

Policy and advocacy achievements of 2023

Nigeria

June 2024

Introduction

This report is a summary of the key successes in policy and advocacy achieved in Nigeria in 2023, led by the country office, with support from the Policy and Global Advocacy team, Global Technical Leads and other teams. The report aims to provide an overview of the most significant achievements, although it is not exhaustive and there are many other examples of progress made towards Sightsavers' policy and advocacy goals which have not been included in the interests of keeping the summary at a manageable length. Sightsavers recognises that policy change requires long-term investment from multiple actors including government, civil society and international NGO partners, and it is important to note that these achievements are not solely attributed to the input of Sightsavers. For a comprehensive overview of Sightsavers' work on policy and advocacy in 2021, 2022 and 2023 please refer to the [Advocacy Outcomes Dashboard](#).

Social inclusion

Domestication of the national sexual and reproductive health and rights policy in Kaduna State

2023 saw the domestication of the National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights policy in Kaduna state. Sightsavers initiated collaboration with OPDs through the Inclusive Family Planning (IFPLAN) project to pool resources and advocacy efforts in influencing key stakeholders in the health sector and ensure that the National Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights policy was domesticated and addressed the needs of persons with disabilities. Sightsavers began the process with stakeholder mapping and engagement, followed by a policy development workshop with government decision-makers, culminating in the sign-off of the policy document by the Permanent Secretary and Commissioner of Health on 5 December 2023.

Ratification of the African Disability Protocol

On 13 February 2023, the President of Nigeria signed the African Disability Protocol (ADP). This was a key milestone, but Sightsavers conducted further follow-up calls and visits to the Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities to ensure the ADP was kept on the agenda and maintain the momentum towards full ratification. On 21 May 2023, approval was given for the ratification, and on 19 October 2023, the ADP was ratified.

Increased representation of persons with disabilities in health committees in Kaduna State

Sightsavers conducted advocacy work through the IFPLAN project, engaging with the Ministry of Health in Kaduna. As a result of this, the representation of people with disabilities in health committees has increased in 2023, with enhanced participation of persons with disabilities on the eight technical working groups in the Kaduna state Ministry of Health.

Adoption and implementation of accessibility standards

Following long-term engagement from Sightsavers and OPD partners, the National Accessibility Standard was launched in 2023, while a simplified checklist was developed alongside it. A taskforce has been established for the enforcement of accessibility standards to ensure that existing buildings are adapted, and new building conform to the regulations, and there are penalties for buildings which do not comply. The next steps will include awareness raising on the National Accessibility Standards for relevant government ministries, departments and agencies, for example the ministry of works and housing and the bureau of public procurement, to get their commitment in adopting and applying the national accessibility standards.

Inclusive education

Adoption of the national policy on inclusive education

Sightsavers facilitated a comprehensive review of the National Policy on Inclusive Education to align it with contemporary practices. This process identified critical gaps and areas for improvement, ensuring the policy remained relevant in fostering inclusive educational environments. On 14 December 2023 at the 67th National Council on Education, the council noted, approved and adopted the revised National Policy on Inclusive Education. In addition, the Kaduna State Ministry of Education has given the go-ahead for the review of the inclusive education policy. Sightsavers is involved in the review process, advocating for the integration of the Support Mainstreaming Inclusion so all Learn Equally (SMILE) component.

Incorporation of inclusion into the curriculum of the college of education

A significant advocacy achievement in 2023 was the integration of inclusive education courses into the curriculum of the Nigerian College of Education. Sightsavers engaged with the college of education department within the Federal Ministry of Education, the Education Research and Development Council as well as the National Commission for Colleges of Education, for the integration of inclusive education components into the curriculum. This milestone will equip future educators with essential knowledge and skills to foster inclusive learning environments, promoting inclusivity and diversity in education

Inclusive eye health

Establishment of a committee to manage the implementation of the national eye health policy in Plateau State

In 2023, Sightsavers supported the establishment of a state eye health steering committee, to review the national eye health policy and determine how the policy can be domesticated in Plateau state. Sightsavers facilitated engagement with the state authorities, but due to a change in government during 2023, progress was halted and advocacy activities had to be

put on hold until the new administration was in place.

Cross-cutting

Development of an Inclusive Data Charter Action Plan

Nigeria became an Inclusive Data Charter (IDC) champion in February 2022, committing to strengthening its systems for the collection and usage of data on people with disabilities to meet their needs. Building on this milestone, Sightsavers convened three technical working group sessions in 2023, to plan and decide on how to proceed with the drafting of the IDC action plan. Following two action plan review meetings and an IDC action plan validation meeting, the validated copy of the Nigerian IDC action plan was discussed during the Festival de Datos, hosted by the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) and held in Uruguay in November 2023. Sightsavers will continue to engage with relevant government stakeholders to ensure that the action plan is implemented, and that inclusive data is used to inform the provision of public services for people with disabilities.