

EMPOWERING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON DISABILITY

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DISABILITY INFOGRAPHIC

INTRODUCTION

In February 2016, the Government of the Republic of Zambia Launched the **National Policy on Disability**. The Theme of the policy is **'Empowering Persons with Disabilities'** and this is in line with international and national policy instruments including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities. This policy was launched in an effort to;

- Deal with various challenges faced by persons with disabilities and
- Ensure for social and economic inclusion for these persons.

Statistics reveal that about **2 million women and men in Zambia have a disability** (WHO, 2011). Detailed information revealed that most of these people with disabilities live in rural areas, and have limited access to basic services. **There are 181,856 (2.4 %) with disabilities in rural areas and 69,571 (1.4%) people with disabilities in urban areas in the country.** (Zambia Census of population and housing 2010)



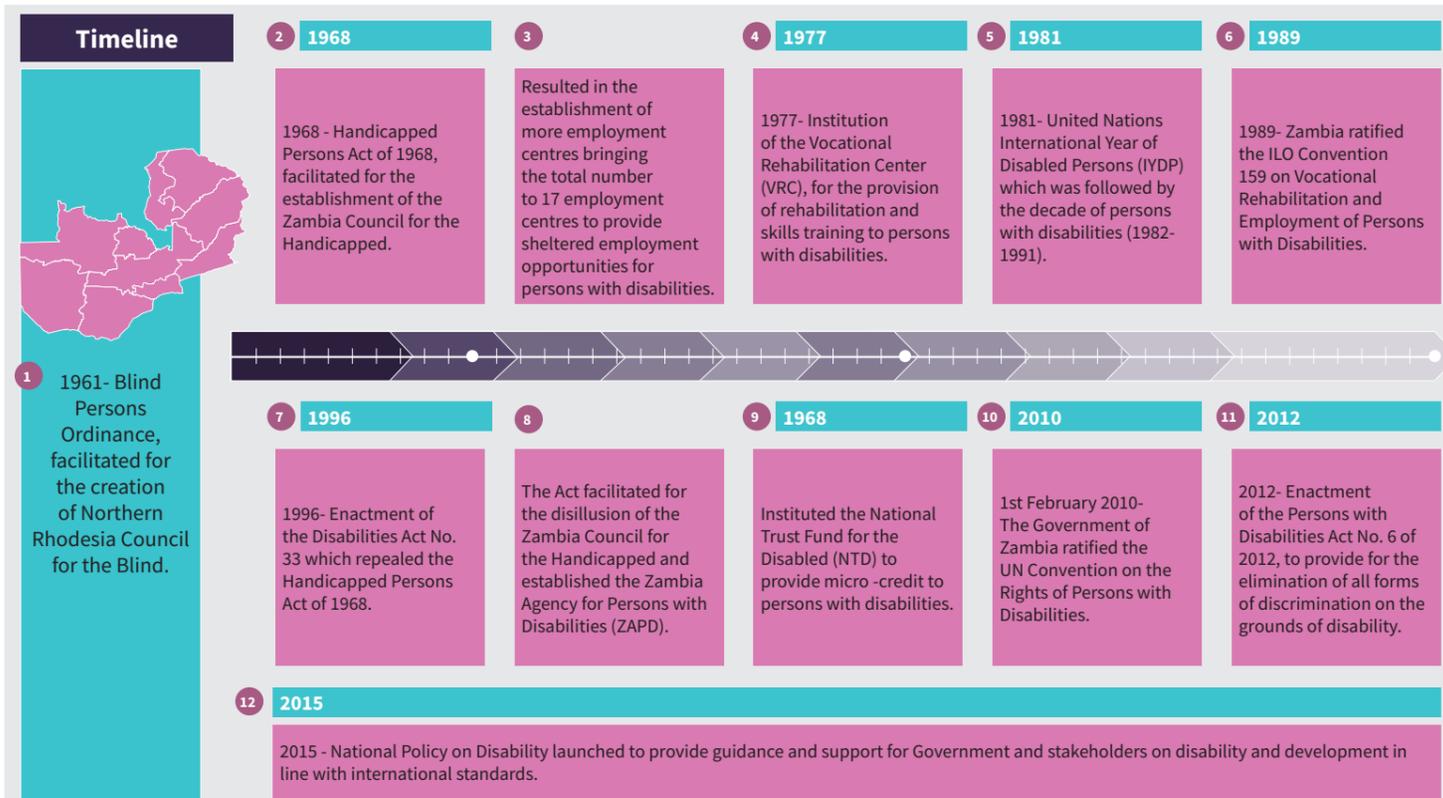
DISABILITY DEFINED

According to the National Policy on Disability, a disability is defined as "Any restriction resulting from an impairment or inability to perform any activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being and would or would not entail the use of supportive or therapeutic devices and auxiliary aids, interpreters, white canes, reading assistants, hearing aids, guide dogs or any other animal trained for that purpose." (2013, National Policy on Disability). Similarly the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines the term disability as "an umbrella term covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions." An impairment is defined as a problem in body function structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing tasks or actions; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations¹ (WHO, 2018).

1. <http://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/> accessed on 21/05/2018



HISTORY OF DISABILITY POLICIES IN ZAMBIA



ABOUT THE 2015 NATIONAL POLICY ON DISABILITY

The guiding principles of the policy are



The policy objectives have accompanying measures to promote them and the summary of these objectives are;



DISABILITY RELATED LEGISLATION

There are various pieces of legislation which support the implementation of the objectives of the National Policy on Disability. Some of these include but are not limited to the following;

- The Zambian Constitution
 - The Vision 2030 and Seventh National Development Plan
 - The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Act, 1998
 - The Workers Compensation Act (No. 10 of 1999)
 - National Policy on Education, 1996
 - National Employment and Labour Market Policy (NELP), 2005
 - National Youth Policy, 2006
 - Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission Act, 2008
- The listed policies and pieces of legislation all recognise and support disability mainstreaming for increased inclusion and empowerment for person with disabilities.

CHALLENGES FACED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

Analysing the National Policy on Disability

Interactions with various key implementing Disability Persons Organisations (DPO's) revealed that some of the activities outlined in the implementation plan may not be attained by 2019 due to various challenges including;

- Delayed disbursement of funds,
- Limited coordination and communication amongst implementing agencies and
- Lack of information and knowledge by some sections of society on disability programming.

General challenges in the sector

- Right to education, health and employment;
- Accessibility of services related to education, health, social protection and employment;
- Inclusive of education health, social protection and employment;
- Budgetary concerns for education health, social protection and employment; and
- Information management systems for education, health, social protection and employment relating to people with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve and enhance** the provision of education, health and employment for persons with disabilities. This must be coupled with increased assessments and monitoring of policies and initiatives to this effect;
- Increased information sharing** on the causes, effects and possibilities of rehabilitation for people with disabilities. This may result in reduced stigma and improve integration of people with disabilities in communities;
- Improve accessibility of services** related to education, health, social protection and employment. This calls for increased pro activity and coordination among various bodies responsible for infrastructure and accessibility;
- Increased budgetary support** to education, health, social protection and employment creation for people with disabilities; and
- Augmented data gathering and information management systems** for education, health, social protection and employment relating to people with disabilities.