Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2012

Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all

Globally, the estimated one billion\(^1\) people with disabilities face many barriers to participation in all aspects of society. The result is that people with disabilities do not enjoy access to society and services on an equal basis with others, including transportation, employment, education, political participation and justice. When barriers are broken down and people with disabilities are empowered to participate in society, the entire community benefits. Disability inclusion is therefore necessary to achieve development and progress for all.

"Accessibility enables people with disabilities to gain education, employment, and healthcare; services which are often taken for granted by people without a disability.

"If we do not overcome the barriers in our physical environment; the way we communicate; our discriminatory attitudes; and our legal and policy frameworks; we will continue to limit fellow human beings, who have a disability, from realising their full potential and also contributing to our own humanity.

"The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) has been ratified by 126 countries; let us now put into practice holistic accessibility, addressing barriers in the physical environment, in our communication, in our attitudes, and in our policies, so as to make inclusion part of everyday life, and build communities which are truly respectful of all people”, says CBM President Professor Allen Foster.

\(^1\) WHO World report on disability, 2011
CBM’s development work in over 80 countries includes specific projects and programmes aimed at empowering persons with disabilities to address accessibility barriers, as well as advocating for disability to be included in all general international development efforts. CBM calls for all stakeholders to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in society on an equal basis with others, by identifying and eliminating obstacles, exclusionary practices and barriers to accessibility.

To celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2012, CBM and partners worldwide are organising many events, public discussions and information campaigns. These aim to highlight the importance of mainstreaming disability in all aspects of development, as well as to further the participation of persons with disabilities in social life and development on the basis of equality.

For more information  www.cbm.org/world-disability-day-2012

Contact P. B. Le Bas  pb.lebas@cbm.org