

Disability Inclusion in Economic Empowerment Strategies

Webinar

October 6, 2020

Texts from Q&A and Chat box

Dear participants,

We analysed the excellent questions put to each of the presenters during the Webinar. We clustered them and below you find some additional information in line with some of the issues that came up. We hope this is helpful but do not hesitate to get in touch with the presenters directly for more information!

Mainstreaming disability in livelihood interventions – *The case of Uganda: Disability inclusive programming in practice* Ambrose Murangira, Disability Inclusion Advisor, Light for the World

How do you ensure that all persons with different categories of disability are included?

“Leave No one Behind” principle guides our work. Our technical support focuses on ensuring that all persons with disabilities can access services/ programs provided to the public. Our pool of Disability Inclusion Facilitators is made up of young persons with different types of impairment who share their lived experiences combined with their technical expertise. We also work closely with representative DPOs to share knowledge and information on the best practices regarding inclusion of persons with different categories of disability.

Disability Inclusion Facilitators – selection, their roles and their availability

A call for application to participate in the Disability Inclusion Academy is made in consultation with local organizations for persons with disabilities (in the target region). A selection is made, and interviews are conducted with applicants. Local representatives of DPOs are part of the interview panel. The selected applicants undergo an initial 6-day training after which they are coached on the job and receive mentoring for a period of six to nine months before they are certified as DIFs. Their role is mainly building relationship with organizations and companies in their communities and triggering them to becoming inclusive. They support willing organizations and companies in becoming inclusive through capacity building like training on disability awareness and disability inclusive programming and hiring practices. They provide follow-up support to ensure that action points made are implemented. As of today, there are trained DIFs in all regions of Uganda. DIFs are recruited on demand. This means that we will continue conducting DIA depending on the need.

Government buy-in of Disability Inclusion

We have had a good working relationship with the government because we value it as a key stakeholder. The line ministry (Ministry which is responsible for disability issues) chairs our steering committee on inclusive livelihood and inclusive employment. We have also provided technical support to the government regarding the ‘how’ of inclusion. For example, we have provided training on disability inclusion and disability inclusive programming as well as developing tools (such as Youth Livelihood Programme).

For more information

Ambrose Murangira: a.murangira@light-for-the-world.org

Anneke Maarse: a.maarse@light-for-the-world.org

Or go to our Make 12.4% Work website: www.wecanwork.ug and visit our knowledge hub

Leverage technology and innovation – Human-centred design to improve the livelihoods of farmers with disabilities Virak Kheng, Senior Program Manager, Light for the World

How are people with disabilities who participate in the AgriLab selected and how do you ensure full participation?

We worked closely with local DPOs in the rural provinces to select farmers who would be interested and would benefit from the process. Representation of disability (by type) was quite typical of the local setting – we didn't promote requirements as such. We did have farmers or family units representing all disabilities. However, we acknowledge that physical impairment was the most represented. One province was heavily landmine affected, so there were many farmers with prosthetic limbs present as is typical of the community. Facilitators had been involved in disability awareness training, but this did at times need prompting to ensure all voices were heard and that all were participating. Family members were a great resource in helping us ensure greater inclusion of all. The training sessions were all done in local language and it was all practical – with little formal presentation. Many activities involved games, role plays, and simple construction with locally available resources such as fruit, wooden sticks, string and straws etc... All sessions were explained verbally, and literacy was not a requirement. Harnessing the local interest and energy was key as the discussions and solution generation were directly linked to problems experienced daily.

Can you share more about the process and logistics of the workshops?

The trainings were all done in local pagodas or centres that the community could easily reach. We supported transport costs where this was needed. Some of the testing of the prototypes were done in the very fields of the participants and often with great collaboration and interest of the village chiefs and other local leaders. The whole process from initial discussion to testing prototypes involves 5 sessions. However, this can be tailored to suit the needs of the community. We factored in around 10 contact days spread over 3-4 months. Sometimes this was covered in 5 sessions, sometimes in 3. There was also some testing to be done by the communities in between, which harnessed a lot of creativity and it was during these 'in between' times that communities would develop alternative solutions of build and adapt on the initial design. The process is not very costly and having locally available resources from the market or the community was key. Outside technical support is needed to support the more 'tech' side of the work, but this can also be availed locally. The problem identification stage related to many stages of the value chain – some relating to agricultural production itself and others around marketing; land ownership was not a requirement. Prototypes were developed depending on needs of wider community and at what stage of the value chain they were involved in Please don't hesitate to contact us

For more information:

David Curtis: d.curtis@light-for-the-world.org

Virak Kheng: v.kheng@light-for-the-world.org

Or refer to the Agri-lab handbook: Drain, A., Kheng, V. & Curtis, D. (2019). *AgriLab Project Handbook: Creative Capacity Building and Co-design 2019*. Retrieved from:

researchgate.net/publication/336251018_AgriLab_Project_Handbook_Creative_Capacity_Building_and_Co-design_2019

Pathways to enhance access to finance – *Financial empowerment through inclusive saving and credit groups* Oyuki Yofisa, National Programme Officer – iSAVE National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda - NUDIPU

How are you managing to sustain the technical assistance to entrepreneurs (including it for instance in formal finance scheme?)

Sustainability has been ensured by making the BDS training a key component of the iSAVE model. There is continuous monitoring and technical support to the entrepreneurs with disabilities by experienced business trainers/professionals long after qualification.

What kind of public private partnership did you manage to foster with other actors to sustain and scale such interesting work?

1. First, networking with the private sector development centres for entrepreneurship coaching and trainings to iSAVE groups
2. Secondly, engaging the District Local Government offices in program processes i.e. planning, implementation and monitoring
3. Thirdly, bringing on board the prominent local artisans to embrace enrolling illiterate youths with disabilities so they extend craftsmanship skills in marketable trades.
4. Lastly, ensuring that the program Working Groups have representatives from the private sector, government offices and groups leadership.

What are the main barriers persons with disabilities face to access credit?

Financial service programmes seldom reach out to persons with disabilities hence limiting their access to credit. The most hindering factor is not lack of collateral but rather the societal prejudices. The financial institutions and their staff perceive persons with disabilities as a “risk” even before they are given chance to register as clients! As a result, they are excluded and do not have the chance to participate as regular clients.

What are advantages and disadvantages of having mixed groups of disabled persons and other members of the community as a part of the iSAVE model?

Experience is that advantages outnumber the disadvantages. Advantages being that mixed groups raise awareness and bridges the information gap among two worlds. As a result we see that persons with disabilities have assumed leadership positions in mainstream political arena. Builds confidence among the disabled after learning that they can perform better than persons without disabilities in some group activities; that their needs are not different from the rest of community members; and that their success depends on individual effort, input and attitude. A disadvantage is that there is a risk of dominance by persons without disabilities and that the 60% disability proportion gets compromised and even the key positions on the group management committee i.e. Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary end up being filled by persons without disabilities. Another issue that is sometimes seen is a hesitance from members with disabilities to participate because they believe that they may not add value to the group and prefer disability exclusive groups.

For more information:

George Mukasa Mukisa: George.Mukisa@nhf.no

Oyuki Yofisa: oyukiyofisa@yahoo.com

Or refer to the iSAVE website: <https://isave-inclusion.com/>