

A group of people's hands are shown holding a woven basket, symbolizing community and support. The background is a blurred green forest. A white text box is overlaid on the top left, and a semi-transparent grey bar is at the bottom.

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE STORIES

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Clear Horizon

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Introduction

The following 20 MSC stories were clustered into four domains after being collected, based on the key themes in the stories. Some stories fit into more than one domain, however for the purposes of the MSC Selection process, a primary domain was identified for each story. The stories come from various stakeholder groups (government, non-government, OPDs, International Organisations, international development programs). Each storyteller had given permission to use their anonymized story.

The domains are:

- Influencing partner governments – 3 MSC stories (stories 5, 12 and 16)
- Knowledge change – 5 MSC stories (stories 9, 11, 13, 15 and 18)
- Practice change – 7 MSC stories (stories 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 14 and 19)
- Strengthening partner organisations – 5 MSC stories (stories 2, 4, 6, 17 and 20)

**INFLUENCING
PARTNER
GOVERNMENTS**

Story 5: Ownership of Disability Policy and Implementation Strategy by Partner Government

The IAG was engaged by our organisation to provide advisory, technical, and capacity building support during the development of a Disability Policy and Implementation Strategy for our partner government. Before the IAG's engagement, there was limited support provided by my organisation and not much strategic forward planning. The partner government saw the importance of disability inclusion at policy level and requested support which is why we engaged a disability advisor to assist with the development of the Disability Policy and Implementation Strategy.

As a result of IAG's involvement, our partner government took ownership in the development of the Disability Policy and Implementation Strategy. It provided advice and capacity building on how to implement disability inclusion through the policy. It has also improved the partner government's capacity to develop other strategic policies. They have taken the lead in ensuring other social policies are put in place such as reviewing the Gender and Youth policies and developing a new Partnership Policy. The Disability Policy was launched on the International Day of Disability and the partner government is proud and confident that the policy reflects the views of the disabled people and the partner government's commitment to supporting its implementation.

This change occurred because of the IAG representative's continued engagement with the partner government. Coincidentally, the representative involved happened to be a national citizen who had local knowledge, experience and existing networks in place. It therefore demonstrated the value and importance of engaging a local consultant who understands the local context to manage expectations, especially during such a challenging period. It also ensured the continuity of work to meet deadlines. Her understanding of local context and strong relationships with key stakeholders such as the local Disabled Persons Organisation and the partner government helped to progress the development of the Policy. The IAG representative provided technical advisory support as well as capacity building on the methodology of data collection to inform the policy (including how to conduct consultations and ensuring qualitative data collection during the workshops), to feed into the write up of the policy and provided guidance where necessary.

Moving forward, I think the partner government is now better positioned to ensure there is disability inclusion at all levels of government and in communities. This change was the most significant for me because the policy and implementation strategy will ensure that people living with disability are now going to be included in strategic decision-making and service delivery priorities for the partner Government.

Story 12: Transforming minds and practice: mainstreaming Disability Inclusion

I have been working in my sector for 20 years. When I first started working in the sector, we didn't talk about disability at all. There has now been a really profound shift in the sector and now no good quality project in the sector would engage in any space without considering disability.

I worked as a consultant on a civil society project targeting informal settlements, where the donor wanted a strong focus on disability inclusion. The organisation delivering the project also had a strong intellectual commitment to promoting disability inclusion, but the practical aspect of what that meant was completely missing. IAG was brought in as a partner to provide technical advice and support to address this gap. They had limited time to contribute to the project, and they were also working remotely from Australia. Despite this, they were able to do the work skillfully to leverage a lot of change in the disability space.

Before IAG engaged with the organisation delivering the project, there were no systems, practices or facilities in place that addressed the needs of those with disabilities. For example, the building did not have working lifts to enable those with disabilities to access the offices, there was only one vehicle which could fit a wheelchair, and organisational systems and processes did not support people with disabilities.

IAG worked to establish links with local DPOs and got them to engage and work with the organisation on the project. It sounds straightforward now to say you make those connections, and things will happen. However, it took constant support and considerable effort from IAG to create spaces for people with disabilities to engage with the project and the organisation in a way that was genuine. From their approach to baseline data collection, which included enumerators with disabilities and involved a training session delivered by people with disabilities from the local context to the development of local champions in the disability space, IAG's engagement in the project brought about profound shifts at the individual and organisational level – in terms of practice, understanding and thinking around disability. For the enumerators, they reported a sense of recognition within their community and a level of agency they had not had in the past, while one of the project team members who had no real experience in the disability space became a regional and national-level disability champion within the organisation, influencing their strategies and integrating disability inclusion in their work.

There were also changes at the institutional-level within local government in their approach to disability inclusion. It is common for people to say it is a good idea, but it is very rare to get people to put their own resources into this space – the local government and the municipality in which we delivered the project started spending the minimal resources they had to make their buildings accessible and to get people with disabilities involved in their decision-making fora. It was so surprising to visit two years after the project and see the transformation and see what IAG started together with the project team and local champions.

This was the most significant change for me because the shift in Government priorities, where they were investing their limited resources to promote disability inclusion, demonstrates a transformation in the way people viewed disability and the opportunities that come with it, as well as the rights of people with disability to access services.

Story 16: Building trust and confidence putting us on the map for disability inclusion

I am the head of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion for a Facility working on supporting economic policy in Indonesia. I have a background in gender, but not in disability and I was tasked to build a portfolio on disability inclusion too. I engaged the IAG to assist with this as I had heard an IAG team member at a conference discussing international experiences with concessions. Concessions is the law, but was not translated into implementing regulation. The IAG was able to work with us on providing all sorts of technical support. This included webinars and capacity building, engaging with bilateral discussions and quality assuring our work.

Prior to the IAG's involvement, there was only one report that we had on disability inclusion in economic policy; a meta-analysis of the state of people with disability in Indonesia, education and labour forced participation. There was also no team within our facility to provide knowledge and drive this agenda.

IAG's involvement has put our facility on the map, and we now have recognition about disability inclusion in the work that we do. The IAG has the knowledge and grasp of issues, as well as the global coverage which they can relate back to the Indonesia experience. The uniqueness of the IAG sitting at the intersection of evidence, advocacy and policy enables their ability to understand the policymaker's perspective and have a good, grounded understanding on what people's lives are like across countries – it is not a normative discussion. That's a big difference.

As a result of IAG's support to us, our Government stakeholders are committed to piloting concessions, and advancing the disability inclusion agenda. There is trust and confidence from the Government for us to do this work, there is trust and confidence in the disability movement to drive this agenda, and there is trust and confidence in the development space that we are taking disability inclusion seriously. I now have five other team members, two who work specifically on disability inclusion. There is now institutional memory and through the next phase of the facility there will be a focus on disability inclusion, whether the team stays or not. There is more lasting change.

This was the most significant change for me because the change was more long lasting, not based on individuals anymore. Once it's not based on individuals, it is much easier for the next team to carry this forward as we already have the credibility. The team does not have to start from scratch, it is not in somebody's mind – it has institutional roots.

**KNOWLEDGE
CHANGE**

Story 9: Best practice support leading to high engagement from staff

I work for an NGO who has had multiple engagements with CBM Australia IAG over the years. Most of the work has been through technical support to our team based in-country to ensure a more transformative process to WASH and disability and addressing social norms change and more service delivery integration.

The biggest impact of the IAG's work has been ensuring best practice from global evidence or tools and the level of rigour they provide the disability inclusion work we do. Whether it is piloting new tools, training, mentoring support to our teams, there has been an expert to draw on. This has been particularly beneficial when my time has been limited. As an organisation, we knew what we wanted, but we didn't know how to do it. The IAG then helped us and worked with the teams to achieve that.

As a result of the IAG's engagement, we now have a solid approach, tools and methodology to follow that the team can use to work on disability inclusion. The team now have the confidence, skills and tools and they know where and how they want to improve the work they do in the disability inclusion space. The team now has strong recognition because of this work. The IAG was able to tailor best practice to suit our organisation and to our working context in-country. The IAG has been beneficial in working alongside the teams, combining application of best practices, their technical knowledge, and their hands-on approach.

It brought new thinking to what we could do and what was possible. It was the most significant because we could not have got that anywhere else. It elevated the quality of our work at the time.

Story 11: High quality technical assistance providing a model for disability inclusion

I work for an intergovernmental organisation where my role is to support our country offices. This includes providing our country offices connections to Australian institutions. Through our partnership with CBM, the IAG has provided technical assistance to our country offices through reviewing policies, drafted laws, and any other supporting documentation. The work has been primarily in five different country offices across three sectors, so 15 different types of engagement opportunities.

There have been many changes due to the IAG's work with us, but the most significant change to me has been the country offices having readily available access to support. Prior to our engagement with the IAG, we would get multiple requests from the 15 areas we work with but could only provide three or four at a time. This was due to the fact we would have to go through the process of developing a Terms of Reference and recruiting someone to assist. This process could take months and require a lot more resourcing than what we had available, so we would not be able to meet the demand that was there in the country offices. There were a lot of missed opportunities.

Now we can respond to nearly all requests to country offices. We have an agreement with CBM where we can literally contract them about a task and after a week they are already working on the piece of work. This in turn has improved our relationship with these country offices as they trust us more and we can work more generally with them on other projects as we have proved that we provide good quality and high responsive support. The quality of CBM's work and their responsiveness has translated into trust. They have proven themselves, built trust within the country offices and they work broadly with them. They have access to high quality consultants who have experience in particular niches within disability and disability inclusion, as well as people who have an in-depth knowledge of the sector or country context.

In the future, I hope that this way of working will become a model for my organisation on how disability inclusion can be considered and implemented across all our programs, as well as within the governments we work with.

This change was the most significant for me because it is what really allows our country offices to systematically include disability in their programming. When you receive bits and pieces of technical assistance and not have all your requests met, it is hard to do effective disability inclusive programming. Being able to have the whole package of things that move together has the greatest impact.

Story 13: Shared knowledge and learning to drive transformative thinking in disability inclusion

I work as part of a coordination team for an international development fund delivering projects focused on gender and social inclusion. We connected with IAG as we felt we needed specialist GESI support around certain areas, this includes disability inclusion and sexual and gender minorities. We wanted to have a small team that we could draw on for input on different needs, and this is when we brought in the IAG. The IAG provides valuable technical support and input to the fund as a whole and at the project level. My engagement with IAG has been at the fund level, and they have assisted us in developing key communication products, reporting, and capacity building.

While the IAG has been involved in the fund from inception, a key process or aspect that was absent in our work in disability inclusion has been opportunities to share learnings and ideas, as well as key challenges. The IAG, through our short term Disability Inclusion Advisor from the IAG, is helping to deliver a disability-focused Community of Practice (COP), and our aim is for partners to share and learn about disability inclusion specific to the sector we work in. Before this, we didn't have a mechanism in place to come together and share our key learnings.

Since the Disability COP was established, the feedback has been really positive, and we know that there is strong engagement in terms of the turnout for each session we have. The consultant from IAG has been instrumental in delivering this, they bring a lot of expertise in guiding our thinking around disability inclusion, and their first-class facilitation skills brings an open conversation. I think it is creating that space where people can share what they are doing, their challenges and ideas about doing things differently or hearing from different projects, so really creating those opportunities to connect and engage.

Looking into the future, I think this will be highly valued and we anticipate that a collaborative learning piece or product will come out from this with the IAG consultant leading the process in a participatory and engaging manner with our partners. We are hoping that such a platform will lead to a deepened understanding and more transformative thinking around disability. In the sector we work in, it is not just around access, but thinking about how to really strengthen leadership of people with disabilities through the way we run our programs.

Through the Disability Community of Practice, we have created a space that was not there before where our partners can come together and share their experiences and learnings. This learning and development process has been the most significant change for me. People are happy with the process, and we have received really positive feedback.

Story 15: Transformation in understanding

I am currently working for an organisation to deliver a WASH project focused on gender and social inclusion. We connected with IAG to better integrate disability inclusion in the work we do, and they have been providing technical advice and guidance in this area.

Before our engagement with IAG, my skills and knowledge were primarily in the area of GESI and I felt I needed more support to enable us to embed a stronger disability inclusion focus across our project. I also struggled to promote GESI within our team, some of the staff did not understand its importance and how to integrate disability inclusion.

IAG has been providing me with continuous capacity building support with tools, resources, materials and guidance on approaches, either on an ad-hoc request basis or through our monthly meetings. For me personally, I have gained a lot of skills, knowledge, and experience, and it has increased my confidence and elevated me to another level. This has enabled me to better support my team and promote disability inclusion across our organisation and the project. I have been conducting in-house trainings and one to ones with our staff on disability inclusion, and reviewing reports and our organizational log frame to find ways to strengthen our focus on gender and disability inclusion. I have been encouraging staff to work with people with disabilities at the initial facility design phase or in any organized meetings, workshops, or focus group discussions, emphasizing the need to have equal representation in terms of gender and people with disability.

I have seen a significant change in our organisation. I believe we have picked up gender and disability inclusion in all our programs and our four outcome areas. Everyone is speaking about disability and how important it is to have that focus within our deliverables and the work we do, and in how we engage and interact with more vulnerable and marginalised members of our community.

In the future, I think this will further strengthen the organisation's adoption of inclusive approaches to stakeholder engagement. We are now working towards enhancing the capacity of organisations working in the gender, social and disability inclusion space by building partnerships with local DPOs and our national disability organisation, and sharing the knowledge and skills we have gained in the space. My vision is to enable them to become strong advocates, and once they understand their rights – they will then be able to stand firm and speak with authority, to represent themselves and say you know we are part of the society, and influence policy makers and decision makers.

Our organisation and our staff have come a long way. There is greater mindfulness and sensitivity in how we engage and collaborate with key stakeholders, with a stronger focus on finding ways to work more closely with people with disabilities, vulnerable women and marginalised groups. This transformation in their understanding and their recognition of the value of disability inclusion, and its impact on their approach to work is the most significant change for me. We now have the motto of 'Leave No One Behind', and this is a key principle we follow in our team.

Story 18: Mentoring and guidance building confidence to deliver outcomes

I am the disability focal point for an NGO and have worked with the IAG in several ways. Amongst other engagements, the IAG was contracted to provide technical support and advice for a project in-country.

Before the IAG was involved with this project, the disability inclusion team member in-country felt unsupported and struggled with internal politics with the program team in trying to incorporate disability-inclusive activities and outcomes into the project.

The IGA provided a mentoring role to this team member and provided practical, solid and appropriate advice and support. This had an impact on their confidence and as a result the disability-related outcomes of the project were delivered effectively. The team member knew what he had to do and how to communicate it with the program team and was guided throughout by the IAG.

This increased confidence has made the NGO staff more aware of how important it is to get technical and relational aspects of a project right, particularly when there are limited disability inclusion resources available in the organisation.

This was the most significant change for me because it enabled the project to maximise the impact on people with disability at the community level. It is so important the results and impacts of a project are felt at the grassroots level. This project and its outcomes are recognised at the international level of the NGO. The work of the IAG is really respected and valued and that project reiterated the importance of partnering with them. Without the IAG there it would have just been a mess.

PRACTICE CHANGE

Story 1: Collecting disability disaggregated data for disability inclusive outcomes

I work for an organisation where disability inclusion is a relatively new consideration. We are updating information for program priorities for disability inclusion and need to understand information about challenges and barriers.

Prior to the IAG's engagement we reported limited information on sex and disability disaggregated data. For my organisation, disability inclusion was only considered for projects which had specific disability-related objectives. For some program teams, they mentioned that disability inclusion didn't apply to them, and didn't collect this data.

The IAG provided disability inclusive development training as well as a disability inclusion clinic for my organisation to raise awareness on disability inclusive development including data collection process on people with disabilities. The IAG brought organisations of people with disability to the training to talk to us about barriers and challenges for more targeted and specific discussions. The information provided was quite practical.

From this training, my unit has taken initiative to focus on disability inclusion, which was supported by our senior management team. This focus has enabled us to incorporate disability inclusive practices into our organisation, including ensuring we are getting high quality disability disaggregated data. It is significant because if it's done properly, we can get a good amount of data on which programs are disability inclusive for us to demonstrate our disability inclusive practice and if not, how to further improve them. Although we are yet to communicate this formally with the program teams, we have buy-in from the senior management and interest from the program teams informally. The program teams are already doing research from resources provided by the IAG on collecting disability disaggregated data.

In the future, we hope to get strong evidence on how our organisation can impact people with disability and give meaningful benefit for them and our partner organisation. This will be able to achieve the policies we are set out to achieve in-country around an inclusive society.

This was the most significant change for me because it is what I've been able to see so far in my role. I can see the clear benefit here and for the future.

Story 3: Validation of disability inclusive practices

I worked for an organisation where I was the disability inclusion focal point. I realised I needed additional technical expertise. I could have done it myself, but was too busy, and it was good to get other expertise. When I first started my role, it was daunting as I came into the role inheriting disability inclusion work from someone else who had done a mind map and nothing else. This person had outdated views on disability inclusion, and it was daunting and hard to talk to managers about disability inclusion as it wasn't in line with their broader mandate. I didn't have the knowledge to have a great case, having what was written and implemented previously wasn't best practice.

The IAG was able to provide technical guidance and mentoring support, as well as training for my organisation. It helped me advocate for my agenda and provide backing that wasn't just coming from me – that there were experts that are widely recognised giving similar advice in our context. It helped me drive a disability inclusive agenda and people could see it wasn't just me driving this.

This had an impact on the organisation and the team. The difficulties I was having disappeared because I replaced the challenges, concerns, and uncertainty about the approach with a technical proficient approach once we got the IAG on board. From this work we were able to do disability inclusive training across our different programs in various countries. It also introduced us to partner OPDs that we didn't have access to before.

This change was the most significant as it had the most impact for me as the person. It was a stressful job, and I didn't have to worry about this and could see it was on track. I knew where I could go to for advice, it was good quality, and it was reliable. Strategically if the riddle could be solved, it led to impact for the team.

Story 7: Embedding disability inclusive practices into ways of working

I work as part of an organisation who partners with the IAG to deliver a project. In the space we work in, there are a lot of staff who do not understand disability inclusion. My organisation was also not known for disability inclusion, and we had varied capacity. We saw it as a priority, but not our highest priority. Our funder advocated for disability inclusion and through our partnership with the IAG was able to provide training for our country teams, as well as provided staff who knew our sector ~~and our context~~ quite well.

Prior to the engagement with the IAG, there was a lot of work to do to embed disability inclusive practice. The IAG worked with teams to take them further to understand disability inclusion beyond accessibility. There was also previously some harmful language used by some team members towards people with disability and disability inclusion and we needed to support teams who were at different stages on their journey. We were able to bring the teams together from both Asia and Africa for an in-depth training on disability inclusion with the IAG and local organisations of persons with disability. It was a big cost to deliver the training in person, but it was incredible. It was a fantastic example to do it in an inclusive way and there were lightbulb moments from the teams involved in the training. We had to bring everyone with us and they did.

From this training, it has built the capacity and confidence in our advisors, and many are now disability inclusion advocates. The teams understand and implement disability inclusive practices beyond accessibility, including working with organisations of persons with disability. They look at activities to understand what is not working and are able to dig into why it is not working. We have been able to create space and use our space in the sector to make space at the table. The teams brought the DPOs to the table themselves. Though progress is slow, I'm seeing the teams owning that and trying to solve it.

Now our organisation is quite "noisy" in terms of disability inclusive practices. Our organisation is embedding disability inclusive practices into the work that we do, including our own organisational ways of working. At the end of the project, the relationships and capacity to work with DPO partners in the sector will be stronger, and our team members will be able to continue work in the disability space, even if they are no longer part of the project team, that knowledge isn't going to go away.

This was the most significant change as our role is to strengthen and support our teams and through the IAG we have been able to offer our knowledge and technical skills. We have been able to build our capacity in a way that we can achieve our contribution in the sector for what is needed for all. The teams can apply their skills through a tailored training rather than what they found online and it was supported by tools, examples and coaching. We were able to respond to what was needed in the teams but also what we were able to contribute through our own roles.

Story 8: Enabling environment leading towards mainstreaming disability inclusion

I work with an organisation on a project focused on economic development. We had the opportunity to connect with the IAG as one of our main outcomes is around persons with disability. The IAG worked with us from time to time, assisting with the design of the program and implementation to accommodate persons with disability.

Before the IAG's engagement, disability was more of a cross-cutting topic for all our projects, specifically catering towards people with a disability, especially children. We would only include one or two people with disability to connect in the program, but we did not do this with intent and the weighting disability on our programs was low.

The IAG provided an enabling environment, providing us with experts which led to our high achievement of engagement. Disability is mainstreamed as part of the project and is one of the main outcomes. The IAG's engagement increased our knowledge and capacity in disability inclusion and pushed us to mainstream it as part of this economic development project. The IAG also provided us with best practice tools using theory and also strong practical knowledge.

In the future, I think this will mean that more programs will also mainstream disability as part of their outcomes. Our organisation has now focused more on disability inclusion because of the success of this project. We are increasing quotas for disability inclusion and including it in all different areas of our organisation. We have been able to share our learnings and milestone achievement around the world.

This was the most significant change for me because it connected theory and technical advice to best practice. This opened our mind to learn a lot of things and we were able to implement it in their field.

Story 10: Disability inclusion: from political will to normal practice

I have been working on a program focusing on strengthening the ability of local communities and organisations in the Pacific to prepare and respond to emergencies, through consortia of around 35 humanitarian NGOs. IAG's role was to increase the knowledge and skills of people with disability and OPDs to strengthen their confidence in participating in the humanitarian sector. As this is primarily a policy space with a lot of competition for funding, the support IAG provided was around how to approach advocacy at the policy level, how to ensure effective participation and how to approach the audience (NGOs).

Before IAG's involvement, disability inclusion was only considered in humanitarian responses in the region if there was a person with lived experience in meetings or in decision-making positions. Otherwise, it always fell off the radar and there was no emphasis on it in any of the humanitarian work. There may have been only one or two organisations talking about disability inclusion at this stage.

The IAG mentoring and technical advice led to an increased visibility and profile of people with disability and OPDs for the humanitarian NGOs in the consortia. People with disability and OPDs have now been in the room to provide advice to these agencies, which has led to institutional-level change and increased adoption of disability inclusion practices. Examples include the integration of the Washington Group of Questions in assessment forms and disability inclusion components in their training and packages, and constantly testing and tweaking tools to make sure it is effective and fit-for-purpose for the benefits of persons with disability in the community.

Around 20 organisations in the consortia now have disability inclusion as part of their policies and practices. Even if the agencies do not have a person with disability in the room, they are now aware and prioritise disability inclusion. Disability inclusion has gone beyond political will to normal practice. The disability inclusion message from the persons with disabilities and OPDs has spread from this program into other development work from these humanitarian NGOs. Due to this institutional mind shift in NGOs, I see significant changes in the future of people with disability breaking the poverty cycle as they will be able to go to school, have access to WASH, and ensuring disability inclusion across donor programs, development programs and humanitarian programs. While there has been a lot of work on disability inclusion, it will be taken to another level.

This was the most significant change for me because it was about internal changes for disability inclusion. For me, you can change yourself whenever, but to change someone outside of your own circle – it takes a lot of budget, time, and effort. To change the mindset of all those NGOs, that was the biggest take away. The ripple effect is impactful – it goes into to their government workspace, UN work space, and development work space.

The IAG bring a lot of knowledge and value as they can see it from the global international perspective, but also have the local perspective. They were able to contextualise and tweak their technical support based the type of request or where the request was coming from.

Story 14: Becoming an advocate and leader in disability inclusive practices

I used to work in humanitarian programs where my supervisor happened to have a background on disability. I was interested in getting to know more about disability and how it can be mainstreamed into our programs, particularly in high conflict areas. We engaged the IAG to conduct training for ourselves and our partners and receive materials from this engagement. The IAG worked with our partners to mainstream disability into their organisations and their programs.

Before the engagement with the IAG, I was ignorant in terms of what could be done for people with disability in both humanitarian programs and at the community level. I did not realise how much impact I may have been having on people with a disability and their dignity.

The training and follow-on support from the IAG was an eye opener and really helped build my knowledge in disability inclusion and reflect on my own practices. I am now more conscious of the needs of people with a disability and when something needs to be done, I know how to do it. Recently an organisation asked me to provide training on disability inclusion as they were not sure how to go about it. I was able to train around 50 members of this organisation on how to work with people with disability in their community. This organisation has already begun implementing what we discussed in the training in community and are already seeing benefits for people with disability.

In the future, I anticipate that I will be considering disability inclusion in everything that I do. For instance, I am now working in climate change and am already thinking about how certain natural disasters impact people with disability specifically and always ask partners how they are working with disability in their communities.

This is the most significant change for me because now I can get more people to think about disability. I have seen the impact this has on people as it leads to a ripple effect for organisations to include and work with people with disability in a dignifying way, which in turn has the overall positive impact on people living with a disability in community.

Story 19: Technical advice leading to mainstreaming disability inclusion

I work with an organisation aiming to mainstream disability inclusion through all our projects. Through our engagement with IAG there has been a significant improvement on how disability inclusion has been considered and mainstreamed through our projects and programs.

Although my organisation has always considered disability inclusion in our work, it was previously quite surface level, it never went deep as staff believed it was a hard task to involve people with disability in our work. The IAG has been able to provide quick and tailored technical support and advice throughout all stages of the project cycle (including design and implementation). The IAG has also provided specific training to staff members on disability inclusion, which has been incredibly helpful. Their advice is always insightful, relevant, and easily applicable. If staff do not have the expertise in disability, they are able to reach out to the IAG for that additional support.

Due to this support, the work that has been done on the ground has improved significantly. Staff are investing in disability inclusion and their approach has changed in a positive way in implementing projects and programs. There has been quite an improvement in how people with disability and organisations of persons with disability are included in these projects and programs as well. Disability inclusion has been mainstreamed and considered across our organisation and through all our projects and programs. It's great that we have an organisational direction on disability inclusion but having the technical support system through the IAG has been significant in how we've been able to mainstream it in our outcomes and the projects we manage as well.

In the future, I hope that disability inclusion becomes further embedded across our organisation and in our programs. I see it's increasing in how it's been considered and I'm hoping that it gets so ingrained in the work we're doing and it's part of every aspect of the work we're doing.

This was the most significant change for me because it impacts everything we do in the organisation. Mainstreaming is our priority focus, and it covers all of our organisation's work with great impact.

**STRENGTHENING
PARTNER
ORGANISATIONS**

Story 2: Partnering for transformation

My organisation is an organisation for people with disabilities and we have members across 20 Pacific Island Countries and territories. We have had a long standing relationship with CBM which has involved several important changes to our organisation and the way disability inclusion is able to target systems change. All of this has been possible because of the partnership with CBM, which have grown over the years with mutual trust and shared values. Another impact of the partnership is the detailed Independent Partner Assessment required for PDF as a recipient of funds through CBM. The partner assessment has standard checklist that PDF as an organisation is assessed against. With our relationship instead of what often becomes just a tick the box checklist exercise, under PDF's request to CBM for a detailed assessment to support PDF's transformation, it is assessing the overall PDF institution – its governance and leadership, programs, and financial systems. We wanted to use the assessment opportunity to help us transform as an institution, improve our systems and how we run our business so we can respond better to our members, deliver our services in a very challenging environment due to COVID and support better the implementation of our 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan.

This change is one of the many most significant changes. The Independent Partner Assessment could have been a tick a box exercise but because of the strength of our relationship with CBM, we wanted them to understand that the process and what comes out of the partner assessment can help us lift and transform our organisation to respond better and grow for our members. This is significant because with closed borders, we have had to change our modality and ways of working because of Covid. Before we could travel and work with members on the ground. Now, for example, communication has become so much more expensive, what can be discussed face to face with the team in the office over an hour, takes days to be sorted via zoom platform and phone calls when Suva was on lockdown while working from home. The same applies with our members, what can be sorted with a visit on the ground in very few days is very different with the reliance on virtual platform and teleconferencing with many follow-ups. Now things take months instead of weeks. We have to find trusted people on the ground. We have to improve and transform our systems so we can respond better during these uncertainties presented by COVID. The Partner Assessment will help us identify the gaps, address the risks and put in place measures so we can be more resilient, innovative and adaptable, while still being accountable and transparent. The assessment will help us address gaps and without it we would not know what these gaps are or our areas that need strengthening. The recommendations will also include budget and priorities. This will be an evidence-based launching pad for the next 4 years implementation of our current strategy.

The only reason that this has been possible is because of the mutually respectful relationship between us and CBM that has been built over time. Though, there was a time that we feel the relationship was not as good as what it should be, however, working through it with open honest conversation has now resulted in a very trusted and respectful relationship that we are both proud of. This has been built partly through regular meetings and engagement over several years and strengthened through consistent joint planning and honest feedback. What is important is that CBM have listened and heard us and vice versa. This is what partnership means. And this detail Partner Assessment can only be done with CBM because of the kind of relationship we have.

Story 4: Seeing value in Disability Inclusion

I have worked on Disability inclusive development for 14 years on programs set up as partnerships and other programs in PNG and elsewhere.

I have drawn on CBM's IAG to build capacity and through the Help desk, as well as drawing on technical support for program design.

In the Australia Water Partnerships gender equality was ok but not disability inclusion – it's been a slow burn. Disability inclusion has taken longer to gain traction, partly because of COVID and the related difficulty doing business generally during a pandemic. Even if disability inclusion is hard, you should still try.

The most significant change that I have observed is that the local NGO partners have been approaching CBM directly for support with disability inclusion. This has been very surprising and a better than anticipated response, which is why I think that it is the most significant change. What it means is that CBM's advice has been valued by partners, which is a great outcome.

The success factors are about the credibility and dedication of the CBM staff. Having a national disability inclusion adviser who is well respected has made civil society partners see value in giving people with disability a voice. Recognizing that change takes time, providing support on disability inclusion brings the issue up front. Being proactive and being prepared to learn about the Water sector have also been success factors for the IAG.

Story 6: Turning up the volume on disability inclusion

I am a senior humanitarian adviser with an NGO consortium that includes CBM. Currently there is a disaster readiness program (AHP Disaster READY) involving 5 countries (Fiji, Solomon Islands, PNG, Vanuatu and Timor Leste) which is due to start a second phase next year (July 2022). The biggest change resulting from the partnership with CBM is that when we started this approx. 4 years ago, the OPDs who were invited to be part of Disaster READY were really quiet. Over the years the volume has been turned up. The key representatives have stayed the same, but their confidence has grown, they now lean in and speak up, advocate and remind other development and humanitarian actors about disability inclusion. It's really great to see that confidence and I think that this is the most significant change.

CBM helped to create the space for OPDs and built their confidence through coaching and mentoring. It can be very lonely in the disability inclusion space, and having direct links to CBM means having people to bounce ideas off and having those essential relationships is really important for people to feel confident.

The reason this change is significant to me is that many years ago, we assumed that the best way to approach disability inclusion in disaster risk reduction was to start with disaster readiness and then look at how to integrate disability inclusion. Now we know that it's in fact the other way around. It's about putting the focus on disability inclusion and having disaster readiness built into that. We know the loudest or most sophisticated voices are the ones that get heard, so it's about turning up the volume on the voices of the people who matter the most. It's not about getting your own way, but about getting heard. Things like 'increased confidence' or 'having a stronger voice' are often not indicators of success in many of our MEL frameworks. We need to change this approach to measuring success. We need people with disability inclusion lived experience to be involved, heard and listened to, when we define success in our MEL frameworks.

Story 17: Evidence is key

I work for an NGO that has been implementing projects in several countries under the ANCP program. One project was particularly successful in terms of disability inclusion and these results are largely due to the involvement of CBM's IAG. There were two main high level impacts (changes) resulting from CBM's work. The first was that project staff capacity was built, including management and field staff and the local disability inclusion adviser.

The second change I observed was that inclusion activities were very basic at the beginning but over time, the project started to tackle more sophisticated activities and innovative approaches were piloted. One example of this was supporting community level DPOs, with almost no, or limited experience and resources to implement projects. DPO members were recruited by the project to be field workers and DPOs became implementing partners. This was really empowering and DPOs started implementing a large part of the project. Because of CBM, this project had good evidence of results and we were able to understand and capture learnings. The reason I have chosen this as the most significant change is because while I observed that the project staff capacity changes were significant, we don't have any M&E evidence of this. There wasn't a system in place for us to measure changes in staff capacity.

The project's M&E proved that this more sophisticated approach of DPO implementation had a big impact and reached more people with disability. Independent reviews found that the chosen interventions were effective. Targets were reached and the endline evaluation showed that personal empowerment was achieved and there was an improvement in representation of people with disability.

One of the success factors was that CBM was involved from the beginning. Diversity inclusion needs to be factored into the design stage of a project because it's easier to get teams to do harder tasks around inclusion if they are already aware of these in the design and logframe. One example of this is including psycho social disability which has still not been effectively achieved yet. Psycho-social disability needs to be properly identified and included in data on future projects. Another area where improvements could be made is establishing a clearer understanding of minimum requirement expectations from the beginning (eg, provision of reasonable accommodation). I think CBM starts small so as not to scare people off but a middle ground would be good. Maybe doing a readiness assessment with leadership would help.

Story 20: Mainstreaming disability inclusion leading to organisational behaviour change

I currently work for an organisation who works with different types of partners in humanitarian contexts. These partners could include governments, donor partners or implementing partners. I have worked with the IAG on several occasions, where they have provided technical support and advice for the work we do.

Throughout my engagement with the IAG, the most significant change to me has been the behavioural change in our partner organisations including disability inclusion across the humanitarian program cycle and subsequent mechanisms. Prior to the IAG's involvement, reports, meetings with partners and on field missions, disability was never mentioned unless we raised the question. The usual responses included *'we'll have to get back to you'*, or *'we need to speak to our gender advisor, they might know'*. Disability inclusion was not mainstreamed, and usually the responsibility was on one person, or didn't sit with anyone. Partners didn't prioritise enough for the information, and they weren't collecting data on it. There was a sense that it was too hard to include in programming.

Due to one of the countries we work in ratifying the CRPD, and the requirement for disability inclusion across the humanitarian program cycle, our main partner (who worked with many different organisations in country) became responsible for upholding disability inclusion across the country. They were open with us that they did not have the capacity and did not know where to start for disability inclusive practices.

We engaged the IAG to assist with providing advice and support to ensure the requirements were being met. The IAG conducted training in country to our main partner and the organisations they worked with, and had follow up meetings with them to understand what technical assistance they might like access to, to implement what they were trained in. The IAG then supported updating the documents and training materials across the humanitarian program cycle that needed to reflect the guidelines. It was beneficial that we had access to the IAG for as much time as we did and having the same IAG staff engaged throughout the program made a big difference.

As a result of the work with the IAG, we started to see a behavioural change from partners who were making small steps in improving progress towards disability inclusion. This included improving data collection for people with disability and engaging people with disability across the humanitarian program cycle. Disability inclusion became mainstreamed into programs and we started to see reports including updates on disability, rather than us having to ask and follow up for this information. We also started to see a snowball effect where the organisations were reaching out to the IAG for additional support.

In the future I believe there will be more information available on people with disability, and that they will be considered across all stages of the humanitarian program cycle. We got the ball rolling on that and focused so much on institutionalisation to ensure that it would be continued, especially when the turnover is so high.

This was the most significant change for me because I saw the change in our partners and in my role. I was able to show partners the details on how to make it happen, rather than keep advocating that it should happen. This enabled meaningful change and you could see the change on the ground, particularly through the number of people with disability accessing humanitarian assistance.