

Attachment 2.2 Disability Inclusion Policy

Version 3.3

Introduction

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires development programs to be inclusive of, and accessible to, people with disability. It stipulates that people with disability are entitled to the same rights, dignity, opportunities and support as other members of the community. Equality and inclusion are core principles of effective development and are central to achieving a vision of a world where all individuals, groups and communities, including women, men, girls and boys with disabilities, are able to exercise their human rights fully and participate in society without discrimination¹.

ChildFund Australia recognises the principles of intersectionality and that children with disability are particularly vulnerable and marginalised. They are more likely to experience discrimination, violation of their human rights, deprivation and exclusion from equal participation in their society. They are especially vulnerable to a range of risks, including those posed by disasters. Children with disability are over-represented as victims of all forms of abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect against children with disability and particularly against children with cognitive impairments, often goes undetected, unreported, non-investigated, non-prosecuted and unpunished. We value the participation of children with disability as capable individuals who can make an active and meaningful contribution to their communities. ChildFund Australia understands that the concept of disability inclusion is about identifying and removing barriers to ensure all people are able to actively participate in and equally benefit from projects and programs and exercise their rights in the broader community.

It is estimated that twenty per cent of the world's poorest people have a disability². In order to carry out our mission of building a world "where children are protected and have the opportunity to reach their full potential," we must address the needs of people with disability and barriers to their full participation and create enabling communities. We want to ensure that children, youth and caregivers with disability can participate fully in the programs and projects we support, and in the broader community. We aim to better equip them to influence and take responsibility for decisions affecting their lives. ChildFund Australia also holds duty bearers accountable. We aim to influence institutions, systems and structures that create barriers for persons with a disability.

Key Principles

Disability inclusion and participation: ChildFund Australia understands that the concept of inclusion is about identifying and removing barriers to ensure all people are able to actively participate in stages of a development project/program and equally benefit from the project/program.

Reasonable accommodation: Make necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments to ensure people with disabilities can exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others. ChildFund Australia advocates for accessibility of persons with disability.

¹ CBM/PLAN 2017 Practice Note: Collecting and using data on disability to inform inclusive development

² CBM Disability Inclusion 2018

Twin-track approach: Implement concurrent activities that include disability-specific initiatives targeted at people with disabilities, as well as disability mainstreaming initiatives ensuring that all development programs are inclusive of people with disabilities.

Awareness: Many people with disability lack awareness and knowledge of their rights or where to go if they do recognise their rights have been denied. ChildFund Australia will raise awareness of the rights of PWD to people with disability, to ChildFund staff and partners, as well as to all sectors in the community.

Representation of Disabled Persons Organisations (DPO's): The slogan of the disability movement is "Nothing about us without us". This means that people with disabilities need to be represented in all activities and decision-making processes that affect them. DPO's are representative organisations run by and for people with disabilities and provide a way for the voices of people with disabilities to be heard and their perspectives included. DPO's are a critical partner in disability inclusive development.

Policy Statement

ChildFund Australia programs and projects seek to remove barriers to participation and achieve equal opportunity and equitable outcomes for children, youth and caregivers with disability. We commit to the core principles of reasonable accommodation and twin-track program approaches to ensure people with a disability can exercise all human rights on an equal basis with others. We will engage with Disabled People's Organisations and raise awareness of how the needs and rights of people with disability can be met. We will not support segregated or institutionalised care approaches, which breach human rights.

Policy Commitments

ChildFund Australia will:

- Ensure that disability inclusion is addressed as a crosscutting issue in all projects: all projects are required to raise awareness of the rights of PWD and address barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in and benefiting from projects on an equal basis.
- Incorporate disability assessment (analysis of local context and barriers to full participation) into all situation analyses and consult DPO's in this process.
- Ensure project level risk assessments consider the risks facing PWD, especially children with a disability.
- Encourage and support participation of people with disabilities and/or DPO's in program decision-making structures and processes (e.g. design process, steering committees, evaluation teams, etc.)
- Add a budget line to project budgets and proposals to cover adjustments, reasonable accommodation and/or other specific actions to ensure disability inclusion.
- Ensure program designs and proposals are reviewed/appraised to ensure inclusion has been adequately addressed.
- Use disability inclusive M&E (including data disaggregation and information about barriers to inclusion)³.
- Provide staff and partners with regular disability awareness training and up-to-date information on disability-inclusive development practices.

- Establish organisational partnerships with relevant national Disabled Persons Organisations to inform project design and support Disability Inclusion training.
- Strengthen institutional capacity of local governance institutions to recognise the rights of people with a disability and take inclusive approaches to service delivery and policy reforms.
- Ensure that emergency responses recognise and respond to the enhanced vulnerability of people living with disability during disasters.
- Ensure that people with a disability are consulted on the design, implementation and monitoring of ChildFund Australia feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Undertake periodic assessments of our own and implementing partners disability inclusion practices, at least every 3 years, including the degree to which this policy is being implemented and the ongoing quality of the policy and practices.

Guidance Notes

Access IPT Disability Inclusion file (Microsoft Teams) for additional resources that support program implementation of this policy.

Document Information

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3.3	22-02-2024	Changed Date of Next Review to 30 June, 2024	People and Culture Officer	Global Programs Director