

MEDIA RELEASE



21 June 2010

New Report: 15% of the World's Population Have a Disability Call to Lift Funding

The first ever [World Report on Disability](#) will be launched in Australia today by the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

The report, produced by the World Health Organisation and the World Bank, shows that 15% of the world's population live with a disability and face massive challenges. ADDC and ACFID are calling on the Australian Government to lift the amount of Australian aid directed at assisting people with disabilities.

"The Report shows that there are over one billion people living with disabilities, including between 110 and 190 million who experience very significant difficulties," said Christine Walton, Executive Officer of ADDC.

"Given this, Australia needs to increase aid funding to directly assist people with disabilities," she said. "The *World Report on Disability* recommends both specific funding for disability inclusive programs and for mainstreaming inclusion right across aid programs."

"Whilst the Government is committed to doing both, it is difficult to see how just \$8 million a year out of the \$4.8 billion aid program is enough to advance AusAID's disability strategy. There is a need for more funding for the strategy, as well as for mainstreaming across all AusAID programs and monitoring these activities."

"In developing countries, the report highlights some worrying trends. There are more people living with disabilities in poorer countries and this number is expected to grow. Disability is more common among women, older people and households that are poor," Mrs Walton said.

ACFID's Executive Director Marc Purcell said "This report confirms that without greater aid funding for people with a disability, the poorest of the poor will remain excluded."

"Our neighbours in South East Asia have the second highest rate of severe and moderate disability in the world, with the Pacific following close behind. In nearby Tonga, for example, only 6% of people with a disability ever receive assistance," he said.

"AusAID has a world-leading disability strategy, but it really needs the dollars to make a difference."

Antoni Tsaputra, an AusAID scholarship recipient from Padang in Indonesia, told the audience that he was born with a disability, a birth defect that left him unable to move from the hips down.

"Life is challenging for people with disabilities in Indonesia," Antoni said, "There is still scant access and lack of inclusion in public places, let alone in education and employment."

"I am forever grateful to AusAID and Australian Government for giving me opportunity to pursue my Masters Degree in Australia. At university in Indonesia, I used to attend classes on the fourth floor without the help of an elevator. I've got strong and faithful friends who carried me happily with my manual wheelchair up the steep stairways," he said. "I have learned that lack of inclusion is the culprit that creates disability."

The launch will be addressed by Minister for Foreign Affairs Kevin Rudd, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Julie Bishop, and Senior Australian of the Year Professor Ron McCallum AO.

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Christine Walton, Marc Purcell, Antoni Tsaputra and Ron McCallum are available for interview & photo opportunities. Launch today at 12.15-2pm, Senate Alcove, Parliament House

Access the Report at http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/index.html