Disability in the Caribbean: Social Inclusion Challenges and the Impact of Support Programs for Families Learned from Zika Response

Persons with disabilities in the Caribbean have little or no access to health care, rehabilitation, or other specialized support services that children and families affected by Zika need. Since 2018, the USAID Applying Science to Strengthen and Improve Systems (ASSIST) Project has worked to strengthen health systems, specifically newborn, well-baby, and psychosocial support services, in four Eastern and Southern Caribbean countries, as part of USAID’s Zika emergency response program in the Caribbean region. WI-HER, LLC, the gender partner for this initiative, has led the gender and social inclusion technical area to integrate inclusive practices into service delivery and throughout the health system. This case study pulls from the global evidence-base to illustrate factors influencing health care access and utilization for persons and families with disabilities, shares findings from two recent gender analysis activities in the Caribbean, and highlights the importance of programs that support families of persons with disabilities in strengthening family health and well-being.
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