



MANIFESTO

(Produced during of the Regional Inclusive Education Workshop organized by African Disability Forum in Ethiopia, 10-12 October 2022)

A MANIFESTO TO ADVANCE THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN EDUCATION ACROSS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

We, the representatives of seven Organisations of Persons with Disabilities from seven African countries, met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 10-12 October 2022 to share experiences and knowledge, discuss the gaps, and prepare the ground for further collaboration, in order to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in education, across the African Continent.

The Manifesto results from our constructive exchanges and sets our intentions to join efforts and advocate for increased commitments to ensure that persons with disabilities fulfil their right to education, with no discrimination and on equal basis as others.

WE WITNESS THAT...

1. Organizations of persons with disabilities and associations of parents of children with disabilities are doing good advocacy work for promoting education for all including learners with disabilities. However, they are not sufficiently consulted, and they don't meaningfully participate in matters related to education including in decision making processes.
2. Various governments and partners together with stakeholders in the education sector have been working and exerting their efforts to have educated human resources and a strong education system in many countries in Africa.
3. Every child including a child with a disability has the right to education. Education is a key and a powerful tool for individual and national

development. It is the entry door for inclusion in society and its positive impact is long-lasting.

4. Barriers to education exist both within and outside the education system and include inaccessible infrastructures, non-adapted materials and curricula, lack of teachers' training and support, persisting stigma and discrimination towards persons with disabilities, lack of assistive technologies and devices, violence and lack of security, and poverty of the households.

WE ARE CONCERNED BY...

1. Limited access to inclusive education materials and accessible learning environment and pedagogy to learners with disabilities. Though we recognize and appreciate the efforts being made and the progress is promising in some countries, still more learners with disabilities are in need of inclusive and accessible learning materials.
2. Lack of up-to date and reliable disability disaggregated data on persons with disabilities and children with disabilities at local, national, continental, and global level. Reliable and accurate data is crucial for proper planning, evidence-based decision making on inclusive policy making, programme development and provision of education and other social services.
3. The exclusion of millions of children with disabilities including in emergency settings in Africa from accessing quality education due to multiple barriers that hinder learners with disabilities from enjoying their right to education on an equal basis with others. This number of millions of children with disabilities is increasing due to disasters and crisis.
4. The limited implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by States Parties, specifically, enforcement of Article 24 on the right to education and its General Comment no. 4, which illustrates the pathway for its implementation. Though efforts have been made in some African countries to promote inclusive education, 20% of the countries in West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa still have provisions for education in segregated settings.

5. The poor training, motivational incentives and support provided to teachers, school community, education offices and resource centres across the continent to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach all children in the classroom, using inclusive pedagogy approaches.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO...

1. Support government decision-makers, the African Union, African Disability Forum, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, partners and other stakeholders at local, national, regional and global level, in developing and implementing inclusive education frameworks, strategies and programmes by providing technical support, expertise, insight and our lived experiences.
2. Support and collaborate with duty-bearers on their commitment to be compliant to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the African Disability Protocol (ADP), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically in issues related to education to ensure education for all.
3. Play a significant role, work together with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and build partnerships with stakeholders involved in implementing inclusive education at all level from local to global to promote and advocate for inclusive education for all.
4. Carry-out public awareness strategies in order to change negative attitudes and perceptions towards persons with disabilities and to promote their right to education and inclusion in all spheres of life. Support persons with disabilities in becoming role models and inclusive education advocates in their communities.

WE CALL ON...

1. The UN bodies and agencies to provide support to States to collect disaggregated disability data at school, community, national and global level. Disability data collection should not be limited only to counting number of learners with disabilities at schools, but also collecting



information on experiences of learners with disabilities and barriers they face to access education.

2. Governments to adopt/ratify and follow implementation of inclusive education policies, strategies and disability instruments including Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and African Disability Protocol (ADP) to ensure access to education to all including learners with disabilities.
3. Governments and International cooperation donors to increase budget allocation for inclusive education to ensure access to education for all in countries of the African continent.
4. States parties and education stakeholders in African countries to strengthen their commitment in removing the barriers hindering learners with disabilities from accessing quality and inclusive education.
5. All stakeholders of the education sector to ensure meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations, parents & guardians of children & learners with disabilities and education professionals at all stages of the education process in advancing inclusive education. Nothing for us without us!