

# GETTING DISABILITY INTO THE MAINSTREAM

WORLD VISION  
INDIA'S  
EXPERIENCE

AN INDEPENDENT DISABILITY SPECIALIST HAS ASSESSED THAT WORLD VISION INDIA IS ROUTINELY IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE ELEMENTS AS THE NORM IN THEIR WORK AND ACROSS THE ORGANISATION.

From 2008 to 2011, World Vision India ran a DFID funded programme that sought to include children and adults with disabilities in development projects to enable them to secure their rights. In 2016 a specialist was asked to evaluate the impact and investigate how far the project had succeeded in mainstreaming disability into general programming and processes.

## THE REPORT FOUND EXTENSIVE EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE:

- Senior and programme level staff widely understood that disability inclusion is a critical component of rights-based programming.
- Policies for increased inclusion of children with disabilities, particularly in child sponsorship.
- Area Programmes collecting disaggregated data on disability.
- Tools and guidance available to help programmes identify disability in a community.
- Expectation that new Area Programmes will include disability as part of baseline and impact assessments.
- Written guidelines by the media and communications department on how to describe disability from a rights perspective.
- Children and adults with disabilities are being included in events, media stories or images alongside non-disabled people –without disability being the main focus.
- Production of the first Braille version of World Vision India's annual review summary.



Pallabi Naskar playing Frisbee. 11-year-old Pallabi Naskar, is a sponsored child. She is a member of children's club and the Disability People's Organisation started by World Vision. "I get support from my children's club. There I feel loved and accepted. We are given sports material to play, like Frisbees and skipping rope. All the children in the club play together. There is no big no small, we treat everyone equally," says Pallabi Naskar.



"As a person with disability I have been in positions where an ignorant society gambled with my rights. Right from birth where they wanted to steal my right to life by convincing my mother to kill me, till losing 6 years of my right to acquiring an education. But now no more, the old Rekha was not aware of her rights and she feared the people of the world. But the new Rekha fears no one, not only does she talk about her rights but she also shows others the right path to follow. I constantly tell others, do not fear come forward and fight for your rights because our bodies may have limitations but our minds do not," says Rekha. From a non-school goer to completing her 12th Grade and now entering the second year of college. Pursuing a degree in Social Work with the help of World Vision, Rekha gears up to advocate for children just like her who are deprived of their basic rights.

World Vision believes that by working together with children, their communities, and our supporters and partners, the lives of the world's most vulnerable children can be transformed. We bring together people – of all faiths and none – in almost 100 countries, to improve children's health, education, water, protection and sources of family income. World Vision India is one of World Vision's largest offices and represents one of several countries where World Vision UK ran a DFID funded Programme Partnership Initiative grant from 2008 to 2011 that sought to include children and adults with disabilities in development projects to enable them to secure their rights.<sup>1</sup>

As in many developing countries, despite relevant law and policies, children and adults with disabilities in India routinely face multiple barriers to living with dignity, experiencing

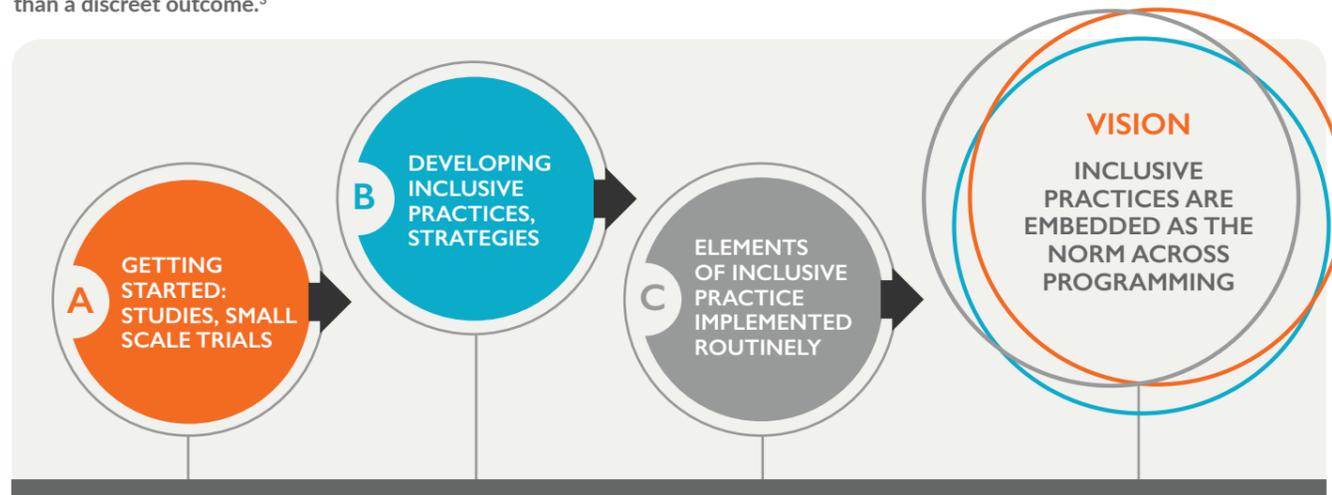
exclusion, discrimination and a lack of opportunities to participate in education, economic and social life.

In India, the ground-breaking project was named "Call Me By My Name" and set out to include and empower children and adults with disabilities in 12 programmes in Delhi and Lucknow regions.

Five years after the project ended, World Vision UK asked an external disability expert (a person with a disability) to evaluate the impact and investigate how far the project had succeeded in mainstreaming disability into general programming and processes. The external evaluator visited community programmes where the project had not been implemented and interviewed staff and stakeholders to assess how far learning had spread and she also reviewed World Vision's advocacy and internal processes<sup>2</sup>.

## FIGURE 1 THE MAINSTREAMING CONTINUUM

The disability mainstreaming continuum is a tool that presents a gradual broadening and deepening of disability- inclusive actions until they become normalised across all aspects of an organisation and its work. It recognises that mainstreaming is a process rather than a discreet outcome.<sup>3</sup>



1 As enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

2 Lorraine Wapling World Vision UK ex-post evaluation of the Programme Partnership Arrangement (PPA) funding for disability inclusion, September 2016 (unpublished)

- The ex-post evaluation involved documentation review, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews.

3 Originally developed by Water Engineering and Development Centre at Loughborough University (WEDC) with adaptations for specific disability mainstreaming assessment. See WEDC (2013) Equity and Inclusion in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Resources <https://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/collections/equity-inclusion/>

## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

World Vision India was assessed according to the "mainstreaming continuum" (Figure 1) which is a measure of how far an organisation has embraced disability inclusive practices. As an example, in January 2016, this tool was used to informally assess DFID PPA-holder organisations during a DFID supported seminar, and resulted in most mainstream agencies reporting they were either not yet on the scale at all, or only just achieving Step A.<sup>4</sup>

On the evidence presented during the review, World Vision India showed significant progress towards achieving Step C on the mainstreaming continuum meaning that disability inclusion has become an accepted organisational norm. To achieve this disability inclusion must be a regular feature across a range of policies and plans, including programming, design and monitoring tools, data collection, communications, human resources, financing and procurement. The extent of World Vision India's progress on the disability mainstreaming continuum was discernibly linked back to the initial investment of DFID PPA funding by World Vision UK in 2008-2011.

## IDENTIFYING THE KEY INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS

**Among senior staff there is widespread understanding, support and articulation of disability inclusion as a right** – effective training of senior and programme managers on disability inclusion at the initial stages and their subsequent support was found to have been a critical success factor.

**Transformed thinking and practice** had resulted from the training, transforming perspectives from disability as an individual impairment issue to one of exclusion resulting from barriers to participation. Once staff understood that reducing barriers could make a huge difference to disabled people's lives, it then became a more practical and programmatic issue.

**Awareness cascaded to others** - a critical mass of trained senior staff (sustained by low turnover) were able to support untrained, sceptical or new staff to also embrace disability as a rights issue, often achieved through discussion in staff meetings.

**Effective training built a strong foundation and common language for rights-based disability programming**, supported by embedding training into other courses and all projects that integrated disability inclusion.

**The appointment of a Disability Adviser – a person with a disability** - in WV India's Programme Effectiveness division was critical for sustaining and building on initial activities by providing a range of tools, technical and monitoring support to programmes. Despite WV India's large size, a single adviser was sufficient due to the widespread support of senior managers: Notably, unlike other inclusive organisations, WV India does not have 'Disability Champions' – they are not required as the issue is so well integrated.

4 See: ADD International (2016) Ensuring no one is left behind: mainstreaming disability inclusive development. Summary of findings.

5 <https://www.worldvision.org.uk/our-work/reports-papers-and-briefings/travelling-together/#section0>. Development of the training course and its subsequent publication were funded through DFID's PPA with World Vision UK.

## IN NUMBERS

THE TRAINING DELIVERED WAS BASED ON MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLICATION "TRAVELLING TOGETHER - HOW TO INCLUDE DISABLED PEOPLE ON THE MAIN ROAD OF DEVELOPMENT"<sup>5</sup>

BY 2010

**80**  
AREA PROGRAMME MANAGERS

AND

**600+**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATORS

FROM

**137**  
AREA PROGRAMMES

HAD BEEN TRAINED ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

THE EVALUATOR FOUND THAT

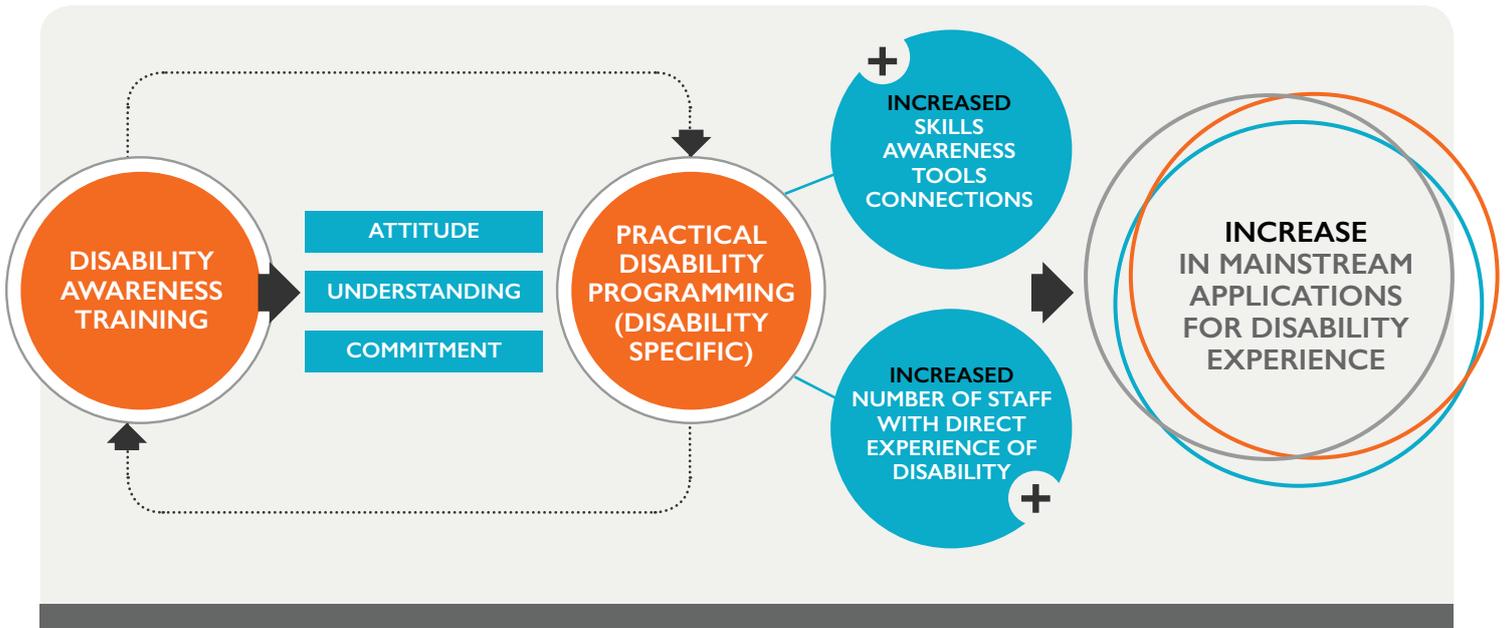
**93%**  
OF SENIOR STAFF INTERVIEWED BELIEVED DISABILITY IS A KEY DEVELOPMENT ISSUE

AND

**85%**  
BELIEVED THAT BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS WAS AN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

FIGURE 2

POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP ILLUSTRATING THE IMPACT OF TRAINING



The roll out of Disability Inclusion focused Projects proved to be a key factor in achieving change and follow on projects funded from other sources enabled further progress. The ten Area Programmes and two sector specific projects supported strengthening of DPOs and developed disability inclusive strategies, policy, culture and aligned projects. These projects provided further avenues

for ‘on the job’ training and it was found that staff working on them were much more likely to be confident about applying rights-based principles to their disability work.

The continued use of awareness raising and training as components of disability projects were found to have created a **positive feedback loop** (Figure 2).

CONCLUSION

A tipping point was achieved in terms of developing a common understanding on disability rights and inclusion through the combination of the rights based disability awareness training and disability focused programming. This common understanding has been an important factor in WV India’s successful disability mainstreaming journey.

The ex-post evaluation review concluded that without the opportunities provided through the DFID PPA funding in 2008-2011 (including disability awareness training, funding support for disability inclusion projects and direct technical support), then progress towards a rights-based approach to disability inclusion in WV India would at best have been much slower to take hold, but may not in fact have happened at all.

The attainment of such a high level of sustained disability mainstreaming in World Vision India is a truly remarkable achievement, particularly having been sustained long after the original programme ended.



14-year-old Rohit painting his aspirations with crayons. "My dream is to become a pilot or bank official. I will study extra hard and put in all my effort to achieve my aims and goals. Through education I will achieve my aim, my goal

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT WORLD VISION UK: [INFO@WORLDVISION.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@WORLDVISION.ORG.UK)



WORLD VISION BELIEVES THAT BY WORKING TOGETHER WITH CHILDREN, THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND OUR SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS, THE LIVES OF THE WORLD’S MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN CAN BE TRANSFORMED. AS A CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION, WE ASPIRE TO REFLECT GOD’S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IN ALL WE DO.