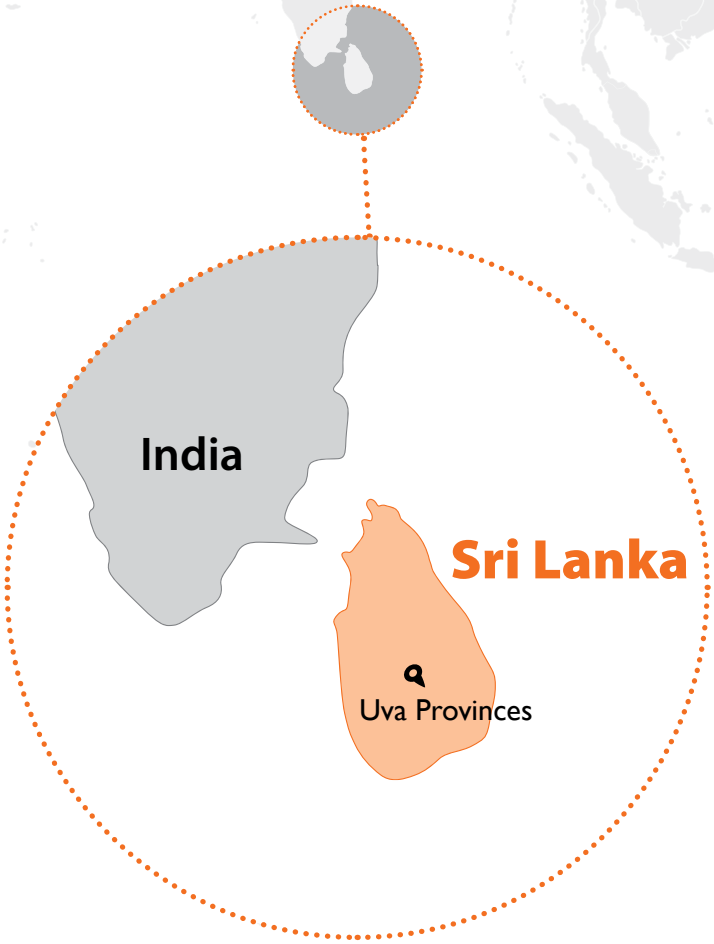
World Vision

Value for Money Assessment of

DISABILITY INCLUSION

Gender and Disability Inclusive Economic Development Project (iLIVE), Eastern and Northern Provinces, Sri Lanka (2016-2021)

RESEARCH BRIEF: MAY 2022



About this report

This report is drawn from a research study on value for money assessment (VfM) of disability inclusion of the iLIVE project, conducted by the World Vision team (Saba Mebrahtu Habte, Evidence Building Advisor, World Vision Australia; Pakkiyanathan Rohas, former iLIVE Manager; Thambirajah Jeyarajan, iLIVE Project Manager; Balathinesh Somasegarampillai, Project Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning; and Kavitha Tharmakularaj, Project Accountant, World Vision Lanka). The VfM assessment was undertaken concurrently with the end of project evaluation undertaken by independent lead evaluator, Kevan Moll. Viktoria Midelauri, Disability Advisor, World Vision Australia, provided technical inputs to this report, and it was reviewed by Melissa Sparke, Country Impact Manager responsible for Sri Lanka, World Vision Australia.

This research study and project were funded by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

Front cover photo: It took the iLIVE project several attempts to convince Jesumalar that she could be empowered with a livelihood despite her disability. Jesumalar is now a mushroom farmer who produces mushroom powder for the immunity improving mushroom drink. She is also a trainer on mushroom cultivation for many organisations and makes sure every person with a disability in her village is engaged in a livelihood.

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A social inclusion session being conducted for women with disabilities at Vaharai (East Sri Lanka).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Context

People with disabilities in Sri Lanka comprise 8.7% of the population and this rate is even higher in the Northern and Eastern provinces of the country, largely due to the 30-year civil war. People with disabilities are often excluded from society and do not have equitable opportunities to increase their income due to major barriers that include limited accessibility and transportation, lack of technical skills and capital, weak Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) that fail to promote a rights-based approach, and a 'dependency mentality' promoted by overprotective parents. Women make up 57% of Sri Lanka's disabled population and these women are doubly marginalised on account of their gender and disability. World Vision's Gender and Disability Inclusive Economic Development (iLIVE) project implemented evidence-informed thematic core project models for improving the income and livelihoods of vulnerable households. The project used a 'twin-track' approach to gender and disability inclusion within local agricultural value chains by addressing barriers for women and people with disabilities. This report presents the findings of the value for money assessment of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project.

Purpose and scope of the study

The main purpose of this assessment is to fill the gap on evidence related to disability inclusion costs and approaches in economic development and the livelihoods sectors. It aims to enhance the understanding of what it costs to be disability inclusive and highlight the benefits of including people with disabilities in the short and long term for programs/projects that aim to improve income and livelihoods. Lessons and recommendations will be identified to inform future disability inclusion programming design and budgeting, and to advocate for the effective integration of disability inclusion with adequate budget allocation in future programs.

The key research questions included:

1. What is the total project cost of disability inclusion and the cost per participant in this economic development project to date? How does this compare with international practice?

2. What is the value for money (VfM) of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project, in terms of **effectiveness** (did the outputs achieve desired outcome), **equity** (were project achievements equitable with regard to engaging and delivering benefits to vulnerable people with disabilities, such as women, female heads of household, and the poor with disabilities, **economy** (how appropriate were the quality and price of inputs), and **efficiency** (how well were inputs converted to outputs)?

Approach, Method and Process

This cost analysis of disability inclusion adapted the VfM 4Es (effectiveness, equity, economy, and efficiency) principles for the iLIVE project, which applied what we know works best using the twin track approach of disability inclusion and the 'best practice disability inclusion activities'. Mixed research methods were used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The estimated total project costs were calculated based on direct expenditure – derived from annual project financial data/reports available at the time of the study – over the first four years of project implementation. The study was conducted by a core working group from World Vision Australia and the Sri Lankan iLIVE project team, at the same time as the end of project evaluation in April-November 2021.

Conclusion

The focus on disability inclusion and the related costs ultimately led to transformative and significant improvements in the lives of people with disabilities – with a 1:3.8 return on investment for people with disabilities.

The project was an exemplar with high diversity in project staff, mobilisers, facilitators and volunteers (74% female, 23% people with disabilities [64% of which were female]), and was therefore able to influence, advise and support other stakeholders to be more inclusive from a position of credibility, legitimacy and experience. This is all reflected in, and congruent with, the highly equitable participation and outcomes achieved by the project for people with disabilities. The project dramatically increased the inclusion of people with disabilities (507% higher than the estimated average of disability inclusion from meta-analysis of ANCP projects), with 22% of total project spend, and a marginal increase in cost per project participant of 12.6%. This compares well with existing (although admittedly limited) evidence that estimates the cost of disability within public social expenditure at around 10% (and up to 25% in some countries). The iLIVE project demonstrated good management of value for money, having made considered and appropriate investments to ensure that all inputs were either of the required quality or able to achieve this at an early stage.

THE TWIN-TRACK DISABILITY INCLUSION APPROACH RESULTED IN **A 507% INCREASE IN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES** BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT

WITH A MARGINAL INCREASE IN COST OF 12.6% PER PARTICIPANT THE PROJECT ACHIEVED A **1:3.8 RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Lessons and Recommendations

Having a twin-track approach, with a baseline and endline of people's income disaggregated by disability and gender, and adequate budget allocation (22% of total project spend) can dramatically increase the engagement of people with disabilities and the ongoing benefits.

- Given that people with disabilities are generally the most vulnerable in the community, this is money well spent. The approach is recommended for replication and expansion drawing from existing good practices and lessons.

While there were significant improvements across key measures of economic engagement and agency of people with disabilities, **only 31% saw positive change in the way the community treats people with disabilities.**

- More efforts are needed to improve entrenched community practices and poor treatment of people with disabilities.
- Comparative assessment of the short-term costs of inclusion against the longer-term costs of exclusion could be useful for advocacy in support of sustained and expanded efforts to promote societal level changes and integration of disability inclusion across economic development programs.

The project made substantial progress in increasing the diversity of people with disabilities with different impairments, however, the **inclusion of people with psychosocial impairments was minimal.**

- The iLIVE project's achievements, experience and learning should be built upon to include these most marginalised groups of people with disabilities in future projects, using resources already available in Sri Lanka and globally, for instance CBM (formerly Christian Blind Mission).
- Strengthening staffing resources and the capacity of mental health service providers towards better inclusion of women and men with psychosocial needs should be considered in project activities and outcomes in future programs.

Training on value addition for women with disabilities through micro projects initiated by Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) in Muthur (East, Sri Lanka).

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

People with disabilities in Sri Lanka comprise 8.7% of the population.[1] This rate is higher in the North and Eastern provinces of the country, largely due to the 30-year civil war. People with disabilities are often excluded from society and do not have equitable opportunities to increase their income. As such, they are largely involved in self-employment or casual work in agriculture and informal sectors.[2] The main barriers that they face include limited accessibility and transportation, lack of technical skills and capital, weak OPDs that fail to promote a rights-based approach, and a 'dependency mentality' promoted by over-protective parents. Women make up 57% of Sri Lanka's disabled population; these women are doubly marginalised on account of their gender and disability.[3] As a result, they are more likely to face a heightened risk of discrimination and stigma, and additional barriers to participation in livelihood activities.

World Vision's Gender and Disability Inclusive Economic Development (iLIVE) project implemented evidence-informed thematic core project models for improving the income and livelihoods of vulnerable households, including local value chain development (LVCD),[4] Savings for Transformation (S4T),[5] Journeys for Transformation (JoT), Community Change (C-Change)[6] and MenCare. The project used a 'twin-track' approach to gender and disability inclusion within local agricultural value chains by addressing barriers for women and people with disabilities. The disability twin-track approach was considered from the beginning of the project design, but turned gradually, year by year, into a more comprehensive approach once project staff capacity had increased. Examples of the twin-track approach are presented in the table overleaf.

iLIVE Project Overview

The iLIVE project aimed to increase the economic engagement of 24,000 target beneficiaries by increasing the incomes of 2,696 participants, including 1,650 producers who achieved a 29% increase in income through targeted value chain crop production, value addition and wage earnings in the Eastern and Northern Provinces in Sri Lanka (Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts) by 2021, through four outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased capacity for producers to earn income, including people with disabilities and women, through: (1) Increased engagement of producers in target value chain activities (producing/processing/selling); (2) Improved market linkages and collective buying/selling for producers through producer groups; (3) Increased technical, vocational and financial literacy skills of producers; (4) Increased capital and access to finance for producers; (5) Increased time available for income-generating activities (IGAs).

Outcome 2: Increased agency of women, through: (1) Changed community attitudes on gender; (2) Increased equitable household decision-making power; and (3) Increased time available for women through shared care work.

Outcome 3: Increased agency of people with disabilities, through: (1) Increased independence of people with disabilities; (2) Changed community attitudes towards people with disabilities; and (3) Strengthened capacity of OPDs, government and service providers.

Outcome 4: Increased project stakeholders' understanding and access to knowledge on how to achieve economic empowerment inclusive of people with disabilities and women for future projects.

1 United Nations ESCAP (2015) Disability at a Glance: Strengthening employment prospects for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2015, pp.158.
2 World Vision Lanka (2016) Statistics in Area Development Programmes (ADPs) in Central, Northern and Northern Province.
3 DOJF (2017) United Nations Universal Periodic Review - Sri Lanka 2017 Third Cycle, 28th Session 2017, Disability Organization Joint Front (DOJF), March 2017.
4 The Local Value Chain Development (LVCD) project model aims to help producers generate a sustainable income to provide for the needs of their families and children. Producers increase their incomes by working together in groups to have a stronger understanding and connection to markets and by better matching their production to market demand to improve their profitability.
5 The Savings for Transformation (S4T) model is World Vision's adaptation of the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) savings groups approach, to reach the most vulnerable groups (especially women and persons with disabilities) and often the most marginalised children, living in different contexts (all faiths, rural, urban or semi-urban).
6 The C-Change project model is a process of facilitated interpersonal dialogue by which communities explore in depth the underlying beliefs, socio-cultural norms and traditional practices that challenge or support their progress towards improving the well-being of children, through which community members are empowered to come up with their own solutions and plans for social change.

Examples of the twin-track approach to disability inclusion in the iLIVE project

DISABILITY MAINSTREAM INITIATIVES	DISABILITY SPECIFIC/TARGETED INITIATIVES
• Disability mainstreamed through all project outcomes (despite the targeted outcome in place) • Key project models and approaches reviewed and adapted to be more sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities • All assessments and analyses being inclusive (e.g., value chain analyses, baseline, mid-term and endline evaluations, etc.) • People with disabilities recruited for different roles (as data enumerators, community workers, volunteers, etc.) • Project communication materials being inclusive • All project implementing teams trained on disability issues • Community sensitisation, awareness-raising events and trainings, including disability messaging • Stakeholders and community partners empowered on disability inclusion • People with disabilities equally empowered for leadership roles, among other community members.	• Disability specific project outcome defined, with corresponding indicators (out of 4 Outcomes) • Intentional outreach and identification conducted in form of household survey using Washington Group Questions • People with disabilities and their representative organisations (OPDs) supported via trainings, office furniture, micro-grants for business start-ups and enterprise establishment, etc.) • Reasonable accommodation provided to ensure participation of people with disabilities in project activities enabling entrepreneurial opportunities • Peer support for people with disabilities provided by active leaders and peers, and selected partner OPDs responsible for outreach to households of people with disabilities, directly delivering project messages and information on opportunities, assessment of individual needs and applying strategies to enable participation.

The project was funded by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). This report presents the findings of the value for money assessment of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project, which was conducted concurrently with the end of project evaluation in April-November 2021.

Value for Money Definition and Framework

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) defines 'value for money' (VfM) as the maximum use of resources to improve lives, with the purpose of developing a better understanding of costs and results so that more informed, evidence-based choices can be made.[7]

The Bond guide to VfM recognises that VfM is much less about economic analysis of the costs in relation to quantitative outputs and more about the approach of the program design, implementation, and evaluation.[8] The VfM approach is framed within a wider context to determine how the overall benefits outweigh the costs, or what benefits the project has brought about for the investment made. While in the context of the 2030 Agenda of 'Leaving no one behind,' it includes a careful examination of those being reached and those being excluded, such as people with disabilities.[9] This approach applies the 4Es. In addition to FCDO's 3Es (economy, efficiency, and effectiveness), the Bond guide to VfM includes equity, which cuts across effectiveness, efficiency and economy, as well as being a stand-alone consideration (Figure 1). Assessment of the effectiveness of an intervention includes consideration of issues of equity, to ensure that development results are targeted at the most marginalised, including the poorest, women and girls. In this regard, it ensures that the VfM assessment is undertaken in an inclusive way, while interventions that exclude people with disabilities, for instance, and other marginalised groups, are not considered good VfM.

Oxfam defines VfM as the best use of resources to contribute to positive significant change in the most vulnerable people's lives,[10] involving Bond's 4Es, as stated above. 'Significant change' covers:

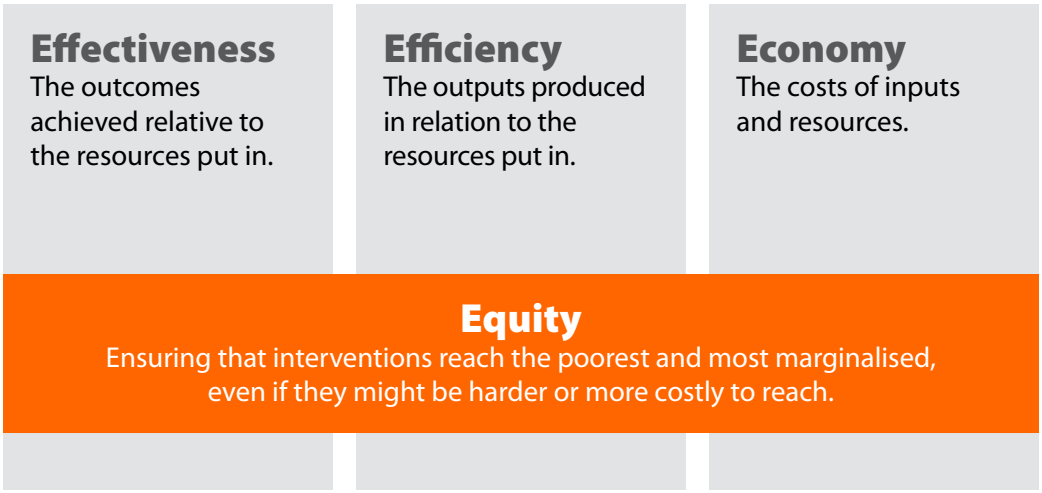
(1) scale – the number of people benefitting;

(2) depth – the intensity and sustainability of change; and

(3) inclusion – the change benefits people who are vulnerable and marginalised.

7 Value for money guide (ukaidmatch.org)
8 value_for_money_-_what_it_means_for_ngosan_2012.pdf (bond.org.uk)
9 Bond (2016) Leaving no one behind: The value for money of disability-inclusive development, November 2016. Published by Bond, Society Building, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL, UK.
10 Oxfam Australia, Value for Money Discussion Paper, Program Quality Unit, Sept 2013.

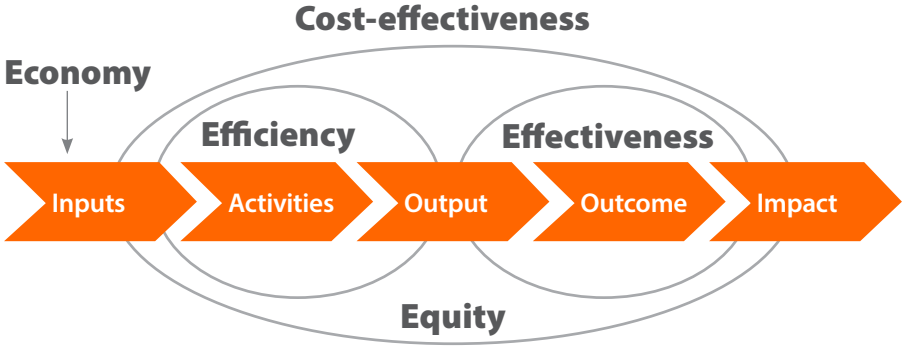
Figure 1: The 4E Principles



Source: Bond, 2016. Leaving no one behind: The value for money of disability-inclusive development. November, 2016.

The way that the 4Es are related to project inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts is shown in Figure 2. Input costs are used as a measure of **economy.** Often quantitative and qualitative inquiries focus on the extent to which systems are in place and are effectively applied to ensure that these costs are reasonable to acquire good quality inputs, towards effecting the desired impact with equity. **Efficiency** is a measure of productivity, and examines the relationship between inputs and outputs, related to increasing output for a given input, or minimising input for a given output, while ensuring equity and maintaining quality. The **effectiveness** is a measure of increase or decrease in outcomes for a given output or examines the relationship between outputs and outcomes to qualitatively and quantitatively measure the extent to which the project is effective in delivering its intended objectives. **Cost-effectiveness** measures the cost per person impacted with equity. **Equity**, as indicated above, cuts across economy, efficiency, and effectiveness while being a stand-alone measure. The ***equity element of economy measure*** also looks at whether recruitment and procurement processes include policies that ensure equity, such as equal opportunities policies for recruitment, accessibility policies for procurement, or whether these processes have adverse effects on equity. This aspect examines if the cost drivers of disability inclusion are identified and justified in relation to projects that do not include people with disabilities or reach the hard-to-reach groups, and the processes involved in managing the cost drivers and eliminating those that do not add value for varying contexts (for instance, in contexts where existing policies and technical capacity on disability inclusion are low, medium, or high). With regards to the assessment of the **efficiency measure from the equity lens**, this examines reliable data on the number of people with disabilities, disaggregated using the Washington Group Questions, that benefit from the project, to determine if this data shows that people with disabilities are benefitting equally, and if there is diversity of people with disabilities reached by the project (for instance, with regard to gender or type of disability). This element also examines if the project included specific processes or outputs associated with disability inclusion, how these activities add value and contribute to the equity of the project as compared to alternative less costly approaches. Equity considerations in measures of effectiveness determine the benefits of disability-inclusive programming, in terms of the intrinsic benefits of not excluding men and women with disabilities. This element also revisits the project theory of change on the extent to which inputs, processes and outputs contribute to these disability-inclusive outcomes, including the potential longer-term benefits.

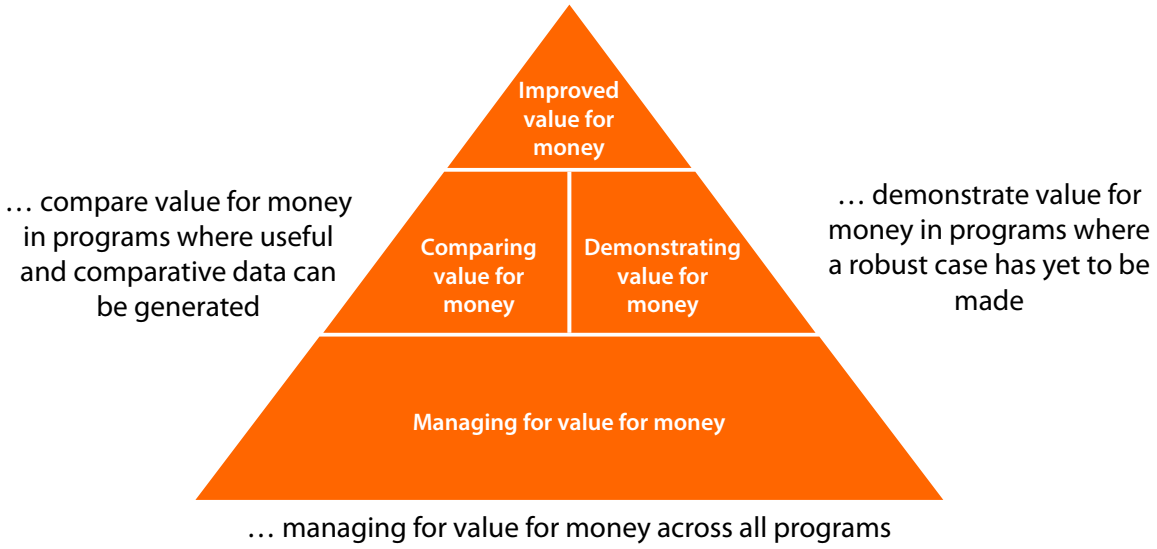
Figure 2: How the 4Es relate to project stages



Adapted from: EDIs-Value-for-Money-Guidance.pdf (opml.co.uk)

The VfM framework (Figure 3) provides an overview of how evaluative methods can be applied across the three categories to improve their value for money. These can include assessment of existing processes for managing for value for money, including programmatic and organisational processes, such as sound planning, monitoring and evaluation and financial systems, as the foundation of good value for money. Evaluative methods and approaches are applied for comparing and demonstrating value for money. Comparative data for selected outputs, for instance, can be used to inform future decisions about what the most efficient costs of delivering the output should be, while demonstrating value for money can be used where generating a robust evidence base is required. This VfM assessment of disability inclusion for the iLIVE project was undertaken as part of a comprehensive end of project evaluation to demonstrate the VfM of disability inclusion of this project to generate learning and data that can be used to inform future programming decisions. Though there have been very few VfM assessments conducted on disability inclusion for economic development projects, this study's findings are compared with existing evaluative findings, while the existing process was also looked at to inform future efforts at driving improvements for inclusive projects.

Figure 3: The VfM Framework



Adapted from: value_for_money_-_what_it_means_for_ngos_jan_2012.pdf (bond.org.uk)

Purpose and scope of the study

The main purpose of this assessment is to fill the evidence gap on program costs related to achieving disability inclusion and approaches in economic development and the livelihoods sector. More specifically, it aims to enhance the understanding of what it costs to be disability inclusive and the benefits of including people with disabilities in the short and long term for programs/projects that aim to improve income and livelihoods. The assessment also aimed to generate evidence on the extent to which the project's strategic approach on disability inclusion was good value for money, in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Lessons and recommendations will be identified to inform future disability-inclusion programming design and budgeting, and to advocate for effective integration of disability inclusion with adequate budget allocation in future programs.

The key research questions of the study included:[11]

- What is the total project cost of disability inclusion and the cost per participant in this economic development project to date? How does this compare with international practice?
- What is the value for money (VfM) of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project, in terms of **effectiveness** (did the outputs achieve desired outcome), **equity** (were project achievements equitable with regard to engaging and delivering benefits to vulnerable people with disabilities, e.g., women, female heads of household, and the poor with disabilities [as per the Multidimensional Poverty Index], **efficiency** (how well were inputs converted to outputs), and economy (how appropriate were quality and price of inputs)?

11 VfM related sub-questions are listed in the Annex.

THE APPROACH, METHOD, AND PROCESS

This cost analysis of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project adapted the 4E VfM principles for what we know works best using the twin-track approach of disability inclusion and the 'best practice disability inclusion activities'.[12] As indicated earlier, the project included a targeted outcome (3) to enhance the agency of people with disabilities, while mainstreaming disability inclusion across all the remaining outcomes (1, 2 & 4), that implemented World Vision's evidence-informed thematic core project models for improving the income and livelihoods of vulnerable households, to include marginalised population groups.

Mixed research methods were used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Estimated total project costs were calculated based on direct expenditure – derived from annual project financial data/reports available at the time of the study – over the first 4 years of project implementation.[13] Costs related to disability inclusion were calculated, including: 100% of all costs for targeted disability inclusion (Outcome 3), and the share of costs for mainstreaming disability inclusion into the remaining three outcomes (i.e., Outcomes 1, 2 and 4), which was estimated through a consultative process.[14] An Excel-based additional cost estimation tool (ACET)[15] was used to consolidate and analyse project budget expenditure data across five project cost categories:

- **Assessment and planning:** disability data collection, stakeholder mapping, baseline surveys, disability inclusion plan development, printing and distribution of assessments and plans
- **Reasonable accommodation:** transportation, ramps, communication, interpretation and follow-up visits
- **Capacity building, sensitisation and OPD engagement:** leadership training for people with disabilities, support to OPDs and government stakeholders on disability inclusion and sensitisation, training and support on disability inclusion
- **Project staff and associated costs:** iLIVE project staff, assistants and mobilisers, World Vision Australia advisory and international consultancy support
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** development of disability disaggregated ITT, monitoring tools, transport and communication, design and implementation of disability-inclusive MTR and evaluation.

The cost analysis was conducted by a core working group, comprising of joint World Vision Australia and World Vision Lanka iLIVE project teams.[16] The working group also reviewed the processes used during project implementation to manage value for money, including project planning, monitoring and financial procurement processes and systems. Beyond cost analysis, quantitative data from the project's regular monitoring was used to derive measures for key output indicators, while end of project evaluation[17] quantitative findings on project achievements across key project outcomes and impact indicators, and qualitative findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) of key project stakeholders and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of key beneficiaries, were triangulated with the quantitative cost analysis results. The qualitative component of the end of project evaluation, which was conducted concurrently with this value for money assessment, generated insights on perceptions of project participants and stakeholders on value for money assessments of project benefits – what had worked and why, and what can be done better.

With her 'Ezhuchchi' mushroom PG in Karaichchi, Nirmala's commitment and prominent success in mushroom farming made her family come around and support her.

12 DFAT (2015) Development for All 2015-2021: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, May 2015.

13 This represents 80% of the total project budget (AU$5 million) expended by the end of the project.

14 Share costs of staff time allocation (in terms of % of total staff time allocated to the project) to plan and implement mainstreaming of disability inclusion of project staff across three outcomes (1,2 & 4), for iLIVE project staff and external international consultants were derived during in-country consultation involving all project staff facilitated by iLIVE project manager and MEAL specialist, while the costs related to the WVA oversight and technical advisory support was derived through one-on-one consultation facilitated by WVA evidence building advisor.

15 The tool was adapted from WVI's cost estimation tool for health and WASH programming which uses an "80/20 rule" (80% accuracy with 20% effort to obtain associated global costs) and is intentionally generic to allow for cost estimates by project teams for different regions, across national offices, area programs.

16 The core working group was led by WVA's Evidence Building Advisor (the author), and included iLIVE Project Manager, Project Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning Specialist, and Project Accountant.

17 Quantitative and qualitative methods used in the end evaluation are reported in the iLIVE Impact Brief.

LIMITATIONS

ACET was intentionally 'generic' to allow for cost estimates from across World Vision Australia supported priority countries to obtain the global costs associated with disability inclusion in livelihood and economic empowerment programming models. It was not possible to address one of the key questions, i.e., to calculate the differing costs of inclusion of people with different types of disabilities, since the project did not provide impairment disaggregated data for this analysis. Despite the fact that Washington Group Questions - Short Set (WGQ-SS) was used, to identify participants with diverse disabilities and reach diverse groups intentionally, cost disaggregation by group was not done.

Merianita Aananthan is no longer limited by her disability. She grows mushrooms and sells her harvest to the mushroom coffee producers in her village in Karaichchi (North Sri Lanka).

FINDINGS

Key Project Achievements

By the end of the project evaluation, the following main outputs were completed by the project:

- The project worked directly with a total of 8,101 vulnerable people, 19% with disabilities (56% female).
- Across key project interventions, participation of people with disabilities was at 23% for JoT, 18% in S4T groups, 15% in producer groups (PGs), and 13% in C-Change groups.
- 85 PGs were formed with 3,120 members, 66% female, 15% people with disabilities and 12% female heads of household. Of these, 54 groups were working on groundnuts, 21 on mushrooms and 10 on manioc.
- 27 value addition centres (VACs) were established involving 90 project participants, 91% female, 34% people with disabilities and 33% female heads of household. 15 VACs focused on groundnuts, 6 on mushrooms, 3 on manioc and 3 on all three LVCs.
- 172 S4T groups were formed comprising 4,188 members, 85% female, 13% people with disabilities and 14% female heads of household. Around 90% of members re-joined their groups when they disbanded and formed new ones after 12 months. Of 165 active S4T groups, 24% were in their first annual cycle, 42% second, 21% third and 13% in their fourth iteration.

'Women and men with disabilities are active in participating and leading community meetings and activities.'

– EDO, KANDAVALAI

- 99 C-Change conversation groups were established with 4,594 participants, 87% female, 13% people with disabilities and 14% female heads of household.
- 668 JoT sessions comprising 61 journeys were conducted for 1,524 participants (762 couples), 50% female and 23% people with disabilities.
- 1,569 participants took part in MenCare sessions, 19% of these were men with disabilities.
- Across 267 active group structures supported by the project and 1,521 leadership positions, 22% of these were held by people with disabilities.
- 10 OPDs were supported to ensure that they were established, skilled, functional, and active.
- 91 (46 male and 45 female - all people with disabilities) leaders of OPDs were provided with training to strengthen their capacity.
- 55 sessions were conducted on disability awareness for 2,887 project participants (1,460 female and 1,427 male, including 179 men and 192 women with disabilities).
- A further 12,473 community members and 486 other stakeholders (mainly government officers) were reached through awareness-raising activities on gender and disability equality and inclusion.

'Earlier people considered us a curse but the iLIVE project was able to bring about positive changes in the community towards people with disabilities. Now in our village they respect and accept us.'

– KII WITH A MAN WITH DISABILITY, SERUVILA

The following key project outcomes were realised:

- **3,120 PG members (15% people with disabilities) achieved an average 107% increase in annual household income from targeted value chain products.**
- 99% of all PG members (100% of all men and women with disabilities participating in this group) reported feeling satisfied with their PG (supported by the project). PG members negotiating better prices through collective buying and selling in greater volumes and improved market linkages. 67% of all respondents (66% of people with disabilities) felt they received a fair price compared to 54% at the project start.
- 61% of S4T group members (67% of men and 68% of women with disabilities) reported feeling confident they could get a loan if they had an urgent need (up from 25% at baseline), while 73% of households with a S4T member and 73% of households having people with disabilities, used their own savings or loans in order to invest (expand/diversify) in their income-generating activities.
- 92% of people with disabilities reported increased independence, making their own decisions and confidence to speak out at community meetings now they are economically active.

'In our group, everybody takes a different responsibility but works collectively. Some members do production while others do marketing in different areas which increases sales and gives a good income.'

– FEMALE MANIOC PG MEMBER WITH A DISABILITY, VAHARAI

- 91% of community members stated they felt comfortable working with people with disabilities, up from 26% at the start of the project, but only 31% of respondents reported positive change in community attitudes.
- Stronger and more confident OPDs have improved the quality and frequency of interaction with government on behalf of their members, leading to regular consultations at division, district and provincial levels.

Project cost of disability inclusion

With total project expenditure only available for the first four project years (2016/17-2019/20) at the time of the study, the fifth year (2020-21) has been excluded from this analysis. As such, the total project cost, numbers of people with disabilities and total number of project participants, are similarly only those over the same four-year period. Costs have been calculated in both AU$ and US$ to allow for international comparison using average rates of exchange for each project year.[18] As shown in Table 1, the total project cost of disability inclusion across the four years was estimated at AU$894,798 (US$639,674). Over the same four-year period, total project spend was AU$4,011,771 (US$2,880,062), which means that disability inclusion costs comprise 22% of total project spend.

With regard to the spend by year: as would be expected, it was low during the first year, which was focused on initial assessments to map people with disabilities, to identify the barriers that they face at individual, social, community, organisational, or institutional levels, on the basis of which detailed plans were developed. It peaked during Year 2 which saw the implementation of these plans, and gradually declined towards the conclusion of the project. Table 2 shows the breakdown by cost categories, project staff and benefits – including World Vision Australia advisory and international technical assistance,[19] and capacity building and sensitisation and OPD engagement accounted for the majority of the project costs.

'Before, the community rejected us but the project changed this. People now accept and respect us after they realised they hadn't given us opportunities to grow.'

– DISABLED MAN, SERUVILA

Table 1: Project disability inclusion cost by year

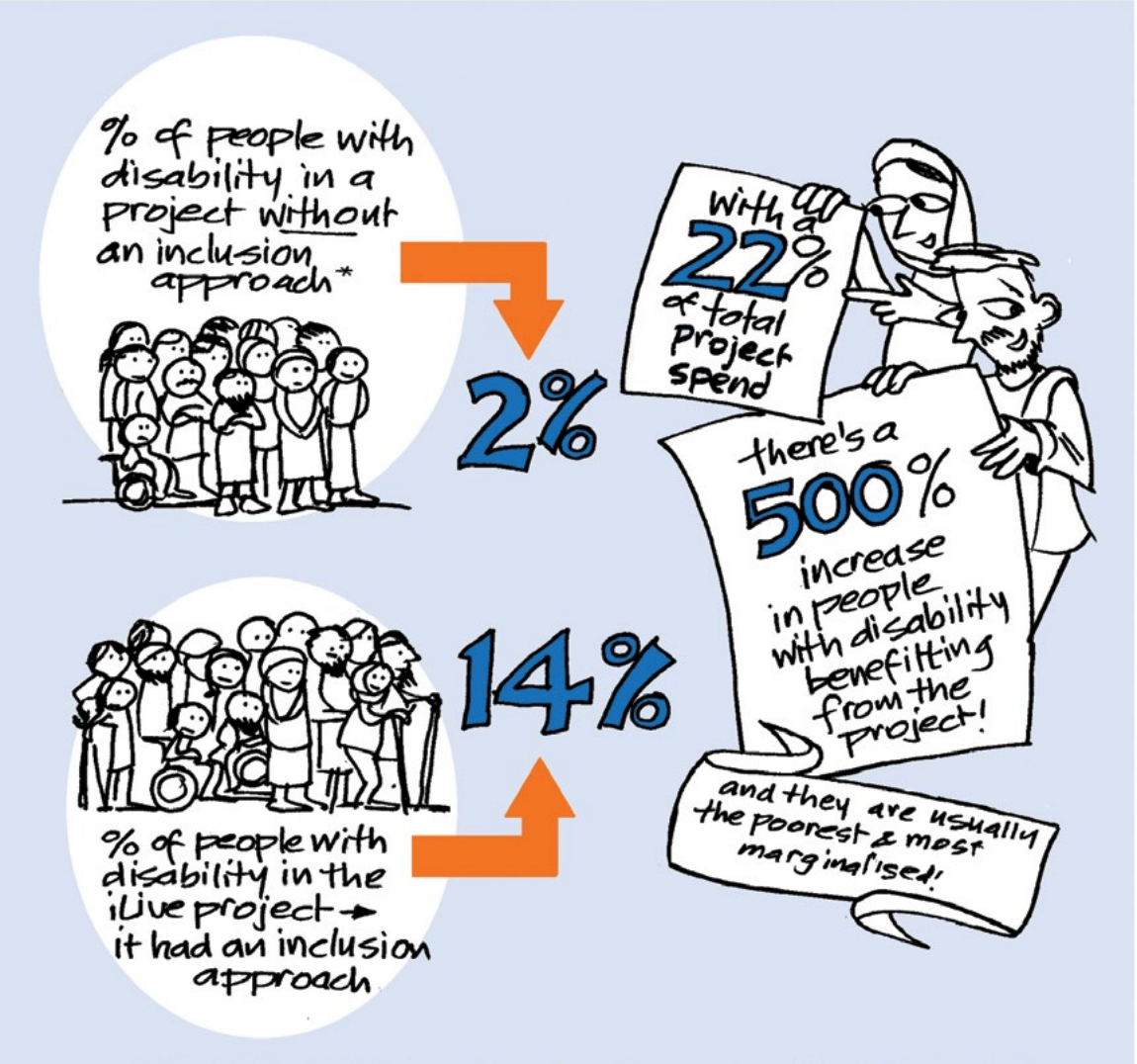
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	TOTAL
AU$	53,450	306,148	273,250	261,950	894,798
US$	40,967	228,519	189,942	180,245	639,674
% of Total	5.97%	34.21%	30.54%	29.27%	100%

Table 2: Project disability inclusion costs by cost categories

DISABILITY INCLUSION COST CATEGORIES	AU$	US$	% OF TOTAL
Assessment and planning	27,979	20,543	3.13%
Reasonable accommodation	8,577	6,094	0.96%
Capacity building, sensitisation and OPD engagement	262,753	184,339	29.36%
Project staff and benefits (includes WVA advisory support and international TA)	558,498	402,152	62.42%
Monitoring and evaluation	36,991	26,546	4.13%
Total	894,798	639,674	100%

18 Average ROE as per World Vision Australia ACET Tool: US$1 = A$1.40

19 Cost of WVA advisory support over the four years was estimated at US$70,773.88 (AU$97,599.08) and of International TA at US$179,338.47 (AU$248,838.67).



Creative image credit: Julie Smith, CBM Australia

During the project's first four years, a total of 7,346 project participants benefitted directly, and the average inclusion cost per participant (including those with and without disabilities) is estimated at AU$546 (US$392). The total number of people with disabilities included in the project (direct participants) was 1,061, and the total estimated project spend on disability inclusion over the same period is estimated at AU$843 (US$603) per project participant with a disability. However, because it is not reasonable to load the full costs of disability inclusion on only project participants with disabilities, the additional cost per project participant of disability inclusion spread across all 7,346 participants was estimated at AU$122 (US$87).

A World Vision Australia meta-analysis of ANCP reports at the time of this study had estimated disability inclusion at a maximum of 2%, which is far lower than the disability inclusion rate of 19% achieved by this project by the end evaluation. Assuming that the project would have reached this minimum inclusion rate without any specific attention on disability inclusion and related costs, there would have been only around 150 participants with disabilities over the four-year period. The total project costs over the same time period would have been AU$3,116,973 (US$2,240,388) and assuming the same staff capacity and other interventions, total participants would have been only 6,436 (i.e., excluding the 910 people with disabilities). In other words, as a direct result of the project's disability inclusion focus and costs, an additional 910 people with disabilities were included, as opposed to 150. **This means that the uplift in targeted spend on disability inclusion has led to a 507% increase in the inclusion of people with disabilities.**

In terms of the marginal increase in costs and participants for projects that use the twin-track approach to disability inclusion as compared to those that do not, the increase in total spend was estimated at 28.7%, resulting in people with disabilities making up 14% of all project beneficiaries over the project's four years (Table 3). These figures would give an average increase in costs per project participant of AU$62 (US$44), representing a 12.6% increase. As indicated earlier, the twin-track approach to disability inclusion meant that the share of disability inclusion of total project cost was 22%. This figure compares well with existing (admittedly limited) evidence that estimates the cost of disability within public social expenditure at around 10% (and up to 25% in some countries). [20]

20 WHO & World Bank (2011) World Report on Disability, www.who.int/teams/noncommunicable-diseases/sensory-functions-disability-and-rehabilitation/world-report-on-disability

Table 3: Marginal increase in cost of disability inclusion per project participant

	PROJECT DOES NOT USE TWIN-TRACK APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION		PROJECT USES TWIN-TRACK APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION		MARGINAL INCREASE IN PROJECT COST PER PARTICIPANT ASSOCIATED WITH TWIN-TRACK APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION
	AU$	US$	AU$	US$	%
Total project cost	3,116,973	2,240,388	4,011,771	2,880,062	28.7
No. of project participants	6,436		7,346		14.1
Cost per project participant	484	348	546	392	12.6

Effectiveness: Did the outputs achieve the desired outcome? How well did the project outputs sustainably achieve the desired disability inclusion targeted outcomes, i.e., in terms of access to economic and financial services and economic advancement, agency, and equitable systems?

The outputs, which were realised through the strategic inputs to enhance disability inclusion in the iLIVE project (costed at AU$894,798 or US$639,674), helped achieve key outcomes for people with disabilities.

Increasing access to economic resources and financial services and economically advancing vulnerable people with disabilities:

- 92% of people with disabilities or 987 (397 males, and 590 females) reported that they successfully obtained a livelihood as a result of skills training or capacity building.
- Men with disabilities that participated in local value chain program skills development or training increased by 124% (up from 42% at baseline to 94% by endline) and this increased by 107% (up from 46% at baseline to 95% by endline) among women with disabilities.
- Time available for income-generating activities (IGA) among women with disabilities rose by 223% (up from 1.9 hours at baseline to 6.14 hours at endline), and by 70% (up from 4.2 hours at baseline to 7.12 hours at endline) among men with disabilities.
- Men with disabilities reporting that they could get a loan if they urgently needed one rose by 190% (up from 23% at baseline to 67% at endline); among women with disabilities, it rose by 112% (up from 32% to 68%, respectively).
- People with disabilities made up 15% of the 3,120 PG members that benefitted from a 107% increase in mean annual household income earned from key value chain products, which rose on average from 21,671 LKR (US$121.93)[21] at baseline to 44,857 LKR (US$226.04)[22] by endline.

Improving agency of people with disabilities:

- 95% of people with disabilities reported feeling confident to speak out on key community/economic issues in front of other people and groups (up from 39% during the baseline survey).
- 90% of people with disabilities reported being able to make their own decisions about what is important to them (up from 47% during the baseline survey).
- 91% of community members reported feeling comfortable to engage with people with disabilities (up from 26% at baseline).
- 73% of people with disabilities were members of self-help groups (up from 26% at baseline).
- Furthermore, capacity building and sensitisation efforts to promote equitable policies and systems in support of disability equality and inclusion, led to 88% of PGs having policies/requirements for the representation of vulnerable persons, including women and people with disabilities, in leadership roles, while 68% had strategies and action plans for overcoming constraints faced by these vulnerable persons. Similarly, 99% of S4T groups had policies/requirements for representation of vulnerable persons in leadership roles, and 72% of groups had strategies and action plans for overcoming constraints faced by vulnerable persons. **This helped ensure that 22% of the 1,521 leadership positions, across 267 active group structures supported by the project, were held by people with disabilities.**
- The project was highly effective in transforming the lives of many beneficiaries with disabilities, some of whom were encouraged by their ability to engage in productive livelihood despite their disability, like Jesumalar who went on to become a trainer on mushroom cultivation and a champion within her community.

21 Average rate of exchange of 177.73 at baseline in August 2019 was used.
22 Average rate of exchange of 198.45 at the time of the end evaluation in June 2021 was used.

Enhancing the capacity of OPDs in support of equitable policies and practices:

The support to establish and develop skills, and strengthen the functionality of 10 OPDs, including introducing nine of them to policies/by-laws on women's representation in leadership positions, as well as disability-inclusion awareness and training of OPDs and key stakeholders, showed positive results:

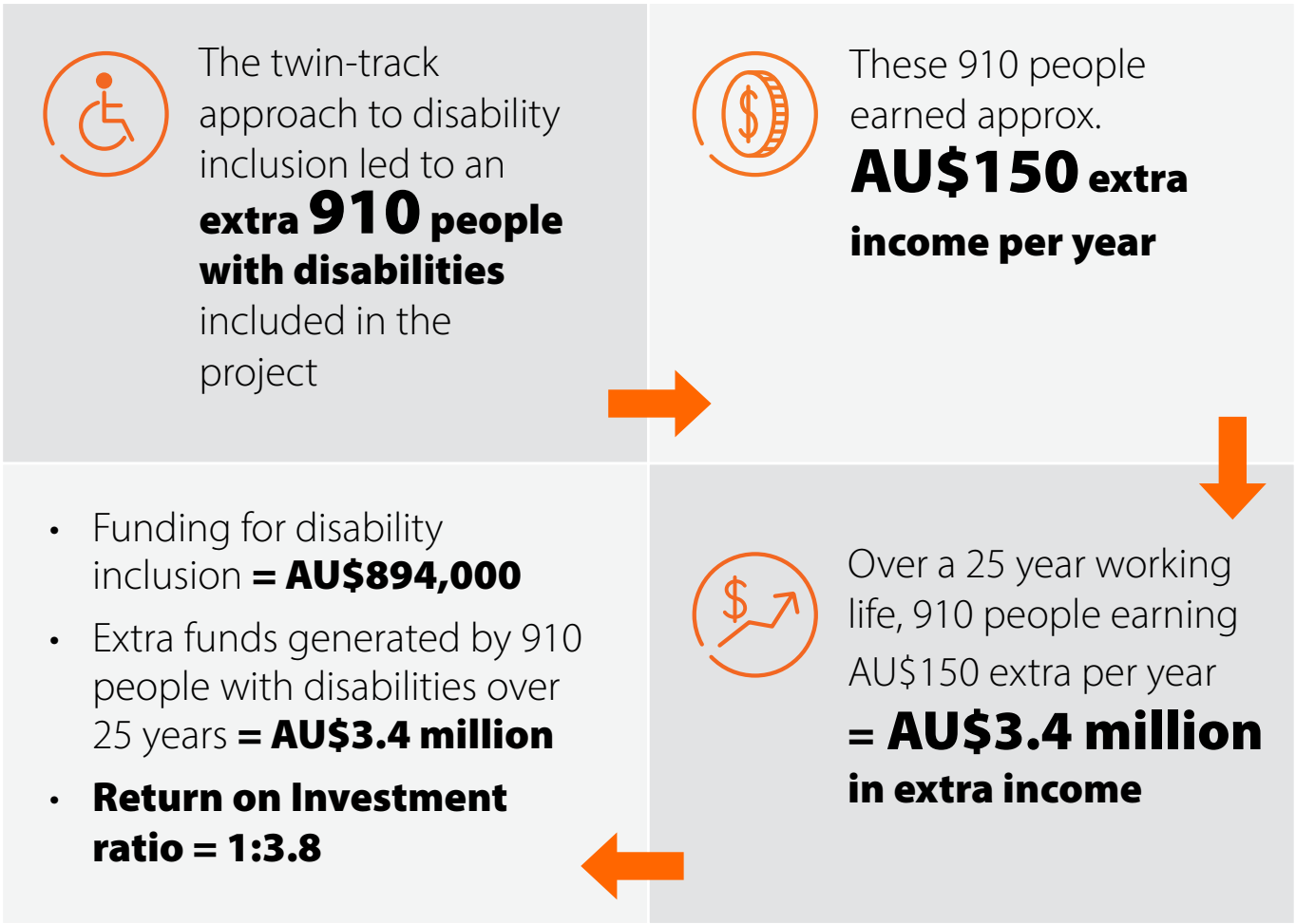
- 83% of people with disabilities (84% male and 81% female) reported having benefitted from increased support from OPDs since the project started.
- 93% of all stakeholders (men and women) reported greater confidence in communicating with people with disabilities as a result of workshop/training.
- 60% of persons in OPD leadership or management positions were women.

Ultimately, the project achieved an average increase of 29% in annual total household income for all project participants, including 1,061 people with disabilities. This equates to an average increase in income of approximately AU$150 per participant per year. As a result of the twin-track approach to disability inclusion, an extra 910 people with disabilities were included in the project (above the 150 that would have been included without this approach). Assuming the average age of participants is 30 and they have a minimum of 25 years of their working lives remaining, these additional 910 people with disabilities will earn a total of at least 475,202,000 LKR (approximately US$2.43 million/AU$3.42 million) over their working lives. **This demonstrates the success of the project with the additional costs of disability inclusion generating a projected return on investment, in terms of sustained average annual household total income of 1:3.8.**[23]

92% OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SUCCESSFULLY OBTAINED A LIVELIHOOD AS A RESULT OF SKILLS TRAINING OR CAPACITY BUILDING

TIME AVAILABLE FOR INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES **ROSE BY 223% FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES**

Figure 4: Return on Investment for twin-track approach to disability inclusion



23 The AU$894,000 funding for disability inclusion will result (even at a conservative estimate) in AU$3.4 million generated by people with disabilities over 25 years. Hence the ratio of 1:3.8.

The likelihood is that this increased income will be sustained and probably increased for many years, factoring in the strong prospects for sustainability in terms of increased individual economic capacity and independence, the establishment of PGs and VACs, and the links forged with markets and government programs and structures, which collectively reinforces the evaluation's conclusion that the investment is good value for money.

Equity: Were project achievements equitable with regard to engaging and delivering benefits to vulnerable people with disabilities?

The assessment has revealed that the strategic approach and activities supported with the additional cost of disability inclusion (AU$843 or US$603 per project participant with a disability), achieved highly equitable participation:

- A high proportion of women with disabilities, who are often excluded due to their gender and disability, benefitted from project interventions: 64% of disabled S4T group members and 44% of PG members were female – with an average of 51% female engagement across all interventions, which is considered highly equitable inclusion.
- Diversity in disability inclusion was also well aligned with the demographics of the disabled population in Sri Lanka: 63% physical/mobility impairments, 10% intellectual, 9% speech/hearing, 5% visual, with others multiple or unclassified.

'I was alone at home and never participated in any of the community activities as I was not a member of any of the village groups. I was invited by World Vision to join the newly established OPD. After joining, I learned that there were many people like me and I enjoyed their company. Thanks to them, I have developed strong supporters with and without disabilities who introduced me to a sub-contracting opportunity that helped me start earning an income in addition to project assistance through OPD micro-projects. Now I am also a member of some village societies as well.'

– KII WITH A WOMAN WITH DISABILITY, MUTHUR

The project achieved some key outcomes equitably for vulnerable people with disabilities:

- Changes in the proportion of respondents who reported feeling confident in financial literacy (Table 4) was greatest among women with disabilities (162%), followed by men with disabilities (156%), compared to the average for all participants (130%).
- Percentage change between baseline and endline in ability to make own decisions was greater among the most vulnerable people with disabilities (Table 5), such as female widowed, divorced or separated (176%), the poor (162%), and female heads of household (91%).

Table 4: Percentage of respondents who reported feeling confident in their financial literacy (iLIVE End Evaluation, 2021).

	BASELINE	ENDLINE	% CHANGE
All	33%	76%	130%
Men with disabilities	28%	72%	156%
Women with disabilities	29%	76%	162%

Table 5: Percentage of people with disabilities able to make their own decisions about what is important to them (iLIVE End Evaluation, 2021).

	BASELINE	ENDLINE	% CHANGE
All	47%	90%	91%
Men	50%	94%	88%
Women	44%	86%	96%
Female heads of household	47%	90%	91%
Female widowed, divorced, or separated	33%	91%	176%
Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Poor	34%	89%	162%

- The project's efforts to enable both men and women with disabilities to equitably take on leadership positions was effective. Across 267 active project group structures, 22% of leadership positions (out of a total of 1,521) were held by people with disabilities, of which 56% were women with disabilities.

Efficiency: How well were inputs converted to outputs, and was there strong control over quantity and quality of outputs?

As shown in Table 6, in each of the three years between the second to the fourth project year, the target number of participants (people with disabilities), was exceeded by 448%, 233% and 37% respectively, and on average by 109%. The resources used to support assessments, identifying people with disabilities, plus providing reasonable accommodation, ultimately led to 14% of all participants[24] being people with disabilities, which is in line with global WHO recommendations. The assessments, mappings outreach and identification of people with disabilities and their representative organisations, helped the project to plan for tailored interventions, identification of skills and expertise requirements of project staff and implementing partners, including OPDs from the outset. Furthermore, as revealed by the end of evaluation survey, this all contributed to the project being able to include a greater diversity of people with disabilities (3% with physical/mobility impairments, 10% intellectual, 9% speech/hearing, 5% visual, with others multiple or unclassified), which mirrors the demographics of the disabled population.

With the resources that were put into disability inclusion (AU$894,798 or US$639,674, representing 22% of project cost), a total of 1,061 people with disabilities were reached (14% of all project participants, i.e., a total of 7,346 people).[25] As indicated earlier, this achievement far exceeds the estimate of 2% disability inclusion by World Vision Australia meta-analysis of all ANCP project reports available at the time of the evaluation. This means that the deliberate focus on disability inclusion, accounting for 22% of total iLIVE project spend, has led to a 507% increase in the inclusion of people with disabilities, which can be considered highly efficient.

'We have noticed an increase in the number of people with disabilities coming to the Divisional Secretariat. Also, they are much more confident in conversation and provide a lot of information to SSOs on how to include people.'

– ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PLANNING, KANDAVALAI

According to the evaluation, all the additional costs of disability inclusion identified and practised by the project are recommended for any economic development project aiming to be disability inclusive, with none considered unnecessary or avoidable. This assessment has revealed that the project strategy and design is in alignment with the twin-track approach to disability inclusion, with a targeted outcome focused on enhancing the agency of people with disabilities, while mainstreaming disability inclusion across outcomes related to economic development, gender equality, and knowledge and learning.

This assessment has identified capacity building and sensitisation involving pre-existing OPDs established under the national CBR Programme[26] (29.4% of disability inclusion project spend), as particularly efficient in terms of its conversion to outputs, not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. The project worked directly with all eight DS Division OPDs whose average (although largely inactive) membership of approximately 500 members with disabilities per OPD provided access to around 4,000 people with disabilities, with a potentially high conversion rate (1:8) in terms of the number of people with disabilities reached with better quality of service through increased capacity of each OPD member. The capacity of OPDs was strengthened through membership and leadership development training, including organising and facilitating regular meetings and keeping records, as well as physical inputs such as basic furniture and stationery in some cases. As a result, meetings

Table 6: Number of participants with disabilities – targeted and actual

YEAR	NO OF TARGETED PARTICIPANTS WITH DISABILITIES	NO OF ACTUAL PARTICIPANTS WITH DISABILITIES	VARIANCE (%)
2	60	329	448
3	60	200	233
4	338	532	37
Total	508	1061	109

24 By the end of the project evaluation the project achieved 19% disability inclusion.

25 By the end of the evaluation, disability inclusion increased to 19% people with disabilities (56% female), out of a total of 8,101 project participants. Across key project interventions, participation of people with disabilities was at 23% for JoT, 18% in S4T groups, 15% in PGs, and 13% in C-Change groups.

26 Department of Social Services, Community Based Rehabilitation Programme, https://www.socialservices.gov.lk/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=29&Itemid=137&lang=en (Accessed 8 March 2022)

were held more regularly, and were better organised and attended, leading to renewed and refreshed membership and leadership with increased capacity, coverage and activity. This included branches being formed at Grama Niladhari Division (GND) and village level, operating independently, improving representation and the flow of information by reaching out and supporting more members.

The project organised disability-awareness training with OPDs for DS Division officers that included individual people with disabilities narrating personal experiences of life and how they tried to access government schemes. Greater exposure to OPDs and disability issues means that division, district and provincial government now proactively call upon OPDs and/or individual members for local consultations on disability-related community issues and services. This has also built OPD confidence to engage with local government on their members' behalf. The introduction of OPD micro-projects and the involvement of OPDs in the monitoring and support of members' IGAs has also enabled OPDs to better understand barriers to inclusion, how to overcome these and advocate on behalf of members.

Government officials interviewed during the evaluation stated that OPDs now engage with local government on behalf of their members and know who to contact for a particular issue, how to contact them, and frequently

Joining an 'S4T' group enabled Nonawathy to learn about savings, cash management, mushroom farming, business and marketing and record-keeping. Today, she employs two other vulnerable people in her mushroom production.

'When the project started, there was no active OPD in Verugal until the project revived it in 2017. Over the last three years, inactive members were supported by the project in leadership development and new leaders who are managing their OPD successfully. As a result of that training, other people with disabilities are holding leadership positions in other CBOs as well. While men with disabilities are more readily accepted as leaders of mainstream CBOs, when women are given the opportunity, they participate actively and are very committed. At Verugal DS Division OPD, the president is female while the secretary and treasurer are men.'

– PROJECT ASSISTANT, VERUGAL.

the type of service they can provide. Greater levels and quality of interaction with government has also led to OPD participation being sought for district and divisional meetings convened by the provincial government agent and divisional secretaries. Many of the project OPDs have also established similarly productive relationships with NGOs such as VOICE and Berendina. Furthermore, OPD leaders consulted as part of the evaluation, described how they were previously unsure how to engage with government; they lacked confidence and were generally limited to referring members to social service departments for individual assistance. Support and training from the project in organisational management, membership and leadership development provided the necessary skills and knowledge, particularly through their role in monitoring and supporting OPD micro-projects. As a result, OPDs are not only able to offer a better service to their members, but also advocate on their behalf, as well as connect and support them with other stakeholders. All these achievements related to OPDs are also good sustainability guarantees – with local capacity increased the OPDs can continue to serve people with disabilities even once the project is finished.

Economy: How appropriate were the quality and price of inputs?

In-depth interviews with project staff revealed that competitive processes were used to assure the appropriate quality and price of inputs, which is considered fundamental to the management of value for money. As indicated earlier, the key inputs were categorised into five cost categories, which are considered essential elements of disability inclusion. **Assessment and planning on disability inclusion** (3.1% of disability inclusion costs), included data collection on people with disabilities and service provider mapping for the project sites, two rounds of baseline

surveys, and the development and dissemination of disability inclusion action plans to key stakeholders. Early assessments and baseline surveys, with a level of detail in line with Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS), assured engagement with a greater diversity of people with disabilities that mirrored the demographics of the disabled population. The information generated by the assessment also helped the project plan when it came to tailored interventions, skills and experience from the outset.

Capacity assessments of partner OPDs enabled the project to identify relevant technical and practical inputs related to **capacity building, sensitisation and OPD engagement** (29.4% of disability inclusion costs), specifically tailored to meet these needs. Provision of furniture and equipment combined with disability inclusion and leadership development training and sensitisation ultimately improved OPD management, administration and service to their members, including supporting the OPD micro-project initiative.

Reasonable accommodation (0.96% of disability inclusion costs) was also tailored in order to enhance accessibility. This ensured transportation facilities for people with disabilities to provide improved accessibility to project training activities and participation in group activities. In addition, accessible communication and sign language interpretation was provided for meetings, trainings and communication materials, such as video documentaries.

For a project that was deliberately aimed at enhancing the participation of people with disabilities in project benefits, it was considered crucial that the management processes used to ensure that the composition of the project team (particularly, but not exclusively, those working on the ground and in communities) was broadly representative of the project's participants. As the end evaluation revealed, the iLIVE project was an exemplar in this regard with the overall iLIVE project team of staff, mobilisers, facilitators and volunteers comprising 74% female and 23% people with disabilities (64% of these female). The project was able to influence, advise and support other stakeholders to be more inclusive from a position of credibility, legitimacy and experience.

In addition, the iLIVE project benefitted from access to a wide range of internal and external organisations that provided technical and administrative support, during the design, assessments, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the disability inclusion aspects of the project. This involved both the National Office (World Vision Lanka) and Support Office (World Vision Australia) as well as three external technical support providers: CBM Australia (disability awareness and inclusion), Promundo (mainstreaming disability inclusion into C-Change, JoT and other gender-focused activities) and Value for Women (mainstreaming disability inclusion into women's economic empowerment) who were contracted by the project. The iLIVE project team received numerous visits at regular intervals throughout the project. In addition to routine monitoring and support visits, a number of World Vision Australia sectoral specialists in monitoring and evaluation, economic development and women's economic empowerment, and disability inclusion also visited the project to provide specific advice and support throughout its life. A number of different consultants from each of the technical support providers also carried out support visits and training on specific aspects of the project, particularly the key project interventions, helping to design, roll out, review, adapt and follow up on these. Inputs related to project staff, including World Vision Australia advisory and international expertise support (62.4% of disability inclusion costs), helped meet key global best practices for twin-track approach to disability inclusion:

- One staff member was fully engaged on disability inclusion, the Disability Advisor's previous local experience was supplemented by capacity building inputs, regular support from World Vision Australia's Disability Inclusion Advisor, and external technical support provider, CBM (targeted Outcome 3).
- All other project staff received training on disability inclusion from World Vision Lanka and World Vision Australia Disability Inclusion Advisors, while external expertise – CBM, V4W and Promundo – supported mainstreaming of disability inclusion into economic development (Outcome 1) and gender equality (Outcome 2), respectively.
- Project assistants and mobilisers, based in the Divisional Secretary (DS) division and involved in all four sectors, i.e., economic development, gender equality, disability inclusion, learning and sharing, were provided with various capacity building opportunities on disability inclusion.
- 10 OPDs were established, skilled and functionally active, in support of disability inclusion awareness (55) and training (106) sessions, involving 2,887 participants (1,466 males, 1427 females).
- For an additional 4.1% of disability inclusion costs, a detailed disability inclusive disaggregated **monitoring and evaluation** system was put in place and the information served as input to quarterly reviews involving all project staff team members to track progress; studies and documentation were also conducted to draw lessons for future programming on disability inclusion in economic development.

CONCLUSIONS

Effectiveness: Focused attention on disability inclusion and the related cost was ultimately successful, leading to transformative and significant improvements in the lives of people with disabilities, as demonstrated by the 1:3.8 return on the project's investment in disability inclusion.

Equity: The project is an exemplar and was able to influence, advise and support other stakeholders to be more inclusive from a position of credibility, legitimacy and experience, with high diversity in project staff, mobilisers, facilitators and volunteers comprising 74% female, and 23% people with disabilities (64% of these female). This is all reflected in and congruent with the highly equitable participation and outcomes achieved by the project for people with disabilities.

Efficiency: The project was successful in dramatically increasing the inclusion of people with disabilities (109% beyond the target, 507% higher than the estimated average of disability inclusion from meta-analysis of ANCP projects), while the increase in additional cost per beneficiary was marginal at 12.6%.

Economy: The iLIVE project made considered and appropriate investments to ensure that all inputs were either already of the required quality or able to achieve this at an early stage, a clear reflection of good management of value for money.

Lessons and Recommendations

Having a twin-track approach, with a baseline and endline of people's income disaggregated by disability and gender, and adequate budget allocation (22% of total project spend) can dramatically increase the engagement of people with disabilities and the ongoing benefits.

- Given that people with disabilities are generally the most vulnerable in the community, this is money well spent; the approach is recommended for replication and expansion, drawing from existing good practices and lessons.

While there were significant improvements across key measures of economic engagement and agency of people with disabilities, only 31% saw positive change in the way that the community treats people with disabilities.

- More efforts are needed to improve entrenched community practices and poor treatment of people with disabilities.
- A comparative assessment of the short-term costs of inclusion against the longer-term costs of exclusion, could be useful for use in advocacy in support of sustained and expanded efforts to promote societal level changes and integration of disability inclusion across economic development programs.

The project made substantial progress in increasing the diversity of people with disabilities with different impairments, however, inclusion of people with psychosocial impairments was minimal.

- Build upon the iLIVE project achievements, experience and learning to include these most marginalised groups of people with disabilities in future projects, using resources already available in Sri Lanka and globally, for instance CBM.
- Consider strengthening staffing resources and capacity of mental health service providers, towards better inclusion of women and men with psychosocial needs in project activities and outcomes in future programs.

Disability did not stop Sasiharan from becoming a groundnut producer. With training and tools received from the iLive project, he started his business and already has plans for expansion.

ANNEX

VfM assessment sub-questions

What is the value for money (VfM) of disability inclusion in the iLIVE project, in terms of:

- Effectiveness - did the project outputs achieve desired outcome? How well did project outputs sustainably achieve the desired disability inclusion targeted outcomes, in terms economic engagement, access, agency, and equitable systems?
    - How effective was the iLIVE project disability inclusion strategic focus and related costs, in achieving its objectives towards enhancing economic participation among people with disabilities?
    - How did access to economic resources and financial services change among people with disabilities by the end of the project?
    - How did agency (in terms of level of confidence and decision-making in key areas of interest) change?
    - What were the results of the project's efforts in introducing equitable policies and practices (e.g. OPDs and government)?
- Equity - were project achievements equitable with regard to engaging and delivering benefits to vulnerable people with disabilities?
    - What was the level of participation in project interventions among people with different types of disability (e.g., those with mobility, visual, cognitive, etc.). Were there differences?
    - Were there variations in how the project engaged with and benefitted people with disabilities among vulnerable groups (e.g., women; female heads of household; females widowed, divorced, and separated; and people with disabilities from MPI-poor households)?
    - What was the result of the project's efforts to ensure equitable representation of people with disabilities in key leadership positions with the project supported structures (e.g., PGs, S4T groups and OPDs)?
    - Were there differences in the expected positive changes related to agency (improved decision-making) by gender and other vulnerabilities among people with disabilities?
- Efficiency - how well were inputs converted to outputs, and was there strong control over quantity and quality of outputs?
    - What was the estimated additional cost (compared to other 'business as usual' VCD projects) of disability inclusion strategic focus per participant?
    - How did the cost differ by type of impairment (visual, hearing, mobility, communication, intellectual and psychosocial) and why?
    - What were the benefits of these extra efforts of being inclusive (i.e., compared to other 'business as usual' VCD projects, in terms of reach)?
    - Which of these 'additional expenses' are recommended or non-negotiable for an economic development project to be disability inclusive, and were there any of these expenses that could have been avoided?
- Economy - how appropriate were quality and price of inputs?
    - What additional assessments/studies were required, and when did they occur in the project cycle?
    - What type of specific resources (skills, staff, equipment, etc.) were needed to ensure that people with disabilities are effectively engaged?
    - What was the actual costs of 'reasonable' accommodation (disaggregate into ongoing regular costs, e.g., transport, ramps, accessible communications, translator/interpreters, etc. and one-off costs, e.g., C-Change adaptation)?
    - What type of additional data collection and disaggregation level by gender and disability, as well as what amount of resources were required to ensure disability inclusive monitoring, review and evaluation?

'Uthayam' inclusive producer group members from Kiran (East Sri Lanka) involved in collective preparation of mushroom beds.

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