Getting started

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futuremakers by Standard Chartered

Sightsavers

ybi Youth Business International

Acknowledgement

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Purpose, audience and objectives

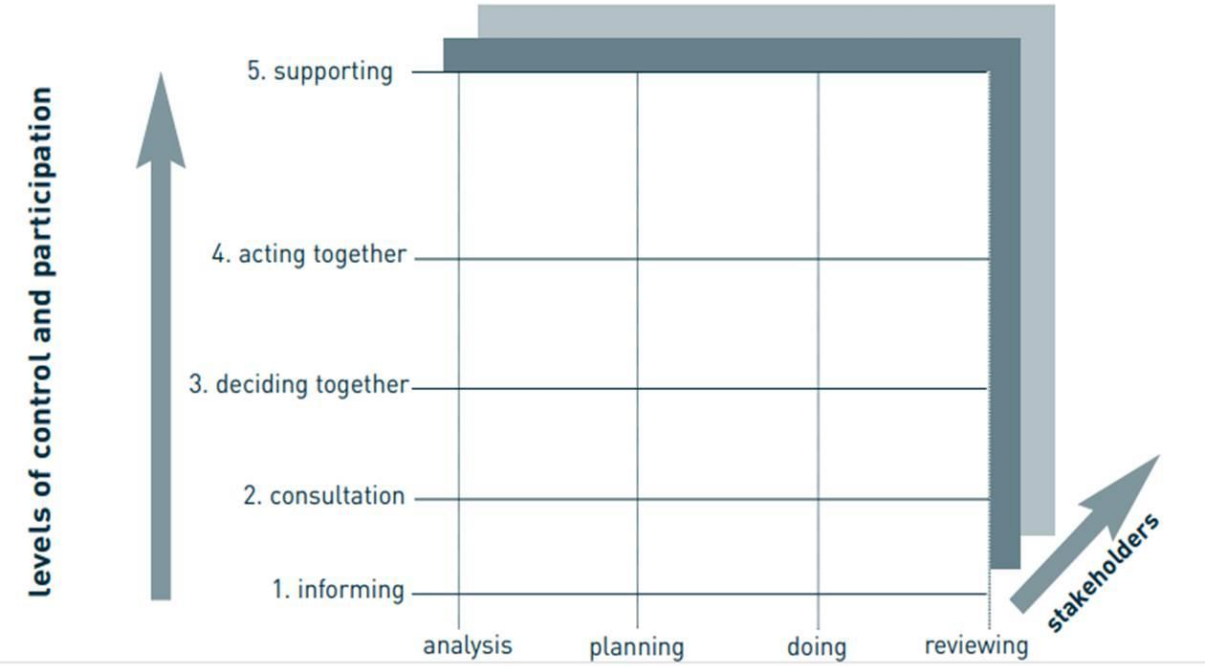
Purpose	This short guide is intended as the final in the series, helping us to get started on greater disability inclusion in our employment and entrepreneurship projects and programmes.
Audience	It is one of a series of short guides developed by Sightsavers, within **Futuremakers by Standard Chartered**, and specifically written with Youth Business International programme partners in mind. While advice included in the document is more targeted towards YBI's youth entrepreneurship programme, we have tried to make these relevant to all Futuremakers projects.
Objectives	1. To build greater disability confidence of the reader and how partners can better include youth with disabilities in their Futuremakers projects. 2. To give specific examples, advice and simple steps on how to adapt projects to be more inclusive of youth with disabilities.

Introduction

As we've discussed in other guides in this series, projects and programmes will have the greatest chance of being more inclusive if we are meaningfully and purposefully engaging with organisations of persons with disabilities. For a reminder, go back to the Meaningful participation guide and also the guide on Working with and through organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs).

Many countries will have an umbrella OPD, and this is the best place to start to find out which member organisation, ideally a youth with disabilities-led organisation if your programme or project is youth-focused, will be best placed to work with you.

Be deliberate in deciding and challenging yourself on what level of participation you want to reach. There's a very helpful analytical framework which was developed by Wilcox in 1994. This might help in challenging yourself on the level of participation you want at each stage of the project cycle:



Source: Participatory approaches: A facilitator's guide[1]

Contacting your umbrella OPD

The disability movement is present in many countries in the world. It was strengthened after 2006 when the Convention on the Rights of Persons (CRPD) with Disabilities was adopted. The CRPD has been ratified by over 180 UN member states. This means that in most countries where YBI is implementing projects, the disability movement has a presence.

Sightsavers works in more than 30 countries worldwide, with a focus on Africa and Asia. It partners with local, regional, national, and international organisations including organisations of persons with disabilities at all these levels.

Where there is any doubt on where to start to reach the umbrella OPD in a given country, the national Sightsavers office may be a good place to start as they can help connect you with the OPD movement.

The following learning from the Sightsavers-led **Inclusion Works programme** may also be helpful here:

- Open a process to identify OPDs the programme will work with. Make an open announcement at the country level inviting applications from OPDs. You can decide on the different levels of partnership, for example implementing partners, technical/advisory partners or communication/outreach partners
- Prepare an expression of interest (EOI) form and constitute a selection panel. Consider having someone from the disability movement in this panel. Some of the selection parameters could include whether or not an organisation meets the criteria to be an OPD, the area of operation, strong governance, and organisational setups etc. Where the programme intentionally wants to work with youth-led OPDs, this will

[1] **https://www.participatorymethods.org/sites/participatorymethods.org/files/VSO_Facilitator_Guide_to_Participatory_Approaches_Principles.pdf**

be one of the criteria used in the selection process. Also consider diversity, such as young people with different disabilities as well as other characteristics such as rural or urban contexts

- Where possible, you may consider investing in having an OPD engagement mechanism which includes a programme officer to guide your work with OPDs

Assessing the accessibility of participant recruitment, training curricula and events

Again, other guides in this series will really help you to get started on this. Particularly if you are using those guides with a representative OPD or youth with disabilities-led organisation.

Much of our employment or entrepreneurship programming will involve recruiting participants into training and mentoring pathways and it's important that, with OPDs, we test the accessibility of the recruitment and selection processes and adapt them to be more accessible to people with disabilities.

Our experience at Sightsavers, is that people with disabilities will have less access to ICT and smart devices, or internet connectivity, or digital literacy than those without. This is particularly the case the further we move away from urban spaces. Therefore, if we are using social media and online registration processes, to ensure that recruitment is accessible, we also engage OPDs to reach out into their memberships across the country and to support applications from people with disabilities. This approach can be successful and please do remember that if we are asking for time and effort from OPDs then we should budget and pay for it.

In addition to this series of guides, Sightsavers has recently developed an accessibility **toolkit** which can help you with representative organisations to test and adapt the content of training curricula and the preparation and delivery of training events. It's completely free to access and is also available in French language **here**.

Adopt adaptive programming!

None of us get it completely right on delivering truly inclusive programmes and projects, right from the start. But we can adapt projects and programmes based on what we're learning as we're going along!

If we're sensitively collecting data about which groups of people are not being included and not participating or benefiting equally from our training and capacity building, then (again with the OPDs or youth with disabilities-led organisations) we can adjust recruitment and selection processes, curricula content or the way we deliver that content in training and events. We can then continuously improve.

Sightsavers recently developed a **self-assessment framework** with a small group of youth with disabilities in preparation for a session they led at the Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit 2023. That tool can help all of us self-assess how well employment and entrepreneurship projects and programmes align with the expectations of youth with

disabilities. Importantly the framework gives you a benchmark report, which helps identify areas where we could improve. Give it a try.

Further Reading

The Global Learning for Adaptive Management initiative (GLAM) **https://www.odi.org/projects/2918-global-learning-adaptive-management-initiative-glam**

USAID Learning Lab – Collaborate, Learn, Adapt (CLA) **https://usaidlearninglab.org/cla-toolkit**

We work with partners in low- and middle-income countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

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