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A growing network of 23+ Partner Organisations
Women-led Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, Inclusive feminist organisations



43 projects supported since 2018

through the MIW Seed Fund

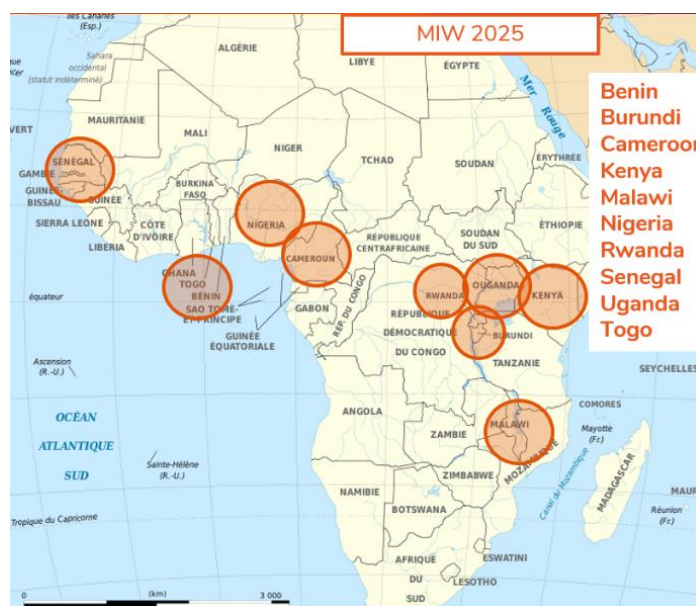


1 global project team based in France and on the African continent

1 Technical Advisory Committee composed of worldwide experts



10 countries



Who are we?

We are a feminist, anti-ableist, intersectional project. We are allied with African women and girls with disabilities.

Making It Work (MIW), initially an HI initiative to support the effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), has been since 2015 focusing on **actions led by women with disabilities**.

The Making It Work Gender and Disability Project has since documented 28 good practices in 10 countries aimed at **preventing and responding to gender-based violence** and **promoting the rights** of women and girls

with disabilities in all areas and at all levels, including in climate action spaces.

MIW is a long-term project committed to **driving social and political change** towards intentionally inclusive and fair societies where all women and girls in their diversities can meaningfully participate, lead and live free from violence.



What do we do?



Feminist Disability Leadership:

MIW works with and supports women leaders with disabilities using a **rights-based approach** to promote more **gender-inclusive disability rights spaces**, more **disability-inclusive and accessible feminist spaces**.



Intersectionality: MIW addresses the **multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination** that women and

girls with disabilities face. We developed with 2 Partners organisations from Nigeria and Kenya the "[How-to-Guide: intersectionality in practice](#)" which provides concrete steps and tools for adopting an intersectional approach to designing and launching projects that will leave no woman behind. We provide **expertise and training packages** to organisations around the world on how to practically adopt an intersectional approach. We have trained 270+ activists and development workers from 30+ organisations since 2022.



Technical and Financial support:

MIW offers **tailored and reinforced technical support and capacity development** to partner organisations, valuing their expertise while helping to strengthen their strategies. collaboration enhances the **quality, impact, and sustainability** of their actions. We work closely with Partner organisations to co-construct **training**

programmes that recognize their unique expertise and equip them with international standards; preparing them to also serve as trainers. Core topics include gender equality, gender-based violence, intersectionality and diversity, the rights of women with disabilities, access to justice, as well as organisational development. We also deliver training and guidance on implementing key technical tools and standards, such as the Washington Group Short Set and accessibility measures.

Women with disabilities' organisations are severely under-resourced. The MIW Seed Fund supports Partners to **strengthen their organisational structures** and enhance the **effectiveness** of their efforts to **advocate** for their rights and combat GBV. Since 2018, MIW has supported and funded **43 projects** across the African continent.



Evidence-based advocacy: MIW

amplifies the voices of women leaders with disabilities and influence policies through **participation** in international women's rights and disability rights events (CSW, Global Disability Summit, etc.), and through **contributions** and interventions at the UN and pan-African levels. MIW encourages the emergence of **new generations of leaders**. In the spirit of **linguistic justice**, MIW also focuses on providing access to opportunities and developing advocacy capacities of West African French-speaking activists. These women are among the most marginalised activists due to the language barrier.



Why it matters?

Providing support to women with disabilities activists and organisations is crucial to boost their growth, impact and performance, as rights violations, unmet needs and lack of access to essential services are high, while deliberate inclusion and support for their priorities and organisations remains extremely low.

- **Women comprise up to 75% of persons with disabilities** in low and middle-income countries¹
- **Systemic sexist and ableist discriminations and inequalities:** women and girls with disabilities have reduced power and status in relationships, households and communities, and are more likely to face discrimination than men and boys with disabilities and women and girls without disabilities²
- **High exposure to GBV:** women and girls with disabilities experience GBV at disproportionately higher rates, and in unique forms as compared to women without disabilities.
 - Women with disabilities are at least twice as likely to experience domestic violence and other forms of sexual violence as women without disabilities³
 - Women and girls with disabilities are 2 to 3 times more likely to be child brides, experience early pregnancy and female genital mutilation⁴
- **Lack of access to quality health information and services,** including significant unmet needs in sexual and reproductive health rights and services.
- **Poverty and restricted economic participation:** only 20% of women with disabilities have a job⁵
- **Impeached political participation and decision-making:** women with disabilities are underrepresented in politics and face numerous barriers to political participation. They remain largely excluded from decision-making and advocacy processes⁶
- **African policies are still not gender and disability responsive:** out of 31 GBV policies analysed in the 2024 Policy review by MIW, 68% neglect women with disabilities, and only 6% include targeted measures⁷
- **Human rights and feminist spaces are not inclusive yet and women with disabilities remain excluded from meaningfully participating in gender equality spaces⁸**



¹ UN Women, Making the SDGs count for women and girls with disabilities, 2017

² UN 2016a

³ S. Ortoleva and H. Lewis, entitled 'Forgotten Sisters – A Report on Violence against Women with Disabilities', Northeastern University School of Law, 2012

⁴ UN Women 2016

⁵ WHO/World Bank 2011

⁶ HI Making It Work, WEI and others, [Gender, Disability, and Participation in Political and Public Life, Submission to the CRPD Committee Day of General Discussion on Article 29](#), 15th February 2025

⁷ MIW, [2024 Policy Review of GBV policies in Africa](#)

⁸ Inclusive Generation Equality Collective

Scaling up women-led OPDs successes

Example #1 from Benin: From Barriers to Business: Dédji Champions Financial Empowerment for Women with Disabilities



NGO Dédji, a women-led OPD representing women with all types of disabilities in Southern Benin, has been working with MIW to build its first advocacy campaign over the past three years. This campaign aims to transform microfinance institutions into more disability and gender-inclusive entities. This collaboration has yielded tangible results, including hiring men and women with disabilities as staff of microfinance agencies and the removal of

some accessibility barriers. In addition, NGO Dédji has been able to innovate and establish the Network of Women Entrepreneurs with Disabilities from Benin, "H-Asuka", a first for West Africa. This initiative provides a solidarity and business space for the promotion of common demands, the delivery of training and the sharing of experiences.

Example #2 from Uganda: Advancing Inclusion: LIDDWA Trains Providers to Better Serve Women with Disabilities



Based in Northern Uganda, LIDDWA (Lira District Disabled Women Association) has worked for several years with MIW to promote inclusive essential services for women with disabilities—health, legal aid, and police services among them. LIDDWA's team has become expert in training professionals on women with disabilities' rights, accessibility, and international standards like the Washington Group Short Set of Questions. These trainings and ongoing technical collaborations with public and private service providers have led to

improved disaggregated data, better physical access, and reduced ableist behaviours. LIDDWA has also strengthened its internal inclusion of women with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, deepening its understanding of their rights, aspirations, and needs.

What's new?



Global Disability Summit – Berlin, April 2025

MIW participated actively in the GDS, contributing to the panel dedicated to the rights of women and girls with disabilities. MIW emphasised the ongoing importance of 'Diversity, Equity and Inclusion' and underscored the necessity of cross-movement collaboration.

They stressed that collaboration is essential for advancing the rights of women with disabilities and strengthening the feminist and human rights movements, thereby enabling us to overcome anti-rights forces. It was also strongly highlighted that women-led OPDs need core support to grow, hire staff, and plan long-term. At the conclusion of the GDS, Ruth Mkutumula – DIWA, delivered a compelling address, emphasising the necessity of women's leadership and cross-movement collaboration. She emphasised

the shift from symbolic to rights-based inclusion, as outlined in the Amman-Berlin Declaration. She welcomed the '15% for the 15%' commitment but emphasised the importance of ensuring that it reflects the full diversity within the 15%: "By the next Summit, we want the numbers, the stories, the voices—especially those of women leaders with disabilities from the Global South—fully represented in GDS governance." MIW also celebrated its 10th anniversary in distinguished company.

Submission to CRPD Committee on article 29 – Geneva, March 2025

After contributing to CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 40 on women's representation in decision-making (October 2024), MIW joined Women Enabled International and nine other feminist OPDs in a [strong joint submission to the CRPD Committee on Article 29](#), addressing the rights of persons with disabilities to political and public life. MIW also delivered an oral intervention on the participation of women with disabilities in decision-making and public life.

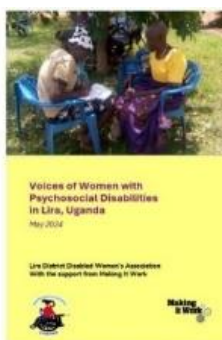
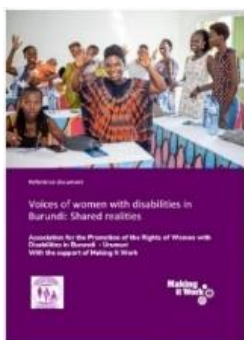
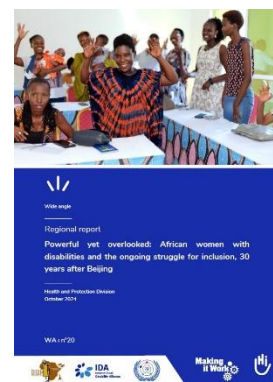


CSW69 – New-York, March 2025

MIW, DIWA and COVAW, held a successful in-person event featuring five women leaders with disabilities. Building on the *Powerful yet Overlooked* report, they exposed the exclusion of African women with disabilities from the economy, GBV response, and decision-making. By amplifying their voices and engaging key actors, the event secured bold, inclusive commitments to advance their rights over the next five years.

“My Voice from Africa” Survey and Beijing+30 review process and “Powerful Yet Overlooked” regional parallel report (May to November 2024)

244 women and gender-diverse persons with disabilities from 23 countries on the African continent were surveyed. The results and further analysis fuelled the Regional parallel report with Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA), IDA (International Disability Alliance) and World Federation of the Deaf: ["Powerful Yet Overlooked: African Women with Disabilities and the ongoing struggle for inclusion 30 years after Beijing"](#).



New “Voices of...” MIW collection (Burundi, Uganda, Benin to come soon) - ongoing

With support from MIW, partner organisations have published *"Voices of Women with Psychosocial Disabilities in Lira, Uganda"* (LIDDWA), *"Voices of Women with Disabilities in Burundi: Shared Realities"* (ABPDFH) and lately *"Echoes of hope for women with psychosocial disabilities in Kassanda, Uganda"* (MUDIWA). The "Voices of..." series features short, data-driven publications by women with disabilities themselves. It helps break the invisibility surrounding women and girls facing multiple and intersectional discrimination and ensures their diverse voices are heard and considered.

MIW's Global Partners



MIW Coordinator, Sophie Pecourt, is Co-Chair of the IDDC Gender task group



Humanity & Inclusion

Handicap International Federation – Humanity & Inclusion (HI) is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) headquartered in France with a presence in over 50 countries worldwide. The organisation operates in a wide range of contexts, from humanitarian to development settings. Since its foundation in 1982, HI has been dedicated to promoting the inclusion of all members of society, with a specific focus on the rights of women and men with disabilities. HI operates across various sectors, including Health and Protection, Rehabilitation, Resilience and Inclusion, and Armed Violence Reduction. The organisation also conducts cross-cutting work on Advocacy as well as Innovation. As a founding member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which led to the signing of the Mine Ban Treaty, HI was a co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.



Stay in touch

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