



## Australian Federal Budget 2020-21

### Submission from the Australian Disability and Development Consortium

People with disability in developing countries often face higher levels of discrimination, exclusion and violence than the rest of the population, alongside lower levels of food security, inclusion in livelihood activities and access to health care and education. Disability can be a cause of poverty as well as a consequence of poverty. Not only do people with disability experience a disproportionately higher level of poverty, being poor increases their chances of having a disability and reduces their access to vital services and employment. This cycle of disability and poverty for people with disability, their families and communities can compound marginalization and be very hard to break.

For over a decade, the Australian Government has been a global leader at the forefront of advancing disability inclusion in international development and humanitarian policy and practice. This has included driving international momentum to include people with disability as key agents of these investments. However there is much work still to be done to ensure a significant cohort of the world's poorest are included in all international development and humanitarian efforts and are provided opportunities to break the cycle of disability and poverty.

#### Summary of Recommendations:

To enhance the lives of people with disability through the Australian international development and humanitarian program, ADDC recommends the following:

#### 1. DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1. Increase the existing \$12.9 million annual investment in disability specific funding in line with the Consumer Price Index in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years, including for the final year of the *Development for All 2015-2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program* and to support the continuation of disability inclusion work within the international development and humanitarian program beyond the current strategy.
- 1.2. Ensure the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated activity costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy of the current *Development for All 2015-2020* strategy in Canberra and at Post, as well as additional funding to ensure comprehensive consultations are conducted to inform the future approach to disability inclusion beyond 2020 within the Australian international development and humanitarian program.

#### 2. CONTINUING AUSTRALIA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1. Commit to fully resourcing the development and implementation of a third, 5-year strategy on disability inclusion for the Australian international development and humanitarian program across the forward estimates.

### 3. AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM BUDGET

- 3.1. Increase the overall budget for the Australian international development and humanitarian program to 0.5 percent of GNI in no more than five years and 0.7 percent by 2030.

---

#### 1. DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

There are over one billion people living with disabilities in the world,<sup>1</sup> with 80 percent of those living in low and middle income countries. This correlates to a prevalence rate of over one in six adults having a disability living in low and middle income countries<sup>2</sup> and people with disability constituting 20 percent of the poorest of the poor. When considering the effectiveness and outcomes of Australia's international development and humanitarian program, it is therefore imperative to ensure that all people with disability are being included within all development efforts.

While inclusion is a values-based imperative for Australia's development cooperation and foreign policy, supportive statements alone are not enough to generate real outcomes for people with disability. Inclusion requires stable, predictable and long-term investment. Investment in the current disability-inclusive development strategy *Development for All* and a commitment to invest in a third iteration of the strategy is fundamental for ensuring that people with disability are reached by both disability-specific development interventions as well as mainstream development initiatives that cross the breadth of all development cooperation.

A failure to appropriately commit resources to inclusion will have wide-reaching ramifications. Development practitioners increasingly understand that policy and program interventions cannot achieve their objectives in comprehensive poverty alleviation, economic growth and regional stability while inequalities persist and when people with disability are unable to participate and benefit. The exclusion of people with disability from paid employment undermines community cohesion, with people with psychosocial and intellectual disability in particular being among the least likely to access employment, which perpetuates stigma and exclusion in other important life domains. Exclusion from work carries a high cost not only for individuals, but for societies, due to limitations on productive potential and implications for families and carers. Globally, the International Labour Organisation estimates that the economic exclusion of people with disability may cost countries between 1 to 7 per cent of GDP.

To ensure a sustainable and quality international development and humanitarian program, people with disability must be included. Investing in disability-inclusive development is economically smart. It makes economic sense to include people with disability in all poverty alleviation, humanitarian and development investments.

ADDC therefore recommends:

- 1.1. Increase the existing \$12.9 million annual investment in disability specific funding in line with the Consumer Price Index in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years, including for the final

---

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation and World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, available from [http://www.who.int/disabilities/world\\_report/2011/en/](http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/), p 29.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation and World Bank, as above, p. 27.

year of the *Development for All 2015-2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program* and to support the continuation of disability inclusion work within the international development and humanitarian program beyond the current strategy.

- 1.2. Ensure the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated activity costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy of the current *Development for All 2015-2020* strategy in Canberra and at Post, as well as additional funding to ensure comprehensive consultations are conducted to inform the future approach to disability inclusion beyond 2020 within the Australian international development and humanitarian program.

## 2. CONTINUING AUSTRALIA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

For over a decade, Australia has been at the forefront of advancing disability inclusion in international development policy and practice and driving international momentum to include people with disability as key agents of development. Australia's *Development for All* strategies have been foundational to this global leadership. The introduction of the first [Development for All 2009-2014](#) strategy in 2009 was ground-breaking and the first of its kind, followed by the subsequent release of the more ambitious [Development for All 2015-2020](#). Guided by the strategies, Australia's international development investments and humanitarian responses have been providing opportunities for people with disability in developing countries to shape their own futures. From [supporting women with disability to achieve financial independence](#), to [facilitating access to much-needed assistive devices](#), and [strengthening educational opportunities](#), the *Development for All* strategies have made tangible differences in the lives of people with disability around the world. However there is still much work to be done.

The current *Development for All* strategy will expire at the end of 2020. The introduction of a third strategy is the next step for the Australian Government to continue as a global leader and meet its commitment to the rights of people with disability living in poverty. The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade released the bipartisan report of its [inquiry into Australia's aid program](#) in the Indo-Pacific in April 2019. The Committee made a number of recommendations relevant to the implementation and continuation of the *Development for All* strategy, in line with recommendations of the 2017 and 2018 Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) evaluations of the current strategy. The report and evaluation recommendations provide a useful roadmap to develop an effective strategy with a strong accountability framework to ensure and understand success, including comprehensive funding for the implementation and evaluation of the current and future strategies.

A central tenet of Australia's ground-breaking work has been ensuring people with disability and their representative bodies are at the heart of this vital work; from developing to implementing and evaluating the strategies. The ODE 2018 Evaluation recognized that the importance of the role of disabled people's organisations (DPOs) 'cannot be overstated' in the success of the first and current *Development for All* strategies. This core component needs to remain part of Australia's work, starting with the process to develop the next strategy with people with disability and DPOs as key informants.

It is paramount in order to meet our commitments under the 2030 Agenda as well the principles of the Australian international development and humanitarian program that people with disability are central agents and beneficiaries of this program.

ADDC therefore recommends;

- 2.1. Commit to fully resourcing the development and implementation of a third, 5-year strategy on disability inclusion for the Australian international development and humanitarian program across the forward estimates.

### **3. AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM BUDGET**

To ensure a sustainable and quality international development and humanitarian program, consistent funding is required based on multi-year commitments necessary to ensure that investments can be planned, budgeted and delivered with maximum impact. After consecutive years of cuts to the development cooperation budget, the time is now right to increase investment in building resilient communities and reducing poverty in our region and globally in the wake of the Treasurer announcing a projected federal budget surplus in April this year.

As recognised in the Australian Government's own foreign policy white paper, Australian aid saves lives, strengthens communities and promotes stability in our region. Scaling up the aid program budget will enhance the efforts to alleviate poverty and empower the most vulnerable. Women, men and children with disability are amongst the most marginalized, the poorest and most at-risk in communities and societies throughout developing countries. Great momentum has been established on disability in Australia's development cooperation program yet there is still much more to do.

ADDC supports the recommendations of the 2019 bipartisan report of the Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade [Inquiry into Australia's aid program in the Indo-Pacific](#) to establish a timeline of no more than five years for restoring Australia's funding for development cooperation to at least 0.5 per cent of GNI. This is followed by a second timeframe of no more than 10 years for increasing funding to at least 0.7 per cent of GNI. This should be achieved and enshrined in legislation so funding floors are established for Australian development cooperation.

ADDC therefore recommends:

- 3.1. Increase the overall budget for the Australian international development and humanitarian program to 0.5 percent of GNI in no more than five years and 0.7 percent by 2030.

#### **Australian Disability and Development Consortium**

The Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) is a community of over 600 individuals and organisations working across Australia, the Asia Pacific and globally on disability and international development issues. ADDC members are united by the desire to see a more disability inclusive world and consider it vital for disability inclusion to continue as a core component of the Australian international development and humanitarian program.

#### **Contact details**

Kerryn Clarke, ADDC Executive Officer

[kclarke@addc.org.au](mailto:kclarke@addc.org.au), 03 8843 4519