Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Steering Committee Meeting Communiqué[1]

16 June 2017, New York

The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Steering Committee met in New York on 16 June 2017, following the Conference of States Parties (CoSP) to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) co-chaired the meeting, which reviewed progress since the GLAD Network Meeting in Berlin on 2-3 March 2017.

Thematic Working Groups

Recalling that GLAD has agreed to focus on disability-inclusive programing and advocacy on humanitarian action, education and social protection, the Steering Committee reviewed progress and membership of the three working groups established to lead GLAD engagement on these priority issues. The Steering Committee welcomed additional nominations to these working groups and noted that while capacity constraints have delayed progress on some actions agreed in Berlin coordinated action by GLAD members has, for example:

- supported advocacy promoting the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action
- resulted in agreement amongst GLAD members which are also partners of the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) on how to work collaboratively with GPE to improve disability-inclusive education
- contributed to the drafting of a joint statement *Towards inclusive social protection system supporting full and effective participation of persons with disabilities*, facilitated by ILO.

Measuring equality through disability data

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities commended GLAD's consistent advocacy and support for the use of the Washington Group short set of questions for the disaggregation of disability data. The advocacy contributed to a joint statement by 25

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[1] Issued by GLAD co-chairs in consultation with meeting participants.

UN Members States at COSP on 16 June calling on the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) to recommend this tool to National Statistics Offices and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals Indicators. Further advocacy by GLAD members has resulted in a commitment by UNSD to issue a joint statement with the Washington Group on disability data disaggregation.

Towards a new OECD DAC Disability Marker

The Steering Committee reaffirmed GLAD's support for the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) proposal for a new OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) marker on disability inclusion, to be considered by the OECD DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics on 21 June.

Private sector engagement

Consistent with GLAD's goal of learning from each other by sharing knowledge and resources, Business Disability International led an interactive learning session on how the GLAD Network can engage with the private sector. The Steering Committee agreed on the need to develop tailored messaging for consistent use in persuading private and public sector stakeholders, at national and international levels, of the ethical, economic, and societal benefits which flow from the inclusion of persons with disabilities. It also acknowledged the potential for GLAD members to mobilise their collective purchasing power to ensure that private sector suppliers/partners meet clearly stated standards of disability and accessibility related performance. Steering Committee members agreed to open discussion internally within their organisations regarding how to progress practical disability-inclusive procurement practices.

GLAD Secretariat Work Plan

The Steering Committee noted plans by IDA to increase staffing in the GLAD Secretariat using initial funding provided by DFAT. A full time GLAD Secretariat Assistant will increase the Secretariat's capacity to progress work plans, including building the online knowledge sharing platform and conducting phase two of the stakeholder mapping exercise. At the request of the Steering Committee, the co-chairs agreed to develop a secretariat budget that Network members could support with voluntary contributions of funding and in-kind support.

GLAD Co-Chairing Arrangement

The Steering Committee discussed and agreed the following proposed changes to the GLAD governance arrangements:

- When a new co-chair is agreed, the existing rotating co-chair remains in situ in a troika arrangement for a term as agreed by the co-chairs.
- The rotating co-chair is selected from amongst Steering Committee members.
- The rotating co-chair is selected by a simple majority of Steering Committee members, in or out of session.

Consistent with the GLAD Terms of Reference, the Steering Committee agreed to recommend the above proposal, which will improve the continuity of leadership and facilitate the rotation of co-chairs, to GLAD Network members for approval.

The Steering Committee noted that while DFAT was due to conclude its term as rotating co-chair at the 2018 GLAD Network meeting, the proposed changes would see DFAT remain for a time in a troika arrangement in support of the next rotating co-chair. The Steering Committee also noted that nominations for the next rotating co-chair remain open.

Membership of the GLAD Network and GLAD Steering Committee

The Asian Development Bank, Global Affairs Canada and UNESCO have been admitted as GLAD Network members since the last GLAD Network meeting. Admission of new Network members, which requires agreement by a majority of existing Network members, will continue to be considered out of session. The Steering Committee noted that foundations remain under represented on GLAD, and encouraged GLAD Network members to recommend potential members to the GLAD Secretariat.

The Steering Committee agreed that it should remain relatively small and flexible and representative of the constituent groups within GLAD, so that it can continue to effectively set the priorities of the GLAD Network. Membership of the Steering Committee, which is decided by a majority of Steering Committee members, should be reserved for the most active members of the GLAD Network.

Upcoming meetings

The Steering Committee noted that the co-chairs have been in contact with various GLAD members seeking a host for the next GLAD Network meeting which should be held by the first quarter of 2018. The Steering Committee preferred that the next Network Meeting be held over three days, including half a day for a Steering Committee meeting, to allow sufficient time for in-depth thematic discussions and a learning session.

Other business

The Steering Committee noted the success of the CoSP side event *GLAD: Coordinating action among the donor community* in promoting GLAD to a wider international audience.

DFID announced its plans to host a global conference on disability inclusive development in 2018. The conference is expected to attract political commitments on disability-inclusive development and humanitarian action from global leaders. It will provide an opportunity to promote GLAD.

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Participant list

**Denotes GLAD Co-chair

*Denotes GLAD Steering Committee Member

^Denotes GLAD Advisor

1. Abilis Foundation*
2. Arab Organisation of Persons with Disabilities^ (rotating DPO Advisor)
3. Business Disability International*
4. Disability Rights Fund and Disability Rights Advocacy Fund*
5. Government of Australia (DFAT)**
6. Government of Finland (FORMIN)*
7. Government of Germany (BMZ and GIZ)*
8. Government of Japan (JICA)*
9. Government of Norway (NORAD)*
10. Government of the United Kingdom (DFID)*
11. Government of the United States of America (USAID)*
12. Inter-agency Support Group on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: co-chair World Health Organisation*
13. International Disability Alliance**
14. International Disability and Development Consortium ^
15. Open Society Foundations*
16. Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)*
17. Arab Organisation of Persons with Disabilities^ (rotating DPO advisor)
18. United Nations Development Programme, UNPRPD Technical Secretariat*
19. United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ^
20. Wellspring Advisors*
21. World Bank*