



“Let Me In!”

Education for All Children with Deafblindness
Global Campaign



Deafblind
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What and why have a global Deafblind Education Campaign



Every child has the right to education!

However, children with limited use of their sight and hearing (including dual sensory loss and additional disabilities) experience difficulties in participating in educational settings and are often left behind.

They have limited access to communication, information, their environment and social interaction. These children need specialized supports to access education.

Both the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child⁽¹⁾ and the Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁽²⁾ proclaim the right to education and full and equitable inclusion of children with disabilities in society.

For children with disabilities, those most at risk of exclusion are children with deafblindness. The 2018 Global Report on Deafblindness makes it clear: Children with deafblindness are up to 23 times less likely to be in school than children without disabilities, and less likely to be in school than children with other disabilities⁽³⁾.

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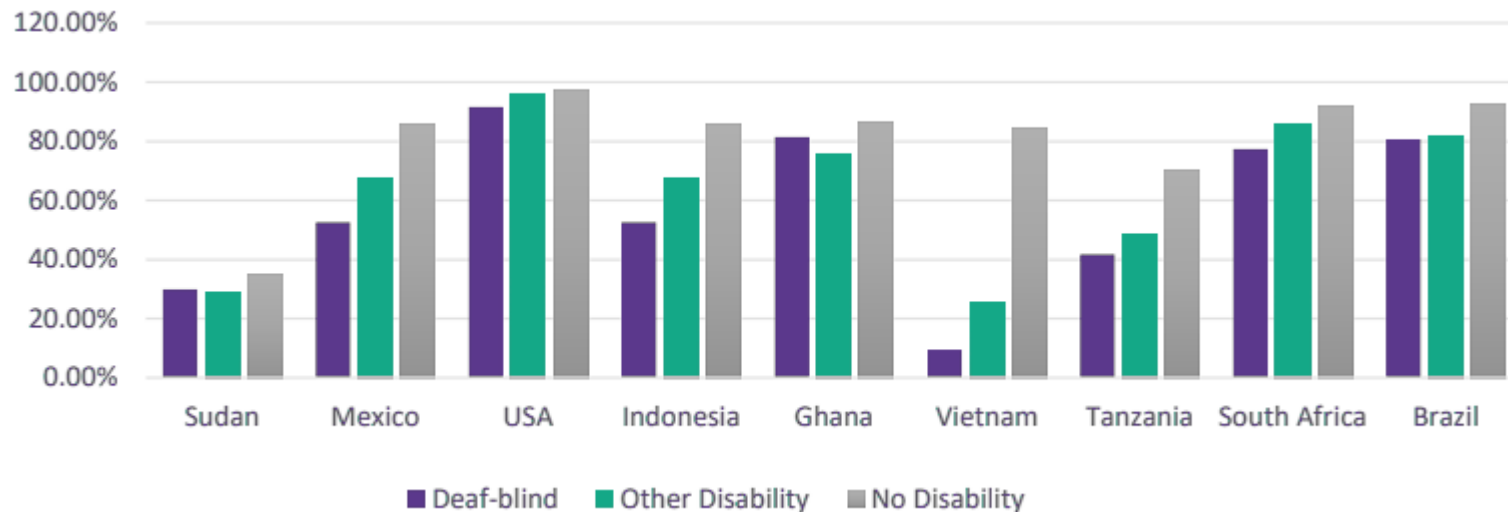


Figure 10, 2018 Global Report on Deafblindness: Educational status of children (aged 5-17 years of age) with deafblindness, children with other disabilities, and children without disabilities

The 2018 Global Report on Deafblindness confirms what we already know: children with deafblindness face multiple challenges in realizing their basic right to education.

Additionally, findings from the report’s literature review highlight serious problems with the quality of education for children with deafblindness. The review found most educational professionals receive little, if any, specific training or support to work with students with deafblindness. This is clearly not acceptable.

This Deafblind Education Campaign therefore calls for the immediate respect of the right to education of all children with deafblindness and children with related needs.

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Who is driving this global Deafblind Education Campaign?



Education for All Children with Deafblindness is a global campaign of Deafblind International (DbI) acting in partnership with the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and the World Federation of the Deafblind (WFDB). DbI welcomes any other international organizations supporting the goals of the campaign.

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What are the essential targets of this global Deafblind Education Campaign?



Addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5 and 17(4), this campaign wants to boost access to quality education for all children with deafblindness and related needs, regardless of their gender, by strengthening relevant partnerships at the global, regional and national levels.

The campaign wants to achieve:

- Increased participation in quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education
- increased participation in free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

This Campaign addresses three key Sustainable Development Goals(4):

- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The campaign focuses on those regions in the world with the lowest participation rates. It aims to identify and bundle relevant existing forces in the target regions strengthening or creating regional networks of competence in deafblindness.

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What is the essential goal of this global Deafblind Education Campaign?



The essential goal is an equal right to education for children with deafblindness and related needs. The campaign is guided by UNICEF’s twin track approach – on one hand working towards social mainstreaming and inclusion, on the other hand towards individual empowerment, supporting specific measures for specific needs.

On this way, awareness and capacity building are central in this campaign. On a global level corresponding networks, partnerships, coordination and communication are key.

The global Deafblind Education Campaign presents a unique opportunity for collaboration between education and health care programs in assuring that all children with a dual sensory impairment or related needs have access to the basic human right of “education for all, leaving no-one behind”.

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How and when will this global Deafblind Education Campaign occur?

The global Deafblind Education Campaign will be launched in one of the target regions in January 2023 and will run for 4 years, each year having its own focus.

- January 2023 – January 2024: **Create awareness** of the campaign priority to recognize deafblindness as a unique disability. **Connect regionally** relevant players or strengthen their connection to a regional networks of competence in deafblindness. Indeed very important is the active involvement of persons with deafblindness and their families.
- January 2024 – January 2025: **Support joint analysis** of the current situation by the regional networks of competence, **leading to regionally common goals and coordinated projects** for increased participation in quality education for children with deafblindness and related needs by 2027. **Facilitate international financial or content support** for projects with such needs.
- January 2025 – January 2026: **Support capacity building** activities in cooperation with the regional networks of competence by sharing of fundamental competencies for quality education for children with deafblindness and related needs in regionally fitting forms ¹. **Support regional advocacy with international advocacy** in exchange with the regional networks of competence.
- January 2026 – January 2027: **Support the evaluation, the follow-up planning and the corresponding communication** in cooperation with the regional networks of competence. **Facilitate further international financial or content support.**

¹ Such as (links to) webinars, tutorials, trainings, conferences and Communities of Practice (CoP)

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The campaign works within the framework of the (general and special) education system of the involved countries and promotes relevant collaboration with their health systems.

The campaign is implemented through a Global Committee (GC) chaired by the President / Vice President of Deafblind International and through Regional Networks of Competence (RC).

The Global Committee is responsible for the global framework of the campaign, the corresponding resources¹, communication, advocacy, networking, coordination and support. An important communication partner is Dbl's Communication Committee (ComCom) and its global network of Communication Ambassadors.

The Regional Networks of Competence (RC) are the regional pillars and possibly also a key outcome of this campaign. They guarantee regionally relevant goals and coordinated projects in a culturally and system-adequate form.

¹ Such as core resources (online/printable) for understanding and educating children with deafblindness and related needs. For example:

- Dbl's upcoming core set of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) for deafblindness
- Best practices for comprehensive assessments and corresponding adaptations of curricula
- Essentials on central issues like interaction & communication



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References:

1. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (in force since 1990)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
2. UN Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities (in force since 2008)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/crpd/pages/conventionrightspersonswithdisabilities.aspx>
3. 2018 Global report on deafblindness
<https://wfdb.eu/wfdb-report-2018/>
4. UN Sustainable Development Goals
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



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