

# END THE CYCLE.

OF POVERTY & DISABILITY



## Employment, Disability and Poverty



Mosua Islam, Bangladesh

### DISABILITY AND POVERTY THE FACTS

- Persons with a disabilities are the world's largest minority, making up 15% of the world's population.<sup>1</sup>
- Up to 80% of persons with a disabilities are unemployed in many countries.<sup>2</sup>
- 22% of the world's poorest people have a disability.<sup>3</sup>

#### SOURCES:

- 1, 3 World Health Organisation and World Bank. World Report on Disability, WHO Press, Geneva, 2011, p.29, p.261
- 2 International Labour Organization, Facts on Disability and Decent Work, ILO, Geneva, 2009, p.2

#### MY STORY: MOSUA ISLAM, BANGLADESH

After contracting polio as a child, 25-year-old Mosua was facing a life without good job opportunities.

*"I was studying in the primary school near my house. After that I was supposed to go to high school, but it was far away and I couldn't crawl that far. We couldn't afford a rickshaw to get to school, so I couldn't go anymore.*

*If I had had that chance to continue my education, it might have been possible to have better work now."*

Mosua, Bangladesh

#### THE CYCLE

Employment, and the ability to earn an income, is one of the most important ways persons with disabilities can break out of poverty. Without an income, persons with disabilities often cannot afford basic needs like food, shelter or medical care and everyday becomes a struggle to survive.

Excluding persons with disabilities from education and employment opportunities also impacts a community's social situation. Without meaningful participation in community life, persons with disabilities can't form the social bonds that are critical to ending the cycle of poverty and disability. It also means societies cannot benefit from having every member participate.

#### A CONSTANT STRUGGLE INSIDE THE CYCLE

Persons with disabilities living in low and middle income countries can struggle to earn an income for many reasons:

- Children with disabilities often do not go to school and miss out on the education so valuable for finding employment as adults.
- Employers may not understand the capabilities and breadth of experience persons with disabilities can bring to the workplace.
- Persons with disabilities may not be able to access small loans or other financial support to start a business.

Right now eight out of every ten persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries are denied their right to employment. Unable to earn an income, they are locked inside the cycle of poverty and disability.

In 2015 the world committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. The 2030 Agenda and the corresponding 17 goals, including Goal 8 on Employment and Decent Work, must be implemented according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

By addressing the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries, we help achieve the human rights of persons with disabilities, and everyone benefits from their contribution.

This is why inclusion, across all development sectors, is important. Empowering persons with disabilities so they can receive a worthwhile education, access health and rehabilitation services, gain a livelihood and participate fully in society, is essential to ending the cycle of poverty and disability.

### REAL CHANGE DOES HAPPEN

When Mosua had to abandon his education he believed he would never have the chance to find employment. But after receiving a mobility device from a local disability organisation, Mosua gained new confidence to begin his own business and become a local ambassador fighting for the rights of persons with disabilities.

*“My business is that I move around the town to buy old books and waste papers. Then I sell them to shops and gain a good profit.”*

**Mosua, Bangladesh**

Mosua’s story is one of powerful change. By combining his own determination with the right resources and encouragement, Mosua is now strengthening his social connections, earning an income and has a bright employment future.

*“When I think about my future I am fine, my life is good this way. I thank God that he has kept me. I am earning sufficient money. Today I am collecting papers, but in the future I will be a shop owner. I will employ four or five other people. That is my ultimate goal!”*

**Mosua, Bangladesh**



Mosua Islam, Bangladesh

## DISABILITY AND POVERTY THE FACTS

- Persons with disabilities are often overlooked by employers because of misperceptions that they cannot, or do not want to work.
- Empowering persons with disabilities so they can earn an income and support themselves is essential to ending the cycle of poverty.
- Persons with disabilities are often denied the training and financial support so important for starting a business and becoming employed.

**END THE CYCLE.**  
OF POVERTY & DISABILITY

End the Cycle is an initiative of CBM

**END THE CYCLE** promotes the human rights and lived experience of persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries.



[endthecycle.info](http://endthecycle.info)



[ETC\\_CBM](https://twitter.com/ETC_CBM)



[www.endthecycle.info](http://www.endthecycle.info)