

# STRIDE FOR INCLUSION CHARITY RUN



## CONCEPT NOTE

2025

SOUTHERN AFRICA  
FEDERATION OF THE  
DISABLED -SAFOD



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## **Background:**

Marginalization of persons with disabilities is an on-going challenge despite the existence of international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) which obliges member states to promote the equal rights to development of that segment of the population. The failure of many states to fully integrate disability into their national development planning, programming, budgeting mechanisms is a development challenge that still needs to be fully addressed.

In Botswana, approximately 2.7% of the population, or 55,347 people have a disability. A significant portion of this population faces social and economic marginalization, with limited access to education, employment, and healthcare. Amongst this 2.7 population are children with disabilities who are one of the most vulnerable groups in society, often facing barriers such as social exclusion, lack of and or limited access to basic services, such as education, healthcare, and housing. According to UNICEF, less than 10% of children with disabilities in Botswana have access to essential services. Studies also show that families of children with disabilities experience unique challenges due to increased stress, financial strain, emotional burdens and accessible housing. The specific impacts vary depending on the type and severity of the disability, as well as the family's resources and support systems.

To respond to these challenges, the government of Botswana has made tremendous efforts in supporting children with disabilities through the provision of social welfare packages, rehabilitation services, and inclusive education for children with disabilities. However, children with disabilities still face various barriers that hinder their full participation in society.

The challenges faced by persons with disabilities should now be acknowledged as being too large to be tackled by public sector only. Achievement of an inclusive society where persons with disabilities are treated with dignity, respect and on the basis of equality rely on all actors of the society. All stakeholders: government, civil society, the private sector, and others, are expected to contribute to the realization of the new agenda.

Private sector increasingly plays an important role as an engine of economic growth and job creation, it provides goods and services, generates tax revenues to finance essential social and economic infrastructure. Nevertheless, the role of private sector is not limited to financing and investment, it is an actor in social development therefore it has a significant role in fostering positive social change, promoting social inclusion, and ensuring people reach their full potential. This includes investing in persons with disabilities, removing barriers, and creating opportunities for them to thrive.

## **Introduction:**



SAFOD is a leading disability-focused network established in 1986 with a mission to advocate for the rights of Persons with Disabilities, to ensure promotion of inclusive development and human rights for Persons with Disabilities in the Southern Africa Region. It is an esteemed and reputable organization registered in 2004, under section 6(1) of the societies act in Botswana. The strategic role of SAFOD is to coordinate and strengthen the capacities of national federations of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, on resources mobilization, governance and leadership, research and knowledge management.



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The organisation constitutes of 16 national federation of OPDs in the SADC region. One of the sixteen SAFOD affiliates includes Botswana Federation of the Disabled (BOFOD) in Botswana. BOFOD is an umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities with a mission to advocate for the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities in Botswana. Over the past three decades, SAFOD has collaborated with numerous partners and made a significant impact in the region through its work in disability rights and inclusive development. Some of these partners include, Norwegian Federations of Organisation of Disabled People (FFO), Christian Blind Mission (CBM), UN Agencies; UNICEF, UNOPS, UNDRR, Google impact challenge, Africa Disability Forum, Academic institutions; Loughborough university, Stellenbosch university, University of Washington and University of Pretoria.

SAFOD has made significant impact at a regional level, some of the initiatives include empowerment of youth with disabilities, disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction strategies and strengthening resilience against climate, economic empowerment for women and men with disabilities. To strengthen this regional impact SAFOD also supports grassroots initiatives which play a crucial role in empowering persons with disabilities by addressing local needs, fostering community inclusion, and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities at a local level. These grassroots initiatives change one life at a time, which can cause a ripple effect and ultimately contribute to a broader positive change towards persons with disabilities. SAFOD believes that there is urgent need not only to ensure the rights and well-being of children and youth with disabilities, but also crucial to develop inclusive policies, improve data on children with disabilities and to advocate for quality education and to strengthen access to specialized healthcare and rehabilitation services that address the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of children and youth with disabilities.

It is on this basis that SAFOD with the support of the Social and Community Development office in Kgatleng District has identified three children in Mochudi, with cerebral palsy, two girls and a boy aged between 11- 13 years. Cerebral palsy (CP) is one of the most common motor disability in children worldwide. This is a group of disorders resulting from damage to the developing brain, often before birth., causing multiple disabilities ranging from difficulty walking, impaired coordination, and involuntary movements. Children with CP may also have associated conditions like epilepsy, visual impairments, or cognitive challenges.

Recognizing the urgent needs of these children, SAFOD has initiated **the Stride for Inclusion charity run**. The overarching goal of this initiative is to advocate for inclusive education, healthcare ,rehabilitation services and social services, for children with disabilities in Botswana. Through the stride for inclusion charity run, SAFOD will also raise awareness on the challenges faced by children with disabilities in Botswana The specific objective for the fundraising event is to raise funds to support life-changing services for these children and their families, who urgently require accessible homes, with basic utilities, and mobility aids such as pushchair.



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### Target Beneficiaries:

Every family has a story, SAFOD will therefore through this initiative share the stories of each of the three children, with the hope that this fundraising becomes a life changing event for them and their families. Even for a family doing relatively well economically, a child with disability can lead to financial constraints due to costs of medication, special education facilities, rehabilitation interventions, which are often only available in the private institutions and assistive aides, which may need to be changed as the child grows.


- ***The 11-year-old is a girl, is an orphan under the guardianship of her aunt who is unemployed and relies on unstable, low-paying piece jobs. They live in an overcrowded, un-serviced home with 12 other family members. She shares a bed with her cousin. This family therefore urgently requires a house with water and electricity. The child will also require rehabilitation services, along with essential items such as nappies, clothes, and food.***
- ***The 12-year-old boy is twin who lives with his mother, four sibling's members. His twin brother does not have a disability and currently doing standard seven. He recently underwent surgery to address a restricted throat, which left him with a critical condition. He is now dependent on expensive specialized milk administered through a feeding tube. His mother is unemployed as she has to provide full-time care and is therefore unable to support her five children. They are currently residing at their grandparents' home with extended family members where family disputes over ownership create tension. The mother owns a plot in Mmathubudukwane and hopes to develop it to relocate from her grandparents. Developing the plot would also allow her to open a tuckshop, providing a stable income. The current social welfare provision only covers two cans of milk per month, lasting just two weeks.***
- ***The 13-year-old girl lives with her mother and four siblings in a two and half house that has no water and poor sanitation and there is lack of accessibility for the girl since they use a pit latrine. The girl has severe impairments that require intensive caregiving. The girl urgently requires a pushchair to improve mobility, as well as rehabilitation services to strengthen her limbs. She has not been admitted to the nearby school due to the severity of her condition. Her mother faces immense economic challenges and lacks the resources needed for adequate caregiving. Enrolling the girl to school will give the mother the opportunity to find employment and better support her family.***


The journey toward disability inclusion requires collaboration between the private sector, government, and civil society. This collaboration will lead to improved quality of life for persons with disabilities. The role that the private sector plays in social development is also broadening from the conventional approach of supporting economic development to a more inclusive and elaborated public



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private partnerships. As such, the private sector has become an important strategic partner for social development to support poverty eradicate, reduce inequalities and exclusion within broader sustainable development. Therefore, SAFOD calls on government ministries, Departments, private sector, development partners, academic institutions and Community members to support the cause and help these three families with home improvements and mobility aids.


To support this initiative, stakeholders can donate, Volunteer, and or become a sponsor. Together, we can build an equitable ecosystem that empowers persons with disabilities and drives sustainable growth and ensure a full inclusive society where persons with disabilities are treated with dignity, respect and on the basis of equality. For more information on this initiative, contact Ms Lilly Ponatshego at [lponatshego@safod.net](mailto:lponatshego@safod.net) or Ms Refilwe Monnakgosi at [rmonnakgosi@safod.net](mailto:rmonnakgosi@safod.net) or call 3170751.



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