



## Submission to Australian Government's forthcoming International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy

The vision of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) is that the voices and rights of people with disabilities are elevated, reflected in, and inform all international development policies and programs of Australian agencies. In pursuit of this vision, we welcome the opportunity to provide input drawn from the experience and expertise of our membership to the formation of the Australian Government's forthcoming International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy ('the Strategy').

The release of the Government's first disability inclusive development strategy, *Development for All*, in 2009 paved the way for other donor governments, INGOs and multilateral organisations to follow in practising and promoting disability inclusion. Today, the Strategy offers a similar opportunity for the Australian Government to again lead globally in advancing disability equity in partnership with the international disability movement.

### The challenge

People with disabilities comprise around 16 per cent of the global population. They are women and men, boys and girls, non-binary, and transgender, they are young and old, they are all ethnicities, in all circumstances, all orientations and all characteristics. However, people with disabilities are disproportionately represented in every under-served and vulnerable group.

Recent world events, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic and the advancing impacts of climate change, have led to a significant change in our world. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with disabilities globally has exacerbated long standing inequalities and barriers to equity. Research by the Pacific Disability Forum found that 'climate change is amplifying the risks and exclusion that persons with disabilities already experience in their daily lives... [and] introducing new risks and creating new barriers.'<sup>1</sup> In this context, global poverty has risen for the first time in over a decade.

People with disabilities experiencing marginalisation and poverty are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and disability that perpetuates inequality, isolation, and exclusion. Poverty and disability can both be a cause and a consequence of the other. Not only do people with disabilities experience a disproportionately higher level of poverty compared to those without a disability, but

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific Disability Forum (2022), [Disability and Climate Change in the Pacific: Findings from Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu](#), p. 6.

being poor increases the likelihood of having a disability and reduces access to vital services. The sharp global rise in people living in extreme poverty inevitably fuels this cycle.

## The opportunity

**Now, more than ever, it is critical for Australia to have an ambitious, accountable and resourced approach to disability equity and rights in their international efforts.** ADDC welcomes the elevation of disability equity as one of the three core areas of action for Australia's international development program, alongside gender equality and climate change. As well as a commitment to being led by 'the experiences and expertise of people with disabilities when designing and implementing development activities'<sup>2</sup>.

Over more than a decade Australia has played an important role leading the donor community and partnering with Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) in advancing disability inclusion. The two previous *Development for All* strategies<sup>3</sup> recognised and began implementing a central role for people with disabilities and their representative organisations in development efforts. This laid a strong platform for people with disabilities to be acknowledged, be present and participate.

Over the same period, international frameworks and organised representation by people with disabilities have become well established. Australia's role as a long-term donor committed to disability inclusion has played a significant role in enabling this progress. The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* was adopted in 2006 and today is almost universally adopted.<sup>4</sup> The early work of pioneers of the disability movement in the Pacific led to the establishment of the Pacific Disability Forum in 2002. It is now the leading advocate for the rights of all people with disabilities to be realised in the Pacific. The first Asia-Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992. The fourth Decade of Disabled Persons commenced this year.

Reflecting these advancements, language has recently shifted from disability inclusion to disability equity. This shift has been led by the Pacific Disability Forum<sup>5</sup> and the international disability movement. ADDC welcomes the Australian Government's support of this shift in the direction of this forthcoming strategy. Equity is the next step. Equity calls for full, effective, and meaningful participation and leadership from people with disabilities to create long-term change that transforms systemic marginalisation and discrimination to full realisation of rights. As the Pacific Disability Forum stated in a recent brief, 'Disability inclusion may raise these questions, but equity insists they be adequately answered.'<sup>6</sup> It is this that will make a difference in the lives of hundreds of millions of people in our region alone. The forthcoming strategy must be built from this foundation.

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<sup>2</sup> DFAT (2023), [Australia's International Development Policy](#), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> DFAT, [Development for All](#), 2009 and 2015.

<sup>4</sup> UNOHCHR, [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#).

<sup>5</sup> Pacific Disability Forum, 2023, *Pacific Disability Forum Statement regarding disability equity and rights*. For a copy contact ADDC on the details below.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

## The vision

Disability equity is an essential part of creating more just and inclusive societies where all people can thrive. Disability equity must be a driver of the process as well as an outcome. In this submission, ADDC recommends a framework explaining how DFAT can think and act to advance the realisation of disability equity and rights throughout our region and globally. Drawing on this framework, a series of approaches, foundational commitments and recommendations are outlined below as critical to delivering on this vision.

ADDC has collaborated with its members and, more broadly, with the Australian international development sector to produce this submission. Because of this collaboration, many organisations will be reinforcing this approach through their own submissions as well as offering additional recommendations informed by their thematic expertise. ADDC's submission was developed alongside CBM Australia's submission. The conceptual framework and higher-level recommendations detailed below complement CBM Australia's comprehensive recommendations to advance disability equity through Australia's international engagements.

## Framing disability equity<sup>7</sup>

### Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the forthcoming International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy must be to **achieve disability equity**.

### What is disability equity?

Disability equity extends far beyond inclusion and requires new ways of thinking that transcend the narrative of 'disability inclusive development'. Recent work<sup>8</sup> on advancing understanding of social equity exposes the special duty the government has to acknowledge and remedy inequities. This work provides a framework for how disability equity can be conceptualised in a global context. Based on this framework, ADDC recommends that disability equity is understood and advanced through four interconnected dimensions: **access, processes, quality, and outcomes**.

### Dimensions of disability equity

**Access** refers to differences in how diverse groups can participate in and derive benefit from development, foreign policy, and trade programming and investments. To effectively advance disability equity, people with disabilities, in all their diversity, must have full access to all processes and benefits of development. Inclusion and accessibility are the primary enablers of access. People with disabilities and their representative organisations must be invited and supported to contribute to all stages of development investment from program design through to evaluation,

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<sup>7</sup> Additional references: Elbers, W. & Kamstra, J., (2020), 'How does organisational capacity contribute to advocacy effectiveness? Taking stock of existing evidence', in *Development in Practice by Informa UK Limited*, trading as Taylor & Francis Group, published 2 July 2020. DFAT (2018), *Creating a new 'business as usual': Reflections and lessons from the Australian aid program on engaging with disabled people's organisations in development programming and humanitarian action*.

<sup>8</sup> McCandless, S. (2023). Social Equity. In: Brinkmann, R. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Sustainability*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

and be full partners in strategy and policy development. The preconditions for inclusion (also known as ‘enablers of equity’, see below) need to be embedded across all DFAT-supported programs and investments. In practice, this means considering group- and population-level approaches to promoting access and guaranteeing accessibility and reasonable accommodation to support individual variances in access requirements.

**Processes** are fundamentally about participation. ADDC recognises the expertise and lived experience of people with disabilities and upholds the disability movement’s call for “nothing without us”. People with disabilities, in all their diversity, must be included in decision-making on all topics and issues related to development cooperation, humanitarian action, foreign policy and multilateral human rights engagement, not just on those issues known to be specifically relevant to them. Participation means ensuring that people with disabilities have a seat at the decision-making table; they are respected and valued members of teams contributing to program designs, decisions and solutions; they have the opportunity to be partners and implementers of development and humanitarian programming; and underpinned by the right to self-determination, they decide how they live their lives.

**Outcomes** refers to the long-term results of Australia’s international engagements, including development investments. The effectiveness of development programming and investments can be judged by the extent to which they result in the transformation of power relations, such that people with disabilities, in all of their diversity, have more power, greater agency, and the opportunity to realise their human rights and live their best lives.

**Quality** refers to the worth, value, or condition of processes and outcomes achieved for and with people with disabilities. In the same way that quality of life can be judged by the extent to which human rights are secured, realised and protected, the quality of processes and outcomes is also fundamentally about human rights. The rights of people with disabilities must be centred in all policies, plans and actions relevant to Australia’s international engagements. Rights cannot be disentangled from the pursuit of equity. The clear positioning of rights in the Strategy’s title is welcome; human rights need to be woven throughout all engagements and outcomes. Rights are both an enshrined goal of Australia’s international commitments as well as a lived experience where rights are progressively constructed through human interaction and through ongoing discourse about what constitutes a common or shared humanity. Rights must be both understood and realised through interaction with people with disabilities as well as through the actions of DFAT and its delivery partners.

Diagram 1: Disability equity as a framework for Australia's international engagements



## Approaches

Under this framework to achieve disability equity, ADDC recommends the following set of approaches. They are the vehicles to implement the Strategy and must be integrated into all activities to achieve its purpose of advancing disability equity. ADDC proposes the following approaches:

- **Respecting agency and leadership.** Create space for people with disabilities to exercise their agency and be leaders. Proactively ensure that their leadership reaches all spaces and places from community level meetings to international forums. This requires DFAT to leverage opportunities for people with disabilities to speak, lead and exercise influence and invest in accessibility measures and reasonable accommodations to make it happen.
- **Championing.** The Australian Government has an important role to play in championing and role-modelling good practices for creating disability equity within and across all divisions of DFAT, as well as nationally and globally, boldly pushing the agenda for disability equity and rights and modelling authentic partnership with OPDs. The Australian Government has a proud history of advancing discussions and commitments to disability inclusion regionally and globally<sup>9</sup> and this provides a solid platform to continue in this role and drive the agenda further under this new strategy.

<sup>9</sup> The leadership and effectiveness of Australia's advocacy on disability inclusion globally was evaluated in this review of the second *Development for All* strategy: Office of Development Effectiveness (2017), [Unfinished business: Evaluation of Australian advocacy for disability-inclusive development](#).

- **Co-learning.** An active and engaged approach to listening and learning from, with and through engagement with people with disabilities is needed to explore and challenge power imbalances, ableism and oppression and learn new ways of working. At a minimum, regular dialogue is necessary to reflect, learn and adapt development interventions for context and changing needs, and to ensure effectiveness. As we reach out and include previously excluded people with disabilities into development programs, this provides new opportunities to learn how to do things better. Listening and learning together helps us recognise and draw on each other's complementary strengths to achieve disability equity.
- **Policy integration.** Integration of disability equity across all Australia's international engagements is critically important. Adequate resourcing is required to deliver on the ambition of the Strategy: it is vital that disability equity is a resourced and technical component, including in all Development Partnership Plans and Strategic Partnership Frameworks.
- **Investing in capabilities.** Australia needs advanced development capabilities including: an understanding of participation through the lens of intersectionality, a more nuanced and extensive approach to accessibility, and a commitment to deeper and more transparent processes for accountability to the disability movement and to the public. This needs to be underpinned by sufficient resourcing and technical capacity within DFAT to support all officers across the organisation to integrate this strategy and deliver it within their work area.
- **Preconditions for inclusion.** The preconditions are foundational to advancing and achieving disability equity. They should be integrated into public policy making and programming across all sectors, including non-discrimination rooted in law. The preconditions are foundational enablers for people with disabilities to access services across all sectors, such as education, health, and justice, and to participate in their communities actively and meaningfully. A multi-sectoral approach to establish and set up these preconditions is required for greater efficiency. The Pacific Disability Forum provides examples of their adaptability, including for inclusive disaster risk reduction<sup>10</sup> and pandemic response<sup>11</sup>.

## Preconditions for inclusion

Fundamental to achieving disability equity through DFAT's work is recognising and explicitly addressing the particular and wide-ranging barriers that people with disabilities face in participating in society, including in development efforts. They are often defined as '**pre-conditions to inclusion**' and should be proactively considered and addressed in both disability-focused and mainstream activities.

Different organisations, including the United Nations Partnership and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN PRPD) and Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), express the pre-conditions to inclusion –

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<sup>10</sup> Pacific Disability Forum (2023), [Submission to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Disability inclusion in DRR in the Pacific](#).

<sup>11</sup> Pacific Disability Forum (2020), [Guideline on Pre-Condition to Inclusion Persons with Disabilities – COVID-19 Response](#).

sometimes called the ‘enablers to equity’ – slightly differently depending on their context and organisational focus. In this submission, ADDC orients itself with the core pre-conditions identified by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in their 2016 thematic report on disability inclusive policies<sup>12</sup>. These are:

1. **Non-discrimination** – ensuring that legal and policy frameworks do not discriminate on the basis of disability, therefore guaranteeing that all people with disabilities are able to access and benefit from them on an equal basis with others,
2. **Accessibility** – the requirement to build barrier-free, inclusive societies where people can live independently and participate fully in all aspect of life and their community, and
3. **Assistive technology and support services** – the availability of affordable and appropriate assistive and support services that are required for people with disabilities to be able to fully access and benefit from policies and programs on an equal basis with others.<sup>13</sup>

We note and address in the recommendations below, in the Pacific the Pacific Disability Forum have identified two additional pre-conditions: community based inclusive development and social protection. Considering and addressing preconditions as a specific outcome of this strategy as well as the lens through which to identify and prioritise investment is key. See recommendation two below.

## Foundations

Foundations keep us strong and stable; they guide decision making and actions. The foundations underpin the purpose of the Strategy to advance disability equity and the approaches above to achieving it. ADDC proposes the following foundations:

- **Partnership.** Genuine partnerships are grounded in the understanding that each partner has something to learn from the other. They acknowledge the expertise of each partner and ensure all parties have a solid, honest, realistic and respectful understanding of the other, making the relationship more collaborative, balanced and less transactional. Experiences of OPDs show that, to be able to fulfil their role in a partnership, access to resources and technology is important. For example, they need sufficient time to consult with members in advance of attending meetings, documents and materials that are fully accessible, and equipment like laptops, internet data, desks, chairs or printers that are necessary to carry out their roles and responsibilities in the partnership. Attending to such matters helps to ensure that OPDs have the capacity to demonstrate their expertise and experience.
- **Participation.** The active contribution of people with disabilities representing a diversity of impairment, age, gender and sexuality throughout policy and program cycles, across all levels of government, private sector and civil society, and across local, national, international regional development investments, should be expected, supported, facilitated and resourced.
- **Intersectionality.** People with disabilities have multiple, intersecting identities and may experience multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage as a result.

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<sup>12</sup> UNOHCRH (2016), [A/71/314: Report on Disability-Inclusive Policies](#).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



Because of this, inclusion of a diverse range of voices is important, learning is constant, and solutions are varied - one size never fits all. The understanding and applicability of intersectionality is vital for ensuring no one is left behind by DFAT's international engagements.

- **Sustainability.** DFAT investment to advance disability equity must be founded on the priorities of, knowledge and expertise of local actors, involve resourcing civil society advocacy movements, and investing in system changes prioritising reaching those living in poverty and those most marginalised. This is an important aspect of DFAT's investment creating long-term positive change.
- **Accountability.** An effective reporting and measurable framework for disability-equitable aid expenditure is required. This includes independent evaluation capacity to record, report and evaluate impact, including those which are not currently captured, and to coordinate sharing of knowledge. Clear and measurable targets and input requirements are recommended in the following section.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations offer direction to implement the four dimensions of disability equity through Australia's international engagements with a focus on the international development program. The recommendations have been developed in collaboration with CBM Australia. The secondary level of detail under these broader commitments is stepped out in CBM's submission.

### Recommendation 1

**The purpose of the forthcoming International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy ('the Strategy') must be to achieve disability equity.** The Strategy must commit to achieving disability equity through following the leadership and expertise of people with disabilities to transform relationships of power and reduce and remove marginalisation and discrimination based on disability and its intersection with the various identities within the community.

### Access

### Recommendation 2

**Commit to adopting preconditions for inclusion as a specific outcome of the Strategy as well as the lens** through which to determine the sectors best placed to build the preconditions in specific contexts and which to prioritise for investment. Including in:

- a. **Partnering with OPDs and under-represented groups of people with disabilities** in the development and delivery of Development Partnership Plans and Strategic Partnership Frameworks.
- b. Ensuring that funding in the core sector groups, including gender, climate, education, health, governance and humanitarian, **has both mainstreamed disability equity investment and allocation for specific contribution** to addressing the empowerment and preconditions for inclusion of people with disabilities.
- c. **Supporting partner governments to develop disability inclusive and disability specific economic and social protection schemes** to support the participation and inclusion of



people with disabilities, and which cover the extra costs incurred by people with disabilities because of inaccessible environments and services.

### Recommendation 3

Increasing visibility of and resourcing for disability equity across all development investments by **ensuring that accessibility and reasonable accommodations are resourced** in all investments in order that people with disabilities and their representative organisations can fully participate and lead in design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation. Specifically:

- a. Ensure that **accessibility provision** – such as ensuring venues are accessible and information is available in accessible formats – are factored into core program budgets.
- b. All investments **allocate a minimum of 5 per cent of the total budget** to support reasonable accommodations for consultation and design processes.
- c. **Consultation and design outcomes include specific reporting** on accessibility and reasonable accommodation requirements for implementation and monitoring and evaluation, with associated delivery budget provision.
- d. **Recognise that for disability specific programs** and where there is a larger cohort of people with disabilities as participants, the reasonable accommodation costs may increase significantly from this minimum level, potentially 50 per cent of the project budget.
- e. **Track and report information on budget expenditure** on reasonable accommodation in order to contribute to continuous improvement and adequate resourcing.

### Recommendation 4

**Access to assistive technologies** is a necessary precondition for disability equity that is preserved as a right in Article 20 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Australia should commit to investing in increasing access to assistive technologies and support services that facilitate active and meaningful participation of people with disabilities. This includes:

- a. Working with partners to **establish a Pacific regional procurement facility** for quality and affordable assistive technologies by 2025.
- b. Provision of direct funding to partner governments, regional bodies or specialist agencies to ensure the **initial training and ongoing professional development of specialist prosthetics and orthotics** personnel in low-income settings.
- c. Providing funding for **regular training of multi-disciplinary personnel** within local systems in the procurement, maintenance, care and disposal of assistive technologies, recognising that a life-cycle approach to managing assistive technologies is important.
- d. **Funding pilots and scale ups** of effective, contextualised rights-based support services, including human supports such as sign language interpreters, sighted guides, tactile interpreters, and personal assistance.
- e. Commit to supporting a **regional rehabilitation and assistive technology association** to facilitate the sharing of resources and building of an evidence-base for future investment.

### Recommendation 5

Commit to **non-discrimination and accessibility as non-negotiable requirements of all procurement investments and processes**, to ensure Australia's investment in accessible public infrastructure includes rather than further exacerbates systemic exclusion of people with

disabilities. This includes public infrastructure such as roads and transport, information and communication infrastructure, education, justice and health facilities and evacuation centres.

## Processes

### Recommendation 6

Commit to **partnering and supporting Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) to grow stronger**, to become more able to pursue their priorities, to advocate and fulfil their duties as civil society organisations with the mandate to keep their governments to account and have greater influence in Australia's International Development program. Achieved through:

- a. **Prioritised engagement with and support to OPDs** throughout the International Development program, via the central disability allocation, in bilateral portfolios and through individual investments.
- b. Increased investment to provide **predictable multi-year core budget support and capacity development** for OPDs in the region, including increasing investment support to OPDs in Southeast Asia.
- c. Commitment to **supporting the diversification of the movement** through providing intentional, multi-year funding for under-represented and under-resourced groups to establish themselves and represent their constituencies.
- d. A significant investment to scope and **support the establishment of representation where none currently exists** – including across geographies, types of disability and aspect of inclusion and equity being focused on.
- e. **Systematically investing in leadership development** and peer collaboration and learning across the Indo-Pacific disability movement so the next generation of leaders have been supported to develop their skills and capacity and to connect with each other. Achieved through a comprehensive approach to leadership development, spearheaded by the Indo-Pacific Disability Equity Leadership Program.

### Recommendation 7

Commit to the **use of an age lens in the design and implementation of new investments to ensure that people with disabilities across the life cycle, in their diversity, are effectively reached with a focus on older people and youth**. There is a pressing need to ensure equity of access to disability-related programs and initiatives for older people, particularly older women with disabilities. Evidence shows that programs, expenditures, and goals for people with disabilities differ substantially across age groups in ways that suggest ageism. It is also estimated that about two-thirds of the global population aged 60 years or older need assistive products and this need is currently not being met. In addition, close to 90 per cent of the world's youth (10-24 years of age) live in low-income countries, where they make up the largest proportion of the population.<sup>14</sup> Youth with disabilities are among the most marginalized and poorest of the world's youth population and are more likely to face severe social, economic, and civic disparities as

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<sup>14</sup> UN, [Youth](#), accessed 13 December 2023

compared with those without disabilities.<sup>15</sup> To address this through a life-cycle approach, Australia needs to:

- a. Undertake **analysis to determine if and how** Australia's international development investments are **inclusive of younger and older people with disabilities**.
- b. **Ensure data is collected and reported across all international development investments with age disaggregation within the older age category at a minimum of 10-year age brackets**. This information is essential for programs to effectively be designed and delivered to reach older people with disabilities in all their diversity.
- c. **Analyse if and how the development programme as a whole is reducing and eliminating intersecting forms of discrimination that people with disabilities may face including ableism, ageism and sexism**. Available research shows that ageism can intersect with ableism and sexism, meaning that older people with disabilities can face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, compounding the disadvantages, particularly for older women with disabilities.
- d. **Require Australian implementing partners to report age disaggregated data following DFAT's GEDSI Good Practice Note** and to report on how they are reaching younger and older populations.

### **Recommendation 8**

**DFAT to establish a new set of standards of practise responding to the call from OPDs** to ensure all DFAT and Australia's development partners consistently operate to build disability equity and strive for good practice in both policy and program development and delivery. This can be built off the learnings from the inclusive and accessible process DFAT has utilised to develop this strategy, developed with diverse representatives of the disability movement as well as based on current research, including the *Feminist Accessibility Protocol*<sup>16</sup> and *Planning for Equity*<sup>17</sup>.

### **Recommendation 9**

Australia commits to being an **international champion for disability equity and rights**, harnessing our national strengths and working in authentic partnership with the disability movement. Australia can utilise its convening power by supporting people with disabilities to inform agendas and exercise their leadership in regional and global forums and by harnessing opportunities to put disability equity on the table as part of all international fora.

## Outcomes

### **Recommendation 10**

Commit **ongoing support to the Pacific Regional Mechanism** beyond the co-design phase, to accelerate the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025*, including:

- a. Committing **\$40 million over four years to the Pacific Regional Mechanism commencing 2024-2025**.

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<sup>15</sup> UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, [Youth with Disabilities](#), accessed 13 December 2023

<sup>16</sup> The Inclusive Generation Equality Collective (2022), [Feminist Accessibility Protocol](#).

<sup>17</sup> ADDC (2023), [Planning for Equity: Making consultation processes inclusive of diverse people with disabilities](#).

- b. **Actively engaging with likeminded donors** to provide support through the Mechanism.

### **Recommendation 11**

Adequately **resource the key role DFAT's central disability allocation** plays in building and strengthening the disability movement and driving DFAT's capability to deliver on the Strategy, by increasing the allocation to \$20 million per annum in the 2024-2025 Federal Budget with annual increases thereafter in line with overall budget increases. This increased funding would enable:

- a. Increased investment in providing **predictable multi-year core budget support and capacity development for OPDs in the region**, including increasing investment support to OPDs in Southeast Asia and the ASEAN Disability Forum.
- b. Systematic **investment in leadership and capacity development** across the Indo-Pacific disability movement, including for women with disabilities and marginalised groups such as people with psychosocial and cognitive disabilities, and those who are deafblind. This support would help under-represented groups to amplification their priorities.

### **Recommendations 12**

Women and girls with disabilities and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) with disabilities are exposed to gender-based violence at a greater rate than the rest of the population. In this strategy, Australia needs to:

- a. **Commit to both investments specifically addressing the increased rates of violence women and girls with disabilities and people of diverse SOGIESC with disabilities experience**, as well as commit to increase funding for the inclusion of women with disabilities and people of diverse SOGIESC with disabilities in all programs to combat gender-based violence.
- b. Commit to removing the barriers to and **increasing access to disability inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights** on an equal basis with others.

### **Recommendation 13**

**People with disabilities are the largest and most complex group at risk of climate change impacts** and are up to four times more likely to die or be injured during a disaster event.<sup>18</sup> As such, Australia needs to ensure that climate change policies, plans and strategies recognise that the impacts of climate change and disasters are exacerbated for people with intersecting identities, particularly gender, age and disability. As such, commit to:

- a. **Analysis of the impact of climate change** on people with disabilities including those with intersecting forms of marginalisation.
- b. Implementation **measures that specifically target people with disabilities**.
- c. The **involvement** of people with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate interventions.
- d. The ability to **monitor implementation** toward disability inclusive climate action in performance assessment.

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<sup>18</sup> Disability Information Resources (2015), [The Great Japan Earthquake and Persons with Disabilities Affected by the Earthquake](#).

- e. **Championing climate financing to be inclusive** of a range of civil society organisations, with a particular stream for OPDs.
- f. Ensuring that **all Australian climate finance, inclusive of ODA and other forms of finance adhere to the standards**, commitments and requirements contained in the Strategy.

## Quality

### Recommendation 14

**Develop, resource and report** publicly the measures to systematically address disability equity across the development program. This would include:

- a. **Setting a 2030 target of 10 per cent of ODA** being allocated to initiatives with disability equity as a principal objective, according to the OECD Development Assistance Committee Disability policy marker.
- b. Establishing a requirement that **all new investments over \$3 million have a disability equity objective**, in line with existing requirements for two other core areas of action of the Australian International Development program, namely climate change and gender equality.
- c. **Establishing an ambitious target that 80 per cent of investments effectively address disability equity.**

### Recommendation 15

Support the **implementation of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*** across the region and globally through a lens of preconditions for inclusion to identify with OPDs and partner governments specific areas for investment, including:

- a. Supporting partner government **CRPD compliant legislative reforms and subsequent structural changes.**
- b. **Advocating for partner governments to allocate core budgets** from each department towards disability equity and support their efforts towards CRPD compliant budgeting and financial management.
- c. **Investing in a program of research and evidence building** regarding disability equity and development, funding critical new research, and exploring and systematically sharing what is working well and not. This would sit well within the remit of the proposed new Disability Equity Effectiveness and Performance team in recommendation 15f below.

### Recommendation 16

**Commit to a timeline to re-establish expertise and increase applicable understanding of disability equity and rights across DFAT** through:

- a. Establishing **specialist technical teams** on Disability Equity and Rights in both the South-East Asia Office and the Office of the Pacific and ensuring that **Disability focal points in Posts** have capacity identified for this role within position descriptions.
- b. Developing and promoting resources to support staff and delivery partners to embed the Strategy in action, including **annual mandatory training** for DFAT and delivery partners.

- c. Developing and implementing a plan to drive up quality of program reporting on disability equity and against **the OECD-DAC disability marker**.
- d. **Establishing an external Disability Equity and Rights Reference Group** as a ‘brains trust’ to support implementation of the new strategy. This diverse group of disability movement representatives could help keep DFAT to account on strategy outcomes, be a resource to explore solutions to current and emerging challenges, keep DFAT abreast of current trends and shifts in the landscape and support DFAT’s internal and external advocacy efforts. This group could play a similar role in support of all new strategies.

#### Additional note

This submission should be read in conjunction with three other policy platforms ADDC has provided to DFAT. They are:

- [ADDC’s submission to DFAT on the new International Development policy](#).
- [ADDC’s submission to DFAT on the new International Gender Equality strategy](#).
- ADDC’s recommendations on inclusive consultation processes, [\*Planning for Equity: Making consultations inclusive of diverse people with disabilities\*](#).

#### Contact

Kerryn Clarke, ADDC Executive Officer via [kclarke@addc.org.au](mailto:kclarke@addc.org.au).