

Persons with Disabilities in the Financing for Development Follow-Up and Review Process

I Background

There are some one billion persons with disabilities worldwide, and they are disproportionately affected by poverty in its different dimensions. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be met without addressing the rights of persons with disabilities.¹

We must therefore ensure there is sufficient, high quality, finance to realise the SDGs' ambitions and ensure no-one is left behind, driving forward commitments made at Addis Ababa, Doha and Monterey.

II Commitments by the UN

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda contains six explicit references to persons with disabilities and disability, one to "inclusive education", one to "inclusive learning environment" and two to "accessible" technologies and infrastructures. The International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium welcome these clear references.

III Recommendations and Key Asks

Quantity of Financing

Ensuring that persons with disabilities are not left behind requires dedicated resources – including resources for social protection, for fully inclusive public services, and for reasonable adjustments that enable access to employment and other opportunities. Failure to allocate these resources is a false economy: a growing body of evidence points to the long-term social and economic costs of exclusion of persons with disabilities.²

The International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium recommend:

1.1 A progressive **increase in dedicated domestic resource allocation and international development cooperation to support the full inclusion of persons with disabilities** in sustainable development. In particular, the forthcoming **Financing Education Commission report** should take into account the full costs of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

To maximise the resources available for all aspects sustainable development, we also call for:

1.2 The Financing for Development follow-up process to take an ambitious approach that not only reviews and monitors existing commitments, but also **advances new solutions** on critical issues, including: the equal inclusion of all countries in decision making on **international tax cooperation**; the design of **pro-poor taxation systems**; the fulfilment of traditional donors' commitments on **Official Development Assistance**; and the alignment of decisions on **trade and debt** with human rights obligations.³

¹For more analysis on the centrality of persons with disabilities to the wider aims of the 2030 Agenda, see for example Bond Disability and Development Group [evidence to the UK International Development Committee inquiry on the Sustainable Development Goals](#), Annex 1

² Much of this evidence is collated in Banks and Polack, [The Economic Costs of Exclusion and Gains of Inclusion of People with Disabilities](#), CBM/International Centre for Evidence and Disability/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2014

³ Please refer to the [Declaration from the Addis Ababa Civil Society Forum on Financing for Development](#) for more detail on these issues.

Quality of Financing

Development finance can only be considered high quality if it does not discriminate against persons with disabilities, or other marginalised groups. We recommend:

2.1 Binding accountability mechanisms to ensure that **private investments** adhere to **human rights standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.⁴ These human rights standards include the obligation to ensure that persons with disabilities have **opportunities to work**, on an equal basis with others, building on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda paragraph 16. Accountability mechanisms should be backed by effective **redress processes** that are fully inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

2.2 **Accessibility** to be a key criterion in the mobilisation of finance, including all public procurement procedures. We are concerned that, while the Addis Ababa Action Agenda contained references to accessibility (paragraphs 14 and 114), the recent report of the [Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development](#) does not discuss **accessible infrastructure**. Nor does the report emphasise the risk of a digital divide if persons with disabilities cannot **access mainstream ICT**.⁵ Accessible ICT should be a priority for the **Technology Facilitation Mechanism** and the **Technology Bank and Science, Technology and Innovation Supporting Mechanism for Least Developed Countries**. We also call for safeguards to ensure that **intellectual property regimes** and **customs duties** do not restrict the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from technologies that would enhance accessibility.⁶

3. Data and Monitoring

We were very pleased that the recent report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development emphasised accessibility in its comments on transparency (p.138). This complements commitments on disability-disaggregated data, and participatory budgeting, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (paragraphs 30, 115, 126). We call for these commitments to be strengthened through:

3.1 The **full participation of persons with disabilities** and other marginalised groups as part of an accessible process to design, implement and monitor budget and fiscal policies. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development should draw on the growing body of **high-quality analysis on disability budgeting** by organisations of persons with disabilities such as the International Disability Alliance, for a more complete understanding of the extent to which budgets are truly socially responsive. We also call for disability resource allocation to be **tracked systematically in global datasets** from the IMF and other actors, and for the introduction of a **disability marker in the OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System**.

⁴ For more detail on proposed accountability mechanisms, please see the [Declaration from the Addis Ababa Civil Society Forum on Financing for Development](#). Such accountability mechanisms should also apply to public-private partnerships, and we agree with the Declaration that these partnerships should be approached with particular caution.

⁵ As opposed to specialised assistive devices which – though important – are not sufficient to ensure the development of ICT does no harm to persons with disabilities. ICT accessibility can be monitored through, for example, reports from the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs.

⁶ Such technology includes, but is not limited to, the technologies covered by the Marrakech Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled; by the World Health Organisation's Essential Medicine List and forthcoming Priority Assistive Products List; and by [International Telecommunications Union standards and guidance on accessibility](#); as well as basic sun protection technologies highlighted in the Report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism (A/HRC/31/63).