



**STATEMENT ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE AT OSLO- NORWAY- 25-29
NOVEMBER 2019, BY HIS EXCELLENCY CHRISTOPHER ANYANG, THE
AMBASSADOR OF UGANDA**

Your Excellences, your Royal Highness, ladies and gentlemen. Mr. president I would like to congratulate you upon your successful presidency and since this is the first time Uganda is taking the floor, let me take this opportunity to thank the people of Norway and the Norwegian government for the warm reception received and congratulate you upon a successful fourth review conference here in Norway.

Ladies and Gentlemen Uganda ratified the Convention on the Anti-Personnel (AP) Mine Ban Treaty) on the 25th February, 1999 and it came into force in August 1999.

Over the past one year, the Government of Uganda this Financial Year 2019/2020 put in place a Disability Fund managed by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The fund which is 2 billion Uganda shillings is to provide more opportunities to Persons with Disabilities to start income generating activities in their groups and improve their livelihoods. These groups of

beneficiaries also include the landmine survivors and victims. This is an additional funding to the Special Grant for Persons with Disabilities which is accessed by groups of Persons with Disabilities at the Local Government Level.

The Government of Uganda with support from DFID through the Expanding Social Protection Program and the Development Pathways Company of UK conducted a situation analysis of Persons with Disabilities in Uganda. The findings of the study will be disseminated during the disability symposium scheduled to take place from 27th November 2019 in Kampala. The study was done to among others establish the causes of the different disabilities in Uganda and their effects on men and women as well as boys and girls, so as to direct planning.

The Persons with Disabilities are as well beneficiaries of other Government General Development Programs which have specific guidelines on how they are to benefit from them. These include the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE), the Youth Livelihood Program (YLP), the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Program (UWEP) and Operation Wealth Creation, among others.

The Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) has majority of its beneficiaries being Older Persons with Disabilities, at about 111132, with 41% having severe disabilities benefited from the program, (Expanding Social Protection Report 2018 (ESP 2018).

The Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), aims at empowering youth in Uganda to harness their socio-economic potential and increase self-employment opportunities and income levels. To date, a total number of 7000 about (2.9%) Youth with Disabilities (YLP social second review report, 2019).

In the same way, the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP) is a government of Uganda initiative aimed at improving access to financial services for women and equipping them with skills for enterprise growth, value addition and marketing of their products and services. Over 1500 women with disabilities have benefited so far (UWEP quarterly report, 2019). All the programs mentioned above including the SAGE, YLP and the UWEP have in their guidelines clauses that emphasize the inclusion of Older, Persons, Women and Youth with Disabilities respectively, so as to ensure that they benefit from these government programs.

Regarding laws and policy frameworks, the Government of Uganda revised the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2019. The Act is the guiding law for all interventions for all Persons with Disabilities in Uganda, including the landmine survivors.

The country is also in the process of reviewing the National Policy on Disability in Uganda (2006) to align it the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, as well other relevant International and National laws and policies.

Uganda has also completed to draft Inclusive National Disability Plan which is awaiting printing and dissemination.

The government of Uganda has put in place a new initiative that it will be implementing and it is aimed at mainstreaming disability in the broad Social Protection Framework. This is implemented with funding from the UKAID through DFID to enhance inclusiveness.

Challenges faced

- The State has not yet been able to have the actual number of the landmine victims and this affects planning and proper budgeting.
- The State has not been able to allocate a fund or a project to target landmine victims alone because of the insufficient funds amidst many priorities.
- There is a challenge of inadequate materials to equip the orthopedic workshops across all the hospitals and therefore cannot produce enough assistive devices.
- There is a problem of stigma and discrimination to persons with disabilities arising of fear and ignorance on the causes and management of disabilities.

Way forward

- Ensuring that attention is given to the peculiar needs of landmine Survivors in addressing challenges facing Persons with Disabilities.
- Awareness raising on the needs of unit disability challenges since disability is not homogeneous

- Continuing partnership with development partners, NGOs, Civil Society and Organizations of persons with disabilities , so that the needs of landmine survivors are tackled using a Multi- sectoral approach

Mr. President Uganda continues to implement an inclusive approach of ensuring that all Persons with Disabilities and their caregivers, including the landmine victims are given the same range services just like other Ugandans, keeping in mind their peculiar needs and their rights.

- Mr. president Uganda also supports the suggestions submitted by Mozambique to Create a national database on mine casualties, disaggregated by gender, age and type of impairment;
- Create more job opportunities for mine survivors, as we endeavor to extract more persons with disability, in general, out of poverty;
- Increase fund allocation to local governments to promote more inclusive actions in a broad way that can cover people with disabilities and mine victims in particular.

The above requests are not just for Mozambique but for all the State Parties implementing victim assistance, including Uganda. We therefore call on the donor community to re-awaken funding for Victim Assistance support. I thank you.