

## **Mobilizing official development assistance (target 17.2)**

Target 17.2 calls on developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, with special targets set for least developing countries. This section will focus on the role of official development assistance in supporting the realization of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by, for and with persons with disabilities.

Official development assistance is one part of international cooperation, which the CRPD fully recognizes as important in supporting national efforts to pursue the objectives of the Convention (article 32). The CRPD also stresses the importance of making international cooperation inclusive and accessible to persons of disabilities and to promote economic assistance, including in facilitating access to assistive technologies.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda committed to scale up international cooperation (i) to allow all children to complete free, equitable, inclusive and quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, (ii) to upgrade education facilities that are disability-sensitive and (iii) to increase the percentage of qualified teachers in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.

Although official development assistance for supporting disability inclusion and the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities has been in place for many years, its monitoring has remained elusive until recently due to the lack of monitoring mechanisms.

As monitoring mechanisms are now in place to provide insights into the role of one type of official development assistance – bilateral aid – on disability inclusion, this section will provide an overview of the current situation and of progress in bilateral aid for disability inclusion and the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and provide recommendations on how to mobilize official development assistance for the realization of the CRPD and of the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities.

## **Current situation and progress so far**

Since 2018, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) started to collect data on development cooperation activities that support the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities.<sup>578</sup> The data are collected yearly, and are part of the regular data collection on development cooperation activities from DAC members and other bilateral countries, multilateral institutions and philanthropic actors in the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System.

Disability-related data is collected through a voluntary policy marker. The marker tracks if, and to what extent, development cooperation activities support the inclusion and empowerment of persons with

disabilities. The marker distinguishes between activities that have disability inclusion as a principal objective (activities that have been specifically developed for this scope) and activities with disability inclusion as a significant objective (activities that have other prime objectives but have been formulated or adjusted to help meet the relevant disability concerns)<sup>579</sup> — see Box 12. The policy marker on disability can be applied to bilateral activities in any sector (excluding administrative costs).

#### **Box 12. Aid for Disability inclusion – definitions**

**Bilateral aid** is provided directly by a donor country to an aid recipient country.

**Multilateral aid** is channelled via an international organization that is active in development (for example, the World Bank or the United Nations Development Programme).

An activity can target disability inclusion as a “principal objective” or a “significant objective”.

**Principal objective** means disability was an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental in its design.

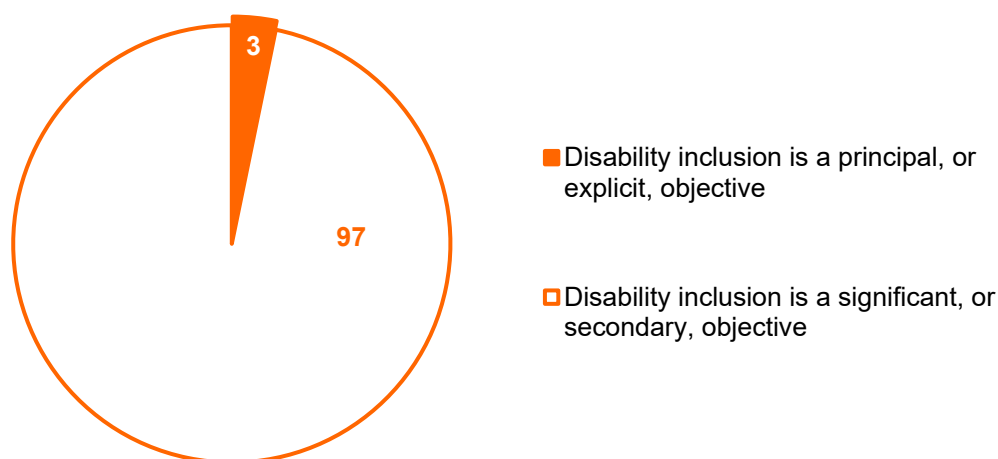
**Significant objective** means disability was an important, but secondary, objective of the activity.

Several countries implemented the policy marker: 24 countries reported disability-related development commitments in 2021. These countries reported 15.6 billion US dollars of bilateral ODA with disability inclusion objectives. In most cases (15.1 billion US dollars, corresponding to 97 per cent of the disability-inclusive ODA), the disability objectives are recorded as *significant* or secondary objectives, while activities with disability as *principal* objectives amounted to 504 million US dollars, corresponding to 3 per cent of the disability-inclusive ODA (Figure 233). This indicates that support to disability inclusion largely consists in mainstreaming disability-inclusion in activities that have other main objectives. These figures are similar to the ones observed for other policy areas of development cooperation. In particular, ODA that supports gender equality, which is also tracked by a policy marker, is also mainly composed (95 per cent) of activities with gender equality as a significant objective.<sup>580</sup>

For several donors, disability objectives are included in a relatively large part of their bilateral aid (Figure 234), the largest being Iceland (44 per cent), the European Union (29 per cent), Japan (29 per cent), Ireland (24 per cent) and the United Kingdom (24 per cent). In total, 17 per cent of bilateral ODA was reported as disability-related in 2021.

Support for disability inclusion is embedded in aid activities in many sectors (Figure 235). The sector with the most disability-related commitments in 2021 was Transport and storage (3.4 billion US dollars), mostly for activities in support of rail transport, followed by Health (2.8 billion US dollars).

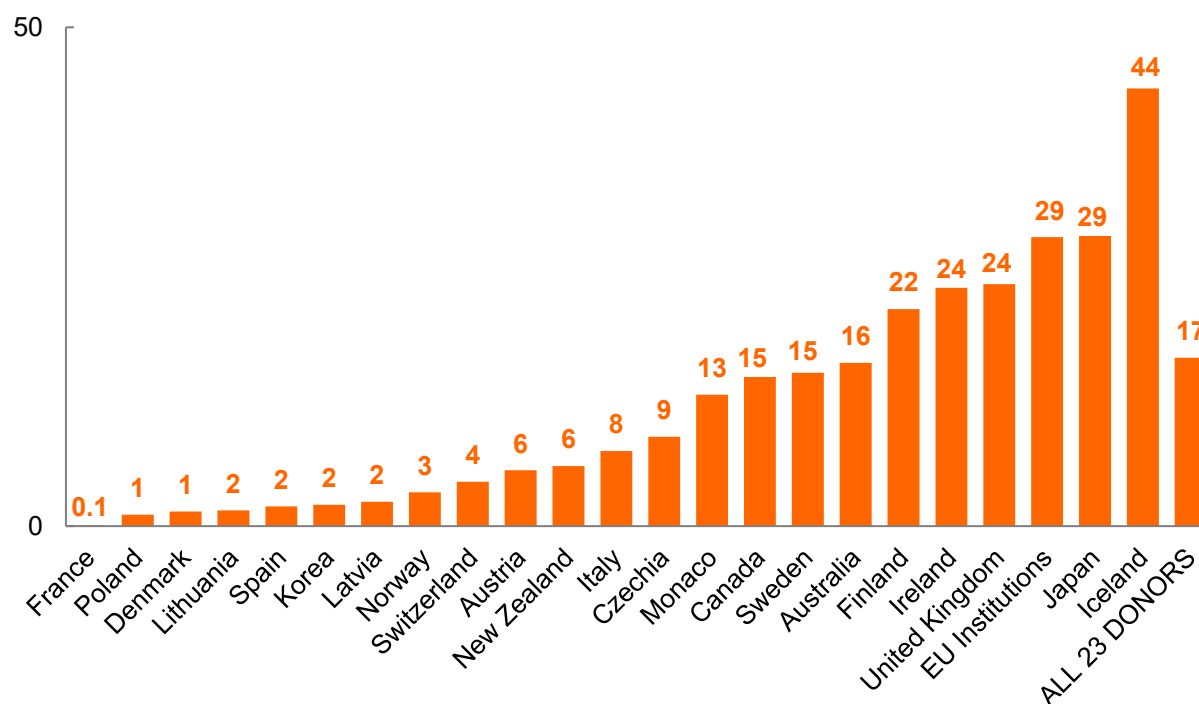
**Figure 233. Percentage of disability-inclusive bilateral aid, for which disability is a main or secondary objective, in 2021.**



*Note: Bilateral aid refers to bilateral official development assistance.*

*Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System.*

**Figure 234. Percentage of bilateral aid that is disability inclusive, for 23 country donors, in 2021.**



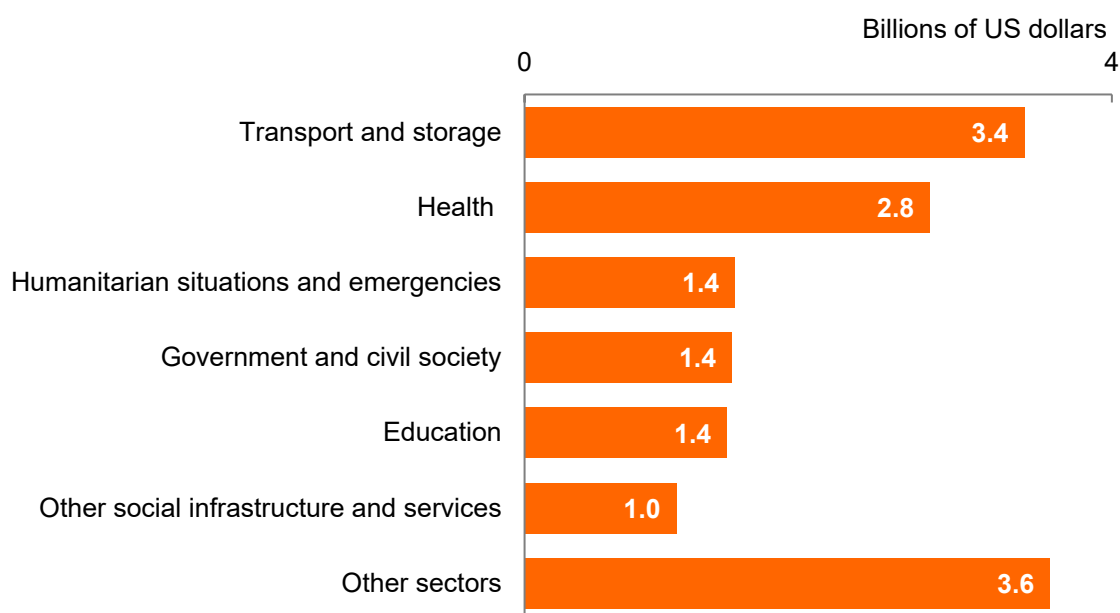
*Note: Bilateral aid refers to bilateral official development assistance.*

*Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System.*

Humanitarian aid (which includes emergency response, reconstruction relief and rehabilitation and disaster prevention and preparedness) is also a focus of disability-related activities (1.5 billion US dollars) as well as government and civil society (1.5 billion US dollars) and education (1.4 billion US dollars).

Looking exclusively at the activities that have disability inclusion as the main objective of the activity, the largest sectors are health (145 million US dollars as of 2021), followed by government and civil society (74 million US dollars) and education (54 million US dollars).

**Figure 235. Disability-inclusive aid, by sector, in 2021.**



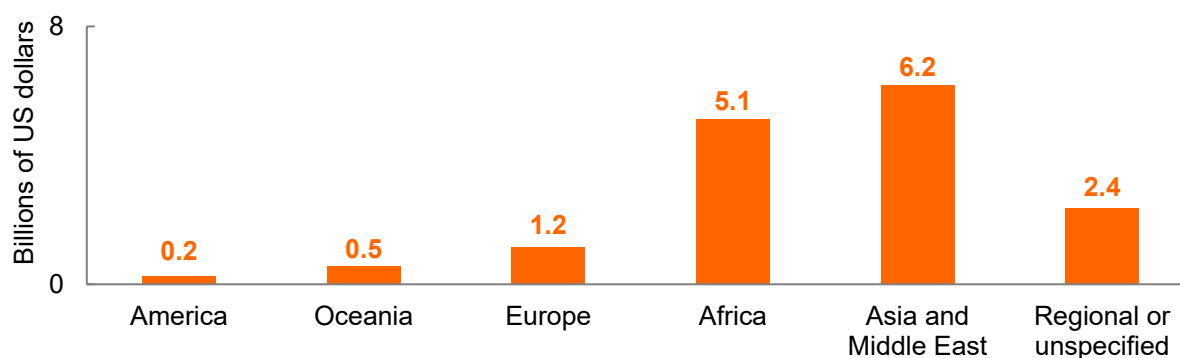
*Note: Aid refers to official development assistance. Amounts shown in current 2021 US dollars.  
Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System.*

Disability inclusive aid focuses mainly on Asia and the Middle East (6.2 billion US dollars in 2021) followed by Africa (5.1 billion US dollars) – Figure 236. The major recipient of disability-inclusive ODA is India (2.3 billion US dollars in 2021), followed by Bangladesh (1.7 billion US dollars), Türkiye (756 million US dollars) and Indonesia (506 million US dollars). The majority of disability-inclusive ODA is focused on few recipients, in fact the commitments to the top 10 recipient countries amount to 67 per cent of the total disability-related ODA committed to individual countries (that is, excluding regional and global programmes).

Data show strong linkages between the activities that support disability inclusion and the activities that support gender equality. In fact, in 2021, over 90 per cent of the disability-related activities are also reported as contributing to gender equality. In particular, 87 per cent of the activities marked significant for disability are also marked significant for gender equality. This shows that development cooperation

activities aim to support the equality, inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities and of women with cross-cutting approaches that include different groups of beneficiaries and their intersectionality.

**Figure 236. Disability inclusive aid, by recipient region, in 2021.**

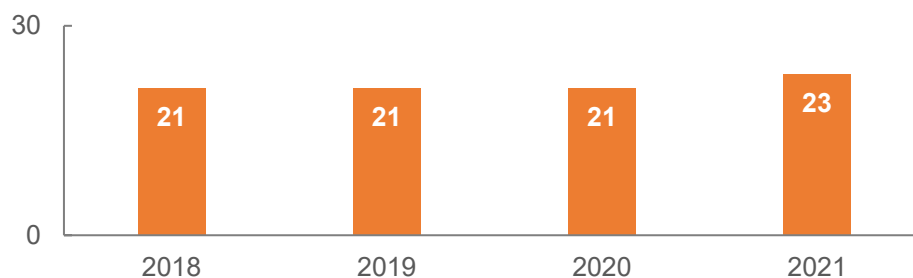


*Note: Aid refers to official development assistance. Amounts shown in current 2021 US dollars.  
Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System.*

Countries have increasingly reported on the disability marker in their bilateral aid (Figure 237). In 2018, the first year of adoption of the disability marker, 21 country donors reported on this marker in their bilateral aid. In 2021, 23 reported.

The disability marker was already picked up by donors other than countries. In 2018-2021, 18 philanthropic foundations reported on the disability marker for their aid, totalling 452 million US dollars<sup>581</sup> to activities with disability inclusion objectives over this four-year period.

**Figure 237. Number of country donors reporting on the disability marker in their bilateral aid, by year, in 2018-2021.**



*Note: Aid refers to official development assistance. The data refer to individual countries and the European Union.  
Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System.*

Apart from monitoring aid for disability inclusion, there have been efforts in recent years to coordinate this aid through the creation in 2015 of the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network, a coordination body of bilateral and multilateral donors and agencies, public and private foundations as well as representative organizations of persons with disabilities.

## Summary of findings and the way forward

The OECD DAC introduced in 2018 a policy marker to track bilateral aid in support of the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities. As of 2021, 23 country donors reported commitments on disability-inclusive bilateral aid. Bilateral aid in support of disability inclusion surpassed 15 billion US dollars in 2021, with 17 per cent of total bilateral aid reported in 2021 including disability inclusion objectives.

In most cases, disability inclusion objectives are being incorporated as the secondary (significant) objectives of activities that have other focus areas, showing that disability inclusion is being mainstreamed in broader bilateral aid activities. Only a small portion of disability-inclusion aid, 3 per cent, includes disability inclusion as the main (principal) objective of the activity.

As disability markers for multilateral aid are largely missing, it is not possible at this point to assess the role of international organizations in providing this assistance. Several philanthropic foundations are already reporting on the disability marker, but there is scope for increasing the reporting from public and private foundations.

The following steps can contribute to ensuring that aid is increasingly disability-inclusive:

**1. Improve data and research on multilateral aid for disability inclusion.** Encourage multilateral organizations to report on a disability marker for their multilateral aid and encourage all donors to report the disability marker in their bilateral aid. Encourage research tracking aid from private entities to create a global mapping of aid for disability inclusion. Undertake evidence-based research on the application of aid versus country needs to identify and address gaps.

**2. Encourage bilateral and multilateral donors to include disability-inclusion objectives across all relevant aid, avoid duplication of aid activities and cover areas where aid activities are lacking, such as disability-inclusive climate action and combating multiple intersecting forms of discrimination.** Encourage donors to invest in areas that need more attention, such as access to basic services for persons with disabilities, like access to water, sanitation and energy. Encourage donors to also invest in areas that can create synergies and be impactful for all, if not most SDGs, like access to assistive technology, including transfer of technology from developed countries to other countries. Some countries tend to receive the bulk of aid, while others urgently needing assistance to implement disability-inclusion activities are struggling to receive assistance. Conducting a comprehensive study on needs versus assistance can identify gaps and duplication.

**3. Encourage focal points from sectors other than disability inclusion to participate in mechanisms of coordination of bilateral and multilateral aid.** These mechanisms have mostly focal points on disability and would benefit from wider cross-sectoral expertise to ensure that aid is effectively allocated, coordinated and used with successful outcomes.

**4. Raise awareness of CRPD among the private sector involved in aid activities and encourage them to build partnerships with implementing partners that follow the CRPD.** Many private sector donors work with organizations that follow a traditional model of disability not in line with the CRPD.

**5. Involve representative organizations of persons with disabilities in the implementation of international cooperation activities.** To ensure an effective implementation of international cooperation activities regarding disability inclusion, donors should ensure that representative organizations of persons with disabilities are consulted and meaningfully engaged from the beginning of these activities and in all stages of implementation.