

# **Policy approaches to dis/ability inclusive development**

*A case study of Sida*

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## **Abstract**

*Dis/ability rights have for a long time been excluded from the discourse and practice of international development. This has taken a turn with the creation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. International organisations have extended their policies on dis/ability, and some development agents now explicitly mainstream dis/ability. Sweden, however, does not have a specific policy on dis/ability mainstreaming. This thesis aims to examine how the Swedish international development cooperation agency (Sida) deals with the inclusion of dis/ability in policy and practice. A textual analysis in combination with interviews has been thematically applied to a framework of dis/ability mainstreaming in order to study this question. The findings present an analysis of to what extent the current Sida approach to dis/ability resembles dis/ability mainstreaming, as well as some indicators of the implications of using the current approach in terms of including dis/ability perspectives. The results indicate that Sida has a comprehensive framework that allows for dis/ability inclusion, but this framework is not implemented evenly and is highly dependent on context.*

Keywords: disability mainstreaming, inclusive development, SIDA, social model of disability, thematic analysis

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## **1. Introduction: Dis/ability in Development**

For most of the history of international development, dis/ability issues were seen as individual, non-systemic matters that would need to be the objective of charity and individual change and capacity building, rather than a structural, social issue (Ambert & Harrison 2006). Thus, dis/ability rights were not addressed in large-scale development policy for a long time (Chataika & McKenzie, 2016:423). Yet, extensive research mainly conducted past the turn of the century shows inevitable systemic cycles of the interaction and double-ended causation between poverty, dis/ability and marginalisation (Eide & Ingsted 2011:3). Social and statistical invisibility and systematic incapacities to respond to disability issues are problems globally, but especially among low and middle-income nations (Yeo 2003). There are an estimated one billion people worldwide who carry some form of disability. About 80% of these people live in low- or middle-income countries (WHO 2020). Here lies the starting point for this thesis: addressing the need for development activities to become more dis/ability inclusive.

Paying attention to the inclusion of people with dis/abilities (PWDs) in policies and development programmes is essential because of the vulnerability that PWDs are exposed to, especially in settings of extreme poverty (Eida & Ingestad 2011:3). The results of research in this area generally indicate a strong link between poverty and disability, low-income countries and dis/ability rates, and institutionalised prejudices against PWDs (Mitra & Sambamoorthi 2014; Willish 2020:195). Conflicts, poverty, and statistical invisibility both exacerbate the socio-economic problems that PWDs face and increase the number of disabled people (Stubbs 2002; Anomsari & Mursalim 2020). On local scales, PWDs are generally those who are first to die in contexts of which food or sanitary conditions are lacking, and they rarely receive education or other tools of empowerment (Eida & Ingestad 2011:3). On a larger, societal scale, PWDs are excluded from social opportunities. They lack practical opportunities for engagement in social and economic life due to a lack of dis/ability-inclusive views in legislation, which further raises inequalities and thus marginalises the livelihoods of many PWDs (Willish 2020:195). One may phrase it as "poverty within poverty" (Eida & Ingestad 2011:1).

Still, dis/ability rights have long been a marginalised issue. Black and Stienstra (2016) stress that one of the main challenges of advancing international cooperation for dis/ability rights is building sustainable support and frameworks at the donor-level organisations. These must be inclusive throughout and include efficient strategies for helping PWDs specifically. Doing so is difficult for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, it is difficult to address a marginalised and often non-coherent group (Black & Stienstra 2016). PWDs as a group are generally only united by social oppression, but facing vastly different challenges. Everyone's needs and capacities are made up of intersecting identities, meaning that there is no single policy or action that could ensure a better life for all PWDs.

Secondly, a general tendency among donors and northern development agencies is to strive for measurable results and impact, which can be challenging to provide in any post-neoliberal development efforts. When the goal is mainly to increase rights and freedoms (as has been established as a critical need for many PWDs), it often becomes nearly impossible to statistically measure impact (Grech and Soldatic 2016:14; Black & Stienstra 2016). Increased attention to dis/ability rights does not necessarily look good on project evaluations or in the eyes of result-focused donors and is thus less incentivised to address in development or humanitarian efforts.

A third reason why dis/ability rights have been so marginalised within the development discourse may be attributed to the general neoliberal agenda prevalent in the foreground and arguably in the fundamentals of development work throughout the whole history of development efforts. Neoliberal ideals are essentially non-compatible with dis/ability rights (Black & Stienstra 2016). If one can not be economically productive in the traditional sense, a merely neoliberal perspective doesn't note the value of protecting one's rights and freedoms. One might ask if the neoliberal agenda was a contributing factor for PWDs to be excluded from development projects for so long, and arguably still. Additionally, one might wonder - in what sense is development even desirable for PWDs? As we have seen with the development of gender inclusion, many forms of efforts to include women in development have actually been approaches to involve women in capitalism (Grech & Soldatic 2016:14; Acker 2004). However, as development efforts and Global

North-Global South donor relations persist, one may still reasonably assert that donor agencies should improve their efforts to be more inclusive of PWDs.

Finally, there are a few significant reasons why disability studies and development studies as academic fields are relevant to intersect (and consequently why this thesis exists). Disability studies and development studies have notably a small number of intercrossing works (Black & Stienstra 2016). Yet, scholars argue that if PWDs were fully included in development work, poverty reduction strategies would have the potential of being more efficient in reducing poverty and providing assistance to those most affected at the very margins - as this group constitutes PWDs (Black & Stienstra 2016). Moreover, the ordinary leaning on work of dis/ability inclusion in development tends to stem from the field of disability studies, not development studies (Marshall 2012:55; Kandyomunda et al. 2012). Consequently, important perspectives on dis/ability within both discourses are left out. For example, development journals generally employ a very narrow representation of dis/ability, and in academics in general, the "disabled perspective" is frequently the one of a physically disabled (e.g. in a wheelchair), white, western, male (Marshall 2012:57; Willish 2020:201). Thus, both disability studies and political development studies would benefit greatly from increased academic attention at their crossings, i.e. where this thesis lies.

## **2. Research Aims and Objectives**

In this chapter, the blueprint of this thesis will be presented. What exactly is to be studied, with what aims and objectives?

### **2.1 Research Question**

The background discussion brings me to my aim: to examine how Swedish international development work engages with questions of including dis/ability perspectives and disability actors. I have chosen to focus on the matter in the context of the official Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). I pose the question with an eye to one specific theoretical approach, namely dis/ability mainstreaming.

The research question is:

*How does the Swedish International Development Agency engage with dis/ability mainstreaming?*

## **2.2 Specific Aims**

There are a few significant reasons why I have chosen this specific case and question, both in terms of a gap in existing research and a theoretically motivated curiosity. This section consists of an integrated discussion on why this research question is important to study, what aims are intended with the study, and how these aims will contribute to the discourse.

First off, why Sweden? In 2006, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was actualised. The European Commission ratified the convention in 2010. In addition, the European Union (EU) also signed the World Humanitarian Summit's Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action Charter in 2016 (EC 2019). Some academics (such as Skarstad et al. 2018:2; Marshall 2012:54) assert that the CRPD automatically includes a commitment and responsibility to apply disability mainstreaming. In accordance with these agreements, the EU has stated explicitly that it adopts a disability mainstreaming approach (European Commission n.d.). The same goes for institutions such as the United Nations (UN) (Skarstad & Stein 2018). In being part of the EU, Sweden also holds a commitment to these international agreements. Sweden has, however, chosen an approach to dis/ability inclusion that builds on the rights-based approach (Sida 2020). Thus, it becomes interesting to study whether the Swedish human rights-based approach (HRBA) corresponds to using a specific dis/ability mainstreaming policy.

Although development organisations appear to be adapting the HRBA with expected benefits for PWDs, Miller and Albert (2005:11) found that dis/ability views are rarely mainstreamed within the HRBA in ways that favour PWDs. This discovery emphasises the value of looking at mainstreaming in particular. The same researchers found that dis/ability mainstreaming needs to be investigated on the level of organisations. Specifically, there is a need for everything on the organisational level, from responsibility practice, dis/ability recognition and preparation, consultation of PWDs, human resources, etc., to become inclusive of dis/ability perspectives

(Miller & Albert 2005:15). Similarly, Marshall (2012:53) discovered that up until 2012, many development organisations, including Sida, lacked standardised dis/ability policies and instead included the issue in independent "disability programs". Moreover, many argue that because of the social dimension of dis/ability (see further 3.2), mainstreaming is particularly important as creating transition is entirely contingent on a shift in wider social awareness among development stakeholders (Willish 2020:207; Skarstad et al. 2018:5).

This thesis includes some insight into how much and what kind of space dis/ability matters take up within Sida's policy approach, combined with an analysis of how this appears to manifest in Sidas' actions and practical organisation. I hope to give a lead on questions on whether the HRBA makes a sufficient alternative to dis/ability mainstreaming and whether it can be comparable in scope and extensiveness of inclusion. By analysing Sida and their policy approach, an interesting example can be presented in the light of different approaches to intersectionality and (dis/ability) inclusion in development work, which further could be utilised for comparative research on e.g. strategy efficiency within development organisations.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

This chapter approaches the concepts and theory that underbuilds the foundation of the research. The conceptual clarifications (3.1) entails an explanation of the meaning and usefulness of words and concepts that are present throughout the study. The philosophical framework (3.2) discusses the worldview that has been present in forming the whole research process. The theoretical framework (3.3) is a detailed explanation of the theory that most fundamentally has brought about the research question and has been used to frame and support the data analysis.

#### **3.1 Conceptual Clarifications**

The concept of dis/ability is used according to the definition employed by the UNCRPD (2006), i.e. the concept of dis/ability is understood as evolving, and impairments are understood as social constructs (see further definitions below) (Katsui & Chalklen 2020:14). In other words, disability

can be seen as a deviation from the mainstream that exists in a way that may cause inability to function within the dominant social systems. The concept of dis/ability is, of course, a complex one, and although often used as a "them", PWDs are far from a coherent group in terms of most everything (Grech & Soldatic 2016:16). Contexts, cultures, ideologies, wants, and differences in constraints to ability are different and dynamic (ibid).

Here, I have chosen to use *dis/ability*, including a punctuation mark, to highlight the social understanding of dis/ability; i.e. a disability becomes a dis-ability when the social context causes the deviation from the norm to lead to disadvantaged ability of participation or function. When the concept disability is used without a punctuation mark, it highlights either specifically a context in which a specific condition (impairment) is a hindrance of ability, or an external (to this thesis) context.

*Discrimination* in regards to disability is in the CRPD defined as discrimination such as distinction, exclusion, recognition, or denial of the fundamental freedoms, based on what can be defined as a disability. The definition encompasses all aspects of discrimination, including a refusal to have "reasonable accommodations". *Reasonable accommodations or fulfilment of rights* is a fundamental right stated in the convention. It points towards sufficient changes and modifications needed, not to impose an unnecessary or unreasonable strain for PWDs, and to ensure that they can have the same enjoyment of human rights and freedoms as all people are entitled to. (UN Enable 2015a)

### **3.2. Philosophical Framework: the Social Model of Dis/ability**

An overarching framework for this thesis, both in the descriptive discussion on previous literature, background of the field and a basis for the methodological analysis, is the social model of dis/ability.

The social model of disability critiques "normality". It is founded on the idea that "disability" is a social construct and that it becomes a disability specifically in the space created between an impairment and the relationship that is constructed between the impairment (and the individual)

and the outer society. That is, for example, the social environment of attitudes, stigmas, political beliefs, the socio-psychical environment such as architecture and urban development, and political systems of service (Hurst 2005:65). The social model understands dis/ability to be a political issue of social oppression and identifies the barriers of PWDs to accessing their full humanity and human rights (WHO 2001 in Hurst 2005:70, 78).

The model was first coined in 1981 by Mike Oliver, then as a reaction to the view of dis/ability as an individual problem that needed to be "helped" (Barnes & Mercer 2004:3). Since then, the social model of dis/ability has been dominant in both political and academic dis/ability discourses since around the turn of the century, which has been most strongly manifested in the UNCRPD (constructed entirely based on this model) (Barnes & Mercer 2004:19). The shift in the discourse should be contrasted with the previously dominant understanding of disability - namely, the medical model. The medical understanding of disability is that of seeing a person as "disabled" based on physical impairment (Degener 2017). With this understanding comes a notion of disability being a negative attribute, which necessarily ought to be "fixed" or avoided to the greatest extent possible. This is fundamentally an non-compatible approach to human rights, i.e. restricting the freedoms and humanity of a person on the basis of physical or emotional impairment.

The social model is the primary political tool used to advance dis/ability rights matters in policy, and it is widely used in the academic discourse (Hurst 2005:65). Despite this, the model has faced various criticisms in the past decade. The critique is generally strongly focused on the non-versatility of the model. Despite various legal incentives, it can be criticised for disregarding the agency of dis/abled persons; to say that the disability is a responsibility of the surrounding society may point towards disincentivising empowerment for social action from within the movement (Degener 2017). Moreover, the social model approach can also be criticised for, on the one hand, not highlighting the values of impairments for human diversity, as well as, on the other hand, being non-accepting of any policies to prevent impairments (Degener 2017). However, according to Degener (2017), these perspectives are a matter of interpretation and use of the approach. She argues that the CRPD specifically uses a social understanding of dis/ability that is also inclusive to a human rights-based understanding of dis/ability.

As most of the critique appointed towards the social model understanding of dis/ability regards the implementation of the approach in operative projects and practise, this thesis is built on the assumption that the approach is still the best philosophical framework available for a completely academic assessment on the topic. There's an important distinction between the social model as a tool for social change versus using it as an analytical tool (Hurst 2005:66).

### **3.3 Theoretical Framework: Mainstreaming Dis/ability**

Scholars such as Stein (2013:301) argue that dis/ability mainstreaming is essential for developing inclusive societies and the fulfilment of human rights for PWDs. This stems from the fact that dis/ability exclusion and discrimination is a cross-cutting issue present in essentially all sectors of society, both on social, economic and physical levels (ibid).

A standard definition of mainstreaming, also to be detected in other mainstreaming approaches, e.g. gender mainstreaming, is to include the perspective in all aspects of development and to go beyond just increasing the number of participants involved from the specific target group or increasing the number of projects targeting this group (De Waal 2006:209). In the context of gender mainstreaming, the aims can be said to explicitly require the assessment of implications for women and men of all projects and actions (ibid). The gender perspective needs to become present as an essential and fundamental dimension of whole project cycles (from design, proposal, implementation and evaluation); by transforming the general and the "mainstream", equality can be achieved (ibid). Mainstreaming is a deliberative and purposeful strategy, rather than a broad philosophy or some afterthought, to accommodate an already existing plan to a wider target (De Waal 2006; 210).

Largely inspired by the movement of gender mainstreaming, many took to advocate for mainstreaming of dis/ability too (Albert 2006 in Grech & Soldatic 2016). The same definition can be translated into the concept of dis/ability mainstreaming; by including dis/ability perspectives throughout the whole process whilst tending to their needs from a social perspective, the rights

and experiences of PWDs in that context can be perceived as equal to that of the norm of the beneficiary. Mainstreaming is not a goal in itself; equality is.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined disability mainstreaming as specifically the inclusion and participation of PWDs in all activities and services intended by any non-specific group (WHO & World Bank 2011 in Grech & Soldatic 2016:5). However, this does not entail more specific instructions on what the implementation would look like, which remain open for interpretation. Some scholars, such as Anomsari and Mursalim (2020) or Miller & Albert (2005) use a definition similar to the one described above, and this is the approach used here as well. More specifically, dis/ability mainstreaming implies that dis/ability is displayed at all organisational actions and functions.

Moreover, drawing upon the philosophy of the social model of dis/ability and the demands of the UNCRPD, what is defined as dis/ability perspectives or dis/ability inclusive perspectives must tend to the social model and not the medical. Dis/ability interventions that tend to the medical perspective by, for example, addressing medical interventions for unmotivated preventative measures (such as selectively aborting fetuses that are believed to have a dis/ability) may indeed address dis/ability, but they can not be included in the definition of dis/ability mainstreaming as they are not measures that are implemented to achieve equal rights for PWDs (Stubbs 2002; European Commission 2019; Miller & Albert 2005:12; Anomsari & Mursalim 2020; Hurst 2005:76). Arguably, medical measures are more so a threat to the lives and existence of PWDs, rather than accommodating to their human rights (Barnes 2019:3; Degener 2017).

In the thematic analysis, I utilise a framework for defining "disability mainstreaming", developed by Skarstad & Stein (in the article "Mainstreaming disability in the United Nations treaty bodies", 2018). This is, to my knowledge, the most extensive and explicit developed framework for defining dis/ability mainstreaming. The reason for using this specific definition stems from its broad and all-encompassing approach, covering both the general and specific approach to dis/ability - i.e. both addressing the social dimension issue of acknowledging the existence of a social-level issue (acknowledgement of rights pointing towards dis/ability discrimination) while also covering a mobile action dimension (acknowledgement of equal rights). Moreover, the

framework was developed to specifically analyse dis/ability mainstreaming on a thorough organisational level (for the UN), making it suitable also for the analysis of my case, which similarly analyses the case of one organisation. The framework defines the theory across five criteria, in two categories, as displayed in table 3.3.1.

Category 1: Acknowledgment of rights
1. Disability integrated in general concerns.
2. Disability addressed as a particular concern.
Category 2: Equal rights
3. Same type of rights.
4. Same level of fulfilment of rights.
5. Same duties in order to fulfil rights (mandatory obligations).

Table 3.3.1 Framework for disability mainstreaming

“Disability integrated into the general concerns” means that disability is mentioned, among other factors, to be considered or be a point of concern. When it is addressed as a “particular concern”, disability is addressed as a concern in itself, not among other groups of concern. “Same type of rights” means that the human rights of PWDs are mentioned or considered. “Same fulfilment of rights” means that reasonable accommodations have/should be taken to specifically fulfil the rights of PWDs (which might indicate more extensive action than fulfilling the human rights of

persons without disabilities). Mandatory obligations are explicit mentions of obligations that one or more actors are required to adhere to, to fulfil the rights of PWDs, i.e. incentivising and ensuring accountability of the agent. According to this theory, if all five dimensions are applied, dis/ability can be considered to be mainstreamed.

## **4. Literature Review**

A broad body of literature could be examined in relation to the topic of dis/ability inclusion and mainstreaming in development. Here, I will discuss the most relevant works and scholars in relation to, firstly, the CRPD as the most fundamental pillar of disability rights. Secondly, Sweden and dis/ability. Thirdly, global institutions and dis/ability inclusion. And finally, other mainstreaming practises within the international development field.

### **4.1. The UNCRPD**

The purpose of the UNCRPD is essentially to empower PWDs to enjoy full human rights and empower them to enjoy their fundamental freedoms (Wazakili et al. 2011:15). As of 2019, 180 countries (including the EU and Sweden) had ratified the UNCRPD, making dis/ability matters more salient than ever (Ahlgren et al. 2019).

The UNCRPD Article 32 explicitly states that PWDs need to be included and a present thought in development programmes and efforts, and should thus be mainstreamed rather than pose a single possible strategy or approach (UN Enable 2015b). The CRPD preamble also states that disability mainstreaming is a vital part of sustainable development (Stein 2013). However, scholars such as Black and Stienstra (2016) highlight the difficulties of translating the targets and blueprints set out by Article 32 into practice and efficient policies that generate change.

Furthermore, the CRPD also obligates all national agencies to take all necessary actions to ensure a halt to discrimination of hinders to enjoy full, equal enjoyment of human rights for people with disabilities, including promoting international cooperation on these issues (Wazakili et al. 2011:16). This includes economic, social and cultural rights being mainstreamed into all

economic and social development programmes within a nation that has ratified the convention (ibid). This can be interpreted not only as "Sweden needs to mainstream dis/ability within all Swedish national development programmes and agencies", but also as that this needs to be done within national agencies operating for development outside of Sweden, as Sida does.

## **4.2 Sweden and Dis/ability**

Sida is a critical player in the nordic field of international development agencies and recognised across the world, especially for its rights-based approach to development and its strong commitment to advancing gender equality (Alffram et al. 2020:87). So, Sweden is good at feminist development - but how intersectional is this feminism? What about dis/ability?

In 1987, Sweden (together with Italy) was the first state to suggest an international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities to the UN (Hurst 2005:69). Later, the Swedish government ratified the UNCRPD in 2008, and since then, Sweden has been externally examined by the UN on this point once in 2014, and with two additional reports in 2019 (Ahlgren et al. 2019). The most recent reports showed that despite a history of strong dis/ability rights in Sweden (e.g. being a model country for the Law on Support and Service to PWDs) and no recent prominent economic declines, the situation for PWDs has taken steps backwards in recent years. In fact, Sweden is now the country in Europe where PWDs living in poverty are increasing in numbers the fastest (Ahlgren et al. 2019:14). The general recommendation from the report by Ahlgren et al. (2019:80) states that it is crucial that dis/ability perspectives are mainstreamed in all decision-making public institutions in Sweden, and additionally they included recommendations specifically related to the UNCRPD Article 32; to prioritise dis/ability perspectives in the international development work and the SDG goals, especially in line with the UNCRPD recommendations.

Despite the previously mentioned incentives and obligations featured in the UNCRPD (see point 4.1.), poverty reduction strategies in national development agencies rarely feature specific policy on dis/ability (Wazakili 2011:19), as is also the case of Sweden. Whilst Sweden applies a human rights-based approach, which is said to entail dis/ability perspectives, and additionally have previously received praise from the UN for its twin-track approach (i.e. both using an

intersectional perspective to all projects as well as supporting dis/ability-specific projects) in addressing dis/ability (Algren et al 2019:79), Sida does not have an explicit policy on mainstreaming dis/ability. Moreover, beyond stating that the twin-track approach is present, there have been no reports on its implementation or function (Ahlgren et al. 2019:79). If dis/ability is not specifically addressed in policy, it generally aggravates the issue of bringing funding and sufficient attention to PWDs to actually contribute to alleviating their struggles through development efforts (Wazakili 2011.19.).

#### **4.2.1 The Human Rights-Based Approach to Dis/ability**

The HRBA is reviewed as it is the general policy approach used at Sida, both as a philosophical pillar and an approach to development efforts in practice. It is the primary way in which the agency addresses dis/ability rights.

The HRBA is, by definition, the consideration of human rights and democracy as a fundamentality for all development activities (Alffram et al. 2020:1). The HRBA has grown significance exponentially within the international development field since the turn of the century. The HRBA entails a solid dimension to bring about legal capacity-building and legal rights to vulnerable groups, as the approach builds on international human rights law (Broberg & Sano 2018; Alffram et al. 2020:1). However, in the context of PWDs, one may question how capacity building and legal rights can be utilised in the same way for persons who do not face the same mechanism of social oppression as the general majority. For example, the political context that is present where the approach is used may significantly impact the implementation and outcomes of the policy (Broberg & Sano, 2018:655).

Broberg & Sano (2018:673) states that the HRBA is not suitable for all types of development nor all kinds of recipient communities. Additionally, the HRBA has shown to be most efficient in terms of ensuring that the "weakest" citizens can claim access to basic services such as sanitation, health care and education (2018:672). Pointing to the word "claim", this begs the question - is the approach sufficient to meet the needs of PWDs who might need extensive adjustments to have their rights met? Another concern raised by Broberg & Sano (2018:675) is that the HRBA requires pervasive knowledge about recipient communities and target groups. This, in turn,

indicates that using the HRBA approach to support PWDs may pose a considerable challenge, as we know that knowledge about PWDs in developing countries is one of the most significant gaps detectable in international development discourse today (Ahlgren et al. 2019:77).

In an evaluation of the HRBA at Sida conducted by Alffram et al. (2020:87), it was found that there is a significant variation in the understanding of the approach among Sida staff as well as between Sida staff and Sida's cooperation partners. The evaluation indicates that the approach was widely affected by individual understandings of the approach rather than an institution-wide commitment (Alffram et al. 2020:88). The report does not mention outcomes and impact of using the approach in relation to specific groups (such as PWDs). Still, it does note, for example, that in all four partner countries reviewed in the report, the non-discrimination principle of the HRBA had been interpreted with a focus on gender equality rather than PWDs or LGBTQI matters (Alffram et al. 2020:70).

### **4.3. Global/National Institutions and Dis/ability Inclusion**

Despite large-scale global commitments to the UNCRPD and the evident need for dis/ability inclusion on the international development agenda, policies in most development organisations remain quiet on the matter (Mcclain-Nhlapo 2016:426). However, some examples of dis/ability being mainstreamed into the core development policies can still be found both on national and international scales.

International agencies that employ a mainstreaming approach to international development as well as in internal policy include the European Union (Waddington 2018; Van den Sanden 2020). For example, the European Pillar of Social Rights *"advocates for a strong disability mainstreaming approach throughout the developing policy framework. The full participation and equality of people with disabilities should not be limited to disability-specific policy proposals but, like gender equality, should be considered in all relevant policies and initiatives of the European Union"* (Waddington 2018:9). Another example is the UN, which has taken to mainstream dis/ability since the commitment to the CRPD in 2006 (Skarstad & Stein 2018).

Government agencies for international development in the Global North or in high-income nations that have implemented specific policies on mainstreaming disability are, for example, the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID/UKaid) (Australian Government 2018; UKaid 2018). AusAID states in their policy to utilise a "*mainstream approach—actively including people with disabilities as participants and beneficiaries of development efforts across all sectors*" (Australian Government 2015:12). The UK government department for International Development states in their policy that "*We remain committed to mainstreaming disability inclusion across all of our work—in all policies, programmes, in all country offices and across all sectors—and continuing a twin-track approach of mainstreaming as well as specific and focused action for people with disabilities.*" (UKaid 2018:23). Academic literature on the success and impact of these policy approaches have not been found.

#### **4.4. Other Mainstreaming Policies in International Development**

Mainstreaming of other topics (mainly gender) have been a central topic in the development discourse in the past decade. When studying dis/ability mainstreaming, there is a lot that can be learned from gender mainstreaming. The philosophies of the policy approaches share a multitude of commonalities – e.g. empowering a specific social group that requires attention due to structures of social inequality (Miller & Albert 2005). Gender mainstreaming can be defined as the policy practice of including the perspectives and needs of all genders as a fundamental consideration within all organisational activities (Tsige et al. 2020:2007). Large international development institutions such as the World Bank or the United Nations Development Programme have adapted "gender mainstreaming" approaches to promote gender equality and empowerment of women (Parpart 2014:382,384).

Despite being efficient at addressing a specific topic within policy (i.e. gender), the policy approach of gender mainstreaming has also faced a lot of evidence-based criticism for not being efficient at generating impact in practice (Parpart 2014:384; Cornwall 2007). That is not to say that the approach has been useless, as there are still some examples where gender mainstreaming has successfully generated increased gender equality and real change for women (Parpart 2014:384).

Ultimately, based on the experience of gender mainstreaming at large international development institutions, a lot of the success would be dependent on large-scale knowledge and capacity building within organisational management, not just policy changes (Parpart 2014:386). Ugglå (2007) found that previous practises of mainstreaming gender, environment and HIV/AIDS at Sida (in the early 2000s) faced issues of insufficient goal setting, lack of monitoring and evaluation, lack of sufficient responsibility-division and ambiguity in approaches, and factual knowledge among staff (Ugglå 2007:32). This indicates that the case would be similar for dis/ability mainstreaming; simply mainstreaming a topic is not a panacea for inclusion.

## **5. Methodology**

In this chapter, the methodology that has been used will be described and presented along with comments on benefits and limitations to using the specific methods and approaches applied. Moreover, the exact process of how the methods and analysis have been applied will also be described, firstly in the case of the textual analysis and secondly in the case of interviews.

### **5.1 A Qualitative Case Study**

Case studies allow for a comprehensive analysis with deep and well-connected insights, which then can be utilised to say something about the structure of a matter on a broader scale. (Bryman 2012:69; de Vaus, 2001:220). Despite being a case study, the basic objectives of this research are meant to be useful in wider discussions. Dis/ability mainstreaming is a matter of concern for a wide variety of organisations, and the results of this research are likely to be useful in other related ways (Marshall 2012:59). Additionally, as I examine the concept of dis/ability inclusion in practice but with a specific angle (of dis/ability mainstreaming) in an exploratory manner, a case study also makes for a great fit (Gomm et al. 2000:5). The study is retrospective, as data is collected at a single point in time and examined over a specific time period, to generate data from which thematic codes derived from theory can be identified (De Vaus 2001:225-227; Creswell & Creswell 2018:52, Bogner et al. 2018:660).

This study is highly qualitative because it employs two different methods for data collection and analysis (textual analysis as well as interviews), both of which are based on qualitative analysis. Among the great benefits of using qualitative approaches is that it allows for first-hand contact with the evidence and the potential to move beyond initial analysis and traditional expertise and examine personal perspectives and interactions with key individuals and organisations that affect development cooperation in practice.

## **5.2 Data Collection & Analysis Process**

### **5.2.1 Qualitative Thematic Textual Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a suitable method to identify the common themes across a set of textual data to answer a particular question (Cooper et al. 2012), in this case, to determine the level of dis/ability mainstreaming present throughout the Sida documents, as well as the thematic patterns that appear in the interviews.

Since dis/ability mainstreaming is a broad and complex concept, a qualitative review of the records is appropriate for determining the current state of dis/ability mainstreaming. The documents are chosen to be as recent as possible, which has resulted in a timeframe of five years (2015-2020). In the analysis, I utilise mostly (but not exclusively) deductive coding, applying my framework to the data (Linneberg & Korsgard 2016) to situate the data within the theoretical framework and not to oversee other critical insights. The specific thematic framework that has been used to code data is available in the appendix (1.2). Indicators for "dis/ability codes" were mentions of words and concepts such as *disability, impairment, sign language, physical accessibility, accessibility, mental health, chronic illness, the UNCRPD*.

I analyse four policy documents published by Sida. Two of the documents are purposefully chosen to reflect explicit policy at Sida; i.e. they represent the policy guidelines on the values and aims of the organisation on the one hand, and the specific aims regarding views on dis/ability at Sida on the other hand. These include the 'Thematic Briefs on the HRBA at Sida' and the 'HRBA at Sida Compilation of Briefs on Persons with Disabilities'. Moreover, two randomly chosen

documents have also been analysed to represent the general inclusion of dis/ability perspectives in Sida's international projects.

### **5.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews**

The policy analysis has been complemented by interviews with workers at Sida. This is to match the framework and research question. Only analysing documents would give a one-sided version of the actual implementation and use of dis/ability perspectives. As dis/ability mainstreaming is, per definition, supposed to be an integral part of all aspects within the organisation, the perspective of Sida staff entails knowledge beyond what is stated on paper, hence valuable information to assess whether dis/ability mainstreaming is actually present. Interviews is a good method especially to reach personal insights and experiences on the subject (Punch 2013:168).

The expert interviews have been designed as semi-structured discussions with open-ended questions (Willies 2006:149). Three interviews have been conducted, each stretching between 30 minutes to an hour in time. Each interviewee holds expert (senior or middle-management (Bogner et al. 2018:654)) positions within Sida, some of whose positions directly touch upon topics such as human rights. That is, some of them were experts on the matters, and others contributed with an insider perspective of how non-experts (on disability and human rights per se) come in contact with dis/ability in the work role. All interviewees were contacted by email, and the interviews were set up on video call using Zoom. The interview discussion points, as well as the information used at outreach, are attached in the appendix (1.1) and are drafted based on the theoretical framework. The topics covered in the interviews were the interviewees' perceptions of dis/ability inclusion at Sida, their own understanding of dis/ability inclusion and mainstreaming, and their own experience of being incentivised to use this perspective. Some of the interviews also included discussions on dis/ability policy at Sida and in Sweden at large, as well as shorter comments on the pros/cons of mainstreaming dis/ability at the level of donor organisations. The interviews were audio-recorded and have been manually transcribed. The interviews were conducted in Swedish, and the quotes mentioned here have been translated by me. The data have been analysed inductively and deductively through the same theoretical framework as the textual data, in order to describe the present level of mainstreaming.

## 6. Ethics & Limitations

When doing any type of research, but especially when working with qualitative data and methods such as interviews, there is a range of ethical considerations and research limitations that need to be discussed. Here, I discuss firstly the limitations of my research process, secondly the methodological ethics that have been considered, and finally, the ethics and limitations of the specific topic of this study.

Limitations to the methods include the fact that policy manuals serve as an obtrusive repository of data, i.e. they are written by Sida (for Sida), and with that, some subjectivity may occur (Creswell & Creswell 2018:242). Additionally, interviews may also be obtrusive in nature, e.g., through researcher appearance and intervention, or by the interviewees providing socially appropriate responses (Bogner et al. 2018:653; Halperin and Heath, 2012:318). This is a common delimitation to qualitative research, which needs to be considered by both the researcher and the reader.

The researcher bias is aimed to be minimal or at least visible through the utilisation of a detailed record and openness of procedures for study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:133). The method and analysis have been openly displayed to ensure validity and clarify any possible bias in all steps of the data collection and analysis (Creswell & Creswell 2018:251; Halperin & Heath 2017:328). Furthermore, the definitions and meanings of data, categories and codes have been carefully scrutinised in order to ensure consistency (Creswell & Creswell 2018:253).

The ethical considerations of using interviews have also been carefully considered. The consent and anonymity of the interviewees and the secure storage of interview data have been ensured. Moreover, interviewees have been provided with detailed information of what the data will be used for, with what aims it has been collected and towards what kind of research question it is aimed to contribute. They have also been informed that participation is voluntary and have been given the option to withdraw their participation at any time. (Scheyvens 2014:165)

This work is intended to be useful from an empowering perspective, which for the aspiration of scholarly science is candidly conveyed (Scheyvens 2014:261). I highlight my own positioning as

a neurotypical and able-bodied ally and not an expert on the matter of dis/abilities in any personal or non-academic sense. This thesis is written with the present thought of my own positioning in mind and aims foremost to be a personal learning process, whilst also hoping to support the causes and hard work done by disability activists every day.

Moreover, using a framework constructed by scholars in the Global North might bring about certain delimitations on the topic in terms of a global perspective (Eide & Ingstad 2011:2). That is, Europeans and people in the Global North generally seem to bring a perspective to the field, assuming it is the relevant perspective to have also in the Global South. The perspective (theory) used is a product produced in the west and that might have its limitations in relevance for development projects in the Global South. However, as this case specifically examines an agency based in the Global North, the hope is for this perspective to be sufficient to give a nuanced picture of the possible frames of development-donor agencies functioning in the "developed" world.

## **7. Analysis and Findings**

The coding of the data generated a broad set of answers to the research question. Here, the analysis and findings will be presented in a mixed-data display. The analysis process resulted in codes along with two overarching topics: dis/ability mainstreaming in practice and dis/ability mainstreaming in policy and philosophy. Within these dimensions, more specific practical aspects (such as the organisation internally, international cooperation, etc.) will be covered.

### **7.1 Dis/ability Mainstreaming in Practise**

Dis/ability mainstreaming in practice signifies the practical actions that occur within the organisation or the organisation's work. That is, this section is aimed to present the findings on how dis/ability mainstreaming appears to be present in the outcomes of Sida's work.

### 7.1.1 Non-inclusion within International Projects and Partnerships

One of the main findings in the thematic textual analysis was that dis/ability perspectives were often not concretely included in projects. The two randomly chosen project evaluations (Sida 2020; Sida 2018) were scanned for references to dis/ability or inclusion of disabled perspectives or persons, with zero results of indicators, i.e. fulfilling none of the thematic criteria for dis/ability mainstreaming. (In comparison the word "gender" was mentioned 29 times in the first document and 78 times in the second). Despite two documents not being representative of the general work of the organisation, the finding depicts the general approach to Sida-funded projects as not necessarily inclusive of dis/ability perspectives. It is a clear indicator that the current policy is not corresponding to (implemented) dis/ability mainstreaming.

This indicates that at least the criteria (5) *Fulfilling mandatory obligations* in regards to meeting dis/ability needs are not a mainstreamed concern in any sense. Other criteria such as (3) *Same type of rights* and (4) *Same level of fulfilment of rights* can not be commented upon based on these findings, as dis/ability matters are not addressed within the documents, and the specific inclusion of PWDs or DPOs varies between each project. However, it would be sound to assume that if these criteria were fulfilled in any of the evaluated projects, it would have been explicitly mentioned.

The interviews generated comments in line with this finding. Two out of three interviewees stated that dis/abled persons or disabled peoples' organisations (DPOs) are rarely invited to the table in any stage of a donor-project unless the project is specifically targeting PWDs. As we discussed this point during the interviews, one interviewee brought the perspective that *"the actual challenge is often that Sida only does the analysis and follow up with evaluations to ensure quality, not the projects. The analysis needs to be correct, and that is where the rights based approach is important. [...] But, sometimes, knowledge is lacking, there might not be a local statistics agency in the context in question"*. That is, in some instances, it is beyond the control of Sida to ensure inclusion in the actual programmes and efforts that Sida supports. As Sida is not an implementing agency, their role as a donor is at times limited. Moreover, the problem seems to reach beyond the willingness to include PWDs, i.e. lacking existing research and available information on how and when and why PWDs should be included.

### 7.1.2 Political Disparities between Sida and its Partner Organisations

Not entirely disconnected from the lack of inclusion of dis/ability perspectives in the general Sida-funded project, there seems to be a significant disconnect between practice within Sida and the governments and organisations that Sida works with as cooperation partners and partner countries. The interview data indicate that although Sida utilises the HRBA to a large extent within multiple thematic areas within the organisation, it is not always the case that the corresponding stakeholder is open to adapt to the knowledge and frameworks of Sida on any deep or meaningful level. One interviewee suggested that *"inclusion through support to DPOs can also be difficult if these organisations are "weak" in structure and capacity, or don't exist within a specific context where Sida is working"*. Another one highlighted the challenge in addressing the differences in policy approaches: *"It's a constant question, what responsibility or right does Sida have to ensure or question partners about what they should be knowledgeable about? [...] Maybe Sida can offer opportunities for partners to learn about the rights-based perspective or [other approaches], but Sida can not "educate" if there is not interest from the partner themselves"*.

The HRBA-disability document indicates a similar sense as most of the discussed challenges on the ground are addressed as to be countered with an open discussion on what Sweden can bring onto the table as a topic of discussion (Sida 2015b). See, for example, page 13: *"What Sweden could do – 8 questions to discuss [...] Could Sweden do more to stay updated on the situation of persons with disabilities in the region and the measures initiated by AU and regional bodies to address the rights of persons with disabilities (e.g. the disability architecture AUDA and the post millennium agenda)?"* (Sida 2015b).

A related finding which was mainly expressed through the interviews, was that although dis/ability often is addressed at Sida as (1) *a general concern*, the inclusion of dis/ability as a (2) *particular concern* varies largely depending on the person and project that the process is regarding.

### 7.1.3 Practical inclusion in Sida's Work in Sweden

Within Sida's work in Sweden, on the other hand, all interviewees expressed positive views of inclusion and accessibility (i.e. a high frequency of sign language interpretation, physical

accessibility at seminars etc.). This is an important indicator especially for the (3) *same type of rights* and (4) *same level of fulfilment of rights*.

The textual sources discuss mainly Sida's international engagement and do, therefore, not give a lead on the perspective of including dis/ability in Sida's home-based work. Thus, the question of practical dis/ability inclusion of dis/ability on the Swedish base of Sida was mainly addressed through the interviews. The interviewees expressed a more positive view of Sida's success of inclusion in Sweden than internationally. Especially one interviewee gave an in-depth insight into how Sida works with inclusion locally in Sweden. They stated, "*For example in the course activities we pursue, we have a very comprehensive and inclusive perspective, both concretely, for example, the building - is it accessible? But also functionally - are we accessible, participatory, and transparent in how we function? Are our staff inclusively represented? [...] How do we make information and communications accessible? We consider all these perspectives carefully [...] it is something we continuously work to improve*". This discussion highly indicated that the (1<sup>st</sup>), (2<sup>nd</sup>), (3<sup>rd</sup>) and (4<sup>th</sup>) criteria of mainstreaming are fulfilled, as PWDs are both considered and actively included.

## **7.2 Dis/ability Mainstreaming in Policy & Expertise**

This section is aimed to present the level of dis/ability mainstreaming that was found to prevail within Sida on philosophical grounds.

### **7.2.1 Dis/ability in the HRBA at Sida**

The data analysis of the "Human rights-based Approach at Sida Thematic area Beliefs" indicated that the document fully fulfilled all dis/ability mainstreaming criteria. Dis/ability was addressed multiple times both as a (1) *general concern*, as well as (2) *a particular concern*; For example, "*Does the intervention make a deliberate effort to facilitate inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups (e.g. women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities etc.)?*" (Sida 2015a:71) or "*How can persons with disabilities, elderly and ethnic minorities be supported to resist violent conflict and benefit from protection?*" (Sida 2015a:71).

Moreover, guidelines were described within the official beliefs to fulfil the CRPD (Sida 2015a:40) and recognition of the rights of PWDs, fulfilling point (3). Guidelines and commitments also correspond to point (4), to accommodate the rights of PWDs as to support their access to human rights; For example, “*A HRBA to health aims to realise the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (right to health) and other health-related human rights*” (Sida 2015a:26).

The (5<sup>th</sup>) *point of mandatory obligations* was also addressed multiple times within the document, for instance, “*Governments must take deliberate measures and allocate resources to challenge actions and structures within the health service that lead to stigma and discrimination of certain groups (e.g. women, elderly, persons with disabilities (physical and mental), persons living with HIV and/or TB and Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender persons (LGBT-persons))*” (Sida 2015a:32). That is, addressing responsibility to the governments to adhere to the international agreements to counter discrimination.

However, although the document as a whole fulfils the thematic criteria for dis/ability mainstreaming, the image would differ, were the different thematic areas covered within the document to be analysed separately. Each subject area within the document would not alone fulfil the corresponding dis/ability mainstreaming criteria. Whereas dis/ability was referenced quite frequently as to be a concern within some object areas, other areas barely touched upon it. For example, it was mentioned as much as twelve times in reference to health (Sida 2015a:26-38), but only mentioned one time in reference to climate vulnerability, and then also only as a (1) *general concern* (Sida 2015a:13-26). If dis/ability mainstreaming were to be applied and fulfilled, it would need to be a holistic concern within all areas.

The interviewees all expressed a positive view of the HRBA in terms of what it means in terms of dis/ability inclusion. To quote one, “*If you apply the rights-based perspective correctly, inclusion of all relevant rights-bearing groups will be included. This won't necessarily mean that disabled people are included in all efforts, but it results in informed decisions and well-grounded, inclusive strategies underbuilding what is done and why*”. The general view seemed to be that, as long as the HRBA is used correctly, it allows all avenues for dis/ability inclusion to be present when these

perspectives are important and needed; that is, the perspective is sufficient to support PWDs although it might not have the exact same character or results as a specific dis/ability mainstreaming policy would.

### **7.2.2. Knowledge and Awareness Among Sida Workers**

The findings gave some lead to how aware workers at Sida are regarding dis/ability inclusion and dis/ability matters in general. The interviewees seemed to agree that if knowledge among staff, partner organisations and other stakeholders were sufficient, dis/ability could be more comprehensively approached within Sida's work. That is, indicating that knowledge and awareness currently are not sufficient.

One stated that dis/ability is sometimes simply a perspective that is “forgotten about” and thus not included. The perspectives among the interviewees seemed to diverge on this point, as those who had been active in Sweden were more optimistic about Sidas' success in including PWDs and DPOs than were those whose work was mainly in international cooperation. One interviewee stated, *“Questions of disability inclusions are integrated into the general concerns at Sida, but this also requires the programme manager at Sida to have the competency and knowledge to bring about discussion on these questions”*, implying that although the general framework for inclusion is sufficient, it is very dependent on sufficient individual knowledge and capacity. Another one stated: *“We are not missing anything formal. Potential for improvement lies within competency and capacity, understanding, clarity, both among Sida staff and our partners. Clarity in the methodological application of the HRBA... Here we can still improve, and this is also something that Sida recognises and take into account”*. The conclusion that can be drawn from the discussions seems to be that ensuring (and building) competency and sufficient knowledge is central and exhibits room for improvement. Still, there is organisational education on the HRBA and dis/ability Sida, i.e. fulfilling an important indicator of mainstreaming.

### **7.2.3 Should it Be Mainstreamed?**

Two of the expert interviews included discussions on whether the policy approaches to dis/ability at Sida are sufficient enough to address dis/ability matters or if a more comprehensive policy approach to dis/ability would be needed. Both interviewees were of the opinion that, although dis/ability is not always included in every step of the actions within Sida, the existing policy

approaches would be sufficient to allow for the inclusion of PWDs and DPOs. One of them states, *“Sida wants to work with rights and problems according to local contexts, what groups that are prioritised in projects can thus often depend on the country and partners in question, which is something that the rights-based approach allows for. Often it is women with disabilities that are the very most vulnerable, but then the HRBA should address that, and be applied to support those.”*. Another one states, *“In a way, disability is almost approached in the same way as if it was mainstreamed, as it is one of the central non-discrimination policies. However, Sida has chosen to rather support specific actions, such as direct support to DPOs (such as International Disability Alliance) to rather support these organisations in their work for PWDs. It is a deliberate choice to approach disability in the way Sida does”*. Another one state, *“There are always things that could be improved, especially in terms of building competency etc. But I am very unsure that further perspectives would solve any problems. Most likely, adding new policy would not make it better”*, i.e. all three implying that a mainstreaming policy is not the way to go if the goal is to improve inclusion of dis/ability.

As also evident by the analysis of the HRBA at Sida, dis/ability perspectives seem to be a consistent and mandatory concern. However, it is essentially up for interpretation if each individual case should include the perspective or not; something that a mainstreaming policy would not allow for.

#### **7.2.4 Is the Social Model of Dis/ability Used?**

As stated in the HRBA at Sida briefs on persons with disabilities, Sida supports a non-medical understanding of dis/ability (Sida 2015b:2). The rights-based perspective used is also highly compatible with the social understanding, as both employ a socio-constructed worldview and support the fulfilment of rights (Sida 2015a:2). However, it is also stated that it is a problem for Sida to control that the funded projects also employ this view of dis/ability, as some organisations and governments still employ a medical understanding of dis/ability (2015b:2). But, to the extent of the guidelines addressed in the HRBA at Sida, each employee should adhere to the social understanding, which can be considered an essential aspect of mainstreaming dis/ability. The data collected through the interviews indicate that the employees understand and utilise dis/ability from the social model as well, clearly understanding dis/ability with the rights-based approach as a starting point.

## 8. Concluding Discussion

Finally, this thesis can be discussed through its findings in the context of specifically two dimensions - firstly, what answer has been generated in terms of the research question, and secondly, which questions remain unanswered?

### 8.1 Is Sida's Approach to Dis/ability Inclusion Equivalent to Dis/ability Mainstreaming & Should it Be?

Dis/ability inclusion at Sida checks some boxes of dis/ability mainstreaming, but dis/ability is far from mainstreamed. Most commonly, dis/ability is included in the *general concerns (1)*, and sometimes as a *particular concern (2)*, most commonly in projects that specifically target PWDs. Dis/ability at Sida is clearly understood by the *social model*, seemingly both in policy and by Sida workers. However, this view is not always shared by partner organisations. The *rights of PWDs (3)* are integrated into the core philosophy of Sida (through the human rights-based approach), as the human rights of PWDs are clearly supported. The *same fulfilment of rights (4)* is a stated aim of Sida but not always implemented. The *(5) mandatory obligations* is an ambiguous point, as not many of the findings here point to mandatory obligations of fulfilling the rights of PWDs, although Sweden clearly is committed to the cause. The HRBA and Sida's (Sweden's) commitment to the UNCRPD does allow for the interpretation that dis/ability rights shall be considered and included.

Some of the findings ultimately became a critique of the research question itself. The results lead us to a discussion on whether dis/ability actually should be mainstreamed or not within donor-level development institutions and organisations. As evident by the findings, there is already a comprehensive thematic background at Sida, which provides the potential for the organisation's work to be inclusive of dis/ability perspectives, perhaps even to the extent of it being mainstreamed. However, as of now, the findings indicate that the existing policies and practices at Sida are not equivalent to dis/ability being mainstreamed; although they would allow for such, it is not a general priority for dis/ability perspectives to always be included. Dis/ability is included sometimes, but not always. The findings clearly indicate that Sida deeply considers dis/ability but could potentially do so to an even larger extent. In some areas, inclusion is still

lacking. Especially in terms of international cooperation and partnerships, the dis/ability perspective seems to not often be included in comparison to Sida's work at the Swedish base.

Whether an explicit dis/ability mainstreaming policy would solve the issue of inclusion in terms of actual positive outcomes for PWDs and development at large is beyond the findings of this research to determine. Perhaps a dis/ability mainstreaming policy would more efficiently include PWDs and DPOs, but as also seen in the literature review of other mainstreaming policies, such an approach might also come with other types of challenges. However, the findings of this study do indicate that increased education and awareness of dis/ability matters among Sida workers likely would have a positive impact on the inclusion of PWDs within the organisation and its work.

## **8.2 Suggestions for Further Research**

The findings leave a few indicators of areas in which further research would be needed. For example, comparative studies of tangible outcomes for PWDs between organisations mainstreaming dis/ability and organisations such as Sida that approach inclusion from another perspective would be needed to map out the most efficient and impactful policy choices.

This thesis also does not address the broader scope, beyond Sida, of Swedish development efforts, humanitarian assistance or other foreign political affairs and their engagement with dis/ability inclusion (e.g., at Swedish foreign embassies). That is, to actually assess the full image of dis/ability inclusion within Swedish international political affairs, the case would need to be broadened beyond only studying Sida.

Lastly, the findings also indicate that there is a large research gap in assessing the situation of PWDs in the developing world - what actions do they need from Western-based donor-organisations (do they need them?), how can Western-based organisations best support them, and how do they want to be included?

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# Appendix

## 1. Material for data collection & analysis

### 1.1 Interview discussion points

*This interview will be structured as a discussion on the topic of disability inclusion at Sida, facilitated by a framework of disability mainstreaming. The interview is conducted in order to inform my thesis on “disability mainstreaming in Swedish international development work”. Note that if you feel like you are unable to answer any of these questions or never thought about the concepts/topics, it is also entirely valid to simply state that you are not familiar or have no opinion on the matter. Some of these questions might be very specific and difficult to answer, so of course, you are not expected to be an expert. Mostly, your opinions and experiences are what interests me!*

*Participation in the study is completely voluntary, and by participating in the interview you consent to data being collected. All the information you share will remain confidential and anonymous. The data collected will be used solely for research purposes. If you at any time wish to refrain from answering or withdraw your participation in the study, you are free to do so.*

- Do you have an understanding of what disability mainstreaming means?
- Have you ever come across the concept of disability mainstreaming in your role at Sida?
- Did you ever participate in training as part of your job, where you were explicitly taught about:
  - disability mainstreaming
  - disability perspectives
  - disability inclusion
- What is your perception of Sida’s inclusion of persons with disabilities?
  - In Sweden
  - Internationally
- Sida works with a human-rights-based approach (HRBA); what does this imply in your perception, in regards to disability inclusion:
  - Do you feel that your colleagues generally have a clear understanding of the HRBA and does this understanding include disability?
  - Do you think disability inclusion/perspectives is a significant part of the HRBA?
  - On paper (bylaws, administrative, documentation), how do you find that the disability perspective within the approach is present at Sida?
  - In practice, do you find that the approach makes a difference or has an impact in terms of including disability perspectives at Sida?
- Do you have anything to add beyond what we have discussed on this topic?

## 1.2 Framework for Data Analysis: Thematic analysis of Disability Mainstreaming

Document/Interview	HRBA	HRBA - disability	Project evaluation 1	Project evaluation 2	Interview #x
1. Disability integrated in general concerns.					
2. Disability addressed as a particular concern.					
(A) Use of the social model of disability					
3. Same type of rights.					
4. Same level of fulfilment of rights.					
5. Same duties in order to fulfil rights (mandatory obligations).					
(B) Other indicators of mainstreaming (i.e. present throughout the organisation in policy and practise)					