



FORMAT FOR GOOD PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

Title of the good practice	Reducing Barriers to inclusive education in the Higher Education sector in Sierra Leone
Name of organization or coalition that implemented the good practice	Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration (EDSI)
When is/was the good practice implemented?	The project started in 2013
Where is/was the good practice implemented?	The good practice was implemented in the University of Sierra Leone based in Freetown
Total budget of the good practice	
Central theme of the good practice	Inclusive education in the Higher Education sector in Sierra Leone
Target group of the good practice	All Disable students at fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone

A. General description

Why did you initiate the project?

Describe the context in which the good practice takes/took place. What problem does it address? (75 words)

The good practice project was developed as a result of lack of accessibility and support for people living with disability to benefit from higher educational opportunities. Even though the government of Sierra Leone enacted into law the Disability Right Act in 2011 making provision for PWD to get free educational opportunities, this policy was not implemented. In this regard, therefore, EDSI designed a project titled “Reducing Barriers to inclusive education in the higher education sector in Sierra Leone” as an advocacy project.

Goal and Objective?

What is/was the goal, and what are/were the objectives of the good practice ? What change did you aim to see? (50 words)

The goal of this good practice project is to make sure that more disable people gain access and support to higher education in Sierra Leone. The long-term aim of the project is to provide social empowerment for PWD. This is because, their higher education status will provide work opportunities for them which by extension will better their lives and that of their families

What were the activities?

What did you really do? With whom? (100 words)

EDSI is implementing the good practice project on inclusive education in the higher education sector by first advocating and using its organizational platform as a go between the Ministry of Education, the University of Sierra Leone, the Commission for Disability and individual disable persons. This means EDSI presents all the names of disable students who have gained acceptance in the University to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry provides the full scholarship for them after verification



with EDSI and the Disable Commission. EDSI also established a desk office at the University to look into challenges of disable students who are the direct beneficiaries. To date close to 100 disable students have benefited for this good practice project. Some of these beneficiaries have graduated with various academic degrees and now have a chance of a better life.

What were the results?

Describe the main results of the good practice ? (100 words)

More disable students are able to access higher education now than before the project started in 2013. Nearly hundred disable students have benefited from the projects by getting full scholarship to study in the constituent colleges of the University of Sierra Leone which includes Fourah bay College, Institute of Public Administration and Management and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences

B. Detailed description

This section is to be completed after the exchange visits. During those visits you will have discussed and enriched your understanding of the good practice.

B.1 LOBBY AND ADVOCACY (MAX. 100 WORDS)

Describe per question below what you did relating to L&A.

To whom did you lobby?

EDSI lobbied and advocated with the Ministry of Higher Education of Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Commission for Disability, the administration of the University of Sierra Leone

What did you lobby and advocate for?

With the University of Sierra Leone, EDSI lobbied for a office for disability affairs at the university which was granted to us. We lobbied for accessible lecture rooms for disable students. This has to do with changing lecture rooms from high story buildings to ground floors for disable students. We also lobbied for disable students to get registered at the beginning of the academic year even if there are delays in the approval of their scholarship by the Ministry of Education.

Did you change your plan/activities during the process?

No, we are still working on our planned activities though intend to partner with the two other organizations to bring a disability sensitive approach to their work with other vulnerable groups

Any unexpected L&A results?

From the engagement with the two other institutions and their beneficiaries, we realized that there is a lot of potential and abilities with PWDs. We noticed skills and abilities that need to be nurtured.

Validate	Whom
Describe the main outcomes of the project related to advocacy , resulting from your project? Specify who did what, when and where .	<i>The main change that happened after the advocacy is that the government of Sierra Leone through the ministry of education now provide funding for disable students who are in tertiary educational institution. EDSI led the advocacy, the ministry of education provided scholarship funding and the University of Sierra Leone, provided a office for EDSI to coordinate the activities of all disable students</i>



Describe how your organisation contributed to this change, as described above.	EDSI lobbied and advocated to the all stakeholders in the education sector. Represents all disable students in the University of Sierra Leone and even presents provisional list of disable students who have been accepted to get scholarship from the Ministry of Education. EDSI continues this endeavours to support disable students as a good practice project since 2013
Which organisation or persons could validate the change described above?	<i>The National Commission for Persons with Disability worked with EDSI to do the verification of students beneficiaries of the scholarship programme in the University of Sierra Leone. The Commission also provide letters of support to the Ministry of Education for funding of student beneficiaries who are identified as PWDs by EDSI</i>

B.2 INTERSECTIONALITY (MAX. 50 WORDS)

Describe per question below what you did relating to intersectionality.

To what extent did you pay attention to intersectionality?

Give one concrete example?

EDSI's good practice project gives due consideration to intersectionality. The PWDs beneficiaries come from various backgrounds, religion and ethnic group. Beneficiaries include male and female students, different age including young and older students who are coming from different district, provinces and towns across Sierra Leone. EDSI does not discriminate against any types of disability. We work and are open to work with all types and forms of disability so they can benefit from higher education opportunities.

Validate	Whom
Describe the main outcomes related to intersectionality , resulting from your project? <i>Specify who did what, when and where.</i>	<i>The main change was more opportunities provided to Persons with disability to access higher education for free. This include male and female from across the country from different ethnicity and age. Nearly 100 people with disability have benefitted from this good practice project and funding has been provided by the ministry of education to the university to students living with disability. The University has provided desk office to EDSI to continue working with disable students at the university of Sierra Leone</i>
Describe how your organisation contributed to this change, as described above.	EDSI has served as an institutional hub to continue the support for free scholarship to all disable students in the university of Sierra Leone. At the beginning of every academic year EDSI provide list of all disable students to the Ministry of Education to academic scholarship for their studies
Which organisation or persons could validate the change described above?	<i>The National Commission for Persons with Disability worked with EDSI to do the verification as well as verification of students beneficiaries of the project in the University of Sierra Leone. The Commission also provide letters of support to the Ministry of Education for funding of student beneficiaries who have been identified by EDSI</i>



C. Learning

What did your organisation learn from this good practice? (50 words)

Describe what your organisation learned especially regarding L&A and intersectionality.

EDSI is more aware of creating more intersectional space to our programmes. We used to organize our programs bring on board different groups but the voices for inclusion project has helped us to identify intersectional issues and incorporate them in a more effective manner to our programmes. As we work with PWDs we now feel more sensitive to intersectional issues dealing with our beneficiaries and in the evaluation of our programmes.

What are 3 tips you would give to other organisations?

Tip 1: Do not focus only on your own organizations but engage with others

Tip 2: Always look for activities you can implement without funding so you can keep your advocacy programs going

Tip 3: Always take advantage of the media and make sure communities and ground are aware of what you are doing. This can help to increase legitimacy and credibility

What makes this project a good practice? (max. 50 words)

Please describe what made this project special and more successful than other projects you have done before?

This is a good practice project because it provides empowerment for PWD through access to higher education that will enable them to get a job, contribute to nation building and support their families and dependents. What makes this project unique is that it considers all forms of disability and seeks to provide opportunities for all different groups of PWD. This includes physically challenged, visually impaired, hearing impaired, those suffering from albinism etc. The program benefits all age bracket, ethnic and religious backgrounds and considers finding ways to meet the challenges of students living in distant areas such as the rural and provincial townships.

D. Award

If your organisation would win the award of €5.000,- , how would you use this prize? (100 words).

EDSI will use the prize money to strengthen the Disability Desk at the University of Sierra Leone and provide disability help-desk in the three constituent colleges of the University of Sierra Leone.

Are we allowed to use this good practice in a publication on good advocacy practices?

- Yes, we give permission to include **both** the name of the organisation and the good practice
- Yes, we give permission, but **ONLY** for including the good practice (organisation will be anonymous)
- No, we **do not** give permission to use this good practice in any publication