



**TOWARDS  
DISABILITY  
INCLUSIVE  
FOOD  
SECURITY**

## **We are Able! Advocacy Cases**

**For International Day of Persons with Disabilities – 2025**



## About We are Able! (WaA!)

Persons with disabilities often face increased vulnerability when it comes to food security. The We are Able! programme works to change this reality by strengthening the ability of persons with disabilities to advocate for their rights — especially their right to food, land, and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. The initiative aims to ensure that persons with disabilities are recognised as valuable members of their communities and that supportive laws and policies are effectively implemented.

Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, We are Able! focuses on amplifying the voices of persons with disabilities so they can actively shape policies related to food security. Launched in 2021, the program continues until 2025 and operates in six countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Through close collaboration with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and local authorities, the programme works to create inclusive environment and improve access to food for persons with disabilities.

Over the years, We are Able! (WaA!) has gathered a wide range of valuable experiences and examples of successful inclusive policies and practices. Through the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), we will highlight some of the achievements made in previous years across all participating countries. This occasion also provides an opportunity to acknowledge and thank governments for their continued support for disability inclusion, particularly in relation to food security. We also appreciate the ongoing efforts of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), alongside local partners, in supporting policies and strategies that aim to achieve food security for persons with disabilities in the countries benefiting from the project activities.

The advocacy cases presented in this document highlight what has worked well and offer practical recommendations that support ongoing food security efforts. We encourage policymakers and practitioners to explore these cases and consider how the lessons learned can be integrated into national-level strategies to make food systems more inclusive.

Some cases from countries:

1. Sudan – Support offering lands to Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.
2. Uganda- Access to Land by Persons with Disabilities.
3. Ethiopia – Organisations of Persons with Disabilities Play leading Role on the ratification of Ethiopia Disability Policy.
4. DRC - OPDs have carried out Lobby and Advocacy (L&A) actions aimed at public authorities at different levels to promote the implementation of legal texts on inclusive food security.
5. South Sudan – Advancing inclusive food security through stronger disability leadership in South Sudan.
6. Burundi - Confederation of Networks of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (CORPHB) champions disability-inclusive policy in Burundi.

## Sudan

Through the activities of the WaA! project at the national level, OPDs and newly established alliances have played an essential role in addressing priority issues. Nationally, several key areas have emerged, including advocacy for allocating agricultural land to organisations and groups of persons with disabilities who have organised themselves into officially registered agricultural associations.

The former Minister of Agriculture instructed all Sudanese states to allocate agricultural land to each agricultural group formed by persons with disabilities, and to provide them with logistical support and production inputs through the Ministry of Agriculture at various levels. This directive was circulated to all states.

A notable success story emerged in Kassala State, where the **Deaf Union in Kassala State** registered an agricultural association and officially received agricultural land. The Minister of Agriculture also issued a directive to exempt these associations from registration fees, encouraging greater participation of persons with disabilities in forming agricultural cooperatives.

Additionally, coordinated efforts were made with other entities, including the Civil Registry, Passports, and Immigration authorities, to facilitate the issuance of ID cards and passports for persons with disabilities, which are essential for registering association memberships and executive councils.

These efforts continue with relevant government institutions, including the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture, to establish clear policies and procedures for the allocation of agricultural land to associations of persons with disabilities, along with attempts to exempt them from registration fees in support of their economic empowerment.

### **To further strengthen these achievements, the following recommendations are proposed:**

1. **Develop a comprehensive national policy** for allocating agricultural land to persons with disabilities through their associations, supported by clear and transparent implementation procedures across all states.
2. **Provide additional exemptions and incentives**, including waivers of registration fees and agricultural taxes, and encourage banks to offer accessible and low-interest loans.
3. **Offer technical and capacity-building support** in modern agricultural practices, financial management, and marketing to ensure sustainability.
4. **Strengthen linkages with production and market systems** through the Ministry of Agriculture to facilitate access to inputs and markets.
5. **Enhance inter-ministerial coordination** among key institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Civil Registry, and Immigration Services.
6. **Integrate the needs of persons with disabilities** into national agricultural strategies to promote inclusive economic participation.

7. **Allocate sustainable financial resources** within government budgets to support these initiatives.
8. **Ensure the active participation** of organisations of persons with disabilities in policy development and monitoring to guarantee that solutions are aligned with real needs.



OPDs and the general manager of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities  
with Federal Ministry of Agriculture

## Uganda

In the case of Uganda, efforts have been made to increase access to land by persons with disabilities. A lot of awareness has been raised with Government, parents, cultural and religious leaders on the importance of ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to land and are able to meaningfully participate in food production. The Government of Uganda is currently reviewing the National Land Policy and has ensured that a provision is made to include persons with disabilities in the Area Land Committees.



The photo shows Uganda's Minister for Lands, Dr. Hon. Sam Mayanja, signing a petition on the land rights of persons with disabilities. The petition was presented to him by representatives of the Bugisu Sub-region during the 2025 National Land Awareness Week.

## Ethiopia

Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Ethiopia have played a remarkable and leading role in advancing the Ethiopia Disability Policy, which is now in its final stages of approval. Their active and consistent engagement has ensured that the emerging policy is grounded in the lived experiences, priorities, and voices of persons with disabilities across the country. In close collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, OPDs have taken part in consultations, technical meetings, and advocacy initiatives aimed at aligning the policy with international disability rights frameworks, including the UNCRPD.

Through the We are Able! project, OPDs gained stronger capacity to mobilise communities, conduct evidence-based advocacy, and facilitate inclusive dialogues involving government institutions, civil

society, and development partners. This support enabled OPDs to coordinate targeted advocacy campaigns, increase public awareness, and ensure representation of persons with disabilities from diverse backgrounds throughout the development process.

Collaboration also extended to INGOs, community-based organisations, and sectorial experts, creating a broad coalition committed to inclusion and accessibility. Their combined efforts have made the Ethiopia Disability Policy more participatory and responsive. Although not yet finalised, the policy is now approaching completion thanks to the leadership, persistence and unified advocacy of OPDs and national stakeholders.



Mr. Abayneh Gujo, Executive Director of FEAPD, alongside H.E. Mrs. Huriya Ali, State Minister of Women and Social Affairs, H.E. Dr. Negeri Lencho, Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, and other key stakeholders participating in the validation workshop of the Ethiopia Disability Policy.

## DR Congo

Advocacy efforts have focused on improving access to productive resources, including land, for persons with disabilities to contribute to the improvement of their food security. OPDs have been strengthened and their capacity to lobby and advocate public authorities at different levels has been improved. These authorities have implemented a series of local decrees that guarantee access to land and inheritance for persons with disabilities for inclusive food security. At the provincial and national levels, advocacy notes have been submitted to and followed up within public authorities to continue with the implementation and improvement of legal texts on inclusive food security.

A draft interministerial decree on special measures for access to land and inclusive food security for persons with disabilities has been submitted to the different national ministries and is currently being studied and the process of signature on going.



Submission of the advocacy note to the Sud-Kivu Provincial Minister for Justice, Human Rights, Women, Youth and People living with disabilities



Photos taken during the official handover of provincial operating authorisation documents to OPDs by His Excellency the Provincial Minister of Justice, Gender, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities.

## South Sudan

The South Sudan Union of Persons with Disabilities, as the national umbrella organization, has played a significant role through its lobby and advocacy efforts. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Resources and Fisheries—particularly within the National Food Security and Livelihood Cluster—and with the Ministry of Land and Environment on policies and regulations, the Union has championed the inclusion of the Technical Disability Inclusion Working Group in national policies on inclusive food security, legislation, budgeting, and improved local governance. This coordinated effort has led to the following achievements in South Sudan:



Bishop Isaiah, CAB representative from the faith-based organisation expressing the needs to have strong technically trained disability mainstreaming committees for Inclusion, during the planning meeting in Juba Land Mark Hotel in November 2025.

Coordination and collaboration efforts have strengthened stakeholders' understanding of inclusive and sustainable policy frameworks. These engagements increased awareness of the importance of disability inclusion in community initiatives, identified priority areas for resource mobilization and capacity building, and led to the development of a comprehensive action plan. A monitoring and evaluation framework was also established to track progress at the local, state, and national levels.

Strengthened engagement between government actors, CSOs, and disability groups has increased public authorities' awareness of disability inclusion in food security and livelihoods, leading to greater participation of persons with disabilities in national programmes. These efforts also provided a platform for the MGCSW, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Resources and Fisheries, the National Legislative Assembly, and other stakeholders to enhance coordination in the disability sector, support collaborative planning and reporting, and improve joint interventions across sectors and humanitarian clusters. These efforts enhanced the collective capacity of stakeholders in the disability sector by promoting evidence-based practices, success stories, and innovative approaches to inclusion. They also strengthened ethical data collection, analysis, and reporting to better inform decision-making and improve services for persons with disabilities. This work supported more effective policy formulation, review, and advocacy to advance disability rights and inclusion at all levels of society.

## Burundi

The Confederation of Networks of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CORPHB) approved by Ministerial Order No. 530/178 of July 25, 2025, was established with the overall objective of coordinating strategic advocacy actions at the national level and ensuring representation at the national, regional, African, and international levels to promote the rights, participation, and representation of persons with disabilities in Burundi (Article 4). With the conclusion of the WaA! project, CORPHB has become the heir to the achievements and best practices of this project.



For Q4 2025, with the support of the WaA! consortium, this confederation developed its five-year agenda on November 4-5, 2025, including inclusive food security, and from this agenda, on November 6-8, 2025, it proposed a draft implementation text on inclusive food security based on National Law No. 1/03 of January 10, 2025, on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

On November 27, 2025, CORPHB shared its agenda with decisionmakers and partners. It also organised a session on November 28, 2025, to present and gather input on the draft implementation text from various stakeholders. The participants included representatives from key sectors: the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development, and Public Safety; the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights, and Gender; Ministry of Public Health; Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research; Ministry of Public Service, Labor, and Social Security; Ministry of Infrastructure, Social Housing, Transport, and Equipment; Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture; Ministry of Communication and Media; Ministry of Environment, Agriculture, and Livestock; Ministry of National Defense and Veterans Affairs; Office of the President; the Prime Minister's Office; Parliament, the Senate; the CNIDH, the Embassy of the Netherlands, IOM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UN, WFP, IFAD, FAO, MERANKABANDI Project, ENABEL, European Union; National Radio and Television and Isanganiro Radio; Renouveau and Ubumwe newspapers; Bonesha FM; Representatives of Civil Society COOPED; National Council of Churches of Burundi (CNEB); Conference of Catholic Bishops of Burundi (CECAB); the representative of visually impaired and hearing impaired persons.



For the moment, CORPHB has just submitted this project after various contributions to the relevant ministries for approval, with a view to turning it into a joint ordinance (Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, and Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security).

In terms of planning, there is only one activity scheduled for December 11, 2025, with the media on inclusive food security on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. In Burundi, this day has been postponed to December 12, 2025.