

**PRESENTATION ON LANDMINE VICTIM
ASSISTANCE IN UGANDA**

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INTRODUCTION

One of the effects of the war in Northern Uganda and to a smaller extent in west Uganda was the presence of landmines and Un-exploded Ordinances (UXOs) which killed and caused injuries among the population.

Although there are no reliable figures on the number of landmine/UXO survivors in Uganda, they are estimated at about 2000(MGLD), while those that were indirectly affected are much more. The Effects of the landmines are still felt by communities many years after the conflict ceased.

INTRODUCTION CTN'D

Landmine Survivors requires both immediate and long term interventions. Immediately after the accident, survivors need access to first aid and emergency medical care.

In the medium term, provision of physical rehabilitation services such as provision of orthotics, prosthetics and other mobility aids such as crutches, wheelchairs and tricycles, as well as provision of physiotherapy are required.

Medical and physical rehabilitation services are often needed even in the long term, and may be required for the rest of the survivor's life. The survivors also need to be provided with sustainable sources of livelihoods to enable them meet their own needs and the needs of their families.

PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION

Uganda was one of the first countries to ratify the Anti-Personnel Mine Convention and this was done in February, 1999.

Uganda also endorsed the Nairobi Action Plan for the period of 2005-2009, which gave aims related to victim assistance and also defined more clearly the scope of victim assistance.

In 2007, Government through MGLSD developed the Comprehensive Plan of Action to address the rights and needs of landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities for the period of 2008-2012.

PROGRESS CTN'D

Uganda ratified and domesticated the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with its optional protocol on 25th September 2008 without any reservations.

The convention is for elimination of all forms of discrimination against all persons with disabilities including those disabled by landmines.

PROGRESS CTN'D

Besides the International Obligations, at the National Level, the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda recognizes the rights of Persons with Disabilities to respect and human dignity.

Article 32 provides for affirmative action in favour of those marginalized on the basis of disability, while article 35 obliges parliament to enact appropriate laws for the protection of all Persons with Disabilities.

PROGRESS CTN'D

As a country, we have also been able to put in place some other major laws and policies to promote and protect the rights of all Persons with Disabilities including the Landmine Survivors. They include, the Persons with Disability Act, (2006); the Equal Opportunities Commission Act, (2007); the Local Government Act, (2007); the National Council for Disability Act (2003); the National Policy on Disability in Uganda (2006); and the National Social Protection Policy, (2015),as the National Policy on Elimination of Gender Based Violence In Uganda(2016) among others.

PROGRESS CTN'D

In line with the Maputo Action Plan, Uganda has continued to use the twin track approach of affirmative action through the implementation of the Plan and mainstreaming issues of landmine survivors in the broader context of disability and social services provision.

This is manifested through programs such as the Community Based Rehabilitation Program, which is the leading programme by the MGLSD driving social norm change and broadly addressing economic empowerment, medical attention (rehabilitation) issues as well as social inclusion across the country with current Government funding in 26 districts and a plan to scale-up to the entire country.

PROGRESS CTN'D

The special grant for Persons with Disabilities provides seed capital for income generating activities for Persons with Disabilities and their caregivers through a group approach.

This program covers the entire country, including the landmines affected districts.

PROGRESS CTN'D

In addition, some mainstream programmes such as the Senior Citizens Grant (SCG) are significantly benefiting Persons with Disabilities. For example, the Expanding Social Protection-(ESP II) programme data, shows 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. Some of the Landmine districts that have benefited from this program include: Kasese, Gulu, Yumbe, Koboko, Agago, and Pader.

PROGRESS CTN'D

In the same way, 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 (Programs' reports 2017).

These two programs are also covering the entire country.

PROGRESS CTN'D

Currently, there are four Disability Rehabilitation Institutions in Uganda located in the Central, Western and Northern Regions of the country, which train between 180 and 200 Youth with Disabilities in employable skills every year.

The Government Universities and other Tertiary Institutions have a quota system, where 64 Persons with Disabilities are fully sponsored by Government every academic year.

CHALLENGES AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION

- The current National Policy on Disability in Uganda, (2006) has not been reviewed and yet the recommended time of reviewing the policy is ten years. In addition, the policy is not aligned to the International Disability Rights standards, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the AP Mine Ban Convention, among others.
- Measures to effectively implement and monitor the existing laws and policies are inadequate mainly due to limited funding, as well as the negative attitudes, Stigma and Discrimination attached to disability by some duty bearers.

CHALLENGES CNT'D

- The programs that specifically target all Persons with Disabilities are limited both in scope and scale due to limited financing and the mechanisms for delivery of these programmes.
- There is limited data on landmine Survivors and Victims because generally the available data is not disaggregated and this therefore makes it difficult to properly identify the landmine survivors for specific needs and interventions.

UGANDA'S 2018 COMMITMENTS

- In 2018, Uganda reaffirmed commitments to improving the rights and addressing the needs of all persons with disabilities including landmine survivors.
- One of the first objectives in our 2018 commitments paper is to review the 2006 National Policy on Disability and to develop a nationwide plan of action for its implementation.
- We are happy to launch the process of reviewing the 2006 policy today.

THE END

THANK YOU VERY MUCH