

- **Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)**

# DISABILITY INCLUSION POLICY

Version 2.0

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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Disability Inclusion Policy is to affirm the Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)'s commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities are fully included, respected, and empowered in all aspects of its work. BCDC recognizes disability inclusion as a fundamental human right and an essential condition for achieving social justice, sustainable development, and equitable humanitarian assistance.

This policy provides a framework for integrating disability inclusion across all levels of BCDC's governance, staffing, service delivery, and partnerships—including in its domestic programs in Australia (such as aged care and refugee support through Metta Community Care Services – MCCS), as well as its humanitarian and development work in Myanmar, Thailand, and other regional locations.

BCDC's commitment is grounded in the following international and national frameworks:

- **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**, which upholds the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons with disabilities.
- **Australia's Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)** and associated accessibility standards.
- **DFAT's Development for All: Disability-Inclusive Development Strategy**, which emphasizes inclusive participation and leadership of people with disabilities in all areas of development.
- **The ACFID Code of Conduct**, specifically Commitment 2.3: We promote the empowerment of people with disabilities.

Through this policy, BCDC aims to:

- Remove physical, attitudinal, communication, and institutional barriers that prevent full participation of people with disabilities;
- Embed inclusive practices in service design, delivery, and evaluation;
- Strengthen the capacity of staff, volunteers, and partners to promote disability rights;
- Create safe and inclusive environments that uphold the dignity, agency, and leadership of people with disabilities;
- Ensure that all community members—including older persons and clients in MCCS aged care, refugee applicants, ethnic minorities, and displaced persons—can participate meaningfully regardless of disability.

This policy is a reflection of BCDC's broader vision for an inclusive society where all people, including those with disabilities, can live with dignity, exercise their rights, and actively contribute to their communities.

## 2. SCOPE

This Disability Inclusion Policy applies to all activities, staff, volunteers, partners, and service areas of the Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC), including its operational arm Metta Community Care Services (MCCS) and all affiliated programs in Australia, Myanmar, Thailand, and other regions of engagement. The policy is applicable across governance, service delivery, program development, advocacy, procurement, and partnership management.

### 2.1 Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to the following groups:

- **BCDC Board and Executive Leadership:** Responsible for ensuring strategic oversight, governance, and policy compliance.
- **Staff and Volunteers:** Including full-time, part-time, casual, and contract staff, as well as volunteers and interns working in any capacity with BCDC or MCCS.
- **Partner Organizations:** Including local CSOs, NGOs, faith-based groups, diaspora networks, and implementing partners who collaborate with BCDC on service delivery or advocacy.
- **Contractors and Consultants:** Individuals and organizations engaged by BCDC to provide goods, services, or technical advice.
- **Service Recipients and Community Members:** Including aged care clients, refugees, asylum seekers, ethnic minorities, and displaced persons supported by BCDC's programs—especially those with permanent or temporary disabilities.

All BCDC-affiliated personnel and partners are expected to uphold the principles of disability inclusion in accordance with this policy.

### 2.2 Where This Policy Applies

This policy applies across all geographic regions where BCDC operates or funds programs:

- **In Australia:** Disability inclusion is embedded in refugee support, diaspora engagement, community development, and aged care services delivered through MCCS.
- **In Myanmar and Thailand:** The policy informs the delivery of humanitarian aid, community resilience initiatives, informal education projects, and cross-border assistance—ensuring that people with disabilities are not left behind in fragile or displaced settings.
- **In International Engagements:** Where BCDC enters into global collaborations or regional partnerships, this policy guides inclusive practice in line with international disability rights standards.

## 2.3 What Areas This Policy Covers

This policy governs disability inclusion across the following operational and programmatic domains:

- **Organizational Culture and Governance:** Promoting inclusion within BCDC's leadership, recruitment, internal training, and workplace practices.
- **Program Design and Implementation:** Ensuring all programs consider accessibility, participation, and equity for people with disabilities from the planning stage onward.
- **Service Delivery:** Providing accessible, respectful, and empowering services through MCCS and BCDC field programs, particularly in aged care and refugee support.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** Including disability-disaggregated data, client feedback, and inclusive indicators in all PMEL activities.
- **Partnerships and Procurement:** Ensuring that partner organizations and suppliers uphold accessibility and non-discrimination standards.
- **Communications and Advocacy:** Promoting disability rights through public messaging, community outreach, and awareness activities.

## 2.4 Relationship to Other Policies

This policy is interlinked with BCDC's broader organisational framework, including but not limited to:

- BCDC Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Safeguarding Policies
- Complaint Handling Policy
- PMEL Policy
- Human Resources Management Policy
- MCCS Code of Conduct
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Policy

Together, these policies ensure that disability inclusion is not siloed but fully integrated into BCDC's ethical, programmatic, and compliance obligations.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

To ensure clarity and consistency throughout this policy, the following key terms are defined based on international standards and Australian legislative frameworks:

#### 3.1 Disability

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory, or mobility functions. This includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, and learning disabilities, as well as chronic illnesses.

BCDC adopts the definition from the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*, which states that:

***"Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."***

#### 3.2 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)

Individuals who experience long-term impairments and face attitudinal, environmental, or institutional barriers that limit their participation in society. This includes children, youth, adults, and older persons. BCDC recognizes that disability is a result of the interaction between individuals and the societal or environmental barriers they face, rather than the impairment alone.

#### 3.3 Disability Inclusion

A proactive approach to ensuring that people with disabilities can fully and equally participate in all aspects of life. This involves removing barriers, addressing discrimination, promoting accessibility, and enabling autonomy and dignity. Disability inclusion is not a separate stream of work, but a cross-cutting responsibility within all BCDC and MCCC activities.

#### 3.4 Accessibility

The degree to which environments, services, products, and information are available, understandable, and usable by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. Accessibility applies to physical spaces, digital platforms, communication tools, transport, and events.

### **3.5 Reasonable Accommodation**

Necessary and appropriate modifications or adjustments, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, to ensure persons with disabilities enjoy or exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others. Examples include:

- Flexible working arrangements
- Providing interpreters or assistive technologies
- Alternative formats for communication (e.g., large print, plain language)

### **3.6 Discrimination on the Basis of Disability**

Any distinction, exclusion, or restriction on the basis of disability that impairs or nullifies the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of rights. This includes direct, indirect, systemic, or structural forms of discrimination in employment, service access, program participation, or community engagement.

### **3.7 Intersectionality**

The way in which multiple aspects of a person's identity—such as disability, gender, age, ethnicity, language, or migration status—combine to create overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage. BCDC recognizes that persons with disabilities who are women, children, elderly, LGBTQI+, or from refugee or ethnic minority backgrounds often face compounded barriers.

### **3.8 Inclusive Development / Inclusive Service Delivery**

Processes that actively seek the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs, services, and policies. It ensures that all development or care initiatives are accessible, non-discriminatory, and equitable.

### **3.9 Disability-Responsive Organization**

An organisation that takes deliberate, strategic steps to mainstream disability inclusion across its structure, workforce, programs, and culture. This includes adopting inclusive policies, recruiting persons with disabilities, consulting diverse disability stakeholders, and monitoring impact through disability-disaggregated data.

### **3.10 Assistive Devices or Technologies**

Tools and resources that enhance the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. Examples include mobility aids, hearing devices, visual aids, screen readers, accessible digital interfaces, or communication boards.

## 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BCDC believes that disability inclusion is fundamental to human rights, social justice, and effective community development. Our work with refugee, diaspora, and community-based populations across Australia, Myanmar, and Thailand must be inclusive of all persons, regardless of ability. The following principles guide how disability inclusion is embedded across all BCDC and MCCS programs, partnerships, and organizational practices:

### 4.1 Rights-Based Approach

BCDC is committed to upholding the rights of persons with disabilities as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). We recognize that people with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as all others—to safety, dignity, participation, education, employment, health, and family life. All programs and services must respect and promote these rights.

### 4.2 Non-Discrimination and Equity

No one will be excluded from BCDC’s services or opportunities on the basis of disability. We aim to eliminate barriers—whether physical, social, or institutional—that prevent persons with disabilities from participating on equal terms. Equity, not just equality, is central to our approach: we recognize that targeted support may be necessary to ensure meaningful inclusion.

### 4.3 Participation and Leadership of Persons with Disabilities

Nothing about us without us. BCDC affirms that persons with disabilities must be actively involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs, services, and policies that affect their lives. We will ensure that people with lived experience of disability are consulted, listened to, and empowered to lead—especially in our aged care, refugee support, and diaspora programs.

### 4.4 Accessibility in All Forms

Physical, digital, and communicational accessibility is essential to inclusion. BCDC commits to ensuring that our services, facilities, communications, training, and outreach activities are accessible to persons with different impairments. This includes the use of plain language, accessible venues, mobility support, alternative formats, and assistive technologies.

## **4.5 Intersectionality and Inclusion of the Most Marginalized**

BCDC acknowledges that persons with disabilities may face multiple forms of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, refugee status, language, sexuality, or other factors. Our policies and practices will address these intersecting forms of exclusion—particularly for people with disabilities who are also women, children, elderly, LGBTQI+, or part of ethnic minorities.

## **4.6 Family and Community Engagement**

In many communities, especially within the Myanmar diaspora and migrant communities in Thailand, families and informal caregivers play a vital role in supporting persons with disabilities. BCDC will work in culturally appropriate ways to engage families and community groups to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and build inclusive environments that promote mutual respect and understanding.

## **4.7 Inclusive Humanitarian and Development Practice**

Disability inclusion is not a separate stream—it is a core part of effective and ethical programming. BCDC commits to integrating disability considerations across all sectors, including aged care, education, health, livelihoods, protection, and community development. This includes collecting disability-disaggregated data, identifying specific risks, and promoting inclusive recovery during crises or disasters.

## **4.8 Organizational Accountability and Learning**

BCDC recognises that institutional culture matters. We will build an inclusive workplace, recruit and support staff with disabilities, and provide training to build disability awareness across all teams. We will continuously monitor our progress, seek feedback, and adjust our policies and practices to improve accessibility and effectiveness.

## 5. INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

The Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC) is committed to creating inclusive, equitable, and accessible environments for all people with disabilities across its organisational structure, programs, and community-based services—including Metta Community Care Services (MCCS). These commitments reflect BCDC’s human rights-based approach to development and care, and align with the Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the ACFID Code of Conduct, and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

BCDC recognizes disability inclusion as a cross-cutting issue that must be embedded into planning, service delivery, workforce development, community engagement, and advocacy.

### 5.1 Inclusive Organizational Culture

BCDC will promote a culture of respect, dignity, and empowerment for people with disabilities within its internal and external relationships by:

- Embedding disability inclusion principles into all policies, codes of conduct, and standard operating procedures.
- Promoting a non-discriminatory workplace culture that embraces diversity, equity, and accessibility.
- Ensuring leadership models inclusive behavior and promotes accessibility and participation in all organizational decisions.

### 5.2 Inclusive Program and Service Design

BCDC and MCCS will ensure that people with disabilities can meaningfully participate in, and benefit from, all programs and services by:

- Applying a twin-track approach: integrating disability inclusion in mainstream services while also supporting targeted disability-specific activities where appropriate.
- Including accessibility considerations in all project proposals, budgets, and risk assessments.
- Conducting regular disability inclusion assessments during program design and planning phases.
- Collaborating with Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) and disability advocacy groups to improve program relevance and reach.

### **5.3 Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation**

BCDC commits to eliminating barriers that hinder the full participation of people with disabilities by:

- Providing reasonable accommodations in workspaces, meetings, events, training sessions, and community settings.
- Ensuring physical accessibility of facilities, including ramps, signage, restrooms, and transportation where possible.
- Offering alternative formats of communication and information, such as Easy Read, large print, visual aids, or translations as needed.
- Supporting digital accessibility through screen reader-compatible platforms and user-friendly interfaces in digital services.

### **5.4 Participation and Empowerment**

BCDC recognizes that people with disabilities are experts in their own lives. The organization will:

- Ensure active participation of persons with disabilities in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Create opportunities for leadership and decision-making roles for people with disabilities in governance structures, advisory committees, and staff teams.
- Facilitate feedback mechanisms that are inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities.
- Promote peer-led learning and support networks that center the voices of people with disabilities.

### **5.5 Inclusive Employment and Volunteering**

BCDC and MCCC will ensure equitable access to employment, internship, and volunteering opportunities for people with disabilities by:

- Applying inclusive recruitment practices that actively seek to remove bias and promote accessibility.
- Making reasonable adjustments to roles, tasks, equipment, and working environments to accommodate needs.
- Providing disability awareness and inclusive practice training for supervisors and staff involved in hiring and HR.
- Encouraging self-identification in a safe, confidential, and non-stigmatising manner.

## **5.7 Community Engagement and Advocacy**

BCDC will advocate for inclusive social change by:

- Raising community awareness about the rights, strengths, and contributions of people with disabilities.
- Facilitating inclusive forums, public education events, and consultations that elevate the voices of people with disabilities.
- Promoting disability-inclusive language, attitudes, and practices within refugee, diaspora, and service delivery communities.
- Partnering with advocacy organizations and OPDs to strengthen policy influence and amplify lived experience.

## **5.8 Monitoring, Learning, and Accountability**

BCDC will ensure accountability to people with disabilities by:

- Collecting and analyzing disability-disaggregated data across programs, where appropriate and ethical.
- Including disability-related indicators in its Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PMEL) systems.
- Conducting regular reviews of inclusion practices and progress toward disability equity goals.
- Using feedback from staff, clients, and community members with disabilities to improve policies, services, and participation mechanisms.

## 6. INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING AND SERVICE DELIVERY

BCDC is committed to ensuring that all programs and services—including those implemented through Metta Community Care Services (MCCS)—are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the rights and needs of people with disabilities. This includes both mainstream and targeted services, delivered domestically in Australia and internationally through BCDC’s humanitarian, development, and diaspora initiatives.

Inclusive programming is not treated as an optional add-on, but as a fundamental design principle that strengthens the relevance, equity, and impact of BCDC’s work.

### 6.1 Disability-Inclusive Project Design

BCDC will integrate disability inclusion from the earliest stages of program design to ensure that people with disabilities are not excluded from participation or benefits. This includes:

- Conducting inclusive needs assessments that specifically identify the priorities of people with disabilities.
- Consulting with people with disabilities and representative organizations during the design of activities, outputs, and outcomes.
- Applying Universal Design principles to ensure accessibility in physical infrastructure, learning materials, and communication platforms.
- Including budget lines for accessibility measures, such as assistive devices, transportation supports, or accessible venue hire.

### 6.2 Access to Aged Care and Home Care Services

Through MCCS, BCDC delivers community-based aged care services to older people in the Burmese diaspora, many of whom experience age-related impairments or disability. MCCS will ensure:

- Individual care plans are responsive to both the functional needs and personal preferences of clients with disabilities.
- In-home environments are assessed for accessibility and safety, and adapted accordingly where feasible.
- Support workers are trained in disability-inclusive practices, including respectful communication, mobility assistance, and psychosocial support.
- Clients and caregivers have access to information in accessible formats, including translated documents and visual aids.

### **6.3 Inclusive Community Events and Gatherings**

BCDC regularly hosts public events, training sessions, cultural workshops, and senior gatherings. These activities will be planned and delivered in ways that are welcoming and accessible to people with disabilities by:

- Selecting venues with wheelchair access, accessible toilets, clear signage, and proximity to public transport.
- Providing interpretation, captioning, or alternative communication methods where needed.
- Ensuring printed materials are provided in large print or easy-to-read versions when requested.
- Offering volunteer assistance and safe, inclusive participation options for people with mobility, sensory, or intellectual disabilities.

### **6.4 Inclusive Humanitarian and Development Projects**

BCDC operates and supports projects in Myanmar, Thailand, and cross-border regions that serve displaced and marginalised communities. These projects will:

- Address the specific vulnerabilities of people with disabilities in displacement settings.
- Include disability-sensitive indicators in monitoring frameworks.
- Coordinate with local OPDs, caregivers, and community health workers to identify and refer people with disabilities to appropriate services.
- Ensure food distribution, shelter, education, and health programming do not unintentionally exclude people with disabilities.

### **6.5 Digital Accessibility and Communication**

As BCDC expands its digital engagement, especially in training, communication, and advocacy, it will ensure:

- Websites, training portals, and forms are screen reader-compatible and navigable by people with vision impairments.
- Online events include live captions or transcripts upon request.
- Communications use inclusive language, avoid ableist terms, and reflect diverse representations of people with disabilities.
- Feedback platforms and complaint mechanisms are accessible to all users regardless of disability.

## **6.6 Participation and Feedback Mechanisms**

BCDC will ensure people with disabilities can meaningfully participate in and provide feedback on programs and services through:

- Advisory roles, focus groups, and consultation forums that actively include people with disabilities.
- Inclusive complaint handling procedures that are responsive to diverse communication needs.
- Evaluation tools designed to capture the experiences of persons with disabilities as beneficiaries, partners, and staff.
- Community

## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BCDC recognises that disability inclusion is a shared responsibility requiring leadership, coordination, and commitment at all levels of the organisation. This section outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in ensuring the effective implementation of this policy across BCDC's domestic and international operations, including MCCS programs.

### 7.1 Board of Directors

- Provide strategic oversight and ensure that disability inclusion is embedded in organisational governance and long-term planning.
- Endorse and review this policy as part of BCDC's commitment to rights-based development and inclusive practices.
- Monitor compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct, Australian disability legislation, and other relevant standards.

### 7.2 Executive Leadership (Chairperson, Executive Director, Program Director)

- Champion disability inclusion across all BCDC and MCCS activities and uphold the organisation's inclusive values in public representation.
- Allocate appropriate resources for policy implementation, staff training, and accessibility measures.
- Ensure this policy is integrated into organisational strategies, program proposals, and risk management frameworks.
- Approve partnerships, programs, and budgets that reflect disability-inclusive objectives.

### 7.3 Program Managers and Team Leaders

- Integrate disability inclusion into all stages of program design, delivery, and evaluation.
- Oversee inclusive practices within community events, workshops, and MCCS service activities.
- Collaborate with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), careers, and relevant stakeholders to improve inclusive service delivery.
- Monitor and report on accessibility measures, participation of people with disabilities, and areas requiring improvement.

## **7.4 Safeguarding and Compliance Officers**

- Ensure that people with disabilities are considered in all safeguarding frameworks, risk mitigation strategies, and response mechanisms.
- Monitor complaints, incident reports, and staff conduct to ensure accessibility and equity in redress.
- Support the development and review of procedures that protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

## **7.5 Disability Inclusion Focal Person (where designated)**

- Serve as a key resource within the organisation to build internal capacity, offer technical support, and coordinate inclusion efforts.
- Facilitate learning, training, and resource development related to disability rights and inclusive practices.
- Liaise with external disability advocates, experts, and OPDs to strengthen BCDC's partnerships and knowledge base.

## **7.6 Staff, Volunteers, and Support Workers (including MCCS Care Workers)**

- Uphold inclusive values and respectful behavior when working with people with disabilities.
- Participate in disability inclusion and awareness training provided by BCDC.
- Identify and report accessibility challenges, communication barriers, or risks affecting persons with disabilities.
- Support clients and participants with dignity, patience, and sensitivity to individual needs and preferences.

## **7.7 Partner Organizations and Suppliers**

- Acknowledge and adhere to BCDC's disability inclusion standards as outlined in Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), partnership agreements, or contracts.
- Commit to inclusive practices in service delivery, community engagement, and staff recruitment.
- Engage with BCDC in co-designing and co-delivering inclusive activities, especially in Myanmar, Thailand, or diaspora communities.

## **7.8 People with Disabilities and Their Representative Organizations**

- Actively participate in program co-design, evaluation, and advocacy where possible.
- Provide feedback and insights that inform continuous improvement of inclusive practices.
- Act as peer leaders, trainers, or advisors when appropriate, in alignment with the principle of “Nothing About Us Without Us.”

## 8. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL)

BCDC is committed to continuously assessing, improving, and learning from its disability inclusion practices. This section outlines how BCDC will monitor and evaluate its performance in upholding the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities, both within Australia and in international programs supported through BCDC and MCCS.

### 8.1 Integration into MEL Systems

- Disability inclusion indicators will be integrated into BCDC's broader Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (PMEL) Framework.
- Programs and projects will include specific targets for participation of people with disabilities and measures to assess accessibility, equity, and outcomes.
- Qualitative and quantitative data on disability inclusion will be collected and analyzed, disaggregated by gender, age, and type of disability where feasible.

### 8.2 Disability-Inclusive Evaluation

- Evaluation tools and methodologies will be designed to be accessible and inclusive of people with diverse disabilities.
- Evaluations will assess the extent to which programs and services are inclusive, respectful, and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Feedback mechanisms will be made accessible in multiple formats (e.g., plain language, audio, translated versions) to ensure persons with disabilities can contribute meaningfully.

### 8.3 Participatory Learning and Reflection

- People with disabilities will be included in participatory learning processes, including reflection sessions, focus groups, and community dialogues.
- Lessons learned will be documented and used to improve future design and delivery of programs, policies, and community engagement activities.
- Partner organizations will be encouraged to adopt similar participatory MEL practices and share their learning through joint reviews or knowledge exchanges.

### 8.4 Reporting and Accountability

- Progress on disability inclusion will be reported in internal reviews, Board updates, annual reports, and donor reports where applicable.
- Complaints and incidents related to disability discrimination or exclusion will be monitored through the BCDC Complaint Handling System and addressed in a timely and fair manner.
- The BCDC Board of Directors will review performance on disability inclusion annually and recommend actions for strengthening implementation across all levels.

## **8.5 Capacity Building for MEL Teams**

- MEL staff and program officers will receive regular training on disability-inclusive evaluation practices.
- Tools and templates will be updated to reflect evolving standards on disability disaggregation, intersectional analysis, and rights-based measurement frameworks.
- Where relevant, technical support will be sought from external experts or Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to enhance MEL practices.

## 9. COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC) believes that inclusion begins with attitudes, language, and community dialogue. Through strategic communication, inclusive advocacy, and participatory engagement, BCDC seeks to create an environment in which people with disabilities are recognized as equal rights-holders and active contributors to social, cultural, and community life.

### 9.1 Inclusive and Respectful Communication

- BCDC will use inclusive, respectful, and non-stigmatising language in all internal and external communications, consistent with a human rights-based approach to disability.
- Communications materials—including flyers, brochures, online content, forms, and event announcements—will be made accessible to people with various impairments (e.g. alternative text, large print, audio recordings, or translation into community languages).
- Plain language versions of key policies, including this Disability Inclusion Policy, will be made available to support public understanding and accessibility.

### 9.2 Representation and Voice

- BCDC will actively include people with disabilities, their families, and representative organisations in community forums, public events, awareness campaigns, and media projects.
- People with disabilities will be encouraged and supported to share their experiences and perspectives through storytelling, testimonials, leadership roles, and peer education initiatives.
- BCDC will priorities the voices of people from underrepresented or multiply marginalized disability groups, including women with disabilities, people from ethnic minorities, and LGBTQI+ persons with disabilities.

### 9.3 Disability Rights Advocacy

- BCDC will advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities in all relevant policy, legal, and community discussions, especially in the context of migration, resettlement, aged care, humanitarian response, and inclusive development.
- BCDC will support campaigns that call for the removal of physical, social, legal, and attitudinal barriers facing people with disabilities, both in Australia and in Myanmar/Thailand.
- Where appropriate, BCDC will work in solidarity with Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs), human rights groups, and diaspora-led movements to promote disability justice and legal reform.

## **9.4 Accessible Community Engagement**

- All BCDC and MCCC events, training sessions, and workshops will be designed with accessibility in mind—from venue selection to materials and facilitation styles.
- Support measures such as Auslan interpreters, mobility assistance, quiet rooms, or caregiver allowances will be provided wherever feasible to facilitate participation by people with disabilities.
- Outreach strategies will be tailored to reach people with disabilities who may be isolated due to institutionalization, language barriers, stigma, or limited digital access.

## **9.5 Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness**

- BCDC acknowledges the cultural diversity of disability experiences and the influence of ethnicity, religion, tradition, and migration status on how disability is perceived and addressed.
- All communication and engagement initiatives will be culturally appropriate, avoiding assumptions or stereotypes, and will honor the dignity and values of the communities BCDC serves.
- Staff and volunteers will be trained in culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches to disability inclusion, especially when engaging with refugees, survivors of violence, and displaced populations.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC) affirms its unwavering commitment to the full inclusion, participation, and empowerment of people with disabilities across all areas of its work—whether in Australia or internationally. This policy reflects BCDC’s belief that disability inclusion is not a matter of charity or special consideration, but a fundamental issue of rights, equity, and justice.

Through this policy, BCDC commits to ensuring that all programs, services, events, communications, and partnerships are designed and delivered in ways that uphold the dignity, voice, and agency of persons with disabilities. This includes ensuring physical and communication accessibility, representation in decision-making, and alignment with the lived experiences of people with disability in both the diaspora and local communities in Myanmar and Thailand.

Disability inclusion is a shared responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and partners of BCDC and MCCS are called to uphold these principles and actively remove barriers to participation. BCDC will continue to listen, learn, and adapt its practices to be more inclusive, in line with the ACFID Code of Conduct, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and relevant Australian legislation and policy frameworks.

Ultimately, by embedding disability inclusion as a core organizational value, BCDC seeks to strengthen the social fabric of the communities it serves and contribute to a more just, accessible, and inclusive world.

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