

Newsletter 22 June 2019

Reflecting on past newsletter from us at AfriNEAD, it is amazing to read about the activities we engage in and accomplish, based on the fact that this office is not run on a full time basis. So although our aim is the produce a quarterly newsletter every year, our time is taken up with simple focusing on the events of AfriNEAD. This time the biggest event in our minds is how to host the 6th AfriNEAD conference in Cape Town in 2020. The intention was that AfriNEAD will host 2 bi-annual conferences in South Africa and 3 tri-annual conference in countries outside South Africa. Our Colleagues from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Ghana did us proud. A special issue of the African Journal on Disability –AJOD - was tabled from the 3rd AfriNEAD conference in Zimbabwe in 2011. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology emerged from the 5th AfriNEAD conference in 2017 with GhaNEAD which intend to ensure at grass root levels that the work done by AfriNEAD is emulated. A special issue with the AJOD, from this conference is towards completion.

1. 2020 6TH AFRINEAD CONFERENCE

A lot of consultation with the governing structure of AfriNEAD went into coining the theme for the 6^{th} AfriNEAD conference and as we informed you in the previous email the theme for the 6^{th} AfriNEAD conference is:

"Disability unplugged – Beyond convention and Charters: what really matters to persons with disabilities in Africa."

The date for this conference is: 30th November 2020 – 3rd December 2020. With the plan that the 3rd of December, being the International Day of Disability, AfriNEAD and Stellenbosch University join hands with regional, international and local AfriNEAD delegates to celebrate the 3rd of December - more information will follow on this item.

The plans for now are that the conference will be held at the Artscape Theatre Centre, with the possibilities of both pre and post workshops, which has become common practice at AfriNEAD conferences, and that unlike before we will not have break away session, but rather have more meaningful session in the form of a key note speaker, two other presentations and then a panel discussion.

A committee has been formed to get the wheels going for the conference, with three meetings already having been held. Drawing from the AfriNEAD booklet that has been used by countries in the past 3 conferences - various subcommittees have also been established to work on different aspects of the conference. So early days but there is much to do if we have to live by the intention of bringing the conference back home – which is to strengthen and re-orientate the network.

We are encouraging prospective presenters to start thinking about how their work speaks to the conference theme (see Appendix 1 for guidance). The eight commissions guiding AfriNEAD Conferences are based on the UNCRPD. Hence, we encourage that presenters use the UNCRPD's ABC implementation toolkit attached to Appendix 1 to guide the work that they intend to present at this conference.

2. AFRICAN JOURNAL OF DISABILITY

Our journal the African Journal of Disability (AJOD) is always the pride of this Network. Towards end of last year it became fully registered with Scopus and this really further strengthen this valuable resource of our Network. Soon it will be tabling a special issue from the 2017 conference in Ghana. It continues to be steered by a very capable editor in Chief Dr Charlotte Capri and Co-editors in Chief Dr Martha Geiger and Dr/Sister Francis Awusu – Ansaah. Prof Leslie Swartz continues giving support and highlighting areas that might undermine the functioning of AJOD. He had already highlighted to the AfriNEAD secretariat of the authorship fees that are asked by the publisher which are undermining the possibility of authors both regionally and internationally in using the AJOD as a home for their articles. This is a challenge especially for the Regional authors as this undermines the intention of this journal i.e. also publishing articles that are written by African academics to build African scholarship that will start assisting in developing an African understanding of disability. Part of having AfriNEAD back in Cape Town would be to see how to strengthen the AJOD.

------BREAKING NEWS------

Charlotte Capri – current editor of AJOD and Leslie Swartz today – pass editor – well not really! In 7 years Leslie has got AJOD into Scopus and Pubmed. With foresight from AfriNEAD-partners and KNUST (Ghana), and amazing support from our publisher, AOSIS, in Cape Town, Celebrations at the publishing of the 2018 edition. Thank you!!



3. INFO-MAP PROJECT -GOOGLE PROJECT - WEBINAR MEETING

As you may remember, for the last 3 years SAFOD, together with Washington University and AfriNEAD have been working on the Google Project from Botswana. This has involved collecting information in the Southern African region on Assistive devices and 'mapping' where they are to be found. This project has covered 10 DPOs in Southern Africa. A paper has been published with the AJOD: Visagie SJ, Matter R, Kayanga GM, Chiwaula M, Harniss M, Mji G, Scheffler ES. Lessons from the pilot of a mobile application to map-assistive technology suppliers in African *Journal of Disability* (2018); **7**(1). As part of dissemination of the research outcomes of the project a webinar on AT was tabled at Stellenbosch University in February 2019.

The Webinar on AT in Southern Africa was the very first held by AfriNEAD as part of giving its researchers a platform to disseminate research evidence, AND WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. It was also a huge learning curve and we are extremely grateful to Yusuf Ras, the Head of Medicine and Health Sciences Library, for his very generous support in setting up the technical links for the Webinar – we had about 25 people come and attend the event and over 100 people register for the webinar, however only about 80 people directly participated on line, which I think was wonderful for our very first Webinar. Continuing with the disseminating strategy SAFOD is tabling an AT EXPO in Namibia in October 2019 (for further information see appendix 3 & 4).

4. DISABILITY RESEARCH NETWORK MEETING

On the 10-12 April Gubela attended a Disability research network meeting in the University of KwaZulu Natal that was organised by Professor Jill Hanass Hancock from the South and steered by Prof Paul Lynch from the North and funded by DFID. The aim of the meeting was:

- Establishment of sustainable partnerships between Global North and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) disability researchers to serve as a foundation for knowledge sharing and skill transfer to advance excellence in disability research in SSA.
- Development a strategy to build a disability hubs with SSA researchers and improve research and training capacity in SSA in the field of disability.

There was also a need to determine how the new structure will interface with AfriNEAD. Jill will initiate a meeting with Gubela to discuss the relationship between the 2 structures. A request was also tabled to inaugurate this meeting during the 2020 AfriNEAD conference.

ALTER: EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR DISABILITY RESEARCH (ESDR)

Gubela will be attending an ALTER/ESDR conference in Cologne on the 5-6 September 2019 entitled: Histories, Practices, and Policies International, Comparative and Transdisciplinary perspectives. An AfriNEAD abstract has been accepted. Gubela will also meet with the President of ALTER /ESDR Isabelle Ville and Joanne Woiak (President Society for Disability Studies SDS) to discuss future collaboration as well as the coming 2020 AfriNEAD conference.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in AfriNEAD.

Kind Regards
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Appendix 1

The 6th AFRINEAD conference welcomes persons with disabilities, researchers, business personnel, policy makers, activists and practitioners to share scholarship and ideas on what really matters to persons with disabilities. The theme for the conference is: **Disability unplugged – Beyond convention and Charters: what really matters to persons with disabilities in Africa**. Looking at the conference theme, 2020 will be all about *impact*. It is one that should give evidence based solutions to actions in disability work - or a map, a plan for the future, a blue print for going forward.

Through a wide range of perspectives, knowledges and methodologies, this conference warmly invites you to participate in a common exploration of questions such as, but not limited to, the following:

- What is the impact of the research (work) that I am doing now?
- How has my work impacted on policy and practice?
- How can my work inspire persons with disabilities and other stakeholders in the disability sector?
- Does my work go beyond rhetoric and bring meaningful change in the lives of persons with disabilities?
- Is this work going to continue to have an impact on the lives of person with disabilities in the future?

If you want to submit an abstract to present at the conference and perceive that this is not where your research/work is try to use these questions to organise it so that it can be used to influence policy and practice towards realisation of human rights by persons with disabilities. We want attendees to leave the conference empowered and excited about evidence based disability programmes and practices. Abstracts for presenters will be organised around these eight thematic areas which have been drawn from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD):

- Research Evidence and Utilization
- Children & Youth with Disabilities
- Education: Early Childhood to Tertiary
- Economic Empowerment
- Development Process in Africa: Poverty, Politics, and Indigenous Knowledge systems
- Health and HIV & AIDS
- Community based rehabilitation
- Holistic Wellness: Sport, Recreation, Sexuality and Spirituality

As you start thinking about organising your work, we draw your attention to the UNCRPD's ABC's of implementation Section 4 (http://www.dpi.org/convention-on-the-rights-of/crpd-tool-kit/convention-on-the-rights-of.pdf) as a guiding framework.

Submission Deadline for Paper Abstracts, Exhibition Application, Extended to July 31

Section Four: How do we begin to implement the new convention?

By the end of Section 4 you should

Understand the environment in which implementation will take place

Have a good idea how your organization can work on implementation

Understand the importance of ongoing evaluation

The ABC's of Implementation!

Implementing a <u>UN convention</u> is a complicated and potentially overwhelming thing to attempt! There is so much that can be done that in many cases, NGOs tend to focus only on <u>monitoring</u> and the work of the treaty body; but in fact, that is only a small part of what implementation can and should be all about. This section will offer a framework for the development of an implementation program – something that we like to call "the ABCs of Implementation."

A dopt a Rights-based Vision

B uild a Constituency for Change

C ount your successes and setbacks

A dopt a Rights-based Vision

In section 2 of this toolkit, we spoke about the shift to a rights-based approach. We noted too that although organizations like DPI have been calling for some time for disability to be addressed as a human rights issue (rather than a medical, charity, or social welfare issue), the CRPD is the first legally binding international document to do so. With the adoption of the CRPD, we argued that disability advocates now have a powerful tool to use in framing their advocacy in human rights terms!

We also referred to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), who say that a rights-based approach involves the following characteristics

Express linkage to human rights – here this means linking disability issues to the full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and it means talking about disability issues using the language of human rights.

Accountability – using a rights-based approach requires identifying *who* are the *rights-holders* (the people claiming their rights) and who are the *duty-holders* (the people who have the duty to protect and promote enjoyment of the rights in question).

Empowerment – rights-based approaches focus on the empowerment of rights-holders. This is the opposite of a charitable approach, where the recipients of the charity are passive and have no say in what action is taken.

Participation – rights-based approaches require the *full participation of all relevant stakeholders*. Non-discrimination and attention to vulnerable groups – rights-based approaches call for specific attention to issues like discrimination, equality, equity and groups of persons who have been particularly marginalized.

Turning theory into practice!

So what does this mean, and how does it translate into setting an agenda for action for you and your organization? We propose a three-step process to achieve this.

Step 1 – Environmental scan

Step 2 – Match the environment to your own agenda

Step 3 – Develop a vision of full implementation of this right

Step 1 – Environmental Scan

Section three of this Toolkit provides a handy summary of the Convention - a sort of 'thumbnail sketch' of each of the articles of the CRPD. Review this summary and at the same time, think of the work that your organization does, or would like to do, in the future.

Step 2 – Match the environment to your own agenda

Think a little more about what your organization is doing, or would like to do. Connect that to the article that is most closely related to that work. In the Ratification Toolkit DPI presented a helpful tool for this type of activity called "SWOT Analysis."

As we noted there, SWOT Analysis is an effective way of looking at your environment and identifying the Strengths and Weaknesses, and of examining the Opportunities and Threats your organization will face. In the context of implementation of the new Convention, SWOT Analysis can also help focus your activities in areas where your group is strong, and where the greatest opportunities lie. SWOT will also help you determine areas of weakness that you may either fix or work around in your efforts to implement and monitor the Convention in your country.

Step 3 – Develop a vision of full implementation of this right

Now that you have connected your work to a specific article in the <u>CRPD</u>, we suggest that you go to the treaty itself and carefully review the article to see just what it says the right involves and how it should be realized.

EXERCISE: SWOT WORKSHEET

Build a Constituency for Change

As we noted in Section two, with the exception of Article 23 of the <u>Convention on the Rights of the Child</u>, none of the core <u>human rights conventions</u> even mentions persons with disabilities. Although the human rights expressed in those conventions certainly apply to persons with disabilities, governments and society as a whole have not done a very good job of ensuring that persons with disabilities fully enjoy their human rights.

At the same time, governments have not done a good job of reporting to <u>treaty monitoring bodies</u> about how they are applying the various human rights conventions to persons with disabilities. The monitoring bodies in turn have not done a good job of asking for this information. As a result, some people have noted that persons with disabilities have been effectively "invisible" within the UN human rights system.

This "invisibility" has in turn made it difficult for disability activists to get the UN human rights system to pay attention to disability issues. It is anticipated that with the adoption of a convention specifically addressing the human rights of persons with disabilities this situation will change, by giving the system some legally binding human rights standards that clearly apply to persons with disabilities. In addition, it is anticipated that establishing a committee on the rights of persons with disabilities will bring disability expertise into the international human rights system, and then the other treaty monitoring bodies would be able to learn from this body and start addressing disability issues in their own work.

Given all of these factors, the time is ripe to start reaching out to groups and governments to begin getting them to pay more attention to disability issues, and to do so in a rights-based framework. Turning theory into practice!

Here again we offer three steps that stem from the rights-based vision we asked you to develop in the previous section. They are:

Step 1 – Identify the objectives you will need to meet to realize your vision

Step 2 – Identify activities that will help move your agenda forward

Step 3 – Identify collaborators from the larger community

Step 1 – Identify the objectives you will need to meet to realize your vision

How this evolves will depend on many different factors. Information from the environmental scan and SWOT Analysis will be key to planning this wisely. However, despite the variance from issue to issue, or from country to country, it is always the case that the pursuit of a large goal or what we called above, a "rights-based vision," will involve a series of steps along the way. For example, if your organization were to identify education as its priority, then you would need to look at the factors involved in ensuring equal access to education, including everything from teacher training to

accessible buildings and information, and many, many other things as well. These are what we mean by objectives to meet your goal.

Step 2 - Identify activities that will help move your agenda forward

As we noted at the beginning of this section, implementing a UN treaty is a complicated and potentially overwhelming thing to attempt! There is so much that can be done that in many cases, NGOs tend to focus only on monitoring and the work of the treaty body, but in fact that is only a small part of what implementation can and should be all about. We hope that by now it is becoming clear that, while very important, treaty body work and things like shadow reporting are only a part of how civil society can implement the CRPD.

If all NGOs were to do was report on instances where education, as an example, did not measure up to their "rights based vision," this would be important to note. However, it does not begin to take advantage of all the opportunities presented by the new Convention for activities, such as the development of resources to improve the quality of education for governments and administrators, or training and the development of resource materials to enhance the quality of education for students with disabilities.

It is these later measures, like the provision of training or resources that can be most effective in moving society closer to the goal of inclusive and accessible education. It is also through these sorts of activities that we can really begin to address the invisibility issue, which is often at the core of many barriers faced by people with disabilities.

Step 3 – Identify collaborators from the larger community

Again, on this issue of invisibility, the CRPD offers a wonderful opportunity to begin to reach out to groups beyond those with whom DPOs traditionally work. Through the whole convention development process, DPI and many other DPOs have begun to develop linkages with other human rights and equity seeking organizations. Equally, our connections to governments have expanded into areas where we had not been able to establish much useful contact in previous efforts. Once you have identified the areas that are important to your organization's agenda, and decided on the types of activities you wish to undertake to achieve your goal or your "rights-based vision," you should think carefully about whom in the community is also a stakeholder on this issue in question. From there you will need to determine who among this group are likely to be your allies, and with this list in hand, you should begin to approach others with your ideas and see if they are open to collaboration. As noted above, the Convention development process was full of this type of activity, and in many cases the results were very positive.

Perhaps the single best example of this is the collaboration with governments themselves! Those of us involved in advocacy work are familiar with the often adversarial relations between <u>civil society</u> and governments, but the development of the CRPD was an exception to this and should serve as an example as we move forward to the implementation stage.

Count your Successes and Setbacks

Finally, with the ABC's of implementation we come to the point of evaluation. Its essential to have a clear sense of what has worked and what has not. Only with evaluation will your organization be able to learn from its mistakes and emulate its successes. Evaluation and self-analysis is the key to organizational growth and improvement.

There are entire books and websites devoted to evaluation and the many important things to be considered. They go well beyond the scope of this toolkit, and users are encouraged to seek out more information. Having said this, a few key principles are worth noting here as being essential for a good evaluation process. The following are taken and adapted from the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Evaluation Policy, available on line at

http://www.netpublikationer.dk/um/7571/html/chapter09.htm

These principles reflect the core values of effective evaluation work. The guiding principles consider the fundamental expectations of both evaluators, and the evaluation processes.

Independence – the evaluator's judgments are not influenced by pressure or conflict of interest.

Evaluation team members must not have been engaged in the activities to be evaluated.

Impartiality – the personal preferences of the evaluator do not affect the evaluation. Evaluations must give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses.

Objectivity – the evaluation rests on verifiable findings of fact. Judgments must be clearly separated

from factual statements.

Transparency – features, issues and decisions significant to the evaluation are identified and explained clearly.

Feasibility – the appropriate methodology and resources required by the evaluation are available.

Propriety – the evaluation does not harm individuals.

Cost-efficiency – the evaluation is done at least cost.

Accuracy – the data do not contain errors of significance to the evaluation.

Fairness – evaluations give a balanced presentation of strengths, weaknesses and different views.

Credibility – the evaluation is conducted in such a way that the results are believed.

Usefulness – the evaluative process and the information it produces are utilized by users and stakeholders.

Click here to link to Toolkit Evaluation

Appendix 3

The Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD has extended the deadline for receiving paper abstracts and application for exhibitions of Assistive Technology (AT) at the Southern Africa Assistive Technology Expo (SAATE), to be held from 23 to 25 October 2019 at the Namibia's largest Conference Centre, the Safari Court Hotel & Conference Centre, in the Capital City, Windhoek.

31 July 2019 is the new application deadline for both those who want to showcase different types of AT, and it is submission deadline for those want to present papers or facilitate workshops and roundtables that explore best AT product delivery models for southern Africa; reflect on role of international NGOs and development actors; examine policy and regulations to increase access, including financing mechanisms; and most importantly advance local innovations of appropriate AT solutions, products and services. The SAATE 2019 will bring together representatives of leading public, private and non-governmental organizations - including academia, government representatives, Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), just to mention a few – from around the world to share insights and build networks to advance the AT sector within Southern Africa. Expo activities aim to explore and find practical solutions to a myriad of AT challenges in the region, while increasing general awareness of AT products and the AT sector as a whole. This event serves as an important component of the AT-Info-Map project, a project jointly run by SAFOD, the University of Washington and the African Network for Evidence-to-Action in Disability (AfriNEAD), which was established to map the current availability of different types of AT in ten countries in Southern Africa using a mobile application and web-based database. The Expo, in particular, builds on the AT-Info-Map project to contribute towards the long-term goal of increasing AT access for persons with disabilities, and influencing AT awareness among DPOs and their members, Governments and their agencies, and the public.

The core thematic priorities for SAATE 2019 include:

- 1) Right to AT for inclusive education
- 2) Right to AT for inclusive employment (formal and informal)
- 3) Right to AT for home living (daily living aids, adaptive environments)
- 4) Right to AT for community living (moving about, accessible buildings, transportation, voting, recreation)
- 5) Right to AT for access to criminal justice system (police, courts)
- 6) Right to AT for arts, crafts and other creative expressions

Organizers acknowledge that the thematic priorities listed above on their own may exclude critical presentations/round tables that examine parts of the AT sector such as production, procurement, provision, etc. but not linked to specific activity (for instance education). Applicants are, therefore, encouraged to contact us to discuss this further if their presentation explores critical issues not clearly linked to the core thematic priorities above but they strongly feel they would make interesting discourse at the Expo.

More information about abstracts submission, including online submission form, can be found on this link here: http://saate.org/abstracts.html

More information about AT exhibitions and what to exhibit can be found here: http://saate.org/exhibitions.html

Appendix 4

Report of the AT-Info-Map-Project

1. Webinar

As observed at the review meeting last month, the webinar generally went well. However the set-back was that there was a technical problem that prevented the recording of the video for those who were unable to participate. I had done an audio recording of almost the whole webinar so that I could later transcribe in the form of a report that can also be uploaded on the website. Unfortunately the recorder was stolen here together with the laptop bag for Louisa after we came back. So what I have are just the questions but I can't recollect exactly how we responded to each and every question. So all that I did was just to upload the presentations on the website and not the actual conversations.

2. New app.

The good news is that the app is live on both Google Play Store and App Store, and the download links can be accessed here: http://atinfomap.org/app.html (or simply a search using 'ATInfoMap' keyword on both stores would still take you straight to the download page). The bad news is that both apps still have a few bugs that need to be fixed, and the iOS app on the app store has even more serious bug that prevents the listings from appearing.

Another important issue is that the app cannot run on Android and iOS platforms that are lower than version 8.0 respectively, because those are the new minimum requirements on both Google Play and App Store. To address this, they have to downgrade the app and upload the lower version directly on the SAFOD server to cater for the users whose phones may not be up-gradable to version 8.0.

Ashveer (the app developer) changed jobs and we are now working with his new employer to finish all work related to the app. We hope they will be able to fix all outstanding app issues soon.

3. Journal article

It's good news that the article has finally been accepted for publishing in the AJOD. Congratulations to Surona for the excellent work! Please keep us in the loop if there are any other updates that we need to be aware of.

4. Expo Preparations.

This month, we have been prioritizing on two of the most important aspects of the expo event preparations; the event budget and the marketing plan. We are done with both documents. Ideally, the marketing plan will guide us how we are going to engage with different stakeholders to ensure that we do not only secure participation of delegates, but also that we have people interested to send in abstracts for the workshops, round-tables and lectures, as well as exhibitors sending in their registrations. On the other hand, the entire event budget will now provide us with clear estimates of expenses and income projections. Please find attached the two docs for your review.

We hope that Tone and Tendekayi who are specifically mentioned in the Marketing Plan to help us with real-life experiences/stories of locally designed/produced AT at Lorewo and Deaftronics respectively, will indeed send us the articles so that they can inspire other people to share their own stories on the website and in newsletters that we will be sending out regularly from now until the Expo as part of the marketing plan. We also hope that the stories will inspire local innovators who cannot sponsor themselves to apply for scholarships to be able to come to SAATE and share their work, subject to availability of SAATE scholarship funding.

Please also see attached a flyer for the expo for your records.

5. Fundraising

The only critical document remaining is the fundraising strategy which will be ready by march 31st, but meanwhile we can begin implementing the Marketing Strategy in earnest (in fact we have already started implementing by sending out an expo invitation newsletter to the ACAT community over the weekend and we will post more announcements on other platforms this week, including on the GATE Community). Both the Marketing and Fundraising docs will complement each other, but the fundraising strategy will specifically look at what exactly we're going to do to raise funds from various stakeholders, and will also include specific templates for fundraising letters of requests, proposals, etc for our internal use throughout the preparatory period.

6. 1st Leadership Meeting after Feb 28th

The good news is that it is the Google contract/funding that officially expired on February 28th, not the AT-Info-Project *per se*:). We will do our best to ensure that we are not only marketing the Expo but also the entire project, including the associated products/services like the app and website database. So once in a while, it would be good to resume review meetings for the project leadership just to share some updates whenever time permits for everyone.

On our part at SAFOD Secretariat, we would like to ensure that we complete all the donkey work related to the expo this month i.e. the fundraising strategy this week, and then from 1st April going forward we can begin to focus more on both implementation of everything we have put in writing as well as focus on scheduled leadership meetings for updates and evaluation. So Thursday, 4th April (5 pm SAST), will be the earliest most convenient date for SAFOD Secretariat with regards to the next Advisory Committee meeting. Please let us know what you think?

7. Letter to WHO and other strategic players

Becky shared with the SAFOD Secretariat some more ideas of how best we frame the communication to WHO and others. It will also be very useful in our process of developing the fundraising strategy which will include several customized templates. So we are concurrently reviewing her input and the other templates that we're developing together, for both the expo specifically and the entire project in general.

As hinted above, our interest is to ensure that we continue fundraising for the AT-Info-Map moving forward. In this context, we did upload a short proposal on the <u>GlobalGiving.org</u> crowdfunding platform on this link: https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/southern-africa-a-t-information-and-advocacy-prgram/. This was uploaded on the deadline day for their current accelerator program:

https://www.globalgiving.org/acceleratorhub/. I urge all to contribute at least \$10 each (a), or alternatively, support this cause by creating your own personalized fundraising pages here:

https://www.globalgiving.org/dy/v2/fundraisers/start/?fundraiser.projids=39150