

“Infiltration strategy” for women and girls with disabilities

USA (active in 80 countries) - Mobility International USA (MIUSA)

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The three-week Women’s Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD) program of Mobility International USA (MIUSA) has trained more than 200 women with disabilities from over 80 countries on strategies for improving the lives of women and girls with disabilities. Utilizing the innovative WILD strategy to move from exclusion to "infiltration" they have formed partnerships with development organizations and governments.

“WILD has succeeded in raising strong and dynamic women who are assertive enough to engage their community leaders to promote the issues of women and girls with disabilities in their countries. I am such an example; my level of confidence has tripled since WILD.”

—Ekaete UMOH, WILD alumna from Nigeria

FACTS & FIGURES

- The 200-plus disabled women activists are followed and measured in terms of their impact and accomplishments.
- Within 6 months of attending WILD: 72% of WILD alumni received funding or in-kind support from sources they acquired through WILD
- 92% of international development organization staff report that they had made changes to their organization’s policies, programs and practices to be more inclusive as a result of their participation in WILD.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Founded in 1981, MIUSA is a disability-led non-profit organization headquartered in Eugene, Oregon, working to advance the rights of people with disabilities globally. By implementing innovative programs, MIUSA is building bridges to create a new era in which people with disabilities will take their rightful place in the world community. Women with disabilities are one of the most marginalized, under-served populations in the world, yet they offer tremendous potential for leadership and the ability to transform communities.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

- Creating a unique space for rights-based leadership training specifically for women and girls with disabilities. This is a place to gain confidence and pride, and to build the skills needed to be a force for change.
- Promoting the strategy of infiltration for both disabled women activists and international development organizations. Disabled women activists must proactively become involved in existing mainstream development programs. International development organizations and women leaders with disabilities must build partnerships to make such inclusion sustainable.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Utilizing these strategies, disabled women activists and the development community can break the strong links between poverty and disability – championing the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities as beneficiaries and leaders in the many life-enhancing and life-saving development programs that are changing their communities.

Photo: Yes

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