

‘ഭരണഭാഷ മാതൃഭാഷ’

നം. ബി/131/2019

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വിഷയം:- സാമൂഹ്യനീതി വകുപ്പ് - ജില്ലാ സാമൂഹ്യനീതി ഓഫീസ്, കോട്ടയം
വിവരാവകാശ നിയമം - 2015 - മറുപടി നൽകുന്നത് - സംബന്ധിച്ച്

സൂചന : - താങ്കൾ സമർപ്പിച്ച 10/01/2019 തീയതിയിലെ അപേക്ഷ

മേൽ സൂചന പ്രകാരം താങ്കൾ ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ട വിവരങ്ങൾ ഇതോടൊപ്പം ഉള്ളടക്കം ചെയ്യുന്നു.

വിശ്വസ്തതയോടെ

ജില്ലാ സാമൂഹ്യനീതി ഓഫീസർ
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കേരള സർക്കാർ
Government of Kerala
2015



Regn. No. KERBIL/2012/45073
dated 5-9-2012 with RNI
Reg. No. KL/TV(N)/634/2015-17

കേരള ഗസറ്റ്
KERALA GAZETTE

അസാധാരണം
EXTRAORDINARY

ആധികാരികമായി പ്രസിദ്ധപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

വാല്യം 4 Vol. IV	തിരുവനന്തപുരം, ചൊവ്വ Thiruvananthapuram, Tuesday	2015 സെപ്റ്റംബർ 29 29th September 2015	നമ്പർ } No. } 2200
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കേരള സർക്കാർ

സംഗ്രഹം

സാമൂഹ്യനീതി വകുപ്പ്—ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവർക്ക് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള
സംസ്ഥാന നയം 2015—അംഗീകാരം നൽകി
ഉത്തരവ് പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുന്നു

സാമൂഹ്യനീതി (ഡി) വകുപ്പ്

സ. ഉ. (പി)നമ്പർ 60/2015/സാ.നീ.വ.

തിരുവനന്തപുരം, 2015 സെപ്റ്റംബർ 22.

പരാമർശം:—സാമൂഹ്യനീതി ഡയറക്ടറുടെ 29-6-2015-ലെ ഇ3-6750/14 നമ്പർ കത്ത്.

ഉത്തരവ്

ഭിന്നശേഷിക്കാരുടെ ക്ഷേമം, പുനരധിവാസവും വികസനം അവകാശ സഹായം, അവസരസമത്വത്തിനുള്ള കരുതൽ നിടപടി, ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവരുടെ വ്യക്തിസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യത്തിനുള്ള തടസ്സങ്ങൾ നീക്കുക, അവരുടെ പൂർണ്ണ പങ്കാളിത്തം ഉറപ്പ് വരുത്തുക എന്നീ കാര്യങ്ങളിൽ ശ്രദ്ധകേന്ദ്രീകരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്.

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സർക്കാർ പ്രസ്താവനയുടെ സുപ്രാദിനാൽ തിരുവനന്തപുരം ഗവൺമെന്റ് സെക്രട്ടേറ്റ് പ്രസ്സിൽ അച്ചടിച്ച് പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചത്, 2015.

33/3771/2015/S-13.

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‘ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവർക്ക് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സംസ്ഥാന നയം 2015’-ന്റെ കരട് സാമൂഹ്യനീതി വകുപ്പ് ഡയറക്ടർ പരാമർശം കത്ത് പ്രകാരം അംഗീകാരത്തിനായി സമർപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നു.

സർക്കാർ ഇക്കാര്യം വിശദമായി പരിശോധിച്ചതിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ അനുബന്ധമായി ചേർത്തിരിക്കുന്ന ‘ഭിന്നശേഷിയുള്ളവർക്ക് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സംസ്ഥാന നയം 2015’ അംഗീകരിച്ച് ഉത്തരവ് പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുന്നു.

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ഗവർണ്ണറുടെ ഉത്തരവിൻപ്രകാരം,

എ. ഷാജഹാൻ,
സ്പെഷ്യൽ സെക്രട്ടറി.

- ഡയറക്ടർ, സാമൂഹ്യനീതി വകുപ്പ്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
- സംസ്ഥാന വികലാംഗ കമ്മീഷണർ, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
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- എല്ലാ ജില്ലാ കളക്ടർമാർക്കും
- എല്ലാ പൊതുമേഖലാ വകുപ്പ് എം. ഡി./സി. ഇ. ഒ. മാർക്കും
- പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ അക്കൗണ്ടന്റ് ജനറൽ (എ ആന്റ് ഇ)/(ആഡിറ്റ്) കേരള, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
- നിയമവകുപ്പ്
- പൊതുഭരണ (എസ്.സി.) വകുപ്പ്
- ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ ആന്റ് പബ്ലിക് റിലേഷൻസ് വകുപ്പ് (വെബ് ആന്റ് ന്യൂ മീഡിയ)
- സ്റ്റോക്ക് ഫയൽ/ഓഫീസ് കോപ്പി.

KERALA STATE POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES—2015

A. BACKGROUND

The Constitution of India ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all, including Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). In recent years, there have been vast and positive changes in the perception of society towards persons with disabilities. It is now well understood that a majority of persons with disabilities can lead a better quality of life if they have equal opportunities and effective access to rehabilitation measures.

A number of international, national, and sub-national instruments have been brought out over the last three decades relating to the welfare, rehabilitation, development, protection of rights, provision of equal opportunities, facilitating full participation, removing barriers to freedom, promoting universal socio-economic equality and enabling cultural inclusion of persons belonging to diverse categories of disabilities. In order to awaken and sensitize the conscience of humanity, the United Nations commenced its global campaign in favour PwDs with the observance of the International Year for Disabled Persons (IYDP) in the year 1981. Since then, through the following instruments, all nations including India have been mandated to enact legislation, formulate policies, initiate action plans, develop suitable programs and improvise effective implementing mechanism for the promotion and achievement of universal, all-inclusive development and rights-based dignity, and freedom of PwDs. International instruments on disabilities are given as Box-1

- World Programme of Action concerning PwDs vide UN General Assembly Resolution No. 37/52 of 3rd December 1982.
- Standard Rules for Equalization of Opportunities for the PwDs adopted vide UN General Assembly Resolution No. 48/96 of 20th December 1993.
- UN Convention on the Rights of PwDs (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol adopted vide UN General Assembly Resolution No. 61/106 of 13th December 2006 which came into force on 3rd May 2008.

- Reaffirmation of Millennium development focus on policies and actions on the poor and those living in most vulnerable situations including PwDs vide UN General Assembly Resolution No. 65/1 of 22nd September 2010.
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific decade for PwDs 1993-2002 declared vide Beijing Declaration dated 5th December 1991 adopted by UNESCAP.
- Proclamation of extension of first decade for PwDs for a further 10 years 2003-2012 for promotion of inclusive, barrier free and rights based society for PwDs vide Resolution No. 58/4 of 22nd May 2002 adopted by UN Economic and Social Commission Asia Pacific.
- Calling for regional implementation of Bewaco Millennium Framework for action to achieve goals of 2003-2012 decade for PwDs vide UNESCAP Resolution 59/3 of 4th September 2003.
- Calling for regional implementation of Bewaco Millennium Framework for action and Bewaco plus five towards inclusive, barrier free and rights based society for PwDs vide UNESCAP resolution No. 64/8 of 30th April 2008.
- Proclamation of 3rd consecutive decade for PwDs 2013-2022 vide UNESCAP Resolution No. 68/7 of 23rd May 2012.
- Community-based rehabilitation guideline document brought out jointly by WHO, ILO, UNESCO and the Inter National Disability & Development Consortium providing multi-sectoral poverty reduction strategy for implementing convention on the rights of PwDs.
- Bewaco Millennium Framework for action for barrier-free, rights-based inclusive society for PwDs adopted by UNESCAP in their high level inter-governmental meeting dated 25-28 of October 2002.
- 2012 Incheon International Conference on Disability to build international consensus and create social unity by sharing disability related international trends and issues as the 3rd Asia and the Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013-2022)

In conformity with the UN and other International instruments, India made the following enactments:

- PwD (Protection of Rights, Equal Opportunities and Full Participation) Act, 1995
- Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992, and
- National Trust Act for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities, 1999.

In addition to the above, the Government of India formulated and announced a national policy for PwDs in the year 2006. An independent Department for Disability Affairs (later renamed as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) was constituted under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which became fully operational in April 2013. It is therefore timely that the State of Kerala formulates and implements a comprehensive policy towards a rights-based, barrier-free, inclusive society for PwDs.

Concept of Disability

Disability is the umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions referring to the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and attitudinal factors). Functionally, disability is complex, dynamic, multidimensional, and seemingly contrasting.

The term Disability truly denotes a state/situation whereby a person is denied [unable] to express or perform his/her abilities compulsorily whereas disability has been interpreted and prejudicially stereotyped as a sub-average sensory/motor/intellectual capability. This has, over the centuries, paved the way for a deep negative conditioning and a sense of discrimination, which has resulted in the development of negative attitude against inclusive participation of PwDs.

Recent thinking developed over the last 3-4 decades has clarified that PwDs as we label now are not disabled in a literal sense; the concept of disability is still beyond a precise definition to be determined clinically and functionally on a case-to-case basis. Scope for further research in this matter exists.

Demographic Profile of PwDs in Kerala

In accordance with the present classification, norms and criteria related to determination of disability level, the 2011 Census reports that the demographic share of PwDs is 2.21 % of the population in Kerala. Inadequacy of the training imparted to Census enumerators is considered a factor in not identifying a person with a specific disability and hence the Census estimate regarding PwDs needs to be revisited. A census needs to be conducted to collect accurate data with reference to PwDs in the State of Kerala, for facilitating better policy formulation and action planning.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

The Kerala State Policy for PwDs recognizes the necessity and inevitability of including disability dimensions in all development agenda, programmes and action plans in the State of Kerala and recognizes and respects the inherent dignity and autonomy of the individual, which includes the freedom to make choices. The State will ensure full effective and barrier-free participation and inclusion in society through non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, gender equality and opportunity, and protection of rights of PwDs, equal with all persons in society irrespective of age, caste, creed, language and cultural diversities, differences, and variations.

Disability is a part of human experience and hence should be accepted as a component in diversity. Diversity should be accepted and celebrated so as to keep the society in the right perspective through the generations. This is a stance different from the traditional negative attitude towards disability. Thus evolving the capacities of PwDs by adoption, implementation, and review and strengthening of the legislative, administrative and other measures supportive of rights fulfilment is the core theme of the policy.

The policy document envisages the following key strategic focal dimensions:

Development Dimension

The Development dimension includes the participation of PwDs in development. This is to be achieved and enhanced through the realisation of the various agreed National legislations and International Conventions and Programmes. It imposes obligations on the State to promote and ensure that development programs, policies, and activities (including State and local programmes and action plans):

- Address the basic needs of PwDs and their families living in poverty.
- Are disability-inclusive and gender-sensitive, and harness the potential of combining universal design with technological advancements for enabling PwDs to fulfill their rights.
- Are explicitly disability-inclusive with priorities for active participation through their representative organisations in relevant decision-making processes.
- Provide requisite budgetary support at all levels for disability-inclusive development and to facilitate inclusion of PwDs formulating tax policies.
- Facilitate multi-spectral consultation and collaboration to expedite and review State and local coordination with National, Sub-regional and Regional link ages to ensure strengthening of disability-inclusive development policies and programmes.
- Promote community and family-based inclusive development to ensure the enabling of PwDs to contribute to and benefit from development initiative, particularly poverty reduction programmes irrespective of socio-economic status, religious affiliation, ethnicity and location.

Liberation Dimension

The *Liberation Dimension* denotes the rights of PwDs to respect their capacities, and calls for the transfer of the exercise of rights from various facets of Society to the PwDs, enabling attainment of liberation from victimhood, attitudinal barriers and unequal negative discrimination from society-it imposes obligations on the State to respect these rights.

Protection Dimension

The *Protection Dimension* acknowledges that PwDs have 'un-evolved' capacities as a consequence of their disability and thereby have rights to protection from abuse (on the part of parents, community and the State) and participation in activities likely to cause them harm.

Accessibility Dimension

The *Accessibility Dimension* aims to make a positive and dynamic inter-actionable environment and attitude for inclusive development and empowerment of persons with diverse disabilities happen as a natural and spontaneous process through barrier-free, friendly and universally-designed accessibility to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication in a usable manner through universal design- assistive technologies taking into consideration the need to accommodate economic, geographic, linguistic and other aspects of cultural diversity, which altogether constitute a critical bridge to fulfilling their rights.

Perspective Building

Perspective building is one of the most important parts of the policy formulation. Through this, the policy acquires its strength in terms of multifaceted views so as to eliminate anyone-sided bias (Government/ NGO). This exercise also will help to make the policy more participatory. Thus Perspective building consists of the following categories:

1. District-wise perspective of all Districts in the State.
2. Perspective from key political, executives, planners, administrators, legislators, and grass root level elected representatives.
3. NGO perspective
4. Civil society perspective
5. PwDs and parental perspective
6. Departmental perspective
7. Legal perspective
8. Stakeholder perspective

C. DISABILITY POLICY FRAMEWORK VISION

In a democratic, rights based society, the needs of all citizens constitute the basis for policy and planning in order to ensure that the general systems and institutions of society are accessible to all by organising the structures of society so that they function in a way that meets the needs of all, Thus, Society mobilises the potential of all its citizens and consequently strengthens its developmental potential.

PwDs are a natural and integral part of the society as a whole, and should have opportunities to contribute their experience, talents and capacities to local and state level holistic development in conformity with sub-national, National, Regional, International development framework and patterns. Considering Kerala State as a wholesome unit with inbuilt locally specific factors and components together, the State needs to ensure that PwDs are included in the process of building a society for all, where citizens, regardless of their wide-ranging origins and abilities, are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities.

While the Local Self Government Institutions in Kerala provide the framework for the participation of PwDs, defining and translating the rights of PwDs into specific measures and programmes constitute a major challenge. The PwD Act 1995, National Policy 2006, United Nations Convention on Rights of PwDs 2008 are the main instruments that guide the public policy in supporting the rights of PwDs. They will also assist the State Government in creating an enabling environment that will lead to the full participation and equalisation of opportunities for PwDs at all levels of society.

Objectives

The broad objectives of disability policy frame work are three fold:

- Inclusive development,
- Enhanced individual competence, and
- Increased personal autonomy of PwDs

This is to be achieved through the:

- The facilitation of the inclusion of disability rights, values, and practices into Government developmental strategies, planning and programmes.
- The development of an integrated management system, for the coordination of planning, implementation and monitoring the various line functions of PwDs in all spheres of Government.
- The development of capacity-building strategies that will enhance Government's ability at all levels to implement recommendations contained in the disability policy frame work.
- A comprehensive plan of action that will include, in addition to programme planning a strong public education and awareness raising programme aimed at changing fundamental prejudices in Kerala Society.

- The development of State level structures such as Department of Disability Affairs, Kerala State Disability Council etc. that will continuously update and link strategy and policy development with operational planning initiatives involving all players (Government Sector, Disabled Person's Organizations and Private sector).

Guiding Principles

Principles upon which the strategy is based include:

Self Representation

A fundamental principle that underlies the outlook of the Disability Rights Movement in Kerala is the right to Self Representation, at all levels including National and International levels. This means that the collective determination and wisdom of PwDs must be used to formulate the strategies of the Government. By recognising this principle, the Government acknowledges the role of organisations of PwDs and their representatives in the decision-making processes. This will ensure that decision taken and implemented will be appropriate for PwDs.

Comprehensive Approach

Historically disability issues have been addressed in a piecemeal, fragmented way. This has been one of the key factors contributing to the marginalisation of differently-abled people and the state of dire poverty in which the majority do live. If the needs of PwD are to be effectively addressed disability dimension must be fully included into the principal strategies and activities of all Government programmes. This will ensure that the adverse effects that have affected PwDs in the past will be eradicated in a sustainable process of reconstruction.

Sustainability

The funding of the disability policy framework as part of planning and development should be integrated with potential long term-sources of finance whether from the Government, public or private sectors. All policies and plans developed need to be cost-effective.

Policy Guidelines and Strategies

This section identifies key sectors where actions must be taken. They are grouped around the three key objectives, namely:—(i) Inclusive development, (ii) Enhanced individual competence and (iii) Increased personal autonomy of PwDs.

Inclusive Development

(i) Equal Rights to Health Care

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Health care system</p> <p>The development of a comprehensive universal health care system at all levels of care that is sensitive to the general and specific health care needs of PwDs, which is aligned with the emerging health policy in Kerala.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to identify and reduce discrimination on the basis of disability in the health sector. • Comprehensive free health care for all PwDs, including free access to assistive devices and rehabilitation services. • Initiating and formulating of special packages for PwDs living in tribal and coastal belt. • To develop norms and minimum standards for the building of health facilities and rehabilitation centres to ensure barrier free access. • Appropriate communication strategies at service delivery points must ensure equal access for people with communication handicap—visual, hearing and/or multiple disabilities. • Training programmes for medical and allied health personnel must be developed to facilitate an understanding of the implication of the delivery of health services within the social and human right model in consultation with and under the guidance of Rehabilitation Council of India. • Collaboration with the education sector for providing assistive devices and services for inclusive education.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Prevention</p> <p>To develop primordial primary and secondary prevention programmes that eliminates/limits diseases and accidents that cause disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy life style promotion and avoidance of evil habits in the home, school, work place and in the society in general. • To ensure adequate maternal health and prenatal health indices as a measure of primordial prevention. • Protective measures such as immunization protection against accidents and protection against occupational hazards. • Avoidance of conflict, war and violence. • Decrease in poverty through targeted intervention in the educational, social and economic status through various national and state poverty alleviation programmes. • Reduction in occupational and environmental hazards through the adaptation of the environment.
<p>Detection and Early Intervention</p> <p>Improved health services including genetic counselling, early identification and interventions, including effective emergency medical intervention measures as guided by international human rights norms and best practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern comprehensive diagnostics and detection facilities to be set up, from the second tier of the three tier health care system for early detection and identification of disability risk cases, paving way for early suitable interventions • Early intervention centers to be establish as a joint initiative by health, social justice department and LSGD's together, to facilitate effective and disability relevant early intervention measures available to infants and children's with disabilities, at least in the block panchayath level. • All other rehabilitation, empowerment and inclusion policy measures belong to comprehensive intervention framework envisaged under this policy.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Special Attention— Mental Illness and intellectual impairment</p> <p>Adopt and facilitate the National Mental Health Policy & Programmes as well as develop adequate human resources and services, and ensure the availability and supply of required drugs to combat the mental illness in the State.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proper budget allocation for mental health services. ● Implementation of District Mental Health Programmes and National Mental Health policy in the State. ● Certification of mentally-ill with IDEAS scale and ensuring appropriate benefits under PwD Act. ● Encouraging community-based programmes for the mentally ill or inclusion of mentally ill in other community-based programmes. ● Ensuring quality rehabilitative services in already existing mental health institutions in the State. ● Strengthening of Psychiatry departments in medical colleges and teaching hospitals. ● Encouraging human resource development in the field of mental health at all levels (Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Neurologists, Social Workers, Nurses, etc.) ● Orientation and training of existing Primary Health Centres/appropriate Government staff in mental health. ● Establishment and proper running of appropriate Mental Health Services through PHCs/District Hospitals and such other existing Government infrastructures.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encouraging NGOs working in the field of Mental Health. Encouraging private sector partnership for the development of mental health services. ● Ensuring funding for research in the field of mental health. <p>Proper linkage and collaboration between the two departments—Social Justice and Health and Family Welfare Departments and Local Self Institutions as well for convergence of services for mentally ill.</p>
<p>Multiple Disabilities</p> <p>The Government shall pay special attention to create enabling environment for PWDs with multiple disability so as to fulfil their rights to education, health, employment, social inclusion and full participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There will be screening facilities made available at District Level and efforts will be made to screen young babies. ● Non availability of medicines for the mentally ill and the hemophilic patients is a major problem as the majority of them are economically backward and unable to procure the needed medications. Therefore the Government shall ensure that appropriate budgetary provisions are made to provide the necessary drugs at subsidized rates for the needy. ● Aids and appliances are not only expensive but require continued maintenance and frequent replacement for growing children, needing technical expertise and monetary resources. The Government shall take necessary steps for provision and maintenance of aids and appliances and their maintenance.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of Physiatrist, Ortho, ENT, Ophthalmology specialists, Physiotherapist, Speech therapist, audiologist, Prosthetist Orthotist and other related services in Govt. hospitals at the block and the District as it will go a long way in rehabilitation of PWDs. The medical education curriculum shall include prevention and identification of disabilities as one of the subjects/topics for the study of medical graduates. • The training curriculum of Social Justice Officers shall include the identification of disabilities using indigenous means. • Proper Certification of persons with multiple disabilities such as “Deaf, blind, Autism etc” is ensured by the Depts. of Health and Social Justice by a joint team consisting of medical and rehabilitation professionals. • Encouraging Human Resource development in the field of persons with multiple disabilities. • Promotion of NGOs working in the field of multiple disabilities.

(ii) Equal Access to Quality Education

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Education</p> <p>While the emphasis will be on facilitating equal access to education and the development of a single education system that will cater to the needs of all learners within an inclusive environment, the State shall meet all the educational requirements of all categories of PwDs in a targeted time frame by method of inclusion and or special schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a clear, inclusive policy that includes all stakeholders and which is understood and accepted at schools as well as at other levels and by the community. • Curriculum development in regular schools to ensure flexibility, addition and adaptation according to the needs of individual learners, regardless of the category to which they seem to belong. • Home-based and special institution-based education for severely disabled persons. • Training for ongoing pre-service and in-service teachers and other school staff. • Parent empowerment programmes to encourage parental involvement in the assessing and making decisions for their children. These programmes need to occur in conjunction with the sensitisation of professionals to this need. • Appropriate technology-development in education and training. • Adequate and appropriate education support services to all learners.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlier access to education for all learners, but in particular for learners with special education needs. • Links between education and the world of work need to be strengthened. • Effective and relevant research. • Measures towards 100% enrolment of all children with disabilities in inclusive/special schools in a time-bound manner. This will require opening of more special schools to accommodate the backlog. • Appropriate methods to assess and identify children with disabilities. • Transport systems to ensure that children with disabilities reach educational institutions. • All the existing regular schools will be suitably adapted for inclusive education. • Higher and professional education sector shall be fully made inclusive for PWDs with all relevant adaptations and technology inputs. • All special schools to be upgraded as resource centres so as to fulfil and accomplish inclusion requirements of students with disabilities.

(iii) Equal Opportunities for Employment and Economic Empowerment:

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Employment and Economic Empowerment</p> <p>The Government shall create conducive conditions to broaden the range of Employment and Economic development options for the people with disabilities, thus giving the rightful opportunity in all National and State employment generation programmes in order to reduce the income gap between non disabled and disabled people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure and enforce appropriate implementation of reservation for employment to persons with disabilities as a mandated by Persons With Disabilities Act and relevant laws of the land. • To assess the current state of reservation of PWD's in all Government departments, PSU, and Autonomous bodies and action to be taken to fill the backlog of vacancies as identified, in the most prioritised manner. • To constitute a permanent mechanism consisting of high level officials of Government, Public Service Commission, PSU-Autonomous bodies, representatives of user population with disabilities and for half yearly review, evaluation and interventional measures in matters related to employment as stipulated by the PWD Act. • Providing PwDs with a range of employment, income generation and economic empowerment opportunities aimed at meeting differing needs and offering real possibilities for economic choices. • Raising awareness amongst PwDs of their potential and their opportunities. • Inter-sectoral collaboration between Govt. Departments, NGOs and the private sector focussing on disability employment and entrepreneurship.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific programmes for personnel working in placement/ personnel/ recruitment and all employers to ensure that they understand the options available in the placement and promotion of disabled job seekers and workers. ● The establishment of support programmes for persons with disability entrepreneurs through developing specialised personnel within the mainstream support services, who understand and are sensitive to the needs of persons with disability entrepreneurs. ● Representation of PwDs on the employment related state Govt. Bodies, KPSC, Planning Board, Councils etc. ● Assuring that the existing vocational education initiatives in Kerala are accessible with people with disabilities, again through assuring maximum levels of participation by Children with Special Needs. ● Development of a database capturing the work and skill status of people with disabilities and creation of a skill inventory as a central register with the Labour and Employment Department in conjunction with Department of Disability Affairs/ Social Justice. ● Device special employment schemes and programmes and promote ventures in co-operative, self help groups, community participatory, and supported modes of employment and social enterprises with financial inputs from Government.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage setting up of career guidance and coaching centres to equip persons with diverse disabilities with reference to disability specific needs and engage job coaches. • Ensure and expedite incentive schemes for private sector employers employing PWDs in accordance with provisions of PWD Act. • To develop and implement inclusive job specific induction programmes in areas wherever persons with disabilities are employed.
<p>Human Resource and skill development</p> <p>The Government shall ensure the development of the capacities of the PwDs to participate more effectively in the economic development their communities and society as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transformation of mainstream vocational training services to provide more accessible and inclusive training for PwDs. • Skills development of PwDs by deepening their specialised capabilities so that they are able to access income through formal sector jobs, through small business or community projects. • Provision of adult base education programme so that the current adult education programme include PwDs with appropriate curriculum, access and other facilities. • Providing PwDs apprenticeships (opportunities to gain employment experience in actual work situations). They may require adjustments to the built environment and acquisition of specialised equipments and technology for training and assessment.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development of appropriate training standards in line with the market requirement by ensuring the accommodation of the specific training needs of PwD trainees. ● Through positive action disabled employees should be given the right to take part in upgrading courses, training programmes of new technologies, and, training on paid educational leave on an equitable basis. ● Pre and in-service programmes need to be developed for the orientation and training of vocational instructors, managers and supervisors in the all employment sectors in disability related matters. ● Ensure authenticity, autonomy and independent of rehabilitation professionals as mandated by Rehabilitation Council of India Act and Rules in matters related to decisions and certifications of eligibility of persons with respective disability and to assess and determine extent and degree of disability. ● Different categories of professional/career courses developed and standardized by Rehabilitation Council of India shall be made available with reference to situational requirement of Kerala and

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<p>required new courses in areas as per demand assessed shall be developed and offered by Rehabilitation Council of India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All rehabilitation professionals to be treated at par with any professional in other areas and to bring about equality and parity in their salaries, service status equal with any other health or administrative professionals in service.
<p>Social Security</p> <p>Analysis and development of economically rational systems of a social security and a safety net that also promotes social inclusion and economic independence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the existing system and if required, evolving a social security and pension system by the Department of Social Justice or Local Self Government or any other department concerned, with particular attention to its incentives for empowerment, integration and employment. • Encourage project initiatives that demonstrate alternative approaches to social security—for e.g., promoting access to small business opportunities, which balance the safety net requirements with incentives for economic initiative. • Statewide implementation of an alternate social security system that has a purpose whereby an individual lives with dignity and feels wanted by the society.

(iv) *Gender Equality—A Cross-Cutting Issue*

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Gender Equality</p> <p>The Government shall ensure the attainment of equal rights by and the creating of opportunities for the Women and Girls with Disabilities in social, economic and political spheres and reduction in violence and discrimination against Women and Girls with Disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on enrolment of girls with disabilities for special, integrated and/or inclusive education, vocational training and such activities. • Special monitoring of any kind of abuse and violence against Women and Girls with Disabilities; provision shall be made for taking strict action against the guilty. • Encouragement to Women with Disabilities for self-employment loans/schemes as well as employment in reserved posts. • Special drives for creating awareness on recognizing women's role and contribution to the development of the family, community, State, Nation and World. • Making health services available to Women with Disabilities with special reference to reproductive health. • Inclusion of Women and Girls with Disabilities in all disability rehabilitation-related activities and programmes. • Encouragement for formulation of NGOs working for Women and Girls with Disabilities and ensuring appropriate support to their activities.

(v) *Research and Statistics for Effective Policy Making and Implementation*

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Statistics</p> <p>To develop and maintain a research and information system that is based on the Social and Human Rights Model of Disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection in conjunction with national census and household surveys undertaken in close collaboration with, amongst others, Universities, Research Institutes and NGOs/ DPOs. • Development of a database to provide information on the causes of disability, incidents of impairment, needs of PwDs, services and existing research. • To conduct a scientific door to door disability census, rather a disability mapping of the State, to ascertain the correct number of disabled persons belonging to various disability groups, their current socio economic situations, accessibility to services at the Grama Panchayat/Urban Local Government level. This would pave way for the visibility of the currently invisible population which would reflect in further planning and budgetary allocations to this sector. The database so created will be periodically updated. • Promoting access for people with disabilities to all aspects of information that affects their lives. • Make registration of disability case with respect to local bodies within 15 days from the date of occurring disability with provision for continuous updation.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Research and development</p> <p>To undertake and promote comprehensive disability specific research and development programs, and actions in order to alleviate difficulties of all persons with disabilities and for upgrading the quality of their life in all spheres of life such as.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social development • Economic empowerment • Time relevant and appropriate employment • Cultural inclusion • Technology utilization • Development of assistive devices • Information Communication Accessibility • Barrier freedom • Accessible transport • Recreation .

Enhanced Individual Competence

(i) Access to Assets, Facilities and Services

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Access to goods, Facilities and services</p> <p>The Government shall ensure that the PwDs have equitable access to goods, services and facilities and to place the onus on service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adoption and implementation of legislation and regulations to enshrine the principle that, it is unlawful for people who provide goods, facilities or services to the public to discriminate against PwDs and to provide a legal framework to ensure that service providers treat PwDs the same way they treat other people, when offering or providing a service or facility.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>providers to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that PwDs can access the required goods, services and facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The publication of a Code of practice containing practical advice for service providers to enable them to provide acceptable access and services to disabled people. • Ensuring that PwDs have recourse to the law when they have complaints about such discrimination by providing required information via all available means, including community-based contacts and organisations. • All personnel within the public sector, who are engaged in any form of service delivery, provision of facilities or goods to the public, to undertake appropriate training to ensure equitable access to the PwDs. • All service providers within the private sector to undertake compulsory certification training to facilitate equitable access to such goods, services and facilities to PwDs. • To device incentive schemes to those who adopt best practices in aforesaid goods and service delivery system.

(ii) *Full and Equal Opportunities for Participation in Public Life*

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Participation in Public Life</p> <p>The Government shall ensure that the PwDs have equitable access and opportunity to full participation in political life at all levels (National, State, Corporation, Municipality, District Panchayat, Block Panchayat and Panchayat) in the electoral process of the Nation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adoption and strict implementation of PwDs Act, 1995 and regulations to enshrine the principle that PwDs have equitable access and opportunity to play a full part in the electoral process and political life. • The adoption and implementation of mandatory national standards regulating and ensuring equitable access to the electoral services within existing Electoral Registration sites and polling stations or by virtue of offering other election services at home or a different suitable venue. The issuance of guidelines to electoral administrators on all aspects of access to electoral services to support the mandatory national standards. • Provision of posters and equipment in voter registration sites and polling stations to allow large-print posters of the ballot papers to be displayed and for simple ballot paper or polling aids to be provided in polling stations, thereby benefiting persons with partial sight and voters with multiple disabilities. • Representatives of persons with disabilities in all Board, Corporation and Committees, directly or indirectly related to the disability sector.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Cultural and Creative activities, Sports</p> <p>To develop and extend sporting and cultural activities for PwDs so that they can participate in sports for recreational, competitive and therapeutic purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training and development of trainers/coaches familiar with sports and arts and culture for PwDs. • Creating accessible sporting and cultural facilities for PwDs. • Public education programmes to make—the public (especially living in rural areas), sponsors, sports and cultural administrators aware of the different forms of sports and cultural activities for PwDs—locally and at all other levels possible. • Sports for PwDs should be “mainstreamed” as far as possible to increase the sponsorship value. In other words it should be promoted jointly with mainstream events (institution of an award for excellence in sports for persons with disabilities). • Make provisions for making available specialized or adapted equipments, gadgets and materials relevant and suitable for persons with suitable PwDs to engage in sports, arts and cultural activities. • The awards, recognitions and monetary incentives given to achievers in the sports, arts and culture arena, belonging to the PWD category should be equal to that of similar achievers in the general category.

Increased Personal Autonomy of PwDs

(i) Enhanced Public Education and Awareness

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Public Education and Awareness raising</p> <p>To implement a public awareness programme that creates a positive and accommodative environment in which diversity is respected, valued and celebrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a multi sectoral integrated disability awareness strategy which would disseminate this message to the different communities through media—print, electronic, web, social media and through art and cultural activities • Inclusion of appropriate curriculum including demonstration, practice, training on disability in primary, secondary, higher, professional education syllabi. • Sensitisation programme for journalists and workers in all media incorporating public broadcaster including the disability rights message as opposed to the “pity and patronage” approach. • Mandatory disability awareness programmes within every line function in Government. • Increased visibility of PwDs in media and in society. • Inclusion of disability content in the induction training of all functionaries in the Government.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)</p> <p>Raising awareness of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and creating access to appropriate rehabilitation services founded on the CBR approach through on-going decentralised planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The appropriate training of people (rehabilitation professionals, technicians and workers in field of Prosthetic and Orthosis, Special Education, hearing and speech, low vision management, mobility, community based works, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and medical technology, Auxiliary nursing, midwifery, anganwadi workers) involved in the rehabilitation services. ● Development of a decentralised service delivery system through support of the Grama Panchayat/Urban local Government and Gramasabha, civil society groups, creating a system for empowering the stake holders at local government level for facilitating community based rehabilitation programme. ● Palliative care service to the bedridden, severely and profoundly disabled, terminal disease sufferers, extremely old aged etc. through a mechanism jointly operated by LSGD, Health and Social Justice departments in collaboration with NGO's and civil society organisations. ● Community based rehabilitation centres like BUDS schools and BUDS rehabilitation centres. ● Provision of appropriate and affordable assistive devices.

(ii) Barrier free access

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Barrier free access</p> <p>To create a barrier free society that accommodates the diversity of needs of PwDs and enables the entire population to move around the environment freely unhindered and to have access to information in a usable form such as braille, sign language and other forms of communication, universally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intersectoral collaboration to ensure that accessibility cuts across departments and pillars. ● Appropriate human resource training on barrier free accesses to provide the exposure to the needs of the PwDs. ● Intersectional collaboration for the development of communication system accessible to people with visual, hearing and communication disabilities. ● Self representation—To plan an accessible environment it is important to involve PwDs and their representative in the planning process ● Licensing and building permit authorities shall enforce provisions of barrier free access to PwDs. Provisions for barrier free access and disability friendly environment creations as provided in relevant acts and laws shall be strictly enforced and a stringent monitoring and auditing system shall be devised. ● All public places such as, roads, zebra crossing, road junctions, footpath, bus stations, railway stations, hospitals, offices, markets, shopping places, auditoriums, recreational areas, cinemas, etc. shall be made accessible with relevant communication inputs installed, be it audio visual, or tactile.

(iii) *Appropriate Assistive Technology for inclusion and participation in society*

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Appropriate Assistive Technology for inclusion and participation in society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote development and use of audio, tactile and vibration and sensor technology used aids appliances and devices to facilitate upgradation of life quality of persons with visual impairment, low vision and visual impairment added multiple disabilities.
<p>To promotion of development and use appropriate relevant and suitable assistive technologies, aids appliances and devices for enabling full empowerment participation and total inclusion of persons with diverse disabilities with reference to each ones specific needs requirements, capacities and potentials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote development and use of affordable high technology mobility aids, artificial limbs and special computers, hardwares and softwares to upgrade the comfort and quality in the life and activities of persons with locomotor disability, cerebral palsy, autism, mental retardation, leprosy cured and multiple disabilities. • promote development and use of latest information and communication technology involved aids and appliances for enabling most effective and useful communication and exchange of information process easily possible for persons with hearing impairment dominated multiple disabilities to facilitate their faster inclusion and participation. • promote development and use of advanced technology aided knowhows and processes in rehabilitation and inclusion of persons with psychiatric disabilities/mental illness.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promote and undertake applied and field research and innovation of various rehabilitation aids and appliances beneficial to persons belonging to different disability areas and encourage and support qualified actual rehabilitation professionals who are to be directly involved in the research and development. ● Technological developments in the recent years have revolutionised speed and efficiency at which tasks can be completed. Appropriate Assistive Technology (AT) which applies some of these advances can play a very key role in compensating the specific functional deficiency of a PwD. ● Traditionally, when assessing disability, the percentage of disability' was estimated based on a few tables and charts of functional limitations. This was used to bring out the inability of a person or the functional barriers. The focus on the barriers resulted in emphasis on exclusion. The main barriers are for communication (hearing, speaking, reading, and writing), sight, and mobility. The developments in the field of material sciences, computers and communication has brought out assistive technologies to overcome the above barriers. Hence looking at a disability as a percentage of limitations has lost its significance and the focus should be shifted to the level to which a person can function using the assistive technology which helps him or her to overcome the barriers.

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However it should be noted that most AT requires training for smooth and efficient use. Adequate training should be made available at as early stage as needed. Using the AT in school level will ensure acquaintance with the AT itself and also gaining expertise in usage. Further this can be an important factor in gaining employment in adulthood. • Since cost may be a prohibitive factor in access to AT, appropriate AT should be made available by the government through special schemes similar to ADIP scheme of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. This should be done after specific requirement assessments by experts such as rehabilitation engineers. • A typical employer should be mandated to provide the necessary accommodations as well as AT for ensuring the functional competence. Government incentives should be made available to acquire AT for employment and this will eliminate the tendency to avoid or exclude PwD by employers.

(iv) Transport and mobility

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Transport and mobility</p> <p>To develop an accessible, affordable multi-model public transport system with greater mobility and communication needs, with features which are essential to disabled people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing and implementation of a disability awareness and orientation component for the transport industry. • Initiating processes to develop accessible transport systems should include participation by all stakeholders. • Development of preferential parking places in the city in consultation with the stakeholder. • Design of public transport vehicles both government and private shall be a universal one, with incorporation of special features and facilities usable by persons with all disabilities. • Formulation of special guidelines for issuance of driving licences to persons with different disabilities to make the process simpler smooth and hassle free. • To ensure supply and availability of individual transport system for the disabled such as side wheel scooters, All Terrain Vehicles, hightech wheel chair etc. • To incorporate and enforce use of white cane rules in traffic laws and provide training to traffic personals drivers and other stakeholders. • Ensure supply and availability of various disability specific aids and appliances to enable their independent mobility and communications.

(v) Safe shelter and accessible dwellings

<i>Policy objective</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Safe shelter and accessible dwellings</p> <p>To provide PwDs and their families with safe shelter and accessible dwellings of their own through equitable access to a range of options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential facilities, which are accessible, at specific levels of the Government Housing schemes. • Ownership of homes under all National and State schemes with ensured accessibility, at specific levels such as 6% of the total quota. Special incentive programme to encourage the participation of private sector housing facilities. • A programme for Assisted Living for Adult Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities will be launched as an answer to deinstitutionalization and community living. This will provide the PwDs with autonomy and greater control over their own lives.
<p>Disaster Preparedness</p> <p>Disaster preparedness measures must ensure that the special needs of the people with disabilities are adequately addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include persons with disabilities in the planning process. • Evaluate all existing infrastructure earmarked for use during emergencies to ensure that they are accessible and meet the needs of persons with disabilities. • Special emphasis on the management of PwDs in the training session for emergency management team.

D. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

The functions of the proposed Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities will be:

- To facilitate, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the Disability Policy.
- To provide a link between Government and civil society.
- To develop a management system for the co-ordination of disability planning, implementation and monitoring in the various departments.
- To provide advice to the Government on disability matters.
- To ensure wide public education as well as capacity-building for the disability movement and Government departments to implement the Disability-Policy Framework.
- To facilitate budget analysis to identify whether sufficient resources are targeted towards disability sector, and particularly towards the integration and empowerment of disabled people.
- To undertake appropriate empirical and action research and maintain the data base on disability including generating appropriate Management Information System (MIS).
- To facilitate financial resources in support of the implementation of the Disability Policy Framework.

Special emphasis should be placed by the Government in preventing duplication and misuse of the existing provisions for the persons with disabilities.

Role definition of various institutions and establishments under the Government spread across various departments for the persons with disabilities is needed in prevention of duplication and wastage of resource to ensure effectiveness and convergence of service. Single window delivery points of services should be operationalised to the extent possible.

There should be an inter-departmental, co-ordination team comprising of the responsible officer from Social Justice, Health, Education and other related departments, Civil Society and stakeholders headed by District Collector at the district level and Chief Secretary at the state level to channelize the multifarious, provisions for the disabled through single channels to ensure maximum efficiency and to prevent duplications, misuse and inefficacies. This inter departmental team shall meet periodically evaluate and monitor the implementation.

While all monitoring structures in Kerala should include the monitoring of the rights of PwDs in their mandates, the Commissioner for Disability should have a special responsibility for this task.

The Disability Department having participation by civil society stakeholders as well as the key Government Departments should also have an essential monitoring role.

Accountability shall be maintained and the activities of the department shall be subject to periodic social audit.

E. MONITORING RESULTS

Monitoring is an essential element in upholding the Human Rights of PwDs. Monitoring can also be used to measure trends, patterns and effectiveness of implementation of Policy Framework. While all monitoring structures in Kerala should include the monitoring of the rights of PwDs in their mandates, the Commissioner for Disability should have a special responsibility for this task. The Department of Disability Affairs with the participation of civil society stakeholders as well as the key Government Departments should also have an essential monitoring role. The Commission would need to develop appropriate indicators to assess policy implementation and measure progress in consultation with sector agencies. The following table provides some intermediate outcome indicators that will be developed further as part of the strategic guidelines.

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Associated Sample Outcome Indicator</i>
Inclusive Development	<p>Increased percentage of children with disabilities complete secondary schools- percentage of PwDs in Government jobs reaches or supercedes per cent level.</p> <p>Decreased number of PwDs living in the tribal and coastal belts.</p>
Enhanced Individual Competence	Increased participation of PwDs in mainstream sports.
Increased Personal Autonomy of PwDs	Enhanced awareness of disability among different relevant communities.