



SOUTHERN AFRICA FEDERATION OF THE DISABLED (SAFOD)

COVID-19 RESPONSE STRATEGY

*For Persons with
Disabilities in
Southern Africa*

(APRIL – DECEMBER 2020)

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

BOFOD:	Botswana Federation of the Disabled
CSO:	Civil Society Organisation
DPO:	Disabled People's Organisation
DPSA:	Disabled People South Africa
FAMOD:	Forum of Associations of Disabled People in Mozambique
FAPED:	Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Angola
FEDOMA:	Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi
FFO:	Federation of Disability Organisations in Norway
FODSWA:	Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Swaziland
FOPDZ:	Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Zimbabwe
LNFOOD:	Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled
M & E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
NFPDN:	National Federation of People with Disabilities in Namibia
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
REC:	Regional Executive Council
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SAFOD:	Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
UNCRPD:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ZAFOD:	Zambia Federation of the Disabled.

INTRODUCTION

What started as an epidemic limited primarily to China sometime in December 2019 has now rapidly grown a global pandemic. According the John Hopkins University Covid-19 dashboard, there are now been close to 400,000 confirmed cases of Covid-19 globally as of 24 March 2020, of which over 17,000 deaths have been reported within just a space of three months. This represents one of the fastest epidemics to have happed to mankind.

Popularly referred to as coronavirus, the official name of the disease, however, is Covid-19, the virus that causes the disease called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2, or Sars-CoV-2 for short.

The disease has been detected in more 196 countries and territories, with Italy, the US and Spain experiencing the most widespread outbreaks outside of China. In the UK, there have been 6,000 confirmed cases and over 300 deaths as of March 24.

The disease has affected everyone, directly or indirectly; it is affecting the health and socio-economic status of people in both developed and developing countries alike. People with different forms of disabilities, for obvious reasons, are not spared.

The Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD), which is the umbrella network of national federation of organizations of persons with disabilities in ten countries, currently works in Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Of all these countries, only Botswana, Malawi and Lesotho are yet to report a single confirmed case as of March 24. A response strategy to address potential effects on persons with disabilities in this crisis is not a matter choice. It is a matter of urgency.

What is currently known?

As the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries prepare for strategic multi-stakeholder responses, there are few facts that are currently known affecting persons with disabilities, which have helped to inform the SAFOD's response strategy.

They include:

1. Most Governments in Southern Africa were taken unawares, as a result they are no sufficient funding/resources to address the epidemic especially if it continues to rise. The fear is that if the situation overwhelmed bigger economies like Spain and Italy, chances are that the situation might likely be even frighteningly worse in resource-constrained SADC nations.

2. Of all the preventative and safety information related to COVID-19 so far being shared, none is yet available in accessible formats such as Braille, sign language, large text, etc.
3. There are no specific stand-alone strategies/plans/etc. targeting persons with disabilities even though there are efforts to broadly mainstream disability – at rhetorical/political level – in some of the national response strategies. How such rhetoric is translated into action on the ground remains to be seen.
4. Involvement of persons with disabilities themselves in national response planning efforts has so far been very insignificant.

What is currently unknown?

However, the following critical issues affecting persons with disabilities remain unclear at present, in the absence of any empirical data/research on the ground:

1. Estimates of persons with disabilities already infected and/or affected by the coronavirus within communities, disaggregated by sex and type of disability.
2. Estimates of persons with disabilities at risk of being infected and/or affected by the coronavirus within communities, disaggregated by sex and type of disability.
3. The other challenges being faced by persons with disabilities in accessing health services related to Covid-19, besides inaccessible information related to Covid-19,
4. Other current needs beyond accessible information related to Covid-19 with respect to persons with disabilities in communities.
5. Specific best practices – if available – of disability mainstreaming efforts in national response strategies/plans at all levels – community level, policy level, political level, etc. – on Covid-19 that can be scaled across the region.

What SAFOD seeks to achieve?

Based on what is currently known already, this response strategy proposes a list of interventions targeting persons with disabilities and their carers through our national affiliates who constitute federations of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) in the countries we work.

However, recognizing that there are still quite a lot of significant information that we need to learn at this early stage, SAFOD will continue updating the response strategy, to incorporate some kind of a baseline data. Hence part of the support that we are seeking - whether it is through volunteer work or financial funding - is towards helping us to effectively conduct a data collection and analysis exercise on a consistent basis to enable us to update this response strategy and make remain as relevant possible for millions of persons with disabilities in the region. This data is most likely to be collected through desk research, online interviews through

Skype, online focus groups discussions using teleconferencing platforms, online questionnaire, etc.

The main goal of this regional response strategy is to support SAFOD's national affiliates and other key stakeholders at national levels in the development of effective and inclusive national response strategies that are focused on reducing infection and impact of COVID-19 among persons with disabilities in Southern Africa.

The specific objectives include:

1. To generate and utilize already existing knowledge, evidence and data from research studies, case studies (good practices), etc. related to inclusive responses against COVID-19 for purposes of documentation, shared learning, disability programming, monitoring and evaluation.
2. To engage and influence SADC and its member states to develop/integrate disability inclusive national response plans on COVID-19.
3. To increase the capacity of SAFOD's national affiliate federations of DPOs in ensuring their effectiveness and sustainability in promoting and securing implementation of inclusive interventions on COVID-19.
4. To increase awareness through sensitization and capacity building of DPOs, SADC, Government Departments, Development partners, Civil Society Organisations, Private Sector and the media on inclusive plans, programs and interventions that address COVID-19 and related issues concerning persons with disabilities.
5. To advocate for mainstreaming of disability into health services and programs ensuring increased access to quality health services related to COVID-19 by Persons with Disabilities.
6. To increase and diversify the funding for implementation of this Response Strategy through fundraising and strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, including international development partners, Governments, the private sector, communities, crowd-funding, and individual well-wishers.
7. To strengthen governance, administration and deepen accountability within SAFOD Secretariat and our national affiliates (who are likely going to be sub-grantees) to deliver quality and impactful interventions guided by this Response Strategy.

This zero-draft response strategy, therefore, seeks to leverage on what we already know to design practical interventions that are going to be consistently updated with new information being gathered on the ground before as well as during (throughout) its implementation.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Who We Are?

The Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) is a leading Southern African disability-focused network engaged in coordination of activities of Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) in the Southern Africa region. The organisation was formed in 1986 by persons with disabilities as a federation of DPOs with a strong presence in 10 countries. In each of these countries, we coordinate our programs and activities through our national affiliates, as follows:

1. Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Angola (FAPED);
2. Botswana Federation of Disabled People (BOFOD);
3. Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled (LNFOD);
4. Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA);
5. Forum of Associations of Disabled People in Mozambique (FAMOD);
6. National Federation of People with Disabilities in Namibia (NFPDN);
7. Disabled People South Africa (DPSA);
8. Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Swaziland (FODSWA);
9. Zambia Federation of Disabled (ZAFOD); and
10. Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Zimbabwe (FODPZ).

Our Mission

"To advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities as well as nurturing and strengthening its affiliates and other stakeholders in Southern Africa to ensure promotion of inclusive development and human rights for persons with disabilities."

Our Slogan

SAFOD operates under the following motto: "Unlocking an inclusive society for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa."

Our Vision

"An inclusive society where persons with disabilities are treated with dignity, respect and on the basis of equality."

Our Work

In each of the 10 countries where we operate, our focus is mainly to strengthen the capacity of our affiliates so that they are able to effectively advocate for the rights of the persons with the disabilities in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD); lobby for inclusive policies and programs; and many other activities. SAFOD has successfully implemented activities and programs, delivering on its mission of strengthening DPOs in SAFOD member countries through training, research, coordination, information-sharing, promotion of human rights and stimulating persons with disabilities' political and social development.

In November 2014, SAFOD held the Strategic Planning Retreat in South Africa as part of a consultative process to seek input into the new five-year Strategic Plan for 2016-2020, which is currently under review in preparation for the new 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

The consultative process in 2014 led to the identification of the eight core programs implemented under the Strategic Plan for 2016-2020, as follows:

1. Southern Africa Capacity and Institutional Building Strategy (SA-CIBIS)
2. Southern Africa Program on Inclusive Policies, Legislation and Justice (SA-IPLJ)
3. Southern Africa Disability Research, Documentation & Learning Centre (SA-DRDLC)
4. The Southern Africa Program on Inclusive Access to Health Care Services (SA-PAIHCCARE)
5. Southern Africa Disability Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Program (SA-DEEEP)
6. Southern Africa Disability and Gender Mainstreaming Program (SA-DGMP)
7. Southern Africa Inclusive Education Program (SA-IEP)
8. Southern Africa Development Program for Children and Youth with Disabilities (SA-DCYD)

SITUTATIONAL ANALYSIS

The World Bank and the World Health Organization in their World Disability Report of 2011 estimate that about 15% of the world population consists of persons with disabilities, translating to over one billion persons with disabilities worldwide.

An estimated 80 percent of the world population of persons with disabilities live in developing countries. In Africa, persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable groups: they are often uneducated or ill-educated, unemployed, poor, generally on the margins of society and often have their other rights violated.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) entered into force on 3rd May 2008 as the most comprehensive human rights instrument for persons with disabilities. To date, all countries in Sothern Africa have either signed or ratified the UNCRPD, except Botswana which is still in the access of acceding to the Convection.

Despite the ratification of the Convention by many Southern African states, the lives of persons with disabilities have largely remained unchanged. There is an urgent need for domestication and implementation of the Convention in all Sothern African states and for the implementation of CRPD-aligned African policy tools for the benefit of persons with disabilities.

A study conducted recently by DSPD/DESA, UNOHCHR and ECA identified lack of capacity to implement the CRPD and fully take the potential of the Convention into disability-inclusive development policy and practices, leading to a low degree of compliance in States parties and sustained social exclusion of people with disabilities in many States in Africa as major challenges leading to non-implementation of disability related human rights instruments. Other challenges identified were:

- a. Government officials, members of Parliament and non-governmental organizations in many developing countries do not have the capacity and knowledge on how to promote social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

BASIC FACTS ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN AFRICA

- (a) People with disabilities constitute about 15% of Africa's total population.
- (b) In society, people with disabilities are the poorest of the poor, have limited access to education and employment opportunities, and often suffer stigma and discrimination.
- (c) Children and women with disabilities are the most vulnerable amongst people with disabilities. They often experience multiple forms of discrimination.
- (d) The situation of people with disabilities in Africa is often characterized by severe forms of disability that impair major life functions in significant ways.

- b. Organizations of persons with disabilities do not have adequate knowledge, skills and capacity to represent their rights and participate in society and development on an equal basis with others. Many persons with disabilities, due to lack of educational and employment opportunities and external barriers and discrimination, face obstacles and challenges to realizing and enjoying the rights established under international and national law. It is of importance to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities are able to participate in and contribute to development on an equal basis with others.

There can be no doubt that the plight and the rights of persons with disabilities have been and still are being negated and neglected, as very few states explicitly provide for constitutional protection on the grounds of disability, and even fewer have adopted any form of legislation on disability.

Such a failure of domestic law and other inclusive programmes underscores the importance on the part of SAFOD of providing disability-led technical expertise towards greater integration of persons with disabilities in steering regional and national responses, including the emerging COVID-19 crisis.

As part of the process of developing this COVID-19 Response Strategy, an assessment of the current and potential factors that are likely to affect or influence SAFOD'S operations was undertaken. The aim was to determine what changes may have to be undertaken to ensure that its planned programmes and activities will be within its administrative, technical, professional and financial capabilities. The assessment also aimed at establishing the present and future needs of people with disabilities in the region and by so doing, involve them in providing information that would contribute towards the development of this response strategy.

The factors that comprise SAFOD environment may present it with:

- Opportunities that will enable it achieve its objectives sooner or with fewer resources;
- Situations that will reduce its capacity to attain any of its stated objectives.

The degree to which these factors will affect SAFOD operations depend on its internal weaknesses and strengths. For this reason, it was necessary that SAFOD opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses be identified as a prerequisite for developing a strategic plan that adequately takes account of the aspects within which it will be implemented. Similarly, SAFOD stakeholder analysis was also carried out.

SWOT Analysis in the Context of COVID-19

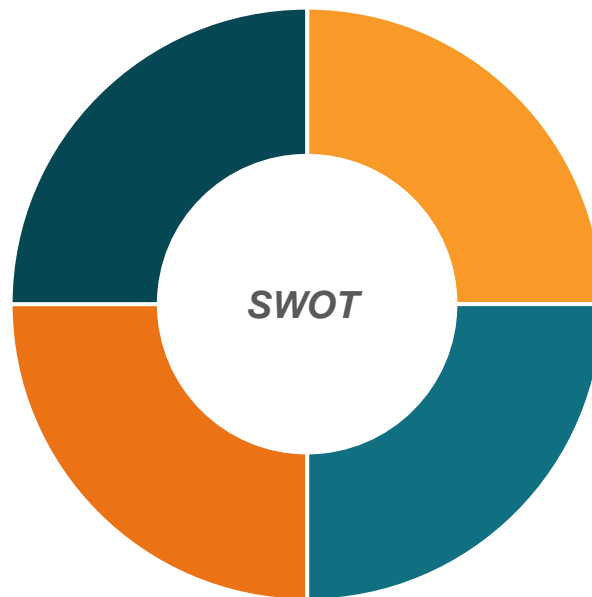
SAFOD's SWOT analysis below has been included to assess the current environment's strengths and weaknesses (internal) and opportunities and threats (external) within the emerging COVID-19 crisis:

STRENGTHS

- Existing regional network of affiliate DPOs (SAFOD).
- Recognition by national umbrella federations affiliated to SAFOD within their countries.
- Active and committed Secretariat.
- Improving relationship with stakeholder (internally and externally).

OPPORTUNITIES

- The adoption of by most ASDC countries.
- Availability of online resources related to COVID-19 increasing day-today.
- New developments in ICT an opportunity for persons with disability and SAFOD management to comfortably use technological advances effectively respond to COVID-19.
- SAFOD's good relationship with some development partners



WEAKNESSES

- Inadequate resources / lack of funding to implement the response strategy.
- Limited technical expertise at the secretariat on COVID-19 issues.
- Poor feedback from members.
- Under staffing at SAFOD Secretariat.

THREATS

- Dependency on donor support (fewer donors) to effectively implement this COVID-19 response strategy.
- A lot still is yet to be learned about how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting persons with disabilities.
- Availability of competent, qualified and willing people with disabilities to work on this project within the region especially during a crisis like COVID-19.

Stakeholder Analysis in the Context of COVID-19

Stakeholder	Areas of engagement with SAFOD	What SAFOD should do
Governments	Information-sharing to persons with disabilities informed on COVID-19	Organize online consultative forums/terms through Skye and other e-conferencing tools.
	Align some of the disability-related activities on COVID-19 with already existing Government plans	Engage through e-conferencing platforms, joint planning and programme implementation.
	Disability mainstreaming within national COVID-19 response plans	Provide technical support/advice in the development and implementation of disability inclusive national response plans.
	Demonstrate models of best practices	Provide technical input in the development of national response plans based on the existing case studies from other countries within and outside Southern Africa.
SAFOD's national Member Federations (affiliates)	Grassroots mobilization, educating and creating awareness on COVID-19 among people with disabilities.	Generate relevant information for affiliate DPOs on COVID-19 and disability, and disseminate within communities.
		Training and technical support
		Provide sub-grants for the implementation of disability related programs at country level.

	Contribute in the production of SAFOD's publications related to COVID-19 response.	Provide national data on vulnerability and actions to people with disabilities' engagement.
	Contribute to SAFODs fundraising activities to support their country plans.	Contribute to SAFODs fundraising activities to support their country plans.
Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)	Promote implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans.	Provide technical input in the formulation of SADC's own regional response strategies/plans for COVID-19 to ensure disability inclusion.
International Development Partners - UN bodies, EU, World Bank and other potential funding partners	Strong and evidence-based proposals and programmes	Build SAFOD's staff capacity to develop strong proposals
	Delivery on projects and donor contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clarify SAFOD's mandate and build the brand ✓ Ensure compliance to donor contracts.
	Support governments in the development of disability-inclusive plans, policies, strategies, and programs on COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SAFOD develops multi-stakeholder e-consultative forums, campaigns, dialogues, etc. ✓ Provide technical support in the development of disability-inclusive funding strategies for COVID-19.
	Hold governments to account for the funding received on COVID-19 response.	SAFOD participates in conducting M & E activities on COVID-19 interventions focused on disability dimensions grants received by Governments.

1. Learning and Research Institutions	Partnerships and creation of information/resources,	Joint research, documentation and dissemination
	Opportunities for learning and practice.	Participate in online workshops, meetings, etc.
2. Private sector	Create awareness and knowledge to stimulate demand on disability-inclusive response on COVID-19.	Hold e-meetings (webinars) / sensitization dialogues with interested private sector firms on COVID-19 response.
	Partnerships and information-sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Foster strong partnerships with the private sector, utilizing opportunities to examine ways to reach out mainly employees, beneficiaries and other business stakeholders with disabilities. ✓ Engage on joint COVID-19 prevention campaigns targeted at employees with disabilities. ✓ Document and share on practices
3. Communities	Create awareness	Though national affiliate federations of DPOs, provide information on COVID-19 targeted at people with disabilities through radio, TV and other media.
	Hold government to account	Encourage SAFOD national affiliates to lobby for consultative planning and joint implementation with their Governments.

RESPONSE PLAN

Based on the foregoing current situational analysis, including the SWOT analysis with regards to SAFOD's capacity to design and implement this COVID-19 response plan, and the stakeholders analysis, it is necessary to outline how we plan to respond to the crisis in countries where we work and, in some circumstances, even beyond.

This section includes identification and analysis of the goals and objectives we seek to achieve, how we want to achieve them, the nature of resources we need, management responsibilities with dates and budgets and making sure results can be tracked.

The operating plan describes how SAFOD and stakeholders will seek to bring different forms services/interventions to key beneficiaries (people with disabilities) and how SAFOD will support its national affiliated federation of DPOs in achieving this regional COVID-19 Response Strategy without endangering the lives of its own workers and implementing partners on the ground, including how we intend to utilize technology logistics as the main vehicle of information sharing in these difficult times.

Goals and objectives

The main goal of this regional response strategy to support SAFOD affiliates and key stakeholders at national levels in the development of effective and inclusive national response strategies that are focused on reducing infection and impact of COVID-19 among persons with disabilities in Southern Africa.

The specific objectives include:

8. To generate and utilize already existing knowledge, evidence and data from research studies, case studies (good practices), etc. related to inclusive responses against COVID-19 for purposes of documentation, shared learning, disability programming, monitoring and evaluation.
9. To engage and influence SADC and its member states to develop/integrate disability inclusive national response plans on COVID-19.
10. To increase the capacity of SAFOD's national affiliate federations of DPOs in ensuring their effectiveness and sustainability in promoting and securing implementation of inclusive interventions on COVID-19.
11. To increase awareness through sensitization and capacity building of DPOs, SADC, Government Departments, Development partners, Civil Society Organisations, Private Sector and the media on inclusive plans, programs and interventions that address COVID-19 and related issues concerning persons with disabilities.

12. To advocate for mainstreaming of disability into health services and programs ensuring increased access to quality health services related to COVID-19 by Persons with Disabilities.
13. To increase and diversify the funding for implementation of this Response Strategy through fundraising and strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, including international development partners, Governments, the private sector, communities, crowd-funding, and individual well-wishers.
14. To strengthen governance, administration and deepen accountability within SAFOD Secretariat and our national affiliates (who are likely going to be sub-grantees) to deliver quality and impactful interventions guided by this Response Strategy.

Key strategic approaches:

In order to affectively implement this Response Strategy for COVID-19, SAFOD shall adopt a people-centred approach based both on our own cumulative experience and that of our membership and national level partners in advancing and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities at both national and regional levels in Southern Africa.

SAFOD creates and holds a strategic niche as a Southern Africa organisation of persons with disabilities championing their own rights. SAFOD is the first regional organisation in Southern Africa bringing together ten national federations from ten different SADC member States having a coordinated focus on the human rights of persons with disabilities. As a regional umbrella organisation, SAFOD supports national federations (affiliates) to take charge of their own issues and projects.

The engagements and work of SAFOD amplify the work of governments, partners and persons with disabilities by arguing for change in practices and policies with national governments and international institutions to support disability related human rights issues.

The changes SAFOD is able to collectively bring benefit others beyond people with disabilities, thus scaling up the impact of our work.

The way SAFOD will lead in delivering the specific objectives and activities of this Response Strategy shall be based on the following strategic approaches:

Advocacy:

SAFOD and its national affiliates consider advocacy central to fulfilling our shared strategic goals of greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream development processes and programs. The focus of all our work is to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are respected, promoted, protected and fulfilled. Over the years, we learned that to be more effective, we need to ensure that our advocacy is grounded in rigorous research, strong evidence, clear policy positions and people's action. SAFOD's involvement in the series of

research surveys on Living Conditions of persons with disabilities emphasizes the need to continue basing our intervention efforts on empirical data so far collected and analyzed. It is also on this basis that we consider this Response Strategy a living document, we will continue to collecting data constantly to feed into and improve this Strategy from time to time.

Participatory analysis and awareness:

A critical part of our work will involve using simple participatory techniques to engage with partners to explore issues highlighted in this Response Strategy. We have learned that articulating persons with disabilities' own situation is a key step on the road to empowerment, developing solutions and effecting change for both persons with disabilities and wider society. Innovative and successful participative approaches that SAFOD and its national affiliates will develop by working with partners and DPOs, the media, trade unions and other CSOs and driving their participation in decision making will be central in scaling up our work.

Partnerships and alliances:

SAFOD and its national affiliates will continue to cherish the diversity of the stakeholders, partners, national Governments, SADC and international partnerships. Collaboration is absolutely fundamental to our approach. Working in this way will enable us to maximize our contribution towards the persons with disabilities while complementing the efforts of others. We will rely on and draw on partners' enormous resource base on COVID-19, deep knowledge of local conditions in the context of COVID-19, customs and politics that we, on our own, cannot match.

Capacity building of our affiliates:

We will seek to achieve the goals and objectives stated in this Response Strategy through capacity building of SAFOD's national affiliates. SAFOD's national affiliates are coalitions of disabled People's Organizations DPOs at country level. Through capacity building and organizational support to these affiliates, it is believed that they will be able to reach out to people with disabilities in their communities with relevant information resources on COVID-19 and advocate effectively to duty bearers to fulfill their commitments of protecting persons with disabilities.

Through targeted advocacy efforts and dialogue with governments, the affiliates will keep pressure on their governments to honor their national and international commitments to human rights and disability inclusion in terms of implementation of inclusive interventions on COVID-19.

For this reason, with the increased institutional capacities of these affiliates, we will ensure that they have strong advocacy voice, are able to continue to advocate and influence policy approaches to implementation on a sustained basis.

Capacity building of media:

We will seek to not only develop media literacy on inclusive COVID-19 resources but also train the media (both mainstream and citizen journalists) on effectively analyzing national response plans on COVID-19 are being implemented in terms of their inclusivity of disability dimensions, as well as investigating and reporting cases of disability-rights violations specifically related to COVID-19 services within local communities and national healthcare systems. This will be an advocacy tool for making community interventions on COVID-19 more inclusive.

With regards to citizen journalists, our South-Africa-based partner, *ThisAbility Newspaper*, will not only impart the disability-mainstreaming reporting skills to selected citizen journalists but will also create a dedicated regional online platform for citizen journalists where they can publish stories on COVID-19 and disability.

ThisAbility Newspaper will sub-contract an independent service provider or relevant NGO to design and administer the online platform for citizen journalists (as webmaster) while ThisAbility Newspaper will manage the platform by providing editorial and publishing services.

Technology approach:

With COVID-19 continuing to impact people and countries around the world, organizations everywhere are moving to remote work. We are seeing the impacts of this changing work environment particularly with nonprofit and international organizations who are on the frontlines providing critical support to their local communities. It is critical for the lifeblood of nonprofits – employees and volunteers – to be connected seamlessly.

This Response Strategy recognizes the need that to ensure that the staff of SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners on the ground remain safe throughout the COVID-19 crisis. In this context, SAFOD shall ensure that almost all the key strategic approaches mentioned above are delivered through online tools rather than face-to-face. This is in keeping with the “social distancing” safety guideline.

For this reason, whether it is capacity-building initiatives of our affiliates; participatory analysis with our partners, training of media, dissemination of information resources – a significant part of this work will involve using ICT tools. These will include investing significantly in an ICT infrastructure that utilizes online tools like premium webinar infrastructure, website and mobile-based (apps) information resources and databases, online platform for journalists, just to mention a few.

Proposed key actions/activities:

Objective one:

To generate and utilize already existing knowledge, evidence and data from research studies, case studies (good practices), etc. related to inclusive responses against COVID-19 for purposes of documentation, shared learning, disability programming, monitoring and evaluation.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners will focus on the following actions to address/respond to the COVID-19 crisis in Southern Africa:

1. Undertake (mostly online) research and literature reviews to generate evidence and knowledge on COVID-19 and disability related issues for informed programming and decision-making purposes.
2. Disseminate findings and engage with partners in development and implementation of innovative COVID-19 response programmes that focus on, or purposefully integrate, disability needs.
3. Regular assessment and analysis of COVID-19 risks related to disability.
4. Develop disability Monitoring and Evaluation framework to assess access to inclusive healthcare services related to COVID-19.
5. Establish online inclusive program learning forums on COVID-19 for effective programming across the region and sharing lessons learnt among country programs.
6. Maintain an interactive web-based and mobile platform with inclusive materials and information on COVID-19 that respond to the needs of persons with disabilities.
7. Conduct independent mid-term and final evaluations of the response strategy to assess progress made towards the achievement of intervention priorities and take remedial actions where necessary.

Objective two:

To engage and influence SADC and its member states to develop/integrate disability inclusive national response plans on COVID-19.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners will focus on the following actions to address/respond to the COVID-19 crisis in Southern Africa:

1. Engage the SADC member States to advocate and lobby for the utilization of the principles of the UNCRPD and other relevant international and continental legal instruments in the development, implementation and monitoring of national response strategies on COVID-19.
2. Create awareness, sensitization and lobby policy makers on disability related issues in the fights against COVID-19.
3. Increase the capacity of SAFOD national affiliate federations of DPOS and their partners to monitor compliance to inclusive implementation of the national COVID-19 response frameworks/plans.

Objective three:

To increase the capacity of SAFOD's national affiliate federations of DPOs in ensuring their effectiveness and sustainability in promoting and securing implementation of inclusive interventions on COVID-19.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners will focus on the following actions to address/respond to the COVID-19 crisis in Southern Africa:

1. Strengthen capacity; deepen engagement and collaboration with SAFOD national affiliates through training, knowledge sharing, and awareness creation (all to be delivered mostly online).
2. Facilitate and build substantive linkages between national federations of DPOs and development partners, the government and other actors in order to foster strong institutions in addressing disability related issues in the fight against COVID-19.
3. Facilitate networking and collaboration between affiliate national federations of DPOs with local CSOs and to rally their support for the protection of human rights of persons with disabilities in the concerted efforts to fight against COVID-19.
4. Support and facilitate affiliate national federations of DPOs to raise levels of consciousness and undertake disability awareness campaigns through online forums.

Objective four:

To increase awareness through sensitization and capacity building of DPOs, SADC, Government Departments, Development partners, Civil Society Organisations, Private Sector and the media on inclusive plans, programs and interventions that address COVID-19 and related issues concerning persons with disabilities.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners will focus on the following actions to address/respond to the COVID-19 crisis in Southern Africa:

1. Advocate and lobby for mainstreaming of disability in the COVID-19 national response plans of governments.
2. Collaborate with CSOs, the private sector and the media to influence policies, legislation, frameworks and programmes that promote the realization and respect for human rights of persons with disabilities in the fight against COVID-19.
3. Lobby and influence SADC and its member States for resource allocation towards disability-focused needs in line with the UNCRPD and other international disability rights frameworks.
4. Map already existing policies and priorities of policy makers within SADC and member States to ensure protection and promotion of human rights for persons with disabilities during the fight against COVID-19 in Southern Africa.
5. Influence SADC to have disability as a key policy agenda and promote it to national governments and development partners.
6. Identify and work with strategic CSO partners, networks, strategic alliances and other like-minded organisations including academia, research bodies, media, think tanks and key individuals to engage constructively yet critically with governments and others on issues of mainstreaming disability in the fight against COVID-19 at both regional and national levels.
7. Advocate for more coordinated response to reduce fragmentation and promoting harmonization to enhance performance and impact of disability related programmes and equity opportunity for persons with disabilities.

Objective five:

To advocate for mainstreaming of disability into health services and programs ensuring increased access to quality health services related to COVID-19 by Persons with Disabilities.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD, its affiliates and strategic partners will focus on the following actions to address/respond to the COVID-19 crisis in Southern Africa:

1. Build capacities of DPOs and the communities to advocate for increased access of health services related to COVID-19 by persons with disabilities.

2. Initiate documentation of models and/or case studies on Inclusive health practices related to COVID-19 in the region through the production of publications, newsletter/journals, video documentaries and online tools (e.g. website, databanks, etc.).
3. Promote innovative and appropriate technology development and assistive devices, including promotion of standardized wheelchairs, that may prove useful during COVID-19 crisis.
4. Strengthen the expansion of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programs throughout the region to be used as the key service delivery model for Persons with Disabilities, including in health delivery, while adhering to social-distancing prevention guidelines in relation to COVID-19.
5. Promote sensitisation and education of health professionals on inclusive health delivery for Persons with Disabilities during the fight against COVID-19.

Objective six:

To increase and diversify the funding for implementation of this Response Strategy through fundraising and strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, including international development partners, Governments, the private sector, communities, crowd-funding, and individual well-wishers.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD will strengthen resource mobilization capacity and increased funding by;

1. Establishing a separate resource mobilization / fundraising strategy specifically for this response strategy.
2. Engaging international institutions such as the World Bank, EU, bilateral donors and the UN system to lend financial and technical support to scale up disability related response programmes on COVID-19 in Southern Africa.
3. Harnessing and significantly increasing core long-term funding from individuals and institutions.
4. Diversifying income sources and donors, predominantly to reduce risk, and increase SAFOD chances of influencing donor policies.
5. Increasing staff capacity to develop quality grant proposals.
6. Delivering on projects/donor contracts and demonstrating accountability to donors and partners through positive impact generated following funding support.
7. Strengthening links with donors and managing donor relations and expanding relationships with them.

Objective seven:

To strengthen governance, administration and deepen accountability within SAFOD Secretariat and our national affiliates (who are likely going to be sub-grantees) to deliver quality and impactful interventions guided by this Response Strategy.

Key actions

Under this strategic objective, SAFOD will strengthen governance, administration and deepen accountability within SAFOD Secretariat and our national affiliates by;

1. Strengthening institutional governance to reflect diversity and inclusiveness resulting to sharing of power and acting together with one voice.
2. Increasing through training the capacity of the Regional Executive Committee (REC) members on governance, partnerships development, networking and fundraising.
3. Strengthening internal systems, capabilities and practices within both SAFDO and our affiliates for delivering accountability.
4. Acting and improving on quality of feedback from partners.
5. Recruiting and retaining adequately competent staff to deliver SAFOD's disability mainstreaming agenda/mission within COVID-19 regional and national response strategies/plans/programmes.
6. Investing in opportunities for staff development in shaping the organisation and affiliates.
7. Encouraging staff and affiliates to reflect, learn, generate and share knowledge for personal and organisational growth.
8. Reviewing and strengthening management structures, Board capacity to discharge governance; improving decision-making processes, programme implementation and accountability.
9. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and reinforcing impact assessment.
10. Reviewing and implementing organisational policies and systems.

Proposed activity plan

Month	Action	Responsible
April 2020	Stakeholder inputs into the data collection tool	SAFOD Secretariat
	Development of the M & E System	Consultant
	Uploading of the data collection tool online	SAFOD Secretariat
	Development of a detailed stand-alone resource mobilization strategy for this Response Strategy	Consultant
	Stakeholder inputs into the SAFOD Response Strategy on COVID-19	SAFOD Secretariat
May 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities	SAFOD Secretariat
	Acquisition and setting up of the technology infrastructure (webinar facilities, databases, etc.)	SAFOD Secretariat / Funding Partner(s)
	Official launch of the SAFOD Response Strategy on COVID-19	SAFOD Secretariat / Funding Partner(s)
June 2010	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively).</i>	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Monitoring <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates

July 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively)</i> .	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Monitoring <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
August 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively)</i> .	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Milestone M & E <i>(a mid-term evaluation to determine if there are major changes that need to be introduced into the response strategy)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
September 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively)</i> .	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Monitoring <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
October 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively)</i> .	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders

	Monitoring <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
November 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively).</i>	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Monitoring <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
December 2020	Data collection from persons with disabilities <i>(continuous process)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates
	Implementation of regional and national COVID-19 response plans based on the specific actions outlined in this Response Strategy <i>(prioritization of specific actions to be developed progressively).</i>	SAFOD / affiliates / key stakeholders
	Milestone M & E <i>(A major evaluation to determine whether the COVID-19 Response Strategy is needed for 2021)</i>	SAFOD / affiliates

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In implementing this Response Strategy on COVID-19, Monitoring and Evaluation will be one of the core institutional and programmatic functions of SAFOD. Through a consultant, the organisation will design and implement a stand-alone user-friendly monitoring and evaluation system to track progress and document experience throughout implementation of this Strategy for institutional learning.

The consultant will develop a log-frame matrix based on the objectives and actions already outlined in this document, as well as the additional information that is yet to be gathered from persons with disabilities themselves as highlighted in the appendix 2, will constitute an important tool for monitoring and evaluation.

To gauge the holistic performance in implementing this Response Strategy, SAFOD will make use of a variety of indicators at both programme and institutional levels. Such markers of progress will entail qualitative, quantitative, process and impact indicators.

Participatory monitoring, reviews and evaluation will be conducted periodically to ascertain the impact, effectiveness and relevance of specific interventions suggested in this Response Strategy. A monitoring and evaluation approach will adopt a results-based monitoring and will capture achievements made, document lessons learned, and share key learnings widely with our constituency in Southern Africa and beyond, including with Governments, donors and other stakeholders.

Participatory reflections and joint monitoring and learning will be built in the M & E framework

RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Key principle in development is the ability to mobilize resources from within and without. Resource mobilization is a critical prerequisite for the organization to fulfil its mandate. It is for this reason that resource mobilization is included in this COVID-19 Response Strategy for SAFOD as a way to reduce over-dependence on donor funding and start addressing the possibility of diversifying sources.

Through these initiatives, SAFOD expects to enhance its self-reliance by December 2020, diversify its funding base and generate more income from local fundraising and other initiatives towards affective implementation of this COVID-19 Response Strategy.

Resource mobilization is about raising both financial and material support for the organization's programmes. The successful implementation of this COVID-19 Response Strategy for SAFOD will depend not only on the quality and on commitment of the Secretariat and the REC, as well as its national affiliates and strategic partners, but also on the availability and efficient utilization of the resources that will be required for the various activities to be undertaken.

Within the changing donor priorities and growing funding fatigue, SAFOD will need to diversify its funding sources. SAFOD will use a combination of approaches including engaging new bilateral donors, retaining old ones, and stimulating resource mobilization from well-wishers.

One of the ways SAFOD seeks to diversify funding sources is to explore opportunities with local and international corporate bodies that are open to social responsibility, that is, those who are committed to ploughing back some of their profits into charitable community activities. In addition, SAFOD will source additional funding for its activities through membership contribution and participants' payments. By so doing, SAFOD will broaden its funding opportunities and reduce any over-reliance on external donor funds.

Recognizing the strength in the expertise of its staff, SAFOD will promote and build capacity of staff members for strategic planning, financial management and proposal writing.

Through a consultant, the organisation will design and implement a more detailed stand-alone resource mobilization strategy specifically for this COVID-19 Response Strategy focused on achieving the goals and objectives for resource mobilization as stated in this section above.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Data Collection Tool

Introduction

An online survey has been developed targeted at persons with disabilities to document their own experiences and views so far experienced on COVID-19. Where the person with disability is unable to complete the questionnaire on his or her own, their carers can complete on their behalf.

Information gathered through the online survey shall be strictly used to inform the development and/or improvement of the SAFOD Response Strategy on COVID-19 for persons with disabilities in Southern Africa.

Questionnaire for Persons with Disabilities

To view how the questionnaire is structured, or to participate in the survey if you are a person with disability, access it through the SurveyMonkey link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/safod-covid>

Appendix 2:

Existing Disability-focused COVID-19 Resources

In terms of production of disability-focused resources, SAFOD together with its national affiliates and other strategic partners will not have to reinvent the wheel. We will seek adapt our resources based on what is already in existence, developed by other stakeholders.

Attempts shall be made to follow appropriate channels in seeking consent to use the resources for purposes of implementing this Response Strategy (and only of this purpose!), unless if the said resource(s) are marked “Creative Commons” or are freely available for re-use under Noncommercial licenses.

The following list constitutes some of such key resources and shall be updated from time to time.

Source	Resource Name & Description	How SAFOD & the Entire Disability Movement Could Utilize the Resource in Southern Africa?	Other observations and recommendations
Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum (CDPF)	Principles and Statement to Governments on Disabled People and the impact of Pandemic of COVID-19 Coronavirus. Description: This is a list of principles and statement to Governments to help ensure that persons with disabilities throughout the Commonwealth are	✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability within their COVID-19 regional,	✓ Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.

	<p>not disadvantaged and have their needs met throughout the response interventions against COVID-19.</p> <p>Resource Link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p> <p>✓ SAFOD could adapt most of the recommendations into its own advocacy materials on COVID-19.</p>	
<p>World Health Organization (WHO)</p>	<p>Disability considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak</p> <p>Description: This is a guidance note on Disability considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak to mitigate the spread of the virus among persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Resource Link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability within their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p> <p>✓ SAFOD could adapt most of the recommendations into its own advocacy materials on COVID-19.</p>	<p>Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.</p>
<p>UNICEF</p>	<p>COVID-19 response: Considerations for Children and Adults with Disabilities.</p> <p>Description: This is a guidance note on considerations for children and adults with disabilities in the COVID-19 response. The guidance</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability within their</p>	<p>✓ Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.</p>

	<p>describes what we need to know about the situation of persons with disabilities in COVID-19 response, and what we need to do in five key points. The guidance will be revised as the situation evolves.</p> <p>Resource Link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p> <p>✓ SAFOD could adapt most of the recommendations into its own advocacy materials on COVID-19.</p>	
<p>International Disability Alliance (IDA)</p>	<p>Key Recommendations toward a Disability-Inclusive COVID19 Response</p> <p>Description: This is a list of the main barriers that persons with disabilities face in this emergency situation along with some practical solutions and recommendations.</p> <p>Resource Link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability within their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p> <p>✓ SAFOD could adapt most of the recommendations into its own advocacy materials on COVID-19.</p>	<p>Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.</p>
<p>Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Reference group for Mental Health and Psychosocial</p>	<p>Briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak-Version 1.0.</p> <p>Description:</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best</p>	<p>✓ Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.</p>

<p>Support in Emergency Settings</p>	<p>This briefing note summarizes key mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) considerations in relation to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The brief was last updated February 2020.</p> <p>Resource Link: <u>Click to follow link here</u></p>	<p>ways to mainstream disability within their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p> <p>✓ SAFOD could adapt most of the recommendations into its own advocacy materials on COVID-19.</p>	
<p>Fourthman Concepts Ltd</p>	<p>COVID-19 Online Self-test Application</p> <p>Description: Due to limited resources to combat the Covid-19 Pandemic in the world, a web App (Tool) has been created for everyone to be able to test themselves before contacting medical consultants, to avoid overwhelming congestion.</p> <p>Resource Link: Take test here: <u>http://covid19.kpolom.com/</u></p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners to encourage people with disability (and their carers) to utilize the online tool as an alternative means of testing themselves in situations where the healthcare system is overwhelmed.</p>	<p>✓ Note that this tool is not necessarily a replacement of normal testing by an expert. Emphasis needs to be highlighted that users would only use it if for some reason they can cannot be tested by an expert.</p> <p>✓ Make/improve the online app to be as accessible as possible to people with disabilities by integrating voice functionality, large text, etc.</p> <p>✓ Make/improve the online platform to become more child-friendly.</p>
<p>Mill Neck Family of Organizations</p>	<p>Video on COVID-19 Facts in International Sign Language, courtesy of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations at <u>www.millneck.org</u></p> <p>Resource link:</p>	<p>✓ With consent from owners, republish the video on SAFOD YouTube channels and share it on its social media accounts</p>	<p>✓ Reproduce the video content by integrating various national sign languages used in the Southern African countries where SAFOD currently works themselves.</p>

	<u>Click to follow link here</u>		
Green Mountain Self-Advocates	<p>Plain Language Information on COVID-19.</p> <p>Description: This 8-page booklet about the Coronavirus is written in plain language. It was created by and for people with developmental disabilities. It focuses on “need to know” information (not “nice to know” information). The producers of this resources are encouraging users to share it widely.</p> <p>Resource link: <u>Click to follow link here</u></p>	SAFOD, affiliates and partners to share this resource widely.	Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNC Frank Porter ▪ Graham Child Development Institute ▪ Autism Team 	<p>Supporting Individuals with Autism through Uncertain Times</p> <p>Description: This resource contains seven (7) support strategies that are designed to meet the unique needs of individuals with autism during this period of uncertainty. In addition, examples and ready-made resources are included to help</p>	✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability with their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.	Ensure that the resource is re-packaged in accessible formats, including Braille, audio books/text, large prints, etc.

	<p>caregivers implement these strategies quickly and easily.</p> <p>Resource link: Click to follow link here</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Superhero Me ▪ Eden School ▪ Lien Foundation ▪ Dr Lim Hong Huay ▪ Dr Leong Hoe Nam 	<p>Let's Fight COVID-19 together with Superhero Me!</p> <p>Description: A package of educational resources on COVID-19 for children with special needs containing videos, drawings, etc. to help them develop self-care skills and understand routine changes and protective measures.</p> <p>Resource link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability with their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p>	
Little Puddins	<p>Coronavirus Social Narrative</p> <p>Description: This is a FREE Coronavirus Social Narrative to help alleviate fears and anxiety many children may be experiencing at this time. The author grants his permission to print off multiple copies of the aforementioned social stories to give to students, and declares: "absolutely no need to request permission."</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability with their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p>	

	<p>Resource links: Click here for to download the PRINTABLE version</p> <p>Click here for to download the ACCESSIBLE version</p>		
CBM	<p>COVID19 Resource</p> <p>Description: This resource contains key advocacy messages, questions to ask on inclusion and signpost to resources to learn more</p> <p>Resource link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource as a key reference material when engaging SADC, Governments and other stakeholders on best ways to mainstream disability with their COVID-19 regional, national and community response plans / strategies / programs.</p>	
Learning Disability Wales (LDW)	<p>Coronavirus: resources for people with a learning disability</p> <p>Description: Useful resources about Coronavirus (COVID-19), including some good easy read guides,</p> <p>Resource link: Click to follow link here</p>	<p>✓ SAFOD, affiliates and partners could use the resource to deepen their understanding / knowledge on COVID-19 and disability.</p>	