

MEDIA STATEMENT

Issued by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

Attention: Journalists and News Editors

Friday:03 May 2024

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DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE ORGANIZATIONS TO STRENGTHEN AND ENSURE DISABILITY INCLUSIVENESS AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN WORKPLACES.

PRETORIA: The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities commemorates Workers Month by encouraging employers to strengthen disability inclusiveness and economic empowerment of women and youth in workplaces. As South Africa is celebrating 30 years of freedom in 2024, employers should be reminded of the importance of building disability-inclusive workplaces that protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others. “Worker’s Month in South Africa traces its origins back to the late 19th century when workers mobilized themselves to demand better working conditions, fair wages, and fundamental human rights” said Minister Dlamini Zuma.

Empowering persons with disabilities is not just a matter of gender equality, it is about dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the transformation of society, particularly the transformation of power relations between persons with disabilities; women, and men to enhance economic growth and resilience.

“Studies have shown that gender diversity in the workplace fosters creativity, innovation, and problem-solving capabilities, leading to better decision-making and improved business outcomes. When women are given equal opportunities and support, they contribute significantly to productivity gains, which, in turn, boost the overall economy” said Minister Dlamini Zuma.

Promoting gender equality and advocating for a disability-inclusive workplace is an investment in the future economic growth of South Africa as we celebrate the democratic achievements of government. It is essential to reflect on the remarkable contributions of persons with disabilities, youth and women to South Africa.

“Equally so by continuing to advocate for resolving labour-related challenges faced by persons with disabilities and women in the workplace, we can create an environment where we can thrive and make significant contributions to the economy” concluded Minister Dlamini Zuma. The provision of a universally accessible environment and reasonable accommodation are at the core of ensuring equity and equality for persons with disabilities to perform their responsibilities effectively.

To strengthen social cohesion and independent living of persons with disabilities, we all have a responsibility to promote the self-representative voice of persons with disabilities by involving persons with disabilities in the planning, decision-making and execution of policies, programs, and services therefore we ought to strengthen awareness initiatives to know more about disabilities. We must employ persons with disabilities at all levels as they equally possess the capacity to work and fulfil the responsibilities assigned to them.

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