

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

### UGANDA

#### STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – VICTIM ASSISTANCE

##### COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Burkina Faso, the Netherlands, Slovenia (Chair) and Zambia)

Intersessional Meetings

18-20 June 2024

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Uganda of updated information on its victim assistance activities.
2. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

##### **Mine casualties**

3. Uganda reported that there are approximately 2,500 mine victims, and that data on casualty is not collected anymore.
4. The Committee encourages Uganda to identify the mine victims, including their needs and challenges they face, as well as indirect mine victims, such as affected families.

##### **VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACTIONS:**

##### **Strengthen partnerships and integrate victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Actions #1, #6 and #33)**

5. Uganda reported that the Department of Disability and Elderly in the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD) coordinates victim assistance activities.
6. The Committee recalls that in 2022 Uganda reported adopting a Persons with Disabilities Act in 2020 to improve the human rights of for persons with disabilities. It contains penalty in case of violations of the rights of persons with disabilities. Uganda also reported that victim assistance has been taken into consideration in the National Policy on Disability, which is being revised in accordance with the 2020 Act.

##### **Develop and implement measurable, realistic, and time-bound national action plan (Actions #2 and #33)**

7. Uganda reported on implementing a national inclusive action plan on disabilities that includes victim assistance commitments, also includes estimated costs required for implementation.
8. The Committee would welcome an update on implementation of the action plan, in relation to achieving the objectives of the OAP on victim assistance and information on efforts invested in lifting barriers, including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication obstacles that hinder participation and inclusion of mine victims.

**Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)**

9. The Committee welcomes Uganda to report on efforts in lifting barriers, including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication obstacles that hinder participation and inclusion of mine victims.

**Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)**

10. Uganda reported taking a twin-track approach in ensuring that all persons with disabilities including mine survivors, have access to services on equal basis with others.

11. Uganda reported that a National Technical Coordination Committee on disability which includes representatives of ministries of Health, Education, Public Service, Justice, the National Union of Persons with Disabilities and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and Constitutional Affairs, among others, work to mainstream disability issues in different plans and programmes of the different Ministries, Departments, and Agencies.

12. Also, Uganda reported the following developments:

- the National Policy on Disability, revised in 2023, contains issues such as health, employment, and education for all persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, was being revised;
- a specific policy on inclusive education was being finalised;
- a Disability Blueprint was being developed to increase assessment and management in disability rights; and
- the Equal Opportunities Policy was being revised to ensure that it includes all the issues and needs of all persons with disabilities especially the gender and equity issues.

13. The Committee would welcome information on alignment of efforts to assist mine victims with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

**Establish or strengthen of a centralised database / national information management system (Actions #9 and #35)**

14. Uganda reported that a disability management information was being developed by the MGLSD, that will start with the beneficiaries of the National Special Grant which is an economic empowerment program for all persons with disabilities, and that it is envisaged to capture information on all persons with disabilities, disaggregated by age, gender, type of disability and cause of disability.

**Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)**

15. Uganda reported that casualties occur rarely and in case of casualties, available healthcare centres at community level provide first aid. Uganda reported that ongoing medical care is available but due to shortages of equipment such as ambulances and other facilities, healthcare efforts are affected.

**Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)**

16. Uganda reported that that referral mechanisms of the health structures start at the smallest unit of administration at township level, simplify access to the different health services that include assessment and referral, for example, mental health medicines can now be accessed at Community Health Centres.

17. The Committee would welcome information on the existence of directory of services to facilitate access to services.

**Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices, and occupational therapy (Action #38)**

18. Uganda reported on availability of rehabilitation services including physiotherapy and occupational therapy, and that a national rehabilitation strategy has been developed.

19. Uganda reported in line with Uganda's commitments announced at the global disability summit in 2022, the pledges are outlined as follows:

- Equip 40% of the orthopaedic workshops across the country to facilitate quality production and revise the essential medicines/drugs/supplies list for lower health facilities to increase rare drugs, medicines, and assistive devices/technology for all categories of Persons with Disabilities, especially mental health, Epilepsy, albinism, persons with physical disabilities who include the landmine victims, by 2024.
- Develop a compendium of all health disability studies and disseminate them quarterly through the disability councils at district level and information on causes and costed framework on management for each category of disability; to guide the country's comprehensive interventions.

**Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)**

20. The Committee welcomes Uganda to provide information on availability of peer counselling and the integration peer to peer support into health systems.

**Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)**

21. Uganda reported that all the Economic Empowerment Programmes put in place by the government are inclusive of all persons with disabilities, including the mine victims. The capacity building as well as physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication actions and programmes are disability friendly.

22. Uganda reported that the Special Grant for persons with disabilities is one of the economic empowerment programmes that was put in place in the Financial Year 2009/2010. This grant is for income generation for groups of persons with disabilities. From July 2023 to April 2024 a total of 1,401 persons with disabilities enterprises were funded under National Special Grant (NSG) benefiting 8,597 persons with disabilities, of which 4,332 male and 4,265 female in 131 Local Governments across the country, with total amount of funds disbursed totalled to UGX 7,005,000,000.

23. The Committee recalls that in 2022 Uganda also reported the following efforts in relation to social and economic inclusion of mine victims and persons with disabilities:

- The capacity building as well physical, social, cultural, political, and attitudinal and communication actions and programs are done with the disability lens. Uganda for example has political representation of persons with disabilities at all levels of administration i.e., from community level to national level;
- The Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme which looks at equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in their communities is another government intervention being implemented in Uganda;
- Other government economic empowerment include: the Senior Citizens Grant for Empowerment Programme, the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme, as well as the Youth Livelihood Programme and the newly launched Parish Development Model, with 10% funding set aside for persons with disabilities; and
- All the programmes target Ugandans from the grass root levels and most of the beneficiaries are in rural areas, who include mine victims and other persons with disabilities.

**Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)**

24. Uganda reported that the government has developed a disability inclusive disaster reduction policy to domesticate the Sendai Framework, with principles in the disability inclusive disaster risk management framework will be adopted and provision made for representation of persons with disabilities on different committees (including disaster, refugees, and climate change structures), to foster disability inclusion.

**Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Actions #4 and #41)**

25. Uganda reported that mine survivors and their representative organizations are included in relevant policies programmes, including through their members of the national technical working committee on disabilities. Uganda also reported that representatives of persons with disabilities are included at all levels government bodies.

**CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS:**

**Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including [...] by making financial and other commitments to implementation (Action #1)**

26. Uganda reported that that the government is committed to availing funding to ensure that, the obligations to the Convention are met including by activities conducted under the community-based rehabilitation programme, the Special Grant for persons with disabilities to reach all the intended beneficiaries including mine survivors.

**Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys, and men are considered (Action #3)**

27. Uganda reported that gender and diverse needs of persons with disabilities are considered in relevant policies and programmes, including by the Equal Opportunities Commission mandated to work with and monitor the activities of all ministries, departments and agencies for the equity and gender compliance and to ensure that the gender and disability specific needs are given attention during implementation of different activities.

**Challenges in implementation of Victim assistance Commitments (Action #8)**

28. Uganda reported challenges in areas of healthcare and rehabilitation and shortages of financial resources affect provision of services to persons with disabilities including mine victims. Uganda also reported even with the presence of an inter-ministerial and inter-departmental committee in place, still attention to peculiar needs of the different categories of persons with disabilities is not sufficiently given.
29. The Committee would welcome information on how the international community including the Committee on Victim Assistance can assist Uganda to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.

**The Oslo Action Plan country reporting tracker**  
**Victim Assistance**  
**Uganda**

Actions	Indicators						Additional information request by the Committee
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
#33	# States Parties that have designated a government entity to coordinate victim assistance activities						
	# States Parties that have national action plans in place containing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound objectives and related indicators						The Committee would welcome an update on implementation of the action plan, in relation to achieving the objectives of the OAP on victim assistance and information on efforts invested in lifting barriers, including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication obstacles that hinder participation and inclusion of mine victims.
#34	# States Parties that report that they include mine victims in relevant national policy and support frameworks						The Committee would welcome information on alignment of efforts to assist mine victims with the provisions of the CRPD.
#35	# States Parties that include victims of anti-personnel mines in disability data systems						
	# States Parties that disaggregate victim data by gender, age, and disability						The Committee encourages Uganda to identify the mine victims, including their needs and challenges they face, as well as indirect mine victims, such as affected families.
#36	# States Parties reporting on efforts to ensure an efficient and effective emergency response to mine accidents						
#37	# States Parties that report having a national referral mechanism						
	# States Parties that report having a directory of services in place						The Committee would welcome information on the existence a national directory of services to facilitate access to services.
#38	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability and accessibility of comprehensive rehabilitation services						
	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability of psychological and psychosocial support services						The Committee would welcome updated information on Uganda's efforts to ensure the availability of psychological and psychosocial support
	# States Parties that have established peer-to-peer services within their national healthcare system						The Committee welcomes Uganda to provide information on availability of peer counselling and the integration peer to peer support into health systems.
#39	# States Parties reporting on efforts to remove barriers to the social and economic inclusion of mine victims						
#40	# States Parties that report integrating protection of mine survivors in their humanitarian response and preparedness plans						
#41	# States Parties that report that they include victim representatives or their organizations in victim assistance planning at the national and local level						
<b>CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS</b>							
#1	# States Parties that report, having included Convention implementation activities in national development plans,						The Committee would welcome information on national financial commitments Uganda has made to support the implementation of victim assistance.

	poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, where appropriate					
	% mine-affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention					
#3	# mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place					
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings					
#8	# States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting					
	# States Parties that report on progress and challenges during formal and informal meetings					The Committee would welcome information on how the international community including the Committee on Victim Assistance can assist Uganda to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.