A. Executive Summary

1. There is a growing recognition of the complex nature of development. Policy debate is shifting from a narrow focus on poverty reduction to more equitable and inclusive development approaches, and from a sole focus on aid to a more holistic understanding of how different interventions impact on development processes. In this context, DDG members welcome this inquiry as an opportunity to explore how UK government structures and areas of responsibility need to adapt to this evolving understanding of development.

2. DDG supports the recommendations made by Bond/UKAN, but we are making this separate submission in order to highlight the key importance of addressing disability inclusion in all aspects of UK government policy and practice which impact on international development.

Summary of key points

3. Disability inclusion is an essential component of effective development. Disability was absent from the MDG framework. Progress against the MDGs has left behind those who face the greatest social exclusion – including disabled people.

4. DFID has been a key player in promoting the ‘leave no one behind’ agenda in the post-2015 debate. We also welcome the active steps being taken to implement more consistent and effective inclusion of disability issues and disabled people through its programmes and through influencing other actors. (Disability Framework to be published November 2014)

5. As a signatory to the UNCRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), the UK has an obligation to ensure that all development cooperation is ‘inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities’ (article 32 ‘Disability and Development’).

6. It is important to ensure coherence between departments so that non-ODA programmes and policies which affect development a) support, and b) do not undermine progress on disability inclusion/ addressing disabled people’s needs

7. To ensure policy coherence in regard to disability inclusion it will be essential to identify and understand the impact of UK non-aid development policies on excluded groups (those who have not benefitted from development efforts to date), including disabled people, through monitoring and disaggregation of data

B. Summary of Recommendations

8. DFID should continue as a stand-alone government department in order to ensure that it is effective as an independent voice within UK government championing a focus on the most excluded, including disabled people – no other department prioritises this focus ahead of the UK’s national interest.

9. DFID should play a leading role in developing and modelling good practice on disability inclusion in all aspects of development, and in providing advice and support to other UK government departments on understanding social exclusion as a result of disability and identifying the impact of their work with disabled people.
10. DFID/UK government should continue to play a leading role in the post-2015 negotiations, ensuring that ‘leave no one behind’ is properly reflected in final post-2015 document, and that disability inclusion is an explicit requirement in the implementation of the new framework, with pragmatic measures in place to monitor this.

11. Action should be taken to identify and monitor the impact of non-aid development cooperation on disabled people, and this should be reflected in the UK’s reporting to the Committee of the UNCRPD under Article 32.

12. Measures should be developed and introduced to monitor and analyse the extent to which the work of all UK government departments impacts on the disabled people in the context of development.

C. Bond Disability and Development Group

13. The Bond Disability and Development Group (DDG) brings together UK-based mainstream and disability-specific organisations to ensure that disabled people’s concerns are addressed at the highest level. The member organisations of DDG represent a large body of experience based on direct work with disabled people and the disability movement in developing countries, as well as advocacy and policy engagement with service providers and policymakers. DDG is therefore able to draw on a broad and deep understanding of the barriers faced by disabled people of all ages, the links between disability and poverty, and the importance of including disability issues within the development process.

D. Focus on issues missing from the MDG agenda

14. The Secretary of State for International Development is right in calling for the UK’s future development approach to focus on those issues which were missing from the MDGs. Crucially, the MDGs did not mention disability, nor did they focus on systemic marginalisation and inequality so that, despite achieving the global goal of halving extreme poverty, those who experience greater social exclusion have remained in extreme poverty – and their relative marginalization is more acute.

15. Disabled people, who make up 15% of all populations (WHO/WB), are disproportionately represented among those still trapped in extreme and chronic poverty because of the close links between disability, marginalisation and poverty (WHO/World Bank 2011, Mitra et al 2012). The barriers and discrimination faced by disabled people is compounded when combined with other factors which contribute to social and economic exclusion, such as gender, age, geographical location and ethnicity.

16. Failure to recognize and address the barriers faced by disabled people also has an impact on development at family, community and national level, and there is evidence that the exclusion of disabled people from labour markets has a negative impact on economies in poorer countries (Buckup, ILO Report 2009). This exclusion is often part of a cycle of discrimination and marginalization where disabled children are more likely to be out of school that any other group of children in most low and middle income countries (UNESCO GMR report, 2014).

---

1 In this submission ‘disabled people’ refers to disabled people of all ages, ethnicities and locations, and of both genders. The term reflects the terminology of the UK disability rights movement, but we recognise that in different contexts ‘people with disabilities’ is used, while the UNCRPD refers to ‘persons with disabilities’.
17. Disability was not mentioned in any of the Millennium goals, targets or indicators, but its emergence as a core development issue over the past decade has been rapid as policymakers have increasingly realized the importance of addressing social exclusion – including disability - in order to achieve the MDGs. This trend has also been supported by the introduction of the UNCRPD (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007) which has now been ratified by 147 countries and which has created a legal framework obliging member states to address disability exclusion at all levels. The UNCRPD has also provided a platform for the disability movement and its allies to promote better understanding of disability as a social and human rights issue, and to lobby for changes in policy and practice for improved disability inclusion.

18. The growing recognition of disability inclusion as a core development strategy is reflected in the post-2015 negotiations through the ‘leave no one behind’ agenda, and the UK government has played a leading role in shaping this. The need for mechanisms to translate this aim into practice has been highlighted in key documents including the Secretary General’s report on the post-2015 Development Framework which identifies the importance of disaggregating indicators, including by disability, and states that ‘no target should be considered met unless met for all social groups, including people with disabilities’.

19. Within this context, we welcome the UK government’s active steps over the past 18 months to improve practice on disability inclusion, as reflected by the IDC inquiry on disability and development (report published April 2014) and the government response (June 2014) which commits to a number of institutional changes to improve disability inclusion in all aspects of DFID’s work. A key component of this will be the publication of a Disability Framework (by end November 2014) which will set out DFID’s commitment, approach and actions to strengthening disability in their policy, programme and international work, including maintaining pressure to ensure international commitment to disability inclusion within the final post-2015 development framework.

E. Underlying government mechanisms needed to support any changes

Coherence of policies which affect development

20. We recognise the shifting role of ODA as development challenges change, and as both government and non-government actors increase our collective understanding of the complex and interconnected nature of the development process in the context of globalisation. It is therefore appropriate for the UK government to examine the role and impact of all government departments on international development, to seek greater coherence between these departments, and to review the role of DFID in relation to other departments. During this process, we urge the government to also consider disability inclusion issues as a core aspect of their analysis.

21. While we are encouraged by the progress on disability inclusion within DFID described above (dependent on the details of the forthcoming Disability Framework), it will also be essential for the UK government to identify and explore the impact of other government departments’ work on the lives and opportunities of disabled people. This is important for the following reasons:
1) **Effectiveness:** Development policies and processes are more effective where they are
disability inclusive, as described above in Section C.

2) **Obligation:** In addition to a moral obligation, the UK government is legally obliged, as a
signatory to the UNCRPD (under Article 32 – International Development), to ensure that
all international cooperation is ‘inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.’
In order to meet this obligation, the UK needs to have a clear understanding of whether,
and to what extent, disabled people are included in and benefitting equally from all
aspects of development cooperation. We are concerned that there are currently no
mechanisms to monitor and evidence this – without evidence and analysis on disability
inclusion across all policies which affect development, it will not be possible to ensure
coherence.

22. In relation to this obligation, the recent IDC Inquiry on Disability and Development
recommended that all non-aid ODA should be monitored for impact on DP disabled people
(recommendation no. 35). We note that the government response disagreed with this
recommendation, maintaining that ‘all government departments have to make sure that
ODA spend is within the OECD DAC ODA guidelines – which have the promotion of economic
development and welfare as its main objective (as defined by the OECD DAC) and value for
money.’ The DDG members argue strongly that adherence to OECD DAC ODA guidelines
does not nullify the UK’s obligation to ensure that this spend is ‘inclusive of and accessible to
PWD’. We argue that it is not only possible, but also essential to meet both requirements if
ODA spend is to be effective, as reflected by the Busan declaration on aid effectiveness
which states that effective aid must be inclusive. We therefore recommend that this
decision be reviewed, and that mechanisms be put in place for development cooperation
through all government departments to be monitored to ensure that it is inclusive of and
accessible to disabled people.

*The impact of the UK’s non-aid policies on developing countries*

23. In exploring the impact of the UK’s non-aid policies on developing countries, it will be
important for the UK government to consider disability. We know that change affects
disabled people in different ways from non-disabled people. For example: A report on ‘The
impact of climate change on people with disabilities’ (GPDD & WB, 2009) concluded that,
due to existing inequities and disparities, people with disabilities face a disproportionate
impact due to climate change, and there is growing evidence of the importance of including
disabled people in disaster risk management strategies (‘Disability and Disasters: The
importance of an inclusive approach to vulnerability and social capital’ Sightsavers 2012).
Conflict can have a direct and sudden impact on increasing disability prevalence, while at the
same time intensifying the factors which exclude and disadvantage disabled people: A report
on displaced populations in post-conflict Northern Uganda (‘As if we weren’t human’ Human
Rights Watch 2010) found many disabled women remaining in camps long after others have
returned home because they are physically and economically unable to leave as a result of
their disability.

24. By identifying and monitoring the impact of UK non-aid policies on disabled people in
developing countries, it will be possible to develop and understanding of whether/ to what
extent these policies either support or undermine the progress being made by DFID and other development cooperation in ensuring that disabled people are included in and benefit equally from development interventions. In order to carry out monitoring at this level, it should be possible to follow the principles being developed within the post-2015 framework (which we hope will include disaggregation of data and indicators by disability) and to draw on the mechanisms and approaches being developed by DFID under the forthcoming Disability Framework.

The role of DFID

25. DFID has an ongoing role to play in *influencing the policies of other Whitehall departments.* The recent cooperation between DFID and the Cabinet Office on Post-2015 issues, including DFID policy advisors being placed within the Cabinet Office, has been very effective, and similar collaboration should be developed in future.

26. DFID is well placed to *support other departments by providing advice* on how to identify and address issues of social exclusion, including disability exclusion. DFID has committed to improving staff understanding and skills as a core aspect of the forthcoming Disability Framework, and for other departments to benefit indirectly from this investment would represent good value for money. At country level, for example, FCO staff could benefit directly from training and resources provided within DFID country offices.

27. In the context of a universal post-2015 international development framework, there is a role for DFID to *support domestic departments in fulfilling obligations under the new SDGs.* For example, the DFID Education team currently meet regularly with the Department for Education to discuss their role in relation to the education goals/targets being developed. DFID will be well placed to play a similar role in supporting departments to meet SDG obligations relating to the inclusion of disabled people.

28. We believe strongly that the *continuation of DFID as a stand-alone Department for International Development* represents an essential component of the UK government’s strategy for effective development cooperation, for the following reasons:
   a) DFID is the only department which is judged in terms of impact on the poorest and most excluded, rather than solely on UK national interest. As such, DFID acts as the moral conscience of the UK government’s international engagement.
   b) This clarity of mandate has been an essential element in building the profile of DFID internationally, and this has contributed to the influence that DFID is able to exert with other bilateral donors and at international level as evidenced by DFID/ The UK government’s leading role during the post-2015 negotiations.
   c) In anticipation of new UK government obligations under a universal post-2015 framework, DFID will have more influence with other governments as a stand-alone department than it would have as part of the FCO. As a result, it will be more effective in supporting departments to meet their obligations under the post-2015 SDGs – including any obligations relating to disability inclusion.