

FACTSHEET: IGNITE PROJECT – INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES

Prepared by: **Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI)**

Project: **Inspiring Girls and Grassroots Networks for Inclusive and Transformative Education (IGNITE)**

Location: **Bayelsa State & Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nigeria**

FACTSHEET



Adolescent girls with disabilities remain one of the most excluded groups from education in Nigeria. Stigma, poverty, inaccessible school environments, and lack of family support often prevent these girls from accessing quality education.

Many families believe that investing in the education of girls with disabilities is unnecessary, leading to high rates of school dropout, social exclusion, and vulnerability to early marriage.

The IGNITE Project – Inspiring Girls and Grassroots Networks for Inclusive and Transformative Education fully supported by Urgent Action Fund is implemented by Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) to address these barriers and promote inclusive education for adolescent girls with disabilities in Bayelsa State and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Through community engagement, life skills training, family sensitization, and education support, the project aims to ensure that

CASE INSIGHT

- Many girls identified during the IGNITE project had dropped out of school due to stigma and financial challenges.
- One adolescent girl in the FCT was at risk of early marriage after leaving school. Through the IGNITE project's family dialogue sessions and life skills training, her parents reconsidered their decision and supported her return to school.
- Stories like this highlight the critical importance of community engagement and family support in promoting education for girls with disabilities.

WHY THIS MATTER

- Girls with disabilities face double discrimination - as females and as persons with disabilities.
- Many parents lack awareness of the rights and potential of girls with disabilities.
- Inaccessible schools and stigma lead to low enrolment and high dropout rates.
- Without education, girls with disabilities are more vulnerable to early marriage, poverty, and lifelong dependency.
- Inclusive education is essential to achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality).

BARRIERS TO EDUCATION FOR GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES

1. **Social Stigma:** Many communities believe girls with disabilities are incapable of learning or contributing to society.
2. **Poverty:** Families often prioritize education for children without disabilities.
3. **Inaccessible Schools:** Lack of ramps, assistive learning materials, and sign language support.
4. **Limited Awareness:** Parents and care-givers lack information about inclusive education

QUICK FACTS

- Over 7 million children with disabilities live in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2022)
- 95.5% of children with disabilities are out of school (UNICEF Education Report)
- Girls with disabilities are twice as likely to be excluded from education compared to boys with disabilities (UNESCO, 2023)
- 85% of schools in Nigeria lack accessibility features such as ramps and inclusive learning tools (World Bank, 2023)
- 63% of youth with disabilities are excluded from education, employment, or training (Disability Inclusion Report, 2024)

KEY PROJECT STATISTICS – IGNITE

- 320 adolescent girls with disabilities targeted for education and empowerment support.
- 353 girls identified and assessed across Bayelsa and FCT.
- 226 adolescent girls trained on life skills and personal development.
- 221 parents and caregivers sensitized on inclusive education and disability rights.
- 400 households targeted for awareness and behavior change interventions.
- Activities implemented across Bayelsa State

VDI'S FOCUS THROUGH THE IGNITE PROJECT

- Identify and enroll out-of-school adolescent girls with disabilities.
- Provide life skills training to build confidence, leadership, and decision-making skills.
- Conduct sensitization and dialogue sessions with parents and caregivers.
- Support school enrollment and retention for girls with disabilities.
- Advocate for inclusive and accessible learning environments.
- Promote community awareness on the rights and potential of girls

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

For Government

- Strengthen implementation of the Nigeria Disability Rights Act (2018) in the education sector.
- Invest in inclusive education infrastructure in public schools.
- Recruit and train teachers in inclusive education practices.
- Provide scholarships and financial support for children with disabilities.
- Strengthen data collection on education for children with disabilities.

For Development Partners

- Support programs promoting education access for girls with disabilities.
- Invest in assistive learning technologies and inclusive teaching materials.
- Fund community awareness campaigns on disability rights and education.
- Partner with local organizations like VDI to scale inclusive education initiatives.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EBONYI STATE

- Implementation of the Nigeria Disability Rights Act (2018).
- Increased national and global focus on inclusive education and disability rights.
- Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Opportunity to scale community-driven inclusive education models across Nigeria.

CALL TO ACTION.

1. Prioritize inclusive education for children with disabilities in state education policies.
2. Ensure schools are physically accessible and inclusive.
3. Strengthen community awareness programs on disability rights.
4. Invest in life skills and mentorship programs for adolescent girls with disabilities.
5. Support initiatives that ensure girls with disabilities remain in school and achieve their full potential.

The time to act is now.





VOICE OF DISABILITY INITIATIVE

...we speak inclusion of equity

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Contact: VDI | www.voiceofdisability.org |

CONTACT +234 803 686 6444

Voice of Disability Initiative

To learn more about VDI,
please visit, www.voiceofdisability.org

Email: info@voiceofdisability.org