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INTRODUCTION

SAFOD remains steadfast in its commitment to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities and to leave no one behind, this is only achieved by working together with governments, donors, the private sectors and with the full participation of organizations of persons with disabilities. For the past 35 years SAFOD had a membership of 10 countries, as the organization was growing and expanding its scope, in the year 2022 it registered six (6) new national federations.

Today, SAFOD is an esteemed and reputable organization constituting 16 national affiliates in the Southern Africa region. The expansion of SAFOD membership is influenced by its greatest desire to cascade impact through its national federations and achieve inclusive societies for all persons with disabilities in the region. This milestone is also triggered by the need to strengthen a strategic alliance with the SADC secretariat, influence policies at a regional level and lobby for the establishment of a disability desk at SADC. SAFOD continued to deepen and broaden the relationship with OPDs, policy makers, donors, academia, women, and youth. In the year 2022 SAFOD through the support from donors such as Christian Blind Mission, UNICEF, Loughborough and the long-standing donor FFO implemented projects that contributed to SAFOD mission “to advocate for the rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure promotion of inclusive development and human rights for Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa Region”.

Resource Mobilization Activities

SAFOD developed a Resource Mobilization plan and sustainability plan. The objective of the plan is to mobilize resources for SAFOD secretariat and its national affiliates in the 14 countries. SAFOD uses a combination of approaches such as engaging new bilateral donors, retaining old ones.

Project proposals

SAFOD has entered partnership with: UNICEF in collaboration with 5 national affiliates which are Botswana, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. ‘#Inclusive-Young-Voices’ Project: A Youth and Children’s Online Advocacy on Disability Mainstreaming in Southern Africa Using Social Media and Other Online Tools.

SAFOD has developed the ‘#Inclusive-Young-Voices’ Regional pilot project to empower youths and children with disabilities (aged 15 – 24 years old) with cutting-edge online tools/social media skills in advancing the disability mainstreaming agenda in their countries and across the SADC region through a coordinated online media campaign. The skills will support them to advocate for national and regional policies, programs, and systems that accelerate their access to inclusive and quality education, health care services, rehabilitation services, recreation opportunities, and other aspects of development that they, themselves, will prioritize. The overall goal of the ‘#Inclusive-Young-Voices’ Regional Project was to provide a platform for youths and children with disabilities in using social media and other online tools in advocating for the effective mainstreaming of disability within national and regional youth/children development frameworks in the SADC region as well as digitizing disability rights advocacy to catch up with the digital era of advocacy and communication.

SAFOD has also entered a three-year partnership with Christian Blind Mission in collaboration with Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. The project is on enhancing Disability-Inclusive DRR capacities and Strengthening resilience against climate-related disasters in the South-East Africa region. The collaboration includes seven local partners, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Zambia Federation of the disability organizations, (ZAFOD) in Zambia, Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI) and Federation of Organisations of disabled people in Zimbabwe (FODPZ) in Zimbabwe, Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD), and Federation of Disability Organisation in Malawi (FEDOMA) and Malawi Council for Disability Affairs (MACODA) in Malawi developed a joint proposal to build capacity of OPDs on Disability disaster risk reduction, and create awareness on DIDRR issues, to ensure preparedness on risk reduction for persons with disabilities. The objective of the project is to contribute to reducing the increased risk of persons with disabilities in climate change-related disasters by strengthening inclusive disaster risk reduction processes and climate change adaptation processes.

SAFOD in partnership with BOFOD and LNFOD submitted a proposal on promoting the inclusion of women with disabilities in the world in entrepreneurship in Botswana and Lesotho by the year 2024 to the African Development bank. The project sought to promote the inclusion and empowerment of women with disabilities in entrepreneurship in Botswana and Lesotho and to realize one of the SDGs which states to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. SAFOD in collaboration with BOFOD developed a concept note on protecting and promoting disability inclusion in sexual reproduction health and social protection of adolescent girls and young women during COVID-19 which was submitted to AIDS and Rights for Southern Africa (ARASA). The objective of the project was to to promote disability inclusion and increase access to sexual and reproductive health services during Covid -19, with a particular emphasis on Adolescent girls and young women with disabilities in Mochudi, Botswana. The project sought to advocate for SRHR, create awareness, knowledge and create community dialogues and meaningful participation to create an enabling environment and garnering wide support and commitment from the general population, particularly adults to ease some of the barriers to accessing services.

Technical Support/Mentorship on fundraising plans/proposals for affiliates trained in 2021

In 2022, SAFOD resource mobilization department continued mentorship and capacity-building support for the affiliates trained in 2021, supporting the affiliates and the attached resource mobilization volunteer mentors to develop proposals for fundraising events. The training started with 5 affiliates, however 3 affiliates, NFPDN in Namibia, FODPZ in Zimbabwe and ZAFOD in Zambia continued with the mentorship.

BOFOD in Botswana and LNFOD in Lesotho paused mentorship due to limited human resources in their respective organizations. In the beginning of the year, the 3 affiliates developed annual resource mobilizing work plans with budgets and fundraising proposals. The resource mobilization department made reviews and made inputs on the fundraising proposals developed. NFPDN and FODPZ produced high-quality proposals and were sub-granted the seed funding to implement their fundraising activities.

Networking & partnership building meetings

In 2022, SAFOD held a series of networking & partnership-building meetings. This included face-to-face meetings in South Africa where various stakeholders were engaged in the Regional Disability Protocol that SAFOD is championing. SAFOD used the opportunity to also explore potential partnerships concerning the upcoming Regional Disability

Some of the actors that were engaged include:

- The Intelligence Transfer Centre
- The Office of Premier Gauteng
- The South African Employers for Disability
- The National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities
- The DPSA Gauteng Office
- The Southern Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

Regional Disability Protocol

Campaign for the Adoption of the SADC Disability Protocol

On the 8th of July SAFOD conducted a Public Webinar on the Campaign for the SADC Disability Protocol. The webinar was attended by a total of 86 participants. During this virtual event SAFOD sought to raise awareness of the ongoing Campaign for the SADC Disability Protocol. SAFOD also presented the current draft of the Protocol, solicited more inputs into the draft, and introduced the terms of reference for an advocacy platform on Disability Protocol.

Regional Disability Roundtable Forum

SAFOD conducted the 2nd Southern Africa Disability Roundtable Forum as a hybrid event in November 2022 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting was a follow-up event to the first roundtable forum that was held in 2017. The second-round table was scheduled to be held in 2020 however due to COVID 19, it had to be postponed to 2022. The Roundtable Forums brought together various actors on triennial intervals to reflect and evaluate the work of SAFOD and the disability movement in the region, share information and experiences, assess the progress being achieved by Governments and other duty bearers with regards to the implementation of development policies and programs affecting persons with disabilities within the region.

The Regional Disability Roundtable Forum was held under the theme: “Leaving no one Behind: Collaborating for a sustainable disability mainstreaming and inclusive development in Southern Africa.” With key thematic focus areas:

- Inclusive Education:
- Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR):
- inclusive development in the SADC.

The Forum evaluated current regional policy frameworks and financing mechanisms for disability programming in the region, including mainly those related to Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) and Inclusive education. Delegates also appraised the progress SAFOD and partners had made in lobbying for the adoption of a regional Disability Protocol at the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) level with the hope of the establishment of a disability desk at the SADC Secretariat as a top priority. The event outcomes were delivered through speeches, keynote addresses, and presentations from various representatives from Inclusion Africa, the World Bank, the African Disability Forum, GIZ, SADC DRR, DPSA, CBM, MIET Africa, AfECN (The Africa Early Childhood Network), FODSWA, ZAFOD, BOFOD, NFPDN amongst others. Key outcomes were also achieved through breakout sessions and panel discussions.

COVID-19 Dissemination Workshop

One of the major activities is the Covid-19 Research Dissemination Webinar which was held on 27th May 2022. During the webinar, different stakeholders learned about the key findings and recommendations from the regional research on the “Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Persons with Disabilities in Southern Africa” that SAFOD conducted in 2021. The dissemination workshop targeted the general public to raise awareness about the issues, as well as specific targets such as SAFOD affiliates and other relevant actors making a total of 62 participants.

The participants made the following comments among others:

- COVID-19 pandemic aggravated the plight of persons with disabilities

- Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, more persons with disabilities were excluded, isolated, and marginalized at the household level, in the communities, and at the national level
- There is a need for legal interventions to enforce disability inclusion as far as national responses to COVID-19 are concerned
- COVID-19 pandemic also resulted in sexual abuse and other forms of gender-based violence against persons with disabilities
- The lack of disaggregation of data remains a key challenge for DPOs to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Governance & Leadership

Regional Executive Committee meetings
Four Regional Executive Committee meetings were held in the year 2022, the aim of these meetings was to provide the SAFOD secretariat the opportunity to give feedback to the REC on project and programme implementation. The REC meetings also provide an opportunity for the REC members to give strategic direction and advisory to the secretariat to drive the organizational mission and foster commitment in advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Capacity building for the secretariat

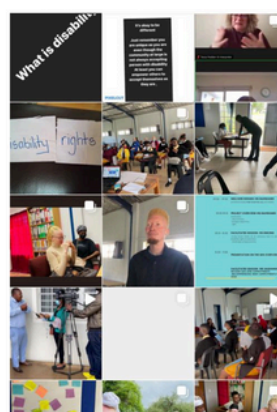
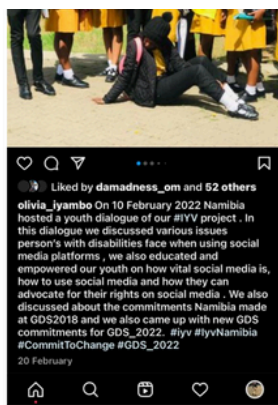
In 2023, the SAFOD Secretariat was trained in a basic sign language training delivered by Botswana Society of the Deaf. The objective of the training was to enhance the communication skills of SAFOD staff, enabling them to better serve the diverse needs of persons with disabilities, particularly those within the deaf community. During the training, SAFOD staff were introduced to the basics of sign language, including common signs, finger spelling, and essential conversational skills.

The training emphasized understanding and using sign language in everyday interactions. Additionally, the training included awareness-raising on the cultural and social aspects of the deaf community. The practical exercises during the sessions allowed the participants to practice sign language and gain the ability to apply what they learned in real-life situations. By the end of the training, SAFOD staff had gained foundational skills in sign language, along with an increased awareness of the importance of accessibility in communication. This training not only strengthened SAFOD's commitment to inclusivity but also equipped its team with the necessary tools to ensure that their interactions with the deaf community are respectful, effective, and empowering.

UNICEF #Inclusive Young Voices project

Funded by UNICEF, this was a four-month regional project piloted in five countries, namely Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Zambia, and Malawi. The project sought to strengthen the capacity of 20 children and youth with disabilities aged 15 to 24 and their OPDs in using social media and other online tools for online advocacy in five pilot countries. Activities under this project were implemented as follows:

Online training of 20 youth ambassadors in social media. The project also seek to digitize disability rights advocacy to catch up with the digital era of advocacy and communication. We are recruiting 20 children and youths with disabilities who are called Youth Ambassadors in the 5 pilot countries (4 kids per country) to lead



others in the implementation of this exciting project in the pilot countries. The project is expected to scale up to all the 16 countries of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) post-March 2022. Data collection and analysis for the child safeguarding assessment and social media use among children with disabilities. The project focused on understanding how children with disabilities use social media in advocating for various issues affecting them at national or even regional levels. Participate in the assessment survey to inform SAFOD on how best it can build the capacity of selected Youths Ambassadors in the five countries and beyond. A series of youth dialogues and engagement meetings with duty bearers in all five countries.

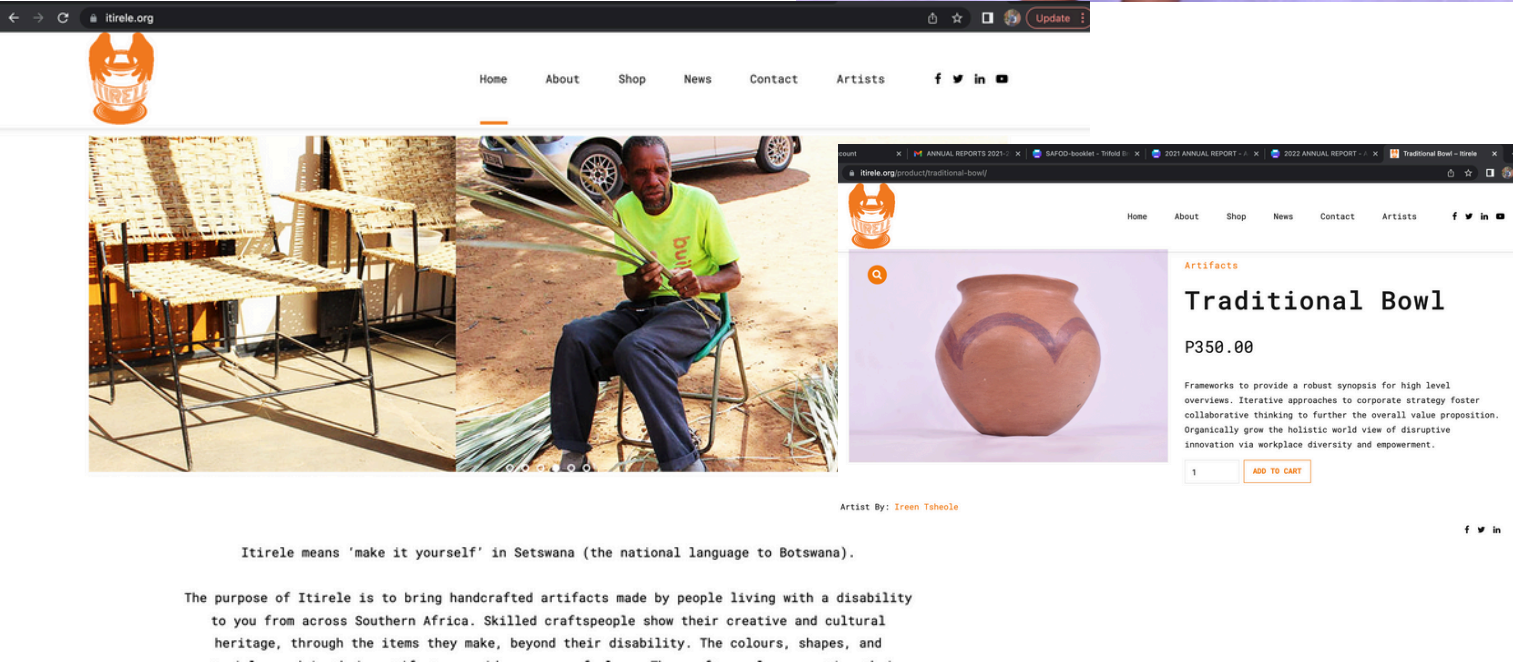
Development of the child safeguarding policy for SAFOD.

The intervention allowed the youth and children to make presentations on the commitments pledged by their Governments at the Global Disability Summit (GDS) 2018 and the progress their respective countries will have made. The presentations were also on how they envision disability mainstreaming to be a priority in their countries, also sharing their experiences as social media influencers as they were expected to have started disability awareness campaigns online and how they can get more youths and children with disabilities to be active in mainstreaming disability and calling for change.



In 2022 SAFOD and Loughborough University implemented a pilot project focusing on enhancing existing networks, supporting artists and craftspeople with disability to develop inclusive sustainable enterprises. A study was conducted to assess the needs of persons with disabilities on economic empowerment. The project targeted 13 crafts people with disabilities in Kgatleng District, Mochudi Botswana. Through this project, a significant milestone was achieved with the construction of a workshop in Mochudi, Kgatleng District. The multi-purpose hall was specifically designed to serve as a hub for arts and crafts activities for local craftspeople with disabilities. It forms part of a broader initiative to create an inclusive, financially sustainable focal point for training, knowledge exchange, and enterprise development. It is envisioned as a place where local artists and craftspeople with disabilities can hone their skills, showcase their work, and access global markets through digital platforms. From the project an e-Commerce website, 'Itirele' was developed to market the artifacts to international markets.







Research projects

Promotion of Inclusivity and Disability Rights among Faith Based Organizations/Actors in Southern Africa.

Atlas Alliance commissioned SAFOD to carry out a qualitative study that involved two methods of data collection namely: semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The study focused on three Southern African countries: Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- Establish the level of understanding of disability rights among the faith-based organizations/actors in terms of knowledge of disability rights;
- Interrogate how disability and impairment in general, are understood, perceived, and treated by different faith-based organizations/actors;
- Find out the nature of cooperation/existing relationships (whether formal or informal) between faith-based organizations/actors and OPDs;
- Unearth the achievements that underlie the existing cooperation (s) between the different faith-based organizations/actors and OPDs, missed opportunities, and recommendations on initiating, promoting and or sustaining vital relationships around disability between faith-based organizations/actors and OPDs.

The Findings of the study reveal that:

- Churches and faith-based organizations/actors in the three countries, there is awareness of disability rights.
- The findings also showed that amongst churches and faith-based organizations, in places of worship, persons with disabilities face several challenges related to accessibility and communication among others

- The results highlighted those churches, mosques and faith-based organizations do not discriminate on the basis of disabilities as they believe that all persons are made in the image of God.
- The study further revealed that some churches and faith-based organizations viewed disability as a punishment for sin and that it can be healed through cleansing, which usually leaves persons with disabilities ashamed and humiliated.
- The results also revealed that different churches, mosques and faith-based organizations viewed disability differently.

The greatest global challenge in the 21st century is adapting to the consequences of climate change, in particular south-eastern Africa which is increasingly affected by extreme weather events such as droughts, heavy rainfall, floods etc. The economic and socio-political situation in these countries exacerbate food and income security. The establishment of inclusive disaster risk reduction systems and inclusive climate change adaptation strategies is essential – even more so for people with disabilities, who have been proven to be at disproportionately higher risk of death in disasters. There is a need to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian aid, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. However, there is often a lack of appropriate translation into national guidelines and national action plans as well as their practical implementation. In addition, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are often not included in the corresponding policy processes at national level and thus do not have the opportunity to adequately address and introduce their concerns. Currently, there are only a few references and commitments to greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the final documents of relevant regional and supra-regional conferences in the African region. Currently, neither SAFOD nor national OPDs from Malawi, Zambia or Zimbabwe are actively involved in regional, Africa-wide, or global policy processes on inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The goal of the project is therefore to contribute to reducing the increased risk of persons with disabilities in climate change-related disasters by strengthening inclusive disaster risk reduction processes and climate change adaptation processes.

CBM project activities

Promote exchange on inclusive Disaster risk reduction between project partners governmental and non-governmental actors of the three countries

SAFOD hosted a side event to launch the DIDRR project. The event was hybrid, 25 participants attended physically (8 males and 17 females) 13 with a disability and 12 without a disability and 13 participated virtually. SAFOD presented the overview of the DIDRR project, the overall objective, the target countries, key activities, and key beneficiaries.

SAFOD hosted its second Disability Regional Roundtable Forum in South Africa, Johannesburg, from the 21st to 23rd November 2022 under the theme “Leaving no one Behind: Collaborating for a sustainable disability mainstreaming and inclusive development in Southern Africa.” The forum was held at the Holiday Inn in Boksburg, Johannesburg, bringing together different disability stakeholders, including OPDs, development partners, research and academic institutions, and corporates. The forum brought together participants who participated physically and virtually. It was hosted under three thematic areas for this which were, Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR), Inclusive Education, and Making a Case for a Regional Disability Protocol.

The round table is held every three years to reflect and evaluate the work of the South African disability movement, share information and experiences, and assess the progress made by governments and other stakeholders in implementing development policies and programmes for people with disabilities in the region.

On the 22nd of November 2022, SAFOD in partnership with CBM hosted a side event to launch the project. This project aims to Enhance disability-inclusive DRR capacities and strengthen resilience against climate-related disasters in the Southeast Africa region. The event was hybrid, 25 attended physically (8 males and 17 females) 13 with a disability and 12 without a disability and 13 participated virtually. During the side event, SAFOD presented the overview of the DiDRR project, the overall objective, the target countries, key activities, and key beneficiaries.

The consensus during the launch was quite positive, from the participants, particularly looking at the gaps that currently exist in the disability movement space. OPDs at different levels, global, regional, and national are not actively involved in regional, Africa-wide or global policy processes on inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. The lack of documentation on good practices of inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and the lack of joint knowledge exchange in the field of inclusive disaster risk reduction at regional level between relevant actors.

Mr. Allen Chaitezvi from CBM in Zimbabwe presented on the Key findings and recommendations from the CBM DiDRR research in three countries. Simon Munde, from FEDOMA in Malawi presented a case study (good practice and lessons learnt). Honorable Deputy Minister, Disability Affairs in Namibia Ms. Alexia Manomba-Ncube made official Remarks to Launch the Project Declared.

Strengthening SAFOD's capacity on inclusive DRR and influencing regional policy processes.

The first training was held on the 7-8 December 2022, on introduction to inclusive DRR and climate change adaptation, the focus of the two-day workshop was on the legal and policy frameworks for the two thematic areas – namely the Sendai Framework for DRR and the UN Climate Change Convention. In the training, participants learnt about the contents of both agreements, but also about the further implementation processes

