

AUSTRALIAN DOCTORS FOR AFRICA

Policy: **DISABILITY INCLUSION**

Date last approved: **10/2024**

Date of next review: **10/2027**

Approved by: **Board**

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 Purpose

Australian Doctors for Africa is committed to the inclusion of and equality for people with disabilities. This is at the heart of the organisation's overseas programs. People with disabilities are the largest minority group in the world, and 80% of people with disabilities live in developing countries. ADFA recognises disability as a development issue and can be considered both a cause and consequence of poverty. Women may be disproportionately impacted, due to the potential for gender inequality to compound the barriers which disability can present.

ADFA is aware of and endorses the World Health Organisation's ICF framework. ADFA takes a rights-based approach to understanding disability, recognising that disability is the interaction between an impairment and barriers in an environment. Barriers (including physical, attitudinal, systemic, or environmental) may limit those with an impairment from being fully included in society. However, ADFA also recognises the significant contribution that people with disabilities make to their families, their communities, and their countries, despite the barriers they face.

ADFA's core activities are specifically directed toward prevention and treatment of disability, especially in the areas of orthopaedics and traumatology, as well as in other medical specialities.

This policy provides a framework for defining and promoting inclusion of people with disabilities in all of ADFA's work, be that through disability specific programs, or through mainstreaming disability inclusion across all its programs.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all ADFA staff, board members, volunteers, and partner organisations.

2 DEFINITIONS

Disability: A disability is a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation of a person in society on an equal basis with others. Disability does not refer only to the impairment, but also the disadvantage and exclusion which may arise as an outcome of the interactions between people who have impairments and their environments.

Disability Inclusiveness and Participation: Disability inclusion involves the intentional identification and removal of possible barriers to participation, to ensure all people can actively participate in, and equally benefit from programs. For development to reach and benefit all, people with disabilities must be included as active participants in, and equally entitled recipients of, international development initiatives. Disability inclusiveness involves promoting, protecting and ensuring that people with disabilities can have full and equal enjoyment of political, public, cultural and recreational life.

Discrimination: Discrimination means treating a person with an identified attribute or personal characteristic differently from a person who does not have the attribute or personal characteristic. Such characteristics and personal attributes may be related to gender or gender identification; physical or mental capacity; age; race; language; sexual, political or religious orientation and national or social origin.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 Guiding Principles

ADFA is committed to the Guiding Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD):

- 1 Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- 2 Non-discrimination
- 3 Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- 4 Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- 5 Equality of opportunity
- 6 Accessibility
- 7 Equality between men and women
- 8 Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

3.2 Application

The application of this policy will be demonstrated as follows:

- All ADFA staff, board members, and volunteers are responsible for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that the key principles are understood, through training or awareness raising opportunities, and reflected in all its initiatives.
- ADFA is a safe environment and works to improve equality for people with disabilities and seeks to remove any barriers to employment or volunteering.
- ADFA seeks to remove barriers to people with disabilities engaging with the organisation, its events or communications, through appropriate technology or accommodation.
- ADFA aims to adopt a twin-track approach to programs, implementing concurrent activities that include disability-specific initiatives targeted at people with disabilities, as well as disability mainstreaming initiatives ensuring that all development programs are inclusive of people with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to Clubfoot programs, surgical missions, training, equipment, infrastructure and scholarships.
- ADFA incorporates disability assessments (analysis of local context and barriers to full participation) into its situation analyses and where possible consults Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), or other relevant groups in country, in this process.
- ADFA aims to enable/support the consultation and participation of people with disabilities in projects, including decision making processes (where appropriate).
- ADFA ensures project-level risk assessments consider the risks facing people with a disability.
- ADFA ensures program designs and proposals are reviewed/appraised to ensure disability inclusion has been adequately addressed and where relevant, accommodations included in the budget.
- ADFA will use disability-inclusive monitoring evaluation and learning approaches (including data disaggregation and information about barriers to inclusion).
- Photographs used by ADFA to promote its work will portray people with disabilities with dignity and respect as per its Ethical Images guidelines,
- ADFA encourages any conflict with this policy to be reported to the ADFA CEO or Chair, utilising the Complaints Handling Procedure, available on the ADFA website.

4 REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

ADFA is committed to continuous improvement of its policies and practices. As such, the Program Team and the Board will undertake periodic assessments of our own and implementing partners disability inclusion practices, at least every 3 years, including the degree to which this policy is being implemented and the ongoing quality of the policy and practices.

5 REFERENCES

5.1 Legislative Frameworks and Standards

ADFA is committed to the following national and international frameworks, standards, and legislation:

- The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade “Development for All, 2015-2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia’s aid program”.
- The Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct, and specifically Commitment 2.4.
- The following Australian legislation and international conventions and frameworks:
 - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
 - Federal anti-discrimination laws such as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
 - Equal Opportunity Act 2010
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1992

5.2 Associated Documents

- ADFA Code of Conduct – Safeguarding
- ADFA Policy – Human Resource Management
- ADFA Procedure – Complaints Handling

Established: October 2021

Reviewed: September 2024