**Finland’s response to the Special Rapporteurs questions on** disability-inclusive international cooperation

**Questions:**

1. **Please describe how your country’s international cooperation efforts, including international development aid, are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities; and how is funding tracked and reported.**

Finland’s development policy and co-operation is human rights based. Advancing the rights of persons with disabilities is a long-standing priority for Finland. Addressing the discrimination against persons with disabilities is a crosscutting objective and this commitment is implemented by a twin-track approach - a combination of mainstreaming and targeted action. Disability rights and -inclusion has been integrated in all four main Development Policy Priority Areas and into related results framework. In addition, the result framework has one exclusive outcome area for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Addressing discrimination against persons with disabilities as Finland’s cross-cutting objective means that no disability based discrimination is supported and/or further exacerbated with Finland’s funds. This requires, at minimum, that barriers for equal participation by persons with disabilities are being analysed and addressed and potential discrimination against persons with disabilities mitigated. As a minimum accountability measure, disability disaggregated data needs to be collected and used.

Promotion of an intersectional lens to all global gender equality work is a priority for Finland. Disability is also fully integrated into all Finland’s gender equality related objectives and priorities.

The annual targeted funding for the rights of persons with disabilities is around 10 million euros. The most important priority for this funding is to support and strengthen the international disability movement, strengthening the capacity of persons with disabilities as rights holders, and to support the governments’ capacity deliver CRPD-compliant policies, services and development results.

Overall funding for disability is being tracked and monitored by MFA Finland’s disability spending marker as well as by OECD-DAC disability policy marker. Finland was the first country to adopt a disability marker for development cooperation. This marker was primarily created for tracking funding and it was introduced in 2016. Since 2019 Finland has also used the OECD-DAC disability policy marker for its reporting.

Monitoring disability inclusion in development co-operation is further strengthened by the Quality Assurance Board that regularity checks all financing proposals against the HRBA and cross-cutting minimum criteria. The integration of disability in the Finnish Development Policy Priority Areas has also been strengthened significantly by the commitment to support systematic gathering and use of disaggregated (sex, disability) data across all activities, results tracking and reporting.

Finland report its development policy results, including results related to disability inclusion and – rights, to the national parliament every four years. The last report was published in 2018 and the next results report is due in 2022.

Finland also supports many disability-specific development projects and programmes through funding instruments directed to Finnish CSOs and DPOs. The required self-financing for CSOs in disability-specific projects is half of the requirement for non-disability projects.

1. **Please describe how South-South and triangular cooperation support your country’s efforts to implement the rights of persons with disabilities, including by facilitating the exchange of innovative knowledge, skills and successful initiatives.**

Finland has been supporting the capacity strengthening and knowledge exchange of the African Union and its member’s states through an AUDA (African Union Disability Architecture)-programme between 2013-2019. Through this initiative, Finland has been able to provide platforms for south-south cooperation and learning in the area of disability mainstreaming in legislative and policy reforms as an example.

Abilis Foundation and Disability Partnership Finland receive programme support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Both organizations work directly with local DPOs and DPO networks in the South to strengthen the capacity and advocacy to implement the rights of persons with disabilities. The Southern DPOs and their networks communicate actively with each other as well as the Finnish organizations to share best practices and knowledge.

1. **Please describe how your country coordinates, prioritizes and manages aid received from international cooperation in order to ensure that national development programmes are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.**

N/A

1. **Please explain whether the Sustainable Development Goals resulted in increased international development aid benefitting persons with disabilities in your country and how.**

The Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals have strengthened disability inclusion in Finland’s development policy and co-operation. The SDG’s core principle of Leaving No-one Behind, and the requirement for disaggregated data as an example, have both given a strong mandate for a more explicit commitment towards disability inclusion in Finland’s development policy and co-operation. This framework has helped to push some critical changes into the overall policy-level results management and accountability frameworks. It has also helped Finland further prioritize its influencing towards the UN and international development banks. Finland has especially focused on promoting the rights of women and girls with disabilities.

1. **Please describe to what extent and how are persons with disabilities and their organizations involved and consulted in decisions related to international cooperation in your country, and how they can access international cooperation funds and grants (including legal requirements, procedures and challenges).**

The Finnish co-operation funds are available to national DPOS and their southern partners through programme-grants as well as through a sub-grantee arrangement between Abilis Foundation and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The incentive of a lower self-financing percentage also applies to projects of non-DPOs that have a distinct disability component. Many CSOs receiving government support for their development projects also choose to consult and partner with organizations such as Abilis Foundation and Disability Partnership Finland (DPF) when projects specifically include persons with disabilities. Abilis and DPF are two of the largest Finnish DPOs receiving government support for multi-year programmes. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs often collaborates and holds events together with the aforementioned organizations, as well as holds annual discussions regarding the programmes of grantees.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs coordinates a group of Finnish CSOs, DPOS, research institutes and other ministries involved in disability and international development. The purpose of this group is to coordinate between Finnish disability rights actors and organisations, share information and learn and plan mutual policy priorities. The Ministry’s Unit for Human Rights Policy leads this group.

Finland coordinates its efforts also internationally. Most importantly under the Global Action on Disability –network. GLAD members are committed to collectively increasing coordination of their disability-inclusive contributions, learning from each other by sharing knowledge and resources, expanding and diversifying the community partners’ contributing resources to disability-inclusive development and humanitarian action and to strengthening existing partnerships and disability inclusion within existing global initiatives. Under GLAD Finland co-chairs the Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance together with UNICEF.

1. **Please provide any information and statistical data available on disability-inclusive international cooperation in your country, including information related to the challenges and limitations of the international aid system to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.**

Additional information about Finland’s contributions towards disability-inclusive international co-operation can be found here:

Leaving No-one Behind: Finnish Approach to Addressing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Development Co-operation and Policy

<https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/finnish_approach_persons_with_disabilities_in_development_cooperation_pdf_1_mb_20_sivua.pdf/ba6daf5b-2ddb-37f8-1e18-c87a4a2f2e0a?t=1560451164740>

Finland’s Development Policy Results Report 2018:

<https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/UM+KPR+2018+ENG+WEB.pdf/944cf817-9d4a-43ca-07a7-2aebd6053801>