

THE NAIROBI AFRICAN YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES DECLARATION ON INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

Nairobi, Kenya 23rd to 29th May 2011.

PREAMBLE

We, the Youth of Africa, present at the *African Youth with Disabilities: Raising our Voices for Inclusion* Convening held in Nairobi, Kenya from the 23rd to the 29th of May 2011:

Observing that, the United Nations proclaimed August 2010-August 2011 the second International Year of Youth,

Noting that the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a key instrument to promote the inclusion of youth with disabilities in the social, economic, cultural and political development activities of society,

Desirous to witness the realization of the goal and objectives of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities by all 54 African States,

Recognizing our grave concern that, despite the efforts of the international community, the principal objectives of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and the World Programme of Action for Youth, and the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (1999-2009, 2010-2020) have not been attained and that countless human beings with disabilities continue to suffer from discrimination and exclusion in development programmes,

Declare that the time has come for youth with disabilities to be closely consulted and actively participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development programmes, raise our voices for inclusion and for humanity to consciously live in a peaceful and barrier free society for all,

Convinced that participation and development for all can only be achieved through addressing the environmental, institutional and attitudinal barriers facing youth with disabilities and persons with disabilities in general, which threaten social stability,

Hereby declare:-

HUMAN RIGHTS :

- 1) Human rights abuses and injustices against youth with disabilities, and Persons with Disabilities in general, are a major obstacle to the social, economic, and cultural development of young people in Africa.
- 2) The active participation of African youth with disabilities as key players in decision making processes and in the promotion of human rights in their communities, and on the national and global level is vital and necessary for the development of truly democratic societies.
- 3) International cooperation for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa is vital and necessary.
- 4) Sexual exploitation of young Africans with disabilities, in particular girls and young women, is a crime against humanity, as it violates their fundamental human rights to childhood and adolescence
- 5) Young Persons with Disabilities in Africa must actively participate in existing and forthcoming youth forums, and an enabling environment must be in place to facilitate their participation.

JUSTICE :

- 6) Youth with disabilities, particularly those with psychosocial disabilities (persons diagnosed with mental illness), intellectual disabilities and the visually impaired in Africa are treated unfairly under the Law and all people are equal before the Law and must be treated fairly. The Courts of Law and Parliaments must protect the values of Human rights in Africa.

HEALTH :

- 7) African States have a mandate to provide adequate and accessible medical treatment to Youth with disabilities in Africa.
- 8) Youth with disabilities in Africa are the most at-risk group to be affected by HIV and AIDS and effective and speedy measures must be taken to reduce the rate of infection among them.
- 9) The Global Health Fund should include African youth with disabilities representation in its decision-making processes.
- 10) To provide free health care services and reproductive health education to young Persons with Disabilities in Africa, including condom distribution, counselling, testing and family planning services.
- 11) The lack of proper health care, sanitation and primary health care promotion are major obstacles to the social and economic well being of young Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

GENDER

- 12) Youth with disabilities in Africa are part of our society and should be treated equally.
- 13) The multiple forms of discrimination experienced by young women with disabilities is a major deterrent to their active participation in society.

14) All forms of violence against Female and male youth with disabilities must be eliminated.

15) Right to active participation of youth with disabilities in society, including receiving family inheritance and rights of succession must be recognized.

EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENT LIVING:

16) The subjugation of Africa and her youth with disabilities in their everyday activities without basic health, education, and access to basic human needs including shelter, food and clothing is a violation of Human Rights.

17) The International Community should devote more funds towards alleviating poverty among youth with disabilities in Africa, and keep their promises fulfilled.

18) The African States must effect aid funds to their real destination, and increase their efforts toward combating corruption and mismanagement of the national resources in all its forms.

19) Persons with disabilities must be provided opportunities, on an equal basis with others, for employment.

EDUCATION, MEDIA AND NEW TECHNOLOGY:

20) Education is a right for all children and young people and not a privilege.

21) African States should ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to the development of the skills and knowledge of Persons with Disabilities, includes their talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential.

22) The refusal to educate young Persons with Disabilities in Africa is a gross violation of their rights to development.

- 23) All African Youth with disabilities should be given the opportunity and actively encouraged to participate in civic activities.
- 24) The African States should give access to new technologies to Youth with disabilities.
- 25) African States must establish mechanisms, with the support of the international community, to ensure that all African youth with disabilities have access to free quality inclusive education in their native languages to support and develop youth leadership.
- 26) African States should provide Youth with Disabilities the needed skills and vocational training in the formal and informal educational sector.
- 27) The African States should establish legal and constitutional environments that must lead to free and competent Inclusive education for all in all the countries in Africa in concrete practical and efficient manners.

COMMITMENTS:

1. We commit ourselves to the protection and promotion of fundamental human rights, particularly the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
2. We commit ourselves to peaceful participation and constructive engagement with all stakeholders for the realization and advancement of our fundamental liberties and rights, including but not limited to gender, health, Education and all socio-economic, political and cultural rights.
3. We commit ourselves to raise our voices for inclusion through the **African Youth with Disabilities' Network** we have formed.
4. We commit ourselves to active and constructive engagement in the economic, social and political processes at all levels.
5. We further commit ourselves to upholding an ethos of transparency and accountability, shunning corruption and apathy.
6. We have formed the African Youth with Disabilities' Network (AYWDN) as our platform to raise our voices for inclusion in all Continental and developmental programs, including those of African Union.

REDRESS MECHANISMS

We, Youth with disabilities of Africa, demand the following:

International Level:

1. The World Programme of Action for Youth should specify the inclusion of Youth with disabilities and actively engage youth with disabilities to help inform its efforts.

Continental and Regional Level :

1. An African Charter on Rights of Persons with Disabilities should be put in place to mobilise more support and commitment for implementation of the CRPD.
2. The African Union coordination office or unit for persons with disabilities should be established to support inclusion of persons with disabilities in social, economic, political and cultural programmes.
3. All the 54 African States should sign and ratify the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
4. African regional communities like The East African community (EAC), Economic community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African development Cooperation (SADC) and others should sign and ratify the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
5. Sign Language should be adopted by the African Union as one of the working languages during the meetings and work.
6. Public Information on programmes and opportunities within the African Union should be accessible to all youth and persons with disabilities.
7. The Global Health Fund should include a sufficient allocation to sub-Saharan Africa focusing on youth with disabilities.
8. African Governments must include Youth in all their political, social and economic gatherings and must involve them in decision making bodies.
9. African governments must provide more support to youth with disabilities NGOs in their regular gatherings in order to encourage better understanding among young Africans and foster Pan Africanism.

STATES :

1. Each of the African States should ratify the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and work, to the maximum of its available resources, toward the full implementation of the rights protected under the Convention.
2. That States and Governments in Africa involve youth with disabilities in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities:
3. African States must support inclusive education and vocational training of Youth with disabilities.
4. African States should allocate budget for the provision of rehabilitation centres for persons with disabilities.
5. African States should employ Youth with disabilities in public sector and create favourable environment for the private sector to employ persons with Disabilities.
6. African States must remove barriers that limit Youth with disabilities' access to justice, particularly the barriers faced by those with mental and intellectual disabilities.
7. African States should support the development of inclusive Youth Forums/councils/commissions that actively engage youth with disabilities in policy making to deal effectively with inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in development programmes.
8. Policy making bodies must include African Youth with disabilities to enable them have their say in the policies that will determine their future.
9. African States should encourage the participation of Youth with disabilities' Organizations at the grassroots level to effectively include Persons with Disabilities in the development programmes.
10. African States must include Youth with disabilities in the reproductive health and HIV/AIDs prevention, treatment, care and support programs and specific programs should be put in place to address the accessibility requirements of youth with disabilities.
11. African States should include sports and other recreational activities and facilities for Youth with Disabilities to help in their development.

12. African States should include youth with disabilities in planning for natural disasters and in the interventions and rehabilitation programmes.

13. Sign language should be officially recognized in all 54 African States' constitutions.

Development partners:

1. Development partners should mainstream persons with Disabilities, with attention to the particular concerns of youth with Disabilities in their funding policies and programmes.
2. Development partners should provide all key documents related to funding opportunities in formats that are accessible to persons with different types of disabilities.
3. Donor funding monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should track the involvement of persons with disabilities in planning and implementation as well as beneficiaries of recipient programmes.
4. Development partners should closely consult and actively involve persons with Disabilities, with attention to the particular concerns of youth with disabilities, in the funding decision making to ensure inclusion for all.

Civil society Organizations:

1. Non-government organizations should mainstream youth with disabilities in all their programmes to promote inclusion for all.
2. Nongovernmental organizations should create partnerships with Disabled peoples' organizations to support the implementation of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities:
3. Non governmental organisations should involve persons with disabilities, particularly youth with disabilities, in the decision making processes including representation at the decision making bodies.