



“MAKING IT WORK!”

GOOD PRACTICES IN THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION -CHINA



How to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are promoted and respected?



Support to DPOs Project- November 2012

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Introduction: what is “Making It Work”?

In 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was brought into force. This major piece of international law represents a significant step toward addressing the poverty cycle and social exclusion experienced by many people with disabilities. **China was one of the first countries to ratify the United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** in 2008. The UNCRPD was subsequently translated into national laws and regulations, notably, the “Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of People with Disabilities”, revised in April 2008 and put into practice on July 1st, 2008.

In most countries, including China, there still exist significant gaps in the standards set by the UNCRPD and national policies - and the reality at ground level for many people with disabilities. **“Making It Work!”** is a **positive advocacy technique**, aiming at documenting and promoting good practices in line with the principles of the [Convention](#). It aims to contribute to making this Convention a reality so that it impacts on people with disabilities’ lives. The methodology is based on identifying effective or innovative actions that have achieved **positive changes** (whether from grass-roots level initiatives or regional-level activities) and analyzing how they could be sustained or replicated. At the heart of this process, people with disabilities are validating **what works** and using the **evidence-based good practices** to strengthen their **advocacy to influence social change**.

In the Chinese context, in particular in the Tibet Autonomous Region, advocacy on disability rights may be more effectively conducted through a non-confrontational manner. “Making It Work!” offers a **subtle approach to rights advocacy**. Policy makers, service providers and other development stakeholders do not want or need a list of all the problems they face in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities, rather the provision of **cost-effective solutions, based on contextual evidence**. Making it Work shifts attention to **what has worked** and how it could be **replicated** or **‘scaled up’** putting forth constructive, practical **recommendations**.

The methodology uses a **multi-stakeholder approach**, building alliances and collaboration around **disability inclusion** issues. Making it Work puts an emphasis on a **“learning by doing”** process that empowers groups to work collectively to document and promote change

There are five key elements of the “Making it Work” methodology:



At a practical level, “Making it Work” offers a set of **tools** and **guidelines** that steer groups through a **collaborative process** to define the types of changes they want to document, to analyze these changes and to work collectively to use this evidence for more effective advocacy. More information available at: <http://www.makingitwork-crpd.org/>

Overview of the national and local context



After China's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, the Government initiated a series of concrete actions to improve the situation of persons with disabilities. To comply with the requirements of the Convention, several new regulations and policies have been passed, such as "The National Law for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities". Social security for persons with disabilities has become one of the main pillars of the current 5-year action plan (2011-2015) of the China Disabled Persons Federation. However, the new policies have yet to reach and impact on the more isolated regions, with the poorest population and least services. These areas have an urgent need for further specialized services for people with disabilities, generally the most marginalized and impoverished group within the community.

The specificity of the Tibet Autonomous Region

The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) is one of the largest regions of China, but less economically developed than other provinces. Average altitude is above 4000 meters, with an arid climate and cold, dry winters. The terrain is underdeveloped in terms of infrastructures, with travel generally difficult. The population is nomadic and dispersed, with access to basic services practically impossible outside of major cities. According to the national sample survey there are 190,000 persons with disabilities living in the region. Tibet can be defined as a very constraining environment but some existing facilitating factors make disability work generally successful.



Project presentation

Handicap International has been active in China since 1998. We currently work in close collaboration with the Disabled Persons Federations in the Tibet Autonomous Region, Beijing Municipality, and in the provinces of Guangxi, Sichuan and Yunnan. The projects aim to create more inclusive development policies, where the rights of persons with disabilities for equal participation are supported and respected. Concrete actions in the field of disability prevention, physical rehabilitation, access to education for children with disabilities, access to employment and social integration are currently ongoing activities within the projects. To complement field activities, we participate in provincial and national level workshops and research, toward the improvement of social protection and service access for persons with disabilities. These activities are conducted in collaboration with Government stakeholders, academic institutions and civil society representatives.

To **support China's emerging civil society**, Handicap International is determined to **reinforce its collaboration with associations of persons with disabilities (DPOs)**, disability focused civil society organizations (CSOs) and continue the successful alliance with the Government system (CDPF).



Beijing CSOs and Tibet DPOs representatives during an exchange of practice workshop in Lhasa

The current Support to DPOs project objective is to **enhance the capacities** of 3 DPOs in Tibet (the Tibetan Deaf Association, the Tibetan Blind Association, and the Tibetan Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities) and 2 Disability Focuses Civil Society Organizations in Beijing to **promote the rights of persons with disabilities in China**.

The expected results of the 3-year project are:

- 1: DPOs and CSOs are representing the interest of persons with disabilities and are organizationally structured and reinforced institutionally to provide quality services to persons with disabilities and their family.
- 2: DPOs and CSOs advocate to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are promoted and respected.
- 3: DPOs and CSOs provide presence and visibility to persons with disabilities and their needs.
- 4: DPOs and CSOs are involved in the decision-making process.

Process and methodology

- Regional Making It Work Training in Beijing

A 3-day regional training was organized in Beijing, by Handicap International Belgium Headquarters, from April 26th to April 29th 2011, for Handicap International staff and the partners of Asia Programs involved or interested in the “Making It Work!” initiative. The training aim was to understand the “Making It Work” methodology, to identify good practice and to prepare case studies illustrating how the UNCRPD can be applied concretely for creating a positive change for people with disabilities. The training also provided the opportunity to share experiences between HI programs in the region and DPOs from different fields. From the Handicap International China Program, the training was attended by the 2 Beijing CSOs’ representatives, HI’s operational coordinator and the Tibet DPO’s project manager and advisor.

- ‘Making It Work’ Duplication in Lhasa

Due to language barriers and ongoing regional logistic difficulties, a duplication workshop was organized in December 2011 to introduce the “Making It Work!” methodology to the Tibetan DPOs, the Handicap International team and the partners. The workshop was facilitated by the S-DPO Advisor and Project Manager, with 25 people attending the training.



Handicap International Projects Managers and Partners presenting their possible action plan to implement “Making It Work!” actions

Some participants were familiar with similar methodologies such as “Evidence-based practices” or “Most significant changes”.

The main outcomes of the training:

- Participants became familiar with the concept of the “Making It Work” methodology and were taught the 5 steps to develop “Making It Work” activities.
- Possible topics for developing good practice case studies were identified.
- Participants were able to define a good practice using the UNCRPD guiding principles.
- The composition of a multi-stakeholder group was drafted.
- Participants were taught how to develop a ‘Making It Work’ report with recommendations.
- Participants identified advocacy methods fitting the context to promote the report.

The training was received enthusiastically, with all participants committing to engage and contribute to the initiative, to include the joint preparation of relevant reports.



Group work during the “Making It Work!” training

Participant feedback:

- “Making It Work!” can work in Tibet, but if we target the Government and even services providers, we need to use National Laws, rather than UNCRPD because of the national pride. Showing practical examples of good practices that are working can be effective. It is in line with the Government approach, developing a lot of pilot project based on good practices, it’s a similar methodology. “ *Social Protection project*”
- “Making It Work!” can be applicable at different levels. Our partners work at grassroots level, they need solution-focused recommendations, some kind of “quick fix”. So this methodology is very appropriate.” *Inclusive Education project*.
- “This is a very good method because we have to collect good practices within our project. “Making It Work!” can be useful to advocate employers and Government.” *Livelihood project*

- Stakeholder group meeting

Following the training on the “Making It Work!” methodology, a multi-stakeholder group meeting was organized on August 9th 2012. The multi-stakeholder group was composed of 23 persons from:

- Tibetan Deaf Association (DPO)
- Tibetan Blind Association (DPO)
- Tibetan Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities (DPO)
- Braille without Borders
- Kiki’s Kindergarten
- Lhasa Special Education School
- TDPF-CBR guidance department
- LDPF Rehabilitation workers
- HI CBR staff
- HI Livelihood/ Social Protection project staff
- HI Inclusive Education project staff
- HI Institution Rehabilitation staff
- HI Support to DPOs staff

In the Tibetan-Chinese context, it is compulsory to involve Government stakeholders, such as the Tibet Disabled Persons’ Federation, to all scheduled key meetings. Without their participation and agreement, no further actions can be conducted. The target of the report is the governmental Disability Working Committee, which was not involved in the multi-stakeholders meeting.



The aim of the multi-stakeholder group meeting was to identify **local criteria of good practice** and to **select good practice**, according to these criteria and the UNCPRD’s guiding principles.

- Collection of good practices

As part of the activities linked with result 2 in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, the DPOs in TAR have decided to use the “Making It Work “ methodology to collect:

- good practice of **persons with disabilities’ social integration and participation**
- good practice in terms of **working methods to ensure partner ownership** and long term **sustainability**
- good practice in terms of **process**, such as **participative working** methods to ensure the long term ‘real’ **inclusion of persons with disabilities**

The Support to DPOs project has collected 13 case studies, **using the existing local networks**: CBR, LDPF rehabilitation workers, Livelihood/Social Protection, Inclusive Education Handicap International projects and organizations working on disability issues such as Braille Without Borders and Kiki’s kindergarten. The case studies were collected and compiled between July and September 2012, using structured interviews with key initiators or implementers of the practice.

- Report promotion and advocacy

The report’s **targets** are:

- The **members of the Disability Working Committee**, which is composed of representatives of different Bureaus (Education, Health, Transport, Social Security, etc.). **The Disability Working Committee is the key Government body in decision making on disability issues.** The Committee is coordinated by the Tibet Disabled Persons’ Federation.
- The **community service providers**, including teachers, employers, media and academic institutions
- Representatives’ organizations of persons with disabilities.

Most of the target groups have a limited global understanding of disability issues. The “Making It Work!” report will prove effective to illustrating successful examples of practical actions to improve the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in the community.

The good practice report was promoted during a 2-day workshop on policies (January 2013), organized by Handicap International and the Tibet Disabled Persons’ Federation, targeting the key stakeholders mentioned above.

A number of case studies from the ‘Making It Work’ Report was presented. The goal in of this workshop was two-fold: to **generate strategies for change by target group that our targets can commit to** and to **begin the advocacy process** by presenting good practices to the group and getting their inputs on how they can contribute to the change process.

The key elements of the workshop for our target groups include:

1. A presentation of the good practice case studies outlining what the most significant changes were, how they were achieved and what the lessons learned and recommendations were
2. An overview of the recommendations for change by target group
3. Strategy development with their target groups on how to achieve these changes
4. Identifying resources needed to move forward (both technical and financial)
5. Identifying the resource people to provide the needed technical support and identify possible sources of funding

By the end of the workshop it is expected to have a list of strategies or action plans for change by target group as well as an understanding of the resources needed to achieve these changes.

Criteria of good practices

Good practices criteria according to the guiding principles of CRPD

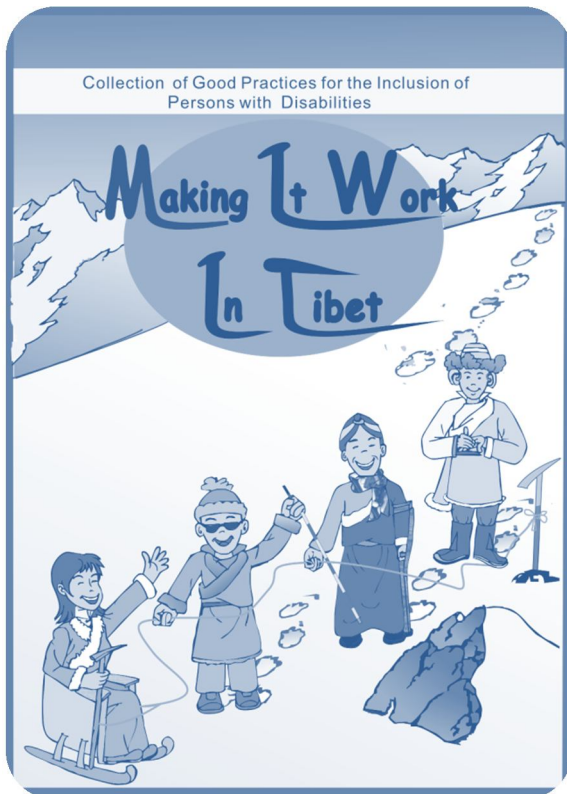
- ⌘ Respect for dignity and autonomy
- ⌘ Non-discrimination
- ⌘ Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- ⌘ Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- ⌘ Equality of opportunity
- ⌘ Accessibility
- ⌘ Equality between men and women
- ⌘ Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities

Apart from the good practices criteria defined in the UNCRPD 's guiding principle , the multi-stakeholder group has expressed the need to **define local criteria of good practices. The guiding principles of the Convention were seen as relevant but too vague and too theoretical to illustrate local good practices.**

The good practices selected are matching with at least 60% of the international (as defined by the UNCRPD) and local criteria.

Good practices local criteria defined by the multi-stakeholders group:

- ⌘ Fitting local context and respecting local culture
- ⌘ Simple, easy to duplicate
- ⌘ Innovative and creative
- ⌘ Cost effective
- ⌘ Sustainable
- ⌘ Accessible
- ⌘ Good coverage, reaching persons with disabilities
- ⌘ Equal opportunities for persons with and without disabilities
- ⌘ Showing the capacities of persons with disabilities
- ⌘ Giving visibility to persons with disabilities
- ⌘ Real participation of persons with disabilities
(solutions for persons with disabilities are found by persons with disabilities)
- ⌘ Meaningful for people with disabilities' life
- ⌘ Links with locals and international laws
- ⌘ Collaboration between sectors
- ⌘ Accepted by the Government and community
- ⌘ Using the rights-based approach



**Good Practices
Related to
DISABLED PERSONS
ORGANISATIONS
and
LOCAL
ORGANISATIONS
INITIATIVES**

“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How was the diverse and localized Tibetan Sign Language consolidated, standardized and promoted by the Tibet Deaf Association?

Title: Tibetan Sign Language Development and Promotion
Organization/Project: Tibet Deaf Association
Location: Lhasa and Shigatse Prefectures, TAR - CHINA
Scope: Regional (Tibet Autonomous Region)

Related articles of the UNCRPD

This practice relates to **articles 21, 24, 30** concerning the freedom of expression and opinion, access to information, education and participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 29 “Government department concerned shall organize and support the research and application of (...) sign language.”

Article 47 (3) “Offer TV programs in sign language, (...) add subtitles or narrations to more TV programs and movies.

Article 55 (...) “in public services, information in sign language shall be made available to persons with disabilities”.

Background and context

Social and cultural settings strongly influence the development of all languages. This is a common rule, especially relevant for sign language which is a visual language. Tibetans, as an ethnic group of China, have their own culture and lifestyle. Members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in TAR are influenced by native cultures, beliefs and traditions, developing individual vocabulary and grammar. Based on this principle, members of the Tibetan deaf and hard-of-hearing community developed a sign language acknowledging the region’s cultural and linguistic characteristics that differ from the standard Chinese Sign Language.

Description of the practice



In 2001, the TAR Disabled Persons’ Federation and Handicap International provided support to the Tibet Deaf community to develop a sign language research project. The Tibet Deaf Association was created and has started collecting and standardizing signs used by the Tibetan deaf community. This was a very difficult task due to the variety of the types of signs and the fact that the same word may have different meanings according to the area and the community. With over 45,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing persons in TAR, this work was however essential to establish a common sign language and ensure inclusive

communication and participation of all in the community dialogue. Working within local communities, members of the deaf community collected and analysed signs used in various areas throughout the region. Information gathering encompassed both rural and urban areas. In Nachu, Shigatse, Lokha, Chamdo and Nyingchy prefectures, the Tibet Deaf Association established linkages with local deaf farmers and shepherds, allowing information gathering on sign language related to rural, nomad and countryside living. Urban sign language information was gathered through liaising with the deaf community in Lhasa. This strategy was successful in **capturing the real essence of sign language as used at grassroots level**. Over this period, more than 800 signs were collected and compiled in three dictionaries and related teaching materials in 2008. However, the grammatical structure remained weak. Consequently, in 2010 a technical mission was organized to strengthen the Tibetan Sign Language. The main outcome of this mission was the edition of the “*Standard Tibetan Sign Language Dictionary*” 4th edition, compiling 1540 signs. From 2008 to now, the Tibet Deaf Association has been **providing technical support for the teaching of Tibetan Sign Language in Lhasa and Shigatse Special Education Schools**. Today, Tibetan Sign Language is taught weekly to various deaf and hearing groups by the Tibet Deaf Association core group members. Moreover, the Tibet Deaf Association organizes regular **public awareness events to promote the Tibetan Sign Language in the community**.

Process involved

1. A Sign Language research and development project was launched in 2001, with a team of 14 Deaf persons in Lhasa.
2. From 2001 to 2007, the Tibetan Sign Language was standardized and a consistent amount of teaching material was produced, including child friendly material. A finger spelling was created using the Tibetan alphabet, composed of 30 letters.
3. In 2008, the Education Bureau officially recognized the Tibetan Sign Language and its teaching became compulsory in Special Schools.
4. In 2010, a four-month support mission was conducted by a sign language expert from mainland China. The expert worked with the Tibet Deaf Association to edit “*The Standard Tibetan Sign Language Dictionary*” 4th Edition. An editorial committee gathering key actors (TAR Disabled Persons’ Federation, Education bureau, Lhasa Special Education School, TAR Autonomous Region Language Committee) was formed to coordinate this work.
5. The “*The Standard Tibetan Sign Language Dictionary*” 4th Edition can be found in all public libraries and most book shops in Lhasa.

Resources required

The development and promotion of the Tibetan Sign Language requires a certain number of resources (mainly human):

- At least 2 full time staff for the collection of signs, development of teaching and promotion material, sign language training and teaching.
- Regular support from a sign language expert to guide and supervise the process.
- Support for coordination staff from the TAR Disabled Persons' Federation.

Financial support was provided to the Tibet Deaf Association to run the research and development project by Handicap International (Belgium Cooperation-DGD and Canada Funds). The TAR Disabled Persons' Federation covered the dictionaries' printing costs.

The factors that made this practice possible

- **Government support:** The President of the TAR Disabled Persons' Federation has been a strong advocate for the research and development of the Tibetan Sign Language project. The Tibet Deaf Association also received useful guidance from the Language Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region Education Bureau as well as from renowned sign language and design experts. Lhasa Special School participated and provided valuable inputs to the work.
- **Technical support:** Technical support from sign language expert made the Tibetan Sign Language development possible and yielded considerable input in terms of linguistic, sign language development, production of the dictionary and teaching material.
- **Public recognition:** the sign language expert, the Vice President of the China Deaf Association, has supported the process of public and national recognition of the Tibetan Sign Language.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- **Low literacy** among the Tibet Deaf Association members is a barrier for the further development of the Tibetan Sign Language. External support from Chinese or foreign sign language experts is necessary.
- **The lack of well trained and committed Tibetan Sign Language interpreters** keeps the Deaf community excluded from information, training and debate. The Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation has agreed to employ a Tibetan Sign Interpreter to support the Deaf community.
- **A lack of interest in the Tibetan Sign Language**, with a focus on the use of Chinese Sign Language.

The impact of the practice



✓ The Tibetan Sign Language has proven to be very useful for the early learning of Deaf students. In Special Schools, students are taught in Chinese Sign Language, and the teachers have only a very basic knowledge of the Tibetan Sign Language. Most of the students come from remote rural areas and do not understand the Chinese Sign Language, which is based on *pin yin* (transcription of Chinese sounds, using the Latin alphabet). The Tibetan Sign Language is a natural sign language, using iconic signs and gestures, and is more adapted for the students to understand the concept of sign language.

✓ More globally, **the Tibetan Local Sign Language promotion is a positive development towards equal inclusion and full participation in mainstream society for members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.**

✓ It is expected that the standardised Tibetan Sign Language will facilitate the successful inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons in the **education system as well as in the labour market, fostering personal, economic empowerment and autonomy.**

Possible improvement

- The Tibetan Sign Language, as any other language, will continuously evolve within the changing social context. The dictionary and teaching material will therefore need to be updated on a regular basis.
- If more funds were allocated to further Tibetan Sign Language development, the grammatical structure and vocabulary could be further developed. Increasing promotion activities would be necessary for a broader recognition of the Tibetan Sign Language.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- The involvement and commitment of local and central Government is essential for the development of any local sign language.
- Teaching in Tibetan Sign Language should be enhanced in all Special Schools in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The Tibet Deaf Association could provide technical support by teaching Tibetan Sign Language to teachers, children, and by giving guidance to use active teaching methods.
- Tibetan Sign Language teaching should be promoted in Chinese Tibetan areas outside the Tibet Autonomous Region.
- Subtitles using Tibetan Sign Language should be provided for key local TV programs.
- Regular exchanges with other sign language research projects in China and abroad would be valuable for a broader understanding of the Deaf culture and promotion of the Tibetan Sign Language.
- The Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation should gradually put a system in place to provide sign language transcript in Chinese and Tibetan during official meetings to ensure that Deaf participants can fully participate in the debate.

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How are autonomy and self-empowerment of persons with disabilities enabled through psycho-social activities initiated by the association of persons with disabilities?

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Title: | Psycho-social support group of youth with disabilities |
| Organization/Project: | Tibet Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities |
| Location: | Lhasa, TAR - CHINA |
| Scope: | Local |

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 6, 19, 29 and 30**, concerning women with disabilities; living independently and being included in the community; participation in political and public life; participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 7 “(...) self-management organizations in urban and rural communities should perform their respective functions on disability.”

Article 8 “ (...) local organizations shall represent the common interests of persons with disabilities, protect their lawful rights and interests, unite persons with disabilities and enhance education among them and provide service for them.”

Article 10 “The State encourages persons with disabilities to have a sense of self-respect, self-confidence, self-strength and self-reliance, and make contribution to socialist development.”

Article 44 “The government and society shall encourage and assist persons with disabilities to engage in literature, art, education, science, technology and other creative work beneficial to the people.”

Article 45 “The government and society shall promote mutual understanding and exchanges between persons with disabilities and their fellow-citizens, publicize the work on disability and deeds of assisting persons with disabilities, advocate self-accomplishment among people with disabilities, and foster a social environment of unity, friendship and mutual help.”

Background and context

In Tibet, religious beliefs around disability are very strong. People believe that impairments are the result of bad deeds in previous lives. As a consequence, **persons with disabilities tend to be stigmatized and do not have self-confidence**. In parallel, Buddhism encourages people to be as good and compassionate as possible toward vulnerable persons. The general population is mostly helpful to persons with disabilities **and families tend to over-protect persons with disabilities**.

Description of the practice

The Tibet Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities was activated in 2010, **with the mandate to empower the persons with physical disabilities** in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The key objectives are to provide guidance and support for access to education and livelihood opportunities for persons with physical disabilities, to raise public awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities and to lobby and advocate decision making instances to improve the situation of persons with physical disabilities and laws enforcement. During the first year, the organisation started to implement some activities and a need assessment was conducted among all the association members. The goal was to assess the barriers,

needs and demands of persons with disabilities. One of the key findings of the survey was that **most of the members, in particular women, consider themselves less worthy than other persons.**



A service was set up by the association to address this need: the Sunday Club was initiated with the objective of **developing self-esteem and contributing to the empowerment of association members.** The concept of the service is that members share their concerns and identify solutions together. The action plan was developed in a participatory manner, with most of the actions specifically aiming at improving self-confidence and boosting members' self-concept to accept themselves as they are. The emphasis was put **on viewing disability as one component of life**, but not the only

component. Another issue for the members was to better deal with discrimination and stereotypes from society. Main actions initiated by the service are:

- Sharing sessions: members expose their concerns and problems; the group tries to identify solutions when possible.
- Motivational speeches by the community's outstanding persons with or without disabilities, once a month.
- Discussions around movies about disabilities: developing concepts of how people with disabilities in other cultures and countries have overcome barriers.
- Gathering in public places in large numbers (cafés, cinemas, libraries and museums), to demonstrate the barriers for accessing public facilities.
- Sessions on positive attitude towards working (body language, personal grooming).
- Training on disability models, disability laws and disability rights.
- Interactive sessions on health education, including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Motivational sessions: people are encouraged to speak about themselves and describe all their positive aspects.
- Women's empowerment sessions: issues, specifically faced by women, are shared and discussed.
- Communication skills: English and Chinese language.

Process involved

1. Association members have expressed their needs and developed a participatory action plan.
2. An additional staff, a woman with disability with good self-confidence and facilitation skills, was employed full time at the association to coordinate the Sunday psycho-social activities.
3. The above-mentioned activities are conducted on weekly bases with an average of 30 participants.
4. Outings in public places are planned on a monthly basis.
5. The service quality is evaluated on an annual basis to assess service-users' levels of satisfaction.
6. A monthly newsletter is drawn up by the service users, to share and promote their actions to the community and local authorities.

Resources required

- 2 staff from the Tibet Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities, to coordinate the activities and regular gatherings.
- Voluntary teachers for Chinese, English and motivational sessions.
- Budget allocated by the Support to Disabled Persons Organizations project –Handicap International in partnership with the TAR Disabled Persons' Federation.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Facilitation and close guidance from Handicap International at the start.
- Strong commitment of Tibet Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities' operational staff.

- Usage of social media and micro-blogging platforms to rapidly inform and federate all the service users
- Recognition by the local authorities and progressive handover to the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation to support general coordination and activity funding.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- Initially, the activity faced resistance from some parents and care takers, worried about the security of persons with disabilities with limited mobility and possible traffic accidents.
- Meetings were organized to explain the association's role and the possible benefits their family members could get by attending the services.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ In less than 2 years, most members have visibly developed their autonomy and confidence. Association members are more willing to speak up and meet local authorities to expose their problems. The society powerfully influences persons with disabilities' concept of themselves.
- ✓ The work of the association gives members the chance to re-evaluate their self-concept and re-shape their own identity to reflect what they believe is more accurate. Most members have a more open personality and are dealing better with their disability and peoples' attitudes toward disability.
- ✓ As a consequence, the local community has become more aware of the capacity of persons with disabilities.

Possible improvement

- Due to the geographical setting and other reasons, people in TAR are isolated from the rest of the world. They wish to be more exposed to new models, possible actions in the field of disability and to exchange more with persons with disabilities and the organizations representing them around the world.
- Field trips and public actions should be developed to put persons with disabilities more in the picture and to develop their role as active citizens.
- Building and developing relationships and partnerships with other key Government departments could support the promotion of this practice.
- The association is also planning to develop sports activities, known to have a positive impact on the development of the confidence of persons with disabilities.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- Activity should start from a small group of motivated people and expand progressively.
- Association staff should be trained in counseling and listening skills, be highly motivated, and be able to build up a good group dynamic.
- Patience toward members is necessary, many of them are traumatized and need time to develop their self-confidence.
- Parents and family members should be well-informed about the activities' objectives and possible benefits for persons with disabilities on the long run.

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to effectively promote disability rights' awareness through the use of participatory arts and drama performances by persons with disabilities?

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Title: | Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club |
| Organization/Project: | Tibet Deaf Association, Tibet Blind Association and Tibet Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities |
| Location: | Lhasa, Shigatse prefectures, TAR - CHINA |
| Scope: | Local |

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 8, 21, 29, 30** concerning awareness raising; freedom of expression and opinion and access to information; participation in political and public life, participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 6 “The States shall adopt measures to ensure that persons with disabilities (...) participate in the management of cultural undertakings (...).”

Article 41 “The State shall protect the equal right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life. People’s governments at all levels and departments concerned shall encourage and assist persons with disabilities to participate in various forms of cultural (...) activities and shall create conditions to enrich the spiritual and cultural life of persons with disabilities.”

Article 42 “Cultural, sports and recreational activities for persons with disabilities should be based on communities, integrated into public cultural life and geared to the different characteristics and needs of different categories of persons with disabilities with a view to bringing about extensive participation.”

Article 43 “The government and society shall adopt the following measures to enrich the spiritual and cultural life of persons with disabilities:

4) Organize and support persons with disabilities for mass cultural, sports and recreational activities, stage special art performances (...).

Article 44 “The Government and society shall encourage and assist persons with disabilities to engage in (...) art (...) and other creative work beneficial to the people.”

Background and context

Usually, members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community face communication barriers to express their needs and to bring attention to their situation. Most of the time, they are not being heard by the community and decision makers. By joining the Tibetan Deaf Association, members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community could find a way to express their concerns and take action to overcome their difficulties. The association members have thus decided to start a theatre troupe to draw public attention to their daily barriers and rights.

Description of the practice



The Tibet Deaf Association was created in 2005 with the mandate to develop and promote the Tibetan Sign Language, raise public attention on disability rights and influence decision-makers in the field of disability. **To conduct awareness actions on rights, the association started the “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club”** in 2010. The knowledge of sign language is very limited in the Tibetan mainstream society. As members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community face difficulties to express themselves verbally, the association decided to use drama, **combining body language, Tibetan Sign Language and humour**. Community drama is very popular in TAR and has proven to be very effective to convey

messages on deafness issues in a humorous way. It is a way to “de-dramatize” disability and to bring up sensitive topics such as discrimination, bullying, and lack of work opportunities. At first, only a few members of the deaf and hard of hearing community were involved in the play. Later, with the growing success, more people joined the group. Today, the **Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club is composed of persons with different disabilities and without disability**. A pool of 15 actors perform depending on their availability. Actors are mixing Tibetan Sign Language and Tibetan speech, with humour as a guiding principle. On an annual basis, two performances are developed in **a participatory process by members of the TAR Associations of Persons with Disabilities**. The plays express the current concerns of persons with disability and **reflect real situations, faced by the association’s members daily**, in order to **promote disability rights**. For instance, the current performances address the lack of accessibility in hospitals for persons who are Deaf and the lack of physical accessibility of public facilities. The performances always provide key information on existing and available services for persons with disabilities at community and prefecture levels. “The Tibet Able Disabled Drama Club” performs at the occasion of community events (harvesting festival), national holidays and disability-related events.

Process involved

1. **New plays are created in a participatory process** and prepared every year by associations of persons with disabilities’ members.
2. Voluntary actors with and without disability are joining “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club”
3. Rehearsals are organized every Sunday before community and public performances.
4. On average, a performance is played 10 times a year.
5. **Focus group discussions** are generally organized by community workers to **assess the audience level of understanding on key messages conveyed**.

Resources required

- Human resources: 8 to 15 voluntary actors
- Transport to the villages or performance spots
- Coordination and authorization from the Tibet Disabled Persons’ Federation
- Financial support from Handicap International and the Tibet Disabled Persons’ Federation for equipment and costumes.

The factors that made this practice possible

- A renowned Tibetan actor has been providing **technical support** to improve the acting of “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club” members which had a visible impact.
- Key actors of the Club possess very good acting capacities and **creativity to develop an educational and humoristic content**.
- The Club members are able to **adapt their messages and acting style to different publics**(informal as well as institutional context).

Some of the difficulties encountered

- Association members are joining “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club” on a volunteer basis. As they are engaged in other work, they are not always available to perform in the community.
- Community events cannot be conducted during sensitive periods, because the gathering of people is restricted.
- Prior authorizations are always required and negotiations are conducted through different offices before every event.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club” is a **valuable space of expression** for persons with disabilities, in particular for members of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community who can finally express their concerns about being understood.
- ✓ It contributes to the development **of the self-confidence of persons with disabilities**. Through “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club” families of persons with disabilities have taken distance from the fatalist approach. Families have realised that many actions can be taken to improve the life of persons with disabilities. Seeing the success and positive impact of “The Tibet Able Disabled Drama Club”, the Lhasa Special School has started drama and acting classes for students with hearing-impairment.
- ✓ Conducting post-evaluation focus group discussions after awareness events, it appears that the “The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama” performances are one of the most appreciated and **effective activities to change the public attitude toward disability at community level** in TAR. It also contributes to the development of knowledge about the Tibetan Sign Language at the community level.

Possible improvement

“The Tibet Able Disabled Art & Drama Club”members are still a group of “amateur” actors. If more technical and financial support was provided, the troupe could become more professional.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- Key persons with disability who have acting potential should be identified to lead the process and the troupe.
- Plays should be pre-tested before the performances in the community to ensure better understanding of key messages

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How does the development of the Tibetan Braille (local language) promote preservation of cultural heritage with education and learning access for the vision-impaired Tibetan ethnic minority in China?

Title: Promotion of Tibetan Braille (local language)
Organization/Project: Braille Without Borders
Location: Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) - CHINA
Scope: Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 24** concerning the right to education.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Chapter 3 - Education, **article 29** concerning “research on Braille”.

Chapter 5 - Cultural Life, **article 48** 2) concerning “support the development of Braille books and other reading material for the visually impaired persons.”

CCP TAR Party Committee, TAR People's Government, Opinions on promotion of the disability work development, May 20, 2010, mentioned “**Develop and popularize Tibetan Braille** and Tibetan Sign Language “(point 9).

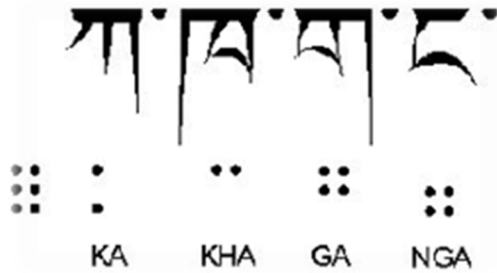
Background and context

According to a national sample survey (2006), 45.000 of the 2.5 million inhabitants of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) are Blind or vision-impaired. In TAR, blindness prevalence is high due to climatic and hygienic reasons: dust, wind, high ultra-violet light radiation, soot in houses caused by heating with coal and/or yak dung, and lack of vitamin A.

In the Tibetan society, it is believed that blindness is a punishment for wrongdoings in previous lives. Before the opening of the Braille Without Borders school, children with vision-impairment in TAR did not have access to education, leading a life on the margin of society with little chance of integration.

Description of the practice

Sabriye Tenberken, vision-impaired herself, has created the **transcription of Tibetan in Braille**. She opened a school in Lhasa **to teach students with vision-impairment in their own language**. Before the creation of the Tibetan Braille, the only education opportunities in Braille for the Blind community were in mainland China, using Chinese Braille. Initially, for her own use in her study of Tibetology at Bonn University, **Sabriye developed a Tibetan script for the Blind persons**. This script combines the principles of the Braille system with the special features of the Tibetan syllable-based script. This script was submitted for close examination to an eminent Tibetan scholar, who found it to be readily understandable, simple, and easy to learn. As Tibetans until that time had had no script for Blind persons, he suggested to Sabriye that she let Tibetans who are Blind make use of it. In 1997, Sabriye traveled within TAR to



investigate the possibility of providing training for persons with vision-impairment. She realized there were no programs educating and rehabilitating persons with vision-impairment within TAR and decided to found the Braille Without Borders project.

Tibetan Braille script developed by Sabriye Tenberken in 1992 at the Bonn University

Process involved

1. The school was established in 1998, enrolling 6 children from different villages. A local teacher was hired, who instructed in the Tibetan Braille script. The children learned the **Tibetan Braille alphabet on wooden boards with velcro dots**. Within just 6 weeks they knew all the 30 Tibetan characters and were able to count in three different languages (Tibetan, Chinese and English).
2. Today, the schools in Lhasa and Shigatse welcome more than 95 students starting with the preparatory school to later integrate into mainstream schools.
3. To provide reading and working materials for the students attending the in-house and mainstream school, a **workshop for the production of Tibetan Braille materials** has been established. The school has the only Braille printing press and Braille library available in TAR.
4. A **computer program to convert written Tibetan into Tibetan Braille is under finalization**. Before, Tibetan books had to be read to a person and typed in Braille Tibetan, which was time consuming.
5. In 2004, a Governmental Special Education School was opened in Lhasa. Government teachers were sent to Braille Without Borders to learn Tibetan Braille.
6. Today, students with vision-impairment in special schools can learn both in Chinese and Tibetan Braille.

Resources required

- The project is mainly funded by individual donors, private companies and foundations (national and international).
- The cost of Braille-related equipment is quite significant: special paper, Braille printer, Braille display. Some donors support the project exclusively for equipment related to Braille (such as paper).

The factors that made this practice possible

- Strong determination of the school founders.
- Training of key Tibetan Blind persons to ensure daily project management, long-term sustainability and continuous research on Tibetan Braille development.
- Involvement and cooperation with the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation (TDPF), the government agency in charge of disability in the region. The TDPF is always proud to mention the creation of the Tibetan Braille and the added value of the Braille Without Borders school.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- The Tibetan language is very rich with many cases of similar spelling, combination and different ways of writing. However, Braille allows only one system. The honorific Tibetan (coming from Sanskrit) used in religious scripture is very difficult to transcribe. Extra combinations of Braille still need to be developed.
- The transcription in Braille of Tibetan books by reading is time consuming. That is why the school is actively working on the development of an OCR (optical character recognition) system in Tibetan.
- Nowadays, with technological developments, such as computers or e-book reading devices, the necessity of Braille learning seems less essential. Nevertheless, learning Braille for studying purposes will continue. Listening to an e-book or a computer cannot replace the pleasure of reading with the fingers.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ The development and the promotion of the Tibetan Braille have a very **positive impact on the inclusion of persons with vision-impairment in society**. It contributes to the preservation of the Tibetan culture and identity. Persons with vision-impairment, as any citizen of TAR, are entitled to learn in their own language, in addition to the Chinese language.
- ✓ The Braille Without Borders school has translated most of the official school manuals to Tibetan, Chinese and English. When the students with vision-impairment are integrated into mainstream schools, they can learn all the subjects, including Tibetan. **Due to having access to education, the students have shown increasing self-confidence which is a very important step for being able to face daily life and become valuable members of society.**
- ✓ Moreover, the project receives a lot of positive attention from the media. It became renowned in TAR but also in the rest of China. Local Tibetan and Chinese communities have a better attitude towards disability. By promoting Braille, the community understands that persons with vision-impairment

can also read and learn as anyone else. The community no longer sees the children with vision-impairment as victims of their fate, but as persons able to learn and become integrated into society.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

Every local language can be developed into Braille. Louis Braille made the most work; Braille can be adapted by making a specific script. Characters from other languages can be used and adapted into any target language.



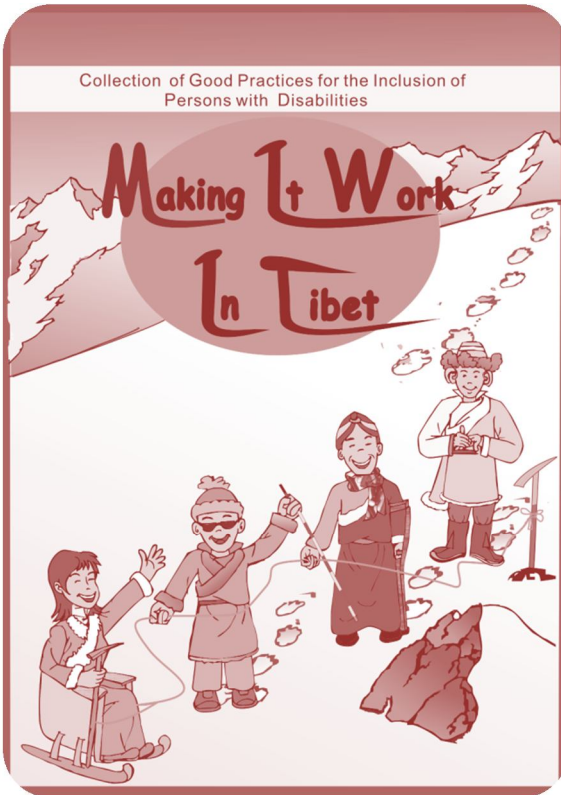
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Collection of Good Practices for the Inclusion of
Persons with Disabilities

Making It Work In Tibet



Good Practices Related to EDUCATION



“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How do early childhood education and social stimulation interventions contribute to the personal development and integration of children with vision-impairment?

Title: Inclusive Kindergarten for vision-impaired and sighted children
Organization/Project: Kiki's Kids
Location: Shigatse – TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) - CHINA
Scope: Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 24** concerning the right to education.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to Chapter 3 -**Article 22** “Education for persons with disabilities shall be developed (...) while effort shall be made to carry out preschool education (...).”

Background and context

In TAR, there are **superstitions surrounding blindness** which is seen as a punishment for wrongdoings in previous lives. Kindergartens in rural areas, if at all available, are too expensive for the average child. Many parents in TAR do not believe that their child with vision-impairment can take care of themselves. They just make them sit in one place or tie them to a bed. Children are not allowed to move around for the fear of hurting themselves. However, children need physical exercise in order to stay healthy and to develop their motor skills since they need to use their hands and fingers for learning how to read and write.

Description of the practice



Kiki's kindergarten is the first **early intervention and integration kindergarten for vision-impaired and sighted children in TAR**. The goal of Kiki's kindergarten is to provide necessary skills to young children and simultaneously **bridge the gap between those who can see and those who cannot**. The vision-impaired children learn **daily living skills, tactile recognition, orientation and mobility skills, motor skills, physical training and Braille reading**. Meanwhile, the **sighted kids learn to accept and believe in the abilities of their vision-impaired mates**, paving the way for future social transformation. The sighted children also benefit from learning basic skills in reading, writing, and foreign languages. The project is located in Shigatse,

the second largest city in TAR. At present, the kindergarten welcomes 22 children aged from 2 to 6 years old. The children spend between 3 to 4 years at the kindergarten. At the age of 6, they are ready to join the

Braille Without Borders preparatory school for one more year of **intensive preparation, before integrating into mainstream schools.**

This concept was born from Kyila's (founder) own life experiences as a person with vision-impairment and a difficult childhood. Before the age of 12, she never attended school. She was at home, over-protected by her parents, who did not know how to deal with her and her 3 siblings with vision-impairment. She had the feeling she had no childhood and that many years were "wasted". She had no interaction with the outside world. She was feeling uncomfortable meeting with sighted people, and she could feel that sighted people were uneasy too. Later when she joined the Braille Without Borders school, she discovered that the world was full of opportunities for the persons with vision-impairment. She developed this idea of an inclusive kindergarten to ensure that in the future children with vision-impairment will have early-education opportunities. Her goal is that persons with vision-impairment and also sighted persons learn to live together at an early stage.

Process involved

- 1- Developing a clear and feasible idea: the project founder attended university for one year, studying social entrepreneurship. She could develop skills in the field of public speaking, proposal writing, fundraising, creativity, and self-confidence.
- 2- Researching as much information as possible on the topic and similar projects. Developing networks; asking for advice from lawyers for all administrative matters.
- 3- Finding regular donors
- 4- Convincing local authorities (Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation) of the project's feasibility.

Resources required

Kindergarten staff:

- 1 director (founder) for the general management of the project
- 4 teachers (including 1 teacher trained in Montessori active methodology)
- 3 house staff (cook, house parents)

The support from Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation is indispensable in order to get the necessary authorization. The Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation and Handicap International refer young children with vision-impairment to the kindergarten. Regular spots were broadcast on TAR Radio stations to inform the population about the existence of the inclusive kindergarten. Radio has proven to be very efficient in reaching the population in rural areas. The project is funded by individual donors, foundations and companies (national and international).

The factors that made this practice possible

KiKi's kindergarten has formed a partnership with the Tibet Disabled Persons Federation, working toward the same goal of educating and integrating children with vision-impairment in TAR. Kiki's kindergarten is also in collaboration with Braille Without Borders. Specifically, Braille Without Borders supports KiKi's kindergarten in conducting outreach programs to identify young children in rural areas, and in building networks with mainstream schools.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- Trust: At first, the trust of local authorities was difficult to gain because the project was innovative and the founder was young with no former experience. After a year, the local authorities have been convinced of the relevance and efficiency of the project.
- Registration: the registration of NGOs remains an issue in China. However, currently registration is getting easier and the organization has initiated the process.
- Secure and regular funding: Funding was a challenge when the project had not yet actually started since there was nothing concrete to present to potential donors.
- Project location: Being far from Lhasa, medical facilities are not easily reachable when children face medical problems.
- Teaching: Teaching stimulatingly to both sighted children and children with vision-impairment is not always possible.



The impact of the practice

- ✓ The **development of capacity of young children is quickly visible**. At an early stage, children with vision-impairment require specific interventions and training in order to progress through usual developmental stages and grasp basic concepts.
- ✓ The project supports children with **preparing a life plan, with early autonomy, independence, and self-confidence**.
- ✓ This practice **changes the general public's negative attitudes toward disability**. Visitors' comments are very positive about the project and the learning capacity of young kids. Parents are completely changing their outlook on the capacity of their own children.

Possible improvement

- The proportion between sighted and children with vision-impairment should be more balanced. Presently the majority of students are children with vision-impairment.
- Teachers need to receive more training, especially on active teaching methods.
- A more creative curriculum, meeting the needs of both children with vision-impairment and sighted children should be designed.
- Regular parent-teacher meetings should be organized to give practical support and guidance to better interact and stimulate children.

Recommendations for the replication this practice

- Quality of teaching should be high, with subjects like English to attract sighted children.
- Proper training of staff is a key starting point.
- Similar practice should be set up in every prefecture to cater to the needs of both children with vision-impairment and sighted children.
- Mainstream schools (headmasters, teachers and students) need to gain specific awareness on disability to be able to develop more inclusive practices and be better equipped to address the needs of students with disabilities.



For more information, contact:
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www.kikikids.org

“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to successfully facilitate integration for vision-impaired students in mainstream education?

Title: Integration of students with vision-impairment in mainstream schools
Organization/Project: Braille Without Borders
Location: Lhasa, Shigatse, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) - CHINA
Scope: Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 24** concerning the right to education.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to the **Chapter 3** concerning the right to education.

Article 25“Ordinary educational institutions shall be open to students with disabilities who are able to receive ordinary education, and offer them facilitation and help. Ordinary primary schools and junior high schools must accept children or juveniles with disabilities who are able to adapt themselves to life and study there; ordinary senior high schools, secondary polytechnic schools, and institutions of higher learning must accept students with disabilities who meet the state admission requirements and shall not deny their admission because of their disabilities; in case of such denial, the students concerned, their family members or guardians are entitled to appeal to relevant authorities, and the latter shall instruct the schools concerned to enroll the student. “

Background and context

In 1998, Braille Without Borders, a school for children with vision-impairment was opened in Lhasa by Sabriye Tenberken and Paul Kronenberg. The school was the first initiative fostering the needs of children with vision-impairment. Later in 2004, a similar school, with a vocational training component was opened by Braille Without Borders in Shigatse, the second largest city of TAR. Concerned with the future autonomy and self-reliance of the students, the founders worked on the integration of their students with vision-impairment into the mainstream educational system.

Description of the practice

Successful integration of students with vision-impairment in regular schools is often only possible through costly investments and strong commitment on the part of parents, teachers and government social workers providing daily support to the students. In TAR, such services are not available. On one hand there are no social workers, and on the other, teachers lead classes with more than 40 students which prevents them from dedicating a sufficient amount of time to students with vision-impairment.



In the Braille Without Borders school, children with vision-impairment come from all over TAR with no prior education. During their first two years of training, they gain enough **self-confidence to cope with daily life independently**. First, the students receive an **intensive training in orientation, mobility and daily living skills** (orientation in a room and the school compound, walking with a cane, eating with chopsticks and daily hygienic skills). This is followed by a training in the **Tibetan, Chinese, English and mathematical Braille script**. In addition to the training of the special techniques for persons with vision-impairment, the students are also taught basic colloquial Chinese and English language skills. With this knowledge they are in a position where they have something to offer to other students in mainstream schools.

When ready, the students with vision-impairment are integrated into mainstream schools. They will ask sighted schoolmates to read what is on the blackboard and in return, they provide assistance with English and/or Chinese. Since the students also receive mobility and orientation training, they are rather independent. In this way, an **equal relationship between sighted and students with vision impairment develops**. Students are generally able to make a lot of friends but also meet some competitors in class, which shows that the integration is real and that the students with vision-impairment do not get a special treatment.

Process involved

The integration process started in 2004 with four students that were sent in primary boarding school near Lhasa (Medrogondra). The experience was successful and opened the path to more integration in mainstream schools. Meanwhile, most of **the official text books for primary and secondary education have been translated to Tibetan, Chinese and English Braille**, depending on the subject. In 2012, among the students with vision-impairment in Lhasa and Shigatse, 25 students were integrated in primary school, 28 students in middle junior school, and 7 students in senior high school. Three students will be integrated in university next year.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Exchange of information between headmasters/teachers who already had experience with integrating students with vision-impairment.
- Strong involvement of the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation and the Education Bureau in order to provide all official documents.
- Most of the official text books for primary and secondary education are available in Braille (prepared by Braille Without Borders).

Some of the difficulties encountered

- The project faced resistance from some mainstream schools, where headmasters and teachers had no experience dealing with persons with disabilities and were scared of accepting students with vision-impairment. They were worried about their security and the possible additional workload. Negotiations conducted by the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation and the Education Bureau were successful in convincing the schools to accept students with vision-impairment.
- Teachers cannot correct children's homework written in Braille. Some time has to be allocated for the children with disabilities to read aloud their homework to the teachers.

- Students with vision-impairment could not take official examinations. Later, a teacher with Braille knowledge has been appointed by the Government to correct tests from students with vision-impairment.

The impact of the practice



This practice is an example of the possible successful integration of persons with disabilities in mainstream society. **Enough self-confidence and basic education are necessary for students with vision-impairment** to integrate themselves into regular schools. This integration also contributes to strengthening **their assertive skills and future integration to the labor market and society**. Integration of students with vision-impairment is necessary to develop their understanding of how society functions and to gain independence. It also contributes to developing knowledge and cooperation between the vision-impaired and sighted communities at an early stage.

Recommendations to replicate this practice

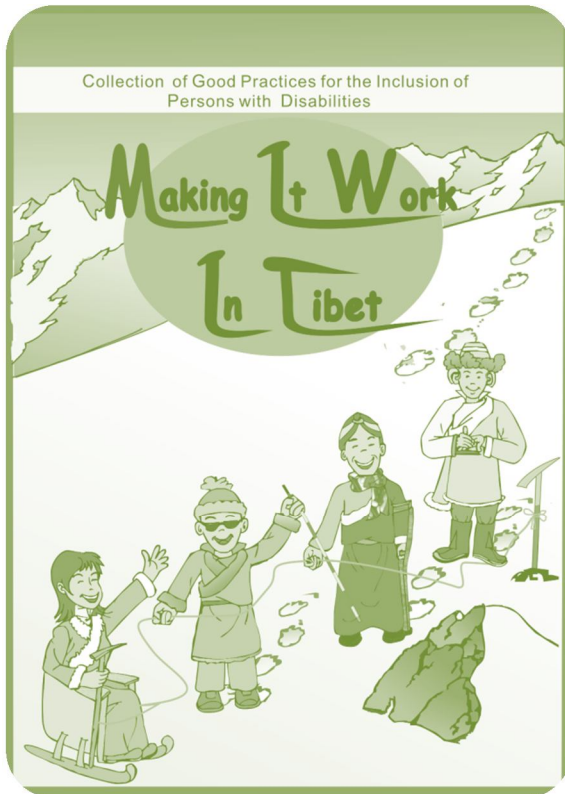
- Successful integration is only possible when **children with vision-impairment are well-prepared and have a strong self-confidence**.
- **Exchange workshops between schools** that have already integrated students with vision-impairment and schools intending to do so should be organized.
- **Disability awareness sessions** should be given to students, parents, teachers, and headmasters before starting the integration process.
- Media, in particular television and radio, have a big impact on people's knowledge and attitude towards disability. **Media should be lobbied** to provide more information on possible student integration into mainstream schools.

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Collection of Good Practices for the Inclusion of
Persons with Disabilities



Good Practices Related to LIVELIHOOD



“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to establish participatory curricula development practice to ensure equal contribution from all stakeholders in developing contextual vocational social skills training programs for persons with disabilities?

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Title: | Vocational Social Skills Curricula Participatory Development |
| Organization/Project: | Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Center / Handicap International Livelihood Project |
| Location: | Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) - CHINA |
| Scope: | Regional (TAR) |

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 27** concerning the right to work and employment.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to **Chapter 3** concerning education and **Chapter 4** concerning employment.

Article 22:“Education for persons with disabilities shall be developed in terms of both the expansion of access and upgrading of levels(...). Priority shall be given to guaranteeing compulsory education and developing vocational and technical education (...).”

Article 27:“Government departments concerned, employers of persons with disabilities and relevant social organizations shall carry out anti-illiteracy education, vocational training, entrepreneurship training and other forms of adult education for persons with disabilities (...).”

Article 37: “(...) Employment service institutions set up by disabled persons' federations shall organize free vocational guidance, introduction and training, so as to provide help to persons with disabilities and potential employers.”

Background and context

Vocational training services for people with disabilities are a relatively new development in the Tibet Autonomous Region, focusing on training skills in traditional craft and trade skills. The training program content and duration is decided at national level and/or senior management level, with little input from trainers, trainees and stakeholders. The training content lacks a **vocational social skills element, often resulting in negative employment outcomes for trainees.**

Description of the practice



To address this issue, the Livelihood project decided on a **participatory curricula development approach to develop social skills curricula and training resources that ensure relevance with the local context, with long-term sustainability**. To ensure local context relevance, ownership and sustainability, the inclusion of stakeholders in a participatory process of curriculum development is essential. A participatory curricula development approach creates working partnerships between trainers, teachers, learners and others stakeholders, and aims to increase ownership of the full learning process, improving the potential for effective learning through participation. (Taylor, 2003)

Process involved

1. Information sharing workshops with relevant organizations.
2. A working group was formed, training was provided by Handicap International Livelihood Advisor.
3. The working group, using inputs from trainees with disabilities, designed and developed an employment focused social skills training program, with corresponding lesson plans and activities to meet the learning needs of a range of persons with disabilities.
4. The pilot training was tested in a classroom situation, with revisions based on participating trainee feedback and group observations.
5. The working group had agreed on a three-year action plan. The toolkit was piloted in 10 vocational centers and schools. Peer training was provided by the working group for 30 trainers.
6. The working group followed up on the toolkit after trainer and trainee feedbacks.
7. The toolkit was revised and finalized.

Resources required

Supporting Organizations:

- TDPF (Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation)
- TDPFVTC (Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Centre)
- LDPF (Lhasa Disabled Persons' Federation)
- Lhasa Special School
- Gongka and Duilong Mainstream Vocational Training School

Working Group: The working group consisted of 6 members from the above organizations/ schools.

Technical and financial support: Training, guidance and support were provided by the Handicap International Livelihood Advisor & Project Manager. The practice was financed under the Livelihood project.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Through **engagement in the process**, individuals were able to **build on their own knowledge, sharing their experiences**.
- The inclusion of **low literacy trainers** in the working group ensured the training content designed was **user friendly** as the majority of persons with disabilities (70%) in the region are illiterate.
- The participation was active, with working group members and relevant stakeholders practicing and learning by doing, promoting further learning.
- Contextualized training and learning is more acceptable, as a **participatory curricula development approach involves those who know the local situation best**.
- The processes allowed those with **different sources and types of expertise** contribute where knowledge and **skill gaps existed**, and suggest future strategies to address such gaps.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- Short time duration
- Difficulties for working group members (trainers) to come together for regular meetings, due to work commitments. Weekend meetings were scheduled.
- Lack of time to include parents and family members in the process.
- The traditional **charity models** predominate attitude and thinking. **Social model training** was provided and persons with disabilities became included in the process.
- The **ensuring of full participation of low literacy working group members in the process**. Visual resources were used and verbal inclusion pre-arranged.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ This case promotes **good practices** through the **inclusion** of stakeholders who might **otherwise be marginalized** in the **decision-making process** in developing and including trainers with disabilities. It promotes equal participation, non-discrimination and respect for differing attitudes and needs.

Possible improvement

- Realistic time frame
- Inclusion of official representation (e.g. Education Bureau) in the working group
- Establishing ongoing support and follow-up for the working group
- Official support and recognition for participatory curricula development process
- The inclusion of parents and family members in the working group

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- A clear understanding of the principles of participatory curricula development is necessary at the start.
- Official representation is required for recognition and support.
- A realistic timeframe to establish and train the working group should be anticipated.
- Ongoing support mechanism in place should be provided.
- Time should be available to working group members to commit to participatory curricula development process.

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to establish processes and structures in the implementation of a grant aid system towards inclusion of potential entrepreneurs with disabilities?

Title: Starting a Business & Grant Aid Guidelines
Organization/Project: Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Center / Handicap International Livelihood Project
Location: Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) - CHINA
Scope: Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 27** concerning the right to work and employment.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to **Chapter 3** concerning education and **Chapter 4** concerning employment.

Article 27:“Government departments concerned, employers of persons with disabilities and relevant social organizations shall carry out anti-illiteracy education, vocational training, entrepreneurship training and other forms of adult education for persons with disabilities and encourage them to tap their potential through self-teaching.”

Article 34 The State encourages and supports the efforts of persons with disabilities to find their own jobs or set up their own businesses.

Background and description of the practice



In the Tibet Autonomous Region, access to employment for people with disabilities remains low, with many **choosing self-employment as the only viable option**. As the majority of potential entrepreneurs have limited or no business management experience, and no access to start-up funding, the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Center and Handicap International Livelihood Project established a **business management training and grant aid process to support persons with disabilities to start and succeed in a small business**. The practice recognizes the **high failure rate of small business** (generally considered to be over 70% within the first year), and the need for **structured support mechanisms to ensure business success and sustainability**.

Process involved

- 1. Information dissemination:** Use of radio, TV and newspaper articles to reach remote areas. Relevant bodies; Disabled Persons Organizations, Civil Affairs Bureau, grassroots organizations and community workers have disseminated the information on grant aid.
- 2. Selection criteria:** Specific selection criteria have been implemented to mitigate business failure.

3. **Applicant interview & initial assessment:** The interview and assessment aimed to gauge the individual's knowledge, skills and motivation to succeed in business, also assessing the levels of support available and required by the applicant.
4. **Draft business plan:** The applicant was requested to complete a draft plan, with a brief outline of the proposed business. The plan may have been completed with the help of a staff member/trainer/family member/ friend if the applicant had literacy issues.
5. **Skills testing:** Where possible, the applicant was requested to participate in skills testing (sewing, furniture painting, and massage) to ensure s/he has the level of required skills. If the applicant was lacking a high percentage of required skills, s/he was referred for further training.
6. **Specific skills training:** On conditional grant aid approval, the applicant participated in specific skills training (1-3 weeks) related to the chosen business in the Vocational Training Center/enterprise company to ensure their skills level meets market requirements. The applicant attended business management training to ensure an awareness of the realities of starting and operating a business.
7. **Business start-up & monitoring:** Following training, the applicant submitted a detailed business plan to include start-up costs. Contracts were drawn up and agreed, including conditions of the grant aid, and participant responsibility for equipment and financial aid.
8. **6 months follow-up and evaluation report.**

Resources required

Support organizations:

- 2 staff from Handicap International
- Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation management support
- County Civil Affairs
- Tibet Disabled Persons' Vocational Training Base (2 staff from Training Department, 1 staff from Job Department)

Funding:

Starting a Business & Grant Aid Process was funded through the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Center and Handicap International Livelihood Project.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Cooperation, consultation and agreement on the pilot process between the project partners to include follow-up, evaluation and revision.
- Local partners' recognition of the fact that structures are required to establish good practices in the grant aid process.
- Ready availability of graduate potential entrepreneurs with technical skills base.
- Funding available through the Livelihood Project to provide startup grant aid.
- Resources, e.g. training rooms, equipment, trainers were available to support the process.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- High support levels were asked by some participants, some were reluctant to take personal responsibility. It is recommended that initial assessment, training, and contracts must clearly indicate support limitations.
- Time pressure on project staff to continuously help participants, as a result support limitations were discussed with participants.
- Ongoing funding is not available. Support from Civil Affairs has to be requested.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ The project was successful in establishing a grant aid, training and support model for persons with disabilities starting a business.
- ✓ Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation Vocational Training Center will continue the grant aid process in 2012 & 2013, supporting a total of 50 participants with disabilities to start a business over the three year project period.
- ✓ The practice is inclusive in a number of ways: **the gender balance** (8 male, 7 female) in the 2011 pilot, **the inclusion and potential future economic empowerment of persons with disabilities by providing the opportunity to start a business and earn a living.**

Possible improvement

For participants:

- Provide basic literacy and numeracy training.
- Further financial planning in business training.
- Business training to cover the differing urban and rural market needs.
- Ensure family members are fully involved and supportive.
- Participants must understand project support is limited, and take personal responsibility for the business.
- Inform participants on Social Protection policies.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

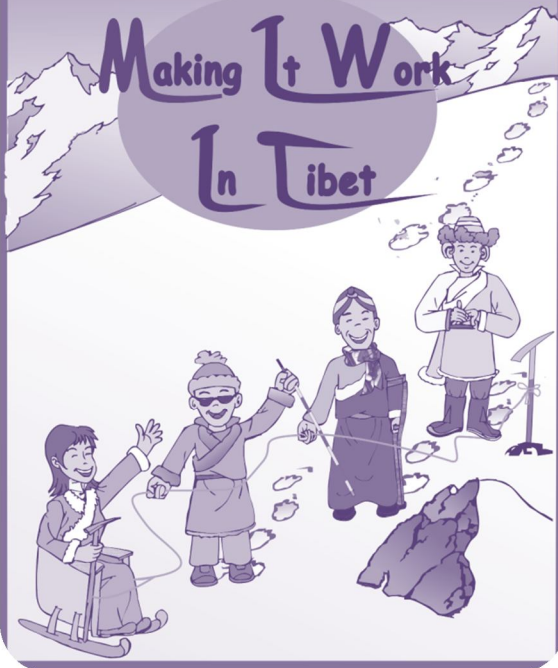
- Establish a 'loan' system for participants to repay the start up grant aid.
- Ensure that a comprehensive vocational assessment for applicants is in place.
- Ensure participants understand time limits (e.g. the project will not provide ongoing support).
- Encourage participants to save money.
- Initial assessment to include physical ability (are applicants physically able for the work?).
- Develop Start On Business (SoB) trainer toolkit to meet low literacy needs.

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Collection of Good Practices for the Inclusion of
Persons with Disabilities

Making It Work In Tibet



Good Practices Related to COMMUNITY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT



“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to foster meaningful community participation through the strength and commitment of Self-Help Group of persons with disabilities?

Title: Self-Help Group Development
Organization/Project: Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation / Handicap International Inclusive Community Development
Location: Lhasa and Shigatse Municipality, Chamdo County – Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China
Scope: Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **articles 19, 21, 26, 29** concerning the right to living independently and being included in the community; freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information; health and rehabilitation; participation in political and public life.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 3:“Persons with disabilities shall enjoy equal rights with other citizens in political, economic, cultural and social respects and in family life as well. “

Article 10:“The State encourages persons with disabilities to have a sense of self-respect, self-confidence, self-strength and self-reliance, and make contribution to socialist development.”

Article 45:“The government and society shall promote mutual understanding and exchanges between persons with disabilities and their fellow-citizens, publicize the work on disability and deeds of assisting persons with disabilities, advocate self-accomplishment among people with disabilities, and foster a social environment of unity, friendship and mutual help.”

Background and context

Due to religious believes, the perception of disability is quite negative in TAR. Most of the people with disabilities and their families are overwhelmed with having disability as they think it is the result of wrongdoings in previous lives. Fatalism is widespread and people tend to think that nothing can be done to change the situation. Thus, many persons with disability stay at home and do not share their issues with other people, they consider it their own problem.

Description of the practice



Traditionally in TAR, community life is active and there is a habit of helping each other. That is why formal **Self-Help Groups of people with disabilities and their families** were formed by the Inclusive Community Development Project. The meetings take place on a voluntary basis. Community leaders and local Disabled Persons' Federation staff were trained to support the Self-Help Groups. **The objective of Self-Help Group participation is to decrease the loneliness, isolation, and burden of persons with disability, , and on the other hand to increase confidence, knowledge and happiness.**

The Self-Help Group organizes regular activities such as disability prevention, disability awareness events and home visits. This practice was used in other Community Based Rehabilitation projects outside China (Bangladesh, Cambodia) and has proven to fit in the local Tibetan culture.

Process involved

1. Project technical advisor provided training on the Self-Help Group concept, benefit of being part of a support group, monitoring and evaluation process to the key Community Based Rehabilitation implementers of Disabled Persons' Federation and Handicap International project staff.
2. The trained staff conducted the training to the key community actors: village party secretaries and leaders.
3. Key community actors informed persons with disabilities and their families in their respective community to identify the Self-Help Group members.
4. Identified Self-Help Group members list was submitted to the local Disabled Persons' Federation and to the project.
5. Trained Disabled Persons' Federation staff provided training on Self-Help Groups concept to the identified members to get a clear and common understanding of Self-Help Groups. Members had to reconfirm their interest to participate in the Self-Help Group.
6. Meetings were organized by the Disabled Persons' Federation staff to choose group leaders and clarify their role. During meetings, Self-Help Group members express their needs, issues and try to identify solutions. Priorities and action plan were defined.
7. According to the expressed needs, regular and continuous training on disability prevention, capacities building, access to services, and social communication were provided by the Disabled Persons' Federation staff.
8. Self-Help Groups' members carry out the activity according to the plan and meet on a regular basis to share their experiences with support from local Disabled Persons' Federation staff.

Resources required

Human Resources:

- 2 staff from the Inclusive Community Development project staff
- 1 Local Disabled Persons' Federation staff per Self-Help Group
- Self Help Group members: Commitment and willingness to meet regularly on a voluntary basis.

Funding: Most of the activities were funded by the project but some of the Self-Help Groups have already started to successfully raise funds to sustain their activities.

The factors that made this practice possible

- The **local cultural setting is favorable for the emergence of support groups**. Self-Help Groups members are committed and willing to join the group on a voluntary basis with no payment.
- Good support from the local Disabled Persons' Federation and government was provided. This is very crucial to keep the members motivated.
- **Active group leader** and support from the village leaders/party secretary is also a key factor to sustain the group.
- Close technical support was provided, especially at the beginning stage, to be able to run daily activities.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- **Personal conflicts** between some members are common but it can be usually resolved with mediation.
- **Distance/geographic constraints:** Group members are scattered, live far from each other, in different villages or remote areas. The project has formed small groups whose members are closer and organized 2-3 meetings with all the different Self-Help Groups' members altogether as a team.
- **Timing and scheduling of activities:** Most members are engaged in farming and cannot attend long training sessions or activities, especially during planting and harvest season. It is difficult to organize special meetings/activities on short notice. Due to this the project informs the members long in advance and tries not to organize activities during busy times of the year.

- **Low literacy, low level of knowledge on disability issues:** Some members are unable to read/write and only speak/understand the local language. Visual aids are used to make awareness materials and specific training is provided according to their needs.
- **Lack of trained capable workers** to facilitate and follow up groups. The staff receives continuous training.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ During project evaluation, members have expressed that their situation has improved significantly compared to before. People with disability indicate that they are **less discriminated** in the community. Moreover, they feel they are not the only ones facing problems. The members are **more confident and motivated** after seeing the impact of their group activity.
- ✓ Disabled Persons' Federation, Self-Help Groups' members, village leaders and party secretaries have realized the impact of Self-Help Groups for both the members and the community. Village leaders acknowledged that Self-Help Groups are **a resource in the community** which reduces their work load.
- ✓ Through the Self-Help Groups' activities, communities better understand disability issues and realize the capacities of persons with disabilities. This

helps to create more **participation opportunities** for persons with disabilities and their families in the community life. Persons are no longer seen as passive recipients of support but as **active members of the community**.

Possible improvement

- Organize more regular meetings and trainings for the Self-Help Groups' members to become more competent and efficient, so that they can run the activity more independently with very little support from the Disabled Persons' Federation.
- Create more opportunities to share experiences among different groups to learn from each other.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- Identify and empower persons with disabilities who can be role models and "ambassadors" in promoting disability issues in their own communities.
- Provide good explanation of the Self-Help Group's concept; this is crucial in order to avoid over-expectations from the members.
- Self-Help Groups should not be composed of more than 15 members to keep them easy to manage and coordinate. Two group leaders should be appointed and rotate.
- Different level governmental leaders and Disabled Persons' Federation should occasionally be invited to Self-Help Groups' activities for the groups to get more recognition, support and attention.
- Key community actors and local authorities should be involved in every step to ensure the activities are sustainable.

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to engage and gain involvement of key community actors in addressing disability issues?

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Title: | Involvement of key community actors in Community Based Rehabilitation work |
| Organization/Project: | Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation/ Handicap International Inclusive Community Development Project |
| Location: | Pilot areas: Medrogongka and Qushui counties - Lhasa Municipality, Cheng Nan and Bianxiong Township - Shigatse Municipality, Sichuan Qiao and Wolong Jie - Cheng Guan Zhen Chamdo county Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China |
| Scope: | Local |

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 21-29** concerning the right to freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information; participation in political and public life.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 4 The State shall provide persons with disabilities with special assistance by adopting supplementary methods and supportive measures with a view to alleviating or eliminating the impact of their disabilities and external barriers and ensuring the realization of their rights.

Article 5 People's governments at and above the county level shall incorporate the work on disability into their economic and social development programs (...), and shall include expenditure on disability programs in budget arrangements with a view to establishing mechanisms of guaranteed resources. (...)
People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall keep in close contact with persons with disabilities, solicit their opinions and fulfill their responsibilities in the work on disability.

Article 6 The State shall adopt measures to ensure that persons with disabilities (...) participate in the management of state affairs, economic and cultural undertakings and social affairs.
Opinions of persons with disabilities and their organizations shall be solicited in the formulation of laws, rules, regulations and public policies involving major issues concerning their rights and interests and the work on disability.
Persons with disabilities and their organizations have the right to put forward opinions and suggestions to state organs at various levels on the protection of the rights and interests and the development of the work on disability.

Article 7 (...) State organs, social groups, enterprises, institutions and self-management organizations in urban and rural communities should perform their respective functions on disability. State functionaries and other personnel engaged in the work on disability should fulfill their duties in accordance with law and try their best to provide quality services.

Article 8 China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) and its local organizations shall represent the common interests of persons with disabilities, protect their lawful rights and interests, unite persons with disabilities and enhance education among them and provide service for them.

Article 15 The State shall ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy rights to rehabilitation services. People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall adopt measures to create conditions for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, (...) thus enhancing their ability to participate in social life.

Article 17 (...) Local people's governments at various levels and departments concerned should organize and guide urban and rural community service networks, medical prevention and health care networks, organizations and families of persons with disabilities and other social forces in carrying out community-based rehabilitation programs.

Article 41 (...) People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall encourage and assist persons with disabilities to participate in various forms of cultural, sports and recreational activities and shall create conditions to enrich the spiritual and cultural life of persons with disabilities.

Article 46 (...) The government and society shall take measures to improve the social security network for persons with disabilities, secure and improve the life of persons with disabilities.

Article 52 The State and society shall take measures to make facilities more accessible and to eliminate barriers in information communications so as to provide an accessible environment for persons with disabilities to participate in social life on an equal basis with others.

Background and description of the practice



Community Based Rehabilitation approach uses existing community resources to provide services for people with disabilities. In TAR, there are **resources** already existing at the **community level that can be used effectively to provide services to persons with disabilities.** Village party secretaries, leaders, doctors and representatives of the Women Federation are assigned by the Government to conduct specific tasks. Most of them are working in their own community, therefore have **a good knowledge of the situation of persons with disabilities in their own community.** Moreover, they hold some decision-making power at community level and enjoy the respect of the community. Involving them is very relevant to address disability issues as it is

guaranteed that they will not be assigned to another location. The Inclusive Community Development project has thus decided to actively involve them in the implementation of Community Based Rehabilitation activities.

After receiving training on disability, they have agreed to add "services for persons with disabilities" to their own task assignment:

- Women Federation members started doing awareness sessions on disability to the community.
- Village doctors provide home visits and basic physiotherapy guidance to the people with disabilities and their families.
- Village leaders and party secretaries take every community activity as an opportunity to include disability issues.
- All key community actors are referring people with disabilities to appropriate services.

To share experiences and strengthen the network of communities, the community actors meet monthly. Local Disabled Persons Federation staff facilitate the meetings and provide technical support when necessary.

Process involved

1. The concept was brought up, discussed and agreed with the partners.
2. Community Based Rehabilitation technical advisor provided training on disability to the key community actors according to their role. A training manual in Chinese and Tibetan (local language) was developed.
3. Follow-up trainings were done by the Community Based Rehabilitation guidance department of the regional rehabilitation center by using the existing training manual.
4. After training, key community actors started to include disability issues in their daily work.
5. Group meetings were organized to share their work experience (achievements, challenges and solutions) and to make future plans.
6. Meetings are still held on a regular basis and improve the motivation and confidence of participants to address disability issues properly.
7. The practice was duplicated in new project areas.

Resources required

The activity is funded by the Inclusive Community Development Project but local Disabled Persons' Federations have agreed to take over after the project ends in 2013.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Motivation and willingness from the key community actors: they have a better overview of disability and clearly understood how to take action to address the issue of disability. They are willing and motivated to include disability in their work schedule.
- Recognition of community actors' work by the local Disabled Persons' Federation and Government is much appreciated and helps to increase their motivation.
- Good ownership from the local Disabled Persons' Federations that facilitate the meetings provide regular guidance and supervision.
- Support from the higher level Disabled Persons' Federation staff in this practice.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- Key community actors have many other duties in the village, and thus it is difficult to gather all the actors at the same time. A fixed date for every monthly meeting was agreed, so that they avoid planning other tasks.
- The proactive attitude of local Disabled Persons' Federation staff appointed to supervise is seldom and can be low in some project areas. This issue was raised to the local Disabled Persons' Federation leaders to get more support.
- Sustainability of the practice after the project is finished could be an issue. Discussions were held to encourage the local Disabled Persons' Federation to apply for budget from the Government.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ **Persons with disabilities are gaining access to appropriate services in their own community which is more affordable and less time consuming.** Disability issues are taken into account by the key community actors and integrated into their daily work.
- ✓ **People with disabilities feel that there is more attention given to their concerns and feel less isolated.**
- ✓ **Opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in community activities are enhanced.**

- ✓ Communities' attitudes toward persons with disabilities have improved. Persons with disabilities explained that before this initiative nobody was paying attention to disability. Now, with the regular meetings of key community actors, disability issues are discussed and solutions are envisioned.
- ✓ Persons with disabilities mentioned that their general situation has improved significantly.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- Early discussion with the local Disabled Persons' Federation is necessary to take the lead and real ownership in facilitating meetings and supervising key community actors' work.
- A specific person from Disabled Persons' Federation should be assigned to work specifically on Community Based Rehabilitation activities with a system to supervise and evaluate the work.

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to promote strategies to ensure disability issues are a constant priority on key decisions-makers' agenda?

Title: Disability Working Committee (DWC)
Organization/Project: Tibet Disabled Person's Federation / Handicap International Inclusive Community Development Project
Location: Pilot areas: Cheng Guan Qu, Medrogongka and Qushui counties of Lhasa municipality, Shigatse municipality, Chamdo county, TAR, CHINA
Scope: County and municipality

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 21, 29** concerning freedom of expression and opinion, access to information; and participation in political and public life.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 4 The State shall provide persons with disabilities with special assistance by adopting supplementary methods and supportive measures with a view to alleviating or eliminating the impact of their disabilities and external barriers and ensuring the realization of their rights.

Article 5 People's governments at and above the county level shall incorporate the work on disability into their economic and social development programs (...), and shall include expenditure on disability programs in budget arrangements with a view to establishing mechanisms of guaranteed resources. (...)
People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall keep in close contact with persons with disabilities, solicit their opinions and fulfill their responsibilities in the work on disability.

Article 6 The State shall adopt measures to ensure that persons with disabilities (...) participate in the management of state affairs, economic and cultural undertakings and social affairs.
Opinions of persons with disabilities and their organizations shall be solicited in the formulation of laws, rules, regulations and public policies involving major issues concerning their rights and interests and the work on disability.
Persons with disabilities and their organizations have the right to put forward opinions and suggestions to state organs at various levels on the protection of the rights and interests and the development of the work on disability.

Article 7 (...) State organs, social groups, enterprises, institutions and self-management organizations in urban and rural communities should perform their respective functions on disability. State functionaries and other personnel engaged in the work on disability should fulfill their duties in accordance with law and try their best to provide quality services.

Article 8 China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) and its local organizations shall represent the common interests of persons with disabilities, protect their lawful rights and interests, unite persons with disabilities and enhance education among them and provide service for them.

Article 15 The State shall ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy rights to rehabilitation services. People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall adopt measures to create conditions for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, (...) thus enhancing their ability to participate in social life.

Article 17 (...) Local people's governments at various levels and departments concerned should organize and guide urban and rural community service networks, medical prevention and health care networks, organizations and families of persons with disabilities and other social forces in carrying out community-based rehabilitation programs.

Article 41 (...) People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall encourage and assist persons with disabilities to participate in various forms of cultural, sports and recreational activities and shall create conditions to enrich the spiritual and cultural life of persons with disabilities.

Article 46 (...) The government and society shall take measures to improve the social security network for persons with disabilities, secure and improve the life of persons with disabilities.

Article 52 The State and society shall take measures to make facilities more accessible and to eliminate barriers in information communications so as to provide an accessible environment for persons with disabilities to participate in social life on an equal basis with others.

Background and context

According to the National Law for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities, different Governmental bureaus have the obligation to provide services for people with disabilities. **All the bureaus tend to work independently** and do not share their plans unless a request is coming from the Government. Networks only exist at the horizontal level because of administrative issues, so there are no vertical networks within the different bureaus. **People with disabilities have comprehensive needs which need coordination among the different bureaus at the vertical level.**

Description of the practice



The existence of networks within the different bureaus that are able to fulfill the comprehensive needs of people with disabilities is one of the key elements of Community Based Rehabilitation approach. The Disability Working Committees are an existing mechanism at the national, regional, municipal and county level but often are not active. Thus the Inclusive Community Development project has worked with the partners to build a network and initiate regular meetings within the different key bureaus **using the Disability Working Committee as a platform.**

Process involved

1. Project has shared the idea of working with the 6 key Disability Working Committee members (Health, Education, Labor, Youth League, Women Federation, Civil Affairs) with the partners (Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation, Lhasa Disabled Persons Federation).
2. A study tour was organized to GuangZhou (mainland China) for the 6 key members at Lhasa municipality for the partners to understand the concept of Community Based Rehabilitation.
3. Meetings were organized after the study tour to get feedback from Disability Working Committee members and to clarify the mandate of the Disability Working Committee.
4. 3 project pilot areas were selected to start working with local members on a regular basis.

5. Later the practice was extended to Shigatse and Chamdo prefectures for starting the project.
6. Discussions took place with the partner on the importance of having representatives of persons with disabilities or their families through Self-Help Groups and Disabled Persons Organizations to attend committee meetings.
7. After gaining the partners' approval, representatives from the Self-Help Groups were chosen and received specific training for effective participation.
8. Representatives of Self-Help Groups and Disabled Persons Organizations started participating in committee meetings.

The factors that made this practice possible

- Government support and attention at the local level is needed to be able to meet with all the members together.
- Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation is ensuring coordination, acting as the secretariat of the Disability Working Committee.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- According to the official document, 28 persons are appointed as Disability Working Committee members. The project could only start working with 6 members and hopes to extend the scope later.
- Timing that suits all 6 members with important workload is a challenge. Individual meetings are organized when needed for specific issues with Disability Working Committee members.
- Representatives of the bureaus attending the meetings often change because of limited staff. Thus there is not a specific person appointed to attend the meetings and there is no good handover of the previous meeting. It was emphasized to assign one specific person from each bureau, or a proper handover should be done in case there is a change of representatives.
- Frequency of meetings and agenda should fit all the members in order to motivate them to continue meeting regularly.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ Through the **activation of the Disability Working Committee, horizontal networks** within the different bureaus were **set up and strengthened**.
- ✓ Inclusive Community Development project evaluation results showed that in Medrogonga, **Disability Working Committee members work more closely and share resources, which help solving budget issues**. The meetings enhance the relationships between bureaus. Prior to these, collaboration and coordination was very seldom. Now, issues related to people with disabilities are shared and each bureau can propose solutions to problems.
- ✓ Through the **participation of Self-Help Groups and Disabled Persons Organizations' representatives** in some meetings, people with disabilities' real concerns and issues are **brought up directly at a higher level and have a better chance to be heard**. Solutions are more likely to be found. The practice also encourages people with disabilities and builds their confidence.

Possible improvement

- Government should distribute formal documents at regional and municipal levels in order to oblige lower levels to meet on a regular basis and to submit meeting reports.
- To **systematically** involve representatives' organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure that people with disabilities are involved in decisions that concern them.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

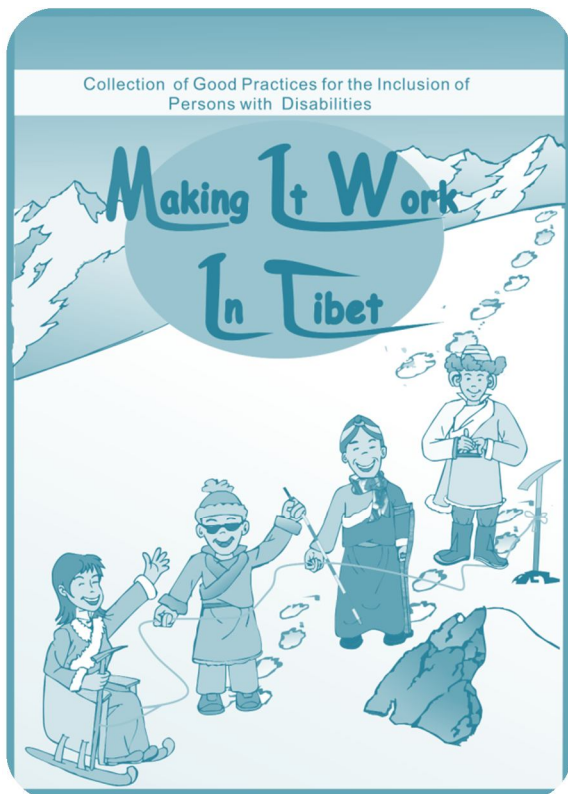
- Disability Working Committee meetings should be activated through Government Department (not through NGOs) to ensure long-term sustainability.
- The Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation, as the Government Department to protect persons with disabilities and also the Disability Working Committee secretary should ensure that each local Disabled Persons' Federation takes the lead in advocating the local committee to meet regularly with support from the chairperson.
- Disability Working Committee meeting request should come from the chairperson to be able to gather and motivate members to meet.

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Good Practices Related to INSTITUTIONAL REHABILITATION



“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to ensure services access and affordability to meet the rehabilitation needs of children for children with disabilities?

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Title: | Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center's strategies to improve financial accessibility of rehabilitation services for 0-6 children with disability |
| Organization/Project: | Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation and Handicap International Institutional Rehabilitation Project |
| Location: | Lhasa (pilot areas), Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China |
| Scope: | Regional (TAR) |

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 7, 25, 26**, concerning children with disabilities, health, habilitation and rehabilitation.

Related articles of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 3: “Persons with disabilities shall enjoy equal rights with other citizens in political, economic, cultural and social respects and in family life as well. “

Article 4:“The State shall provide persons with disabilities with special assistance by adopting supplementary methods and supportive measures with a view to alleviating or eliminating the impact of their disabilities and external barriers and ensuring the realization of their rights. “

Article 15:“The State shall ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy rights to rehabilitation services. People's governments at all levels and departments concerned shall adopt measures to create conditions for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, establish and improve the service systems and implement prioritized programs by stages to help persons with disabilities regain normal functions or compensate for lost functions, thus enhancing their ability to participate in social life.”

Background and context

In the frame of the 12th Five-year action plan, the China Disabled Persons' Federation has set up the “Rainbow Dream Project” to bring more benefits and equal opportunity to children with disabilities. Since 2011, the Disabled Persons' Federation in every province and region, is in charge to implement the project using a National Aid Fund. Accordingly, in TAR the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation developed a specific action plan to bring this policy into practice. The 2011-2014 Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center strategy aims to provide 150 children with disabilities with free orthopedic surgeries (in appointed hospitals). In 2011, 576 children with disabilities should be supported in accessing prosthesis & orthosis devices or assistive devices. In 2012, 350 children should benefit from the same support.

Description of the practice

The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center has been setting up the “Rainbow Dream Project” since 2011, corresponding to the China Disabled Persons Federation's strategy to improve financial accessibility of its services to children with disability between the ages of 0-6.. Through the “equity funds”, low income families can access services free of charge. After an evaluation process, the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center issues a Green Aid Card and provides free orthopedic surgery, prosthesis & orthosis devices, assistive devices, and relevant physiotherapy treatment services.



Process involved

1. The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center has prepared a specific action plan based on the principle of China Disabled Persons Federation's "Rainbow Dream Project".
2. The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center has allocated a budget to each related department to set up specific accounts and an individual audit system.
3. The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center has developed an evaluation system to identify and properly target children with disabilities.
4. The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center has issued Green Aid Cards to children with disabilities identified as fulfilling the criteria of the project.
5. Children with disabilities who were given a Green Aid Card can benefit from free rehabilitation services in the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center's relevant departments (OWS, Limb Department).

Resources required

- **Resources and staff:** 4 management staff from the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center, OWS Department, and Limb Department.
- **Finance:** The entire project is funded by China Disabled Persons' Federation; budgets have been allocated to Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center departments.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- **Integration of all different prefectures:** not all prefectures are quite aware of this project or familiar with the process (e.g. Chamdo).
- **Distance and geographic constraints:** Difficulties for families of children with disabilities living in nomadic areas to access such services. Distances to travel are extremely long and patients' families might face financial difficulties to stay in Lhasa for the duration of the treatment.

The impact of the practice



✓ Cost of rehabilitation services and additional expenses to access the service (transport, accommodation, food) have been identified by the 2011 World Disability Report as one of the major challenges faced by persons with disabilities to access rehabilitation services.

✓ Rehabilitation is one of the key elements for persons with disabilities' well-being and independence. Contributions to remove or reduce part of these obstacles greatly improve access to rehabilitation services.

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- More prefectures should be accompanied by the Tibet Disabled Persons' Federation to implement the project. With only a simple notice announcement they might not take initiative to start the project.
- Practical strategies, especially for local prefectures should be developed. This would bring a deeper impact and really benefit children with disabilities in poverty who are most in need.

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Drundrop, TAR Regional Rehabilitation Center's OWS Manager

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“MAKING IT WORK!” Good Practice Case Study



How to ensure continuous organizational improvement in staff development through ongoing quality training in rehabilitation?

Title: Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center's Continuing Training Strategies
Organization/Project: Tibet Disabled Persons Federation Institutional Rehabilitation Project
Location: Lhasa, Shigatse, Chamdo (pilot areas), Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) China
Scope: Local/Regional (TAR)

Related articles of the CRPD

This practice relates to **article 26** concerning the right to habilitation and rehabilitation.

Related article of the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

This practice relates to:

Article 15:“(…) People’s governments at all levels and departments concerned shall adopt measures to create conditions for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, establish and improve the service systems and implement prioritized programs by stages to help persons with disabilities regain normal functions or compensate for lost functions, thus enhancing their ability to participate in social life.”

Article 18:“Local People’s governments at various levels and relevant departments shall (…) set up rehabilitation institutions for persons with disabilities, and provide medical rehabilitation services, offer personnel training and technical guidance (…).”

Background, context, description of the practice



Continuing training (complementing initial training) ensures that the rehabilitation staff improves and keeps technical skills up-to-date. It corresponds to the second point of article 26 of the UNCRPD “*States Parties shall promote the development of initial and continuing training for professionals and staff working in rehabilitation and rehabilitation services*”.

Since the beginning of the Institutional Rehabilitation project initiated by the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center particular attention was given to building up and maintaining a quality training system and strategy. For more than 10 years, the project was able to duplicate the practice within the TAR.

Process involved

1. Project technical advisors provided elementary technical training on prosthesis and orthopedic devices, physiotherapy treatment concept, monitoring and evaluation processes to the Institutional Rehabilitation Prosthesis & Orthosis local technicians.
2. While technicians accumulated knowledge and practical experiences, the project team selected the most skillful technicians as trainers to support and mentor other colleagues.
3. Handicap International Institutional Rehabilitation project team continued to provide complementary technical training and management level training package: quality control, patient circulation system,

referral system, etc. Technical advisors with the inputs of Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center staff developed a good number of capitalization tools.

4. More staff from different departments of Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center (Limb Department, Community Based Rehabilitation Guidance Department) were selected and coached as trainers to implement continuous training internally and across the prefectures.
5. Cadres and managers were assigned to mainland China to update technical and managerial knowledge related to rehabilitation.
6. The Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center was also collaborating with mainland China rehabilitation centers to receive punctual technical support for its staff (experts from mainland China coming to Lhasa to provide training and support on a specific topic).
7. Technical libraries were made available (hard, soft and on-line resources) to rehabilitation staff.
8. Swap Human Resources plan was designed by the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center, to allocate skillful technicians to Chamdo Disabled Persons' Federation and Shigatse Disabled Persons' Federation (main pilot areas). The Lhasa technicians coached local technicians and received patients, while local technicians were assigned to the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center for initial and refreshing training accordingly. In past years such swap plans have proven to be successful and today local staff is more skilled to provide rehabilitation services independently.
9. As a result, the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center gained experience in organizing continuous training strategy internally and supporting other Disabled Persons' Federations' capacity building at prefecture level.

Resources required

Resources: Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center management staff, Limb Department, CBR Guidance Department, Chamdo Disabled Persons' Federation, Shigatse Disabled Persons' Federation; Institutional Rehabilitation Project team

Staff: Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center 7 persons, Institutional Rehabilitation project 4 persons

Finance: Most of the activities were funded by Handicap International, but after Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center initiated its continuous training strategy (assigning staff to mainland China and allocating staff to support local prefectures) some of the costs were covered by the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center.

Some of the difficulties encountered

- **Technicians in the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center have different knowledge and background.** The education level, medical background, knowledge of Chinese varies from each technician. The last aspect causes implications to attain national qualification training and test in mainland China. Therefore the project put emphasis on continuing refreshing and consolidating capacity building training.
- **Distance/geographic constraints:** Lhasa and Chamdo prefectures are more than 1050 km apart. Road conditions vary dramatically according to seasons. Logistic arrangements are heavy and last minute changes are common. To reduce the various constraints, the project developed more "long-distance" supervision.

The impact of the practice



- ✓ With the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center's successful continuation of training strategies, the technicians are able to upgrade their skills and provide quality services for the patients.
- ✓ Moreover, the work can be effectively duplicated in other prefectures of TAR.

Possible improvement

- Strengthen communication ties between the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center's leaders and managers of departments to promote the strategy on the long run.
- Continuous development and update of capitalization tool can make this practice more beneficial and possible to be duplicated in the future.
- Identify other possibilities for continuing training in mainland China (Disabled Persons' Federation training, Hong-Kong Rehabilitation Society, professional associations, on-line training and forums).

Recommendations for the replication of this practice

- Under the guidance and initiative of the Tibet Regional Rehabilitation Center, invite leaders of Disabled Persons' Federations in other prefectures to organize experience sharing seminars to promote this practice.
- Introduce adaptable plan of technical advisor support to cope with demands from local partners in the future.

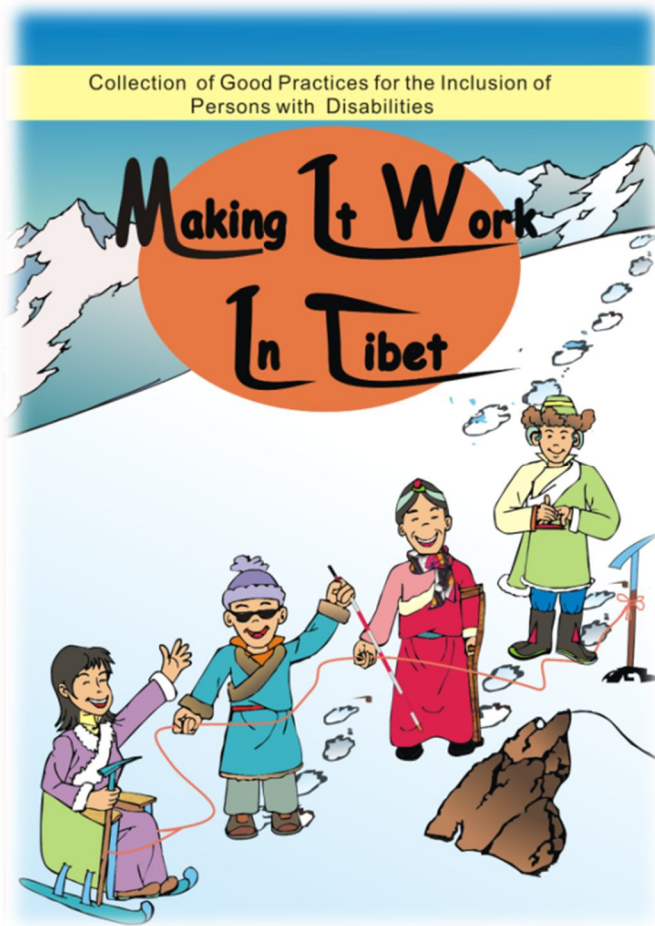
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CONCLUSION



This collection of good practices gives us a diverse range of possible actions for the **enhanced inclusion of persons with disabilities, combining access to services** (early education, mainstream education, and rehabilitation), **arts and culture, awareness raising, and active participation in political and social life**. These models of good practice also focus on promoting effective and participatory working methods for professional involvement in the field of disability, ensuring quality actions, sustainability and the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities. One of the most significant changes, common to most of these good practices, is the increase of persons with disabilities' participation in community life.

The case studies have been collected from Government actors, NGOs working in partnership with the Semi-Government Department, local relevant associations and associations of persons with disabilities. These good practices were selected on the **basis of proven success in providing simple and effective initiatives that may be duplicated at all levels**.

The initiatives contained in this report **are practical examples of how the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the China National Law of the Protection of Persons with disabilities can be effectively implemented** and have a positive impact on the lives of persons with disabilities.

The majority of case studies documented in this report have a local scope with a primary focus on improving and mainstreaming systems. In the context of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the key lessons learned during this compilation process are that the **success of initiatives is based on the following prime factors**:

- the **respect of local culture to ensure the ownership and participation by the concerned persons and the community**
- **involvement and commitment of key Government actors**
- paying attention on the **capacity building** of the relevant target groups to ensure the establishment of good practices and the improvement of services.

With this report, we appeal to the authorities, the community services providers and the representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities to support the emergence and duplication of similar initiatives aimed at the improved inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in our society. The following recommendations concern global actions from the key learning points of the case studies.

Global Recommendations

Local authorities (focusing on the Disability Working Committee)

- **Identification of gaps between policies and practices:** Gaps between disabilities policies and their effective implementation on the ground should be identified in a participatory manner. It is recommended to develop a multi-stakeholder working team with agreed criteria, action plans and shared tasks. It is essential to include representatives of organisations of persons with disabilities in these discussions as they are the best placed to point out the gaps based on their personal experience. Regular reporting and monitoring processes should be established and maintained among the stakeholders to share information and progresses.
- **Support initiatives of persons with disabilities:** An effective way to promote the empowerment of persons with disabilities is to promote the development of Self-Help Groups and the participation of persons with disabilities in Organisations of Persons with Disabilities and local associations. Local authorities, in particular the Disability Working Committee are invited to support the initiatives of Self-Help Groups and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities through technical, financial or administrative support.
- **Promote widely existing policies for persons with disabilities:** Many persons with disabilities in Tibet still do not have a disability card because they are not familiar with the process or face multiple obstacles to obtain the document. The local government, in particular departments related to disability should give clearer information on obtaining disability cards and support persons with disabilities in the process. In a similar way, there are existing preferential policies for children aged 0 to 6 to access rehabilitation services and assistive devices but this information is not yet well-known among disability professionals and persons with disabilities. Strategies should be defined at the local level to ensure that such information reach the key stakeholders and persons with disabilities.

Local authorities and Representatives' Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

- **Developing awareness of disability :** Persons with disabilities ' full participation in social and political life can only be possible if the community services providers (including teachers, various government stakeholders and the community) are made aware of persons with disabilities' particular situation, and actively commit to changing the existing negative attitudes and practices. By conducting awareness raising actions, community attitudes may be changed to realize the capacity of people with disability, and together address the existing barriers to equal inclusion. Awareness raising can significantly reduce the stigmatization and discrimination faced by persons with disabilities. Service providers need to gain specific awareness on disability issues to be able to develop more inclusive practices and be better equipped to answer the needs of persons with disabilities. To raise the attention of key stakeholders is the responsibility of both the local authorities and the representatives' organizations of persons with disabilities. Awareness raising actions can be done through various formats depending on the target groups: developing information/communication/education material, using the media, conducting community events and global campaigns.
- **Training of key professionals (medical, media, and academic institution):** Specific training of professionals on disability issues is a key element to ensure service quality, positive reporting and a global understanding of disability. In China, the charity model prevails and without training on the social model, professionals will continue to patronize persons with disability, unmindful of the opinions and requests of these service-users. Training on National Laws for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are also very important aspects of

developing understanding on disability rights and the need for effective implementation of policies. Training of key professionals is the responsibility of the authorities and the representatives' organizations of persons with disabilities and should be conducted jointly for more effectiveness.

Representatives' Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

- **Involvement of Government:** In the context of China, the involvement and commitment of the Government and related departments working for disability, the Disabled Persons Federation is crucial at every step in order to ensure success. The identification of “agents of change”, who are motivated persons within Government Departments is a key element of success. The involvement of Government actors give credibility to disability work and ensure sustainability of actions.
- **Support the individual empowerment of persons with disabilities:** Due to stigma and marginalization, persons with disabilities often lack the self-belief and confidence to interact with others and engage in community activities. Through the case studies, it is evident that Self-Help Groups and DPOs (Associations of Persons with Disabilities) are an effective measure to foster the self-esteem of people with disability and decrease negative self-image. Active involvement with others in awareness and advocacy (campaigns?) contribute to developing persons with disabilities' confidence and also change the community perception on disability. Increased social participation is an essential element to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Supporting Self-Help Groups and associations of persons with disabilities is an effective way to address challenges faced by persons with disabilities at a collective level. DPOs need to function independently as organizations to achieve goals through collective action, while remaining focused on improving the situation of persons with disabilities.

Community Service Providers

- **Improve access to mainstream and specialized services:** Access to health, education and a decent living wage remains a major challenge globally for most persons with disability. Improved access to services will have a direct impact on improving persons with disabilities' quality of life and will enhance their level of economic, social and cultural inclusion. Barriers to service access include geographical and physical constraints, availability of services, affordability, attitude of the professionals, and (the lack of?) service information. Active measures have to be taken by institutions working in the field of disability to remove these existing barriers. Programs should have an explicit global strategy for improving access to services.
- **Mobilize community resources:** Existing community resources can be adapted and used to serve the needs of persons with disabilities. We have seen that using the existing networks of key community actors can support the better inclusion of persons with disabilities at the community level. Training and follow-up of key community actors on disability issues are essential for keeping them involved on the long run. This is an effective way to improve the accessibility and affordability of services for persons with disabilities. The Community Based Rehabilitation approach offers various concrete solutions to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families, meeting basic needs and ensuring inclusion and participation in the community life.