Introduction

CBM Ireland, as part of the CBM International Federation working in 59 countries, a member of Dóchas and the Dóchas Disability & International Development Working Group (DIDWG) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade and Defence (JCFTD) as part of its review of the Irish Aid programme. We also welcome the Irish government’s commitments to a fairer, more just, secure and sustainable world as expressed in both its foreign policy paper and Ireland’s One World, One Future policy. We very much support Minister Cannon’s recent statement highlighting the important role of Irish Aid in promoting the rights of people with disabilities, and his ambition to continue to work to mainstream disability.ii

Ireland’s overseas development aid programme and its humanitarian response is internationally recognised for commitment to the least developed countries and targeting of marginalised groups within such contexts. As Ireland advances progress on the commitments it has made as part of Agenda 2030, the European Consensus on Development and the Grand Bargain, we look forward to the continuation of the strong leadership role played by Ireland as co-chair of Agenda 2030, in prioritising those who have the lived experience of discrimination and exclusion.
Submission Focus

CBM’s submission is framed on the future direction of the Irish Aid programme and its alignment to need and priority. As a disability and development organisation we are responding to this question highlighting the key role disability inclusive development (DID) can play to ensure no one is left behind.

Our key recommendations are listed below and elaborated upon further in the remainder of the document.

- **Human rights are core to the Irish Aid programme.** Firstly, this means ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), bringing Ireland in line with the rest of the European Union and with the programme countries it works with. Ratification of the CRPD will compel Ireland to ensure its aid programme continues to deliver on its commitment to including persons with disabilities.

- **A quality aid programme needs to be guided by disability inclusive development.** Building on Irish Aid’s Guidance Note on disability, *technical expertise should be engaged by the Irish Aid programme* to deliver upon its commitments to including persons with disabilities. This expertise exists within Ireland and overseas and must be inclusive of the voice of women, men, girls and boys with disabilities.

- **Data measuring progress of Irish Aid programme must include persons with disabilities.** Washington Group data sets are the best standardised method available for collecting data on disability. Ireland already uses it for its census and internationally it is being promoted as a means to collect data for Agenda 2030.

Context for Leaving No One Behind – meeting the needs of persons with disabilities

The World Report on Disability calculates that more than a billion people worldwide have some form of impairment, representing around 15% of the global population.iii Over four out of every five people with disabilities live in the developing world which has a higher prevalence of disability impairment than higher income countries.iv International evidence and voices from the international disability movement have highlighted how on average as a group, persons with disabilities are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than persons without disabilities, such as lower outcomes from education, poorer health outcomes, lower levels of employment, and higher poverty rates. The bullet points below highlight the experience of women, men, girls and boys with disabilities across a range of development themes.

- **Responding to basic needs** – Persons with disabilities have less access to basic services than other members of their community. For example, 50.6% of males with a disability have completed primary school, compared with 61.3% of males without a disability. For females with a disability 41.7% have completed primary school compared to 52.9% of females without a disability.v Similar data exists for employment.

- **Poverty** - Households with a disabled member are more likely to experience material hardship – including food insecurity, poor housing, lack of access to safe water and sanitation, and inadequate access to health care.\textsuperscript{vi}

- **Gender equality** – Women and girls with disabilities experience higher rates of gender-based violence, sexual abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation than women and girls
Women and girls with disabilities are three times more likely to experience gender-based violence compared to non-disabled women.\textsuperscript{viii}

- **Climate change** – It is estimated there will be at least 200 million people displaced by climatic events by 2050, of whom at least 30 million are likely to be persons with disabilities. There are many others who will be left behind to struggle for a livelihood in degraded environments.\textsuperscript{ix}

- **Humanitarian response** - Lack of access to early warning systems, transportation, barrier-free housing, public buildings and spaces place persons with disabilities and older people at higher risk with respect to disasters caused by natural hazards and conflicts or by low-severity high-frequency disasters. For instance, research indicates that the mortality rate among persons with disabilities was twice that of the rest of the population during the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami.\textsuperscript{x}

1. **Human rights as core to Ireland’s aid programme**

Ireland’s foreign policy and Irish Aid’s policy recognise the significance of human rights. The Irish government’s commitment to ratify the CRPD must be realised as soon as possible. Once it is ratified, the State will be required to place a greater emphasis on ensuring that the rights of persons with disabilities are promoted through development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. As part of the State’s reporting to the CRPD Expert Committee, Irish Aid will need to provide evidence on the measures it takes to implement Article 32 on International Cooperation and Article 11 which focuses on the safety and protection of women, men, girls and boys with disabilities in humanitarian settings. All nine of Irish Aid’s programme countries have ratified the CRPD.

2. **A quality aid programme needs to be guided by disability inclusive development**

As Ireland continues to operate within limited budgets for its overseas development, it still also needs to respond to growing social injustice and inequality that its taking place in many of the countries Irish Aid supports. The imperative remains for the Irish Aid programme to maximise the effective use of limited resources to focus on those most in need. In this respect, the current excluded and discriminated status of persons with disabilities as highlighted above, must be addressed with our implementing partners, be they governments we work with, INGOs or local NGOs at the frontline of Ireland’s programme. Addressing this exclusion at all levels and with different partners needs the support of local and international technical expertise on disability inclusive development. The newly developed Guidance Note on disability by Irish Aid is an important step towards a coherent approach to ensuring people with disabilities can equally benefit from and participate in programmes funded by our aid programme. While the Guidance Note will provide for greater integration of persons with disabilities in Irish Aid’s policy framework, increased technical expertise, capacity and budget will be required to ensure Irish Aid can actualise its commitment to leaving no one behind.

3. **Data measuring progress of the Irish Aid programme must include persons with disabilities**

The lack of comparable data on disability remains a critical development issue. Without better, more accurate and comparable data on disability it will not be possible to accurately measure development progress and truly ensure no one is left behind. This lack of data often means decisions are made that reinforce existing inequalities, as governments and decision-makers
allocate resources in a way that excludes people with disabilities. The Washington Group Data Set is the best standardised method available for collecting data on disability. Ireland already uses it for its census and internationally it is being promoted as a means to collect data for Agenda 2030.

Inclusion – Evidence Shows It Works

Despite challenges in finding robust evidence on how investment in disability inclusion generates positive outcomes for everyone, there are several good examples and national level studies which indicate that disability inclusive national development plans and policies on health, education, and work and livelihood can trigger economic gains for entire societies. A 2014 report published by London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, supported by CBM presented evidence on how disabilities inclusive strategies can contribute to national development.\(^1\)

- In a study across 13 low- and middle-income countries, households with an adult with a disability were more likely to live in poverty; however, this poverty gap was reduced for each additional year of schooling that the adult with a disability received.
- Studies in the Philippines and Nepal found an even greater impact of education on wages, with estimates of over 20% increases for each additional year of education that children with disabilities completed.
- Estimates on global economic losses from unemployment and lower productivity of men and women with visual impairments ranged from USD $42 – 168 billion annually.
- In Bangladesh, up to USD $891 million has been estimated to be lost from the country’s GDP due to the exclusion of women and men with disabilities from work in 2008 alone.
- In Morocco, a study in 2011 indicated that USD $1.1 billion, or 2% of the country’s GDP, was lost due to lower salaries and levels of employment among persons with disabilities. Men with disabilities living in urban areas accounted for almost half of the reported losses.

Disability Inclusive Development in Practice: Involving persons with disabilities in development and humanitarian response

For CBM, ensuring the voice of women, men, girls and boys with disabilities are included in national and international development processes is key. The disability movement, persons with disabilities and their representative organisations have for many years battled negative perceptions and paternalistic attitudes – with the prevailing view – we know what’s in your best interest. CBM firmly believes that persons with disabilities are their own agents of change and as an organisation this guides our development and humanitarian work. Our work over recent years has seen a shift from traditional top down approach to disability inclusion to one of partnership with the disability community, engaging the expertise of the community. We have a philosophy of ‘on tap, not on top’ which simply means that in our development and humanitarian work persons with disabilities, their knowledge and expertise are a valuable resource to CBM and its partners.

Accessible and Inclusive Emergency Response Saves lives – A case study

Super Typhoon Haiyan - locally known as Yolanda - hit the Philippines in 2013. It caused widespread destruction and chaos, destroying people’s homes, schools and infrastructure.
Following the typhoon, despite the fact that the government prioritised the evacuation of persons with disabilities, there was serious concern over a lack of transportation and difficulties in accessing emergency clinics and healthcare in Tacloban and the surrounding area. Stories from persons with disabilities emerged about how the distance between their home and the evacuation centre was difficult and that without the assistance of others, they would not have made it.\textsuperscript{xii}

CBM through its partners distributed food and survival supplies to 3,000 families in the municipality of Conception, Panay Island. The involvement of persons with disabilities in both the distribution of survival kits and in the planning and development of responses was a key feature of being able to respond to the disaster and in being able to reach those most at risk. A Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) which CBM worked completed a mapping exercise which showed the location of persons with disabilities and their families. Combining forces with international NGOs and local organisations, particularly those who worked with older people, meant that in the immediate aftermath, persons with disabilities and older people could access food, shelter and livelihood opportunities. Aid reached approximately 18,000 people, ensuring that families were independent for a period of two to three weeks.

\textit{CBM Ireland is open to engage further with the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade and Defence in its review of the Irish Aid programme. For additional information and input please contact:}

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\textsuperscript{1} Department of Foreign Affairs Ireland, The Global Island, Ireland’s Foreign Policy for a changing world
\textsuperscript{ii} In particular, we welcome the Ministers remarks made on September 20\textsuperscript{th} that Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. It can magnify existing vulnerabilities among individuals, communities and nations, and people with disabilities are extremely vulnerable to discrimination, physical and sexual abuse and social exclusion. Ireland is committed to addressing the needs of children and other people living with disabilities by continuing and increasing our support to specific initiatives and to ensuring that we mainstream a focus on disability in our relevant programming work."
\textsuperscript{iii} World Report on Disability; Chapter2; Disability, the global picture"(2011).
\textsuperscript{iv} ibid
\textsuperscript{v} WHO 2011, World Report on Disability, Chapter 7, pg. 206
\textsuperscript{vi} CBM 2016, Inclusion counts, chapter 2
\textsuperscript{vii} In his 2006 \textit{In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women}, the Secretary-General observed that surveys conducted in Europe, North America and Australia have shown that over half of women with disabilities have experienced physical abuse, compared to one third of non-disabled women. A/61/122/Add.1, para. 152, citing to Human Rights Watch, “Women and girls with disabilities”, available at: http://hrw.org/women/disabled.html.
\textsuperscript{viii} Astbury and Walji 2013, Triple Jeopardy
\textsuperscript{ix} CBM 2014, Technical brief for the post-2015 consultation process Disability, sustainable development and climate change
\textsuperscript{xii} CBM 2016, Inclusion counts, chapters 3, 4 and 5
\textsuperscript{xii} UNISDR (2013) Haiyan experiences confirm disability survey findings \url{http://www.unisdr.org/archive/35692} retrieved on 21st September 2014