



AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

## Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2010 – 2019



<< Alex is practising walking on a walking frame made in his village according to measurements from CCBRT. Alex has Cerebral Palsy. He lives in the region of Mount Kilimanjaro/Tanzania. A community worker of CCBRT visits him regularly. Alex has been through a long rehabilitation process. It took years before he could sit and stand. – The rehabilitation centre “Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Tanzania” (CCBRT) is supported by CBM. | ©CBM

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (1999 – 2009) was adopted by the 35th Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, Algeria in July 1999. The 1st AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development, which convened in Windhoek, Namibia, 27–31 October 2012, extended the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2010–2019. The goal of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) is the full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities in Africa.

The mandate for organizing the Decade activities for the period 1999–2009 was given to the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), a specialized agency of the OAU, headquartered in Harare, Zimbabwe, with regional offices located in Dakar, Senegal (for West Africa) Brazzaville, Congo (for Central Africa) and Harare (for Southern Africa). ARI shared the responsibility for the planning of Decade activities with Disabled People's Organisations, governments and other continental organisations for persons with disabilities.

The Continental Plan of Action of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) outlines eight (8) strategic thematic areas for implementation at national level, and includes priority action areas for each thematic area. The first strategic thematic area is the establishment of a coordination and mainstreaming focal point in national governments which will particularly mainstream as priority action areas youth, women and children with disabilities, as well as mobilize resources for disability inclusive development. The second strategic thematic area deals with statistics, research and evidence gathering on disabilities nationally. The third area concerns legislation regarding non-discrimination, equality before the law and freedom from exploitation and cruel treatment of persons with disabilities. The area of health and rehabilitation is subsequently outlined with health and

rehabilitation services identified as priority actions. The fifth strategic thematic area has been identified as adequate standard of living and social protection for persons with disabilities, with social protection as priority action for persons with disabilities.

The promotion of inclusion of persons with disabilities in all sectors of society is the seventh strategic thematic area outlined in the Continental Plan of Action. Under this area, self-representation, education, livelihoods, work, employment, sport and culture are identified as priority action areas. The next thematic area for implementation is the development of institutions dealing with disability, including disability desks in all government ministries and advocacy, organizational support and strong roles of Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs). Lastly, the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action is outlined as a strategic thematic area.

Responsibilities of key actors to implement the Continental Plan of Action, that is, the AU Commission and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, African Union Member States, the transformed African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI) and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) are highlighted.





## CONTINENTAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE AFRICAN DECADE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (2010–2019)

### PART 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

1. The World Report on Disability, published jointly by the World Health Organization and the World Bank in 2011, estimates that over one billion people, or about 15 % of the world's population is living with a disability. This is significantly higher than previous estimates. The Report found higher disability prevalence in lower income countries than in higher income countries. Poorer people, including women and older people were also found to have a higher prevalence of disability, and children from poorer households and those in ethnic minority groups were at a significantly higher risk of disability than other children. The implications for the countries of Africa are clear. To address these findings, the World Report suggests measures to improve accessibility and equality of opportunity; promote participation and inclusion; and increase respect for the autonomy and dignity of persons with disabilities.

2. The most important international instrument to guide national action to address disability and the situation of persons with disabilities is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and ratified by an increasing number of countries including the majority of AU Member States. The purpose of the

CRPD is to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (Article 1). The CRPD identifies persons with disabilities as including “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (Article 1).

3. Both the World Report and the CRPD highlight the role of the environment in facilitating or restricting the participation of persons with disabilities in family, community and national life as a whole. The widespread evidence of barriers documented by the World Report include:

- Inadequate policies and standards
- Negative attitudes
- Lack of provision of services
- Problems of service delivery
- Inadequate funding
- Lack of accessibility
- Lack of consultation and involvement
- Lack of data and evidence.

4. These disabling barriers contribute to the disadvantages experienced by people with disabilities in all countries, and result in poorer health, lower education, and less economic participation, all leading to higher rates of poverty and increased dependency, restricted participation and exclusion.

## 1.2 EMERGENCE OF THE AFRICAN DECADE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (1999–2009)

5.

To address these barriers and the unacceptable situation of persons with disabilities in the countries of Africa, national, regional and continental level organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) in Africa first proposed an African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, modeled after similar Decades in other Regions of the world.

6.

The African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (1999–2009) was the result of a recommendation made by the Labour and Social Affairs Commission of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) during its 22nd Session in April 1999 in Windhoek, Namibia, and adopted by the 35th Session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, Algeria in July 1999. A formal Declaration of the Decade was subsequently adopted by the 36th Session of the OAU Heads of State and Government in Lome, Togo in July 2000.

7.

Responsibility for organizing the Decade was given to the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), a specialized agency of the OAU, headquartered in Harare, Zimbabwe, with regional offices located in Dakar, Senegal (for West Africa) Brazzaville, Congo (for Central Africa) and Harare (for Southern Africa). At the time (2000) ARI shared the responsibility for the planning of Decade activities with DPOs, in particular the Pan African Federation of Disabled Persons (PAFOD), the African Union of the Blind (AFUB), governments and other regional organisations for persons with disabilities. Continental DPOs later established the Secretariat for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (SADPD) to assist in facilitating the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action for the Decade (1999–2009).

8.

The decision to extend the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) was taken by at the 1st AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development in Windhoek, Namibia, 27–31 October 2008 and adopted by the adopted by Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.473 (XIV), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 26–30 January 2009.

## 1.3 GOAL OF THE EXTENDED DECADE (2010–2019)

9.

The goal of the extended African Decade of Persons with Disabilities is the full participation, equality, inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities in Africa.

## 1.4 OBJECTIVES

10.

The Declaration of the Decade, adopted in July 2000, and still serving as the reference for the extended Decade, calls upon AU Member States to study the situation of persons with disabilities with a view to formulating measures favouring equalization of opportunities, full participation, inclusion and independence in society. Among other actions, Member States are called upon to:

- Formulate or reformulate policies and national programmes that encourage the full participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic development;
- Create or reinforce national disability coordination committees, and ensure effective representation of persons with disabilities and their organisations;
- Support community-based service delivery, in collaboration with international development agencies and organizations;





- Promote and encourage positive attitudes towards children, youth, women and adults with disabilities, and the implementation of measures to ensure their access to rehabilitation, education, training and employment, as well as to cultural and sports activities and access to the physical environment;
- Develop programmes that alleviate poverty amongst persons with disabilities and their families;
- Ensure gender equality in all disability-related activities and programmes;
- Put in place programmes that create greater awareness, conscientiousness of communities and governments relating to disability;
- Ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in rural areas in all activities and programmes;
- Prevent disability by promoting peace and paying attention to other causes of disability;
- Mainstream disability on the social, economic and political agendas of African governments;
- Ratify and implement the CRDP and its Optional Protocol;
- Apply all AU and UN human rights instruments to promote and monitor the rights of persons with disabilities.

## PART 2:

## STRATEGIC THEMATIC AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The AU Commission will, for the purposes of preparation of reports and reviews on the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010 – 2019), engage with Member States regarding the status of advancing the following strategic thematic areas towards reaching the goal of the Decade:

### 2.2 NATIONAL COORDINATION AND MAINSTREAMING MECHANISM FOR DISABILITY

#### **Goal**

The effective coordination and mainstreaming of the implementation of the strategic thematic areas of the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) (CPoA), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and national policies and programmes for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To establish and/or strengthen the national focal point for the coordination and mainstreaming of disability issues in Member States (Preferably in the Office of the President or Prime Minister);

- b. To establish disability desks or focal points at all levels of Government;
- c. To facilitate signature and domestication of international instruments regarding disability (national focal point);
- d. To sensitize relevant line ministries about the respective strategic thematic areas of the CPoA, the AU Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the articles of the CRPD;
- e. To facilitate the establishment and regular meetings of National Disability Councils;
- f. To monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CPoA and the CRPD;
- g. To report to the African Union Commission on the implementation of the CPoA, to the African Commission on Human and People's Rights on the implementation of the Protocol and to the United Nations on the implementation of the CRPD.

## 2.2.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS REGARDING NATIONAL COORDINATION AND MAINSTREAMING MECHANISM FOR DISABILITY

### 2.2.1.1 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

#### **Goal**

Ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To ensure access for children with disabilities to mainstream health care services and specialized medical facilities;
- b. To adopt full, inclusive, and accessible education policies, programmes and school systems to promote the education of children with disabilities including early childhood development and education;
- c. To mainstream the needs and interests of children with disabilities, in cultural, sports, recreation and other social programmes;
- d. To develop programmes to implement provisions of Article 13 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child [1999], which recognises the needs of children with disabilities and their care givers and the importance of creating a conducive environment that will allow the child to achieve fullest possible integration individual development and cultural and moral development;
- e. To adopt relevant laws/policies and strategies to remove barriers that hinder and or discriminate against the participation of children with disabilities in society;



- f. To provide training and access to ICT to children with disabilities, their parents and caregivers, and promote access to information, especially for those in rural areas;
- g. To ensure provision of services, equal opportunities and inclusion of children with significant disabilities, including children with multiple disabilities;
- h. To empower parents, guardians, and caregivers of children with disabilities, through information, training and other supports.
- g. To promote training and access to ICTs for youth with disabilities;
- h. To promote access to information by youth with disabilities, especially those in rural areas;
- i. To develop programmes that overcome social and economic isolation and disconnection and remove systemic barriers in the labour market for youth with disabilities;
- j. To ensure access to credit facilities for youth with disabilities;

### 2.2.1.2 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

#### **Goal**

Achieve full participation and equal rights for youth with disabilities.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To raise awareness on the rights of youth with disabilities;
- b. To develop programmes and monitoring mechanisms to ensure young people with disability benefit from the AU Youth Charter;
- c. To promote full, inclusive, and accessible education for youth with disabilities;
- d. To eradicate vulnerability through empowerment, education and awareness of youth with disabilities;
- e. To promote the inclusion of youth with disabilities in all mainstream youth organizations and programs;
- f. To adopt and implement relevant laws/policies and strategies to remove barriers that hinder or discriminate against the participation of youth with disabilities in society;

- k. To put the needs and interests of youth with disabilities on the agenda of all national development programmes;
- l. To develop and implement special measures to facilitate full and equal participation of youth with disabilities in training at sports, culture, science and technology.

### 2.2.1.3 WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

#### **Goal**

Achieve full participation and equal rights for women with disabilities.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To raise public awareness on the rights of people with disabilities, especially focusing on women in rural areas;
- b. To develop programmes to address the needs of women with disabilities during the African Union Women's Decade (2010 – 2020);

- c. To promote the inclusion of women with disabilities in all mainstream women's organizations and programs
- d. To ensure women with disabilities have access to enterprise training opportunities and credit facilities;
- e. To eradicate vulnerability through empowerment, education and awareness of women with disabilities, especially focusing on rural women;
- f. To adopt relevant laws/policies and strategies to remove barriers that hinder or discriminate against the participation of women with disabilities in society;
- g. To provide training and access to ICTs for women with disabilities and promote access to information by women with disabilities especially those in rural areas;
- h. To adopt full inclusive education and adult literacy policies and programs to promote the education of women with disabilities;
- i. To mainstream the needs and interests of women with disabilities in all national development programmes;
- j. To develop and implement policy and legal frameworks that will protect women with disabilities as enshrined in Article 23 of the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights on Women;
- k. To combat sexual violence against women with disabilities by encouraging the Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights in Africa or another appropriate body to undertake investigations and issue reports;
- l. To ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services for women with disabilities.

#### 2.2.1.4 OLDER PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

##### *Goal*

Increased access by older persons with disabilities to their rights, security and fundamental freedoms appropriate to their age and in line with the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, the UN CRPD and other policy instruments.

##### *Priority Actions*

##### **Member States:**

- a. Provide resources for the implementation of the provisions of the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Older Persons In Africa, the UN CRPD and other policy instruments for the benefit of older persons with disabilities
- b. Recognise the fundamental rights of older persons with disabilities and commit to abolish all forms of discrimination based on age;
- c. Undertake to ensure that the rights of Older Persons with disabilities are protected by appropriate legislation;
- d. Ensure all relevant provisions of the CPoA are implemented and/or take due cognisance of the rights of older persons with disabilities.



### 2.2.1.5 PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY

#### **Goal**

To protect and safeguard persons with disabilities in situations of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as in disaster and emergency situations.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To evacuate PWDs in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters;
- b. To ensure that PWDs participate fully in peace building and reconstruction of their communities by promoting disability mainstreaming in development plans;
- c. To put in place protection mechanisms for the safety and the rights of PWDs in emergency and conflict situations based on the AU Peace and Security Architecture;
- d. To promote full and equal access to humanitarian relief for PWDs;
- e. To protect PWDs from all kinds of exploitation and violence during situations of conflict, including Gender Based Violence (GBV);
- f. To combat discrimination against PWDs with regard to freedom of movement;
- g. To protect the dignity of PWDs who find themselves forced to migrate for different reasons including persecution on the grounds of their disability;
- h. To enhance disability inclusive policies, guidelines and service delivery across stakeholders who operate in humanitarian crisis situations;

- i. To strengthen and encourage continental Disabled Persons Organizations to be involved in the revitalization and establishment of local practices to monitor the protection, equal participation, and equal access to humanitarian services for PWDs;
- j. To encourage and support the establishment and functioning of organizations of veterans and disabled ex-combatants;
- k. To ensure the participation of PWDs through their representative organizations, including organizations of ex-combatants in the prevention, resolution and reconstruction of post conflict areas;
- l. To introduce a systemic land-mine clearance program, where mines exist, or strengthening of existing programs;
- m. To assist disabled war veterans and ex combatants with disabilities to access services for inclusive development, that they are not neglected after the sacrifices they made.

### 2.2.1.6 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

#### **Goal**

Resources are mobilized for the implementation of the strategic thematic and priority action areas of the CPoA.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To include a disability component in all Government budgets and budgetary allocations in all their line functions;
- b. To ensure the inclusion of disability as a criterion in national Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes, and other development programmes for consideration by international partners;

- c. To mainstream capacity building, development of technical skills and provision of human resources throughout government to ensure the inclusion of disabilities issues in the public sector;
- d. To allocate financial resources with specific budgets allocated to the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action;
- e. To prioritize objectives in the Continental Plan of Action that may not need additional resources but a change in the way existing resources are administered;
- f. To include private sector representatives, religious organizations and the media as members of National Disability Councils to facilitate resource mobilization.;
- g. To request increased technical and financial support from international partners to support and complement national and continental efforts for the implementation of the CPoA, the CRPD and national legislation and programmes to protect and promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

## 2.3 STATISTICS, RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE GATHERING ON DISABILITIES AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

### *Goal*

Continuous data gathering on the causes and prevalence of disabilities by Member States, on the types of disabilities, disaggregated regarding gender and age, on the participation of children with disabilities in education, and the participation of youth and adults with disabilities in vocational skills training and employment.

### *Priority Actions*

#### **Member States:**

- a. To establish an inter-ministerial epidemiological surveillance system on disabilities to gather evidence for consideration by National Disability Councils, policy bodies and relevant Government Ministries;
- b. To provide for indicators on disabilities in national census questionnaires and other national surveys;
- c. To collate disability data from health, education, tertiary and labour statistics regularly;
- d. To stimulate research and conduct surveys on disabilities.
- e. To publish regular reports on the situation of disability and persons with disabilities in the country.
- f. To include persons with disabilities within community based monitoring as part of national data collection and monitoring systems.





## 2.4 NON-DISCRIMINATION, EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW AND FREEDOM FROM EXPLOITATION AND CRUEL TREATMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

### *Goal*

Laws and public regulations in place that facilitate equality, access to justice, freedom of expression, and freedom from exploitation, abuse, violence and cruel treatment for PWDs.

### *Priority Actions*

#### **Member States:**

- a. To recognize that PWDs enjoy legal capacity and support to exercise their legal rights on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life;
- b. To include disability issues in the implementation of human rights instruments and institutions at national level;
- c. To promote the right of PWDs to express themselves in legal, political, economic and social spheres;
- d. To implement measures to ensure that PWDs are free from exploitation, violence, abuse and cruel treatment.

## 2.4.1 EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

### *Goal*

Persons with disabilities enjoy equality before and under the law and are entitled to non-discrimination, equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

### *Priority Actions*

#### **Member States:**

- a. To identify, then amend or repeal laws which discriminate against PWDs;
- b. To amend constitutional bills of rights to include a non-discriminatory clause on the basis of disability, through parliaments and national assemblies;
- c. To ensure that laws are enacted and implemented to stop discrimination against PWDs, with the active participation of DPOs;
- d. To ensure that mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and enforcing of non-discrimination laws and policies are established;
- e. To eliminate barriers in society that discourage PWDs from participating in civil society;

## 2.4.2 EQUAL RECOGNITION BEFORE THE LAW AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### **Goal**

The full recognition of persons with disabilities everywhere as persons before the law and ensuring effective access to justice and rights on an equal basis with others.

### **Priority Actions**

#### **Member States:**

- a. To review, amend or repeal, and implement the guardianship and inheritance laws to protect the rights of PWDs;
- b. To promote the availability of sign and tactile language interpretation at public meetings and in the media and in courts of law;
- c. To take all appropriate measures to ensure that AU human rights instruments and the CRPD are domesticated in all Member States legal instruments and implemented;
- d. To require political parties to have disability inclusive party policies and manifestos with a view to enhance political participation of the disabled;
- e. To promote and ensure disability inclusive reform and policy of the justice, law, and order sectors.
- f. To promote appropriate training and oversight for those working in the field of administration of justice, including judges, police, and prison staff;

## 2.4.3 FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities exercise the right to freedom of expression, opinion, and access to information in accessible formats.

### **Priority Actions**

#### **Member States:**

- a. To provide information intended for the general public to PWDs in accessible format and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and no additional cost;
- b. To ensure that private and public entities and mass media, including providers of information through internet access make their services available to PWDs.
- c. To accept and facilitate the use of Sign languages, Braille, augmentative and other alternative communication modes and formats;
- d. To support the development of sign language and recognize it as an official language of deaf people;
- e. To support the development of tactile language as a language of deaf/blind people;



#### 2.4.4 FREEDOM FROM TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT AND PUNISHMENT

##### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities have protection and guaranteed freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment.

##### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To enact and enforce laws that protect PWDs from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment;
- b. To establish national mechanisms for monitoring, implementation and enforcement of laws that deal with torture, inhuman, cruel and degrading punishment or treatment to PWDs;
- c. To permit DPOs, human rights defenders, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and national human rights institutions to identify and prosecute cases of torture or of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment against PWDs.

#### 2.4.5 FREEDOM FROM EXPLOITATION, VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

##### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities have protection and guaranteed freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse.

##### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To take all appropriate legislative, administrative, educational and other measures to protect PWDs from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including gender based violence;
- b. To prevent all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse by ensuring that protective services are age, disability and gender sensitive;
- c. To ensure effective monitoring and enforcement by independent authorities of prevention strategies for all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse;
- d. To promote counseling, rehabilitation and social reintegration of PWDs who become victims of any form of exploitation, violence and abuse;
- e. To adopt policies and enact legislation to ensure that instances of exploitation, violence and abuse against all PWDs are identified, investigated and where appropriate, prosecuted.

## 2.5 HEALTH AND REHABILITATION

### Goal

Persons with disabilities have access to mainstream medical and specialized rehabilitation services.

### Priority Actions

#### Member States:

- a. To provide PWDs equal access to medical care within the same system as other members of society;
- b. To increase access to habilitation and rehabilitation services and accessible facilities to PWDs within their communities, including rural areas;
- c. To combat and prohibit discrimination against PWDs by members of the medical profession.

### 2.5.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS REGARDING HEALTH AND REHABILITATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

#### 2.5.1.1 HEALTH SERVICES

### Goal

Persons with disabilities and their families have access to mainstream and specialized health services that are gender sensitive.

### Priority Actions

#### Member States:

- a. To ensure primary health care, early identification and early intervention for PWDs;
- b. To ensure PWDs equal access to medical services and care within the same system as other members of society;

- c. To introduce a system of early intervention or referral, or strengthen existing systems, to minimize the occurrence of secondary disability;
- d. To ensure that Down syndrome or any other disability diagnosed in uterus is not a reason for termination, and that health care providers should do their utmost to provide the necessary information about the diagnoses thereby allowing the parents to make an informed decision;
- e. To institute disability modules in the curriculum of all health professionals' training;
- f. To carry out regular health sector reviews of policies affecting PWDs, in partnership with DPOs;
- g. To incorporate the provisions of the African Health Strategy into national policies, laws and action plans;
- h. To develop disability sensitive family planning and reproductive health services;
- i. To develop health care policies and strategies suitable for PWDs living with HIV/AIDS;
- j. To ensure access of PWDs to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support services available to the general public.
- k. To provide information on HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases to PWDs, in all accessible formats;
- l. To supplement "mother and child" programs to ensure inclusion of mother and children with disabilities and ongoing programs of scientific and medical research;
- m. To ensure the inclusion of disability in the design of awareness raising campaign related to the abuse of drugs and alcohol;



- n. To train health care providers to be able to participate in areas such as early detection of disabilities, the provision of primary assistance and referral to appropriate services.

### 2.5.1.2 REHABILITATION SERVICES

#### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities have access to comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programs to obtain maximum independence and full participation in all aspects of life.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To increase access to appropriate, suitable and affordable assistive devices;
- b. To support the design, development, local production, distribution and servicing of assistive devices and equipment for PWDs, adapted to local conditions;;
- c. To develop policies and programmes to strengthen habilitation and rehabilitation services for PWDs to attain maximum independence and participation in society;
- d. To develop and implement accessibility regulations and universal design suitable to local conditions;
- e. To design and implement affordable personal access programmes in such a way that the PWD using the programme has a decisive influence.

### 2.5.1.3 PREVENTION

#### **Goal**

Decreased incidence of disability and disability-causing factors.

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To allocate sufficient resources for the prevention of disease and chronic illness which result in disabilities;
- b. To combat harmful traditional practices which result in disabilities;
- c. To develop and implement awareness and education programmes against domestic violence;
- d. To enforce occupational health and safety standards;
- e. To develop and implement awareness and education programmes against drug and alcohol abuse;
- f. To introduce and implement stringent road safety policies, or strengthen existing policies;
- g. To introduce a systemic land-mine clearance program, where mines exist, or strengthening of existing programs.

## 2.6 ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

### 2.6.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS REGARDING ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING AND SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

#### 2.6.1.1 SOCIAL PROTECTION

##### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities are cushioned from falling into or remaining in poverty and empowered to participate in and benefit from community and national development strategies targeting poverty reduction.

##### **Objectives**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To ensure access to affordable services, devices, and other assistance for disability related needs;
- b. To ensure access for PWDs to public housing programs;
- c. To ensure access for PWDs to social security, retirement, insurance and other social benefits programs;
- d. To allocate resources towards provision of comprehensive social protection programmes targeting PWDs and to ensure the inclusion of disability issues in social protection policies, laws and national development;
- e. To increase the participation of PWDs and their families in designing and reviewing existing national poverty reduction plans, social protection policies, and strategies;
- f. To increase training and awareness of PWDs and their families to available financial and other social assistance;
- g. To increase disability awareness and programming capacities within the public and private sectors, development partners and other bodies responsible for national development plans and social protection programmes;
- h. To establish coordinating mechanisms for disability within line ministries in charge of social protection programmes;
- i. To develop the capacities of PWDs and their organisations in lobbying and advocating for access to social protection programmes;
- j. To introduce a disability module in the curriculum of all training of social development professionals;
- k. To extend favourable social protection schemes for PWDs living with HIV/AIDS and individuals disabled as a result of AIDS;
- l. To ensure the inclusion of disability as a criterion in poverty reduction and other development programmes submitted for consideration by international partners;





## 2.7 PROMOTING INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY

### **Goal**

Full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all sectors of society, to effectively participate in their own development and in the development of their communities, societies and country.

### **Priority Actions**

#### **Member States:**

- a. To have PWDs represent themselves in all structures affect their lives ;
- b. To ensure accessible and inclusive education for all PWDs;
- c. To ensure equal employment opportunities for PWDs;
- d. To promote accessibility and inclusion of PWDs to recreation, sport and cultural activities for PWDs.

## 2.7.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS REGARDING INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY

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### 2.7.1.1 SELF-REPRESENTATION

### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities are able to represent themselves in all public decision-making structures.

### **Priority Actions**

#### **Member States:**

- a. To develop and implement strategies for the effective inclusion and efficient participation of members with disabilities in parliaments or national assemblies, and at provincial, district and local government levels;
- b. To engage in advocacy, training, and awareness raising that helps motivate youth with disabilities to participate in the political process and share their experiences with other members of the community;
- c. To strive to include at least one disabled member, with consideration of gender equality, in their representation of five members per Member State to the Pan-African Parliament;
- d. To train MPs and build their capacity, knowledge and skills for effectively articulating and engaging in disability issues, including through direct collaboration with DPOs;
- e. To promote and encourage the development, by all political parties, of party policies and manifestos relating to equalization of opportunities for PWDs, including those of disabled youth, women, children, and other marginalized groups;

- f. To advocate for changes of electoral laws to be inclusive of the needs of PWDs;
- g. To ensure that all stages of elections are inclusive and accessible for PWDs, including the campaigning, elections observation and polling stages;
- h. To create opportunities for PWDs to contest and act as election monitors;
- i. To ensure that PWDs effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others directly or through freely elected representatives;
- j. To implement affirmative action measures to guarantee participation of PWDs in political and public life;
- k. To train and build capacity of PWDs to participate in and conduct public affairs;
- l. To enact laws that guarantee the rights of PWDs to participate in political process and electoral systems;
- m. To ensure the full participation and inclusion of PWDs in all aspects of the pre-election, election and post-election processes.

## 2.7.1.2 EDUCATION

### Goals

Persons with disabilities enjoy universally inclusive and accessible quality education for all.

### Priority Actions

#### Member States:

- a. To ensure that all public and private primary and secondary school buildings, colleges and universities and teacher training institutions are physically accessible to all persons with disabilities;
- b. To ensure that teacher education curriculum mainstreams all categories of disabilities;
- c. To develop teacher and personnel skills and learning materials to teach children with disabilities;
- d. To ensure access to information for all PWDs, including access to real time translation, subtitles, and affordable information and communication technologies;
- e. To develop teaching and learning materials appropriate for PWDs;
- f. To ensure PWDs benefit from programmes of the Decade of Education for Africa 2006–2015, in particular the quota system for the award of AUC scholarships;
- g. To establish policies to ensure that girls and boys with disabilities have access to relevant education in integrated settings at all levels, paying particular attention to the requirements in rural areas;
- h. To encourage institutions of education to develop curricula on disability studies at tertiary level education;



- i. To ensure students with disabilities are afforded equal access to teacher training programmes;
- j. To ensure effective participation of students with disabilities in the field of sciences and mathematics at all levels of education;
- k. To allocate specific budgets for the education of children with disabilities;
- l. To foster partnership between school, families and other members of educational teams;
- m. To enact, implement and enforce policies and programmes that promote inclusion and full participation of PWDs in education, taking cognizance of gender and rural areas;
- n. To ensure that PWDs are enabled to access general/tertiary and lifelong education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others;
- o. To ensure that educational data collection is inclusive of all PWDs;
- p. To ensure that there is effective individualized support measures that are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

### 2.7.1.3 LIVELIHOODS, WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

#### **Goal**

Persons with disabilities enjoy non-discrimination with regard to all forms of employment and self-employment, including conditions of recruitment and hiring, retention, career advancement, safe and healthy working conditions as well as basic business skills training and access to credit facilities.

#### **Priority Actions**

#### **Member States:**

- a. To enact and enforce an employment equity policy and legislation for PWDs
- b. To ensure that the employment of at least five per cent (5 %) of the workforce within the public and the private sector in Member States should be composed of PWDs;
- c. To educate and motivate employers in the public and the private sector with regard to disability issues;
- d. To create awareness with regard to the capabilities of PWDs;
- e. To create diversified employment opportunities in the public sector and promote such opportunities in the private sector in a conducive and enabling environment which is barrier free and accessible to PWDs;
- f. To ensure affirmative action in public and private sectors by introducing incentives for employers who offer employment opportunities to persons with disabilities (tax rebates).
- g. To offer learnerships to PWDs in the labour market, which are new paraprofessional and vocational education and training programmes which combine theory and practice and culminate in a recognized qualification;
- h. To encourage and protect entrepreneurial and intellectual properties/works of PWDs with a view to enhance their possibilities to create job opportunities and self-employment;
- i. To encourage investors with disabilities and support employers with disabilities in order to create

employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and fill the gaps of the private sector;

- j. To develop strategies of affirmative action for the effective employment opportunities of PWDs living with HIV/AIDS;
- k. To develop and implement a strategy to promote the recruitment of women and men with disabilities by employers of all kinds;
- l. To develop and implement a strategy to promote training opportunities for women and men with disabilities in mainstream training programmes;
- m. To support the economic empowerment of PWDs in both rural and urban areas;
- n. To develop and promote preferential procurement strategies in favour of PWDs and their organizations;
- o. To provide incentives that encourage participation of PWDs in the economy;
- p. To train youth, women and men with disabilities in relevant marketable skills, where possible in mainstream settings;
- q. To promote vocational rehabilitation and, where necessary, retraining opportunities for people who acquire a disability in the course of their working lives;
- r. To introduce and enforce occupational safety and health standards and strengthen existing enforcement mechanisms;
- s. To ratify and implement the ILO Convention No.159 concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Persons with Disabilities) to ensure entry to the labour market of PWDs;

## 2.7.1.4 SPORTS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

### Goal

Persons with disabilities enjoy full and equal access to cultural life, sports, recreation and social activities.

### Priority Actions

#### Member States:

- a. To create an enabling environment for the effective and equal participation of men, women, and youth with disabilities in national, regional, continental and international level of sports;
- b. To promote enjoyment and access to cultural material and information in formats accessible to all PWDs;
- c. To promote and develop sports and cultural activities to enable the integration of all PWDs in all cultures of learning at community level;
- d. To support the implementation of the recommendation with regard to sport and PWDs in the AU Sports Architecture;
- e. To raise awareness by identifying and eradicating any stigmatizing and discriminating policy and practices within the government itself with regard to sports and PWDs;
- f. Ensure that children with disabilities are included in any legislation regarding sports and physical education;
- g. To include PWDs and DPOs in sports policy development, planning and implementation;
- h. To recognize and apply the rights of all PWDs to participate in sports, physical education, and activities in all governmental programmes;



- i. To engage as many sectors and implementation partners as possible in helping to realize the full potential of sports to advance the inclusion and well-being of PWDs;

## 2.8 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ADVOCACY, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND STRONG ROLES OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS (DPOS), DISABILITY DESKS IN ALL MINISTRIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### 2.8.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ADVOCACY, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND STRONG ROLES OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS (DPOS), DISABILITY DESKS IN ALL MINISTRIES

#### 2.8.1.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT TO DPOS

##### **Goal**

DPOs enjoy governmental support for the development and strengthening of their role in the planning and implementation of public policies and programmes.

##### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States:**

- a. To promote and facilitate the establishment of DPOs at local and national levels in order to support PWD empowerment;

- b. To establish and resource a national Civil Society Organisation/DPO fund;
- c. To promote and facilitate the establishment of National Federations of Disabled Persons Organizations;
- d. To promote and facilitate through financial support, local and national representation of PWDs in all decision-making structures;

#### 2.8.1.2 ROLE OF DPOS

##### **Goal**

DPOs effectively play their role of empowering PWDs and participating in all decisions affecting PWDs.

##### **Priority Actions**

##### **DPOs:**

- a. Promote and create a positive attitude towards PWDs in communities;
- b. Assist in the creation of micro and macro income generation opportunities for PWDs;
- c. Assist in the prevention of the causes of disabilities;
- d. Perform the management, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the CPoA;
- e. Lobby and advocate for inclusion of PWDs at community and national level;
- f. Sensitize and mobilize communities on the priority areas of the CPoA at the local community level;
- g. Carry out activities, including capacity building, in line with the priority objectives of the CPoA at the local community level.

### 2.8.1.3 ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

#### **Goal**

Increased awareness of disability in general, and the need for participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities at community, regional and national levels.

#### **Priority Actions**

- a. To raise awareness of the need for a disability desk in Government ministries, and to advocate for the provision of human and financial capacity in ministries, local governments and intergovernmental organizations such as RECs;
- b. To develop and implement a media and communications strategy for the African Decade and the CPoA;
- c. To develop and implement a media code of conduct relating to disability and persons with disabilities;
- d. To develop and promote cultural activities and sports events by PWDs to raise public awareness of their abilities;
- e. To formulate and implement a comprehensive and protracted awareness raising campaign aimed at improving society's perception of women with disabilities;
- f. To translate the CRPD into national languages and make it available in all alternative formats;
- g. To conduct research on disability-related topics of relevance at every level and disseminate research findings, aimed at improving society's perception of PWDs;
- h. To promote awareness training programs regarding PWDs and the rights of PWDs;

- i. To promote information exchange, for example, through the establishment of disability resource centres and providing information to persons with disabilities and their families, including Braille, large print, audio cassettes and electronic formats.
- j. To foster international exchange of information within Africa, and internationally, so that countries can learn from each other;

## 2.9 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTINENTAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE AFRICAN DECADE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (2010 – 2019)

### 2.9.1 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS REGARDING MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

#### 2.9.1.1 MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP ON IMPLEMENTATION

##### **Goal**

Mechanisms established for coordination, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the CPoA.

##### **Priority Actions**

##### **Member States should:**

- a. Create an entity, council or inter-ministerial body to provide oversight, coordination and mainstreaming of disability issues;





- b. Develop a National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability with specific targets, timeframes and means of monitoring and evaluation;
- c. Designate the inter-ministerial body or other a high level ministerial committee to review and make reports, with input from DPOs, to the AU on progress with the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019); Undertake a review and update legislation on the rights of PWDs and ensure their rights are consistent with and included in National Constitutions and accordingly implemented with oversight by responsible bodies;
- d. Provide national budgetary allocations to support policies and programmes of work to promote the rights and inclusion of PWDs;

## PART 3:

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY ACTORS IMPLEMENTING THE CONTINENTAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE AFRICAN DECADE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (2010–2019)

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## 3.1 RELEVANT AU ORGANS: THE AFRICAN UNION COM- MISSION AND THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

- a. Propose a decision for AU Heads of State and Government to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Disability to ensure implementation, monitoring and reporting of the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities;
- b. Report on the implementation of the Decade Continental Plan of Action to the relevant AU policy organs, including the Conference of Ministers of Social Development, the Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on a biennial basis;
- c. Organize broad based and inclusive discussions for the development of the Africa specific disability rights instrument, the Protocol on the Rights of People with Disabilities;
- d. Provide for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all structures, political and line functions of the African Union, including staff of the Commission and other AU Organs;

- e. Provide technical support to Member States on the development of legislation, policies and other instruments to realize the priority action areas of the CPoA.
- g. Submit reports on the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action to the AU Commission;
- h. Mobilize resources from domestic resources and development partners for disability programmes, including for capacity building of DPOs.

## 3.2 AFRICAN UNION MEMBER STATES

- a. Facilitate the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) by the promulgation of policies and laws incorporating the key areas of the CPoA, and implement these with the collaboration of development partners, including DPOs;
- b. Ratify and domesticate the AU Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities once it is adopted;
- c. Strengthen National Contact Points (preferably in the Office of the President or Prime Minister) and Coordinating Committees with emphasis on the adequate and effective representation of disabled persons and their organizations and clearly define the roles of each in the implementation of national strategies regarding disability;
- d. Establish disability desks in all Government Ministries for the purposes of mainstreaming disability issues,
- e. Collate national data on disability, improve gaps in data regarding disability in rural areas and facilitate information sharing to all stakeholders;
- f. Continuously liaise with the transformed African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), at both continental and regional levels, to enable it to effectively co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019);

## 3.3 THE RESTRUCTURED AFRICAN REHABILITATION INSTITUTE (ARI)

- a. Galvanize support for and popularize the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010–2019) to AU Member States;
- b. Promote and oversee the implementation of the CPoA by Regional Economic Communities and Member States;
- c. With expertise from specialized agencies such as the ILO, provide technical support to member States for the implementation of the CPoA.
- d. Monitor the allocation of resources dedicated by Governments and partners to the CPoA's priority action areas;
- e. Promote and co-ordinate research on disability throughout the continent and disseminate this information to national and regional organisations responsible for policy formulation and implementation;
- f. Assist the development of a unified approach for promoting prevention and early detection of disabilities, and for rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities;



Assist Member States to design facilities and programmes to meet the needs of persons with disabilities who find it difficult to adapt to the rapidly changing world;

- g. Create favourable conditions for inter-African co-operation and mutual assistance regarding prevention, rehabilitation and inclusion, including strengthening of already existing academic and other institutions in various parts of Africa, and utilising them for the training of skilled personnel required for the development of disability inclusive health, education and social services;
- h. Promote and ensure the exchange of information and experiences among AU Member States and other countries of the world during the African Decade;
- i. Mobilize resources for the implementation of the CPoA by member States;
- j. Review Member State reports on implementation of the CPoA.

### 3.4 DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS (DPOS)

- a. Fulfil the role of lobbyist and advocate to Government for the implementation of national and international policies to improve the lives of PWDs;
- b. Fulfil the role of technical experts and advisors pertaining to all matters concerning disability;
- c. Promote PWDs' empowerment in order to take control of their own development;
- d. Mobilize constituencies to engage with governments and stakeholders to understand the rights and needs of PWDs;

- e. Promote inclusion of PWDs as required by the CRPD and other international Conventions;
- f. Mobilize resources from Governments, the private sector and development partners to implement complementary activities in implementing the CPoA and national disability strategies;
- g. Account to their members, their networks and Governments, the private sector and development partners for funding received and progress made in support of the implementation of the CPoA;
- h. Report to the transformed ARI, at request on the implementation of the CPoA.

### 3.5 INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING UN AGENCIES

Seek partnerships and technical support for promoting disability inclusion in development frameworks from specialized international agencies such as the ILO by means of skills development, employability and decent work.



**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS**



**MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN  
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