

Policy influencing 2024 annual summary

Key achievements in influencing policy
relating to inclusive education

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Introduction

This report is a summary of the key successes in policy influencing achieved across Sightsavers' country offices in 2024 which relate to the thematic area of inclusive education, with support from the Policy and Global Advocacy team, Campaigns team, Global Technical Leads and other teams. The report aims to provide an overview of the most significant achievements, although it is not exhaustive and there are many other examples of progress made towards Sightsavers' inclusive education policy influencing goals which have not been included to keep the summary at a manageable length. Sightsavers recognises that policy change requires long-term investment from multiple actors including government, civil society and international NGO partners, and it is important to note that these achievements are not solely attributed to the input of Sightsavers. For a comprehensive overview of Sightsavers' work on policy influencing in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 please refer to the [Policy influencing data hub](#).

Bangladesh

Allocation of funding to promote inclusive education

Through the Disability Inclusive Development consortium, Sightsavers is working to enhance the enrolment of children with disabilities and ensure that the education system in Bangladesh is accessible and of high quality for all children. In 2023, the consortium successfully influenced district and upazila-level education officials to allocate a portion of the School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) funds for children with disabilities in 27 out of the 45 project schools. Following on-going advocacy, in 2024 District Education Officers issued government orders mandating that all 2,444 Government Primary Schools allocate a portion of their SLIP funds to promote inclusive education and support disability inclusion. This is a significant step forward for inclusive education across the whole of Bangladesh.

Cameroon

Political validation of the inclusive education policy

Following the technical validation of the inclusive education policy by the Ministry of Basic Education in 2023, the policy was politically validated in October 2024. The inclusive education policy contains new provisions for the needs of children with disabilities, and the political validation paves the way towards its implementation. This is a landmark achievement following advocacy from Sightsavers and organisations for persons with disabilities over many years, a contribution expressly recognised at the launch event with the Ministries of Basic and of Secondary Education. Beyond this, Sightsavers supported the Ministry of Basic Education to begin effective implementation of the policy through developing resources such as an inclusive teacher's guide, which was finalised in 2024. Sightsavers will continue to analyse and monitor the policy's implementation to ensure that it delivers on its remit to reach children with disabilities

Review of the Education Sector Plan

Another important development in 2024 for the education of children with disabilities in Cameroon was the launch of a revised Education Sector Plan. In response to on-going advocacy from Sightsavers and partner organisations, the new 2023 - 2030 Education Sector and Training Strategy has greater emphasis on disability inclusion with “Increasing access and equity” as one of the three main objectives. The strategy also allocates an additional 90 million CFA Francs, approximately £120,000 to inclusive education for the 2025 budget.

Mali

Relaunch of the national policy development process for inclusive education

For several years, the development of an inclusive education policy had been put on hold, partly due to the security situation, political instability and the change of government. In 2024, following pressure from partners such as Sightsavers, the Ministry of Education (MoE) relaunched the policy development process. The MoE set up a technical working group and a restricted editorial committee which developed the roadmap, action plan and budget for creating the national inclusive education policy. In December 2024, the MoE presented the new roadmap to its technical and financial partners and asked them to support the development of the policy in 2025.

India

Development of a national guideline and implementation framework on equitable and inclusive education

In 2024, Sightsavers supported the development of a national guideline and implementation framework (NGIFEIE) on equitable and inclusive education, to inform the delivery of inclusive education initiatives to be taken at state, district and local level. The NGIFEIE operationalises the 2020 national education policy to ensure accessible, equitable, and inclusive education for marginalized groups, including children with disabilities. The guideline was launched by the Ministry of Education after a series of stakeholder consultation held at state and national level, organised by Sightsavers India as part of its collaborative advocacy.

Launch of ‘Inclusive Practices Recipe Express’

In a significant step towards strengthening inclusive education policy and practice, Sightsavers India, in collaboration with the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD), has co-developed and published ‘Inclusive Practices Recipe Express’—an innovative pedagogical tool designed to mainstream inclusion in classrooms. Launched by the Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in November 2024,

this pioneering resource adopts a 'recipe-style' format across twelve chapters, offering structured, practical, and scalable strategies for educators. By integrating preparation, implementation, outcomes, and real-life case studies, the booklet not only bridges the gap between policy and classroom practice but also serves as a replicable model for teacher training and inclusive education programming across states.

Nigeria

Implementation of the National Policy on Inclusive Education

In 2023, Sightsavers facilitated a comprehensive review of the National Policy on Inclusive Education, and the National Council on Education approved and adopted the revised National Policy on Inclusive Education at the end of the year. In 2024, Sightsavers supported the Nigerian Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) in developing a Standard Operating Procedure to guide the implementation of the policy. Sightsavers is part of a working group inaugurated by the Honourable Minister of Education to oversee the implementation of the inclusive education policy and will continue to participate in this process in 2025.

Pakistan

Roll out and scale up of inclusive education teacher training

In 2023, Sightsavers' technical experts developed a foundation course for the Federal College of Education on inclusive education, for a four-year bachelor's degree teacher training programme, to introduce trainee teachers to the concepts of inclusive education for children with disabilities. In 2024, Sightsavers consulted with different universities and training institutes to develop training on inclusive education for pre-service and in service teachers. This will be done in 2025 under a new project. Moreover, Sightsavers has initiated discussions with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan to find opportunities for the scale-up of this course in all universities offering degree courses in education. To raise awareness, a one-day training on disability inclusion in higher education was conducted for the Higher Education Commission in 2024.

Launch of the International Common Assessment of Numeracy report

In 2023, Sightsavers adapted the International Common Assessment of Numeracy (ICAN) tool for children with visual and hearing impairments, with the aim of making the assessment method accessible for the children with disabilities and thereby generating comparable data on learning outcomes for children with and without disabilities in Pakistan. In 2024, the ICAN report was launched, releasing the new assessment tool and taking education sector a step closer towards the roll out.

Senegal

Technical validation of the inclusive education policy

With the support of Sightsavers, 2024 saw the technical validation of the inclusive education policy. Sightsavers supported the Ministry of Education in this process, bringing together teachers' unions, civil society organisations, Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and parents' associations, to review and approve the new policy. This was an important step towards full institutional validation of the policy, one of Sightsavers' key advocacy goals for 2025.

Zambia

Introduction of bursaries for children at primary school level

Following advocacy from Sightsavers and partners such as the Zambia National Education Coalition and Zambia Federation of Disability Organisation, in 2024 the policy on school bursaries was revised. Previously, the bursary was only applicable to children with disabilities at secondary school level. The policy was revised enabling children with disabilities to qualify for bursaries at primary school level as well. This was an important step forwards in implementing the provisions for children with disabilities which are set out in the education and skills sector plan.