

**SAFOD NATIONAL AFFILIATE CASE STUDY
NAMIBIA PRESENTATION**

SAFOD Regional Disability RoundTable

20th to 23rd June 2017

Holiday Inn Hotel

Johannesburg, South Africa

By Mr Daniel Trum

Chairperson

**National Federation of People with Disabilities in
Namibia (NFPDN)**

BACKGROUND

NFPDN was established in 1991 to advocate for a “Society for All” through protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in Namibia.

NFPDN is an umbrella organization with members representing a variety of disability groups, including youth and women. Currently, there are seven (7) OPDs working under NFPDN namely: Namibian Federation of the Visually Impaired (NFVI), Namibian National Association of the Deaf (NNAD), Namibian Association of People with Physical Disabilities (NPPD), Namibian Association of Children with Disabilities (NACD), Namibian Organization of Youth with Disabilities (NOYD), Namibian Association of People with Albinism (NAPA) and Namibian Association of Differently Able Women (NADAWO). We also have the new established association of the wheelchair user which is still need to be endorse by the board.

The organization is established in the community and has executed several projects since its inception in 1991.

Over many years NFPDN has lobbied and advocated for the rights of persons with disabilities to attain sustainable development and for economic well-being. The organization has pressed for access to education, health care, training, employment and public facilities.

Many initiatives of NFPDN have yielded positive results and have worked to place the policies and legal instruments focused on disability rights into practice.

NFPDN has also gained from programs focused on strengthening the organization including the EU funded Namibia Disability Program that supported establishment of the regional structure of the organization to implement programming.

Due to disabilities advocacy, the human rights of persons with disabilities have been on the Namibian political agenda since independence in 1990. Over the past years, national and international legislation has been constructed to guarantee the rights of Persons with disabilities.

Domestically, Namibia introduced the National Policy on Disability in 1997 and established the National Disability Council Act in 2004. Internationally, the country signed, ratified, and adopted into law the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2007.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ **NFPDN members** have been involved in the drafting of the National Disability Council Act, No 26 of 2004. Drafting of Namibian Sector Policy on Inclusive Education and the drafting of Namibian Human Rights Action Plan (2015-2019) where the disability representatives propose for the amendment of the Namibian Constitution to include issues of person with disabilities.
- ❖ **NFPDN members** advocated for the sign language to become one of the official languages. Today the sign language is included in some programs on the national television. In addition, the sign language interpreter is also available in Namibian Court of Law.
- ❖ NFPDN advocated for the appointment of a person with disability in the National Assembly. To date Hon. Alexia Manombe -Ncube is a Member of Parliament who directly represents the Disability fraternity.
- ❖ NFPDN Advocated for establishment of the Disability Unit at the Office of the Prime Minister, and the establishment of the disability unit at the University of Namibia.
- ❖ NFPDN advocated for re-allocation of the disabilities department from the ministry of health and social services to the office of the president which lead to the appointment of one of its member as a deputy minister of the disabilities affairs department under the office of the vice president.
- ❖ NFPDN actively participated in the drafting of the UNCRPD, and Namibia Ratified the UNCRPD.
- ❖ NFPDN advocated for Namibia to endorse the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities.
- ❖ NFPDN advocated for the establishment of the National Disability Council of Namibia.
- ❖ NFPDN endorsed the establishment of the African Secretariat for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities today ADA.

- ❖ NFPDN ensured that those with visually impaired have independent access to the Namibian Electoral System through Braille ballot cover, and ensured that a staff is employed at the Namibia Electoral Commission to deal with Disability Issues at the Electoral Commission of Namibia, and later ensured that the voting machine of Namibia is accessible to people with visually impairment.
- ❖ NFPDN advocated for the establishment of the Entrepreneurship Programme at the University of Science and Technology. To date more than 30 youths and adults with various types of disabilities went through this Programme.
- ❖ Up to date, NFPDN have self-representation in several decision making body such as:
 - National Youth Council (NYC),
 - Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service (MSYNS),
 - National Council of High Education (NCHE),
 - Namibian Qualification Authority (NQA),
 - Namibian Training Authority (NTA),
 - City of Windhoek Local Tender Board (LTB),
 - Employment Equity Commission (Ministry of Labour),
 - Regional Land Resettlement Committees in all 14 Regions (Ministry of Land and Resettlement),
 - Representative of Persons with Disabilities in all Local Development Committees (Local Government), and
 - Constituency Development Committees (Regional Council).
- ❖ NFPDN with the support of the Namibian Government, declared the 10th June as a National Disability day in Namibia since the year 2000. NFPDN advocated for the government to support this day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on the annual bases. The day is set aside to celebrate the achievement made by persons with disabilities and continuously raise awareness on challenges faced by persons with disabilities in the country.
- ❖ Lastly, NFPDN in partnership with the Namibian Government and with the support of JICA, sent leaders of organizations of and for persons with

disabilities to Japan to participate in the training of social inclusion of persons with disabilities through the independent living program.

CHALLENGES

- ❖ Though NFPDN and member organizations of persons with disabilities have made efforts to address the inequities that exist for persons with disabilities. But there is still much work to be done in this area.
- ❖ Although a number of policies and international laws provide the platform of change, Namibia has not yet been able to translate policy into practice.
- ❖ By increasing knowledge while equipping persons with disabilities to implement advocacy strategies regionally, NFPDN hopes to ensure sustainable change.