

# **Policy influencing 2025 annual summary**

Key achievements in West Africa

## Contents

<b>Policy influencing 2025 annual summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Contents.....	2
Introduction .....	3
Key achievements in 2025 .....	3
Benin .....	4
Progress towards ratification of the Marrakech Treaty.....	4
Cameroon .....	4
Implementation of the national inclusive education policy.....	4
Validation of the eye health strategic plan.....	4
Côte d'Ivoire .....	4
Integration of the World Health Organisation guide for action into the health policy .....	4
Ghana .....	5
Establishment of a national network of youth with disabilities.....	5
Progress towards the launch of the employment equity policy.....	5
Guinea.....	5
Introduction of a law on the rights and protection of persons with disability .....	5
Liberia .....	6
Establishment of a committee for coordinating activities for the elimination of NTDs ....	6
Establishment of county eye health steering committees.....	6
Mali.....	6
Development of national, regional and local eye health plans .....	6
Progress towards establishment of committee to monitor and implement the UNCRPD	7
Revision to the law on sexual and reproductive health rights to integrate provisions for persons with disabilities .....	7
Progress towards the development of a national inclusive education policy .....	7
Nigeria.....	7
Validation of the national strategy for sexual and reproductive health rights.....	7
Domestication of the national eye health policy in Plateau State .....	8
Launch of the Inclusive Data Charter Action Plan.....	8
Inauguration of a committee to oversee implementation of the access to work scheme	8

Domestication of the national policy on inclusive education in Kano State .....	8
Senegal .....	9
Validation of the inclusive education policy .....	9
Revision to the guide for local development to cover disability inclusion .....	9
Sierra Leone.....	9
Integration of eye health into district health plans .....	9
Progress towards approval of the Persons with Disabilities Act.....	9
Togo .....	10
Ratification of the African Disability Protocol.....	10

## Introduction

This report is a summary of the key successes in policy influencing achieved across West Africa in 2025, led by the Sightsavers country offices in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, with support from the Policy and Global Advocacy team, Campaigns team, Global Technical Leads and other teams. The report aims to provide an overview of the most significant achievements, although it is not exhaustive and there are many other examples of progress made towards Sightsavers' policy influencing goals which have not been included in the interests of keeping the summary at a manageable length. Sightsavers recognises that policy change requires long-term investment from multiple actors including government, civil society and international NGO partners, and it is important to note that these achievements are not solely attributed to the input of Sightsavers. For a comprehensive overview of Sightsavers' work on policy influencing in please refer to the [Policy influencing data hub](#).

## Key achievements in 2025

- Launch of the national strategy for sexual and reproductive health rights of vulnerable people and persons with disabilities in Nigeria
- Implementation of the National Inclusive Education Policy in Cameroon
- Integration of the World Health Organisation guide for action into the health policy in Côte d'Ivoire
- Validation of the inclusive education policy in Senegal
- Ratification of the African Disability Protocol in Togo
- Establishment of a national network of youth with disabilities in Ghana
- Introduction of a law on the rights and protection of persons with disability in Guinea

## Benin

---

### Progress towards ratification of the Marrakech Treaty

Building on the completion of the Marrakech Treaty adoption process by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2024, in 2025 Sightsavers had further engagement with the Ministry of Justice as well as Federation of Associations of People with Disability in Benin (FAPHB), to advocate for the formal ratification of the treaty. The Marrakech Treaty facilitates access to published works for persons who are blind or visually impaired through the removal of copyright barriers which prevent the sharing of books and printed materials in accessible formats. Beyond this, Sightsavers participated in a mapping of legislation to identify how the implementation of the Marrakech Treaty would impact copyright law. Sightsavers will continue its advocacy work in 2026 to encourage formal ratification of the treaty by the government of Benin.

## Cameroon

---

### Implementation of the national inclusive education policy

Following the launch of the national inclusive education policy in 2024, 2025 saw some encouraging examples of the implementation of the policy. The Ministry of Basic Education prepared a budget for its resourcing of the policy, and the inclusive education policy has been implemented to inform the training of teachers, identification of children with disabilities, and development resources for inclusive education. Sightsavers played an important role through the provision of technical and financial support with the guide for teachers, and a reference guide for disability which is used to inform the procurement of assistive devices.

### Validation of the eye health strategic plan

The eye health strategic plan was validated in 2025. Sightsavers provided both technical and financial support to the process of the development and validation of the Eye Health Strategic Plan. The new revised Eye health strategic plan was developed in alignment with the national priorities, global commitments and orientation from the World Health Organisation and International Agency for the prevention of Blindness.

## Côte d'Ivoire

---

### Integration of the World Health Organisation guide for action into the health policy

In 2025, the 2026 - 2030 National Action Plan for Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities was given technical approval and now complies with the guidelines of the WHO Guide for Action. This milestone makes Côte d'Ivoire the first country in the world (out of the 10 that

are implementing the Guide for Action) to have integrated its principles into health policy. Sightsavers played a catalytic role in this process, providing training and technical assistance, and facilitating the engagement between the WHO and Ministry of Health.

## Ghana

---

### Establishment of a national network of youth with disabilities

In the past, Ghana had no youth-specific OPDs or coordinated network representing young persons with disabilities. This limited the ability to effectively mobilise young people with disabilities to participate in national programmes and benefit from social interventions, resulting in their frequent exclusion from development initiatives. To address this challenge, Sightsavers collaborated with the National Youth Authority to establish and launch the Ghana Network of Youths with Disabilities (GNYD), a national, non-partisan coordination platform dedicated to amplifying the voices and participation of youth with disabilities. The creation of this network marks an important step toward strengthening youth representation within national decision-making structures, consistent with the provisions of the Youth Authority Act. Sightsavers funded and facilitated the stakeholder workshop that convened diverse youth groups and disability organisations to co-design the network's structure and supported the official launch event that formally introduced GNYD as a unifying platform for youth with disabilities across the country.

### Progress towards the launch of the employment equity policy

In 2025, Sightsavers advocated for the adoption of the Employment Equity policy, as a key instrument to advance the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities. Sightsavers supported a technical workshop on the Employment Equity Policy to strengthen OPD understanding, identify employment barriers, and co-create an advocacy plan for policy adoption. As this is a policy rather than a law, the process to reach completion is simpler. The policy is currently with the Ministry of Labour, there will be further consultations in 2026, and Sightsavers will continue to advocate for its launch and implementation.

## Guinea

---

### Introduction of a law on the rights and protection of persons with disability

In 2025, law L/2025/020/CNT on the rights and protection of persons with disability was signed by the President of Republic, marking an important milestone for disability rights in Guinea. The law received presidential approval in August 2025, and the implementing decree for the law was signed by the minister responsible on International Disability Day. Sightsavers has been advocating for this law to be passed for many years, providing

technical assistance to the Guinean federation of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (FEGUIPAH), coordinating advocacy efforts and facilitating the input of the OPDs to the drafting of the law.

## Liberia

---

### Establishment of a committee for coordinating activities for the elimination of NTDs

In 2024, Sightsavers supported the establishment of a committee for coordinating activities for the elimination of onchocerciasis and lymphatic filariasis. In 2025, the first cross-border meeting was held with representatives from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, promoting synchronised MDA and sharing of data. In a region where the effectiveness of NTD activities inevitably has to involve collaboration between countries, this is an important step forward in coordinating an international response.

### Establishment of county eye health steering committees

In 2025, Sightsavers supported the Ministry of Health in establishing three additional county-level eye health steering committees in Liberia. The committees are keen to advocate and engage with relevant bodies at the county and district levels to influence local eye health resource mobilisation, and this involves discussion around health financing. To strengthen the new committees, Sightsavers supported the dissemination of the National Eye Health Policy, launched in 2023. This will help to ensure that discussions on eye health at each of these levels are guided by the policy.

## Mali

---

### Development of national, regional and local eye health plans

In 2025, Sightsavers continued to engage with the Ministry of Health to advocate for the development of the new national strategic plan for eye health. To this end, Sightsavers facilitated a workshop to review the previous plan and define the next steps, including the recruitment of a consultant to draft the document, progress sessions to validate the various drafts, and a technical and political validation workshop to finalise the process, scheduled for 2026. Sightsavers continued its advocacy work to support the regional authorities of the project's three intervention regions—Sikasso, Segou, and Koulikoro—in developing and implementing their strategic plans for eye health. The regional plans for Sikasso and Segou have already been validated, and the plan for Koulikoro has been developed, pending validation at the regional level, due to take place in 2026. Beyond this, Sightsavers conducted advocacy at the local level with the authorities of Markala, in the region of Segou, for the operationalisation of the optical unit and the integration of eye health into their Local Development Plan. Finally, Sightsavers advocated for the integration of eye

health and disability inclusion into the new Ten-Year Health and Social Development Plan (PDDSS 2026-2035), providing both technical and financial assistance.

## **Progress towards establishment of committee to monitor and implement the UNCRPD**

In 2025, further progress was made towards the establishment of committees in Mali to oversee the monitoring and implementation of the UNCRPD. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the establishment of independent monitoring frameworks plays a strategic role in ensuring the effective implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities, and an essential mechanism for moving from theoretical commitments to practical application. The establishment of these committees will ensure that nothing is decided without the active participation of persons with disabilities themselves, in accordance with the principle of "nothing about us without us." In 2025, ministerial decrees for the formal establishment of the committees were prepared and submitted to the Council of Ministers for validation and signature. Sightsavers will continue its advocacy work and to support this process in 2026.

## **Revision to the law on sexual and reproductive health rights to integrate provisions for persons with disabilities**

In 2025, as part of the implementation of the WISH2 WACA project, Sightsavers carried out a series of advocacy activities, providing support and technical assistance to both government and civil society partners, which led to the revision of the law on sexual and reproductive health rights in Mali, to integrate provisions for persons with disabilities. This demonstrates Sightsavers' growing leadership on this issue in Mali.

## **Progress towards the development of a national inclusive education policy**

In 2025, significant progress was made in the development of the inclusive education policy. The process was launched in accordance with the procedures of the Ministry of National Education. After several meetings of the drafting committee and the technical working group, the theoretical framework of the document was defined. A consultant was recruited to support the process. Data was then collected using the tools developed by the consultant, as well as through regional consultative workshops, in order to inform the policy's strategic framework. The production of a first draft is expected in the first quarter of 2026.

## **Nigeria**

---

### **Validation of the national strategy for sexual and reproductive health rights**

In 2025, the Federal Ministry of Health reviewed and validated the national strategy for the sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) of vulnerable people and persons with

---

disabilities. Sightsavers technical assistance in this process, and facilitated the engagement of OPDs. In 2024, Sightsavers supported the domestication and dissemination of the SRHR policy in Kaduna state. Looking ahead to 2026, Sightsavers will continue its advocacy work to promote the domestication of the national SRHR policy in other states.

## **Domestication of the national eye health policy in Plateau State**

In 2025, the commissioner for Health of Plateau State signed the state eye health policy, to domesticate the national eye health policy. A dedicated eye health budget line was introduced in Plateau state, with some level of funding to cover leadership and governance meetings and awareness creation activities. Two additional eye health professionals were employed to increase capacity, and a retired ophthalmologist was taken on as a consultant. Beyond this, Sightsavers engaged with ministries of health in the states of Sokoto, Zamfara and Kaduna, to begin discussions on how the national eye health policy could be domesticated. Sightsavers will continue to take this forward in 2026.

## **Launch of the Inclusive Data Charter Action Plan**

The Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) action plan was officially launched in Q1 2025. To support the implementation of the plan, Sightsavers supported the establishment of a technical working group, led by the National Bureau of Statistics, and with involvement of the Office of the President for the SDGs. The IDC action plan paves the way for a range of initiatives to strengthen systems for the collection of disability disaggregated data, to be used for the purposes of the allocation of resources and services for persons with disabilities, as well as SDG reporting.

## **Inauguration of a committee to oversee implementation of the access to work scheme**

In 2025, a committee was inaugurated, to be hosted by the National Commission for Persons with Disability, with a mandate to implement the disability law and to oversee implementation of the access to work scheme. Sightsavers provided financial and technical guidance to support the establishment of the committee. The access to work scheme supports employers in making workplaces accessible and disability ready and provides resources and guidance. This includes the accessibility standard which started as a Sightsavers document but has now been adopted as a government standard.

## **Domestication of the national policy on inclusive education in Kano State**

Nigeria has a national level policy on inclusive education, with responsibility for implementation devolved to state level. In 2025, the Kano state government reviewed and validated its state inclusive education policy, to align with the provisions of the national inclusive education policy. The next step is for the policy to be endorsed by the Kano state governor.

## Senegal

---

### Validation of the inclusive education policy

In 2025, Sightsavers in collaboration with the Ministry of Education carried out the review of the inclusive education policy considering the recommendations from the technical review sessions for social validation involving OPDs, parents' associations, teachers and teachers' unions. A second review was organised, involving the ministries of health, local government, finance, justice and transport). These meetings enabled the Ministry of Education to align the policy with Senegal's VISION 2050 before proceeding to institutional validation. The validation of the policy marks an important step forward for the delivery of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

### Revision to the guide for local development to cover disability inclusion

In 2025, a guide for local authorities, used to inform approaches to local development, was revised to disability inclusion. Sightsavers supported the process of revising the guide, from consultation to validation, training OPD members and identifying gaps in the guide in terms of disability. The guide was validated in 2025 by the association of mayors of Senegal.

## Sierra Leone

---

### Integration of eye health into district health plans

As part of its efforts to promote the sustainable financing of eye health and the representation of persons with disabilities in the delivery of eye health services, Sightsavers has supported the strengthening of district eye health committees. Persons with disabilities are playing a role in the allocation of resources for eye health through their representation and participation in these eye health committees. In 2025, eye health was incorporated into all local council and district health plans, facilitated by the various district eye health committees.

### Progress towards approval of the Persons with Disabilities Act

Sightsavers supported sustained engagement with both the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) and the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI) to provide technical assistance during the final review of the revised Act. The final draft has been formally submitted to the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice for vetting. In addition, SLUDI and NCPD led the development of an expanded position paper on key provisions aimed at strengthening the rights and privileges of persons with disabilities as guaranteed in the Constitution. Notably, the Government —through the Law Officers'

Department—has accepted these recommendations, and at the end of 2025, they were under review before submission to the Legislative Committee for approval.

## Togo

---

### Ratification of the African Disability Protocol

In 2025, the National Assembly of Togo passed a bill for the ratification of the African Disability Protocol (ADP). Together with OPD partners, Sightsavers has been advocating for ratification of the ADP for many years. In July 2025, Sightsavers coordinated with media organisations to raise awareness and launched a campaign to secure 10,000 signatures, a record, to demand government ratification. Sightsavers also engaged with the National Campaign for Human Rights (CNDH) to be involved in the process and submitted a petition to the National Assembly. The National Assembly passed a bill for ratification, and the bill has been submitted to the Senate for approval, although this is no more than a formality. There will be an official launch and celebration in 2026.