



The members of the Council boarded the first Accessible Transport Board Bus to test the inclusive features that were offered. (GP)

FROM ADVOCACY TO ACTION

For decades, the Barbados Council for the Disabled championed the need for accessible public transportation while operating its own limited transport service, made possible through the generosity of private donors and partners. That sustained advocacy helped pave the way for Government's investment in accessible buses, marking a significant milestone in creating a more inclusive public transport system.



Disability Car Spaces must have the international Access Aisles. (GP)

DISABILITY PARKING PERMITS:

ADVOCACY INTO ACTION

The administration of disability parking permits by the Barbados Council for the Disabled, on behalf of the Barbados Licensing Authority, represents another significant milestone where advocacy has translated into meaningful public policy. Through years of promoting accessible parking, legislative reform and public awareness, the council has helped establish a system that protects the mobility and independence of persons with disabilities. Today, the permit programme stands as a trusted partnership between Government and the BCD, ensuring that accessible parking is available to those who genuinely need it while reinforcing respect for the rights of persons with disabilities.



Lionel Smith signing at the Launch of FAB Deaf Ambassadors Job Placements. (GP)

THE CALYPSO PROJECT AND THE DEAF AMBASSADOR PROJECT

The Barbados Council for the Disabled's partnership with the Audiovisual UK Calypso Project and Deaf Ambassador Project has played a transformative role in building the confidence, visibility, and self-esteem of deaf persons in Barbados. Through music, cultural expression, leadership development and public engagement, participants have been empowered to showcase their talents, strengthen their communication skills and become ambassadors for inclusion within their communities. Together, these pioneering initiatives have challenged perceptions, celebrated deaf culture and demonstrated that when opportunities are created, deaf persons can lead, inspire and make meaningful contributions to national life.



Milestones THAT MATTER



Inclusion means everyone can join the celebration. (GP)

PROMOTING MENTAL WELL-BEING THROUGH INCLUSION

Recognising the growing impact of mental health challenges across our society, the Barbados Council for the Disabled has expanded its advocacy to promote greater awareness, understanding and inclusion for persons experiencing psychosocial and other hidden disabilities. Through public education, partnerships with governments, the Workplace Wellness Committee, and policy advocacy, the council continues to encourage a more compassionate and supportive approach that reduces stigma, promotes well-being and ensures that every individual can participate fully and with dignity in community life.



Congratulations to the Barbados Council for the Disabled on 50 Years of Advocacy and Progress

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Multi-Country Office extends heartfelt congratulations to the Barbados Council for the Disabled on the celebration of its 50th anniversary. For five decades, the Council has been a leading advocate for the rights, dignity, and empowerment of persons with disabilities, helping to create a more inclusive and equitable Barbados.

At UNDP, we believe that sustainable development is only possible when everyone can participate fully in society. Guided by the principle of 'leave no one behind', we are committed to advancing disability inclusion, accessibility, and equal opportunities across Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. As countries face changes in access to development funding, inclusion remains central to UNDP's development planning and programming – whether we are focusing on climate change and environmental protection, disaster recovery and resilience, sustainable finance, access to justice or citizen security. We strive to ensure that persons with disabilities have a voice in shaping the programmes, policies, and solutions we support.

Through partnerships with governments, civil society organizations, the private sector and organizations like the Barbados Council for the Disabled, UNDP has supported efforts to strengthen disability-inclusive policies and systems. This includes a comprehensive, participatory **Situational Analysis on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Barbados** that helped identify barriers and opportunities for greater inclusion. Additionally, UNDP partnered with the Government of Barbados to host the **XVI Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean** in 2024. The Bridgetown Declaration emerging from the Forum reaffirmed the importance of inclusive social protection systems and recognized accessibility and disability inclusion as key elements of resilient and sustainable development.

As the Barbados Council for the Disabled celebrates this golden anniversary, we congratulate them for 50 years of advocacy, leadership, and service. UNDP will continue to work alongside the Council and other partners to build societies where persons with disabilities can participate fully, exercise their rights, and contribute to sustainable development for all.

SCAN QR CODE to download the Country Brief

Situational Analysis on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Barbados



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