

Source: Prajwal Pradhan/ Handicap International



What Is Full Financial Inclusion?

Full financial inclusion is a state in which everyone who can use them has access to a range of quality financial services at affordable prices, with convenience, dignity, and consumer protections, delivered by a range of providers in a stable, competitive market to financially capable clients.

About CFI

The Center for Financial Inclusion at Accion (CFI) is an action-oriented think tank working toward full global financial inclusion. Constructing a financial inclusion sector that reaches everyone with quality services will require the combined efforts of many actors. CFI contributes to full inclusion by collaborating with sector participants to tackle challenges beyond the scope of any one actor, using tools that include research, convening, capacity building, and communications.

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Financial Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities is a Center for Financial Inclusion at Accion program that promotes equal and fair access to quality financial products and services for persons with disabilities and provides the necessary tools and trainings to make this possible.

The Challenge and Rationale for Action

Over 1 billion people, around 15 percent of the world's population, has some form of disability and are disproportionately excluded from access to finance. CFI works toward sustainable access for persons with disabilities through policy and advocacy work, partnerships between financial institutions and disability organizations, and other stakeholders, and the dissemination of publications, practical tools, and trainings to make financial ecosystems more inclusive to persons with disabilities.

The "Framework for Disability Inclusion," a CFI-designed how-to guide, was successfully piloted in 2013 and implemented in 2014 with Fundacion Paraguaya in Paraguay. CFI at Accion India has customized and implemented the Framework for India with partners Equitas, ESAF, and Annapurna Microfinance, providing financial access to over 30,000 disabled clients, and is now expanding to two new partners, Grameen Koota Microfinance and Micrograam, an NGO with 33 sub-partners, covering five regions in India with continued training support from v-shesh.

In Bangladesh, BRAC, with the support of CFI, has implemented an ambitious disability inclusion program. CFI continues to advise the Nigerian Central Bank and the Ecuadorean government on disability inclusion. In Nigeria, Accion Microfinance Bank launched the People Living With Disabilities (PWLD) product with the support of the Central Bank of Nigeria.

The program has also collaborated with the Smart Campaign and Handicap International to develop non-discrimination tools and trainings that have been tested at Fundación Paraguaya and are disseminated to MFIs worldwide.

What Does Project Success Look Like?

Persons with disabilities who have a desire and ability to be economically active can tap into the power of financial services to unleash their potential and build self-sufficiency. They are satisfied with the quality and accessibility of microfinance services they receive. Microfinance institutions embrace the double-bottom line (social and financial) benefits of serving PWD and are disability-friendly. Disability inclusion becomes a practical option for MFIs with the testing and further development of implementation processes, tools, and knowledge sharing.



Funding and Partnerships

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- Accion Microfinance Bank
- Accion India • Peter C. Alderman Foundation • American India Foundation • Association of Microfinance Institutions of Uganda AVAL • Blue Law International
- BRAC (Bangladesh) • Central Bank of Nigeria • Clinton Global Initiative • Fundación Paraguaya
- G3ICT • Gallaudet University Global Partnership for Disability and Development • Handicap International • Harvard Law School Project on Disability
- Microcredit Summit Campaign
- Mobility International • Multilateral Investment Fund • NCPDEDP
- Rehabilitation International • SEEP Network • SKOLL World Forum
- United Nations • U.S. International Council on Disabilities • U.S. State Department • World Bank • World Institute on Disability

For more information, contact **Josh Goldstein, Vice President for Economic Citizenship & Disability Inclusion**, at jgoldstein@accion.org

Program Highlights

To help achieve disability inclusion, the Center continues to:

- Identify and disseminate best practices related to how persons with disabilities are using financial services today.
- Implement the Disability Inclusion Framework at a number of highly respected MFIs. Our first such partnership is in its third year with Fundación Paraguaya.
- Disseminate disability inclusion tools and trainings for MFIs, developed at Fundación Paraguaya, with the support of Handicap International. These resources are open source and now available for all interested parties to download.
- Partner with Micrograam, an NGO with 33 sub-partners, and MFIs in India— Annapurna, Equitas, ESAF, and Grameen Koota—covering five regions with the continued support of v-shesh to deliver CFI’s disability-inclusion training to the vast Indian market.
- Develop and share the compelling business case for disability inclusion in mainstream financial services.
- Establish and form strategic partnerships with global disability organizations, including Handicap International and v-shesh to achieve maximum outreach and scale.
- Further collaborate with the Smart Campaign and FI2020 to develop practices and tools to implement the newly incorporated Smart principle on non-discrimination.
- Implement a disability inclusion program with BRAC in Bangladesh and in Nigeria with Accion Microfinance Bank and the Central Bank.
- Look for innovative ways to include persons with psychosocial disabilities.

Roadmap for Disability Inclusion

Partnerships with Local Organizations Serving PWDs Local organizations and Disabled Persons’ Organizations (DPOs) serving PWDs can support outreach.	Universal Design and Reasonable Accommodation Facilities, products, and services can be designed with PWDs in mind, while maximizing access and ease of use for everyone.
Sensitivity Training Financial service providers can train staff to increase awareness & overcome prejudices.	Social Performance Management Outcome and impact evaluations will create demand and supply side momentum.
Financial Capability Financial education and literacy can help empower clients and increase demand.	Technology Solutions Technology has a key role in reaching and serving PWDs.
Human Resources Policies Financial service providers can integrate PWDs for employment and internships.	

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