

Development aid as key enabler for accessibility

Most of the one billion persons with disability live in the Global South. Development aid plays a key role in improving their daily lives. Among the countries who give the most official development assistance, about USD134 billion in 2011, only a few have mainstreamed disability into their development programming. Australia is one of those few.

DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL: TOWARDS A DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE AUSTRALIAN AID PROGRAM

Year of existence:	2009 - 2014
Country/region of origin:	Australia
Beneficiaries targeted:	People with disabilities
Responsible body:	Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Stakeholders:	Public, private and non-profit sector (Aid and Donor organisations, NGOs, DPOs)

FACTS & FIGURES

- Provided USD5.5 million to support disabled people's organisations globally (2009-2014).
- Constructed ramps and accessible toilets in 1,275 secondary schools in Indonesia.
- Supported 500 children with disabilities in Samoa to receive an education.
- More than 150,000 people in Asia, Africa and the Pacific received assistive devices.
- Model of good practice in the World Report on Disability 2011.

IN BRIEF

Development for All: Towards a Disability-inclusive Australian Aid Program is not a stand-alone disability program, rather it is about improving the reach and effectiveness of development assistance by ensuring that people with disabilities are included in, contribute to, and benefit equally from development efforts.

INNOVATIVE ASPECTS

Mainstreaming

Australia mainstreams disability into its development programming, in particular in its education and infrastructure programs. Guidance on how to apply universal design to its aid program has been published.

Bolstering partner governments' efforts

The Australian aid program provides comprehensive support for partner governments' efforts towards disability-inclusive development as well as to disabled people's organisations.

Role models and leaders

Investments in role models and leaders with disabilities, together with advocacy by the Australian Government, increase the resources for inclusive development globally.

HISTORY

In 2008, Development for All: Towards a Disability-inclusive Australian Aid Program was released to guide the work of the then Australian Agency for International Development. Australia's aid program is now managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Development for All is integral to sustainable development and to improving the well-being of the world's poorest people by 2015. In preparing the strategy, AusAID conducted consultations in over 20 developing countries in which the Australian Government provides development assistance, involving people with disabilities, their families and caregivers, government representatives, non-governmental organisations, and service providers, and using alternative formats. Almost 500 written submissions were received. During the consultations, overseas-based Australian government staff were supported to engage with local disabled people's organisations.

«Through our aid programs, Australia has an important role in improving the lives of people with disability in other countries.»

(Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia)

KEY FEATURES

The primary goal is to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in and benefit equally from Australia's development assistance. The strategy focuses on achieving two primary outcomes:

- Improved quality of life for persons with disability, by providing support for partner governments, promoting inclusive education and accessible infrastructure across all programs and supporting disabled people's organisations.
- Effective management of disability and development by modeling good practice in disability-inclusive development, by adhering to aid effectiveness principles and by bringing a growing awareness of the importance of disability-inclusive development to all partnerships and policies.

To enable these core outcomes, the Australian Government is building skills and processes for disability-inclusive development, by establishing senior advocates in DFAT for disability-inclusive development, by embedding accountability in reporting, and by establishing a disability and development capacity; and improving DFAT's understanding of disability and development by focusing on the lived experiences of people with disability and developing strategic partnerships to capture robust data.

IMPLEMENTATION

DFAT has set up a dedicated disability-inclusive development network of around 200 staff. Approximately 60 focal points for disability-inclusive development are based in 15 posts and

in most sector policy areas in Canberra. A specific technical assistance facility with CBM Australia and the Nossal Institute for Global Health is in place. Australia created a Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group, which includes people with disability, to guide the implementation of the strategy. Guidance notes have been prepared, including on accessibility, social protection and investment concept design. In 2012, a Disability Policy Marker was included in the data management systems, which collects disability-related data.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

In 2012, a mid-term review found Australia's work for disability inclusive development so far as 'considerable and impressive'. The Government, elected in 2013, announced on 3 December 2013 its intention to develop a new strategy for disability-inclusive development for 2015 and beyond, building on the successes of the previous strategy.



An external ramp linking separate school buildings. Madrassah Balarajam (Public Junior Secondary School), in Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia (© Maria Siahaan, AusAID)

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SOURCES WHO/WB, World Report on Disability, p. 264:
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 Pamela Thomas (ed), Implementing Disability-inclusive Development in the Pacific and Asia:
<http://bit.ly/JLaAHM>

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