

# EVALUATION FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

## Inclusion Works!

### Including Persons with Disabilities in a Food Security Project in Bangladesh



# Disability Mainstreaming in the Project Cycle

# Awareness Raising along the Way

## Proposal Development

Establishing a strong network of disability and mainstream organisations is crucial for ensuring that joint project proposals are developed to meet the needs and aspirations of all network partners.

Before writing a project proposal, it is essential that there is mutual trust between partners, and that all partners understand that inclusion is an integral part of the project and a joint responsibility.

Inclusion will not happen automatically – to ensure that persons with disabilities can participate equally in the programme and benefit from it in the same way as other target groups, it is important to formulate specific strategies in the project proposal.

Making specific provision in the budget (about 1-7% of total project costs) for the inclusion of persons with disabilities is both cost effective and necessary; in this project 6% was earmarked. This included rehabilitation services.

It is essential to have accurate data on disability during project development in order to anticipate on staffing and resources needed; if no detailed data is available it is a good idea to allow some flexibility in the budget.

Including specific disaggregated disability indicators in the M&E framework will show the extent to which equal participation has been achieved.

## Project Implementation

There is no need to organise special training or select special types of income generating activities for persons with disabilities: participating equally in all types of income generating activities leads to the same results for people with or without disabilities.

It is good to involve other household members in the selection of income generating activities, yet also ensure that the person with a disability is making the choices.

Ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to disability specific services, such as physiotherapy, medical care and rehabilitation services, helps to improve their functional abilities and thus enhance their participation and productivity.

These services can be included in the project or (ideally) can be provided by referring persons to government services or other service providers.



From begging to business.

## Awareness and Accessibility

Training of all staff and development workers on disability issues, as well as raising their awareness on the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities is essential for dealing with any negative attitudes and ignorance which can prevent the participation of persons with disabilities in projects.

Ensuring that senior management understand disability mainstreaming processes is crucial for the success of the project.

The need to ensure accessibility in all aspects of the programme is more efficient and cost-effective than building it in later; this includes taking into account the specific needs of hearing, sight and mentally impaired persons, and ensuring that buildings are accessible.

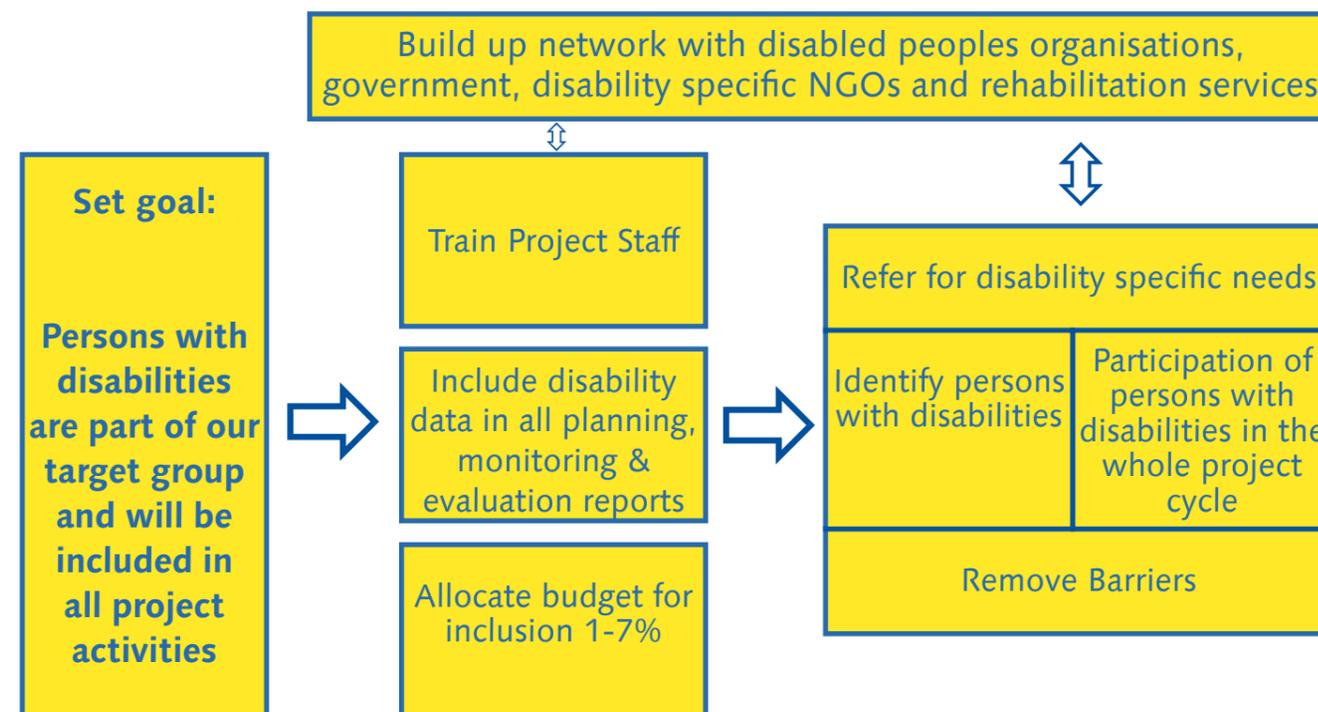
Raising awareness in the women's groups on disability issues was an important step in enhancing the social acceptance of women with disabilities in the group and increased their sense of self-esteem and empowerment.

Raising awareness helps remove negative perceptions of women with disabilities, such as being unreliable or incapable of supporting themselves.

Including advocacy in the project ensured that attention was paid to removing institutional barriers, such as discriminatory legislation, laws and policies.

## Sustainability

Ensuring that persons with disabilities are included in all programmes, as well in all organisational systems and structures, ensures that inclusion is seen as a mainstream and continuing activity.



# The Project



Meeting of one of the inclusive women village groups.

The inclusion of persons with disabilities and leprosy in mainstream development programmes is a relatively new concept. The Gaibandha Food Security Project in Bangladesh (2009 to 2013) was jointly implemented by ICCO, LIGHT FOR THE WORLD Netherlands, The Leprosy Mission, and seven local partner organisations. The aim of this project was to improve food security for 40.000 ultra-poor female headed households in a densely-populated and disaster prone area in the north of Bangladesh. The project is one of the first programmes that has mainstreamed disability on a large scale.

The women received training and assets to perform their own income generating activities, such as goat keeping, chicken farming, tailoring, and shop keeping, as well as training on topics such as health, hygiene and disaster preparedness. Rehabilitation services to the direct beneficiaries and any family member with a disability were also provided. The results of this programme were that the women not only improved their financial situation, but also led to improved social acceptance in communities and improved social status at household level.

On the basis of our learning from this project a checklist has been developed that will help you to assess the disability inclusiveness of your project throughout the different phases of the project cycle. This publication »Inclusion Works!« can be found at the international homepage of Light for the World.

(<http://www.light-for-the-world.org/fileadmin/content/files/InclusionWorks.pdf>)

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