

Programme Information Sheet

Every Last Child: Providing children with disabilities with their rights

Kenya: Children and Disability

Among some of the most marginalised and excluded groups in society, children with disabilities face daily discrimination that prevents them from realising their rights to education, healthcare and survival. In Kenya, most communities hold beliefs that disability is caused by evil spirits or a curse from the gods. Children and adults with disability are kept at home and prone to missed opportunities such as schooling and healthcare due to these entrenched social stigmas.

- One in every 10 Kenyans below the age of 21 is disabled
- 16% of children with disabilities are out of school
- Only 1% of Special Needs Education (SNE) teachers have training to work with children with multiple disabilities

While Kenya has an enabling policy environment for children with disabilities, there are not effective mechanisms for implementation, meaning children with special needs and disability are unable to realize the right to free and compulsory quality basic education.

'From Exclusion to Inclusion'

From 2015-2017, Save the Children with funding from Christian Blind Mission (CBM) has been working in Kenya's Turkana County to:

Raise awareness of the rights of children with disabilities, tackling community perceptions and removing barriers to children with disabilities attending school

Building capacity within health and nutrition teams to identify and refer children with disabilities; equip health facilities; provide training on corrective procedures; and provide surgical and rehabilitative support to children.

Advocate for accountable county budgets for children with disabilities, and effective implementation of laws.

Programme Impact

'From Exclusion to inclusion' has directly reached 2,523 children with disabilities, and 2,526 people in the community with awareness raising messages. The stand-out outcomes of the programme include:

- Successful advocacy campaign has resulted in the creation of the **Turkana County Disability Act 2017**, committing 1.5% of the county budget to disability
- One intervention school has seen a **1000% increase in enrolment** of children with disabilities—from three to 33.

- One sub-location has **increased the number of children identified with disabilities by 97%** (29 to 57) due to health worker training. Identification is the first step to referral and then support (via surgery etc.)
- The Ministry of Education has opened up participation in a large music festival to special schools and units, **recognising disabled children's rights**

How have we achieved this?

- Critical partnership working with the Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education and Social Services
- Holistic approach to programming, integrating nutrition and disability to support early intervention, with education and child protection mainstreamed
- Utilising evidence from the ground to support advocacy
- A firm belief in reaching **Every Last Child**, and showing duty bearers, and community members why this matters.

What next?

'From Exclusion to Inclusion' has made important progress in addressing disability in Turkana County, but subsequent support remains vital to ensure budget accountability and sustained prioritisation of children with disabilities. Save the Children is looking to scale up interventions via:

- Strengthening coordination and collaboration among Ministries on budget spend, and building capacity for effective implementation
- Establishing a Disability Technical Working Group to hold Turkana County Disability Act duty bearers to account
- Strengthening disability mainstreaming within health practitioner training, and building effective and sustainable referral systems
- Strengthening school systems to be able to cope with increased enrolment of children with disabilities
- Holding schools to account to adhere to the national 'Inclusive School Guidelines'
- Strengthening systems for children with disabilities, to ensure that **Every Last Child** has access to their rights.

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