

CBID in India



NGOs leading the way for social change

Community based inclusive development (CBID) practice focuses on the creation of inclusive societies where people with disability have access to all development benefits like everyone else in their communities. This involves a twin track approach in which people with disability, governments and community based organizations work together for inclusion of people with disability in the services and development of their communities, at the same time as ensuring specific services that may be required in relation to impairment, and knowledge about their rights.

India provides an example of CBID development where local NGOs facilitate and mobilize access to improved sustainable livelihood opportunities by linking local DPOs and self help groups with mainstream livelihood training initiatives as well as financial institutions.



What is one example of CBID in rural India?

A typical example of CBID is in a program running in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The program in this area takes a twofold approach by focussing on facilitating access to sustainable livelihoods, and at the same time on social empowerment of people with disability. This approach ensures that the implementation of livelihood trainings and activities are backed by groups of people who understand the rights of people with disability, and have started to address stigma and discrimination. So the focus of the program is not just people with disability, but also their families, the people in their villages, and the institutions in these villages – taking in everything from the local primary and maternal health care centres, the schools, the banks, the training institutes and the village, block and local government's district administration.

CBM is supporting two organizations that have worked locally on mainstream poverty reduction programs. PGSS (which is the welfare arm of the Archdiocese of Gorakhpur) and a local NGO (NIRPHAD). They have come together and developed a CBID program called "Parivartan" (*The Change*).

"Parivartan" implements activities that:

Ensure that people with disabilities are included in the program design and implementation and no one was left behind

At the beginning of the CBID program, the main stakeholders, including people with disabilities, undertook a baseline survey to identify the pressing concerns of people with disabilities and their families in the program area, as well as the perception of the wider communities on disability. As well as better understanding the situation of people with disabilities, the mapping was also a first window for both local mainstream NGOs to orient themselves on disability issues and to initiate collaboration with other stakeholders.

Ensure awareness of disability rights and strengthen local DPOs and self-help groups



> People with disabilities are coming together and their voices are now heard in the community.

The involvement of DPOs and self-help groups as main stakeholders is a central pillar of CBID. In Uttar Pradesh the formation of these groups was facilitated and supported and their members received training in organisational skills, leadership skills as well as on government schemes, acts and policies, including disability laws. These local groups were also linked up with community organizations, service providers, local government as well as government schemes.

Work towards sustainable livelihood opportunities through skills development

As a next step individual capacity building plans and business plans were developed by the two NGOs. The NGOs worked with family groups to understand how they could be better

supported to take steps out of poverty. They linked people with disability to mainstream vocational training institutions. In this particular program, people with disabilities were trained to be trainers in agricultural skills such as goat raising and mushroom cultivation. These trainers then transferred their knowledge to other people with disabilities that were identified during the baseline assessment. Additionally, people with disabilities were connected with vocational training centres to receive training in nursery, organic composting and backyard kitchen gardening.

A sanitary napkin production unit managed by women with disabilities was established in 2014 and since then has continuously expanded its production.

Facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in financial services

Leaders of self-help groups were trained on organizational skills and book keeping. Groups also became aware of opportunities for accessing credit. Based on this training members of the self-help groups could link up with banks and credit societies. They received additional guidance on how to open bank accounts and receive small business loans.

What frameworks and structures have been important to have in place?

India ratified the CRPD in 2007. In 2016 the Indian parliament passed the Rights of People with Disabilities Act to fulfil its obligation to the UNCRPD.

There are a number of disability schemes and allowances in place, including income tax deductions, travel allowances, scholarships, quotas in state training institutions and access to financial services. However, most of these schemes have not been well promoted, and are therefore not known or accessed by most people with disabilities. The poor particularly, miss out because they do not know how to apply for these schemes.

A National Competency Framework

CBID is being undertaken by NGOs, but the experience of NGOs is that the training of CBID workers has neither been consistent or adequate. There is no recognized competency framework that validates and recognises CBID workers. Currently India's Department of Empowerment of People with Disability are working with the Rehabilitation Council of India, with support from the University of Melbourne and other institutions, to develop a training program for CBID workers. This training aligns with the obligations of the UNCRPD, and will be a single recognised training program that all those working in CBID can subscribe to. India is the only country to date to be working on an accredited CBID training program.

What ways of working have been most important?

Local ownership

For the *Parivartan* program, making the work sustainable, specifically through active involvement and ownership of people with disabilities, has been seen as pivotal since the early stages of the program. Focus has been given to building strong community leadership and ownership of what the program is trying to achieve. Strengthening community level groups and developing strong collaborations and partnerships has been a priority. Creating strong and stable internal leadership for DPOs has also been important.

Training on disability rights as important foundation

Strong community ownership and leadership is underpinned by building the capacity of people with disabilities, especially to advocate for their rights and entitlements with policy makers. DPO meetings, in the initial program period, primarily entailed training and orienting members to different schemes, rights and entitlements. The NGOs showed them how they can access these rights and entitlements. They were oriented about relevant government departments and positions, thus creating strong partnerships and collaborations. Regular handholding support and training resulted in people with disabilities being well trained to manage entire government procedures, in the process of accessing their rights and entitlements.

Improvement of livelihood opportunities as a powerful tool to break the cycle of poverty and disability



> Local women with disabilities are gaining independence, earning money and advising to others on organic agriculture.

A significant part of *Parivartan* is to strengthen and improve livelihood opportunities for people with disabilities. Different activities and trainings, which were planned and designed following a market feasibility study, resulted in a number of people with disabilities starting their own enterprises – either individually or as a group.

These enterprises, largely managed by people with disabilities with operational support from PGSS and NIRPHAD, include businesses such as a sanitary pad making and a tailoring unit. Additionally, the program has supported people with disabilities to initiate and manage co-operatives, farmer producer organizations and other community-managed bodies. With initial support, people with

disabilities now network and establish linkages with different government and private departments and institutes. These linkages have led to them access a range of schemes for skill development, financial support, resource and technical support.

What are some of the ongoing challenges and learnings?

The limited physical accessibility to banks and government buildings, for example, is one challenge. The cost of transport in the area also impedes people with disability being able to meet together regularly. Deaf people particularly seem to be left out of much community organizing, unless special attention and effort is made.

Many of the issues related to accessibility, however, need to be addressed by policies and laws on state level and beyond. To address these challenges more effectively the CBID program stakeholders feel they need to establish stronger links to political decision makers in the state government as well as more actively participate in national advocacy fora to more effectively advocate for policy changes and inclusive state laws and budgets. Linking in with national level DPOs for advocacy in this area is the natural progression.