



## **Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network Meeting Communiqué<sup>1</sup>**

*2-3 March 2017, Berlin, Germany*

The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network met in Berlin on 2-3 March 2017, for the first time since its launch on 3 December 2015. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) co-chaired the meeting. The meeting was hosted by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ). Representatives from 32 organisations (see attached) met to identify key actions to advance disability inclusive education, social protection and humanitarian action in developing countries. Representatives also agreed to work together to prioritise the collection and analysis of data to guarantee that people with disabilities are not left behind in development and humanitarian efforts.

Ms Annette Seidel, Head of Division 302 (Human Rights, Gender Equality, Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities) of BMZ, opened the meeting, highlighting GLAD's uniqueness in facilitating learning opportunities by uniting a broad range of stakeholders within one network of like-minded people. Ms Dinah Radtke, Vice-Chair of Disabled Peoples International (DPI), emphasized the importance of supporting the inclusion and capacity building of disabled people's organisations (DPOs) in developing countries. The Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific, [Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells](#), reaffirmed Australia's commitment to disability rights and disability inclusive development. The Minister also emphasised that working with, and learning from, people with disabilities themselves, is critical to understanding how best to address barriers to full participation. Colin Allen, Chair of IDA, reminded that the GLAD Network exists to motivate and inspire entities to further support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their international development and humanitarian action efforts.

Carsten Schmitz-Hoffmann (Head of department of GIZ) underlined that GIZ is still facing challenges in systematically addressing inclusion in their development programmes; therefore, it is important to share knowledge in dialogue with network initiatives like GLAD to improve jointly promising approaches.

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<sup>1</sup> Issued by the co-chairs in consultation with the participants.

Michael Krake, Head of Political Analysis and Strategic Planning Department (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), filled in for the parliamentary state secretary of Germany Thomas Silberhorn and underlined the importance of the disability marker and a gender balanced CRPD Committee.

GLAD welcomed the International Labor Organization (ILO) as a new Network member and noted that the Open Society Foundations was the newest member of the Steering Committee. The United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) would represent the United Nations agencies on the Steering Committee. GLAD also acknowledges the participation of interested organisations and observers at this Berlin meeting.

### **GLAD Updates**

The Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific chaired a session on the work undertaken since the 17 June 2016 Steering Committee meeting to facilitate greater cooperation and coordination by GLAD members.

DFAT presented the GLAD stakeholder mapping exercise commissioned by the GLAD Network to identify and understand the entities that are actively involved in contributing international resources to disability-inclusive development and humanitarian action, and the rationale behind these efforts. The first phase identified areas in which the Steering Committee members are investing their financial and political capital to support disability-inclusive development and humanitarian action. In particular, it identified that advocacy efforts focus on common work in inclusive education, promoting improved data on disability, and endorsement and implementation of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. Subsequent phases of the mapping exercise will expand the scope to include all GLAD members and, eventually, potential members. A working group, which is to be established, will refine the findings into a collaboration tool for the online knowledge-sharing platform, and guide subsequent phases of the project.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (FORMIN) presented on progress in developing an online knowledge-sharing platform. Following consideration of an options paper, the GLAD Network agreed on the guiding principles and functionality of the platform. FORMIN called for financial and in-kind contributions by multiple partners to enhance sustainability and create

a sense of shared responsibility and mutual accountability. A working group will explore options for, and lead on the development of, the platform.

The importance of both stakeholder mapping and an online knowledge-sharing platform for facilitating out of session communication, information sharing and collaboration was emphasised throughout the meeting.

### **Shared experiences monitoring and measuring progress on disability inclusion**

Consistent with GLAD's goal of learning from each other by sharing knowledge and resources, the Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific chaired a session on monitoring and measuring progress towards inclusive development and humanitarian action.

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) presented on the current momentum towards disability-disaggregated data and statistics, and highlighted the importance of consistent advocacy on methodology. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) introduced a proposal for an OECD DAC marker on disability inclusion. The GLAD Network welcomed the findings of the strategic evaluation of disability-inclusive development in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and agreed that the next UNDP strategic plan should give greater prominence to disability. DFAT provided an overview of its ongoing strategic evaluation of disability-inclusive development, committing to sharing final findings at the next GLAD Network meeting. Preliminary findings indicate that while increased commitment from senior leadership is encouraging more inclusive programming, investment managers are missing or under-estimating opportunities to engage with persons with disabilities in program design and implementation. The BMZ committed to sharing the findings of an external evaluation of its Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, following its completion in May 2017.

### **Thematic Working Group Sessions**

On 17 January 2017, the Steering Committee, noting their common focus on disability-inclusive programming and advocacy on humanitarian action, education and social protection, established three working groups to lead GLAD engagement on these priority issues. The working groups met for the first time in Berlin and, in a reporting-back session facilitated by the European Commission, agreed on the GLAD Network's approach on the issues.

## **Humanitarian action**

DFAT facilitated the Humanitarian Action Working Group, which included presentations by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (IASC-TT), UNICEF and Handicap International.

GLAD calls on all relevant stakeholders who have not already done so, to endorse the [Charter on Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action](#) launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

GLAD acknowledges the valuable work of the IASC-TT to develop globally endorsed guidelines to assist humanitarian actors and affected communities to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions that foster the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities across all phases of humanitarian action.

GLAD will promote disability-inclusive humanitarian action through:

- promoting the Charter and its universalisation and implementation; and
- raising awareness, building internal constituencies and promoting common messages across development disability and humanitarian areas

GLAD will draft and agree common messages on disability-inclusive humanitarian action, for use by Network members in influencing executive boards of UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Food Program.

The GLAD Humanitarian Action Working Group will meet in the margins of the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (21-23 June 2017).

## **Education**

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and USAID co-facilitated the Education Working Group, supported by IDA and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The session included presentations from UNICEF, the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) and the World Bank.

The GLAD Network is concerned that equal, inclusive and equitable education does not reach persons who are most marginalized. GLAD encourages national education sector plans to include strategies that ensure marginalized children, including children with disabilities, can exercise their right to education. There is also need to address the needs of all age learners and staff with disabilities and expand the notion of education beyond preschool and primary

education. This approach would provide opportunities for all learners with disabilities to access lifelong learning and equally benefit technological and scientific progress, including application of inclusive information and communication technologies.

GLAD will seek to influence the following global and regional processes over the next 12 months:

- World Bank 2018 World Development Report, which has an education focus, including a call for good practice examples;
- UNICEF's Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines, including the call to pilot, share and provide feedback on the chapter on inclusive education of children with disabilities;
- USAID's inclusive education evidence summit, scheduled for end 2017, including the call for participants/co-hosts.

There will be follow up from the GLAD co-chairs with the GPE regarding inclusive education for persons with disabilities.

USAID will work with participants of the education working group to collect specific project and program information, including resources on training tools, and mapping or programs and projects at country level. This would feed into the GLAD Network's online knowledge sharing platform system. USAID will develop a template to collect information from GLAD Network members on their inclusive-education projects and investments.

### **Social protection**

FORMIN and GIZ facilitated the Social Protection Working Group. The GLAD Network noted that universal social protection floors are a key instrument for reducing poverty and inequality and supporting inclusive economic growth. Access to social protection programs provide the resources necessary to live a life of dignity and facilitate access to opportunities. Countries developing or reforming their social protection systems should incorporate disability inclusion in the design from the start. Both universal policies and targeted social protection services should consider the specific rights of persons with disabilities.

The GLAD Network supported in principle, and agreed to provide comments by 24 March on, a draft joint statement, *Towards inclusive social protection system supporting full and effective participation of persons with disabilities*, prepared by IDA and ILO. GLAD also committed to

drafting a joint statement on adaptive social protection in fragile and humanitarian contexts, to present in July 2017.

The working group will meet by June 2017 to define its objectives and map GLAD members' social protection work, to understand opportunities for collaboration and opportunities to influence both social protection and disability-inclusion circles. It will also circulate to the Network the outcomes of two ongoing operational processes, namely BMZ's social protection toolbox and DFID's operational guidance.

### **Stakeholder sessions**

To support collaboration between members, GLAD is committed to facilitating opportunities for focused discussions within its constituent groups, including States, multilateral agencies, foundations and private sector. Accordingly, the GLAD Network meeting included an opportunity for stakeholder groupings separately. The World Bank facilitated a panel discussion wherein the stakeholder groups reported on the outcomes of their discussions.

### **State and multilateral agencies**

While States and multilateral agencies are likely to meet separately at future GLAD meetings, on this occasion they met together, facilitated by GIZ, to discuss issues of common interest. The combined group discussed FORMIN's experience in introducing a policy marker to track funding and welcomed DFID's proposal to jointly work towards a new OECD DAC policy marker on disability inclusion. Group members expressed the timely need for a systematic and international approach for monitoring both the implementation of the CRPD and for tracking the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for people with disabilities. The group discussed and agreed the importance of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics short set of questions and the UNICEF/Washington Group module on Child Functioning for SDG data disaggregation for children as a cost-effective tool for the collection of disability-disaggregated data in census and population surveys.

### **Private sector engagement**

Business Disability International facilitated a discussion on the relationship between members of the GLAD Network and the private sector. The launch of the Business & Sustainable Development Commission by the World Economic Forum in 2016 highlights the emerging

corporate interest in the SDG agenda. There is great potential to leverage the collective influence of GLAD Network members to shape how the private sector engages on disability-inclusive development and humanitarian action. Likewise, there is great potential for GLAD Network members to enhance inclusive practices through learning from the expertise of the private sector.

In order for GLAD to maximise its impact, it will invite mainstream business networks at the global level to become members of GLAD, rather than their individual corporate members. Examples include the Business & Sustainable Development Commission and Business for Social Responsibility (BSR). GLAD will also approach the UN Global Compact to consider GLAD Network membership.

Additionally, each of GLAD's thematic working groups will consider how private sector entities can contribute to their forward work plans. In the longer term, there is potential to develop agreed disability-inclusive messaging that GLAD members can use when engaging private sector entities and when building the capacity of developing country governments to call for inclusive services through engagements the Private Sector.

### **Engagement with Foundation members**

The Disability Rights Fund/Disability Rights Advocacy Fund facilitated a discussion on GLAD's engagement with foundations and philanthropies. The group discussed the importance of maintaining realistic targets for the group as well as feasibility of a high-level event during the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of States Parties in June 2017, including participation from Directors of New-York based Foundations, and Ministers of Member States. GLAD members were encouraged to introduce additional foundations to the GLAD Network.

### **Measuring equality through disability data**

The GLAD Network recognised the urgent need for better data on the situation of people with disabilities globally. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly commits to disaggregating data wherever possible to monitor progress in implementing the SDGs so that no one is left behind.

The GLAD Network acknowledges that the Washington Group has developed and tested internationally comparable, cost-effective tools for use in all national data collection efforts to monitor equality of outcomes for people with disabilities.

The GLAD Network endorses the use of the short set of questions developed by the Washington Group for the SDG disaggregation of data for adults, and the UNICEF/Washington Group module on Child Functioning for the SDG disaggregation of data for children. The GLAD Network recognises the importance of supporting national statistics offices to implement these tools and analyse the resulting data to inform better policy and programs.

Furthermore, the GLAD Network will work towards including the short set of questions developed by the Washington Group tools within their own organisations in program-level monitoring and evaluation systems to assess our own progress in supporting the inclusion of people with disabilities.

### **Towards a new OECD DAC Disability Marker**

The GLAD Network endorsed DFID's proposal to work towards a new policy marker on disability-inclusive development under the auspices of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The GLAD Network sees value in being able to monitor and analyse trends in funding to support disability-inclusive development over time. This information will be valuable in supporting the case for greater investment in disability-inclusive development, and improve our understanding of where more effort is needed. This work is particularly timely, given the imperative mandate of the 2030 Agenda to track the achievement of the SDGs for people with disabilities.

### **Next steps**

In closing, co-chairs re-iterated a number of themes that had emerged during the meeting, including:

- the need, given the initial phase of the GLAD Network, to control the growth of GLAD membership and focus efforts on the selected themes, such that GLAD can make progress towards its agreed goals;
- the importance of working with people with disabilities and their representative organizations in all of the GLAD Network's activities;
- the opportunity that GLAD provides for members to motivate their organizations to mainstream disability inclusion internally;

- the value of members' individual and collective contributions to advancing GLAD goals.

### ***Upcoming meetings***

GLAD Steering Committee will meet in New York on Friday 16 June 2017, following the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is anticipated that the next GLAD Network meeting will be held at least four months after the Conference of States Parties, and probably in early 2018. The GLAD Secretariat is seeking volunteers to host the 2018 GLAD Network meeting. The 16 June 2017 Steering Committee meeting will consider possible dates and locations. This timely announcement will facilitate early arrangements for Ministerial representation.

The GLAD Secretariat will seek volunteers to lead each of the working groups, and to progress work plans out of session, in consultation with the working group members and the GLAD Secretariat. The GLAD Secretariat will also seek volunteers to support the development of the stakeholder mapping exercise and the knowledge-sharing platform.

### ***Governance and new members***

The permanent co-chair of the GLAD Network is IDA. The second rotating co-chair, currently DFAT until the end of 2017, is a GLAD member agreed by a simple majority of GLAD members. The GLAD Secretariat will prepare and circulate for consideration by Network members an options paper on possible amendments to the GLAD governance arrangements and seek out of session nominations for the next rotating co-chair.

Admission of new GLAD members, which requires agreement by a majority of existing members, will continue to be considered out of session.



## Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network Meeting

2 to 3 March 2017, Berlin

### Participant list

*\*Denotes GLAD Network Member*

*\*\*Denotes GLAD Steering Committee Member*

#### **African Disability Forum**

Samuel Njuguna Kabue  
Consultant / CRPD Committee Member

Anjeline Okola – Charles  
Programme Coordinator

#### **Abilis\*\***

Kalle Konkola  
Chair

#### **Bezev**

Gabriele Weigt  
Executive Board

#### **Big Lottery Fund**

Christopher Manion  
Portfolio Manager

#### **Business Disability International\*\***

Susan Scott-Parker  
CEO & Founder

#### **Disabled People's International**

Dinah Radtke  
Vice-Chair

#### **Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund\*\***

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Founding Executive Director

Yumi Sera  
Director of Partnerships &  
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#### **European Commission**

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#### **Global Partnership for Education**

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Education Specialist- Inclusive Education

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#### **Government of Australia**

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***Australian Embassy in Berlin***

Lauren Bain  
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Amanda Annamalay  
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