



DISABILITY INCLUSION POLICY

APPLICABILITY: ACCI Staff & Strategic Partners

VERSION: June 2020

AUTHORISED BY: Board Approved

PREAMBLE

Statistics reveal that...

- 15% of the world's population have a disability.
- 80% of people with a disability live in developing countries.
- 20% (1 in 5) of the world's poorest people in developing countries have a disability¹

With so many people globally living with a disability, it is vitally important for ACCI to prioritise disability inclusion throughout all areas of our organisation, both within internal operations and through our program activities. ACCI aims to work for and with people with disabilities, to promote their human rights and empowerment.

Those living with a disability often face serious barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. People with disabilities, who also face poverty, often live in places where it is difficult to access services or assistance. This exclusion from accessing basic rights such as education, health, employment and participation in public or political life leads to a cycle of poverty, which can increase a person's vulnerability.

ACCI acknowledges that disability inclusion is linked to our faith as we believe everyone is created equal and therefore should have equal access to services and resources. Therefore, we are committed to be a disability inclusive organisation and supporting all our partners and field workers to prioritise disability inclusive approaches and practices to development. This does not only include our community development projects, but also how we can include people with disabilities in ministry and church activities.

For the purpose of this policy, people with disabilities is as defined by the *United National Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (CRPD)*:

People with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others ².

PURPOSE

This policy aims to:

1. demonstrate ACCI's commitment and approaches to disability inclusion;

¹ CBM, 'Inclusion Made Easy: A quick program guide to disability in development', 2012

² United National Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (CRPD), 2006

2. outline the expectations and responsibilities of ACCI stakeholders; and
3. provide guidance to stakeholders on how to meet good practice standards.

ACCI'S APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

ACCI takes the following approaches to disability inclusion:

Mainstreaming: Incorporating disability inclusion into all sectors of the organisation including in education, health, livelihoods, water and sanitation and disaster management projects. Disability Inclusion should be incorporated into all we do not just seen as separate activities or programs.

Rights based approach: People with disabilities are right holders and should therefore never be looked down upon as causes for charity, but as individuals who have the same rights as everyone else, including their right to participation. Therefore, it is the responsibility of governments and other duty bearers, including NGO's to make sure that their rights are upheld.

Strength based approach: Focusing on the abilities, strengths and priorities of people and organisations, and their efforts to achieve self-reliance.

ACCI recognises that the following must also inform our approach:

- People with a disability come from many different contexts and therefore their perspectives and lived experiences are diverse.
- People with a disability play the central role in representing their own interests and priorities. Understanding this enable us to work more effectively.
- The interaction of gender and disability is very important to take into account, as girls and women with disabilities, along with the elderly, often face compounding vulnerabilities.

STANDARDS & GUIDANCE

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) outlines the rights of those with disabilities and the responsibilities of nations and other duty bearers to uphold and promote these rights. This policy reflects our commitment to support the CRPD and the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the related to inclusion.

ACCI has an obligation to act within the laws of the countries wherein we operate, as well as to hold duty-bearers within those countries accountable for promoting and ensuring disability inclusion. ACCI adheres to relevant Australian law, including federal anti-discrimination laws, such as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986; the Disability Discrimination Act 1992; Equal Opportunity Amendment (Family Responsibilities) Act 2008; and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010.

As a member of ACFID and signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct (2015), ACCIR has committed to promote disability inclusion within our development and humanitarian initiatives and internal operations. ACCI also recognises our responsibility to promote best practice under the ACFID Code of Conduct in our development projects.

ACCI is guided by organisations leading the way in this area, including CBM's work in the following documentation:

- ‘Inclusion Made Easy: A quick program guide to disability in development’³.

SCOPE

Those who fall within the scope below are required to read, sign and adhere to the **ACCI Disability Inclusion Policy**.

This policy applies to all ACCI Stakeholders defined below.

- All ACCI Staff including but not limited to employees, contractors and consultants.
- All ACCI Field Workers.
- All ACCI Associates.
- All ACCI Strategic Partners including any organisation receiving ACCI funding in Australia or abroad to implement activities including but not limited to community development, disaster response or non-development activities.
- All ACCI Board Members.

This policy is recommended for ACCI Stakeholders defined below.

- All ACCI Volunteers including but not limited to office and event-based volunteers.

ACCI'S INTERNAL COMMITMENTS AND STRATEGIES:

ACCI is committed through its organisational development to outwork the following:

- Ensure **continual learning** as a staff to enhance our awareness, knowledge and strategies in this area.
- Conduct assessments of all **project design documents** to ensure that disability inclusion is mainstreamed and clearly understood by partners.
- Work alongside **advocacy** groups to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities both at the institutional and policy level
- Support initiatives that are in our line of work to **reduce the stigma** that impact those living with disabilities.
- Ensure that **barriers to employment at ACCI are removed** and that the workplace is accessible for people with disabilities.
- Demonstrate a commitment to developing **resources and stakeholder communications** that seek to reduce barriers to ensure accessibility for people with a disability.

ACCI is committed to work with our partners and field workers to undertake the following:

- Promote the **active participation and the creation of opportunities** for people with disabilities. This should involve the inclusion and contributions of people with a disability in every phase of a project cycle.

³ CBM, ‘Inclusion Made Easy: A quick program guide to disability in development’, 2012

- Develop **capacity building** plans for partners to ensure disability inclusion is mainstreamed across program design and activities. This includes providing partners with resources and tools on disability inclusion.
- Encourage specific **budget allocation** to be assigned to disability inclusion.
- Complement programs with **targeted support and services** to empower people with disabilities.
- Continue to **network** with organisations that specialise in working with people with disabilities and refer those that may be useful for partners.

ALL STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS:

All ACCI stakeholders are expected to consider disability inclusion in all programming and activities. They are also expected to create plans and strategies unique to their context, size and programs.

ACCI is committed to **helping stakeholders** meet these expectations through:

- providing training and capacity building opportunities;
- information sharing; and
- ongoing coaching and support.

ACCIR PARTNER EXPECTATIONS:

The below section applies to those with formal partnerships with ACCI Relief.

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS

Before **onboarding** any ACCIR new partner, ACCIR will:

- Conduct an evaluation of every potential partner's practices, commitments and capacity to upholding ACCI standards and policies before partnership approval.

During project **design and delivery**, partners are expected to:

- Complete the disability inclusion section in their program framework and stakeholder analysis, outlining their commitment and strategies to disability inclusion through their project cycle.
- Identify and address barriers to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communication systems, services and to other public facilities.
- Ensure people with disabilities are included in decision-making throughout all stages of project implementation.
- By signing the MOU, partners agree that they will implement these commitments during the delivery of their program.

Through **monitoring and evaluation**, partners are expected to:

- Ensure all monitoring and evaluation frameworks and strategies include the participation and representation of people with disabilities.
- Cooperate with ACCI monitoring and evaluation processes, including the following:

- 6-month evaluation on how partners are meeting their disability inclusion commitments outlined in their program framework; and
- Monitoring visits at least every 2 years to assess each partner's delivery of disability inclusion commitments.

BEST PRACTICE

To comply with best practice, ACCIR encourages partners to outwork the following actions:

- Develop and design their own disability inclusion policy, guidelines or statement.
- Assign a focal person with the responsibility of helping their organisation to be more inclusive of those with disabilities.
- Provide disability inclusion training to staff.
- Demonstrate a commitment to developing resources and stakeholder communications that seek to reduce barriers to ensure accessibility for people with a disability.
- Ensure that barriers to employment within their organisation are removed and that the workplace is accessible for people with disabilities
- Incorporate, wherever possible, the following into program strategies:
 - Promote and enable the active participation of people with disabilities through engagement and collaboration with locally led committees or advocacy groups, led by people with disabilities.
 - Include specific budget allocation to disability inclusion.
 - Prepare and implement an affirmative action plan to remove barriers and ensure equal access for people with disabilities.
 - Ensure disaster risk reduction plans are developed with a disability inclusion lens.

REVIEWING THE POLICY

ACCI Missions & Relief' Disability Inclusion Policy and Code of Conduct will be reviewed every three years. ACCI General Manager will manage the review and stakeholders will be consulted during this process.