

# VANESSA DOS SANTOS

GENDER OFFICER AT LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

BEIRA (MOZAMBIQUE)



## How have you been affected by flooding?

The floods have hampered activists' ability to travel to their communities to provide community-based rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. What drives us to act is that the standard design of humanitarian response projects/plans don't take into account the participation of people with disabilities. My role in resilience building is to empower communities on disability-inclusive and gender-responsive preparedness during the preparation and response phases of extreme climate events.

## Key actions and impact

The Light for the World ICDP Project was specifically developed to enhance institutional and community capacities for inclusive and gender-sensitive preparedness for climate-related disasters (2021–2025). Community disaster risk management committees were trained on the inclusion of people with disabilities; 8 savings groups were created to strengthen the financial resilience of communities; approximately 50 members of the provincial technical councils were trained on the inclusion of people with disabilities; 20 small businesses led by youth and adults with disabilities were established, and people with disabilities were included in community disaster risk management committees. We also distributed preparedness kits to local disaster risk management committees under the ICDP project, and we trained the same committees as well as the disaster risk management technical councils on first aid matters.

## Challenges and lessons learned

Working with Community-Led Groups for Disaster Risk Reduction (CLGRD) members for the first time to address the issue of disability inclusion was not easy because there were different social perceptions about people with disabilities. Raising awareness among CLGRD members and providing them with training on disability inclusion has helped them change attitudes about the rights of people with disabilities, and they have gained firsthand knowledge of how to help others with disabilities in the event of extreme weather events. It is important to always look for solutions with your target group so they feel involved and it becomes easier to overcome the situation.

## Call to action

We can have communities better prepared to face different climate events, and more women and people with disabilities can be in decision-making environments so that no one is left behind.

*This text was translated from Portuguese.*

“May everyone choose to **embrace inclusive initiatives** with all social classes involved, where we never leave anyone behind.”

## MEET THE CHANGEMAKERS

**#9** *This is part of an infographic series profiling key role players who are working with the INACCT Resilience project in supporting resilience building.*