
**FEDERAL BUDGET
SUBMISSION TO TREASURY
2021-2022**

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pacific COVID-19 response package: including people with disabilities

1.1 Create a Disability Inclusion Fund of \$10million as part of \$304.7million Pacific COVID-19 response package to support the inclusion and specific needs of people with disabilities.

2. Stepping up disability Inclusion in the Pacific

2.1 Commit \$40million over four years to a *Regional Partnership for Inclusion* to accelerate the Implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025*.

2.2 Commit an initial \$200,000 in 2021-22 to the design of the *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*.

3. Disability Inclusion Policy

3.1 Increase DFAT's central disability allocation to a minimum of \$14million per annum.

3.2 Ensure the DFAT has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated support costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy supporting *Development for All 2015-2021*, in Canberra and at post.

4. Disability Inclusion Policy

4.1 Release a comprehensive budget Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2021-22 Federal Budget.

4.2 Report a transparent accounting of the Australian Aid Budget's disability funding through:
a. separate reporting of core disability inclusion funding; and
b. public reporting against the OECD DAC disability marker.

5. Overall Aid budget

5.1 Commit to rebuilding the Australian development cooperation budget, which includes floor for official development assistance levels enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.7 per cent of gross national income by 2030.

5.2 Increase current COVID-19 ODA commitments to \$2 billion across the forward estimates in the 2021-22 budget.

5.3 Increase funding to ANCP by \$50m and retain the 10 per cent match requirement in the 2021-22 budget.

INTRODUCTION

Including people with disabilities in development investments not only upholds Australia's values-based and strategic commitments; it also maximises value. Australia has made commitments to leave no one behind and this means ensuring that, by 2030, people with disabilities along with others will no longer experience barriers to improvements in education, employment, access to infrastructure, health or gender equality. Disability inclusion cuts across all programs, sectors and contexts of Australian development policy and requires effective and adequate budget to enable continued success for the Australian Government in disability-inclusive development.

In order to support development cooperation activities which best address poverty, inequality and injustice, with particular reference to the needs of people with disabilities, this submission makes eight recommendations relating to inclusive budgeting considerations for the 2021-2022 financial year.

About us

CBM Australia is an international Christian development agency, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest places in the world. In 2020, CBM Australia supported field projects in 12 countries and supported partners including governments, multilateral organisations, non-government organisations and organisations representing people with disabilities OPDs in 21 countries.

CBM Australia is proud to have a partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as part of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), and is a member of the Australian Council for International Development.

The Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) is an Australian-based network focusing attention, expertise and action on disability issues in developing countries. ADDC has over 700 members including representatives from major Australian international development non-government organisations, the Australian disability movement and Organisations of People with Disabilities, academia, and individuals.

CBM Australia and ADDC welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the 2021-22 federal budget process. The Australian Government has been a champion of and global leader in disability-inclusive development for more than a decade. Key investments within the development cooperation program have supported this role, returning significant results for minimal expense.

1. PACIFIC COVID-19 RESPONSE PACKAGE: INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Reports from OPDs indicate that they are among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. People with disabilities have experienced higher job losses, food insecurity and face immense challenges to protecting themselves from the virus.¹ Without strategic intervention, the pandemic is set to widen inequalities and push people with disabilities and their families deeper into poverty. The pandemic has validated the logic of focusing on pre-conditions to inclusion or on specific interventions with people with disabilities.² This means, laying the foundations for people with disabilities to be included in mainstream services and all aspects of community life, such as the provision of assistive devices.

The Australian government made a commitment in *Partnerships for Recovery* to 'support people with disabilities, in light of the multiple layers of exclusion they face and effectively addressing the needs of the most vulnerable provides the bedrock for social cohesion.'³ In order to bring this policy commitment to fruition we recommend the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) create a COVID-19 Disability Inclusion Fund of \$10million as part of \$304.7million Pacific COVID-19 response package.

Table 1: COVID-19 Disability Inclusion Fund

Investment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
1. Disability Inclusion Fund	\$10m	-	-	-	\$10m

CBM and ADDC propose that DFAT posts or partners apply for funds via this fund to support their disability inclusion work in the Pacific and Timor Leste. We propose the fund places priority on the pillars of the *Partnerships for Recovery* strategy with cross cutting initiatives that ensure the foundations are in place for people with disabilities to engage, such as providing assistive devices and consulting on program design with people with disabilities.

This could include:

- i *Health security*: Inclusive public health information, inclusive gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health services and initiatives to support equitable access to a vaccine.
- ii *Economic recovery*: Job creation investments include specific streams for people with disabilities.
- iii *Stability*: Ensure social protection schemes are accessible to people with disabilities and account for the specific needs and additional cost of disability.

¹ E.g. see Disability Right Monitor (2020) [Disability rights during the pandemic: A global report on findings of the COVID-19 Disability Rights Monitor](#)

² Pacific Disability Forum, *Towards an Inclusive and Resilient Pacific: Strategic Plan 2021-2025*, 3.

³ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2020), *Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response*, p.11.

Recommendation

1. Pacific COVID-19 response package: including people with disabilities

1.1 Create a Disability Inclusion Fund of \$10million as part of \$304.7million Pacific COVID-19 response package to support the inclusion and specific needs of people with disabilities.

2. STEPPING UP DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE PACIFIC

CBM Australia and ADDC recommend Australia commits \$40million over four years to fund a *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific (PIP)* to accelerate the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025 (PFRPD)*⁴ and ensure pre-conditions are in place for the effective inclusion of people with disabilities. An initial commitment of \$200,000 in 2021-22 is required to support the design of PIP.

Table 2: Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific

Investment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
2a. Design – Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific	\$200,000	-	-	-		\$200,000
2b. Implementation – Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific	-	\$10m	\$10m	\$10m	\$10m	\$40m

This proposal sets out a possible model for a regional partnership that requires further testing and development in response to feedback from stakeholders and finalisation during a design phase. PIP would include four components:

1 - Disability Inclusion Priority Initiatives

This component would seek to address some key preconditions to inclusion applicable for all PICs.

2 – Technical Advice and Research

This component would provide coordinated research or technical advice in response to requests from Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and OPDs. For example, specialist advice in relation to data collection and analysis and approaches to inclusive education and employment.

3 –Disability Services Workforce Planning and Development

⁴ For more information on the Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, see <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/PFRPD.pdf>

Recognising the shortage of a skilled workforce for disability service provision, this component could include both strategic volunteer placements combined with support for coordinated workforce development and capacity strengthening of disability professionals.

4 – PFRPD Implementation Fund

This would be the largest component in financial terms and would provide funding for PICs to invest in scaling up support for pilot initiatives in key areas. We proposed that access to funds under this component would require a joint application from government and civil society.

The initial proposal in 2021-22 is for \$200,000 in to fund a design process. Extensive consultation with PICs and OPDs would be critical to access understanding of existing gaps and opportunities, wide expertise and ensure any partnership found widespread support. We propose that the design team explored learning from similar funds and look for robust and inclusive governance mechanisms. CBM Australia and ADDC urge DFAT to utilise its leadership on disability and convening ability to rally support from other donors as part of the design phase.

Rationale

The Pacific Disability Forum (PDF)⁵ estimates there are 1.7 million people with disabilities in the Pacific. PICs have expressed commitment towards addressing the barriers faced by people with disabilities. Governments in the region have jointly adopted the PFRPD. PICs expenditures dedicated to people with disabilities is about 0.1 per cent of GDP compared with 2.2 per cent on average in European Union countries⁶, with a heavy reliance on ODA to fund many of the disability inclusion initiatives and costs.⁷

Systemic change will only come about through intentional implementation of the PFRDP, requiring sustained ongoing increases in domestic resource allocation, alongside significant increase ODA contributions and overarching, coordinated programming that will address the existing gaps in disability inclusive development.

A pooled, Pacific partnership to support PFRPD will provide greater coordination of resources and priorities, better sharing of lessons from examples of good practice, and economies of scale for service provision. A strong partnership approach – seeking buy-in from a range of donors, implementing partners and PIC governments - will enhance coordination, scale and efficient allocation of resources.

⁵ PDF is the regional peak body on disability - established by people with disabilities themselves, their representative organisations and like-minded partners in 2002.

⁶Cote, A. and Alexandre Cote and Balsubramanian, M. The New Normal: Getting Governments to spend [more and better] for [inclusion] of all persons with disabilities. May 2019. Available from <https://asksource.info/sites/all/modules/pubd/cnt/pubd/cnt.php?fid=1239>

⁷ Pacific Disability Forum (2018) *SDG-CRPD Monitoring Report*, available from https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/pdf_sdg.crpdp_report_.pdf p.1.

2. Stepping up disability inclusion in the Pacific

2.1 Commit \$40million over four years to a *Regional Partnership for Inclusion* to accelerate the Implementation of the *Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025*.

2.2 Commit an initial \$200,000 in 2021-22 to the design of the *Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific*.

3. DISABILITY INCLUSION POLICY

CBM Australia and ADDC recommend that DFAT increase its central disability allocation to a minimum of \$14million per annum. This will ensure Australia can meet its commitments to ensuring people with disabilities are included in regional COVID-19 response and recovery and international development programming.

Table 3: DFAT’s Central Disability Allocation

Investment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
DFAT’s central disability allocation	\$4.4m	\$4.6m	\$4.8m	\$5.0m	\$18.8m

In the 2020-21 budget, DFAT’s central disability allocation was cut by 25 per cent from a long-standing figure of \$12.9m to \$9.6m. While a relatively modest amount in the overall aid budget, this investment is significant in providing core resources for disability inclusion across the aid program. This central allocation to disability inclusion is distinct from disability funding in mainstream programs and disability specific programming, however it is crucially supports these. The support, partnerships, technical expertise and global leadership this central allocation leverages, is foundational to enabling DFAT to implement adequate disability inclusion in its programming.

DFAT’s central disability inclusion allocation is also crucial to maintaining Australia’s strong credibility and reputation for being an ambitious global leader in disability inclusive development. The 2017 Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) evaluation confirmed that Australia is seen as an influential and credible leader in this field.⁸ However, this report cautioned that ongoing investment in disability is required to secure Australia’s hard-won wins and strong standing in disability inclusion. Furthermore, 2021 will be a particularly critical year in disability inclusion policy, with the conclusion of the current Development for All 2015-2020 Strategy. In 2020 DFAT committed to extending the strategy to 2021 and consulting on the development of a new policy.

The implementation of these policy priorities is only as effective as the capacity of those charged with implementing them. We therefore call for DFAT to increase the core departmental budget

⁸ Office of Development Effectiveness (2017) [Unfinished Business: Evaluation of Australian Advocacy for Disability Inclusive Development](#).

available for associated staff and support costs to enable the effective implementation and monitoring of *Development for All 2015-2021*, both in Canberra and at post.

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3.2 Ensure the DFAT has sufficient core departmental budget for staff and associated support costs to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and advocacy supporting *Development for All 2015-2021*, in Canberra and at post.

4. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING

CBM Australia and ADDC recommend that Australia releases a comprehensive Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2021-22 Federal Budget. In addition, there should be transparent accounting of the Australian Aid Budget's disability funding through separate reporting of its central disability allocation and public reporting against the OECD DAC disability marker.

After the decision to end the Ministerial Statement on Australia's development assistance program (Blue Book) in 2014-15 and some years of variable budget reporting, in 2016-17 DFAT introduced a comprehensive departmental summary the Australian Aid Budget (Orange Book). This detailed information on country, regional and global programs is an important public accountability and transparency measure. While CBM and ADDC recognise that 2020 has been a disruptive year, it was unfortunate that the 2020-21 budget did not include a detailed summary. This practice should be resumed in 2021-22, including as much detailed information as possible on both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years. This must be coupled with a return to the more comprehensive reporting on the overall performance of the aid program, as well as country and regional programs.

In 2016-17 (\$12.9m) and 2017-18 (\$12.9m) the departmental summary included a transparent breakdown of DFAT's central disability budget. However, in 2018-19 this practice ceased with disability funding being incorporated into the 'other sectoral programs' category. The central disability allocation was then cut in 2020-21 budget by 25 per cent. As a leader in disability-inclusive development, Australia should report separately its core disability programming.

In June 2018, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) introduced a policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities. Like the gender equality marker, it provided for identification for projects where disability inclusion is a principal or significant objective. 2019 was the first full period of reporting against the marker (for the 2018 calendar year). Australia reported only \$60million to the DAC against the marker. For a leader in disability, this is a disappointing result. DFAT should be utilising the marker during the budget process and in its own performance reporting to track the proportion of the program with disability inclusion as an objective. This would then provide the basis for the introduction of an ambitious target to accelerate disability inclusion efforts in all areas of Australian aid.

4. Budget transparency and reporting

- 4.1 Release a comprehensive budget Australian Aid Budget Summary with the 2021-22 Federal Budget.
- 4.2 Report a transparent accounting of the Australian Aid Budget's disability funding through:
 - a. separate reporting of core disability inclusion funding; and
 - b. public reporting against the OECD DAC disability marker.

5. OVERALL AID BUDGET

CBM Australia and ADDC recommend that Australia commits to rebuilding the Australian development cooperation budget, which includes a floor for official development assistance (ODA) levels enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) by 2030. We also recommend that Australia increase its current COVID-19 ODA commitments to \$2 billion across the forward estimates in the 2021-22 budget.

Since the 2019 election, the Government has implemented further cuts, so that the core aid program is now \$4 billion. While the Australian Government made a number of important commitments to respond and fight COVID-19 in our region, none of these new announcements represent a permanent increase in Australia's international development program.

The scale of the pandemic recovery effort required in our region will be enormous, and to meet the need for the sake of security, stability and human rights in our region, these new investments from the Australian government need to be permanent and ongoing. In the mid-2000s, when the region suffered a devastating natural disaster in the Asian tsunami, there was a bipartisan commitment to stand with the region through a decade long recovery. The global pandemic requires a similar bipartisan commitment to investment. The COVID-19 pandemic will not be over for anyone until it's over for everyone and we must work collectively together to recover and rebuild. As such, the new COVID-19 regional funding announcements made in 2020 should be extended out to the end of the Forward Estimates at the very least, to achieve a \$2billion increase over the period 2020-21 to 2024-25. This would provide time to assess the trajectory for a permanent increase.

CBM Australia and ADDC also recommend the Australian government increases funding to the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) by \$50 million in 2021-22 and retain the 10 per cent match requirement in FY 2021-22.

Table 4: ANCP investment

Investment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
1. ANCP	\$50m	\$50m	\$50m	\$50m	\$200m

Australian aid not only reflects the character of most Australians; it is also an effective investment in reducing poverty and inequality, and contributing to mutual development

outcomes. Since its inception, ANCP has proved itself to be among the Australian aid program's most effective investments. Without the provision of indexation, ANCP continues to decline in real terms. The program continues to yield disproportionately high outcomes relative to financial size. In the 2021-22 federal budget, the Australian Government should therefore invest in performance, and increase funding to ANCP by \$50 million for the coming financial year.

CBM Australia is also committed to the co-investment principles of the ANCP program, which requires a co-investment from those funds to the ANCP program. During the COVID-19 pandemic DFAT has reduced the co-investment requirements from 20 per cent to 10 per cent, providing welcome relief to charity budgets that have taken a significant hit from a decline in giving. This decline has been due to both the general economic conditions as well as the restrictions that have limited the ability to undertake face-to-face and event-based fundraising. A temporary extension of this contractual flexibility would provide welcome relief as other government supports are withdrawn, without imposing a cost on the federal budget.

5. Overall Aid budget

- 5.1 Commit to rebuilding the Australian development cooperation budget, which includes floor for official development assistance levels enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.7 per cent of gross national income by 2030
- 5.2 Increase current COVID-19 ODA commitments to \$2 billion across the forward estimates in the 2021-22 budget.
- 5.3 Increase funding to ANCP by \$50m and retain the 10 per cent match requirement in the 2021-22 budget.