



# Breaking Barriers: How we promote inclusion & participation



Photo: Anil Fastenau

OPDs and associations of persons affected by NTDs are often important partners in projects (here: DAHW advisor Anil Fastenau with representatives from Asia, Africa and Latin America)

### People with disabilities as partners in our work:

Our approach promotes the active participation of people with disabilities throughout the entire project cycle. By strengthening self-advocacy organisations and developing skills within a community-based inclusive development framework, we empower people with disabilities to play a greater role in shaping their living conditions.

For us, „Leave no one behind“ means advocating for all people with disabilities – regardless of the cause. Health is a human right, just like living with dignity and free from discrimination.



Photo: Ngozi Ekeke

f.l. Brima Kpeh, NAPAL (National Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy) Sierra Leone, Contanze Vettel (DAHW), Amaka Stella Onyima-Esmail (IMPACT Group, Nigeria), Dr. Ngozi Ekeke (Red Aid Nigeria)



## Breaking down barriers

We are committed to creating an inclusive society in which people with disabilities can live independently and participate fully – by removing physical, social and communication barriers.

- 🎯 Provision and distribution of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, orthopaedic sandals, prostheses and orthoses
- 🎯 Promotion of inclusive frameworks, e.g. construction of ramps, inclusive school materials, access to services and support in humanitarian crises
- 🎯 Rehabilitation measures



Practical example from Sierra Leone:  
„Give me a hand“

In our project in Sierra Leone, we provide targeted support to individuals affected by the loss of limbs. Causes such as leprosy and the civil war have left many people with disabilities.

By using 3D printing technology, we can produce lightweight, discreet and cost-effective protheses, ideally adapted to people's individual needs. These prostheses are more quickly and easily accessible and make a significant difference: they promote participation in everyday life, help reduce stigma, and enable individuals to carry out their professional activities with self-determination.

## Building resilience

Disability and poverty are closely linked. We always consider the socio-economic situation of rather people with disabilities in order to promote participation and economic independence:

- 🕒 Vocational training and further education
- 🕒 Provision of seeds, sewing machines, or other equipment for income-generating activities
- 🕒 Establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA)

A non-inclusive society can significantly impact the mental health of people with disabilities. Therefore, we support:

- 🕒 Psychosocial support
- 🕒 Establishing and strengthening self-help groups
- 🕒 Training of specialists as well as lay counsellors and peer counsellors for accessible counselling and support.



Practical example from Ethiopia and Uganda:

„We value your inclusion“

A young Ethiopian woman with hearing impairment feeds her goats. In this project, we have strengthened the health, well-being and resilience of people with disabilities and their communities. We follow the One Health approach, which takes equal account of the health of people, animals and the environment.

At the local level, we have built capacity to reduce the vulnerability of people with disabilities to disease and food insecurity. Support was provided for integrative health services, including veterinary care and environmental initiatives, as well as income-generating measures that help people strengthen their economic independence and sustainably improve their quality of life.

## Changing the world

Around the world, people with disabilities experience stigma and discrimination. Our projects work both on the ground and in political discourse to bring about change:

- 🎯 Awareness campaigns to educate and reduce stigma
- 🎯 Establishment, development and strengthening of organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)
- 🎯 Advocacy, lobbying and political representation
- 🎯 Promoting the self-determination of people with disabilities in advocating for their rights
- 🎯 Engaging in dialogue with decision-makers



Photo: Mahamath Cissé

Practical example from Senegal:

### [Abolishing discriminatory laws](#)

In Senegal, the establishment of „leprosy villages“ was legally mandated for decades. Initially intended as a protective measure, this law soon reinforced the discrimination and marginalisation of people who were and are affected by leprosy and disabilities. After years of advocacy work, the discriminatory law was abolished in 2023 – a great success for a broad alliance of non-governmental organisations and associations of persons affected by leprosy. However, this is not the end: There is still a long way to go before the complete integration of the „leprosy villages“ into the local administrative structures.

## This is DAHW:

DAHW *German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association* is an expert in the fight against poverty related and neglected tropical diseases. We are committed to improving the quality of life of people affected by disease, poverty, and social exclusion in countries of the Global South through prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation projects, as well as inclusion measures.



Photo: Devotha Martin

Francis from Tanzania, who was born with cerebral palsy was able to go back to school and actively participate in social life



*We are committed to the equal participation of people with disabilities, the removal of barriers and discrimination, and the creation of structural conditions that promote an inclusive and diverse society.“*



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### Feel free to contact me!

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