

## Best Practices in Disability Inclusion



Photo by Resources for the Blind



WorldVision considers the most vulnerable populations as its key constituency and specifically engages people with disabilities in all aspects of programming. Because community development is the starting point, WorldVision's interventions are local, sustainable, and transformational. This makes World Vision uniquely placed to tackle the environmental, attitudinal, and institutional barriers that underlie exclusion of people with disabilities.

To address these key barriers, WorldVision takes a twin-track approach, developing disability-specific programming and also mainstreaming disability across development sectors. In addition, WorldVision seeks to build staff capacity to address the needs of people with disabilities and examine its own attitudes and practices so that the organization may serve communities better.

### DISABILITY-SPECIFIC APPROACHES

The **8+ Model** for holistic wheelchair programming, developed through the USAID-funded ACCESS project, supports trained service providers to adhere to the WHO Guidelines on the Provision of Manual Wheelchairs and ensures an enabling environment for disability inclusion and empowerment. This model is built on the belief that while an appropriate wheelchair may be necessary for mobility, it is not the only element sufficient for social inclusion. It takes community engagement to not only support service provision but also ensure inclusive societies and environments. This model has been rolled out in El Salvador, India, Kenya, Nicaragua, and Romania and has served more than 4,758 clients so far.

**Citizen Voice and Action** is a social accountability tool used to hold governments accountable for the promises made in laws and policies. While originally used in health and education programs, in six countries this method is used to support people with disabilities to demand appropriate services. Outstanding results have included the construction of accessible infrastructure by local authorities, restocking of medical clinics with key medicines needed for people with some disabilities, increase of wheelchair outreach services, and training for teachers on inclusive education.

**Engaging with faith leaders** is World Vision's unique contribution to disability inclusion efforts. Using local faith traditions and texts, World Vision engages with faith leaders to consider disability inclusion not only within their own worship services but also in the broader community. In communities with deeply-held faith traditions, this intervention can excavate the roots of exclusion and build stronger support networks for people with disabilities.

Through the **OurVoice** program, World Vision empowers children and youth with disabilities in India to raise their voices to claim their rights. Our Voice assemblies are organized at the local, state, and national levels where children with disabilities can meet, learn their rights, and work together to develop advocacy materials that are then shared with the Indian government. Children who have participated in the OurVoice program have gone on to represent Indian children at international forums in the United Nations, advocating for inclusive education and shaping the post-MDG development agenda.

The **TEAM Colombia** project provides medical and rehabilitation services to people with disabilities (PWDs), expands provision of assistive technologies, increases access to economic opportunities for PWDs and their caregivers, and trains rehabilitation service personnel. Underpinning this is a focus on developing the ability of victim's groups and Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) to support PWDs to navigate the complicated government "road map" to access health services.

## DISABILITY INCLUSIVE APPROACHES

**WASH |** World Vision designs water points to be accessible and develops programming around disability inclusion in water, sanitation, and hygiene projects. In Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Niger, Uganda, and Zambia, awareness raising efforts have included faith leader training, empowerment of people with disabilities, and sporting events featuring people with disabilities. These efforts emphasize that not only should infrastructure be physically accessible, but attitudinal and institutional barriers to access should be broken down to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are met.

**Education |** World Vision works with parents, teachers, and community members to ensure children with disabilities have equitable access to educational services and activities, including school clubs and programs. World Vision works with schools to construct accessible classrooms and facilities. All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development (a partnership of USAID, World Vision and the Australian Government) sources, tests, and disseminates technology-based solutions to improve literacy skills of early grade learning in developing countries. Its focus on enhancing reading outcomes for children with disabilities has included several of the first adaptations in the world of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) for children who are blind/low vision or deaf/hard of hearing. These adaptations have the potential to change the way education is provided to children with these disabilities.

**Economic Development |** World Vision seeks to include people with disabilities in a range of economic development projects. In Kenya, people with disabilities are integrated into an agriculture project that has trained 145 people with disabilities in its first year. In

India, goats donated through the World Vision Gift Catalog have been provided to 274 wheelchair users over the last year. The families were then trained on goat rearing and financial management to increase household income. The USDOL-funded Engaged, Educated, Empowered, Ethiopian Youth (E4Y) project aims to address exploitative child labor in Ethiopia by promoting education and vocational training and enhancing livelihoods opportunities and access to social protection programs for youth and their households. This project targets youth from 7,500 households and emphasizes inclusion of youth with disabilities while exploring opportunities for disability inclusion in the Ethiopian workplace.

## COMMITMENT TO ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Over the past six years World Vision has developed and implemented two one-day training curricula that challenge its staff to examine their own understanding of disability inclusion and provide guidance on how to ensure disability inclusion throughout the program cycle.

**Traveling Together** was developed in 2010 and is a basic training course that can be used with community and staff alike. This curriculum is made up of eight sessions that seek to increase understanding of the charity, social, and medical models of disability programming, examine the barriers faced by people with disabilities, and explore the reasons why some organizations do not effectively include this population in their work. Participants are asked to examine their own practices and make concrete steps toward inclusion.

**On the Road to Disability Inclusion** was designed in collaboration with the U.S. International Council on Disability (USICD) as a supplement to Traveling Together and provides guidance on including people with disabilities throughout the program life cycle. Sessions are divided between pre-design, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Each is presented with an accompanying checklist for participants. This training reinforces the learning from Traveling Together and provides practical examples of how people with disabilities can be included in programming across sectors.

*World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.*