



REPORT OF FORMER BOARD MEMBERS AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FAREWELL DINNER HELD AT SAROVA STANLEY ON FRIDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2021

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities held its first farewell dinner for its former Board of directors and Board of trustees to appreciate and recognize their efforts in steering the Council's functions since its inception to its current position.



Ps Nelson Marwa Receiving his gift.

In attendance was the first Council's Chief Executive Officer **Cicilia Mbaka** who highlighted the major challenges they faced among them, working in a tiny office with only three specialists who were an accountant, a secretary and a clerical

officer. At that time the Council was getting a very low budget of about seven million but there was a lot of work expected to be done by the Council hence the budget was very lean to cater for the persons with disabilities demands. She also stated that there was a lot of expectations from persons with disabilities to get such services such as tax exemption.

Restlessness among persons with disabilities was also very common at that time as they sometimes camped at the Council's office demanding for money. They also suffered scarcity of resources as they were forced to use their vehicles to carry out their daily duties. Back then, the Councils employee's remuneration was not at par with that of other state corporation's employees. In order to set the road map to know the direction they were heading, they came up with a strategic plan.



In his short speech **Justice Laibuta, former chairman board of directors** highlighted their effort in reviewing the persons with disabilities act. During that time there was

a lot of in fighting among the board members. They however managed to enhance partnership development in order to improve the Council functions.

Commissioner **Simon Johny Ndubai** in his few remarks expressed his joy for the appointment of the current director who is a person with a disability noting that he is in a position to understand and handle disability matters therefore persons with disabilities have no chance to complain.

Honorable Dennita Ghati who represents persons with disabilities in the parliament expressed his effort in offering support in any disability matter that need legislative support in parliament. She requested more funding by the government for the council in order to help it carry out its programs and services. She stated that even the county services officers need to be facilitated with vehicles to facilitate their movement within the county when offering services.



Former CEO Mohammed Gabbow Receiving his certificate

She also pushed for the registration of persons with disabilities to be devolved to the counties to avoid the inconveniences of persons with disabilities travelling from all corners of Kenya to go for registration at the headquarters in Nairobi. She also noted that disability matters need to be sorted in one environment and also encouraged regional offices to be established to make it easier for the council to operate easily. She also stated that budget cuts should not apply to the council and called for the council to enhance its media coverage to widen its communication.

Samuel Odawo called for tax exemption exercise to be made permanent but not renewable after one year as it has been the norm. He also highlighted that disability should not remain as a quest but be made a reality.

Phoebe Nyagudi a former director noted that she was privileged to work under three board chairs who taught her about coming up with better programs for persons with disabilities. She however noted some key challenges they faced amount them having very little budget to carry out their activities.

Director Chege a former director appointed to represent parents of children with disabilities expressed his regrets that till this far regulations to devolve to counties have not been gazetted and also decried that there is only one representative for persons with disabilities in the parliament.

Sarah Kinyanjui who represented Kenya pipeline confirmed that the 1% profit harvested from the company profit goes to educating students with disabilities in secondary schools where there are two students in every county being sponsored. She also gifted the Councils Chief Executive Officer and other council staffs that have been working closely with them to achieve the education dream for student with disabilities in secondary schools.

The former council's Chief Executive Officer Mohammed Gabbow stated that persons with disabilities work does not come to an end and it is therefore a calling.

The former nominated senator who also served in the council in two capacities both as a former Board member and also as former chief communication officer noted the challenges they encountered. They held their first board meeting in Nyayo stadium in a very tiny room. Pushing for more council's funding, lobbying for the albinism fund, lobbying for the cash transfer fund and also having few staffs with poor remuneration was a big challenge. The former senator highlighted that in his time they were involved in drafting the strategic plan and also started the registration of persons with disabilities at the time. He however appreciated the steps the council has made in improving the lives of persons with disabilities. Going with last census, it is estimated that about 4.2 million people in Kenya are persons with disabilities, he stated.

The current Executive Director Mr Harun Hassan highlighted that the council still runs short of employees by 40%. Serving densely populated counties is also another big challenge. He called for revamping of resource mobilization by inviting more stakeholders to the council. He also stated that disability advocacy has to take an upstream scale. He also noted that board membership has been far reduced as compared to the past for effectiveness. He also confirmed the dedication of the current board in handling disability issues. He also confirmed that about 80% of retargeting of cash transfers has this far been achieved. In his final remarks, he expressed his dedication to ensure the tax exemption will be permanent.

Mr Peter Muchiri, the current chairman board of directors in his speech thanked the Council's stakeholders for their support. He also confirmed that about 12,000 assistive devices have so far been given by the Council. He also stated that the Council has made efforts to streamline the promotion structures for the council staffs.

Nelson Marwa, the permanent secretary ministry of labor and social protection who was also the chief guest noted that through a follow up, bank account

opening for cash transfer beneficiaries is moving fast. He also stated that what other former executive directors had been requesting was now being effected.





Former Chair Hon. David Sankok Receiving his certificate

He called for looking into the matters of auxiliary staffs such as sweepers and other support staff. He also echoed that there is a need to decentralize disability services to the counties and also confirmed that treasury has set funds for the purchase of vehicles for field officers.

He called for the Council to ensure that accessibility issues for persons with disability to different environments and also the 5% of the employment set aside in the constitution for persons with disabilities was adhered to. He also confirmed that there are efforts underway to set up a building that will host all the council staff in one building in the prime and where the councils headquarter offices are now located. He also highlighted the need to mobilize around persons with disabilities registration, voter registration and ratio in nomination.

Also in attendance were the current Board of trustees led by the Chairman Samson ole Ntipape and other members like Abia Abdi and Susan Mutungi. UPDK chairman David Kiptum, KSB CEO Samson Waweru, statehouse DJ Euphoric were also in attendance.