

**REPORT ON THE FIRST GLOBAL DISABILITY SUMMIT HELD
IN LONDON, JULY 2018**

PRESENTED BY:

SAFIA NALULE JUUKO (HON)

NATIONAL WOMAN MP-PWDS.

The UK Government and her international Development Agency- DFID, the Government of Kenya, the International Disability Alliance and other organisations like Amplify Change convened the first ever Global Disability Summit (GDS18), in London in July 2018.

The aim of the Global Disability Summit was to raise global attention on a long-neglected area, mobilize new global and national commitments on disability inclusion and show case good practice, innovation and evidence from across the world.

Globally, an estimated one billion people have a disability, of which 800 million live in developing countries. In these countries, disability is both a cause and consequence of poverty and people often face significant barriers that prevent them from participating fully in society, including getting quality education and employment.

The ambition of the Summit was to make the GDS18 a world-first and a land mark celebration of the achievements and rights of people with disabilities, and one that creates renewed action, partnership and accountability to deliver long lasting change for people with disabilities around the world. Too, there is commitment to strive for real change through the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals for persons with disabilities.

The Summit was built around four themes:

- Dignity and respect for all,
- Inclusive Education,
- Economic Empowerment and
- Technology and Innovation

There were also additional cross-cutting and spotlight sessions among which was Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of PWDS and more women and girls with disabilities, Violence against Persons with disabilities, Persons with disabilities and Humanitarian assistance.

The GDS18 was addressed by a number of high level personalities /institutions among whom were The UK Secretary of State for International Development, Hon. Penny Modaut, UN Women, Australia Aid, World Bank, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, ILO and other partners.

What was so unique with this historic Summit was that persons with disabilities were at the center of organization and delivery of this GDS18.

I was privileged to be among those few people from across the world to chair sessions and to be a panelist on two sessions. I chaired the session on Violence Against persons with disabilities and I was a panelist on one of the session of aligning SDGS to the UN CRPD and on another session of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities.

The Summit was crowned by all participating States, International Institutions and organisations of persons with disabilities signing the Global Disability Summit18 Charter for Change, an expression of our collective ambition commitment that unites us all. By the close of the Summit 300 Governments had signed the Charter for change.

Uganda was among the 300 States. I acknowledge Hon. Minister Janet Mukwaya, the Minister of Gender Labour and Social Development. For she did not only participated in the GDS18 in London, but she earlier on organized a national forum to galvanize Uganda's Commitments to advance the disability inclusion agenda. I commend the UK Government through UK Aid for funding this forum.

MY ROLE AT THE SUMMIT:

As a Chairperson of one of the sessions and as a panelist in two other sessions I was charged with the following:

- i. To Tell the Summit whether the Government of Uganda has ever re aligned the 2030 Global Agenda that is the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. And how has Uganda Implemented this Convention?
- ii. How the Gender and Equity Budgeting provisions in the Public Finance Management Act has helped the inclusion and implementation of disability needs in the national programmes and Budgets.
- iii. What commitments is Uganda making as to what she is going to do to realize inclusion of persons with disabilities to comply with the SDGS goal of leaving no one behind, bearing in mind that next year the 2030 Global Agenda is going to be evaluated.

These were very difficult questions to handle. True we have mass representation of Persons with disabilities at different decision making positions, we have a number of pro disability sensitive legislations among which is the Constitution, Disability Act, Public Finance Management Act and others. We have institutions and government departments whose mandate is to ensure implementation of disability responsive programmes, but implementation of a number of programmes to respond to the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities is still lacking. The following are among the areas where we find these critical concerns.

DATA ON DISABILITY:

It is regrettable to say that we don't have reliable data on disability which is also disaggregated. At the global level the state of the world disability report on disability by WHO and the World Bank provide that one in seven of every population is a person with a disability. Therefore one billion people in the World are estimated to be PWDS. With a Ugandan population of more than 38.8million, an estimated more than 5 million persons are believed to be PWDS.

However, the National Census of 2014 put the population of PWDS at 12.4% that is 4.4 million persons. This population was said to have increased to 6millions in 2016. We have a set of 6 standard questions known as the Washington Group of Questions used when counting PWDS. However when conducting the National Census and the House Hold Surveys, prefer to use some of these questions and leave out others so the results are always contradicting

In the absence of reliable data it is very difficult to properly plan, programme and budget for PWDS

EDUCATION OF PWDS.

Education is a right to all. Indeed Uganda has a Special Needs Education under the Ministry of Education and Sports. However this department is not only highly underfunded but it is also understaffed. The Disability Act provides for 10% of the education to go to education of persons with disabilities but this vote only gets 0.1%. According to a UNICEF survey of 2014, only 9% of children with disabilities of the primary school going age were enrolled in primary schools. Only 2 out of 10 disabled pupils in Primary seven make it to Senior one. There is a high inadequacy of SNE Teachers/Instructors in schools. At Makerere University, blind students

reported having been asked to read and interpret their Brailled exams in order to have their Brailled exam scripts graded. This is not torturous but traumatizing.

The Summit's commitment was to have inclusive schools, however, since 2011 Uganda designed the Disability inclusive education policy and it has never been finalized. Attainment of education has a positive and transformative influence on lives and welfare around the world. Denial of education to children with disabilities denies them these positive transformation and their welfare is at balance.

HEALTH:

Despite the enormous challenges faced by persons with different disabilities in this health sector, ranging from assistive devices, facilities for mothers with disabilities in antenatal and labour wards, lack of medical requirements like sun screen lotions for persons with albinism to lack of drugs for persons with mental disabilities, there is lack of a budget vote for PWDS in this health sector. The concerns of PWDS are found scattered in other budget votes and whenever there is any shock in the health sector, the monies which would have gone to work on a disability issue is re allocated because disability is not regarded as life threatening and therefore not urgent!

The Summit made a commitment to avail assistive devices to 500000 PWDS by 2030. Uganda therefore needs to make strategies to ensure that part of her disability community also benefit from this development.

Too Parliament need not to pass a budget of this Ministry without a specific budget vote for PWDS.

ICT:

Despite the provision in the Constitution and in the Uganda Communication Commission Act to guarantee the right to access communication and to available technology, PWDS especially those with sensory disabilities like deaf, blind and deaf-blind persons still find it difficult to access and use the available technology. Microsoft was among the companies at the Summit and committed to make technology accessible to PWDS. It is imperative that Parliament checks on the commitments made by the Ministry of ICT in the Summit especially in budgetary terms to ensure realization and benefits by PWDS.

Too, the Government of the UK made a commitment to construct a disability friendly ICT HUB in Kenya. Uganda must strategize to make use of this HUB.

EMPLOYMENT

According to the global report on disability by WHO and the World Bank, persons with disabilities are the poorest of the poor and they live below the poverty line. Women with disabilities and those with sensory disabilities are poorer than the others. The report continues to say that majority of these PWDS live on the margins of society and they live in developing countries where it is very difficult for them to get education, skills training and hence employment.

The Summit made a commitment that PWDs must be trained in employable skills and job quotas must be reserved for them by both national governments and the private sector. We need to see these commitments in Uganda. It is sad to note that since the 8th Parliament when we, MPs representing PWDS successfully lobbied for a disability grant, since then the grant amounts to only 3 Billion shillings, despite the fact that the number of persons with disabilities keep on increasing. Too, there is mismanagement of this fund at the district level. Hence there is an urgent need to increase this fund to at least 12 Billion Shillings and streamline its allocation and management.

The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social development has to give annual reports to Parliament on the employment status PWDS. However it has never given a single report.

REALIGNING THE SDGS TO THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

The 2030 global agenda that is the Sustainable Development Goals emphasize the issue of leaving no one behind. And both the SDGS and the UNCRPD talk of working on all these issues to all people of the World. Uganda is destined to achieve the middle income status by 2020. However there has never been a single meeting or strategy to realign the SDGS to the UNCRPD. With all these omissions among so many others, it was very difficult for me to defend Uganda's position on its commitment to the inclusion agenda of PWDS, the major theme for this global Summit.

I therefore strongly recommend that, Parliament does the following:

Appoints a select committee to specifically handle the Sustainable Development Goals. Among other things; this select committee must make a matrix and relate the SDGs to international and regional commitments, to the national development agenda under NDP11 and allocate specific activities to the relevant committees to ensure that these fall up these global commitments through the implementing ministries and report to Parliament. If we don't do this, Uganda will continue to be embarrassed in such global summits. Uganda will not be taken serious and will continue to miss out on opportunities like the ICT Hub to be built in Kenya, the economic empowerment programmes which are going to be implemented in Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and others.

Too, Parliament need to fall up on the process of developing of Uganda's performance report to the forthcoming SDG evaluation.

On another note, Uganda was selected to host the COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION CONFERENCE OF 2020. As Parliament we must be prepared to present a report on our progress, in reference to what we have done to realize disability inclusion.

Signed by:



Safia Nalule-Juuko, (Hon.)

National Woman MP PWDS

Vice Chairperson Human Rights Committee.

Attached are the boarding passes as confirmation of accountability for the travel to UK.