

**Standing Committee on  
Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration**

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN UGANDA**

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**Introduction**

Uganda was among the first 82 countries that signed the Convention and its protocol on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007. Upon signing, countries are expected to:

- refrain from discriminating against persons with disabilities;
- ensure that third parties like the private sector and individuals do not discriminate against persons with disabilities;
- pass laws and policies in line with the Convention;
- take financial, educational, social and other measures to ensure discrimination does not occur.

**Shift from charity to human rights**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities presents a shift from pity, charity, medical orientation to human rights. In this case, persons with disabilities (PWDs) must be active in decision making on matters that affect them in their lives. They should be able to claim their rights.

**Content**

The Convention on the Rights of PWDs clarifies content of human rights principles and their application in the context of PWDs. It provides an authoritative and global reference point for domestic laws and policy initiatives.

**The Convention and Victim Assistance**

The Convention brings Victim Assistance into the broader context of policy and planning for PWDs. It puts the six elements in victim assistance into a clearer legal framework. It elaborates on binding obligations in the Mine Action Ban Treaty.

## **Multi-sectoral collaboration**

Since disability issues are multi-dimensional implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities must be multi-sectoral at national, local government and community levels other actors such as Disabled Peoples Organisation, Civil Society Organisations, Community members and the private sector must participate fully.

The first step the Government of the Republic of Uganda has done is to disseminate the Convention to all stakeholders and different levels of Government using different structures which have been involved in planning and implementation of programmes for persons with disabilities.

## **The National Community Based Rehabilitation Steering Committee**

This was established by the Government. It brings together representatives from line Ministries, Civil Society Organisations and DPOs. It is chaired by the Hon. Minister of State for Disability and Elderly. It meets quarterly. This has been a useful organ as far as dissemination of the Convention is concerned.

## **National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU)**

This is an umbrella organization of persons with disabilities. It has branches in all districts. This was used to disseminate the Convention.

## **Local Councils**

These are political structures from grassroot level to National level. It is the decision making organ of Government at the various levels. Persons with disabilities are represented by two (male and female) councilors at each level. There are also five members of Parliament representing persons with disabilities . Approximately 108,000 persons with disabilities are involved in decision making processes at different levels.. The local councils formed an important avenue for disseminating the convention at these levels.

## **National Council for Disability**

This a body corporate which was established in 2003. One of its major objectives is to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes designed for equality and full participation of persons with disabilities.

One of its important functions is to carry out or commission surveys and investigations in matters or incidents relating to

- (i) violation of rights of PWDs;
- (ii) non-compliance with programmes, policies or laws relating to disabilities;

- (iii) take appropriate action or refer the matter to relevant authorities.

The Council is decentralized to lower levels and it was instrumental in disseminating the Convention.

### **Ratification of the Convention**

After awareness creation, at various levels the process of ratification was embarked upon.

### **Areas of focus**

The Convention highlights major areas of focus that countries need to start implementing within the framework of their mandates in terms of programmes for PWDs. For instance line Ministries such as Health, Education, Social Development should step up its annual budgets.

- The Disabled Peoples' Organisations (DPOs) should play their rightful roles;
- It is through such concerted effort the rights of PWDs will be promoted and protected

### **Way forward**

- Guidelines for implementation of the Convention will be worked out. All stakeholders will participate. The guidelines will spell out the roles of each stakeholder;
- The National Council for Disability will play its role of monitoring and evaluation of all stakeholders.