Terms of Reference

Situation Analysis: Engagement of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities in Climate Action and Climate Decision-Making

Background

Persons with disabilities are among those most affected by climate change, through extreme heat, flooding, drought, storms, displacement and the disruption of health, food, water and support systems. They are also holders of knowledge and expertise that climate action needs. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) requires States to consult closely with, and actively involve, persons with disabilities through their representative organisations in decisions that affect them (Article 4.3 and Article 33.3), and to protect them in situations of risk (Article 11). The Paris Agreement also recognises the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate action.

Persons with disabilities are increasingly named in national climate documents such as nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs), usually as a "vulnerable group". Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are also increasingly visible in climate events, statements and trainings. But little is known about what OPDs are actually doing in climate action, or what real part they play in the decisions that shape it. Much of what is reported as "engagement" consists of training and capacity-building, awareness-raising, advocacy and the adoption of policy language. These can matter, but they do not in themselves show that OPDs have a say in what governments decide and fund, or that anything concrete is being done on the ground.

This assignment seeks to provide a clear, evidence-based picture of the current situation: where and how OPDs are engaged in climate action and in climate decision-making, what tangible activities and results exist, and what stands in the way of more.

Objective

The primary objective of this consultancy is to produce a situation analysis of the engagement of OPDs in climate action and climate decision-making, with a focus on identifying real, tangible activities and results rather than only trainings, advocacy and policy-making.

The analysis should:

- Map what OPDs are actually doing in climate action (for example adaptation, resilience, disaster preparedness, mitigation, emergency response) and where they have a role in climate decision-making, at national level and in sub-national or community activities that connect to national frameworks.

- Distinguish clearly between tangible engagement (a role in decisions that can be shown to have influenced outcomes, or concrete activities that have been funded, implemented or monitored) and activity that is limited to training, awareness-raising, advocacy, consultation or policy statements.
- Document concrete examples of OPD-led or OPD-involved climate action and decision-making, and examples where engagement was sought or claimed but made no practical difference.
- Identify the factors that enable or block engagement, including legal frameworks, accessibility, funding, timing, government and partner attitudes, and OPD capacity and priorities.
- Highlight the diversity of the disability movement and the voices that are often left out.
- Identify gaps and opportunities, and provide practical, evidence-based recommendations for governments, OPDs, donors, UN agencies and climate funds.

What counts as tangible engagement

For the purposes of this assignment, engagement is considered tangible only where there is evidence of something real: a role in a decision with traceable influence, or an activity that is actually carried out, funded and able to be verified. The consultant should apply the following test:

- **Is there something concrete?** A decision, a budget, a programme, a service, a monitoring output or a response that can be pointed to.
- **What was the OPD role?** Leader, partner, member of a decision-making body, implementer or monitor, as opposed to a participant, observer or beneficiary.
- **Can it be verified?** By documents (agreements, decrees, minutes, budgets, reports), by independent informants or by direct observation.
- **Was it accessible and resourced?** Participation was accessible, and the OPD had the funding and support to take part and to deliver.
- **Who was involved?** The OPDs concerned are genuinely representative, led by persons with disabilities, and reflect the diversity of the disability community.

The consultant should record trainings, capacity-building programmes, awareness-raising events, advocacy campaigns, position papers, and the adoption of policy language or commitments as context. They should be reported separately and should be counted as tangible engagement only where they are linked to a concrete, verifiable outcome, such as a seat obtained, a budget allocated or a project implemented. Where OPDs themselves identify them as priorities or preconditions for participation, this should be noted.

The following typology gives a starting point. The consultant will refine it with OPDs at inception.

Type of tangible engagement	Examples of the evidence the consultant should look for
A role in decisions	OPD seats, votes or co-drafting roles on national climate councils, NDC/NAP working groups, disaster risk reduction platforms or climate fund bodies, shown by decrees, terms of reference, minutes and successive drafts; changes to text, targets, indicators or budgets that can be traced to OPD input.
Implementation by OPDs	Climate adaptation, resilience, disaster preparedness or mitigation projects designed and run by OPDs, with budgets, beneficiaries and results, for example accessible early warning, evacuation planning, community water or food security schemes, climate-resilient livelihoods, green job schemes, accessible shelters.
Delivery in partnership	OPDs working as formal partners or sub-grantees with governments, UN agencies, NGOs or climate funds on climate action, with agreements, funding flows and defined responsibilities.
Monitoring and accountability	OPD-led audits, data collection, accessibility checks or monitoring of climate and disaster programmes, with outputs that are acknowledged or acted on by authorities.
Access to resources	Climate finance, grants or contracts received by OPDs; funding of participation costs (interpretation, personal assistance, accessible formats); core as opposed to short-term project funding.
Emergency response	OPD involvement in real responses to floods, heatwaves, storms, droughts and fires, such as checking on members, evacuation support, distribution of aid, or sharing of data with response agencies.

Scope of work

The consultant will design and implement a mixed-methods situation analysis, grounded in the experience of OPDs and verified against documentary records.

Key areas to explore include:

1. Participation in climate decision-making

- Whether OPDs hold seats, votes or defined roles on national climate councils, committees, NDC and NAP coordination structures, disaster risk reduction platforms and climate finance bodies, and the legal or policy basis for this.
- Whether national designated authorities and focal points for climate funds, and national delegations to UNFCCC processes, include or consult OPDs, and how.
- Participation in the development, review and monitoring of NDCs, NAPs, long-term strategies and national reports, and in sectoral decisions on energy, housing, transport, water, agriculture, health, social protection, disaster preparedness and just transition.
- Which stages OPDs were involved in, from agenda-setting to monitoring, who decided who was invited, and what changed as a result.

2. Climate action carried out by OPDs

- Adaptation, resilience, disaster risk reduction and mitigation projects and initiatives designed, led or implemented by OPDs, at national, sub-national and community level.
- OPD roles in early warning, evacuation, shelter and emergency response, and in recovery after climate-related disasters.
- OPD involvement in climate-related livelihoods, green jobs, energy, water, food security and housing initiatives.
- Informal and community-level practices by persons with disabilities and their organisations, including local knowledge and mutual support, which may not be recorded in official reporting.

3. Partnerships and delivery with others

- Formal partnerships, sub-grants and contracts between OPDs and governments, UN agencies, NGOs, climate funds and the private sector on climate action.
- Whether disability inclusion in mainstream climate and disaster programmes is designed with OPDs, delivered by them or only reported on, and what changed for persons with disabilities as a result.
- Whether mainstream climate organisations and coalitions share or block access to decision-making spaces and resources.

4. Resources and climate finance

- Whether OPDs can access national or international climate finance, and how much reaches them directly.
- Whether participation costs (interpretation, personal assistance, transport, accessible formats, staff time) are covered.

- Whether funding to OPDs for climate work is short-term and project-based or core and sustained.

5. Monitoring, data and accountability

- Whether data on persons with disabilities is collected and used in climate and disaster planning, and whether OPDs contribute to it.
- OPD-led monitoring of the accessibility and inclusiveness of climate programmes, and whether authorities respond.
- Whether governments and partners report back to OPDs on how their input was used.

6. Accessibility and quality of processes

- Accessibility of meetings, venues, platforms, documents and communication, including sign language, Braille, Easy Read and plain language.
- Notice periods, language, technical complexity of documents and whether OPDs can realistically prepare and respond.

7. Diversity within the disability movement

The consultant should ensure that the analysis reflects who is, and is not, involved, including:

- Women and girls with disabilities, and organisations led by them
- Youth and children with disabilities, and youth-led OPDs
- Deaf, blind, deafblind, psychosocial and intellectual disability organisations, and organisations of persons with less visible or more stigmatised impairments
- Older persons with disabilities
- Indigenous persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities in rural, coastal, island, drought-prone, flood-prone or otherwise climate-exposed communities
- Cross-disability and national umbrella organisations as well as grassroots OPDs, with attention to who has access to national spaces
- Others with intersecting identities as relevant

8. Perspectives, gaps and priorities

- How government ministries, climate focal points, UN agencies, climate funds, donors and civil society describe their own engagement with OPDs, compared with OPD accounts and the documentary record.
- What OPDs consider to be their priorities in climate action, where the biggest gaps lie, and what practical support would make the most difference.

Methodology

The consultant is expected to:

- Consult and work closely with persons with disabilities and OPDs, and IDA members across different regions
- Agree with the IDA, at inception, a sample of 18 countries, selected to reflect different regions, income levels, climate risk profiles and strengths of the disability movement, including both promising and weak examples.
- Review national climate documents (NDCs, NAPs, climate laws, national communications and transparency reports, institutional decrees and terms of reference, meeting records, budgets), project and programme documents of governments, UN agencies, climate funds and NGOs, and OPD reports, and analyse where persons with disabilities and OPDs are referenced and whether any role, activity or funding is attached.
- Carry out key informant interviews and, where appropriate, focus group discussions, site visits, or a short survey with OPD leaders and members, government officials, climate focal points, UN and donor representatives, climate civil society, and, where relevant, community members.
- Build a mapping of identified tangible activities and decision-making roles, recording for each the type, the OPD role, the funding and the evidence source.
- Hold a validation discussion with OPDs and other key informants on the draft findings,
- Ensure ethical, safe and accessible engagement, apply a disability-inclusive approach throughout, and prioritise informed consent, confidentiality and do-no-harm principles, particularly where OPDs operate in restrictive civic space and could face reprisals.

Deliverables

- An inception report setting out the analytical framework, country sample, data collection tools and work plan.
- A situation analysis report (30–40 pages, excluding annexes) presenting the overall findings, comparison across countries, key themes, enablers and barriers, gaps and opportunities, and recommendations.
- A country profile for each country in the sample (2–3 pages each) summarising the situation.
- A short policy brief (2–4 pages) and an executive summary.

Oversight

The consultant will work under the guidance of IDA Climate & Humanitarian Senior Adviser

Timeline

The dates below are proposed and may be adjusted at contracting.

- Contract start: December 2026
- Inception report: 15 January 2027
- Draft report: 15 March 2027
- Final report: 31 April 2027

Consultant Profile

- Demonstrated experience in situation analysis, policy and institutional analysis and rigorous mixed-methods research
- Knowledge of the CRPD and disability rights, and experience working with persons with disabilities and/or OPDs
- Experience of participatory and ethical research with civil society, including in restrictive civic space contexts
- Knowledge of climate action, disaster risk reduction and climate finance at national and international level (NDCs, NAPs, UNFCCC, climate funds)
- Ability to produce clear, evidence-based reports in English; working knowledge of French, Spanish or other languages is an asset

Persons with disabilities and nationals of countries in the Global South are strongly encouraged to apply.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit:

- CV
- Cover letter
- Brief methodology proposal outlining how they would carry out the analysis.
- An example of previous relevant work
- Proposed number of working days and financial proposal.

The interested individuals are invited to submit all of the above consultancy@ida-secretariat.org indicating in the subject of the email "*OPD meaningful participation climate consultancy*". **The deadline for applications: 10 December 2026.**

Contracting and Remuneration

- A consultancy contract (as per Swiss law) will be signed between the selected consultant and International Disability Alliance.
- Only applicants with valid commercial and/or consultant registration and/or tax numbers will be considered.
- Payments will be made upon agreement with IDA and as per terms set out in the contract.

**Understanding and awareness of IDA safeguarding policies. IDA works in multi-cultural environments and with persons with disabilities, who experience higher rates of discrimination, violence, and abuse. Therefore, we expect any staff, consultant, or collaborator to understand and fully comply with IDA's Safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct (available here: https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/reportingfraud-abuse). IDA will not tolerate any form of abuse, violence, fraud, corruption, or any breach of IDA policies.*