



## **UPDATES ON THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE IN UGANDA PRESENTED DURING THE 17 MSP VICTIM ASSISTANCE EXPERTS MEETING BETWEEN 26-30 NOVEMBER 2018 IN GENEVA- SWITZERLAND:**

### **Enhancing local capacities**

The local capacity to serve the landmines victims is appropriate especially as supported by the international and national legal and policy frameworks. These include:

### **The International laws ratified**

Uganda ratified the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in 1999 on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1999 and it came into force in August of the same year, while the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was ratified in 2008, on September 25, without any reservations.

### **The National laws/ enhancing local capacities**

Some of the major National laws in existence that promote and protect the rights of all Persons with Disabilities include:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda which is proactive on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and it obliges all the stakeholders to uphold and protect those rights. The other laws include, Persons with Disability Act, 2006,

the Equal Opportunities Commission Act of 2007, Local Government Act of 2007, the National Council for Disability Act of 2003 and the Mental Health Act of 1964 among others.

- The presence of a department that is responsible for disability issues is also an opportunity that helps to deliver services to the persons affected by landmines as well as other Persons with Disabilities in the entire country
- The presence of Technical Officers both medical and Community Development Officers in charge of disability at district level, Village Health Teams/Community Health Workers, Disabled Persons Organizations also help to deliver services the land mine victims and survivors.
- The Government of Uganda has further designed and implemented National programmes specially targeting and benefiting Persons with Disabilities. The Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme is the flagship programme by Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development driving social norm change and broadly addressing Stigma and Discrimination to Persons with Disabilities including the Landmine Survivors and Victims across the country with current funding in 26 districts and a plan to scale-up.
- The National Council for Disability Act gives the National Council for Disability the mandate to monitor and advice on all programs especially those targeting Persons with Disabilities and advice the government. This is replicated at the upper and lower local levels

### **Socio-Economic Inclusion and Social Protection**

- There is an effort to tackle Economic and Social Protection inclusion which is one of the main challenges facing all Persons with Disabilities. These interventions are by Government and Civil Society Organizations and they include among others, voter education and civic awareness, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

awareness; Universal Primary Education, Youth livelihoods Programme the Women Entrepreneurship Program (UWEP) and Operation Wealth Creation.

- The biggest number of the beneficiaries of the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment are PWDs and mostly in the mine affected districts of Northern Uganda and Western Uganda. According to the Social Protection-ESPII Programme data of 2017, a total of 111,132 Older Persons with Disabilities (41% of whom have severe disabilities) are benefiting from the regular cash transfers to senior citizens.
- Persons with Disabilities constitute 7.6% and 2.8% of total beneficiaries under the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) and the Youth Livelihoods Programme (YLP) respectively
- The CBR program, the Special Grant for PWDs, were put in place to benefit all PWDs, while the Women Entrepreneurship Program, the Youth Livelihood Program were put in place to benefit the vulnerable youth and women, including those with disabilities.
- The National Development Program (2) emphasizes the social protection actions for the vulnerable persons including the PWDs
- The accessibility standards as well as the building control act which were put in place to guide construction of different physical structures are guiding the construction of all the buildings
- The existence of civil society organizations and other disabled persons organizations such as NUDIPU, USLA, NUDIPU NUWODU among others also helps to ensure that some services are provided to the different persons with disabilities including those affected by landmines

### **Applying gender and age principles to ensure women and girls boys and men access services**

- Universal primary and universal secondary education for all boys and girls
- Inclusive education policy which is about to be completed

- Affirmative action of 1.2 points for girls joining universities
- Vocation education- training of only women and girls with disabilities in Mpumudde and the presence of the other training institutions for youth with disabilities boy male and female
- Uganda women entrepreneurship program which aims at ensuring that women from 18 years to 65 access the fund for income generation
- the Youth Livelihood Program that targets both male and female youth, including those with disabilities

### **Enhancing Coordinating victim assistance implementation**

- Generally government coordinates services for all PWDs through local government by CDOs but also the DPOs including and especially the ULSA, but also others like NUDIPU, NUWOD and civil society

### **On whether there are sufficient physiotherapists trained and positioned**

There are trained but not position in all areas where they are needed

### **Efforts to improve rehabilitation services**

- The ministry of health has a disability unit to coordinate the services
- The government has continued to embrace the CBR Program
- The government of Uganda has put in place the community health workers
- Government and other stakeholders normally facilitate training on disability inclusiveness

### **Challenges**

- The National Policy on Disability in Uganda is obsolete and needs to be revised
- Limited data on the survivors and victims
- Limited awareness on the peculiar needs and rights of landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities by their families, communities and the service providers

- Limited funding for the general programs and plans for service delivery to PWDs as well as to the peculiar needs of landmine victims
- Stigma and discrimination attached to PWDs
- Cultural beliefs and norms as well as the ignorance on the needs and rights of the victims of land mines and other PWDs
- Lack specific information on the survivors that need rehabilitation and services.

### **How to overcome the challenges and Way forward**

- To review the National Policy on Disability in Uganda (2006) to update it and align it to the Landmine Ban Convention, CRPD and other obligations and protocols at the International level and development of the National Plan of Action to operationalize the Policy
- To collect data on the Victims and the Survivors for tailor made actions for their needs
- and through capacity building to create awareness raising
- Paying attention to the Victims Assistance Activities especially Socio-economic empowerment of the victims and Physical rehabilitation