



Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Steering Committee Meeting Communiqué¹ **5 February 2020 | Washington DC, USA**

The Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Steering Committee met in Washington DC on 5 February 2020, following the fourth meeting of the GLAD Network. The International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) co-chaired the meeting, which reviewed progress since the last Steering Committee meeting on 12 September 2019.

Feedback on the Washington Network meeting

The Communiqué from the Network meeting in Washington, provides a summary of the earlier suggestions and discussion among the Network members, which were noted by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee felt that the meeting had been a success, and the Network was strengthening its coherence and vision.

In terms of taking forward emerging topics, a discussion was had around the potential for developing new working groups. It was decided that this was not generally necessary at this stage, with the exception of climate change if there is sufficient interest from members. Steering Committee members will comment on draft position papers on capacity building and safeguarding in order to agree them as formal GLAD position papers. It was agreed that the conversation on safeguarding would continue to be revisited, and members should share their institutions' policies to help identify common standards and approaches. GLAD should engage with IDDC and other organisations in aiming to identify and develop common practices on what constitutes a reasonable safeguarding response.

More generally, it would be helpful to develop key principles to be mainstreamed across the working groups and meeting sessions, to guide discussions and retain focus on implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It was agreed that bringing in external experts to give keynote speeches on new topics would be beneficial, particularly from organizations of persons with disabilities.

A discussion was had on the issue of increased DPO participation in the Network meetings. There was support for the idea of increased DPO representation from developing countries, with donor and host country DPOs to be included on a case by case basis. It was agreed that DPO representation in each of the thematic groups might be helpful, as well as seeking targeted DPO expertise in accordance with the proposed meeting agenda. The importance of the network meeting still functioning as a meeting of members rather than a conference was

¹ Issued by GLAD co-chairs in consultation with meeting participants.



noted and accepted. The Secretariat will work to propose ideas for formalised DPO participation going forward, ensuring that different impairment groups such as people with psychosocial disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and other most marginalized groups are represented on a rotating basis. It was noted that the budgetary implications of funding DPO participation will need to be considered.

Membership of the GLAD Network

The Steering Committee positively noted the announcement at the Network meeting of the expanding membership, and also welcomed the announcement that Norad would take over as rotating co-chair of the Network from DFID. The increasing capacity of the GLAD Secretariat following the recruitment of a Manager was also welcomed.

In terms of new membership, the GLAD Secretariat has had promising discussions with several states and organisations who have shown interest in GLAD membership, some of whom attended the Washington Network meeting in an observer capacity. A discussion was held on further proposed outreach, with GLAD members sharing ideas and aiming to work together where possible to enhance opportunities for influencing potential new members. The Secretariat will inform the Steering Committee if new membership requests are received.

Next Network and Steering Committee meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held ahead of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) in New York in June, most likely the afternoon of Monday 8 June, to be confirmed by the Secretariat².

A discussion was had on possible side events at COSP, including options for a GLAD side event. It was agreed that a GLAD side event should focus on capacity building, with collaboration from developing country governments. It was noted that members should coordinate on topics for their own side events, and support each other's events where possible, particularly noting the limited space for events this year. The Secretariat will develop a proposal for a GLAD side event, and also compile a list of member-sponsored side events, to be sent around the network.

The GLAD Co-chairs seek volunteers to host the next Network meeting in early 2021, with support from the Co-chairs and strengthened GLAD Secretariat. It was noted that the Steering Committee have previously discussed the option of hosting GLAD meetings in countries where members are working. This idea would still be welcomed, although the budgetary

² Due to the COVID19 outbreak, all meetings in the first half of 2020 might need to be rescheduled or conducted online and the Steering Committee members will be informed on the date of the next meeting in due course.



implications for would have to be considered further as the GLAD Secretariat budget does not currently include meeting costs.

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Participant list

***Denotes GLAD Co-chair*

**Denotes GLAD Steering Committee Member*

^Denotes GLAD Advisor

1. Abilis Foundation*
2. Disability Rights Fund / Disability Rights Advocacy Fund*
3. Government of Australia (DFAT)*
4. Government of Germany (GIZ)*
5. Government of Finland (FORMIN)*
6. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)*
7. Government of Norway (NORAD)*
8. Government of Sweden (SIDA)*
9. Government of the United Kingdom (DFID)**
10. Government of the United States of America (USAID)*
11. International Disability Alliance**
12. International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)^
13. Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
14. Open Society Foundations*
15. UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD)*
16. US State Department*
17. Wellspring Advisors*
18. World Bank*

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