

# 'Inclusive': Barrier-Free Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities – End Term Evaluation

## Executive Summary

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This report gives the findings of an end term evaluation of a Sightsavers project called 'Inclusive': Barrier-Free Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities'. It ran from April 2013 to March 2016 and was co-financed by the European Union with a budget of €802,265.

The overall objective of the project was to ensure the equal participation of persons with disabilities and their organisations into socio-economic activities and community life, and to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and be aligned to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in Bangladesh. It had 3 specific objectives:

1. To strengthen the capacities and voice of Disabled and Blind People's Organisations (DPOs/BPOs) and increase their linkages and networking with state and non-state actors.
2. To promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in socio-economic activities and improve their access to services.
3. To support local authorities and other government departments to meet their obligations for inclusive development as set out in the UNCRPD.

The key actors of this initiative were people with disabilities, their organisations and the project implementing agencies Assistance for Blind Children (ABC) and Bangladesh Visually Impaired Peoples Society (BVIPS) who operate in Narsingdi and Dhaka. The local authorities and the government sector targeted by the project were also relevant stakeholders.

### Overall Summary

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the projects' achievements and challenges, and to capture the lessons learnt for Sightsavers and partners in the context of inclusion of person with disabilities. The evaluation is a summative final evaluation focusing on both accountability and lesson learning. It used a mixed methods approach that blends qualitative data gathered through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and stories of change with limited quantitative data taken from the monitoring tools that were developed during the project, and quantifying themes from the stories of change. The evaluation used the data collection technique of Most Significant Change (MSC) and collected a series of

stories of change from project participants. These were analysed by a series of committees consisting of project stakeholders including partner staff, Self Help Group (SHG) representatives and local government, who then selected the stories they felt most represented the project.

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### **Relevance**

**Rating: Satisfactory**



*The project has been relevant to the needs of people with disabilities and aligned with local and international policies and priorities on disability and inclusion in Bangladesh. The project activities were appropriate for the gaps in services for persons with disabilities in the target communities and based on evidence of previous Sightsavers interventions. The strengthening of the capacities of the SHGs was particularly relevant to local needs. However, Sightsavers documentation of the project design process is weak. For example, Sightsavers undertook a needs assessment at the design stage of the project but did not document this. The implementation of the project was relevant to the needs of women with disabilities. However, the original design did not include a gender needs assessment and lacked a coherent approach to addressing the power imbalances within Bangladesh society.*

### **Effectiveness**

**Rating: Satisfactory**



*The evaluation found that the project was effective at achieving its objectives and targets even under many challenges many of which were not predictable and out of Sightsavers' control. The project also responded to most of the recommendations of the mid-term review (MTR) and ROM exercise.*

### **Efficiency**

**Rating: Satisfactory**



*The initial project design was very ambitious and due to a number of disruptions, many of which were unforeseen, the project was initially delayed in implementation. The project team was able to adapt the project log-frame and revise its scope and time frame of implementation, and adjust the budget to ensure it conducted most activities and achieved the objectives of the project. Some of those activities will be strengthened further via a Sightsavers self-funded extension for three months after the project.*

### **Impact**

**Rating: Excellent**



*The impact of this project is demonstrated in the many Most Significant Change (MSC) stories which were collected from the project beneficiaries. Impact themes that stood out amongst persons with disabilities were increases in confidence, dignity, hope and knowledge of rights, greater economic empowerment as well as positive changes in family attitudes and the local community and governance. The project also strengthened the capacities of the SHGs. Most SHGs are now registered, have developed action plans and have facilitated greater participation of their members into local government structures as well as accessing government initiatives.*

### **Sustainability**

**Rating: Satisfactory**



*The project has made considerable strides towards ensuring the gains of the project will be sustainable. In particular, the strengthened capacities of the SHGs and the involvement of SHG members into local and district decision making committees should be sustainable. There is evidence that some of the changes have multiplied beyond the area of the project*

intervention. The advocacy work of the project has contributed to the positive changes brought about by the disability actors throughout the project.

The biggest threat to the sustainability of the project is the limited resources that government structures have to implement the new Disability Act and the UNCRPD. A number of participants shared with the evaluation team that, due to the project, local government officials have greater awareness of disability rights. However, they often lack resources and have limited awareness of how to implement the Act and the UNCRPD.

### **Replication**

**Rating: Satisfactory**



Learnings have been made by this project. Though documentation of these can be improved upon, strategies for dissemination of these learnings are being formulated. Involvement of other disability stakeholders such as NFOWD will help to share captured learnings.

### **Coherence/Coordination:**

**Rating: Excellent**



Other NGOs have been involved in aspects of implementation of this project especially linking SHGs to wage employment opportunities, justice and education systems. Sightsavers and partners have strong disability networks in Bangladesh which has helped facilitate and coordinate synergies with state and non-state actors.

## **Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Addressed to</b>
<b>Design/Strategy</b>		
Put clear monitoring tools in place before start of activities (in Bangla and English).	Medium	Sightsavers Partners
Ensure support is given to the country program with proposal and logic model development, through support from Sightsavers Global office and by developing staff capacities in this area.	High	Sightsavers
Include budget for partner staff training to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- clarity of role in project</li> <li>- on going professional development tailored to job description</li> </ul> This may also help to reduce turnover of staff for the project period by keeping motivation and feelings of support.	Medium	Sightsavers Partners
Ensure a gender-focused approach to project development, including conducting a gender based needs assessment. Encourage gender equality in recruitment of Sightsavers and implementing partner staff.	High	Sightsavers Partners
<b>SHG Capacity</b>		
Develop a strategy for splitting large SHGs to maintain group intimacy and ensure all members including marginalized members have a voice.	High	Partners SHGs
Encourage the Trainer of Trainer (TOT) approach of SHG members as part of the community pool to help with those unable to access formal trainings.	High	Partners SHGs
<b>Economic Empowerment and Access to Services</b>		
Employ Livelihood Officers to help with personalised employment plans, locate other trainings and liaise with wage employers using success stories	High	Sightsavers Partners

of the project as role models		SHGs
Promote entrepreneurship of SHGs as a source of funding for the group and for members. Access private sector funds (CSR/Advertising) for machinery etc	High	Partners SHGs
Employ a Rehabilitation Therapist to: - assess and treat those people with disability who are not so mobile to access SHGs - help link with Government One Stop Services - assist with prescription of relevant Assistive Devices for local artisans to manufacture	High	Sightsavers Partners
<b>Support Local Authorities</b>		
Partner with government to help sustainability and therefore assist with local and national activity and impact	High	Sightsavers Partners Local Government
Encourage Sightsavers and partners to fulfill their own disability staff quota levels to be a good model for employment opportunities and lobby government to fulfill their employment obligations	Medium	Sightsavers Partners Government