



African Left-Handers Foundation
CIPC REG 2020/012889/08

1954 Temba Manyeleti Hammanskraal
Mobile: 0635245097 or 069 354 0654
Email: africanlefthandersfoundation@gmail.com



Statement delivered at the African Left Handers Confederation Initiative (ALHCI) at the commemoration of the 76th World Human Rights Day, December 10, 2024

On this day, ALHCI stands in solidarity with all individuals whose fundamental human rights and dignity are too often overlooked and/or undermined.

Today, we focus particularly on the rights of left-handed/left-footed children and adults, who continue to face unique challenges in a predominantly right-handed/footed world.

Left-handed/footed individuals, from a young age, often encounter societal, educational, and workplace barriers and prejudice that hinders their full potential, participation and development.

Left-handed/footed persons are sometimes required to adapt to environments that are not designed with their needs in mind. For instance, using scissors, sitting on traditional desks designed for right handed persons, writing with pens that smudge more easily or participating in sports that doesn't accommodate left hand/footedness. This can lead to unnecessary stress, discomfort, and a sense of exclusion. In the early childhood development stages hand switching as practised in some families/communities has proven to be a traumatic experience for left handed children, leaving some scarred for life, mentally, emotionally and psychologically.

In the workplace, left-handed/footed adults frequently face ergonomic challenges with tools, computers, and equipment that are not made to accommodate their natural hand dominance. This can limit their efficiency, pose occupational health and safety risks and in some cases, lead to workplace discrimination.

The World Federation for Human Rights and Equality, 2022 *report asserts that*

"A truly inclusive society must accommodate the needs of left-handed individuals, from the tools they use to the spaces they occupy, ensuring their full participation without prejudice"

We therefore call for greater awareness, understanding, and adaptation to ensure that left-handed persons enjoy the same opportunities as their right-handed peers. It is essential that society recognises the unique needs of the left-handed/footed persons and work towards

creating more inclusive environments whether in schools, homes, or workplaces that respect and celebrate their rights.

On this World Human Rights Day, let us remember that true equality means acknowledging and addressing the specific needs of every individual, regardless of handedness and *footedness*. The African Left-Handers Confederation Initiative advocates for the rights of left-handed people everywhere to live, learn, and work without barriers, and to be empowered to reach their full potential.

As Nelson Mandela remarked *"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others"*

Statement Issued by:

**African Left-Handers Foundation
Department of Communications and Stakeholder Relations**