

**NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS AWARENESS MONTH**

**2016**

**FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

13 October 2016

**National Theme:**

***‘Persons with disabilities – equal participants in shaping a sustainable future’***

# INTRODUCTION

Disability Rights Awareness Month (DRAM) provides South Africa with an opportunity to:

* **Inspire hope and confidence** in the ability of South Africans and the state machinery to work together in addressing the common challenges facing persons with disabilities and society in general;
* **Mobilise persons with disabilities** around the gains made in protecting, promoting and upholding the rights of persons with disabilities since the adoption of the Freedom Charter, 22 years into democracy, and 9 years after ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol;
* **Reach out to the diversity within the disability sector**, and acknowledging that ***all*** human and socio-economic rights should be equally enjoyed by ***all*** persons with disabilities, irrespective of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, impairment, socio-economic status, educational qualification level, religion, culture, employment status or nationality; and to
* **Advocate for accelerated implementation of White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, which advocates for measures that will hold duty-bearers accountable and strengthen recourse measures for rights-holders whose rights have been violated.

# **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

South Africa ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol in 2007. Article 8 of the CRPD requires of States Parties to adopt immediate, effective and appropriate measures that will:

* raise awareness throughout society regarding persons with disabilities,
* foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities;
* combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities in all areas of life; and
* promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.

# **International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

The United Nations General Assembly appealed to Member States in 1992 to commemorate December 3 annually as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) to promote awareness and mobilise support for critical issues relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society and development. The Day works to promote action to raise awareness about disability issues and draw attention to the benefits of an inclusive and accessible society for all.

**The 2016 IDPD theme, announced by the UN in September 2016, is:**“*Achieving 17 Goals for the future we want*”.

# NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS AWARENESS MONTH AND NATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Cabinet in 2013 approved the annual celebration of National Disability Rights Awareness Month from 3 November to 3 December, and 3 December as National Day of Persons with Disabilities on the national events calendar.

# DRAM2016 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of DRAM2016 are:

* To illustrate that age, race, gender, sexuality, severity and type of impairment, socio-economic status and geographical location matters in ensuring that no one is left behind;
* To mobilise society in general – and decision-makers in particular – in taking responsibility for ensuring that persons with disabilities have equitable access and participation in all services rendered in both the public and private sector;
* To raise awareness of the value of persons with disabilities and their families participating in building sustainable and cohesive communities;
* To support the empowerment of persons with disabilities by making available information in accessible formats on their rights, their entitlements, how to access these rights and what their recourse mechanisms are when their rights have been violated;
* To demonstrate government’s commitment to the promotion, protection and upholding of the rights of persons with disabilities

# 2016 NATIONAL THEME

‘*Persons with disabilities – equal participants in shaping a sustainable future’*

**Key Messages:**

The key messages will be launched on November 3, 2016.

These messages will be utilised for purposes of speech writing across government, and will also form the centre of weekly media campaigns.

# DRAM2016 CONTEXT

The following events/milestones/processes provide context to DRAM2016:

* 1. **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 (SDGs) to build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Persons with disabilities were not referenced in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This means they were excluded from many important development initiatives and funding streams around the world.

The SDGs however explicitly calls for inclusive implementation of the 17 goals. The overarching principle of 2030 Agenda is: *Leave No One Behind*. This means to ensure its success, the Agenda must remain of the people, by the people and for the people, committing the world to global action for the next 15 years. This echoes the disability rights movement’s own principle: *Nothing About Us Without Us*.

The SDGs are explicit Paragraph 23 - *“People who are vulnerable must be empowered. Those whose needs are reflected in the Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80 per cent live in poverty)”*

This paragraph is particularly strong because it calls for the empowerment of “vulnerable” people and places persons with disabilities at the centre of poverty eradication throughout the entire Agenda.

Persons with disabilities are referenced directly 11 times in the 2030 Agenda:

***Declaration***

* + Human rights (paragraph 19)
	+ Vulnerable groups (paragraph 23)
	+ Education (paragraph 25)

***Sustainable Development Goals***

* + Goal 4: Education – 2 references
	+ Goal 8: Employment
	+ Goal 10: Reduce inequality
	+ Goal 11: Inclusive cities – 2 references
	+ Goal 17: Means of implementation, data

***Follow-up and review***

* + Data disaggregation (paragraph 74,g)

**5.2 10th Celebration of the Adoption of the UNCRPD**

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the CRPD in 2006. 2016 is therefore the 10th Anniversary of adoption of this milestone in the international disability rights struggle.

South Africa became a signatory to the CRPD on 30 March 2007, and ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol without reservations on 30 November 2007. DRAM2016 therefore kicks off a year of reflection on achievements and challenges in implementing the CRPD at country level over the first 10 years, culminating in our national 10th anniversary in 2017.

The National Disability Rights Machinery meeting in March 2017 will finalise the 10th Anniversary CRPD ratification programme.

**5.3 60th Anniversary of the Historic Women’s March**

South Africa commemorates 98 years of women struggle and the 60th Anniversary of the Historic Women’s March this year.

It provides the country with an opportunity to reflect on the role played by women with disabilities during the liberation struggle to dismantle apartheid, as well as to reflect on which measures to put in place to ensure that women with disabilities benefit equally from affirmative action measures for persons with disabilities on the one hand, and equitably from women empowerment measures on the other.

**5.4 White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Cabinet approved the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD) in December 2015. It commits duty bearers to realising the rights of persons with disabilities by:

* Accelerating implementation of existing legislation that advocates equality for persons with disabilities;
* Taking calculated action to ensure that their rights as equal persons are upheld;
* Removing discriminatory barriers to access and participation;
* Ensuring that universal design informs access and participation in the planning, budgeting and service delivery value chain of all programmes;
* Recognising the right to self-representation;
* Acknowledging that not all persons with disabilities are alike, and that personal circumstances, gender, age, sexuality, religious and cultural backgrounds, geographical location, requires different responses; and
* Embedding the obligations contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in legislation, policy and service delivery.

The WPRPD is built on nine (9) Strategic Pillars:

* Strategic Pillar 1: Removing Barriers to Access and Participation
* Strategic Pillar 2: Protecting the Rights of Persons at risk of Compounded Marginalisation
* Strategic Pillar 3: Supporting Sustainable Integrated Community Life
* Strategic Pillar 4: Promoting and Supporting the Empowerment of Children, Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
* Strategic Pillar 5: Reducing Economic Vulnerability and Releasing Human Capital
* Strategic Pillar 6: Strengthening the Representative Voice of Persons with Disabilities
* Strategic Pillar 7: Building a Disability Equitable State Machinery
* Strategic Pillar 8: Promoting International Co-operation
* Strategic Pillar 9: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Directives under each of these strategic pillars task duty-bearers with the responsibility of eradicating the persistent systemic discrimination and exclusion experienced by persons with disabilities.

DRAM2016 will therefore focus on continuing to unpack the policy directives contained in the new policy, to showcase examples of implementation during the first year, and to advocate for accelerated implementation in the second year post its approval.

# ACTIVITIES

The main focus for activities will be on demonstrating elements of implementation of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and contextualising these elements within the SDGs in a manner that it makes sense or ordinary persons on the ground. We therefore call on our stakeholders to focus on community-based activities rather than large events.

Activities should in addition specifically target the so-called mainstream sectors of society, advocating for access and full participation by persons with disabilities by decision-makers and frontline staff taking responsibility for disability rights mainstreaming.

Of critical importance is to ensure that we raise the bar in using public media platforms at all levels on getting our messages across.

**6.1 03 November – DRAM2016 National Launch**

DSD is responsible for coordination and hosting of the media launch for DRAM2016 on November 3.

* Venue:  Sibonile School for the Blind and Deaf in Kliprivier, Meyerton, Gauteng
* Partner: MTN SA Foundation (launching the accessible interactive computer lab at the school for Deafblind learners)
* Focus: Technology as an enabler for Deafblind children to learn, play,  communicate and participate
* Format: Media launch

**6.2 Focus for Week 1 (07-13 November)**

* The focus will fall on inclusive and sustainable development
* The challenges persons with disabilities experience in rural, under-serviced and under-developed areas will be highlighted
* Examples of good practice will be shared on how inclusive rural development can build social cohesion and change the lives of persons with disabilities
* Specific attention will be paid to the situation of children with severe disabilities, older persons with disabilities, as well as persons whose freedom of movement is impaired due to inaccessible or non-existent transport systems

The DSD hosted activity in this week will be from 07-11 November – Vhembe, Limpopo, showcasing how international development cooperation can strengthen delivery systems-

* Venue: Vhembe District, Limpopo
* Host: DSD, JICA
* Partner: Limpopo Department of Social Development
* Focus: Promoting social cohesion and the rights of persons with disabilities through dialogue, capacity building and local campaigns

**6.3 Focus for Week 2 (14-20 November)**

* The focus will fall on the role played by women with disabilities over 98 years of women struggle and 60 years since the historic women march, but in particular paying tribute to the role of mothers of children with disabilities have played in changing the lives of their children
* The challenges experienced by families with children with disabilities who do not have equitable access to services and opportunities in the communities where they live, will be highlighted
* Examples of good practice will be shared of how families in general, and mothers in particular, stand up for the rights of their children with disabilities, as well as service delivery models and projects that make a difference to the lives of these families
* Specific attention will be paid in unpacking the policy directives contained in the WPRPD

The DSD hosted activity in this week will be on 18 November, partnering with Afrika Tikkun and the Sidinga Uthando Parents Organisation in Orange Farm for a Paint-it-Purple Day -

* Deputy Minister Bogopane-Zulu and DSD will be joining the community of Orange Farm in Gauteng on its monthly Paint-it-Purple Day.
* Venue: Orange Farm
* Host: Afrika Tikkun and the  Sidinga Uthando Parents Organisation
* Focus: Parents of children with disabilities promoting the rights of their children by painting their houses purple (safe havens; centres for disability information and engagement; making our children with disabilities visible)
* Format: Painting a house/fence/door purple and press conference

**6.4 Focus for Week 3 (21-25 November)**

 The focus will fall on strengthening self-representation by persons with disabilities, including strengthening the voice of persons with disabilities, and how international development cooperation can build solidarity

* The challenges experienced by disabled people organisations and under-represented user-groups in accessing effective platforms and processes within the restrictive economic climate, and finding sustainable solutions for these, will be explored
* Examples of good practice in self-representation will be shared, highlighting the role played by persons with disabilities in leadership and managerial positions
* Specific attention will be paid in unpacking the policy directives contained in the WPRPD
* The Southern African Federation for the Disabled (SAFOD)  is also hosting a Regional Disability Forum during this week

**6.5 Focus for Week 4 (26 Nov - 2 December)**

* The focus will fall on protecting and upholding the rights of persons with disabilities who experience all forms of violence, and in particular girl-children and women with disabilities who survive gender-based violence
* The challenges they experience in accessing justice across the justice value chain, will be highlighted
* Examples of good practice will be shared
* Specific attention will be paid in unpacking the policy directives contained in the WPRPD

The DSD hosted activity in this week will be on 26/28 November – Launch of the GBV Command Centre Deaf Access Facility -

* Venue: GBV Command Centre
* Host: DSD
* Focus: Technology as an enabler to give Deaf women and men access to the services provided in the GBV Command Centre
* Format: Press Conference (more information to follow)

 **6.6 03 December -   National Day of Persons with Disabilities**

DSD is responsible for overall coordination and hosting of the national celebrations of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

The programme, venue and format will be announced on November 3, 2016.

A number of provinces have indicated that they are at advanced stages of putting together provincial IDPD celebrations on or close to the 3rd of December. More information will be shared during the launch of DRAM2016.

**6.7 DSD Internal DRAM2016 Programme**

DSD will be coordinating the following activities during DRAM2016 for its own employees, as well as for employees of SASSA and the NDA:

* Disability Literacy and Attitude Online Survey
* Your Rights are My Rights Campaign (interviews with DSD staff for daily in-house circulation)
* Video and slide shows on all in-house plasma screens
* Disability rights-dedicated DSD Policy Forum discussion
* Sharing examples of Good Practice in disability rights mainstreaming

**6.8 Other DRAM2016 Activities**

DSD is currently liaising with public, private and non-governmental institutions with regards their respective DRAM2016 calendar of events. The complete calendar will be released on November 3. Public institutions, businesses, corporates and organisations are requested to forward their activities for DRAM2016 to DisabilityRights@dsd.gov.za before 25 October 2016 for inclusion in the National Calendar of Events.

# MEDIA AND BRANDING

DSD will be releasing the national branding for DRAM2016 during the third week of October 2016 for use and adaptation by stakeholders.

DSD will in addition be releasing e-posters and e-flyers with the key messages for DRAM2016 to stakeholders towards the end of October 2016 for reproduction and distribution by stakeholders at institutional levels.

DSD will be buying airtime and print media space to share information on weekly basis.

DSD will collect stories on video and in print through participant interviews in key events (local, provincial and national) for utilisation as advocacy materials.

An integrated media plan is currently under development. The focus is on utilisation of social media platforms; pre-recording short interviews with disability rights activists and residents from event sites for release through social media on the days of the events, panel discussions on radio/ television actuality programmes, children’s programmes and the print media.

THE END

**Enquiries can be directed to** **DisabilityRights@dsd.gov.za**