

Inclusion
international



2025 Annual Report





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President's Message

Gathering 600 of us from 74 countries for the 18th World Congress in Sharjah was a defining moment for our movement in 2025. After years of connecting from a distance, coming together face-to-face proved that our collective voice is undeniable.

Our members reminded the world that inclusion isn't a solitary effort. It requires partnership, visibility, and working hard every day to change things. Last year, we saw again that our network thrives when it is active and united. Our approach remains simple and strong: support members to lead and help them connect with each other.

Our work was grounded in people's lives and led by our members. Together, we:

- **Reunited our global family**, using the momentum of the World Congress, the Self-Advocacy Summit, and the Families Summit to set our clear plan for the future.
- **Worked to make sure the world focuses on care and support**, ensuring the lived experiences of families and self-advocates shaped UN reports and international policy.
- **Protected the right to education in crises**, testing new tools and resources that ensure children with disabilities are not left behind during humanitarian disasters.
- **Pushed to make communities truly inclusive**, finishing multi-year projects that supported women leaving institutions in Jordan, trained self-advocate leaders in Southern Africa, and supported political participation in Cameroon.
- **Elevated our shared voice on the global stage**, from leading conversations on the big Issues in our lives at the Global Disability Summit to demanding sexual and reproductive rights at the United Nations.

We will carry this momentum forward into 2026. As we welcome our new Executive Director, Jamie Cooke, we will continue turning the priorities you set in Sharjah into global action.

Thank you for your work. I am grateful for your leadership, and for the way you stand with each other.

Sue Swenson
President

Who we are



Inclusion International is the global network of people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Together, we work for the rights and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities around the world.

For more than 50 years, we have been part of the movement for human rights. We represent over 200 member organisations in 115 countries across our five regions: the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific.

Our members work to make the rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) a reality. We want a world where people with intellectual disabilities and their families can take part in community life, just like everyone else.

Our members have agreed on a **Statement of Unity** that explains what an inclusive world means to us. As a global network, we believe that real inclusion means:

- Supporting people with intellectual disabilities to have control over their lives and make their own decisions.
- Accepting people with intellectual disabilities as equal members of their families and communities.
- Removing the barriers that stop people with intellectual disabilities from taking part in all areas of life.
- Making sure education, healthcare, and other services are accessible to everyone.
- Ending all spaces where people with intellectual disabilities are separated from their communities.
- Celebrating diversity and equality as the foundation of strong and inclusive communities for ALL.

The World Congress

Arriving at our World Congress only a month after becoming Executive Director was an unforgettable introduction to Inclusion International.

In **Sharjah**, our host city, the sense of connection was immediate. People spoke with each other in many languages. Plenary sessions were shaped by lived experience as much as by policy discussions. This was not just an event, it was our movement in motion.

The World Congress showed both the urgency of our work and the possibilities ahead. Urgency, because too many people with intellectual disabilities are still segregated in education, excluded from work, denied legal capacity, and living in poverty. Possibility, because **self-advocates and families are organising, influencing laws, and changing systems in every region.**

Throughout the week, one message was clear: **rights must be put into practice.** As we approach the 20th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2026, putting these rights into practice cannot slow down.

What stayed with me most was the commitment across the Congress — a shared belief that **change is possible when self-advocates, families, and allies work together.**

Our task now is to build on the connections made at the World Congress, strengthen national and regional advocacy, and support alliances that work together to change people's daily lives.

The week left me hopeful. The work ahead is serious, and we will move forward together - **We Are Inclusion.**

Jamie Cooke
Executive Director



Inclusion
international



Advocacy

As an international network, we make sure that the voices of our members and the issues that are important to our network are heard in places where important decisions get made, like at the United Nations, in the CRPD Committee, and in other global forums.

Advocacy Milestones

Our progress throughout the year

April

GLOBAL DISABILITY
SUMMIT

In April, at the **Global Disability Summit**, an Inclusion International delegation of 75 people from 32 countries took part and shared their experiences. Our network was present in plenary sessions, side events, and other key discussions. We hosted a side event about **deinstitutionalisation** with the UK government's foreign office (FCDO) and took part in conversations on inclusive education and other issues that matter to our movement.

Our **self-advocacy side event** drew one of the largest audiences at the Summit. For many members, the side event was a chance to connect with each other and to speak directly with their government representatives.

June

COSP

In June, at **COSP**, a self-advocate from Inclusion Australia spoke on behalf of our network at the general debate on using AI to support the inclusion and participation of persons with intellectual disabilities. We also co-hosted a side event on gender and legal capacity with Women Enabled International, where we shared key results from our joint project.

COSP was also an **opportunity to meet with the UN Special Rapporteur** on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms Heba Hagrass, a strong ally of our network and especially of women and families of persons with disabilities. This was a chance to agree on future collaboration on care and support and strengthening the role of families.

September

WORLD CONGRESS

Our **World Congress in Sharjah** was an important moment to discuss our advocacy priorities with members and to hold dedicated sessions on important topics, including care and support. In one session, we highlighted why this agenda is so important for our network, with Ms Heba Hagrass among the speakers. She again underlined the importance of this issue in her closing plenary keynote which brought together 600 participants from around the world.

October

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CARE & SUPPORT

In October, for the **International Day on Care and Support**, we shared a video with family members who spoke about the challenges they face with care and support in their communities. We also produced a podcast with a mother from our network as part of the **Global Alliance for Care** campaign. She explained the realities faced by people with intellectual disabilities and their families, and shared the good practices families are developing to support one another.

2025

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education has always been one of our priority advocacy areas. In 2025, we increased our work at international, regional and national levels to make sure **inclusive education is part of emergency responses**. This was also an important year for us to look at new areas where we can influence and strengthen inclusive education. We focused on humanitarian contexts, climate change, and global data discussions. Our work reflects the changing global development, political and funding landscape.





Publications & Resources

We produce publications, reports, and resources for our members. Often linked to projects and programmes, they share knowledge from across our network and support advocacy on the issues that matter most to us.

Publications & Resources



Throughout 2025, Inclusion International published resources and tools spanning inclusive education, humanitarian action, self-advocacy, and disability rights.

Supporting Families to Become Conversation Leaders on Inclusive Education

with Inclusion Africa, Asdown, ASNIC, SPSP, La Chrysalide, ZAPDD, & KAIH

An inclusive education advocacy toolkit for families of children with intellectual disabilities, available in English, Spanish, French, and Swahili.

What We Learned: Including Girls with Intellectual Disabilities in Crisis Situations

with FENAI, APEE, and the International Rescue Committee

Lessons from girls with intellectual disabilities who experienced displacement, with recommendations for humanitarian organisations and OPDs.

An Introduction to Inclusive Education in Emergencies (EiE): A Learning Tool for OPDs

with Asdown, FNPH, and the International Disability Alliance

An interactive learning tool supporting OPDs to apply their experience to inclusive education in emergencies, developed across multiple countries.

How Self-Advocacy Groups Form and Make a Difference

with Friendly Barn Development Foundation and APEGADA

A case study report that looks at how self-advocacy groups come together, with examples from Zambia and Angola about the work of self-advocacy groups.

My Body (but not) My Choice

with KAIH, SABE, Liber, Women Enabled, TCI, and more

An easy to understand report about the right of women with disabilities to make choices about their bodies, relationships, and having children.

Publications & Resources



Citizenship and Political Participation — Series of Guides **with Sightsavers**

Four plain language guides covering local development, elections, voting rights, and decision-making — available in French and English.

Big Issues in Our Lives **Prepared for the Global Disability Summit**

Plain language guides designed by self-advocates that explain our rights in employment, education, healthcare, community living, and more.

Using Listen Include Respect for Inclusive Projects **with Friendly Barn Development Foundation**

This case study shares an example of how Listen Include Respect can be used to design and run inclusive international development projects.

Supporting the Work of Family Groups: A Toolkit for Family Advocacy.

with Inclusion Africa, Asdown, ASNIC, SPSP, La Chrysalide, ZAPDD, & KAIH

A toolkit to support families to come together as peer support and advocacy groups, available in English, Spanish, French, and Swahili.



Programmes

Members Working Together

Programmes are how we support our members to learn new skills that will help them address issues they care about.

Programmes

Key achievements



Empower Us

Empower Us is our programme to help members strengthen self-advocate leadership.

The Empower Us programme is led by self-advocates, for self-advocates.

We want more people with intellectual disabilities to learn about human rights and advocacy so that they can advocate for inclusion.

What we have done in 2025:

- **Ran training in Jordan** — As part of our project on closing institutions in Jordan, we ran Empower Us training for women with disabilities living in institutions. The training helped women in institution start to build self-advocacy skills - starting with confidence, identity, and decision-making. The training helped prepare women who left the institution to advocate for their needs in the community. A self-advocate leader from Egypt led the final round of training in 2025, which helped participants learn about how to take part in their communities.
- **Evaluated the programme** — The Empower Us team did an evaluation of the programme. We spoke with self-advocates and organisations who had taken part in the training, as well as with trainers who delivered the sessions. The findings will help us understand how to improve support and grow the programme more effectively.
- **Showcased self-advocacy groups at the World Congress** — The session “Starting and Supporting Self-Advocacy Groups” brought together self-advocates from the network who shared how the Empower Us training supported the work of their group.
- **Celebrated alumni** — At the Global Self-Advocacy Summit many Empower Us alumni participated and shared the self-advocacy work they have done, including people from Nepal, Egypt, Colombia, Benin, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon.



Programmes

Key achievements



Listen Include Respect

The [Listen Include Respect \(LIR\) guidelines](#) help organisations understand what it means to be inclusive.

We created the guidelines together with Down Syndrome International's network in 2022.

What we have done in 2025:

- **Delivered training-of-trainers sessions** — In January, our team led a Listen, Include, Respect training-of-trainers session in Toronto, Canada. Members learned how to involve people with intellectual disabilities in decision-making and left with practical tools to train others in their organisations.
- **Led sessions at the World Congress** — Members who use LIR shared their experiences with how the guidelines help them make their organisations more inclusive.
- **Expanded the website into new languages** — The Listen Include Respect website was translated into Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, and Indonesian, making it easier for more people to access.
- **Created easy-to-read translations** — Easy-to-read versions of documents were produced for the Global Disability Inclusion Report and the COSP Civil Society Forum.
- **Worked with paid groups of self-advocate experts** — Small reference groups of self-advocate experts guide the creation of translations and accessible information by Inclusion International - in our own projects and in the translations we make for other organisations. Including self-advocate leaders in this process, a key LIR principle, ensures materials are easy to understand and that those involved can share them confidently with others. Self-advocate experts are paid for their contributions.



Programmes

Key achievements



Catalyst for Inclusive Education

Catalyst for Inclusive Education is Inclusion International's programme for transforming education systems by supporting peer learning, building technical expertise, and creating collective advocacy.

Catalyst connects Inclusion International members with regional response teams made up of technical experts to give them the tailored guidance they need for sustainable policy reform, implementation, and monitoring.

What we have done in 2025:

- **Expanded our community of practice** — We helped members from different regions meet and talk. They developed new practical learning tools aligned with Article 24 of the CRPD.
- **Supported learners in crisis settings** — We launched interactive learning modules for humanitarian staff and drafted reports on big barriers facing learners with intellectual disabilities in emergency contexts.
- **Built capacity at the national level** — We strengthened the skills of more than 220 teachers and 260 family members in inclusive ways of teaching and rights-based advocacy.
- **Influenced international standards** — At the Global Disability Summit and COSP, we worked with the UN Special Rapporteur to promote inclusive education strategies, secured new global commitments, and strengthened shared focus on data collection and accountability for learners with disabilities.





Projects

We work in partnership with members on specific time-limited projects in their countries.

Projects

Key achievements

Inclusive Education in Emergency Settings

Inclusion International, the International Disability Alliance, Asdown Colombia, and the Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées (FNPH) work together in Colombia and Niger to make sure children with disabilities are included in education during emergencies.

With support from Education Cannot Wait, we help humanitarian and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) work together to create learning spaces that include everyone.

In 2025, we:

- **Looked at barriers to inclusion** — We gathered stories from 82 children and 80 caregivers and used them to draft a toolkit that helps organisations understand and address the barriers children face.
- **Provided training** — We worked with 221 teachers and 268 family members on inclusive teaching and advocacy.
- **Worked together** — We supported 41 OPDs to take part in national education coordination groups and share their expertise.
- **Tested new tools** — We piloted an online learning tool for humanitarian staff and shared our work at the Global Disability Summit.

In 2026, we will launch our final toolkits and learning modules in multiple languages, publish four case studies about how the partnerships worked, and carry out an independent review of the project's impact.



Projects

Key achievements

Collecting Care and Support Experiences

Inclusion International is working on a project funded by the SAGE Fund to make sure the global care and support agenda includes people with intellectual disabilities and our families. The project runs until June 2026.

The project is about making sure families and self-advocates are part of global discussions. We want care systems that respect our dignity, support choice, and reflect our real experiences.

In 2025, we:

- **Collected information** — We ran a survey with families and people with intellectual disabilities to understand their care and support needs.
- **Shaped UN recommendations** — We used the survey results to inform the report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.
- **Discussed key findings** — We organised discussions with our members to look at the report's findings and what they mean for our movement.
- **Held consultations** — At our World Congress, self-advocates and families shared their challenges and their demands for better support.
- **Gathered case studies** — We collected case studies from members around the world to highlight good, inclusive care and support models.

In 2026, we will launch a global report that brings together all the information and stories we have collected. This report will help us advocate for inclusive care and support solutions that work for everyone.



Projects

Key achievements

Self-Advocacy in Southern Africa

Inclusion International's work to support strong self-advocacy groups in Southern Africa came to an end in 2025. The project was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland.

Earlier in the project, we worked with our members in Zambia and Angola to train self-advocates and start new self-advocacy groups. Over the last two years, these groups led advocacy in their communities on different issues.

In our final year, self-advocates in Southern Africa:

- **Met with education, health, and social services** — to talk about how people with intellectual disabilities are treated in their communities.
- **Held meetings** — in schools, markets, and other community spaces to talk about inclusion.
- **Hosted training sessions** — for people with intellectual disabilities about their right to vote.
- **Took part in Inclusion International's World Congress** — in Sharjah to share their work and experiences.

Over three years, **the project trained 30 self-advocate leaders, supported 130 self-advocates to take part in advocacy, worked with 725 family members, and reached 475 people in the community.**

Although the project has ended, the self-advocacy groups in Zambia and Angola will continue working to make their communities more inclusive and to support new self-advocates to join their work.

When I joined, I felt very happy and free, like a heavy burden I had been carrying for years was finally removed. Before this, I had a lot of thoughts but no platform to speak.

– Ruth, Self-Advocate from Zambia

Projects

Key achievements

Deinstitutionalisation in Jordan

Inclusion International worked with Humanity & Inclusion to provide technical support to their EU Commission-funded Deinstitutionalisation project in Jordan.

The project ended in late 2025 and supported Jordan's national strategy to move women with intellectual disabilities from institutions into the community.

In our final year, we:

- **Supported women through Empower Us** — We support women with intellectual disabilities living in the Tafilah institution through our Empower Us programme, helping them build the tools and confidence they need for real community inclusion as they move back to their communities.
- **Strengthened family networks** — We brought families together through a Family Summit and a training of trainers for relatives of people in institutions. These sessions helped families share experiences and prepare for important role in supporting community living as their family members move out of the institution.
- **Built civil society advocacy** — We hosted a Listen Include Respect training and supported local organisations to prepare their parallel report to the CRPD.
- **Mentored community organisations** — We coached two community-based organisations to help them change their services to become fully inclusive.

The project closed with an event where survivors of institutions, families, and people involved in the work shared its impact and celebrated the path forward for inclusive communities in Jordan.



Projects

Key achievements

Political Participation in Cameroon

Inclusion International worked with Sightsavers in Cameroon on a project to promote political participation and citizenship for people with intellectual disabilities. This work was funded by Irish Aid.

Through consultations, training, and resource development, we worked to support families and self-advocates to take part in political life and to influence government actors to make voting and election rules more inclusive.

In our final year, we:

- **Built knowledge on rights** — We facilitated training sessions for 39 participants to build their understanding of citizenship and political rights.
- **Drafted recommendations** — We developed recommendations to identify and remove barriers to political inclusion.
- **Created tools for self-advocates** — We created resources in [English](#) and [French](#) to help self-advocates take part in politics.
- **Trained key stakeholders** — We trained government and civil society actors to share recommendations and advocate for inclusive change.

We also shared resources developed by the project's reference group to help partners use these tools in their ongoing work.

These efforts help make sure that the recommendations made by self-advocates lead to real change in future political processes.



Projects

Key achievements

Legal Capacity and Sexual and Reproductive Health

In 2025, we finished a project about how women make choices about their sexual and reproductive health in different countries.

Inclusion International worked on this project with Women Enabled International and our members in Spain, Kenya and the USA.

Organisations of persons with psychosocial disabilities in Fiji and Uganda were also part of the work.

Through this project, we spoke with women about their right to make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. We wanted to understand whether this right is respected in different countries.

In our final year, we:

- **Co-wrote an easy read report** — We worked with a group of women self-advocates to write an easy-to-understand report about what we learned. The report includes recommendations to make sure women everywhere can make their own decisions.
- **Held a COSP18 workshop** — We held a workshop at COSP18 where government representatives, OPDs and organisations working on sexual and reproductive health learned directly from women with intellectual disabilities and psychosocial disabilities. Together, we explored ways to make systems more inclusive.
- **Shared key messages at World Congress** — We presented the main ideas from the report at Inclusion International's World Congress in Sharjah and showed how women with disabilities led the project from start to finish.



Projects

Where did we work with our members in 2025?



Self-Advocacy in Southern Africa

Angola, Zambia



Deinstitutionalisation in Jordan

Jordan



Citizenship and political participation in Cameroon

Cameroon



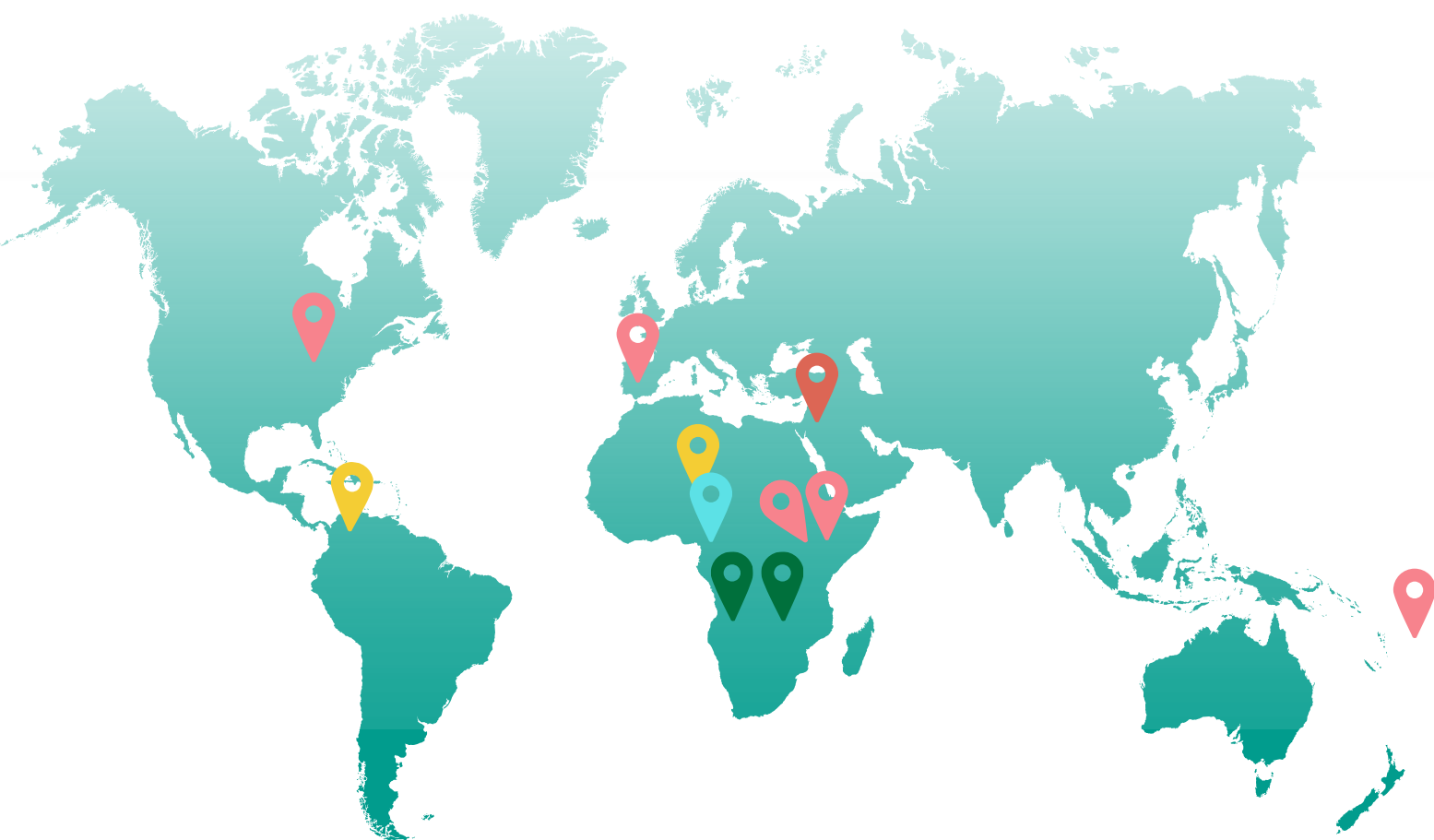
Education in Emergencies

Colombia, Niger



Legal Capacity and Sexual and Reproductive Health

United States, Spain, Kenya, Fiji, Uganda





Connecting Members

We connect people and organisations around the world to help them share knowledge about building inclusion.

Connecting Members

World Congress



In 2025, our global movement came together in person for the World Congress in Sharjah, U.A.E. Hosted alongside our member, Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services, the Congress brought our network together to explore what inclusion means in different parts of the world.

Together, we shared our priorities and looked at the practical steps needed to make inclusion real for every person with an intellectual disability.

The Global Self-Advocacy Summit brought together 260 self-advocates from 45 countries to Sharjah. This was our first in-person global meeting for self-advocates in seven years.

During the Families Summit, over 90 family members from 35 countries gathered to talk about the future of the family movement.



Connecting Members

Member Groups

In 2025, our **Regional Groups** met quarterly online, giving members a space to connect and tackle the issues that matter most where they are. Quarterly regional meetings are hosted by our Regional Representatives to Council.

Our member-led **Topic Groups** have also been producing resources, hosting conversations, and building the shared knowledge that strengthens our whole movement.

In 2025, we supported 8 member groups on different topics:

Deinstitutionalisation Working Group

(co-chaired by Associação Azul and PAPID)

Sexual and Reproductive Health Discussion Group

(co-chaired by Down Syndrome South Africa and Corbrook)

Employment Working Group

(co-chaired by Down Syndrome Foundation Niger and Betty Fonyuy, Individual Member)

Siblings Working Group

(co-chaired by Inclusion Canada and Down Syndrome Foundation Nigeria)

Inclusive Development Working Group

(co-chaired by Inclusion Uganda and Lebenshilfe)

Self-Advocacy Network

(co-chaired by Plena Inclusion and Inclusion International)

Families Discussion Group

(co-chaired by Inclusion Ghana and Anna MacQuarrie, Individual Member)

Survivors of Institutions Network

(chaired on a rotating basis by self-advocate members)

Financial Report

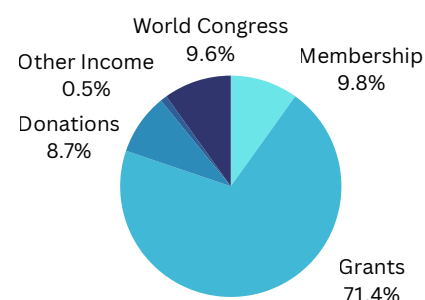
Financial Summary

All figures are in USD.

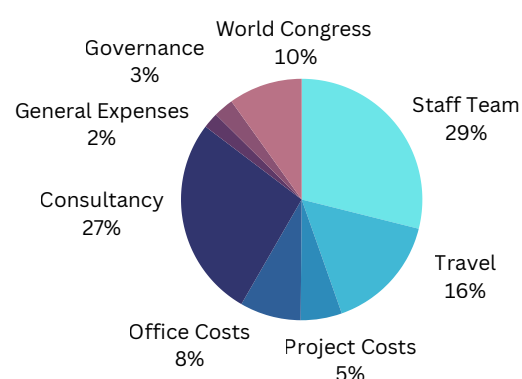
Financial activities for the years ending 31/12/2024 and 31/12/2025.

	2025	2024
Income		
Membership Income & Donations	236,120	172,514
Consultancy Income	5,749	38,720
Grants	912,196	1,245,514
Investment	834	1,096
World Congress	121,995	N/A
Total Income	1,276,894	1,457,844
Total Expenses	1,231,121	1,344,734
Net Incoming / (outgoing) resources	113,110	(11,375)

Income 2025



Expenses 2025



	2025	2024
Assets		
Debtors (money we are owed)	34,955	235,647
Liabilities (money we owe to other people)	(39,599)	(111,844)
Net Assets	947,075	926,445
Funds		
Restricted Funds (for programmes and projects)	614,651	616,320
Designated Funds	178,293	156,189
Unrestricted Funds	154,131	153,936
Total	947,075	926,445

Financial Report

Thank You to Our Supporters

Everything we did this year was made possible by the people and organisations who chose to fund our work. We are grateful to each of them.

Donors are people who give gifts to support our mission wherever it is needed most.

Grants are funding for specific programmes and projects.

Donors

- Disability Opportunity Fund
- Arc Thrift Stores
- Charles Stinson
- Therap Global
- Joseph Meagher

Grants

- Sightsavers
- USAID ¹
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- EU Commission ²
- U.S. Department of State
- Women Enabled International
- Education Cannot Wait ³
- SAGE Fund ⁴

We also thank our members. Membership contributions sustain the work of our whole network throughout the year.

¹ Funding from USAID reached us through the International Rescue Committee.

² Funding from the EU Commission reached us through Humanity & Inclusion.

³ Funding from Education Cannot Wait reached us through the International Disability Alliance.

⁴ Funding from the SAGE Fund was received in December 2024 and put to work during 2025.

The Council

Made up of Officers and Regional Representatives

The Council leads our organisation and represents the voice of our members from all over the world. The General Assembly elects the Council members.

Officers



Sue Swenson: President



Luis Gabriel Villareal Peralta:

Vice-President



Lloyd Lewis: Treasurer



Nagase Osamu: Secretary General



Jyrki Pinomaa: Co-Opted Officer



Richard Bennett: Co-Opted Officer



Regional Representatives



Gabriela Martínez Olivares: representative for the Americas, Mexico



Dominique Kantor: self-advocate representative for the Americas, Argentina



Stephanie Gotlib: representative for Asia Pacific, Australia



Shiva Shrestha: self-advocate representative for Asia Pacific, Nepal



Chantal Gnahoui: self-advocate representative for Africa, Benin



Fauzia Haji: co-opted representative, Zanzibar



Auberon Jeleel Odoom: representative for Africa, Ghana



Soufiane El Amrani: self-advocate representative for Europe, Belgium



Jyrki Pinomaa: representative for Europe, Finland



Mariette Ziade: representative for Middle East and North Africa, Lebanon



Chaica Sultan Saqr Al Qassimi: self-advocate representative for Middle East and North Africa, United Arab Emirates

The Staff Team

Jamie Cooke, Executive Director

Manuela Hasselknippe, Deputy Executive Director & Director of Finance

Kimber Bialik, Director of Programmes & Network Development

Manel Mhiri, Director of Advocacy

Federica Settimi, Inclusive Education Programme Manager

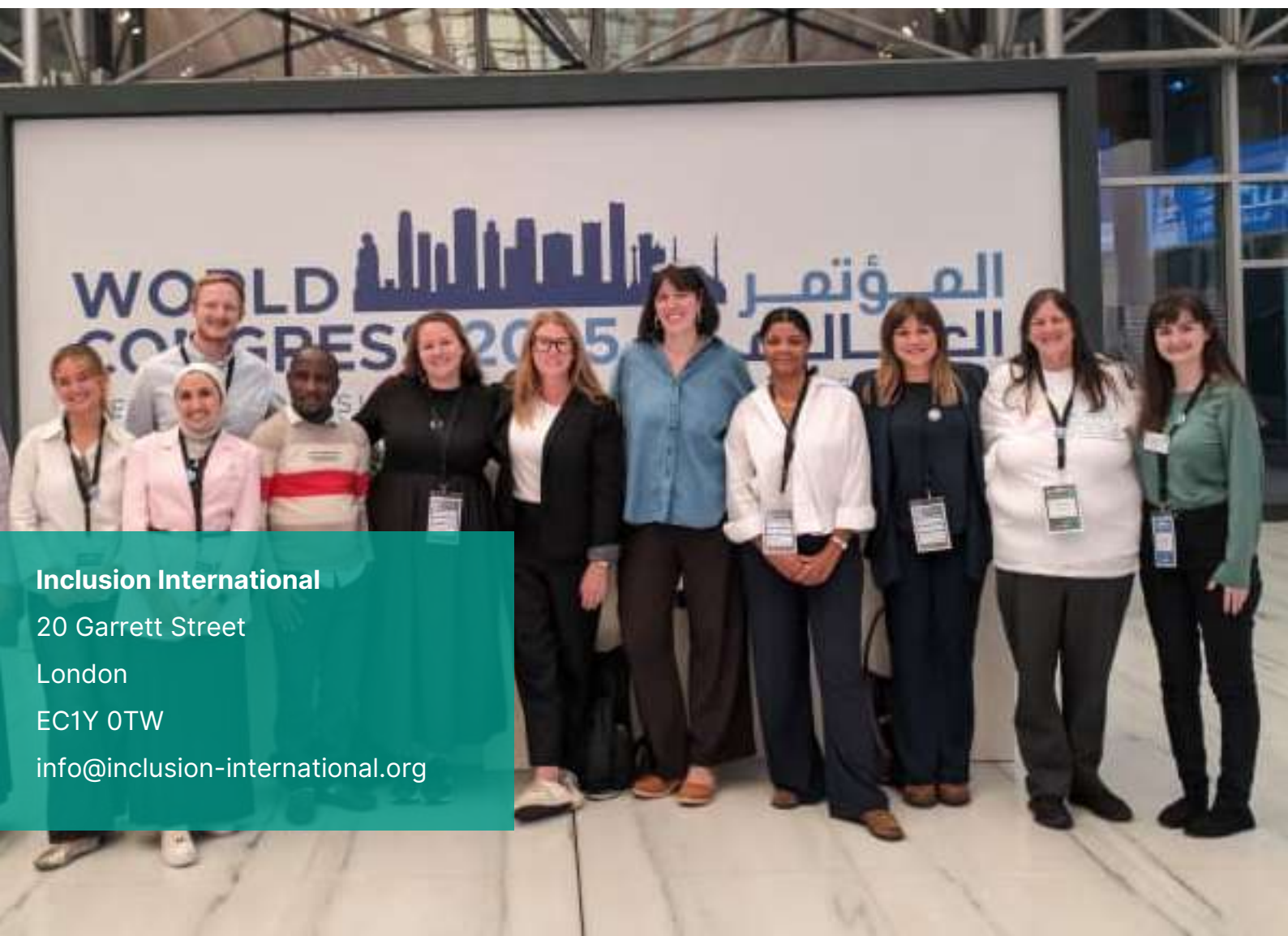
Ailis Hardy, Self-Advocacy Programme Manager

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