

# Child Disability

Why it's so important to address



# **A LOOK AT THE LIVES OF DISABLED CHILDREN**

- **Up to 150 million disabled children globally & rising**
- **Disabled children are disproportionately likely to live in poverty.**
- **Four times more likely to be neglected & physically abused & over 3 x more likely to be emotionally abused.**
- **Their lives not treated as of equal value to others**
- **In some countries – 90% will not survive beyond age 20**
- **Only 2% across developing world have access to education**
- **Discrimination in access to Health & other services**

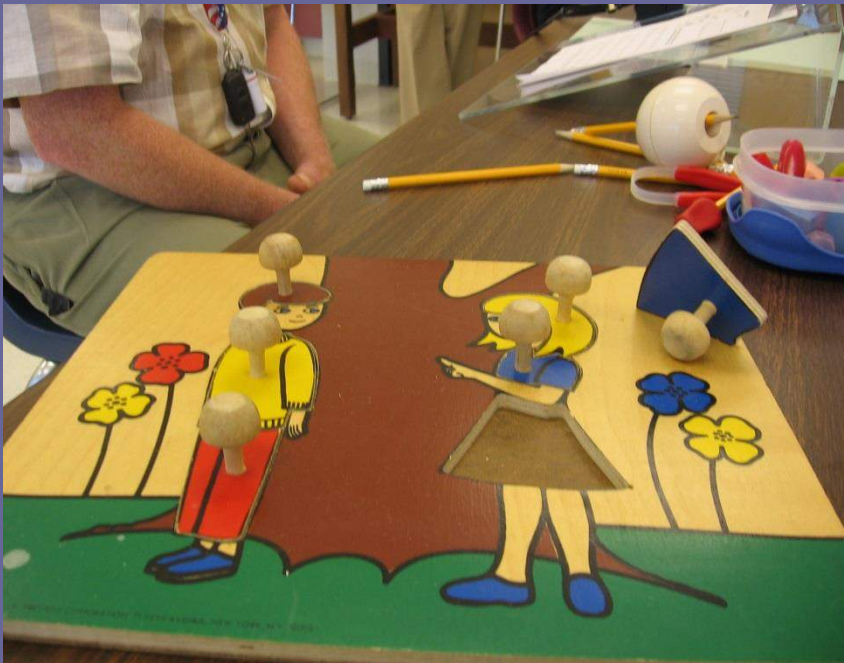
# Q&A: Why are disabled children treated differently?

- Children with disabilities have exactly the same needs as other children, but are frequently denied these and segregated, marginalised & isolated....
- Have been subjected to physical and sexual violence with relative impunity and even right to life sometimes violated...
- Causes of this rejection lie deep in society- shame, guilt, superstition, dislike /hostility to difference –
- Discrimination against disabled children has existed in every community throughout history....
- Too often we see impairment and not the child.

# CAUSES OF IMPAIRMENT AMONGST CHILDREN

- Malnutrition – 20%
- Accidents/trauma/ war – 16%
- Infectious diseases – 11%
- Non – infectious diseases – 20%
- Congenital diseases – 20%
- Poverty related ...

# Affect on children of adverse situations when growing up..



- Poor development in language, social and emotional behaviour & learning.
- Malnutrition affects physical & mental abilities
- Prone to diseases & disability

# CHILD ABUSE



- Can refer to physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- All children at risk but especially disabled girl child
- Without access to Education, most will continue to be exploited

**‘Education for All’** is a stated Millennium goal but most children with disability are not going to school, especially girls

**‘Schools for All’** is another objective but few schools accept disabled children & almost none are inclusive





# **Using Key Informants to identify children with disabilities in Bangladesh and Pakistan**

**New Project funded by CBM**





# Background

- Many children with disabilities often remain undetected in developing countries
  - Social stigma
  - Lack of awareness or access to services
- This lack of evidence affects planning
- KIM has been shown to be cost effective and successful with detecting childhood blindness.
- Now to test whether it can also be used to detect Hearing impairment /Epilepsy/ Physical impairment.

**Q: Is a 'combined' approach to identify all of these types of impairment equally effective ?**



# TYPES OF DISABILITIES: POLIO



# What is polio?

Polio is a disease that affects the nerves that go to and from the muscles. This causes weakness or loss of strength (paralysis) through different muscle groups in the body – arms / legs / trunk.....

# Signs of Polio

- Some of the person's muscles are floppy, wasted (smaller) and either weaker or completely paralysed
- The person usually has problems walking or moving around - the arm or leg may be 'stuck' in a bent position or contracted.
- The arm or leg is often shorter on one side and in severe cases the spine may be bent sideways.
- Sometimes these children move around with crutches and callipers (leg braces) Otherwise they may lean on a pole or crawl on hands and knees.

- About 30% recover totally
- Another 30% → mild weakness afterwards
- 30% → moderate or severe weakness
- 10% die if breathing muscles affected
- If any paralysis left after 6-7months – usually permanent



## Some examples of Different Types of Child Disability: Hydrocephalus



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF HYDROCEPHALUS?

It is usually seen at birth or very soon afterwards.

The child will show most of the following:

- the head of the child is abnormally big
- the size of the head usually increases quickly
- the blood vessels (pipes) may look swollen on the top of the head
- the eyes may look downwards
- the child may be restless, or very sleepy and inactive
- the child may have fits, or vomiting
- there may be problems of vision, hearing, speech, physical and mental development



# What can be done ?

- **Surgery** — a tube is placed inside to drain the excess fluid off the brain
- **Advice** — positioning & daily care
- **Assistive devices** — wheelchair, special seating
- **Education** — where possible IE or special school
- **Social** — encourage inclusion & participation in family and community life

# Club Foot



# What is it?

- The foot / feet of a child turn inwards from birth.
- The calf muscles usually become wasted too as the child grows up.
- At birth the foot may be flexible and with the right exercises and splinting can be corrected....
- The exact cause is unknown but it may be that someone else in the family has a similar condition.

# What can be done?

- Advice
- Positioning & plasters
- Surgery
- Exercises
- Chronic conditions - supportive footwear

# Cerebral Palsy



# Features of CP

- CP is a condition caused by damage to the developing brain, which results in problems with muscles, balance and controlling movements.
- The nerve connections from the brain to other parts of the body have been damaged permanently.
- This causes different problems and the extent and pattern of impairments are different for each child with CP.....

# What are the Causes of CP?

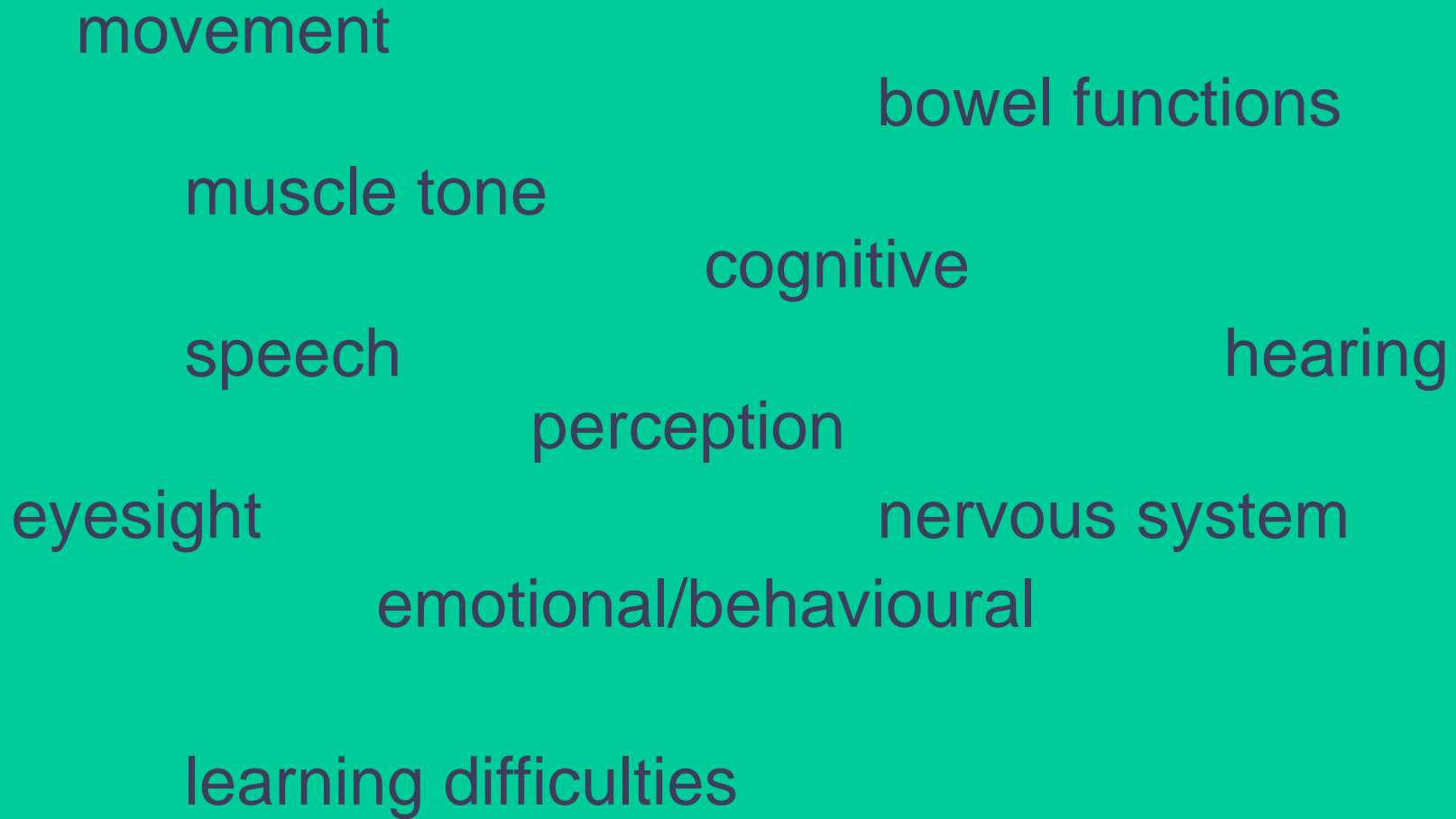
- The brain is damaged before, during or shortly after birth or early childhood.
- Lack of oxygen jaundice, premature, low birth weight, disease, viral infections, meningitis, encephalitis.
- Poor nutrition & ante-natal care
- Often cause is not known



# Athetoid Cerebral Palsy



# What areas can be affected by CP?



# Priorities of living

- Social Interaction
- Communication
- Activities of Daily Living
- Mobility – one good hand
- Walking

# Cleft Lip & Palate



A child may be born with one or both of these. Cleft lip is a gap in the upper lip and cleft palate is a hole in the roof of the mouth. It means that the mouth and nose are connected.

- Difficulties with sucking, eating and drinking -they choke and gag on food that gets into their nose
- Also problems in making some sounds and so difficulties with speaking.
- Most children become self conscious about the reaction of other children and this causes difficulties with mixing socially.
- Surgery is need to correct this condition with the best age at 3-6 months for the lip and 12-18 months for the palate.

# Spinal Cord Injury





# **What is a Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) ?**

- **Weakness / paralysis affecting the spinal cord**

# Signs of the SCI

- **Their limbs can be floppy but often they feel tight**
- **The limbs may be totally or partially paralysed depending on the extent of the injury.**  
**(all 4 limbs = quadriplegia & only the legs = paraplegia)**
- **The person cannot use their legs – sometimes also their arms cannot move if the spinal cord damage was high.**
- **Loss of feeling in affected areas**
- **Pressure sores**
- **Loss of bladder/ bowel control**
- **Contractures – stiff joints**



**Head Injury**

# What is a head injury ?

Head or brain injury is the name given to an injury or a damage to the head, which in turn damages the brain inside it.

# What cause it ?

A head injury is usually caused by an accident (fall, road).

# What are the sign of head injury ?

Depending to the amount of damage.

The kind of problem depend of the part of the head that is injured.

- **Mild injury :**

First, when head injury has happened, the person may be unconscious for some time (few seconds or minutes).

The person may be dizzy, have a headache and may be confused and forgetful. They may have problems for a few days and then be fine again.

Sometimes it looks like a mild problem but there can be bleeding inside the head after a few hours.

- **Severe injury** : the person may be unconscious for days or weeks.

They are likely to have problem in the future, like:

**Physical** : paralysis of part of the body, difficulties to order the movements ....

**Thinking, remembering and understanding** : forget things, may be very confused, loss of memory, problem with paying attention or concentrating.

**Change in personality and behaviour**, often by frustration at lack of ability.

**Problem with communication** : not remembering words or names, or try to speak and the words coming out wrong.

**Sudden changes in emotions** : cry easily or get very angry for no reason.

**May develop epilepsy.**





## **Muscular Dystrophy**

# What is muscular dystrophy ?

- Muscles gradually get weaker –may look normal at birth until early childhood – Then notice the child is clumsier, falls down

# What are the signs of muscular dystrophy ?

- Syndrome will be seen with 3-5 years of age
- Boys are affected more
- Fall-down at the time of walking in primary stage
- Can walk depend on foot
- Different type of walking and running style : walks up on his toes, with a 'waddling', wide-based pattern and arched back.....
- The calf muscles look strangely fatter as if they are strong, but it is just degenerated muscle tissue.
- Body is like sculpture
- Most of the children lose ability to walk
- Gradually muscles get weaker & joints stiffer - by 10 years may no longer be able to walk or use his arms very well for functional tasks



**Burns**

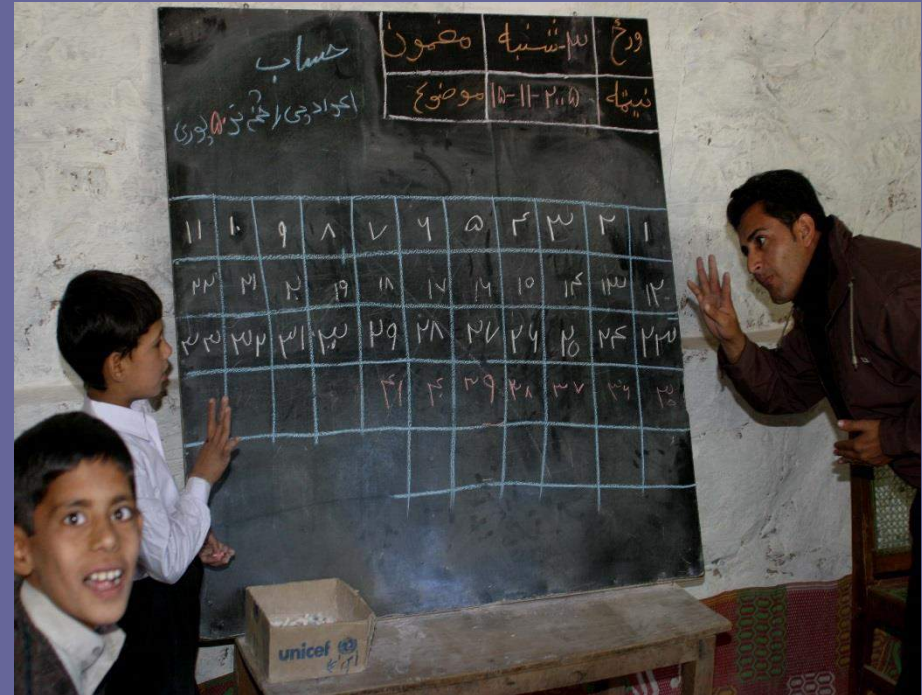


# **What are the signs of a burn ?**

- **The skin is thick and very tight in the burned area.**
- **The joints nearby will not move properly**
- **The skin may be stuck together, so that part of the body cannot move at all.**
- **The person will sometime get chronic pain**



# Deaf children at school



# How would we recognise a child had a hearing problem?

- Not responding when called or loud noise
- Delayed speech
- Isolated from friends
- Difficulties at school
- Emotional/behavioural problems





# Small story.....

*Of an 11 year old girl with Polio  
playing with a little boy....*

*"Are you disabled he asked. "No I'm  
Fatíma" she replied and they went  
on playing.*