**Question 1: What are the most important things we should work on for disability equity and rights?**

Persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable population worldwide. During any emergency situation, persons with disabilities are the ones who are affected the most. In recent years, due to rapid climate change, intensity of extreme events are on the rise. Persons with disabilities experience the impacts differently and more severely than others. They are majorly affected in disasters due to inaccessible evacuation, response (including shelters, camps, and food distribution), and recovery efforts. Their needs, rights and access to vital information and amenities including infrastructure and basic health care are often ignored despite being a common challenge for all stakeholders. Early/Emergency warnings and other important messages are not usually designed with accessibility in mind. Lack of disability friendly infrastructure often push Persons with disabilities, their caretaker, family and society as a whole, in a risk impact from climate induced hazards. Persons with disabilities are also more likely to have social and economic risk factors such as poverty and unemployment that put them at greater risk.

To ensure disability equity and rights, there is a need to focus on implementing and strengthening laws and policies that protect the rights of people with disabilities and ensuring inclusivity and accessibility so that no one is left behind. Developing and upgrading infrastructure to be accessible, including public spaces, transportation, and communication facilities is another key area. Improving access to healthcare services tailored to the specific needs of individuals with disabilities is also crucial for their physical and mental well-being. Creating policies that encourage the inclusion of people with disabilities fostering equal employment opportunities is also important along with inclusive education which in turn will help to raise awareness and reduce stigma and misconceptions surrounding disabilities. There is a need to create early warning system which is accessible for all. Lastly, disaggregated data is needed to better understand the disability issues and address them better.

**Question 2: What are the best ways we can do this?**

To ensure a more inclusive and responsive approach, it is essential to actively include persons with disabilities in decision-making processes. By involving them, we can gain a deeper understanding of their specific needs and preferences, allowing for the implementation of customized solutions that address their challenges effectively. Also, there is a need to provide trainings, orientations and awareness for various stakeholders, educators, employers, health care professionals as well as government officials to enhance their understanding about disability issues. This will also enable the stakeholders to incorporate this consideration into their upcoming programs. Similarly, this might also allow the local government to incorporate this into their annual plans and budgets. This approach ensures that policies and practices are not only inclusive but also tailored to the unique requirements of persons with disabilities across different sectors.

Australia should lead by example. Australia can influence other countries through good practices and sharing those practices. Also, the best ways to advance disability equity and rights globally include working closely with others and sharing knowledge. Australia can collaborate with various international organizations, NGOs, and partner countries to exchange best practices, resources, and strategies. This will help to deepen the understanding of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in various contexts. By working together, Australia can contribute to interventions grounded in evidence, addressing the unique needs of individuals with disabilities worldwide.

**Question 3 Part 1: How can we support people with disabilities to do this work?**

DFAT can play a crucial role in ensuring equity and rights for persons with disabilities through various avenues. Firstly, DFAT can allocate direct funding, offer grants and financial assistance to support initiatives led by people with disabilities, ensuring their independence and sustainability.

Furthermore, DFAT can incorporate disability perspectives into diplomatic efforts and negotiations, advocating for inclusive policies and practices on the international stage. This includes promoting disability-inclusive development programs and ensuring that international agreements and partnerships prioritize the rights and needs of Persons with disabilities.

DFAT can also provide training programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of persons with disabilities, empowering them to actively participate in advocacy and decision-making.

**Question 3 Part 2: How can we support organizations working with people with disabilities to do this work?**

To support organizations working with people with disabilities, it is crucial to provide direct funding and allocate necessary resources. This support ensures that these organizations have the means to carry out their initiatives effectively, promoting disability rights and addressing related issues. Additionally, creating networking opportunities is essential. By facilitating platforms for collaboration, these organizations can share best practices and learn from each other's experiences. This exchange of knowledge and expertise strengthens the collective effort towards advancing disability rights and creates a more connected and supportive community of organizations dedicated to this. Concept of Disability HUB can be a good idea where all DPOs, INGOs, NGOs, Private sector as well as individuals can contribute to exchange ideas, good practices and develop network

Hence, DFAT can support through financial support, providing direct grants to empower these organizations in their advocacy, awareness, and capacity-building initiatives. Furthermore, DFAT should offer capacity development programs to enhance the effectiveness of these organizations.

**Question 4 Part 1: What could stop us improving disability equity and rights?**

There are several factors which could hinder the improvement of disability equity and rights. Deep-rooted societal norms, prejudices, and misconceptions stand as significant barriers, delaying the in acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities. Due to the different kinds of societal structures and lack of knowledge and accessibility, Persons with Disability faces these challenges in an extreme way and that is never reported too. They are often disregarded by the family members, are not sound economically Addressing these biases is essential for fostering a more inclusive society. Additionally, a lack of prioritization of disability-related issues in laws and policies poses a challenge. Without a dedicated focus on these matters, the legal framework may fall short in adequately safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities. Moreover, insufficient allocation of financial and human resources to disability-related programs and initiatives is a critical obstacle.

**Question 4 Part 2: What could help us to improve disability equity and rights?**

DFAT could prioritize and actively support the development and enforcement of inclusive policies that specifically address the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities. This involves collaborating with relevant stakeholders and advocating for the integration of disability perspectives into international agreements and policies. DFAT can focus on comprehensive awareness campaigns, both domestically and internationally, to educate the public about disability rights. These campaigns would serve to challenge societal norms and prejudices, fostering a more inclusive and supportive global community.

Moreover, fostering partnerships and collaborations with national and international organizations, as well as learning from best practices, can provide DFAT with valuable insights and approaches. This collaborative effort ensures a more effective and informed approach to advancing disability rights globally.