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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Capacity Statement

Light for the World
June 2024



Our aim

We aim to improve the learning outcomes, participation and life chances of children and youth with disabilities, paying special attention to the needs of girls and those most discriminated against, while also building up disability-inclusive education systems.

About us

Light for the World is a global disability and development organisation, breaking down barriers to strengthen society and empower people with disabilities in some of the poorest regions of the world. We create change through local people, organisations and governments to ensure lasting impact in health and disability inclusion. Our focus areas are economic empowerment, eye health, humanitarian action and education.

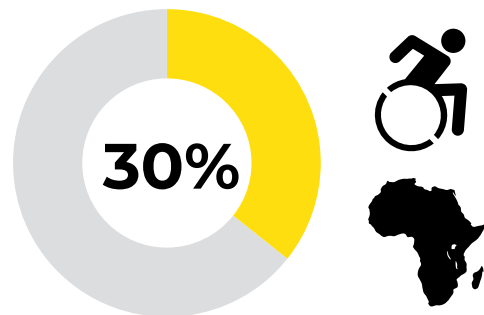
The work of supporting girls and boys with disabilities in realising their right to education started nearly 30 years ago through our community-based rehabilitation work. Since 2013, we have deepened our engagement and commitment to systemic change by linking international advocacy to national level influencing and enhancing the capacities of the mainstream education systems and actors.

Why

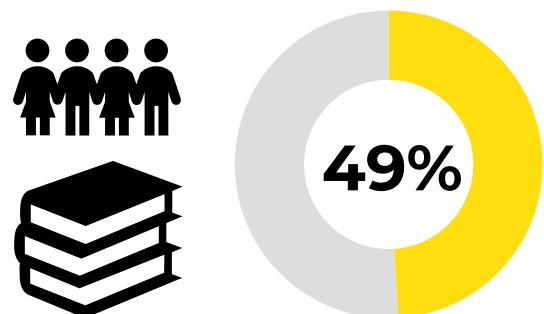
At Light for the World, we are passionate about resetting the starting line and creating enabling conditions that allow girls and boys with disabilities to thrive and reach their full potential.

There are 240 million children with disabilities worldwide. Most children with disabilities are excluded from education systems and experience huge disparities in learning. Compared to children without disabilities, children with disabilities are 49% more likely to have never attended school and 42% less likely to have foundational reading and numeracy skills (UNICEF, 2021).

Solutions that support the inclusion of learners with disabilities, who are often those most at risk of neglect, stigma and abuse, are the same approaches that support the well-being and success of all learners. As it states in the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), inclusive education is a means of achieving high-quality education for all children and young people. Investment in inclusive education systems, with diversity at the core, is key to transforming education.



Around 30 percent of all children with disabilities reside in sub-Saharan Africa.



Children *with* disabilities are 49% more likely to never have attended school than children *without* disabilities.

BURKINA FASO

ETHIOPIA

SOUTH SUDAN

MOZAMBIQUE

Our approach

Our work is guided by the overarching twin-track approach, recognized in the UNCRPD; that transforming education systems to be disability inclusive requires: (1) Providing specific support for learners with disabilities, such as tailored rehabilitation and assistive devices; (2) System-wide reforms which embed disability inclusion in the education system, thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning for all through changing policies, practices and attitudes.

We take a holistic, integrated and multisectoral approach to advancing disability inclusive education – in both development and in emergency contexts – to address the multiple disadvantages girls and boys experience depending on their locality, gender, disability, ethnicity and economic status. It starts with targeted support to the child and family and includes creating a conducive environment by mainstreaming disability into all services geared to support children who are most discriminated against.

1

Targeted support to children and families on a community level

Our approach to inclusive education is rooted in social behavioural change at community and family level, and we support our partners to ensure children with disabilities are supported holistically and in a sustainable way. Families receive counselling and accurate information about their child's condition to combat myths and pervasive negative stereotypes. We facilitate access to early childhood intervention services including rehabilitation, medical care and assistive technology, and link families to livelihood activities that help lift them out of poverty and increase their status in the community. Child protection services are embedded throughout our programmes.

2

Child-centred design and inclusive play

Light for the World sees “play” as a key driver to inclusion, especially for young children with disabilities. Inclusion of children with disabilities does not happen automatically, not on the playground or in the village, and is a process that needs to be moderated. Inclusive play is a proven, accepted methodology to stimulate learning and inclusion. In our inclusive play approach, we focus on three core elements: (1) Child-centred design to foster innovation to address barriers to play; (2) Offering technical guidance on the ‘how’ of inclusive play; (3) Documentation of stories and good practices.

Our approach

3

Technical support and capacity development to governments, teacher training institutions and education actors

Our technical support to implementing partners involves practical capacity development on how to make teaching and learning practices more inclusive and improve learning outcomes. We encourage schools to take a whole-school outlook by fostering a nurturing environment and making inclusion the responsibility of everyone. To lessen the demands on teachers, Light for the World works with organisations who specialise in the use of accessible technologies to make textbooks and learning materials accessible.

We support governments to deliver disability-inclusive education in development as well as in emergency settings. We tailor our support to the specific needs of each context. Examples include customized training packages and coaching for staff and implementing partners on collecting and analysing disability disaggregated data, school accessibility audits, pedagogical approaches such as Universal Design for Learning and the deployment of Disability Inclusion Facilitators - young people with disabilities trained to provide practical advice and support on disability inclusion to a range of stakeholders including governments, companies, vocational training centres, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), NGOs and humanitarian actors.

4

Advocacy for system change

Our evidence-based advocacy campaigns on investing in disability inclusive education, early childhood development and the education workforce are changing systems at both international and national level. With key partners like Save the Children, UNICEF, UNESCO and donors like Education Cannot Wait (ECW), including OPDs, families of children with disabilities, other local and international education NGOs, Light for the World makes the case for governments and donors to urgently increase investment in disability-responsive education financing.



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Education is the gateway to the future, and ensuring this gate is wide open for every child equally is our responsibility. Quality teacher training and community involvement are the roots of quality Inclusive Education programmes – and children with disabilities deserve access to proper services and technology to thrive.”

Hannan Endale, ETHIOPIA Inclusive Education Programme Officer

Education in emergencies

Children with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, such as conflict, natural and climate-related disaster. They face elevated levels of violence, exploitation and abuse; are more affected by the disruption of health, education and other social services; and face barriers (including physical barriers) to accessing protection, assistance and even evacuation to safety. This heightened risk is linked to pre-existing patterns of discrimination and exclusion, exacerbated by gaps in humanitarian assistance design and delivery.

Education in emergencies promotes the rights of children with disabilities in humanitarian contexts. Light for the World is committed supporting education in emergencies interventions – *before, during and after crises*. This is especially true when children from marginalized groups and children with disabilities, especially girls, are concerned. Ensuring a disability-inclusive education within emergency contexts is key to combating the exclusion of children with disabilities from their right to education and can improve the learning experiences and outcomes of all children. It fosters diversity, agency and understanding. It protects children with disabilities from discrimination and violence and empowers them to participate meaningfully in society; enhancing their future employability.



Publications, resources and tools

- [Gender-responsive and Disability Inclusive Education Budgeting](#)
- [Bedrock to Inclusion: Why Investing in the Education Workforce is Critical to the Delivery of SDG4](#)
- [Leave No Child Behind: Invest in the Early Years](#)
- [Pivoting to Inclusion: Leveraging Lessons from the COVID-19 Crisis for Learners with Disabilities](#)
- [#CostingEquity: The Case for Inclusive Education Financing](#)
- [CapAble online resource platform](#)
- [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\) training](#)

Achievement highlights 2018 - 2023



Inclusive Education

Led IE investment movement resulting in:



GCE community of practice - **membership + 250** mainstream and disability organisations, **influencing** major US-based donors such as the World Bank, USAID, GPE, etc.

Disability indicators included in the **results framework** of ECW, the World Bank and USAID

Disability inclusion in the **Nurturing Care Framework**

Published **Bedrock of Inclusion**: Why investing in the education workforce is critical to the delivery of SDG4



2023: Reached **28,700** students with disabilities in **9 countries**, **2,149** students with disabilities were provided with **assistive devices**; **964 schools** were supported



Continued development of **youth leaders and champions** of disability inclusive education through our **disability inclusion facilitator** work



2019 – 2023: 14,733 teachers, 12,335 government staff, 8,710 staff of civil society organizations and 5,048 community workers were **sensitized or trained on inclusive education**

Our projects/programmes



PROJECT / DATES	DONOR / PARTNER / PARTICIPANTS / IMPACT
<p>Multi-Year Resilience Programme for South Sudan 2023 – 2026</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Education Cannot Wait (ECW), Global Partnership for Education (GPE) PARTICIPANTS: 318,700 in-need children, who are most discriminated against; 10% children with disabilities and 60% girls IMPACT IN BRIEF: Establish and strengthen linkages with OPDs and provide support. Conduct needs evaluations to procure and distribute mobility and assistive devices, targeted resource mobilization and specialized services for learners with disabilities. DIFs will be identified, trained to enable inclusion (school and community level). Guidance integrated into the teacher helpdesk and referral mechanisms designed to provide tailored services for those with disabilities. Resource center established, dissemination of the inclusive education policy, teachers training, transcribing textbooks to braille and empowering DIFs to be key facilitators.</p>
<p>Mastercard Foundation Scholars Programme 2023-2030</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Mastercard Foundation IMPACT IN BRIEF: Ongoing support to selected higher education institutions to support the enrolment of youth with disabilities. Capacity development, helpdesk and bespoke resources on Cap-Able platform, to support disability inclusion and overcome barriers to education and employment.</p>
<p>IE and DICD intervention for persons with disabilities in Central and North Gondar Zones, Amhara Region, Ethiopia 2022-2024 (Continuation)</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Gondor University PARTICIPANTS: Supporting 901 young people with disabilities and 14 schools in the Gondar Zones in Amhara region. IMPACT IN BRIEF: Develop competent and confident families, students and teachers through community-based rehabilitation and facilitate the enrolment and school readiness of children with disabilities, school capacity strengthening and teachers training in inclusive pedagogies.</p>
<p>Inclusive Education Kossi/Nouna 2020-2023</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Sternschnupper, Catholic Organisation for Development and Solidarity PARTICIPANTS: 45,930 students, including 300 newly identified children with disabilities, 10 educational supervisors, 10 pedagogical advisors, 40 teachers, 40 experts and 50 educational staff; School peers and communities (indirectly). IMPACT IN BRIEF: Children with and without disabilities able to attend local schools; educational professionals received inclusive training.</p>
<p>EAGLE - Empowering Adolescent Girls to Learn and Earn Actively promotes literacy and learning in out of school adolescent girls with disabilities 2020-2025</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) PARTICIPANTS: Aims to increase access to education, improve literacy, numeracy, business and life skills, and enhance economic empowerment for 3000 out-of-school girls and young women, ages 15-19 in Manica and Sofala provinces, Mozambique - using technology and accelerated learning programmes (ALP). IMPACT IN BRIEF: Increased capacities in disability inclusive programming. The success of the girls with disabilities has raised community and political commitment to ensure their well-being, education and economic empowerment.</p>
<p>Accessible learning and reading through technology 2017-2025</p>	<p>PARTNER/DONOR: Merch Family Foundation, Daisy Consortium, WIPA and UNESCO PARTICIPANTS: Learners with visual disabilities in primary, post-primary and secondary schools and university, and teachers. IMPACT IN BRIEF: Mobilizing the Marrakesh treaty, relaxing copyright laws enabling the production and dissemination of accessible publications (e.g. ePub, Bookshare, etc.), awareness-raising and providing training on universally accessible technologies for students and teachers.</p>
<p>#CostingEquity and Leave no Child Behind International evidence-based advocacy campaign to track ODA commitments in relation to policies 2015-2020</p>	<p>DONOR/PARTNER: Open Society Foundation (OSF) IMPACT IN BRIEF: Over 260 civil society organisations signed a call to action for transformation to be more disability inclusive and demanding more investment. An inclusive education and early childhood development CoP, comprising of over 240 members was established. The World Bank, UK government and other prominent donors have made disability inclusion part of their results framework. For example, in 2018, the World Bank committed to make all education programmes disability inclusive by 2025.</p>

Key partners

TECHNICAL & EXPERT PARTNERS Daisy Consortium, eKitabu, etc.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Sudan - Ministries of Education, Social Welfare Services, Health Agencies (national, regional and district levels), etc.

INGOs & HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES Save the Children, VSO, BRAC, Plan International, NRC, Finn Church Aid, UNICEF, etc.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MOVEMENTS Enabling Education Network (EENET), Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and National Education coalitions, International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), Early Childhood Development Taskforce, etc.



I have no doubt that the partnership between Light for the World and UNICEF will continue to be stronger. A partnership like this, that is based on mutual trust and genuine commitment, has a solid ground for reaching tangible results for children and adults with disabilities.”

Edina Kozma, UNICEF Protection Specialist

Key experts

SOPHIA MOHAMMED International Expert, Inclusive Education, East Africa Region/Country Lead South Sudan

MARIEKE BOERSMA Inclusive Education Lead, Head of Quality and Innovation



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LIGHT FOR THE WORLD is an international organisation specialising in inclusive development. Our goal is an inclusive society that is open to all and leaves no one behind. We champion inclusive services in all aspects of life, so that persons with disabilities can participate with equal rights in society.

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD works closely with local partners and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities. This enables us to apply donations in a targeted, sustainable way, to create lasting structures and pave the way to an inclusive society.

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