COMMEMORATING 2019 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
3 December 2019

Theme: Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership
Taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda

2nd and 3rd of December 2019, Harare

I. BACKGROUND
The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is commemorated on 3 December each year, with the purpose of promoting, empowering and creating real opportunities for persons with disabilities. This International Day also falls within the 16-Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

The observance of this UN Special day complements efforts of Government’s to mobilize support for the dignity, well-being and rights of persons with disabilities. On this day, persons with disabilities are further provided a platform to share their experience and set their priorities. Awareness-raising on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is also key on this day for garnering stakeholder support and investment in promoting inclusive service delivery (in justice, health, education, employment and social protection sectors).

The theme for this year’s International Day for Persons with Disabilities commemoration is “Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda”. 
The UNCT in Zimbabwe, in partnership with the World Bank, is organizing a joint UN event incorporating different stakeholders and components on advancement of disability rights. The main focus of the event will include awareness-raising on the CRPD, Accessibility issues and the new Strategy for disability inclusion for UN Staff Programming. This event is being coordinated by the UN Human Right Working Group.

II. THE 2019 COMMEMORATIONS
Accessibility of infrastructures, services and information to all is a fundamental prerequisite to make the 2030 Development Agenda happen on the ground. Article 9 of the CRPD on Accessibility advocates for persons with disabilities to live independent lives that allow them to participate fully in all aspects of life. State Parties are encouraged to take appropriate measures that ensure persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, the following (among others):

- physical environment
- transportation
- information and communications ((ICTs) and relevant information/facilities/services provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas
- assistance in the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility

Since this Commemoration will also be conducted under the the 16-Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence which is focusing this year on “Generation Equality Stands against Rape”, a particular attention will be paid to the violence and marginalization that women and girls with disabilities experience in their everyday life. Women and girls with disabilities participating in both the UN Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and the Spotlight Initiative in Zimbabwe will take an active part in the Commemoration and lead the programme.

The main objective of the joint UN commemorations of this International Day will be to raise awareness on disability rights and promote disability inclusion in all areas of work within the UN, and with the different stakeholders.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- Sensitizing the UN staff and broader community on the CRPD
- Presenting the recent United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy launched by the Secretary General in June 2019
- Promoting visibility of UN Agency & Civil Society work on Disability rights and good practices/tools for promoting Accessibility in communities
- Strengthening partnerships

The expected outputs are as follows:

- Better understanding of the CRPD
- Renewed commitment of stakeholders towards advancement of Disability rights
- Shared and common vision and approach in Disability Inclusion based on the new UN Strategy
- Improved understanding of disability programmatic landscape
- Understanding of the scope of accessibility challenges faced by persons with disabilities & best practice/models that work

III. MAIN ACTIVITIES
The following activities are taking place:
TRAINING
Sensitization of the UN and the World Bank Staff on the CRPD and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
An induction session will be conducted for UN and the World Bank Staff, including Heads of Agencies, to sensitize on the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, which was recently launched by the Secretary-General in June 2019. The Strategy stipulates the vision for the United Nations system on disability inclusion for the next decade and aims to provide an institutional framework for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among other international human rights instruments. The training focus will be on the Strategy’s 3 key areas:
- System-wide policy
- Accountability
- Implementation modalities

ARTS EXHIBITION
Artists with Disabilities Exhibit
The United Nations and the National Gallery will open up a public arena for artists with disabilities to exhibit their works in relation with the 2019 theme on accessibility. The objective is to promote artistic expression of artists with disabilities, and raise public awareness on Disability Rights and barriers related to accessibility, e.g. Physical, Information in accessible formats, Social stigma, etc.

The Art exhibition will feature pieces of artwork that visualize the challenges that are hampering/acting as barriers to accessibility in rural and urban areas. A public call to artists will be launched and a jury will be selecting the artworks that will be exhibited on the 3rd of December.

TESTIMONIES
Nothing About Us Without Us – Walking the Talk!
Throughout the Day, women and girls with disabilities who have been involved in the UNPRPD programme and the Spotlight Initiative in Zimbabwe will be bringing valuable testimonies from the ground. The objective is to show, through real life stories, how intersectional discriminations between gender, disability, poverty, and vulnerability are affecting important sections of the population.

PUBLIC CONFERENCES
Getting to Know the International and National Frameworks on Disability Rights
As the CRPD implementation and its localization need wide partnerships, this session will allow the national authorities to update the public on the ongoing national endeavor to localize the CRPD, while the UN will also present the international standards and support schemes that exist, notably through the UNPRPD.

Accessibility in the service of the 2030 Development Agenda
Disability Persons Organization and Umbrella bodies, as well as the University of Zimbabwe Disability Resource Centre will highlight the need for sign language, braille and inclusive service delivery for persons with disabilities in various domains. Access to public information, to inclusive education, to justice, and to SRHR services will be particular areas of focus, while insisting on the easy-fix solutions that stakeholders can build into their programmes and interventions. This will raise awareness on the University of Zimbabwe’s contribution to Disability Sector and Services offered in regards to Inclusive Tertiary Education as well.
A short induction training will be delivered on Sign Languages as well.

**The UN interventions on the Disability Rights**
UN Agencies that are delivering programmes in relation with disability rights will have the opportunity of informing the general public of the outcomes of their work, so as to allow strengthened partnerships and cooperation among the UN system, national authorities, the DPOs, and other stakeholders.

**“WALK IN MY SHOES” PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITY.**
This participatory and interactive activity will expose and subject participants to the “lived reality” of persons with disabilities. The main objective of this activity is to enlighten participants on the experiences and challenges faced by persons with disabilities in accessing justice, information, SRHR services and fully participating in society. Visitors will go through the different stations/boots to experience the different accessibility challenges faced by PWDs, then receive more information on each station about the work UN is doing to address a particular experience. Some of the activities will include attempting to vote blindfolded, or to give evidence in a court without reasonable accommodation (Sign language interpreter, braille and assistive devices).

**IV. PARTICIPANTS**
At least 200 participants expected to attend. Profile of participants to include:
- UN Agencies and the World Bank
- Disabled Persons/Service Organizations (DPOs/DSOs)
- Women and Girls with Disabilities
- Government Representatives
- Embassies/Development Partners
- Civil Society Organizations
- Academic Institutions
- Independent bodies – Human Rights, Gender, NPRC
- Artists (Art Exhibition)
- Private Sector
- Media

**V. VENUE**
There will be two venues.

UN Staff and the World Bank Training, 2nd of December 2019
Arundel Office Park, Norfolk Road, Mt Pleasant, Harare

The International Day Commemoration, 3rd of December 2019
National Art Gallery, 20 Julius Nyerere Way, Harare

The Arts Exhibition by Artists with Disabilities, 3rd of December 2019
National Art Gallery, 20 Julius Nyerere Way, Harare