility of web portals, and training on web accessibility</i>). | <p><i>with Disabilities, validated by SENADIS and presented to CONADIS).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informe final Asistencia técnica de apoyo logístico operativo a las actividades de fortalecimiento de capacidades de Organizaciones de Personas con Discapacidad (OPD), Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil que trabajan Discapacidad (OSCD) y OSC CONADIS (<i>Final report Technical assistance for operational logistical support to the capacity building activities of Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPD), Civil Society Organizations that work with Disabilities (OSCD) and CSO CONADIS</i>). Sistematización de la respuesta de la SENADIS a la emergencia sanitaria generada por el COVID-19 en Personas con Discapacidad (<i>Systematization of the SENADIS response to the health emergency generated by COVID-19 in People with Disabilities</i>). |
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- Protocolo de cedulaación de personas con discapacidad (*Protocol for the identification of people with disabilities*).
- Video accesible descriptivo de la Ruta de Intervención simplificada de Registro de Identidad y Cedulaación de Personas con Discapacidad en Paraguay (*Descriptive accessible video of the Simplified Intervention Route for the Identity Registration and Identification of Persons with Disabilities in Paraguay*).
- Informe final Asistencia Técnica a SENADIS para la simplificación de trámites administrativos (*Final Report Technical Assistance to SENADIS for the simplification of administrative procedures*).
- Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica para la guarda y organización de documentos del archivo de la SENADIS para el fortalecimiento del "Proceso de Simplificación de Trámites Administrativos" (*Descriptive report on the technical assistance process for the storage and organization of documents in the SENADIS archive to strengthen the "Simplification of Administrative Procedures"*).
- Informe descriptivo del proceso de asistencia técnica para la digitalización de documento del archivo de la SENADIS para el fortalecimiento del "Proceso de Simplificación de Trámites Administrativos" (*Descriptive report of the technical assistance process for the digitization of a document from the SENADIS archive for the strengthening of the "Administrative Procedures Simplification Process"*).
- Informe final de la asistencia técnica para diseñar una propuesta de un Manual de puestos y funciones para la SENADIS (Final report of the technical assistance to design a proposal for a Manual of positions and functions for SENADIS).
- Informe final de la asistencia técnica para diseñar un Certificado de Discapacidad y Potencial Laboral / Empleabilidad de Personas con Discapacidad y lineamientos para su implementación para la SENADIS (*Final report of the technical assistance to design a Certificate of Disability and Labor Potential / Employability of Persons with Disabilities and guidelines for its implementation for SENADIS*).



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informe descriptivo del proceso Asistencia Técnica para el fortalecimiento del Centro de Relevó en la provisión de servicio de interpretación gratuita y en línea de lengua de señas para la población por vía telemática (<i>Descriptive report of the Technical Assistance process for the strengthening of the Relay Center in the provision of free and online sign language interpretation service for the population by electronic means</i>). Informe final de la asistencia técnica para el diseño e implementación de cursos en materia de Educación Inclusiva al personal técnico, docentes, directivos y supervisores del MEC (<i>Final report of the technical assistance for the design and implementation of courses on Inclusive Education for technical staff, teachers, managers and supervisors of the MEC</i>). Compendio de Lineamientos y textos para ajustes razonables en los niveles de Educación Básica e Inicial, Media, Universitaria y Técnica, para la aplicación de la Ley de Educación Inclusiva (<i>Compendium of Guidelines and texts for reasonable adjustments in the levels of Basic and Initial, Middle, University and Technical Education, for the application of the Inclusive Education Law</i>). Informe final de la asistencia técnica para el diseño de cursos autoformativos e-learning en el ámbito de la Educación Inclusiva de las Personas con Discapacidad (<i>Final report on technical assistance for the design of self-training e-learning courses in the field of Inclusive Education for People with Disabilities</i>). Informe final Elaboración de un Plan Operativo para la implementación de la Ley de Educación Inclusiva junto con el MEC y la CONADIS, con el apoyo de expertos (<i>Final report on the preparation of an Operational Plan for the implementation of the Inclusive Education Law together with the MEC and CONADIS, with the support of experts</i>). 	
<p>Finalized but NOT published on the project e-library</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propuesta de Lineamientos de Registro y Certificación de OPD/OSCD con su metodología de implementación (<i>Proposal for Registration and Certification Guidelines for OPD / OSCD with its implementation methodology</i>). Guía de apoyo pedagógico de educación inclusiva servicio de atención educativa compensatoria - aula hospitalaria en el marco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">



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del Proyecto Acortando Distancias (*Pedagogical support guide for inclusive education compensatory educational care service - hospital classroom within the framework of the Bridging the Gap Project*).

- Servicio de asistencia técnica (AT) para la elaboración de un documento técnico de discapacidad con datos derivados del Censo Nacional de Población y Viviendas 2012 (*Final report of the technical assistance service for the preparation of a technical document on disability with data derived from the National Population and Housing Census 2012*).
- Prestación de servicios para contribuir al fortalecimiento de la SENADIS para el desempeño de su mandato institucional de velar por el cumplimiento de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad a través de la revisión de sus normas orgánicas y administrativas (*Report on the provision of services to contribute to the strengthening of SENADIS for the performance of its institutional mandate of ensuring compliance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities through the review of its organic and administrative regulations*).
- Diagnóstico que contribuya a un plan operativo para la implementación de la Ley de Educación Inclusiva, año 2019 (*Diagnosis that contributes to an operational plan for the implementation of the Inclusive Education Law, year 2019*).
- Servicio de asistencia técnica para la elaboración de un informe técnico sobre el impacto, proceso de incidencia y primeros resultados de la implementación de la respuesta a la emergencia sanitaria producto del COVID-19 en Personas con Discapacidad en el marco del Proyecto Bridging The Gap II / Acortando Distancias (*Report of the technical assistance service for the preparation of a technical report on the impact, advocacy process and first results of the implementation of the response to the health emergency caused by COVID-19 in People with Disabilities within the framework of the Bridging The Gap Project II*).

Communication and visibility

The project design did not consider the incorporation of a person in charge of communication and the actions that required communication were handled by their coordination. As a strategy to solve eventual communication needs that would additionally serve to strengthen the institutional capacity of the State, during 2019 the decision was made to equip and strengthen the Communication Directorate of SENADIS, therefore, they assumed the follow-up of project activities.

A project communication officer and a communication plan have been designed based on the recommendation made in the mid-term evaluation. This officer coordinates the design and implementation of the Campaign for Inclusive Education since 2020. The new authorities in the Inclusive Education Office of the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC), former SENADIS Minister, has had an impact on the plan of the campaign for the rights of people with disabilities, since all the content and focus are It has built with actors from the Directorate of Inclusive Education. As an impact mitigation measure given the risk that the dissemination of the campaign cannot be executed with the MEC, from the beginning of this consultancy it was proposed to involve the Organizations of People with Disabilities with creation workshops developed last March and the possibility of joining the governing body on the rights of people with disabilities, the National Secretariat for the Human Rights of People with Disabilities (SENADIS), as the issuer of the campaign.

A procedural work has been carried out with the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC) for the campaign materials, which precisely due to its procedural nature, with changes of authorities involved, has been delayed. As a result, the "[Incluyendo](#)" (Including) campaign incorporates all the learning developed during the project and was built in close collaboration with the MEC authorities. The projection of the main video of the campaign was presented within the framework of the closing event of the project at the Government Palace on August 2, 2021.

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

Three types of difficulties were identified during the project: a) related to project design, and b) related to the context and relationship between the State and Civil Society Organizations.

Related to the Project Design



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- Outcome of impossible compliance. The introduction of the Inclusive Education chapter during the last minute of the project design resulted in the dab design of the 2.2 Outcome: “Increase the enrollment of children with disabilities in regular schools by 10%”. Beyond the fact that whether or not to enroll a child with a disability is a parent's decision and it is difficult to presume to achieve the objective in a project in such a short time, it was discovered in December 2018 that the baseline was incorrectly calculated³ and the number of children with disabilities did not reach 3% (compared to 27% originally recorded). Additionally, a series of union conflicts and changes in ministerial authorities delayed the execution of activities related to this outcome until October 2019. The measure taken with the MEC was the incorporation of technical assistance to carry out a diagnosis of the implementation of the Inclusive Education Law that would shed light on the adjustments that the project might need and align them to the available times until December 2020. As a result, new activities were incorporated to strengthen the capacity of the MEC in inclusive education and a new outcome was formulated as "A methodology for the registration of children with disabilities in the RUE is designed, and there is a proposal to reform the mesh curriculum for teacher education according to existing guidelines".
- Design ambition. Even the mid-term evaluation claim that “Both the design and the intervention model are coherent, but the project itself is probably too ambitious for being so comprehensive, since products pursued have a strong political nature that slows down processes and limits the project's capacity for action”. In addition, the project was designed in 2017 and its implementation was accepted in June 2018, less than two months after the change of Government with the risk that the new Government would not accept its implementation. The first measure taken to solve it was to review the activities designed with the new authority in charge of SENADIS and adjust the execution, prioritizing those that contribute to the construction of public policy and leaving those related to specific services to a second level of execution. In any case, due to the extension of the project execution term for an additional 7 months to the closing date of the initial execution, it was possible to execute 100% of what was adjusted with the new Government.

³ During the analysis, it was discovered that the RUE brought together the registration and accounting of all children who required a specific need for education, including both those with disabilities, as well as those with high abilities, who are in a situation of vulnerability, institutionalization, or hospital classrooms.



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Related to related to the context and relationship between the State and Civil Society Organizations

- Civil Society against the Government. In the disability sector, the relationship between civil society organizations and the State was never ideal. However, the change of government made it more difficult by transferring these problems to the project's Board of Directors and using it as a condition for compliance with political demands. As a solution, the decision was made to hold the meetings of the Board of Directors in the AECID office, a monthly calendar agreed to by all parties was set, and quarterly goals were established with responsibilities for each party (Government, AECID and DPO). Additionally, from the coordination of the project, training was carried out on the operation of the State and the structure of public policy to provide timely assessment tools to the DPOs.
- Civil Society against Civil Society. In addition to the conflicts between the organizations with the State, the representation of the sector in the National Disability Commission, CONADIS, highlighted the existence of conflicts between the organizations, both due to the role of people with disabilities and equitable representation in the project of organizations of the Capital and the countryside. As a palliative measure, the project differentiated Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) from Civil Society Organizations that work on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCOD), and an Annual National Meeting with representatives from all over the country was included in the planning to ensure the participation of all possible voices in the review of activities and accountability of the project.

Lessons learned from implementation:

- Virtuality contributed to the relationship and participation of Disability People Organizations (DPO) and Civil Society Organizations working in Disability Rights (CSOD)
- The support and training in matters of public policy and regulations makes it visible that its actors do not have the information / training necessary for the role.
- In relation to the different actors of civil society and the State, recognition should be given in the process of the “invisible” work of accompaniment and personal and individual advice.
- When working with the inclusion of public policies, it was useful to “dissect” the activities and work on diagnostic processes-progressive implementation plans.



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- In relation to the development of activities that have the State as beneficiary, the sensibilization of those who are professionals and consultants who participated in the different activities was required, given that the perspective had to be changed from criticizing the public to accompanying and strengthen processes that are often incipient or that meant recognizing existing technical work.
- The project was successful making disability visible as a State-social-community responsibility.
- A relevant learning is that this type of project even requires “making” its products to the State since the look is more related to political “achievements” and not necessarily the construction of public policy (more political than technical).
- The understanding that CONADIS have a “public service” role is not necessarily understood by its members.

Lessons learned in relation to cooperation agencies and agents:

- It is necessary that cooperation and civil society can dialogue and exchange ideas and proposals.
- The assessment that certain organizations can manage funds should be promoted.
- Disability must also be mainstreamed among key cooperation actors in public bodies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Initiatives and Communications, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the Technical Secretary of Planning for Development.

Lessons learned in relation to the State:

- From the State, the Inclusive Education Law is a specific challenge in influencing the Iberoamerican States Organization initiative for a new National Education Plan funded by the EU.
- The rules, plans and programs are not met, and it is necessary to build competence to analyse and understand what is not met and how to address it without going back to “zero page”.
- The underlying issue should be addressed in the political capacity of SENADIS for the policy of mainstreaming.
- It is necessary to change the social perception of disability from the same political and technical state actors (breaking the social imaginary in the face of capacity).
- The National Plan dashboard is essential for sustainability and an advocacy tool for municipal campaigns.



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Lessons learned regarding DPO/SCOD:

- The participatory process with CONADIS requires working with SENADIS and with people at the national level.
- The relation with SENADIS from DPO and SCOD is not understood.
- The internal division of the company affects the implementation of activities and processes.
- The debate regarding the roles of civil society vis-à-vis the National Action Plan for Rights of People with Disabilities (National Plan) needs to be sustained.
- The heterogeneity and representativeness of the sector generates contradictory positions of "complaint" and assistance in the face of incidence.
- It is a challenge for organizations to leave their personal or institutional "agenda" and embrace the institutional framework so that the National Action Plan for Rights of People with Disabilities participation experience can be executed.
- Mainstreaming is more declarative than practical.
- The experience of holding exchange workshops and tables for intersectoral articulation shows that civil society participation may benefit from articulation with other networks. The exchange of experiences enriches and helps to avoid encapsulation (even among People with Disabilities themselves).
- The identification of young people for "training" leaves as learning that it is possible to include People with Disabilities in processes of dialogue construction. More participation is required as not all people with disabilities know the CONADIS.
- The exercise facilitated with young people should continue from the idea of the contribution it may have to larger processes at the country level. Potential for collective action, interest, and awareness (in the existence of your rights, but you know they are not respected).
- That the deaf sector requires additional attention.
- That there are generational visions that also influence the understanding of the project that interprets cooperation only as "donors of funds".
- There are organizations that are just started and require a differentiated strategy, so promoting participation can be a double race.
- The construction of an identity for the sector should be promoted.



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Cross-cutting topics

According to the Country Action Plan, the cross-cutting issues of the project requires consideration of gender issues and indigenous people of both sexes. No specific activity was linked to these groups in the reporting period and is expected to be achieved during the next period.

The report [The Empowerment of Women and Girls with Disabilities](#), a capitalization study conducted by the project remarks about the project activities in Paraguay “took into account gender considerations in the selection of candidates for the design of indicators for the National Plan on 5 Sex disaggregated data is a first step in understanding the diversity of the target population. Efforts should then continue to include gender disaggregated data, going beyond binary classification. Valuing experience in gender mainstreaming, and in working with girls and women with disabilities, in selection criteria of implementing organizations and professionals, strengthens implementation”.

Additionally:

- In Paraguay, BtG-II has strengthened the National Action Plan on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The Plan, which was designed with no monitoring mechanisms, has now an extensive list of indicators, including some specifically on girls and women with disabilities. For instance, to monitor the inclusion of women with disabilities in decision making positions, the Plan will monitor the “number of participatory agencies at national and municipal level, in which women with disabilities participate”; it includes disaggregation by sex, age, type of disability, type of organization, and type of position. The Plan also includes an indicator on the percentage of national budget assigned to and executed by public institutions working against the abuse and mistreatment of people with disabilities, disaggregated by sex, and it will measure the number of public programs to attend women which have been adapted for women with disabilities.

BtG-II also supported the development of a matrix to gather information on OPDs and civil society organizations working on disability in Paraguay, which includes two questions about organizations working on women and girls with disabilities. This matrix was officially approved by the national authority on disability, and is meant to be used to identify first, and strengthen later, those organizations working on disability, to enable them to participate and have influence in the elaboration of policies. (Page 12)

- Additionally, BtG-II has supported Paraguay in developing a monitoring methodology on the public response to the sanitary emergency of COVID-19 and its consideration of people with disabilities. In this work, BtG-II’s support



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suggests explicitly the need to work with public agencies, human rights organizations, and civil society dedicated to eliminating gender-based violence, to adapt their services to women and girls with disabilities, by including accessible campaigns, and effective mechanisms to identify women and girls with disabilities at risk of or suffering abuse and violence during the pandemic. (Page 13)





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Sustainability and replicability of the project activities

Because of the interaction with other development agencies through the implementation of the outcome 1 and the National DPO and CSOD Annual Meetings, a strong synergy with the WHO-PAHO raised to ensure the participation of DPO in the ongoing process of designing a National Mental Health reform which will define a new Law for the country on the matter. As a result of this process, eight leaders of DPO were trained and formally included in the process.

Since mid-March 2020, the sanitary emergency in response of the COVID-19 pandemic was declared and all the presential activities were cancelled in accordance with the in-force quarantine by Presidential Decree on March 16th.

In this context, the impact that the provision of equipment and software had to the SENADIS communication team by Bridging the Gap, has been revealed. This support offered by the project in 2019 has allowed the daily generation of an accessible news capsules informing about the outbreak and the spreading of the COVID-19 pandemic, that are distributed on institutional social networks. Moreover, a space for the analysis and the exchange of information on the Estate response given to the needs of persons with disabilities in this context has been set together with the World Health Organization, the Pan-American Health Organization, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The project closing event was held the 2nd of August of 2021 in the Presidency of the Republic with the announcement of the signing of an agreement between SENADIS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, and the Technical Planning Secretariat to ensure the use of the Indicators of the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a control tool of the State planning system. This measure, consistent with the request for support to the indicator design process made by the President of the Nation on December 3, 2018, consolidates the strengthening of SENADIS and enables the incidence of DPO and SCOD.





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Annexes

1. List of documents and reports

- a. Administrative history
 - i. Main documents of the project related to the grant
 - ii. Archive by Outcome
 - iii. Follow-up of activities
 - iv. National Directive Council
 - v. Report of activities
 - vi. Approval letters by governmental institutions
 - vii. Publications and reports
- b. Means of verification
 - i. General documents
 - ii. Output indicators
 - iii. Outcome indicators
 - iv. Quarterly reports
 - v. Annual reports
 - vi. SENADIS approvals
 1. Technical assistances to Governmental institutions
 2. General approval
 3. Equipment

2. Published documents and reports

- a. [Sistematización de la respuesta de la SENADIS a la emergencia sanitaria generada por el COVID-19 en Personas con Discapacidad](#)
- b. [Plan Operativo de Incidencia al Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad](#)
- c. [Análisis de la experiencia de participación de la propuesta de Ley de Salud Mental](#)
- d. [Situación sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad en Paraguay](#)
- e. [Diseño de una propuesta de revisión de la malla curricular del Instituto de Formación Docente en materia de transversalización de la educación inclusiva](#)
- f. [Compendio de Lineamientos y textos para ajustes razonables en la aplicación de la Ley de Educación Inclusiva](#)
- g. [Protocolo de cedulação a personas con discapacidad](#)
- h. [Guiding Document for the drafting of the Paraguayan Nationwide Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Indicators and Baseline](#)
- i. [Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad 2015-2030](#)
- j. [Documento de sistematización del proceso de elaboración del Plan de Acción Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, sus indicadores y su línea de base](#)
- k. [Guía para la inclusión de la perspectiva de la discapacidad en planes y proyectos de la cooperación al desarrollo en Paraguay](#)
- l. [Inclusion of persons with disabilities in EU development cooperation – Paraguay](#)