



STATEMENT ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE DURING THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS AND FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE FIFTH REVIEW CONFERENCE - 18-20 JUNE 2024, GENEVA SWITZERLAND

Your Excellences, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity given to me. Uganda continues to use the inclusive approach of ensuring that all Persons with Disabilities benefit from the government programs on equal basis. These also include the landmine survivors and victims. However attention is always given to the peculiar needs of landmine victims especially in terms of rehabilitation, surgery and provision of assistive devices.

In our National Inclusive Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities (2020-2025) developed with support from ISU, attention was given to Victim Assistance.

The revised National Policy Persons with Disabilities 2023, emphasizes provision of special and peculiar support to categories of Persons with Disabilities that may need it. This includes medical rehabilitation, assistive devices and psycho-social support.

The Persons with Disabilities Act 2020 emphasizes none discrimination in provision of services and also spells out penalties for those that contravene this law

We have faced some challenges implementing victim assistance such as;

Those associated with insufficient funding for the overall landmine victim needs especially rehabilitation and medical needs.

Inability to know the exact number of the victims to whom services are to be delivered because we are always working on estimated numbers.

In order to overcome the challenges, the relevant sectors have been brought on board to carry out their mandate in service delivery to all PWDs and the landmine victims, using the relevant legal and policy frameworks , such as;

- The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda;
- The Disability Inclusive Planning Guidelines (2017-2040), which is a tool that guides national and sub national sectors to plan,

- The National Development Plan (NDP) series that guide the Government to deliver services to Ugandans.
- In addition, the Disability Coordination Committee has membership from ministries of Health, Education, Public Service, the National Union of Persons with Disabilities and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs among others. And International Agencies such UNFPA, UNICEF, HI, among others. Meetings are held quarterly.
- The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) put in place the Disability Management Information System (DMIS).
- With support from UNFPA, MGLSD is currently mapping out the service providers in the disability area to ensure timely and easy access by those that might need them.

We have faced challenges sustaining victim assistance especially in regard to;

- Provision of medical rehabilitation mainly because most of health facilities are not well equipped with both assistive devices or technology and medicines that are required by the survivors,
- The referral mechanisms have challenges associated with insufficient ambulance services, medication, timeliness and the costs associated with them, and insufficient assistive device provision, also with very high costs
- The provision of economic empowerment programs, sometimes is a challenge because of the insufficient funds to enable all members to be included.

The above challenges have been addressed partly through:

- Working with partners both Local and International to ensure that the services are delivered. Most of the assistive of the assistive devices are donations by partners,
- Equipping the orthopedic workshops at 40% of all the equipment needed to produce and provide assistive devices as pledged by the Government in the 2022 Disability Commitments,
- The Ministry of Health has finalized its Rehabilitation Strategy to guide the provision of medical and psycho-social rehabilitation services and has also, developed the Assistive Technology Strategy to guide the production and provision of assistive devices and technology that is needed.
- The Government continues to provide capital for income generating activities for PWDs. This FY 2023/2024, there was an increase from 10 billion Uganda Shs to 16 billion Shs on the funding to the National Special Grant for Persons with Disabilities. Other economic empowerment programs include; Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Program, the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Program, the Youth Livelihood Program and Parish Development Model all have a percentage put aside for PWDs.

I THANK YOU FOR LISTENING TO ME