

Case Study : Christian Blind Mission

# How CBM improved program management efficiency, collaboration, and compliance

## Challenge

CBM struggled with an outdated, overly customised program and project management system that led to inefficient processes and a lack of standardisation and collaboration between staff and projects worldwide.

## Solution

CBM implemented NGO Online, a centralised platform that streamlines workflows, standardises processes, and improves collaboration. The system was tailored to CBM's needs through a participatory design process, ensuring broad staff acceptance.

## Outcome

CBM experienced improved efficiency, enhanced compliance, and stronger collaboration both within the organisation and with external partners, significantly boosting its operational effectiveness.

**NGO online**  
by precio fishbone 

# How CBM improved program management efficiency, collaboration, and compliance

## **The challenge: Inefficiencies from an over-customised system and fragmented data**

CBM faced significant challenges managing complex program operations across multiple countries. Their existing project management system was finance-focused and had been customised to the point of inefficiency, discouraging program staff from using it. Ulrike Veismann, CBM's Team Manager IT Programmes, explains:

– Our old project management system captured a lot of important information, but as we added more customisations over time, it became very complex and cumbersome to use.

Program data and documents were spread and duplicated across multiple systems and locations, making routine tasks like planning, monitoring, and reporting more difficult and time-consuming. “We had to do a lot of manual work in Excel to compile data for reporting. It was inefficient and prone to errors.”

## **Fragmented workflows created bottlenecks**

Outdated templates scattered across different locations contributed to quality issues.

– Lack of standardisation was a major issue. People had their own templates stored on their computer and didn't realise there was an update, Ulrike recalls. “We had strong compliance controls in place, but ensuring adherence took extra time and effort due to this issue.

Fragmented workflows also created bottlenecks. For example, the lengthy approval process for project proposals required multiple manual steps, with three or four people taking turns to print, sign, scan, and email documents — causing stressful delays when facing critical donor deadlines.

As CBM increasingly shifted to donor-designated project funding, efficient internal collaboration between divisions like technical advisers, field teams, and fundraisers became increasingly important. But their



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existing system couldn't support this, making it harder to maintain quality standards and meet donor deadlines.

– Our old program management system didn't support collaboration, so we were working in silos and aligning our efforts took significantly longer.

## The solution: Implementing a centralised, integrated program and project management system

To overcome these challenges, CBM implemented NGO Online, a user-friendly program and project system designed specifically for NGOs. After evaluating several options, CBM chose NGO Online for its ability to meet their needs without over-customisation.

### Broad staff acceptance

The design process was highly participative, with CBM gathering over 1,000 user stories from staff and partners to ensure the system addressed diverse needs. This approach helped drive broad staff acceptance from the outset, reinforced by a successful regional training model.

– We involved key stakeholders from across regions and departments in the design process, to ensure the system fit the real-world needs of the people who would actually be using it.

The new system, known internally at CBM as ProMIS, streamlines workflows, standardises processes, and allows real-time collaboration using centralised program data, templates, and policies.

Custom integrations include a small but critical interface with CBM's finance system that enables seamless fund requests and financial tracking within the project management workflow. A partner portal, currently be-

### About CBM

CBM is an international Christian development organisation, dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities in some of the world's poorest communities. Through direct project partnerships and policy advocacy, CBM focuses on inclusive eye health, community-based inclusive development, and inclusive humanitarian action across 46 countries.

ing rolled out, empowers CBM's local partners to engage directly with their project data, including budget tracking and indicator updates.

### Accessibility a priority.

Accessibility was a priority. Leveraging an earlier accessibility audit, CBM worked closely with Precio Fishbone to address specific needs, particularly for users with visual impairments.

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– Ulrike Veismann  
CBM’s Team Manager IT Programmes



### **The outcome: Improved efficiency, collaboration, and compliance**

NGO Online has transformed CBM's program and project management by significantly improving efficiency, compliance, and collaboration while enhancing partner engagement.

The most immediate benefit was the standardisation of processes, which significantly enhanced compliance. With a centralised platform for all project-related documents and workflows, staff across countries can now work more efficiently and confidently with accurate program data.

– Everything is in one place and easy to find. Templates are linked to the workflow, and tasks give clear guidance. You always know what needs to be done next, and you don't lose time searching for things," Ulrike explains. Because our new system guides users through their project work routines, they no longer need to maintain separate to-do-lists.

– NGO Online has been a game changer in terms of efficiency and collaboration. Now everyone works in the system, with standardised processes and templates, we have far fewer errors.

### **A huge improvement**

The digital proposal approval process is a huge improvement on the previous manual, delay-ridden process.

– It's so much faster, it's fantastic. That's so important when you're up against donor deadlines.

Internal collaboration has also improved. Different departments can now collaborate seamlessly using shared documents and centralised task management, increasing efficiency and breaking down silos.

The new partner portal is already yielding positive results, allowing external partners to directly input data and collaborate on shared documents. This is enhancing efficiency and fostering a stronger sense of partnership while reducing the administrative burden on CBM's country offices.

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### **Strong staff ownership**

An unexpected benefit of NGO Online has been the strong staff ownership.

– Many colleagues across different regions were eager to become trainers, and participated in the design and implementation. They are now our best key users, providing great peer-to-peer support and onboarding new staff to ProMIS, Ulrike says. It's made the system much more sustainable.

**To find out more about NGO Online's unique, comprehensive software solution for NGOs, get in touch:**

**[ngoonline.net](https://ngoonline.net)**



## ABOUT

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NGO Online is a cloud-based program, project and grant management IT solution specifically designed for international humanitarian and development NGOs.

NGO Online is developed by Precio Fishbone, a software and consulting company focused on SharePoint and Microsoft 365 based solutions. We have customers in Europe, Australia, Asia and North America supported by approximately 170 employees in Sweden, The Netherlands and Vietnam.

Together with our partners, we have assisted some 1000 customers with their digital solutions.

Precio Fishbone is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm First North Premier.

## CONTACT

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