

SUBMISSION

Australia's new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy

Mary MacKillop Today, 15 December 2023

Background and Acknowledgements

Mary MacKillop Today welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to influence the development of Australia's new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy. In making this submission, we wish to acknowledge the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) and Christian Blind Mission (CBM) Australia, whose recommendations we are endorsing. Special thanks also to one of our implementing partners, Psychiatric Survivors Association (PSA) Fiji, for their collaboration on this submission, and for their important work seeking to improve the lives of people with psychosocial disability.

Recommendation 1: The Strategy is grounded in the following principles:

- a. Disability equity is both the ultimate objective and the starting point for all DFAT's work. The inclusion and meaningful participation of people with disabilities are essential elements toward achieving equity.
- b. DFAT explicitly seeks to address the preconditions for inclusion throughout the development program and as a specific outcome in and of itself.
- c. In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), DFAT's definition of disability includes:
 - a. forms of psychosocial, sensory and cognitive disability, and
 - b. the differing experiences, needs and priorities of people with disabilities depending on the intersection of their disabilities with other life conditions, such as gender, age, location, First Nations identity and religious beliefs.
- d. In line with the International Development policy, the Strategy must be delivered hand-in-hand with civil society and other partners, particularly those representing people with disability themselves.
- e. DFAT and delivery partners are accountable to people with disabilities and their representative organisations for delivery against the principles,

commitments and approaches outlined in the Strategy and the International Development Policy.

- f. DFAT commits to investment in capacity building of key stakeholders to support locally led development and solutions driven by people with disabilities and their representative organisations.
- g. DFAT seeks to strengthen its championing of disability equity and rights on the international stage.

Recommendation 2: Ensure the application of ‘Do No Harm’ as a minimum standard for people with disabilities in their interaction with Australia’s development program, by:

- a. Establishing disability as a separate safeguard area within all policies, standards and procedures.

Recommendation 3: Set a timeline to update the Procurement Policy to promote accessible procurements.

Recommendation 4: Establish a requirement that all new investments over \$3m will have a disability equity objective, in line with existing requirements for climate change and gender equality.

Recommendation 5: Set a 2023 target of 10% of ODA being allocated to initiatives with disability equity as a principal objective.

Recommendation 6: Establish an ambitious target of 80% of investments effectively addressing disability equity.

Recommendation 7: Ensure that funding in social infrastructure and services and humanitarian services sectors includes both:

- a. Mainstreamed disability equity investment, and
- b. Allocation for specific contribution to addressing the preconditions for inclusion of people with disabilities.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that accessibility and reasonable accommodations are resourced in all investments so that people with disabilities and their representative organisations can fully participate and lead in design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendation 9: Establish and fund a disability advisory group, or consultation mechanism, to allow strategic engagement between DFAT and OPDs in country at a consistent strategic level.

Recommendation 10: Increase the disability inclusion central allocation to \$20m and increase in line with year-on-year ODA growth.

Recommendation 11: Increase support for leadership development across the Indo-Pacific disability movement by increasing the focus on people with disabilities within the Australian Awards Fellowship, with scholarships offered at all levels, including Diploma, Master's Degree and PhD.

Recommendation 12: Establish an external Disability Board to offer ongoing technical advice to the new strategy and its implementation.

Recommendation 13: Engage with and support organisations of people with disabilities and other partners in Asia to explore effective and representative regional coordinating mechanisms.

Recommendation 14: Invest in a program of research and evidence building.

Recommendation 15: Strengthen the focus on disability equity in and through the new Performance and Delivery Framework.

Recommendation 16: Include questions on disability equity and rights in the new biennial Perceptions survey.

Recommendation 17: Ensure consistency in monitoring and reporting delivery against disability equity requirements and standards across all delivery partners.

Recommendation 18: Include a priority outcome around monitoring delivery and performance against the Disability Equity and Rights Strategy for the new Development Committee.

Recommendation 19: Continue to promote the adoption of the Washington Group Short Set questions with partner governments and support inclusion of the questions in national, regional and local data collection.

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