



# Strengthening inclusive education in Tanzania

**Project timeline:** August 2019 – December 2025

**Project budget:** £2.96 million

**Capturing the power of collaboration:** ADD, Sightsavers, Sense International, Leonard Cheshire (exited November 2022), Light for the World (Joined January 2022), Institute of Development Studies, Tanzania Cheshire Foundation, Tanzania League of Blind, Tanzania Association for the Mentally Handicapped, Tanzania Albinism Society, Tanzania Society of the Deafblind, Chama cha Watu Wenye Ulemavu Tanzania, Chama Cha Viziwi Tanzania, Tanzania Society of the Deafblind. All relevant Government led institutes, Government ministries and regional government offices are participating in the project.

**Every child has the right to education.** However, children with disabilities in low and lower middle-income countries – **including thousands of school aged children with disabilities in Tanzania<sup>1</sup>** - are more likely to be left out of school or to receive a sub-standard education compared to children without disabilities. That is why Disability Inclusive Development - Inclusive Futures is part of the global movement to transform inclusive education for children with disabilities in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. **We are working with partners to open up education systems - and children's future opportunities.**



## The situation in Tanzania

Since 2009, commitments to inclusive education have been formally embedded in the Tanzanian education system through successive national education sector programmes and strategies, as well as being enshrined in law through the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2010<sup>2</sup>. However, throughout Tanzania, there remains wide-spread discrimination towards people with disabilities. In practice, there is little provision for children

with disabilities in mainstream education and **only 51% of children with disabilities attend school<sup>3</sup>**. Effective implementation of Tanzania's education strategies and legislation requires a step-change in deeply rooted systems and attitudes - presenting enormous barriers. **There remains much to be done to increase access to education for children with disabilities in Tanzania.**

## How we are helping

**This project is rolling out a locally led model for inclusive education in government primary schools that will have nationwide impact.** We are highlighting what can be achieved by working with 47 schools in the Shinyanga rural, Shinyanga Municipal Council and Misungwi districts of Tanzania to improve access to education for children with disabilities.

We have brought together a consortium of experts including Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), education practitioners, government bodies, international and local non-governmental organisations and research institutes.

**The team is strengthening systems for enrolling, retaining, and providing quality primary education for children with disabilities through key pillars of action:**

- **Developing a model for implementing pre-primary and primary inclusive education in Tanzania.** The innovation phase of this project, completed in 2020, brought consortium partners together to develop an inclusive education model tailored for Tanzania. As a result of project advocacy from the innovation project, the Pre-primary and Primary Inclusive Education in Tanzania (PPIET) Model became a deliverable of Tanzania's new National Strategy for Inclusive Education 2021-2026. This demonstrated the Government's commitment to interventions that have been tested.
- **At community level** to increase school enrolment and demand for services, OPDs are working with parents and communities to raise awareness of the rights of children with disabilities and the government services available. School Management Committees are being trained to engage with parents and relationships between schools and parents will be strengthened through the development and roll out of inclusive Parent Teacher Partnership guidelines. We are supporting communities to establish Education



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Isaya, pictured centre, a young person with a disability, is being supported to attend a mainstream school in Shinyanga, Tanzania. His class teacher, Habasha, has been trained in inclusive education with support from the project.

Support and Resource Centres to identify and assess children with disabilities, ensuring all in need receive referrals.

- **At system strengthening level** we are supporting schools to increase their inclusivity through teacher training, environmental accessibility adaptations and building relationships with local government. The project is working with Trainers of Trainees to train up to 1,167 teachers, District Education Officers and Ward Education Officers in universal design for learning and curriculum differentiation as well as in the procurement and use of assistive devices and materials. Accessibility audits are being undertaken at all schools and school management committees are being supporting to ensure infrastructure adaptations are made.

- **At governance and policy level** we want to see the Government of Tanzania's commitments to scale up inclusive education implemented. We are engaging with government education bodies and supporting the revival of the National Technical Working Group on inclusive education. This will enable effective

learning and collaboration within and across government departments, as well as with other education projects such as the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office supported Shule Bora programme.

## Project impact to date



We have reached 1,233 children across 49 schools, where there has been a decrease in drop out rates, increase in attendance rates and successful completion of year end of assessments. This is attributed to school improvements implemented by the project, including providing teachers with inclusive teacher training, making adaptations to school facilities and classrooms to create a better learning environment, and supplying assistive devices to students with disabilities.



747 teachers from 49 schools have been provided with the skills needed to foster inclusive learning. 70% of the trained teachers reported improvement in their teaching skills, including to effectively manage large classrooms. This has led to an increase in student participation and there has also been a substantial decrease in drop out rates across all students since the scale project began (from 17% to 8%)



We also supported the Government to incorporate inclusive data tools into the National Guidelines for Screening and Assessment and incorporate more inclusive education content into teacher training curricula for student and in-service teachers.

## Discovering what works

Our project is contributing to the global evidence base on disability inclusion. For example, our experience of forming an advocacy Action Group is highlighted in this learning brief on '[Partnering for disability inclusion](#)'. Forthcoming learning outputs are focused on in-school identification and screening of children with disabilities; and teachers' mentoring and coaching approaches.

## Breaking barriers for people with disabilities

Disability inclusion is critical for reaching the Global Goals and we have produced the evidence on what works in a range of different areas. We now need the allocation of resources for inclusive education to turn evidence into action.

### To find out more visit

[inclusivefutures.org/inclusive-education](https://inclusivefutures.org/inclusive-education) or contact

Claire Walsh at [cwalsh@sightsavers.org](mailto:cwalsh@sightsavers.org).

### Endnotes

- 1 Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (2016) 2016 Population and Housing Census – Disability Monograph, p.45. Available online at: <https://rodra.co.za/images/countries/tanzania/research/Tanzania%20Disability%20Monograph%202016.pdf>
- 2 Inclusive Futures / Institute of Development Studies (2020), Tanzania Situational Analysis - June 2020 Update.
- 3 Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (2016) 2016 Population and Housing Census – Disability Monograph, p.v. Available online at: <https://rodra.co.za/images/countries/tanzania/research/Tanzania%20Disability%20Monograph%202016.pdf>