

Disability Rights Boosted in Ecuador with New Funding Plans



Quito, May 5 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Ecuador's Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion has signed agreements with key bodies representing people with disabilities, with the aim of furthering their rights.

The agreement was reached with five national federations that seek to ensure that all rights of people with disabilities are upheld and that public policy is enacted in compliance with the 2012 Organic Law for Disabilities.

With the new agreements, their projects will now receive \$250,000 in funding from the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion for plans of their choosing. On this development, the Vice President of the National Council of Equality of Disability, Xavier Torres, told teleSUR English, "What this means is that we can strengthen those projects we have planned ...And these projects will permit the training of members to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities and (strengthen) their federations."

The President of the National Federation of the Blind, Mario Puruncajas, in an interview with teleSUR English, said that with the funding, "we are going to offer a training course for our blind comrades about the possibilities available for them to develop projects with each of our affiliates...We will train all the women coordinators of the country, their male counterparts, and young people."

Under the Citizen's Revolution, people with disabilities have seen significant advances in their integration into society. Two national social programs, *Mission Manuela Espejo* and *Joaquin Gallego*, register the number of people with disabilities, identify their needs, and invest in necessary infrastructure, support and training for people with disabilities and to the professionals working in the field.

In 2006, the number of people with disabilities in the workforce stood at 500. By 2014, that number had soared to 85,000. By providing funding for the projects of the federations, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion seeks to build this work, providing better opportunities for people with disabilities and encouraging their integration in society.

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