



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

List of issues in relation to the initial report of Sierra Leone*

A. Purpose and general obligations (arts. 1–4)

1. Please provide information on:
 - (a) Measures taken to incorporate a definition of disability in the Constitution of 1991 that is aligned with the language of the Convention, as part of the constitutional review process;
 - (b) Measures taken to review and harmonize all legislation, policies and measures, including the removal of derogatory terminology referring to persons with disabilities, such as “lunatic” and “mental derangement”, to adhere to the Convention and the human rights model of disability;
 - (c) Measures taken to ensure that human and financial resources are available at all levels of government for meaningful consultation with persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, regarding all legislation, policies and programmes;
 - (d) Measures taken to legally define the term “reasonable accommodation” in line with the Convention and details of the extent to which the concept is incorporated into policies and programmes;
 - (e) The progress the State Party is making in its preparations to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention, indicating a time frame.

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

2. Please provide information on:
 - (a) Measures taken, in accordance with the Convention, to prohibit all forms of disability-based discrimination in national legislation, including the Constitution, and to include the recognition of the denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of disability-based discrimination;
 - (b) Legal and other measures taken to prevent and address multiple and intersectional discrimination faced by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities, persons affected by leprosy, persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, and persons with albinism;
 - (c) Accessible and effective legal remedies and complaints mechanisms that exist for persons with disabilities who are victims of discrimination, and the sanctions provided for in law for perpetrators of disability-based discrimination.

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group at its twentieth session (24–28 March 2025).



Women with disabilities (art. 6)

3. Please inform the Committee about:

- (a) Steps taken to mainstream the rights of women and girls with disabilities and to ensure that all policies and programmes, including the 30 per cent quota policy, adhere to the Convention and are in line with the Committee's general comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities;
- (b) Measures to ensure the full and effective implementation of the draft gender equality and women's empowerment policy, including the resources allocated to address the policy objective on women and girls with disabilities in the policy;
- (c) Measures in place to ensure that women and girls with disabilities and their representative organizations are closely consulted and actively involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes relating to persons with disabilities;
- (d) Steps taken to prevent, and to protect women and girls with disabilities from, multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

4. Please inform the Committee about measures taken:

- (a) To ensure the deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities and to provide them with access to alternative care in a family setting;
- (b) To address all forms of discrimination, including prejudices and stigmatization, against children with disabilities and strategies to modify or eliminate stereotypes and negative cultural approaches to them;
- (c) To enable children with disabilities to effectively participate in and express their opinion on matters that affect their daily lives;
- (d) To provide parents and families with the information and social and financial assistance they need to care for their children with disabilities.

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

5. Please provide information on the measures taken, with the involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, to raise awareness throughout society about the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly among persons with disabilities, their parents and families, professional groups, government officials at all levels, the private sector, religious groups, the media and the general public, including at the community level, in order to combat stigma, stereotypes, harmful practices and deep-rooted cultural beliefs relating to persons with disabilities.

Accessibility (art. 9)

6. Please provide information on:

- (a) Measures taken and the budget allocated to ensure the effective implementation of the building adjustment and adaptation order prescribed by the Persons with Disability Act, 2011, the monitoring mechanisms available and the applicable sanctions in place for failure to comply;
- (b) Strategies that have been put in place to guarantee access to information and communications technology for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including the progress to date on the adoption and implementation of the Communications Bill, indicating specific timelines, the allocated budget and whether persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, have been involved in the process;
- (c) Steps taken to develop and implement minimum standards and guidelines for accessibility in consultation with, and with the active involvement of, organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure the accessibility, irrespective of impairment, of public and private infrastructure, transportation, goods and services in both urban and rural areas.

Right to life (art. 10)

7. Please provide updated information on the steps taken to eliminate infanticide of children with disabilities and killings of and attacks against persons with disabilities for witchcraft practices in some communities. Please provide updated information on measures taken to investigate cases of killings of children with disabilities and to bring to justice those responsible for such crimes.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

8. Please provide information on:

(a) The efforts made by the State Party to develop disability-inclusive laws, strategies and protocols for situations of risk, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, including conflicts, floods and epidemics, such as cholera, Lassa fever and Ebola virus disease, and the 2015 and 2017 mudslide and flooding disasters, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;

(b) The steps taken to ensure that information on disaster risks and related warnings is accessible to all persons with disabilities, regardless of the type of impairment;

(c) The measures taken to involve persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in the planning and implementation of plans for disaster and emergency response, rehabilitation and recovery, as well as counselling services to attenuate the psychological impact of disasters.

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

9. Please explain:

(a) The efforts being made to revise and/or review legal and other policy measures that deny legal capacity to persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, to enter into contracts, open bank accounts and exercise rights related to family life and inheritance;

(b) The measures taken to establish supported decision-making regimes for persons with disabilities, in line with the Convention, to replace guardianship and other systems of substituted decision-making.

Access to justice (art. 13)

10. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To provide procedural and age-appropriate accommodation for persons with disabilities in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants in all legal proceedings;

(b) To equip police stations, courts and prisons with accessible forms of communication and to make their physical structures and services accessible to persons with disabilities;

(c) To ensure the systematic and continuous training of personnel in the judicial system and law enforcement agencies, including police and prison officers, to promote and ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities;

(d) To ensure adequate resources for the provision of free legal services to persons with disabilities through the Legal Aid Board and to ensure that legal aid services prioritize children and women with disabilities.

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

11. Please provide information on:

(a) Efforts made to revise and repeal laws and policies, including section 17 (1) (i) of the Constitution, that allow for the involuntary detention or hospitalization of persons with disabilities on the basis of perceived or actual impairment;

(b) Measures taken to adopt and implement the Mental Health Bill of 2023 to ensure the protection of the rights to liberty and security of persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, including a timeline for its adoption and a timeline and budgetary allocations for its implementation;

(c) Steps taken to prohibit non-consensual treatments, such as forced medication and confinement, in particular for persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities.

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)

12. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To end all forms of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in health facilities, psychiatric hospitals and other care facilities faced by persons with psychosocial disabilities when they are admitted to such facilities, as well as in family settings;

(b) To address the degrading and cruel treatment that persons with disabilities face in prayer and healing camps, which occurs under the pretext of healing, as well as the use of restraints and shackling;

(c) To investigate and prosecute such criminal matters, to enable victims to obtain redress and to impose sanctions on those responsible for such acts.

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

13. Please provide updated information on measures taken:

(a) To provide persons with disabilities with the appropriate channels to report instances of exploitation, violence, abuse and neglect in any setting and to strengthen and resource these channels and monitoring agencies;

(b) To prevent the abuse and exploitation of children with disabilities, particularly children with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, children with epilepsy and children with autism, as well as the practice by teachers of corporal punishment and abuse and neglect of children with disabilities, and their exploitation through begging;

(c) To provide the necessary protection and support services, such as accessible temporary shelters, psychological support and legal aid, to persons with disabilities who are survivors of exploitation, violence or abuse, particularly women and girls with disabilities.

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

14. Please provide updated information on measures taken to protect the integrity of persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities, from being subjected to forced sterilization, abortion or female genital mutilation, as well as from being subjected to involuntary medical treatment by non-certified traditional healers.

Liberty of movement and nationality (art. 18)

15. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that all children with disabilities are registered at birth. Please also indicate the steps taken to ensure that all persons with disabilities, including those in rural areas, acquire national identity documents at the required age.

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

16. Please inform the Committee about:

(a) Steps taken, including budgetary allocation, to implement and monitor the right of persons with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities and those living in rural areas, to live independently and to be included in the community, including the provision of personal assistance and community-based services;

(b) Measures taken to move away from institutional care settings and invest in accessible community facilities, goods and services, such as access to the labour market, transportation, housing, education, health, recreational activities and other facilities and services available to the public in order to combat the isolation, marginalization, exclusion and segregation of persons with disabilities.

Personal mobility (art. 20)

17. Please provide information on:

(a) The efforts to develop legislation or a policy to ensure the effective provision of mobility aids, assistive devices and other assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including the development of a national assistive device supply programme and the involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in this process;

(b) The measures taken to ensure that construction and other infrastructure planning, as well as transportation, in both urban and rural areas, guarantee personal mobility, and monitoring mechanisms to that end.

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

18. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To officially recognize Sierra Leonean sign language in the law and increase the number of qualified sign language interpreters, in close consultation with the deaf community;

(b) To ensure that persons with disabilities have effective access to information, including on the Internet, in accessible formats and technologies, irrespective of their educational level;

(c) To ensure the provision of audio descriptions, captioning and sign language interpretation in television programmes, by both private and public media;

(d) To reactivate the Braille Printing Press at the Government Printing Department to facilitate the production of national programmes and plans for persons with visual impairments and to enhance access to information.

Respect for privacy (art. 22)

19. Please provide information on the measures taken to protect the right to privacy of persons with disabilities, including by raising awareness among family members and caregivers, sanctioning any violations and providing remedies.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

20. Please provide information on:

(a) Efforts to address cultural and religious beliefs that negatively impact the freedom of persons with disabilities to exercise their rights with regard to the home and family, parenthood and relationships, including by raising awareness of these rights among the judiciary, child protection services and the general community;

(b) Measures taken to provide support to children with disabilities and their families, as well as to parents with disabilities, including information services and other social and financial support to enable them in the fulfilment of their parental responsibilities.

Education (art. 24)

21. Please provide updated information on:

(a) The progress made to implement the Inclusive Education Policy, in particular to transition from segregated to inclusive education, with a time frame for implementation and details of human, technical and financial resources;

(b) The measures taken to ensure the training of all teachers in the mainstream education system on teaching children with disabilities and to include inclusive education as an integral part of the core teacher training curricula to ensure that the values and principles required for working in an inclusive education system are infused at the onset of teacher training and teaching careers;

(c) The efforts being made to provide accessible infrastructure, learning materials, adaptive learning environments and sufficient individualized plans for students with disabilities at all levels, including for learners with visual or hearing impairments, deafblind learners, learners with intellectual disabilities, and learners with autism and to prevent discrimination and the denial of reasonable accommodation in the education system;

(d) Measures in place to ensure the learning of science, including information and communications technology studies and mathematics, by students with visual impairments at all levels of education;

(e) The steps taken to include children with disabilities in out-of-school programmes and to extend adult literacy programmes to learners with disabilities.

Health (art. 25)

22. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To ensure accessible healthcare facilities, services and equipment, especially in rural areas, for persons with disabilities and to ensure that the provision of those facilities, services and equipment respect the privacy and right to consent of persons with disabilities, including deaf persons, women and girls with disabilities, persons with albinism, persons with leprosy, deafblind persons, and persons with visual, intellectual and psychosocial disabilities;

(b) To make comprehensive healthcare affordable for persons with disabilities, including steps taken to operationalize the provision of “free medical services”, pursuant to section 17 (1) of the Persons with Disability Act, 2011, and to include essential medication for persons with disabilities in the list of medicines that are covered in line with that provision;

(c) To ensure that sexual and reproductive education and services are available, accessible and affordable to women and girls with disabilities;

(d) To raise awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and requirements of persons with disabilities through the systematic training, with the involvement of representative organizations of persons with disabilities, of health personnel and traditional health attendants on the rights of persons with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities, to access healthcare and services.

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

23. Please provide information on:

(a) Policies, budgetary allocation and plans to extend comprehensive and community-based habilitation and rehabilitation programmes for persons with disabilities, including in rural areas, and to increase the number of rehabilitation professionals;

(b) How persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, are involved in the planning and implementation of habilitation and rehabilitation facilities and services;

(c) Measures taken to ensure that habilitation and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities are based on a human rights-based approach and that the services are designed and implemented to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life.

Work and employment (art. 27)

24. Please provide information on:

(a) The status of the Labour Bill of 2018 and the review of the National Employment Policy, indicating whether they are in line with the Convention, the timelines and budgetary allocation for their implementation and whether persons with disabilities have been involved in the review;

(b) The measures taken to increase the employment rate among persons with disabilities in the open labour market, including the status of the implementation of the tax deductions for employers employing persons with disabilities, pursuant to section 23 (1) of the Persons with Disability Act, 2011, the operationalization and resourcing of the Employment Committee created by the National Commission for Persons with Disability and the programmes in place for training employers on the rights of persons with disabilities, and on the provision of reasonable accommodation;

(c) The steps taken to prohibit discrimination in recruitment processes and to ensure accessibility, fair conditions of service, career advancement, a safe working environment and equal pay for equal work value;

(d) Whether disability-based discrimination in employment, including the denial of reasonable accommodation, is prohibited under the law, the sanctions provided for in the law for employers who do not comply with the relevant legislation and the remedies available to victims of such discrimination.

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

25. Please provide information on:

(a) Measures taken to safeguard an adequate standard of living and social protection for persons with disabilities and to develop and implement targeted programmes and services for persons with disabilities, particularly women and children with disabilities, living in situations of poverty in rural areas;

(b) Whether persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, effectively contribute to the design, implementation and monitoring of such initiatives;

(c) Measures taken to address the systemic barriers and improve targeted outreach to ensure that persons with disabilities benefit equitably from social protection programmes and measures to cover the additional costs relating to disability.

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

26. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in the context of participation in political and public life, particularly the right to vote and to stand for elections, and to increase the number of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in political and public life;

(b) To ensure that the action taken to ensure that electoral infrastructure, processes and information related to elections are fully accessible are extended to all persons with disabilities, including in rural areas.

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

27. Please provide information on measures taken:

(a) To increase the availability of accessible spaces for culture, sport, recreation and leisure for persons with disabilities, both in rural and urban areas;

(b) To ensure that children with disabilities participate actively in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including sporting activities in school, on an equal basis with other children;

(c) To ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled.

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

28. Please provide information on efforts made to establish a system for collecting data on the situation of persons with disabilities, and to increase the systematic collection of and reporting on disaggregated data and coordination between all public bodies and State agencies, to give effect to the Convention. Please indicate the steps taken to develop data collection tools in this regard, using the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning and its related methodology, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities.

International cooperation (art. 32)

29. Please provide information on:

(a) Measures taken to ensure that persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, are included in international cooperation engagements on disability-specific and other policies, with the aim of mainstreaming the human rights model of disability in development policies and programmes;

(b) Measures taken to consult closely with and actively involve persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(c) Progress made towards the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa, adopted by the African Union in 2018.

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

30. Please provide information on:

(a) The mandate and activities of the National Commission for Persons with Disability and the human, technical and financial resources allocated to it in order to carry out its mandate, as well on its coordination with focal points in different ministries;

(b) The extent to which the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone cooperates with the National Commission for Persons with Disability on the implementation and monitoring of the Convention;

(c) The measures taken to ensure the meaningful involvement of representative organizations of persons with disabilities, including organizations of women and children with disabilities, in the monitoring of the enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities under the Convention.
