

Innovative practice 2017 on employment, work, and vocational education and training: 2042

TITLE

A full chain of support from primary school to employment

Armenia: Save the Children International – Livelihood Improvement through Fostered Employment (LIFE)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Save the Children is an international organization whose representative office in Armenia administered the Livelihood Improvement through Fostered Employment (LIFE) programme from 2012 to 2016, funded by the United States Agency for International Development. Using its own unique model for inclusive vocational education and employment for people with disabilities, LIFE introduced vocational training as a way of transitioning from stage to stage, starting as early as primary school and ending with job placement.

FACTS & FIGURES

From 2012 to March 2016:

- Approximately 900 persons with disabilities were placed in training in 90 state vocational education institutions
- 653 persons were employed through the LIFE programme
- 1,045 teachers from 90 vocational training institutions participated in a series of training sessions on methods of Inclusive Education
- 720 employers participated in round-table discussions on issues of disabled persons' employment

PROBLEMS TARGETED

In Armenia, children and youth with disabilities encounter a lack of guidance and support once they leave school, and very few job options match their skills, knowledge, and personal interests.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

As a first step, the LIFE programme's focus was on providing professional orientation workshops for children during their last year of study at inclusive and special schools. These workshops were conducted by teachers from technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions as well as

inclusive and special schools, all of whom were trained in providing Inclusive Education and career guidance mechanisms. Moreover, students of TVET institutions were provided with programme internship opportunities in various work settings.

The second step was to promote equal access to open employment, accessibility to public-sector workplaces, and supported employment programmes for people with disabilities. It also focused on raising the awareness of disability issues among employers and on providing job placement and post-placement support to people with disabilities.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

LIFE had an annual cost of US\$200,000. However, the programme has been replaced by the project “Social Innovations for Vocational Education and Employability of Young People with Disabilities” (SIVEE). The main objective of SIVEE is to “Promote social innovation in the technical vocational education sector in order to create equal employment opportunities as a basic human right for Young People with Disabilities and generate shared growth.” This project will last for two years, starting in 2016.

QUOTE

“My dream was to sing, and many people said that I have good vocal ability. Thanks to LIFE, the miracle took place, and I was admitted to college to study voice. Now I am happy to sing and master my skills!”

— Mr. Hakob, student, Gyumri State Musical College

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