

EMPOWERMENT FOR DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION (EDSI)

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MOTTO: CHANGING ATTITUDE TOWARDS DISABILITY



THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE

EMPOWERMENT FOR DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

1. PREAMBLE

WHERE AS the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration, a nation-wide network of men and women of a Non-Governmental Organization was established in response to the need for collective initiatives and actions for the overall advancement of men and women with disability

AND WHERE AS the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration. provides a platform for building effective alliances among the disabled, by sharing information and ideas on current and emerging issues of common concern to the disabled in Sierra Leone, as well as the joint planning and implementation of action oriented programmes and projects;

AND WHERE AS the vision of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration is free from violence and conflict, where good governance prevails, and where the disabled are accorded equality of opportunities in all spheres of life, and empowered to meaningfully contribute towards the sustainable development of the nation;

AND WHERE AS the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration is desirous of developing an organized, diverse and articulate constituency of individuals committed to promoting the advancement of the disabled.

ARTICLE I – NAME

There is hereby established the **Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration** that is non-political, voluntary, charitable, non-sectoral, non-profit making and non-discriminatory against any disabled in terms of race, creed, age, ethnicity, colour, nationality or religious persuasion .

ARTICLE II VISION AND MISSION

SECTION A – VISION

The Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration visualizes a Sierra Leone in which disabled people in all parts of the country, irrespective of tribe, religion, culture or status, region are empowered to be educated and well integrated into society and protected.

SECTION B – MISSION

The Mission of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration is to improve the quality of life of disabled people with developmental disabilities through advocacy for job creation, job financing and the establishment of educational institutions to curb poverty in society.

ARTICLE III – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration are the advancement of the status of the disabled people and empowerment of them all in Sierra Leone.

SECTION A – GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To promote a platform for building effective alliances among the disabled, by sharing information and ideas on current and emerging issues of common concern to the disabled in Sierra Leone, and taking collective action on issues affecting their social well being.

SECTION B – SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To equip the physically challenged persons with leadership advocacy skills to position them as able bodied actors to participate in governance and self reliance.
- Promote their participation by expanding the organization to know and claim rights with regards to their issues.
- Undertake awareness on ability issues through community radio discussions, jingles as well as making use of theatre, radio and newspapers to increase knowledge base and speak out on all the problems faced by the physically challenged in Sierra Leone.
- Established an educational institution for the wellbeing of the physically challenged persons in all discipline related to their survival and livelihood.
- To promote and influence the formulation of national and international policies and services for the advancement of the disabled in the country.
- To advocate and lobby for development support for member organizations, associations and groups, to take initiative that will strengthen them and build the capacity the disabled.
- To form linkages and collaborate with other organizations, nationally and internationally, that shares a common goal with the Empowering Disability and Social Integration.

ARTICLE IV – LANGUAGE

The main language of the Network shall be any of the more widely spoken national languages as appropriate at the relevant level to cater for all needs; however consideration will be given to the use of English Language and krio for wider communication among the disabled people.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

There shall be two categories of membership

- Full members
- Affiliate members

SECTION I - FULL MEMBERSHIP

Every disabled organization, association or group interested in improving the quality of life of disabled people shall be eligible to become a full member upon the completion of an application form and the payment of such registration and monthly fees as may be determined from time to time. Such members will be inducted into the organization by the National Coordinator acting in consultation with the Board.

A full member shall be entitled to participate in the deliberations of the organization at the appropriate level. Voting at the General Assembly shall be on the basis of one vote for each full paid up member organization.

SECTION II – AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

Any other organization, association or group that does not meet all of the laid down criteria for full membership, but is involved in improving the quality of disabled people, or otherwise share the ideals, shall be eligible to become an affiliate member, upon the completion of an application form and the payment of a registration fee as may be determined from time to time by the Board.

SECTION III - INDIVIDUALS

Individuals interested in the organization may attend meetings as observers and participate in discussion, but shall have no voting right and not become members of the organization.

ARTICLE VI – ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organs of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration shall be:-

The General Assembly

The Advisory Council

The National Coordinator

SECTION I THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

There shall be a General Assembly of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration and shall comprise the following:

- 10 representatives from the Western Area including the National Coordinator, Treasurer and Secretary.
- All present members of the National Executive.
- Members of the Advisory Council.

SECTION II MEETINGS

There shall be a General Assembly to transact the following business:-

- To receive the Annual report of the activities of the organizations during the previous year
- To receive and consider the accounts of the organization for the previous year.

- To review policy matters of the Organization
- To decide on any other resolution that may be duly submitted to it.
- To elect officers and appoint members to the Advisory Committee and elect officers to the National Executive of the organization.
- Nominations for election of members of any office shall be made at the GA.
- Notice of any resolution proposed to be moved at the GA shall be given at the GA.

SECTION III – CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- The National Executive shall convene all meetings to the General Assembly and the National Coordinator shall act as Secretary to the General Assembly to be assisted by a deputy. The Secretary shall serve notices of every meetings of the General Assembly to every member about the date, time and venue at least 7 days before the meeting.
- The quorum for the said meeting shall be 1/3 of the General Assembly members and each member present shall have one vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- Meetings shall be held annually but elections of officers should be at every two years.

SECTION III – THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

There shall be an Advisory Council of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration which shall consist of:

- 4 members of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration to include 3 founding members of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration.
- The Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs or his/her representation
- 1 Legal Representative

SECTION III. 1- FUNCTIONS

The Advisory Council shall:

- Serve as an advisory body to the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration on policy and national matters
- Serve as an arbitrator in case of a dispute within the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration
- Suggest issues for action by the organization
- Perform any other function that may be assigned to it by the General Assembly

SECTION III. 2 – MEETING

The Advisory Council shall meet twice a year and the Secretary of the National Executive shall serve as Secretary to the Council.

SECTION IV - THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

There shall be a National Executive of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration comprising the following:

- A National Coordinator
- Deputy National
- Secretary
- Finance Officer
- Program Coordinators.
- Information and Communication Officer

6.4.1 The Executive members shall be proposed, seconded and elected at the General Assembly.

Elections shall be for a period of two years but can be eligible for re-election for another additional term (i.e. the General Assembly meets for ordinary session yearly, but conducts election biannually every two years).

6.4.2. Any vacancy occurring by resignation or otherwise during the tenure of the National Executive

Can be filled by the Committee in consultation with the National Coordinator; and so chosen

Shall retire at the next Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election at that

Meeting.

6.4.3 Committee meetings shall be held not less than once every six months, and the quorum shall be

1/3 of its members. Decisions of the committee shall be made by a simple majority and in the event of equality of votes; the Chairman shall have a casting vote. The National Coordinator shall

be the Secretary to the Executive Committee.

6.4.4. General Functions of the National Executive.

The National Executive shall perform the following functions:-

- Manage and coordinate the affairs of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration at National level.
- Formulate and submit proposals and recommendations to the General Assembly for the adoption of policies and programmes of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration.
- Authorize and approve the expenditure of national secretariat.
- Ensure that proper accounts are maintained by the national Secretariat.
- Convene the General Assembly and all other meetings of the General Assembly
- Prepare and submit to the General Assembly
- Receive quarterly reports from the national Secretariat

- Discuss any such questions or matters that may be referred to it by the national Secretariat and take appropriate action.

6.4.5 Specifics Functions

1. The National Coordinator

- Serves as the Chief Volunteer of the Organization.
- Partners with the Executive members, and other members in achieving the organization's mission.
- Provides leadership to the organization
- Chairs meetings of the Executive after developing the agenda with the Secretary and in her absence the Deputy National Coordinator.
- Serves as ex-officio members of committees and attends their meetings
- Discusses issues confronting the organization with the Executive.
- Helps guide and mediate Board actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns.
- Reviews with the Vice Chairperson any issues of concern to the Executive.
- Establish reporting systems at the National Executive.
- Supervise and monitor activities undertaken to ensure that they are within the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration national plan
- Identify actions for resource mobilization and collaborate with the appropriate committees to write proposals and monitors implementation of projects.
- Ensures the establishment to systems for information gathering, processing storage retrieval and use.

- Prepares and submits to the General Assembly an Annual Report.
- Liaises with and informs other agencies about the work of the Empowerment for disability and Social Integration.

2. The Deputy National Coordinator

The Deputy National Coordinator shall be responsible to the National Coordinator and duties shall include but not limited to:

- The Deputy National Coordinator shall have such duties and responsibilities as the National Coordinator shall delegate to him or her.
- The Deputy National Coordinator shall have all of the powers and duties of the Executive Director whenever the office of National Coordinator is vacant or whenever the National Coordinator shall be absent or shall otherwise be unable to exercise the powers or fulfill the duties of National Coordinator.

3. Secretary

- Serves as secretary to meetings of the Executive and any other meeting as requested by the National Coordinator.
- Ensures that various reports, minutes, accounts, etc on meetings are produced and circulated on time as relevant.
- Sends out invitations for all meetings.
- Keeps track of incoming mails and ensures follow up action.
- Liaises with National Coordinator about reports.

4. Programmes Coordinators

- Draw up plans of action in collaboration with the representatives at national secretariat.
- Liaise with organizations to nominate members to the respective areas
- Ensure that activities of the respective thematic areas are promoted at national, regional and district levels.
- Maintain effective reporting system on activities all levels.
- Report to the National Coordinator.

5. The Finance Officer

The Finance Officer is responsible for keeping records of financial data by posting financial transactions and preparing accurate and reliable financial statements, budgets and reports.

The duties of the Finance Officer shall include but not limited to:

- Ensure that accurate and complete accounting, reporting and internal control systems are functioning and that all relevant records are maintained;
- Provide authoritative interpretation of requirements for handling of financial transactions;
- Monitor, analyze, and approve transactions for entry into the accounting system;
- Participate in the development of accounting policies;
- Provide information needed to respond to audit findings;

- Keep abreast and provide guidance on the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration billing procedures
- Shall exercise all duties assigned to the office of Finance.

6. The Information and Communications Officer

The Information and Communications Officer shall plan and implement publicity programs designed to promote the work of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration by producing and using communication systems.

The duties of the Information and Communications Officer shall include but not limited to:

- Promote the work of the Empowerment for Disability and Social Integration through various media approaches;
- Formulate, develop and advance the Organisation's communications strategy by identifying key messages to be promoted and target audiences by developing media friendly products (press releases, information notes, information packs), by creating channels of dissemination, by screening interview requests and by scheduling them;
- Provide policy guidance to senior staff, including, on the approach to take with the media by recommending specific interviews and by briefing them ahead of the anticipated questions;
- Maintain a system to effectively monitor the media and respond to any misleading or incorrect reporting on the Organisation;
- Liaise where necessary with partners and other collaborative institutions;
- Classify and store information, usually using special computer applications, for easy access and retrieval;
- She/he shall exercise all duties incident to the office of Information and Communications Officer.

Conveners of Committees.

1. Membership Committee

- Maintain contacts with National Coordinator on update and membership drive – names of groups, location, number, activities and financial status with the organization.
- Mobilize for registration of new members.
- Coordinate membership activities at national level; working with the National Coordinators.

2. Resources Mobilization Committee

- Maps out sources of resources needed for identified activities and prioritize them
- Devise strategies for resource mobilization
- Works in collaboration with national and other members of the Executive especially the thematic groups to write proposals.
- Ensures adequate documentation – narrative and accounting records on activities implemented.

3. Publicity Committee

- Shares information with members of the organization
- Organizes radio discussions on radio/TV, Press conferences in collaboration with members of the Executive
- Compile names, addresses and telephone members of all Executive members
- Facilitate printing of brochures, and newsletters of the organizations for circulation to members and the public.
- To visit the regions from time to time
- To publicize the organization through website and the internet
- To work with the National Coordinator, and National Executive on all functions from time to time.

4. Programmes Committee

- Establishes and proposes programmes and activities to the National Executive.
- Works in collaboration with the Chairpersons of Resource Mobilization, Thematic Areas and Conveners of Committees to develop proposals to implement adopted programmes.

3. ARTICLE viii – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be altered, added to, amended or repealed or a new constitution may be adopted, provided that such alteration, addition, or amendment shall be initiated by the General Assembly and approved by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership, either at the Annual Meeting, or at any special meeting of the General Assembly

4. ARTICLE ix DISSOLUTION

A resolution to dissolve the Organization shall only be proposed at a Special General Meeting of the General Assembly and shall only be carried by a majority of at least two-thirds of members present.