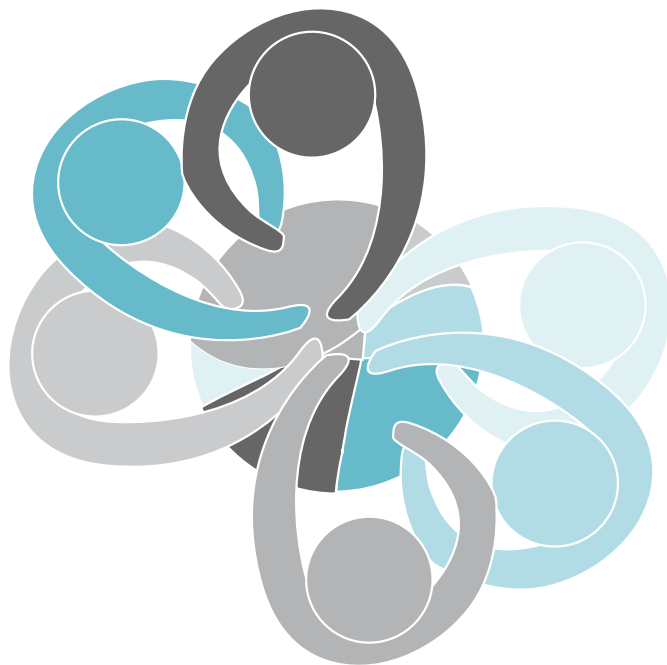


# **A Proposal to** ***Achieve Community*** **Based Inclusive** **Development**

**The experience of Project Káloie in the  
Brunca Region of Costa Rica**



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## Introduction

**T**he community is a space in which different persons share a common territory, their different ways of thinking, and their own feelings in accordance with their stories and cultures.

In the community as a whole, there are persons, organizations, enterprises, microenterprises, churches, and groups, among others, who will call social actors. These persons know and are concerned about the needs of the community, and they are the indicated persons to perform activities to improve their community and the quality of life of its inhabitants.

Nevertheless, each actor has his or her own perspective of reality and works based on it. Also, it is not necessarily true that actors that know each other and work in an articulated manner. And, with respect to disability and persons with disabilities, probably they will not be taken into consideration within all of the activities being performed ordinarily.

This is not due to a bad intention, what happens is that the person is thought of and constructed from an idea of what a person should be. This idea of person is called "normal person" (standard). The social construction of an ideal of person, of an standard or a norm with respect to persons, denies the existence of human diversity, that is, it denies the reality that we, all persons, are different. That idea is responsible for social exclusion, prejudice, and poverty of persons who do not adjust to the social idea and, among them we find persons with disabilities.

It is necessary that social actors begin to think on the rights of persons with disabilities. This will facilitate persons with disabilities to participate in their activities and will help them to come out of poverty and the social exclusion in which they live.

We present a tool that has been very effective for having communities thinking about all of its members, specially persons with disabilities, when fostering development. It is the Community Based Inclusive Development.

Without being a recipe to be followed, this material shows "a possible step by step attempt" and it is aimed at persons with disabilities, organizations of and for persons with disabilities, and for those who want to put into practice a Community Based Inclusive Development.

We have performed this strategy in three communities of the Brunca Region of Costa Rica: Térraba, Puerto Jiménez, and Coto Brus. We were very successful in these communities and achievements were obtained, not only to benefit persons with disabilities, but the whole community.

We are able to say: We have successfully used this strategy and now we have the experience!

Great advances were made in Térraba, with the contribution of persons with and without disabilities, including plans to build an aqueduct that will logically benefit all the inhabitants.

The community of Coto Brus is developing a recycling microenterprise and, also, they are manufacturing technical aids and support articles, based on community needs. Here we have experienced how the participation of all the sectors is making it possible to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, their families, and the community as a whole.

In the national policy field one of the aspects, that makes us most proud, is that the concept of Community Based Inclusive Development has been included in the National Development Plan of Costa Rica. It is hoped that this strategy will be extended to other communities of the country.

We hope this experience will set an example and that it will be used according to the concrete reality of each community.





## A proposal for initiating the Community Based Inclusive Development strategy.

*A strategy is a set of actions or a way of doing things (García, 2003).*

That is why, to say that Community Based Inclusive Development (CBR) is an strategy, means that it is a set of actions fostering the participation of persons with disabilities, their families, their organizations, and pertinent social actors, to achieve more accessible and developed communities, which are better for all persons, and using the possibilities, resources, ways of being, imagination, and the creativity of the communities and the persons involved.



**Inclusive Development means:  
Development for all persons.**

Originally understood as Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) strategy, the Community Based Inclusive Development maintains the abbreviation CBR, because that nomenclature is much known by grass root organizations, governments, and international cooperation agencies.

The strategy is not a static and unique recipe. No matter how different are the communities, the principles of the strategy should be respected, in order to reach the objectives from a human rights approach.

This strategy develops from the needs of the population with disabilities, but its benefits reach the entire community. A community that is good for persons with disabilities, is a community that is good for all persons.



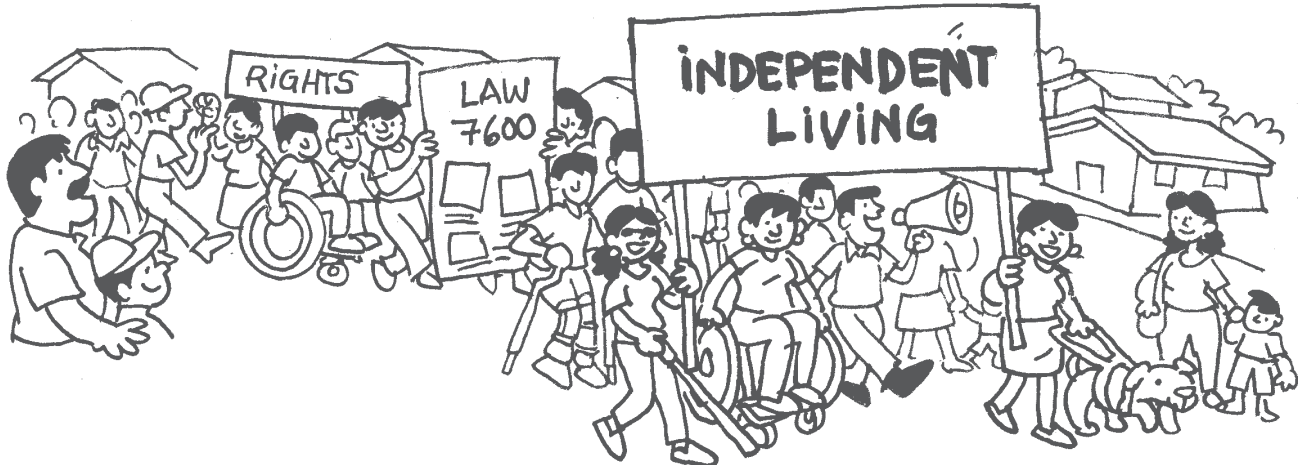
The following graph shows the proposal being developed





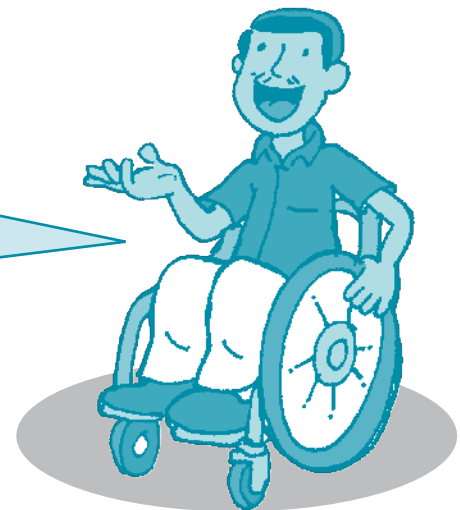
step:

## Mobilizing the community for participation and organization:



### ¿What do we want to achieve?

- *Community mobilization: We want persons, organizations, and institutions to mobilize and organize themselves.*
- *Make persons with disabilities visible. Investigate if, and how much, persons with disabilities are included in the community.*
- *Question if the community is adequate for all the persons.*



### ¿How to do it?

The attention call to the community may be performed by:

- *mass meetings*
- *house to house visits*
- *demonstrations demanding rights*
- *fairs or publicity campaigns*
- *celebrating and commemorating special dates*
- *conducting community meetings to speak about the topic*

**These activities are performed during the entire process, the number of times needed.**



2<sup>o</sup> step:

## Forming the Local Committee:

This is a wide representation group where persons with disabilities, family members, members of development associations, and public institutions are able to work on the activities.

### What do we want?

We want the local committee for Community Based Inclusive Development to be its own "Orchestra Conductor".



### Important note

The Local Committee does not conduct all the actions. It initiates and articulates the existing resources and possibilities, to obtain other resources that the community has, like information on its members, the labor force available, the time available of some members, and other resources that are not just institutional, but pertain to other social sectors.





## How to do it?

It could be that the task be undertaken by:

- *a non government organization of the community.*
- *a group of interested persons of the community.*
- *Existing commissions in the community*
  - o *Municipal Accessibility Commissions*
  - o *County Councils for Interinstitutional Coordination*
  - o *Regional Councils (RECO)*
  - o *Other groups organized, including the Combined Institute on Welfare (IMAS), the National Institute of Women (INAMU), National Council of Native Persons (CONAI), Universities, among others.*



The Local Committee may use two tactics:

- *Training community agents.*
- *The collaborative work between public institutions and the citizens.*

## An example

There were not any organizations of persons of the civil society to assist persons with disabilities and to achieve a better quality of life for them, that is why the Committee for Rehabilitation and Special Education (COPRES) was organized on November 29, 2008, during a session held at the Parish Church of the Puerto Jiménez community, attended by 21 persons, above all members of families of children and youngsters with different types of disabilities.

The need to widen the interinstitutional relations and to make the seeking of funds possible led to the constitution of the Association for the **Inclusive Development of Osa**, on July 17, 2010, during a general assembly held in the community of La Palma, attended by 73 associates.





step:

## Elaboration of the participatory diagnosis:

### What is a participatory diagnosis?

*It is an instrument to identify and recognize the reality of a community in a collective manner, including the problems affecting it, the resources available, and the potential of the community to be used to benefit all persons. This allows the identification, ordering, and prioritizing the community problems and seeking solutions.*



### Why perform a community participatory diagnosis?



It permits that community is able to:

- Analyze and becoming more sensible regarding that situation in which they live.
- Identify the problems and prioritizing them.
- Identify the existing obstacles and the resources available.
- Assume action plan and the solutions.
- Develop actions for solving the problems identified as priority.
- Motivate persons to unite in order to perform activities,
- All persons, of every age and condition to express their opinions, feelings, and solutions.

### One example

To know and understand the situation of the population of persons with disabilities of the Osa Peninsula, a participatory diagnosis reaching to more than 86 persons. It was known beforehand that this sample represented the 13% of the estimated total of the population of persons with disabilities in the zone.

From this information basis presenting the real needs of the persons with disabilities, we began to plan strategies that would support this population.

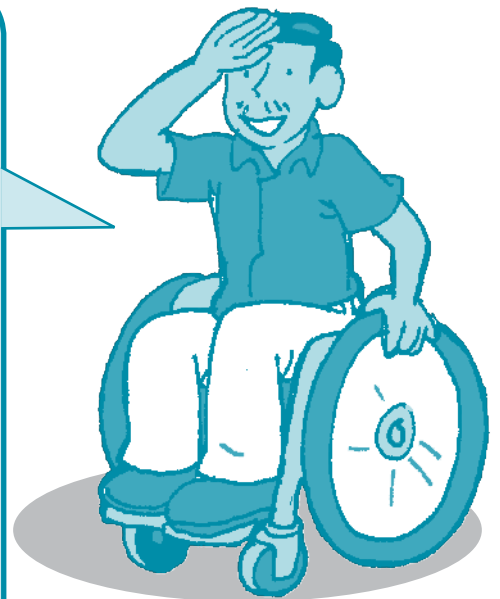


PROBLEMS  
OBSTACLES  
RESOURCES  
PLANS OF ACTION  
SOLUTIONS



### ¿What are we looking for?

1. To identify the problems of the community that do not allow participation with quality of life of all persons.
2. To know what and how much resources are available.
3. Prioritize the needs detected.
  - Identify the barriers that impede the participation of persons with disabilities. ¿Is the environment facilitating participation and inclusion or, on the contrary, is it exclusive and has barriers?
4. Know what is the situation of persons with disabilities and their families



- Who are they?
- Where do they live?
- What are their needs?
- Are they in contact with the different services and the activities or not?



**Localize and contact the persons with disabilities of the community. This is one of the most important tasks in the strategy.**



## Human Rights Approach

To look at life under the Human Rights “approach”, is to examine situations to determine if human rights are being met or not. This way it is possible to identify aspects that impede the integral development of persons. .

The Human Rights Approach that is related to disability, begins from a fundamental premise that may be summarized this way:

- *All persons, without distinction, have rights.*
- *All persons are different in some aspect (ethnicity, gender, physical or mental condition, preferences, nationality, perspectives on the world, among others). This is diversity and the richness of being human.*
- *To have or not a physical or mental deficiency, is only one of the multiple characteristics of human condition.*
- *The social construction or an ideal of person, or a standard or of a norm in relation to persons, denies the existence of diversity and produces social exclusion and prejudice.*
- *The society has been taught and constructed from the ideal of person or “normal” (standard) person.*
- *The above situation has caused the exclusion and poverty of those persons who do not adjust to the social ideal.*





step:

## Elaboration of the work plan:

The work plan must include the community, the different sectors, and the institutions, according to what each has to do to contribute to solve the problems of the community.

### What do we want?

To plan the necessary actions so that the community is able to promote inclusion.

### How to do it?



### 4.1. Before making the plan

1. Disseminate and share the results of the diagnosis with the community and with all the persons and actors involved. The ideal is to organize a meeting inviting:

- The citizens
- The local government,
- The institutions and organizations
- Private enterprise and other community actors.



### In order to inform about the results:

- *Print and distribute brochures and panflets*
- *Distribute summary posters among the business establishments of the community*
- *Use the sound communication among other things.*

## 4.2. To do the plan

We have to consult again the results of the participatory diagnosis with its three components:

- *The situation of persons with disabilities and their families.*
- *The problems detected as priorities by the community.*
- *The identification of barriers in the environment.*

And answer the following questions:

- *What should be done with the information about the situation of persons with disabilities?*
- *What should be done with the problems detected as priority by the community and with the barriers of the environment affecting persons with disabilities.*



It is necessary to perform two fundamental functions:

### a. The bridge or link between the persons and the resources existing in the community.

Each institution must be informed of the findings of the participatory diagnosis, so they will incorporate the actions that guarantee the access to services and the attention of the persons according to their needs.

**All the training actions provided by public institutions are important and necessary.**

The more participation, the greater the possibilities of having active agents dedicated to transforming the situations of exclusion.



### Important task

Make sure and control that the actions are performed. This task must be included in the work plan.

Without this task of control and demanding rights, the strategy will not provide the expected results.



### For example...

if in the diagnosis school age children with disabilities that are not attending school are found, the school should act to assess the situation immediately to provide its programs and services for their educational inclusion.



**b. The strengthening of persons with disabilities and their families for inclusion and active participation in the development of the strategy in the life of the community. All of this should be performed from a human rights approach, Independent Living, and participation.**

The active participation of all persons must be promoted. These persons need training so they are able to achieve a better perspective regarding disability and persons with disabilities. This training and improved perspective should motivate them toward participation and Independent Living.



## ELIMINATING BARRIERS FOR AN independent living

### Something to think about...

Not always the community identifies as its main problems the environmental barriers limiting the participation of the population with disabilities. That is the case of the Térraba community, whose main detected problem was the lack of drinking water, which affects all the population without distinction. But, we must not forget that what we want is social inclusion and reduction of poverty.

The idea is to unify the resources of the community (public institutions, private enterprises, municipalities, NGOs, development associations, churches, among others) in the work plans.



Next, we propose, to be included in the work plan, three strategic actions to assess the problems and demands contemplated in the participatory diagnoses:

### Strategic action 1:

***Include the actions in the operational plans of the institutions and the organizations for distributing resources:***

It is imperative to include the needs and problems that were identified:

- The specific actions
- in the operational plans
- of the public and private institutions and organizations of the community.

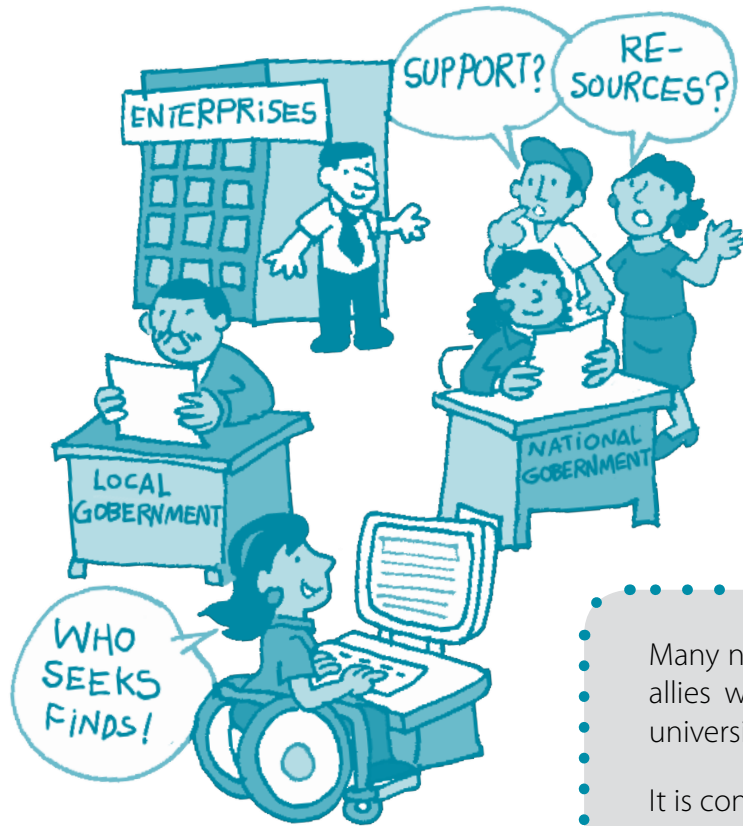
The institution must comply with its role and the nature of its functions, goals, and objectives, with a human rights approach.



This is one of the most important activities for reaching consistent and durable solutions. If this action is not performed, the responsibility will fall on the social society.







## Strategic action 2:

### **Regional and national coordination for obtaining resources and supports**

There is the need to:

- Coordinate activities with regional and national institutions.
- Seek human and financial resources, together with policies to respond to the needs and problems of the community.

Many national institutions and organizations could be allies with respect to community efforts, for example, universities and international organizations.

It is convenient to build alliances with these and other national organizations.

## Strategic action 3:

### **Community reorganization:**

Organize change agents according to the collaboration work

According to the Political Constitution of Costa Rica, the State and its institutions are responsible of securing that the inhabitants enjoy their human rights. But, the State have difficulties meeting the demands and the rights of the population.

So, when the actions are included in the operational plans of the institutions, it is important to include other actions of the other social actors of the community, specially the population and its resources.



The idea is for the community to reorganize itself to solve its problems. This community reorganization should be the result of an inclusive development process.



The Local Committee can develop two specific methodologies which have been used frequently in similar experiences around the world:

- *training community agents and*
- *collaboration work between public institutions and citizens.*



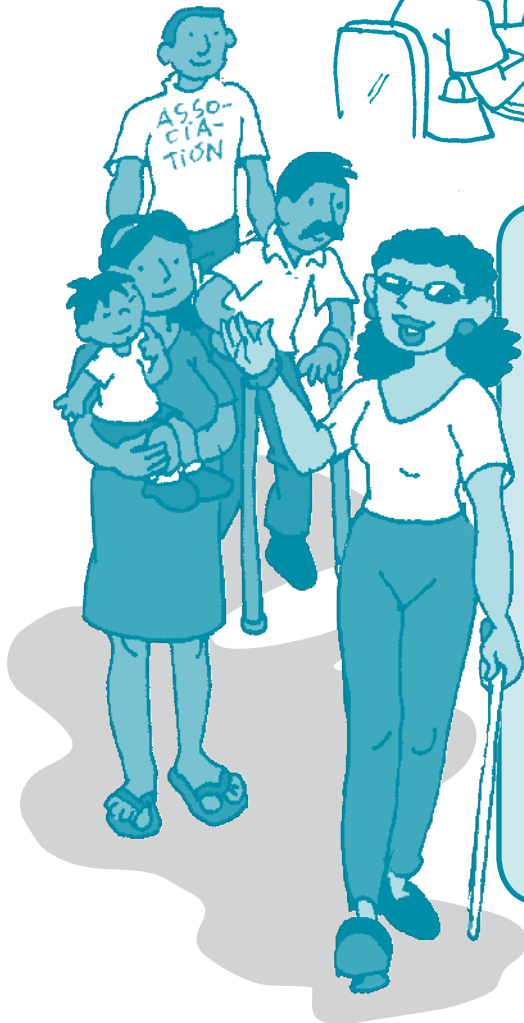
### **Change agents:**

Change agents are all persons who get involved in the strategy:

- *persons with disabilities*
- *family members*
- *other leaders*

When change agents know that the strategy is working in the community, they can become multiplier agents for training and coordination.

Change agents must work in coordination with the Local Committees, providing information and encouraging neighborhood participation.



*In general, community change agents could perform the following functions:*

- Involve the community in the strategy and its actions.
- Localize and identify the persons with disabilities of the community.
- Localize and identify leader to join the strategy.
- Inform and provide support so persons have access to the different services, programs, and strategies.
- Mediate between the community, the Local Committee, and the State.
- Inform, communicate, empower, and support the population, specially persons with disabilities, their families, and supporting persons, to demand their rights.
- Keep data, statistics, and information on the activities and the persons contacted.
- Collect and consolidate information on the needs of the population.
- Provide information regarding the needs, interests, and the potential of the community to the Local Committee and other institutions.
- Support negotiations to include projects or strategies in the working plans to be elaborated.
- Participate in the programing, implementation, and evaluation sessions regarding the plans of the Local Committee.
- Support the motivation and mobilization activities of the population to increase community participation.
- Support coordination with professionals when the community calls for answers.



The main idea is that participating persons of the community may acquire some specialization. This way, there will be change agents with emphasis on diverse aspects, like **empowerment, education, livelihood, health, and social** fields.



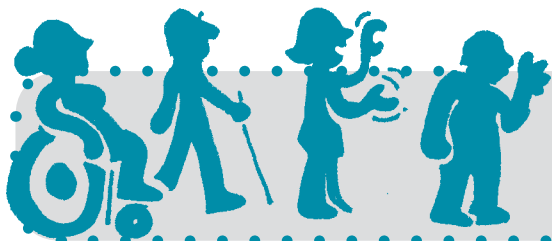
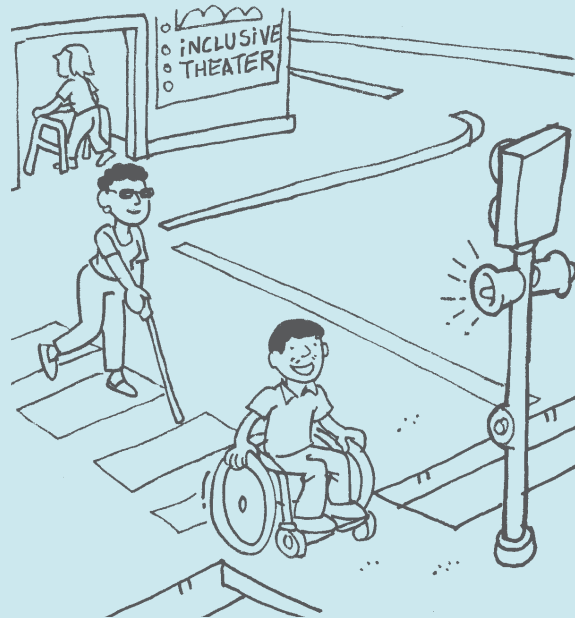
The change agents in the **“empowerment component”** will be involved in:

- advise on human rights and demanding rights.
- negotiation.
- political actions for the respect of human rights
- organizing, demonstrations, concerts, and similar public activities.
- promoting citizen participation.
- promoting self-help groups.
- supporting the community organizations.



Change agents in the **“social component”** will be involved in:

- prevention of violence and promotion of peaceful living.
- promoting the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the cultural, artistic, recreational, and sports life of the community.
- organize political activities in recreational parks and national parks. The places for these activities must be accessible.
- promoting the right to have a family and Independent Living for persons with disabilities.
- fostering an accessible community environment: streets, paths, entrances to establishments and facilities, sidewalks, among others.



It is very important that change agents are persons with disabilities or members of families of persons with disabilities.





**Change agents in the “educational component” will be involved in:**

- *coordinating with schools and high schools the inclusion of children with disabilities, including formal and informal and lifelong education for adults with disabilities.*
- *creating and improving accessible spaces for education.*
- *creating special programs in education, like teaching Costa Rican Sign Language, to children and adults with disabilities.*

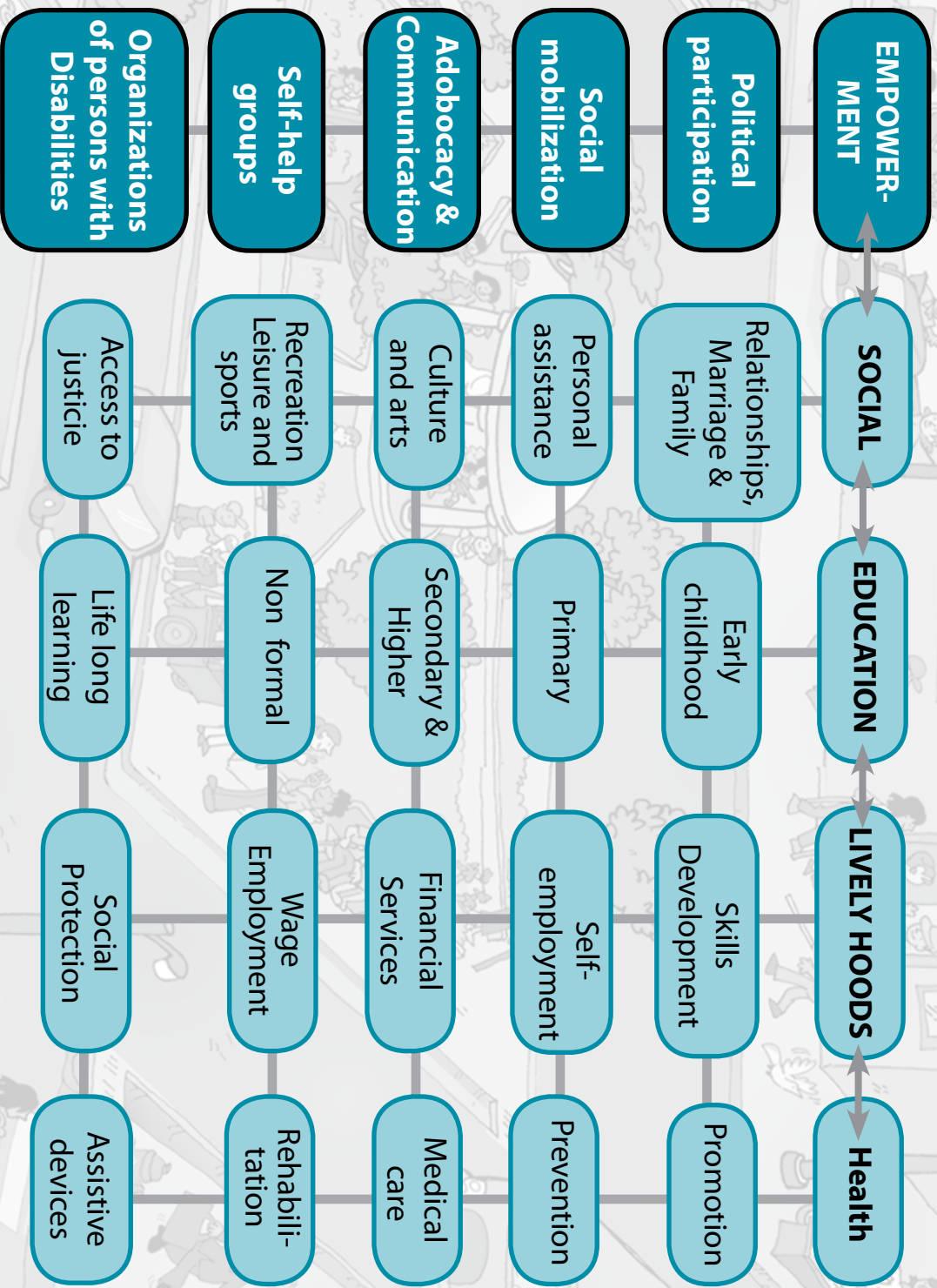


**Change agents in the “livelihood component” will be involved in:**

- *coordinating with institutions, like the National Institute of Learning, training in production projects (handicrafts, agriculture, tourism, and others).*
- *advise and train in seeking jobs.*
- *advise companies regarding the inclusion of persons with disabilities.*
- *contacting and communicating with persons who need government subsidies and financial aids provided by the different institutions and protection programs for persons with disabilities who have been abandoned.*



# CBR Matrix



## What is needed to implement this community organizational tactic?

- **It is a tactic that must be understood as work.** Payment for the change agents must be considered.

*It is important that they receive, at least subsidies or other forms of remuneration.*

At the beginning, persons of the community may be willing work ad honorem, nevertheless there should be strategies for paying these persons for their work.

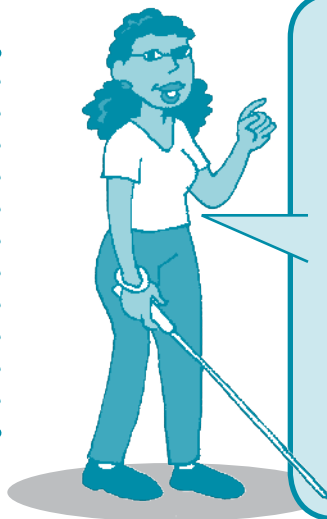
- **It is a tactic that recognizes the accumulated knowledge of the persons in the community.** The staff are not experts but facilitators, there is share knowledge: the persons of the community have their knowledge and the persons of the institutions another. In other words, this should become a gathering of knowledge for the common good.



- **It is necessary that persons know and understand the tactic, its implications, and want to implement it.** On the contrary, it will not be able to function.
- **The planing should include:**
  - Define the objectives of the community agents on each component.
  - According to the diagnosis, make a proposal at the beginning of the work.
  - Define a training agenda for the change agents.
  - Define a coordination strategy between the institutions of each field and the change agents.
  - Plan a period for preparing and elaborating the work instrument.

### 4.3 How to elaborate the work plan and what should it include?

It is convenient to make an annual work plan, concrete and simple, with the necessary actions that the community can promote according to the involvement of the different social actors.



For elaborating the work plan, it is necessary to:

- Analyze the information provided by the participatory diagnosis.
- Assess the resources, possibilities, and advantages offered by the community, also, the disadvantages, obstacles, and limitations.
- Balance the information obtained from the diagnosis and the resources, possibilities, and advantages of the community. Each community would provide very valuable information on how to find the best solutions and resources to be considered.



It is important for the plan to define:

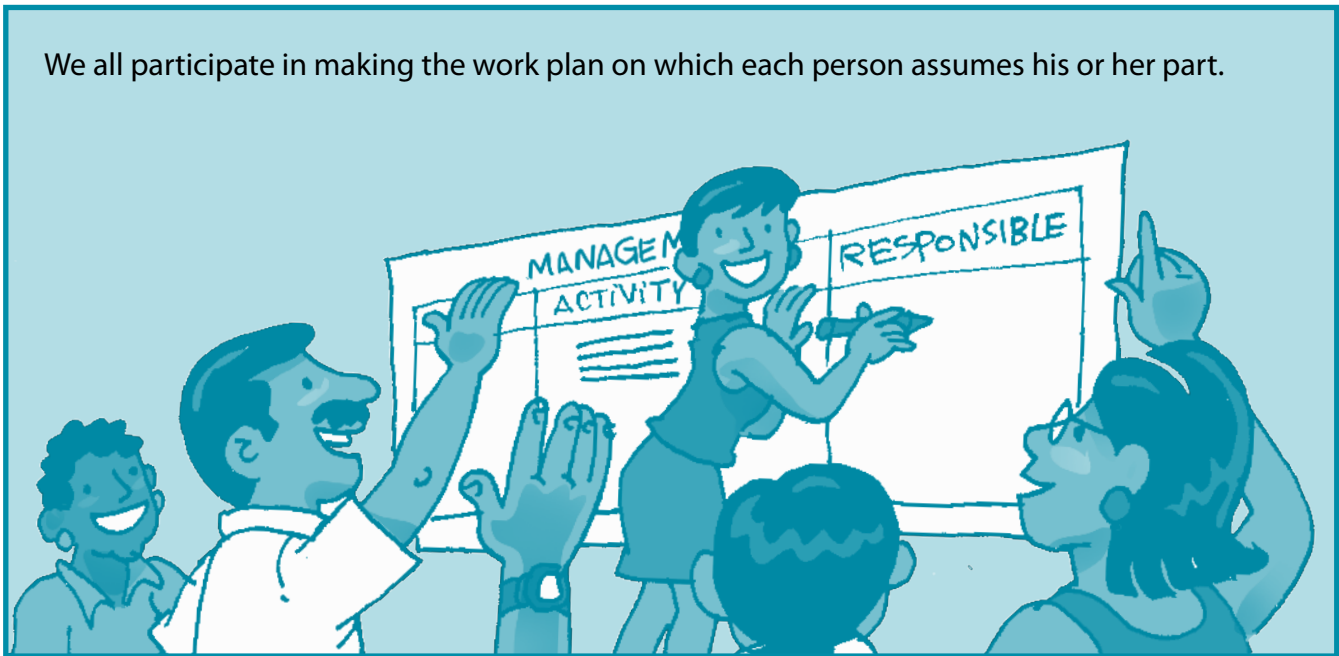
- 1. Strategic actions:** What are we going to do?, ¿Where are the actions directed to?
- 2. Goal or goals of the intervention** What condition do we hope to reach at the end?, How is the community we dream of?
- 3. Objectives to be achieved:** What do we hope to achieve with the work plan?
- 4. Indicators: How are we going to measure the changes achieved?** For example: "Community of Terraba with drinking water" or "350 persons with disabilities actively participating in the strategy."

- 5. What are we going to do?:** Processes, activities or projects to be performed.
- 6. How will they be performed?** These aspects include mechanisms and procedures to follow-up, supervise progress, and evaluate results and methodologies to be used in the actions.
- 7. Who will do it?** These are the pertinent entities or institutions.
- 8. When will it be done?** This refers to the time and the part of the year selected to perform the planed actions.
- 9. What resources are needed to perform the actions?** This include, persons participating, financial resources, and other resources needed to perform the actions.

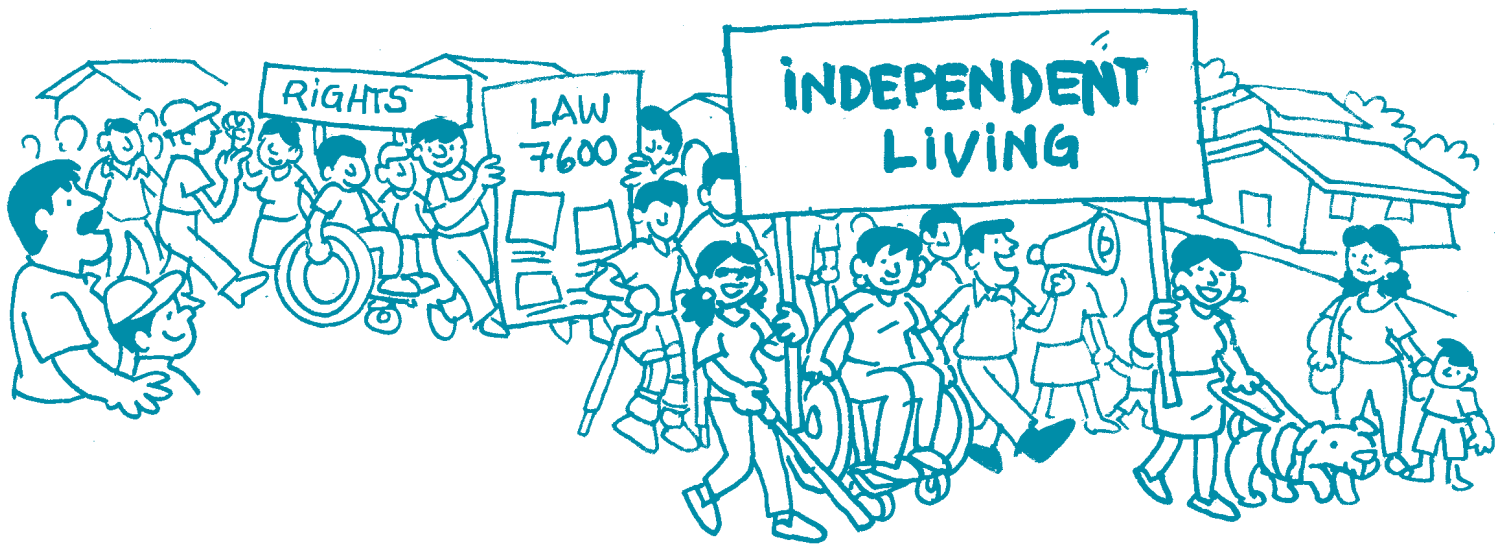




We all participate in making the work plan on which each person assumes his or her part.



We have to organize mobilization activities in the community.



**The community must be kept informed on the actions performed.**



5<sup>o</sup> step:

## Executing the work plan, evaluating and providing follow up for the strategy

### What are we expecting?

To execute, evaluate, and follow up the work plan.



### How to do it?

The tasks such as, evaluation, analysis, and follow up of the actions performed, must be constant to be able to determine:

- progress.
- participation level of the different social actors and the participation of persons with disabilities and their families.
- evaluate if the objectives defined are being achieved by the strategy.

Evaluation and follow up activities are easy to be forgotten. These activities explain the progress being made and where to make corrections.

**Evaluation.** It is an activity of constant revision of the tasks planned and how the indicators have been achieved.

**Evaluation.** It is a very useful activity to understand why things happened the way they did and what has been the role of the different actors at developing the strategy.



After this step, the cycle begins again. There may be the need to redirect or make changes in the methodologies to obtain the solutions pending because of multiple reasons.



It is very important that the topic of disability is constantly being positioned in the community, trying to involve all of the social actors. The activities and initiatives will come up, together with emerging problems in the community, including barriers imposed upon the participation of the population of persons with disabilities. These actions are to be conducted in a short or median term basis.



## To end...

We hope that this document will be useful for implementing the strategy in many other communities, wishing to become communities for all persons.

Also, we want to Express our gratitude to the members of the Local Committes of San Vito de Coto Brus, Térraba de Buenos Aires, and Puerto Jiménez de Osa. They have been pioneers and were very willing to share with us on their day to day efforts in the construction of more just, fair, and inclusive communities.

Thanks also to the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, for being more than a technical associate and for showing great sensibility and respect for the communities and the processes undertaken in them.



**If you wish more information on the  
Community Based Inclusive Development  
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