



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



# **Development for All 2015–2020**

**Strategy for strengthening  
disability-inclusive development in  
Australia's aid program**

**May 2015**

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Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
R G Casey Building  
John McEwen Crescent  
Barton ACT 0221 Australia

Telephone +61 2 6261 1111  
[disability.inclusive.development@dfat.gov.au](mailto:disability.inclusive.development@dfat.gov.au)

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Cover images from left to right:

Meeting of members of Psychiatric Survivors Fiji – the only organisation of people with psychosocial disabilities in the Pacific.  
Photo credit: Andy Issacson, Disability Rights Fund, 2012

Indigenous people with disabilities organising for rights advocacy in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh.  
Photo credit: Andy Issacson, Disability Rights Fund, 2012

People with disabilities who live and work on the street organising at a park in the capital city of Dhaka, Bangladesh.  
Photo credit: Andy Issacson, Disability Rights Fund, 2012

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## Ministerial foreword

The Australian Government is committed to playing a leadership role internationally in disability-inclusive development to enable people with disabilities in developing countries to find pathways out of poverty and realise their full potential.

Our development policy, *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, confirms Australia's commitment to expanding opportunities for people, businesses and communities as key to promoting economic growth and reducing poverty. It recognises that everyone is affected if the most disadvantaged people are left behind, and acknowledges that people with disabilities make up the largest and most disadvantaged minority in the world (comprising 1 in 7 of the global population). The Australian aid policy outlines our continuing commitment to including people with disabilities as participants in and beneficiaries of our aid program.



Aid alone cannot solve development problems. Our partner governments need to lead in expanding opportunities for people with disabilities by developing and implementing strong policy and legislative frameworks and improving service delivery. And we recognise we need to tap into ideas from a wider range of sources, including the private sector, and leverage new kinds of partnerships.

This new strategy—*Development for All 2015–2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program*—builds on experience in implementing the Australian Government's first strategy for disability-inclusive development<sup>1</sup>, which helped establish Australia as a strong voice globally in this area. This strategy sets out how the Australian Government—in particular, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)—will strengthen its impact in promoting disability-inclusive development beyond 2015, with a particular focus on our region, the Indo-Pacific.

Australia's international advocacy, diplomatic efforts, and aid program investments will continue to make a major contribution to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities in developing countries with the objective that our development efforts leave no one behind.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Bishop". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

The Hon Julie Bishop MP  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

<sup>1</sup> *Development for All: towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009–2014*, <http://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/development-for-all-towards-a-disability-inclusive-australian-aid-program-2009-2014.aspx>

# Acknowledgements and Audience

## Acknowledgements

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) gratefully acknowledges all those who generously gave their time to provide valuable input to help shape the development of this strategy.<sup>2</sup> DFAT recognises the contributions made by people with disabilities and their representative organisations, government representatives, non-government organisations, service providers and others, including the Australian Disability and Development Consortium and DFAT's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group. We look forward to continued engagement over the next five years and beyond, as we seek to deliver better development outcomes for all.

## Audience

The audience for this strategy is both internal and external to DFAT.

*Development for All 2015–2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program* provides guidance for DFAT's strategic decision making by articulating key opportunities for strengthening disability-inclusive development where we can make the most difference—addressing the key challenges of disability-inclusive development in the Indo-Pacific, using Australia's expertise, and aligning our efforts with the priorities of Australia's aid program.

For external stakeholders, this strategy is a non-binding public articulation of the Australian Government's continued commitment to disability-inclusive development and highlights our approach, principles and priorities.

Mr Joazito dos Santos, Chair of the Timorese disabled people's organisation, Ra'es Hadomi Timor Oan, and Mr Gaspar Alfonso, Board Member of the Disability Association of Timor-Leste discuss strategies for awareness-raising with Australian Ambassador, Mr Peter Doyle. Photo credit: Arlindo Dos Santos Soares, DFAT, 2014.



<sup>2</sup> Views were gathered through stakeholder consultations conducted in mid-2014 in a number of countries in the Indo-Pacific Region (Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Timor-Leste).

# Objective

The purpose of the aid program is to promote Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.

Supporting this, the objective of Australia's work in disability-inclusive development is to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in developing countries. We will achieve this through:

- enhancing participation and empowerment of people with disabilities, as contributors, leaders and decision makers in community, government and the private sector
- reducing poverty among people with disabilities
- improving equality<sup>3</sup> for people with disabilities in all areas of public life, including service provision, education and employment.

We will work with our partners, people with disabilities and their representative organisations to achieve this, recognising the vital role of people with disabilities in effective disability-inclusive development.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Equality' refers to equal outcomes for people with disabilities, enabling their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. The concept of 'equality' is aligned with the Purpose of the Preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as seen in Article 1.

# The importance of disability-inclusive development

Development efforts that include and benefit people with disabilities are integral to achieving Australia's aid policy objectives of promoting prosperity, reducing poverty and enhancing stability in our region.

## Reducing poverty and contributing to sustainable economic growth

To be effective in reducing poverty, development must actively include and benefit people with disabilities. People with disabilities are the largest and most disadvantaged minority in the world. They make up 15 per cent of the global population (about one billion people)<sup>4</sup>, with most extended families including someone with a disability.<sup>5</sup> This has particular implications for women and girls, who are typically the primary carers for family members with disabilities. Having a family member with a disability can accentuate gender inequality within the household and limit women's and girls' opportunities for education and employment. This in turn undermines their ability to contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth within their household, community and country.

It is clear that there is a link between disability and poverty, with 80 per cent of people with disabilities living in developing countries<sup>6</sup>, and one-in-five of the world's poorest having a disability.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, people with disabilities and their families are more likely to be poor and remain poor as a result of higher living costs, barriers to education, health and employment opportunities, and unpaid caring responsibilities.

Economic opportunities for people with disabilities are often limited by poorer educational attainment and inaccessible education, poorer health and inaccessible health services, and lower employment rates and workplace discrimination. Opportunities for people with disabilities and their households are also limited by caring responsibilities that prevent family members (typically women and girls) from attending school and working. This has an impact at individual, household and national levels, with national economies losing an estimated five per cent of gross domestic product when people with disabilities do not have equal access to employment (this cost is greater when indirect costs, such as caregivers' lost wages, are taken into account).<sup>8</sup>

These factors highlight the importance of enabling people with disabilities and their families to lift themselves out of poverty through accessible and appropriate health services, and education and employment opportunities. This requires concerted efforts to overcome stigma and discrimination in order to recognise the value and capacity of people with disabilities. Disability-inclusive development provides opportunities for people with disabilities to participate on an equal basis to others and realise their full potential. This enables countries to harness the potential contribution of all citizens, maximising opportunities for poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth.

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4 World Bank and World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 261.

5 *ibid.*, p. 3.

6 United Nations Enable, *Factsheet on Persons with Disabilities*, viewed 23 January 2015, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=18>.

7 World Bank and World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

8 International Labour Organization, *The Price of Exclusion: the Economic Consequences of Excluding People with Disabilities from the World of Work*, Geneva, 2009, Table 65, p. 4.

## Upholding our international obligations

Australia is a party to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) 2007. The CRPD requires that parties support each other to implement the CRPD, including through ensuring that development programs are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.<sup>9</sup> The CRPD has been ratified by 154 countries internationally (at May 2015) and by 70 per cent of countries in South East Asia and the Pacific<sup>10</sup>, demonstrating strong global support and increasing regional support for the rights of people with disabilities.

The Australian Human Rights Commission, with People with Disability Australia and the Australian Centre for Disability Law, supported a delegation of young people with disability to participate in the 7th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in New York from 10–12 June 2014. Photo credit: People with Disability Australia, 2014.



<sup>9</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 32.

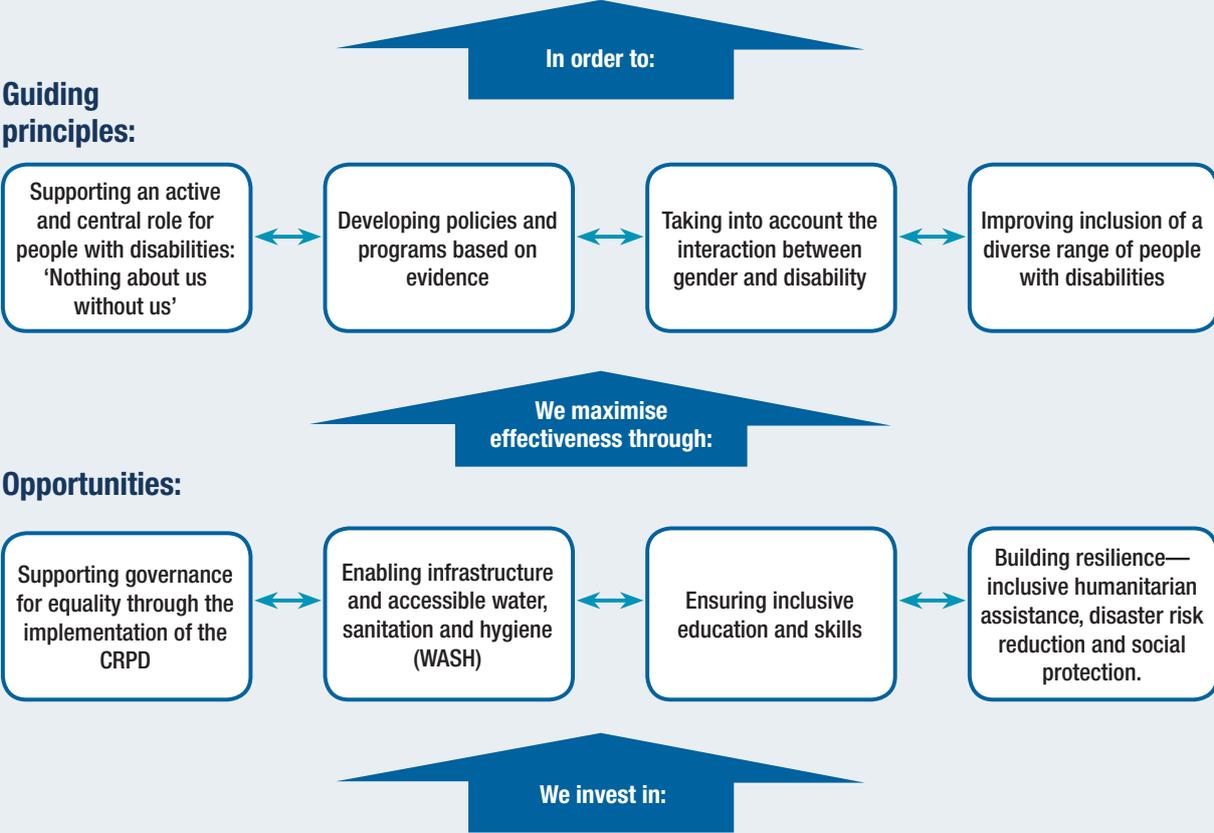
<sup>10</sup> Nine of eleven countries in South East Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Burma, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and nine of sixteen in the Pacific (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand) had ratified the CRPD, as at May 2015; United Nations Enable, Convention and Optional Protocol Signatures and Ratifications, viewed 12 May 2015, <[www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=12&pid=166](http://www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=12&pid=166)>.

# Strategic framework

This framework underpins *Development for All 2015–2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia’s aid program* and outlines how Australia will strengthen disability-inclusive development and, in turn, promote our national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction, in line with the overall purpose of the aid program.

**Objective:**

- Improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in developing countries through:
- enhancing their participation and empowerment as contributors, leaders and decision makers
  - reducing poverty among people with disabilities
  - improving equality for people with disabilities in all areas of public life, including service provision, education and employment.



We will take a twin-track approach (implementing disability-inclusive development through mainstreamed and targeted efforts). We will promote ‘reasonable accommodation’—encouraging support for people with disabilities (as required and based on what is reasonable in the given circumstances) to enable them to participate in, and benefit from, our development efforts.

# Definitions

## People with disabilities

The term 'people with disabilities' is conceptualised as including those who have episodic or long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.<sup>11</sup>

**Disabilities = impairments + barriers**

Impairments may limit an individual's personal or social functioning in comparison with those who do not share the same impairment (characteristic or condition, such as hearing and/or vision impairment, developmental delay or physical impairment). The full inclusion of people with impairments in society can be inhibited by attitudinal and/or societal barriers (such as stigma), physical and/or environmental barriers (such as stairs), and policy and/or systemic barriers, which can create a disabling effect.

## Disability-inclusive development

Disability-inclusive development promotes effective development by recognising that, like all members of a population, people with disabilities are both beneficiaries and agents of development. An inclusive approach seeks to identify and address barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in and benefiting from development. The explicit inclusion of people with disabilities as active participants in development processes leads to broader benefits for families and communities, reduces the impacts of poverty, and positively contributes to a country's economic growth.<sup>12</sup>

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11 The reference to disability is based on the characterisation of persons with a disability in Article 1 of the CRPD. The term 'episodic' has been added by DFAT in line with the 'evolving concept of disability' referred to in the Preamble (e).

12 While prevention of impairments (for example, avoidable blindness and road safety activities) remains an important public health objective, it is outside the scope of disability-inclusive development as set out in this strategy and recognised in the mid-term review of Development for All: L. Kelly and L. Wapling, *Development for All Mid-Term Review Report*, October 2012, p. 31, 65, viewed 23 January 2015, <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/development-for-all-strategy-mid-term-review.aspx>>.

# Principles

## Support an active and central role for people with disabilities: 'Nothing about us without us'

The Australian Government recognises the important role of people with disabilities and their representative organisations (known as disabled people's organisations) in development. People with disabilities and disabled people's organisations can provide perspectives based on their experiences of living with disabilities, to inform effective poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth efforts.

To support an active and central role for people with disabilities, we will:

- actively work with people with disabilities and disabled people's organisations to support meaningful engagement, leadership and decision making at community, national and international levels
- support people with disabilities' empowerment and advocacy, which will enhance development outcomes, improve access to service delivery and contribute to the fulfilment of their rights.

Members of DFAT's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group, Rosemary Kayess (centre) and Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo (right) with Australia Awards Scholarship recipient Thi Hoang Yen Vo from Vietnam. Photo credit: Australian Disability and Development Consortium, 2014.



## Develop policies and programs based on evidence

A robust evidence base is required to support effective disability-inclusive development. Relevant evidence and data should be collected, compiled and analysed to build this evidence base, with lessons learned actively shared internally and with partners. Research provides opportunities to better understand the challenges and opportunities for people with disabilities in particular country contexts, and improve disability-inclusive development practices.

The absence of reliable internationally comparable data on disability leads governments to underestimate the nature and prevalence rates of disabilities. This can undermine comprehensive action on disability, including sufficient resource allocation and effective policy responses.

Data that is disaggregated by sex and disability status in service delivery is also critical in understanding and assessing the extent to which development efforts reach and benefit people with disabilities. For example, disaggregated data is required to ascertain whether both girls and boys with disabilities are attending school. Disaggregated data provides strong evidence to inform designs, policies and programs that effectively address particular barriers for people with disabilities within specific contexts. However, a lack of data should not inhibit disability-inclusive development efforts, noting that the rationale for action is clear.

We will strengthen evidence-based policy making, programming and service delivery by:

- supporting and disseminating research on the most effective disability-inclusive development interventions, including how to move from pilots to implementation at scale
- developing and drawing on strong monitoring and evaluation frameworks for disability-inclusive development in the aid program to better understand which DFAT aid investments are most effective and why, in the interests of continuous improvement
- strengthening disability data collection globally through working with multilateral and bilateral partners to develop a consistent international approach

A community worker conducting an interview with a family in the field to collect data for the Cambodia Demographic Health Survey 2014. The survey collected data on disability status using the Washington Group of short set of questions. Photo credit: Marc Derveeuw, UNFPA, 2014.



- working with partner governments to include the Washington Group<sup>13</sup> disability prevalence questions in national censuses and in administrative data sets, as appropriate
- working with implementing partners to disaggregate data by disability status to understand how well our investments are reaching people with disabilities
- strengthening knowledge management practices and developing partnerships to better collect and share evidence and data with both internal and external stakeholders, to improve policy and programs.

## Take into account the interaction of gender and disabilities

Women and girls with disabilities experience multiple disadvantages resulting from the interplay between poverty and discrimination on the basis of gender and disability. This limits women's and girls' voices and agency and constrains their opportunities for economic, political and social advancement.

Women and girls with disabilities are at greater risk from all forms of violence than are those without disabilities.<sup>14</sup> They are two to three times more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse.<sup>15</sup> For women with intellectual disabilities, the risk of abuse is ten-fold.<sup>16</sup> Not only do women with disabilities have higher prevalence rates for violence, they are also victims of different kinds of violence, such as withholding of medication and forced sterilisation.<sup>17</sup> We have supported research to better understand and address the risks of abuse experienced by women and girls with disabilities.<sup>18</sup> Findings highlighted the disproportionate family violence experienced by women and girls with disabilities and their lack of access to appropriate support services as a result of discrimination. This research has been used by a wide range of development partners across the Indo-Pacific region to raise awareness of the prevalence of violence against women with disabilities and encourage action to address it.

Girls with disabilities are less likely than are boys to be enrolled in any form of education, which results in very low rates of literacy among women with disabilities and, consequently, low rates of participation in civic life and the work force.<sup>19</sup> Disability can perpetuate poverty and accentuate gender inequality within a family or household. Women and girls are commonly the primary carers for household members with disabilities, which limits their opportunities for education and employment.

We will therefore take the interaction of gender and disabilities into account in our disability-inclusive development efforts and will include women with disabilities in programming on leadership, women's economic empowerment and ending violence against women.

In ensuring development is inclusive of all people with disabilities, our efforts will be gender sensitive as well as disability-inclusive. This means that we will:

- encourage and facilitate the collection of data in regard to the situation and unique needs of women and girls with disabilities, to make this under-served group more visible to decision makers
- devise outreach strategies to include women and girls with disabilities

13 The Washington Group's short set of six questions is recommended by the United Nations for use in all national censuses and household surveys to provide internationally comparable disability data: Washington Group on Disability Statistics, Short Set of Questions on Disability, viewed 27 January 2015, <[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington\\_group/wg\\_questions.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington_group/wg_questions.htm)>

14 UNESCAP, *Hidden Sisters: Women and Girls with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 1995, p. 5.

15 Department for International Development (DFID), *Disabilities, Poverty and Development*, DFID, United Kingdom, 2000.

16 K Heinicke-Motsch and S Sygall (eds), *Building an Inclusive Development community: A Manual on including People with Disabilities in International Development Programs*, 2004.

17 JM Spratt, United Nations Population Fund, Pacific Sub-Regional Office, *A Deeper Silence: The Unheard Experiences of Women with Disabilities and Their Sexual and Reproductive Health Experiences: Kiribati, the Solomon Islands and Tonga*, Suva, Fiji, 2012, p. 12.

18 J Astbury and F Walji, *Triple Jeopardy: Gender-based violence and human rights violations experienced by women with disabilities in Cambodia*, January 2013.

19 H. Rousso, UNESCO, *Education for All: a gender and disability perspective*, 2003, pp. 9–10.

Women with and without disabilities participate in a workshop as part of the 'Triple Jeopardy' research project on violence against women with disabilities in Cambodia. The women, in Battambang, are testing a workshop manual developed to challenge discrimination against women with disabilities. Here, a member of the Battambang Disabled People's Organisation reports back to the group. For more information on 'Triple Jeopardy' see <http://www.iwda.org.au/research/triple-jeopardy/>.

Photographer: Nina Vallins, 2012  
Copyright: IWDA.



- support women with disabilities to develop leadership skills and experience
- provide support to DFAT employees (and others, as appropriate) on how to address the intersections between disability and gender-based discrimination.

### Improve inclusion of a diverse range of people with disabilities

Disability is part of human diversity, with the majority of people likely to experience disability at some stage in their life.<sup>20</sup> All communities have people with disabilities who experience varying types of disability with varying impacts. The experience of disability manifests differently for all individuals and is affected by a number of factors<sup>21</sup>, such as the specific local context, which should be taken into account in our development efforts.

We recognise that some groups within the disability community are at heightened risk of marginalisation, particularly those with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities. People with these types of disability can be rendered invisible and left out of disability-inclusive development efforts. Psychosocial and intellectual disabilities are commonly less understood, leading to greater stigmatisation.

We will give greater attention to people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities by:

- encouraging partner governments to provide appropriate and accessible support services to meet people's basic needs
- supporting greater inclusion, participation and empowerment, enabling people to be contributors, leaders and decision makers in all areas of public life, such as education, health and employment
- promoting awareness of psychosocial and intellectual disabilities to reduce stigma.

<sup>20</sup> World Bank and World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Other factors include age of onset, education, socio-economic status, personality, family support and cultural perceptions of disabilities

# Our approach

## Twin-track approach

Australia adopts a twin-track approach in this strategy, which involves a:

1. mainstream approach—actively including people with disabilities as participants and beneficiaries of development efforts across all sectors
2. targeted approach—targeting people with disabilities in development initiatives designed specifically to benefit people with disabilities.

Actively including people with disabilities in mainstream development efforts is necessary to ensure that broader systems, policies and services include and benefit people with disabilities.

Targeted efforts are also required to address barriers and exclusion experienced by people with disabilities and accelerate efforts towards disability inclusion. Targeted efforts can include providing disability-specific support and services, such as:

- assistive devices to support mobility
- assistive technology to enhance communication
- community-based rehabilitation to meet the basic needs and improve the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families by facilitating access to health, education, livelihood and social sectors<sup>22</sup>
- life skills training programs for people with disabilities to build their capacity to participate more fully in community, education and employment.

## Reasonable accommodation

Australia recognises that the opportunity for people with disabilities to participate in, and benefit from, our development efforts (targeted and mainstreamed) largely depends on the provision of reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation is the provision of support, modifications and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities to ensure they enjoy and exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis to others, as outlined in the CRPD.<sup>23</sup>

Reasonable accommodation can include the provision of accessible transportation, sign-language interpreters, accessible meeting venues, and documents in accessible formats.<sup>24</sup> Australia will advocate for governments to provide reasonable accommodation (where it does not impose a disproportionate or undue burden) and will demonstrate practical ways that reasonable accommodation can be provided.<sup>25</sup>

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22 World Health Organization, *Community Based Rehabilitation Guidelines*, 2010, p. 12.

23 CRPD, Article 2, viewed 23 January 2015, <[www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml](http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml)>

24 Documents in accessible formats can include electronic versions that are compatible with screen readers or versions in more simple language and illustrations for people with intellectual disabilities.

25 Countries that have ratified the CRPD are committed to working with other governments, non-government organisations and the private sector to provide reasonable accommodation, as required in all areas of public life, including education, health and employment, Articles 2 and 32.

## Partnerships and people-to-people links

Australia will leverage broader change to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities through advocacy, partnerships and knowledge sharing. We will:

- advocate for and support partner government-led reforms to legislation, policy, budgeting, service delivery and data collection
- encourage our partners in the private and non-government sectors to become more disability-inclusive, providing access to technical assistance from disability-inclusive development experts as required
- promote knowledge sharing in disability-inclusive development across the region
- advocate for disability inclusion in new and existing international, regional and national development and humanitarian frameworks (with indicators and targets, as appropriate)
- use strategic partnerships with multilateral organisations to strengthen and promote the implementation of disability-inclusive development policies and programs
- foster people-to-people links through the Australia Awards scholarship program and Australian-funded volunteer programs, recognising their contribution to development outcomes and public diplomacy.

### *Australian volunteers linking people with services*

Australia supports volunteers, through the Australian Volunteers for International Development program, to build the capacity of local non-government organisations in the Indo-Pacific to facilitate access to disability services and work in partnership with disabled peoples organisations to advocate for better outcomes for people with disability. The disability-inclusive volunteering program policy aims to support people with disabilities to participate fully as volunteers, and to ensure that disability is a focus area for volunteer assignments.

AVID Phoebe Thompson volunteered as a Prosthetic and Orthotic Advisor with Simon of Cyrene Children's Rehabilitation and Development Foundation in the Philippines. Phoebe and her counterpart are pictured working together to align the knee of an above-knee prosthesis. Photo credit: Scope Global 2013



## Harness private sector resources and ideas

Australia recognises that the private sector is the engine of economic growth and plays an important role in achieving development outcomes. Therefore, we will:

- explore working with the private sector to achieve innovative, market-driven solutions to disability-inclusive development challenges
- pilot innovative approaches as models for change, for instance working with the private sector and others to scale-up successful models.

## Geographic focus

Australia's disability-inclusive development efforts will be more sharply focused on the Indo-Pacific region (particularly the Pacific and South East Asia), where we can make the most difference. We will also contribute to disability-inclusive development more broadly, by sharing our experience in international fora and advocating for greater attention to be given to disability issues by governments, donors, the private sector and multilateral organisations.

## *Enhancing employment through advocacy, cooperation and capacity development*

Australia supports the Include Disability Employ this Ability initiative in Fiji, where five leading disabled people's organisations have joined forces with government, educators and employers to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The project promotes the capacity of people with disabilities through a local media campaign to address stigma and builds the capacity of task force members from various disabled people's organisations through on-the-job training. It has helped secure employment for 35 people with disabilities.

Include Disability Employ this Ability's Task Force. Photo credit: IDEA, 2013.



# Opportunities—how Australia can make a difference

Australia's support for disability-inclusive development has led to significant improvements in the lives of people with disabilities, with particular gains made in areas such as increased access to education and public infrastructure.<sup>26</sup> We have identified key opportunities to build on our successes and strengthen Australia's disability-inclusive development efforts. These opportunities (outlined below) recognise where we can make the most difference within the priority sectors<sup>27</sup> of the aid program, based on key disability-inclusive development challenges and our particular expertise. The identified opportunities recognise the need for mainstream and disability-targeted efforts within relevant priority sectors, where we can make a significant impact. Program areas should identify opportunities and implement them as appropriate within their specific context.

## Supporting governance for equality through the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### Issue

Discrimination and stigma commonly prevents people with disabilities accessing appropriate healthcare, education, transportation and employment. This undermines their ability to live healthy and productive lives, inhibits their participation in household and community decision making, and undermines their contribution to poverty reduction and economic growth.

The CRPD outlines the responsibilities of countries to ensure people with disabilities can participate and benefit as equal members of society. Governance reform is required to ensure people with disabilities have equal opportunities and equality of outcomes in all areas of public life, with the provision of additional support as required. This includes the right of people with disabilities to access appropriate services, such as health, education and transportation, and contribute to the work force and participate in public life, such as through leadership roles, decision-making processes, accessible voting and through representation by disabled people's organisations.<sup>28</sup>

There is growing support for the CRPD in South East Asia and the Pacific, with 70 per cent of countries in the region having ratified the treaty.<sup>29</sup> Effective implementation of the CRPD improves the quality of life of people with disabilities and has the potential to empower people to lift themselves out of poverty and contribute to national economic growth.

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26 L Kelly and L Wapling, *Development for All Mid-Term Review Report*, October 2012, p. 23, 63, viewed 23 January 2015, <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/development-for-all-strategy-mid-term-review.aspx>>

27 'Priority sectors' are also known as 'investment priorities', as outlined in *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, DFAT, June 2014.

28 Article 33 of the CRPD requires that civil society and the organisations that represent persons with disabilities be invited and participate fully in monitoring implementation of the Convention. Article 4 obliges countries to consult and actively involve persons with disabilities, through their representative organisations, in the development and implementation of legislation and policies that give effect to the Convention.

29 Nine of eleven countries in South East Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Burma, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and nine of sixteen in the Pacific (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand) had ratified the CRPD, as at May 2015; United Nations Enable, *Convention and Optional Protocol Signatures and Ratifications*, viewed 12 May 2015, <[www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=12&pid=166](http://www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=12&pid=166)>.

While some partner countries have begun to implement the CRPD<sup>30</sup>, significant challenges remain. This is largely due to stigma, limited capacity to mainstream disability across government departments and services, limited supports for people with disabilities (reasonable accommodation), and weak legal protections against discrimination.<sup>31</sup> Disabled people's organisations play an important role in advocating for the interests of people with disabilities and have been influential in increasing the number of countries that have ratified the CRPD.

### ***Australia's response***

To build on the existing capacity of disabled people's organisations and their members, we will support them to:

- raise awareness of people with disabilities' rights and abilities, to address stigma and encourage acceptance amongst government, employers, community members and households
- provide opportunities for people with disabilities (including women) to develop leadership skills and take on leadership roles within disabled people's organisations, community, government and the private sector
- engage government to advocate for the ratification and implementation of the CRPD to fulfil the rights of people with disabilities in everyday life, including those with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities
- provide technical advice to government and donors to support effective, context-specific disability-inclusive development.

We will support partner countries<sup>32</sup> to implement the CRPD by assisting them to:

- develop and implement policies and action plans (including through sufficient budget allocation), reflecting the responsibilities of countries to progressively implement the CRPD (including through preventing non-government service providers and employers from violating the CRPD)
- implement and promote enforceable anti-discrimination legislation that promotes substantive equality in all areas of public life (including education, health and employment)
- strengthen systems to improve health service provision and access, where possible, including for people with psychosocial disabilities
- provide additional support (reasonable accommodation), as required, to enable people with disabilities to participate fully in all areas of public life (such as through the provision of sign-language interpreters, braille and assistive communications technology)
- promote a whole-of-government approach to disability inclusion through coordinating and mainstreaming efforts across partner government departments and service providers.

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30 To date, efforts have typically focused on supporting the participation and empowerment of people with disabilities through greater access to physical environments and information: UNESCAP, *Disability at a Glance 2012: Strengthening the Evidence Base in Asia and the Pacific*, viewed 23 January 2015, <[www.unescap.org/resources/disability-glance-2012-strengthening-evidence-base-asia-and-pacific](http://www.unescap.org/resources/disability-glance-2012-strengthening-evidence-base-asia-and-pacific)>; UNESCAP, *Livelihood and Poverty in Asia and the Pacific*, 2012.

31 CBM Australia, *What are the enablers and barriers to implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in the Indo-Pacific* (unpublished), 2014, 2.

32 'Countries' refers to current and successive national governments (or 'States').

## ***People with disabilities have their say in Indonesia's Presidential elections***

The 2014 Presidential elections in Indonesia provided greater opportunities for people with disabilities to have a voice in the political process. DFAT provided support to AGENDA, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) General Election Network for Disability Access. AGENDA is led by the South East Asia International Foundation for Electoral Systems network of civil society organisations and disabled people's organisations. A total of 300 election monitors were trained through AGENDA, half of whom have disabilities, to monitor whether polling stations were accessible to people with disabilities. Election monitors developed their knowledge of the specific needs of voters with disabilities and found that two-thirds of polling stations monitored were physically accessible for people with mobility impairments. AGENDA also worked with the Indonesian electoral commission to ensure that braille voting cards were available for voters who needed them.

AGENDA staff discuss with polling booth officials how to enable voting by people with disabilities.  
Photo credit: Shelly Thomson, DFAT 2014



## **Enabling infrastructure and accessible water, sanitation and hygiene**

### ***Enabling infrastructure***

#### **Issue**

People with disabilities require accessible infrastructure to access and participate in opportunities such as employment, education and health services. While physical accessibility alone will never be enough to achieve disability inclusion, it is an important first step, enabling people with mobility impairments to gain greater independence and contribute more actively to economies and communities.

Accessibility does not have to be costly. Retrofitting buildings for accessibility is considerably more expensive than planning for accessibility at the outset of new infrastructure projects<sup>33</sup> (planning at the outset increases building costs by as little as 0.5 to 1 per cent).<sup>34</sup> Designing accessible infrastructure from the start, in consultation with people with disabilities and other stakeholders, makes good economic sense. Even where retrospective adaptations are needed, this can be an important investment in a safer environment for all. For example, roads with separate footpaths and accessible bus stops improve accessibility and help reduce accidents.

Australia has supported inclusive infrastructure by producing and disseminating the *Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program (Accessibility Design Guide)*.<sup>35</sup> The *Accessibility Design Guide* encourages the uptake of universal design principles in developing countries by providing practical information on how barriers in the built environment can be minimised to improve access for people with disabilities, as well as pregnant women, elderly people and those who are injured. This has helped reduce physical barriers to inclusion and contributed to improvements in the accessibility of social infrastructure (schools and health clinics) and economic infrastructure (roads) built by Australia and our partners. These improvements in accessible infrastructure importantly also send a strong, visible message that people with disabilities are valued members of the community.

### Australia's response

To strengthen accessible infrastructure, we will:

- apply the *Accessibility Design Guide* as we scale up infrastructure investments, to ensure new infrastructure funded through Australia's aid program is physically accessible for people with disabilities (as well as for pregnant women, children and the elderly), as appropriate
- support partner governments to update building codes to increase infrastructure accessibility
- work with multilateral organisations to strengthen consideration and implementation of disability access.

Kazol (23, Bangladesh) fetches water from a wheelchair accessible pump.

To watch a video of Kazol telling her story see:  
<http://bit.ly/1DPfpax>

To read Kazol's full story visit:  
<http://endthecycle.org.au/stories/Kazol>

Photographer: Wahid Adnan, Drik 2012  
Copyright: Centre for Disability in Development/CBM Australia.



33 *Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program, 2013*, viewed 23 January, 2015, <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/accessibility-design-guide-universal-design-principles-for-australia-s-aid-program.aspx>>.

34 RL Metts, World Bank 'Disabilities Issues, Trends and Recommendations for the World Bank', Social Protection Discussion Paper no.0007, 2000.

35 *Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program, 2013*, viewed 23 January, 2015, <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/accessibility-design-guide-universal-design-principles-for-australia-s-aid-program.aspx>>.



Data collectors and researchers from the Travelling Together project in Papua New Guinea during a data-analysis workshop. Engaging with people with disabilities as partners in research can strengthen findings and promote inclusive research practices, as well as build the capacity of people with disabilities and their organisations to use research and advocate on access issues. Photo credit: Travelling Together project, 2012.

### ***Australian aid in action: Travelling together in Papua New Guinea***

Australian-funded research is influencing transport policy in Papua New Guinea to be more inclusive by providing evidence about how people with disabilities are involved in road consultation and planning, and developing guidelines on how to better include them in infrastructure planning and meet their access needs. In the Travelling Together project, people with disabilities were central participants as co-researchers and data collectors. They worked to identify barriers to people with disabilities using roads to safely access community services and places of employment. Key barriers included a lack of marked crossings, open drains and narrow or absent footpaths, many of which could be overcome with simple, low-cost solutions during design, construction and maintenance of roads. These findings are informing proposed changes to make the National Transport Strategic Policy more inclusive of people with disabilities, and providing a basis for ongoing advocacy by the Papua New Guinea Assembly of Disabled Persons on this issue.

### ***Accessible water, sanitation and hygiene***

#### **Issue**

One vital type of infrastructure investment is in accessible water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. Globally, 748 million people do not have access to safe drinking water and 2.5 billion people have no access to hygienic sanitation.<sup>36</sup> People with disabilities and their families commonly lack access to these basic necessities.<sup>37</sup> A lack of safe water and sanitation can lead to increased risk of illness, impairment and greater poverty. Despite this, people with disabilities are commonly not included in WASH promotional and educational opportunities, due to social isolation and taboos.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> World Health Organization and United National Children's Fund, *Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation*, 2014, viewed 23 January 2015, <[http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/resources/JMP\\_report\\_2014\\_webEng.pdf](http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/JMP_report_2014_webEng.pdf)>.

<sup>37</sup> WH Van Brakel, *Measuring health-related stigma—a literature review: Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 2006, cited in World Health Organization and World Bank, *World Report on Disabilities*, 2011, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> CBM, *Inclusion Made Easy: A Quick Program Guide to Disabilities in Development*, 2012, Melbourne, Australia, p. 128.

Improving access and inclusion in WASH not only brings increased dignity and self-reliance for people with disabilities and social benefits for their families and communities, it can also contribute to poverty reduction and economic development. Education institutions and workplaces that do not provide accessible toilets create barriers to participation for some people with disabilities. Improvements in access to toilets and water collection points (including amongst people with disabilities) commonly bring social, cultural and economic benefits to women and girls in the family who take on most of the daily care of people with disabilities.

Through Australia's aid program we have supported more accessible WASH facilities in a number of countries. For example, Australia has supported people with disabilities to participate in rural WASH service delivery in Timor-Leste. This has led to the WASH sector in Timor-Leste including disability in policy and guidelines, allocating disability-specific budgets and collecting data on access by people with disabilities. In 2013, more than 90 per cent of water systems constructed with the support of Australia's aid program incorporated accessibility ramps, providing a powerful demonstration of universal design that now benefits entire communities.

### Australia's response

To support accessible WASH, we will:

- involve people with disabilities and their representative organisations in WASH design
- provide educational and promotional opportunities to ensure facilities within communities, schools and workplaces are accessible
- apply the *Accessibility Design Guide* to ensure new WASH facilities take into account international good practice.

#### ***Monitoring accessible water systems in rural Timor-Leste***

In Timor-Leste, the participation of people with disabilities in community management of rural WASH facilities is increasing their confidence, skills and standing in their communities, as well as providing practical accessibility benefits. Arminda Sena, a 24-year-old mother of three who has a mobility impairment, is the technical officer for the Water Management Group in Manapa village. Following her election to the Group, Arminda undertook technical training that has enabled her to carry out regular inspections of the water system, and repair broken pipes and taps. 'I feel different now that I am a Water Management Group member,' says Arminda. 'The community doesn't discriminate against me because of my disability. Now I can take care of the system and have the knowledge to solve problems with the tap stands.'

## Inclusive education and skills

### Issue

Education is critical to developing skills to improve livelihoods, lift living standards and gain employment, enabling people in poverty to participate in and contribute to the economy. However, people with disabilities are particularly disadvantaged by poor quality, inadequate and inaccessible education.

Of all children who are not in school in the Asia-Pacific region, one-third have a disability.<sup>39</sup> Better access to appropriate education services is required to enable more people with disabilities realise their full potential and live productive lives.<sup>40</sup>

We have made strong progress in enabling people with disabilities to benefit from our education investments. For example, in Fiji we are working closely with the Ministry of Education to promote access for children with disabilities to mainstream education. Five demonstration schools across the country are piloting ways to enable children with disabilities to participate in all school activities on an equal basis with others.

To support quality disability-inclusive education and maximise employment opportunities, a comprehensive approach is needed. This requires a range of interventions such as education policy and curriculum that supports the inclusion of students with disabilities, and access to training that enables teachers to provide for the individual needs of students with diverse disabilities. It also requires the provision of reasonable accommodation (such as alternative communication strategies and assistive devices) that enables students with disabilities to realise their full potential, and skills development for students with disabilities that enhances their employability, responding to work force demands and linking to industry. Education policy, curriculum and teacher-training should support student-centred learning that is tailored to the individual needs and interests of students and benefits students, with and without disabilities.

Children at a special education centre in the Philippines are able to access appropriate assistive devices, such as a braille typewriter for children with vision impairment, to enable them to realise their full potential. Parent volunteers assist special education teachers with behaviour management and meeting the special learning needs of students with a diverse range of disabilities. Photo credit: Anne Rigby, DFAT, 2013.



39 J Modern, C Joergensen and F Daniels, RESULTS UK and Department for International Development, *Disabilities and Education: Bridging the Implementation Gap*, London, January 2010, p. 6, viewed 29 April 2014, <<http://results.org.uk/dfid-disability-and-education-bridging-implementation-gap>>.

40 LM Banks, and S Polack, International Centre for Evidence in Disability Research Report, *The Economic Costs of Exclusion and Gains of Inclusion of People with Disabilities: Evidence from Low and Middle Income Countries*, 2014, viewed 23 January 2015, <<http://disabilitycentre.lshtm.ac.uk/new-report-economic-costs-exclusion-gains-inclusion-people-disabilities/>>.

## Australia's response

To support inclusive education and skill development, we will:

- improve the accessibility to and quality of education for people with disabilities through policy dialogue, teacher training, curriculum development and education infrastructure
- encourage and support the implementation of inclusive education in Australian-supported education programs from early childhood education to technical and vocational training
- enhance targeted support for people with disabilities, as required, to meet their needs and enable them to realise their full potential in education and employment, including through the provision of alternative communication strategies and assistive devices
- support skills training programs for people with disabilities to improve their ability to participate in the community and gain employment
- actively encourage and support people with disabilities to undertake tertiary study in Australia as part of the Australia Awards program.

Children who learn together, learn to live together. The Access to Quality Education Project in Fiji demonstrates the benefits of inclusive education. Photo credit: DFAT, 2013.



### ***Australia Awards: Investing in further education and people-to-people links***

Australia Awards provide opportunities for the next generation of global leaders, including those with disabilities, to study in Australia.

Awardees gain the academic and life skills needed to contribute to the development of their home country on their return and develop enduring people, country and professional links that contribute to broader public diplomacy outcomes.

We support awardees to undertake study in disability and other areas and proactively encourage, select and support awardees with disabilities, providing reasonable accommodation (including support for carers) as necessary.

We will continue to review our policies and procedures (including the Australia Awards Disability Policy) to ensure we actively recruit, include and support people with disabilities to participate in the Australia Awards program, recognising the importance of further developing their capacity to contribute to development outcomes in their communities.



Thi Hoang Yen Vo has established and led a disabled people's organisation in Vietnam and is currently studying a Ph.D (Social Work and Social Policy), as an Australia Awards Scholarship recipient. Photo credit: DFAT, 2014.

## **Building resilience: inclusive humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction and social protection**

### ***Inclusive humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction***

#### **Issue**

Australia supports disability-inclusive humanitarian practice, in line with our obligations under the CRPD.<sup>41</sup> People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by conflict and disasters, yet their specific needs are often overlooked in disaster planning. During conflict and disasters, people with disabilities are commonly unable to escape due to mobility impairments, loss of assistive devices, separation from carers and family, and/or inaccessible early warning systems. During humanitarian responses, people with disabilities are often invisible in registration processes and excluded from accessing emergency support and essential services such as food distribution, shelter or WASH facilities.<sup>42</sup>

We have contributed to improving the international community's inclusion of people with disabilities in disaster risk reduction efforts and in times of crisis.<sup>43</sup> Through the Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction, we have enhanced disaster preparedness for children with disabilities and their families, trained people to assist children with disabilities to evacuate, and supported the district

41 Through ratifying the CRPD, Australia has committed to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risks and humanitarian emergencies: CRPD, Article 11.

42 Women's Refugee Commission, *Disabilities inclusion: Translating policy into practice in humanitarian action*, March 2014, pp. 16–17.

43 L Kelly and L Wapling, *Development for All Mid-Term Review Report*, October 2012, pp. 23 and 33, viewed 23 January 2015, <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/development-for-all-strategy-mid-term-review.aspx>>

government to implement disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction legislation. We have supported a range of activities, such as promoting rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in low-income countries (including those injured by landmines), and the conducting of research on protecting people with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in camps for refugees and internally displaced people.

***Building resilience to disasters in the Pacific***

In the Pacific, the impact of disasters on communities and social and economic development is significant, yet people with disabilities are often excluded from efforts to plan ahead, respond and recover. The Pacific Disability Forum and other disabled people’s organisations in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu have been working together with National Disasters Offices to make disaster risk reduction and response measures more inclusive, drawing directly on the lived experience of people with disabilities. Recognising their innovative approach, the Pacific Disability Forum was awarded the inaugural Pacific Innovation and Leadership Award for Resilience by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Disability-Inclusive Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction Management Workshop held in Nadave, Fiji, 2013. Photo credit: Pacific Disability Forum and the Fiji Disabled People’s Federation, June 2013.



## Australia's response

To support inclusive humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction, we will:

- consider, include and support people with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian planning and implementation, as outlined in DFAT's humanitarian and disaster risk reduction policies, such as the *Protection in Humanitarian Action Framework*, and in line with the *Accessibility Design Guide*
- work to integrate disability inclusion and disaster risk reduction into international humanitarian response frameworks
- build the disaster resilience of people with disabilities through programs and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Accessible social protection

### Issue

People with disabilities and their households experience increased living costs, including in healthcare and transportation, and decreased income.<sup>44</sup> Earning capacities are commonly limited due to caring responsibilities amongst family members and inadequate access to appropriate schooling and employment opportunities amongst people with disabilities.<sup>45</sup>

Through partner government-funded, regular and predictable transfers, national social protection programs can help unlock the economic potential of people with disabilities and their families. Social protection programs can increase the status of people with disabilities within households, as they are seen as contributing members.<sup>46</sup> Transfers can also increase people with disabilities' access to appropriate healthcare, transport, education and subsequently employment<sup>47</sup>, providing carers with more time to access employment and earn an income.

Australia has worked with partner governments to develop effective approaches to social protection for people with disabilities. Supporting partner governments to develop and implement social protection systems that meet the needs of people with disabilities can have a catalytic effect, providing significant benefits and value for money.

## Australia's response

To strengthen accessible social protection, we will support partner governments to:

- improve and expand the coverage of national mainstream social protection systems and advocate for social transfers to be accessible to people with disabilities and their households
- develop and implement disability-specific social protection programs, as appropriate, to provide critical safety nets to people with disabilities who have higher support needs and may not be able to access mainstream social protection programs.

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44 J Braithwaite and D Mont, *Disability and poverty: A survey of World Bank Poverty Assessments and implications*, 2007, viewed 23 January 2015, <[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/280658-1239044853210/5995073-1246917324202/braithwaite\\_and\\_mont\\_final\\_pub\\_version\\_ALTER57.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/280658-1239044853210/5995073-1246917324202/braithwaite_and_mont_final_pub_version_ALTER57.pdf)>; N Viet Cuong and D Mont, 'Does Parental Disability Matter to Child Education? Evidence from Vietnam'. *World Development*, vol. 48, 2013, viewed 23 January 2015, <<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/Article/pii/S0305750X13000958>>

45 *ibid.*

46 M Schneider, W Waliuya, J Munsanje and L Swartz, *Reflections on Including Disability in Social Protection Programmes*, Oxford, 2011, p. 2, viewed 29 October 2014, <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2011.00271.x/pdf>>.

47 *ibid.*

# Measuring performance

## Making Performance Count—reducing poverty target

Disability is specifically included in the aid program's overall performance framework, as part of the reducing poverty target. Country and regional programs are developing Aid Investment Plans that promote economic growth in ways that provide pathways out of poverty. These plans will outline how the aid program will empower more disadvantaged members of society, including people with disabilities, to improve their quality of their life through:

- participating and sharing in the benefits of economic prosperity
- accessing the same opportunities as others.

## Strategy performance

DFAT's Disability Section will monitor the overall performance of Australia's aid program in strengthening disability-inclusive development. We will assess the breadth, depth and effectiveness of our work in this area across the aid program, identifying lessons learned and examples of good practice. This assessment will be guided by these key evaluative questions:

- To what extent have our development efforts identified and addressed barriers to inclusion and opportunities for participation for people with disabilities?
- To what extent have our development efforts actively involved disabled peoples' organisations in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating (recognising this improves participation amongst people with disabilities and enhances aid effectiveness)?

We will assess the performance of disability-inclusive development across the aid program annually, with outcomes publicly reported in the Australian Government's Annual Performance of Australian Aid report. To inform this assessment, we will collect and analyse:

- Annual Program Performance Reports to assess the effectiveness of implementing disability inclusion in country programs
- ratings on the effectiveness of identifying and addressing barriers to inclusion, and promoting opportunities for participation of people with disabilities within aid investments, collected through annual Aid Quality Checks and analysed by country, sector and value
- ratings on the effectiveness of involving disabled people's organisations at the investment-level, collected through annual Aid Quality Checks and analysed by country, sector and value
- data on disability-inclusion indicators collected through investment-level monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- expenditure on programs promoting disability inclusion
- relevant experience from pilots and innovative approaches

- relevant information from thematic portfolio reviews (for example, education, social protection and governance)
- case studies of good practice in disability-inclusion in targeted and mainstreamed programs.

## Strategy review

An independent mid-term review and final evaluation of this strategy will be undertaken to identify results achieved, lessons learned and recommendations for future policy priorities. This will enable lessons learned to be shared across DFAT and with our partners, and continue to strengthen disability-inclusive development to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities.

## Performance guidance for country and regional programs

A disability Performance Assessment Note will provide a range of indicators and evaluative questions for program areas to draw from in designing disability-inclusive investments and associated monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The Performance Assessment Note will draw on international experience and consultation with DFAT program areas. It will highlight that program areas should:

- **Pick indicators that suit the context and program.** The choice of indicators will be informed by the nature of the problem the investment is seeking to address, what solutions have been identified and what data can feasibly be collected.
- **Engage people with disabilities and disabled people's organisations** in each stage of aid programming, including in developing performance frameworks and gathering data.
- **Combine quantitative and qualitative data** to provide more comprehensive evidence of performance.
- **Disaggregate data by disability** where possible (using the Washington Group questions), and by gender.
- **Build in feedback loops.** Ongoing testing of assumptions and feeding back lessons to inform and, if necessary, adjust investments, to help ensure intermediate changes support long-term results.

# Further support and References

## Further support

DFAT is committed to effectively implementing disability-inclusive development through diplomatic efforts and aid investments and will develop and maintain strong internal expertise to do so.

**DFAT's Disability Section** can:

- facilitate appropriate practical and technical advice on disability-inclusive development, including in regard to policy advocacy, program design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation
- provide training materials and other resources to support internal policy development and implementation, including practical tips for DFAT employees.

**DFAT disability focal points and senior advocates** within Divisions and Posts will be supported to share lessons and monitor progress across the aid program. They can:

- provide leadership and practical advice on disability-inclusive development
- ensure coherence in the application of this strategy
- contribute to strengthening disability-inclusive development practice over time.

For a list of relevant disability-inclusive references, see below.

## References

*The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (2006)*: an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and set out a code for implementation. Countries that ratify the Convention, like Australia (in 2008), agree to take concrete actions to undertake the legal rights and obligations contained in the Convention.

<<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>>

*World Report on Disability (2011)*: the first report to provide a global picture of the situation of people with disabilities, their needs and the barriers they face to participating fully in the societies in which they live.

<[http://www.who.int/disabilities/world\\_report/2011/en/](http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/)>

*Washington Group on Disability Statistics website*: provides background on the group formed by the United Nations to develop internationally comparable disabilities data sets. The United Nations recommends that countries use the Group's short set of questions in their national censuses and surveys to assess disability prevalence.

<[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington\\_group/wg\\_questions.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington_group/wg_questions.htm)>

*Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program*: provides practical information about how to apply universal design principles to physical infrastructure (such as schools, roads, hospitals and courthouses) to minimise barriers and enable people with disabilities to participate more fully in social and economic life. <<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/accessibility-design-guide-universal-design-principles-for-australia-s-aid-program.aspx>>

*DID4All: Resources for Disability Inclusive Development*: includes detailed evidence and guidance on mainstreaming disability-inclusive development in a range of sectors. <<https://www.did4all.com.au/>>

*Inclusion Made Easy*: CBM's practical guide on how to ensure programs are disability-inclusive. It offers basic inclusion principles, practical tips and case studies. <<http://www.cbm.org/Inclusion-Made-Easy-329091.php>>

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every receipt, invoice, and bill should be properly filed and indexed for easy retrieval. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations. The text further explains how digital record-keeping can significantly reduce the risk of errors and fraud, while also providing a clear audit trail for management review.

In addition, the document highlights the need for regular reconciliation of accounts. By comparing internal records with bank statements and supplier invoices on a monthly basis, discrepancies can be identified and corrected promptly. This practice is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the financial data and preventing small issues from escalating into major problems. The author also notes that consistent reconciliation can help in identifying trends and optimizing cash flow management.

Another key aspect mentioned is the importance of transparency and communication. All financial decisions should be clearly documented and communicated to relevant stakeholders. This includes providing regular reports to the board or management, as well as being open to external audits. Transparency builds trust and ensures that everyone is on the same page regarding the company's financial health. The document also suggests implementing internal controls to further enhance transparency and accountability.

Finally, the document concludes by stressing the long-term benefits of a robust financial record-keeping system. It not only aids in accurate financial reporting but also provides valuable insights into the company's performance over time. By analyzing historical data, management can make more informed decisions and identify areas for improvement. The document ends with a call to action, encouraging the reader to take immediate steps to review and strengthen their current financial record-keeping practices.