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### **CBM calls for a permanent increase in global disability-inclusive development funding**

CBM Australia is calling on the Australian Government to urgently restore and increase the core disability inclusion funding within the international aid budget to address critical challenges in our region.

CBM recommends an increase to the central disability allocation to a minimum of \$14 million per annum so that Australia can meet its commitments to ensuring people with disabilities are not left behind.

Jane Edge, CEO of CBM Australia says: "Australia has a strong reputation and credibility as an ambitious global leader in disability inclusive development.

"In 2020, DFAT's central disability allocation was cut from a long-standing figure of \$12.9 million to \$12.1 million. In 2021 this was cut further to \$9.6 million which translates to a 25% cut.

"These cuts are not consistent with maintaining Australia's overall leadership position."

CBM Australia's 2022-2023 federal budget submission makes a series of recommendations relating to inclusive budgeting. The submission supports development cooperation activities that best address poverty, inequality and injustice, with particular reference to the needs of people with disabilities.

CBM also recommends a commitment of \$10 million over four years to rebuild livelihoods and increase resilience as part of economic recovery from COVID-19 in our region. People with disabilities have experienced higher job losses, food insecurity and face immense challenges in protecting themselves from the pandemic. Without strategic intervention the pandemic is set to widen inequalities and push people with disabilities and their families deeper into poverty.

Ms Edge says: "Including people with disabilities in development investments not only upholds Australia's values-based and strategic commitments, it also maximises value.

"Australia has made commitments to leave no one behind and this means ensuring that, by 2030, people with disabilities along with others can benefit from improvements in education, employment, access to infrastructure, health, and gender equality."

An increase to the core departmental budget for associated staff and support costs is required to enable the effective development and implementation of the next iteration of the *Development for All* strategy.

Ms Edge says: "The scale of the pandemic recovery effort required is enormous. To realise security, stability and human rights in our region, these new investments from the Australian government need to be permanent and ongoing.

"Disability inclusion cuts across all programs, sectors and contexts of Australian development investments. It requires effective and adequate budget to enable continued, Australian-led impact in disability-inclusive development."

CBM Australia is a Christian, international development agency, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest places in the world. In 2021, CBM Australia supported field projects in 13 countries and supported partners including governments, multilateral organisations, non-government organisations and organisations representing people with disabilities (OPDs) in 36 countries.

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*Jane Edge is Chief Executive Officer of CBM Australia and a member of the Board of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).*

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