

Progress Report in improving the Status of Victim Assistance in Ethiopia

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Mdam Chair,

Honourable Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me convey my profound congratulation and thanks for the excellent preparation 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 to be active participants in all spheres of life and deeply involved to put in place the issues of persons with disabilities and **victims of landmines** included in the development agenda of the country.

Thus, this 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 .

1. Institutional Coordination

- As a prerequisite of effective policy implementation, inter-Ministerial and inter- sectoral coordinating mechanisms were established consisting of GOV't , NGOs, DPOs and Civil society organizations. Aside from the intervention being implemented by government institutions and development partners, there are eight National Associations of Persons with disabilities in the country who are working in the areas of socio economic development and in the right issue of disabilities ,and also they are serving as a voice for their right and dignity as well exercise their potentials.
- There is an umbrella organization by the name of "**Federation of National Association of Persons with Disabilities**" consists of six National Associations and playing a role of coordinating .The Government of Ethiopia allocated 7 million Ethiopian Birr In 2018/2019 to

enhance the capacity of Federation and 8 other National Associations. Additionally MoLSA is providing technical support to Disabled Peoples' Organisations(DPOS).

- **There are also Veteran Associations** whose members are directly victims of landmines. They are organized at a regional level particularly those regions who were 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 & Orthotics materials ,mobility devices as well vocational training and employment. There are also other few organisations like Survivor Recovery and Rehabilitation Organization engaged in Victim Assistance programs .
- 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 outlined 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 Ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) is involved in this exercise to promote the right of PWDs including landmine survivors.
- Before two months new independent Disability Directorate is opened in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, that is expecting to coordinate and lead all issues of disability including the victim of landmines/survivors.
- **The General Audit and Human Right Commission of Ethiopia conducted a performance audit and produced the report about the implementation of disability programs in the country to take a corrective measures on structural adjustment and service provisions to improve the living condition of PWDs .**

2. Awareness raising

- With the collaboration and participation of DPOs, the government of Ethiopia has been organizing enormous awareness raising programs for government and relevant non government organizations implementers as well for leaders of DPOs.

3. Health care services

- Expansion of universal and quality health care services was one of the main strategic themes of the health sector in our Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP)2. In line with this general direction, 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 Intended with disability inclusions.

- A general increase in medical care and rehabilitation services was reported. Access to health care increased after two health centers were made physical accessible, which allowed many survivors and Persons with Disabilities to access reproductive health services .
- Training materials on peer to peer education in Braille are prepared and distributed for the federation and other National Disability Associations, Brochures on HIV and disability were also prepared and distributed.
- In 2016/17, more than 778 Persons with disabilities out of which 178 of them are victims of landmines who received free medical treatments.
- In the same year, the Federal Ministry of Health has prepared two guidelines to include Persons with disabilities in health service provisions. These guidelines are the National guideline of Physical Rehabilitation in Referral Hospitals 2016/17 and Guideline for disability mainstreaming in Health Sector 2016/17.
- The National disability mainstreaming guideline in Health Sector focuses on special health provision for Persons with disabilities with particular consideration on physical accessibility of government and private Hospitals, Clinics, and health posts .

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4. Access to Basic Services

- There are huge Urban and Rural productive Safety Net Programs in Ethiopia. More than 8 million beneficiaries are earning cash or Kind support on monthly bases , among which those who are very Poor and labor constrained households (Persons with Sever Disabilities and landmine victims those who are difficulty of moving) are benefiting from these Programs .
- **The government of Ethiopia is committed and passed a resolution to give a permanent monthly bases cash assistance for those previous soldiers (specifically those who are out off pension schemes) who were participated in the civil war in the Derig regime.**

5. Access to Rehabilitation Services

- Based on the National Physical Rehabilitation Strategy of the country on job training for orthopedic technicians and physiotherapists is progressively growing.

- The government of Ethiopia has developed the Bachelor of Science & Master of Science curriculums to train prosthetics and orthotics professionals.
- A National physical Rehabilitation service provision standard has developed .
- In the Year 2017/18 many number of Persons with disabilities have got assistive devices including wheel chairs, prosthetic orthotic appliances and physiotherapy services.
- In 2015/16 two additional centers in Assosa and Gambella Administrative Regions were opened and giving rehabilitation services ,on the other hand there is one Rehabilitation center Under establishment In Afar region.
- The government of Ethiopia has prepared and endorsed directive no. 41/2015 and gave opportunity for PwDs (Person with physical disabilities and bilateral blinds) to import tax free transportation vehicles. So far, 1308 PwDs (many of them are landmine victims) have got a tax free imported car support services from MOLSA.

6. Education to PwDs

The Government of Ethiopia is committed to enhance the special needs education/inclusive education system using different policies, strategies and plans. The Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia 1994 has laid the ground for the development of the education sector as a whole. One of its main objectives has been to provide basic education for all, in recognizing the rights of Persons with Disabilities and gifted children to education by stating; **“to enable both the disabled and the gifted learn in accordance with their potential and needs.”** In the year 2016/17, around **60,000 children with disabilities were enrolled in schools from pre- primary to higher education.** The Federal Ministry of Education also launched the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) V (2015/16 – 2019/20) that prioritizes equal opportunities and participation for all, with special attention to disadvantaged groups and the delivery of quality education that meets the diverse learning needs of all children, youth and adults. The number of students with Special Needs are Increasing, In this result Special Needs Education Program expand across all levels of education. The objective of the ESDP V is to fully integrate Special Needs Education as one of the seven identified cross-cutting issues within the priority programs. Awareness raising workshop was conducted for 500 education and social sector workers.

- MOLSA has been working with Ministry of Education for expansion of inclusive education and special needs education at different layer of education programs . A Committee, whose members drawn from the two Ministries was established and making a close follows up for the implementation of the program.

7. Employment to PwDs

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 that limit equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, this good Initiative brings a positive reward on employment opportunities for Persons with disabilities, as a result number of employed Persons with disabilities have been increasing from time to time.

However, it is not easy to get accurate current and reliable data for each year that how many Persons with Disabilities are employed in different sectors ? .

8. National Data Collection

The Ethiopian Central Statistics Agency (CSA) has planned to carry out a Nation wide census in the 2017/18, however due to previous political unrest, it was not possible to conduct census. To overcome all problems related to the former errors of counting the disabled individuals of the 2007 census, MOLSA and **Federation of National Association of Persons with Disabilities** are working closely with the CSA to assure formulations of procedures, standards and measurements to make the upcoming nation wide census inclusive.

9. National legal and Policy frameworks.

Several National guidelines were developed and released in 2017 these includes:

- 1.The National Disability mainstreaming guideline 2017.
- 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 Draft National Standard Operating Procedures for physical Rehabilitation.

I Thank You !!