

Marie-Charlotte Garin



Marie-Charlotte Garin graduated from the Master in International Development at PSIA with concentrations in Environment and Middle Eastern studies. She is currently working as a Gender and Disability Project Officer for Humanity & Inclusion (formerly known as Handicap International).

How did you secure this role?

I had first applied for a field position at Humanity & Inclusion but it didn't work out. However, I had a really great experience with the recruitment process and the recruiter encouraged me to apply for other positions and to get in touch with them - which I did!

I found this job opening about the "Making It Work Gender and Disability project" and instantly loved the methodology behind it. I was drawn by its participatory and intersectional approach and applied. And if you had told me before graduation that I would be moving out of Paris for Lyon... well, I probably wouldn't have believed you!

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AND MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES?

On this project, our role (we are a team of two!) is to support the voice of women and girls with disabilities using an intersectional approach. I support our partners, who are women with disabilities or feminist organizations in Africa as we fund them and provide ad hoc technical support. I've also worked on all the participatory processes surrounding the selection of our partners, which always follows a call for good practices. We also push for their voice to be heard on

the global advocacy stage, which means, for example, helping them submit pieces to the UN's Special Rapporteurs, or ensuring their participation to major international advocacy events so that they can enter these spaces and advocate for themselves.

WHAT IS THE MOST FASCINATING AND/OR SURPRISING ASPECT AT YOUR ROLE?

My favorite part about my position is how we get to improve ourselves and really learn how to be allies to women and girls with disabilities. I do not identify as a woman with disabilities, and it is extremely humbling to follow their lead and trust that they know better. I have met women leaders who have taught me so much about courage, sisterhood and community mobilization. The field visits we did to document their good practices (which then serves as evidence-based advocacy material!) allowed me to see their work and the incredible impact they have.

And as most of them work on gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities... I do NOT want to hear that we don't need feminism in 2020.

HOW DOES YOUR PSIA EXPERIENCE HELP YOU WITH THE ROLE?

At PSIA, I always tried to have at least one class per semester on Gender or Women's Rights. That choice fueled my desire to work for equality and allowed me to do research on the subject, which served as a strong foundation for my job interview and my work later on. I also think that the relatively diverse environment in which we study certainly helped nurturing the willingness to explore intersectionality, which is a key aspect of this job. I met individuals who opened my horizons and that's probably the greatest asset of PSIA: the community!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS?

I would tell the next generation of PSIA students to set goals but to be open to change, too! I am about to wrap up this chapter of my life after 1,5 years and I don't regret a single minute of it. Yet, I would have never predicted that my career would start this way and I'm infinitely grateful for how things turned out. Don't plan too much what's going to happen after graduation - there are lots of options out there and you never know what opportunities might arise. And lastly: whatever happens, you'll be fine!

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