

Inclusive Humanitarian Action



Someone with a physical disability is more at risk in a disaster situation as moving around can be difficult after a natural disaster.

Working together to help each other

- Persons with disabilities are more at risk in disasters and humanitarian emergencies. These are things like famine, floods or drought.
- Humanitarian help must include and protect **all persons**, including persons with disabilities.
- Humanitarian action and information must be easy to understand by everyone, including persons with disabilities, this is called Universal Design.
- Persons with disabilities work as experts in humanitarian help.



BASELINE

Ensuring no one is left behind when disasters happen, is central to the humanitarian mandate. It is reflected in the humanitarian principles and the core humanitarian standards.

In disaster and crisis situations, persons with disabilities are often among those most in need and at an increased risk of violence, exploitation and abuse. Inclusive humanitarian action starts with the participation of persons with disabilities in the humanitarian program cycle – from inclusive needs assessments and identification of affected populations, the provision of accessible and appropriate humanitarian relief to the engagement in participative monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian work. Apart from being a legal obligation, persons with disabilities bring a unique set of skills, experiences and expertise to shape the way we engage in humanitarian action.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The principles of inclusive humanitarian action are based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Geneva Conventions and the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action as well as the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards. They call for:

1. Design of humanitarian response to reach persons with disabilities and address their diverse rights and needs.
2. The meaningful participation and leadership of persons with disabilities.
3. Non-discrimination and respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities.
4. Inclusive policies and processes to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The CRPD has a stand-alone article on situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (Article 11) requiring States Parties to take “[...] all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.” Additional articles of the CRPD relevant to inclusive humanitarian action include Article 5 (Equality and non-discrimination), Article 9 (Accessibility), Article 10 (Liberty of movement and nationality) and Article 31 (Statistics and data collection).



MEASURES

A prerequisite of inclusive humanitarian action is to assess the risks faced by persons with disabilities and ensure that appropriate preparedness measures are in place. Specific barriers and enablers for persons with disabilities must be identified:

- Barriers which hinder persons with disabilities from accessing and participating in humanitarian assistance and protection. These can



The experienced CBM-partner Yakkum delivered medical and rehabilitative outreach after the earthquake and tsunami in Sulawesi. The local organization for persons with disabilities Perkumpulan Penyandang Disabilities Indonesia provided together with Yakkum and CBM workshops for government and other humanitarian agencies to mainstream disability in their emergency programs.

include environmental, communication, attitudinal, economic and institutional barriers.

- Enablers, i.e. external factors such as the political system, culture and/or geographic setting facilitating access and participation in society for persons with disabilities alongside the individual capacities of persons with disabilities.

Specific measures ensuring accessibility and inclusion along the humanitarian program cycle follow from this analysis:

- Accessibility of buildings, facilities, distribution points and other physical locations (applying the principles of Universal Design).
- Collection of disaggregated data by Sex, Age and Disability (SAD) and systematic identification of persons with disabilities in affected communities.
- Provision of mobile- or outreach services to facilitate access to services, such as community health centers.
- Provision of a functional referral systems for humanitarian services (including specialized services) and protection assistance.
- Provision of information in accessible formats and channels, including accessible feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Design of activities to allow persons with disabilities to remain together with their caregivers, families and other support networks.
- Promotion of an organizational culture that respects the dignity, rights and capacities of persons with disabilities, including through training of staff.

 **GOOD PRACTICE**

In 2018, CBM and its local partner Yakkum Emergency Unit responded to the devastating earthquake and tsunami on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

To ensure inclusive action, CBM partnered with a local organization of persons with disabilities, Perkumpulan Penyandang Disabilities Indonesia, who supported the planning and implementation of the response and provided technical support to ensure accessibility and inclusion. Doctors were trained to work with patients with disabilities. The health and hygiene kits for persons with disabilities were adapted to include an item that addressed their specific needs, in this case a piece of clothing which is easy to handle for persons with injuries or physical disabilities. Persons, who needed support for opening a bank account or withdrawing the cash transfer, got individual assistance, to ensure they received the money and could decide themselves how to use it. Water points were made accessibly for everyone, following universal design principles.

CBM and PPDI established an “Ageing and Disability Focal Point” (ADFP) which identified persons with disabilities and older persons with limited mobility, in all affected villages through a group of volunteers, themselves persons with disabilities. At the same time, all available humanitarian services from the government and other actors were mapped and people and services systematically matched. Representatives from the ADFP participated in coordination mechanisms, to highlight the barriers for persons with disabilities and help other organizations to work more inclusively.

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LINKS AND INFORMATION

Inclusive Humanitarian Action: Briefing Paper (CBM)

<https://www.cbmswiss.ch/humanitarian-action-paper>

Inclusive Humanitarian Action: A Study into Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA) Agency Practice in the Nepal Earthquake Response

<https://www.cbmswiss.ch/humanitarian-action-study>

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