

# Accessibility to ICT Services by Persons with Disabilities – South African Perspective

**Phosa Mashangoane - General Manager  
Consumer Affairs**

**[PMashangoane@icasa.org.za](mailto:PMashangoane@icasa.org.za)**

**Tel: +27 11 566 3631**

**Fax: +27 11 566 3438**

**Mobile: +27 082 890 5532**

**Independent Communications Authority of South Africa  
(ICASA)**

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**Population size: 44 819 778**

**PwD: 2 255 982**

**Percentage of PwD: 5%**

**Sight disability: 32%**

**Physical disability: 30%**

**Hearing disability: 20%**

**Emotional disability: 16%**

**Intellectual disability: 12%**

**Communication disability: 7%**



**Source: Stats SA 2001**

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## CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA

- **The right of people with disabilities are protected by the Constitution**
- **Government departments and state bodies have a responsibility to promote and protect the fundamental rights of PwDs**

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## DISABILITY STRATEGY

### STANDARD RULES

- **Implies a strong moral and political commitment by the State**
- **Offers an instrument for policy-making and action**
- **Outlines crucial aspects of socio-economic policies in the disability field**
- **Outlines national mechanisms for close collaboration between the State and the organs of the UN, NGOs and DPOs**

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## PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- Negative attitudes that lead to the social exclusion and marginalisation of PwDs
- PwDs are viewed as helpless and dependent
- Perception of PwDs as different or ‘outsiders’
- Changing is a complex process
- Public education and awareness is central to the changing of attitudes
- Raising of awareness of disability is a human rights and development issue

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## ASSISTIVE ICT TECHNOLOGIES

- Assistive ICT technology enables PwDs to participate on equal terms
- PwDs must have access to appropriate ICT technologies that are appropriate and affordable
- Assistive ICT technologies will enable PwDs to access their rights and participate in society as equal citizens
- Initiatives to develop appropriate assistive ICT technology took place
- Standardisation of ICT technologies need greater enhancement

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## COMMUNICATIONS

- **Communications is an important aspect of access to public services**
- **Sign Language is the first and natural language of people with hearing disabilities**
- **Special Language Systems/Augmentative and Alternative Communication for people who can not use a spoken or sign language (Braille, Touch, Bliss symbols)**



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## COMMUNICATIONS Cont.

- **Interpreter Services are linked closely to the communication needs of Deaf people and people with limited or no speech**
- **Technology that will ensure inclusive use of public amenities by all consumers is required and should be standardised**

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## ACCESSIBILITY STUDY CONDUCTED

### Mobile telephony

- Only 57% of PwD have a cell phone
- Cost is a primary driver of choice of mobile provider

### Fixed line telephony

- 11% of PwDs have access to a landline in the home

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## ACCESSIBILITY STUDY CONDUCTED Cont.

### Public phones

- People with physical or sight disabilities are more likely to use a public access phones compared to those with hearing and communication disabilities

### Community phones

- Community service phones were found to be within a walking distance from PwD's homes
- Community service phones were found to be accessible PWDs (ramps, assistive technologies)

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## NATIONAL SUMMIT FOR PwDs

### Resolutions

- **ICASA, in conjunction with the SABS to develop accessibility standards**
- **ICT operators to broaden the use of Sign Language in their service provision**
- **ICASA to establish a consultative forum to with associations for PwDs**

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## Resolutions Cont.

- **ICASA to set up a monitoring structure for the promotion and protection of consumers' rights including PwDs**
- **ICASA to establish a forum to consult with Persons with Disabilities on a regular basis**
- **ICASA to set up a monitoring structure for the promotion and protection of consumers' rights, including PwDs**

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## REGULATIONS

- **Developed and published regulations to regulate ICT industry in the public interest**
  - **To promote competition**
  - **To protect consumers**

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## CODE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Broadcasters to ensure that services are accessible to PwDs
- ECS and ECNS service providers to provide assistive technologies such as text phones, amplified telephony, relay services , hearing aids etc
- ECS and ECNS service providers to provide access ramps and visible signage

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**THANK**

**YOU**