



POLICY
Humanitarian
Action

Global situation

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected

It is estimated that about 15% of the world’s population are people with disabilities¹. In some humanitarian contexts this figure is even as high as 27%². Climate change, natural disasters and conflicts are likely to further increase the prevalence of disability in the future. These events moreover increase vulnerability, forcing people from their homes and disrupting support networks. In 2019, approximately 12 to 16 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide have a disability³.

Women, girls, boys and men with disabilities are among the most at-risk in crisis affected communities⁴ as well as in contexts of forced displacement. They are disproportionately affected in humanitarian settings, as reflected by their mortality rate: this is two to four times

higher than that of people without disabilities⁵. The risks facing people with disabilities are increased by a range of barriers: environmental, attitudinal, as well as institutional barriers to social participation create structural inequalities and restrict access to humanitarian assistance and protection⁶.

Inclusion is not a favour...

In the past decade considerable progress has been made in the way humanitarian frameworks and policies address inclusion. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) laid the foundation by obliging states to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in situations of risk and during disaster response, as stated in Article 11⁷:

“States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.”

1 WHO, “[Disability and health](#)”, 16 January 2018.

2 Several studies indicate that the 15% average is an underrepresentation. HelpAge International & Handicap International (2014), estimate 20% in their [study](#) Hidden Victims of the Syrian Crisis. The Vulnerability Assessment Framework Population [Study](#) in Jordan from 2019 estimates 21% (p.59). In Afghanistan the Afghanistan Model Disability [Survey](#) conducted in 2019 found 13.9% of people with a severe disability but that 40% had a moderate disability. The Disability: Prevalence and Impact study by the Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme found a staggering 27% disability prevalence among the sample population in Syria.

3 UNHCR Global Trends Report 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/>

4 Report of the UN Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit, [One Humanity, Shared Responsibility](#).

5 Katsunori Fujii, ‘[The Great East Japan Earthquake and Disabled Persons](#)’, in Disability Information Resources, Japan.

6 [IASC guidelines](#), Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, 2019.

7 UNCRPD (2006). [Article 11](#).

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(2015\)](#)

affirms that no one should be left behind and to support those ‘furthest behind’ first. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (2015) highlight the same principles, as do other commitments derived from the World Humanitarian Summit (2016), including the [Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#). [The UN Disability Inclusion Strategy \(2019\)](#) applies a ‘disability inclusion approach’ across all pillars of the UN System, including the humanitarian field. Furthermore, there is a growing body of guiding materials developed to support with inclusive humanitarian action, such as the [Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for Older People and People with Disabilities \(2018\)](#). Most recently, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) [Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action \(2019\)](#) were published. These complement and build on existing humanitarian standards, including the [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) and the [Sphere Handbook](#).

The international community continues to demonstrate increased attention to inclusive humanitarian action, in part thanks to the advocacy efforts of the disability movement and supporting partners. This increased attention is reflected by growing funding opportunities - for example by the [UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office](#) and the [European Union](#).

Why we need to engage now

In Light for the World’s focus countries [humanitarian needs](#) continue to be on the rise because of the combined effect of conflict, food shortages, climate change, poverty, and disease outbreaks – all factors to which the coronavirus pandemic constitutes an additional challenge. Conflict is disrupting the lives of many fragile communities in the north of Burkina Faso. Uganda hosts the largest number of refugees in the continent, the majority of whom are from South Sudan or the Democratic Republic of Congo. Insecurity and recurrent weather extremes are eroding the ability of fragile communities in Ethiopia to recover, while it is also Africa’s second largest refugee-hosting country, thus compounding the humanitarian situation in a country that is already struggling to cope. Another looming crisis is emerging in Mozambique’s northern Cabo Delgado province. In 2019 it even saw two cyclones devastating much needed agricultural produce and affecting hundred thousands of lives. South Sudan witnesses the impact of multiple disasters year after year, with millions of people being displaced. Even Kenya, known for its vibrant business community and relative stability, is stretched to cope with the refugee numbers in Kakuma and Dadaab camps, desert locust infestations, heavy rains and the pandemic. As Light for the World we cannot stand at the side, we need to engage. To support persons with disabilities. To support humanitarian actors to become more disability inclusive.

The coordination of humanitarian assistance

Coordination

Humanitarian coordination means bringing humanitarian actors together to ensure a coherent and principled response with the aim of assisting people when they most need relief or protection. The United Nations (UN) has mandated the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to coordinate humanitarian responses to natural hazards and conflict. The Emergency Relief Coordinator is responsible for the oversight of all emergencies requiring UN humanitarian assistance. When an emergency or conflict occurs, the primary responsibility for coordinating humanitarian assistance rests with national authorities. If international humanitarian assistance is required, the Emergency Relief Coordinator may appoint a humanitarian coordinator. The humanitarian or resident coordinator is responsible for leading and coordinating the efforts of both UN and non-UN humanitarian organisations in-country, which can include establishing a cluster structure with appointed cluster leads and a UN humanitarian country team⁸.

Strengthening the humanitarian system

The [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\)](#) is a forum where both UN and non-UN organisations are represented. Its main aim is to strengthen the humanitarian system. It develops humanitarian policies, agrees on a division of responsibility for various aspects of humanitarian assistance, identifies and addresses gaps in response, and advocates for effective application of humanitarian principles. Often it does not only concern a particular emergency but is relevant for the humanitarian aid sector as a whole. Other organisations and networks that provide important research to improve humanitarian practice are the [Humanitarian Policy Group](#), [ALNAP](#) and [CHS Alliance](#).

Key processes

The humanitarian programme cycle, taken forward by the UN humanitarian country teams, is a central process in any emergency. It supports the needs assessment and analysis, based on which the strategic response planning and resource mobilization takes place. This is followed by implementation and monitoring of interventions and is finalized with an operational review and evaluation. The humanitarian programme cycle aims to have a stronger emphasis on the needs of affected people, improved targeting of the most vulnerable, increased funding for humanitarian priorities, and greater accountability of humanitarian actors and donors for collective results. Information on emergency operations, assessments and reports as well as the humanitarian system set up, is made accessible to anyone to support an efficient, effective and coordinated approach⁹.

Sector cooperation

One of the coordination mechanisms is the cluster approach¹⁰. It is established at global level and can be activated at national as well as at sub-national level. Clusters are organized in accordance with the main response sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. camp coordination and management, early recovery, health, food security, shelter and protection. A cluster can consist of various sub-clusters (e.g. child protection) and different working groups (e.g. disability working group). Each cluster is jointly led by one or two designated agencies and the local government who are responsible for management and coordination of the cluster activities. Cluster members may involve international humanitarian organisations, host governments, local authorities and local civil society organisations.

8 See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters/who-does-what>

9 See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en>

10 See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters>

Donors

The largest donors on humanitarian assistance are the US, Germany, EU institutions and the UK. The total volume of funding was 28.6 billion USD (2017) of which 34% was channelled to NGOs. On average international NGOs receive 42% of their funding from government funding and 58% from private sources. Although local and national NGOs receive funding directly from institutional and private donors, the percentage is very small (3.1%) compared to international NGOs. A trend is the increase in pooled funding, which is a funding vehicle used in particular by

donors like the UK, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway. Humanitarian appeals to mobilize financial resources are either launched within weeks after natural disasters, or launched every year in countries with protracted crises, like South Sudan and Ethiopia. Long-term humanitarian work is also taking place in countries like Kenya and Uganda with large refugee populations¹¹.

¹¹ See: <https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2019/>

Making humanitarian action inclusive and accountable

Humanitarian transformation agendas

The [CHS Alliance 2018 Humanitarian Accountability Report](#) provides valuable insight on the gaps in the humanitarian system and the levers that can be used for positive change to support disability inclusive humanitarian action. Major transformation agendas in the humanitarian sector are the participation of crisis-affected people in humanitarian decision-making processes, the localization agenda, the alleviation of sexual exploitation and abuse, inclusive humanitarian action, cash transfer, and simplification and harmonization of reporting requirements. These necessary transformations are also based on the [Grand Bargain commitments \(2016\)](#) and aim to challenge and address the power inequity, promote local ownership as well as accountability to and protection of affected people. At the level of the IASC this has been reflected in a result group on [accountability and inclusion to promote people-centred approaches](#), and the publication of the IASC guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action in 2019. The IASC result group works closely with the [disability reference group](#), of which Light for the World has been a member since 2020.

Commitments but not yet practised

The recent [gap analysis commissioned by ELRHA](#)¹² underlines the lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action in practice. It highlights the lack of meaningful participation of persons with disabilities, lack of involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities, low level of skills of humanitarian practitioners on how to include persons with different types of disabilities, and the sheer lack of evidence on what works and absence of tailored technical guidance and tools. Why is the change process towards more local ownership, accountability and inclusion rather slow in the humanitarian sector? What are the barriers? A number of factors play a role such as the relative high number of experienced international staff moving from one emergency to another; large budgets to be allocated, spent and accounted for in short period of time; little room for failure and proper follow up; perceived lack of local capacity to deliver aid and work according to

¹² The gaps and good practices are also described in ODI's Humanitarian Practice Network Journal Humanitarian Exchange, Issue 78, October 2020 on Disability inclusion in Humanitarian Action: <https://odihpn.org/magazine/disability-inclusion-in-humanitarian-action/>

humanitarian standards; competition and a siloed approach of humanitarian actors; and, high demands by institutional donors.

Levers of change

But also, both ELRHA and the CHS Alliance identify levers of change to foster disability inclusive humanitarian practice. These are tailoring of technical guidance and tools – such as a disability marker; driving organisational change to ensure that humanitarian organisations make it part of their default approach; putting meaningful participation into practice for example by engaging persons with disabilities in decision making structures; understanding intersectionality between age, gender and disability; the collection and use of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics but also needs based data; allocation of resources and maintaining knowledge; and, adapting to local and diverse contexts. Disability organisations, organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and donors all have an important role to play to push for change.

Light for the World’s experience

Light for the World’s hands-on, country based, experience is especially relevant in view of the localisation agenda, accountability to affected populations and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the humanitarian sector. In the countries where Light for the World is working, it has a long-term vision, primarily in sub Saharan Africa, country offices and qualified teams, a sound network of grassroots organisations reaching out to persons with disabilities directly. We invest in developing relationships of trust with organisations of persons with disabilities, nurtures strategic links with government agencies and ministries, and advises mainstream organisations in making their work disability inclusive. Within this ecosystem of partnerships Light for the World takes a rights-based approach to the design, implementation and evaluation of its programmes, as well as thematic and country strategies.

There is a demand for Light for the World to act and respond to the increasingly important question of ‘how to include’ in humanitarian action. Moreover, in the context of

a humanitarian crisis, additional expert capacity is required. Organisations of people with disabilities and disability-specific partner organisations are affected by disasters. Both conflict and natural disasters, affect partner staff directly and hamper their work. Light for the World can engage in humanitarian action and support both partner organisations struck by disaster where necessary, as well as humanitarian actors in making their interventions disability inclusive.

Previous interventions by Light for the World in our focus countries in South Sudan, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Uganda showed how our inclusion expertise can make sure that people with disabilities are not left behind in times of emergency. Light for the World formed, trained and equipped a group of disability inclusion facilitators: persons with disabilities in the lead to train, coach and monitor mainstream humanitarian organisations to make disability inclusion a reality. At the same time necessary direct support was given to persons with disabilities in IDP sites in South Sudan who had fled conflict and in rural areas in Mozambique in the wake of cyclone Idai. The needs identified during these interventions has stressed the importance of incorporating humanitarian action in our strategic framework 2021-2025. There has been a recognition that the context of our focus countries makes it impossible to operate outside of humanitarian action.



Our approach to humanitarian action

Our guiding principles

- ▶ The humanitarian work of Light for the World is guided by the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCRPD\)](#), in particular general principles embedded in Article 3 and Article 11.
- ▶ The [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) is used as a guiding standard in our emergency work. It sets out nine commitments that can be used to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance.
- ▶ We share the principles of the [Humanitarian Charter and Sphere Handbook](#) that guide our response to disasters.
- ▶ We support organisations with the practical implementation of the [IASC Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#).

Our intervention strategies

Light for the World believes that targeted support to persons with disabilities and technical support to humanitarian organisations on inclusion should go ‘hand in hand’ to reach women and men, girls and boys with disabilities in humanitarian settings. We have embedded this approach in the following intervention strategies:

In our focus countries Light for the World supports, advises and advocates to ensure the rights, protection and safety of people with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies. We act when a partner and/or the communities they work with are affected, by mobilizing our existing local networks and by connecting with mainstream humanitarian actors. The duration and structure of engagement depends on the magnitude of the emergency, the experience and capacity of staff, the partner network within the country, and requests by mainstream humanitarian organisations to provide technical support.

Intervention strategies	Outputs	Outcome	Impact
1. Technical advice to mainstream humanitarian actors ¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ support operationalization of technical guides and tools ▶ build capacity of disability inclusion facilitators ▶ train and coaching of humanitarian practitioners ▶ monitor and document progress on disability inclusion ▶ engage with humanitarian coordination mechanisms 	Interventions of mainstream humanitarian actors are accessible for and inclusive of people with disabilities	Saving lives, mitigating harmful consequences, building resilience, and upholding the rights of persons with disabilities
2. Facilitate advocacy for inclusion of people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ support OPDs to have their voice heard (e.g. in a disability working group) 	People with disabilities engage confidently and effectively with humanitarian organisations and the humanitarian coordination mechanism	
3. Direct support to affected persons with disabilities in emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ support disability specific organisations and OPDs during the first emergency phase with food and non-food item distribution ▶ enable disability specific support to persons with disabilities (e.g. disability inclusion in community development related activities) 	The immediate needs of people with disabilities are met, support personal assistants, and caregivers of children with disabilities in affected communities	

¹³ Mainstream humanitarian actors include the government, UN agencies, (I)NGOs and ICRC/IFRC.

The intervention strategies of Light for the World are:

1. **Technical advice to humanitarian actors:** we participate actively in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and provide capacity building through qualified disability inclusion advisors and facilitators on inclusive humanitarian action. The capacity building entails among others training, action planning, supportive monitoring and documentation. We increase visibility of people with disabilities in an emergency by promoting disaggregation of data by disability type, gender and age, facilitating direct engagement and participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in humanitarian clusters, and highlighting inclusive good practices by humanitarian actors and DPOs.
2. **Advocate for inclusion of people with disabilities:** we advocate for disability inclusive humanitarian action plans as well as enhancing consultation with and participation of DPOs with governments and mainstream humanitarian actors. We take an active role in international humanitarian and disability networks e.g. the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), the Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and national cluster structures in affected countries.
3. **Direct response in emergencies:** through our local partner network or by linking up with other organisations including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, we provide targeted support to people with disabilities to meet their immediate needs during emergencies. We ensure equal access to information, essential food and-non-food items, safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, and provide psychosocial support. This support is time bound, to aid our target group through an extremely difficult period, and to be able to resume development interventions as soon as possible. We will provide direct support only when absolutely necessary.

These three intervention strategies are relevant in all three phases of humanitarian action, that is during preparedness, response/emergency and reconstruction. Whereas the direct response to support our target group is primarily during the emergency phase.

What is the nexus approach – and how should we feed in?

A nexus approach is needed in response to the increased number of protracted crises, conflicts and intense natural disasters. These crises create a cycle of vulnerability, which particularly affects those who are already in a vulnerable position, such as people with disabilities. To address this issue, an approach is required that takes into account preparedness, emergency relief, and sustainable development. This is referred to as the concept of a 'humanitarian-development-peace nexus'. Within a nexus approach, actors from different fields bring in their specific expertise in order to create sustainable solutions.

With our approach, Light for the World aims to feed into the nexus framework, with a specific focus on the inclusion of people with disabilities in humanitarian response and development interventions. We work on both humanitarian interventions and project-based development to meet the needs of the most vulnerable effectively. This is reflected within our approach: activities under the third intervention strategy (direct action) mainly contribute to immediate relief efforts, while our mainstreaming and advocacy activities under the first and second strategies (technical advice and advocacy, respectively) ensure long-lasting inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in a humanitarian response.

Our organisational policies

We engage in humanitarian action in alignment with our policies. The following are of importance:

- ▶ **Safeguarding:** our own practices on safeguarding inform our approach and support our ability to operate in the protection cluster, that tackles gender-based violence and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse.
- ▶ **Gender:** the lived experiences of persons with disabilities varies; being a women or girl influences the stigma of disability in a given community. Light for the World applies an intersectional approach to its work.
- ▶ **Safety and Security:** the humanitarian context in which staff work can pose increased risks. Light for the World has a duty of care to its own staff, partners we work with and beneficiaries. We operate in line with the “do no harm” principle.
- ▶ **Transparency & Anti-Corruption:** the policy on transparency and anti-corruption supports healthy financial management with checks and balances and applies to both, own programmes as well as those of partners that receive funding through Light for the World.

Our thematic mandate areas

Eye Health



A significant part of the programmes of Light for the World support sustainable eye health services across the countries where Light for the World is active. It means working with ministries of health, hospitals and clinics. Humanitarian crises often put an immediate demand on health care services or even destroy health and rehabilitation infrastructures. Our established networks of medical providers and health ministries can play an important role in humanitarian action by:

- ▶ meeting basic needs of affected people by provision of health services;
- ▶ negotiating access to health and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities provided by humanitarian actors;
- ▶ supporting restocking, equipping and rebuilding of medical and health services infrastructure.

Disability Inclusion in Community Development (DICD)

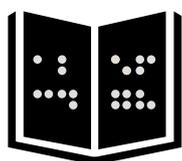


Community activities at Light for the World are based on the Disability Inclusion in Community Development (DICD) approach. It means working with communities to become inclusive while also offering targeted support to people with disabilities. Humanitarian crises may disrupt community structures, can destroy health and rehabilitation services, and also undermine independent living. People with disabilities might face difficulties accessing support and personal assistance, assistive devices or medical treatment. DICD can play an important role in humanitarian action by:

- ▶ conducting accessibility audits and understanding how disability inclusion can be brought in camp/community structures with active engagement of persons with disabilities where possible in refugee/IDP camps and settlements;

- ▶ linking up to existing services for rehabilitation and assistive devices and where possible providing rehabilitation services in (temporary) shelter to ensure continuity and sustainability of rehabilitation during emergency situations;
- ▶ negotiating access to goods and services for people with disabilities provided through humanitarian channels, such as WASH items and health services.
- ▶ training teachers and education providers working in humanitarian settings about the basics of inclusive education and how to interact with and teach different groups of children and youth with disabilities;
- ▶ distributing assistive devices for learning, e.g. MegaVoice devices.

Inclusive Education



As captured in the UNCRPD and SDG 4, every child, including children with disabilities, has the right to inclusive and equitable, quality education. However, due to protracted crises and emergencies, this right is often denied. Disasters may cause physical harm and psychological distress, damage or destroy school buildings and disrupt education activities. This hampers children's access to qualitative education and disrupts learning. By engaging in humanitarian action, Light for the World aims to protect children with disabilities, ensure continuity of learning or recovering the learning process and use the opportunity to 'build back better' - an inclusive education system for children with disabilities. Our Disability Inclusive Education programmes can be translated to humanitarian settings by:

- ▶ advocating for allocations in budgets to target children with disabilities in emergency education programmes and child friendly spaces in camps;
- ▶ ensuring children with disabilities are prioritised in education programmes run by the government and humanitarian actors;
- ▶ providing advice and training on how to make school buildings and learning materials/methods accessible for and inclusive of children with disabilities;

Economic Empowerment



Humanitarian crises have an enormous economic impact. Conflict and natural disasters cause damage to infrastructure, services, private property and assets. The direct economic effects of disasters are especially felt among those who are already poor, which is often the case with people with disabilities and their families. Economic empowerment programmes of Light for the World can reduce the impact of a crisis on the economic well-being of people with disabilities by:

- ▶ meeting basic needs of people with disabilities by provision of food, water and shelter items;
- ▶ establishing village saving groups to mitigate losses of the disaster;
- ▶ linking people with disabilities with shelter, food security and livelihood programmes of government or mainstream humanitarian actors;
- ▶ supporting business opportunities of people with disabilities and organise basic training in bookkeeping.

Our geographical focus areas

Light for the World works in 15 countries in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world. We have country teams operating in our focus countries Burkina Faso, DRC Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. In countries where we have a local presence we intend to play a role in disability inclusive humanitarian action when necessary, using the intervention strategies mentioned above. We will not actively engage in countries where we do not have a presence, as our added value would be more

limited, with the only exception of financially supporting like-minded organizations that promote disability inclusive humanitarian action in case of humanitarian appeals that mobilize significant public support.

Light for the World implements inclusive humanitarian action on different levels through the following intervention levels:



- ▶ **At local level** we work with and through our existing partner network in the region affected by a crisis, prioritizing Organizations of Persons with Disabilities. In the first place, support is provided to the partners affected themselves in order to become fully operational again. Through these partners we will then provide direct support to affected people with disabilities and their families.



- ▶ **At country level** we participate in the Humanitarian Cluster System, the Protection Cluster in particular, once it has been set-up in the affected country. Through this platform we advocate for the inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in humanitarian action, increase our visibility as a humanitarian organisation and seek alliances and partnerships for (future) project implementation. We try to influence mainstream humanitarian actors to become inclusive by sharing our experience and knowledge on inclusion, and supporting humanitarian organisations with practical implementation of inclusive policies and guidelines.



- ▶ **At international level**, we take an active role participating in international humanitarian and disability networks such as the International Disability and Development Consortium and Disability Reference Group. In case a disaster hits a country/region where Light for the World does not have a country office or a local partner network, we would not engage directly, but in case of available funds, and collaborate with other international partners with whom we have a shared mission of reaching people with disabilities in need.

Our partners, staff, allies and donors

To implement our approach, we work through different disability inclusion experts in humanitarian action who are part of the Light for the World family and beyond:

► **Organisations of Persons with Disabilities**

Light for the World works together with local and national organisations of persons with disabilities (OPD) in developing and implementing humanitarian action programmes. The majority of OPD staff and members are people with disabilities themselves and have lived experience of barriers and mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion. In our humanitarian programmes, we support OPDs because they know best how to reach out to people with disabilities affected by a disaster. Members of the disability working group include OPDs, relevant government institutions and (I)NGOs. As representatives of the disability working group, OPDs participate in various clusters where they lead advocacy efforts towards making disability inclusion an integral part of the work and approach of mainstream humanitarian actors.

► **Disability Inclusion Facilitators**

Light for the World has built local capacity for inclusion, by training young people with disabilities to become Disability Inclusion Facilitators (DIFs). The DIFs act as role models and change mindsets. They have acquired in-depth knowledge on mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, both from personal experience as well as through an extensive training and coaching programme. The DIFs provide training and coaching, conduct awareness raising, perform inclusion benchmarking, facilitate action planning and inclusive programming, support monitoring and document good practices. They do this by interacting with individual humanitarian organisations and by participating in cluster meetings and camp coordination mechanisms. The DIF concept is an integral part of our humanitarian programmes.

► **Disability Inclusion Advisors**

Light for the World has its own in-house team of Disability Inclusion Advisors based in various countries. They provide capacity building to Light for the World staff on e.g. inclusive humanitarian action. They also train youth with disabilities to become DIFs and provide them with continued coaching and professional development support. Together with the DIFs, they provide high quality advice to mainstream humanitarian actors on how to make their programmes and organisations accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities. In addition, our Advisors are responsible for training and the development of programmes in close collaboration with OPDs. They give technical input to strengthen institutional capacities to mainstream disability into humanitarian policies and programmes on international, national and local levels.

► **Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Action Experts**

The Humanitarian Action Expert Group at Light for the World brings together staff with extensive experience in the humanitarian field. The group includes country directors, programme coordinators, project officers, research and documentation specialists and disability inclusion advisors. They exchange experiences and knowledge on inclusive humanitarian action within Light for the World and with a broader audience.

▶ **Networks and alliances**

Over the past 30 years, we have built up a network of strong partnerships with the ministries of health, social affairs and education, as well as with a wide range of civil society organisations in our partner countries. The enduring strength of those networks and relationships, built through our ongoing development work, means we can leverage those wide-reaching partnerships for timely and effective humanitarian response in emergencies. We are involved in the national level humanitarian cluster systems of disaster affected countries and we strive for partnerships with mainstream humanitarian actors. At global level we align our messaging with the International Disability Alliance and the members of the International Disability and Development Consortium. We will develop memoranda of understanding with disability-expert-organisations (e.g. HI and CBM) in order to make use of our potential to mobilize attention, resources and influence relevant stakeholders beyond our current partner countries.

▶ **Public and private donors**

Light for the World International is registered as a humanitarian actor with the Austrian Development Agency. It is Light for the World's intention to develop more direct contacts with donors through their list of pre-selected humanitarian organisations, such as the Rapid Response Facility, the Dutch Relief Alliance, Framework Partnership Agreement partner with ECHO, and USAID/OFDA.

Private donors are our individual donors and foundations, who will be approached when an emergency appeal is launched. An emergency response protocol as well as a dedicated emergency response fund is set up to fast track programmatic response, communication and fundraising in the wake of a disaster.

Our resource and knowledge development

We conduct research and document our learning to develop practical guidelines and tools, based on practical experiences on the ground. The technical resources are used to continuously improve our own practices, but also to motivate and technically support other stakeholders to become more inclusive. To capture our learnings and to scale up good practices, we use the following approaches:

- ▶ Conducting research to foster evidence-based practices and advocacy development for inclusive humanitarian action, such as Aid out of Reach.
- ▶ Creating practical guidelines to foster the implementation of inclusive humanitarian practices among our partners, such as Practical Guide on Inclusive Humanitarian Action.
- ▶ Developing tools to monitor and evaluate our work on inclusive humanitarian action, such as the Checklists on inclusion.
- ▶ Documenting our knowledge and experiences on humanitarian response, such as the Capacity Statement on Inclusive Humanitarian Action.
- ▶ Supporting focal persons of Light for the World on Humanitarian Action to share their experiences and learning in the Humanitarian Cluster System.
- ▶ Joining platforms of humanitarian stakeholders to network and share learnings (e.g. Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action).

Annex I: Practical guiding principles



What we do:

- ▶ We involve organisations of persons with disabilities in all our emergency response interventions
- ▶ We work with and through our local partner networks
- ▶ We support the creation of a Disability Working Group as part of the humanitarian cluster system
- ▶ We participate as a member of the Disability Working Group and the Protection Cluster
- ▶ We take an active role in international humanitarian and disability networks
- ▶ We support partners in preparedness for humanitarian crises
- ▶ We arrange food and non-food item distribution to affected partners, people with disabilities and their families, when necessary
- ▶ We safeguard access to rehabilitation goods and services for people with disabilities
- ▶ We address mental, psychological and social needs of our partners, people with disabilities and their families
- ▶ We advocate for equal access to goods and services provided by other humanitarian actors
- ▶ We ensure communication and information channels reach people with disabilities
- ▶ We install complaint mechanisms as part of our humanitarian interventions
- ▶ We provide training and coaching to mainstream humanitarian actors on disability inclusion
- ▶ We promote disability disaggregated data collection and provide support to make data collection tools disability inclusive
- ▶ We advocate for disability inclusive humanitarian action plans of governments and mainstream humanitarian actors
- ▶ We collect evidence and document good practices on inclusive humanitarian action which is shared with a wider international community to stimulate evidence-based learning



What we do not do:

- ▶ We do not support interventions that are outside the humanitarian response plans of the respective country
- ▶ We do not engage in interventions that go against our guiding principles
- ▶ We do not support activities that worsen the exclusion of minorities or support particular political or religious standpoints
- ▶ We try to avoid becoming an instrument of government policy
- ▶ We do not respond without involvement of our local partners and OPDs
- ▶ We do not put our staff unnecessarily in danger while working in humanitarian settings
- ▶ In countries without a local presence we engage only with and through partnerships and alliances.
- ▶ We will not work in isolation, without involvement of the government or other humanitarian actors present.

Version: 2021-01

Approved by: International Management Team, 2021-01

Next review: 2026-01

Responsible: Director of Humanitarian Action

Light for the World

Niederhofstrasse 26

1120 Vienna, Austria

Europe

www.light-for-the-world.org

info@light-for-the-world.org



LIGHT

FOR THE WORLD