

CASE STUDY 1



VILDA

Vilda, 20
Kisumu, Kenya

Children with disabilities are more than twice as likely to never attend school than other children. Investing in their education makes a big difference to their futures.

Investing in Education

Vilda's left hand was badly injured in a fire when she was only 2 months old. She grew up with a disability which stopped her taking part in school and damaged her self-confidence.

“ When I started school, I was the only disabled child in my class. The other children didn't understand disability and neither did my teachers. At break times no one wanted to play with me and touch my hands. They bullied me and would say things like “don't touch her, we can't touch her.” I felt really lonely. There was such a shame around disability and I never had anyone to talk to about it. ”

Vilda received no support at her school. Children with disabilities were usually kept at home. But she was determined to receive an education. Things changed once she started at a school which was part of a project called the Girls' Education Challenge and paid for by the British government. This project provided



Photo: Leonard Cheshire, Girls' Education Challenge Kisumu

support for students with disabilities, and this made a big difference.

“ It meant I could go to school with children with and without disabilities and disability could be celebrated. People had an understanding of disability and could support me to do my best in school. It made me feel more positive about myself and my disability. It made me realise there is possibility with disability!

My mother had always wanted me to go to school and build a life. But the discrimination I had faced meant I didn't believe that those opportunities existed. But I completed my secondary education. Now, I'm at university. I'm looking forward to finishing my degree and getting a good paying job. I want to help support my family and also help others with the little I get! ”

Case study: Leonard Cheshire

¹ Ensuring the Right to Quality Education for Persons with Disabilities: from Commitment to Action, key highlights of the virtual International Symposium, 25-27 November 2020 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375212>