



2023 Elections & Beyond

Abridged Charter of Demands of Women With Disabilities

1 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Nigeria is a West African country with an approximate population of 195.9 people with a political structure of 36 states plus The Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The estimated number of Nigerians with disabilities, range from 14 to 25 million people. It is also estimated that nearly 40% of people with disabilities have multiple impairments.

The 2018 National Demographic and Health Survey reported that 92% of residents have no difficulty in any 'disability domain'; while 7% have some difficulty and 1% have a lot of difficulty from age 15 and older, 2% of women and 2% of men have a lot of difficulty or cannot function in at least one domain. Other disability report estimates range from 2 to 10%. Furthermore, there is no data or statistics that shows women with disabilities are fully integrated, mainstreamed or included in social issues, agendas or priorities.

2 REASON FOR A CHARTER OF DEMANDS

Women with disabilities are left behind and have been sidelined for too long. We have many barriers that are hindering us from living independent lives in Nigeria. Key barriers include medical, attitudinal, infrastructural, social and economic limitations.

Nigeria



0% level of participation in governance

This is despite concerted efforts and actions for our inclusion through, advocacy programs, resource interventions to improve the participation of women with disabilities in governance and leadership.

These and other daily challenges and limitations inform the development of this charter of demands, as another advocacy tool that is aimed at calling out government, its agencies and operators, public and private sector institutions, civil society, the media, and donors to prioritize the inclusion and participation of women with disabilities in politics and governance. The vision is to drive home the rights of women with disabilities to enjoy equal opportunities that enable them to productively contribute as equal stakeholders in Nigeria's development.

3 CONTEXT AND SUPPORT

The development and production of this charter of demands is set within the scope of Nigeria's 2023 elections and beyond; and is themed..



2023 – "No Credible Election Without Us" (PWDS)

The objectives are to advance the promotion of gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) as an index of credible elections and popular participation in governance. It is to also use the strategy of a public rally to amplify the voices of women with disabilities, and other usually excluded vulnerable groups in elections and governance in Nigeria.

This has been made possible under a partnership between Network of Women with Disabilities (NWD) and Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) under its Improving Electoral Integrity and Accountability (IEIA) project supported by MacArthur Foundation.

4 Therefore, WE, Women with Disabilities Collectively Agree and RAISE OUR VOICES to demand through this Charter the following:

Article One



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

To avail to women with disabilities the right to gainful public and private sector employment government and private institutions should:

- (a) Ensure all employments, including government and its institutions/agencies, public and private organizations, comply with provisions of the National Policy on Disability in Nigeria 2017 and the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018
- (b) Prohibit all forms of workplace discrimination in organizational processes, access to resources, privileges and opportunities for career entry and growth.
- (c) Ensure effective accountability through monitoring and reporting of violations to the Social Welfare government department on the working conditions and treatment of female employees with disabilities
- (d) Enforce infrastructure modifications to ease access to buildings and movement in and around work spaces.
- (e) Provide for women with disabilities equal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services in all health care facilities.

Article Two



POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Parties as the major platforms for citizen political participation should:

- (a) Incorporate into party statutes and implement disability accountability mechanisms in line with the National Policy on Disability in Nigeria 2017, the Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2019, and those in the National Gender Policy (NGP) 2021.
- (b) Deliberately recruit and integrate women with disabilities as card carrying members backed by disaggregated party membership data.
- (c) Nominate and protect the equal dignity of women with disabilities as members with equal stake and responsibility to the party.
- (d) Encourage women with disabilities to aspire for and serve in leadership and executive positions, with special measures for their protection in all political processes especially during election periods.
- (e) Articulate and implement gender and disability inclusion education for its members and enforce a zero tolerance for stigma, discrimination and exclusion of persons with disabilities

Article Three



THE LEGISLATURE

The National and State Legislative Assemblies among their other roles should:

- (a) Ensure that Nigeria's annual budgets allocate funds to facilitate the effective implementation of the provisions Nigeria's Disability Act 2019 to guarantee improvements in the social and economic lives of women with disabilities.

- (b) Cause the inclusion of disabilities as one of the indices of diversity and enact an amendment law to rename the Federal Character Commission to Federal Character and Equal Opportunity Commission.
- (c) Conduct strict legislative oversight to enforce and ensure public and private institutions implement and comply with the Disability Prohibition Act 2019 and other legislations providing for inclusion and protection of persons with disabilities.

Article Four



INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)

As the electoral umpire, INEC should:

- (a) Spare no resources in enabling persons with disabilities to actively participate in all electoral processes responding to their specialized needs in ways that evidence credibility, citizen inclusion and participation.
- (b) Work with the Disability Commission and other CSO Disability groups to recruit and train PWDs as ad-hoc election staff and election observers in order to dispel any fears of exclusion or helplessness especially in election periods.
- (c) Strengthen its co-operation and collaboration with other election management bodies (EMBs) to make polling centers orderly and safe for all especially persons with disabilities.

Article Five



INTER- PARTY ADVISORY COUNCIL (IPAC)

The non-partisan platform of IPAC should:

- (a) Perform its vanguard functions to regulate party actions and ensure citizens, especially vulnerable PWDs are specially catered for by all election management bodies.
- (b) Intensify inter-party dialogue to press home the need for parties to promote peaceful elections in order not to disenfranchise vulnerable persons such as PWDs who need guaranteed protection to participate and contribute to the credibility of the elections.

Article Six



TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA

As the public conscience of society, the media should:

- (a) Raise awareness on positive disability policies and practices to justify the demands by persons with disabilities especially women and children.
- (b) Promote the adoption of an inclusion culture that enables women with disabilities participate and contribute in community development associations
- (c) Create media development programs to strongly discourage discrimination against women with disabilities.
- (d) Promote and celebrate the potential benefits and real value of the inclusion of women with disabilities in governance and decision-making structures.

Article Seven



ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL SECURITY

Overall protection and dignity should include:

- (a) Provision of free basic literacy, numeracy and skills development to facilitate the inclusion of women with disabilities in the formal and informal sectors of the economy.
- (b) Incorporation of women with disabilities in conflict prevention and peace building structures and processes in line with the provisions of UNSCR 1325.
- (c) Dedicated funding for women with disabilities in form of Annual Business grants that improve their economic disposition, protect their dignity and assist self-reliance.
- (d) Elimination of all forms of electoral violence to enable women with disabilities participate in politics to achieve the goal of achieving 15% disability affirmative action in elective and appointive positions from 2023 and beyond.
- (e) Building the capacity of all service providers to professionally respond to the physical and psycho-social needs of women with disabilities in peace and conflict situations.
- (f) Ensuring protection for women with disabilities, and that that none remain in hostile and life-threatening IDP camps for periods longer than necessary.
- (g) The passage/adoption and implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act 2015 in the 36 states of Nigeria, towards entrenching protection and establishment of functional domestic and social peace architecture and facilities particularly to protect women and people with disabilities.

Article Eight



CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil Society Organizations as foot soldiers should:

- (a) Strengthen collaboration and synergy to support each other in closing capacity gaps and provisioning for persons with disabilities through all the election processes, particularly on election day.
- (b) Ensure effective election monitoring to scale up information that leads to the mitigation of any challenges PWDs may be at risk of or are actually victims.

Article Nine



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Development Partners as independent entities should:

- (a) Sustain the calls to government, politicians, security and the election management bodies to conduct credible elections in which no one is excluded through the deployment of best practice and context aligned political frameworks and processes.



PWDS are CAPABLE include US in Governance Positions & Programmes



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In Partnership with WRAPA



Supported by

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