



Federal Budget 2023-2024 Submission to Treasury

The vision of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) is that the voices and rights of people with disabilities are elevated and reflected in all Australian international development policies and programs. In pursuit of this vision, we welcome the opportunity to provide input drawn from the experience and expertise of our membership for the 2023-2024 Federal Budget. This submission provides budgetary guidance to support the Australian Government in their commitment to prioritise people with disabilities in international development efforts by advancing their globally recognised leadership in disability inclusive development and ensuring the integration of effective disability inclusive approaches across the entirety of the international development program.

Summary of Recommendations

Disability inclusive development

1. Increase DFAT's central disability allocation to minimum of \$14.4m in FY2023–24 budget and increase at minimum in line with GNI annually thereafter.
2. Release and comprehensively fund a new, ambitious disability inclusion and rights strategy in 2023.
3. Establish an ambitious target on disability inclusion within the development program. In the first year, this should look like 70% of all programs having a disability inclusion and rights objective, inclusive of at least 10% having it as a principal objective, in 2023-24 and increasing the levels of ambition in following years.
4. Ensure DFAT has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated support costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy supporting disability inclusion in Canberra and at post.
5. Release a comprehensive Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2023-24 Federal Budget, with reporting on disability inclusion investments.

Stepping up disability inclusion in the Pacific

6. Commit an initial \$200,000 in FY2023-24 to the design of *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*, a regional group of key partners to coordinate action and mobilise financial resources to accelerate the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016–2025 (PFRPD)*.
7. Commit \$40 million over four years from FY2024-25 to the *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*.

Investing in international development

8. Commit to rebuilding the Australian development cooperation budget, which includes the floor for ODA levels enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.5 per cent ODA/GNI by the end of the 10-year period, with an interim target of reaching the OECD average of 0.33 per cent.

Disability inclusive development

ADDC welcomes the renewed prioritising by Australia of disability inclusion across the international development program with the restoration of the central disability allocation to \$12.9 million in the federal budget released in October 2022 along with increased transparency in reporting on this budget line and disability inclusion in the ODA budget papers. We also welcome the announcement from the Minister of

International Development and the Pacific in late November 2022 committing Australia to develop a new disability rights and inclusion strategy in 2023. We seek to mark these advances and the prioritising of disability inclusion across the international development program as well as recommend building on this momentum. The launch and funding of an ambitious third disability inclusion and rights strategy in 2023 and continuing to build of the disability inclusion budget with increasing transparency are critical steps to achieving a truly disability inclusive international development program that ensures no one is left behind and enables Australia to strengthen its strategic global influence in this space.

While a relatively modest amount in the overall aid budget, the central disability allocation is significant in providing core resources for disability inclusion across the international development program. This central allocation to disability inclusion is distinct from disability funding in mainstream programs and disability specific programming, however it is crucially supports these. The support, partnerships, technical expertise, and global leadership this central allocation leverages is foundational to enabling DFAT to implement adequate disability inclusion in its programming. The welcomed restoration of this budget line in October 2022 brings it back to the level it was from 2014 to 2020, before it dropped to \$9.6m and later lifted to 12.1m. Given the growing need of people with disabilities amongst the poorest communities across our region and globally, and Australia’s renewed commitment to disability inclusion, this budget lines needs to increase further to a minimum of \$14.4m in FY2023–24 budget and increase at minimum in line with GNI annually thereafter.

Table 1: DFAT Central Disability Allocation– historic budget levels (\$m)

| 2014/2015 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 * | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/2022 | 2022/23 |
|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| \$12.9 | \$12.9 | \$12.9 | \$12.9 | \$12.9 | \$12.9 | \$ 12.1 | \$ 9.6 | \$12.9 |

For people with disabilities to be included in and benefit from Australian development assistance, DFAT must have long-term expertise in-house as well as on-going partnerships with Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs). Such expertise and partnerships are core to Australia delivering international development through a human rights-based approach in line with obligations under the *Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*. The Minister for International Development and the Pacific on 28 November 2022 in a meeting with disability rights leaders from Asia and the Pacific concluded the meeting with a commitment to investigating ways DFAT could increase funding to OPDs to enable them to grow as rights advocacy organisations and carry out their advocacy work.

Fostering an evidence-based and transparent approach to disability inclusion will deepen understanding of the drivers of change in disability inclusion and provide avenues to see the cycle of poverty and disability broken for people with disabilities living in poverty, their families and communities. This must include supporting the development of knowledge products and evidence, building the capacity of local OPDs particularly those from marginalised groups, and gathering and sharing internal practices and lessons learned. Australia must commit to restoring effective reporting of disability inclusive development expenditure to provide an objective and measurable framework to guide progress. As such ADDC recommends commitment to an ambitious disability inclusion target as well as releasing a comprehensive Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2023-24 federal budget.

While DFAT has a highly competent disability inclusion team, most resourcing and programming comes from other parts of the department who have limited expertise and experience in disability inclusion. A foundational understanding of disability inclusive development remains critical. There is a lot of potential for

widening and deepening expertise, for example by appointing disability advisors or units based in the Office of the Pacific and the new Office of Southeast Asia. Having expertise in these teams will ensure people with disabilities are central to any regional or country initiatives and tailored advice can be provided. ADDC recommends DFAT ensures there is sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated support costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy supporting disability inclusion in Canberra and at post.

Recommendations

Disability inclusive development

1. Increase DFAT’s central disability allocation to minimum of \$14.4m in FY2023–24 budget and increase at minimum in line with GNI annually thereafter.
2. Release and comprehensively fund a new, ambitious disability inclusion and rights strategy in 2023.
3. Establish an ambitious target on disability inclusion within the development program. In the first year, this should look like 70% of all programs having a disability inclusion and rights objective, inclusive of at least 10% having it as a principal objective, in 2023-24 and increasing the levels of ambition in following years.
4. Ensure DFAT has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated support costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy supporting disability inclusion in Canberra and at post.
5. Release a comprehensive Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2023-24 Federal Budget, with reporting on disability inclusion investments.

Stepping up disability inclusion in the Pacific

ADDG recommends Australia commit to fund the *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific (PIP)* to accelerate the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025 (PFRPD)*¹ and ensure pre-conditions are in place for the effective inclusion of people with disabilities across the region. An initial commitment of \$200,000 in FY2023-24 is required to support the design of PIP. Followed by a commitment of \$10million annually for four years totalling a commitment of \$40million for implementation.

Table 2: Design and Implementation of the Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific (PIP)

| Investment | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Total |
|---|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 2a. Design – Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific | \$200,000 | - | - | - | | \$200,000 |
| 2b. Implementation – Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific | - | \$10m | \$10m | \$10m | \$10m | \$40m |

Pacific Island Countries (PICs) jointly adopted the *2016–2025 Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PFRPD)* in a commitment to address barriers faced by people with disabilities. A Pacific partnership to accelerate implementation of the PFRPD would provide greater coordination of resources and priorities, better sharing of lessons from examples of good practice, and economies of scale for service provision and development programming. A strong partnership approach – seeking buy-in from a range of

¹ For more information on the Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, see <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/PFRPD.pdf>

donors, implementing partners and PIC governments – will enhance coordination, scale and efficiency in how resources are allocated and further the rights realised for people with disabilities in the Pacific.

The initial proposal in 2023-24 is for \$200,000 in to fund a design process. Extensive consultation with PICs and OPDs would be critical to access understanding of existing gaps and opportunities, wide expertise and ensure any partnership found widespread support. We propose that the design team explored learning from similar funds and look for robust and inclusive governance mechanisms. ADDC urges DFAT to utilise its leadership on disability and convening ability to rally support from other donors as part of the design phase.

Recommendations

Stepping up disability inclusion in the Pacific

6. Commit an initial \$200,000 in FY2023-24 to the design of *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*, a regional group of key partners to coordinate action and mobilise financial resources to accelerate the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016–2025 (PFRPD)*.
7. Commit \$40 million over four years from FY2024-25 to the *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*.

Investing in international development

ADDC recommends that Australia commits to rebuilding the Australian development cooperation budget, which includes a floor for ODA levels enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.5 per cent ODA/GNI by the end of the 10-year period with an interim target of reaching the OECD average of 0.33 per cent.

While we welcome the Australian Government's recent commitments to direct an additional \$1.4 billion over 4 years to the Official Development Assistance (ODA) program, bringing the total to \$4.651 billion in 2022-23; there are notable gaps that require further action through the Development Policy process and future budgets – especially in critical areas like hunger and climate change. Australia's ODA levels remain at 0.20% of GNI, well below the OECD average of 0.33 percent.

Recommendations

Investing in international development

8. Set out a long-term budget framework (10 years) to support the delivery of the international development policy, beginning with a commitment to 0.5% ODA/GNI by the end of the 10-year period with an interim target of reaching the OECD average of 0.32% by the end of the forward estimates

About ADDC

ADDC is an Australian based, international network focusing attention, expertise and actions on disability in the majority world, building on a human rights platform for disability advocacy. ADDC brings people together to inspire, influence and support all international development actors in Australia to embrace and deliver disability inclusive development. ADDC is made up of over 500 members from Australian Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs), aid agencies, managing contractors, academia as well as individuals. This submission has been developed in consultation with ADDC members and written by the ADDC Executive Committee - the governance body of the network elected by the membership every two years. Organisations currently represented on the ADDC Executive Committee include; CBM Australia, ACFID, People with

Disabilities Australia, Australia Federation of Disability Organisations, National Disability Service, World Vision Australia, Good Return, Motivation Australia, The Leprosy Mission Australia, Exemplar International and Nossal Institute for Global Health.

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