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**Bridging the Gap strengthens the  
capacities of the National Council  
Disability Focal Points in Burkina  
Faso**

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From the 11th to the 18th of July, in Ougadougou (Burkina Faso), Bridging the Gap II held the training activity entitled “**The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and inclusion: promotion and integrated protection of the rights of persons with disabilities through synergies between institutions and civil society – The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the local regulatory framework and their application**” « *Formation sur la CDPH, les objectifs du développement durable, le cadre réglementaire national et l'application des règles* ». The initiative aimed at strengthening the capacities of the focal points of the **National Multisectoral Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Persons with Disability (COMUD/Handicap)** in line with the expected results 2 and 3 of the Project Bridging the Gap.

The Council, responsible for guiding actions to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities and for monitoring and supporting the implementation of the CRDP, is formed by 76 members. Those members represent government institutions at central and local level, organizations of persons with disability, civil society, the private sector and donors.

■ The sessions were attended by 69 members of the National Multi-  
■ sectoral Council for the Protection and Promotion of Persons with Disability: the governors of the 13 regions, 12 regional directors of social services, 15 representatives of ministries, the Prime Minister's Office, the Presidency of Burkina Faso, 4 federations of associations of disabled people, 13 regional coordination mechanisms of people with disabilities, 6 non-governmental organizations and civil society associates and a representative of the private sector.

The activity, organized by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) (<https://www.aics.gov.it/language/en/>) as implementing partner of the project in **Burkina Faso**, consisted of two training sessions of three days each: the first from the 11th to the 13th of July and the second from the 16th to the 18th of the same month. Both sessions were moderated by the Permanent Secretary of COMUD/Handicap, Mr. Boukary Savadogo, who manifested the high commitment of the Burkina Faso Government that has recently organized the first national forum of persons with disability towards the subject.

The training was carried out by a pool of trainers led by Giampiero Griffo, head of the Italian Disability and Development Network (RIDS) (<http://www.ridsnetwork.org/en/who-we-are/>) and Michele Falavigna, senior disability advisor at Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau (AIFO) (<http://www.aifo.it/english/>), two experts with over 20 years of experience in the field of disability and sustainable and inclusive development. The training sessions also benefited of the intervention of Maryam Ouedraogo, Lassimane Kounkorgo, respectively head of training and head of research at COMUD Handicap, Mr. Issa Palenfo and Mr. Souleymane Ouedraogo, two trainers from **FEBAH** and **ReNOH**, the main Burkinabé Federations of disability organizations. The spirit of this event was reflected by the diverse team that participated, which included not only people with disabilities, but also from different backgrounds, nationalities and gender.

■ The training raised awareness on the CRPD's principles and its  
■ specific content, on the Sustainable Development Goals, it informed the participants on the country's existing legal framework, laws and decrees, appreciated how the country was among the first signatories of the Convention and how its spirit was reflected in the Law 012/2010 for the Protection and Promotion of Persons with Disability. The group work exercises allowed the participants to reflect on their role, to express their expectations, identify possible obstacles while formulating a common way forward.

For the majority of participants this was the first time that they had the opportunity to attend a training on the CRDP. Therefore, good foundations were put into place so as to build a common knowledge and reinforce the common identity of the Focal Points, to ensure more inclusive planning, the mainstreaming of disability in programs, so that persons with disability will not be subject of further stigmatization by the society. Mr. Griffo invited all the participants to consider how society can make a persons with disability more vulnerable.

The relevance of the training was also recognized by the opening remark of the **State Secretary for Social Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Fight against Social Exclusion, Yvette Dembélé**, that said: "I welcome the fact that this first training and exchange session with the Italian experts, the local experts, the representatives of the institutions and the representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities, will make a decisive turning point for the consideration given to disability in the planning of the different sectors."

It is also worth mentioning that this training involved persons with disabilities at all levels, being a cooperative of persons with disability Tigoung Nonma that provided catering to one of the sessions. Likewise, the hotel hosting the event was a nice example of collaborative and solidary behaviour since it decided to renounce to part of its income to benefit the association.

■ The Bridging the Gap II team looks forward to these training  
■ sessions being replicated over time so as to allow the focal points to further foster the CRPD and SDGs translation in the Burkina Faso legislative and normative agenda and the application of existing norms to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

### **Exchange of experiences Italy-Burkina Faso**

On July 19th, following the training activity, a meeting between the representatives of the Italian disability movement and the local federations of persons with disabilities in Burkina Faso was held at the AICS office in Ouagadougou. The encounter aimed at promoting and exchange experience and information among the representatives of associations of people with disabilities, as well as enhancing the mutual knowledge on the mechanisms of active participation, the enforcement mechanisms of the protection rules and the operational capacity of the associations.

The session brought together the two Italians experts Giampiero Griffo, and Michele Falavigna, members of the Burkinabe Federation for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (FEBAH), of the Network of Organizations of People with Disabilities (ReNOH), of the National Coalition of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (CNAPH), of the National Union of Blind People (UN-ABPAM) and members of the National Federation of Students with Disabilities (AEEHB).

On July 20th, Mr. Griffo and Mr. Falavigna met with Italian development practitioners active in Burkina Faso to advocate for the mainstreaming of disability in development cooperation projects implemented in the country.

The meeting, held at the AICS headquarters in Ouagadougou, was attended by representatives of nine NGOs (Acra, CIAI, Tamat, Medicus Mundi, CISV, GVC, TDHI, Cesvium, Mani Tese), that have been introduced to the CRDP and the newly issued AICS' Guidelines on Disability, in order for them to have an introduction on the principles and the history of the Convention, its cross-cutting dimension, the twin-track approach (mainstreaming and specific

interventions), and to underline the importance of accessibility and universal design in all the facilities together with the need of monitoring tools.



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