



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 040

Tuesday, November 28, 2023



Chair: Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury

Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.)): Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 40 of the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

[Translation]

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

[English]

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of the witnesses and members.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mic, and please mute yourself when you are not speaking.

[Translation]

Regarding interpretation for those on Zoom, you have the choice, at the bottom of your screen, of either Floor, English or French. For those in the room, you can use the earpiece and select the desired channel.

[English]

For members in the room, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand. For members on Zoom, please use the “raise hand” function. The clerk and I will manage the speaking order as best we can, and we appreciate your patience and understanding in this regard.

[Translation]

In accordance with the committee's routine motion concerning connection tests for witnesses, I am informing the committee that all witnesses have completed the required connection tests in advance of the meeting.

[English]

Please join me in welcoming the witnesses who are appearing this morning as we continue our study of international disability-inclusive education.

From CARE Canada, we have Nidhi Bansal, director, program quality and impact; and Mohammed Emrul Hasan, chief programs

officer. From Humanity and Inclusion Canada, we have Anne Delorme, executive director; and Julia McGeown, director, inclusive education. From Plan International Canada Inc., we have Lindsay Glassco, president and chief executive officer; and Peter Simms, senior education adviser. From Right To Play International, we have Susan McIsaac, president and chief executive officer; and Tracey Evans, director, global partnerships. From Save the Children Canada, we have Danny Glenwright, president and chief executive officer; and Sarah Moorcroft, senior education adviser. From World Vision Canada, we have Michael Messenger, president and chief executive officer; and Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore, policy adviser.

Thank you all for being with us today.

You will each have a maximum of five minutes for your remarks, after which we will move to questions with members of the subcommittee. I will let you know when you have one minute left.

We will begin with CARE Canada. Thank you for agreeing to appear.

Ms. Bansal and Mr. Hasan, the floor is yours for five minutes. Please proceed.

Mr. Mohammed Emrul Hasan (Chief Programs Officer, CARE Canada): Good afternoon.

Thank you, Chair, and thank you to this committee for inviting us to share CARE's experience on international disability-inclusive education.

My name is Emrul Hasan. I'm chief programs officer of CARE Canada. I'm joined by Nidhi Bansal, director of program quality and impact.

CARE is committed to equitable access to inclusive education and skills development for children living with disabilities. We particularly seek to address additional underlying barriers to education faced by vulnerable girls living with disability.

We have all heard the staggering data that 50% of children with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries are still out of school. Crisis, conflict, climate disruption—these are just a few other formidable barriers to inclusive education for many children living with disabilities. In many countries, we do not even know how many children living with disabilities are not able to access education, because the data is simply missing.

Imagine that this child living with disability is a girl. Her chances of accessing or completing her education are further diminished. From our own study, we found that while boys in most cases are most likely to experience disabilities, girls across most contexts are more disadvantaged by disability due to a confluence of restrictive gender norms and disability-related stigma. In particular, adolescent girls with intellectual impairment are at a higher risk of experiencing sexual violence. These challenges are further amplified in fragile contexts and humanitarian emergencies.

A CARE study in northern Uganda found that both boys and girls who experienced war injuries, abduction, forced recruitment and ill health were significantly less likely to complete their education. Disabled girls were the least likely group to attend school. We can take this northern Uganda study and apply it to all those children who will survive today's wars with significant physical, emotional and psychological injury. The need for gender-responsive disability-inclusive education is more urgent today than ever before.

Canada has been playing a leadership role to promote inclusive and gender-responsive education. Today we offer two key recommendations for Canada's continued leadership in disability-inclusive education.

From our experience at CARE, the first thing needed is significant investment in strengthening systems to deliver disability-inclusive and gender-responsive education. Yes, we need more funding for programs that ensure that children living with all types of disabilities, especially girls and those in conflict contexts, can continue to learn in healthy and inclusive learning environments, with access to such critical support as trained teachers and accessible infrastructure. Equally important, investment is needed in supporting education to propose progressive education policies, building capacities of teachers to integrate the diverse needs of all children, establishing quality standards and promoting innovative assistive technologies for disability-inclusive education.

We also need to invest in improved collection of sex, age, and disability disaggregated data and accountability systems. Over the last decades, we have seen improvement in collecting sex and age disaggregated data. We need to make sure that we have not only age and sex disaggregated data but also data disaggregated by disability as well as other intersectional variables.

I will end here by observing that while there are incredible barriers for children living with disability, we know that each and every effort brings the barriers down a bit lower. The ideal of disability-inclusive education is a continuous process of incremental gains. Every effort and every investment towards this process counts. For gender-responsive disability education, we need to act today to address the multiple barriers and intersecting vulnerabilities. We need financial investments. We need your political leadership.

• (1110)

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. That's good timing.

I would like to invite Madame Anne Delorme or Ms. Julia McGeown to take the floor, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Delorme (Executive Director, Humanity and Inclusion Canada): Good morning.

Thank you for inviting me to appear before the committee.

Canada has made significant commitments toward inclusive education, which are also reflected within the Feminist International Assistance Policy's intersectional lens and each of the Minister of International Development's mandate letters. However, Canada must adopt and fund more specific and targeted interventions in order really to meet its inclusive education commitments.

• (1115)

[*English*]

The numbers are stark. One in 10 children has a disability, and an astounding 49% are more likely than their peers to have never attended school. Forty-two per cent are less likely to have adequate foundational reading and numeracy skills.

What are the barriers to inclusive education? Physical barriers are often the first thing that comes to mind. Those are often resolved by assistive devices like wheelchairs or ramps, but invisible barriers are often more of a challenge to address. Those include attitudinal barriers like stigma, so that children with disabilities are often shunned by community members or hidden by families because of gross misconceptions and fears. Children with disabilities are also twice as likely to face sexual, physical or mental abuse, and they are much more likely to be bullied.

[*Translation*]

Children with disabilities also face important institutional barriers such as a lack of inclusive education policies, teacher training modules or adapted education programs.

In addition, inclusive education initiatives tend to consider children with disabilities as a homogeneous group rather than offer adapted strategies to meet the needs associated with various types of disabilities, physical, intellectual or developmental.

It should also not be forgotten that girls with disabilities are especially vulnerable to violence and that gender norms contribute to reduced access to quality education. This was shown in a recent report published by Humanity and Inclusion, formerly Handicap International, on the education of girls with disabilities in West Africa.

[English]

How can we overcome these barriers? Humanity and Inclusion recommends a twin-track approach that includes both mainstreaming inclusion in the education sector and focusing on targeted support for learners with disabilities. Mainstreaming refers to the full integration of disability inclusion in the education system and national education plans. Humanity and Inclusion is currently working in 27 countries on 45 inclusive education projects to help transform education systems. This involves working on education policy, having early school screening and formal teacher training programs, and even building parents' capacity.

[Translation]

Mainstreaming is only half the solution. There must also be targeted support for learners with disabilities to achieve meaningful outcomes. Humanity and Inclusion has a wealth of experience demonstrating the efficacy of a targeted approach that focuses on disability-specific supports and community-based services, by working with more than 400,000 children with disabilities a year. This experience shows that it is essential to provide specific supports, such as appropriate assistive devices, adapted personal support and accessible learning tools. This helps us make sure that children with disabilities stay in school and reach their potential.

An example of community-based services is the establishment of mobile teachers, whose role is not only to support individual children with disabilities in schools, but also to guide and support teachers. This approach works. Rates of completion are higher. According to a school inspector from Togo, the number of pupils with disabilities is increasing in junior and senior secondary school, and school exam success rates are rising. These pupils now feel valued and are much more confident.

[English]

Another example of a multisectoral approach to community-based services is from Cox's Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh, which houses over a million Rohingya refugees. Humanity and Inclusion works with multidisciplinary teams, which include mobile health units, education professionals, speech and language therapists and physiotherapists who can promote early learning both at home and in the learning centres, as well as greater community acceptance. This approach has really benefited young children with physical disabilities, as well as those with autism, Down's syndrome, and other developmental disabilities.

To close, I'd like to share a few recommendations. There are five in total.

First, we have to ensure that all education programs focus on this twin-track approach of providing support to children with disabilities and transforming education systems towards inclusion for all learners, which is in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Second, we need to increase funding for educational programs that are focused on or include a dedicated objective on inclusive education. This should include stronger disaggregated data collection methods and tracking of budgets.

• (1120)

[Translation]

Third, we must include inclusive education training as a core part of continuing teacher training programs and ensure that it is properly funded.

Fourth, it is important to invest in long-term support for national and local actors, including local communities so that they can take ownership of inclusive education intervention and scale and sustain them in the long term.

Fifth, we must support the design and implementation of coordinated cross-sectoral strategies and thus work with various departments in the areas of education, social protection, health and equality.

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you on behalf of Humanity and Inclusion Canada.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Delorme.

I now invite Susan McIsaac or Tracey Evans to take the floor.

[English]

Ms. Susan McIsaac (President and Chief Executive Officer, Right To Play International): Good morning and thank you, Chair.

I thank you for this invitation to be a part of this and for your attention to this important issue of inclusive education for all children.

For over 20 years, Right To Play has used play, one of the most transformative forces in a child's life, to protect, educate and empower children to rise above adversity. Through working with children, teachers, parents and communities, we have learned a great deal about the power of play in improving inclusive and quality education for children.

At Right To Play, we firmly believe that taking an inclusive approach means addressing the multiple and sometimes overlapping barriers to education faced by girls, refugees, children in need of psychosocial supports and, especially, children with disabilities. Addressing the learning needs of the most marginalized children improves the education quality and learning for all. Inclusive education is when all learners are present, participating and achieving. With regard to disability-inclusive education, we believe in providing real opportunities for children with disabilities to learn and play side by side in the same school, for the benefit of all.

According to the WHO, one billion people, or 15% of the world's population, experience some form of disability, yet children living with disabilities often remain invisible. In lower- and middle-income countries, as many as 33 million children with disabilities are out of school, largely due to stigma and fear.

Right To Play has been addressing these challenges head-on by building community awareness to tackle stigma, providing inclusive education training for teachers and implementing strategies to support children with disabilities to enrol in and complete school. We are also working to rehabilitate classrooms, build ramps and provide assistive devices like wheelchairs, auxiliary crutches and orthopaedic shoes to support children's access to education. Over the last few years, we have also strengthened our internal capabilities by adapting and testing our unique play-based approaches to specifically include children with disabilities, providing an entry point for learning where traditional approaches have historically excluded them.

Play can also promote inclusion and dismantle stigma. An example of a popular game we lead is called “co-operation station”. Two groups of children are asked to assemble a simple puzzle. One group is blindfolded and the other must keep their hands behind their backs. At first they struggle, but then the group merges and co-operates to assemble the puzzle. The activity builds understanding, as children can appreciate the special skills each person brings to the table. It encourages empathy by changing attitudes that can exclude people with disabilities.

These types of play-based interventions are most effective, however, when coupled with teacher training and engagement with community leaders and coaches. In Mali, our projects are working to improve the skills and confidence of teachers in delivering play-based disability-inclusive education. In Burundi and Tanzania, we are improving access to education by raising community awareness around disability. At the start of the school year, community coaches and junior leaders lead door-to-door campaigns to encourage enrolment of children with disabilities, including referrals to specialized services for those children with the highest need.

While we still have a long way to go to realize the right of all children to receive a quality, inclusive education, examples such as these and the others we have heard today make me hopeful that it is, in fact, possible.

Before I conclude, I want to leave the subcommittee with four recommendations for your consideration.

One, Canada can continue to build on its demonstrated leadership in global education by raising the bar on quality, inclusive education for all. This means ensuring that its policies and programs seek to address multiple and overlapping barriers to access, including gender, refugee status, psychosocial well-being and disability.

Two, Canadian investments in global education must also support teacher professional development to give teachers the confidence and skills they need to deliver gender-transformative, disability-inclusive education. This includes proven methodologies like play-based approaches.

Three, the international community, including donors, ministries of education and NGOs, must set specific targets to ensure that all learners with disabilities are reached in all educational programs.

- (1125)

Finally, four, Canada can and should increase budgetary allocations to international development assistance more broadly, with

specific increases to inclusive global education in next year's federal budget.

I look forward to the results of this study, and I am hopeful that this subcommittee will offer its strong support for inclusive education globally.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McIsaac.

Now, I would like to invite either Mr. Danny Glenwright or Ms. Sarah Moorcroft to take the floor for five minutes, please.

Mr. Danny Glenwright (President and Chief Executive Officer, Save the Children Canada): Good morning.

Thank you, Chair. Thank you to the subcommittee for inviting us to speak with you today.

As you noted earlier, my colleague Sarah Moorcroft, our senior education adviser, is joining me.

Save the Children works to address the rights of children in more than 120 countries. My comments today will be through the lens of our global experience on disability-inclusive education. Particularly, they are on the global crisis for children with disabilities and their right to quality education in low- and middle-income countries, and what we need to do to respond.

I will speak to three urgent issues. The first is an ongoing deprioritization and depletion of inclusive education funding. The second is an increase in conflict and climate crises. Last are the discriminatory attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Two hundred and forty million children—that's one in every 10—live with disabilities. The link between poverty and disability is inextricable. We know that 80% of people with disabilities live in low- and middle-income countries. According to the World Bank, 20% of the world's poorest people have some kind of disability. With more conflicts globally such as in Gaza, Ukraine and Yemen, we're seeing increases in disability due to blast injuries from explosive weapons. Even after a conflict ends, children are 50% more likely to suffer blast injuries that cause disabilities, because they pick up unexploded devices while playing. Trauma from conflict and a constant fear of conflict also severely affect injured children's development, learning and future potential.

As my colleagues have shared today, almost half of all children with disabilities have never attended school. This number is higher in many countries such as Ethiopia, where more than 90% of Ethiopian children with disabilities are out of school today. Why is this? It's partly because many of our education systems are on the brink of collapse due to significant decreases in global education funding. Additionally, as I mentioned, we're seeing a rise of climate and conflict crises, which frequently close schools and disrupt learning.

Earlier this year, UNESCO found that there's a \$97-billion U.S. annual funding education gap for education financing. Many countries are far off the target for sustainable development goal number 4, with its target to ensure inclusive and equitable education for all. As well, the aftermath of COVID-19 has led to significant cuts in public funding for education. Contributions from donor countries like Canada have declined. Without proper resources, education systems are overcrowded and under-resourced. Children with disabilities are the first to suffer. Without proper resourcing, there are no effective systems to screen for children with disabilities. There's no support to families to provide rehabilitation and assistive learning devices, or to ensure strengthened and accessible school grounds, latrines and classrooms that support children's learning as well as their emotional, psychosocial and physical needs.

Look again at the case of Ethiopia and the conflict in northern Ethiopia. We know the education system in Tigray was not operational in 2021, which made it impossible for 1.3 million students to even go to school. When the conflict spread to the Afar and Amhara regions, more than 4,300 schools were either damaged or destroyed. That meant that an additional 1.9 million children were unable to continue their education in those two regions.

A crisis is not neutral. Education for children with disabilities is deprioritized or forgotten during a crisis. Already out of school, these youth are invisible in education, emergency and recovery plans. They're seen as a curse, misfortune, and cause of shame for their families and their communities. Teachers see them as a nuisance. Ministries see them as too expensive, with little return. We know, of course, that none of this is true, but these discriminatory attitudes silence children with disabilities and impede their rights. This situation is unacceptable.

As Canadians, we have the power and means to act, and we must. We must prioritize investment in global education with and for the most marginalized children, particularly in low- and middle-income countries and in fragile places, some of which you've already heard about today. Education is life-saving. It's the pathway to peace and security for all of us.

• (1130)

Canada has long been a leader in global education. Now we need to revitalize our strategy for resilient, inclusive education to ensure that no child is left behind. Today, we'd like to recommend that Canada renew and scale its global education funding so that we continue to focus on inclusive education agenda for the most marginalized, one that is grounded in an intersectional approach, and so that we target emergency areas most impacted by climate and crisis.

I'll leave you with final words from Maysoun, a 15-year-old girl from Sudan who uses sign language. She has sadly witnessed countless verbal and physical abuse towards deaf children in her 15 years. She says, "Children should know their rights and how to advocate for them. You must provide children with education and the means to protect themselves from violence and harassment, especially those with disabilities."

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Glenwright.

I would now like to invite either Mr. Michael Messenger or Ms. Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore to take the floor for five minutes, please.

Mr. Michael Messenger (President and Chief Executive Officer, World Vision Canada): Thank you, Chair and committee members, for inviting World Vision to contribute to this important conversation.

I'm joined by my colleague Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore, who brings a policy background in education and social inclusion.

For over 70 years, World Vision has operated as a relief, development and advocacy organization delivering programs and insights in stable and fragile contexts. With our programming and a support network of supporters here in Canada, we work across many sectors, including education, to respond to the needs of the world's most vulnerable girls and boys.

We're pleased to provide testimony in support of this important study.

I visited Peru last year, and there I met Wilmer. He was a young man who had suffered a spinal injury while swimming when he was a young teen. He fought for his life for 15 days in a coma. He spent three months in the hospital and required a tracheotomy to breathe. The accident took a tremendous physical toll on him, leading to lifelong physical disability. He was unable to walk. He had limited use of his hands and arms, and had to rely on others for many of his basic needs.

Wilmer faced more than just physical disability. He told me, when we talked, about his struggle with mental health, suicidal ideation, social stigma and economic exclusion. Along with learning how to navigate a body that required different things, Wilmer also had to learn how to live in a society that was persistently telling him that he was somehow now of less value.

In places where we work, for many children and young people like Wilmer who navigate disabilities, the commonality is not disability itself but rather the obstacles and barriers, physical and invisible, that societies impose on them. Wilmer's story is just one example of the need for our communities, civil society and decision-makers to create enabling environments where all children and youth, especially the most vulnerable, can access equitable outcomes and enjoy a high quality of life, and education is key.

In Wilmer's case, through World Vision's Youth Ready education and life skills program, he received customized support, training and mentorship, and seed capital. This enabled him to start a successful welding business. Today, he proudly owns a growing small business that supports his family.

Wilmer's story is one of many, and I feel proud that we were able to provide support through education, but I'll be frank. At the same time, at World Vision, like many organizations, we have a long way to go. For every young person we've worked with to improve access to life-saving and life-sustaining support, there are countless children and youth with disabilities we've left behind, perhaps because we didn't bring an inclusive lens in understanding the communities with which we work or because we didn't adequately take into account the particular needs of children who would benefit from inclusive approaches to education.

I remember visiting Zambia and talking to a disability activist. After I was telling him about how proud I was that we were doing better in reaching the most vulnerable in communities, he challenged me by asking how we were reaching children with intellectual and developmental disabilities who were so stigmatized in that community that they were often hidden away from our community workers. Our usual approaches, even though they were community-based and community-supported, simply didn't look hard enough to ensure that we were really taking an approach of inclusion.

With that, I have three messages for you today.

First, from our experience, children and youth with disabilities possess invaluable expertise regarding their own experiences and needs, and we need to listen to them. Speaking for the international development sector, it is crucial that we continue to actively seek out opportunities to engage and collaborate directly with young people on the margins to create and implement solutions that are responsive to and informed by their lived experiences. We have to listen and act grounded in their reality.

Second, inclusion extends beyond mere rhetoric. Motions like the one you're studying are critically important, and we value them, but the mere mention of including people with disabilities is inadequate. We need to integrate people with disabilities into the fundamental framework of our programs.

Disability is also complex, and we can't assume that one size fits all. Individuals with disabilities are not a monolith. Achieving meaningful inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in education requires us to demonstrate empathy and acknowledge the intersecting and intersectoral challenges and realities they encounter.

Let me finish and close with two recommendations. These are based on the transforming education summit and the disability inclusion call to action, which we endorse.

● (1135)

First, what gets measured gets managed. We urge Canada to set medium-term and long-term targets to ensure that all learners with disabilities are reached. This includes improving the collection, monitoring and use of disaggregated social identity data in strategies to ensure that all children and young people can access quality, equitable and inclusive education and lifelong learning.

Second, meaningful inclusion requires meaningful investment. The motion focuses on prioritization of inclusive education. We also call on Canada to progressively increase specific funding for disability-inclusive education. We suggest moving toward making it at least 5% of our education budgets.

Our awareness of disability has increased dramatically in recent years, revealing that more children are affected by visible and invisible disabilities. Concurrently, the world is grappling with escalating crises, rising displacement and increasing demand for mental health and psychosocial support services. We can't keep standing by watching as our goal of creating a more fair, just and equitable world by 2030 slips farther away.

Canada can step forward to ensure that all children are given the chance to live life to the fullest, to be protected and to achieve their full potential.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Messenger.

[*Translation*]

Thanks to the witnesses for their testimony.

We will now go to questions from members of the subcommittee.

[*English*]

For the first round, I would like to invite Mr. Lake to take the floor for five minutes.

I'm sorry. I would like to invite either Ms. Lindsay Glassco or Mr. Peter Simms to take the floor for five minutes, please.

● (1140)

Ms. Lindsay Glassco (President and Chief Executive Officer, Plan International Canada Inc.): Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights.

I am here today with my colleague, Peter Simms, who's Plan Canada's senior education adviser. It's a true honour to be here along with our fellow witnesses to share our message of the necessity of prioritizing and investing in disability-inclusive education.

Plan International Canada is part of a global federation working in 80 countries. We focus on children's rights and gender equality for girls in all their diversity. Plan delivers \$200 million a year of education programming, working directly with those who are most marginalized.

Across the countries where we work, we see the children with disabilities stigmatized and facing violence, abuse and maltreatment. We also see children with physical, intellectual or sensory impairments continually denied their right to education.

Education systems around the world are failing children with disabilities, with disastrous consequences. We know that today around 240 million children around the world have a disability. We also know that almost the same number of children are out of school, but these are not unrelated statistics. Half of out-of-school children in the global south have a disability and the problem of out-of-school children is, to a significant extent, a problem of a lack of inclusive education.

Children with disabilities face significant barriers, both in and outside of school. They are less likely to enrol in school, less likely to meet learning standards and less likely to complete any stage of education. Their absence from school also means that they miss out on school meals and they miss out on health campaigns, such as vaccine programs, and consequently they face higher health risks.

In short, children with disabilities are excluded from the short- and long-term benefits of education. Their needs are clearly not being met.

Plan International prioritizes the rights of women and girls in its programming. We see that gender is a significant barrier to education for children with disabilities. Even for those in school, girls with a disability are 10% less likely to finish primary school than boys with a disability. Disability intersects, exacerbates and is itself a product of wider inequalities, most notably poverty, gender discrimination and the existence of conflict or crisis.

Let me tell you the story of Munira, a girl from Borno in north-eastern Nigeria. One day she was walking to fetch water, like all girls do, and was hit by a car. Her leg had to be amputated, leaving her with a lifelong mobility issue.

For girls like Munira, going to school was already a challenge, because she lives in a community where ongoing conflict and repeated insurgent attacks on schools are terrorizing children and making parents afraid to send them back to class. In fear, many families choose not to give their daughters an education. Not getting an education, we all know, exposes girls to greater risk of gender-based violence and early and forced marriage.

The fear of Munira's parents to send their daughter to school was now compounded by the fact that their daughter had a disability. They didn't think a girl with disabilities could make use of an education, and they chose to keep her out of school.

Munira discovered an accelerated learning program through an awareness session held by Plan International. She tentatively inquired whether she, a girl with one leg, could join. You can imagine that she was thrilled when the answer was a resounding yes.

With Plan's support and with funding from the Canadian government, Munira returned to school, with classes tailored to fill the gaps in her education and with accessible facilities to ensure she could attend and learn. Munira's story is illustrative of the challenges girls face in crisis situations and how those challenges are multiplied for girls with disabilities.

Plan International integrates disability inclusion into all of its education programming, but I have to confess that it could do so much more. Disability rarely exists independently of other vulnerabilities, including age, gender, extreme poverty, conflict and fragile

contexts. Understanding the intersectional nature of disability is central to ensuring that we are able to bring about lasting change.

• (1145)

In conclusion, Plan International recommends, like all the other witnesses here, increased investment to make sure that children with disabilities are not left behind. Investment is vital to address the needs and uphold the rights of children with disabilities.

We also recommend new approaches in disability responses that are truly inclusive and address the intersectional nature of disability, including gender inequality. This involves engaging people with disabilities in defining solutions and ensuring that they are at the table.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now I would like to go to questions and answers with the members of the committee.

I would invite Mr. Mike Lake to take the floor for seven minutes, please.

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Let me start by saying a huge thank you to all of the witnesses here today. I have known many if not all of you for a long time. I have found that, as we have driven this conversation, there has never been any lack of willingness to have the conversation and to take on tough questions.

Today I am going to start with Anne and Julia, because you're the one organization here that is specifically focused on disability and inclusion.

The language that we use in the sustainable development goals talks about the hardest to reach. It talks about leaving nobody behind. When we talk about the hardest to reach and people left behind, in your experience—I'm going to focus specifically on developmental intellectual disability—how hard to reach are people with developmental intellectual disability? How much further are they left behind typically?

Ms. Julia McGeown (Director, Inclusive Education, Humanity and Inclusion Canada): Thanks for inviting us to this panel.

I think you're right to start with that question because, typically, they are the most disadvantaged, the most likely to not be enrolled in schools, not accessing schools and, even if they are in schools, they might not be able to access a quality education even when there, which is something else that I think we should highlight.

In terms of the percentage of children with the most severe disabilities or the most complex needs who are able to access education, it's the smallest number—I think it's under 1% or something, typically. It's very low. It's a very small percentage. I think, and I'd have to check all the statistics, that there used to be a statistic that 90% of children were out of school with disabilities, and that's now gone down, as many of you mentioned today. It's often about 50% these days, but when it comes to children with more complex developmental needs, I think in the recent UNICEF study in terms of looking at the different types—and that was looking more in terms of functional difficulties—they were seeing high proportions of children. It was getting close to 90%, or 95% even, of children out of school when they had more complex needs, and it is a lot in low- and middle-income countries, so it is a vast challenge.

I think it's a challenge that has been able to be addressed, as we said, in some contexts, and I think that we need to.... It's really worth mentioning the fact that this is often the most neglected group of children, particularly in terms of the support that's given, so I think it's worth mentioning that.

There are also a lot of good things we can say about what has been achieved in some places and what can be done to support children with these types of needs, as we mentioned.

Hon. Mike Lake: As we're talking about potential solutions, again in the big picture, I'm going to look at Right to Play.

When I think about potential solutions, the world is focused significantly on education. It might not be enough. Obviously, we have to do a lot more on education broadly, but I think there is more than \$4 billion toward Global Partnership for Education and over \$1 billion toward Education Cannot Wait, just to name two big organizations globally that are working on these issues.

It strikes me, from personal experience, from my son's experience in school, that when he was included in the classroom, it helped everybody else to be better. That wasn't why we included him in the classroom; it was all about Jaden, but ultimately what we learned was that every other kid was better off for having him included there.

Right to Play does amazing work. I think you do amazing work at trying to reach harder-to-reach kids. What do you find to be the benefits for the kids without disability when you include people with disabilities in Right to Play programming?

• (1150)

Ms. Tracey Evans (Director, Global Partnerships, Right To Play International): The benefits definitely are multi-faceted, both for the children who are being included and for their peers, and we have a lot of evidence globally to support that.

In terms of their peers, we see a lot of social emotional growth, increased empathy and also ability to work with and engage with people with different types of disabilities. What we're trying to mimic in the classroom by promoting an inclusive environment is what both children with disabilities and their peers are going to face when they go out into the wider world. I think the challenge is that the barriers we face in segregated education systems are not reflective of the eventual reality that both individuals with disabilities and the rest of society are going to have to engage with.

A classroom provides a safe, inclusive environment in which everyone can learn how to interact with one another, not just children with and without disabilities but boys and girls, refugees who are learning in different contexts. The education system provides a nice environment in which to do that, and we firmly believe that play, specifically, opens doors to foster that kind of engagement and allows children to learn these life skills in a way that makes sense to them.

Hon. Mike Lake: I have a very short period of time on this one, so I will go back to Humanity and Inclusion.

Do you have any advice for the other CEOs around the table, as they're thinking about the work that they already do, the really important work that they do, on how they might maybe work with Humanity and Inclusion to take action on something that we all agree is a pretty significant issue?

Ms. Julia McGeown: I think that, first and foremost, it's quite likely that whatever you do for children with disabilities is going to benefit all children, so don't see it as a separate thing. Oftentimes they will invite us to come and work with them but then have it as a siloed thing as part of their overall education program. This should be embedded across all of the aspects of the program, not just maybe a little section on disability-inclusive education for teacher training or something, or accessibility, which might be what people assume, or counting the number of children with disabilities in the classes, or something around data collection but not across the board.

Actually, the best way of including disability-inclusive education is literally at all levels, embedding it everywhere. Until you do that, it's not going to be true disability inclusion. I'm not saying that everybody might do this, but there can be a sort of disability-washing mentality around ticking the box for doing disability inclusion but not doing it throughout the whole program.

That is my biggest piece of advice, and that inclusion does cost money. You can't allocate a really tiny amount of funding, 2% or something, for disability and expect that your entire education program is going to be fully inclusive—it will be a touch, an absolute drop in the ocean. To go back to the funding point, in being mindful to do it well, it actually should be given a sufficient budget allocation.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McGeown.

Now I would like to invite Ms. Anita Vandenbeld to take the floor for seven minutes, please.

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Thank you very much.

I have several questions, but I would like my first question to go to you, Ms. Glassco. You spoke specifically about gender and about the particular discrimination against girls with disabilities. One of the things you mentioned was the higher proportion of these girls who face gender-based violence and early and forced marriage. I was wondering if you could elaborate a little bit on the differences in gender, and specifically whether it is also important to have not just education for these girls, or for gender non-conforming individuals, but also sexual health education.

Ms. Lindsay Glassco: Indeed, gender is a huge issue. Multi-country estimates show that girls with disabilities are more likely to be out of school than boys with disabilities, and they face all of these other significant barriers, some of which you referenced. One of them is health care and access to sexual and reproductive rights. There are a whole variety of other access issues they are facing in terms of health care specifically.

Girls with disabilities and girls in general, as you mentioned, experience heightened rates of gender-based violence. They are also facing communication and cultural barriers, due to stigma, in reporting incidents and accessing referral services where they do exist. This is all compounded in special education institutions, where girls with disabilities are often more isolated from their support networks. There are likely to be significant ramifications for survivors, related to mental health, motivation and access to school. Even if the infrastructure is there, the barriers presented to them in terms of their ability to have access and speak out verbally, and the cultural implications, are huge, so they just don't do it.

This stigma and these cultural barriers are seen at the community level. They are seen at the family level and they are seen with the parents. Parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school. Of course, when there are economic hardships or the crisis situation I spoke to earlier, these are all barriers that girls are basically confronted with daily.

• (1155)

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld: Thank you very much for that.

My next question is for Ms. Delorme.

One of the things you mentioned that struck me was about early learning. When we talk about education, we usually think about grade school. We are not necessarily looking at preschool or early learning. I wonder if you could elaborate on that.

Ms. Anne Delorme: I will let my colleague Julia help me along with that, please.

Go ahead, Julia. Thanks for being here with me.

Ms. Julia McGeown: It's a good question, and sometimes early years education is different in different contexts, of course. There's a mix, a good hybrid mix, between ECD, or early years learning, and formal education marrying up with pre-primary and primary education. These days, in many countries in Africa and Asia, pre-primary education is often in the same school as primary education, so we're talking about sometimes starting four-year-olds or five-year-olds within the same formal setting as the primary. Then there are some settings where it might be even earlier.

Obviously, we're talking more about how to help transition between non-formal settings and community-based education initiatives, because often it's those children who drop off the radar, especially children with disabilities in the early years. Maybe early ECD providers and health care providers might be able to track those children. They get to three years old or four years old and then they're off the radar, and it's a really key stage to keep hold of them and track them. Otherwise, they get to six years old or seven years old, ready for primary, and we can't find them anymore. We often find early intervention is also key in terms of development, so if you do everything early on, you have better and longer-term outcomes. However, it's also about being able to continue with those children and support them through the transition from the early years services through to primary education. Children with developmental disabilities in particular can really benefit from that, but so can all children with disabilities and without, in fact.

Another really quick point is that children with and without disabilities merge really well together at that age group. I've seen it myself in those early settings. They don't notice that the child has different needs; they absolutely don't bat an eyelid. You can really promote inclusion in these younger age groups, which can be a really good model for older groups, where that might be more of a challenge. You can really promote inclusion in society by having inclusive early years settings where children are able to play and get along with each other.

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld: Thank you so much.

I don't know if I have time for a question to CARE.

The Chair: You have about a minute, Ms. Vandenbeld.

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld: Okay.

We have one minute to talk about something that you and others have also mentioned, which is the stigma. It's one thing to provide education, to provide resources and to provide funding, but ending stigma is a much more difficult thing. In 45 seconds, could you let us know how to do that?

Thank you.

• (1200)

Ms. Nidhi Bansal (Director, Program Quality and Impact, CARE Canada): Thank you so much for that question.

That is the crux of the matter. It's the belief that it is indeed beneficial to have children with disabilities included in the education that is offered.

Stigma happens at both levels. It has to be addressed at the community level. Therefore, the response that is required is not just in the education system but in the social structure as well. It's also within the education system right from the top, up to the teachers who are providing the education at the school level. As a system, it's about believing there is a need for addressing this issue and then supporting the frontline teachers delivering that education, and then at the community level. All three levels are needed.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Vandenbeld and Ms. Bansal.

[*Translation*]

I now invite Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe to take the floor for seven minutes.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being with us today, both in person and online.

Two things in particular stood out from their respective presentations. The first is access to vulnerable populations, that is, children with disabilities, in this instance, today. The second is funding.

My first question concerns access to vulnerable populations.

Second, we have worked on Bill C-41. It was designed in part to ensure that people are able to work with vulnerable populations in countries like Afghanistan. I wonder if the fact that a country is controlled by a terrorist entity, as is the case in Afghanistan, is still a problem for your organizations.

Do you still have trouble accessing vulnerable populations of children with disabilities despite the passage of Bill C-41?

That's an open question. I know that World Vision Canada took part in the discussions, as did CARE Canada, I believe.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Messenger: With respect to Afghanistan, the efforts on Bill C-41, particularly the humanitarian exemption, have certainly opened up the opportunity for us to continue to do the work there. There are still some matters that are being worked out in terms of the details of that, but our commitment is to release funding to ensure that it is reaching the most vulnerable in that context. That includes some of our education programs as well.

We're committed to that. That effort has certainly helped. There still remain some barriers as we work out some of the details, particularly on the development side as opposed to just the humanitarian response, where it's not entirely clear. We're committed and we're positive about the ability to reach those in need.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: My understanding is that there has been an improvement but that the original objective hasn't yet been achieved.

Thank you very much.

As regards funding, Canada has nevertheless adopted a so-called feminist international aid policy. We've discussed the difference between the treatment reserved for boys and girls with disabilities. I

completely support the vision of a Liberal government international feminist policy. However, funding is the issue. Today, international aid represents 0.29% of Canada's gross domestic product, or GDP. That's less than the 0.32% level reached by the Harper government. Perhaps inflation is a contributing factor to that decline.

These days, when people talk to us about inflation, how hard is it for you to get federal government funding? How do you have to advance your international aid program? Are you considering taking action in the public space by appealing to the media, for example?

That's an open question, and I invite all the witnesses to answer it. Everyone has talked to us about funding. I can see the weak areas in the international aid the government provides. Canada is well below the 0.7% threshold requested by the UN. It's also well below the average for members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the OECD, which is 0.42%.

How can we force the government to provide more funding for initiatives such as yours?

How can we prevent certain political parties from including budget cuts in their political agendas? I'm thinking of the party that proposed to cut international aid spending by 25% in order to capture votes.

Do you have any suggestions to make on that subject?

[*English*]

Ms. Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore (Policy Advisor, World Vision Canada): Thank you for the question. I think it's very relevant.

We know that Canada has been a leader in funding education and inclusive, gender-equal education. Also, globally, we're seeing rising crises. We're seeing rising conflict, rising needs, and restrictions and limitations to what funding is possible right now.

I think World Vision isn't alone when it says that accessing funding has been challenging. Of course, earlier this year we saw the former minister of international development invest through education and emergencies at the ECW high-level financing conference, which was very welcome. Our needs are continuing to grow.

One thing we do hope to see is Canada continuing its leadership in investing in inclusive education and recognizing that we need financial investment that is flexible, adaptive and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable. It must also take into consideration that humanitarian development nexus and be able to respond to the different challenges that we're seeing in the world.

When we talk about disability inclusion, I think that piece on responding to the specific challenges is really key, as well as being able to provide flexible funding that allows us not just to sustain, but to actually reach the most vulnerable.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you very much.

I have a question for the Humanity and Inclusion Canada representatives.

However, I see hands still raised for the previous questions.

I yield the floor to you, Ms. Delorme.

Ms. Anne Delorme: We're in a very difficult budget situation. The message we're getting from the Canadian government is that there's no funding.

We've also seen that programs that target persons with disabilities or that have adopted that strategy are the first ones to be cut because they cost more. It costs more to travel to where children with disabilities live.

I can also answer Ms. Vandenbeld's question on sexual and reproductive rights. Unfortunately, they're the first projects that get cut. That's the way it is in every country. The most vulnerable individuals are exposed to risk, and they're the first ones to lose out when budget cuts are made. It's always the case.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you.

Mr. Simms, you also had your hand raised. You have the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Simms (Senior Education Advisor, Plan International Canada Inc.): I will be brief, because I know time is short.

It is about money. It is about the amount of money. Yes, there is never enough, but I think before that we should also be aware that we can do more with the money we have at the moment and be slightly better. That's in a couple of ways. This also relates to what Ms. Vandenbeld was saying.

We can bridge between sectors a little bit better. Inclusive education isn't just solved in the education community by ministries of education. We can link with ministries of health and ministries of social protection as well. Bridging together some of the services that are currently splintered can take us a long way. Then we can look at where more targeted additional money should go.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Mr. Chair, do I have any time left?

The Chair: You have 10 seconds left.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: In that case, the other people who had their hands up can answer my questions in the next round.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Boulerice, you now have the floor for seven minutes.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to everyone who has come here today to tell us about this extremely important issue.

I'll go first to the representatives of Save the Children Canada.

We're all aware of the dramatic events that have been unfolding for several weeks in Gaza, which is now living under indiscriminate bombardment. I'd like to hear what the people from Save the Children Canada think about this because they discussed it in their opening remarks.

What do you think are the consequences of this conflict and these bombardments in Gaza for children with disabilities? What impact will this have on their future?

[*English*]

Mr. Danny Glenwright: Sir, thank you very much for the question.

One of the reasons we chose to focus on fragile places today, especially those affected by conflict and other crises, is that, as some of my colleagues have shared, this is where children with disabilities are forgotten first. This is where they suffer the most, and this is where we are most worried.

The example of Gaza is a good one, because we've all been watching this unfold over the last several weeks. We know that the destruction that's been caused there is going to take months and years to rebuild. In the education system alone, we've seen that more than 300 schools have been damaged or destroyed, and that's more than half of all schools in Gaza. We know that more than 10,000 children have suffered injuries, and many of those injuries will be life-changing injuries. They will result in disabilities that children will be grappling with for the rest of their lives. That is not to mention the infrastructure that's been damaged. Those who have mobility issues will struggle to get to school, because many roads have been damaged over the past several weeks.

This is why we highlight the importance of addressing this, especially in places of conflict, because conflict is increasing. This example in Gaza is the most recent conflict that we've all been seeing.

Save the Children has been working in Gaza since 1953, in many cases in education. Part of why I mention this as well is that in many of these places where we've seen vast strides around education and inclusive education, conflict will set that back. It will make it a challenge for us to meet the sustainable development goal around education.

I haven't even mentioned the psychological and mental health effects of what has unfolded in Gaza, which will affect so many children there. Before this latest escalation of hostilities, we know that three-quarters of the children in the region were struggling. They were struggling to focus in school and they were reporting anxiety. Also, mutism was on the rise, where children lost the ability to speak. The impacts of conflict on children's education are immense. I think it's a critical area for us to be paying attention to. We're certainly relieved to see the pause in fighting in Gaza, and we hope that it holds.

Thank you.

• (1210)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you for your answer.

We're somewhat relieved by this cease-fire, albeit temporarily.

As you know, we're calling for a complete cease-fire.

In conflicts of this kind, the media often talk about people who lose their lives but rarely about the wounded. You're right in saying this will have very long-term consequences.

My question is for anyone who wants to answer it and specifically concerns children with disabilities living in the Gaza Strip.

What role should Canada play in helping children who find themselves in this extremely unusual situation?

I know my Bloc Québécois colleague mentioned Afghanistan a little earlier, but what should Canada's role be in Gaza?

The Chair: You have the floor, Ms. McGeown.

[*English*]

Ms. Julia McGeown: Thank you very much for the question.

To add to what others have said, it's important to get the message out there about what the overall effects of this are doing to children in Gaza, and the ongoing effects for children with previous disabilities, but also now for children with new injuries and disabilities.

Canada can play a role by highlighting and being able to spread messages. Many organizations are there doing lots of important work, but finding out the testimonies, finding out what's actually happening on the ground, and being able to help, promote and explain what's happening so that people are aware are all really important.

We have a report coming out before, during and after a crisis, for example. There is also weekly advocacy on things that are happening week by week, just to update the situation, to share what's actually happening on the ground and how we're supporting children, for example, with psychosocial activities, well-being activities, and just the sheer basic needs that are required.

I think it's about being able to raise that to the fore, because as you said, this hasn't had that much of a mention. It's much more, at the moment, about the numbers of dead, rather than the additional issues that are happening. There are people who had disabilities previously. For example, they can't move from the north to the south, because there are no physical means. Everybody else is

walking to the south, but they can't get there. What happens to them? They weren't able to move.

These kinds of testimonies aren't really out there in the media. I think it would be really helpful for Canada to be a part of helping to promote that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you very much.

Ms. McGeown, a little earlier brought up the concept of intersectionality. To what extent should the Canadian government incorporate that idea in inclusive education for children with disabilities?

• (1215)

[*English*]

The Chair: Would anyone like to answer?

[*Translation*]

To whom are you directing the question, Mr. Boulerice?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: It's for Ms. McGeown, if possible, so she can tell us a little more about how important the notion of intersectionality is.

[*English*]

Ms. Julia McGeown: About the notion of intersectionality in general, I think that's a really important point. I think that sometimes things are in silos. For example—

The Chair: Please wrap it up quickly because time is up.

Ms. Julia McGeown: Okay.

The point is this: Don't just focus on girls. Don't just focus on refugees. Don't just focus on children with disability. We need to think about all of the layers, the multiple layers and how that affects a child. A child is a child who's also a refugee, who's also a girl, who also has a disability. You need to account for all of those things, not separate things.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

We will now go to the second round.

[*English*]

I would like to invite Ms. Damoff to take the floor for five minutes.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Thank you to all of our witnesses for being here today and, more importantly, for the good work that you do around the world.

I'm going to start with World Vision.

You talked about taking an inclusive approach and how you missed the mark in one particular context. How do you make sure that we can include those with lived experience in developing programs, not just for the program in general but also the country context?

The second part would be, how does the government ensure that we're using people with lived experience when we are developing those programs? So often what's lacking is having people at the table with lived experience.

Ms. Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore: Thank you for that question.

I'm going to try to answer it with one key example.

World Vision Canada is the host of the refugee education council, which brings together 15 refugee and displaced youth from different parts of the world and with different lived experiences and backgrounds across intersections. We have youth who identify as LGBTQI+. We have youth who have disabilities. This is a group of young advocates with lived experience who are coming together to help support Canada's international development sector by informing our programming and helping ensure that the work we're doing at a programmatic and advocacy level is informed by lived experience, as well as supporting the Government of Canada.

The refugee education council works very closely with the minister and with Global Affairs Canada. Many of you around this table have had an opportunity to interact with them. It's a very strong example and a prototype of what this work can look like and what it can look like to actually bring folks with lived experience in the room to help ensure that nothing is done for them without them. I think that, especially when we're talking about the most marginalized, we need to create space for different types of knowledge, and different types of data as well. Knowledge informed by lived experience in this scenario is the most valuable.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you for that.

My next question is for Humanity and Inclusion Canada.

You talked about how inclusion costs money. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about how it actually saves money in the longer term.

Ms. Julia McGeown: Did you want me to answer?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Yes, please answer if you can. If not, I can get someone else to answer.

Ms. Julia McGeown: I can answer. That's fine.

Maybe you want direct figures, but essentially, retrofitting is always more expensive than starting out by being inclusive and accessible right from the get-go, so that's an example of how it might be expensive now to make schools inclusive and accessible. Here I'm talking about physical changes—so you have, maybe, ramps or larger, accessible toilets or classrooms that are light and airy, all of the things that make a school much more accessible to all children with different types of disabilities—but that obviously costs money. It's cheaper to do it right at the beginning if you're building a new school, making it inclusive and accessible to start with, than to do it later on. That saves money.

Also, if you think about the added cost to the wider society, the cost of not educating and of exclusion—and there are reports on this that we can share—is actually more than the cost of inclusion, because by excluding children you're obviously impacting society. Maybe their parents aren't able to work, so they, themselves, won't be able to grow up to have a decent job and gain income later on in life. That has a knock-on impact on the economy, for them and also for their wider family.

We should also think about the wider costs—less about the economic costs and more about the wider costs. Not having an inclusive society in general has an important cost for society. If the society is basically closed, inward-looking and not inclusive, that's not the society we should be advocating for, so I think it's also outside of the economic question.

There are studies that look at the actual rates of improvement for economic costs and for the GDP of a country by educating all children and not leaving out a section of children because it's not accessible.

• (1220)

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Damoff. Your time is up.

Now I invite Mr. Lake to take the floor for five minutes, please.

Hon. Mike Lake: Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Simms earlier touched on—it was in a conversation generally about budgets—challenging budgets globally right now with the circumstances we're in. Mr. Simms said that before a challenge we can do more with the money we have, not discounting the possibility of more funding but talking about bridging together what we have now.

In disability-inclusive education, there's a call to action. I don't know how many of you are aware of this call to action or have read it, but the call to action has just three main points in it. It's a two-page document. The three calls to action, in a sense, are the following. Number one is “Progressively increase budgetary allocations for disability-inclusive education towards being at least 5% of education budgets”, so talking about the percentage of budgets, presumably budgets that already exist around the world. Number two is “Set a medium to long-term target to ensure all learners with disabilities are reached in all education programmes, recognising that at least 10% of learners in any country will be learners with disabilities.” The third one is “Ensure all education programmes and grants mainstream disability and include disability-inclusion criteria and targets.” Those are the three asks of the call to action.

I'll point out that at this point in time—and you know what these things are like—not everybody is even aware that this conversation is happening. People are at different points in the process. I'll note that World Vision Canada, Humanity and Inclusion Canada, and Save the Children Canada, as of right now, I think, have signed on to this call to action. At this point in time, the other three of your organizations, to the best of my knowledge, have not.

My question is for Plan International Canada, CARE and Right to Play. When you hear me say those three things, are those things that seem like they would resonate with your organizations? Maybe we just need to reach out to encourage you to sign on to what seems like a fairly easy thing to support. I'll start with Plan International.

Mr. Peter Simms: I can jump in there.

Yes, even though Plan isn't technically a signatory of that call to action as yet, that's a procedural fact. It's not because we have any issue. We completely commit to those sectorial gains. We actually have slightly more ambitious ones in other areas as well. The nature of the development industry means that we sign these things in slightly different ways, but those three commitments are the absolute priority.

Mr. Mohammed Emrul Hasan: Those are absolute priorities, but I'll add one more here. We've been talking about measuring and having data, and a number of people have mentioned this. We quite often forget how difficult it is to get data in any circumstances, forget about going to hard-to-reach populations for data. I hope that it is a part of the mix and that we're able to really up the game there so that we can not only get the data that helps the programming but also measure the progress and show the progress over the time of the commitment.

Hon. Mike Lake: Absolutely.

Susan, go ahead.

• (1225)

Ms. Susan McIsaac: Yes, Mike, we are supportive.

Hon. Mike Lake: I'm not trying to trick anybody. It's one of those things that I think sometimes the conversation has....

We're looking for incremental steps that we can take in the right direction, and we want to turn that into action. The two-pager talks about the twin-track approach and other things. It also talks about the Washington Group's child functioning module, which I think lots of folks understand. Maybe some have had some input into early diagnosis and that kind of understanding.

I'm going to go to World Vision, but this could apply to almost anybody in the group. Peter was talking about that bridging. You're already doing work on the ground in however many countries. Each of you is doing work on the ground, and you have workers focused on children's health going door to door in many communities and talking to families—I've seen it on the ground, Michael, in World Vision's case—and yet kids are getting left behind.

To what degree could you hard-wire an awareness of what developmental disability looks like into that sort of door-to-door work you're already doing, especially if we're working on tools that you can then offer parents in terms of help? To what extent could we do

a better job of hard-wiring that awareness into the work you're already doing?

Ms. Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore: Some of that work we are already doing on the ground. In a number of regions where we provide teacher training on disability inclusion and disability education, teachers are equipped with sign language and able to assess and respond to various special needs. Teachers are even able to identify special needs and disabilities that learners may not have received a formal diagnosis on, and then they are able to support and work with parents and the community to ensure those learners are equipped with the right supports. We are doing some of that work already.

When we talk about the gaps and some of those shortcomings, that is in some of those more deliberate pieces. It's about ensuring that disability inclusion is not an add-on but is actually foundational and core to how we approach this work. It's the same as how we think about gender. When we talk about reaching the most marginalized, we want to make sure that we are intentionally building that into the core of our work.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

I would now like to invite Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe to take the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Delorme, I was surprised to hear other witnesses who appeared before you say that sometimes it seems hard for francophone children in Canada to find specialized French-language services, which requires families to turn to English-language services.

In your experience and practice, have you heard about that in the rest of Canada, especially regarding francophone children with disabilities outside Quebec? If not, others may comment on this.

There are no right or wrong answers. We're here today to discuss the subject of our study and to improve the situation. That's everyone's objective.

Ms. Anne Delorme: Unfortunately, I haven't heard that. We mainly work internationally, not in Canada. However, I could say that, generally speaking, the percentages of people who lack access to education in francophone communities such as those in West Africa are higher than elsewhere. There are problems in that area.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: That's the point of my next question.

When do you plan to address the problem? Your organization operates in 80 countries. The members of the Save the Children organization work in 63 countries. World Vision's representatives are virtually everywhere. I see there's a real discrepancy between the services offered to anglophone and francophone populations. That's what I've understood, but I may be wrong.

Ms. Delorme, you're very familiar with the problem. Can you tell us why it's that way? What potential solutions are there?

Ms. Anne Delorme: I'll ask my colleague Ms. McGeown to supplement my remarks if necessary.

We're essentially seeing something interesting happening. The organizations advocating for children's rights, women's rights and the rights of persons with disabilities aren't as well funded in francophone countries and are much more isolated. There are fewer regional mechanisms enabling those organizations to come together to plead their case to their governments and regions. We're seeing this particularly in the case of women's organizations. They're slightly more organized and funded on the anglophone side and are therefore slightly more successful at coming together and breaking out of their isolation in every country. Consequently, they have greater influence on their local governments and regions.

We're also seeing this trend in our Making It Work program, which supports the rights of women and girls. For the moment, it's much stronger in anglophone than francophone Africa.

• (1230)

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: In Cameroon, for example, roughly one fifth of the population is anglophone and the remaining four fifths francophone. One side of the population is better served than the other, even though they're part of the same country.

Is my understanding of the situation correct?

[*English*]

Ms. Anne Delorme: Julia, I don't know if you can answer this. I wouldn't be in a position to provide specific information on Cameroon at this time.

Ms. Julia McGeown: I can't answer on Cameroon.

I was going to add that, on the positive side, in west Africa there is quite a strong coalition, ANCEFA, and also FAWÉ, which are focused on education for all. It's an "education for all" movement, which includes children with disabilities. That is actually quite a strong movement. That's a positive thing, because it is among the francophone countries in that region.

Unfortunately, I don't know about Cameroon, but in terms of other countries where we're actively working on inclusive education, it's across the Sahel, including Burkina Faso, where there's strong stuff going on in terms of teacher training on inclusive education. You also have Niger, Senegal and Togo. Quite a few of those countries are making strong strides on increasing education.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you very much.

Mr. Messenger, my colleague mentioned intersectionality earlier. To sum up what I've heard today, it's essentially hard to access vulnerable populations, and it's even more difficult when children have

disabilities. If they are girls, it's that much harder. And it's hardest in the case of francophone girls.

Am I right in saying that?

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Messenger: You're right about all those elements of intersectionality.

I would add some additional ones. For example, I would add conflict-affected countries, more fragile contexts, marginalized populations and displaced people.

In terms of our experience in francophone, anglophone or other language contexts, our operating model is very similar. It's community-based and civil society-based. I was in Mali and Mauritania earlier this year and I had a chance to see that work, which is very similar in other places, such as east Africa, for example. The elements of poverty and questions of gender exclusion and social inclusion are the more similar pieces that we've seen. We haven't done a study on the difference particularly in the francophone contexts.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe.

Mr. Boulerville, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerville: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

My first question is for the representatives of Humanity and Inclusion Canada.

Your organization operates in nearly 60 countries. I'd like you to explain to us how it uses new technologies and innovation to improve inclusive education for persons with disabilities and children with disabilities.

Ms. Anne Delorme: I'll answer your question and then let Ms. McGeown comment further.

Since we're talking about innovation, I'd like to tell you about an initiative of which I am very proud. We're working on a 3D printing project in Uganda. It isn't a project that's directly related to education, but it's part of our education program. It's a different project and it's funded.

3D printing enables us to produce prostheses and orthotics for children with physical disabilities. The special feature of this project is that it's being developed and is based in the community, at existing hospitals. So we're trying to develop local capacities.

Children are constantly growing, and as you can imagine, prostheses and orthotics must constantly be remade to adapt to their growing bodies. This new 3D printing technology lets us produce orthotics and prostheses that work for individual children, enables them to play and gives them physical access to school. This is an example of an innovation that's transformative for these children.

• (1235)

[English]

Julia, do you want to add anything?

Ms. Julia McGeown: I'll just add briefly that in the education-specific sphere we are embracing the use of ed tech, or education technology, specifically to support children who might have communication difficulties with alternative and augmentative communication, sometimes known as AAC. For example, in Rwanda, we're working with children who are struggling to communicate, and we're using free apps you can get on your tablet or your phone to enable them to communicate through voice icons, which means they can communicate in the classroom.

Also, we used tablets and phones to enable children to learn sign language remotely during COVID. Actually, they've continued to use these different learning apps, as well as going to school, to help them pick up sign language and also help parents learn sign language. This was something that happened in Nepal, where we did a specific sign language app in Nepali.

We're trying to embrace it, both for teachers, to help train teachers through different websites and platforms that enable teacher training, and also for children themselves, when appropriate and where this infrastructure is available for them to access technology directly.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you very much.

I'd like to know whether you think the Canadian government is providing adequate support for the development, purchase and distribution of new technological tools to support these children, who have very specific needs.

Is that part of Canada's strategy? Do these investments or programs take into account the use of these new technologies and tools?

[English]

Ms. Julia McGeown: Shall I continue? I am happy to continue.

I'll also refer you to the global education monitoring report for 2023, which is very informative about the best types of ed tech or technology and innovation that can be suitable for children with disabilities—or for all children—and how to enhance education through technology. There's a whole section there, chapters 3 and 4, on children with disabilities, so that's a really useful place to go to support this.

Typically, it's underfunded. I can't remember the figure, but it's a huge figure in terms of the gap, where the funding needs to go to do this. Particularly for children with disabilities, innovation and technology are a game-changer, so I think there's always a huge need in terms of funding.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you very much, Ms. McGeown.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Boulerice.

I now invite Ms. Anita Vandenberg to take the floor for four minutes, please.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: Thank you very much.

I'll be quick in my question. I want to follow up on something you said, Mr. Hasan. You spoke in your opening remarks about children with all types of disabilities. Here we are talking about disabilities as if they're one thing, but there's so much difference depending on what the disability is, so I wonder if you could elaborate on that.

Mr. Mohammed Emrul Hasan: I have to tell you that I'm not a disability expert, but what I know from working with people living with disabilities in a different context is that whenever there is a disability you can see, people focus on that one. Quite often, you will see an educational program talking about ramps, school infrastructure and everything, but we forget developmental disabilities and disabilities you get from being in a very stressful conflict situation. You get so many different types of it, so whenever we design a program and we talk about disability-inclusive education, it is important to take all of this into consideration.

That's why I go back to the same narrative I have been talking about, which is data. You collect data about the disabilities of children, but if you are not able to really understand the different types of disabilities and to train people to collect data in a very consistent manner, you'll never be able to capture that narrative to inform your strategy. That's why we say that it's not "one size fits all". We need to really understand there are different types and different implications for your strategies and programming.

• (1240)

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: I saw a lot of nodding when you said that.

Ms. Delorme, I wonder if you have anything to add, or if anybody else wants to add to that.

Ms. Anne Delorme: Thank you very much.

I'm happy to share the floor. I realize that Humanity and Inclusion has been speaking a lot, but I think we've given a number of different examples. We've given a number of examples on physical disability, everything from ramps to wheelchairs, but also realizing that if you think about the pathways to school, we're not talking about a nice paved sidewalk; we're talking about rocky roads that get washed out because of climate change and flooding.

Julia has given some great examples around communication and various developmental disabilities. I think we're starting to get a picture here, so I'll pass the baton very quickly.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: Ms. Evans also wants to respond.

Ms. Tracey Evans: Thank you so much.

As we talk about these various types of disabilities, I'd just draw attention to the complexity of what it means to work in classrooms with about 100 children, sometimes with different and overlapping disabilities. I just want to draw attention to the importance of really investing in teacher capacity building on an ongoing and continued basis, to make sure that teachers are getting the support they need to do this effectively.

Again, that's where we believe play can actually be really effective in helping them manage a large classroom with different disabilities. They can leverage some of the students who are capable of leading smaller groups in a play-based activity to make sure everyone is getting the individualized support and attention they need.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Simms, the floor is yours for 40 seconds, please.

Mr. Peter Simms: Thank you. I'll be very brief.

I think the fact that there is such a range of different types of disabilities and the fact that diagnosis is very poor mean that the operative word when we're talking about disability inclusion is "inclusion" rather than "disability". It's about making sure that the schools—in particular the teachers Tracey was talking about—are in a position to respond to the needs of children, whatever those children require when they come to school and how they get to school.

That, I think, is the paradigm shift we're looking to have when it comes to the breadth and the range, particularly in the challenging contexts that we're talking about.

I'll stop there.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now, I'll invite Mr. Lake for four minutes, please.

Hon. Mike Lake: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've known most of you for a long time through maternal, newborn and child health work, through the Muskoka initiative and the work done on that, which Canada really led on. It's interesting, Mohammed, talking about data. We could look at data. We knew what the numbers were, and we knew that we made a tremendous impact towards what the world had agreed was a problem, a very significant problem on maternal mortality and the mortality of kids under five.

Now we're looking at the situation here. Tim Shriver was here last week, talking about the urgency of this situation. He said, "The problem is not the disability. The problem is not intellectual and developmental disability. The problem is fear, neglect, indifference and oversight. The problem is us. The problem is urgent, and the problem is now."

When we're having these conversations among organizations focused on disability—Humanity and Inclusion is here today, and Special Olympics and Inclusion International were here the other

day—I sense that there is a real urgency. Of course, if you talk to families, you sense that real urgency in the worlds they're in.

To conclude my round of questioning here, I'm interested in what each of your takeaways is from this meeting. What can you do now, in the coming weeks or months, in terms of your organizations that will have an impact for these families and these individuals around the world who need that urgent attention now?

I'll start with CARE.

Ms. Nidhi Bansal: One thing that can be done most immediately is integrating the issue of how we deal with it as an attitude and belief, because what you say is right—the problem is with us. The problem is not with the people who are living with disability. It is our fear, our lack of belief in their ability to contribute and to be productive individuals that is stopping us.

Therefore, if we can integrate our health programming in our communities where we have a direct contact with the communities, and if we can create spaces where we are enabling the parents to come out and not hide their children with disability and then demand these services from their schools, that would be one thing we can do most immediately and integrate into in our programming as we go along.

● (1245)

Hon. Mike Lake: Tracey, go ahead.

Ms. Tracey Evans: I think for us at Right To Play, what I'm taking away from today's conversation is the added value that all these different partners are bringing to this important space. I think we've spoken to the play-based approach and particularly the way we think it can dismantle some of the barriers that children with disabilities face in the education system, whereas other partners have demonstrated, specifically with respect to technology, the way they're leveraging their assets.

I think bringing each of our specific assets to the table and collaborating is something we'll be thinking a lot about.

Hon. Mike Lake: Okay.

Michael, go ahead.

Mr. Michael Messenger: We value the dialogue and the opportunity to learn from others in this space.

Whenever I talk to any of my team who are making a speech or something, I always say they need to include the "What?", the "So what?" and the "Now what?" The "What?" is really a better understanding of what the situation is, to help understand the implications for our work. The "So what?" is the analysis then to say, "What are the things we need to think about doing?" The "Now what?" is really driving us toward the next steps for action.

One thing in particular—and maybe Tiyahna can speak to it—is the Global Refugee Forum and the conversations around disability and inclusion in that space, which will be happening very soon.

Ms. Tiyahna Ridley-Padmore: Yes, absolutely.

Personally speaking, this motion is quite timely. I have a child at home right now who is currently out of school due to disability since we cannot find structures and resources to support her learning needs. What does that look like in the context of there already being so many barriers to accessing education?

The Global Refugee Forum, which will take place in a couple of weeks, offers an opportunity for Canada to ensure that disability inclusion is central to how we're doing this work and how we're investing in education and committing to education. Our immediate steps include ensuring that it remains central to and part of the core of those discussions.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

I invite Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe to take the floor for four minutes.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to echo what Ms. Vandenbeld said earlier.

This isn't a monolithic block, but I'd like to add one point.

Ms. Evans and Mr. Hasan, you talked about introducing various projects in the regions.

When you deploy your projects, you have to adapt to the region's way of life and its cultural particularities. I imagine you don't roll out a project in the same way in Sri Lanka as you do in Mali, for example.

Consequently, when projects are funded, how flexible do the funding criteria have to be?

Mr. Hasan and Mr. Messenger, as well as Ms. Evans, would you care to comment on the subject?

[*English*]

Mr. Mohammed Emrul Hasan: Absolutely.

I think you just said the most important thing here, which is that the context will make it very different. For example, if you're working in Mali, the context is different from that in Cameroon. Your work in northern Cameroon is very different from your work in southern Cameroon. I think it's a very important variable. Where we are living or where we are staying is one intersectional variable, and all of these other elements go along with it.

I'll just give a very quick example. I lived in a village called Kita in Mali, and I had an opportunity to really see the difference even from one village to another, despite the fact that they're in the same district. The intersectional identity and the background and upbringing, I think, basically define what kind of programming you need to do.

I think that bringing all of this disability narrative and all the intersectionality is very critical to understanding that your programming will be different, your cost structure will be different and your approach will be different.

I totally agree with you on that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Tracey Evans: Thank you for your question.

[*English*]

I'll just explain in English to be very clear.

I think we've spoken very well to the different contexts and the ways in which those intersect, but even within the same context, especially the fragile contexts that we've discussed at length today, what we see is constant evolution. What worked one day can rapidly not be functioning the next. What we need in order to be effective in this space is flexible and responsive funding that enables us to pivot and to be agile to the ever-evolving needs of the situation and the children we're trying to serve.

Mr. Michael Messenger: I'll build on what my colleague just said, because I think it's really critical.

For many years, that is exactly what we have done in our long-term development community-based work. Instead of making a decision at the top with respect to what is needed to make a difference in the context of communities in need, we have listened to their needs and identified their strengths and opportunities. That has always been fundamental to the work we do. When we then step into some of the grant space, particularly in fragile contexts, that flexibility and that responsiveness are even more critical to our being able to meet the needs and understand those.

We see it right now in northern Ethiopia with the funding we have from the Government of Canada. As my colleague Mr. Glenwright said, post-conflict the needs are far more significant, and the situation requires flexibility and perhaps an ability to respond to immediate crisis and to pivot the efforts, the areas of focus and where the funding goes. Having a system to do that is really key.

• (1250)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Thank you.

Mr. Chair, that's a popular question—

[*English*]

The Chair: Excuse me. Due to the shortened time, I would like to invite Ms. Moorcroft to take the floor—but quickly, please.

Ms. Sarah Moorcroft (Senior Education Advisor, Save the Children Canada): Thank you very much.

One of the key things when we're talking about funding and the areas of focus... What we haven't spoken about here today are the learning outcomes and the learning needs, and really putting them at the forefront when we're thinking about what sort of funding...what that looks like and how to respond to it in different contexts. I think there's a lot.

We talked about the value of early education and primary education. We know that getting children ready for school, as well as getting children with disabilities engaged in school, is so valuable. There's a lot that can be said, if we are looking at funding and targeted funding, about how we need to have learning needs at the very forefront of all our inclusive education priorities, funding and flexible models.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

I now invite Mr. Boulerice to take the floor for four minutes.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I noticed that a few remote witnesses already had their hands up to take the floor. I would like to give them a chance to speak.

I would particularly like to hear what Mr. Simms has to say. He seems to want to contribute to the discussion.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Simms: Thank you very much.

To answer the previous question around how you adapt, develop and respond in so many different circumstances, part of it is working with organizations of people with disabilities, OPDs, and this was mentioned previously. Those kinds of organizations are central to making sure that the responses we bring in—what we know works in one context and around international best practice—are then adapted and developed for the specifics and the nuances of what works there.

Most particularly, because OPDs are often community-based, they have that bridge for the way these things operate, the communities we're trying to support and the social environment that surrounds the school. It's about engaging with organizations of people with disabilities and making sure that they're funded properly and that the partner funding, anything that comes through an organization like Plan International, is able to fully support their needs. That's central to making sure that we can adapt and respond to all the nuances and variations in the reality for disability.

The Chair: Ms. McGeown, do you want to add something?

Ms. Julia McGeown: Yes. I will be really succinct. I know we're tight for time.

I'll add that I completely agree with what Peter said, but I also think it's about meeting the countries where they are, and meeting the ministry of education. If they have something in place, work with it. Don't try to bring in something new and add it because you've done it in another country.

In Nepal, they have resource classes. They've had them there for 20-odd years. Work with them and make them more inclusive. Don't try to introduce something else that's worked in India. Sometimes that happens. Work with the education sector's planned system and the education planning system that's there. Making sure that it's inclusive is paramount, rather than having separate programs that don't have anything to do with the ESP.

Thanks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Thank you.

My question is for the representatives of Plan International Canada.

How can education designed to include persons with disabilities help prevent violence against and the abuse of children with disabilities?

How can this form of inclusive education play a preventive role for those children?

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Simms: It's very important, because children with disabilities are disproportionately affected by violence. Again, that's true specifically for girls with certain types of violence as well. This is where you have to view child protection as a key component of any education system—of any inclusive education system, particularly. That means you have to have a bridge to protection systems and to health systems. Health systems might be the ones, for example, that are able to respond. Protection systems, for example through social workers and social systems, will then refer any cases of violence and follow up.

Again, at the community level, community-based child protection mechanisms are a central component of the multiple facets of an inclusive education system. We often narrow it down to the image of a classroom, students in the classroom and the teachers, but in order for that child to be there and to be able to exist properly in that place—and to their full extent—there are a lot of components that need to work with that.

The child protection system and the education system need to be hand in hand so that violence prevention is central.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Simms.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Mr. Boulerice.

I also want to thank our guests for their testimony and for taking part in our study on international disability-inclusive education.

We appreciate your taking the time to meet with us and to contribute your expertise on these important matters. Please contact the clerk if you have any additional information you wish to forward to the subcommittee.

[*English*]

Colleagues, before we finish, I have two items that I would like to discuss with you.

Thank you very much to all the witnesses. It's been a great pleasure seeing you today. You are free to go.

• (1255)

(Pause)

• (1300)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order.

We are going to deal only with the budget, please.

The clerk circulated a draft budget for the study on disability-inclusive education last Friday. If there are no questions or concerns about this budget, we can adopt it now. Otherwise, I can schedule some time in camera to discuss it.

Is it the pleasure of the subcommittee to adopt the draft budget unanimously?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Ms. Anita Vandenberg: Might I also suggest that if everybody agrees by email on the draft, we can just issue it without having to come back to the meeting next week?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: It's approved.

The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>