

Monthly News Update

July 2008

Regional News

African Network of Women with Disabilities Formed

An African Network of Women has been formed. The network was formed early July, 2008 at a forum held in Johannesburg and attended by 12 women with disabilities from 12 different countries.

The forum is an independent continental network aimed at offering support and voice to women with disabilities within the disability movement. Countries represented included, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Botswana and South Africa among others.

All women with disabilities have been invited to join the network. The network has appealed to the Secretariat of African Decade of Persons with disabilities (SADPD) to continue providing the necessary secretariat services to the network.

It was agreed that the Networks steering committee will work closely with the secretariat in the expansion, mobilisation and marketing of the network.

For more information, contact Email:

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West African Media Embrace Disability

West African media has pledged to increase coverage of disability issues in the region. In a rare gesture by journalist representing 11 media houses from eleven different countries, they agreed to give a voice to people with disabilities.

They agreed to respect the use of correct and respectful terminology and appropriate and accessible communication tools when reporting in general and specifically on issues faced by Persons with Disabilities.

To use their privileged positions as journalist to advocate for the rights of and respect for Persons with Disabilities. To establish a network to enhance and coordinate their advocacy efforts for the rights of Persons with Disabilities and to promote the exchange of information and expertise between countries.

They also called on AU Member States to declare a second Decade for Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

The journalists made the declaration at a journalists workshop for inclusive media held in Senegal in May year.

Countries represented included, Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Togo, Ghana, Cameroon and Sierra Leone. Burundi was also represented at the workshop.

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Research on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Health and Education In Mozambique Disseminated

Mozambique has made substantive progress in streamlining disability. Recent research results disseminated in July, 2008 at a workshop sponsored by SADPD and DFID indicates that the government has taken the initiative to sponsor children with disabilities up to University level.

The research conducted by Sonia Saune, a consultant also shows good progress in provision of basic health care to children with disabilities.

One beneficiary is 24 year old Inocencio Zandamela, who teaches English and Geography at Josina Michal special school for the deaf. He received government sponsorship to train as a teacher at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa.

He does not only teach but also supports other teachers at the school. To date a total of 358 teachers have been trained in sign language in the country.

Participants at the workshop were trained on how to conduct research of a similar nature. They called for

more input in research work to determine exactly what benefits children with disabilities were entitled to from their governments.

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National Status Reports on the African Decade Released

SADPD this month held a regional conference of management committees and national Decade Steering Committees (DSC) to discuss and share national Decade country status reports. The workshop was held on 7th -9th July 2008 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Participants were drawn from Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda Tanzania and Uganda. All participating countries reported positive progress on integrating disability rights by their governments. Participants called for countries that had not ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to do so. Another area of concern was strengthening of good governance, information technology and fundraising by Disabled people's organizations.

They also called for the formation of a continental disability fund. Governments they argued did not have good budgets for disability and this hampered service delivery.

The secretariat was challenged to help broaden the skills of leadership of persons with disabilities for effective management of the DPO's

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Namibia Launches National Disability Council

Namibia has launched a national disability council. The council launched in Mid July, 2008 will monitor disabled peoples' welfare, the implementation of policies and identify provisions of policy and comment on legislation which may affect persons with disabilities.

It will consult with persons with disabilities and organizations rendering services to persons with disabilities to obtain information of the policies.

The council members are representatives of various organizations of persons with disabilities, Ministry of Health and Social Services and Labour and Social Welfare and an expert on disability related matters.

Source: New era newspaper, July 10, 2008

Ghana Streamlines Disability in Sports

Twenty persons with physical disabilities in the Greater Accra and Volta Regions can now play basket ball and Tennis after being trained.

The training of both male and female disabled persons saw 12 of them get trained in basket ball and eight in tennis. The training is part of sports development, an initiative by the sports wing of the Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled (GSPD).

This was the fourth sports training in a series planned for the various regions as a means of decentralising disability sports in the country. The move is seen as taping talent from the interior of the country and giving

all persons with disability an opportunity to participate and showcase their talents just like everybody else.

Source: ghanaweb.com/public-agenda

Tanzania's people with Albinism seek Presidential Intervention

People with albinism in Tanzania are seeking audience with their President Jakaya Kikwete to brief him on their predicament as victims of sporadic killings.

Lake zone region in Tanzania has been singled out as the most notorious with witchcraft associated killings of people with albinism.

The chairman of the albinos association in Mwanza region Alfred Kapole, has criticised the government for making no arrests of the alleged killers. The killings are reported to have increased at alarming levels in the last one year.

"The government has been sacking its officials who fail to mobilize people to undertake development programmes, but has failed to reprimand officials who have failed to stop the killings" Ka pole said.

Mr. Kapole has also appealed to the government to subsidize drugs to treat melanin deficient skins. Most of the people living with albinism he notes are unemployed due to stigma and cannot afford to buy essential drugs at the market price of shs. 15,000 and shs. 20,000 per dose

Source: The citizen, 22 July, 2008

International News

UK Children with Communication needs Funded

The United Kingdom has announced a \$50 million package for children with communication needs. The announcement followed a government commissioned review on existing services for children and young people with communication needs.

Forty recommendations came from the review that will ensure children with communication needs are identified at an early stage and that they receive better support.

The government has promised to come up with an implementation plan of the recommendations.

Source: Disability now.

Three Girls with Disabilities Discriminated against in UK Salon

The proprietor of a beauty salon, in West London has paid \$4,500 in compensation to three girls with disability after an employee at the salon allegedly refused to paint their nails.

The employee allegedly dismissed the girls when they visited the shop. She is reported to have said “ This is my shop. There isn’t enough room for the pushchairs”.

In her defense the salon owner said, it was a health and safety issue and the person doing the nails could only do one person at a time and her shop was too small. The incident she said was regrettable.

For more information, visit: [www. Disability now.org.uk](http://www.Disabilitynow.org.uk)

A Kenyan wheel chair-user and Asylum Seeker in UK face Deportation

A Kenyan Peter Gitau Gichura, a wheel chair user may be sent home from UK after a high court ruling which states that he doesn’t have to be in UK to instruct his lawyers on a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) case.

Gichura has had several asylum applications rejected since his arrival in UK in June 2001. In May 2008, the Court of Appeal ruled that he had a case under DDA on the grounds that the law did offer protection to disabled people in prisons and detention centres before December 2006 and the introduction of Disability Equality Duty (DED).

He argues going back to Kenya would adversely affect his health. “As someone with spinal injury vulnerable to chronic kidney infection, I need sanitary living conditions to survive. I cannot afford medical treatment-there is no free healthcare in Kenya”.

Mr. Gichura’s legal team plans to appeal against the high court ruling.

Feed Back

➤ Referring to activities by the Secretariat of African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, Tekle Selase Glane writes “Welldone. I wish you more success in the future. Tekle is an Orthopedic Technical Advisor and Marketing Manager of Sutco PLC.

➤ Getache Moges, another reader writes, “Thank you for the update”.

Upcoming Events Regional

18-19 September
SADPD AGM
Location: Nairobi, Kenya
Contact: Patsy@africandecade.co.za

Helpful websites

www.afri-can.org
www.motivation.org.uk
www.wheelchairfoundation.org
www.paranet.ch
www.joniandfriends.org
www.africandecade.org.za

The Secretariat of African Decade of Persons with Disabilities monthly News Update is circulated monthly. We welcome views and feed back from our readers. Your Responses will always be published in the next issue. For more information, please contact info@africandecade.co.za

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International

15 October

International white cane day

3 December

International Disability Day

