

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT)
Disability Inclusive Development Reference Group

Communiqué from Eighth Meeting, 26 – 27 August 2014

Attendees:

DFAT's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group (DRG) met for the eighth time in Canberra on the 26 and 27 August 2014. Attending the DRG were members: Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Co-ordinator of the office for Disability and Inclusive Development at USAID; Setareki Macanawai, Chief Executive of the Pacific Disability Forum; Rosemary Kayess, Director of Human Rights and Disability Projects at the Australian Human Rights Centre, University of New South Wales; Carrie Netting, seconded from the UK's Department for International Development to DFAT; and Sophie Plumridge on behalf of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium. Apologies were received from DRG member Senator Monthian Buntan of Thailand.

The DRG was also attended throughout by DFAT's Disability Section: Ian Bignall, Katie Magee, Shelly Thomson, Benita Chudleigh and Darcie Lyons and DFAT's Disability Regional Specialist for Disability Inclusive Development in the Mekong and Philippines, Darryl Barrett.

The DRG opened by paying its respects to Fred Miller, DFAT's Regional Specialist Disability Inclusive Development for the Pacific, who passed away just a few weeks ago. As well as a dear colleague and friend Fred was a fierce advocate for disability-inclusion in the Pacific. His infectious passion and selfless drive to support people with disability will be missed by all.

Recommendations:

This year the DRG was invited to provide strategic advice on the development and implementation of DFAT's disability-inclusive development strategy (2015 – 2020). The DRG commends DFAT for promoting disability-inclusive development as a cross-cutting issue throughout its own aid programme as well as internationally. Including people with disability in our development efforts will be critical to the achievement of our development goals and in ensuring that no-one is left behind.

The DRG supports DFAT's commitment to develop a new disability-inclusive development strategy and recommends that DFAT builds on the success of *Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive*

Australian aid program 2009–2014 by ensuring that the new disability strategy:

- Defines disability-inclusive development for DFAT: to provide staff with a common understanding of what disability-inclusive development is.
- Articulates clearly how disability-inclusive development is integral to the achievement of Australia's new development policy *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*: through demonstrating how disability-inclusive development is fundamental to achieving the priorities outlined in the new aid paradigm.
- Highlights what has worked: to ensure that future programmes are based on sound evidence and international good practice.
- Explains how the strategy will be implemented: by DFAT staff embedding disability-inclusive development in their work and to clarify how the disability section's budget will deliver the strategy's objectives.
- Has a robust monitoring and evaluation plan: to better measure and understand what works in disability-inclusive development and to maximise the impact of DFAT's investment.
- Recognises that people with disability are central to the success of the strategy: and details how people with disability, and their representative organisations in the region, will be advisors and partners in guiding DFAT in the effective implementation of the strategy.
- Outlines how DFAT will build its capacity to succeed: by building knowledge on disability-inclusive development internally, drawing on external expertise where necessary to support DFAT's work.
- Explains how DFAT staff, particularly focal points, will be supported: to enable them to implement the strategy.
- Identifies how the private sector and innovation can be harnessed: to support DFAT to deliver its disability-inclusive development agenda.
- Is shared in final draft for comment: by people with disability, and others, and have their comments reflected in the final disability strategy; and finally
- Strengthens DFAT's leadership role for disability-inclusive development:
 - internally to recognise that political and senior leadership is required to ensure momentum on disability-inclusion is not lost within DFAT, and
 - internationally to encourage and support other donors and multilateral organisations to be disability-inclusive.