

One in Five Is Not Enough:

Disability Inclusion Still Missing in Climate and Gender Aid



Executive Summary

Catastrophically changing climate; lethal disasters; and pervasive gender inequalities: these can all exacerbate the injustices that persons with disabilities already face. When disasters (including climate disasters) interact with existing inequalities, persons with disabilities can be robbed of adequate healthcare, food, water – and of safety. Meanwhile discrimination, stigma and negative attitude can stop women and girls with disabilities accessing education, livelihoods and health. Yet efforts to reduce disaster risk, and movements to claim climate justice and gender justice, often leave persons with disabilities out. Some forms of climate action even risk making things worse for persons with disabilities.

Every year, Global North governments and multilateral organisations allocate billions (often, tens of billions) of dollars in Official Development Assistance (ODA) for climate, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and gender equality-related purposes. But how far does this ODA take disability inclusion into account?


This briefing looks at self-reported data from the 33 members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC, or DAC for short). In particular, it looks at data on a "marker" that reports whether activities had disability-related objectives. The briefing focuses on 2023, the most recent year with data available. It finds that:¹


Less than
1/5

Less than one in five climate, DRR or gender equality-related activities were reported as disability-related. This is despite the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) requirement that all international cooperation should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities (Article 32).

For the remaining more-than four in five activities, either the activity was not reported as disability-related, or there is no data. This covers a vast range of life-changing or even life-saving activities –


 From a project to increase food security among smallholder farmers in Tanzania.


 Through support to crisis-resilient community water and sanitation services in Haïti.

 To a project focused on ending violence against women and children in Timor-Leste.

Persons with disabilities may have missed out on all of these.

The “one in five” statistic covers all climate, DRR or gender equality-related activities: this includes activities where these themes were significant, but not the main reason why the activity took place. This means the vast majority of aid in these areas is not explicitly inclusive of persons with disabilities.

 The data reveals a systemic issue: **disability inclusion is still seen as an add-on rather than a core component** of effective and rights-based development and climate action.

 We also zoomed in on just those activities where tackling the climate emergency, reducing disaster risk or promoting gender equality was the main objective. For gender equality, this gives a slightly better result – though still far too low: **22% of activities with gender equality as the main objective were also disability-related.**

 But for climate and DRR, this approach gives a worse result. In fact, **less than 10% of activities with climate mitigation or DRR as the main objective were also disability-related.**

In 2019 DAC members reported that an even lower share of climate, DRR or gender equality activities were disability related compared to what was reported in 2023. Data over the five years from 2019 to 2023 is not conclusive, but suggests DAC members may slowly have started paying more attention to disability in their climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities. Based on these trends, **it will take until 2058 for 100% of adaptation-related ODA activities to be disability inclusive.** It will take even longer for gender equality with **the estimate being 2068 before 100% of gender equality-related ODA activities are disability-related.**

Even when activities are disability-related, they very rarely focus on disability inclusion as a **main** objective. In fact in 2023, **only around 1 in every 100 adaptation, mitigation, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities had a main objective on disability inclusion.** Nor does this level seem to have been increasing in the five years since 2019. Yet, as the OECD-DAC’s own guidance recognises, a twin-track approach to disability inclusion is essential, involving both mainstreamed activities, and focused activities where disability inclusion is the main objective. This data would suggest the twin track approach is not being implemented.

The level of disability-related activities varies: levels in some countries, sectors, and spending channels are especially low. For example, in 2023 **in the Philippines, just 2% of DRR-related ODA activities are disability-related.**

The true level of disability-related activities could be even less than what has been reported, as the data may not always be reliable. Within this project, we did not have the resources to do full research on data quality. But the results of our limited investigations are a warning sign that DAC members’ use of the disability marker may not always be accurate. This fits with concerns raised in other research.



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Recommendations

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The findings in this briefing show that urgent action is needed to bring climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA into line with the CRPD.

OECD-DAC members and multilateral organisations that spend ODA funds should:

- 1.** Use the OECD-DAC disability marker to report on all ODA spending.
- 2.** Make all climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA disability inclusive, in line with the CRPD requirement that all international cooperation should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities.

OECD-DAC members should also:

- 3.** Scale up their support for climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA that makes disability inclusion a main objective. Both the number of activities, and the amount of funding, that has disability inclusion as a main objective, should increase substantially.
- 4.** Review the accuracy of disability marker scores before reporting them to the OECD-DAC.
- 5.** Call for the disability marker eligibility criteria to be tightened, to capture more fully what a CRPD-compliant ODA activity should involve.

Content

2 Executive Summary

6 Introduction

6 Aim of this briefing

6 Why this research matters

10 What this briefing does

10 It looks at the overlap between different ODA “markers”

12 Despite its limitations, the disability marker is the best available way to analyse patterns across large numbers of ODA activities

14 Findings

14 Disability is overlooked in the majority of climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities

18 Progress has been much too slow

20 Even when activities are disability-related, they very rarely focus on disability inclusion as a main objective

23 Reported levels of disability-related activities are particularly low in some countries, sectors and spending channels

25 True levels of disability-related activities may be even less than what is reported

27 Conclusions and recommendations

28 Annex 1 – methodology and limitations

28 Quantitative analysis

30 Sample review

33 References

Introduction

Aim of this briefing

When Global North governments fund international cooperation activities linked to the climate emergency, disaster risk reduction, or gender equality, how much do these activities pay attention to disability inclusion?

This briefing aims to investigate the question. It focuses on one important kind of international cooperation – Official Development Assistance (ODA, or “aid”). It uses the latest available data (2023) from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC, or “DAC” for short). It looks at:

- What share of climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related
- Changes over time
- Some detailed questions on what kinds of activities were reported as disability-related.

The main audience for the briefing is policymakers in organisations that report ODA data to the OECD-DAC. This includes both policymakers in Global North governments, and policymakers in multilateral organisations. In addition, we hope the briefing will be helpful to organisations of persons with disabilities, and to all organisations that recognise tackling the climate emergency, reducing risk from disasters, and promoting gender equality are also critical disability rights issues.

Why this research matters

ODA is a key resource

ODA is a crucial resource to help realise the rights and equality of persons with disabilities. While national governments have the main responsibility to budget for the rights of persons with disabilities, ODA can play an important complementary role.² In some countries, a substantial share of total spending on disability (national spending included) is funded by ODA.³

Drastic recent cuts in ODA have had a devastating impact on persons with disabilities.⁴ This grave context makes it even more urgent that every remaining dollar of ODA should be spent in a way that upholds the rights and equality of persons with disabilities. Tracking how ODA is spent on disability-related and disability-focused activities is more critical than ever in the dramatically reduced funding environment. **The DAC data shows that disability inclusion is still not embedded in development assistance — and without robust monitoring through DAC data, we risk missing the gaps and failing to drive the progress that the CRPD demands.**

Addressing the climate emergency, reducing disaster risk, and promoting gender equality are all critical areas for disability-inclusive ODA

ODA can address a wide range of issues that are critical to achieving a fairer and safer future. For example, in 2023 (the most recent year with available data), it was reported that:

- USD 28.1 billion of bilateral⁵ ODA aimed to support adaptation to the climate emergency;
- USD 13.1 billion of bilateral ODA aimed to support disaster risk reduction (DRR);
- USD 61.7 billion of bilateral ODA aimed to promote gender equality.⁶

Tackling the climate emergency, reducing disaster risk, and promoting gender equality are all crucial policy areas for persons with disabilities.

On DRR and tackling the climate emergency. Due to inequalities, persons with disabilities are at higher risk from disasters, including climate-related disasters.⁷ Disasters (including slow-onset disasters like droughts aggravate existing inequalities, making it even harder for persons with disabilities to access healthcare, food, water, and other rights.⁸ Disaster evacuation and response efforts are often inaccessible for persons with disabilities; social protection systems are often not inclusive of persons with disabilities; and persons with disabilities face barriers to participate in disaster risk reduction activities.⁹ Some policies to address the climate emergency risk harming persons with disabilities are, for example if they make essential products unavailable or divert funding.¹⁰ Yet persons with disabilities are under-represented in the climate justice movement,¹¹ and the UN climate agency does not yet recognise an official Disability Constituency.¹²

“Those who can move have already left for places with water and food. It is us who cannot move that have remained.”

Quote from a person with disability in Kenya, reproduced from CBM Global, 2023, [The impact of climate change, from people with disabilities in the places we work](#)

“People with disabilities face many dangers due to the lack of shelters for people with disabilities in our vicinity. [...] The cyclone centre [is] too far away and there are no facilities for people with disabilities to enter and there are no suitable bathroom facilities.”

Quote from a person with a disability in Bangladesh, reproduced from CBM Global, 2022, [Missing in climate action: stories of persons with disabilities from the Global South](#)

“Last year, there was a huge flood in the Sylhet region... and more funding is required for that area to rebuild. So that means some fund cut will happen. And of course, disability is a more ignored issue and if something is cut, then it will cut from the disability”

Quote from a disability activist in Bangladesh, reproduced from CBM UK, 2023,
[Climate change and disability rights : does the climate crisis impact implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) ? A 3-country study](#)



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On gender equality. Women and girls with disabilities may face even greater inequalities compared to women and girls without disabilities or compared to men with disabilities.¹³ Due to discrimination, stigma and negative attitude, it can be very difficult for women and girls with disabilities to access education, livelihoods, healthcare (including sexual and reproductive healthcare).¹⁴ Despite the extreme inequalities they face, women and girls with disabilities tend to be under-represented in both the gender justice and the disability movements.¹⁵ Meanwhile the limited available evidence suggests that non-gender conforming persons with disabilities face severe double and intersecting discrimination, to the extent that they are mainly invisible in data.¹⁶

Since the climate emergency, DRR and gender equality are such fundamental issues for persons with disabilities, it is essential that ODA devoted to these issues should be disability-inclusive. But how far is this actually the case?

What this briefing does

It looks at the overlap between different ODA “markers”

This briefing looks at key data on disability inclusion in ODA for climate, DRR and gender equality. To do this, it uses the OECD-DAC’s system of “markers”. Markers record whether an ODA activity aims to promote a particular policy objective, such as disability inclusion, or gender equality. They do this using a three-point scoring system. **Box 1** gives an example using the OECD-DAC’s marker for the empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities (the “disability marker” for short). **Box 2** explains the terms we have used to refer to different combinations of marker scores.

Box 1: how the OECD-DAC marker scoring system works – example

The following example (using the disability marker) shows how the OECD-DAC’s 3-point marker scoring system works.

- **Score 2** means that inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities is the principal objective of the activity.
- **Score 1** means that inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities is a significant objective of the activity.
- **Score 0** means that the activity does not target disability inclusion in any significant way
- **“Blank”** means that the marker has not been used for this activity.

Source: adapted from CBM Global, 2024, [Tracking aid for persons with disabilities: why the OECD-DAC disability marker can be a powerful advocacy tool for organisations of persons with disabilities – and recommendations on how to make it even more effective](#), p.9. For details of the full definitions and eligibility criteria currently used for marker scoring as at August 2025, see pages 10 and 11 of OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020) 48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#). Details of the full definitions and eligibility criteria for other markers are available in OECD-DAC, 2025, DCD/DAC(2024)40/ADD2/FINAL, [Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System \(CRS\) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire](#), Annexes 19 and 20 ; and OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDER-NET), 2016, [Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker](#).

Box 2: terms used in this briefing

To keep things as simple as possible, we use the following terms to refer to the different combinations of marker scores that we analyse. The example below is for disability, but we use the same approach for the other markers that we study too.

Disability-related → This includes all activities that scored either 1 (significant objective) or 2 (principal objective) on the disability marker.

Disability-focused → This includes only those activities that scored 2 (principal objective) on the disability marker.

The OECD-DAC currently uses 11 markers, covering 11 different policy objectives. Every ODA activity recorded in the OECD-DAC's database can be given a score for each of the 11 markers. This makes it possible not only to look at individual markers such as disability inclusion on their own, but also to look at how different markers overlap. For example, **we can look at how many activities with objectives on climate adaptation also had objectives on disability inclusion, or how many activities with objectives on DRR also had objectives on disability inclusion** – and so on.

ODA across **all** markers should be disability-inclusive, but for this briefing we focus **on five markers that link particularly closely to CBMG's current work.** These are:

- Three markers relating to the climate emergency:
 - ODA targeting the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement: climate change adaptation (the "adaptation marker" for short)
 - ODA targeting the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement: climate change mitigation (the "mitigation marker" for short)
 - ODA targeting the objectives of the Convention to Combat Desertification (the "desertification marker" for short)¹⁷
- The marker for ODA targeting the objectives of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (the "DRR marker" for short)
- The gender equality marker (the "gender marker" for short).

Throughout our analysis, we look at the number of ODA activities with a given marker score, rather than looking at the value of ODA spending. This is to avoid the risk that a small number of high-value activities could skew the results.

For full details of how the analysis was done, please see the methodology in Annex 1.

The briefing aims to complement other recent work by CBM Global and by Sightsavers. **Box 3** gives more details.

Box 3: links to other recent work

The briefing builds on research published by CBM Global in 2024, which was led by Anne Sofie Hagen Herskind from Disabled People's Organisations Denmark.¹⁸ Like this briefing, the research looked at the overlap between the OECD-DAC's different markers. This briefing updates the previous research with the latest data on the five chosen markers.¹⁹ It also digs further into the data to understand a little more about the kinds of climate, DRR and gender equality-related activities that were, and were not, reported to have objectives on disability inclusion.

This briefing also aims to complement Sightsavers' OECD-DAC Dashboard and accompanying analysis.²⁰ Among other topics, Sightsavers' dashboard presents detailed analysis on the gender marker and its overlap with the disability marker. This covers each OECD-DAC member country, in every year since the marker was introduced. Meanwhile this briefing looks at the gender marker alongside other markers on the climate emergency and on DRR. Its analysis on the gender marker focuses on a few specific questions, in particular the overlap between activities where gender equality and/or disability inclusion was reported to be the main objective. The briefing also digs down into more detailed project records for a small sample of activities that were reported to promote gender equality and disability inclusion.

Despite its limitations, the disability marker is the best available way to analyse patterns across large numbers of ODA activities

While the OECD-DAC's marker data is a very useful source, it has some limitations. These include:

- Some Global North governments and other organisations do not yet use the disability marker. In 2023, no **multilateral** organisations used the disability marker, except for the European Union (EU). Because of the lack of data on most multilateral organisations, we have focused our analysis on the 33 members of the OECD-DAC ("DAC members" for short): this comprises 32 Global North country governments, plus the EU.²¹ The lack of data on most multilateral organisations is an important gap, and we hope other multilateral organisations will follow the EU's example in future.²²
- Global North governments **self-report** marker data to the OECD-DAC. There is a risk that not all these governments interpret the marker eligibility criteria in exactly the same way. We cannot assume that the data from different governments is completely accurate or comparable unless we confirm it against more detailed information on the ODA activities that are being reported. We look into the question of data quality in a little more detail later in the briefing.



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- The OECD-DAC's **definition** for the disability marker covers important points, but it does not capture everything that we would expect to see in an ODA activity that complies fully with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). For example, the current definition allows projects to be reported as disability-related even if they do not actively involve organisations of persons with disabilities.²³ The OECD-DAC is currently refining its definition for the marker: we hope this will make the disability marker an even more useful tool for CRPD monitoring in the future.

The limitations of our analysis are discussed in more detail in Annex 1.

Despite these limitations, the disability marker is the best available way to analyse patterns in disability inclusion across large numbers of ODA activities. **The fact that the disability marker can be combined with other markers also makes it a valuable tool to explore the overlaps between different policy priorities.** While the limitations should be kept in mind, the OECD-DAC's markers can still give important clues on how far Global North governments are seeking to include persons with disabilities in their climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA.

Findings

Disability is overlooked in the majority of climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities

First, we looked at all climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities

We began our analysis by looking at the number of ODA activities in the overlap between disability inclusion and each of the five markers, which included 3 climate, 1 DRR and 1 gender marker, selected for this study.

In 2023, less than one in five of the DAC members' climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related

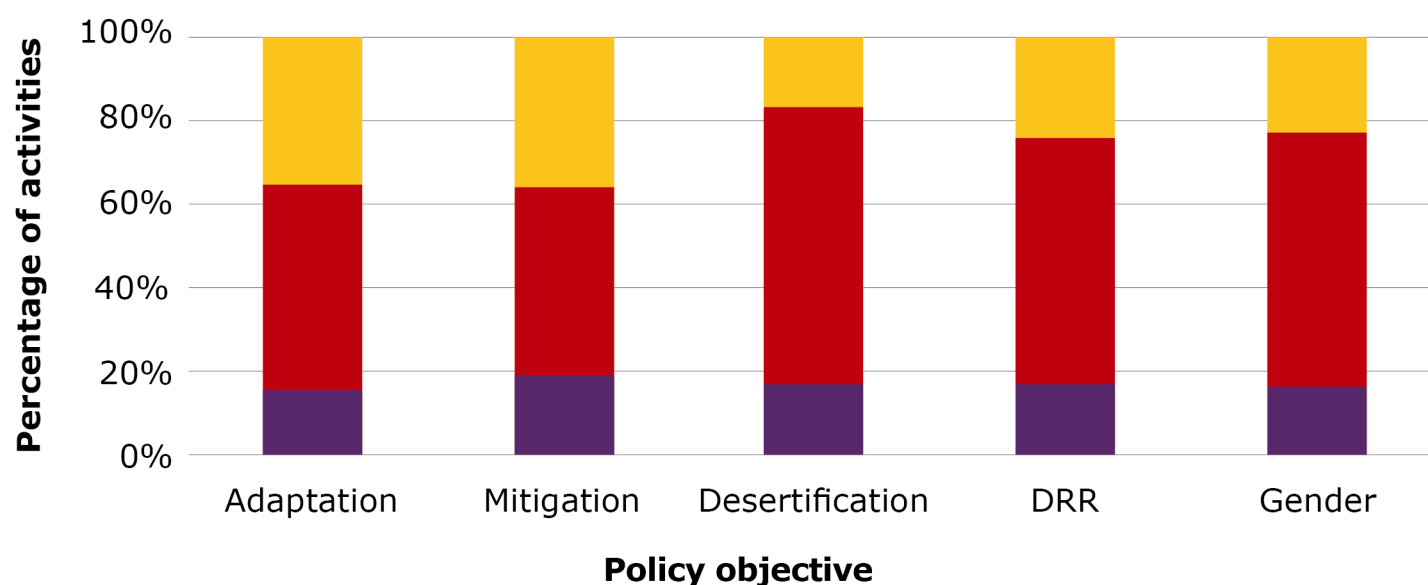
We found that in 2023, for each of the five markers, **less than 20%** of DAC members' ODA activities²⁴ were reported to be disability-related (**Chart 1**). In more detail:

- 16% of adaptation-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related.
- 19% of mitigation-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related.
- 17% of desertification-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related.
- 17% of DRR-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related.
- 17% of gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-related.

For the remaining **more-than 80%** of ODA activities, either the activity did not target disability inclusion in any significant way (marker score 0), or there is no data (marker score blank – this applied to a minority of activities).²⁵

This is an alarming result.²⁶ According to the OECD-DAC's guidance, if an activity scores 0 on the disability marker, disability is only a "marginal component" of the activity, or is not considered at all.²⁷ The activity has not mainstreamed disability²⁸ – in other words, it has not taken full steps to ensure persons with disabilities are included. Yet the CRPD requires that all international cooperation activities should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities.²⁹ **The fact that, for over 80% of ODA activities in the crucial areas of climate, DRR and gender, either persons with disabilities were not included, or there is no data, is a serious gap.** Box 4 gives examples of activities that were not reported as disability-related. Each of these activities could have life-changing (sometimes life-saving) impacts for persons with disabilities. The fact that these activities were not reported as disability-related raises worrying questions about how far persons with disabilities may have missed out.

Chart 1: reported share of disability-related activities across DAC members' climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA activities in 2023



■ Disability related (Score 1 or 2) ■ Not disability related (Score 0) ■ Not marked (blank)

Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. Adaptation activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the adaptation marker, mitigation activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the mitigation marker, and so on. The analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.

Box 4: examples of activities that were not reported to be disability-related

Adaptation

- A USD 19 million project to increase food security among smallholder farmers in Tanzania (reported by Norway)
- A USD 4 million project in Latin America to support women and youth from indigenous and Afrodescendant peoples to take part in advocacy on climate justice, loss and damage (reported by Sweden)

Mitigation

- A USD 249 million project to build a new mass public transport system in Ho Chi Minh City (reported by Japan)
- A USD 43 million project to increase forest cover and create forestry jobs in Uganda (reported by the European Union)

Desertification

- A USD 3 million project to strengthen communities' resilience to climate shocks in Ethiopia (reported by Austria)

DRR

- A USD 4 million project to support crisis-resilient community water and sanitation services in Haïti (reported by Switzerland)

Gender equality

- A USD 11 million maternal and child health project in South Sudan (reported by the UK)
- A USD 6 million project focused on ending violence against women and children in Timor-Leste (reported by Australia)

Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. All values are stated in 2023 USD.

Since the CRPD requires that all international cooperation activities should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities, in general **100%** of ODA activities should be reported as disability-related using the disability marker. There may be one small complication to this (explained in **Box 5**), but it is a minor one. **The fact that across climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA activities, not even 20% of activities were reported as disability-related, shows just how far DAC members have to go to fill the gap.**

Box 5: an unanswered question on ODA activities that do not target individual people

Some people argue there are a few kinds of ODA activities that do not target individual people. A possible example might be a survey on biodiversity. They argue that if activities do not target individual people at all, then they cannot be expected to target persons with disabilities. In these kinds of activities, they ask, would a disability marker score of 0 really be a problem?³⁰

In this briefing, we do not try to answer this question. To answer the question fully, we would need detailed information on individual activities – including information from organisations of persons with disabilities in the countries where the activities took place. We would also need advice from experts on the legal requirements in CRPD Article 32.

Although we do not try to answer the question, we do want to express some caution. It can be easy to assume that activities do not have any distinct impact on different individual people. But when activities are examined more closely, this is not always the case.

Take the example of an activity that involves building a new electricity substation. At first sight, the substation does not target individual people directly (other than a small number of electrical engineers). However, this could depend on the details of how the activity is designed. Suppose a private electricity company is involved in building and running the substation. Suppose this company negotiates with the DAC member over how much funding is needed. And suppose that in order to do this negotiation, the electricity company works out the price it expects to charge customers for its electricity in the future. But what about the barriers that can make electricity prices unaffordable³¹ for persons with disabilities (and other people experiencing inequalities)?³² If the negotiations do not take these barriers into account, the activity does risk having unequal outcomes for different individuals after all.

This is a simplified example. And it is just part of a much wider discussion about how to ensure people who experience inequalities can access affordable energy.³³ But it illustrates how even when activities appear at first not to be targeting individuals, in fact there can still be important disability-related questions to consider.

Source: personal correspondence.

Next, we zoomed in on climate, DRR and gender equality-focused ODA activities

Our analysis above looked at **all** climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA. But we also zoomed in to **look just at ODA activities where climate, DRR or gender equality objectives were the main objective**. In other words, we removed activities where climate, DRR or gender equality objectives were significant objectives, but not the main reason why the activity took place. This left us only with activities where climate, DRR or gender equality objectives were the main focus of the activity. (For short we will refer to these activities as “adaptation-focused”, “mitigation-focused”, “desertification-focused”, “DRR-focused” and “gender equality-focused”). For example, we took all the activities that were reported as DRR-focused activities (DRR marker score 2). We then analysed how far these activities also aimed to include persons with disabilities (disability marker score 1 or 2).

Zooming in on climate, DRR and gender equality-focused ODA activities is important because it helps us to learn more about whether DAC members are putting disability inclusion at the heart of their strategies on climate, DRR and gender equality. If DAC members are not aiming to include persons with disabilities in activities where climate, DRR and gender objectives are the main focus, this suggests they have not really recognised the importance of these issues for persons with disabilities.

In 2023, the bulk of DAC members’ climate, DRR and gender-focused ODA activities were not reported as disability-related – and for climate mitigation and DRR-focused activities, the share was less than 10%

Our results (**Chart 2**) were mixed.

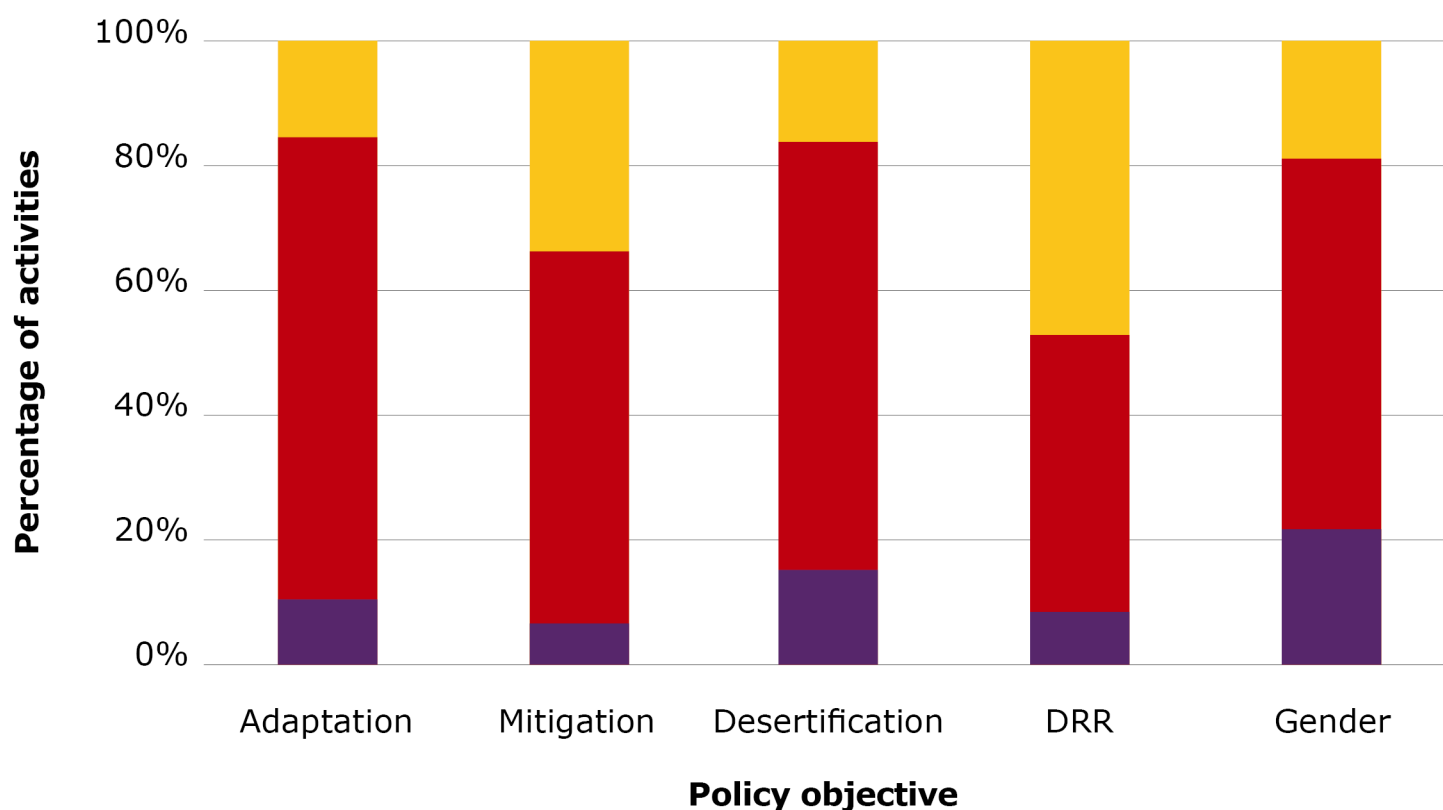
On the one hand, we found that, in 2023, 22% of gender equality-focused ODA activities³⁴ were reported as disability-related. This is slightly higher than the share of disability-related activities reported across all gender equality-related ODA activities (17%). This is perhaps not surprising. If DAC members are already focused on promoting gender equality in an activity, it makes sense that they may pay more attention to equality issues affecting other overlapping population groups. However, **the result still means that 78% of gender equality-focused ODA activities were not reported as disability-related.** As discussed above, this is far from meeting the CRPD requirement that all ODA should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities.³⁵

On the other hand, we found that, in 2023:

- 11% of adaptation-focused ODA activities were reported as disability-related
- 7% of mitigation-focused ODA activities were reported as disability-related
- 15% of desertification-focused ODA activities were reported as disability-related
- 9% of DRR-focused ODA activities were reported as disability-related

These results are all **lower** than the share of disability-related activities reported across **all** climate and DRR-related ODA activities.³⁶ **This is worrying, as it suggests that when DAC members really focus on climate and DRR objectives, disability inclusion tends to become less of a priority.**

Chart 2: reported share of disability-related activities across DAC members' climate, DRR and gender equality-focused ODA activities in 2023



■ Disability related (Score 1 or 2) ■ Not disability related (Score 0) ■ Not marked (blank)

Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. Adaptation-focused activities are those that scored 2 on the adaptation marker, mitigation activities are those that scored 2 on the mitigation marker, and so on. The analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.

Progress has been much too slow

The disability marker was introduced in 2018. For this research, we looked at the data for the five years from 2019-2023.³⁷

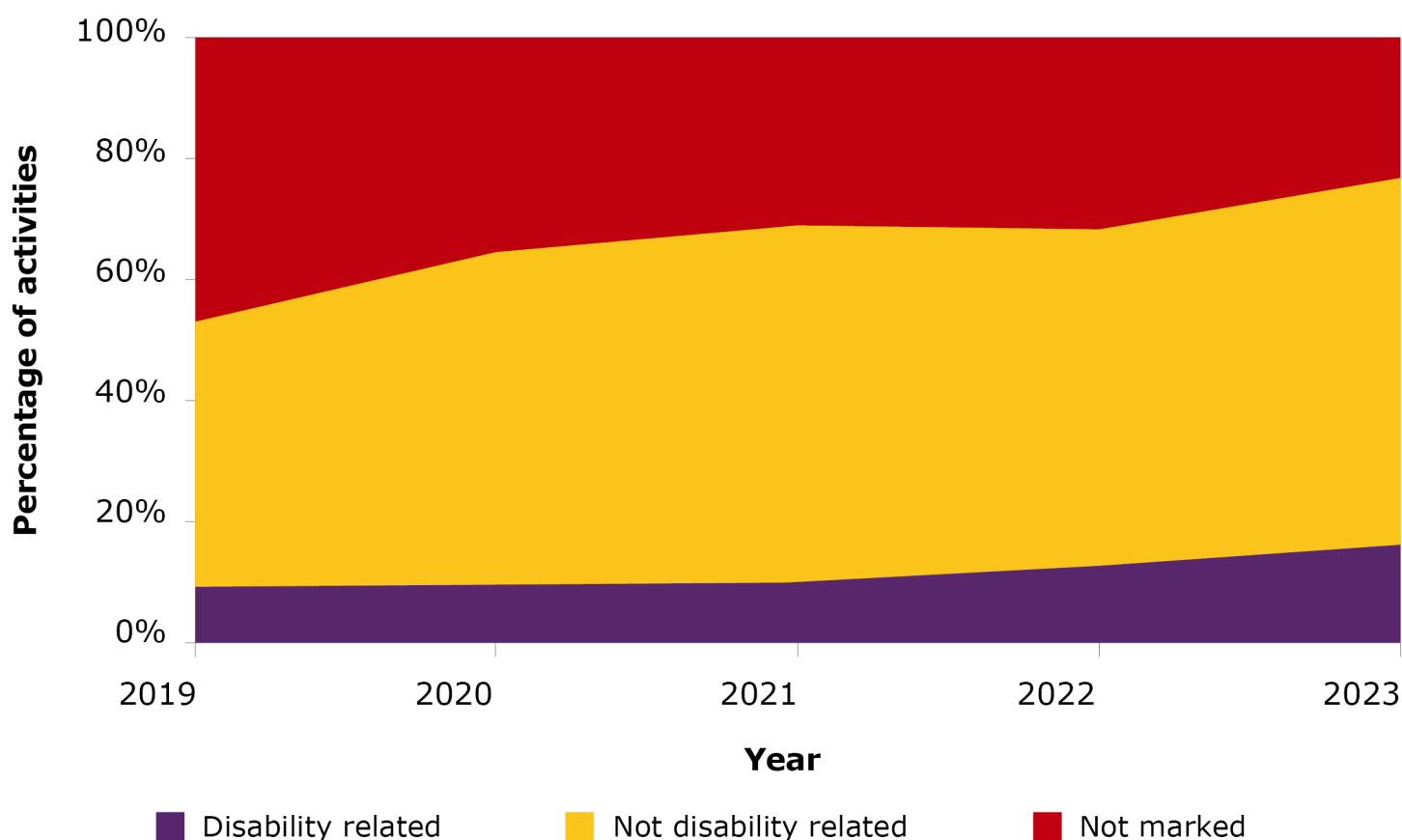
Across each of the five climate, DRR or gender markers that we studied, a higher share of disability-related ODA activities³⁸ was reported in 2023 than in 2019. This is true both when we look at all climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA activities, and when we zoom in on climate, DRR and gender equality-**focused** ODA activities. For example, as Chart 1 shows, in 2023, DAC members reported that 17% of their gender-related ODA activities were also disability-related. This is up from 9% in 2019.

For some markers – particularly gender – there seems to be a small but steady upwards trend over the five years.³⁹ However, for many of the other markers, the picture is more fluctuating. This is especially true when we consider the data on climate or DRR-**focused** activities as well as those that were climate or DRR-related. This makes it hard to be sure whether the higher levels of disability-related ODA activities in 2023 are a sign that DAC members are starting to do more to fill the gap in disability-related ODA activities – or whether they are just a one-off.

Even if the results from 2019 to 2023 are the start of an upwards trend, progress so far has been much too slow. Much more urgent action is needed to fill the gap in disability-related ODA. Using gender equality-related ODA activities as an example, Chart 3 shows the changes that took place from 2019 to 2023, and the gap that still needs to be filled.

If the share of disability-related activities in climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA continues to increase by the same number of percentage points per year as it did on average in the period 2019-2023, then it would take decades before ODA activities in these areas were reported to be fully disability-related. For example, it would take **until 2058, i.e. 33 years from now**, until 100% of adaptation-related ODA activities were disability-related. And it would take **until 2068, i.e. 43 years from now**, before 100% of gender equality-related ODA activities were disability-related.

Chart 3: reported share of disability-related activities across DAC members' gender equality-related ODA activities, from 2019 to 2023



Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. Gender equality-related activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the gender marker. The analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.



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Even when activities are disability-related, they very rarely focus on disability inclusion as a main objective

To achieve full equality and inclusion, dedicated disability-focused activities are needed

As well as looking at the total number of ODA activities reported as disability-related, we also examined the number of ODA activities where disability inclusion was reported to be a principal objective (“disability-focused” activities, for short).

While all kinds of disability-related activities are vital, activities with a principal objective on disability have a special role to play. As a recent report by the European Disability Forum put it,

“Significant objective and principal objective projects are both essential. At their best, significant objective projects ensure that persons with disabilities participate fully in, and benefit equally from, projects that target a wider population. This is crucial for promoting inclusion and equality. But principal objective projects are also vital. Without them, there is a risk that the specific priorities of persons with disabilities will be overlooked, and the specific barriers that prevent persons with disabilities fully enjoying their rights will not be adequately tackled.”⁴⁰

The idea that mainstreaming disability is not enough, and that disability-focused activities are also indispensable, is at the heart of the “twin-track” approach to disability inclusion – which the OECD-DAC’s own guidance on the disability marker supports.⁴¹

Box 6 gives examples of ODA activities that were reported to be disability-focused, to illustrate the key role these can play. The examples in Box 6 come from across all ODA – not just climate, DRR or gender equality-related ODA. This is to show a broader range of the ways in which disability-focused activities can add value.

Box 6: examples of disability-focused ODA activities

Examples from climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA activities

- A project that trains persons with disabilities in Mozambique to offer renewable energy services, as a way to increase their incomes (reported by Norway)
- A project to support Paraguayan women with disabilities to claim their rights (reported by Spain)
- Support to the International Disability Alliance, including its work on the rights of women with disabilities (reported by Sweden)

Examples from other ODA activities

- Supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Lebanon to provide inclusive education to Palestinian refugees with disabilities, and to increase its capacity in disability-inclusive programming (reported by Italy)
- Supporting the World Food Programme to develop its disability inclusion activities (reported by Finland)
- A project in Somalia, supporting organisations of persons with disabilities to advocate for inclusive education, and supporting the government to develop its inclusive education work (reported by Norway)
- Support for a disability-awareness TV series in Mozambique (reported by Ireland)
- Participatory research on how to improve access to healthcare for persons with disabilities in Uganda (reported by the UK)

Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. Please note that due to the limited detail in the database, it was not possible to review the design of these activities in depth.

In 2023, only around 1 in every 100 adaptation, mitigation, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities had a main objective on disability inclusion

For this analysis, we started by taking all the ODA activities that DAC members had reported as related to one of the five thematic markers on climate, DRR or gender. For example, we took all the ODA activities that DAC members had given a gender marker score of 1 or 2. We then analysed how many of these activities were reported as disability-focused. For example, out of activities given a gender marker score 1 or 2, how many had also been given a disability marker score 2? ⁴²

Looking at the five thematic markers in our study, in 2023, for four of the markers, DAC members reported **less than 1.2%** of their ODA activities as disability-focused.⁴³ In more detail:

- 0.6% of adaptation-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused
- 0.8% of mitigation-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused
- 1.0% of DRR-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused
- 1.1% of gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused

The one exception is desertification, where the result was a little higher, at 2.5% of ODA activities. However, this is based on a relatively low total number of desertification-related activities, so the result should be treated with some caution.

The results are so low that they would not show up if we plotted them on a graph (unless we zoomed in on a very small part of the scale). Instead, **Box 7** summarises some of the key results in infographic format.

Like most of the analysis in this briefing, the analysis above focuses on the number of ODA activities with objectives on disability inclusion.⁴⁴ But if we look at the **value** of ODA spending that was reported to be disability-focused, we find the results are even lower still. In more detail:

- Only 0.1% of adaptation-related ODA spending was reported as disability-focused
- Only 0.1% of mitigation-related ODA spending was reported as disability-focused
- Only 0.3% of desertification-related ODA spending was reported as disability-focused
- Only 0.02% of DRR-related ODA spending was reported as disability-focused
- Only 0.2% of gender equality-related ODA spending was reported as disability-focused

It is very doubtful that DAC members can do enough to address disability-specific priorities in climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA until they substantially increase their support for disability-focused activities.⁴⁵

Box 7: In 2023, only around 1 in every 100 adaptation, DRR or gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused

- **0.6%** of adaptation-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused
- **1.0%** of DRR-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused
- **1.1%** of gender equality-related ODA activities were reported to be disability-focused

Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. Adaptation-related activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the adaptation marker (and so on). The analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.

There is little sign that DAC members' support for disability-focused activities has increased since 2019

We also looked at how the share of reported disability-focused ODA activities had changed over time. Overall, we found that, since 2019, **the situation does not seem to be improving.**

The data needs to be interpreted with caution, as the overall number of disability-focused activities is so low. But looking across most of the thematic areas that we studied, it appears the reported share of disability-focused ODA activities has fluctuated throughout the period 2019-2023, without clearly increasing.⁴⁶ Moreover, in the case of gender equality-related ODA, the reported share of disability-focused activities seems to have decreased slightly between 2019 and 2023.

This lack of progress is worrying. It suggests DAC members may not be fully aware of the crucial role that disability-focused activities play in making climate, DRR and gender focused ODA more inclusive and equitable.

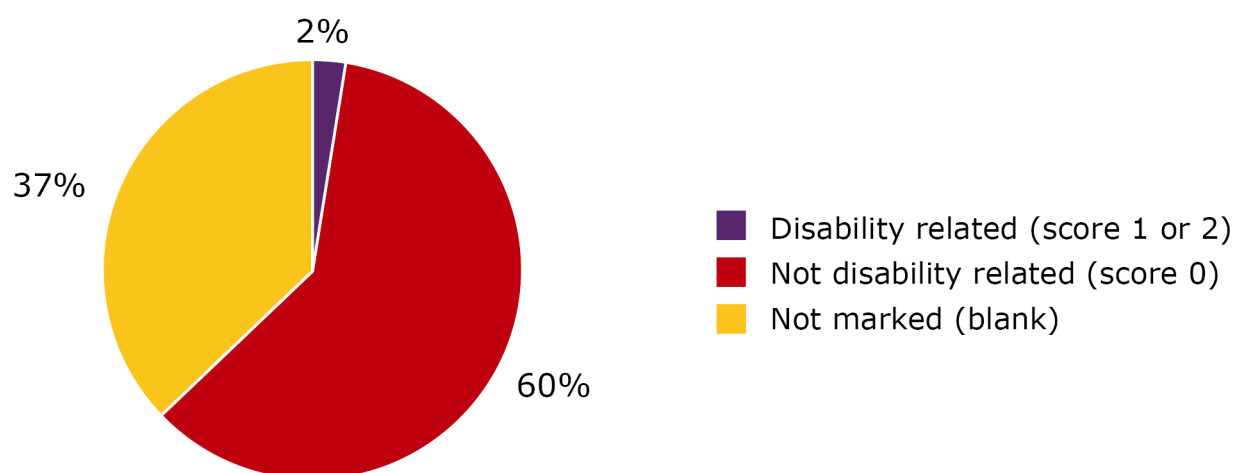
Reported levels of disability-related activities are particularly low in some countries, sectors and spending channels

Reported levels of disability-related activities varies substantially. The levels in some countries, sectors and spending channels are particularly low. For example in 2023 (as shown in **Chart 4**:

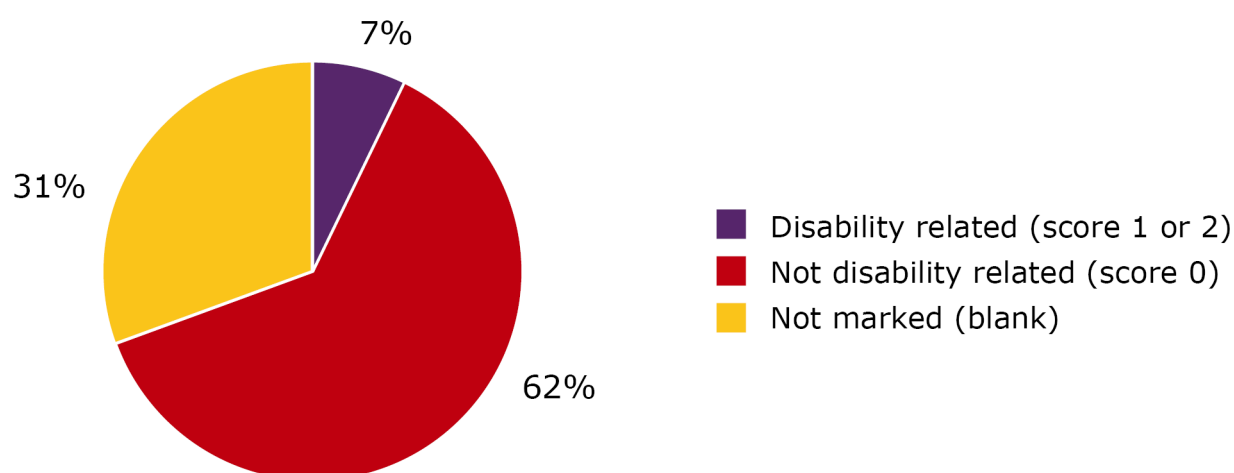
- In the Philippines, **just 2% of DRR-related ODA activities** were reported as disability-related.⁴⁷ This is especially alarming considering that the Philippines is the top-ranked country in the World Risk Index.⁴⁸
- Only **7% of adaptation-related ODA activities in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors** were reported as disability-related. Yet agriculture is a vital source of livelihood for a large and growing number of persons with disabilities.⁴⁹
- Only **5% of gender equality-related ODA activities channelled through private sector institutions** were reported as disability-related. This may partly be because DAC members only used the disability marker for a small share of these activities. This lack of transparency is worrying, since private sector institutions were a substantial channel for gender equality-related ODA. They accounted for around 8% of all gender-equality related ODA, equivalent to around 7 billion USD.⁵⁰

Chart 4: reported levels of disability-related activities in climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA: selected countries, sectors and channels

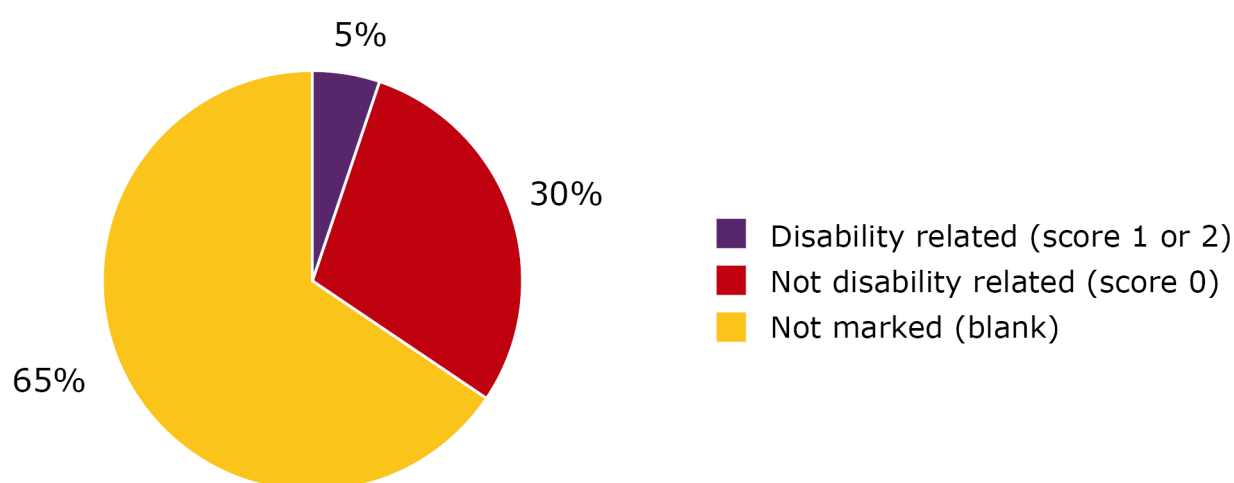
DRR-related ODA activities in the Philippines



Adaptation-related ODA activities in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors



Gender equality-related ODA activities channelled through private sector institutions



Source: author's analysis of Creditor Reporting System data. DRR-related activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the DRR marker, adaptation-related activities are those that scored 1 or 2 on the adaptation marker, and so on. The analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information. True levels of disability-related

True levels of disability-related activities may be even less than what is reported

There is a risk that marker data may not always be accurate

As mentioned above, Global North governments self-report marker data to the OECD-DAC. This creates a risk that some governments will interpret the marker eligibility criteria more generously than others.

The OECD-DAC has recognised the risk that governments may not always report accurate marker data.⁵¹ For example, it recently conducted some (limited) analysis which found evidence of data problems for some markers.⁵² Other researchers and civil society organisations have also found some problems with the data. This includes problems with the climate markers, the gender marker, and the disability marker.⁵³

To get clues on whether our data was accurate, we looked at a small sample of activities in more detail

To test fully whether marker reporting is accurate, we would need to review the detailed documents on individual activities. There was not scope to do this kind of detailed review as part of preparing this briefing. Instead, we took an alternative approach that gave us some basic clues about whether reported marker scores are accurate.

We took a (very small) sample of activities that had been reported as climate,⁵⁴ DRR or gender equality-related and as disability-related.⁵⁵

We looked at how DAC members had described these activities in the OECD-DAC's ODA database. We checked whether the description referred to disability inclusion. If not, this can be a clue that the marker may not have been used correctly.⁵⁶ However, this clue is not decisive. Activity descriptions in the database are brief, and in some cases it may not be realistic to mention all the markers that have been used.⁵⁷

Please see Annex 1 for more details on this approach and its limitations.

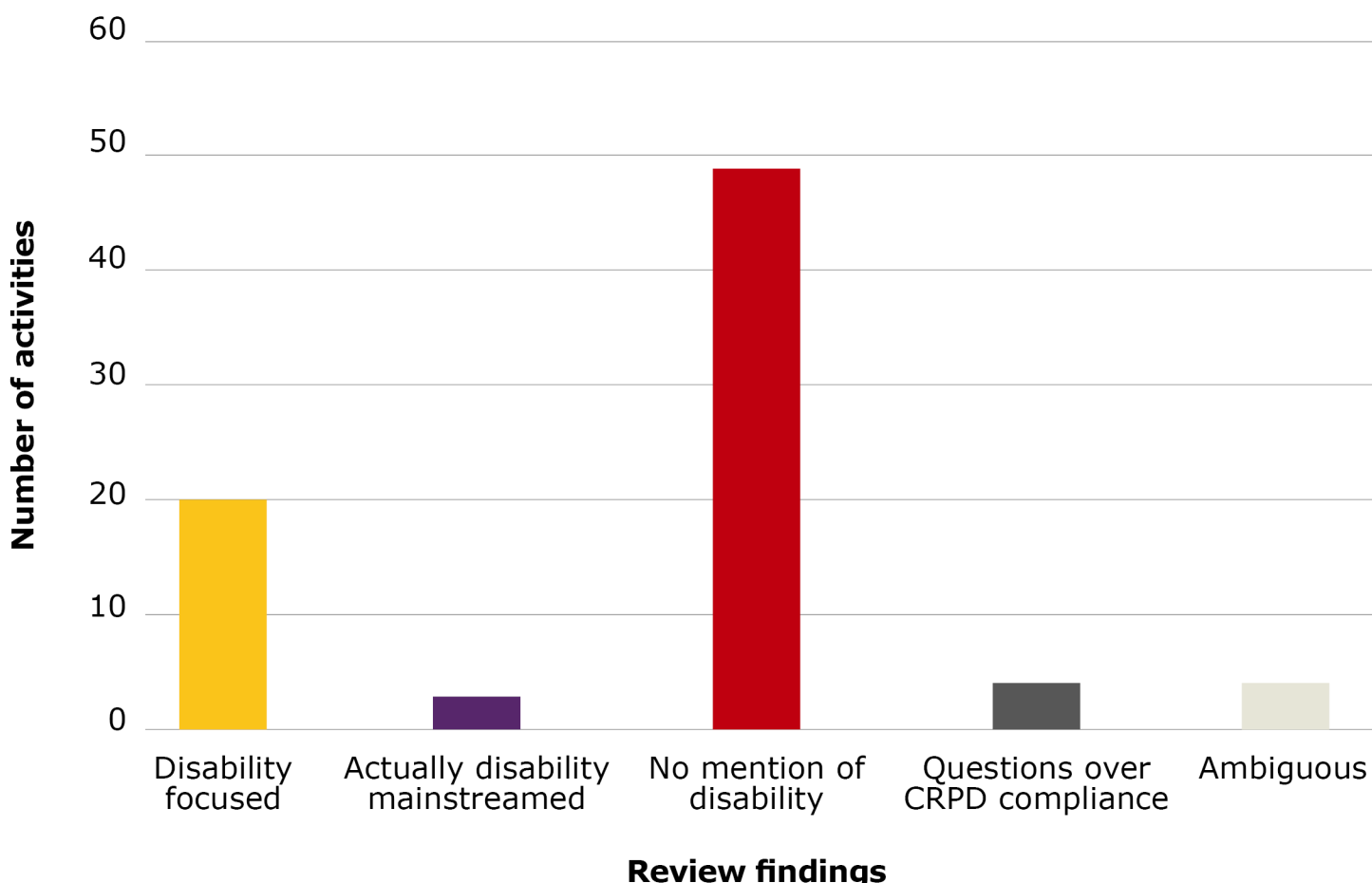
Our findings suggest some “disability-related” activities may not really be disability-related activities – but we would need more information to confirm this

We reviewed a total of 160 activities that had been reported as disability-related. This included 80 activities that were reported as disability-focused (i.e. disability marker score 2). It also included 80 activities where disability was reported as a significant objective, but not the main reason why the activity took place (i.e. disability marker score 1).

The OECD-DAC's guidance says that, in the case of disability-focused activities, the activity's description in the database should mention the reason why the activity has been given a disability-focused marker score.⁵⁸ However, for 49 out of the 80 activities we reviewed, the description in the database did not mention disability. For a further 3 activities, the description seemed to suggest a score of 1 (significant objective) would be more appropriate than a score of 2 (disability-focused). And for a further 4 activities, the description raised questions about whether the activity really was compliant with the CRPD – though more research would be needed to confirm this. These findings are summarised in Chart 5. The findings in the chart need to be treated with care. If

disability is missing from a description, this may be a problem with the description, not with the activity that it describes. And the 80 sampled activities may not be representative of all the disability-focused activities that were reported. Still, our finding is a warning sign that DAC members’ reporting on disability-focused activities may not always be accurate.

Chart 5: findings from a review of database entries for 80 “disability-focused” activities ⁵⁹



Source: author’s review of Creditor Reporting System data. Please note descriptions in the database are very limited, so it was not possible to form a full judgement on whether activities really qualified for a disability-focused score.

In the case of activities where disability was a significant objective, it is harder to make a definite judgement. The OECD-DAC’s guidance says that, “The relation between the activity and the disability objective should be explicitly communicated in the activity descriptions reported to the CRS, in particular for the activities marked principal [i.e. disability-focused] and the largest activities.” ⁶⁰ The activities in our sample were not necessarily the largest of all activities with a significant objective on disability, so mentioning disability was optional for them. Still, it is striking that out of the 80 significant-objective activities in our sample, only 12 ⁶¹ had descriptions that mentioned disability. This does not mean the marker scores for the other 68 activities were inaccurate. But it does not give much reassurance either.

Overall, our findings suggest that DAC members’ reported levels of disability-related activities need to be treated with some caution. It is possible – but not confirmed – that the true level of disability-related activities across climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA may be lower than the level reported.

Conclusions and recommendations



Addressing the climate emergency, reducing disaster risk, and promoting gender equality are all critical concerns for persons with disabilities. Yet, as the analysis in this briefing sets out, disability-related ODA in these areas remains rare. If persons with disabilities are excluded from climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA, this risks exacerbating the dangerous inequalities they already face.⁶² Urgent action is needed to bring climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA into line with the CRPD.

We make the following recommendations.

OECD-DAC members and multilateral organisations that spend ODA funds should:

- 1.** Use the OECD-DAC disability marker to report on all ODA spending.
- 2.** Make all climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA disability inclusive, in line with the CRPD requirement that all international cooperation should be inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities. If this recommendation was fulfilled, we would expect to see all⁶³ ODA would qualify for a score of at least 1 on the disability marker.

OECD-DAC members should also:

- 3.** Scale up their support for climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA that has disability inclusion as the main objective. If this recommendation was fulfilled, we would expect to see a rapid increase in (i) the number of activities; and (ii) the amount of funding that qualifies for a score of 2 on the disability marker.
- 4.** Review the accuracy of disability marker scores before reporting them to the OECD-DAC.
- 5.** Call for the disability marker eligibility criteria to be strengthened, so that the marker aligns better with the CRPD.⁶⁴ The OECD-DAC's on-going process to develop minimum standards for the marker is an opportunity to do this.

Annex 1 – methodology and limitations



Our analysis had two parts. The first part was quantitative analysis on the share of ODA activities reported as disability-related and disability-focused. The second part was analysis on the database entries for a small sample of activities that had been reported to be disability-related.

Quantitative analysis

Methodology

The data for this analysis came from the OECD-DAC's Creditor Reporting System database. To access the database, we went to the OECD Data Explorer site. We then selected the option called "CRS: Creditor Reporting System (flows) [cloud replica]".

We selected the data that we wanted to download.

- We selected data for the **33 DAC members**. This data includes (i) bilateral ODA; and (ii) **earmarked** contributions to multilateral organisations. It does not include core ODA contributions to multilateral organisations,⁶⁵ due to a lack of data.
- We selected data on **ODA commitments**, i.e. data reported at the point when DAC members decide how they will allocate their ODA. The alternative would be to use data on ODA disbursements, i.e. data reported at the point when DAC members transfer ODA funds.⁶⁶ Both types of data are important, but data on commitments is the best way to understand a DAC member's intentions and policy priorities in a particular year.⁶⁷ As we wanted to understand how far DAC members made disability a policy priority in 2023 (and compare this with priorities in earlier years), commitments data was the best data for our purposes.
- We selected data in **constant 2023 prices**. Using data in constant prices is the best way to make comparisons between years, as the data has been adjusted to take into account the effect of inflation and of changes in exchange rates.

We downloaded the data for each of the years 2019-2023 into Excel. We made these downloads in July 2025.

Once we had made our downloads, our first step was to **remove any negative commitments** from the data.⁶⁸

We then analysed the data using pivot tables. **We created a separate pivot table for each of the five markers included in our analysis** (climate adaptation, climate mitigation, desertification, DRR, gender equality).

We filtered the pivot tables so that they only included “**allocable**” ODA. This is because the OECD-DAC recommends only using allocable ODA when doing analysis on marker data.⁶⁹ Allocable ODA includes a range of common types of ODA, such as projects, technical assistance, core contributions to non-governmental organisations, and sector-specific support to the budgets of countries in the Global South.⁷⁰

To do our analysis, we then **grouped the data in each pivot table based on the marker scores** that it had received. This covered both (i) scores on the disability marker; and (ii) scores on the other markers that we wanted to analyse in each pivot table. For example, one pivot table grouped the data based on disability marker scores and climate adaptation marker scores; another pivot table grouped the data based on disability marker scores and DRR marker scores, and so on.

Once we had grouped the data in this way, we could calculate the percentage of ODA that had particular combinations of marker scores. For example, we could calculate the percentage of climate adaptation-related ODA (climate marker score 1 or 2) that was also disability-related (disability marker score 1 or 2).

For some of the detailed analysis, we also added extra filters to the pivot tables. This allowed us to understand how the percentage of disability-related ODA varied in different global South countries, in different sectors, and through different spending channels.

In general, we did our analysis based on the number of ODA activities that had particular marker scores. This is how most of the results are presented in the briefing. For background, we also calculated what the results would be if we looked at the value of ODA spending that had particular marker scores. We have occasionally included this information in footnotes or details of the briefing, to give a more complete picture.

Limitations

The OECD-DAC marker data is a very useful source, but it has some limitations.

As mentioned briefly in the text, some of these limitations include:

- a.** Marker data is not fully **complete**. In 2023, no **multilateral** organisation used the disability marker, except for the European Union (EU). Because of this, we excluded core multilateral ODA from our analysis, except core funding to the European Union. In addition in 2023, some DAC member governments that report **bilateral** ODA did not use the disability marker, or only used it for some of their programmes. When we present charts of our results, we make clear what percentage of bilateral ODA activities had no marker data. In general, this is only a minority of the total bilateral ODA activities that we are studying.⁷¹
- b.** Marker reporting may not always be fully **reliable**. DAC members self-report their marker data. This means there is a risk that some DAC members will interpret the marker criteria more generously than others. This concern is the reason we did some more detailed analysis on a small sample of ODA activities that had been reported as disability-related.⁷² This is described in the section on why “True levels of disability-related activities may be even less than what is reported”.

- c. The OECD-DAC's **definition** for the disability marker covers important points, but it does not capture everything that we would expect to see in an ODA activity that complies fully with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). For example, the current definition allows projects to be reported as disability-related even if they do not actively involve organisations of persons with disabilities.⁷³ This concern is one reason why we use the term "disability-related" to describe activities that scored 1 or 2 on the disability marker, rather than using stronger terms like "disability-inclusive" or "CRPD-compliant".

In addition to these three main concerns, there are also some more technical limitations to keep in mind:

- d. DAC members report disability marker data at the start of their activities. This means that marker data gives us **evidence on activities' objectives, but not on their results**.⁷⁴ To understand how far persons with disabilities are included in the results of ODA activities, we would need different forms of evidence, such as disability-disaggregated data, and feedback from organisations of persons with disabilities (including feedback from under-represented groups).
- e. As mentioned above, we have done our analysis based on the number of ODA activities reported, rather than the value of ODA spending reported. We think this is the best approach for this briefing, because it avoids the risk that a small number of high-value activities could skew the results. However, neither approach is perfect. **What counts as a single "activity" can vary** across different DAC members and across different contexts. Sometimes DAC members report a whole programme as just one activity; sometimes they break it down into parts and report each of these separately.⁷⁵ So although we think looking at the number of activities is the best available approach, the results still need to be interpreted with a little caution.

It is important to keep these limitations in mind. And we have picked up on some of the limitations in our recommendations, where we think there is an opportunity to strengthen disability marker data in future. But **despite its limitations, the disability marker is the best available way to analyse patterns in disability inclusion** across large numbers of ODA activities. It can give us important clues on how far Global North governments are taking disability inclusion into account in their ODA.

Sample review

Methodology

For this analysis, we took a sample of **160** ODA activities that had been reported as disability-related in 2023. This included **80 activities that were reported as disability-focused** (i.e. disability marker score 2). It also included **80 activities** where disability was reportedly a significant objective, but not the main reason why the activity took place (i.e. disability marker score 1).

Each sample of 80 activities was evenly split into 8 categories **of 10 activities**. First we subdivided the 80 activities into 20 adaptation-related activities, 20 mitigation-related activities, 20 DRR-related activities and 20 gender equality-related activities.⁷⁶ We then further split the adaptation-related activities into 10 activities where adaptation was the main focus (i.e. adaptation marker score 2) and 10 activities where adaptation was a significant objective alongside other objectives (i.e. adaptation marker score 1). We did the same for mitigation, DRR and gender equality.

To select each set of 10 sampled activities, we took the following approach. Using the pivot tables that we had created for our quantitative analysis, we dug down to get a complete list of the activities in each of the sub-categories that we had split out to sample. For example, we got a complete list of all disability-focused activities that were also adaptation-focused. We got a complete list of all activities where both disability inclusion and disaster risk reduction were significant objectives alongside other objectives, and so on. We then **selected the sample using four main criteria:**

1. We gave priority to activities that took place in Global South countries where CBMG has Federation Members or Country Teams.⁷⁷ This was to help inform CBMG's country-specific work.
2. We selected the activities with the highest value of ODA spending. This was for two reasons. First, it helped us cover more ODA spending within the limits of our very small sample. Second, it fits with the OECD-DAC's guidance, which implies that higher-value activities tend to have more detailed database entries, which are more useful for our analysis.⁷⁸
3. We removed activities with database entries in languages that we could not work with. This meant keeping database entries in English, French, Spanish and Galician.⁷⁹
4. We removed any duplicates that had already been included elsewhere in our sample.⁸⁰

For each activity in our sample, we then reviewed **how the DAC member had described the activity in the OECD-DAC's Creditor Reporting System database.** We looked at the database entries for "project title", "short description" and "long description". We checked whether these entries mentioned the reason why the activity had been reported as disability-related.

Finally, we added up the number of activities with descriptions that did, and did not, seem to back up their "disability-related" marker score.

Limitations

This part of the analysis had three main limitations.

First, the **sample was very small** compared to the total number of disability-related activities reported in climate, DRR and gender equality-related ODA. For illustration: we took a sample of 40 disability-related, gender equality-related activities. Yet in 2023, DAC members reported a total of 9850 disability-related, gender equality-related activities altogether. Some DAC members may not be represented in our sample at all. This is particularly true since our sample was weighted towards Global South countries where CBMG has Federation Members or Country Teams.

There are some factors that make our small sample more meaningful than these numbers might suggest. First, for this part of our analysis we were particularly interested in disability-focused activities (i.e. disability marker score 2). For disability-focused activities, the gap between our sample size and the total number of activities reported is less extreme, since DAC members reported so few disability-focused activities altogether. Second, the aim of our analysis was to look for clues on whether reported disability marker data is reliable. Although our sample was small, it was enough to identify examples where there is a risk that the data may not be reliable. This is already a useful finding, as it gives us a warning that disability marker data may need to be treated with some caution.

Still, the small sample size is an important limitation.

The second limitation is that activity **descriptions in the OECD-DAC's ODA database are very brief**. If an activity's description does not say why the activity is disability-related, this could simply be because the description is not detailed enough – not because the activity has been given the wrong disability marker score. Still, the OECD-DAC's own guidance says that "The relation between the activity and the disability objective should be explicitly communicated in the activity descriptions reported to the CRS, in particular for the activities marked principal [i.e. disability-focused] and the largest activities."⁸¹ If disability-focused activities or large activities do not explicitly mention the reason for their disability marker scores, this at least raises questions about whether the scores were accurate.

The third limitation of our analysis is that it required **judgement**. This included judgement on whether activities appeared to be disability-related at all; whether they appeared to be disability-focused; and whether there could be a risk of harm to persons with disabilities. These judgements can be challenging anyway, but they were made even more challenging by the lack of detail in the OECD-DAC database. In general, when activities mentioned disability, but only briefly, they were given the benefit of the doubt and assumed to be disability-related. For other judgements the most reasonable-seeming approach was taken, on a case-by-case basis. Where there was a particularly high level of uncertainty – including around the potential risk of harm – the briefing highlights this explicitly.

These limitations mean that the findings from our sample review have to be interpreted with care. We seek to emphasise this when we present our findings in the main body of the briefing. Despite this, the findings have a useful role to play, as they suggest that we cannot always assume DAC members' reported disability marker data is fully reliable.

References

- 1 The results are all based on analysis of the number of allocable ODA commitments. The results do not include core funding to multilateral organisations, other than the European Union, due to a lack of data. We treated activities as disability-related (or climate adaptation, DRR, gender equality-related, etc.) if they scored 1 or 2 on the relevant marker. Please see Annex 1 for more information.
- 2 See ETO Consortium, 2013, [Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#), principles 31-35.
- 3 Knox-Vydmanov and Côte, 2025, [Financing acceleration of disability inclusion in low- and middle-income countries](#), Figure 25 on p.40. This finding is based on disability-focused ODA spending, i.e. where disability inclusion is reported to be the main objective.
- 4 For example, see Disability Reference Group, 2025, [Impact of funding cuts on persons with disabilities](#); and Minieri and Nelms in Alliance magazine, 2025, [‘Everyday, more rights are threatened’: new research reveals impact of funding cuts on feminist disability activists](#) (accessed 3 October 2025). The articles describe the combined impact of ODA cuts and other funding cuts, but ODA cuts are sadly an important part of this wider picture. With thanks to Disability Debrief for highlighting these articles.
- 5 I.e. ODA from Global North governments that is not channelled as **core** funding to multilateral organisations.
- 6 The numbers include **both** ODA where this issue (climate adaptation/disaster risk reduction/gender equality) was the main objective, **and** where the issue was a significant objective, mainstreamed alongside other objectives. The numbers are stated in 2023 prices. The analysis is based on allocable ODA commitments : the methodology in Annex 1 gives more information.
- 7 CBM Global Disability Inclusion Advisory Group, 2024, [Climate action: guidance for organisations of persons with disabilities](#), p.3; Twigg, Kett and Lovell, 2018, [ODI briefing note: disability inclusion and disaster risk reduction: overcoming barriers to progress](#), p.3; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2020, A/HRC/44/30, [Analytical study on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change](#), paragraph 5.
- 8 CBM Global Disability Inclusion Advisory Group, 2024, [Climate action: guidance for organisations of persons with disabilities](#), p.3; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2020, A/HRC/44/30, [Analytical study on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change](#), paragraphs 8-18; Bond/International Disability and Development Consortium, 2025, [Unequal climate justice for people with disabilities; insights and evidence from communities and civil society organisations](#), pp.16-17; Bailey and others, 2022, [Our lessons: an approach to disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction – based on consultations with people with disabilities in the Asia and Pacific regions](#), pp.25-34

- 9** UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2023, [Global survey report on persons with disabilities and disasters](#), pp.21-24; Bond/International Disability and Development Consortium, 2025, [Unequal climate justice for people with disabilities; insights and evidence from communities and civil society organisations](#), pp.17-19
- 10** International Disability Alliance and others, 2021, [Towards COP 26 : enhancing disability inclusion in climate action](#), p.2 ; CBM UK, 2023, [Climate change and disability rights : does the climate crisis impact implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)? A 3-country study](#), pp.1-3, 6-7, 10-11
- 11** Kett, Sriskanthan and Cole, 2021, [Disability and climate justice: a research project](#), pp.38-40; Bond/International Disability and Development Consortium, 2025, [Unequal climate justice for people with disabilities; insights and evidence from communities and civil society organisations](#), p.28
- 12** Rattray, for European Disability Forum, 2024, '[Disability is still an afterthought at international climate negotiations](#)' (accessed 4 October 2025)
- 13** UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2025, [Thirty years of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: its potential for women and girls with disabilities](#), A/HRC/58/56, paragraphs 65, 67. (see Blyth, Alexander and Woolf, 2020, [Out of the margins: an intersectional analysis of disability and diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression & sex characteristics in humanitarian and development contexts](#), pp.14-31).
- 14** UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2025, [Thirty years of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: its potential for women and girls with disabilities](#), A/HRC/58/56, paragraphs 65-67, 69
- 15** Inclusive Generation Equality Collective, Women Enabled International and Advocacy for Women with Disabilities Initiative, [Submission to the CEDAW Committee on Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in Decision-Making Systems](#), Section II E
- 16** Blyth, Alexander and Woolf, 2020, [Out of the margins: an intersectional analysis of disability and diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression & sex characteristics in humanitarian and development contexts](#), pp.14-31
- 17** While the analysis includes all three markers, it gives more emphasis to the first two, since these cover a larger number of ODA activities than the desertification marker.
- 18** Hagen Herskind and Meeks, How far do OECD-DAC members consider the overlap between disability inclusion and other crosscutting priorities?, in CBM Global, 2024, [Tracking aid for persons with disabilities: Why the OECD-DAC Disability marker can be a powerful advocacy tool for organisations of persons with disabilities – and recommendations on how to make it even more effective](#).
- 19** Please note the results in this briefing cannot be compared directly with the results in the previous research. This is because the analysis for this briefing included (1) the European Commission, and (2) Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

- 20** Sightsavers, [OECD-DAC Dashboard](#) (accessed 4 October 2025); Loryman and Thorne, 2024, [OECD-DAC disability and gender markers: data analysis 2018-2022](#)
- 21** In more detail, this means the analysis covers: (1) Bilateral and earmarked multilateral ODA from the 32 Global North country governments in the DAC; (2) Core multilateral ODA channelled through the EU. The analysis does not include core multilateral ODA channelled through other multilateral organisations.
- 22** An additional limitation is that not all data reporters use all the other markers for all their activities. When the markers were not used, we cannot be sure whether activities had any objectives on adaptation, mitigation, desertification, DRR or gender equality. However, in general this is only true for a small share. In 2023, DAC members used the adaptation and mitigation markers for over 90% of their ODA activities. They used the DRR and gender markers for over 80% of their ODA activities. Only use of the desertification marker was lower, at around 67% of activities. This is one reason why we focus more on adaptation and mitigation than on desertification in our analysis. However, as we still have desertification marker data for around two in every three activities, even this is enough to give us some useful information. (Source: Creditor Reporting System. The percentages are calculated based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments) – please see Annex 1 for more details).
- 23** European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), recommendation 3 on pp.22-23
- 24** This analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.
- 25** If we had done the analysis by looking at the value of ODA spending, rather than the number of activities, we would have got a wider spread of results. In 2023, 31% of mitigation-related ODA spending was reported as disability-related. In contrast, only 10% of adaptation-related ODA spending was reported as disability-related. This fits with our expectation that, if we look at the value of ODA spending, the results may be more variable, due to the differing sizes of the activities involved. Of course, even when we did the analysis by value, and even if we focused on the highest result of 31%, this is still far lower than the standard set by the CRPD.
- 26** Acknowledgement: the argument in this paragraph draws on arguments put forward in the European Disability Forum’s recent (2025) publication, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), pp.10-11.
- 27** OECD-DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, pp.4, 13, 14.
- 28** This follows from the definitions referenced above. Moreover, the OECD-DAC guidance also states that disability mainstreaming would typically be captured by a disability marker score of 1 [not 0]. (Source: OECD-DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, p.15). In fact, as discussed above,

even some activities that are scored 1 may fall short of full mainstreaming, since the marker definition is limited and does not capture all dimensions we would expect to see in a fully CRPD-compliant activity.

- 29** [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), Article 32.
- 30** Source: personal correspondence
- 31** Several factors contribute to high levels of energy poverty among persons with disabilities. These include higher levels of income poverty (especially after adjusting for the extra costs of disability) and additional energy needs, such as additional heating or cooling, and energy to power assistive devices. For an overview, see Marimuthu, B., Wardrop, P., and Patrick, M., 2025, [Opportunities for Disability-inclusive Energy Access](#), Global Disability Innovation Hub for the Transforming Energy Access platform, pp.13-15. For an example from Ghana, see Sections 3, 4 and 5 of Oteng and Gamette, 2025, [Intersectionality of access and use of clean energy consumption among persons with disability in Ghana](#), in Regional Science Policy & Practice, Volume 17, Issue 4.
- 32** Of course, there could be many different answers to this question in different contexts. Maybe the national social protection system already allows adequately for the extra costs that persons with disabilities can face, including any extra costs of energy. Maybe the government has put in place regulations on energy prices. Maybe the government already provides effective energy subsidies Persons with disabilities (and others who experience similar barriers). Or, maybe more action is still needed. In any case, it is crucial for the DAC member to ask itself this question.
- 33** See for example Sial, 2022, [PPPs in energy infrastructure: regional experiences in light of the global energy crisis](#), pp. 8, 16; Romero and Sonkin, 2021, [Reclaiming sustainable infrastructure as a public good](#), p.18
- 34** As above, this analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.
- 35** [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), Article 32
- 36** To check that the results for 2023 were not outliers, we also looked at the data from 2019-2022. In general, this fitted with the pattern that we describe here: the share of disability-related ODA activities in climate and DRR-focused ODA tends to be lower than the share of disability-related ODA activities in all climate and DRR-related ODA. There are a few exceptions to this pattern in individual years, but they are not enough to suggest that the results for 2023 are unusual.
- 37** We began the analysis in 2019, rather than 2018, because of some concerns that data from the marker's first year is less reliable. For example, the OECD-DAC published a handbook containing guidance on how to apply the marker, but this was not available to DAC members until they reported their 2019 data.
- 38** As above, the analysis in this section is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.

- 39** However, even for gender, the trend needs to be interpreted with some caution. During the period 2019-2023, DAC members also gradually increased the share of gender equality-related activities where they used the disability marker. This introduces an extra uncertainty. Some (though not all) of the increase in disability-related activities could simply be because we have better data, not because DAC members' approach to disability inclusion has improved.
- 40** European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), p.13
- 41** OECD-DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, p.15
- 42** Activities can have more than one principal objective. For example, support for an organisation of women with disabilities could potentially have both gender equality, and disability inclusion, as principal objectives.
- 43** As above, this analysis is based on allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.
- 44** This is because analysis on the value of spending can easily be distorted by a few high-value activities. However, in this case the overall results are so low that this is less likely.
- 45** There is not yet enough research to say exactly what percentage of ODA needs to be disability-focused in different contexts. But two reference points come from recent campaigns towards the European Union and towards Australia. First, CONCORD (the European Confederation of NGOs working on sustainable development and international cooperation) recently called for disability inclusion to be a principal objective in 5% of European Union ODA funding. (Source: CONCORD, 2025, [Stepping up EU international cooperation through the next Multiannual Financial Framework](#), p.6). Currently, only an extremely low share of the European Union's ODA activities have disability inclusion as their principal objective (source: European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), pp.12-13). This means the 5% target should be seen as a stepping stone rather than as the final aim. A second reference point comes from the Australian Disability and Development Consortium, which recently called for disability inclusion to be a principal objective in 10% of Australian ODA. (Source: Australian Disability and Development Consortium, 2024, [Joint call for action on disability equity](#), accessed 6 October 2025). Both these campaigns illustrate how low our results are by comparison.
- 46** Desertification-related ODA is a possible exception, but the total number of desertification-related activities was lower, and the results fluctuate considerably, so it is hard to be sure of any pattern.
- 47** As above, this analysis is based on the number of allocable ODA activities (commitments). Please see Annex 1 for more information.
- 48** Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft / IFHV, [World Risk Report 2025](#), p.52
- 49** See e.g. Ahlenbäck, Lee and Coe, 2019, [Agriculture and mobile-based interventions for smallholder farmers: best practice on disability inclusion](#), p.2

50 Stated in 2023 prices.

- 51** See for example OECD-DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020, [Assessing the policy objectives of development co-operation activities: review of the reporting status, use and relevance of Rio and policy markers](#), DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)27, paragraphs 26, 30
- 52** OECD-DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020, Assessing the policy objectives of development co-operation activities: review of the reporting status, use and relevance of Rio and policy markers, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)27, paragraphs 26-30
- 53** For the climate markers, see for example p. 462 and pp. 464-467 in Romain Weikmans, J. Timmons Roberts, Jeffrey Baum, Maria Camila Bustos & Alexis Durand (2017) Assessing the credibility of how climate adaptation aid projects are categorised, Development in Practice, 27:4, [DOI](#); Ritchie, 2024, [Climate finance: earning trust through consistent reporting](#), pp.29-31, p.35 (accessed 12 October 2025). For the gender marker, see for example Grabowski and Essick, 2020, [Are they really gender equality projects? An examination of donors' gender-mainstreamed and gender equality-focused projects to assess the quality of gender-marked projects](#). For the disability marker, see European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#) pp.15-18; Larsen and Nilsson/NIDS, 2021, [Mapping of Norwegian efforts to include persons with disabilities in development assistance, 2010-2019](#), p.12 and section 2.4.2 on pp.13-14; Watkins, Christopolos and others/NIDAS, 2022, [Evaluation of persons with disabilities in development cooperation](#), p.22.
- 54** We looked at adaptation and mitigation, but not desertification, as the first two markers play a more important role in our analysis throughout this briefing
- 55** Our sample focused particularly on Global South countries where CBM Global has Federation Members or Country Teams – see Annex 1.
- 56** Looking at activities that have been reported as disability-related allows us look into the risk that marker data is being **over**-reported. In other words, it allows us to investigate the risk that activities have been reported as disability-related, when they are not disability-related in reality. In contrast, it does not allow us to investigate whether the marker results have been **under**-reported. To do that, we would need to look at activities that had been reported as **not** disability-related. If we found evidence that these activities were disability-related in reality, this would be a clue that marker data was being under-reported. We chose to focus our limited resources on the risk that the marker is being over-used, because we think this is a bigger risk. This is because there is a lot of interest in DAC members' disability marker results, including from organisations of persons with disabilities and civil society organisations that are calling for ODA to be disability-inclusive. This creates an incentive for DAC members to report disability-related activities. In principle, this could encourage over-reporting. DAC members have themselves reported that if there is intense interest in their marker results, this can make them feel pressure to over-report (source: fourth bullet on p.22 of Benn, J., F. Rühmann,

[“Peer Reviews on Development Finance Statistics – Lessons learnt from seven pilots”](#), OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers, No 85 OECD Publishing, Paris). In contrast, if DAC members feel there is pressure to report large numbers of disability-related activities, they are less likely to miss activities that should have been reported (i.e., under-report).

- 57** See OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.15; and OECD-DAC, 2024, [Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System \(CRS\) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire](#), DCD/DAC(2024)40/ADD2/FINAL, p.63, paragraph 10 of Annex 20.
- 58** OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.15
- 59** Acknowledgement: chart layout draws on the approach taken in European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#) pp.16-17
- 60** OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.15
- 61** One of these appeared from its description to be more suitable for a score of 2 (disability-focused). Based on the limited information available, the remaining 11 seemed suitable for a score of 1 (disability is a significant objective).
- 62** See Groce and Kett, 2013, [The disability and development gap](#), pp.9-12
- 63** Box 5 describes how there are different opinions on whether there could, occasionally, be some ODA activities where the disability marker is not relevant, because the activities do not target individual people. As explained in Box 5, we do think we are in a position to make a judgement on this question. More consultation would be needed, including consultation with organisations of persons with disabilities, and consultation with legal experts. Suppose the consultation **did** decide that the disability marker is not necessarily relevant to all activities. Then in principle not quite all ODA would need to qualify for a score of 1 on the disability marker. However, we would expect DAC members to back this up on a case-by-case basis. To do this, they should complete a detailed disability analysis, including consultation with OPDs. They should also ensure all activities (even those with a score of 0) include measures to make sure no harm is done to persons with disabilities.
- 64** For more detail on how the marker should align with the CRPD, see European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), recommendation 3 on pp.22-23
- 65** The European Union is a special case. It is a multilateral organisation, but it is also a DAC member. Because of this, we made an exception and did include core ODA funding to the European Union in our analysis.

- 66** These are simplified definitions of commitments and disbursements. For the full definitions, see the OECD-DAC's [Glossary of statistical terms and concepts of development finance](#) (accessed November 2025).
- 67** See [OECD-DAC, Official Development Assistance \(ODA\): frequently asked questions](#), "What is the difference between a commitment and a disbursement?" (accessed November 2025).
- 68** Negative commitments are rare, but they can happen for several reasons. For example, if a DAC member made a commitment to fund a programme, but then this funding was returned unspent, this would be reported as a negative commitment. (Source: UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2020, [Management of the 0.7% ODA spending target: a rapid review](#), p.ii. Please note some parts of the information in this reference are no longer up-to-date, but the part on unspent funding is still valid).
- 69** OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.19. Although we have chosen to use allocable ODA in this case, there is some debate about whether it is the best approach to use in every context. See Meeks/Atlas Alliance, 2023, [Tracking disability inclusive development: Making the most of the OECD-DAC disability inclusion policy marker to promote equality and inclusion in international development and humanitarian assistance](#), pp.6-7.
- 70** For the full list of types of ODA that are covered, see the update on the second page of Meeks/Center for Inclusive Policy, 2020, [Getting the data: how much does aid money support the inclusion of persons with disabilities?](#)
- 71** Data on the other markers that we studied is not complete either. However, in general this is only true for a small share of activities. In 2023, DAC members used the adaptation and mitigation markers for over 90% of their ODA activities. They used the DRR and gender markers for over 80% of their ODA activities. Only use of the desertification marker was lower, at around 67% of activities. This is one reason why we focus more on adaptation and mitigation than on desertification in our analysis. However, as we still have desertification marker data for around two in every three activities, even this is enough to give us some useful information.
- 72** We looked for clues on whether "disability-related" activities really are disability-related. There is also a risk that "adaptation-related" activities may not really be adaptation-related, "DRR-related" activities may not really be DRR-related, and so on. We have cross-referred to other researchers' work that has looked into these risks in more detail. But our main focus in this research was on understanding what DAC members' data tells us on disability inclusion.
- 73** European Disability Forum, 2025, [Steady progress, serious shortfalls: disability inclusion in EC ODA projects](#), recommendation 3 on pp.22-23
- 74** See OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.14.

- 75** See also Knox-Vydmanov and Côte, 2025, [Financing acceleration of disability inclusion in Low- and Middle-Income Countries](#), footnote 19 on p.38
- 76** We focused on adaptation and mitigation rather than desertification, because desertification makes up a less important part of our findings in the rest of the briefing.
- 77** These are: Bangladesh; Bolivia; Burkina Faso; Indonesia; Kenya; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Madagascar; Nepal; Nigeria; the Philippines; and Zimbabwe.
- 78** In more detail, this refers to the guidance about activities given a score of 1 (significant objective) on the disability marker. The guidance says the highest-value of these activities should always explain, in their database entries, why they have used a particular disability marker score. It implies that for lower-value activities given a score of 1, this is optional. However, the activities in our sample were not necessarily the highest-value of all disability-related activities – just the highest-value disability-related activities in the overlap with other markers, in our selected countries. So not all our sampled activities could necessarily have been expected to include detail on the reasons for their disability marker scores. (Reference: OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.15).
- 79** This meant removing entries in Dutch and Polish: unfortunately, the consultant who did the analysis is unable to work in these languages. For Spanish and Galician, where the consultant has a more limited knowledge than English or French, translation tools (DeepL/Google translate) were used to check understanding.
- 80** Duplicates could occur if, for example, an activity had been reported as disability-related, adaptation-related **and** mitigation-related.
- 81** OECD-DAC Working Party on Statistics, 2020, DCD/DAC/STAT(2020)48, [The OECD-DAC policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities: handbook for data reporters and users](#), p.15

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