



**TOWARDS  
DISABILITY  
INCLUSIVE  
FOOD  
SECURITY**

## Global Disability Summit 2025

### Call to Action

#### Ensuring Food Security for Persons with Disabilities

Today, persons with disabilities face systemic barriers to food security, economic opportunities, and land ownership, making them highly vulnerable to hunger, poverty, and exclusion. This situation needs to be addressed urgently. We call upon the participants at the GDS 2025 to work with governments, donors, international organisations, OPDs and CSOs to reduce these economic and legal barriers in order to promote inclusive food security.

Our policy recommendations are based on experiences obtained from the *We are Able!* programme 2021-2025, a multi-country, inclusive food security programme in East- and Central Africa (Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Sudan and Sudan). This grassroots advocacy oriented program has identified pressing challenges highlighting the urgent need for disability inclusive policies and their meaningful implementation. These challenges include:

#### 1. Stigmatization and Discrimination

- Cultural and religious biases often lead to the exclusion of persons with disabilities from families, communities, and economic opportunities, particularly affecting women and girls with disabilities.
- At the same time, businesses, governments and organisations frequently overlook persons with disabilities in job recruitment, thereby denying them access to stable income sources.

#### 2. Limited Access to Land and Basic Resources

- Persons with disabilities face legal, institutional, and physical barriers in securing land tenure, exacerbating their food insecurity. Inheritance rights are often overlooked, with few persons with disabilities being able to acquire an own plot of land because of their family rights.
- Women with disabilities are disproportionately affected, with only 7.8% having secured land rights in *We are Able!* programme countries in East- and Central Africa.

#### 3. Exclusion from Food Security Programs

- Humanitarian aid and agricultural programs often fall short in identifying needs of persons with disabilities, leaving them without critical food assistance.
- Climate change affects stable food production and often intensifies food shortages, and persons with disabilities are often last in line for resource distribution, and among those who are most at risk in times of climate disaster.

#### 4. Limited Policy Implementation and Civic Space for OPDs

- While many African nations have ratified inclusive laws (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Maputo Protocol on investments in domestic agriculture, and the African Disability Protocol) that should strengthen food security for persons with disabilities, enforcement of these agreements remains weak.
- Organizations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are often not recognized in their capacity to advocate for their rights, and thus civic space is limited for them.

Based on the observed challenges, we call upon GDS participants and all governments, donors and international organisations to:

- Ensure land and resource accessibility for persons with disabilities**, by implementing inclusive land tenure policies and providing legal support for persons with disabilities to secure land ownership and inheritance rights.
- Strengthen local organisations for persons with disabilities and their power to engage other stakeholders**, by providing funding and legal protection for grassroots organisations to have a seat at decision-making tables, promoting disability-inclusive policies.
- Enhance economic inclusion**, by incentivizing businesses to employ persons with disabilities and integrate disability inclusion in vocational training and agriculture programmes.
- Integrate Disability in Global Food Security policies**, thereby truly upholding the SDGs (2, 10, 17) and to realise these commitments in food security strategies.
- Expand funding for inclusive development programs**, supporting disability-inclusive agricultural models, such as the *PIP approach*, which empowers farmers, including farmers with disabilities, to secure sustainable livelihoods.
- Ratify and enforce the African Disability Protocol**, as the swift implementation of this framework will help protect the rights of persons with disabilities across the African continent.

### We count on your support!

Ensuring the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities is not only a matter of social justice but a crucial step toward achieving universal food security and reducing poverty. We urge policymakers to take immediate action in addressing these systemic challenges, ensuring that no one is left behind.

### We stand ready to collaborate with governments, donors and international organisations to turn these recommendations into reality!

