
SPOTLIGHT: Nigeria

Disability-Inclusive COVID-19 Response

Setting the Scene

Persons with disabilities were among the hardest hit by COVID-19 and preventative measures, such as lockdowns and limited service-delivery. However, persons with disabilities had not been included in Nigeria's pandemic response plan. Vaccine administration did not prioritize persons with disabilities, and there wasn't any accessible communication on prevention and impact of COVID-19. Advocacy from the disability movement pushed for the prioritization of persons with disabilities for vaccines, accessible communications, and greater consideration of their needs, including in rural areas.



Who led the cause?

The Centre for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) played a central role in raising awareness through radio and social media campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination for persons with disabilities. The Association of Lawyers with Disabilities in Nigeria (ALDIN) and the Nigeria Association of the Blind FCT-Abuja Chapter (NAB FCT) also supported advocacy for more accessible communications and raising awareness on the health impact of COVID-19 and prevention precautions for persons with disabilities. Other organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and government actors also supported efforts to create a disability-inclusive response for the pandemic.



"If not for some of the interventions from OPDs, the negative effect of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities would have been more disastrous in Nigeria." - DRF Grantee in Nigeria

Milestones 2019-2022

- 1. CCD conducted research on access to COVID-19 vaccines for persons with disabilities.** Key government stakeholders were invited by the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities to participate.
- 2. The research results were shared widely by various OPDs.** In the meantime, CCD published an open letter urging the federal government to prioritize persons with disabilities during the rollout of vaccines.
- 3. ALDIN and NAB FCT produced radio jingles, radio programs, and other accessible communication materials to raise awareness on the existence of the COVID-19 vaccination,** and the need for accessible and inclusive sanitation for the prevention of COVID-19 among persons with disabilities.
- 4. As a result of these interventions, government agencies distributed palliatives to persons with disabilities** and made persons with disabilities a priority group in the government's vaccination plan.

Why is this win so important?

- Protective measures were made accessible to persons with disabilities and helped equip OPDs with preventative measures to stay safe.
- This is a good example of OPDs' role and thought leadership to influence government actions on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- This achievement is a reference point to create inclusive responses for future emergencies.

DRF/DRAF Contribution

DRF/DRAF's previous technical assistance supported CCD to conduct a research study on access to COVID-19 information and response for persons with disabilities. Through DRF/DRAF's flexibility, CCD was able to shift activities, organizing an event to disseminate the research results, and advocating for the participation of key government actors. DRF/DRAF grants also supported ALDIN and NAB FCT to create awareness on COVID-19 prevention and protection through accessible communication materials.

