

Towards an integrated service delivery for children with disabilities

RATIONALLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

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social development

Department:
Social Development
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Outline of the presentation

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- Current situation
- Will the UN Convention matter to children with disabilities?
- Rationale for the Strategy for children with disabilities
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Introduction

- No policy starts in a vacuum
- S.A has adopted the vision and policy imperatives within a developmental and rights-based framework, which outlines how the best interests of every child should be protected and promoted.
- A human rights-based approach to development demands that every effort be made to reach all children without exception. **How do we ensure that all this happens?**
- The recognition of disability as a development issue, as both a cause and a consequence of poverty has facilitated a broadened understanding of disability, contributing towards social transformation.

Children with disabilities, as part of the Developmental agenda

- Children are high up on the agenda of all government programmes.
- The prevalence rates for children with disabilities ranges from 2 to 6% of the entire population
- S.A's Comprehensive social protection includes both *social grants* as well as *social services* for the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society.
- With a scarcity of resources across the service sector, children with disabilities have been shown to fall between the cracks,

Children with disabilities, as part of the Developmental agenda cont...

- They deserve our focussed attention not only to illustrate the complexity of their situation, but to ensure equalization of opportunities
- While social grants have significantly reduced the impact of poverty on families, it should not detract attention from developing and strengthening social services.
- Its delivery is aimed at enhancing an integrated and coordinated service delivery programme , towards the reduction of the impact of poverty

Children with disabilities, as part of the Developmental agenda cont...

- All duty bearers need to recommit to ensuring that no child is excluded and that all children are protected and made visible. The primary duty will inevitably fall upon national governments, since they bear the statutory responsibility for providing for and protecting their citizens.

Current situation – Policy stance of the country

The large scale policy reforms of the nineties emphasized access, equity, equality, the language of equal opportunities, and rights- based approaches became prevalent in all government and non-government initiatives

There has been, global effort to reduce Poverty – e.g.the development of the Millennium Development Goals, despite these global efforts, children people with disabilities and their families continue to be economically disadvantaged.

Will the UN Convention matter to children with disabilities?

- The ratified UN Convention by S.A contains both a separate article & an explicit reference to children in the nine other articles
- Whilst the CRC recognized the evolving rights of children, the UNCRPD went a long way to spell out the human rights, protection / services needed, & support measures required.
- The prevalence rates for children with disabilities ranges from 2 to 6% of the population, it therefore remains essential to ensure that protection services are age, disability & gender sensitive.

Rationale for the Strategy for children with disabilities

- One aspect that strengthens the need for the strategy is the result of the study conducted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) on the educational status of children in rural communities point out that children with disabilities are a large group whose needs generally go unnoticed.
- The generation of this strategy is informed by two direct research activities undertaken by the Department of Social Development:
 - an audit report of national departments and Non-Profit Organizations on their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of services to children with disabilities
 - a desk top study on the Social Needs of People with Disabilities conducted during the period 1995-2006

Rationale for the Strategy for children with disabilities

The Strategy has been developed to:

- guide for the development and implementation of all Government frameworks on Children with Disabilities
- guide the implementation of the Children's Act
- facilitate the process of closing the gap between policy development
- develop a support system which includes a preventative and developmental programmes in order to support families and children who are vulnerable,

Rationale for the Strategy for children with disabilities

- Create an enabling environment in order to prepare children with disabilities to become independent adults & allow them to live within their families
- foster holistic and integrated support provision through inter-sectoral collaboration, & is a mechanism to mobilize resources for service provision
- Develop further research need & Implement the research findings

Recommendations

- The seminar aims to initiate a dialogue on the plight of children with disabilities, a dialogue that will bring a better understanding of the issues of children with disabilities and service delivery.
- We hope that the dialogue will reach its highest pick and work towards shared concern on the plight of children with disabilities, culminating in shared experiences and recommitment to a collaborated effort to delivering services to children with disabilities.

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