

USAID/Uganda Disability Plan

USAID/Uganda has actively assisted the Government of Uganda (GOU) in developing a nationwide program to include disabled in the development process. Most notably the Mission was a major donor in supporting the development of Uganda's constitution (1995) which established statutes to protect people with disabilities. Specifically, Chapter 4 Article 35 (1) and (2) of the Uganda constitution states that :

- Persons with disabilities have a right to respect and human dignity and the State and society shall take appropriate measures to ensure that they realize their full mental and physical potential.
- Parliament shall enact laws appropriate for the protection of persons with disabilities.
- Additionally the Uganda Constitution stipulates that the President of Uganda shall appoint a disabled person as Minister for people with disabilities and the disabled shall elect a person among themselves as a Member of Parliament. This objective has been achieved.

The Mission in conjunction with the US International NGO Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO) supported activities for disabled persons for eight years. The project did much to improve the provision of orthopaedic, orthotic and physical therapy services for Uganda's thousands of children and adults who have lost upper and lower limbs, been crippled through Poliomyelitis or otherwise become immobilized especially those persons whose disabilities resulted from civil strife. A European NGO, Christ Blind International , continued this work upon completion of USAID project in March 1998.

- Additionally, USAID under the Demobilization and Reintegration Project (UDRP) has provided training to Demobilized Soldiers (disabled and able bodied) in the selection, planning and management of their own businesses in targeted districts , after which they were linked to credit institutions. The activity is ending in December 1998.

USAID/Uganda's future plans to assist the disabled continue through the inclusion of the disabled in development activities in Uganda.

- Codification of the Laws of Uganda which include statutes for the protection of people with disabilities.
- Through a Special objective for the Reintegration of Northern Uganda the Mission has earmarked \$1 million of Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) to deal with trauma and maimed children of the conflict in Northern Uganda. USAID/Uganda is planning to give Grants to US and International PVO's and NGO's to carry out activities in Northern Uganda, where many children have been disabled by land mines and ambushes in the ongoing conflict.

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The USAID/Uganda disability policy is based on the encouragement of US interagency collaboration and networking among donors and other diverse entities concerned about persons with disabilities with a view to increasing impact and sustaining these efforts. Most organizations representing people with Disabilities in Uganda are still in their infancy. USAID/Uganda will strive to open up avenues to liaise with these organizations with a long term view of integrating them into our programs at a later date as they progress towards maturity.

USAID/Uganda does its best to incorporate the interest of the disabled in the National Programs of the Education and Health sectors which are supported by multi national donors and governments.

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