

World Vision International

Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Preamble

World Vision's ministry goal is "the sustained well-being of children within their families and communities, especially the most vulnerable." Children with disabilities¹ are among the most vulnerable children. People with disabilities are often excluded from development processes, 82% of people with disabilities live in poverty² and over 90% of children with disabilities do not receive education³.

World Vision Policy Basis for these Guidelines

These guidelines support all World Vision offices in their implementation of World Vision's commitment to the intentional inclusion of, and the full, equal and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in society and in all World Vision's programmes and projects.

These guidelines align with World Vision's core documents, ministry policies, and strategic directions, and the WVI Board's endorsement of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights instruments. The guidelines align with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In September 2009, the World Vision International Board approved the partnership policy on the Well-being of Children, which includes the following section on inclusion of children and adults with disabilities:

The rights of persons with disabilities may be violated by attitudinal, institutional or environmental barriers that exist in society. We recognise God-given abilities, rather than focusing on individuals' impairments or functional limitations. We work to enable people to be treated with dignity, not prejudged or portrayed as victims, incompetent, or in need of medical care. Language and images used in communications and in the words, actions and attitudes of World Vision staff uphold the dignity of disabled people. Decisions, principles and goals set for World Vision's programmes and projects apply to adults and children with or without disabilities. Management shall establish Partnership standards for inclusion of persons with disabilities. (*Partnership Policy on the Well-being of Children*)

World Vision core values affirm God's love for all people without discrimination and commit us to act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person, through all our ministries and programming activities.

Definitions:

Impairments refer specifically to a person's physiological condition, structure or mechanism that is lacking or does not fully or effectively function. Impairments may be long-term or short-term, and may be physical, sensory, neurological, intellectual, mental or other physiological condition.

Disability is a result of the limitations imposed on people with impairments by attitudinal, institutional, and environmental barriers to their participation in society.

Inclusion is the desired state that all people, including people with disabilities, equally participate in and benefit from policies and programmes in political, economic, societal and spiritual spheres without barriers or discrimination.

Mainstreaming is the strategy taken to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities. This means including people with disabilities, their concerns, contributions and experiences as an integral part of programming. It is an approach rather than a programme or project in itself, and requires the removal of societal barriers that exclude people with disabilities.

Principles:

1. **Dignity:** Persons with disabilities are treated with dignity. They are not prejudged or portrayed as victims, incompetent or in need of medical care or charity. Language and images used in communications

and in words, actions and attitudes of World Vision staff ensure that the dignity of persons with disabilities is upheld.

2. **Equity:** Disability is an issue of human rights and poverty. Persons with disabilities have the right to fully, equally and meaningfully participate in and benefit from humanitarian assistance and development processes in their communities.
3. **Participation:** Persons with disabilities are recognized as equal participants in development processes. As experts on disability issues, concerns and experiences of persons with disabilities are valued, consulted and reflected in World Vision's policy and programming. World Vision works with persons with disabilities and their organizations to achieve inclusive programming which leads to inclusion in community. This includes the participation of children with disabilities in ways that are appropriate to age and capacity.
4. **Diversity:** World Vision recognizes that persons with disabilities are diverse and belong to different gender, age, culture, race and ethnicity, socio-economic background, religion, educational background, and family background. Persons with disabilities also have different types and degrees of impairment, and these should be taken into account for programming, decision-making and targeting.
5. **Rights-based and the Social Model approach:** World Vision recognizes that rights of persons with disabilities are violated by attitudinal, institutional or environmental barriers that exist in society, rather than providing direct services that are focused on individuals' impairments or their functional limitations.
6. **Justice:** In line with the Partnership Policy on Promotion of Justice, World Vision listens to those who are excluded, discriminated against or marginalised. We challenge those who oppress and discriminate against children and adults with disabilities. World Vision works to bring changes in policy where necessary. World Vision includes issues and concerns of persons with disabilities in its regular advocacy work. World Vision supports advocacy work of disabled people's organizations.
7. **Community-based support:** In line with the Transformational Development Policy, World Vision works with communities and local partners in a way that encourages community ownership and sustainable development. This applies to World Vision's support for community members with disabilities.
8. **"Same as all" and Equity principles:** Any decisions, principles or goals set for World Vision's programmes and advocacy apply to children and adults with or without disabilities.
9. **Privacy and confidential information:** World Vision respects personal and confidential information of the individuals it serves, and does not disclose their information to a third party without the consent of the person and / or her / his caregiver.

Programming Guidance:

10. **Inclusive programming** supports full, equal and meaningful participation of children and adults with disabilities in WV's programs and projects by identifying and removing barriers for participation. Analysis of barriers and recommendations are made in collaboration with community-based organizations of persons with disabilities⁴. National offices ensure that programs have adequate capacity to facilitate disability mainstreaming. Where WV works with local government in support of basic services to general population in the program area, WV works to ensure that persons with disabilities have equitable access to all such services.
11. **Child Focus:** Assuring equitable access to and benefit from health, education, local government services, and participation in the community is our aim for all children, including children with disabilities. Approaches to working with children with disabilities include - raising awareness about their rights, promoting a positive attitude of the parents and the communities towards them and facilitating their inclusion and participation in ongoing development processes.

12. **Disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation:** People with different impairments access information about World Vision’s assistance, distribution and services (e.g., re/construction, WASH, evacuation, etc.) during disaster management including emergency responses. People with disabilities and their organizations review service delivery in these situations to avoid discrimination as the vulnerability of disabled people often increases during an emergency response.
13. **Access:** Universal access, or disability access as appropriate, is stipulated for all re/construction and infrastructure work. People with disabilities and their organizations will be involved in assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation of re/construction and infrastructure work.
14. **Promoting attitudinal and behavioural changes:** Programs and projects will focus on their inclusiveness and accessibility, not on individuals’ condition or impairments. Disability equality orientation and refresher training is provided to stakeholders including WV staff and leadership. This promotes attitudinal and behavioural changes, accessibility and inclusive programming, in order to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in World Vision’s programs. Wherever possible, disability training is provided by, or in cooperation with, community-based or national disabled people’s organizations.
15. **Intentional inclusion of persons with disabilities through mainstreaming approach:** Disability is recognised as relevant for any and all World Vision programs and projects (e.g., sponsorship, education, health, economic development) throughout their assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The goal is to enable equal access and opportunities for persons with disabilities as program participants and beneficiaries. Given that persons with disabilities are amongst the poorest and most oppressed people, World Vision will proactively seek to understand the disability situation in the community and to make special effort to fully, equally and meaningfully include persons with disabilities in World Vision programs and projects.
16. **Prevention:** Through regular programming in health, nutrition and other sectors, World Vision promotes the prevention of illness and injury that can lead to impairments. Special projects that aim to support the prevention of secondary impairments and disabilities may specifically target persons with disabilities.
17. **Special Projects** support disability mainstreaming, rather than stand-alone support to persons with disabilities. Assistance is provided in ways that sustain and enhance community ownership, sustainability, holism and mutual transformation in line with World Vision’s development approach.
 - 17.1. *Disability Mainstreaming Projects:* Special projects can be implemented with a goal to achieve full, equal and meaningful participation of adults and children with disabilities in World Vision programs (e.g. disability equity training, inclusive education, accessible facilities and communication, capacity development of disabled people’s organisations). These projects may target persons with disabilities, persons with and without disabilities together, or only persons without disabilities.
 - 17.2. *Support and/or provision of services for persons with disabilities:* Where program or project assessments identify significant gaps in services available to persons with disabilities that government or other civil society organizations are unable to meet, World Vision works alongside community partners and local government to assure equitable access of persons with disabilities who have been unable to access to such services where they do exist. WV may design projects to improve service provision to persons with disabilities (e.g. community based habilitation⁵ / rehabilitation, assistive devices, basic education for adults with disabilities, training for inclusive education teachers, empowerment of persons with disabilities). Rather than delivering long-term services directly, World Vision’s approach is to work alongside governments, disabled people’s organizations and other institutions to develop their capacities for long-term accessible service provision.

- 17.3. *Transition*: For special projects that do not align with these guidelines, a transition plan would be established in order to support full, equal and meaningful participation of children with disabilities, guided by the best interests of the child.

18. Child Sponsorship in Programming

- 18.1. *Transition*: These guidelines inform new child sponsorship supported programs as they are established. They also provide guidance to ongoing programs during redesign, in alignment with the programming guidance to support World Vision's Programming Effectiveness Standards and the Sponsorship Minimum Programming Standards.
- 18.2. *Programme Design*: Child focus principles in section 11 (above) guide child sponsorship practices involving children with disabilities. World Vision's preferred approach is "shared direct benefits" and this principle applies to all registered children. While World Vision does not normally provide direct medical services, programs may provide referrals to other organizations that provide such services and facilitate access to assistive devices⁶.
- 18.3. *Selection Criteria*: Children with disabilities and children of parents with disabilities are included in child selection criteria and procedures, with the proportion of these children registered for child sponsorship being at least equivalent to the proportion of children with disabilities within the program areas. Where local disability data is unavailable, national estimates can be used. As programs increase their focus on the most vulnerable children, the proportion of registered children with disabilities would increase.

Taking into account that a significant portion of children with disabilities in developing countries are often hidden, do not receive education and are not in school, World Vision identifies ways to ensure that the registration of children for child sponsorship takes place in ways that children with disabilities have equal access to registration.

- 18.4. *Donor communications* help donors understand World Vision's approach to ensure that children with disabilities participate in and have access to the improvements that will be taking place in their community. By ensuring their inclusion in sponsorship, World Vision is helping to raise awareness and non-discriminatory practices within the community.

Staff are aware that each child's development is unique, and that the pace of development varies; this is especially true among children with disabilities. With this in mind, the development of a child with disability is communicated appropriately, including in Annual Progress Reports.

[†] From a rights-based and social model understanding, World Vision recognises that the rights of persons with disabilities are violated by social barriers rather than an individual's physiological condition. However the terms "disabled people" and "people with disabilities" are used interchangeably as World Vision works in different cultural and societal contexts.

² UN cited in Dutch Coalition on Disability and Development: Editorial / Impaired Millennium Development Goals? <http://www.dccd.nl/?2812>

³ UNESCO: The Flagship on Education for All and the Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/know_sharing/flagship_initiatives/disability_last_version.shtml

⁴ See WVI Inclusive Programming Guidelines – Working with DPO, and Inclusive Programming Tool and Users Guide.

⁵ Habilitation refers to enabling those without certain functions to be fit or capable to function in society. Rehabilitation refers to restoring those who have lost functions to be restored to former capacity.

⁶ See WVI Wheelchair Distribution Position Paper