

Putting the Needs of Persons with Disabilities at the Centre of Humanitarian Action - Finland's Achievements



Persons with disabilities are among the most marginalized in crisis-affected communities and disproportionately impacted by disaster and conflict. They face particular barriers in accessing life-saving relief and recovery support and are often exposed to targeted violence, exploitation and abuse. Women and girls with disabilities in particular experience sexual and gender-based violence and suffer from multiple forms of discrimination.

Finland is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to services essential for their survival, protection and recovery during and in the aftermath of crises.

Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action

At the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Finland in collaboration with a coalition of Member States, UN agencies, International Organizations and Civil Society Organizations launched a groundbreaking Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action. The Charter has been considered as one of the most important outcomes of the Summit, with endorsement from more than 150 Governments and organizations. The Charter proposes concrete solutions to improve the situation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian crises.

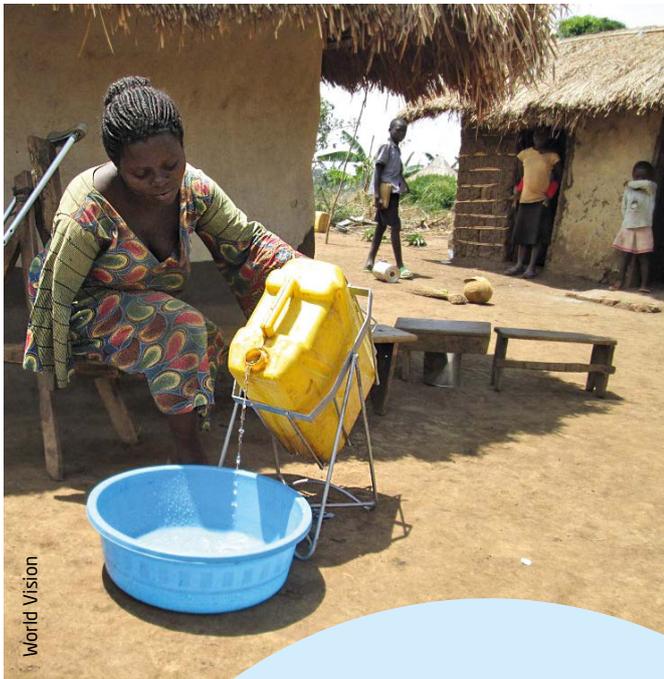
Based on Finnish Humanitarian Policy, humanitarian organizations receiving Finnish funding are requested to incorporate disability issues into their policies and operations. Finland also actively promotes the use of disaggregated data for planning and monitoring, to increase accountability.



Ensuring inclusive WASH services in Uganda

As a result of conflicts, Uganda currently hosts over one million refugees. In the refugee camps, with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, World Vision has implemented inclusive WASH projects. Persons with disabilities have benefitted from inclusive latrines, access to water and livelihoods support for economic empowerment. Due to the reduced vulnerability and improved self-worth, persons with disabilities have been empowered to actively participate in decision making and leadership, reducing their discrimination and stigmatization.

With support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, World Vision has implemented disability inclusive humanitarian operations in Uganda.



Mainstreaming and targeted actions

In addition to mainstreaming, Finland has invested in targeted actions to promote the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. In collaboration with World Vision, Finland has supported the development of simple and low-cost technological solutions and innovations that can facilitate the daily life of people with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies in Kenya, Uganda and Iraq. Focus has been on water and sanitation with an aim to promote the protection, safety and dignity of persons with disabilities.

Finland has also supported the provision of services and protection to persons with disabilities in situations of forced displacement. As part of the project implemented by UNHCR in partnership with the Women's Refugee Commission, technical support for capacity-building has been provided, training materials and networks with disability actors have been developed, and work towards institutionalization of disability inclusion has progressed.

Finland has actively used its political leverage and organised several advocacy events .

Developing Global Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance

At the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul (2016), Finland in collaboration with a coalition of other actors launched a groundbreaking Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action.

As a follow up to the Charter, Finland has supported the development of system-wide inter-agency guidelines. These guidelines aim at driving change and transformation across all sectors of humanitarian action.

The guidance clarifies how the needs and rights of persons with disabilities are best taken into account in humanitarian assistance and how their involvement in this work can be promoted. The guidelines are developed with active engagement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

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