

**Put Us in the Picture:
the global change we seek**



Sightsavers



“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.

We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.

We are the change that we seek¹.”

Social inclusion is the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society².

**It sounds so simple, doesn't it?
Ability, opportunity and dignity...**

Yet of course it's not – particularly for young people with disabilities, like Hamza Kamuna, who's blind and has been out of school for more than two years. At just 16, he's already experienced what exclusion feels like:



“It was too far to walk to every day; boarding is 250,000 Ugandan shillings [about £60] for one term, and I needed small things: soap, shoes and books.

So I couldn't afford to go. I feel bad not going to school – when other friends of mine are going I feel bad being left behind.

I want to go back, I want to learn more. In the future I want to be a teacher.”

In many developing countries it is difficult to reach everyone, even when education systems aim to be inclusive of all children. National budgets for education are often limited and families are frequently unable to afford the costs of education³. For children and young people with disabilities, like Hamza, the situation is particularly acute as they commonly face additional barriers to participation, including discrimination, violence and abuse; inadequately trained and resourced teachers; a shortage and high cost of assistive devices and learning materials; and inaccessible water and sanitation points in schools. Many girls and women with disabilities experience double and multiple discrimination, including gender-based violence⁴.

These barriers – and the hidden costs of attending and getting to school – are all factors that explain why children with disabilities are less likely to start school than children who do not have disabilities, and have lower rates of staying in school⁵.

It's not just Hamza. We know that exclusion affects more than just the individual; it impacts on the economic prospects of the families and communities in which they live and can affect people within households in an ongoing 'cycle of poverty'⁶, resulting in a lack of opportunity that continues for generations.

Discrimination and negative attitudes about disability also increase the exclusion experienced by people with disabilities and their families. Research in one programme found that 19 per cent of people with disabilities were instructed by community members not to touch the water because they were considered 'dirty' and at risk of contaminating the source⁷.

The first ever World Report on Disability in 2011 found a “large and unacceptable gap between the quality of life for people with disabilities and others.”⁸ Often individuals are 'invisible' from official statistics as in many cases people with disabilities are not reported in the household when survey personnel carry out interviews⁹. How can someone retain their dignity when facing such discrimination?

Put Us in the Picture



Put Us in the Picture, Sightsavers' policy campaign, aims to deliver development policy that is inclusive of people with disabilities.

By that we mean we want the UK and its development partners to make people with disabilities a priority.

Over the past two years we have been working with the UK government, Sightsavers supporters and political parties to realise this ambitious aim. In 2014, the UK published its first ever Disability Framework, setting the UK on an exciting, challenging and ambitious path towards delivering disability-inclusive development.

One important lesson we have learned in this time is that the UK cannot achieve change alone. If we are to achieve disability-inclusive development and ensure the inclusion of young people like Hamza, we need to convince others that poverty reduction measures won't be effective – and deliver the impact required – unless they are inclusive of people of disabilities.

There is an implicit assumption that development policies and programmes targeting extreme poverty will inherently include people with disabilities and other excluded groups. It is increasingly recognised that this is simply not the case and people with disabilities can remain hidden or excluded unless their active inclusion is planned and resourced from the start.

The Sustainable Development Goals have delivered a critical mandate for change. For the first time people with disabilities are explicitly included in global development frameworks which represent a commitment towards inclusive action by the international community.

Over the next two years, Put Us in the Picture will work with the UK government and its partners to make inclusive development a reality. Removing barriers to participation and unlocking the vast potential of people with disabilities is critical to addressing global poverty reduction, and empowering people to access their rights and actively participate in all aspects of society.

We're still ambitious for change!

What are we calling for?

Sightsavers is still committed to working closely with the UK government to influence disability-inclusive development.

We welcomed the Disability Framework published by the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) as a critical tool in this regard and will **continue to work with DFID** to help translate the framework from policy into practice, so that it delivers

meaningful change for people with disabilities, their families and communities.

In order to achieve this, and make disability-inclusive development a reality, **Put Us in the Picture is calling for global change.**

We are calling on DFID and its partners to:

1. Demonstrate global and national leadership.

One of the most important elements in an inclusive development system is **strong and continuous leadership at global and national levels**. Leadership is a necessary precondition for local, national and global level change.

A demonstrable aspect of effective leadership is a **coherent measurable approach for disability inclusion**. In our experience, it is incredibly difficult for any agency to track the impact of its interventions on people with disabilities without a resourced policy and measurable targets in place. This policy must be published and open to scrutiny to ensure transparency and full accountability.



Bagada Godfrey (centre of image), district chairperson for people with disabilities, Kiryandongo, Uganda:

“We have to work together. We have to change the negative attitudes. People with disabilities have to have self-esteem, to say ‘yes we can’ and the community has to change to believe disability is not inability. We have the potential, we can compete, we can serve and play a part in the development of the nation.”

2. Engage with, and ensure the participation of, people with disabilities at all levels.

Disability inclusion will never really be achieved without the engagement and participation of people with disabilities. People with disabilities have been excluded from the decision making processes that directly affect their lives¹⁰. Improving inclusion is about asking and understanding why this is the case and why some people with disabilities lack equal access to essential services or have poorer development outcomes.

Answering these questions and developing the policies and interventions required to address the drivers and underlying causes of exclusion **requires an inclusive approach to consultations**. This calls for real and sustained engagement with and participation of people with disabilities and their families.

Systematic processes for engagement must be built into existing policies and programmes and inclusive programme cycles developed so that people with disabilities can be fully consulted and actively involved in all stages of formulating and implementing policies, interventions and services relating to them.



Rita Asaba, teacher:

“There are so many people with disabilities out there who have not been given a chance, a voice. So people like me who have been empowered become the voice for the others who are marginalised and victimised.”

3. Promote a rights-based approach to inclusion.

Disability is a human rights issue. People with disabilities can experience inequality and discrimination that violates their rights. UN agencies and related bodies must promote the rights of people with disabilities in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and **support States Parties to the Convention to meet their national obligations under the UN CRPD** as duty bearers, embedding disability rights into development policy and programming.

Applying this requires that staff in the UN and related agencies have the **confidence, knowledge and skills to facilitate the engagement of people with disabilities**. “All staff (must) be prepared to raise the issue of disability inclusion with partners, government representatives, and other bilateral and multilateral agencies and with the NGO sector”¹¹.



Isaac Kirungi, student:

“Disability is not inability. It does not stop you from doing any work another person can perform.

My wish and desire is to change the opinions about people with disabilities.”

4. Improve data collection on the situation of people with disabilities.

If we are to successfully implement the SDGs and promote inclusion, then we must improve the international comparability of disability statistics and provide concrete options on ways to **promote the collection, analysis and reporting of information on disability** for inclusive development.

We are calling for greater collaboration between UN agencies and related bodies in this area. We support the UN Expert Group's¹² view that the UN Statistical Commission must encourage the UN Statistics Division **to support countries in incorporating the Washington Group Short Set of Questions¹³ in the 2020 round of national census**. Central to this is the provision of training and technical assistance to national statistical offices. We also call on DFID and its partners to support the Global Network on Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development, which will establish a basis for the future monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a disability-inclusive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

National statistical offices should support the development of innovative data collection techniques to improve coverage and data quality. **International donors must fund the collection and analysis of qualitative information**, complementing the use of quantitative information in reports to provide a better knowledge base of disability¹⁴.



William Mwambu, district councillor for disability, Masindi district, Uganda:

“The challenge I have found is lack of segregated data. Initially... we thought we only had 3, 4, 5 people in Masindi [district in Uganda] with disabilities. Whereas... we have over 12,000. When the [people who make decisions] lack information, lack data, it becomes very hard for them to plan. Because what are they planning for? Nobody shows interest in disabilities. Why? Because they do not know they are there.”

The change we seek

Our vision is the full inclusion and active participation of the one billion people worldwide living with a disability.

Our ambition is high. Put Us in the Picture aims to deliver an enabling environment that fosters ability, opportunity and dignity for all.

It's a big task, but delivering disability-inclusive development is a moral imperative.

Two years ago we argued that we should uphold our ideals not just when it's easy to do so, but when it's hard. We still stand by those ideals.

Do you?

Footnotes:

- 1 Obama, B. Speech, 5 February 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/05/us/politics/05text-obama.html?pagewanted_print&r_0. Accessed 20 November 2015.
- 2 World Bank (2013) Inclusion matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity, Washington D.C. The World Bank
- 3 WHO (2011) World Disability Report, 2011. World Health Organization and World Bank. Geneva.
- 4 WHO (2014) A67/16 Disability. Draft WHO Action Plan 2014–2021. Better health for People with Disability. Report by the Secretariat.
- 5 WHO (2011) World Disability Report, 2011. World Health Organization and World Bank, Geneva
- 6 Mitra S., Posarac A., & Vick B. (2011). Disability and Poverty in Developing Countries: A snapshot from the World Health Survey. World Bank SP Discussion paper No 110.
- 7 Paragraph 2.4, Written evidence submitted by WaterAid, 2013, http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidenceHtml/4405#_edn4
- 8 WHO (2011) World Disability Report, 2011. World Health Organization and World Bank. Geneva.
- 9 World Bank (2013) Inclusion matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity, Washington D.C. The World Bank
- 10 WHO (2014) A67/16 Disability. Draft WHO Action Plan 2014–2021. Better health for People with Disability. Report by the Secretariat.
- 11 Ingdal N., & Nilsson A. (2012). Mainstreaming disability in the new development paradigm. Evaluation of Norwegian support to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. Norad, Oslo.
- 12 UN Expert Group Meeting on Disability, data and Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation: The Way Forward. A Disability Inclusive Agenda towards 2015 and Beyond, Paris, France (8–10 July 2014).
- 13 Washington Group on Disability Statistics. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington_group/wg_questions.htm
- 14 UN Expert Group Meeting on Disability, data and Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation: The Way Forward. A Disability Inclusive Agenda towards 2015 and Beyond, Paris, France (8–10 July 2014).

