



# **Children with disability** **Promising Practices**

FEBRUARY 2022



# Promising Practices across five priority areas

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This document highlights the work World Vision has done across the five priority areas for the Global Disability Summit 2022. We hope we encourage others to do the same. After each promising practice, you will find the contact details for our staff who can provide more information.

For more information on our work on disability inclusion worldwide, please contact the disability inclusion leadership team:

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**IMAGE ABOVE:** A 'Sunday School' session for parents of children with disabilities in Telavi, Georgia. Photo by Meri Arjevanidze, Feb 2019 © World Vision.

# Inclusive Education - Georgia

**World Vision** Georgia's **Inclusive Early Childhood Development (ECD)** plan shows how an education programme focused on ECD can work with others to identify children with disabilities early on and give full support to meet their needs. Targeted early childhood development is very important to get caregivers and other community members on board and prevent deaths, developmental delays, violence, neglect, and social isolation in children with disabilities.

**World Vision Georgia's approach includes the following beliefs:**

## Every child is valued

Stigma towards children with disabilities is the biggest barrier to accessing early childhood education. The team used World Vision's "Traveling Together" manual on disability inclusion and held meetings led by local partners to change attitudes towards children with disabilities.

## Every child is seen and families are empowered

The team uses **World Vision's** core education programme models, **Go Baby Go** (for the first 1,000 days) and **Learning Roots** (ages 3-6 years), with all children, including those with disabilities.

The programme trained preschool education specialists to use markers to identify children who have significant development delays, as this may show the child has a disability.

Positive parenting schools give parents of children with disabilities power as direct caregivers and advocates for accessibility, diversity, and quality of services for their children. Parents also receive information on services that are available.

Children join in high-quality activities that suit their age and level of development. Early childhood educators and assistants are there to help.

## An inclusive learning environment is created

As part of education staff coaching, World Vision supported the recruitment, funding and training, of inclusion specialists. These specialists work with children with disabilities and talk to parents and preschool workers to make sure they have access, meaningful participation, and a smooth transition to preschool (and later to school). Because of this, the number of children with disabilities in preschools, including those from ethnic minorities, increases each year. The World Vision team created a guidebook for school readiness and a plan with the Ministry of Education to extend this practice across Georgia.

## Advocacy for transformative development

World Vision has shared the materials and results from the programme nationally and written a proposal to encourage adoption across the country. This has increased demand from the community for improved services for children with disabilities, resulting in more projects to enhance ECD services that are co-funded by government and other organisations.

World Vision is also advising the government on giving five-year-old children with hearing and visual impairments access to pre-primary education. For more information, watch the video [Inclusive Preschool Education](#).

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## Inclusive Health – South Sudan

World Vision works in South Sudan with the **Health Pooled Fund** (a consolidated fund from the British Government's **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office** (FCDO), the **Government of Canada**, the **Swedish International Development** (SIDA) and the **United States Agency for International Development** (USAID)). The programme covers **74** health facilities in Tambura, Nagero Ezo, Nzara and Yambio counties. It shows the importance of placing persons with disabilities in decision-making positions so that inclusive health services meet their specific needs

The overall programme aimed to make the health system more helpful for the community, particularly for women and persons with disabilities. So, women and persons with disabilities were placed in leadership roles. They then made and influenced all important health decisions both at village and unit levels. These included decisions that they were usually excluded from, such as for renovation of health facilities.

This led to important improvements in access to health facilities. All buildings were made accessible and new accessible latrines were constructed in all health facilities. People with disabilities were also given walkers, wheelchairs and tricycles to help them get to the health facilities. We used the Washington Group Short Set of Questions to identify people with disabilities. The number of persons with disabilities accessing health facilities increased from **1,639** in **2019** to **15,069** in **2020**. All facilities also trained staff to help them deal with mental health issues.

This was life-changing for persons with disabilities, who feel that greater access to health services and more influence and mobility have improved their quality of life. A 28-year-old in Yambio county, who spent three years without a wheelchair, said: "It just feels good to know that there are organisations that remember people like us. I feel valued and excited that there are people who still see us as human beings, and important in society."

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**IMAGE RIGHT:** Empowering persons with disabilities in South Sudan through access to facilities © Scovia Faida. Charles © World Vision 2021.



# Inclusive livelihoods and social protection

## – Sri Lanka

World Vision's work in the **I-Live** project in Sri Lanka, partly funded by the Australian government, shows the importance of challenging stigma towards persons with disabilities as part of efforts to enhance their livelihoods.

In Sri Lanka, the **I-Live** project has brought **1,526** persons with disabilities into the community and workforce, with **92%** saying they feel more independent. Persons with disabilities made up **19%** of project participants but held **22%** of leadership positions in the project groups. They made their own decisions, were more confident to speak out at community meetings and more economically active. The project also challenged stigma towards persons with disabilities. The percentage of people reporting that they felt comfortable working with someone with a disability increased from **26%** to **91%**. **C-Change** conversations created a place for the community to identify challenges and break down barriers. This led to more encouragement and support for households, being welcomed at community meetings and having their views requested. **I-Live** recruited staff with skills to support disability inclusion including the removal of physical, communication, attitudinal and institutional barriers. It also provided ongoing skill training for staff and home visits to understand the needs of persons with disabilities. Staff took time to build relationships with persons with disabilities, addressed safety concerns and built confidence, and provided accessible transport, sign language and support staff. The project also worked with:

- **Organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) so they could reach out to persons with disabilities in their communities and use their skills and knowledge to raise awareness, challenge stigma and promote improved living conditions**
- **Government at district level by teaching them about disability issues, improving disability inclusion in their programmes and referral mechanisms to specialised services**

See how the project worked for one group of persons with disabilities in [Life in a nutshell](#). The project has produced very useful resources, including a **C-Change** manual, a Disability Inclusion staff guide and community activities.

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IMAGE ABOVE: A groundnut producer group developed by an organization of persons with disabilities. © World Vision.

# Strengthening engagement with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) - India

“Nothing about us, without us” has been the mantra of the disability community, which demands that persons with disabilities are included in the design and decision-making process of programmes. **World Vision** encourages children to join in these processes. The **Our Voice** programme shows that when children with disabilities are included in design and decision-making, there are life-changing results for everyone.

**World Vision** India has improved the lives of around **7,000** children with disabilities through **Our Voice** workshops. **World Vision** staff and volunteers find suitable children during home visits. Meetings are held locally where children are asked to rate services on a scorecard, given information on rights and services, and can enjoy talent shows. Former **Our Voice** champions continue to campaign for the rights of children with disabilities in their communities. For example, Samir Mondal (West Bengal) has formed 10 groups for persons with disabilities in his area and works for the inclusion of children with disabilities by helping them get their disability certificate and other services.

The programme has organised more than **20** national meetings for children with disabilities. These help the children understand each other’s challenges, express themselves, display their talents, and talk about their concerns with relevant people. They are conducted with OPDS and other organisations, working to connect children with disabilities to those with the power to make decisions that improve their lives.

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**IMAGE ABOVE: INDIA:** Rekha, pictured on her way to school, is an Our Voice participant. She convened the National Forum of Children with Disabilities - part of a global movement of children with disabilities - and led an 11 member group to present a children’s manifesto at the 68th UN General Assembly in New York. © Annila Harris, World Vision.

# Inclusion in situations of conflict and crisis, including from climate change

## – Iraq and Uganda

Our work in Iraq and Uganda shows the importance of working with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in conflict and crisis situations.

**World Vision** provides inclusive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programmes for displaced people: see the video [Disability inclusive WASH](#) in Iraq. Since 2017, we have built **90** accessible latrines and showers, made **35** schools, **12** health centres and a youth centre accessible, and provided **170** households with devices to improve access to WASH. This work has been funded by the Finnish government and UNHCR and will be expanded further with World Vision funds. The Iraq team has used WASH as a starting point for more change. **World Vision** worked with OPDs to pressure the government to improve accessibility. Now, accessibility conditions are met before providing a construction license for public and private buildings including schools

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**IMAGE BELOW:** World Vision is implementing a two-year Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Inclusive project aimed at improving access to WASH services for 40,000 refugees and host community members in Omugo sub-county. © Derrick Kyatuka World Vision 2021.



In Uganda – the Omugo Disability Inclusive WASH, Livelihood and Protection project has helped over **8,665** persons with disabilities living in refugee camps and host communities in the past three years. The project, funded by the Finnish government, works with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) to find households who may need help.

**World Vision** constructed latrines and water points with ramps and handrails to help those with physical disabilities, including children, to access water within 200 metres of their home. It also supported households with income-generating activities such as baking, grinding, weaving and carpentry. **World Vision** sensitized households by challenging existing stereotypes towards children with disabilities, **as Awate J says:**

*“I am extremely happy to tell everyone that I now live happily with my daughter. The learning sessions I have attended have given me time to love my child whom I used to hate because of the stress she gives me. She does not want to eat food, talk and even bathing is always a fight. Because of this, I had a lot of anger and used to beat her. But after the learning sessions, I have come to understand her state and even love her more. We can now freely talk and sometimes laugh together. I have also extended these sensitisations to my neighbours and other persons with disabilities who had no opportunity to attend the community sensitisations. I want to thank World Vision from my sincere heart. I have learnt a lot and I will not go back to the anger I used to have towards my daughter and other persons with disabilities.”*

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# CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY PROMISING PRACTICES

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World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

**IMAGE FRONT COVER:** Mwikali, 14, a key beneficiary for the Wheel Chair for Kids donations supported by World Vision Australia © Laura Reinhardt, World Vision.