

COAST Foundation. Principal Office, Dhaka.

Date: 5 July, 2024

## Disability Inclusion Policy

### 1. Introduction:

The COAST Foundation, a development organization that focuses on people, values inclusivity in all of its activities and programs. To be a diverse organization, COAST must ensure that people with disabilities are appropriately included at all levels of its operations, programs, and activities. COAST is adopting this policy on disability inclusion in light of these considerations.

### 2. COAST Mission regarding Disability Inclusion

COAST respects persons with disabilities' strengths and individuality by giving them the appropriate tools they need to fulfill their full potential as program participants in an inclusive environment.

COAST will achieve disability inclusion by continuously examining the approach used by members, employees, and management, as well as by collaborating with partners and donors in collaboration with individuals with disabilities and their families.

To implement this policy, a very first level of activity will be conducting an audit of accessibility in existing COAST structures.

### 3. COAST Understanding of the Disability

COAST abides by the definition of 'Persons with Disability' given by the Rights and Protection of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 of Bangladesh. According to the act Persons with Disabilities refers to any person who is physically, psychologically, and/or mentally not functioning properly due to social or environmental barriers. Any person who can't take part actively in society is considered to be a person with a disability.<sup>1</sup> COAST also endorses the types of persons with disability also mentioned in the same act.

This definition is also aligned with the definition given by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>2</sup>. The convention mentions that, disability is long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder [a person's] full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.<sup>3</sup>

There are four models of the point of view of the disability, such as- Charity Model, Medical Model, Social Model and Right Based Model. Among these COAST considers the Social Model and Right Based Model as under the Social Model, the focus is on removing barriers so that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to participate as others and with the Right Based Model persons with disabilities are viewed as having the capacity to claim their rights and make decisions

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act In Bangladesh User-Friendly Booklet, Produced by Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF), available on ILO website, link:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/95795/118013/F51789448/BGD95795%20Booklet.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/45f973632.html> [accessed 28 September 2022]

  
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that affect their lives. On the other hand, in the charity model person with disability 'must be 'cared for' in separate facilities from the rest of the community and that they are unable to make their own decisions.' The Medical Model 'means that most persons with disabilities cannot access equal opportunities for participation in society'.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. COAST's Commitment towards Including Persons with Disabilities

COAST is open to all community members, regardless of their abilities. To the greatest extent possible, COAST will incorporate people with disabilities in both playing and non-playing roles.

COAST will work to make the organization as inclusive and accessible as feasible, based on a commitment to follow existing Bangladesh acts and regulations as well as UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

##### 4.1 Initiative at the Staff Level

For all staff in COAST, induction and foundation training must include the issue of disability inclusion. A special training curriculum will be developed in this regard. The training curriculum should include etiquette for communicating with persons with disability. In all levels of COAST, some words/phrases will be ignored totally, for some specific cases using some words/phases will be must, for

Words/phrases/sentences should be ignored	Words/phrases/sentences should be used
Disabled/handicapped	Person with disability
Afflicted by, suffers from, victim of (something/impairment)	Has/have + (impairment/problem)
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound	Wheelchair user
Mental patient, insane, mad	Person with a mental health condition
The blind	People with visual impairments; blind people; blind and partially sighted people

For promoting the rights and developments of Persons with disability, to advance the rights and advancements of people with disabilities.

To facilitate and supervise the overall disability inclusion, there will be designated committees at three levels, Project Level, Regional level and Central Level. Terms of Reference will be developed for each of these committees.

##### 4.2 Initiative at the Project Cycle

To design any project, in all other phases of a project cycle the issue of disability inclusion will be a must for all projects and programs. The very first step will be the screening of persons with disability. To do that, COAST will use the Washington Group short and extended set of questionnaires for screening persons with disability.<sup>5</sup> For all projects, COAST will regularly prepare data and reports from projects on disability inclusion. In all aspects, COAST will also focus on the 'Care Givers' along with the person with disability.

Along with its usual program activities, COAST will engage in advocacy work and interact with decision-makers and program implementers to advance the rights of people with disabilities.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bqhcr.org/publications/brochures/629626c94/handout-2-models-of-disability.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets/wg-extended-set-on-functioning-wg-es/>

  
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COAST MEAL section will develop a separate tool that will be able to measure the level of disability in all its projects and program.

#### **4.3 Initiatives/measures to Ensure Accessibility for All**

COAST is committed to making the organization's atmosphere, training and education, and physical facilities as accessible to people with disabilities as is reasonably possible. COAST is willing to accept any reasonable changes that may help it fulfill this goal more completely and effectively over time.

##### **COAST's efforts will include:**

- a. Accessibility Audit
- b. Improving the physical layout of the facilities that COAST uses
- c. Updating training and education to reflect disability awareness/inclusion
- d. Adjusting how COAST delivers/promotes its information to persons with disabilities
- e. Organizing disability awareness/inclusion training for all EC/GC, staff, volunteers and members
- f. Improve the accessibility of all programs
- g. Conduct a thorough review of all areas to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations

#### **4.4 Initiatives/measures to Ensure Participation for All**

COAST will seek to deliver accessible programs, promote and advocate for disability inclusion, and increase the number of individuals with disabilities engaging in its program activities by building capacity and capacities within the organization.

##### **COAST efforts will include to**

- a. Consult with program participants to adopt an inclusive approach across all elements of the organization.
- b. Consult and listen to the views of people with disabilities in all of its discussions and program development.
- c. Collaborate with other organizations and individuals who advocate for people with disabilities' inclusion.
- d. Recognize and promote the contributions, accomplishments, and triumphs of persons with disabilities in the organization through promoting good governance throughout the organization.
- e. Acknowledge and support the contributions, achievements and successes of people with disabilities in the organisation

#### **5. Arrangements/Mechanisms for Appropriate Supports**

COAST recognizes that developing a Disability Inclusion Policy necessitates a great deal of support from all levels of the organization. COAST will make every effort to provide assistance where it is needed and financially and tactically feasible.

##### **COAST efforts will include to:**

- a. Improve management, staff, and member capacities so that they have a greater knowledge of what it takes to create an inclusive atmosphere. All of our board members, staff, and members will get disability awareness/inclusion training as part of this effort.



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- b. Assign a Disability Inclusion Officer to the main office to oversee, support, and help in organizational efforts to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.
- c. To guarantee that all future policies, strategies, and plans are inclusive of individuals with disabilities, management, staff, and members will be educated and supported to be welcoming of persons with disabilities across the organization.
- d. Add disability awareness training to the COAST coaching/training process.
- e. Collaborate with external organisations who work in the area of disability and consult with them and their members in the development of COAST programs.

## 6. Reporting and Reviewing Mechanism

COAST will review and update the organization's Disability Inclusion Policy at least every three years, as well as any recommendations and developments that have emerged as a result of the policy's development.

In efforts to deliver on this COAST will:

- a) Review the work that has been completed during the time frame
- b) Check the list of actions or measurable outcomes that were set as part of the policy development
- c) Consult with people with disabilities, members, and organizational staff on their views and achievements in relation to the policy
- d) Update the policy as needed
- e) Request board of management/ Executive Council/General Council approval of any policy updates Outcomes that can be measured

## 7. Setting a list of measurable outcomes and tracking the Policy implementation.

In efforts to deliver on this COAST will:


- a. Ensure that the Disability Inclusion Policy has been adopted by the entire EC (Executive Committee/GC (General Council) and all employees.
- b. Ensure that the policy is understood by the EC/GC, staff, and members and including in the code Conducts of the organization.
- c. Ensure that the policy is included in the organization's manual and that all new employees receive induction training.
- d. Ensure that the policy is posted in a visible location inside the organization. Ascertain that the organization's board, staff, and members' training needs in regard to the Disability Inclusion Policy have been recognized and satisfied.
- e. Ensure that all occurrences are documented and handled in accordance with the policy.
- f. Conduct an inclusiveness audit of the organization, as well as all of the surroundings and facilities where programs and activities are held.


## 8. Duties and responsibilities of staff/volunteers

- a. All staff must read this policy, they should have clear understanding on this. They have to abide by this.
- b. Management action can be taken against those who violate this.

## 9. Scope:

The policy will be applicable for all staff, members of EC/GC, volunteers, vendors/suppliers, consultants, program-participants.

  
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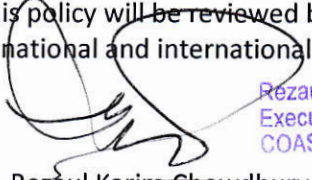
  
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**10. Approved by the General Council and effective date:**

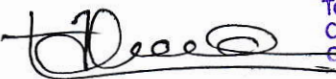
The review of this policy has been approved unanimously in the 6th Annual General Meeting which was held on 6 July 2024 at COAST Principal Office, Dhaka, and be effective with no delay.

**11. Review of this policy:**

This policy will be reviewed by 2027 or earlier, if necessary, incorporating significant changes in national and international laws, policies, and human rights declarations.

  
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