Management Response

Mid-term review of Development for All – Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009-2014

AusAID's *Development for All* strategy was launched in November 2008. *Development for All* (the Strategy) seeks to strengthen the effectiveness of Australia's aid program by ensuring that people with disability, about 15 per cent of the world's population, participate in and benefit equally from the aid program. *Development for All* guides AusAID's work in 'enhancing the lives of people with disabilities' - one of ten development objectives of *An Effective Aid Program for Australia: Making a Difference - Delivering Real Results 2011*.

The independent mid-term review of *Development for All* was conducted between February and June 2012 by monitoring and evaluation specialist, Dr Linda Kelly and disability specialist, Ms Lorraine Wapling. It recognised that AusAID's commitment to disability-inclusive development and the work undertaken so far has been 'considerable and impressive'.

AusAID is seen as the lead donor on disability-inclusive development by bilateral and multilateral organisations, Non-Government Organisations and Disabled Peoples' Organisations. This review strongly supports the direction that AusAID is taking under the Strategy. The review noted that the Strategy, funding commitment and, in particular, the dedicated staff in Canberra and at Posts have led to significant improvement in the lives of people with disability.

This is no small achievement. We are pleased that the review team found that AusAID has been able to make good progress towards becoming a more inclusive aid program. This achievement will be sustained with senior-level commitment, greater understanding of disability-inclusive development and improved analysis, monitoring and evaluation.

Many of the achievements of the Strategy are due to the valuable contributions of Disabled Peoples' Organisations and people with disability, including AusAID's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group. AusAID will continue to ensure that people with disability play an active and central role in guiding and informing AusAID's work on disability-inclusive development.

AusAID's commitment to transparency will be important in communicating our achievements and progress in disability-inclusive development. In sharing this information, we will build understanding of best practice and lessons learned, and promote broader commitment to and resourcing of disability-inclusive development by our donor and government partners.

AusAID welcomes the findings of this mid-term review. We agree to all of the recommendations and responses to all ten recommendations are now underway. This is a clear demonstration of Australia's very practical commitment to enhancing the lives of people with disability.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS NOTED BY REVIEW

- Australia's support to the Pacific Disability Forum has assisted people with disability in the Pacific to have a strong regional voice and to work with Pacific Governments to develop and implement policies which include people with disability.

- Australia's contribution as a grant-making committee member and largest donor to the global Disability Rights Advocacy Fund ($6.2 million 2009–14) has provided seed funding for 125 (2008-2011) established and emerging Disabled Peoples' Organisations to raise awareness on disability rights in their countries, contributing towards greater action by their governments.

- AusAID's volunteers program has recently moved to ensure that disability is a focus area for volunteer assignments and that people with disability can participate fully as volunteers. A key element of this policy is a budget of $2 million over three years to 2013-14 which recognises that reasonable adjustments will need to be made to enable Australians with disability the opportunity to volunteer and share their skills and experience with others.

- In Indonesia, 1,275 junior secondary schools were constructed with ramps and accessible toilets leading to increased enrolment of children with disability. In Samoa around 500 more children with disability receive an education or early intervention services because of our support.

- AusAID's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group (DRG) provides high level guidance to AusAID to help shape Australia's implementation of *Development for All.* The DRG is internationally recognised as a good practice model of how to ensure that the voices of people with disability are taken into account in development policy making and programming.

Mid-term review of *Development for All*
Executive Summary recommendations and AusAID response

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
1	It is recommended that: a) AusAID continue with the current Strategy for the remainder of the Strategy period. b) AusAID develop a subsequent disability-inclusive development strategy for the period 2015-2020 and utilise the learning and lessons from this review to assist with preparation for the subsequent strategy to guide the organisation beyond 2014. c) AusAID develop a relevant explanation of disability-inclusive development which is appropriate to the current AusAID program. A clear definition of disability-inclusive development should be included in the next AusAID strategy. d) The expectations attached to being a focus country need to be clear and monitored on a regular basis. If utilised as an approach in the next strategy, future focus countries should have clear agreements around resources, approaches, senior staff engagement. e) Under the current Strategy and beyond, AusAID gives particular attention to increasing disability-inclusive development work in the health sector.[1]	**Agreed** We will commence consultations for the next strategy in early 2014, based on the successes and lessons learned from *Development for All*. These consultations will inform the decision on the period of time the next Strategy should cover. We will adapt our training and awareness-raising material to provide a clear picture of what successful disability-inclusive development looks like. We will review internal management and support arrangements for existing focus countries by July 2013. We will develop clear agreements with partner governments prior to agreeing to any future focus countries, to ensure we continue to focus our efforts where country ownership is strong. While the primary focus of *Development for All* will remain in the sectors of education and infrastructure we will actively pursue opportunities to mainstream disability-inclusive development within other sectors, including health.

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[1] It is appropriate that the first strategy avoided a focus on health as a sector since this can lead to confusion over whether to focus on impairment related services or disability-inclusive development. However, AusAID now has a clearer understanding of inclusive development and should be in a position to explore how best to facilitate the development of accessible health services.

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
2	It is recommended that: a) Detailed disability-inclusive development guidance notes be developed for at least the sectors of education, infrastructure, health and social protection. b) For program and activity designs, and country strategy and delivery strategy development, disability-inclusive analysis be required. c) A budget (3-5%) for disability-inclusive analysis and inclusive implementation be allocated within all program designs and delivery strategy development processes. d) Regular monitoring and analysis be undertaken of disability-inclusive development implementation and outcomes and that this information is made available for accountability and learning inside and external to AusAID. e) AusAID fosters an active and central role for people with a disability to inform development practice. f) Disability Policy Section continues to develop, disseminate and publish guidance on how to improve access to the aid program for people with disability. In particular, the Accessible Design Guide currently in development be urgently progressed.	**Agreed in principle** We will continue to provide practical support and guidance on how to integrate disability-inclusive development into programs and policies, including through assisting programs to analyse the barriers and opportunities for inclusion. Guidance notes for sectoral areas will be completed by end 2013, including the Accessible Design Guide and a guidance note on including disability within social protection which will be finalised by end 2012. These guidance notes will be complemented by technical assistance and support. We are committed to ensuring that our program design processes are inclusive and accessible. This includes consultation with Disabled Peoples' Organisations and support for people with disability to attend stakeholder meetings and consultations. We will also ensure rigorous analysis and inclusive implementation is undertaken across programs, however a mandatory budget allocation level of 3-5% may not be appropriate in all situations. We will undertake monitoring, reporting and evaluation of disability-inclusive development as part of our quality and results reporting system. Our commitment to transparency will ensure that information on how we are working to enhance the lives of people with disability will be available through regular updates on our website as well as formal public reporting, such as the AusAID Annual Report and against the Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework indicators. We will continue to foster an active and central role for people with disability through ongoing high level engagement with AusAID's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group, as well as through strengthening relationships with Disabled Peoples' Organisations in-country.
3	It is recommended that the next strategy does not include work on preventable impairments.	**Agreed** This work remains a priority for AusAID but is now appropriately managed by AusAID's health (avoidable blindness) and infrastructure (road safety initiatives) thematic areas.

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
4	It is recommended that: a) AusAID build understanding and awareness about the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities throughout the Agency, with particular attention to Article 32 on international cooperation. Other relevant articles such as Article 11 (Humanitarian Assistance), 13 (Accessibility) and 24 (Education) should be referenced as appropriate across the Agency. b) AusAID develop a policy position around disability- inclusion in the post-2015 UN development agenda discussions and take this position forward whenever the opportunity arises over the coming months. c) AusAID focus its attention on making a strong case for the inclusion of people with disability in mainstream development cooperation at the 2013 High Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly (HLMD) on Disability.[2] d) Where AusAID has a funding relationship with a bilateral or multilateral donor, AusAID establishes disability performance indicators, to hold partners and AusAID to account on disability-inclusive development outcomes. e) Where there is no funding relationship with a bilateral or multilateral donor, AusAID continues to influence bilateral and multilateral donors on disability inclusive development. f) AusAID increases its regular dialogue and engagement with Australian Disabled Peoples' Organisations to maintain and expand communication, transparency and accountability.	**Agreed** We will continue to provide strong leadership in disability-inclusive development to mobilise the action and resources of the international community. This includes at the High Level Meeting on Disability and Development in 2013 and through advocating for explicit inclusion of disability as a cross-cutting issue in the post-2015 development agenda. Our leadership work will be underpinned by a strengthened understanding and awareness by AusAID staff of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Where we fund multilateral organisations or jointly fund activities with bilateral donors, AusAID will seek to include agreement to collaborate on disability-inclusive activities within these partnerships. As they are established or renewed these relationships will be guided by AusAID's Due Diligence Framework, which includes disability as a consideration. AusAID's Multilateral Assessment Framework and Multilateral Engagement Strategy will also inform these relationships. Where we do not have a funding relationship with partners, we will seek to influence them to consider disability-inclusive development through targeted policy dialogue. We will continue our direct engagement with Disabled Peoples' Organisations in our partner countries. In addition, AusAID will hold at least annual consultations with Australian Disabled Peoples' Organisations as well as regular interaction at Australian Disability and Development Consortium meetings to discuss policy issues and share information.

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[2] This will be a significant gathering of Heads of State focused specifically on how to ensure the Post-2015 development frameworks are inclusive of people with disability. AusAID will have a considerable contribution to make at this meeting and it could represent a unique opportunity to influence major international stakeholders about the importance of disability-inclusive development.

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
5	It is recommended that: a) The DRG continue to be utilised by AusAID for its informed advice and support in Strategy implementation. b) The DRG should continue to undertake direct contact and interaction with senior management within AusAID and politicians, in particular to focus on progress under the Strategy and to provide informed assessment of this progress directly to senior management. c) The donor and Australian Disability and Development Consortium members of the DRG rotate on a regular basis (three years), to ensure opportunity for other donors and stakeholders to engage with AusAID in this way.[3]	**Agreed** We will continue to be guided by the DRG which has provided invaluable advice to AusAID and senior stakeholders in Australia, as well as advocating on AusAID's behalf internationally**.** We will hold the next DRG meeting in 2013 in Canberra to provide an opportunity for senior advocacy with Australian Government stakeholders and to consolidate and inform AusAID's disability-inclusive programming. We will invite a new donor representative to the DRG at this time and commence discussions with the Australian Disability and Development Consortium about rotation of their position.
6	It is recommended that: a) AusAID develop a disability-inclusive development marker within Aidworks so disability-inclusion in all programs can be tracked and reported throughout AusAID. b) All results frameworks developed for AusAID country and regional programs and thematic areas include disability-specific monitoring indicators and analysis. c) AusAID reports publicly on both disability-specific and disability-inclusive programs. This reporting will include • an annual list of activities by country and sector indicating the program and nature of the disability-specific or disability-inclusive activities; • information about the allocated budget for the program; • where possible, information and analysis about relevant program outcomes through country and sectoral transparency pages on the AusAID website.	**Agreed** We will ensure that disability is a consideration in our program management, design and evaluation systems. To assist with this a disability policy marker will be included in AusAID's data management systems by the end of 2012, to complement work on systemically tracking disability-inclusion across the aid program through existing quality processes. We are currently developing a performance assessment framework for disability-inclusive development which will provide an informed basis for country programs to monitor and report on their work in disability-inclusive development. Country programs will seek to collect disability-disaggregated data to measure inclusion of people with disability where possible. AusAID's commitment to transparency will ensure that information on disability-specific and disability-inclusive programming will be available through regular achievement updates on AusAID's website as well as formal reporting such as the AusAID Annual Report.

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[3] An important proviso is that any nominated member of the DRG is appropriately qualified.

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
7	It is strongly recommended therefore that at all AusAID posts, but particularly for those countries designated as focus countries under the Strategy, a person at senior management level be identified with responsibility for implementation of disability-inclusive development throughout the work that is supported by AusAID in that post.[4]	**Agreed for priority posts** We have identified managers at Counsellor level or above in the *Development for All* focus countries who are already fulfilling this role. Commensurate with the size and capacity of the post, identification of appropriate level managers will continue to be taken forward at priority posts during 2013.
8	It is recommended that this Manager at Post be responsible for: a) ensuring that disability is consistently on the agenda of high-level consultation meetings with partner governments and other development partners; b) ensuring that disability-inclusive development is understood, supported and implemented throughout the country program; c) ensuring that disability-inclusive development is reflected in high-level policy and strategy documents relevant to the country program.	**Agreed** for priority posts.
9	It is recommended that there continues to be a fully resourced, dedicated staff team for disability, but that greater attention be given to whole-of-team clarity of roles and responsibilities. (For more detail see page 57 of the mid-term review).	**Agreed** We note that the review recognised that our staffing profile on disability-inclusive development is a key element in our success. We have a dedicated policy team working on disability-inclusive development, as well as regional specialist positions based in Cambodia and Fiji and disability-inclusive development officers based in the East Asia and Pacific Divisions in Canberra. We will continue to work towards a Disability Policy Section primarily focused on policy and quality assurance. This is in line with the role of the Policy and Sector Division. We will continue regional disability specialist positions with a focus on providing broad strategic advice and quality assurance to Posts. We will support other disability specialist positions at Post as required and as resources allow. We will continue to maintain a specific technical assistance facility for disability-inclusive development while at the same time ensuring that disability-inclusive development is resourced in other sector resource facilities such as health, education and infrastructure.

[4] This would be separate to responsibility for disability-specific programs, which would continue to be the responsibility of staff within the relevant sector.

	Review recommendation	AusAID response
		We have established a focal point network, receiving quarterly newsletters from the Disability Policy Section. Approximately 15 posts and most sectoral policy areas in Canberra have focal points in place and this will be expanded and further supported in 2013. We will continue to roll out training for focal points based on successful regional training held for focal points in Suva, Fiji, in July 2012. We will formalise roles and responsibilities for the focal points and embed discussions on these roles within AusAID's existing performance management systems.
10	It is recommended that: a) AusAID should continue its support for disability-related research through the Australian Development Research Awards as well as support for research by other institutions. b) AusAID gives particular attention to research in the following areas: • The economic implications of disability-inclusive development, particularly as it pertains to broader economic development within countries. • Effective examples of disability-inclusive development within mainstream aid sectors, particularly those where less attention has traditionally been given to inclusive development work such as health, social protection and law and justice.	**Agreed** We are supporting disability focused research through the Australian Development Research Awards Scheme. AusAID works on an ongoing basis with the research community to identify and develop disability-inclusive development research proposals and opportunities.