

International Development Committee

Disability-inclusive development: FCDO's disability and inclusion rights strategy

FCDO Written Evidence

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List of abbreviations

- OPD** – Organisation of persons with disabilities
- UN CRPD** - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- IDA** – International Disability Alliance
- GLAD** – Global Action on Disability network
- DID** – Disability Inclusive Development programme
- DCBP** - Disability Capacity Building Programme
- GDS** – Global Disability Summit

Introduction

1. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) welcomes the International Development Committee's inquiry into its work on disability inclusion.
2. People with disabilities throughout the world face more barriers to equal participation in society as compared to those without disabilities.¹ They are less likely to have a job or complete education; more likely to experience poverty and poor health outcomes; and are at greater risk of violence, stigma and discrimination. These factors are true everywhere but exacerbated in lower and middle-income countries.
3. The UK was an early advocate of the 'Leave No One Behind' agenda during negotiation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and has since [re-affirmed this commitment](#) to prioritising those who have least opportunity and are most excluded.
4. The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating and disproportionate impact on people with disabilities and reversed many hard-won gains, exacerbating pre-existing inequalities. People with disabilities were among the hardest hit in terms of infection, severe complications and fatalities and often excluded from the response.² The FCDO pivoted policy and programming to provide critical support to people with disabilities.
5. The FCDO Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy 2022-2030 contributes to 'building back' a more disability-inclusive world. It was launched in February 2022, following consultation with over 100 organisations from across the international disability movement. The Strategy details UK global commitments on disability inclusion through its diplomatic and development activity. It sets out the FCDO's international approach up to 2030, with periodic reviews anticipated in recognition of a changing global context.
6. The FCDO Strategy builds upon the foundations of both the DFID Disability Inclusion Strategy launched in 2018, and UK generated and co-hosted Global Disability Summit of the same year. The creation of the FCDO has presented an opportunity for us now to do more on disability through a global network of over 280 posts, taking a differentiated approach which varies in line with local needs and capabilities. The Strategy combines targeted support through disability specific development programmes; and mainstreaming disability inclusion across the breadth of the FCDO's work, including policy, diplomacy and influencing.

¹ WHO, 2011; World report on disability, available at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241564182>

² Mladenov, T and Brenna, CS, 2021; The global COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor: implementation, findings, disability studies response, Disability & Society, Vol. 36. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2021.1920371>

7. The FCDO is also engaged in cross-government efforts to promote disability inclusion, including through the National Disability Strategy. Following a request from the Prime Minister for action from all departments, David Rutley MP has been appointed as the FCDO Ministerial Disability Champion. Led by the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Tom Pursglove MP, the Ministerial Disability Champions are tasked with ensuring disability inclusion is a priority in their department. They drive progress on disability policy and contribute to a cross-government Disability Action Plan (DAP), which will set out the steps the Government will take over the next two years to improve the lives of people with disabilities. As FCDO champion, Minister Rutley provides further visibility to the disability inclusion work that the UK does internationally through FCDO aid spend and ensures this is reflected within the DAP.

The FCDO Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy as a framework for approaching disability-inclusive development

Development of the Strategy

8. FCDO's Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy upholds the UK's ambitions for its work with, and for, people with disabilities. The strategic vision is a sustainable, inclusive and equitable future where:

People with disabilities in all their diversity - including marginalised and under-represented groups - are meaningfully engaged, empowered and able to exercise and enjoy their full rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others, without discrimination and across the life-course. They are full and active members of society and decision-makers in all aspects of life, including diplomatic and development efforts.

9. The Strategy was developed in close consultation with the global disability movement. The FCDO conducted a series of external meetings with over 100 organisations, including organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs³). These were facilitated by partners such as the International Disability Alliance and the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum. Written feedback was also received from the International Disability Alliance, Disability Rights Fund and the Bond Disability and Development group. Staff across FCDO, including the Disability Inclusion and Awareness Network, provided inputs. The Strategy was underpinned by evidence on the barriers faced by people with disabilities across the different sectors and intervention areas.
10. The Strategy was widely welcomed by key partners and civil society. The Bond Disability and Development Group noted that '*the Strategy is a timely and positive progression that has potential to continuing the UK's leadership of disability inclusion*'. The International Disability Alliance, who represent people with disabilities globally, said: '*the FCDO has come out with a disability inclusion and rights strategy for 2022-2030 which is pioneering on many counts*'. They also noted that '*the Government of UK has been a rare champion in investing in the disability rights movement, particularly to support organizations of*

³ Term often used interchangeably with *Disabled Persons' Organisation* (DPO). FCDO usage of 'OPD' formulation follows terminology used in UN CRPD.

persons with disabilities (OPDs) in keeping with the spirit of “Nothing about us, without us”.

11. The Strategy followed the merger of the Department for International Development (DFID) and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), representing an opportunity to influence the full range of the FCDO’s diplomatic and development work across a much bigger global network. This necessitated an adjustment to the approach taken by the previous 2018 DFID Disability Inclusion strategy. Awareness and capacity on disability inclusion in many FCDO posts and departments is low. The new strategy recognises that fulfilling the ambition to build a disability inclusive organisation is a long-term process and will require a differentiated approach across the global network, varying from country to country in line with local needs, capabilities and partnerships.

Strategy Approach and Delivery Plan

12. The Strategy takes a human rights-based approach to disability inclusion, underpinned by and complying with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It fits within a broad approach to equalities within FCDO, led by the Gender & Equalities Department. This is guided by an equalities continuum that moves from ‘equality awareness’ to ‘equality transformation’. As a minimum, teams must comply with UK legislation and do no harm, for example through not reinforcing inequalities or creating additional safeguarding risks. As an organisation, the FCDO will progressively move towards equality transformation, empowering women and girls, people with disabilities, LGBT+ people and other socially marginalised groups.

13. The FCDO committed in the Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy to concrete action towards four key outcomes which are fundamental to progress against the strategic vision:

Rights: people with disabilities in all their diversity have full and equal enjoyment of all their rights and fundamental freedoms

Voice: full and meaningful participation, representation and leadership

Choice: people with disabilities have more choice and control in all aspects of their lives

Visibility: greater visibility of people with disabilities through quality comprehensive data and evidence.

14. The FCDO continues to take a ‘twin track approach’ - mainstreaming a disability inclusive and human rights perspective across all the department’s work, whilst simultaneously providing targeted support to people with disabilities. This means influencing the programming, policy and diplomacy work of policy teams and posts across the organisation and the FCDO’s internal systems and processes, while also funding programmes and initiatives that directly support people with disabilities.
15. In practice, mainstreaming work is concentrated on specific intervention areas. Four of these (**education, economic empowerment, social protection and humanitarian action**) build on the 2018 DFID disability strategy and were prioritised given their close fit with the Sustainable Development Goals and support across the life cycle. Two new intervention areas (**human rights and health**) reflected the priorities and expertise of the newly merged FCDO. Inclusive **climate action** was introduced as an emerging area to

be developed and implemented, reflecting that it is relatively new for the global disability community. These areas were verified through discussion with OPDs. These consultations highlighted that COVID-19 had exacerbated the challenges in accessing health systems, disrupted education and exposed gaps in education systems, and resulted in job losses and reduced self-employment opportunities. OPDs felt that more attention should be given to inclusive social protection systems.

16. The Strategy also identified three enablers for delivering on disability inclusion across the FCDO. Firstly, it committed to expanding the FCDO's work on assistive technology (AT) such as wheelchairs, prosthetics and orthotics, spectacles, hearing-aids and digital devices. AT is critical for inclusion; WHO and UNICEF estimate that, excluding spectacles, only 11% of people globally have access to the AT they need, with the proportion falling as low as 3% in some low- and middle-income countries.⁴ FCDO's work on AT is being implemented through two central programmes: ATScale and AT2030.
17. Secondly, the Strategy recognises that change will only happen with a strong disability movement. It commits to stepping-up efforts to strengthen organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs). The Disability Capacity Building programme is supporting OPDs at global and grassroots levels to build organisational capacity. The FCDO is also strengthening connections between OPDs and FCDO posts, encouraging the meaningful and two-way participation that was a key requirement identified within consultations on the Strategy.
18. The third enabler is empowering all people with disabilities, including the most marginalised and under-represented. This was another priority from the consultations, reflecting that people who experience multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination are likely to be among the most left behind. For example, the FCDO is supporting people with intellectual disabilities and LGBT+ people through its flagship disability programmes.
19. To ensure progress on these areas, a delivery plan was developed following the publication of the Strategy which sets out the actions policy teams will take to deliver on their commitments up to 2025. At this half-way point, delivery will be fully reviewed. The delivery plan is not intended as a comprehensive overview of all FCDO activity on disability, rather as a tool to create momentum across the organisation and measure progress. It is a live document which may change in response to circumstances, such as new ministerial priorities or changes in available resources. For this reason, it has not been published. It has however been made available to an External Disability Board and members of the Bond Disability and Development group.
20. There are dedicated leads for the delivery plan in the relevant policy teams. They are supported by a member of the central Disability Inclusion team, currently comprised of a full-time resource of 6.5 FCDO officials, who support by: providing technical advice; signposting relevant guidance and training resources; and linking up with external experts. A series of disability technical advisers have also been embedded in policy departments⁵, seconded from the NGO Sightsavers. They have provided expert input,

⁴ WHO and UNICEF, 2022, Global report on assistive technology, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049451>

⁵ Economic Empowerment departments, Global Health department, Conflict and Humanitarian department and Energy, Climate and Environment department.

advice and capacity building and been catalytic in stimulating change in these policy areas.

Building Equalities Capabilities

21. The delivery and approach of the Strategy fits within a broad approach to equalities within FCDO, led by the Gender & Equalities Department. An Equalities Impact Unit has recently been established within the department to support teams across the FCDO to deliver equalities obligations. It is focussed on strengthening organisational awareness, guidance and capability on the Public Sector Equality Duty, International Development Act and carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. It is also influencing FCDO's corporate processes to mainstream the consideration of equalities.
22. This has included an enhanced capability building 'offer' to staff. A new internal resources hub known as the 'Equalities Gateway' contains information, guidance and advice on all equalities issues. There are workshops and seminars to build awareness and capability, for example a recent series of Human Rights, Gender and Equalities seminars was organised jointly with the Human Rights Department, maximising the opportunity created by the merger.
23. Posts across the FCDO network have begun developing internal strategies for gender and equalities and including disability. Gender & Equalities Department is encouraging all posts to undertake Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) analyses to assess equalities needs in their country. In the Africa region, FCDO has committed to including organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in any civil society consultations on the development of new programme business cases.
24. FCDO posts will soon be able to access a new equalities 'enabling fund' which will provide funding for equalities work, with a particular focus on marginalisation including disability. The funding will be used to develop knowledge, connections or capabilities on equalities, as well as deliver on priorities outlined in the International Women and Girls and Disability Inclusion and Rights strategies. From 2024-25, the FCDO anticipates this fund will provide support to around 30 small projects each year, delivered by the UK's overseas network to enhance gender and equalities capacity and capability.
25. In addition to these broader capacity building activities on equalities, there is disability specific support. The central Disability Inclusion team has produced a package of internal resources designed to raise awareness and equip colleagues to engage with disability inclusion in their policy, programming and diplomatic activities. This includes a new guidance note that has been developed for FCDO staff on how to consult and engage OPDs meaningfully, with practical advice for very small embassies and posts with limited capacity. Training courses are available including three introduction modules on disability movement, data collection and programming. Staff can also draw on a disability helpdesk for a range of practical support, including evidence reviews, advice on programme design, programme audits or Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion analysis. Ad hoc support is also provided by the Disability Inclusion team.

26. This learning package has been consolidated through an ongoing series of teach-in events; and supported by messaging from Ministers and senior officials on internal communications channels. The Disability Inclusion team has also engaged closely with representative staff networks and Human Resource specialists to encourage a more holistic approach to disability inclusion across the FCDO.

Accountability and Governance

27. Accountability for the Strategy implementation is provided by the External Disability Board, comprised of five external disability experts from civil society and academia. The board meets twice a year, chaired by a senior FCDO official. Its purpose is to provide expert advice and challenge to the FCDO, including on its strategic approach to disability inclusion and progress against the Strategy. Teams across FCDO provide regular updates on progress for the Board. Board meetings also provide an opportunity for deep dive discussions on a thematic area of the Strategy, such as climate, education and health.

28. In addition to the External Disability Board, equalities are embedded into governance boards in the FCDO, including: the Strategy Committee, the Investment and Delivery Committee, and the People Committee. Collectively these boards hold senior responsibility for the FCDO's obligations on equality including implementation of the Strategy. Gender & Equalities Department reports annually to the Investment and Delivery Committee on whether large business cases are mainstreaming and complying with equalities duties.

29. The FCDO's [Programme Operating Framework](#) (PrOF) guides staff in designing and delivering high quality programmes. Its mandatory rules include one on equality (Rule 10) which requires that: "all programmes (and policies) **must consider and provide evidence** on how their intervention(s) will impact on **gender equality, disability inclusion and other equality considerations**." This is supported with specific guidance, including a PrOF guide on disability inclusion.

FCDO spending on disability-inclusive programmes and the impact of cuts to ODA programmes on people with disabilities

30. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the UK economy, in 2021 the government temporarily reduced the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income. The budget will return to 0.7% when the fiscal situation allows.

31. The unanticipated ODA costs of supporting refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, including from Ukraine and Afghanistan, required the FCDO to revisit its ODA allocations in 22-23 and 23-24 to ensure they remained affordable within 0.5% plus the additional £2.5bn over two years announced at the 2022 Autumn Statement.

32. The FCDO remains committed to maximising the impact of its ODA spend, along with other mechanisms, to support the lives of vulnerable people and groups with protected characteristics. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) produced for 23-24 FCDO ODA allocations, shared with the Committee, assessed the potential impact on equalities of

proposed reductions to country and thematic areas. At this stage, it is not possible to provide substantial analysis of the risk of direct or indirect discrimination stemming from the ODA reduction. However, the 23-24 EIA indicated that, before mitigation measures were accounted for, the impact on FCDO programming with a strong focus on fostering equalities was likely to be significant.

33. Against a challenging fiscal backdrop, the FCDO continues to make progress via **disability-specific programming**. The FCDO Disability Inclusive Development (DID) programme focuses on the generation and dissemination of evidence on 'what works' to support disability-inclusive development. Despite the reductions in funding, by the end of March 2023, the DID consortium led by Sightsavers had reached over 16.7 million people – including 3 million people with disabilities – with public health messaging and interventions addressing education, health, livelihoods and tackling stigma and discrimination. The overall DID programme has been extended until 2026 and FCDO is in the process of extending the contracts to enable it to deliver outcomes as originally intended.
34. As part of the FCDO's commitment to facilitating full and meaningful participation and leadership of people with disabilities (see 'voice' outcome in strategy), the FCDO continues to support the development and growth of the global grassroots disability movement through the Disability Capacity Building Programme (DCBP). As an example, the International Disability Alliance has trained disability activists to hold governments and duty bearers to account for compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Around 195 activists from over 50 low- and middle-income countries have completed this training (known as Bridge CRPD-SDG) since March 2020.
35. Through the DCBP, the FCDO also contributes to the Disability Rights Fund's⁶ pooled participatory grant, providing financial and technical resources to grassroots OPDs to build capacity in advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. Advocacy by grantees has delivered real change for people with disabilities. For example, work by DeafFlourish in the Marshall Islands led to a commitment by the Ministry of Health and Human Services to providing sign language interpretation at health centres so that Deaf women can receive accessible sexual and reproductive health information. ODA cuts reduced the amount of FCDO funding provided through DCBP partners over the four planned years of the programme (April 2020 to March 2024). As a result, FCDO has extended the programme to March 2025 to continue on-going support to partners and OPDs.
36. These programmes were a key part of the FCDO's COVID-19 response for people with disabilities. The DID programme flexed quickly in 2020 and provided direct support through the delivery of hygiene and food parcels, money transfers, educational materials and accessible public health messaging regarding the pandemic. The programme's research component (PENDA), led by the London School for Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, provided real-time information on the situation in developing countries. The Disability Capacity Building programme supported OPDs to cope with the impact of COVID-19 and influence governments to make their responses disability-inclusive. There were other programme and policy initiatives. For example, a partnership with Unilever provided accessible information on hygiene practices and addressed physical barriers to

⁶ Covering both the Disability Rights Fund and the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund

sanitation and hygiene facilities. FCDO education programmes provided additional support to parents educating children with disabilities at home and guidance was shared with education advisers on how to support children with disabilities. A policy paper on inclusive vaccines was shared widely across the FCDO health network.

37. FCDO assistive technology (AT) programmes have been instrumental in growing the global partnership to galvanise efforts to ensure assistive technology reaches those that need it most. The FCDO AT2030 programme, delivered by the UK's Global Disability Innovation Hub (GDI), is a multi-partner innovative platform that develops, tests and delivers proven models of what works to improve access to affordable and life-changing assistive technology. It has helped 27 entrepreneurs to trial and test their AT innovations including technologies such as a low-cost, digitally enabled hearing test and 3D printed prosthetic limbs. The programme works with over 100 partners in over 40 countries. From inception in 2018 until March 2023, AT2030 reached 8.8 million people directly (and an estimated 24.8 million people indirectly). The UK has recently announced it will increase funding to AT2030 by £31m.
38. The UK was a founding partner of the ATScale global partnership launched in 2018 and commenced its funding in 2022 with a payment of £1.85m. The partnership aims to bring market-shaping approaches to Assistive Technology that have been successfully used over the last decade to cut prices and increase access to life-saving health commodities such as medicines, vaccines and contraceptives. This is complemented by creating an enabling environment through a strategic approach to increasing political will, policy reform, investment, and systems strengthening. It is currently delivering AT joint investment plans in six countries (Kenya, Cambodia, Senegal, Tajikistan, Georgia and Azerbaijan). These aim to strengthen delivery systems and provide nearly 600,000 people with AT.
39. As noted in the recommendations of the Committee's previous report the FCDO is using its leadership in the assistive technology space to press for greater investment and engagement from partners. This includes through increased funding to AT2030 and membership on the board of ATScale. Both programmes have also assisted in providing AT supplies to Ukraine following the Russian invasion.
40. It is however clear that reductions in ODA have had an impact upon the ambition set out in the FCDO Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy. There were reductions in the annual budgets of all centrally managed disability specific programmes listed above. Other civil society programmes with specific projects on disability also had their budgets reduced (UK Aid Connect and UK Aid Direct).
41. The FCDO recognises the opportunity cost of this reduced funding. For example, cuts in support to the Disability Rights Fund resulted in the loss of roughly 80 grants to grassroots OPDs between April 2021 and March 2024. In other cases, such as the Disability Inclusive Development programme, cuts have led to slower delivery of interventions and risks of not achieving what was set out in the original business cases. FCDO is working closely with implementing partners to mitigate this risk and is extending programmes where possible.
42. The FCDO also anticipates some negative impact upon **mainstreamed** programmes across the FCDO that support people with disabilities. Recent qualitative analysis of 21 cost centres with the largest reductions suggest a reduction in the number and size of

targeted programme activities aimed at reaching those furthest behind – including women, girls and people with disabilities. Examples include in Ethiopia, where 8,000 children with disabilities will not benefit from improved learning environments; and South Sudan where work on disability, inclusion and mental health will cease - with impact on the elderly and people with disabilities. Nevertheless, as discussed in paragraph 44, a significant proportion of FCDO ODA programmes continue to be inclusive of people with disabilities. Annex A contains case studies of disability inclusive programmes.

43. As shown in the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts 2022 to 2023 (Annex A), the FCDO’s ODA spend is planned to increase from £7.4bn in 2023-24 to £8.3bn in 2024-25. In the meantime, the FCDO has sought to mitigate the overall impact of the savings target for 2023-24 through use of in-year underspends and other existing resources. This has enabled FCDO ministers to make adjustments including 23-24 funding uplifts targeted at helping the most vulnerable and those with a relevant protected characteristic.
44. In terms of mainstreaming across the FCDO programming portfolio, there is no discernible impact of ODA reductions upon the *proportion* of disability inclusive programmes. At the point of merger, almost 35 percent of bilateral ODA programmes were marked as being disability-inclusive. Post-merger, the proportion has remained stable at around 35 to 36 percent (see *Figure 1*).

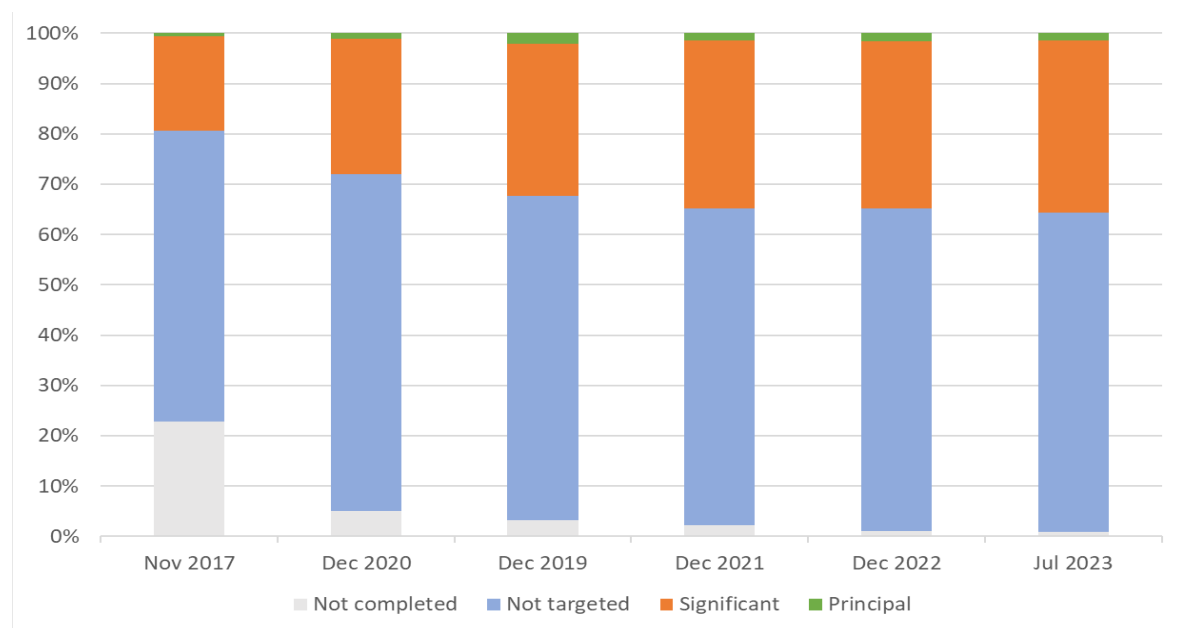


Figure 1: DFID (Nov 2017) and FCDO bilateral ODA programmes by disability policy marker

Participation of people with disabilities, and relevant advocacy groups, in developing FCDO’s strategy and approach

45. The Strategy itself was developed with the participation of people with disabilities, their representative organisations and other civil society partners, aligning with the principle of ‘nothing about us without us’ and the UNCRPD. With the support of partners, FCDO conducted a series of external consultations with over 100 organisations within the global disability movement between October – December 2021.

46. Consultations involved eight country-based meetings in Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya, Bangladesh and Indonesia. A virtual consultation brought together OPDs from across the world, facilitated by the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum, and four regional trainings and workshops involved a range of OPDs from around Africa, facilitated by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the African Disability Forum. Staff from across FCDO also provided valuable inputs through consultations and written contributions, including the staff Disability Inclusion and Awareness Network. Discussions focused on the thematic pillars of the Strategy, particularly the new pillars and cross-cutting themes, as well as on ways of working with FCDO. The consultations provided a valuable perspective of the lived experience of people with disabilities and their families. OPDs suggested the FCDO should move beyond consultations into more meaningful participation, including integrating OPDs into the programme cycle (as experts but also as delivery partners). They highlighted that particularly marginalised voices within the disability community often fall through the gaps and specific efforts must be made to include them. This engagement with OPDs prompted us to improve approaches to working with OPDs, including the most marginalised. As such, the Strategy committed to going beyond isolated and extractive consultations towards the active, meaningful, and two-way participation of people with disabilities and their representative organisations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of FCDO policies, programmes, projects and services.
47. To enable this, the FCDO has recently published internal guidance to help FCDO staff engage meaningfully with OPDs. The OPD guidance note contains practical advice on how to work with OPDs, including overcoming accessibility issues. This guidance has been promoted across the FCDO global network of staff. An external version is also available and has been shared with several donors and organisations.
48. The OPD guidance note was drafted in a collaborative and participatory manner with members of civil society, OPDs and internal stakeholders. The central Disability Inclusion team undertook desk research to review existing FCDO guidance and looked at best practice from the third sector to create the new guidance. A reference group was then used to provide in-depth advice and input and a challenge group provided light-touch reviews and challenge. The reference group included three representatives from OPDs alongside a wide range of other sector experts including the International Disability Alliance, Sightsavers, UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Disability Rights Fund. Reasonable accommodations were offered at each meeting of the reference group, including translation.
49. Some FCDO posts are already working to these principles, and best practice case studies have been highlighted within the guidance. For example, the British High Commission in Kigali (BHCK) made a commitment to consult OPDs on the design of all new programmes in Rwanda.
50. The first programme to do this was Girls in Rwanda Learn (GIRL), developed during summer 2022. The team held consultation meetings with OPDs, women's rights organisations, LGBT+ people and youth with disabilities. The consultations helped shape the design of the GIRL programme and contributed to the development of a standalone component for children with disabilities. In a context with limited data on disability and persisting issues around stigma and discrimination, the insights on the barriers faced by children with disabilities in accessing school were invaluable for the design of the

programme. A clear objective for the consultation meetings was important to ensure that participants understood what information BHCK was seeking and how it would be used. The BHCK team also ensured that the consultations were inclusive and accessible, including sign language interpretation and tactile interpretation.

51. As mentioned in paragraph 34, FCDO is committed to funding grassroots OPDs. Funding helps OPDs – especially women-led organisations and under-represented groups - build their capacity and expertise to advocate for disability rights. During the first two years of the Disability Capacity Building programme (covering April 2020 to March 2022), FCDO funded around £3.75m of grants, technical assistance and advocacy support to grassroots OPDs; with 17% of pooled fund grants going to women-led OPDs. To date, over 1,500 disability activists have received training on how to advocate for disability rights. As a result, advocacy by grantees had led to 27 national level and 81 local policy changes that secured or improved the rights of people with disabilities in target countries. Gender equality is central to this capacity-building with the Disability Rights Fund applying a gender lens to their work, guided by their ‘Gender Guidelines’. These include the issues facing women and girls with disabilities from more marginalised communities and those with non-majority identities and sexualities (such as ethnic minorities, refugees, or LGBT+ persons).
52. A technical assistance grant provided to the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) funded a series of eight workshops between March and December 2022. These strengthened knowledge, skills and partnerships for advocacy and built alliances within the disability movement. Local OPDs have reported a number of practical applications of the workshop outcomes. Inclusion Uganda and Uganda National Association for the Deaf have trained local district leaders, UN Population Fund staff and implementing partners on the UNCRPD. A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between the Foundation of Persons Affected by Dwarfism (FPAD) and the Micro Finance Support Centre to increase microfinance opportunities for FPAD members. The Spinal Bifida and Hydrocephalous Awareness Network Uganda (SYHNEA-U) has engaged with school management committees to raise awareness of inclusive education for learners with disabilities.
53. FCDO’s advocacy and engagement work goes beyond the programme space. For example, British High Commission Dhaka facilitated consultation between the Social Welfare Ministry of the Government of Bangladesh and a group of NGOs and OPDs to agree collective commitments for the 2022 Global Disability Summit. As a result of this continued influencing work, eleven commitments from Bangladesh were secured during summit. This demonstrates how FCDO can use soft power to influence a development agenda such as disability inclusion.

The extent to which other ODA-spending departments are ensuring that their ODA expenditure is inclusive of people with disabilities

54. In 2022, 38% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) was spent by other government departments.⁷ The government committed in the UK’s National Disability Strategy to

⁷ Including ODA spent by the Home Office on in-country refugees.

make the UK's ODA spend disability inclusive, whether spent by FCDO or other government departments.

55. Progress against this commitment can be measured through the OECD-DAC's disability policy marker. The UK led a global effort for a new disability policy marker in the OECD-DAC's Creditor Reporting System. This was agreed in 2019 on a voluntary basis and the UK was one of the first organisations to implement the policy marker. DFID had already introduced the marker into its systems in 2017 and other government departments started to follow suit in 2020.

56. The FCDO commissions ODA-spending departments to report against their ODA spend bi-annually: the first commission asks for high level, summary information on spending in the previous calendar year; the second asks for more detailed breakdowns, including the disability policy marker. The latter commission includes explicit guidance on how to complete the disability policy marker. The guidance covers the criteria for eligibility of programmes to be marked as 'principal' or 'significant' and a link to the OECD-DAC handbook on the disability policy marker. The commission explicitly states that the FCDO expects all departments running ODA programmes to start including the disability policy marker in their data to ensure that they receive credit for any disability-inclusive activities they carry out. The relevant section of the guidance is included in Annex B.

57. Analysis of the 2021 Statistics on International Development (SID) data⁸ shows a mixed picture in how the disability policy marker is used across ODA-spending departments. Table 1 provides the number of individual project lines⁹ in the SID data by ODA-spending department and marker.

Proportion of bilateral projects in 2021 SID data

	Not using marker	Using the disability policy marker			Total bilateral ODA (m)
		Not targeting disability	Significant	Principal	
BEIS*	15%	80%	2%	3%	£602
CSSF	0%	81%	12%	7%	£331
DHSC	100%	0%	0%	0%	£221
Home Office	0%	95%	0%	5%	£1,041
Others (exc FCDO)	15%	78%	4%	3%	£374
Total (exc FCDO)	16%	77%	4%	3%	£2,559
FCDO	0%	64%	35%	1%	£3,847

⁸ Data for 2022 have been collected for publication in September 2023. However, owing to restrictions under the Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008 the 2022 data could not be accessed in August for inclusion in this written evidence.

⁹ SID data is broken down by project (which are often subsets of programmes, and were previously called components in some departments), recipient countries, channel of delivery and type of spending. Each ODA programme is likely to result in multiple lines of data. The table presents figures as a proportion of total projects reported by each department to simplify the distinction between individual projects and programmes (groups of related projects).

*Data marked as BEIS came from two separate departments: DECC and BIS. Returns for future years will be marked separately and come from DSIT and DESNZ.

Table 1: Project lines in 2021 Statistics on International Development data by ODA-spending department and disability policy marker. Only departments spending more than £100m bilateral ODA have been specified. Excludes projects that solely provide administrative or core multilateral costs as these should not use the marker.

58. In 2021, 84% of non-FCDO ODA projects used the disability policy marker¹⁰, with 7% being marked as disability-inclusive (i.e. significant or principal). This is significantly lower than FCDO's figure (36 per cent) though is a small increase from 6 per cent in 2020.
59. Due to resource constraints the FCDO has not been able to quality assure the marker data or provide additional support to government departments to use it. The Disability Inclusion team intends to undertake more proactive work with ODA-spending departments in the coming years. This will raise awareness on why the marker is important, how to complete it, and provide advice on how to make programmes disability inclusive. The Disability Inclusion team will also carry out reviews of how ODA-spending departments have used the marker.

The role of the UK in disability inclusion within the global humanitarian and development community

60. The UK continues to play a key role globally on disability-inclusion, building on previous leadership. The FCDO works closely with the International Disability Alliance (IDA). IDA is an alliance of eight global and six regional networks of OPDs, representing 1,100 OPDs in 180 countries. IDA promotes the rights of people with disabilities and supports OPDs worldwide to hold their governments to account and advocate for change.
61. With IDA, the FCDO co-founded the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) network and co-hosted the first Global Disability Summit (GDS) in 2018. The FCDO continues to fund the GDS secretariat and play a key part in the GLAD network. In addition to its flagship disability programmes, the FCDO uses its broad development and diplomatic network to advocate for the progression of disability rights on the global stage and within international fora.
62. The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network is a membership network of bilateral and multilateral donors and foundations with a common interest in achieving disability-inclusive international development and humanitarian action. As a founder and previous co-chair, the FCDO continues to take an active role in the network. The FCDO sits on the Steering Committee and have a representative in four out of five GLAD thematic working groups, co-chairing the inclusive health working group. The working groups aim to inform development and humanitarian policy and programming through knowledge sharing, advocacy and networking, and by enabling increased investment in disability inclusive programming and budgeting.
63. The FCDO has funded the GLAD Secretariat with over £412,000 since 2020, enabling the network to function efficiently and effectively. This funding has also supported case study reports on 'localisation and disability', which involved interviewing 67 organisations

¹⁰ Projects can be marked as "not targeting", "significant" or "principal". Only those classified as "unmarked" do not use the marker.

of persons with disabilities and 22 donors to build up a picture of funding to OPDs in Bangladesh, Kenya and Nepal. The report found that access to funding remains a key challenge, particularly among grassroots OPDs that have limited technical capacity for fundraising. It highlights the need for more equitable partnership arrangements that provide opportunities for OPDs to participate in every stage of the project cycle. The GLAD network is considering how best to disseminate this learning to the global community, particularly donors, to strengthen their funding to OPDs. The FCDO is also funding a second case study report on OPD engagement in humanitarian contexts in Pakistan, Jordan and Ukraine.

64. The FCDO is also a member of the consultation group for the GLAD Network's Strategic Plan 2024-2026 that will be used to guide the overall work of the network and develop a framework to measure progress in meeting strategic goals and objectives.
65. The legacy and continued success of the Global Disability Summit movement remains a priority. FCDO has provided £288,000 of funding to the Global Disability Summit secretariat since 2020. This supports regular monitoring of achievements of commitments made at the summits, published progress reports, and engagement with OPDs and broader civil society. FCDO officials have shared best practice and advice with Germany and Jordan as co-hosts for the next GDS in Berlin in April 2025.
66. In June 2023, FCDO officials accompanied the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work - Tom Pursglove MP, based in the Department for Work and Pensions, to the UN Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP16) in New York. This is an annual event in which States Parties meet to showcase progress, share learning, and discuss matters relating to the implementation of the UNCRPD. The COSP delegation is led by the Cabinet Office Disability Unit and the FCDO is represented at senior level to advance international objectives and build relationships with key partners. The UK co-sponsored side events on topics such as digital accessibility, assistive technology and disability employment. The UK also co-hosted a joint event with the International Disability Alliance to promote the voice of women and girls with disabilities.
67. At COSP16, the UK announced that it would invest a further £31 million into the AT2030 programme led by Global Disability Innovation Hub, to reach 9 million more people directly and 12 million more people indirectly with life-changing accessible technology. In line with the commitment to support OPD engagement, FCDO also provided a £12,000 grant to the Commonwealth Disabled People's forum to support their attendance at COSP and to host two side events on women and youth with disabilities.
68. The UK also promotes disability inclusion within the UN multilateral system. The FCDO uses its diplomatic capabilities to push for the inclusion of disability inclusive language in multilateral fora, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, the Human Rights Council, the UN General Assembly Third Committee and others. The FCDO works with other parties in the GLAD Network to encourage a co-ordinated approach to negotiations, as well as its position on Boards to influence multilateral organisations to become more disability inclusive.
69. Through its Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva the FCDO has regularly supported events to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day. The UK's Global Ambassador for Human Rights delivers statements at these annual celebrations to highlight how the UK

promotes the participation of people with disabilities both nationally and internationally. For the event in 2023, the Permanent Mission also facilitated access for people with disabilities by funding the costs of captioning for the event.

70. From a broader humanitarian perspective, the FCDO sits on the UN Disability Advisory Group (DAG), which has strong representation from key agencies and partners co-ordinating humanitarian responses. The DAG, supported through FCDO's humanitarian core funding to the UN, includes OCHA, WFP, UNHCR, IOM, WHO and Humanity & Inclusion as members. It convenes monthly and has issued a number of guidance notes and tools to support humanitarian partners to strengthen disability-inclusive programming.
71. In May 2023 the DAG produced and launched a 'Decision Tree' on disability data collection in humanitarian action. This is intended to enable humanitarian actors to identify the types of data to be collected for different purposes; and recommends key tools and approaches to be used. This decision tool can be used for strategic, programmatic and operational purposes in coordination and programming. This is in addition to guidance on the use of the Washington Group Questions in Multi-Sector Needs assessments and Guidance on Strengthening Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Response Plans. The Group has improved data collection on disability, with disaggregation of Persons-In-Need data in over 90% of reviewed UN Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans (HNOs/HRPs). The FCDO has also agreed disability inclusion indicators in the 2023-2026 UN core funding business case, including agency specific performance indicators agreed with WFP, IOM, OCHA, UNHCR and UNICEF and linked to Payment by Results.
72. One example of how the FCDO is working with the humanitarian community is through the support of people with disabilities in Ukraine. British Embassy Kyiv's Humanitarian Programme has funded a disability inclusion expert embedded within the Ukrainian humanitarian response via a UNHCR Standby Partnership. During the response, this partnership has provided disability inclusion technical assistance to the Protection Cluster, supported the Age and Disability Technical Working Group, developed guidance for humanitarian actors, and built relationships with Ukrainian OPDs. The disability inclusion expert also worked with the UNHCR, WHO and Humanity & Inclusion to develop a draft Disability Inclusion Framework for consideration by UN leadership. The FCDO is also ensuring that disability is included in broader initiatives. At the Ukraine Recovery Conference, the FCDO worked with Government of Ukraine to host a session on human capital and inclusive recovery. This included a focus on disability inclusion, with OPDs on the panel.
73. The UK looks to apply inclusive principles across all elements of programming and consultation in relation to disaster risk planning and management. During negotiations of the Sendai Framework political declaration at the UN earlier this year, the UK and likeminded partners supported the EU's proposals to include disability inclusive language, such as "gender responsive and disability inclusive disaster risk reduction".

Safeguarding issues within disability inclusion that should be prioritised in FCDO's work tackling sexual exploitation and abuse in the aid sector

74. The [International Development Strategy](#) (2022) reinforces FCDO's commitment to safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) and its leadership on this agenda. The FCDO uses its convening power to improve

standards, identify perpetrators and support survivors and victims, building on the [UK Strategy: Safeguarding against SEAH](#) (2020). In addition, the FCDO Digital Development policy framework includes digital inclusion objectives, with a focus on people with disabilities. This will be reflected in the upcoming Digital Development Strategy.

75. The FCDO recognises that people with disabilities are disproportionately at risk of SEAH. Whilst data is scarce and more effort is required to improve evidence, existing data suggests an estimated 40-70% of young women and girls with disabilities will be sexually abused before they reach 18 years of age; and that girls with disabilities are four times more likely to be sexually assaulted¹¹.
76. The FCDO recognises that some of the barriers underlying this data include stigma and discrimination faced by people with disabilities and a lack of understanding and knowledge about their varied needs. This undermines their access to services and goods and their potential to demand and shape them.
77. To address safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse in the aid sector for people with disabilities, FCDO is committed to three priority areas:
 - (i) Strengthening the capability of organisations in the aid sector and of FCDO staff to improve their understanding and management of SEAH safeguarding issues, with particular attention to people with disabilities;
 - (ii) Providing guidance to improve disability-inclusive SEAH policies and programming;
 - (iii) Strengthening SEAH communities of practice to share learning and encourage voice from and advocacy from and for people with disabilities.
78. Significant disability-inclusive efforts are being made to achieve the above. Examples of capability-building and of guidance being developed include:
 - (i) An [Open University](#) course on SEAH safeguarding in the international aid sector that integrates disability issues into the course content, including guidance and training on how to prevent harm to people with disabilities and safe recruitment when working with children with disabilities. This free course has been completed by 853 people from all over the world.
 - (ii) Able Child Africa and Save the Children disability-inclusive child safeguarding [guidelines and tool](#) are the first in the sector to focus on safeguarding children with disabilities against SEAH. These support practitioners to strengthen disability inclusion in planning and operationalising child safeguarding policies, raising awareness around social norms and legal protections.
 - (iii) A Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub ([RSH](#)) regional review of disability-inclusive safeguarding in Moldova, Poland and Romania in 2023 to support the Ukraine response¹² considered the vital role OPDs play during heightened humanitarian crises. The findings focus on strengthening safeguarding systems to be disability-inclusive and were further discussed through an RSH Eastern Europe Hub [webinar](#).
 - (iv) The Resource and Support Hub [conducted research](#) with a Nigerian umbrella organisation of OPDs, JONAPWD, on their experiences of promoting disability-inclusion in safeguarding. This serves as a resource for others.

¹¹ Able Child Africa/Save the Children, 2021: Disability Inclusive Child Safeguarding guidelines. See also [Global report on health equity for persons with disabilities \(who.int\)](#)

¹² Funded by the Disasters Emergency Committee

- (v) A [Pocket Guide](#) on safeguarding people with disabilities and mental health conditions in the workplace was developed with people with disabilities, informed by the RSH research above. It is available in English, Swahili, Arabic and French.
- (vi) Sightsavers is a consortium partner in the Safeguarding Research and Support Hub (RSH) to ensure this flagship capability-building programme is disability inclusive. The RSH produced a [Tip Sheet on people with disabilities in the Safeguarding Journey](#) and Social Development Direct produced an [Evidence Map on SEAH for people with disabilities](#) to support training for aid sector NGOs.
- (vii) Other RSH products include a disability-inclusive safeguarding [code of conduct](#) and a [tip sheet](#) on safeguarding in digital programmes.
- (viii) FCDO's Digital Access Programme operates in five countries and has worked with OPDs in Kenya (inAble and the Association for the Physically Disabled in Kenya (APDK)) and with the Kenyan Government to strengthen digital skills and online safety for people with disabilities, including development of the first national standard on digital accessibility for people with disabilities.
- (ix) FCDO's Support to Survivor project in Malawi includes the women led OPD Human Rights for Women and Girls with Disabilities. The project provides disability inclusion training for all accompaniers working with all of the Women's Rights Organisations, and has supported the Ministry of Gender to develop National Referral Pathway Guidelines, with disability-inclusive materials.

79. FCDO has also invested in strengthening disability-inclusive **communities of practice**:

- (i) Working through the RSH platform to host practitioner learning and exchange events, such as the [webinar](#) aimed at raising awareness of the factors that make people with disabilities vulnerable to SEAH in humanitarian crises; a [podcast](#) on disability-inclusive safeguarding, resulting in a [Spotlight](#) infographic; a [blog](#) on protecting people with disabilities from abuse and neglect in the workplace; and three [webinars](#) on disability-inclusive child safeguarding for OPDs. A webinar *Breaking barriers: Disability inclusion for all*, was held in August 2023.
- (ii) The Safeguarding Unit convenes representative groups to support the development of SEAH policy and practice, including OPDs. This includes the Global Framework Steering Committee, the Cross-Sectoral Safeguarding Group and the Independent SEAH Reference Group.

80. The FCDO has committed to improve SEAH prevention and response in all programmes and across the wider aid sector, paying specific attention to people with disabilities. This is a work in progress, illustrated through the examples given. The FCDO is encouraging the sector to do better through building the evidence base and improving operational capability. This work will continue through FCDO funding for the RSH, through the [Programme Operating Framework](#) that requires FCDO and partners to take account of the 2010 Equalities Act, and through the work on building FCDO staff capability through learning events that focus on disability-inclusive safeguarding against SEAH.

FCDO's learning from other approaches and global work on disability inclusion

- 81. The FCDO draws upon successful approaches to mainstreaming disability inclusion and sector specific knowledge from others within the international community.
- 82. The GLAD Network provides a useful learning platform to engage closely with other donors, OPDs and civil society organisations. The thematic working groups on inclusive employment, gender, climate, health and education are opportunities to share

information and learn from others. The FCDO is represented currently in all of these groupings save for gender, where a spot is to be filled in due course.

83. Through the Disability Inclusive Climate Working Group (DICWG), FCDO worked collaboratively on messaging and developed lines on disability inclusive climate action for COP27 at the end of 2022. FCDO then marked International Day of Persons with Disabilities by inviting the three co-chairs of the GLAD DICWG (the International Disability Alliance, CBM UK and UN PRPD) to a learning and capacity building session with staff in FCDO's Energy, Climate and Environment Directorate and wider climate network. This complemented previous disability awareness training and capacity building sessions; giving staff access to disability and climate experts who provided practical insights into disability inclusive climate action.
84. The FCDO also co-chairs the GLAD Inclusive Health Working Group which shares good practice on inclusive health and co-ordinates activities to influence the global health system. The expertise of other donors and civil society experts in the group is invaluable in informing the FCDO's approach on inclusive health. For example, in policy documents and advocacy with others, FCDO has used the evidence and recommendations in the Missing Billion reports, WHO's Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities and UNICEF's practice guide on inclusion of children with disabilities in health services.
85. Outside the GLAD network, the FCDO engages closely in sector specific working groups in the interest of shared learning and evidence. For example, FCDO's Safeguarding Unit (SGU) through its chairing of a quarterly Technical Working Group on SEAH have suggested pooling learning on disability and safeguarding and through funding of Sightsavers as a consortium partner of the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub (RSH). FCDO also funds the two co-chairs of the inclusive safeguarding working group in the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), Able Child and Sightsavers, who produced disability inclusive child safeguarding guidelines. Through the RSH, there are a total of 23 resources and shared learning pieces on disability inclusive safeguarding.
86. The FCDO has also been working with other organisations to take stock of progress on promoting disability-inclusive social protection, learn from different approaches, and set an agenda going forward. For example, supporting UNICEF, ILO and others to organise a virtual conference on disability-inclusive social protection in March 2022, with a broad set of stakeholders including OPDs, to enhance awareness and share different approaches across the sector. Through the UNPRPD programme, FCDO has supported a joint guidance note on disability-inclusive social protection, which intends to draw together existing global knowledge on the issue, including from developed countries, and establish a commonly agreed framework for developing more inclusive social protection systems. The FCDO organised an internal learning session for the Social Protection Community of Practice with the disability-inclusive social protection lead at UNICEF, one of the primary authors of the guidance note, and a disability inclusive social protection expert at the World Bank. The session focused on learning from both the framework set out in the note and UNICEF and the World Bank's current work to implement this.
87. A key component of FCDO programmes is improving understanding and knowledge of best practice approaches. The Disability Inclusive Development programme is comprised of several elements, all of which focus on the generation and dissemination of evidence

about 'what works' for supporting disability-inclusive development. The central pillar of the DID Inclusive Futures (DIDIF) project, led by Sightsavers, is to implement a set of smaller-scale innovative and scaled-up interventions to support people with disabilities to access health, education and livelihoods opportunities, based on some of the best approaches used globally. All the evidence is published as a global public good and has already influenced mainstream programmes run by FCDO and other donors.

88. The Programme for Evidence to Inform Disability Action (PENDA) research programme is conducting impact evaluations to build understanding of what works. These include a cash plus programme targeted to children with disabilities in Laos and BRAC's ultra-poor graduation programme adapted for households of people with disabilities in Uganda. The programme also supports capacity building of southern-based researchers with disabilities, produces research outputs such as peer-reviewed articles, conferences and the Disability Evidence Portal, and analyses country-level data about people with disabilities.
89. PENDA conducted an inclusion assessment on the FCDO and Unilever Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition programme using a COVID-19 Inclusive WASH Checklist developed for the purpose. Following the assessment and feedback, the second phase of the programme requested partners place greater emphasis on inclusion of marginalised populations, including people with disabilities. The report informed a number of publications, including guidance on '[Including people with disabilities, older adults and their caregivers in COVID-19 prevention programmes](#)'.
90. The Disability Inclusion Team have also completed technical training on disability inclusion led by Social Development Direct. This included an overview of the disability movement, inclusive programming and evidence and undertaking meaningful engagement with OPDs. This is also available to FCDO policy teams on request.

FCDO's progress in implementing the Committee's previous recommendations, and the commitments made at the Global Disability Summit

91. Many of the recommendations of the Committee's previous inquiry, as well as the UK's commitments at the Global Disability Summit, are discussed in previous sections of this response. The following provides additional information on those areas which have not already been covered.

Data disaggregation

92. Disaggregating data to include people with disabilities is a key delivery focus of the FCDO's Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy. The FCDO is committed to ensuring that data is collected about children with disabilities wherever possible. The FCDO education department has begun planning for a new Data for Foundational Learning programme which will run from 2023 to 2027 and include children with disabilities as a priority. All centrally managed education programmes will collect data on disability and a new internal results framework will disaggregate data by disability where possible, telling us how many additional children with disabilities are in-school through the programmes.
93. FCDO's Private Sector & Capital Markets and Public Sector & Tax departments have launched a disability data audit of their programmes with recommendations for future work being produced later this year. The FCDO Resilient Cities & Infrastructure Team

are including data disaggregation in the planned Centre of Expertise on Green Cities and Infrastructure.

94. The FCDO also continues to improve systematic collection and use of disaggregated data and knowledge in social protection. Briefing notes on OPD engagement within social protection programmes and disability inclusive data disaggregation have been developed, to complement FCDO's new guidance on engagement with OPDs.

Education

95. The strong education focus within the Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy recognises that children with disabilities, particularly girls, are the most marginalised group of children – and the least likely to be in school and learning. Education also featured prominently in DFID's previous response to the Committee and UK commitments at the Global Disability Summit.

96. The DFID Education Policy 2018 committed to stepping-up targeted support for the most marginalised children, including children with disabilities.

97. The FCDO's overarching ambition is for all children with disabilities to realise their right to education. This means being equipped with the foundational skills they need to progress through 12 years of quality education, to be able to secure work, and to lead fulfilling lives. While in schools they should be able to learn in an environment that is inclusive, accessible, safe from all forms of violence and free from discrimination.

98. Through the FCDO's Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) programme, FCDO has directly supported over 150,000 girls with disabilities to be in school and learning. The GEC is also driving national policy reform on inclusive education and enhancing understanding and responses to disability and inclusive education in the sector. The FCDO is also supporting children with disabilities across a range of country programmes, including in Rwanda through support to the Government of Rwanda to develop a costed inclusive education plan and train 12,000 teachers – equating to one per school.

99. As a key donor to the Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), FCDO uses its voice to ensure children with disabilities are not left behind. In May 2022, ECW published their Policy and Accountability Framework on Disability Inclusion.

100. The Committee's previous report highlighted the importance of families to education programmes. Where possible FCDO takes steps to involve families in the design, implementation and monitoring of support to the education sector. The projects run through the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) take a holistic approach which includes engaging with communities and families. The vast majority of FCDO education programmes were required to pivot during the COVID-19 pandemic related school closures, and this included providing additional support to parents to continue the education of children with disabilities at home where possible. For example, in Pakistan, FCDO bilateral work supported the development of videos for parents and children on sign language.

101. In line with the Committee's previous recommendations, the FCDO has produced guidance on disability inclusive education which has been shared with implementing partners. For example, the GEC has required implementing partners to develop clear child protection policies, and to ensure safeguarding is in place for vulnerable children along with broader guidance on how to adapt learning assessment, value for money

analysis and lessons learnt from the field. The GEC has produced a range of guidance and best practice publications on safeguarding which include specific recommendations for safeguarding children with disabilities. Outside the GEC, the FCDO has produced guidance on ensuring the inclusion of children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic which was shared with FCDO education advisors and some implementation partners as required.

Social Protection

102. Building inclusive social protection systems is a key component of the Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy. A disability lead has been appointed within the FCDO Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources Facility (STAAR), leading on mainstreaming disability considerations into all activities and scoping targeted work on the intersections between social protection, disability, crisis, and gender.
103. FCDO and UNICEF have been working through STAAR to develop a background note and a subsequent workshop with key stakeholders from the social protection, disability inclusion, and gender spaces on the role that social protection can play in promoting high quality care and support systems.
104. The FCDO jointly organised a virtual conference on disability-inclusive social protection held in March 2022 with a broad range of stakeholders, and also fed into a UNPRPD guidance note on disability-inclusive social protection drafted and undergoing broad consultation process.

Economic Development

105. All areas of the FCDO's economic development structure are working to fulfil the commitments of the Disability Inclusion & Rights strategy to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in its work.
106. The International Finance Institutions (IFI) Department have conducted an audit of the IFIs and disability inclusion to inform future engagement. It covers IFI strategic focus on disability inclusion compared against best practice, links between IFI work on disability inclusion and the FCDO's disability strategy, and opportunities to strengthen the work of IFIs on disability inclusion.
107. The FCDO-funded Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) continues to screen 100% of its projects for disability-specific risks and empowerment opportunities. In a typical year, PIDG screens and reviews around 100 projects as part of its formal Sustainable Development Impact review process.
108. PIDG embeds the Washington Short Set of 6 Questions into its ongoing program of end-user surveys, which is typically between 3-5 surveys per year - and seeks opportunities to embed disability specific questions on all other impact assessments such as Environmental, Social and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA) to help identify projects' specific impact on people with disabilities.
109. PIDG embeds disability inclusion into its knowledge sharing work (which can be internal for staff or external such as for investees, other investors / Development Finance Institutions), such as through PIDG Institute regional training events, which have so far been conducted once or twice annually.

110. As highlighted in both the Committee's previous recommendations and the Global Disability Summit commitments, there is ongoing work to ensure that investments are disability inclusive. British International Investment (BII) has produced an Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Toolkit containing a specific section on Disability Inclusion. This provides advice for fund managers and financial institutions on assessing and addressing barriers to disability inclusion, with links to additional resources and a note on Disability Inclusion Guidance for Companies.
111. BII has also delivered company-wide internal capacity building and embedded disability inclusion in its new Policy on Responsible Investing (PRI) launched in April 2022. This is communicated to fund managers, financial institutions and investees through BII's ESG Toolkit and annual ESG Workshop programme in Africa and South Asia. Over 1,100 people have participated in these trainings, raising their awareness about BII's responsible investing requirements.

Gender and Disability

112. The FCDO Women and Girls strategy was published on 8 March 2023. Women and girls with disabilities have been embedded across the Strategy. It highlights that "FCDO will use the full weight of its diplomatic and development offer to put women and girls, in all their diversity, at the heart of everything the FCDO does. The FCDO will take a life course approach and stay true to our commitment to leave no one behind and tackle poverty, recognising the extreme challenges for those facing multiple dimensions of disadvantage". As the delivery planning process continues, the FCDO will ensure that women and girls with disabilities are included across the commitments contained in the Strategy.
113. Through the UK's 'What Works to Prevent Violence' programme FCDO will disaggregate data by disability status. The programme will contribute to the global evidence base by piloting and evaluating innovative approaches to address the risks of violence faced by women and girls with disabilities around the world. In April 2023, the What Works Helpdesk produced a guidance brief on disability inclusive programming to support grantees under the What Works programme. This included guidance on engaging with OPDs. Women with disabilities are represented on the programme board, bringing expertise on gender-based violence, disability, and the engagement of people with disabilities in research.
114. Since 2014, the UK has been a proud contributor to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (UNTF). In 2018, the UK contributed £1 million to the UNTF's Special Funding Window to address violence against women and girls with disabilities, awarding grants to projects focused on addressing this violence announced at the UK hosted Global Disability Summit in London. Over the course of the window between 2018–2020, 28,504 women and girls with disabilities directly benefited from those projects.
115. In 2022, the [UNTF released a review](#) on the projects under the Special Funding Window. All 22 projects were led-by or included the meaningful engagement of OPDs, reaffirming the importance of meaningful participation and the self-determination of women and girls living with disabilities in the response to gender-based violence. Successful interventions included flexible adaptation, engagement at policy levels, prioritisation of collaborations and shifting societal perspectives.

Mental Health

116. Mental health was featured as a bespoke area of the previous DFID Disability Inclusion Strategy. Following the merger, this has been included in the wider work on health.
117. The FCDO “Approach and Theory of Change on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support” was published in August 2020. This was developed in consultation with the sector and provides practical advice for those in FCDO and beyond on how to support those with mental health and psychosocial disabilities. This continues to guide FCDO’s approach.
118. The FCDO has worked in partnership with WHO, partner countries and organisations to support the delivery of mental health and psychosocial support services and to develop evidence on context-appropriate interventions for mental health.
119. This includes the Leave No One Behind programme which works across poverty, disability inclusion and mental health, providing £39.2 million over five years (2019-2024) to support the Government of Ghana to deliver services to the poorest and most excluded. The programme works across four areas – policy; enjoyment of rights and access to quality integrated health and social services; active, full representation and participation and reduced stigma; and improved knowledge and evidence. By 2022, over 58,000 people with a severe disability had received cash grants as part of the social protection element of the programme and a further 50,000 people with disabilities were reached by activities addressing stigma and providing mental health support.
120. Through the Support Comprehensive Care and Empowerment for People with psychosocial Disability in Africa (SUCCEED) programme, FCDO funded a research programme consortium aiming to generate new knowledge of ‘What Works’ for people with psychosocial disabilities, particularly focusing on psychosis - schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other psychotic disorders. One of the programme aims is to generate new knowledge on co-production for mental health research in LMIC settings, by modelling best practice in disability inclusion, addressing attitudinal barriers among key stakeholders, and building the capacity of Disabled Persons Organisations to engage meaningfully in mental health research and policy.
121. Prior to this, PRIME was a six-year programme that started in 2011. It was led by a consortium of research institutions and ministries of health in 5 countries (Ethiopia, India, Nepal, South Africa & Uganda) to develop mental health guidance for integrating support for mental health conditions into primary health care and community-based services.
122. The FCDO will continue to support this agenda, through applying policy and guidance adapted by others, and continuing to advocate for integrated approaches to mental health at the country level.

Disability Inclusive Climate Action

123. Recognising the disproportionate impact of climate change on people with disabilities everywhere, FCDO committed to an emerging pillar on disability inclusive climate action for the first time in the Disability Inclusion and Rights strategy published in 2022. Between 2022-2023, the Energy, Climate and Environment Directorate of FCDO has been embedding disability inclusion across its policy and programmes with the support from a seconded technical expert on disability inclusion from Sightsavers. This included providing 110 members of staff with disability inclusion capacity building training in December 2022.

124. Key programmes have progressed their work on disability inclusion as a result. For example, the [UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transition \(UK PACT\) programme](#), funded by the UK's International Climate Finance, supports countries with high mitigation potential to increase their climate ambitions and implement that ambition more rapidly, more effectively, and more equitably through demand-led technical assistance. Guided by UK PACT's Gender and Social Inclusion Framework, which has disability as a core component, partners have been embedding disability inclusion into their programmes and will continue to do so over the next programme funding cycle. An audit of 9 projects in Indonesia in the Energy Efficiency, Carbon Pricing and Future Cities sectors led to further recommendations to strengthen this work and resulted in a workshop sharing best practice amongst UK PACT programme managers on disability inclusion in the region in May 2023. Progress has also been made to embed disability inclusion as an indicator in the Green Climate Fund's second replenishment process.

Equality in the workplace

125. According to last year's diversity data, 13.7% of FCDO staff registered as being disabled; higher than the average of 12% for the UK Economically Active Population.

126. The FCDO priority is to achieve equality of opportunity and greater parity at senior grades with the UK population for its disabled staff. FCDO is targeting efforts on the critical areas of workplace adjustments and assistive technology to do this. Work continues to ensure that staff receive the reasonable adjustments they need in a timely manner, and consultations are ongoing across the organisation to progress the talent of disabled colleagues.

127. The FCDO adheres to the Civil Service Commission recruitment principles. FCDO operate the guaranteed interview scheme and offer reasonable adjustment through the recruitment process.

128. FCDO is currently conducting a full review of the FCDO Disability Confident Scheme and its application within the Department, based on testimonies and data to provide a broader understanding of the FCDO's disability inclusive culture.

Annex A: Disability Inclusive Programming: examples from overseas network

Using learning to identify opportunities for change

The ***Saving Lives in Sierra Leone*** (SLiSL) programme undertook a disability context analysis to understand and explore differences in equity of access to free health care for people with disabilities.

The rapid action research included a desk review of 37 documents, 14 key informant interviews, five focus group discussions (31 participants), two barrier analysis workshops (eight participants), and two reflection meetings (11 participants). Throughout the process there was engagement with representatives of government ministries, OPDs, CSOs, disability-focused organisations as well as people with disabilities.

The review produced 11 recommendations. These included a high level but fundamental recommendation for the Government of Sierra Leone to revise the Persons with Disability Act to mirror Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; this should be coupled with a best practice approach to disability registration.

Other recommendations included the creation of a code of conduct to set expectations of appropriate attitudinal and professional norms among health professionals toward people with disabilities. Alongside this, the review recognised that there is a need for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to regularly deliver modules on disability inclusion to all health workers, both in pre-service training and ongoing professional development.

The disability context analysis and recommendations have informed the business case for a new health programme in Sierra Leone and FCDO will work with implementing partners to see how best to respond.

Inclusive training to support people with disabilities into employment

The ***Youth Skills for Economic Growth in the Eastern Caribbean*** (SkYE) programme ran for four years, ending earlier this year. It was a mainstream programme that responded to the socioeconomic problems of the lack of skills and high unemployment, particularly among the disadvantaged youth (15-30).

One aspect of the programme supported basic skills and work readiness training, numeracy and literacy, and critical life skills for disadvantaged young people. The main purpose of this work was to allow individuals to compete for employment or further training opportunities. A second aspect delivered higher level skills in areas of economic growth.

A quarter of trainees enrolled in the programme self-identified as having a disability with 19 per cent of trainees graduating from the programme being people with disabilities - exceeding the target of 10 per cent. Follow-up studies showed that 55 per cent of traced people with disabilities were in employment following SkYE training.

SkYE is a good example of how a programme can incorporate elements to allow for specific support for people with disabilities to undertake training alongside non-disabled peers. It used the Washington Group Questions to allow participants to self-identify and tailored approaches to meet their needs.

The programme also looked at how to make inclusive training practices more widespread and sustainable. Fifty technical and vocational education and training instructors from across Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines took part in a 'training of trainers' project to

improve their practice and skills in delivering training to young people with disabilities and people with special educational needs.

Ensuring children with disabilities receive a quality education

The FCDO's Girl Education Challenge Transition project is executing a seven-year initiative named '**Empowering girls with disabilities through education in Uganda**', delivered through Cheshire Services Uganda. The project aims to provide learning opportunities at all levels of school, including primary, secondary, and postsecondary. It began in 2013 and has two transition phases: 2013-2017 and 2018-2024, during which it has assisted over 2500 people with impairments (approximately 2000 females and 500 boys). 225 (192 girls and 33 boys) have graduated from high school and entered the workforce.

The provision of education opportunities in an inclusive environment, medical rehabilitation, and mentorship support continues to contribute to the retention of beneficiaries in learning institutions. Cheshire Services Uganda has made education services inclusive through the provision of tuition, scholastic materials uniforms, sanitary wear, braille machines, and braille papers for visually impaired learners, among others. Many of the learners supported are severely disadvantaged, orphaned, have refugee status, or are heads of households.

Medical rehabilitation has improved the health and well-being of disabled girls and boys, allowing them to remain in school. During school breaks, mentorship and counselling have also been provided to provide guidance as well as emotional and mental support.

The project has aided the transition of learners to various educational levels annually. In particular, at least three students with difficulty walking, caring for themselves, and seeing were admitted to the University on a three-year government scholarship at the degree level in 2022. To address physical environmental inaccessibility, the project assessed and supported over 22 primary schools to improve their physical environment. These 22 model schools got assistance in the form of ramps and walkways connecting classrooms and other buildings, as well as accessible standard WASH facilities. Cheshire Services Uganda, in collaboration with the Kampala Capital City Authority, has provided expertise on inclusive education approaches to instructors in both private and government partner schools in Kampala. 1,573 (692 males, 881 females) primary and secondary school teachers have benefited as a result.

A number of other mainstreamed projects designed and run at FCDO posts address specific aspects of **inclusive education**. For example, the overall aim of the **Lei Weh Lan** (LWL) programme is to support learning outcomes for all secondary pupils in Sierra Leone in Maths and English. The programme team has recognised that children with disabilities – and especially those with visual impairments – need additional support to access the same education as their peers.

Through medical screening in junior secondary schools, LWL has already provided 2,270 visually impaired children with assistive devices such as glasses and solar lamps. This scheme will shortly be extended to senior secondary schools. More tailored support has been provided where needed – such as supplying English textbooks in braille and voice recorders to allow children to record and relisten to their lessons.

LWL has also set out to help teachers to introduce inclusive education approaches to their classrooms. In conjunction with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, the programme has also developed a disability inclusive responsive pedagogy which the ministry started to roll out in 2021/22.

BE Amman is providing support to refugee and host community children with disabilities to access quality education through a multi-donor funded programme called "**Accelerating Access to**

Education Initiative". The Programme selected 120 schools around Jordan, to support children with disabilities and learning difficulties through recruitment of education staff, providing the learning materials, hearing, vision, and physical aid devices, as well as developing institutional screening and monitoring guidelines for the inclusion of children with disability - and finally training all school staff on the inclusion concepts and steps.

The creation of Learning Support Teachers and Multi-Disciplinary Team Members is a first for Jordanian public schools. The programme is currently supporting 360 Learning Support teachers and 210 Multidisciplinary Team members across all directorates to support the 120 schools.

Work is also underway to support the education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh. The **Education Quality Improvement Programme - Bangladesh (EQUIP-B)** provided technical assistance to the Directorate of Primary Education to develop a framework on special education need and disability (SEND).

A system-wide capacity building initiative on inclusive education targets teachers, teacher educators, supervisors and administrators, and decision makers at various levels to support the implementation of the SEND framework. Over 2,000 government primary school teachers have received Training of Trainers (ToT) on disability inclusive education, and they will train 130,000 teachers of 65,000 government run primary schools in a phased manner. The programme will also support piloting in selected primary schools to identify best practices and streamlining Assistive Device (AD) provisions for children with disabilities.

Some children need additional support to catch up on education or access alternative education. The **Educate the Most Disadvantaged Children in Bangladesh (EMDC)** programme supported around 1,400 children with disabilities in its first year in 2022/23. EMDC also aims for girls to account for at least 50% of participants. The programme intends to refine and improve definition and parameters for disability screening and targeting based on lessons on accessible education for children with disabilities; accordingly, will broaden and expand screening in pilot areas. Lessons learned on a stronger and more defined approach to disability inclusion aims to inform FCDO's advocacy and policy support to the Government of Bangladesh.

Ensuring that people with disabilities access digital and financial literacy skills to build sustainable businesses

Two projects in Indonesia have been providing people with disabilities with training and support to build digital and financial literacy skills.

The UK – Indonesia Tech Hub started **Tech to Empower** in 2020 as part of the response to COVID-19. It was launched in conjunction with *AlunJiva*, a civil society organisation which focuses on empowering people with disabilities to create, run and digitally transform businesses, with the overall aim of normalising conditions for people with disabilities working in the technology sector. Tech to Empower has provided accessible training for over 500 participants with disabilities from 15 provinces across Indonesia, ranging from basic digital literacy (e.g. internet browser, email and office applications) through to entrepreneurship (e.g. business development, product development, online marketplace and marketing). The project will provide training to 500 additional people with disabilities this year.

The UK-Indonesia Tech Hub co-ran a job fair and entrepreneur expo for people with disabilities with the Indonesian Ministry of Manpower in FY21/22. A total of 57 applicants with disabilities were successful in gaining employment through the expo.

Alongside this, the **Digital & Creative Entrepreneurship project** aims to provide digital and entrepreneurship training to 600 people from marginalised communities, including women and people with disabilities, in Greater Makassa, Kendari, Manado, Balikpapan and Samardina. The project will

also create 25 trainers to support the project participants. Some of the trainers will also be trained as sign-language interpreters to increase the number of interpreters in eastern Indonesia.

Protection of people and rights, and tackling social inclusion

The ***Aawaz II: Inclusion and Preventing Modern Slavery programme*** operates in Pakistan to protect children, women and girls, persons with disabilities, transgender people, and religious minorities. Working through community engagement, it seeks to embed behavioural change and strengthen citizen-state engagement promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

The Aawaz II community forum was developed in partnership with the British Council and Pakistani NGOs contributed to the passage of Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act 2022.

The programme has directly supported 32,454 people with disabilities (119 transgender, 1,514 religious minorities, 11,602 women and 20,733 men) to obtain disability certificates, registering with relevant government departments. The programme activated disability boards, ensuring inclusion of children with disabilities and constructing ramps in local Social Welfare Department (SWD) offices, hospitals, and other public and private institutions.

In collaboration with UNFPA, Aawaz II implemented a twin-track approach to ensure disability inclusion in gender-based violence (GBV) services in all the provinces of Pakistan, focusing on psychosocial support (PSS), referrals of women with disabilities to GBV services, information sharing on GBV services, and technical capacity development of OPDs to deliver GBV awareness sessions. Ethical guidelines and standard operating procedures for PSS and GBV services were developed. PSS workers further developed and regularly updated referral directories to refer GBV survivors to public GBV services as per their needs.

In Ghana, the ***Leave No One Behind*** programme (LNOB) works across poverty, disability inclusion and mental health providing £39.2 million over five years (2019-2024) to support the Government of Ghana to deliver services to the poorest and most excluded focusing on social protection and the rights of people with disabilities and mental health conditions.

LNOB works across **four key areas** – policy; enjoyment of rights and access to quality integrated health and social services; active, full representation and participation and reduced stigma; and improved knowledge, evidence.

The LNOB programme flexed to support FCDO's response to COVID-19 in 2020. FCDO provided £4m through the World Bank's Ghana Productive Safety Net Project, for emergency cash transfer payments via mobile money to 45,710 vulnerable individuals including women in witches' camps, homeless, aged, people with disabilities. In addition, FCDO provided support to UNICEF to provide personal protection equipment for social workers, staff of Judicial service departments and domestic violence and victims support units to support extremely poor and vulnerable groups. Furthermore, Options and consortium members under Ghana Somubi Dwumadie (Ghana Participation Programme) provided support e.g., accessible materials, media sensitisation, support to psychiatric hospitals and self-help groups and grants to CSOs in response to COVID-19.

Supporting people with disabilities in humanitarian responses

People with disabilities can be particularly vulnerable in times of crises, especially if humanitarian responses do not take their needs into account. The ***Women Leading Response and Recovery programme*** (WLRR) in Ukraine supported women's rights organisations to lead coordinated gender-

responsive assistance to women and girls affected by the war. WLRR conducted an audit of gender accessibility and safety of public places. The audits noted that certain services had clear accessibility needs and institutions often did not comply with accessibility requirements.

Two local WROs undertook work to rectify some of the accessibility problems in pilot areas, including install ramps, accessible bathroom facilities and handrails, and ensuring the provision of disabled parking spaces. The recommendations and lessons learnt from the pilot areas were shared within other regions. This led to local authorities taking further actions to improve accessibility.

In Ukraine, FCDO has also prioritised funding support and capacity building for people with disabilities and their representative OPDs. The 10 million Civil Society Fund (2022-24) seeks to create a more responsive, capable and accountable Ukrainian state by supporting civil society organisations piloting more inclusive solutions across the reconstruction and amplifying the voices of marginalised groups to influence trajectory of the post-war recovery. In 2023-24 this includes eight grants to organisations of persons with disabilities, or organisations focused on disability rights, working on issues spanning universal access in infrastructure and the judicial system, cutting edge rehabilitation services, and deinstitutionalisation and the rights of children with disabilities.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, the **Support to Civil Society programme (SCSO)** is helping civil society organisations (CSOs) to tailor interventions to take gender, equalities, disability and social inclusion needs into account. CSOs are working with local stakeholders to identify solutions to problems and bottlenecks. It has become clear that civil society supported by SCSO demonstrate more effectiveness in demanding and influencing better performance from government and holding government to account. CSOs supporting people with disabilities have agreed that to build partnerships and coalitions to raise the voice and needs of people with disabilities at local and national levels. These partnerships will be of value to other FCDO projects should there be a need to seek any relevant expertise and/or opportunity to advocate for rights and needs of people with disabilities.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

The **Womens' Integrated Sexual Health programme (WISH £273m 2018-2024)** is the UK's flagship programme on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), supporting women and their partners in 27 countries in Africa and Asia to safely plan their pregnancies and improve their sexual and reproductive health. To date, WISH has prevented nearly 52,000 maternal deaths and an estimated 18.7million unintended pregnancies.

Currently, WISH is being implemented in 17 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa including fragile and conflict affected settings (FCAS) such as Niger, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. The programme is delivered via consortia in two separate lots led by MSI Reproductive Choices (Lot 1) and IPPF (Lot 2/WISH4Results), respectively. A separately contracted Third Party Monitor (TPM) known as WISH4Results (W4R) undertakes results verification, evidence and learning.

The Leave No One Behind (LNOB) agenda is at the heart of WISH: the programme has a specific focus on increasing access to services for adolescents (defined as below 20yrs of age), the poorest and people with disabilities. These groups are traditionally under-reached by comprehensive SRHR services leading to poor health outcomes, increased vulnerabilities, and higher maternal deaths.

From the outset, WISH has taken concrete action towards the rights, voice, choice and visibility of people with disabilities. The programme has partnered with specialist organisations to ensure the services FCDO fund and the systems we're supporting respond to the needs of disabled people. Each consortium has a disability partner (Leonard Cheshire then more recently Sightsavers in Lot 1; Humanity and Inclusion in Lot 2) and works with OPDs at national and community levels to embed disability-inclusive approaches. Implementing partners actively showcase WISH's work on disability including, most recently, a side event co-sponsored by FCDO, Sightsavers and Humanity and

Inclusion at the June 2023 Conference of States Parties (COSP 16) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

WISH measures progress via programme reporting and a specific indicator on clients with disabilities who access SRHR services: since it began, the programme has reached an average of 7% of people with disabilities though this varies by country and had reached approximately 10% just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The forthcoming WISH Dividend programme (£200m 2023-2029) will continue this work.

In Madagascar, engaging and mobilising members of disability community groups has been an effective way of ensuring the SRHRH needs of people with disabilities are met as well as an important tool in empowering them. People with disabilities have proven to be powerful community advocates for WISH in their local contexts. Promotional materials that include representation of people with disabilities have been developed using a user-centred design approach.

Overall, the focus on reaching marginalised groups has had a wider positive impact on perceptions and social norms which could help promote inclusion beyond the programme. This was evident both at community level and at wider policy level - WISH's success in reaching people with disabilities has provided an example of how other health programmes could be designed for the inclusion of marginalised groups.

Annex B – guidance on disability policy marker provided to ODA-spending departments

Disability and inclusion and empowerment marker

At the UK's first ever Global Disability Summit in July 2018, the world promised to do more for people with disabilities – who have all too often been neglected in developing countries. The UK promised that it would take a lead in working towards a fairer world in which no one is left behind. See [DFID's Disability Inclusive Strategy](#), which the former parts of FCDO that came from DFID are still working towards, more information.

The DAC collected and published the disability marker for the first time during 2019. Although many of the UK's programmes included the marker, the majority of these were FCDO programmes. FCDO expects that all departments running ODA programmes to start including the marker in their data to ensure that they receive credit for any disability-inclusive activities they carry out. The DAC has published a [handbook](#) explaining how to use the disability policy marker.

Specific advice on the marker is also available from Daryl Lloyd (daryl.lloyd@fcdo.gov.uk).

Criteria for Eligibility

Activities are classified as being inclusive of people with disabilities (score Principal (2) or Significant (1) if:

They have a deliberate objective of ensuring that people with disabilities are included, and able to share the benefits on an equal basis to persons without disabilities.

or

They contribute to promote and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people with disabilities, and promote respect for their inherent dignity in line with Art. 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

or

They support the ratification, implementation and/or monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Examples of activities that could be marked as principal (score 2) include:

Support to inclusive education as defined by art24 of the CRPD.

Support to job insertion programmes inclusive of person with disabilities.

Support to reduce architectural barriers in urban areas

Examples of activities that could be marked as significant (score 1), include

A new or refurbished infrastructure project that has been explicitly designed to be fully accessible to people with disabilities

A social inclusion project that includes people with disabilities among the target groups.

An education project that includes an inclusive education element to ensure that deaf pupils remain in school and receive a quality education.

Examples of activities that could be marked as not- targeted (score 0)

A programme or activity aimed at improving basic services for the poor that states that it will also reach people with disabilities because they tend to be amongst the poorest, but does not contain specific mechanisms or activities to ensure inclusion.

If you have questions on this marker please contact daryl.lloyd@fcdo.gov.uk