

**AN EVALUATION OF EMPOWERMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN  
THE VHEMBE DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

By

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### **Declaration**

I, Yingwani Dennis Nghonyama, hereby declare that this dissertation for the Masters of Development Degree at Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership, University of Limpopo, hereby submitted by me, has not been submitted previously to this university or any other university and that the whole work has been done by me. Reference materials in the dissertation have been duly acknowledged.

Signature-----

Date-----

## **Abstract**

### **An Evaluation of Empowerment Opportunities for People with Disabilities in the Vhembe District**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of, and access to, empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities in the Vhembe District. The methods used involved Semi-structured interviews and Document study in which fourteen officials coordinating services to people with disabilities in the fourteen departments were interviewed and documents available in the rendering of services to people with disabilities were requested and studied. The findings of the study indicated that there were enough opportunities for people with disabilities in the district created by relevant departments. But people with disabilities did not make adequate use of the created/available opportunities. It was also established that people with disabilities had to be made aware of these opportunities and had to be trained on taking advantage of the opportunities. The contribution of this study is in the empowerment of the previously disadvantaged individuals (e.g. people with disabilities) as proposed by the present government. The study wanted to determine how far the district had gone in the empowerment of one section of the previously disadvantaged people.

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## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In South Africa people with disabilities as a vulnerable group are said to have been discriminated against. As a result of such discrimination, they have also been disadvantaged. The discrimination ranged from the legislative framework of the country which did not ensure equality between people with disabilities and people without disabilities, to the attitude of the public that people with disabilities cannot be included in the mainstream activities of society. People with disabilities were not exposed to empowerment opportunities and did not participate in sport and in income generating projects, and were hardly employable. During the apartheid period, legislations, policies, programmes and projects did not make it possible for people with disabilities to be exposed to empowerment opportunities.

This discrimination can be perceived of at two levels. In the first place, there is the role of government whose focus tended to marginalize such people in practically all activities and programmes of a developmental nature. This produced a situation where people with disabilities were essentially left to peripheral activities and denied the chance for integration in the mainstream economy. At the second level, communities in which people with disabilities live, also did not treat them as people entitled to leading normal lives. They were seen merely as a burden in the household with limited income through disability grants. An additional widespread view is that in which people without disabilities see no reason why those with disabilities should indeed receive any special attention from the state in terms of access to services and opportunities.

In the new democratic governance, equality between people with disabilities and people without disabilities is ensured. The legislative framework of the republic of South Africa as set out in The Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, indicates that there shall not be discrimination against any one on the ground of disability. The constitution as the principal law of the republic regulated the promulgation of laws that make it possible for people with disabilities to be empowered and not to be discriminated against. The attitude

of the public appears to be changing with the promulgation of the present legislative framework, programmes and projects that are made known through campaigns.

It is indicated that people with disabilities as a previously discriminated against group and being vulnerable, should be exposed to equal opportunities with people without disabilities. In ensuring this equality between people with disabilities and people without disabilities, the gap created in the past by the apartheid government has to be closed. To close this gap is to create preferential empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities which are supported by legislations, policies and programs. Preferential opportunities for people with disabilities are regulated in various acts which do not specify exactly what the opportunities are supposed to be. It is left upon the public sector department to identify the opportunities in line with the regulations.

The Vhembe district has a large number of people with disabilities and a large number of people living in poverty (Maluleke, 2002). The public sector departments might have responded to the stipulations of the Acts to create empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities. The present study seeks to survey these opportunities in the district.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

People with disabilities are said to have been discriminated against during the apartheid period (RSA, 1997). As a vulnerable group, these people were not given access to opportunities. The equality clause of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa requires that there be equality of opportunities through the creation of preferential opportunities for people with disabilities.

The question is: what are these opportunities for people with disabilities? A problem arises whenever there is no communication between government departments in the creation of opportunities; and the result is that there may be a duplication of services. There is also the danger of over creation of opportunities if there is no integrated planning across government departments at district level. In addition, even where an optimum creation of opportunities for people with disabilities exists, lack of awareness

on the part of people with disabilities limits their access to such opportunities. The focus of this study therefore is to address the problem as follows: What kinds of opportunities for people with disabilities are available in different government departments and to what extent are these integrated in the Vhembe district?

### **1.3 Motivation**

As a Social Development Coordinator, in the Department of Health & Social Development for Vhembe District, responsible for services to people with disabilities, I have observed that almost all departments render services to people with disabilities. I have also noticed that there is a possibility of two or more departments providing similar opportunities for people with disabilities. It has also been noted that there is little, if any, joint planning and communication on the creation of these opportunities by different sector departments. The services they are rendering are not packaged into an integrated service with common delivery sites. The absence of joint planning at the district level may lead to the possibility of duplication of services.

It has been observed that political leaders often interfere in the creation of opportunities for people with disabilities. They often claim that government officials are not rendering services as required by people with disabilities. They often present themselves as representatives of the marginalized by making claims about the incompetence of government officials.

It has also been observed that there is at present no guiding government document in the Vhembe district that stipulates what opportunities are available and, in which district departments. There is lack of knowledge by some officials about new trends in the empowerment of the previously disadvantaged. This awareness about the lack of knowledge on opportunities available in other district departments has encouraged me to study stipulations of the legislative framework that advocate for the creation of opportunities for people with disabilities. While there is evidence that various government departments have responded to this legislation, the problem arises when such responses are not integrated.

An additional motivation has been the realization that at present, the state of information on people with disabilities in the context of identity, age-sex distribution, type of disability, location, income-generating activities engaged in, level of education, family support structures and access to disability grants is hopelessly inadequate. This study should advise on a methodology for constructing a comprehensive database for the entire district.

### **1.4 Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the nature of, and access to, empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities in the Vhembe district.

### **1.5 Objectives**

The following objectives, directly derived from the aim of the study, are advanced:

- To identify opportunities for people with disabilities in the Vhembe district created by different district departments.
- To describe possible duplication of opportunities for people with disabilities by the sector district departments.
- To suggest methods of optimizing access to these opportunities.

### **1. 6 Research Questions**

According to Creswell (1994) a research question is in most instances used in qualitative research. The following questions are advanced to guide the study:

- *Which specific opportunities* for people with disabilities have been created by government departments in the Vhembe District?
- How do government departments *create awareness* amongst people with disabilities about the existence of these opportunities?
- What is the *relationship between government departments* in the creation of opportunities for people with disabilities?

- What is the *extent of integration* between government departments in the provision of opportunities for people with disabilities?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will contribute to the knowledge base of government departments, non-governmental organizations, and community based organizations working with people with disabilities. The study should provide information on how best to integrate planning for people with disabilities within local integrated development plans (IDP) of each local municipality in the district.

A study of this nature will hopefully provide the basis for government in designing policy for people with disabilities. Such policies should allow for internal corroboration across different government departments in the provision of opportunities so that we minimize duplication, save costs, reduce waste of resources and ultimately deliver an efficient service to the people.

The study will also serve as a database indicating the state of socio-economic empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities not just in the Vhembe district, but throughout the Limpopo Province

Finally this study will provide important additional information on people with disabilities. Such information may be required by researchers at various tertiary institutions who may be investing various aspects on the social environment of people with disabilities.

## **1.8 Definitions of Concepts**

Babbie and Mouton (2002) state that it is important to define concepts so that they are well understood and meaningful conclusions are drawn about them. Creswell (1994) indicates that it is important to define concepts so that they are commonly understood by people outside the profession. In this study, terms that are commonly used are

operationally defined so that others have a common understanding with the researcher. The researcher has defined terms that this study revolves around and those which will be frequently used in the study.

### **Empowerment**

Madi (1997) states that socio-economic empowerment is breaking down social barriers, changes in life style, and creating wealth. Nkuhlu (1990) provides a political definition of empowerment in which it is defined as the taking control of national resources which makes it easy for the standard of life of the previously disadvantaged to be improved through socio-economic development. Such control of resources brings about self reliance through the redress of past injustices. Humphreys and Hamilton (1995) define empowerment in the context of democracy as power with others, as relational power, and as distribution of power. My own understanding of the concept is that it deals with ensuring the ability to engage and participate in the country's beneficial social and economic activities. It is ensuring self-reliance, independence in decision making and living a full life like any other members of society.

### **Opportunities**

Opportunities refer to the situation that is favourable to someone in comparison to others. It is the situation that gives one a chance to attain wellbeing or achieve an aim while others do not have the same chance. The RSA Integrated National Disability Strategy (1997) implies that an opportunity is the favourable situation created and made available to a given vulnerable group (people with disabilities) that was in the past discriminated against in order to equalize their position in the society with those members of the society who are not vulnerable (not having disability) and were not discriminated against in the past.

### **People with disabilities**

People with disabilities are people with a disadvantage from an impairment that limits the fulfillment of a role that would otherwise be normal for that individual. It is a lack of ability to perform an activity which would be performed within the range of a normal person (RSA, 1986). People with disabilities are people who have physical or mental

incapacity to function in the society/ community/ country in an expected, normal way. The incapacity may be inborn or inherited. For the purpose of this study the extent of disability (incapacity to function in an expected normal way) will not matter as long as the person has a disability, he or she will be considered as a person with disability.

### **Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation deals with reorientation of a person with disabilities to restore normal, expected functioning within the society. It is reducing the extent of disabilities so that the person with disabilities functions normally within the society (RSA, 1997).

### **Assistive devices**

Assistive devices are materials made to assist people with disabilities function in an expected, normal way in the society. Assistive devices are materials or instruments made to reduce the inability of people with disabilities in the society (RSA, 1997)

### **Barrier free Access**

Barrier Free access is the assurance that the public infrastructure is accessible to people with disabilities. Grounds and buildings are structured in such a way that people with disabilities can reach out to (RSA, 1997). It means that people with disabilities using wheelchairs can actually reach out to every building by means of special ramps and lifts without assistance from other people.

### **Affirmative action employment**

Affirmative action Employment is defined as specific steps taken to end discriminatory practices. It is meant to promote equal opportunity and ensure that discriminatory practices do not recur. Affirmative action employment is meant to ensure that non-legal barriers to employment opportunities, including intentional and non intentional discrimination are eliminated (Swanepoel, et al, 2003)

### **Human resource development**

Human resource development is defined by Swanepoel et al. (2003) as a learning experience organized mainly by the employer, usually within a specified period of time to

bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/ or personal growth. The aim of Human Resource Development is to attain the objective of the organization that employed an individual and the individuals themselves.

## **1.9 Ethical Considerations**

According to Bailey (1987) ethical consideration is conforming to professional practice. The researcher asked for permission to conduct the study from the sector departments at the Vhembe district. The researcher showed sensitivity to time, knowledge and emotions of the respondents.

As Sarantakos (1988) puts it, that respondents have to be alerted on the purpose of the research, the researcher indicated what the purpose of the research was when requesting permission and when interviewing respondents. The researcher has not misrepresented the information furnished by the respondents. He adhered to the competences of interviewing to avoid harm to the respondents and to ensure the continuity of data gathering. The respondents were told that their information would be treated as truly confidential.

## **1.10 Limitations of the Study**

The study took place at the Vhembe District and the results cannot be generalized to other districts. The information furnished might have been distorted as respondents might have furnished more information so that their departments should not be underestimated. This might have come about because legislations and policies dictate that a certain department must have certain opportunities. Respondents might have feared that their departments would be exposed for not abiding with the stipulations of the acts. The respondents might have provided scanty information and few documents due to lack of resources/materials in such departments.

## **1.11 Summary**

This chapter has provided an introduction to the nature and purpose of the investigation. The problem statement indicated the focus of the study around the issue of people with disabilities. The motivation for the investigation has been elaborated upon while the aim and objectives have been shown. Various research questions were advanced to provide a guide in the pursuit of the investigation. This was followed with a comment on the significance of the study and a review of key concepts used. Ethical consideration and limitations of the study were outlined. In the next chapter, the relevant literature is reviewed to provide a basis for the methodology.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Before the new democratic dispensation in South Africa people with disabilities were seen as the disabled who were not employable. They were seen as people who could not contribute to society (RSA, 1986). They were disqualified when they mentioned their disabilities presuming that they could not perform the duty even when they were qualified for such jobs. Isaacs (2000) and Morgan (2003) indicate that the challenge of inequality and underdevelopment of the previously disadvantaged in South Africa needs redress through affirmative action, integration, promulgating of policies and training. It is now felt that there are some of the things that people with disabilities can do despite their disabilities. It is felt that the previous treatment of people with disabilities was based on attitude against them and not what they could really do.

### **2.2 Empowerment of People with Disabilities**

A review of nineteen researches conducted by Hunt and Goets (1997) shows that there is a general consensus that integration should start with inclusion of children in the mainstream education in which they learn alongside their non disabled counterparts. This it is hoped would facilitate integration later in their workforce life. It is maintained that children with disabilities should be free to interact with the rest of society without the need for special and separate facilities which tend to isolate them. This position is in line with a presentation made by Mokgogo (2005), a parent of a child with down syndrome at the international conference on Down Syndrome in Johannesburg on 30 September 2005 in which he indicated that children with disabilities should be included in the community and in schools. He indicated that teachers should be ready to take the challenge of working with children who have disabilities. In the same conference other three presentations that maintained that children with disabilities should be included in the mainstreams education system were made by Monyemore (2005), Lourens (2005) and Klompas and Bowker (2005).

In Europe, the problem of disability is handled through supporting advanced technological research and development. This has been facilitated by the European Commission to empower people with disabilities and the elderly and to improve their quality of life through work and for integration (Ballabio and Whitehouse, 1999). Through the commission, people with disabilities are made to be participative, integrated into society and made independent.

Kosciulek (2004) indicates that the exclusion of people with disabilities from the labour market should be solved through vocational rehabilitation so that they are included in the workforce. Said (2004) indicates that there is vulnerability among people with disabilities which results in poverty. To empower people with disabilities, vocational skills are necessary. In Zanzibar, the Zanzibar Association of People with Disabilities introduced loan and vocational skills schemes in 1990 to empower people with disabilities. It is maintained that micro-finance and vocational skills make people with disabilities to exercise their rights. People with disabilities exercise their right when information is disseminated on services available to them in the way that can be understood by people with different types of disabilities, by consulting with people with disability on types of service they require, reviewing policies and regulations to address the needs of people with disabilities, and modifying the buildings and environment to make them accessible for people with physical and visual disabilities.

Said (2004) and Kosciulek (2004) share the same sentiment on the manner of empowering people with disabilities through vocational training. Said (2004) adds that financial assistance be used to supplement vocational training indicating that people with disabilities are generally poor. If training is provided without access to financial assistance, then the skills acquired may not be put into practice. The two authors maintain that people with disabilities have the capacity to engage in the mainstream economy when empowered.

Empowerment and the general involvement of people with disabilities are important as the world is becoming increasingly democratic and industrialized. People with disabilities have to be assisted to get into the mainstream society, mainly through full participation in

socio-economic activities. Vocational rehabilitation offers people with disabilities opportunities for career development. Life roles of people with disabilities change with vocational rehabilitation in which they become independent in their lives and empowered. Humphreys and Hamilton (1995) maintains that empowerment is necessary for a healthy democracy; for, it reduces inequalities in access to opportunities between those with and those without disabilities. For South Africa, this is particularly important because affirmative action as practised today does not appear to include people with disabilities.

## **2.3 Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

### **2.3.1 Employment opportunities**

Klauber, J., Klauber, A., Rosenthal, Porfert, and Olsen (2005) provided a specification of examples of empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities mostly in the United States of America. **Able to Work** is a consortium of North America's largest employers who are dedicated to increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities through coordinated effort. People with disabilities post their job initiatives for reviews by about 1000 corporations. It is believed such an initiative brings about inclusion in work opportunities of people with disabilities in a way that empowers them economically.

Websites also provide work-related opportunities such as **The Disability at Work-National Job Opportunity Listing** which is an opportunity website established in the USA, appearing three times a year. It lists available job opportunities for people with disabilities and persons from poor backgrounds. These opportunities do not indicate the type of jobs that are available for people with disabilities. It is important to accept that people with disabilities may not be able to perform certain work related duties due to the state of their disability. To a certain extent, it may be necessary for certain job opportunities to be coupled with training. This is called for so that employment of a person with disability does not generate unforeseen frustration and failure. Such a position is regulated in South Africa by the Skills Development Act, Number 97 (RSA,

1998). An approach of this kind was earlier advanced by Said (2004) and Kosciulek (2004) who maintained that there should be vocational training. The vocational training referred to is the one that takes into account the state of disability.

Another opportunity listed in the **Able to Work** website is **EARN (Employment Assistance Referral Network)** which is a project launched in 2001 in cooperation with the United States of America's Department of Labour. It seeks to increase employment prospects of people with disabilities through representing them in work places. It is indicated that people with disabilities placed in jobs through EARN were retained and mostly promoted due to good performance. The finding that people with disabilities placed in job opportunities kept their jobs and were promoted agrees with the position of Kosciulek (2004) and Said (2004) that people with disabilities have the capability to work in the open labour force. In South Africa, Phama (2005) and Wilkinson (2005) have practical South African success stories of people with disabilities who were placed in open labour force and kept their jobs. Phama works for **Ntiro:Employment Project for People with Intellectual Disabilities**. The project is based in Mamelodi in Tshwane. It trains people with intellectual disabilities and negotiate their placement in work opportunities. Wilkinson established **The Living Link** in 2000. This organization trains adults with intellectual disabilities on labour and advocate for their placement in an open labour market. Phama and Wilkinson made presentations on their success in placing people with disabilities in the open labour market. On evaluation, they found that employers were happy about the performance of the placed people with disabilities.

Another available opportunity listed in the website is **Employment Resources for People with Disabilities** which is the resource link established by the University of Minnesota. It provides useful links for people with disabilities in issues of training, employment and placements. This opportunity is an ideal one in the empowerment of people with disabilities because it addresses training and employment.

The United States of America based **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** is also provided on the website. It oversees the employment provisions of America's Disability Act (ADA). It ensures that there is equality in employment of

people with disabilities and people without disabilities as regulated by the Disability act of America. This opportunity is an ideal one for people with disability as it makes it a point that what appears on the paper about people with disabilities is put into practice. If there is no commission that monitors the implementation of the Act, the Act may remain an ineffective document in the advancement of the interests of people with disabilities.

**Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** is the US president's committee on the employment of people with disabilities. It is a toll free and website consulting service that provides information about job accommodation and employability of people with disabilities. This is a positive advancement of the interests of people with disabilities as it consults with such people any time on toll free and website on what they think will best suit them. This is in line with Said (2004) who says that for people with disabilities to fully exercise their rights, consultation with them as individuals and their organizations is necessary.

In Klauber, et al. (2005), the handbook provides information on how to set career goals and how to look for jobs as a person with disability. This opportunity also constitutes a positive empowerment to people with disabilities. It guides people with disabilities on how to look for jobs. It is important because legislations only indicate that people with disabilities should be given the preference in employment without going through how. There is a need for a supplementary document that deals with the how which this one is.

**Job Access** is a joint effort career mosaic and ability magazine and a website. It offers employers with prospective employees with disabilities. People with disabilities are given the opportunity to post their jobs all in a given geographical area. This opportunity appears to be a positive one for people with disabilities as it receives the names of people with disabilities looking for jobs with their types of disabilities and the types of jobs they can do and cannot do. They then refer them to prospective employers based on their scrutiny. Job Access reduces chances of frustration at work by people with disabilities as they try to get the right person for the job.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (**ODEP**) is a formerly established office in the office of the US President to ensure the employment of people with disabilities. The mission of ODEP is to increase employment of people with disabilities. It also provides a website of information about the office's programmes, services, news, links, recruitability local liaison and related issues. In South Africa, there is an office on the status of people with disabilities in the presidency. This came about following recommendations made in the Integrated National Disability Strategy of 1997. At the level of the provinces, this office on the status of people with disabilities is in the premiers' office. The role of the office is to integrate services to people with disabilities by all departments. It does not only look at one issue; for example employment like the ODEP in America. The Office on the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP) in South Africa looks at all issues affecting people with disabilities.

Social Security Administration (**SSA**) provides information on employment opportunities to social security recipients who want to enter employment. It aims to reduce dependency on grants that are received by people with disabilities simply because they have disabilities. This opportunity is in line with the findings of Mahashe (1998) who found that grants constitute dependency in the lives of people with disabilities. This opportunity should not only provide information for those who want to enter employment but from social security, but encourage recipients of social security to enter employment.

**Work Support.Com** is a website developed by Virginia Commonwealth University in collaboration with business partners. It is a gateway to information, resources and services regarding employment of people with disabilities. It provides articles, contact information and on line learning opportunities. Topics covered include disability management, workforce diversity accommodation, bridge to employment, law and policy, supported employment and workforce training.

**Home Employment Database – Promoting Home Employment for People with Disabilities** is the established website providing available job opportunities for people with disabilities in given geographical areas to encourage people with disabilities to work around their homes. This opportunity is a positive one as it provides employment for

people with disabilities around their homes. It is important because some people with disabilities have to have the support of their relatives on daily bases and jobs available far from their homes may be rejected by such people. The National Business and Disability Council (**NBDS**) is a council that assists the business community in providing full access to their places of business and employment. It provides job posting for people with disabilities. It also provides access to these businesses by people with disabilities. The opportunity is important as it ensures that there is barrier free entry into private business by people with disabilities. The National Business and Disability Council is in line with the provisions of the National Disability Strategy that public and private enterprises serving the public should have barrier free access to entry by people with disabilities. It can be indicated that it would be more effective to regulate barrier free access than just advising private business to ensure barrier free access.

The Small Business and Self-Employment Service (**SBSES**) is a service of the United States Department of Labour on disability and self employment policy. It indicates self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This opportunity is also an important one as covering people with disabilities who do not want to look for jobs but want to create their own. People with disabilities can create jobs in their own homes or outside their homes depending on the nature of the job.

### **2.3.2 Leisure and Recreation Opportunities**

Klauber et al. (2005) also mentioned leisure and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities in their website: **Telecommunication for People with Disabilities**. This is an **established** website that provides information relating to telecommunication options of people with disabilities. This opportunity is said to be important for people with visual impairment as they cannot use standard computers for e-mails and cell phones for small and medium messages (SMS). This opportunity is said to be important for people who cannot hear and speak as they cannot use phones. It can be indicated here that the extent of telecommunication means for people with disabilities may depend on the extent of financial position of the country and of the person with disability as for example, a special personal computer for a person with visual disabilities is very expensive.

**Accessible Vacation Home Exchange for People with Disabilities** is an established website to enable people with disabilities to exchange homes when they each want to go on vacation. For example, **A Home for One's Own** is a Consortium for citizens with disabilities. It works with the department of housing in the USA to increase access to decent, safe and affordable housing for people with disabilities in terms of America's Fair Housing Act. **Opening Doors** is an initiative designed to provide information and guidance on affordable housing issues for people with disabilities and their families in the USA.

In sport, **Paralympics** games provide Olympic level competition opportunities for athletes with disabilities all around the world. It is believed that people with disabilities can, to a certain extent participate in sport and that brings about social empowerment and a sense of existence in their lives.

## **2.4 The Law and People with Disabilities**

The legislative framework of the Republic of South Africa, as set out in the Constitution Act 108 of 1996 Section 9(3), (RSA, 1996) states that there shall not be unfair discrimination directly or indirectly on the ground of disability. The Constitution as a principal law of the Republic regulates the promulgation of Acts and policies which are in line with the above mentioned Act and Section. The implication given by this framework is that people with disabilities were in the past discriminated against. These Acts and policies seek to address this problem by offering opportunities for people with disabilities in an attempt to redress the imbalance of the past.

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (RSA, 1998) states that there must not be unfair discrimination in employment against anyone on the ground of disability. The Act requires that employers implement affirmative action programmes in which people with disabilities must be given priority in employment to address the imbalance created by the previous apartheid government. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 (UK, 1995) is very much in line with the South African Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 by indicating that people with disabilities should not be discriminated against in

employments except in the inherent requirement of the job and that people with disabilities should not be discriminated against in the working environment.

The Skills Development Act 79 of 1998 (RSA, 1998) attempts to ensure the development of skills for those employed without skills and those who are not employable because of lack of requisite skills. The Act seeks to improve the employment prospects for the previously disadvantaged. The Act implies that people with disabilities as the previously disadvantaged should be empowered with skills. The National Integrated Disability Strategy (RSA, 1997) indicates that sector departments, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations and civil society must provide empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities in order to close the gap created in the past.

The Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act 5 of 2000 (RSA, 2000) gives preferential treatment for people with disabilities in the awarding of work contracts. The Act implies that people with disabilities as the previously disadvantaged must score more points when competing with others who are not Historically Disadvantaged Individuals (HDI's). The Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (RSA, 2003) and the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (RSA, 1999) also indicates that public entities may in accordance with the framework provided by the legislations give preference in the awarding of contracts to advance the Historically Disadvantaged Individuals.

The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Disease Act of 1993 (RSA, 1993) replaced the old Workman's Compensation Act of 1941. Its aim is to provide for compensation for disability caused by occupational injuries or diseases sustained or contracted by employees in the course of their employment or for death resulting from such injuries and illness. The Act also provides for assistance of dependants of the person who passes away while working.

## **2.5 Studies on People with Disabilities**

Research conducted by Lorenzo (2000) on barriers and strategies to equal opportunities in the Western Cape found that barriers to equal opportunities for people with disabilities could be dealt with through the empowerment of such people. Research by Philpott (1994) on the rights of people with disabilities in Kwazulu-Natal found that unless the rights of people with disabilities were respected, integration and empowerment would not be achieved. The findings of these two studies are in line with each other with the former forecasting on what must be done to empower people with disabilities and the latter focusing on what must not be done if people with disabilities are to be empowered. The two studies are in agreement with the position of Said (2004) and Kosceulek (2004) in which they maintain that people with disabilities must be empowered, and that they have the capability to operate in the outside working environment.

Mufamadi (2002) conducted a study on the effectiveness of affirmative action in the workplace in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The study found that affirmative action in the workplace was effective in terms of producing its intended goals which were to reduce inequality between the vulnerable/ historically disadvantaged individuals (HDI) and the historically advantaged. The study also found that affirmative action still needed full scale implementation. The study recommended that further research be carried out on affirmative action programmes. Research conducted by Mahashe (1998) on the effects of Disability Grant in Thohoyandou found that grants encouraged dependency of people with disabilities. The study implies that socio-economic involvement of people with disabilities in the society was imperative to their well being. There is a general view not just with reference to people with disabilities but to all recipients of social welfare grants that these are seen as a guaranteed source of monthly income. It reduces the desire for people to engage in income generating activities.

Research conducted by Malatjie (2002) on the views of family members living with people with disabilities in their families found that they had a generally negative attitude towards disability. It was felt that people with disabilities could not be easily integrated. They were instead seen as a burden on the household. The Integrated Disability Strategy,

(RSA, 1997) indicates that such a negative attitude against people with disabilities leads to discrimination. It is indicated that a change of this attitude brings about a better functioning of people with disabilities.

Maluleke (2002) conducted a study on the challenges faced by adults with physical disabilities at Botsoleni village in the Vhembe district in the Limpopo Province. The study found that adults with disabilities encountered difficulties in their daily lives which left them living in poverty. Adults with disabilities found themselves almost isolated in their lives. The study recommended that stakeholders in services rendered to people with disabilities conduct awareness campaigns targeting people with disabilities; services to people with disabilities and reach out into deep rural areas so that people with disabilities get involved in the whole spectrum of socio-economic activities. In addition, existing policies should address the needs of people with disabilities.

Semata (2002) evaluated services rendered to children with physical disabilities at Helen Frantz Hospital School, in Limpopo province. The study found that education, protection, support, and recreational services were rendered effectively within the school. There was effective intervention from the government. It was also found that the children did not have adequate access to the outside environment. The study recommended that the disability policy make it a point that all government departments rendered services to people with disabilities. The recommendations by Semata (2002) already appear in the disability strategy of 1997. The problem appears to be at the level of implementation where every government department is required to put in place specific policies in line with the national strategy.

Ndou (2001) conducted a study on the challenges faced by Children of Mentally ill Parents. The aim was to explore challenges faced by these children through assessing their social functioning. The study found that children experienced problems ranging from depression to stigmatization. This study's findings suggest that people with disabilities are often handicapped when confronted with social expectations especially in the context of family responsibilities. A study of this nature would have benefited more people by assessing the responses of the extended family system to mental illness.

## **2.6 Closing the Gap through Affirmative Action**

The legislative framework of the Republic of South Africa on the previously disadvantaged as contained in the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996) , indicates that there should not be discrimination on the ground of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, birth or HIV status. It is indicated that opportunities should be opened for people who were in the past discriminated on these grounds to fill the gap created. A consistent pattern of available literature indicates a bias towards the empowerment of people with no disabilities and the continuing marginalization of people with disabilities.

Kerr et al. (1999), Mayrhofer and Hendrics (2005) and Tallontire et al. (2005) have written about the advancement of women in South Africa at the national, provincial and local levels in both the public and private spheres. There is no mention of people with disabilities in his perception of empowerment of the previously disadvantaged. It would appear that his works shed no light whatsoever on empowerment of people with disabilities. It does not help in providing insights on our problem of investigation. Riessman (1982) wrote about creation of jobs to empower the previously disadvantaged. According to him, empowerment was seen in the context of the Black youth in South Africa. In a later study (Riessman, 1987) he lamented the profound neglect of literature on people with disabilities.

May (1998), Matlala (2000), Isaacs (2000) and Morgan (2003) have done extensive research on empowerment of the previously disadvantaged through affirmative procurement. They believe that the advancement of affirmative action to empower the previously disadvantaged is based on the opinion that these people did not have equal opportunity and should now be given this opportunity. By giving them such an opportunity, empowerment will be ensured. Their advancement of affirmative procurement is directed to blacks and not inclusive of people with disabilities as intended by the legislative framework of the Republic of South Africa. The present investigation

focuses on people with disabilities irrespective of race and gender. Their work; therefore, is of limited application in a study of this nature.

Willman (2001) found in his study on affirmative action that there was a negative attitude in some of the employers on its practicality after the promulgation of the affirmative action Act in the United State of America in 1964. He maintained; however, that generally, affirmative action promotes equal opportunity in hiring. Affirmative action helps organizations by increasing the racial and gender diversity of the workforce. It is further maintained that affirmative action will in the long run reduce racial and gender tensions. In a study conducted in South Africa in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality by Mufamadi (2002) it was found that affirmative action in the workplace was generally effective in terms of producing intended goals. The sections of the society in terms of people with disabilities, women, and blacks were incorporated in the empowerment workforce. It was indicated that procurement favoured the previously marginalized so as to include those sections of the society that was not given the preference in the past. Mufamadi (2002) makes a conclusion on affirmative action procurement similar to May (1998), Matlala (2000) Isaacs (2000) and Morgan (2003).

This conclusion was also arrived at by Waterman (2000) and Mayrher and Hendrics (2005). They maintained that the section of the population that was previously marginalized should be included in the socio-economic mainstream of the society through affirmative action. It was established however that their reference of the previously marginalized did not include people with disabilities. They referred to the previously marginalized as black and woman. Their work shall have limited application in this study.

This conclusion was confirmed in the report by Mlambo- Nquka (2002) and Bukula (2005). They reported that the previously disadvantaged with the new South African government have taken high positions in the government and in private enterprises. They indicated that the new democratic government in South Africa has made this possible through open governance in which the previously disadvantaged are given the preference. They added that the previously disadvantaged are supported in their ventures to

empowerment opportunities. These two authors have reported on the previously disadvantaged in terms of two sections, blacks and woman in South Africa. Their work does not include the previously disadvantaged in terms of South African people with disabilities as the people who are so defined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Their work is of limited application for this study.

## **2.7 Integration of Ideas**

It appears that there is a general agreement in the theory and research findings that people with disabilities should be empowered. There is also a general agreement that people with disabilities can operate in the open work environment if empowered. It is generally indicated that affirmative action procurement should be considered in creating equal access to opportunities.

Unfortunately, most of the work on empowerment of the previously disadvantaged in the context of South Africa does not include a reference to the plight of people with disabilities. It follows that there exists an urgent need to conduct research in South Africa on people with disabilities, on how they interact with the rest of society, on how they are perceived in the open labour market and, on the effectiveness of government policy on their empowerment. What is implied is that on the basis of existing literature on people with disabilities and on the empowerment of such people, there are knowledge gaps which need to be filled. The essence of this study therefore is to investigate empowerment opportunities with specific reference to people with disabilities. The approach is from the point of view of government departments and how they interact with such people in rendering services to them. In the process of conducting this investigation, the insights generated should contribute in filling some of the existing knowledge gaps on the empowerment of people with disabilities.

## **2.8 Summary**

In this Chapter literature on empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities was reviewed. The literature was reviewed in terms of the available empowerment

opportunities internationally and in South Africa. The legislative framework directing the empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities was outlined and researches on people with disabilities were reviewed.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the methods in terms of the design, population, the sampling, choice of instruments, data collection method and the procedure used in collecting the data are outlined. The area where the study took place is shown with the use of maps. The pilot survey used is also indicated.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A simple status survey design was used. According to Rauline (1997), simple status survey research is an area of research that is used to obtain information from the people in their natural environment. Rauline (1997) goes on to say that simple status survey is used for the purpose of learning about the environment by asking people in that environment. There exists already a large volume of literature on the legislative framework and policies in this area of study. These indicate what and how departments are supposed to render opportunities for people with disabilities. No research, as yet has been conducted in the Vhembe district to find out what the created opportunities for people with disabilities are. Research conducted on disability is on other aspects of disability and not the opportunities for people with disabilities. The choice of the survey design is deemed appropriate for this type of study because it provides the relevant primary data which may be supplemented with both observation and secondary sources of information.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities. The aim was to get information on empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities from officials in their departments through the use of simple status survey. This study is essentially an institution-based survey that focuses on the state of service delivery to a particular class of people. The approach where individual officials are targeted as sources of information is acceptable. In order to create a mechanism for corroborating the responses from the various departments, field

observations were conducted for a period of one month before the actual data collection procedures were initiated. These observations involved visits to various government departments in Vhembe and informal interviews at household level, with people with disabilities.

### **3.3 Area of Study**

The district is situated in the far North of the Limpopo Province of South Africa. A map of South Africa appears in Figure 1 on page 26 and Limpopo Province appears as the Northern Province on the map. The map of Limpopo is shown in Figure 2 on page 27. The map of Vhembe District where this study was conducted appears in Figure 3 on page 28. The district consists of four municipalities; namely, Musina, Makhado, Mutale and Thulamela. These local municipalities are indicated in Figure 3 on page 27.

People with disabilities are organized into a District Disability Forum by the district municipality, which is constituted by representatives from the local municipalities. The focus of the study is the entire district. Vhembe district is one of the poorest districts in the Limpopo Province with a large number of people with disabilities. In addition, unemployment rates are very high while the ranges of economic activities through which people engage in income-generating activities remain limited. Under these conditions, most households are dependent on social welfare grants.

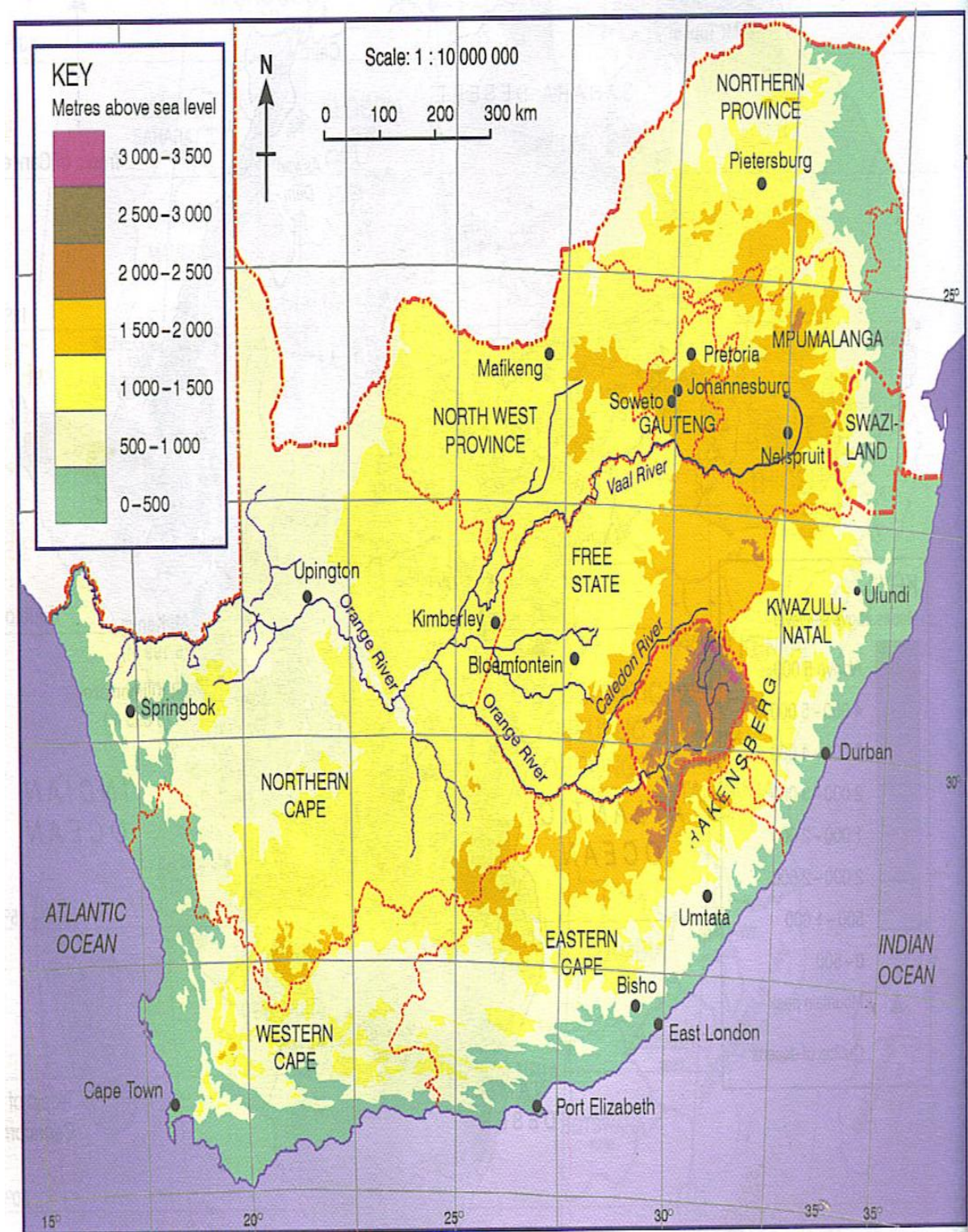


Figure 1 Republic of South Africa (McGow , Nattrass and Roberts 2001:V11)



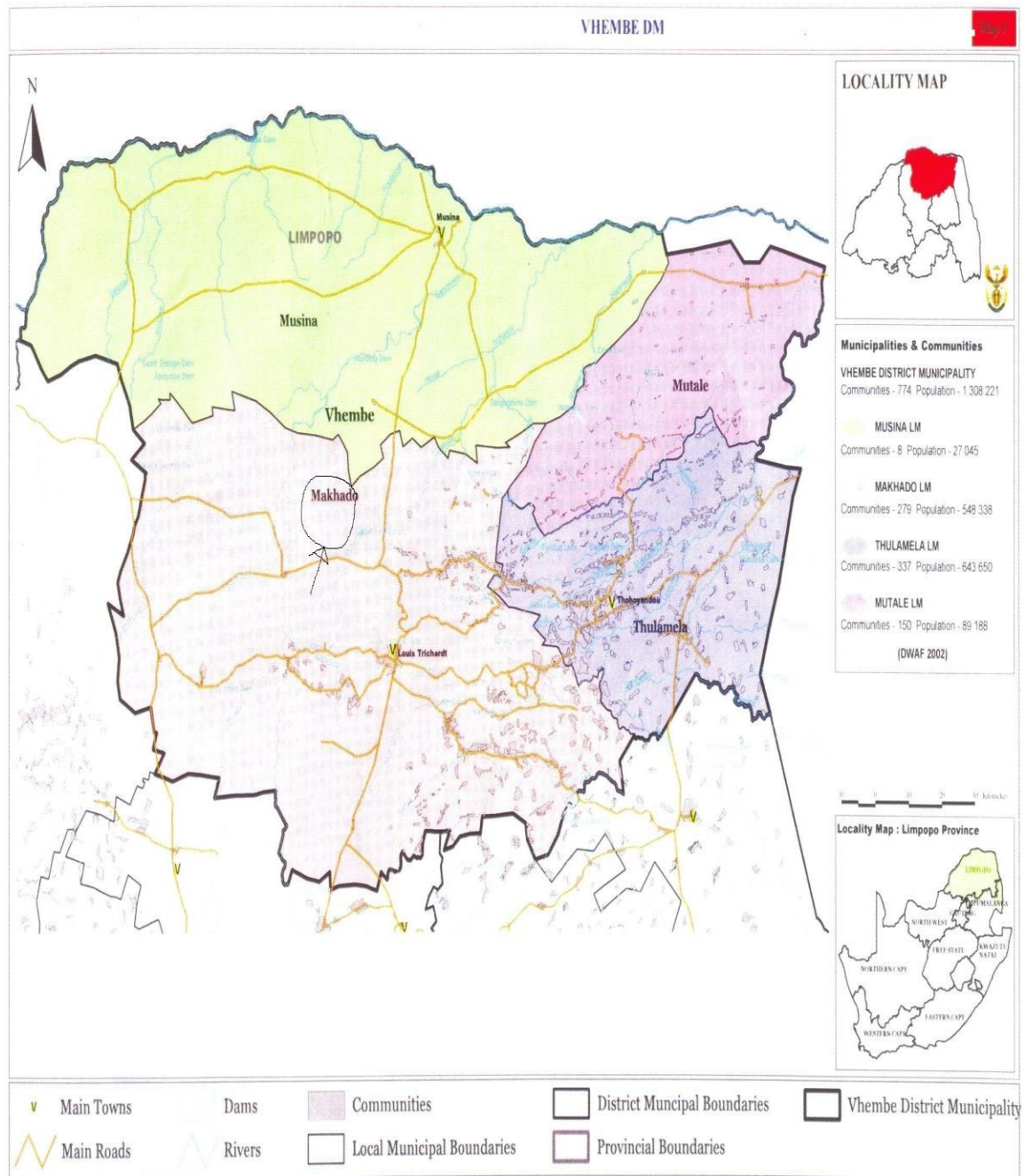


Figure 3: Map of Vhembe District (Vhembe District Municipality, 2005)

### 3.4 Population

Population, as defined by Bless and Higson –Smith (1995) is the entire set of objects, events or people who are the object of research. Bailey (1987) defines a population as an

entire set from which a sample can be drawn. In this study, the target population will be fourteen (14) district government departments based in the Vhembe district in Thohoyandou which are supposed to have opportunities for people with disabilities. The departments are: Education; Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture; Premier; Communication; Local Government and Housing; Labour; Justice and Constitutional Affairs; Safety, Security and Liaison; Health and Social Development; Public Works; Roads and Transport; Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism; Home Affairs; and Agriculture. It is assumed that these district departments share the characteristic of providing socio-economic opportunity for people with disability. As such, they are the universe of enquiry in this study.

### **3.5 Sampling Methods**

The study used stratified random sampling. According to Rauline (1997), stratified random sampling procedures are used when it is important to ensure that subgroups within the population are adequately represented in the population. Bailey (1994) refers to this type of sampling as dimensional sampling. In this study, stratified random sampling was used so that all government departments (strata) are represented. Within the departments (strata), the researcher selected one official who was responsible for services to people with disabilities in what Newman (2000) calls sequential sampling. Bernard (2000) indicates that the size of a sample, among others, depends on the heterogeneity (strata or clusters) from which elements are chosen. In this study, strata (government departments) had representation by one official as what was important was what is available in the strata and not from the person. For each department, once the strata of all officials whose job descriptions entail interactions and dealings with tasks related to people with disabilities was identified. One official was picked following the allocation to the group of code numbers and the use of standard tables of random digits. As earlier indicated in 3.1, responses from these officials were compared to information already in the possession of the researcher following field observations conducted a month before this. The unit of study was individual government departments rendering services to people with disabilities in the Vhembe district.

Sampling as a technique was used only in the choice of individuals to represent various government departments. Literally all the fourteen (14) departments operating in the area were included. On the basis of this, we may talk of a sample size for this study of 14 people.

### **3.6 Choice of Instruments**

In this study, two instruments were developed for use; a semi-structured interview and observation. Fourteen (14) responsible officials in each of the fourteen departments in the district were interviewed. An interview is defined by Bless and Higton-Smith (1995) as a direct way of obtaining information from the respondents through asking questions. The researcher adopted this method for the advantage stated in Bailey (1987) that it ensures better response rate and completeness. The interview schedule was made up of a series of questions which aimed at soliciting responses related to the interaction between the department and people with disabilities. The focus was consistent therefore with the nature of services rendered, the type of opportunities created in the process and the extent to which the department disseminated information to the public and specifically to people with disabilities. A standard interview was applied across all departments in order to be able to compare responses. Using a semi-structured interview provided a level of control over responses and facilitated eventual analysis of results.

The second instrument used was field observations. Here two simple spreadsheet schedules were developed to record observations in various localities of the district. The focus of these observations was on the attitude of households to people with disability, awareness of people with disabilities to the existence of opportunities created through government services and the perception of state support for people with disabilities. A second schedule was filled in during visits to various government departments in the area. In both cases, the ultimate aim of observation was to provide objective assessments of conditions on the ground. This would later be critical in testing and corroborating responses gathered through interviews.

### **3.7 Pilot Survey**

According to De Vos (2004), a pilot survey or a pilot study is testing the instrument of gathering the data before actual gathering of the data by means of applying it on a small number of persons having similar characteristics as those that the researcher intended to study. It is indicated that a pilot study helps alerting the researcher to possible problems in interpreting questions. A pilot study helps the researcher to gain confidence that the chosen procedures are suitable, valid, reliable, effective and free from problems and errors.

The semi-structured interview was tested on three officials at Makhado municipal area. The researcher interviewed and asked for documents from three departments; Health and Social Development, Agriculture, and Justice and Constitutional Development. The pilot survey indicated problems on the state of demographic information held by these departments. Questions on this topic were excluded from the interview schedule and replaced instead with questions on the institutional framework.

### **3.8 Data Collection Methods**

During the month of August 2005, letters were sent to all government departments in the district indicating that the researcher would be conducting research in September and October 2005 and asking both for permission and for their support. The same letter was used to introduce the researcher; to describe the aim of the research project; to indicate potential benefits of such a research project and, to request for their participation. Towards the end of August, visits were made to individual departments to introduce the researcher and to gather information on staff profiles. In the first week of September, a second round of visits was conducted during which, individuals belonging to the strata of interest were isolated, sampling administered and the selected officials formally informed that they would be required to participate in the study. This information was passed on to the district Manager for each department. Thereafter, all departments were informed that the interviews would commence at the start of November 2005 and an administration schedule therefore provided. Appointments were then set up with individual officials

following this schedule. In the meantime, the period October 2005, was used to survey existing relevant government documents and, to conduct observations.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedures**

Data was collected through interviews during November 2005 following a timetable with different departments. These interviews were conducted by the researcher himself in the office of the responsible official earlier selected during sampling. Each interview was allocated roughly 30 minutes. Responses were filled in the interview schedule which also provided space for indicating the name of the department. The time of the interview, the rank of the official in the department and name of the official were not included as it was not deemed necessary. At the end of the interview, the official was asked to feel free and provide any additional information that he/she felt was important but had not been covered by the interview. This was recorded at the bottom of the schedule. This exercise was repeated for all selected 14 officials and by the end of November, the exercise was completed.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter has provided a detailed description of how the methods for the study were developed and how the study was actually conducted. Reasons for the choice of instrument have been provided. The use of the survey method has been explained and justified. The dissemination of information to participants in the study has been described. The next chapter addresses the processing of the collected data, attempts to answer the research questions earlier set in Chapter 1 and addresses the objectives earlier advanced.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

According to De Vos (2004) data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and putting the meaning to the mass of data collected. Bernard (2000) defines analysis as a search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there. In this study, data collected through interviews, observations and documents was recorded in the way that facilitated analysis. The researcher used frequency tables to organize and analyze the data. The researcher used the univariate presentation and analysis of the data as the study is not measuring the relationship between variables but surveying the opportunities of people with disabilities.

### **4.2 Public Education and Awareness**

Respondents were asked about the extent to which their departments provided education and awareness on issues of disability. The emphasis was on the manner in which the departments taking part in rendering services to people with disabilities informed the public on what it meant to be a person with a disability, what to do as a person with a disability, how others should handle people with disabilities and present to government the trends on issues of disability. The departments had to indicate the manner in which this information was passed on to the public. They indicated that they provided information and awareness through workshops, campaigns, seminars and media.

On the bases of the data in Table 1, nine departments representing 64.2% of the district departments provided information and raised awareness on issues of disability. Two district departments representing 14.2 % of the Vhembe district departments did not offer education and raise awareness on issues of disability. Three departments representing 21.4 % indicated that the issue of raising awareness on disability did not apply in their district departments.

**Table 1: Departmental Responses on Education and Awareness**

| <b>Name of the District Department</b>        | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture            | X          |           |                       |
| Education                                     | X          |           |                       |
| Communications                                | X          |           |                       |
| Premier's office                              | X          |           |                       |
| Local Government and Housing                  | X          |           |                       |
| Health and Social Development                 | X          |           |                       |
| Public Works                                  | X          |           |                       |
| Labour                                        | X          |           |                       |
| Economic Development, Environment and Tourism | X          |           |                       |
| Safety, Security and Liaison                  |            | X         |                       |
| Justice and Constitutional Development        |            | X         |                       |
| Home Affairs                                  |            |           | X                     |
| Agriculture                                   |            |           | X                     |
| Roads and Transport                           |            |           | X                     |

This is a surprising response given that a department, for example, like Home Affairs should indeed be active in this respect. The response indicates institutional failure because an exercise of this nature should apply literally to all government departments not just in the Vhembe District but throughout the whole country.

The information shows that more than half of the departments in the Vhembe district provided information and awareness on disability when less than a quarter of the departments found that raising awareness on disability did not fall within their scope of operation and another far less than a quarter of the departments did not raise awareness and did not provide information. The findings address item 2 in the present schedule that raised the issue of how government departments created awareness amongst people with disabilities about the existence of opportunities.

The information in Table 1 responds to the first objective of this study which is concerned about identifying opportunities for people with disabilities in the departments that are supposed to render services to people with disabilities. If the opportunities are available and departments do not have means to educate people with disabilities on these opportunities then the opportunities cannot be accessed. The information in this table responds to the last objective on increasing access of opportunities for people with disabilities in which knowing about opportunities increases access to the opportunities.

### **4.3 Rehabilitation Services**

Respondents were asked about the presence and absence of services to ensure that people with disabilities' daily functioning within the society is as normal as possible like any other person who does not have disabilities. This could be done through physical training/rehabilitation, engagement in vocational activities and skills development.

The information in Table 2 shows that four of the district departments, representing just above a quarter (28.5 %) of the district department offered rehabilitation to people with disabilities, five district departments representing 35.7 % of the departments did not provide rehabilitation and another five district departments representing 35.5% indicated that rehabilitation of people with disabilities did not fall within the scope of operation of their districts departments. It means that there were few departments providing rehabilitation of people with disabilities among the departments that were supposed to provide this service.

The information shows that to a certain extent, rehabilitation is offered to people with disabilities in the district by relevant departments though that only accounts for at least just above a quarter of the respondents. The information in this table is important in as far as the third objective is concerned. This focused on the need to identify methods of optimizing access to services for people with disabilities. People with disabilities have to be rehabilitated physically and mentally so that they are able to use the available created opportunities. It means that few people with disabilities can access opportunities as there

are few rehabilitation services available from the departments supposed to provide this service.

The implication of this finding is that the limited rehabilitation services as provided by government departments deny access to a significant percentage of people with disabilities. For example, while the Department of Health & Social Development is very active in rendering rehabilitation services, several other departments are unable to follow suit. This appears to indicate that such departments which are not participating in rendering this service do not feel that it is part of their mandate to do so.

**Table 2: Departmental Responses on Rehabilitation Services**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>                           | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Education                                               | X          |           |                       |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture                      | X          |           |                       |
| Communication                                           |            | X         |                       |
| Premier's office                                        |            | X         |                       |
| Local Government and Housing                            |            | X         |                       |
| Health and Social Development                           | X          |           |                       |
| Public Works                                            |            | X         |                       |
| Labour                                                  | X          |           |                       |
| Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism |            | X         |                       |
| Safety, Security and Liaison                            |            |           | X                     |
| Justice and Constitutional Development                  |            |           | X                     |
| Home Affairs                                            |            |           | X                     |
| Transport                                               |            |           | X                     |
| Agriculture                                             |            |           | X                     |

#### 4.4 Assistive Devices

Respondents were asked to provide information on the provision of assistive devices (artificial limbs, artificial legs, crutches, wheel chairs, braille type writers, vocal computers and mobile stick for the blind) of people with disabilities that ensure that they function physically and mentally like any other person without disabilities.

**Table 3: Responses of the Departments on Assistive Devices Provided**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>                           | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Education                                               |            | X         |                       |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture                      | X          |           |                       |
| Communication                                           |            |           | X                     |
| Premier's office                                        |            |           | X                     |
| Local Government and Housing                            |            |           | X                     |
| Health and Social Development                           | X          |           |                       |
| Public Works                                            |            |           | X                     |
| Labour                                                  |            |           | X                     |
| Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism |            |           | X                     |
| Safety Security and Liaison                             |            |           | X                     |
| Justice and Constitutional Development                  |            |           | X                     |
| Home Affairs                                            |            |           | X                     |
| Roads and Transport                                     |            | X         |                       |
| Agriculture                                             |            |           | X                     |

The information in Table 3 shows that assistive devices were provided in less than a quarter of the concerned departments (only two departments representing 14.2 %). Only two departments representing 14.2 % when asked felt they had a stake in the provision of assistive devices but did not provide them. Almost three quarters (71.4 %) of the

departments representing ten departments, felt that assistive devices of people with disabilities was not a service that was supposed to be provided by their departments.

The information in Table 3 shows that to a certain extent assistive devices of people with disabilities at the Vhembe district were provided from relevant departments. Half (50%) of the departments that were supposed to render the service rendered it and another half (50%) that was supposed to render the service did not. The information in the table is important in as far as the third objective is concerned in which people with disabilities are supposed to be assisted with assistive devices to enable them to engage in societal activities which then enable them to claim available opportunities.

#### **4.5 Barrier-free Access**

Respondents were asked about the maintenance of barrier free access within their departments that enabled people with disabilities to access services that were provided within their departments. It came out that all departments' ground floor were accessible to people with disabilities using wheel chairs but all those which had multiple floor offices did not have lifts making people with disabilities have difficulties in accessing the offices. The information on barrier free access shows that all the departments participating in this study were committed to barrier free access to people with disabilities. They however, all indicated that the only barrier free access that was then being maintained was on ground floor offices. Barrier free access was not maintained on multiple floor offices as all departments did not have lifts to floors above the ground.

The information shows that barrier free access was maintained to a certain extent and not completely. People with disabilities did not have access to floors above the ground. The findings presented in this table are important for the third objective of this study in which failure of people with disabilities to reach some offices would make them unable to access some of the services and opportunities available in such offices. This is because people with disabilities have the right to access all offices that other people without disabilities can access. According to the findings in this table, access to services available in the offices in the storied buildings should be ensured through installing lifts to those offices.

## 4.6 Transport

Respondents were asked about the provision of accessible transport to people with disabilities in the district.

**Table 4: Provision of Accessible Transportation by Departments**

| Name of the Department                                  | Yes | No | Not Applicable |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----------------|
| Education                                               |     |    | X              |
| Sport, Recreation Art and Culture                       |     |    | X              |
| Communication                                           |     |    | X              |
| Premier's office                                        | X   |    |                |
| Local Government and Housing                            | X   |    |                |
| Health and Social Development                           |     | X  |                |
| Public Works                                            |     | X  |                |
| Labour                                                  |     |    | X              |
| Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism |     |    | X              |
| Safety, Security and Liaison                            |     |    | X              |
| Justice and Constitutional Development                  |     |    | X              |
| Home Affairs                                            |     |    | X              |
| Roads & Transport                                       |     |    | X              |
| Agriculture                                             |     |    | X              |

The departments that indicated that they provided means for accessible transport services to people with disabilities indicated that they did it through information sharing with owners of public transport in the district. The information presented in Table 4 shows that accessible transport was maintained by two departments in the district, representing 14.2 % and two representing another 14.2 % indicated that they were supposed to be taking part in ensuring accessible transport but they were not. A lot of the departments, ten out

of fourteen representing 71.4 % indicated that they did not have a stake in the provision of accessible transport.

The results are important for the third objective of this study in which access to created opportunities can hardly be maintained if people with disabilities are not mobile because there is no accessible transport. The results as appearing in the table and the manner of ensuring access mentioned by the two departments do not guarantee accessible transportation of people with disabilities as private transport owners can still not implement resolutions taken in the information sharing sessions. Results from observations indicated that for people with disabilities their mobility from the rural areas to access services was as a result severely handicapped.

#### **4.7 Communication**

Respondents were asked about the presence of communication means with people with disabilities. The departments that indicated that they had communication means for people with disabilities indicated that they did that through sign language and wrote documents in braille.

The information presented in Table 5 shows that it is necessary that all the departments have communication means such as braille and sign language that accommodate people with disabilities as no department indicated that communication means with people with disabilities is not applicable to them. In all the departments, only a third of the district departments, five district departments representing 35 % then had communication means for people with disabilities and the rest of the departments, nine district departments representing 64 % did not have communication means for people with disabilities at the time of conducting this study.

**Table 5: Communication Means with people with disabilities**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>                              | <b>Communication Means Available</b> | <b>No Communication Means</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Education                                                  | X                                    |                               |
| Sport, Recreation Art and Culture                          |                                      | X                             |
| Communication                                              |                                      | X                             |
| Premier's office                                           | X                                    |                               |
| Local Government and Housing                               | X                                    |                               |
| Health and Social Development                              | X                                    |                               |
| Public Woks                                                |                                      | X                             |
| Labour                                                     |                                      | X                             |
| Economic Development,<br>Environmental Affairs and Tourism |                                      | X                             |
| Safety, Security and Liaison                               |                                      | X                             |
| Justice and Constitutional Development                     | X                                    |                               |
| Home Affairs                                               |                                      | X                             |
| Roads & Transport                                          |                                      | X                             |
| Agriculture                                                |                                      | X                             |

The information shows that communication means with people with disabilities had to be established in all the departments so that information that these departments had could reach out to people with disabilities. This finding is important for the third objective in which people with disabilities who are deaf and cannot communicate in an expected way cannot access the services or opportunities available in the district departments.

#### **4.8 Affirmative Employment in favour of People with Disabilities**

Respondents taking part in this study were asked to indicate if their district departments ensured affirmative action employment in favour of people with disabilities in the district. The respondents indicated that they all ensured affirmative action employment in

favour of people with disabilities in the district. The information collected in the field showed that all the departments in the district in which the study was conducted maintained affirmative action in favour of people with disabilities as indicated in the Employment Equity Act.

These findings showed that opportunities for people with disabilities were maintained in employment. The hindrance might occur if the people with disabilities did not qualify as per inherent requirements of the job. The findings of this study on affirmative action employment are important for the aim of the study in which it appears that all departments, in which the study was conducted, ensured empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities in the district. Informal interviews with the general public in different localities confirmed that certain government jobs were actually specifically reserved for people with disabilities. This was especially so for certain clerical positions in government offices.

The findings are also important for the first objective of this study in which it was found that empowerment of people with disabilities in the district was maintained through affirmative employment in favour of people with disabilities. From observation, it does appear that while few people with disabilities are getting employed, at least a significant number in the Vhembe district seem to have benefited from the affirmative employment policy.

#### **4.9 Level of Human Resource Development**

The respondents in this study were asked about the extent to which their departments ensured human resource development. It came out that all departments provided human resource development to their employees including people with disabilities. The extent to which human resource development was provided differed from department to department. Table 6 presents the extent to which human resource development opportunities are provided. The respondents indicated that human resource development was ensured through workshops and training.

The information shows the extent to which human resource development to the employed people with disabilities existed. Half of the departments (seven departments representing 50%) maintained human resource development on average. Less than a quarter (three departments representing 21.4 %) maintained low human resource development and just above a quarter of the departments (four departments representing 28.5%) maintained high human resource development.

**Table 6: Human Resource Development Ensured by the Departments**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>          | <b>Low</b> | <b>Average</b> | <b>High</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| Education                              | X          |                |             |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     |            |                | X           |
| Communication                          |            |                | X           |
| Premier' Office                        |            |                | X           |
| Local Government and Housing           |            |                | X           |
| Health and Social Development          |            | X              |             |
| Public Works                           |            | X              |             |
| Labor                                  |            | X              |             |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            |            | X              |             |
| Safety, Security and liaison           |            | X              |             |
| Justice and Constitutional Development |            | X              |             |
| Home Affairs                           | X          |                |             |
| Roads and Transport                    | X          |                |             |
| Agriculture                            |            | X              |             |

The findings of this study in this table are important for the third objective in which human resource development is empowerment on its own. It ensures upward and horizontal mobility in the workplace. The findings are also important for the first objective in which it is found that human resource development is an opportunity on its own. This is an opportunity that can be accessed by any one in the workplace as people

with disabilities are trained and attend workshops with others without disabilities. The findings are also important and respond to the overall aim and the question of the study.

#### **4.10 Social Welfare and Community Development**

The respondents were asked to indicate if there was a provision of social development services from their departments addressed to people with disabilities. Departments that provided social development services to people with disabilities indicated that the services were in the form of protective workshops, residential facilities, day care centres and income generating projects.

**Table 7: Provision of Social Welfare and Community Development by Departments**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>          | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Not<br/>Applicable</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| Education                              |            |           | X                         |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     | X          |           |                           |
| Communication                          |            | X         |                           |
| Premier's office                       | X          |           |                           |
| Local Government and Housing           | X          |           |                           |
| Health and Social Development          | X          |           |                           |
| Public Works                           |            | X         |                           |
| Labour                                 | X          |           |                           |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            | X          |           |                           |
| Safety Security and Liaison            |            |           | X                         |
| Justice and Constitutional Development |            |           | X                         |
| Home Affairs                           |            |           | X                         |
| Roads and Transport                    |            |           | X                         |
| Agriculture                            | X          |           |                           |

The information in Table 7 shows that half of the departments (seven departments representing 50 %) at the Vhembe district provided Welfare and Community Development Services to people with disabilities. Far less than a half of the departments (two, representing 14.2 %) did not provide Welfare and Community Development in Services to people with disabilities and just above a quarter (35.7%) of the departments indicated that Welfare and Community Development was not provided from their departments.

The information shows that there was a reasonable degree of Welfare and Community Development services for people with disabilities by departments who were assigned to provide this service. The information in the table is important for the aim and the first objective of the study. The information in this table shows that people with disabilities were empowered to a greater extent through social development. It is indicated that social development services to people with disabilities open ways to economic development of people with disabilities. Social development projects of people with disabilities empower people with disabilities into open labour market.

#### **4.11 Housing**

Respondents were asked to indicate preferential provision of housing in their departments. The preferential housing provided was the four roomed Reconstruction and Development Projects houses. The information on housing preference for people with disabilities was provided in the district. The provision was only made by the relevant department of Local Government and Housing. The information showed that the needs of people with disabilities in housing were taken in to consideration when compared with the past in which people with disabilities only stayed in houses that were owned by their relatives. This finding is important for the research question of the study in which the provision of houses for people with disabilities is an opportunity for them. Ownership of a house brings about empowerment and independence in the lives of people with disabilities.

## 4.12 Sport

Respondents were asked about the provision of sporting opportunity for people with disabilities in the district. The departments that indicated that there were sport opportunities for people with disabilities indicated that these provisions were in the form of athletic, crutch soccer, wheelchair basket ball, wheelchair tennis, and power lifting.

The information in Table 8 shows that all the district departments (six representing 43 %) that had a responsibility in the provision of sport services to people with disabilities provided it to a certain extent. The departments (eight representing 57 %) not providing the service indicated that such provision did not fall within their scope of operation.

**Table 8: Sport Provision for People with Disabilities by Departments**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>          | <b>Yes</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     | X          |                       |
| Education                              | X          |                       |
| Communications                         |            | X                     |
| Premier's office                       | X          |                       |
| Local Government and Housing           | X          |                       |
| Health And Social Development          | X          |                       |
| Public Works                           | X          |                       |
| Labour                                 |            | X                     |
| Finance                                |            | X                     |
| Safety Security and Liaison            |            | X                     |
| Justice and Constitutional Development |            | X                     |
| Home Affairs                           |            | X                     |
| Roads and Transport                    |            | X                     |
| Agriculture                            |            | X                     |

The information in the table shows that the relevant departments responsible for providing sport services to people with disabilities did respond adequately. The findings in this table answered the research question of this study in terms of what opportunities are available for people with disabilities at the Vhembe district. The findings were also responding to the overall aim and the first objective of the study.

#### **4.13 The Extent of Use of Available Opportunities**

The respondents were asked to elaborate on the extent of use of available opportunities in the district by people with disabilities. Respondents were supposed to indicate the use of resources or opportunities available in their departments. The information in the Table 9 shows that as per the experience of the officials interviewed, services available to people with disabilities were not being used to the level that was expected. People with disabilities did not claim services available to them from the departments. Only one respondent, representing 7 % indicated that people with disabilities took advantage of the services and the rest (93 %) felt that people with disabilities were not using opportunities available to them.

These results are important as suggesting that empowerment services available were not being utilized. Additional ones could hardly be put in place before the existing ones were utilized to the maximum. These findings are important for the third objective of the study which it indicates that there is a need to optimize opportunities for people with disabilities so that they could claim them.

**Table 9: The Use of Available Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

| Department Name                        | Satisfactory | Not satisfactory |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Education                              |              | X                |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     |              | X                |
| Communication                          |              | X                |
| Premier's Office                       |              | X                |
| Local Government and Housing           |              |                  |
| Health and Social Development          |              | X                |
| Public Works                           | X            |                  |
| Labour                                 |              | X                |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            |              | X                |
| Safety Security and Liaison            |              | X                |
| Justice and Constitutional Development |              | X                |
| Home Affairs                           |              | X                |
| Roads and Transport                    |              | X                |
| Agriculture                            |              | X                |

#### **4.14 Integration in Rendering Services to People with Disabilities**

Respondents were asked to indicate if their departments rendered services to people with disabilities in collaboration with other district departments. The departments that indicated that they offered services to people with disabilities indicated that they collaborated through the district forum, through collective plenary meetings, integrated seminars, workshops and campaigns. Research question III raised issues on the relationship between government departments in the creation of opportunities for people with disabilities while question IV raised doubts about the extent of corroboration between these departments.

**Table10: Integration between Departments in Rendering Services**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>          | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Education,                             |            | X         |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     | X          |           |
| Communication                          | X          |           |
| Premier's Office                       | X          |           |
| Local Government                       | X          |           |
| Health and Social Development          | X          |           |
| Public Works                           |            | X         |
| Labour                                 |            | X         |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            | X          |           |
| Safety Security and Liaison            | X          |           |
| Justice and Constitutional Development | X          |           |
| Home Affairs                           |            | X         |
| Roads and Transport                    |            | X         |
| Agriculture                            | X          |           |

The information in Table 10 shows that nine departments (representing 64 %) maintained integrated service delivery to people with disabilities, while five departments (representing 36 %) did not maintain integrated service delivery to people with disabilities.

From these result, it would appear that indeed there is some corroboration between some of these departments in their services to people with disability. What appears to be missing is an across board mechanism for the joint delivery of such services.

The information is necessary for the second objective as indicating that there was less likelihood of duplication of services between departments as in terms of one of the objectives of this study. Through collective plenary meetings, workshops and seminars,

duplication was likely to be avoided. It appeared that a considerable percentage of departments integrated in providing opportunities for people with disabilities.

#### **4.15 Adequacy of Services to People with Disabilities**

Respondents were asked to indicate if in their opinion they found opportunities for people with disabilities adequate.

**Table 11: Opinions of the Respondents on the Adequacy of Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

| <b>Name of the Department</b>          | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Education                              | X          |           |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     | X          |           |
| Communication                          | X          |           |
| Premier's Office                       | X          |           |
| Local Government and Housing           | X          |           |
| Health and Social Development          | X          |           |
| Public Works                           |            | X         |
| Labour                                 | X          |           |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            | X          |           |
| Safety, Security and Liaison           | X          |           |
| Justice and Constitutional Development | X          |           |
| Home Affairs                           | X          |           |
| Roads and Transport                    | X          |           |
| Agriculture                            | X          |           |

The information in Table 11 shows that almost all interviewed officials in the respective departments (93 %) who were interviewed felt that created opportunities for people with disabilities were adequate. Only one department (7 %) indicated that opportunities for people with disabilities were not adequate. The findings of this study as presented in the

table suggest that there is no need to add other opportunities for people with disabilities, but to maintain the existing ones until the optimum use of the available ones is maintained. The findings of this study are important in as far as the third objective is concerned.

From observations and from the conducted of informal interviews with people with disabilities and with the general public, it was noted that the general pattern of responses to this question produced a consistently negative answer. The perceptions of the public are different from those of government officials. It was generally picked up from the public that these opportunities were hopelessly inadequate in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. This mismatch between the general public and government officials in their perception is critical for policy formulation. It clearly indicates that the information available to government departments in evaluating their own performance may be based on incomplete statistics on the ground.

#### **4.16. Increasing Access of Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

The respondents were asked about what they felt could optimize access of opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Table 12: Opinion of the Respondents on Increasing Access of Opportunities to People with Disabilities**

| <b>Manner of increasing access to opportunities</b>                                        | <b>N</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Training                                                                                   | 21       | 21%      |
| Community Outreach Campaigns/ Marketing Government Programmes for People with Disabilities | 8        | 57%      |
| Workshops                                                                                  | 3        | 21%      |

Table 12 shows opinions of respondents on the increase of opportunities for people with disabilities. The way to ensure access was through training as people with disabilities could not utilize some of the opportunities due to shortage of skills. Just less than a quarter of the officials (21 %) felt that training was important. Another 21 % of the respondents felt that, information dissemination workshops with people with disabilities on their available opportunities might increase access to the created opportunities. Above a half of the respondents (57 %) felt that people with disabilities did not really know about opportunities open to them and it seems as if a mere community outreach campaign may increase access.

The findings of this study as indicated in Table 12, address the question of the manner of increasing access to people with disabilities as indicated in the third objective of the study which indicates that the study wanted to identify methods of optimizing access of opportunities for people with disabilities in the district. Methods were identified by the respondents which they felt if executed could make people with disabilities gain access to the opportunities.

One final objective of this study centered on methods for optimizing access to opportunities created by government departments. On the basis of a scrutiny of various government documents, informal interviews conducted in the field and personal observations prior to the administration of interviews, an approach is suggested here. It has been found from this study that there is an urgent problem on the lack of adequate and accessible data on people with disabilities. There are community rehabilitation workers who live among various communities in the study area. They visit people with disabilities and conduct joint planning to how best to refer them to professionals for social work assistance. They also do physiotherapy at the local level and refer patients to more specialized facilities. It is recommended that these people should be given basic training in data collection and capture so that they begin to gather information on people with disabilities. This is important because government cannot simply rely on information provided by applicants for disability grants. It is essential that for each district and local municipality we develop a comprehensive data base on the profile of

each person with disability. From such a database, it would become easy and cost efficient to plan for these people.

#### **4. 17 Evaluation of the Performance of the Departments by the Respondents in Offering Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

Respondents were asked to evaluate the extent to which their departments were offering opportunities to the satisfaction of people with disabilities.

**Table 13: Evaluation of Performance of the Departments in Offering Opportunities to People with Disabilities**

| <b>Department Name</b>                 | <b>Satisfactory</b> | <b>Not satisfactory</b> |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Education                              |                     | X                       |
| Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture     | X                   |                         |
| Communication                          | X                   |                         |
| Premier's office                       | X                   |                         |
| Local Government and Housing           | X                   |                         |
| Health and Social Development          | X                   |                         |
| Public Works                           | X                   |                         |
| Labour                                 | X                   |                         |
| Finance, Trade and Industry            | X                   |                         |
| Safety Security and Liaison            |                     | X                       |
| Justice and Constitutional Development |                     | X                       |
| Home Affairs                           |                     | X                       |
| Roads and Transport                    |                     | X                       |
| Agriculture                            |                     | X                       |

The information on Table 13 shows that eight departments constituting just above a half (57 %) are satisfied with the empowerment opportunities to people with disabilities from

their departments. These departments indicated that they would not at the time of conducting this study add such opportunities. Just below a half (six departments representing 42 %) indicated that the opportunities to people with disabilities available in their departments were not satisfactory and might be added.

The information in this Table responds to the third objective of the study in which methods of optimizing opportunities for people with disabilities by relevant departments are suggested. Field observations made with people with disabilities show that people with disabilities focus on other departments, more especially the department of Health and Social Department and the local municipalities for service and ignore other departments. Their indication of the satisfaction of the opportunities from the district departments were mainly in terms of those offered by these departments.

#### **4.18 Summary**

Overall, the findings reported in this chapter and the analysis and evaluation thereof indicate that government departments indeed provide a wide range of opportunities for people with disabilities. Such opportunities have been individually presented, and analyzed. It has been shown that in spite of this, a significant level of discontent felt by people with disabilities was not generally appreciated by government at the district level. This calls for better means of communicating with the public. The objectives of the study raised in Chapter 1 have been addressed. The same applies to the four research questions that were advanced. In short, this chapter has presented the data, the analysis and its evaluation in the context of both objectives and research questions.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The researcher aimed to investigate the nature of and access to, empowerment opportunities to people with disabilities at the Vhembe district. The objectives were to identify opportunities for people with disabilities created by different district departments, to identify possible duplication of opportunities for people with disabilities by sector district departments and to identify methods of optimizing access to these opportunities. The researcher investigated the presence of the empowerment opportunities of people with disabilities in terms of those prescribed in the Integrated National Disability Strategy policy of the Republic of South Africa.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

On the bases of the findings, the following recommendations are advanced:

- ❖ That sector departments focus on ensuring access of opportunities to people with disabilities.
- ❖ That the government should not focus on increasing opportunities but make it a point that the present opportunities are being utilized.
- ❖ That further research be conducted to find out from people with disabilities if they want preferential treatment in the rendering of service or they want to be treated like any other civilian in the country.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The provision of education and public awareness on issues of disability at the Vhembe district indicated that the number of departments providing the service was outnumbered by those that were supposed to render the service but not rendering it. There had been a

considerably large number of those that found that this service was not supposed to be rendered in their departments (above one quarter).

Almost all the departments that were supposed to render rehabilitation services to people with disabilities were found to be rendering it. Only seven percent of the departments were not rendering the service. There were a lot of departments that stated that this service was not rendered in their departments making almost a third of the departments. Half of the departments that felt that they had a stake in the provision of assistive devices were then providing them and another half was not providing them. There was a considerable number of departments not providing this service in their scope of operation. This constituted about three thirds of all the departments. All the departments indicated that they ensured barrier free access in their offices. They all also indicated that the barrier free access was limited to ground floor. Multiple storied buildings did not have lifts to ensure complete physical access. Half of the departments that felt that they had a stake in the provision of accessible transportation was providing while the other half was not. Almost all the departments did not provide accessible transportation in their scope of operation. The majority, two thirds of the departments ensured that there was communication means with people with disabilities and about three quarters of the departments did not have communication means with people with disabilities

It came out that all the departments that took part in the study practised affirmative employment in favour of people with disabilities in terms of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. It came out that all the departments that took part in the study maintained Human Resource Development. It also manifested itself that the only difference was with regard to the extent of Human Resource Development as per department.

Half of the departments (who were supposed to offer social welfare and community development opportunity to people with disabilities) that took part in the study indicated that they provided Social Welfare and Community Development services in the empowerment of people with disabilities. Only less than a quarter of the departments did not provide Social Welfare and Community Development opportunity. The department that was supposed to offer preferential housing for people with disabilities made houses

available to people with disabilities. This was represented by the department of Local Government and Housing as the only department rendering the service. The rest of the departments were not responsible for rendering this service within their departments. All the departments that were supposed to offer preferential sport for people with disabilities made sport available to them. The rest of the departments were not entitled to rendering this service within their departments.

Almost all the respondents felt that there was no optimum use of opportunities available for people with disabilities. It was concluded that more respondents were not satisfied about the minimum use of the opportunities by people with disabilities. With reference to integration, it was concluded that most departments provided opportunities for people with disabilities in consultation with other departments as services to people with disabilities were coordinated through the district forum. With reference to the adequate use of opportunities, almost all the departments indicated that there were enough opportunities for people with disabilities. It was concluded that there were enough opportunities for people with disabilities and little utilization of the opportunities. With regard to optimizing access to opportunities, there was minimum use of opportunities for people with disabilities. A suggestion was made about the manner in which these opportunities could be optimized. The suggestions showed that there was supposed to be information dissemination on opportunities for people with disabilities in the district and that those who wanted to claim the opportunities had to be trained to prevent failure.

It can be generally concluded that there was enough opportunities for people with disabilities created in the Vhembe district. Service providers of people with disabilities in the district should focus on optimizing their use as indicated that there was minimum use of the created opportunities.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **APPLICATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY IN THE DISTRICT DEPARTMENT**

P.O. Box 1032

Malamulele

0982

10 August 2005

#### **THE DISTRICT MANAGER**

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.....  
.....  
.....

#### **APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR DISTRICT DEPARTMENT**

I am a Master of Development student at the University of Limpopo Graduate School of Leadership. I am conducting research on Empowerment opportunities for people with disabilities in the Vhembe District.

The respondents in the study are officials working on services to people with disabilities. One official out of these officials will be selected and interviewed for the purpose of this study. The information obtained is not meant to be used against the department, but to help understand empowerment of people with disabilities. Officials working in the service for people with disabilities are thus asked to take part in the study.

Your assistance will be valued.

Faithfully,

.....

Nghonyama, Y. D.

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**(For Coordinators of Services to People with Disabilities in Various Departments in the Vhembe District)**

1. Institutional Framework

1.1 Name of the department?

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1.2 Position in the department?

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2. Does your department provide education and awareness on issues related to disability?

If it does, explain them.

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3. Does your department offer rehabilitation to people with disabilities?

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Explain if it does.

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4. Does your department provide assistive devices to people with disabilities? Describe them if

any.....  
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5. Does your department ensure barrier free access to people with disabilities? Please explain the manner in which it is maintained if

any.....  
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6. Is there intervention made in transport to make it a point that there is accessible transport for people with disabilities in the district? Describe it if

any.....  
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7. Are there means to make it a point that there is effective communication with people with disabilities? (e.g. sign language) describe if

any.....  
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8. Is preferential affirmative action maintained in favour of people with disabilities in employment Describe if

any.....  
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9. If your department employed people with disabilities, what level of Human Resource Development is maintained?

Explain.....  
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10. Does your department play a role in Social welfare and Community Development? If yes, describe this

role.....  
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11. Is there any housing preference provided to people with disabilities in your department? Describe it if

any.....  
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12. Is there any sport designed for people with disabilities by your department in the district? Describe it if

any.....  
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13. What is your opinion on the use of created opportunities for people with disabilities by the people with disabilities?

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14. Does your department integrate with other stakeholder departments in rendering services to people with disabilities?, explain if it does.....

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15. Do you feel that opportunities for people with disabilities are adequate?

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16. How do you think access to opportunities to people with disabilities can be maintained if not

adequate?.....  
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17. What is your evaluation of the performance of your department in rendering services to people with disabilities?.....

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Thanks very much to you and the department for your time.

