

**Chance for Childhood** is an award-winning charity working in Africa to support the most vulnerable children. Our vision is of a world where no child is forgotten. We work with **African visionary community-based organisations** to implement **effective, locally relevant projects**.

Our unique approach to analysing intersectional barriers enables us to reach the most marginalised children and communities, both in terms of complex needs (e.g., children experiencing disabilities) and location (e.g., remote rural areas, informal settlements).

Chance for Childhood was established in the UK in 1992. We have been working in Rwanda since 2009 and officially registered there as an INGO in 2017.

**We are the disability inclusion and Safeguarding specialists for children and young people in Rwanda!**

### Why Inclusive Education and Safeguarding?

According to a MINEDUC & UNICEF (2016) study, children experiencing disabilities represent only 0.85% of total enrolment in pre, lower, primary and secondary education. Our research from the UNICEF-funded iECD (Inclusive Early Childhood Development) project (2018-2020) across 22 districts found children experiencing disabilities enrolment rates at only 41% on average at ECD (Early Childhood Development) level, with low transition rates from ECD to primary school and further. The Government of Rwanda has shown its commitment to the rights of people with disabilities through various instruments such as its ratification of the UNCRPD, the Rwanda Education Sector Strategic Plan (RESSP) 2018/19-2024/5, and the development of national guidelines including the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy. We are committed to supporting the Government deliver on its strategy to ensure the inclusion of children experiencing disabilities. Inclusive learning and development are one of the key prerequisites to fostering an inclusive society. We work to ensure that inclusion promotion, support and tailored teaching needs start as early as possible.

Chance for Childhood supports children who live in high-risk settings where harm is more likely to happen. Many of these children will have intersecting risk factors, including disabilities, gender, and age in their lives meaning it is key to understand situations to keep them safer ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone we support is at the heart of our organization and our work.

As a result, we work on the principle of Inclusive Safeguarding. Many current safeguarding practices fail to consider how to include children with additional needs in our Policies and Procedures. We believe that every person has equal rights to protection from violence and so work to ensure that our safeguarding policy, procedures, and practices are inclusive and accessible to every person we support. We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that should be seen as a Golden Thread that weaves its way throughout the organisation and is much more than a compliance issue but is at the heart of the organisation's culture.

## Key impacts so far

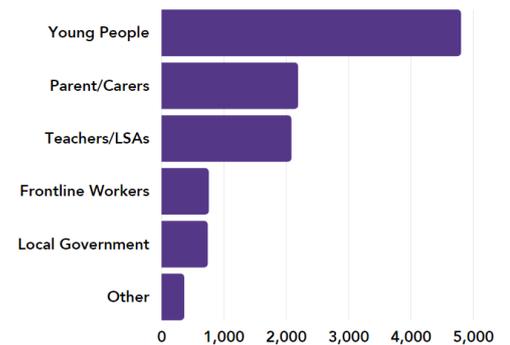


Figure 1 - Targeted Beneficiaries in Rwanda Inclusive Education Projects 2016-2019

**7,951** Children in 22 districts of Rwanda aged 0-8 were surveyed for developmental delays or functional disabilities by Chance for Childhood in 2018

**70** Staff from 7 NGOs trained by Chance for Childhood specialists on inclusive ECD

+ EEE project learning fed into the Ministry of Education's 'Guide to Inclusive Education in Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education in Rwanda' (2016).

**Chance for Childhood is the only organisation in Rwanda leading in the early detection of young children (<3 years old) at risk of developmental delays or developing a disability.**

### Technical Advisory

- Using our extensive expertise on inclusion to train and strengthen skills of service providers
- Leading on inclusive safeguarding to build capacity of project teams, beneficiaries, and service providers
- Delivering on several global safeguarding training consultations

### Programme Design & Implementation

- Managing interventions at a variety of scales & contexts
- Evidence-based models of programme impact
- Experimenting with new innovative pathways to impact
- Working to with key stakeholders build robust policies, procedures, and referral pathways

### Research & Mapping

- Designing validated screening tools for early identification of developmental delays or functional disabilities
- Collecting and analysing child disability and safeguarding data
- Comprehensive mapping and desk review of in-country legislation regarding inclusivity and safeguarding

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION & SAFEGUARDING | EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK

## Identification of children experiencing disabilities, data disaggregation and community mapping

**EDUCATION, Equality And Empowerment (EEE) project:** From 2013-2016, Chance for Childhood mapped over 23,000 people with disabilities in 3 districts of Rwanda. After an initial village scoping exercise with community representatives, data collectors interviewed a sample of young people with disabilities and

**Family Strengthening Project:** From 2021-2022, through funding from UNICEF, we have been able to roll out the second phase of the EEE project, which has focused primarily on conduct a mapping exercise in targeted intervention areas, screening and identifying children with disabilities through community frontline volunteers and community health workers. These trained volunteers aim to reach individual households, screening children to identify disabilities, disseminating inclusive messages, doing referral and follow up services to ensure children with disabilities are accessing mainstream and disability services.

## COMMUNITY-LEVEL PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND PEER SUPPORT FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION

**Communication Camps:** Since 2015, Chance for Childhood has been supporting parents with young children with severe and complex communication disabilities in a 3-day residential camp. It was designed to be easily delivered in rural settings, at a low cost and using locally sourced materials for props and toys, and cover child-parent simulative interaction and communication skills, play and feeding techniques. To date, 351 parents and 195 children have benefited from our Communication Camps. Follow-up visits with 42 families revealed that 93% reported that they now have access to support mechanisms and 93% are no longer frequenting hospitals with their children to receive treatment on conditions caused by poor feeding techniques. Following the Camp, parents formed Parent Support Groups. To date, we have 11 active Parent Support Groups with 175 parents of children with severe and complex communication disabilities. Today, the Parent Support Groups offer a network of support through group savings and generate income through pig farming.

Throughout 2019-20, Chance for Childhood's inclusion specialists visited sectors in 22 districts of Rwanda to deliver community advocacy events in collaboration with local government like education and social protection officers.

**Family Strengthening Project:** From 2021-2022, through funding from UNICEF, our activities include parent and caregiver home-based training on how to care for their children with disabilities in their daily living activities. Inclusive parent guides are being developed and disseminated to each household. Parents Support Groups have been created as a way for parents and carers to support each other, share knowledge, experiences, and skills. Furthermore, Community events and awareness raising campaigns. Local leaders are being trained on inclusive practices and safeguarding measures. We also work with the community to use locally available materials to assistive devices to ensure sustainability and learning from the intervention.

**Natwe Turashoboye (We can Also) Project:** Funded by Comic Relief (2021-2024), our recent project aims to improve inclusion, participation, and protection of D/deaf girls at the individual, community, and institutional level. At the Community level, we actively engage community leaders and district officials to better communicate and deal with D/deaf children as appropriate. We also engage community volunteers like "friends of families" in a few training sessions about how to support D/deaf children and/or other children with different disabilities whose family members and the community around is the source of violence and abuse they face to shift values that perpetuate exclusion & violence. We train teachers, frontline workers on inclusive safeguarding and referral pathways as well as increasing accessibility to information on SGBV, safeguarding and referral pathways. We also carry out advocacy for D/deaf girls to be included in the national child rights forum(for). Although, this programme has not phased out yet, it has helped teachers revisit their teaching learning practices regarding the inclusive safeguarding concept and are now committed to being active advocates of the child's rights in their schools and families.

IDENTIFICATION

COMMUNITY  
ADVOCACY

# Inclusive Education & Safeguarding | Examples of our Work

## Disability inclusion in education: ECD and transition to mainstream education

We have provided inclusivity training to NGO staff, frontline workers and government personnel involved in the delivery of early childhood development (ECD) services using a 'Training of the Trainers' (ToT) methodology. During the EEE project, we trained 417 primary school teachers in inclusive teaching methodologies. Learning from the project was later incorporated into the Ministry of Education's 'Guide to Inclusive Education in Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education in Rwanda' (2016). To support the transition of children to the 4-6 years age group, an inclusive toolkit for children 4-6 years old was created for ECD caregivers, encouraging them to engage with the parents of children experiencing disabilities and continue to provide parenting education.

We have trained Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), who promote social skills as part of learning, while provided individualised physical and educational support to improve learning outcomes of children experiencing disabilities and improve chances of transition to primary education. LSAs are also trained to facilitate communication between children experiencing disabilities and their teachers and family members.

## Training key actors on inclusive education and safeguarding

We are committed to generating evidence through our work, and the delivery of high-quality training to key actors in the sector are key components of our strategic objectives. Under the project supported by UNICEF Rwanda, we trained 70 staff from 7 NGOs working in ECD on our inclusive education screening tool. Other topics covered included introduction to ECD, developmental delay/disability, child rights, access to ECD services, inclusion, families, resources, activities, support systems and referrals. More recently, delivered several safeguarding training consultancies. The most recent being to the Southwest International Development Network. This was a two-day training focusing on Improving Safeguarding Practice. We have been invited to deliver two further trainings for Board Members later this year in 2022.

**INCLUSIVE  
PEDAGOGY**

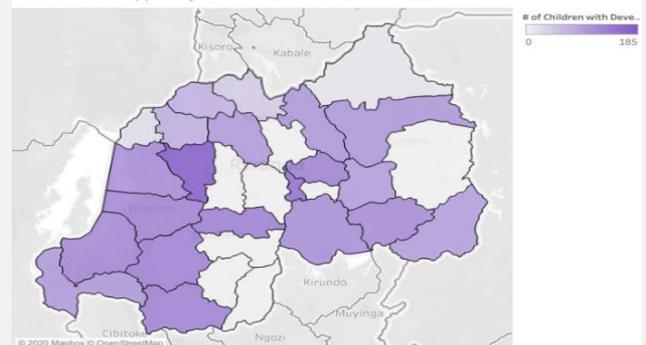
**CONSULTANCY  
SERVICES**

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*After the training of AVSI capacity-building officers and caregivers by Chance for Childhood, community mobilizations included "Inclusive early childhood development" in messaging. From then, 68 children (38 boys and 30 girls) were enrolled in early childhood development centres! This was a great achievement because most of them had never thought of attending any children's space, or school, but now their parents have understood the importance of care services for children*

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Number of Children with Developmental Delays or Functional Disabilities Mapped by Chance for Childhood in 2018



## Stay in touch

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