PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN AFRICA

Monitoring guide for African NHRIs in respect of Article 33 of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN-CRPD)

Under the Sida funded Regional Africa Programme, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI) and the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions Secretariat (NANHRI) are working in close partnership to enhance the role of African NHRIs in the protection and promotion of human rights in the national and regional setting, including in promoting strategies and good practices related to peace and conflict.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted in 2006 and entered into force in 2008. NHRIs, as part of their mandates, have an important role in monitoring the implementation of the CRPD. To this end, NANHRI commissioned the development of a Monitoring guide to assist Africa’s NHRIs as they monitor implementation of the CRPD. The guide sets out some of the process and questions which monitors should take into account as they monitor implementation of the CRPD.

In August 2014, a workshop in Kampala, Uganda, was organised to increase the knowledge of the CRPD, exchange information regarding the practical implementation of the CRPD in relation to the NHRIs and strengthen the monitoring capacities of NHRIs. The workshop was attended by 16 persons from the NHRIs of Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and was hosted by the Ugandan Human Rights Commission. Following from this workshop, some NHRIs already initiated work to this end. For example, Zambia developed a tool which targets detention facilities and how the country complies with the CRPD in this area.

In order to finalise the guide and make it a useful and practical tool for NHRIs, NANHRI and RWI are during 2015 carrying this work forward through a testing phase, followed by a validation meeting, and finally a finalization of the document. The idea is that each NHRI can adapt the guide and use it for their situation. The guide will also be circulated to a select number of disabled peoples’ organisations.

Currently, feedback on how staff are using the tool; which sections they are using; if the examples are relevant; can it be more user-friendly; moving forward in implementing the tool etc. is collected from NHRIs by NANHRI. The NHRIs are encouraged to consult persons with disabilities and relevant organisations to look at the tool from their perspective as well.

A meeting to discuss the testing experience and provide final input is planned for September 2015 and would have approx. 15 participants from selected African NHRIs and disabled people’s organisations.

The final document is envisioned to be disseminated towards the end of 2015.

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