



Women and Girls with Disabilities: Official Development Assistance at the Crossroads of Disability and Gender, February 2024

English Transcript

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As part of International Development Week, Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Canada, in collaboration with the Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), organized a webinar entitled “Women and Girls with Disabilities: Official Development Assistance at the Crossroads of Disability and Gender” on Thursday, February 8, from 11am to 12pm (UTC-5). The webinar discussed the [Briefing Paper](#) of the same name, co-edited by DAWN-RAFH Canada, HI Canada, and EDID-GHDI. View the [video on YouTube \(in French\)](#).

Speakers: Michèle Asselin, Emmanuelle Lajoie, Patricia Atkinson, Nicole Nyangolo, Nancy Saint Louis, Dieynaba Diallo, Anne Delorme

Welcome by Michèle Asselin

0:01

[Michèle]

Hello everyone, welcome to all. We are very happy to welcome you to this webinar entitled Women and Girls with Disabilities: Official Development Assistance at the Crossroads of Disability and Gender. This activity is organized by Humanity & Inclusion, formerly known as Handicap International, and the Québec Association of International Cooperation Organizations (AQOCI). We're going to start in 2 minutes. Here is some information to ensure the smooth running of the meeting. I invite you to ask your questions in the chat box at the bottom of your screen indicated as question and answer, and my collaborator Emmanuelle Lajoie will submit your questions during the question period following the presentation by the panelists. So, we'll have a 10-minute question

period. You can identify if it's for specifically one or all of the panelists. Note that this webinar is going to be recorded and broadcasted on the Youtube channel, so you'll be able to watch it, share it with your colleagues and networks. Also I'd like to point out that if you have any technical problems during the webinar, don't hesitate to contact us, by communicating directly in the chat box with Marijke De Pauw who is from the Humanity & Inclusion team and she will immediately help you. My name is Michèle Asselin, I am the director of AQOCI.

I use the pronoun her and I wear glasses. I have white hair now -- I used to be blonde -- and I have curly hair. So I describe myself briefly to make people feel welcome who are visually impaired. Before proceeding, allow me to recognize that we are at the offices of Humanity & Inclusion and AQOCI, located on the unceded Indigenous territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation on Tiohtià:ke Island, in other words, Montreal. It should also be noted that this webinar is based on the briefing paper that will be sent to you soon in the chat box. I invite you to watch your box throughout the webinar; we're going to provide some information since we don't have much time to share together. I now pass the floor to our first speaker who will give us the opening remarks. It's Madame Patricia Atkinson, who is the Director of Natural Resources and Governance at Global Affairs Canada. As I said earlier, you'll find in your chat box a more detailed biography of Patricia. Patricia, the floor is yours.

Opening Remarks by Patricia Atkinson

3:43

[Patricia] Thank you very much Michèle, can you hear me well?

[Michèle] Very well.

[Patricia] Perfect. So, hello. As you noted my name is Patricia, I use the pronoun she. Also, and for those who don't see me I'm a white woman in her forties with short light hair. I wear glasses and I'm calling you from my home in Ottawa. I want to recognize that I'm speaking from the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishnaabek Algonquin people. We recognize that Canada exists on the ancestral land of Indigenous peoples with languages of the distinct cultural practices, histories and spiritual beliefs, and furthermore we recognize the Algonquins as the customary guardians and defenders of the Ottawa River watershed and its tributaries. I'm very pleased to be here with you today to open this excellent session, and to share with you some of the efforts made by Global Affairs Canada to ensure meaningful inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in our outreach work. As you well know, women and girls with disabilities are more likely than men to have a disability; they are more marginalized because of the intersection of their gender and their disability, So to adopt an intersectional approach in all these fields of activity, Canada is also seeking to ensure the development, advancement and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities and their families, and to provide greater support to these people in developing countries through advocacy interests in multilateral forums and the programming of international development aid. In the course of these efforts, I must confess that we have seen both successes and failures, and, unfortunately, areas for improvement. In 2023 Canada has announced the allocation of \$195 million over 5 years and 43.3 million per year thereafter for the renewal and expansion of the Voice and Leadership of Women Program, or VLF. Canada's renewed VLF program will retain its existing framework while expanding its support for conflict- and crisis-affected

contexts, and by being more intentional in reaching structurally excluded groups such as women with disabilities. In October, consultations were undertaken with women's organizations and the women and girls with disabilities to hear their suggestions on strategies for a more intentional inclusion of these communities. Another initiative that I would like to highlight is the Making It Work initiative that has been implemented by Humanity & Inclusion. Over the last four years, this project, to which GAC (Global Affairs Canada) has contributed 6 million dollars has helped to improve and to promote and protect the related rights of women and girls, including those with disabilities, in the Ivory Coast, in Senegal and in Togo. These initiatives represent a step in the right direction; nevertheless, there is still much to be done to include women and girls with disabilities. We can ensure that our international assistance takes disability into account from the outset of any new initiative, while continuing to integrate inclusion into our existing actions.

So before we pass to the panelists, I would like to emphasize the exceptionally difficult geopolitical and operational environment in which we find ourselves, as war wreaks havoc in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and Europe. And we must not forget the increased vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities in the situations of conflict and crisis. Canada very much welcomes the views and experiences of advocates such as those we will hear from today on how to build a more just and equitable world for all, including women and girls with disabilities. I look forward to hearing from the distinguished panelists about their experiences and advice in the following discussion, and thank you to our colleagues from Humanity & Inclusion Canada and the Québec Association of International Cooperation Organizations, for organizing this event at a very opportune time during International Development Week. Thank you.

8:25

[Michèle] Many thanks to you Patricia. It's very important too, to be able to count on the huge Global Affairs Canada team as allies on this very important and too often forgotten issue. So thank you for this presentation and thank you for being an ally. So now, yes, we are going to give the floor to three panelists, three defenders of rights, three women. So I'll introduce them right now and then they'll speak in the order I'm presenting them to you. So first Miss Nicole Nyangolo. Nicole is the regional coordinator of the COCAFEM [La Concertation des Collectifs des Associations Féminines] and for the women's program implemented with the consortium of the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation and CECI [Centre for International Studies and Cooperation], two Quebec organizations. Also speaking will be Nancy Saint Louis; Nancy is a researcher for the Engendering Disability-Inclusive Development project at the Live Work Well Research Centre. The third person who will speak is Dieynaba Diallo. Dieynaba is vice-president of Women in Law and Development in Africa, better known by its English acronym WiLDAF Senegal. She is a member of the women's organization participating in the "Making it Work" initiative implemented by Humanity & Inclusion, and Dieynaba is also the regional coalition coordinator for the WiLDAF West Africa coalition.

I invite Nicole to speak. So, hello Nicole, I have a first question for your organization.

Presentation by Nicole Nyangolo

[Nicole] Hello.

[Michèle] Your organization implements the Girls' Education for a Better Future in the Great Lakes Region of Burundi, DRC, and Rwanda. Can you briefly summarize this program for us?

10:52

[Nicole] Thank you, Michèle. Hello everyone, I am very pleased to be here with you. And so, like you mentioned, Girls' Education for a Better Future in the Great Lakes Region of Burundi, DRC, and Rwanda is a project, or rather, a program, that is being implemented by the consortium formed by the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation and the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation, CECL, and with the aim of empowering 22,000 girls and women, including women and girls with disabilities, through education. So a pilot zone has been targeted per country, each of which hosts a refugee camp, to a total of 24 elementary and secondary schools, and the project has a duration of 5 years so it started in 2020 and will end in early 2025. There are two technical partners who accompanied the local partners - HI and FAWE, the Forum for African Women Educators, and of course, their implementing partners in the three countries.

12:05

[Michèle] Thank you, so it's a vast project. I'd like now if you could tell us about the main issues related to the education of girls in vulnerable situations, particularly those who live with a disability in this large region.

12:25

[Nicole] Thank you. The first issue is relating to obstacles, to accessing and maintaining primary secondary education but also training -- vocational training -- for girls. There are many other obstacles or barriers, maybe we'll talk about that later. The second issue I could mention here is the quality and adaptation of education with a focus on gender equality, but also, the specific needs of girls, including those with disabilities. And finally a third issue is the leadership of girls and women in decision-making, but also the promotion of their right to education.

13:06

[Michèle] Of the major challenges, I think you're [managing] to meet these challenges. And to help us understand them better, I'd like you to share with us some concrete actions you're taking.

13:24

[Nicole] Yeah, of course. In COCAFEM, there were two specialized partners I talked about, HI and FAWE, and with the six implementing partners and of course, accompanied by the consortium. We started by carrying out diagnoses on inclusion both in our implementing organizations but also in relation to the activities targeted for the project, and then we had to be reinforced so our capacities were strengthened on the fundamentals of disability, but also inclusion. There was also community awareness-raising and even visits to families with disabled children to make sure that these girls were entering into education, or even informal education, and also would be considered at school despite the fact that she's disabled. And there's awareness-raising and even training courses on legal issues for the players, of education and even authorities at various levels from the regional, provincial and even local levels.

And I should also mention inclusive facilities. So in the three targeted intervention areas there have been ramps added in some of the secure washroom facilities, but also adapted, and even boards that would have to be lowered in order to enable students in wheelchairs to follow lessons properly. We've also been learning about the importance of data broken down according to disability, and here are some of the flagship actions that have been implemented in the three countries.

15:27

[Michèle] In fact, I think you're going to present two of the photos to illustrate your point.

15:32

[Nicole] Yeah, yeah

[Michèle] While we're going to show you the pictures I'll just...

15:45

[Michèle] I notice that there are 86 people present and several are waving in the audience chat box. Know that we are very impressed to see several people from Francophone countries, thank you for being here. So I don't know if, Emmanuelle, can you show us the photos Nicole wanted to share?

16:12

[Emmanuelle] So, unfortunately, there's a little technical problem, I thought I was sharing the photos, but you can continue. I'll put the photos in the chat, so Nicole, you can briefly tell what we will see and continue. I'll put them in the chat, it won't take long.

16:26

[Michèle] So Nicole, describe the two photos that we're going to be able to see in the chat box. Truly this box is very important today! Nicole?

16:37

[Nicole] Okay so the first picture - the first picture I've selected is an image that illustrates a capacity-building training session for teachers in the Congo zone, in DRC, South Kivu, specifically, and henceforth, we think the teachers will have the right pedagogical training. And a second image that I selected this time - it's in the Rwanda area - it's an image that illustrates the realization of a need by handicapped refugee girls. They had expressed the wish to have an inclusive and accessible room for girls, and so the project was able to realize this wish, and with images on the wall, invite them to come and express their needs and their problems and to be accompanied by the facilitators who are in these rooms. These rooms allow girls with disabilities, who are menstruating, to have the freedom to go and take a shower, change their clothes, and so on.

17:56

[Michèle] Thank you very much Nicole, I reassure you that the two pictures have been shared, I invite people to go and see them because we know that a picture is worth 1000 words. Now, one last one question for you Nicole, can you share with us the testimonial of a participant in the context of your project? So thank you Nicole.

18:20

[Nicole] Thank you Michèle. So I have selected a testimonial that particularly moved us: Charlotte Niremberé's story, we have Charlotte's photo in the chat box? Thank you.

[Michèle] Yes Nicole.

18:35

[Nicole] Okay, so she's a Rwandan - I'm still here in the Rwanda zone, a member of a club for girls who have dropped out of school. The clubs are supported by the project and so she was part of this group, probably because she couldn't reintegrate into a regular education system. Once in this group, she gained self-awareness, and at 17 years old, the counsellors helped her regain her self-esteem and hope. Also, because at 17 she said it was all over for her, she testified that she had grown up trying not to ask anything of her parents, who are poor.

It's really precarious because they see themselves as a burden, so there's also the question of all the cultural burdens that accompany them. For example, the issue of handicapped children; so the psychosocial assistant spoke with her parents to share with them Charlotte's desire to be able to go back to school and encouraged them to help their daughters to take part in the training courses organized by CFEM, our collective in Rwanda. And so, thanks to awareness and close monitoring, Charlotte joined the elementary school at 16, in 2021. And she testifies that she now feels fulfilled, and like any other person, she has learned to read and write; and her results are very satisfactory, so she passed with a mark of over 90%. And even the members of the community have cleared the path to the school so that she can then go with the wheelchair that was given to her from a contribution from members of the community. So her last wish was to see the collective give her another wheelchair because the one she has is defective and she sometimes arrives late to class, but otherwise she's very enthusiastic and she's very happy with what she has become. Here's Charlotte's testimonial.

21:06

[Michèle] Thank you very much, Nicole, you have very well illustrated this major issue of inclusion and access to education for people living with disabilities, and the need to pay particular attention to girls. So thank you Nicole. So now I'll pass the floor to a second panelist; we're now going to speak with Ms. Saint-Louis. As for Nicole, you're going to have access to her curriculum vitae (CV/resumé) in the chat box.

Hello Nancy, so I have a first question for you: in what way is the Global Affairs Canada's international aid policy for women relevant, and what are the different issues at stake? What analysis have you drawn from your studies of these limits in terms of the inclusion of people living with disabilities, particularly women and girls?

Presentation by Nancy Saint Louis

22:20

[Nancy] Hello, thank you, and it's a pleasure to be with you. So international aid policy was officially adopted in 2014, but was launched in 2017, by its intersectionality. It focuses on six fields of action,

the main one being gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the workplace, with the goal of eradicating global poverty by addressing inequality and promoting women's empowerment.

This policy is also an important one because it is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 5, gender equality, and Goal 16, peace, justice and institutions. This policy has made it possible to refocus official development assistance on the most vulnerable and poorest people, notably women and girls. In addition to promoting gender equality, it serves to strengthen the power of these categories, including in the fields of maternal and reproductive health, education and growth, peace and security. The feminist international aid policy has helped to build Canada's distinct brand as a donor, and the results of some of our projects.

Projects are also important; for example, the women's voice and leadership project implemented in many countries, including Haiti, has supported local women's organizations defending women's rights against violence targeting women and people with disabilities. There is also access to justice and the fight against impunity in Haiti and Lawyers Without Borders Canada, which also fights against impunity for violence against women and girls. Finally, Canada has made it a priority to provide considerable assistance to people with disabilities and to defend their cause in multilateral forums. This is a good step according to feminist critics, like Sonarg and Thomson, that consider this Canadian feminist policy to be innovative, but it remains liberal and does not cohere with other international or national policies.

With internal transformations, for example, she criticizes this policy because Canada has sold arms to the Saudi Arabian government despite its repression of women and its war in Yemen. In the end there would be a kind of under-representation and marginalization of certain categories of women, and Canada's international feminist policy is intended to be a policy conceived for developing countries, hence its characterization as a feminist policy. So, that's a general reading of Canada's international feminist aid policy.

25:45

[Michèle] And now can you tell us a bit more about the problem of women and girls with disabilities, particularly in Haiti? I think you've done a lot of work on this issue, Nancy.

26:00

[Nancy] Yes, thank you. It's interesting because I'm working on access to justice for women with disabilities, and for this part, I'm going to present to you the section about justice. And I'll go back a bit to the earthquake of January 12, 2010, which led to the unprecedented increase in the number of people living with disabilities to around 1 million in Haiti, i.e., 10% of the population. This statistic is from 2016, and it could increase. And paradoxically the problems of disabled people and women are enormous. And this in any field - health, education, employment, law, protection and justice - despite numerous normative cases, such as the 2012 law on the integration of people with disabilities in Haiti, and international frameworks such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2009, and numerous Haitian state institutions and civil society. And also, since official development assistance takes the case of the justice component, there is a lawyer

IKenson Edumé who addressed a gloomy picture of the situation of women with disabilities via access to justice.

According to him, access to justice for a person with a disability is an ordeal; the space is inaccessible for people with reduced mobility. The welcome reserved for this person expresses nothing but contempt and shame, not to mention the numerous hostilities if she tries to assert a so-called right that she is entitled to. [She may be called] a pejorative name called Kokobe. Kokobe is a Creole word, but it's a pejorative word. This scornful and prejudiced attitude of the judiciary and the police, especially towards people with disabilities, is the main handicap to the emergence and emancipation of the right to equality for all.

The opportunities in Haiti are therefore numerous for women and women's organizations. People with disabilities also point out that these institutional and structural barriers have double impact on women, who are discriminated against because there is no sign language interpreter in the courts and police stations, and there is a lack of training for judges, police officers, and other actors. In the gender-inclusive approach there is a lack of data collection system to provide information on follow-up cases involving people with disabilities. There are organizations, such as the Association Filles et Femmes au Soleil and its allies, which report that young deaf women have been taunted as they filed complaints in some police stations after being assaulted in the street in full view of several people. They are also absent from the statistics, making the abuse they suffer invisible to certain popular beliefs.

And a sexual act performed with a woman with a disability carries the opportunity to attract money for the person who performs it. Finally, the marginalization of women with disabilities was highlighted by the same association, Association Filles et Femmes Soleil and allies, during the development of the National Policy for Gender Equality, from 2014 to 2030, adopted by the Haitian government. But their situation is not taken into account in the said policy nor in the plans that flow from it, so they are often marginalized and their needs not taken into account.

Despite this gloomy picture and this complex and complicated crisis in Haiti today, it requires a kind of synergy and coordination between the various state structures and human rights organizations of the broader women's movement, whether by the feminist, women's organizations, or disabled people's organizations. Also, it would take a good technical and financial resource so that we can help these women, who are often invisible, marginalized, and unrepresented, to face all these challenges and obstacles that block the advancement of their cause in a coherent and systematic way. Essentially, this is the problem in the area of justice for women with disabilities.

31:25

[Michèle] Thank you very much Nancy, for in a few words having drawn us a very shocking portrait I'd say of the fact that because women are disabled or live with a disability they are particularly discriminated against and even assaulted, and that they don't have access to justice. So equal rights pose quite a challenge for these women and girls, thank you. Thank you also for underlining the importance of working in alliances to defend their rights, and the necessity to have financial and technical resources to support the work of the alliance and justice for its women and girls.

Thank you very much Nancy for your presentation, now I'd like to pass the floor to Miss Dieynaba Diallo. So, Dieynaba, you have the floor.

32:37-33:47 [Technical difficulties]

Presentation by Dieynaba Diallo

33:52

[Dieynaba Diallo] Thank you very much to Michèle. So what's WiLDAF's game? Thank you, first of all, for allowing me to share this important meeting with WiLDAF. It's a pan-African network using a variety of legal tools to promote a culture of respect for the rights of women and girls, including those with disabilities. Created in 1990, WiLDAF is present in 11 West African countries in Senegal. The areas of intervention are focused on awareness, information, training and education. It works to make women and girls visible. The activities revolve around the key themes of gender, equality and gender equity, women's empowerment, violence against women, girls combatting early marriage, women's political participation, peace and security for women, to food security resources.

That's WiLDAF, and what is the place of women and girls with disabilities in the action of WiLDAF? First of all, let me share WiLDAF's vision of having a world where all women enjoy all the human rights. Concerning the place of disabled women and girls, the organization has an inclusive approach, i.e., to take into account the disability dimension in the design of projects. It involves disabled women and girls in activities by taking into account the needs of their families and communities. Senegal is particularly advanced on the dimension of inclusion. As a testimonial position in the organization -- my leadership position -- I am the vice-president - I'm also the coordinator. Being a disabled woman, this organization magnifies everything I just said, but also it has long relationships with disabled people's organizations and representing women and girls with disabilities. So here too, working in alliance is important to achieve all these objectives.

37:19

[Michèle] So could you tell us about the major challenges facing your organization?

37:33

[Dieynaba] The biggest challenges facing this organization are the financial resources that are really inadequate. First of all, we have difficulty obtaining available funding. There are a number of reasons why: the criteria for responding to calls for proposals, which require qualified personnel, and sometimes it's too much of a shortcoming; sometimes we even have problems registering with certain platforms' information. Also at the moment, we don't always have the right information; as long as we're a French-speaking organization, we have linguistic problems, and that too is a linguistic gap as a French organization, but lack of mastery of English isolates us. And then there's a difficulty for disabled women and girls to benefit from funds and subsidies earmarked for disability issues because of patriarchy in disabled people's organizations. The fact that organizations are predominantly run by men, many of the state subsidies go through these organizations, which are more sensitive to the needs of women with disabilities. But there's also a lack of strong disabled women's organizations that meet all the conditions to be able to apply for proposed funding and

that could benefit from funding opportunities specific to women and girls with disabilities, which is a great message.

[Michèle] Send Patricia the new World Business Canada, a fund dedicated to set up groups of strong disabled women. So, we've heard you now about this leadership.

39:46

[Dieynaba] Yes.

39:49

[Michèle] So now, what are your dreams for WiLDAF? Can you share with us some of your overall perspectives, your hopes?

40:00

[Dieynaba] The dream I have of WiLDAF is to have funding for a large-scale, inclusive prevention and response project to GBV (Gender-based violence), and for all of Senegal to change the situation once and for all. Empowerment means empowerment, first economic empowerment of women and girls with disabilities through political participation, and so on. For women with disabilities, I dream of seeing them in the National Assembly and in positions of responsibility. In my country, WiLDAF is also a feminist organization, and I hope that WiLDAF, who played a leading role in promoting the Maputo protocol, which is an African protocol on women's rights, as important. I know that WiLDAF plays an important role today in the protocol on the rights of persons with disabilities, which is an important protocol for girls and women, and I wish it all the best.

41:29

[Michèle] You're going to be in New York in a few weeks.

41:43

[Dieynaba] It's going to be for the first time. Yes, there are some groups from Quebec who are going to be there for the first time. I will be with the coordinator, Sophie, making her CSW this year, to bring the perspectives of handicapped women leaders in West Africa, and I envy the people who are present at this panel to give us a place in their events and discussions. [Michèle] So thank you for sharing your dreams with us. And I can say without a doubt that the 83 people still here share them with you. Sharing them means carrying them with you in our various networks, and how to make this important voice heard, and we hope that you will soon be a regional municipal elected official.

Question & Answer Period

42:46

[Michèle] So thank you very much for sharing your dreams with us and the situation which deserves in-depth alliance and support. Thank you, thank you to our three panelists, but it's not over yet. Now, I invite you to put your questions in the chat box. We have a 10-minute exchange; my colleague Emmanuelle, the joy of the team of Humanity & Inclusion, will ask your questions. Please put it in the question and answer box, as there are many comments and encouragement in the chat

box, it'll be easier if you write down your questions in the second Q&A box. So then Emmanuelle are there already questions?

43:49

[Emmanuelle] Yes I caught a question that was in the Chat, but I confirm what Michèle says that it's better to put it in the Q&A. The question is the following - the question is actually addressed to the three panelists - so the question goes like this: "What do you think that we Canadians can do in order to support the organizations of women with disabilities and the initiatives like yours?"

44:21

[Michèle] And if you don't mind, Emmanuelle, Patricia wants to respond. I know the question is addressed to our panelists, but I think we'd also like to hear it if she feels comfortable doing so, so would one of you three like to go first?

Answer this question: what can we do as Canadians and as Quebecers to support this great challenge of justice and inclusion for women and girls who live with a disability? It takes one to break the ice. Yes Nicole, the floor is yours.

45:17

[Nicole] Thank you for the question, I'll answer in relation to what we concluded after the implementation of the project and the GEF in the field, concretely, I even said it in closing with Charlotte's testimony. We had faced a challenge on the whole, which was the need for a suitable budget to carry out all the activities necessary for the inclusion of young girls with disabilities, because quite often projects don't have a sufficient budget. We had to do some lobbying to approach certain organizations, like World Vision, etc., to be able to have, for example, orthopedic equipment, and other materials to help children with disabilities, because schools would come to us and we didn't have the means to satisfy all the needs. I'd also like to talk about the economic needs of women and girls with disabilities. For example, supporting the parents of girls with disabilities to be able to support the education of disabled girls; so raising chickens, for example, in rural areas, the breeding of— all the breeding of pig farms, and other forms of business that the families of handicapped children could be able to do. So, these are the two I'd like to mention for now, but in relation to we who are involved in the field, it's true that handicap has helped us, but it's still a fair compared to all the tools, the mastery of all the tools for collecting information and detecting cases of disability. It's true that we've been in a 3-day training course, but at our level we felt the need to be able to forge our capacities. We can't be everywhere but if this knowledge is passed on to all those involved, even in the most remote areas, we're sure that it will be taken into account, and above all, support for people, or children in this case, with disabilities will be beneficial.

47:50

[Michèle] Thank you very much Nicole. Dieynaba, can you turn on your microphone – yes? No, we can't hear you...still no...

48:20

[Emmanuelle] I don't know if Nancy wants to answer while waiting for Dieynaba's mic.

48:27

[Michèle] Okay, so we'll give you the floor again later. Nancy?

48:34

[Nancy] So thank you for the question. I think Nicole has already elaborated on this, it's almost the same scenarios, except that I would add that in Haiti, in relation to the experience I've had in the EDID project, which is the acronym in English, but in French it's the Genre, handicap et développement inclusif. The experience that I've had in this project is that there are women's organizations, or people with disabilities, in Haiti who want to do activities, like organizing workshops or doing research on themes related to their cause. The problem is that there's no certain training or a certain requirement to respond to these projects. For example, there's an organization that tried to apply, but the project didn't meet the academic criteria that we in Canada have set, so we would need a lot more supervision and a lot more women and/or people with disabilities who can carry out really interesting research on their behalf, so we'll have more literature on specific needs and how to address the main recommendations made by these organizations themselves, so that we can act on this in synergy. You who are in Canada, Canadians, and everyone else, we have our part to play by encouraging or supporting in our way these people who are disabled in developing countries like Haiti, which is in a really fragile situation.

50:28

[Michèle] Thank you very much Nancy. Dieynaba, now as soon as I give you the floor, it looks like the microphone - I'm not touching anything – an issue is occurring. But anyhow, you are similar in your answers and we hear the importance of supporting the leadership of women themselves who are living with a disability and also, that donor program seems to be agile and responsive to enable them to develop this leadership. So, I think that's very relevant. You still don't have the floor? Emmanuelle?

51:21

[Dieynaba] Can you hear me?

51:22

[Michèle] Yes, yes, yes I can

51:28

[Dieynaba] There, yes speak one listens to you there it is me what I what I what we're expecting of you is really support so that we have strong organizations because the challenges we listed, first of all, require strong organizations, both institutionally and organizationally; that we're supported that we're accompanied on the plan; technical and financial support to meet these challenges. Because if we're talking about platforms now, if we're talking about available funding, and our organizations have difficulty accessing this funding or these platforms, this really requires capacity building at the personal organizational level, but also our organizations. That is, strong organizations that are being set up elsewhere, and there are spin-offs and successes, and we're

asking for this support so that girls and women with disabilities really have strong organizations because we know where we're going, we know where we are, but how, with what means, and where to do it. So that's a challenge before us, and we're asking the Canadian government to help us technically with that, so we can be strong organizations, but also members who really respond to our needs; members who can really meet these challenges together because the diagnosis has been made, and as you said earlier, we are completing our work by Country, and that's general, especially in Africa. So what we're left with now are strong organizations to bring answers to these questions.

53:30

[Michèle] Absolutely. So thank you very much, I see the time is running out. I think, Emmanuelle, that we are going to have time for just one more question, so you have the difficult task of selecting one last question, since many of you will have to leave us at noon. So, we want to end together and give the floor to Anne, who's going to give us her recommendations. So

54:04

[Emmanuelle] One last question - I'm going to go with the question that was asked the quickest, but there were some very good questions. The question was actually addressed to Dieynaba, and the question was if you could share something you're particularly proud of - an accomplishment. So that was the Question, that's going to be the last one, but there'll be a future webinar for all the other projects that could be funded from the place of deaf people. So thank you very much for all your questions. Dieynaba.

54:32

[Dieynaba] Thank you, Emmanuelle. I've built confidence in myself by putting education, training and strengthening so my knowledge continues through me. Will recognized this by sending me to external organizations, but also by giving me positions of responsibility, which means being disabled doesn't mean you can't be successful. I'd also like to share a question that's really close to my heart. There is a case in 2019 of a disabled woman who was abused by her adoptive father, and we took the case to court and the perpetrator was arrested. We suffered a lot of ignorance and harassment, but also a lot of disabled people attended the hearing, and the man was convicted. It was the culmination of a lot of action and awareness-raising that led to a start of a new awareness, but even so we've had successes and still face many challenges, as I said earlier. There's also a lack of investment on the part of the Senegalese government and the resources for civil society. There's the cumbersome judicial procedures, the high cost of justice, the lack of knowledge of our legal texts; all this contributes to a glaring lack of access to justice for women and girls with disabilities. These are also the challenges that lie ahead, we certainly have successes, but the challenges are still there. So thank you.

56:45

[Michèle] Many thanks to you three. It's a long march for women to reach all their rights, but progress is certainly being made and you are models of commitment. Now without further ado, I'm going to give the the floor to Anne Delorme, Director of Humanity & Inclusion Canada, who will

share with you the findings of the Briefing Note that inspired this webinar. So Anne, you have the floor.

Closing Remarks by Anne Delorme

57:18

[Anne] Thank you Michèle. So I'm a white woman with blond hair, I'm wearing a blue jacket, I'm in my mid-forties, and I have a small pin on my jacket with the image of a hand grouping the letters "HI" for Humanity & Inclusion, or Handicap International. We have five recommendations, it's really perfect, then, just to say we hear very clearly in these five recommendations the comments that have already been raised by our panelists. What we see is the need for this specific, cross-functional approach, as well as for targeted funding. Funding is still the NIR of the war, and even though we are entering an extremely difficult context, not just in Canada but around the world, we're seeing tighter cuts. We have to make sure that it's not the inclusive programs for people with disabilities - the most marginalized populations - who are the first targets of these budget cuts.

So very quickly, the first recommendation is to ensure funds to support core funding and capacity building for organizations led by women with disabilities, it can't be any simpler than that these organizations are needed to defend women's rights and they need to be funded, and they're not currently funded enough, that much is clear.

Secondly, to recognize that disabled women's organizations are key actors and ensure effective representation of disabled women as human rights defenders. As has often been pointed out, women with disabilities and their organizations are often excluded from the disability rights movement, which is instead led by men. They can also be excluded from feminist movements, yet the reality is very specific - their priority is very specific, so it's really important for them to create stronger networks; sometimes there aren't several organizations in one country. So these regional efforts are also very important to bring organizations together, so that they can share best practices, develop winning strategies, and feel encouraged.

Thirdly, set aside funds for mainstreaming disability in women's rights and gender equality programs. So again, we have a feminist approach, we have an emphasis on women's rights, but we really also need to include women with disabilities in this programming. And it's possible, it's even necessary, for funders to use the different markers, the different indicators of equity, so that we can see and ensure accountability mechanisms and importability so that these funds—to ensure that these funds actually reach women's disability organizations, as we've seen with people in the past. Here were beautiful words; maybe one we say we're going to use an intersectional approach, then at the bottom of the page we say which is inclusive of women with disabilities, of LGBTQI people. But really when we checked on the ground and we looked at the reports, it was very superficial. So we can learn from this history to ensure that we do not repeat the same mistakes with disabled women.

So that brings me to recommendation number 4 on the insured data; we have data because what's measured is achieved. And finally we talked about the specific approach of also ensuring that intersectional approaches or sectoral approaches—no matter whether it's sexual and reproductive rights, whether it's gender-based violence, whether it's education as we emphasized today, or on

health—ensure that rights are a component for women with disabilities. So, I'm running out of time but I think we've made a good summary of what's been said today. Thank you very much.

1:01:50

[Michèle] Thank you. I really invite you to read the note, it's very short, but very precise. So it can support us in our engagement. We have three great defenders of the rights of women living with disabilities who have called on us to support them, so I invite you to read this note to support Humanity & Inclusion. And I'd like to highlight because in the chat box there were also testimonials from other organizations involved. I know that Humanity & Inclusion will take note of your messages and unanswered questions. I think this meeting testifies to the importance of getting together to take stock. It's really a feminist issue, rightly so, which needs to be promoted better, to be promoted more widely by all our allied networks. So, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you. I'd also like to thank the Humanity & Inclusion team, who have provided organization and technical support. You will receive a brief survey, please respond, it will help us follow up on this activity. I wish for our friends on the other side of the Atlantic a good evening, good night, good afternoon for those who are in Quebec and Canada. I wish you goodbye in solidarity.