

Maseru Declaration on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights for Persons with Disabilities from the 4th to the 5th April 2019

Taking into account that, Lesotho is a state party to the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD) which seeks to protect and ensure equal enjoyment of human rights by people with disabilities;

Noting article 25 of the Convention on the rights of people with disabilities which requires the state parties to make their general healthcare services accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities including the sexual and reproductive health services;

Concerned about the slow progress made by Lesotho with regard to realisation of the sexual and reproductive health rights of persons with disabilities by the service providers;

Acknowledging the lack of data disaggregated by disability by various programs implemented by the sexual and reproductive health rights service providers which hinder such service providers to measure inclusion of people with disabilities in services and programs on sexual and reproductive health;

Noting the role of civil society organisations, and organisations of people with disabilities to intensify advocacy on sexual and reproductive health rights for persons with disabilities in order to realise the sexual and reproductive health rights for persons with disabilities in Lesotho and within the region;

Underscoring the need to provide sexual and reproductive health rights interventions for persons with disabilities through disability specific target, indicators and allocation of budget;

Concerned about the lack of communication and cooperation among the advocacy civil society organisations, UN agencies and the government agencies working on sexual and reproductive health rights in Lesotho and within the region which negatively affect efforts towards the realisation of sexual and reproductive health rights of people with disabilities;

Noting the urgent need to conduct situational analysis study for persons with disabilities to deepen our understanding of social, economic and political barriers facing people with disabilities hindering them from participating on an equal basis with others in society;

Recognising the efforts of the government of Lesotho to enact Disability Equity Bill for the holistic promotion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities including their sexual and reproductive health rights;

We, the representative of the sixteen civil society organisations, AIDS Foundation South Africa, Sex Rights Africa Network, Southern African Federation of the Disabled, Disabled and HIV/AIDS Association, Lesotho National Council of Women, Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled, Lesotho National League of Visually Impaired Persons, Lesotho National Association of the Physically Disabled Persons, Intellectual Disability Association of Lesotho, National Association of the Deaf Lesotho, Lesotho Women Institute, Bacha le Bacha, Anti-Drug Abuse Association of Lesotho, Safe Heaven, Pledge 25 and Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association together with government ministries namely; Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Police (CGPU), the UN development partners; UNFPA and UNICEF, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Social Cluster, gathered in Maseru from the 4th and 5th April 2019, undertake to fast track the realisation of the sexual and reproductive health rights for persons with disabilities as follows:

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Social Cluster

- Open for people's inputs on the Disability Equity Bill, 2018 until 30th April 2019 and immediately proceed with all other parliamentary procedures leading towards the enactment of the Bill into law by 2019. That is:
 - Clause by clause inspection by the committee
 - Report to the parliament on the amended Bill which has the power to further amend or remove any other clause as they may deem fit (from this stage on the public inputs are allowed)
 - Report presented before the business committee

- Adoption of the report from the business committee by the house

NB No timeframe as to how long each step will take from April 30th

- Provide the oversight role to the government ministries on the protection of the rights of people with disabilities.

Lesotho Civil Society Organizations

- LNFOD in partnership with Disabled and HIV/AIDS Organisation Lesotho will establish an overseeing committee whose functions will include awareness raising and dissemination of information on the status of Disability Equity Bill as soon as possible.

International Civil Society Organizations

- Continue to support and promote networking, knowledge sharing of CSOS and other stakeholders through capacity building and budget tracking and accountability system e.g. disability mainstreaming budget and allocation of budget for disability services.

UN Development Partners (UNFPA)

- Undertake to mainstream disability within their programs and support the development of the situational analysis study to generate data on disability.

The Government Ministries

- Finalise Reproductive, Maternal, New-Born, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) and National strategy and collaborate with LNFOD for disability specific indicators or issues through the Ministry of Health by next week.
- Train and or enrol law enforcers and other line Ministries in sign language (Pre – service and in service) through the Ministry Of Police by 2020
- Advocate for amendment of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to accommodate different disabilities through the Ministry Of Police by 2020

- Ensure that the Ministry of health has at least one sign language interpreter in each hospital by 2024
- Ensure effective coordination of disability mainstreaming on SRHR and other related issues through the appointment of disability focal points through The Ministry of Social Development.