

Step by step towards a disability-inclusive COVID-19 response

A summary of Light for the World's activities (Status: June 21)

Introduction

COVID-19 has touched the lives of people all over the world, however, marginalised people - including people with disabilities - have been most severely impacted by the pandemic. Since March 2020, Light for the World has been raising awareness, taking measures, joining campaigns and supporting initiatives to reduce and mitigate the heightened risk the pandemic poses for women and men, girls and boys with disabilities and their families. As the pandemic was evolving, so were we: From responding to the emergency, over adapting our programmes and raising awareness to the ongoing collaboration to ensure national and international commitment to disability-inclusive responses.

Since 03/2020 Emergency Response

Key message

Prevent the spread of COVID-19, prepare people with disabilities to cope with the economic and social impact and adapt ongoing projects.

Target group

People with disabilities and their representative organisations (OPDs) in partner countries.

Tools and initiatives

- Preparing and distributing accessible information and learning materials to people with disabilities, their representative organisations and partners
- Supplying food and hygiene packages
- Procuring of medical and protective equipment
- Protecting our team by switching to home office
- Providing of psycho-social support
- Supporting ad-hoc vocational training for sustainable income

►► Have a look at our [Final Report 'Stronger Together - Light for the World's COVID-19 Response'](#) to find out more about our efforts and projects between April 2020 and March 2021.

Since 06/2020 Awareness-Raising and Tailored Programmes

Key message

Change policies and attitudes at all levels and develop concrete projects and measures to ensure a sustainable disability-inclusive response.

Target group

National stakeholders, regional and local partners, and international organisations, like the WHO.

Tools and initiatives

- Raising awareness through information campaigns targeting health workers, OPDs and national and international stakeholders
- Translating and distributing the WHO Guidelines on COVID-19 and Disability to ensure disability-inclusive, accessible and rights-based disaster responses
- Providing sign language interpretation on press releases and other material on COVID-19
- Adapting projects to the given circumstances and national regulations
- Collecting data on the situation of persons with disabilities in partner countries

►► Find out more about [ReCouVrer](#), a new partnership focussing on economic empowerment and resilience of disadvantaged groups during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Burkina Faso and Senegal, initiated and funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation.

Since 01/2021 **Building Alliances for Inclusive Vaccination Plans**

Key message

We call on the international community to ensure an equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and call on national stakeholders to be inclusive and accessible in the planning, awareness-raising and distribution phase of vaccination strategies.

Target group

National stakeholders, including state governments and Ministries of Health, and international organisations and development actors.

Tools and initiatives

- Issuing a policy statement, a press release and related Issue Briefs and speaking at a press conference on equitable and inclusive COVID-19 vaccination roll-outs
- Collaborating with and supporting an international campaign led by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), including:
 - Issuing public statements and letters and raising awareness on online channels
 - Collecting and publishing stories from project participants in partner countries
 - Preparing a toolkit for national advocacy for OPDs

►► Read through our [Policy Statement 'Front row for the most vulnerable'](#), the latest [Issue Brief on 'The Rights to Disability-Inclusive Health'](#) and IDA/IDDC's ['Toolkit for National COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign for Persons with Disabilities'](#) for concrete examples of international advocacy.

About Light for the World

Light for the World is a global disability and development organisation, breaking down barriers to enrich society and unlock the potential in all of us. Our vision is an inclusive society for all where no one is left behind. We enable eye health services and empower people with disabilities in some of the poorest regions of the world.

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