



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Concluding observations on the initial report of Vanuatu*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Vanuatu (CRPD/C/VUT/1) at its 451st and 452nd meetings (see CRPD/C/SR.451 and 452), held on 21 and 22 March 2019. It adopted the present concluding observations at its 472nd meeting, held on 5 April 2019.
2. The Committee welcomes the initial report of Vanuatu, which was prepared in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines, and thanks the State party for its written replies (CRPD/C/VUT/Q/1/Add.1) to the list of issues prepared by the Committee (CRPD/C/VUT/Q/1).
3. The Committee appreciates the fruitful dialogue held with the delegation of the State party, during which many issues were raised, and the State party's positive attitude and commitment to the implementation of the Convention.

II. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party since the ratification of the Convention to develop a legislative and policy framework for its implementation, in particular the adoption of:
 - (a) The National Disability-Inclusive Development Policy (2018–2025);
 - (b) The national disability inclusion policy for the technical and vocational education and training sector (2016–2020);
 - (c) The national sustainable development plan (2016–2030), which includes the provision of accessible governmental services and buildings and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
 - (d) The Community-Based Rehabilitation Action Plan (2014–2024);
 - (e) The National Building Code, in 2013;
 - (f) The Inclusive Education Policy and Strategic Plan (2010–2020);
 - (g) The Mental Health Policy and Plan (2009–2015);
 - (h) The Education Policy and the Gender Equity in Education Policy (2005–2015), which ensures that women and girls with disabilities have equal rights to those of men and boys.

* Adopted by the Committee at its twenty-first session (11 March–5 April 2019).



5. The Committee commends the State party for endorsing the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (2013–2022), the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (2010–2015) and the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2003–2012).

III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

A. General principles and obligations (arts. 1–4)

6. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The delay in the repeal and amendment of legislation that is not in line with the Convention following the legislative review by the Ministry of Justice and Community Services in 2016;

(b) The use of derogatory terminology concerning persons with disabilities in law and in practice;

(c) The lack of a specific law to enforce policies and action plans with regard to persons with disabilities and the limited implementation of the National Disability-Inclusive Development Policy (2018–2025);

(d) The fact that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations have not been effectively involved in the development of laws and policies or in decision-making processes on matters affecting them.

7. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal or amend all discriminatory legislation, within a clear timeline, adhering to the Convention and ensuring that persons with disabilities are consulted and meaningfully engaged in the process;**

(b) **Eliminate the use of all derogatory terminology regarding persons with disabilities in law and in practice, including in the media;**

(c) **Enact a disability bill, without delay, which includes the human rights model of disability enshrined in the Convention and an assessment mechanism that is compliant with the Convention, and adopt measures to effectively implement the National Disability-Inclusive Development Policy (2018–2025);**

(d) **Ensure the full involvement of persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, through their representative organizations in legislative and policy development and decision-making, in accordance with the Committee’s general comment No. 7 (2018) on the participation of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention.**

8. The Committee is concerned that the State party has not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

9. **The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention without delay.**

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

10. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of legislation to prohibit disability-based discrimination, including by establishing the denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of discrimination;

(b) Intersectional discrimination faced by persons with disabilities and the lack of data on the number of victims of such discrimination;

(c) The lack of mechanisms to provide remedies to persons with disabilities who are victims of discrimination.

11. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Amend article 5 of the Constitution and other relevant legislation to include disability as a prohibited ground of discrimination and ensure that the anti-discrimination framework under the National Disability-Inclusive Development Policy (2018–2025) encompasses all forms of disability-based discrimination and establishes the denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of discrimination;**

(b) **Address and explicitly prohibit intersectional discrimination against persons with disabilities and collect data on multiple and intersectional discrimination disaggregated by sex, age, type of impairment and place of residence;**

(c) **Establish a mechanism to monitor complaints of disability-based discrimination and provide persons with disabilities who are victims of discrimination with legal remedies and support.**

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

12. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The persistence of patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes concerning women and girls with disabilities;

(b) The lack of reasonable accommodation for women with disabilities.

13. Recalling its general comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities and in view of targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Strengthen awareness-raising campaigns, at the village level, on the rights of women and girls with disabilities to eliminate stereotypes and prejudices concerning them;**

(b) **Ensure that women and girls with disabilities are not denied reasonable accommodation, such as the provision of individualized support in education, political and public life and economic activities, in any areas, including through the meaningful participation of women with disabilities.**

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

14. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of information on the measures taken to improve access to early identification and intervention programmes for children with disabilities, and the expiration of the National Disability Policy and Action Plan (2008–2015), which has not been renewed;

(b) The lack of participation of children with disabilities in awareness-raising events due to discrimination against them.

15. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Take the measures necessary to renew the National Disability Policy and Action Plan (2008–2015) and ensure its implementation, especially to provide children with disabilities and their families with adequate assistance and support, including early identification and intervention programmes, as provided for in the previous Policy and Action Plan;**

(b) **Adopt measures to combat discrimination against children with disabilities and strengthen efforts to raise awareness among children with disabilities, their parents, their families and the community, about the rights of children with disabilities.**

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

16. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The high prevalence of stigmatization and negative stereotypes and attitudes concerning persons with disabilities;

(b) The lack of continuous awareness-raising programmes on the rights of persons with disabilities with the adequate involvement of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in their design and implementation.

17. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt and implement the measures necessary, grounded in the human rights-based approach to disability, in order to combat stigmatization, prejudice and stereotypes concerning persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Adopt a national awareness-raising strategy and implement continuous awareness campaigns, including in rural areas, with the involvement of all stakeholders, such as the media and persons with disabilities through their representative organizations.**

Accessibility (art. 9)

18. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Buildings are still not accessible for persons with disabilities despite the adoption of the National Building Code in 2013;

(b) There is a lack of accessible transportation;

(c) Access to information and communications technology for persons with disabilities is still limited;

(d) Persons with disabilities do not have adequate access to remedies;

(e) There is no legal sanction for non-compliance with accessibility standards and guidelines, including in infrastructural projects using foreign investment.

19. **With reference to its general comment No. 2 (2014) on accessibility, the Committee recommends that the State party take into account the links between article 9 of the Convention and Sustainable Development Goal 9 and targets 11.2 and 11.7, and that it, in particular:**

(a) **Allocate sufficient human and financial resources for the implementation of the National Building Code;**

(b) **Ensure that accessible public transport is available for persons with disabilities throughout the State party;**

(c) **Enforce the Information and Communication Technology Policy (2012) to provide access to information and communications technology for persons with disabilities;**

(d) **Develop and promote the use of all accessible formats such as sign language, captioning, Braille and Easy Read, and adopt capacity-building programmes for translators and interpreters who work with those formats;**

(e) **Establish a mechanism to monitor compliance with article 9 of the Convention, provide remedies for persons with disabilities and introduce sanctions for non-compliance with accessibility standards and guidelines, including in infrastructural projects using foreign investment.**

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

20. The Committee notes the vulnerability of the State party to natural disasters and is concerned that persons with disabilities are not sufficiently involved in disaster risk reduction plans at the national, provincial and community levels. The Committee is also concerned that some persons with disabilities were left behind during the evacuation from

Ambae Island in 2018 and that there have been no unified measures taken to establish an emergency notification system that is accessible for all persons with disabilities regardless of the type of impairment.

21. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Improve the accessibility of warning information for persons with all types of impairment, particularly for persons with visual and hearing impairments and those with intellectual disabilities;**

(b) **Closely consult persons with disabilities through their representative organizations on the design and implementation of all disaster risk reduction plans at the national, provincial and community levels, and adopt a comprehensive strategy, which incorporates recommendations made in the joint study entitled *Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction: Experiences of people with disabilities in Vanuatu during and after Tropical Cyclone Pam and recommendations for humanitarian agencies*, in accordance with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13;**

(c) **Continue to ensure that clusters under the National Disaster Management Office, including the Gender and Protection Cluster, adequately address the specific requirements of all persons with disabilities in disaster risk responses.**

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

22. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, continue to be denied their legal capacity on the grounds of disability in law and in practice.

23. **Recalling its general comment No. 1 (2014) on equal recognition before the law, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal and amend, without delay, all legal provisions that restrict the legal capacity of persons with disabilities on the basis of impairment;**

(b) **Replace all substituted decision-making regimes with supported decision-making regimes that respect the autonomy of persons with disabilities, and increase awareness among persons with disabilities, their families and relevant officials, including the judiciary, about the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly the right to equal recognition before the law.**

Access to justice (art. 13)

24. The Committee is concerned about the limited access to justice for persons with disabilities due to various barriers, including the lack of physical accessibility to police stations and courts, and the lack of procedural accommodation and legal aid. It is also concerned about the low level of awareness among the judiciary and the police about the rights of persons with disabilities.

25. **The Committee recommends that the State party pay attention to the link between article 13 of the Convention and target 16.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that it, in particular:**

(a) **Ensure that persons with disabilities have access to procedural and age-appropriate accommodation, free legal aid and accessibility provisions, such as the use of sign language, captioning, Braille and Easy Read formats, and ensure that persons with disabilities are not denied reasonable accommodation in their access to justice;**

(b) **Strengthen training for the judiciary and law enforcement personnel, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers and prison staff, on the rights of persons with disabilities in all provinces of the State party;**

(c) **Raise awareness among persons with disabilities about their right to access to justice, including the legal aid, remedies and redress available to them through the judicial system.**

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

26. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, are still subjected to laws that deprive them of their liberty based on impairment, and that there is a lack of information on the measures taken to ensure that those persons are not subjected to arbitrary treatment, including confinement.

27. **The Committee recalls its guidelines on the right to liberty and security of persons with disabilities (A/72/55, annex) and recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal all relevant provisions in legislation, including mental health laws, that allow for the deprivation of liberty of persons with disabilities, particularly persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, on the basis of impairment;**

(b) **Establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure that persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities are not subjected to arbitrary and forced treatment, particularly treatment that results in confinement.**

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)

28. The Committee is concerned about cases of violence against and abuse of persons with disabilities, especially women and children, both in the home and in the community. In particular, it is concerned that:

(a) The Family Protection Act, which is the legislative framework to protect victims of domestic violence, including persons with disabilities, is not aligned with the Convention;

(b) There are cases of violence against and abuse of children with disabilities, including corporal punishment;

(c) Complaint mechanisms are inaccessible;

(d) There is no mechanism for monitoring cases of violence against persons with disabilities and the State party's intervention in cases of domestic violence against persons with disabilities largely depends on the Vanuatu Women's Centre;

(e) Cases of violence against and abuse of persons with disabilities are not properly investigated and the perpetrators are not punished; for example, cases of sexual abuse of women with disabilities, especially women with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, are dealt with through reconciliation in the women's villages, whose authorities impose a fine as a sanction for the perpetrator.

29. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Amend the Family Protection Act (2008) in line with the Convention and improve the protection of persons with disabilities from violence and abuse;**

(b) **Protect children with disabilities from all forms of violence and abuse, including by expediting the enactment of the child protection bill, ensuring that it is in line with the Convention to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings;**

(c) **Establish accessible mechanisms for persons with disabilities to report violence and abuse against them and ensure that they know where to seek assistance;**

(d) **Strengthen the capacity of the Vanuatu Women's Centre and the authorized persons and registered counsellors under the Family Protection Act (2008) to protect and provide support to persons with disabilities, and effectively monitor the situations of persons who are victims of violence, particularly women;**

(e) **Adopt measures to increase the capacity of the Family Protection Unit under the police to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of violence against persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities.**

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

30. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities, especially women with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, are subjected to forced sterilization without their consent.

31. **The Committee recommends that the State party prevent and prohibit all forms of coercive medical treatment, including forced sterilization, of persons with disabilities without their free and informed consent, and ensure that no women or girls with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities are subjected to forced sterilization.**

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

32. The Committee is concerned that, despite the adoption of the Community-Based Rehabilitation Action Plan (2014–2024), there is a lack of sufficient support, including personal assistants, for persons with disabilities to enable them to live independently in the community.

33. **In line with its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Allocate adequate resources to provide support, including personal assistants and social protection, for persons with disabilities and their families to enable them to live independently in the community and to choose where and with whom they live;**

(b) **Establish mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and impact analysis of the Community-Based Rehabilitation Action Plan (2014–2024) in providing health and rehabilitative services to persons with disabilities in the home and in the community.**

Personal mobility (art. 20)

34. The Committee is concerned about the limited access to personal assistive devices for persons with disabilities, especially in rural areas. It is also concerned about the insufficient financial support provided by the State party to facilitate access to assistive devices.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt measures in the framework of the Community-Based Rehabilitation Action Plan (2014–2024) to facilitate access to mobility aids and assistive devices and technologies, especially in rural areas, at an affordable cost for all persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Include persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the development of policies on assistive devices and continue to strengthen partnerships with their representative organizations and provincial governments;**

(c) **Introduce tax and customs exemptions for the purchase of assistive equipment and devices for persons with disabilities.**

Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information (art. 21)

36. The Committee is concerned about the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their right to freedom of expression and access to information due to the lack of information in accessible formats and communication barriers. It is also concerned about the lack of official recognition of sign language.

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Continue efforts to enable the local deaf community, in cooperation with the regional and international deaf communities, to develop a national sign language for recognition by the State party, provide training for sign language interpreters and introduce a certification system;**

(b) **Adopt legislative and other measures to improve the availability of all public information in accessible formats, such as Braille and Easy Read.**

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

38. The Committee is concerned about discriminatory legislation on family and marriage, including sections 1 and 2 of the Matrimonial Causes Act (1986) that prohibit marriage on the grounds of disability, including psychosocial or intellectual disability. It is also concerned about the insufficient support services provided for children with disabilities and their families, especially in rural areas.

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal or amend legislation on family and marriage that allows for discrimination against persons with disabilities, including sections 1 and 2 of the Matrimonial Causes Act (1986);**

(b) **Provide adequate support, including counselling services, for parents and families of children with disabilities to ensure that children with disabilities are not separated from their family on the grounds of disability and that children are not separated from their parents with disabilities.**

Education (art. 24)

40. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Many children with disabilities remain at home and do not receive support to access inclusive education;

(b) One of two schools with inclusive education has stopped its pilot programme due to budgetary constraints;

(c) There is a lack of accessible educational materials, facilities and accessible formats of communication in schools, including sign language, Braille, Easy Read and plain language;

(d) There is insufficient training for teachers and non-teaching staff on the right to inclusive education.

41. **Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially targets 4.5 and 4.A, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen efforts to raise awareness among families of children with disabilities and their communities about the right of children with disabilities to inclusive education;**

(b) **Provide sufficient human, technical and financial resources and continue efforts to implement the Inclusive Education Policy and Strategic Plan (2010–2020) to ensure that children with disabilities enjoy their right to inclusive education in all mainstream schools, with individualized support;**

(c) **Ensure that persons with disabilities are not denied reasonable accommodation at all levels of education through individualized support, including the use of technology, classroom support and accessible learning materials;**

(d) **Ensure continuous training for teachers and non-teaching staff on inclusive education at all levels, including training in sign language and other accessible formats of information and communication.**

Health (art. 25)

42. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The limited access to health-care services for persons with disabilities;

(b) The insufficient training for health-care personnel on the rights of persons with disabilities;

(c) The lack of access to sexual and reproductive health-care services for persons with disabilities, particularly all women with disabilities, including those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities;

(d) The lack of data on health-care services provided to persons with disabilities.

43. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt measures to implement the Health Sector Strategy (2017–2020) and other legislative measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to affordable, accessible and quality health services on an equal basis with others;

(b) Ensure that medical and health-care professionals receive regular and compulsory training on the rights of persons with disabilities, including on the individual requirement of health care based on free and informed consent;

(c) Ensure that persons with disabilities, particularly all women with disabilities, including those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, have access to sexual and reproductive health-care services in their communities, as set out in target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) Collect data disaggregated by age, sex and type of impairment to monitor medical treatment and health-care services for persons with disabilities.

Work and employment (art. 27)

44. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The insufficient employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and the fact that no particular attention is paid to the rights of persons with disabilities in the Employment Act (2006);

(b) The lack of mechanisms for monitoring equal work conditions for persons with disabilities in both the public and private sectors;

(c) The lack of individualized support for women with disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities in the workplace;

(d) The fact that the mandate of the Labour Inclusion Officer is limited to facilitating the participation of persons with disabilities in seasonal employment;

(e) The fact that the cost of obtaining business licences remains a significant obstacle for persons with disabilities to starting their own business;

(f) The lack of official data or statistics on persons with disabilities employed in the public and private sectors.

45. With reference to article 27 of the Convention and recalling its link with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt legislative and other measures, including an amendment of the Employment Act (2006), to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in the open labour market on an equal basis with others, in close consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities;

(b) Ensure that labour inspectors have the mandate and resources to effectively monitor working conditions for persons with disabilities and ensure decent work for all, including persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value;

(c) Ensure that persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities and persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, are not denied reasonable accommodation in the workplace;

(d) Strengthen the capacity of the Labour Inclusion Officer to facilitate stable employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;

(e) Promote self-employment opportunities among persons with disabilities, including by exempting the cost of business licences for persons with disabilities;

(f) **Collect disaggregated data on the employment of persons with disabilities in the public, private and informal sectors.**

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)

46. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities remain at the highest risk of poverty and that this affects their right to an adequate standard of living. In particular, it is concerned that there is a lack of social protection programmes to target persons with disabilities and their families in the framework of the National Disability-Inclusive Development Policy (2018–2025).

47. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt social protection programmes, including allowances, for persons with disabilities and their families, particularly those who are living in poverty and those with high support requirements, to cover the additional costs related to disability. The Committee also recommends that the State party allocate an adequate budget and ensure that the assessment and eligibility criteria for social protection and poverty reduction programmes are in line with the Convention, taking into account the Committee’s general comment No. 6 (2018) on equality and non-discrimination.**

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

48. The Committee is concerned that schedule 4 (“rules for voting by proxy”) of the Representation of the People Act (2006) still restricts the right of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities to participate in electoral processes. It is also concerned that the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life is limited, including with regard to working in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government and working as teachers and health-care professionals.

49. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt legislative and administrative measures, including an amendment of schedule 4 of the Representation of the People Act (2006), to ensure that persons with disabilities, especially persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, enjoy their right to fully participate in the electoral process, including by voting through secret ballot on their own or assisted by a person of their choice, with full respect for their autonomy, rights, will and preferences;**

(b) **Adopt a strategy to promote the participation and effective representation of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in political and public life and in decision-making positions at the national, provincial and community levels;**

(c) **Provide information on electoral processes in accessible formats.**

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

50. The Committee is concerned that the State party has not yet ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

51. **The Committee encourages the State party to adopt all appropriate measures to ratify and implement the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled as soon as possible.**

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

52. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities did not fully participate in the data-collection process for the 2009 census. It is also concerned that disaggregated data

on the situation of persons with disabilities are not systematically collected, which makes it difficult for the State party to develop appropriate public policies.

53. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Develop systematic statistical and data-collection procedures for the next census, to collect data disaggregated by sex, age, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in the national context, in accordance with the human rights model of disability and focusing on barriers experienced by persons with disabilities, in order to design appropriate public policies;**

(b) **Ensure the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the development, implementation and monitoring of data collection.**

International cooperation (art. 32)

54. The committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of a systematic approach to incorporate the Convention into international cooperation programmes and funds;

(b) The insufficient consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities and their limited participation and inclusion in international development projects, including in decisions concerning the use of international funds that could affect the rights of persons with disabilities;

(c) The lack of a concrete plan to ensure that the measures taken to promote the rights of persons with disabilities are linked with the Sustainable Development Goals.

55. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Adopt a development policy in line with the Convention that incorporates the principles and values enshrined in the Convention into all the State party's development cooperation policies and programmes;**

(b) **Ensure meaningful consultation with and the participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects developed in international cooperation efforts;**

(c) **Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities into the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

56. The Committee is concerned that no independent monitoring mechanism has been established, as required under article 33 (2) of the Convention, and that persons with disabilities are not fully and meaningfully involved in the monitoring process through their representative organizations. It is also concerned that provincial disability committees that monitor the implementation of national strategies and the framework of the Convention, as focal points at the provincial level, have not been established in Penama, Sanma or Torba.

57. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Designate or establish an independent monitoring mechanism in conformity with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and the Committee's guidelines on independent monitoring frameworks and their participation in the work of the Committee (CRPD/C/1/Rev.1, annex);**

(b) **Ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the process of monitoring the implementation of the Convention;**

- (c) Establish provincial disability committees in all provinces, without delay, to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of national strategies and action plans in relation to the Convention.

IV. Follow-up

Dissemination of information

58. The Committee emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding recommendations. With regard to urgent measures that must be taken, the Committee would like to draw the State party's attention to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 13, on women with disabilities, and 41, on education.

59. The Committee requests the State party to implement the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. It recommends that the State party transmit the concluding observations for consideration and action to members of the Government and Parliament, officials in relevant ministries, local authorities and members of relevant professional groups, such as education, medical and legal professionals, as well as to the media, using modern social communication strategies.

60. The Committee strongly encourages the State party to involve civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in the preparation of its periodic report.

61. The Committee requests the State party to disseminate the present concluding observations widely, including to non-governmental organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities, and to persons with disabilities themselves and members of their families, in national and minority languages, including sign language, and in accessible formats, and to make them available on the government website on human rights.

Next periodic report

62. The Committee requests the State party to submit its combined second, third, fourth and fifth periodic reports by 23 November 2026, and to include in them information on the implementation of the present concluding observations. The Committee also requests the State party to consider submitting the above-mentioned reports under the Committee's simplified reporting procedure, according to which the Committee prepares a list of issues at least one year prior to the due date set for the report of a State party. The replies of a State party to such a list of issues constitute its report.
