



**Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities**

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Consideration of reports submitted by

States parties to the Convention under article 35

List of issues in relation to the initial report of Ethiopia

Addendum

Replies of Ethiopia to the list of issues*

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Introduction

1. The International Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, through the Secretariat of the United Nations (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), has requested the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia as a state party to provide additional information to the list of issues on its initial report submitted in November 2012. Accordingly, Ethiopia is pleased to provide response to each of the list of issues as follows:

A. Purpose and General Obligations

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 1 of the list of issues (CRPD/C/ETH/Q/1)

2. The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has realized from the outset that effective implementation of the UNCRPD document requires the adoption of comprehensive anti-discriminatory legislations in all areas alongside the UNCRPD document. The government examined the UNCRPD document and obligations prior to the ratification for consistency with the legislations of the country. It was understood that most legislations were basically not contradicting with the UNCRPD document though there are still some laws that need to be harmonized in the process of implementation. The process of harmonization began during the first two years period of the implementation with the objective of establishing anti-discriminatory legislation and anti-discriminatory provisions in the relevant sectors such as employment, education and Social Security. The responsibility to protect persons with disabilities from any type of discrimination is not only limited to the state or public bodies, but the responsibility also goes to private organizations and to individuals.

3. The concept of disability has been harmonized in the different laws, policies, strategies and action plans of the country some of which are indicated below.

4. The Right to Employment of Persons with Disabilities Proclamation No. 568/2000 reads as “ ‘Person with disability’ means an individual whose equal employment opportunity is reduced as a result of his physical, mental or sensory impairments in relation with social, economic and cultural discrimination.”

5. The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 515/2007 Article 13 (4) provides that “The definition of disability is applicable in the appropriate law relating to disability shall also apply for the purpose of this article.” The term “appropriate law” refers to the concept of disabilities of the UNCRPD.

6. The National Plan of Action for Persons with disabilities (2012-2021) defines disability in the context of the UNCRPD as “Persons with disabilities that include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 2 of the list of issues

7. In order to match with the development progress of the country, Ethiopia has been revising the laws, declarations and policies related to disability. There have been also efforts to remove guidelines, provisions, terminologies and definitions that manifest some sort of contradiction with the convention. Such revisions have been done at different times in almost all sectors. The major laws reviewed include proclamations on employment, building and construction, the Criminal Law, the Developmental Social Welfare Policy (DSWP) 1997 that was under revision and being replaced in 2014 by the National Social

Protection Policy. The Labor Proclamation 377/2003 was amended by Proclamation No. 494/2006. The Labor amendment makes unlawful for employers to discriminate based on disability in recruitment and promotion. This amendment gives the right to persons with disabilities to compete on an equal basis with others and helps them in increasing employment opportunities.

8. The Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FENAPD) and its member associations have been working on issues of disability in close coordination with government bodies. Organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) have actively participated in the process of developing laws, policies, strategies and action plans through consultations and providing inputs.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 3 of the list of issues

9. The two National Plans of Actions serve as driving forces to change attitudes of viewing disability from a charity model to right based model.

(a) The National Plan of Action on Human Rights 2013-2015 brought some of the following major impacts and achievements:

10. Executing bodies (Ministries and Agencies) are responsible and accountable to mainstream disability in their respective mandates. The then Ministry of Justice is mandated to coordinate the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Human Rights (2013-2015) in the different social sector executing bodies. Based on this, annual plan of Action is being prepared, implemented and regularly monitored. Executing bodies are also responsible to submit periodic performance reports to the House of Peoples' Representatives. The House of Peoples' Representatives evaluate the implementation of the UNCRPD as per the obligation of the country. Members of the House also include disability issues in their oversight of implementation of activities in their constituencies.

11. It has helped to carry out intensive awareness creation works at federal and regional levels with the ultimate objective of eliminating discrimination and harmful practices against persons with disabilities, to bring about positive attitudinal changes in the society to reduce discrimination, to increase the employability of persons with disabilities.

12. It helped to establish Coordinating Committees at federal and regional levels of the country to enhance the mainstreaming of disability issues in different laws and policy making processes and actual implementation of the development agendas of the country.

13. Supervisory and monitoring efforts have been enhanced during the design and construction of public buildings, basic infrastructures and condominium houses to ensure the accessibility to persons with disabilities.

14. The Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority has established a separate department which is responsible to ensure the equal participation and benefit for persons with disabilities. This includes tasks like media monitoring to ensure media programs on raising awareness and messages on the rights of persons with disabilities.

(b) The National Plan of Action(NPA) of Persons with disabilities (2012-2021) brought some of the following major impacts and achievements:

15. Federal and regional concerned government sectors have been planning, implementing activities that are in line with their core mandates to create access for equal participation and to benefit persons with disabilities in an inclusive manner from all development endeavors. The government sectors structured under economic, social and good governance clusters develop their plans, implement and report their performances on the National Plan of Action to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The NPA has

increased the participation of DPOs in raising awareness, building capacities of their members, in the planning, implementing and monitoring of the intervention of the different thematic areas of the NPA.

16. In general, the two NPAs have contributed for the enhancement of mainstreaming and implementing the issues of Persons with disabilities by the different sectors along their mandates.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 of the list of issues

17. The objective of the restriction on funding is to discourage financial dependency on foreign financial resources. This restriction did not bring any problem on the rights and benefits of persons with disabilities. Still, Persons with disabilities are the first to be considered in the provision of services given by charities and societies in the country. The government, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, provides annual financial support based on their plans and implementation reports in a progressive manner to DPOs to build their capacities.

B. Specific Rights

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 of the list of issues

18. The Employment of Persons with Disabilities Proclamation No. 568/2008 has clearly defined disability and outlaws any form of discrimination including lack of reasonable accommodation at workplace. The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 515/2007 has also well articulated the concepts and principles of disability and granted persons with disabilities to have an equal opportunity for employment and employment related benefits (medical, disability pension and gratuity) with other candidates. Denial of reasonable accommodation in all areas other than employment is considered discrimination. The Labour Proclamation 377/2003 has defined disability in relation to work injury and the entitlements of persons with disabilities. All these provisions are to address the possible discrimination and vulnerability of persons with disabilities. It is well recognized that lack of reasonable accommodation other than employment hampers the rights and inclusion of Persons with disabilities to access services, their equal opportunities and full participation in all development aspects. However, the absence of reasonable accommodation outside workplace cannot be attributed only to denial but mostly attributed to lack of awareness and low level of development of the country. The ongoing initiatives and efforts to make basic infrastructures and facilities, reasonable accommodations in courts, basic service (health, education, access to information etc.) to make persons with disabilities all inclusive will gradually reduce and finally solve the problem of reasonable accommodation in areas other than employment.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 6 of the list of issues

19. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission has been playing important roles in promotion and protection of the rights of Persons with disabilities. One of the mechanisms through which the Commission promotes and protects the rights of Persons with disabilities is that it considers the issue of disability in its monitoring mission. For instance, it has made prison monitoring from 2010-2012 in which special emphasis was given to the situation of Persons with disabilities and the challenges they face. As a result, consultative workshops and discussions were conducted with prison administrators on how to deal with those challenges and improve the situations.

20. The Commission has also been playing a great role in awareness creation campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities. To this effect, other than the various face to face awareness raising programs, the Commission aired twenty four clips of 45 seconds each enclosing concise and easily understandable messages focusing on the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities on the national television on a thrice per week schedule.

21. The Commission is also actively involved in promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities through other such methods as organizing and providing trainings, conducting multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder forums regarding the rights of persons with disabilities, and free legal aid provision programs in collaboration with civil societies and higher education institutions.

22. The Commission has mainstreamed the issue of disability into its organizational structure by creating a separate section led by a commissioner. This section is responsible to promote and protect the rights of various vulnerable groups including women, children, and Persons with disabilities. This structure has also its sub-ordinates in all regional branches of the Commission. Using these structures, the Commission is playing its own role for the effective implementation of the UNCRPD.

23. Similarly, the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman has been conducting necessary monitoring activities across different organizations where violations of the rights of Persons with disabilities are suspected. For example, as far as administrative/governance problem is concerned, monitoring and controlling activities were conducted in institutions such as hospitals, primary and secondary schools, higher education institutions, and other related organizations. In order to improve the universal accessibility for persons with disabilities, the institution also works in close collaboration with concerned government authorities such as the Federal and Addis Ababa Road and Building Construction Authorities.

24. The Ombudsman has also been playing important role in promoting and protecting the rights of Persons with disabilities through receiving complaints from Persons with disabilities and intervening in solving their problems. The Ombudsman, (in collaboration with the Ethiopian Center on Disability and Development – a local NGO that deals with the promotion of the rights of Persons with disabilities), has created a free telephone line via which Persons with disabilities report any problem with regard to the violation of their rights. The Ombudsman has received a total of 45 complaints (persons with visual impairment 22, persons with leg disability 12, persons with hearing impairment 4, persons with hand disability 1, and persons with other types of disabilities 6) on which it conducted investigations and gave solutions.

Woman with disabilities (art. 6)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 of the list of issues

25. The rights of women and girls in the country are being ensured through gender mainstreaming approach. Regarding the rights of women and girls with disabilities, there are various policies and programs to benefit women and girls in education that include affirmative action to join higher learning institutions, providing residential houses and working space and employment opportunities to increase their integration in society. The actual implementation is done at the grass root level in coordination and collaboration among the different relevant actors.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 of the list of issues

26. Government sectors and private organizations (such as justice and court, education, social security and the like) give due emphasis to address the problems of children with disabilities at different levels and scales of interventions depending on their mandates. The Ministry of Justice, currently Office of the Attorney General, has established a separate coordination office with similar structure at various levels including regional and districts (weredas) in order to protect the rights of children with disabilities against neglect and mistreatment in life. The Ministry of Education has been providing inclusive support and attention to children with disabilities starting during their pre-school education, and compulsory education to all children. The amended Public Servants'- and Private Organization Employees- Social Security schemes Proclamation Nos. 714/2011 and 715/2011 respectively) Article 40, No. 4(b) include persons with disabilities in the survivors pension which state that "Children of the deceased who are under the age of 18 years or in the case of incapacitated child or a child with mental health problem, under the age of 21 years." The extension of the survivors' age for pension benefit coverage from 18 to 21 years of age for persons with disabilities is to protect their rights against neglect and mistreatment in life.

Awareness raising (art. 8)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 of the list of issues

27. Government sectors, DPOs, partner organizations and stakeholders have been developing and implementing various supportive proclamations and guidelines on raising awareness. In addition, awareness raising activities have been conducted using websites, radio and TV programs, Celebration of International Days, by organizing trainings, workshops and symposiums at national and sub-national levels through the participation of Persons with disabilities to prevent discrimination and stereotype against Persons with disabilities. Ethiopia has been popularizing the UNCRPD right after signing it and the document was translated into Amharic and other federal working languages. Consecutive Articles on the persons with disabilities have been posted in the two popular government newspapers (Addis Zemen and Ethiopian Herald).

Accessibility (art. 9)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 of the list of issues

28. The Ministry of Construction and Urban Development was among the leading government organs working on accessibility of public buildings to enable Persons with disabilities to live independently in barrier free buildings. The Ministry developed the Building Code Proclamation No. 624/2009, Building Regulation 243/2011 and a Directive to ensure the design of accessible buildings according to the standards, to give license to contractors for construction, to monitor and control buildings under construction. The Ministry also encourages through raising awareness for modifying existing buildings that are not accessible for Persons with disabilities built before the proclamation was issued.

29. The Ministry of Transport is responsible to regulate the construction of roads. Accordingly, in most urban areas, ramps and signals to cross roads for Persons with disabilities have been constructed. Most of the public buildings like schools, airport terminals, health service buildings, train stations, public toilets, government offices, are implementing the Building Code Proclamation and directive in their undertakings.

30. The UNCRPD, the human rights convention, the 1995 Constitution, the Employment of persons with Disabilities Proclamation No. 568/2008, HIV/AIDS related materials and the National Social Protection Policy were translated in to accessible format (Braille) to persons with visual impairments and disseminated to different concerned organizations.

31. In the private sector, services providers (health, education, hotels, etc.) are also being encouraged to make their infrastructures accessible to persons with disabilities.

Right to life (art. 10)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 of the list of issues

32. The Constitution grants the protection of the life of every citizen that includes the rights of Persons with disabilities to enjoy equal and nondiscriminatory rights. One of the major responsibilities of the then Ministry of Justice is to protect and promote the rights of Persons with disabilities to life. The Ministry in collaboration with other law enforcement parties (like the police) takes appropriate measures when their rights are violated. In addition, persons with disabilities are provided judicial protection and legal assistance whenever necessary to ensure that their lives are not deprived off. This includes persons with albinism. Therefore, the above legal measures are applicable to persons with disabilities including persons with albinism.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 of the list of issues

33. The then Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) that was under the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, now restructured as National Disaster Risk Management Commission is responsible for risks and emergency issues in the country. The National Disaster Risk Management Policy and Strategy (2013) deals with the disaster and risk management practices of the country in which Persons with disabilities are one of the targets. Disability issues and persons with disabilities are integrated and given due attention in the Disaster Risk Management Policy and Strategy document under the cross-cutting issues that states “Vulnerabilities associated with ... disability ... will be given due attention in DRM.” Persons with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable and hardest hit segments of the society during emergencies that they need special care and attention. Poor and vulnerable Persons with disabilities are also given priority in humanitarian assistance, Rural- and Urban- Productive Safety Programs as Permanent Direct Support Clients or on unconditional cash or kind social safety net transfers to protect them from deprivation especially in drought prone areas. The International Day for Disaster Reduction is also being celebrated in the country to create awareness to policy makers, development partners, implementers and the society at large on the impact of Disaster and Risk especially on Persons with Disabilities.

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 13 of the list of issues

34. The Civil Code of the Empire of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 165 of 1960 in chapter 3 and 4 under Articles 339 and 388 uses the terms of insane persons, infirm persons, and feeble-minded, with mental diseases and incapable of understanding their actions. Nevertheless, all modern Ethiopian laws and practices disregard these terminologies and

consider them derogatory. To make the Civil Code compatible with the current National and International laws and procedures, the Federal Attorney General is in the process of conducting a study to revise the Civil Code.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 14 of the list of issues

35. According to the Ministry of Health, persons with intellectual impairment and psychosocial disabilities have the right to be informed consent for treatment, admission and discharge from any hospital in the county. Persons with intellectual disabilities can access any nearby hospitals for treatment without any precondition. There are government and nongovernment mental health service providers. The Ministry is also working on awareness creation to expand community based mental health related services.

36. The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia is responsible for handling election votes and handle complaint cases. Persons with disabilities, like any other citizen, have the Constitutional right to vote and bring complaints. If Persons with disabilities face any problem of excluding them from registration or from using their rights during election, perpetrators are subject to punishment as per the amended electoral law of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 532/2007, and the Federal Criminal Law. Therefore, since the Constitution gives equal rights to every citizen, Persons with disabilities enjoy every right like any other citizen in the country.

Access to Justice (art. 13)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 of the list of issues

37. In Ethiopia, Persons with disabilities have supports in the different stages of legal procedures. If a person with disabilities needs legal assistance due to resource or any other constraints, one gets free legal service. In the Criminal procedure, if the suspected is a person with hearing impairment and/ or speech difficulties, the court assigns sign language interpreter(s). The Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FENAPD) provides free legal support in the legal process to its members when they face constraints.

38. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has also been continuously organizing and conducting awareness raising and training to staffs of the justice sector to promote the UNCRPD especially on reasonable- and procedural- accommodations in the justice sector at the federal and regional levels. The then Ministry of Justice has also given short- and long-term trainings to Attorneys, lawyers, court staffs, legal experts, judges, and middle managers on mainstreaming disability issue and sign language.

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 16 of the list of issues

39. The fundamental rights and dignity of all Ethiopian citizens are indiscriminately fully respected in the Constitution. No citizen is arrested without the decision of the court. Illegal or forced detention is prohibited. Article 18 No. 1 of the Constitution states that “Everyone has the right to protection against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” Therefore, there is no forced detention and treatment on the basis of impairment.

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 17 of the list of issues**

40. A Federal National Coordination Body, drawn from pertinent government and Non-government organizations, has been established to protect the rights of women and girls from abuse and violence, and support for those victims of abuse and violence. The National Coordination Body has technical committees under it. A strategy has been designed and plans prepared to provide health, justice and social services to victims of abuse and violence in a “one stop center.” There has been raising awareness on the fight against harmful traditional practices including female genital mutilation. As a result, improvements have been recorded in terms of reduction in the rate of harmful practices including female genital mutilation. There are initiatives to sue perpetrators and their collaborators of genital mutilation.

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 18 of the list of issues**

41. Government and non-government organizations provide rehabilitation services to support people with mental health problems to enable them lead independent life. Mental health related services within communities are provided by Health Extension Workers and nurses. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate and involve in cultural shows like music, sport including Paralympics, and to organize bazaars. This is to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in communities for reintegration and to lead independent life. However, the mental health service coverage in this regard is very low.

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 of the list of issues**

42. Article 29 of the Constitution provides equal right to everyone including Persons with disabilities for the right of thought, opinion, expression and access to information. To transform the constitutional right in to action, measures have been taken. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority the latter to coordinate public and private printed and electronic Media information to be accessible for the expression of the rights of persons with disabilities. Based on the MoU, a Media forum (electronic and printing) was established to promote the rights of Persons with disabilities and enhance their participation in all walks of their lives to fully enjoy their rights. Different programs on disability and the affairs of Persons with disabilities have been transmitted on Television and Radio. The Authority issued an Advertisement Proclamation No. 759/2012 among others to protect harmfulness of advertisement and regulate the rights of people. Article 7 No. 4 of the proclamation states that an advertisement that undermines the dignity or emotional feeling of physically disabled person is deemed to have unlawful or immoral content or presentation.

43. With the cooperation between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and FENAPD, a resource center was established for persons with disabilities to facilitate their access to information and to express their opinions.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 of the list of issues

44. As part of special needs education, sign language departments have been opened in different eight Colleges and five Universities in the country to train sign language interpreters. The departments have been producing graduates on sign language at Diploma and Bachelor Degree Levels. Most colleges of the country also give sign language training to primary school teachers as an additional course to make education all inclusive for students with hearing impairment and speech difficulties. Different Television transmission programs have regular sign language translation coverage. Different meetings, workshops and symposiums have also sign language translation to reach persons with hearing impairments.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 21 of the list of issues

45. The right to marriage, personal and family life is clearly given in the Constitution and more particularly under Article 34, No. 5 which says that “Particulars shall be determined by law.” The Family Code (2000) was designed both in Amharic and English versions based on the constitutional provision. The Amharic Version of the Family code does not use the word and concept of “disability” at all in the whole document. However, the word “disability” is used in Article 34 of the English version of the Code, under Nos. 2 and 3 to refer to judicial interdiction in the Amharic version. In Article 51, No. 1 of the English version the term “under disability” is used to mean “inability of one of the spouses to lead the family” in the Amharic version. In Article 220 under the title of “Default of one of the Parents” No. 1 the word “disability” is used to refer to “lack of capacity to lead the family” in the Amharic version. The judicial procedure in Ethiopia uses the Amharic Version at Federal level and regional languages at the regional states that the English version is not used in the due process of law which means that the Amharic version and the regional family codes developed based on the Amharic version have final legal authority.

46. Therefore, there is no discrimination regarding marriage and family life in Ethiopia neither in the constitution, the family code nor any other laws. However, it is well recognized that the word “disability” in the English version of the Family Code used inappropriately not to mean disability as used in the UNCPD shall be repealed, and the Family Code to be revised to make marriage and family life disability inclusive.

47. Regarding community based supports, the regional bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs provide psychosocial and economic supports, the food security bureaus provide cash/kind safety net transfers and the ministry of health and its regional bureaus provide family planning, safe contraceptive methods and reproductive health and other health related services.

Education (art. 24)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 22 of the list of issues

48. Various efforts have been made to make persons with disabilities beneficiaries of the education policy. The Strategy on Special Needs/Inclusive Education (2012) recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities to inclusive education at all levels. The Ministry of Education has given special emphasis to promote the education of all persons with disabilities i.e. children, youth and adults. Accessibility at schools has been improved by building schools near their houses living with their parents. Moreover, special classes and/or special schools for learners with disabilities have been opened. Inclusive Education

Approach is also being implemented in order to address the needs of those students with disabilities. To enhance the quality and accessibility of education for students with disabilities, the following measures have been taken by the Ministry of Education: a special needs and inclusive education curriculum has been revised; an implementation guideline for special needs and inclusive education has been developed; 113 inclusive education resource centers have been established to provide support to students with special needs; teaching aid materials for mathematics has been prepared; curriculum harmonization guideline has been prepared; Special Needs Education and Inclusive Education Communication Strategy and guideline has been prepared (2012); a manual for incorporation of special needs and inclusive education in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has also been prepared; reference manual on Special Needs Education for Higher Learning Education has been prepared; departments of Special Needs Education have been opened in eight Colleges and five Universities in the country.

Health (art. 25)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 23 of the list of issues

49. The Ministry of Education provides trainings on the job and in universities to professionals who work in the teaching and learning process to provide care and support to children with disabilities at school. In addition, the Ministry of Education assigns focal persons responsible to attend children with disabilities and help them at times of any inconvenience and assist them to get first aid supports and refer them to hospitals for further treatments.

50. The Ministry of Health also provides trainings on the job and in universities to professionals who work in the health service provision at health posts, clinics, and hospitals. Health professionals give priority in treating children with disabilities in the provision of health services.

51. Under the auspicious of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, children with disabilities are prime beneficiaries of physical rehabilitation services that include provision of prosthetic and orthotics appliances and physiotherapy services in ten government and other nongovernment physical rehabilitation centers located at different parts of the country. Social Workers in different social services works help to link children with disabilities to other complementary services.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 24 of the list of issues

52. Persons living with HIV/AIDS are not considered as persons with disabilities in the state party. HIV/AIDS, coupled with disability, has a severe impact on persons with disabilities. Regular trainings are given to education and health sector professionals on the job and in line with core courses. The objective of trainings is to give special attention to persons with disabilities during the provision of services catered by the different sectors. The Ministry of Health trains professionals on sign language to assist persons with hearing impairment during treatment, provide guidance and counseling and information services to persons with disabilities on sexual reproductive health HIV and STIs at health posts, clinics and hospitals.

53. The HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs give trainings to DPOs, at different levels, to support their members with HIV/AIDS to adjust their living styles including to take proper medication and integrate in to their communities. The above institutions also prepared, documentary film on the impact of HIV/AIDS on disability, brochures and pamphlets using brails on

behavioral change communication regarding the transmission of HIV/AIDS, control and treatment up to the grassroots levels that include the rural areas.

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 25 of the list of issues

54. Early childhood program aimed at habilitating children with disabilities is incorporated in the pre-school strategy in the Ministry of Education. The program is also included in the service provision strategy of the Ministry of Health. Children with disabilities are provided practical gait training to familiarize with their new appliances. In general, the issue of childhood rehabilitation program is being mainstreamed in deferent sectors to benefit children with disabilities at all levels.

Work and employment (art. 27)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 26 of the list of issues

55. The Rights to Employment for Persons with disabilities Proclamation No. 568/2008 makes null and void any law, practice, customs, attitude and other discriminatory situations that limit equal opportunities for Persons with disabilities. As the result of the efforts for employment opportunities for Persons with disabilities, the number of employed Persons with disabilities has been increasing from time to time. According to the Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development, Four Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Nine (4,339) Persons with various types of disabilities have been employed in different government and private sector institutions in the country. These are: with hearing impairment 192 (Male 137 & Female 55), with speech difficulties 76 (Male 56 & Female 20), with visual impairment 614 (Male 422 & Female 192), physically handicapped who use wheelchair and crutches 1912 (Male 1358 & Female 554), and with other types of disabilities 1545 (Male 912 & Female 633).

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

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 27 of the list of issues

56. Ethiopia has been implementing the second largest Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2005. The objective of the program is to support through cash or food transfers to transitory and chronic food insecure consisting of 8.3 million chronic food insecure and 1.7 million transitory food insecure clients out of whom 1.36 million are labor constrained direct beneficiary clients in selected food insecure districts of the country. The PSNP is being run by the Ministry of Agriculture. The permanent direct support is amongst the poorest and most vulnerable. The labor constrained caseloads include quite large number of Persons with disabilities. The PSNP clients of each household do not have detail individual profile that it is not possible to provide accurate data on the number of beneficiaries of Persons with disabilities.

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 28 of the list of issues

57. The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia has been working to ensure equal participation of all citizens in the national election process. The rights of Persons with disabilities including the blind to effectively participate in the election process is clearly

indicated in the Electoral Law (Proclamation), Directive, and Regulation. The Electoral Law of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 532/2007 enabled persons with disabilities to elect and be elected with their full constitutional rights and without any constraints. The directive of the Board for the Registration of Electors No. 2/2009 (as amended) states that; Persons with disabilities shall be given the opportunity to participate in elections as they have the right to elect or to be elected. Persons with disabilities fully participate during the preparation of rules and guidelines governing election procedures through their representatives. The Organization and Procedure of Grievance Hearing Committees at Every Level during Elections Regulation No. 1/2009 (as amended) of the Board gives the right to enable every Ethiopian citizen to exercise ones democratic right to elect and to be elected and to provide transparent procedure by promptly settling disputes that arise in the electoral process, while a citizen is engaged in the experience of one's rights.

58. Moreover, awareness raising trainings on the rights of persons with disabilities related to election has also been given to representatives of associations of Persons with disabilities and those in various leadership positions.

C. Specific Obligations

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 29 of the list of issues

59. In order to gather reliable information for proper policy designs and planning for Persons with disabilities based on the findings of the next national census, the Central .Statistics Agency (CSA) has been dealing with the required preparatory works. One of these major preparations is the establishment of a Task Force Committee (being led by Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs comprising of CSA, different concerned government intuitions, development partners and DPOs) that works on the definition of different types of disabilities in relation UNCRPD. This is to have a common understanding on the concept and definition of Persons with disabilities in line with the UNCRPD and to give guide for enumerators in the census. To facilitate and help in guiding the task force in the process of setting the necessary preconditions for proper counting of person with disabilities in the next census, a focal expert was trained abroad in disability statistics. It has also been recognized that the public lacks clear understanding on the concept of disability that it does not give the correct information on disability and persons with disabilities during censuses. It is planned to aware the public in anticipation of providing correct information about persons with disabilities in households during the census. Thus, the CSA has finalized the preparation including the questionnaires for the census that enumerators will be trained before going to the fields.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 30 of the list of issues

60. The first and second Growth and Transformation Plans (GTPs) have addressed the issues of Persons with disabilities to mainstream in all sectors. The focus of GTP I was to provide community based services. GTP II anticipates the establishment of social protection system where Persons with disabilities will be equally participating and benefiting from the overall development interventions of the country. The plan also considers Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development (SDGs). Organizations of Persons with disabilities were involved in the development process and implementation of the GTPs. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is a focal Ministry to coordinate the affairs and activities of Persons with disabilities. Thus, Organizations of Persons with disabilities are one of the constituencies of the Ministry that they have regular meetings with the Ministry to discuss on planning, implementation and monitoring of activities of the targets set in the GTPs.

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 31 of the list of issues

61. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is a focal Ministry that has established a National Steering Committee at Federal level consisting of members from key executing sectors. Committees were also established at regional and sub-regional levels following the national Steering Committee structure to perform the same task. The Committee is in charge of making a follow up on the effective implementation of the UNCRPD. The issues of Persons with disabilities were also clearly indicated in the Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 691/2010, Article 10, No. 5 and the revised Proclamation No. 916/2015, Article 10, No. 4 for mainstreamed implementation by all executing bodies stating as “Each Ministry shall have the powers and duties to: create, within its powers, conditions where by Persons with disabilities ... benefit from equal opportunities and full participation.” Based on the proclamation, every ministry is responsible to implement disability related affairs and submit periodic reports to the House of Peoples’ Representatives that the House gives feedbacks to each Ministry. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Institution of the Ombudsman also evaluate the ongoing implementation of the UNCRPD.
