
COMMUNICATIONS CASE STUDIES GUIDELINES – DISABLED PEOPLE

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1. The dignity and rights of every child and adult are to be respected in every circumstance.
2. Special attention is to be paid to each person's right to privacy and confidentiality, to have their opinions heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm and retribution.
3. The best interests of each person are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy issues or the promotion of rights.
4. World Vision needs strong stories to inform and provide impetus for our advocacy activities and as a child focused agency, case studies featuring children are most in demand. Always ask permission of the child to talk to them and find out more about their story, not just the adult/carer with them.
5. Reporting on disabled people should be consistent with social model principles i.e. focusing on the need for environmental, institutional and attitudinal change by society rather than the individual having to make adaptations in order to fit in.
6. Do not define disabled children and adults by their impairments. Consider carefully whether the person's impairment is crucial to the story. The reporter should present an accurate and balanced portrayal of disabled children, with reference to their social, cultural and economic environment, avoiding manipulation or sensationalisation of text and images. For example: *'Fatima is currently unable to attend school because the building is inaccessible with narrow doorways and no ramps for wheelchair passage'*, instead of *'Fatima has cerebral palsy and cannot attend school'*.
7. Do not use negative or figurative language, which may be open to interpretation, or make inaccurate generalisations. Avoid using degrading, victimising or shaming language and images. Use appropriate and specific terminology where needed. Refer to World Vision International 'Guidelines Addressing Disability'.
8. Allow the subject of the story to speak, or otherwise communicate, for themselves.
9. Avoid taking photographs out of context or intrusive close-ups.
10. Avoid using 'them and us' expressions as it divides disabled and non-disabled people. Simply use 'disabled and non-disabled people', 'people with and without disabilities' or 'people with and without impairments.'
11. Reporting on disabled children and adults should demonstrate their inclusion within a community setting and avoid consolidating negative stereotypes by setting them apart.