

## Here are some generic reasons why disabled children in developing countries may not go to school



- **Poverty** – the family cannot afford to send their child to school.  
Even where primary education is free, the costs of a uniform, books and exam fees can be too much for families.
- **The school is too far away from the family home**  
Little or no infrastructure such as roads for buses, no local authority pick up for children.
- **Parents think that their disabled child does not need an education.**  
Often when families cannot communicate with their disabled child – perhaps the child is deaf or has autism – they cannot see any point in sending their child to school.
- **The education policy of the country does not promote the education of disabled children.**
- **Parents think it is more important to send the other children in the family to school rather than their disabled child.**  
For disabled and non disabled girls cultural expectations may dictate that they are needed to care for other children in the family or help with household chores.
- **Parents are ashamed or embarrassed by their disabled child.**  
In extreme cases having a disabled child can mean that the whole family is ousted by their immediate communities, sometimes mothers are banished from the home with the child and not allowed to return.
- **The disabled child does not want to go to school.**  
This is usually the case if the child has a low self esteem, or has already experienced rejection from their family and community and may assume that the school environment will be the same.
- **The parents are afraid that their disabled child will be teased at school.**  
With prevailing negative societal prejudices about disability parents are often over protective of their disabled child.
- **The disabled child can't walk to school.**  
Often distances between home and school are immense - 10 km, most physically disabled children in developing countries have no access to assistive devices to support their mobility and/or access to education.
- **Parents feel their disabled child won't be able to go to school.**  
A lack of information about the right to education for every child or what support is available for disabled children means that many families accept that their child simply won't be able to go to school rather than pursuing the issue.
- **The school principal or the teacher doesn't want the disabled child at their school.**  
Often education professionals are worried that they 'won't know what to do' with a disabled child in their school or classroom, this is due to a lack of information, awareness raising and support from the education authorities.
- **Other parents at the school don't want the disabled child to join the school.**  
Sometimes parents who do not have disabled children are afraid the education of their non disabled children will be disadvantaged in some way if there are disabled children at the same school, or that their child will 'catch' a disability.