Be a voice for people living with diabetes and their carers.

Strengthen IDF’s mandate by providing a better understanding of the needs, challenges and wishes of people living with diabetes.

Support IDF’s global advocacy activities to effect real changes in areas of concern for people with diabetes.
As of December 2019, the BCV network comprised 153 members from 64 countries.
2019

ACTIVITIES
IDF has been involving its BCV members in advocacy activities since the inception of the Blue Circle Voices Programme.

In 2019, IDF’s main global advocacy campaign revolved around the **UN High Level Meeting (HLM) on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** which took place on September 23 in New York. The HLM was a great opportunity for all UHC champions and advocates, including BCV members, to make their voice heard and help mobilize high-level political attention globally and in their countries.

As part of its **UHC campaign**, IDF developed a **call to action** to governments for the development of health-in-all-policies to achieve UHC by 2030. IDF produced a short **toolkit** with information about the HLM on UHC and how to support the IDF campaign. The call to action and toolkit were made available for download in five languages on the **IDF website**.

The call to action and toolkit were distributed to all BCV members, who were encouraged to use them in national advocacy initiatives.

BCV members were particularly active on **social media**, where they posted **#HLMUHC_selfies**, highlighting their monthly expenditure on essential diabetes care.
BCV members participated in the 9th edition of the IDF Diabetes Atlas with pictures and testimonials of their experience with diabetes.

The 9th edition of the IDF Diabetes Atlas, the authoritative resource on the global impact of diabetes, was launched on November 14, 2019. BCV members were engaged to provide personal perspectives from people living with diabetes to inform the content of the Atlas. Testimonials and pictures from the following BCV members were featured:

- **Osarenkho Ethel Chima-Nwogwugwu** (Nigeria) – living with type 2 diabetes and a history of GDM
- **Chris Aldred**, (UK) – living with type 1 diabetes and father to a son with type 1 diabetes
- **Erum Ghafoor** (Pakistan) – living with type 2 diabetes
- **Patricia Gómez Medel** (Mexico) – mother to a daughter with type 1 diabetes
- **Verónica Emilia Tapia Abril** (Ecuador) – living with LADA
- **Narsimha Raju Dichpally**, (India) – carer for his father with type 2 diabetes
- **Pei Yan Heng** (Singapore) – living with type 2 diabetes

Their testimonials are available on the [IDF Atlas website](#).
IDF webinars

Throughout 2019, IDF developed a series of webinars for BCV and YLD members to improve their knowledge on key diabetes-related areas and build advocacy capacity. BCV members Michael Donohoe (USA), Osarenkhoe Ethel Chima-Nwogwu (Nigeria), Véronica Emilia Tapia (Ecuador) and Sigurjón Lýðsson (Iceland) also participated as speakers in the webinar “Living with different types of diabetes”, providing their personal perspectives and experiences.

The slides and recordings of all the webinars are available on the IDF advocacy webpage, and the most recent ones are also available on the GoToStage platform. Topics covered in 2019 include:

- IDF School of Diabetes and D-NET (May 17)
- Basic facts about diabetes (June 21)
- The UN HLM on Universal Health Coverage (June 14)
- Living with different types of diabetes (June 21)
- World Diabetes Day (July 19)
- Oral health, DKA and Hypoglycaemia Unawareness (September 6)
- Travelling with diabetes (October 4)
- Diabetes: nice to know (October 25)

IDF education platforms

BCV members receive regular information about the activities of the IDF School of Diabetes and are invited to take the free short courses.

BCV members are also encouraged to participate in the discussions organised on D-NET, the IDF Diabetes Network for Healthcare Professionals, to increase their knowledge on key diabetes-related topics and clarify any doubts they may have.

In October 2019, BCV member Betsy Rodríguez (USA) was invited by D-NET to lead the monthly discussion “Improving intercultural patient-provider communication in the management of diabetes”, where she highlighted the importance of delivering diabetes education programmes and care with culturally appropriate methods.
In 2019, several BCV members participated as speakers at international meetings.

In March 2019, Heather Koga (Zimbabwe) was invited by Servier to attend the Master Class programme "Working with, and for patients" aiming to improve the relationship between healthcare providers and patients. Heather later wrote a Diabetes Voice article about her experience, "Doctor Communication: burn-out, and too much judgment".

Also in March, BCV member Riva Greenberg (USA) spoke at the 41st Annual Lions Day with the United Nations (LDUN 2019) at the UN Headquarters in New York. During her intervention, Riva talked about her experience of living with type 1 diabetes for 47 years. Her full speech is available here.

In May, on occasion of the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva, IDF and the World Heart Federation (WHF) hosted the side event "Joining forces to fight cardiovascular disease (CVD) in people with diabetes: Pathways to Solutions". BCV member Stela Prgomelja (Serbia) provided her perspective as a person living with type 1 diabetes and CVD. You can watch the event here.

Featuring the voice of BCVs at the IDF Congress.

Nine BCV members participated as speakers at the IDF Congress in Busan (2-6 December 2019):

- Renza Scibilia (Australia) – Chair of the Living with Diabetes stream, participated in several symposiums.
- Bernard Enyia (Nigeria) – Sustainable coping mechanisms for people with diabetes
- Chris Aldred (UK) – Talk about complications; Diabetes and sex; it's not just erectile dysfunction – The male perspective
- Cherise Shockley (USA) – The diversity of diabetes; life, education and community
- Phyllisa Deroze (UAE) – Living with type 2 diabetes – the silent majority; Eighty years of progress; Why we need to hear from diverse voices in the diabetes community
- Riva Greenberg (USA) – A flourishing approach: moving from “machine-” to human-based diabetes care and education
- Pei Yan Heng (Singapore) – Different sides to peer support; Living with type 2 diabetes for more than 2 decades; Together we are stronger
- Christine Maalouf (Lebanon) – Oral poster presentation: The role of social media in spreading diabetes awareness
- Erum Ghafoor (Pakistan) – Oral poster presentation: Assessment of factors associated with non-compliance to self-management in people with type 2 diabetes
IDF promotes the activities of BCV members through a regular newsletter.

The BCV newsletter is published in English, French and Spanish. It compiles information on the initiatives that the BCV members develop in their respective countries, as well as news from IDF and joint activities between BCV members and IDF. The BCV newsletters also feature interviews with members of the network.

In 2019, IDF published three BCV newsletters: in April, June and August. The BCV newsletter is available for download on the BCV webpage.
2019 GRANTS
In 2019, IDF launched BCV grants to help BCV members implement activities in their countries.

In early 2019, IDF launched a consultation aimed at getting suggestions from BCV members on how to improve the network. Several BCVs pointed out that financing their activities is often difficult, and they would appreciate support from IDF.

As a result, IDF launched the BCV grant programme in August to help BCV members implement diabetes-related activities in their regions/countries. To be eligible, projects needed to help improve the wellbeing of people with diabetes through one or several of the following aspects: advocacy, awareness-raising, education and prevention. The amount of each grant ranged between 100 and 500 euros, depending on the type of project. Priority was given to projects by BCVs from low and lower-middle income countries.

In September, 24 grant applications were approved. 17 projects were implemented between September and December. The remaining 7 were developed in early 2020 or could not be implemented due to external reasons (local instability, health condition, etc.).

All BCV grantees are requested to report on their activities. The following pages provide a highlight of some of the projects that were implemented.

BCV grantees report that at least 8,000 people have directly benefitted from projects developed with BCV grants.
In November, Bridget organised an event to celebrate Diabetes Awareness Month. Events activities included yoga, tai-chi, African aerobics, as well as games, a lucky draw, a sugar challenge launch and free diabetes screening. More than 300 people participated in the event, that was featured in various radio and television programmes.

Amrit Pudasaini (Nepal)
Awareness raising and blood glucose testing

In October, Amrit organised several awareness-raising and blood glucose testing activities in Kathmandu. He prepared and printed education leaflets on the different types of diabetes, key regional facts and diabetes management tips. He also moderated discussions on various diabetes-related topics. Amrit reached about 1,000 people with his activities.

Deric Formbuh Nkimbeng (Cameroon)
Do you know your body?

From November to December, Deric offered diabetes screening and education on the myths and misconceptions about diabetes to families in Ntingkad Mankon (Bamenda region). This project helped people with diabetes to improve their management, and their families to learn about what the condition really is, how they can support people with diabetes, and how they can contribute to preventing type 2 diabetes around them. Deric screened around 300 people.
Jérôme Kazabukeye (Rwanda)
Diabetes Management in Refugees

In January 2020, Jérôme organised a workshop to provide test strips and glucometers to refugees living with diabetes in the Eastern Province of Rwanda, and encouraged them to share tips on diabetes management. Jérôme also used this opportunity to reflect on the World Diabetes Day 2019 activities organised in the region, and to start planning for 2020.

20 refugees benefitted from this activity, some of which will share glucometers as the number available was limited.

Heather Koga (Zimbabwe)
Diabetes Awareness Symposium

In November, Heather organised an awareness symposium in Harare in collaboration with the Diabetics Association of Zimbabwe. This event aimed to bring basic awareness and education to people living with diabetes and the general public through workshops, presentations and discussion panels by dieticians, diabetes educators, peer educators and clinical counsellors.

A total of 46 people attended the Symposium. The participants’ feedback was very positive, and many attendees expressed their gratitude towards this learning opportunity.
Carol Hendricks (South Africa)
Diabetes Awareness Day

On November 14, Carol organised a Diabetes Awareness Day in Westridge (Cape Town) to mark World Diabetes Day. The objective of this activity was to raise awareness on the potential dangers of diabetes and hypertension, through blood pressure and glucose testing, light physical exercise and health talks. About 120 people were encouraged to adopt healthier lifestyles and learned about diabetes.

Liliana Tieri (Argentina)
Education and access for vulnerable groups

From September to December, Liliana participated in the project “Improved education and access for people with diabetes in situations of social vulnerability” in the city and province of Buenos Aires. The project aims to form a network to support vulnerable people with diabetes in accessing the care they need, and to provide them with adapted diabetes education. Six local hospitals and health centres were reached during the four-month period. Diabetes strips, glucometers, and other essential supplies were distributed.

Narsimha Raju Dichpally (India)
Diabetes Detection Camps

During Diabetes Awareness Month, Narsimha and many other Lions from his Club conducted a series of diabetes screening events to test the blood glucose levels of people from vulnerable settings. Participants in the screenings also received emotional support upon diagnosis, and advice on how to prevent type 2 diabetes and recognise its symptoms. The BCV grant supported the screening of some 4,000 people.
On November 14, Patricia helped organise a football match between the “Blue team”, composed of children with diabetes, and another football team. The objective was to promote physical activity and show that sports is not an obstacle for children with diabetes. The event also intend to raise awareness about diabetes and what World Diabetes Day means to people living with it around the world. About 200 people participated in this activity.

Bernard Enyia (Nigeria)
Capacity Building Seminar

In October 2019, Bernard organised a one-day capacity building seminar on diabetes peer education for staff and students of the Health Technology College. The objectives were to encourage the creation of diabetes clubs, strengthen existing ones, and empower people living with diabetes. More than 100 people participated in the Seminar, including medical doctors, nurses, staff and students, people living with diabetes, and members of the Diabetes Association of Nigeria.

Estefanía Malassisi (Argentina)
To school with my friend with diabetes

From September to November, Estefanía participated in the project “To school with my friend with diabetes”, which aims to educate students and school staff about diabetes. One of the main aims is to prevent stigma and discrimination in the school environment. The feedback was very positive, and children with diabetes reported that, after the session, they felt the school was a safer place. Almost 500 children and adolescents and around 50 school staff were reached by the project.