

Programme Area Summary

Country: Namibia

Programme Area: Disability

What is the aim of the programme area?

Empower and support people with disabilities to fully participate in all aspects of society.

Why is VSO working in that particular Programme Area and region?

Despite a very progressive legislation and a clear commitment from the government, the majority of people with disabilities (PWD) in Namibia still do not access the same opportunities of leading an independent life as non-disabled people do. Access to employment is extremely rare among people with disabilities: only 10% are employed. Women with disabilities are worse off than men. Access to the education system for PWD is low. The Ministry of Education is committed to Inclusive Education, but physical and attitudinal barriers (among teachers, family and the community) prevent disabled children from attending school.

Access to rehabilitation services, which could help PWDs to access education and employment, is still very low. There is a lack of rehabilitation staff within the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS), especially in rural areas. Studies show that only 26% of people that have a need for rehabilitation can access this. 67% of PWD expressed a need for assistive devices, although only 17% have access. Similar figures exist for the need for counselling.

Therefore, improving access to mainstream education and access to rehabilitation services are priorities to ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully participate in society. The disability movement in Namibia identifies low awareness among decision makers and civil society as the root cause of the lack of coordination and prioritisation to offer inclusive education and rehabilitation services.

Key beneficiaries and partners:

Ultimate beneficiaries are disabled people in the 6 target regions and Windhoek

Our key partner, in its national office in Windhoek and regional offices, is The National Federation of People with Disabilities in Namibia (NFPDN) and its member organisations:

- The National federation of Visually Impaired (NFVI)
- The Namibian National Association of the Deaf (NNAD)
- The National Association of People with Physical Disabilities (NAPPD)
- The National Association of Differently Abled Women (NADAWO)
- The National Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities (NAPCD)
- The National Disabled Youth Council (NDYC)

The Disability Advisory Unit at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Organisations involved in Community Rehabilitation:

- The Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) in each of the 6 target regions
- Elcin Rehabilitation Centre
- Onyose Trust (Windhoek)
- Association for Children with language, Speech and Hearing Impairments of Namibia (ClaSH)

Organisations involved in Inclusive Education

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) in each of the 6 target regions, responsible for providing inclusive education
- Association for Children with language, Speech and Hearing Impairments of Namibia

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(ClaSH)

- University of Namibia (UNAM)

Key objectives of the programme:

- Namibia Disability Programme (NDP): EU funded sub-programme to support to NFPDN in its activities both in Windhoek, and establishing regional offices in the rural areas. We will support the Disability Movement (NFPDN and its member organisations) in:
 - delivering their awareness raising campaigns
 - increasing their representation at national level and their mobilisation capacity in rural areas
- Support the Ministry of Health and Social Services in the target regions in the development of Community Based Rehabilitation programmes, in order to reach people with disabilities in their communities
- To support the Ministry of Education in the target regions to implement their Inclusive Education mandate

Current programme activities

Focus of International Volunteer Placements

- Capacity Building of NFPDN and OPD's: for instance in HRM, fundraising, training of Executive Committee members, vision setting, PR, donor & stakeholders relations, member relations etc, through skill sharing and formal training
- Support regional offices of Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) to implement the National CBR Programme, by attaching experienced Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Audiologists and Social workers to the Social Services and Rehabilitation Services departments of MoHSS in order to improve co-operation between the two departments and Primary health Care division, identify, train and coach CBR volunteers in the communities in for instance assessment, therapy, counselling, reporting and referral and ensuring that CBR committees are active and include PWD. Volunteers work both at regional and district level.
- Capacity Building of Elcin Rehabilitation Centre (main training centre for CBR volunteers), ClaSH and Onyose Trust
- STAP volunteer looking at CBR development
- Support to 6 regional Ministry of Education offices on development of Inclusive Education in lower primary education. Experienced education volunteers with management experience are attached to the regional offices to guide development of Inclusive Education at the regional level.
- Experienced primary teachers work directly with clusters & circuits of primary schools on training teachers etc.
- Resource trainers to work in mainstream schools on access for children with sensory impairments
- Resource teachers at UNAM to facilitate education for special needs students at tertiary level
- Volunteer supporting ClaSH

Support to National Volunteering

- National Volunteering programme currently being developed, supporting CBR and Home Based Care

Providing grants and/or equipment for partners

- Funding NFPDN to decentralise, establishing 4 regional offices in the target region

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(currently 2 regional offices established)

- Establish of Disability Support Fund
- Liliane fund individual bursary scheme for inclusion

Development of publications or other materials for training or communication

- Developing Advocacy & Public Awareness Raising campaigns, newsletters

Advocacy and Global Education

- Organising National Conference on Disability

What makes VSO's work in this programme area special?

- The National Disability Programme (NDP, support to the development and expansion into rural areas of NFPDN) is fully funded by the EU.
- The VSO disability programme (its objectives as well as its activities) in terms of establishing CBR and Inclusive Education, follows closely government policies and objectives. VSO has a strong mandate to work alongside MoHSS and MoE.
- The disability programme focuses on the regions where the majority of marginalized Namibians live and where services are less available and less developed compared to Windhoek and southern Namibia.