

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

Progress Report on the Status of Victim Assistance in Ethiopia

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Presented on the Oslo Action Plan Conference, Oslo 27 November, 2019

Dear Mr. President,

Distinguish Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all let me convey my profound congratulation and thanks for the Norwegian government and for Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for their excellent preparation of the Oslo conference and the opportunity given to me to speak on behalf of my government on the issue of Victim Assistance.

The government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is undertaking various favorable conditions by developing action oriented policies and programs to enable persons with disabilities in general and land mine survivors in particular to be active participants in all spheres of life and the development agenda of the country. Thus, my brief presentation highlights recent developments concerning institutional coordination, health care services, education to Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), employment to PWDs, national data collection and access to rehabilitation as well basic services.

To begin with institutional coordination as a prerequisite to effective policy implementation, inter Ministerial and inter- sectorial coordinating mechanisms were established consisting of GOV't, DPOs and Civil society organizations. Aside from the intervention by government institutions and development partners, there are one Federation of Ethiopian National Association of Persons with Disability (FENAPD) which has eight National PWDs association under it. There are also eleven regional associations of persons with disabilities plus one survivor organization is exists in the country. These organizations are working in the areas of socio-economic development and in the right issue of disabilities, and also serving as a voice for their right and dignity as well exercise their potentials. The Government of Ethiopia allocated 7 million Ethiopian Birr in 2019 to enhance the capacity of the Federation and 8 National Associations that are members to the federation. Additionally the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) is providing continous technical support to Disabled Peoples' Organizations and survivor organization. There are also Veteran Associations whose members are directly victims of landmines. They are organized at a regional level particularly in the regions highly affected during the times of last protracted civil wars. The Tigrai Disabled Veteran Association (TDVA) is the biggest one supporting members by providing Health care, awareness raising training, physical rehabilitation services ,including Prosthesis & Orthothesis appliances, mobility devices as well vocational training and employment. There are also other organizations such as Survivor Recovery and Rehabilitation Organization (SRaRO) that is pioneering Victim Assistance programs basically conducting peer supports in trauma recovery activities and advocacy. A National Plan of Action (NPA) on Human Right has been issued by the Ethiopian Council of Ministers and endorsed by the House of people's representative's in order to promote

the full realization of all human rights in the country. The NPA on human rights has devoted to outline a separate chapter/thematic area regarding the rights of vulnerable segments of the population including persons with disabilities.

A National Steering Committee composed of high government officials Chaired by the Federal General Attorney has been established, to which the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) serving as the secretary for the committee to promote the right of PWDs including landmine survivors.

Because of the Ethiopian government unreserved effort to improve the lives of PWDs and survivors, new Disability Directorate which is explicitly working on disability issues has been opened in April 2019 under the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The directorate has been given the mandate of coordinating and leading all issues of disability that includes the assistance of landmines survivors. We believe that this move could be considered as the main achievement as far as the government commitment is concerned.

Concerning health care services for PWDs with the involvement and active participation of the community and Health Extension Program Workers (HEPW), the government has given particular focus for the improvement of quality health services for PWD and a general increase and improvement in medical care and rehabilitation services was reported. Access to health care increased after government hospitals and health centers were made physically accessible, which allowed many survivors and persons with disabilities to access reproductive health and other health services. In 2019, more than 778 Persons with disabilities out of which 178 of them are landmines survivors provided with free medical treatment. The government of Ethiopia has developed the Bachelor & Master of Science curriculums to train prosthesis and orthotics professionals to improve rehabilitation services.

The government of Ethiopia has prepared and endorsed directive number 41/2015 and gave opportunity for Persons with disabilities to import tax free personal vehicles. So far, above 1500 PWDs (many of them are landmines survivors) have got a tax free imported car support services from MOLSA to resolve their mobility challenges.

Because of the nature of rehabilitation centers the government officially transferred prosthetic and orthotics centers to the ministry of health from MoLSA for the efficacy of the service delivery for PWDs. MoLSA remains working on social rehabilitation in the rehabilitation centers of the country.

Mr. President,

In the case of access to basic services there are huge urban and rural Productive Safety Net Programs in Ethiopia. Generally more than 8 million beneficiaries are earning cash or kind support on monthly bases, among which those who are very poor, labor constrained households and hard-to-reach persons with severe disabilities and landmine survivors those with mobility

challenges are benefiting from these programs. The government of Ethiopia is committed and passed a resolution to give cash assistance for those previous soldiers (specifically those who are out of pension schemes) permanently on monthly bases.

The rights to Employment for persons with disabilities Proclamation No.568/2008 makes null and void any law, practice, custom, attitude and other discriminatory situations.

To overcome all problems related to the former errors of counting the disabled individuals in general and land mine survivors in particular of the 2007 census, MoLSA and Federation of Ethiopian National Association of Persons with Disabilities are working closely with the Central Statistics Agency (CSA) to assure formulations of procedures, standards and measurements to make the upcoming nationwide census inclusive and reliable.

In the case of National legal and Policy frameworks, in addition to the previous legal documents on PWDs several national guidelines were developed and released in 2018/2019 these includes:

1. The National Disability mainstreaming Proclamation.
2. The National Disability Mainstreaming Guideline for health sector.
3. National Guideline for physical Rehabilitation in Federal Hospitals.
4. The Disability Mainstreaming Guideline for Training and Vocational Education,
5. The National Standard and Operating Procedures for physical Rehabilitation.

Finally, to improve the lives of land mine survivors by implementing the Oslo Action plan, the Ethiopian government committed to ensure the full, equal and effective participation of PWDs in general and landmine survivors in particular in the community and based in respect of human right. We also work to improve policies and legal frame works on PWDs to better address assistances to victims and survivors. As we have challenges and resource limitations concerning better service delivery in the rehabilitation centers, economic integration of the landmine survivors, staff capacity building and issues concerning reliable data, we need international cooperation and assistance to be continued our effort in assisting landmines survivors.

I Thank You!!