

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

CBM chooses to support project partners and activities that promote sustainability.

One of the most effective ways of doing this is to support work that actively engages with governments, at all levels.

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) outlines responsibilities of governments towards its citizens with disability.

CBM and its partners work towards government fulfilling these responsibilities - rather than developing systems and services outside of government.

We support partners who are activists, advocates, provide support for improved government services, and provide technical advice to government.

Working from the outside of government

Activism:

This approach uses groups to campaign to government for change and includes rallies, demonstrations, publicity, petitions and public awareness raising on an issue.

- In Bangladesh, self-help groups of women and men with disability and parents of children with disability, have developed the confidence and skills to visit local government offices. They have successfully reported rights violations, requested funds for assistive devices like wheelchairs, and petitioned for land to support their agriculture livelihoods.
- In India, our partner has helped set up disabled people's federations and groups that work to get government to allocate funds for inclusion of people with disability. While some groups work as activists, acting as a watch dog and informing the government about violations of rights of people with disability, other groups take on a friendly advisory role, together motivating government to act.

Advocacy

This approach builds on activism, without being so confrontational. It focuses on building relationships and providing suggestions about actions that a government could take.

- In Cameroon, our partner advocates to mayors to ensure inclusion of people with disability in all their programs and supports them to develop action plans for this.
- In Australia, CBM has supported the establishment of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC) which is a strong collective voice that strategically targets politicians to support disability in the aid program.
- In India, CBM has contributed to discussions and policy submissions to the national government that push for a government funded country-wide community based rehabilitation program. CBM has suggested a range of possible approaches the government could take.

Working from the inside with government

Advising

This approach is usually the result of successful advocacy. A government then calls on an organisation to give advice on implementing a particular disability policy or plan.

- In Fiji and Tonga, CBM has worked with Ministries of Education on making education systems more inclusive of children with disability. In Fiji this involved development of some inclusive education demonstration schools that show how inclusion works in practice.
- In Zimbabwe, CBM has trained local disabled people's organizations and World Vision in considering disability in water and sanitation programs. This has led to them working with councils to improve public taps and toilets, making them accessible to people with disability.
- In East Timor, CBM is advising the Ministry of Health about how to consider disability across all health programs, not just as a welfare or pension issue.
- In The Philippines, our partner sets up groups of parents with children with disability. They then work with local councils to advise them on the best way to spend their disability budget.

Service Delivery

This approach usually focuses on existing government services and provides extra training, equipment or funding to improve the quality and accessibility of the service. It can be developing a model that the government can then adopt and scale up.

- In Ethiopia, CBM's partner has convinced the government of the best and most cost effective way to treat clubfoot. This is now being included in the national health insurance scheme.
- In Vietnam, CBM supports local eye hospitals to improve their services to the most disadvantaged, through professional training of government employed health workers.
- In Tanzania, CBM's partner has provided intensive support to selected government hospitals to improve maternal and child health services, ensuring fewer babies and mothers die during or after delivery; particularly making sure the needs of women with disability are met. They are encouraging the government to adopt this approach.

For more information contact: programs@cbm.org.au