



USAWA NA HAKI

SEPTEMBER 2021 ISSUE



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EDITORIAL

In this issue of **Usawa na Haki**, we continue to focus on education for learners with disabilities. This is deliberate because from the results of last year's KCPE and the KCSE there was tremendous improvement of persons with disabilities. The excellent results are a clear demonstration that given the right support persons with disabilities can excel. It is also a wakeup call to our planners and the public at large.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the government has done a lot in enhancing access to education for persons with disabilities. Key among these are formulation of various policies and legislations that promote education to learners with disabilities. However, there is still a lot to be done especially on the education funding for children with various disabilities as a result of their heterogeneous nature of disability.

On its part, the Council has continued to collaborate with a number of organizations, Foundations and companies that provide scholarships to children from poor and vulnerable communities who have excelled in the national examinations at primary and secondary levels. Through this engagement the Council has been advocating for increased opportunities for learners with disabilities. This has seen more persons with disabilities access scholarships this year than any other year.

The debate on funding for education comes at the backdrop of The Global Education Summit Held on July 28 and 29, 2021 in London and virtual. The Summit was co-hosted by president Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The summit brought together heads of State and ministers from donor and partner countries. Leaders from businesses and private foundations, representatives from international organizations, development banks, civil society organizations, teachers' organizations and youth leaders also participated in London and virtually.

In addition to the US\$4 billion pledged from donors, 19 Heads of State and Government committed to spending at least 20% of national budgets on education, rallying behind a political declaration on education financing led by Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta over the next five years.

In this second issue of the **Usawa na Haki**, we have also carried a story on the forthcoming general and presidential elections and how the IEBC need to ensure that persons with disabilities participate actively. Our rallying call to persons with disabilities is to encourage them to get registered for them to vote. We are also calling upon the IEBC to ensure that the electoral process includes persons with disabilities. All the barriers that deny persons with disability the right to participate in the elections must all be eliminated.

Usawa na Haki is a quarterly newsletter published by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities.

Editors;

Content -Francis Anyenda

Graphics & Layout-Samson Njapit

vision:

a barrier free society
for persons with disabilities

Our Contacts:

[Email:info@ncpwd.go.ke](mailto:info@ncpwd.go.ke)

[Website:www.ncpwd.go.ke](http://www.ncpwd.go.ke)

Call for Articles.

Kindly submit your articles to:

Newsletter@ncpwd.go.ke

The next issue will be published in November 2021.

DIRECTOR'S DESK.

We are pleased to share with you the second issue of the Usawa na Haki Newsletter. This is one of the channels we hope to keep using to share information with the public about our work, and also provide a platform for persons with disabilities to share their stories and perspectives on what can be done better to improve the well-being of persons with disabilities in Kenya. While the Covid-19 pandemic is still with us, we are grateful to the government under the leadership of H.E President Kenyatta for the continuous efforts made in easing access to vaccines for all. We urge all of us – disabled and non-disabled- to get vaccinated to protect not only ourselves but our loved ones.

With our focus in this newsletter issue being on education for learners with disabilities, the Council is making deliberate efforts to address the gaps in provision of educational support for learners with disabilities. We have an Educational Assistance Fund which caters for 75 percent of course fees while the learners with disabilities cover the remaining quarter. Another programmes in place is the Jiwezeshe Scholarship Programme which provides support to non-disabled bright but needy students in secondary schools, whose parents are persons with disabilities. In total, we have nine education sponsorship programmes implemented with the support of our partners to name a few Equity Group Foundation, Kenya Pipeline Company, KCB etc. Despite these programmes in place, we are unable to support all the applicants on our own due to constraints in resources and a ballooning demand. Picture this: over the last five financial years, the Council has received 38,893 applications for educational support. Through the financial resources at our disposal, we have been able to support 12,930 of them, which values at a third of all the applicants. This positively translates to 12,930 fighting chances for learners with disabilities, since education is the greatest equalizer for them. However, the 25,963 learners missing out equally need the support. How do we bring them on board?

Early this month, we held a consultative meeting on Accessibility to Education for Persons with Disabilities in Kenya, that brought together 12 key stakeholders in the education sector. We mulled over different ways our institutions can partner to address gaps in support that hinder sustainable admission, retention, transition and completion of learners with disabilities. Our discussions culminated in the formation of a five-member committee chaired by the Ministry of Education. Other members are NCPWD, National Government Affirmative Action Fund, National Government Constituencies Development Fund and State Department for University Education and Research. Its objective will be to map out potential areas of collaboration among the stakeholders.

Through similar partnerships, we'll make the constitutional right to education for all a reality for persons with disabilities.



Harun M Hassan
Executive Director- NCPWD

Council is making deliberate efforts, to address the gaps in provision of education to persons with disabilities

BEATING DISABILITY: Learners with Disabilities Excel in KCPE and KCSE

By Samson Njapit

In the 2020 KCPE and KCSE national examinations, learners with disabilities performed exemplary compared to other years. Some of the best performers came from the marginalised communities in the arid north. In this article, Samson Njapit discusses measures that can be put in place to promote inclusive education.



A lesson in session in an integrated school.
Photo courtesy of MOE

A pupil from Young Muslim Academy in Garissa County was among the top best performing learners with disabilities in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), 2020. Ifrah Mohamed Shuriye went against all odds to score 405 marks.

Ifrah has both physical and partial visual impairments. He was number seven overall nationally and top in Garissa County, under the special needs education category. Ifrah's story is similar to that of Kipkemoi Miriam Chepleting from Moi Girls High School, Eldoret. Miriam scored a mean grade of 84.8 in the KCSE examination, topping nationally in the special needs category.

In the KCPE examination, nine candidates with disabilities scored 400 marks and above. Another 318 candidates scored between 300 and 399 marks, while 897 scored between 200 and 299 marks. Their counterparts in high school also performed exemplarily well in the 2020 KCSE examinations. According to the results, 11.9 per cent of the candidates attained the minimum university entry grade of C+ and above.

The performance of learners with disabilities in the 2020 examinations show that given a fair and conducive environment, they can always excel. The big question now remains, what can be done to enrol more learners

with disabilities? We should have more learners with disabilities getting formal education and passing just like other learners. All students with disabilities have unique needs and questions that should be addressed.

In every country, the paradigm shift in Special Needs Education is to promote the inclusion of learners with disabilities in the academic, vocational and social education aspects.

The Persons with disabilities Act No 14 of 2003 states that, "Learning institutions shall take into account the special needs of persons with disabilities with respect to the entry requirements, pass mark, curriculum, examinations, auxiliary services, use of school facilities, class schedules, physical education requirements and other similar considerations."



Ifrah being interviewed on receipt of her KCSE results. Photo
Courtesy of Kenyanews.co.ke

Despite the fact that the right to education for all is enshrined in a myriad of national and international policies, learners with disabilities still face challenges in accessing education, social inclusion and receiving quality education.

According to research, the rate of disability prevalent in populations is between 10 and 16 per cent. In this regard, it is worth understanding and appreciating what is meant by inclusive education and disability.

In a number of cases people have defined inclusive education as education that does not exclude anyone, be it on grounds of disability, language, gender, class, ethnicity, etc. However, definition of disability in relation to inclusive education takes into account how learners experience barriers to education through their environment, disabling them in the form of technology, materials and other social amenities.

There is a broad spectrum of disabilities when it comes to ensuring a disability education that is inclusive. Whereas some are severe and profound difficulties, others are largely hidden, highly-functioning difficulties. Such a spectrum is enough for us to change

the paradigm from theories to practical cases.

In conclusion, no matter the individual opinion, each student legally deserves the right to learn in the least restrictive environment. For many students, that means getting out of the self-contained and resource classrooms into a co-taught or assisted general education class. School systems are required to obtain all the necessary teaching and learning materials, equipment, and technology that each student with a disability needs. These requirements are outlined in the curriculum designs. While there can be possible obstacles to mainstreaming, it typically brings about positive outcomes for the student and others.

FIGHTING POVERTY

Through Enhancing Access to Education

By Titus Yego

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities has continued to support persons with disabilities pursue their education goals through provision of bursaries. In this article, Titus Yego gives insights to some of the efforts the Council is making to increase the number of learners with disabilities accessing available opportunities for scholarships.



Presentation of cheques to students with disabilities benefiting from Inuka Scholarship program.

Many Children with Disabilities (CWDs) live in extreme poverty. They do not have access to basic education. Yet it is obvious that lack of education is the root cause of poverty among CWDs. If all children with disabilities can access school and acquire basic education at an early age, they can lift themselves out of poverty. That would translate to 12 percent reduction in

Kenya's total poverty index.

Education is one of the greatest equalizers. It can ensure that there are equal opportunities for everyone regardless of race, gender, social class, or disability as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. This will ensure equal access to education. Lack of access to education often deprives persons with disabilities (PWDs) better job opportunities.

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) recognizes that while there are still significant barriers for CWDs to access basic education, the realization of the need for education by all children is increasing. This is due to the increase in levels of public awareness and access to information. This has diminished the popularity of backward cultural values that stigmatize children with disabilities.

Disability experts generally agree that inclusive education should be the standard. Several experts point out that reluctance to embrace inclusive education often comes from parents of both categories of children; children with disabilities and those without disabilities. Cultural views on disability often shape the perspective of the education children with disabilities access. As more children with disabilities are educated, cultural views on disability are starting to change. Many people have started accepting disability as a usual part of life.

In labour market, persons with disabilities face acute challenges in accessing employment. This is attributed to barriers ranging from access to quality education to economic challenges in the ever changing socio-economic dynamics in Kenya. The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, Article 54(2) provides that "...at least five percent of the members of the public in elective and appointive bodies are persons with disabilities." Apparently, most employers say that, persons with disabilities miss out on these opportunities because they lack the necessary qualifications pinned on jobs advertised. Sometimes, employers claim that persons with disabilities have lower qualifications.

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) therefore, feels that there is a need to provide scholarships for CWDs. Providing education scholarships for CWDs at secondary school level will help bridge the present gap and address the future needs as envisaged in Article 54 (2) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010.

To increase the number of PWDs accessing scholarships, the NCPWD recently partnered with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Equity Group Foundation – from Equity Bank Group – to reduce the gap. The MoE and Equity Group Foundation have been offering scholarships to needy children dubbed **Elimu**

Scholarship. Children with disabilities are equally included in the category of needy children. Elimu Scholarship is committed to attract 900 applications from needy learners with disabilities. This was due to limited funding to NCPWD. More applicants will benefit from Elimu scholarship.

The NCPWD, has been able to transform the lives of 500 students with special needs, by accessing education. The Council is providing scholarships for their secondary school education for the financial years 2020/2021, and 2021/2022.

This scholarship support will go a long way in helping CWDs. It will also be a model for the 2023/24 Financial Year. By then, the 4-year education cycle will be complete and the Council will have supported 1,000 students with disabilities through secondary education. The Council is highly committed to making this scholarship model, a huge success and in the process ensure that CWDs access secondary education.

In the current academic year (2021/2022), the Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) Limited, is sponsoring another set of 94 children with disability joining secondary schools. The children are identified and selected equally from all the 47 counties. The selection is mainly done by a panel chaired by the county commissioner in each county. Successful students are fully sponsored by KPC for a period of four years. This scholarship adheres to gender equality during selection. Last year, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the first cohort of students under KPC sat for their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

Kipkemoi Miriam Chepleting was the top candidate in the country, under the category of students with special needs. She scored a mean grade of "A". She was a student at Moi Girls High School, Eldoret. Miriam has set a high standard of achievement for persons with disabilities seeking equal opportunities. It is also a very good expression for girls with disabilities.

Miriam is a cancer survivor. She uses prosthesis – an artificial limb. This assistive device was donated by NCPWD in 2018. When she was contacted by phone, she was extremely happy. She asserted her determination to pursue a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree programme (MBChB).

She is specifically interested in the health of human beings, with a passion for the wellbeing of persons with disabilities.

"Am determined to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery at any Ivy League university in the USA." she said.



Kipkemoi Miriam Chepleting. A beneficiary of Inuka Scholarship program.



Kipkemoi Miriam Chepleting Celebrating her victory after the release of the 2020 KCSE results

"Let's embrace change by reducing poverty through access to education for all learners, as it is the greatest equalizer."

EDUCATION FINANCING

Is the Kenyan child with disability getting their fair share of the cake?

By Samuel Odawo

In this article, Samuel Odawo looks at the issues of funding for children with disabilities and what need to be done to effectively fund education of this category of children.

The delivery of quality, accessible, equitable and inclusive education to children with disabilities (CWDs), is founded upon the existence of a robust ecosystem of legal, programmatic and resource mobilization frameworks. This constitutes comprehensive policies, elaborate programmes and strategies to ensure the early identification, assessment and appropriate placement of CWDs in educational institutions, mechanisms to ensure all CWDs enroll and complete school, recruitment of qualified teaching and non-teaching staff and adequate finances to enable the achievement of the aforementioned. Question is: does the Shilling always correspond to the need? In order to address this question effectively, it is worth interrogating the budgetary allocations to the education of CWDs, by the two governments (county and national), in the context of the responsibilities accorded them by law.

The right to education for CWDs is anchored and guaranteed both in international and national policies. These include, inter alia, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Salamanca Statement, the Constitution of Kenya, the Basic Education Act (2013), the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), the Sector Policy for the Education of Learners with Disabilities (LWDs) and the National Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022. Specifically, article 54(1) B) of the Kenyan constitution guarantees every person with disability (PWD), access to educational institutions and facilities for PWDs that are integrated into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person. Additionally, section 44(4) of the basic education Act requires the education Cabinet Secretary to ensure that every special school or educational institution with learners with special needs is provided with appropriate trained teacher, non teaching staff, infrastructure, learning materials and equipment suitable for such learners.

Further, section 46(1) of the same Act mandates every County Education Board in consultation with the relevant county government to provide for education assessment and research centres (EARCs) including a special needs service in identified clinics in the county. These centres play a vital role as the gateway to the education of CWDs, since early identification, assessment and placement in appropriate educational institution, form the basis for providing them with quality education.



NCPWD presenting a cheque to students in a past event.

Currently, the Ministry of Education allocates KSh3,720 per year, to each LWD in primary school, which is KSh2,300 more than what a learner in a regular school receives. In addition, there is a special needs education grant of total Sh455m to be shared among all special primary schools, including some integrated programmes and special units. For secondary schools, every LWD receives KSh57,770, KSh35,500 more than what a learner in a mainstream school gets. This funding from government is meant to cater for tuition, the purchase of learning resources and paying of emoluments for support staff employed in special schools.

However, this government funding regime neither takes into account the heterogeneity of disability, nor considers the varying needs of different LWDs, given the intersectionality of gender, poverty and geographical location. Besides, the kitty shared by all special primary schools has remained at Sh455m for the last five years, despite an increase in pupils' enrollment, as well as the establishment of more institutions for special needs education (SNE). Moreover, due to inadequate properly functioning EARCs, many learners may be missing out on the capitation, as they are not registered on the national

education management information system (NEMIS). In fact, there are many unidentified CWDs either in mainstream schools or at home owing to stigma and discrimination. Thus, it is evident that the about 300,000 cited by the ministry of education as the number of LWDs currently present in the country, is incorrect data. Finally, in spite of the provisions of sections 46 and 47 of the basic education Act (2013) on the county education boards, regarding the establishment and functions of EARCs, it is unclear what budgetary allocations county governments are making to enable the full operationalization of this law.

Whereas the jury is still out on the cost of educating a CWD in Kenya, there is consensus that current government funding is inadequate, considering the expensive SNE learning resources and the overall necessities of operating a special school. Some experts have suggested that approximately Sh70000 is enough to educate a CWD annually. Yet, what government gives schools per child cumulatively is about KSh40,000 in average. The balance is expected to be covered by school fees from parents who most of them are poor, hence unable to pay.

In the global partnership for education summit, co-hosted by the UK and Kenya governments held in the UK and online on July 28th and 29th 2021, there is an opportunity to bridge the existing funding gap in the education of CWDs. Hence, the government should: First, conduct a needs assessment to determine the cost of educating a CWD, cognizant of both the category of disability and the varying needs. Second, ensure an increase of the budgetary allocations for the education of CWDs appropriately, and that there is value for money. Third, involve stakeholders to develop public-private partnerships for optimal resource mobilization.

In conclusion, as previously declared in this article, the law guarantees every CWD the right to access education on an equal basis with others. Equally, the government has ratified the global legal instruments relating to education, including the sustainable development goals, of which goal 4 requires states to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all. Therefore, in order for this "for all" to ring true also to CWDs of this nation, the government must commit to and facilitate a fair allocation, as well as efficient spending of resources, so the shilling can adequately respond to the need.

RIGHT TO VOTE AND BE ELECTED

By Francis Anyenda

In August 2022, Kenyans will have the third general election since the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The preparations of the elections have already begun with the process of mass voter registration kicking off in October 2021 and as Francis Anyenda examines access to the electoral process to persons with disabilities is still a mirage.



one of Kenyan political rallies. photo courtesy of kenyanews.co.ke

In less than 12 months from now, Kenyans will be going for the presidential and general elections to vote for those who will represent them in the National Assembly, the Senate, and County Assemblies. They will also vote for the President, Governor and also their Women Representative at the County. With the elections in the offing, we will soon be witnessing a lot of political realignments as politicians position themselves in the best political vehicle that will facilitate them to their political position of their interest. And as usual, elections come with a lot of frenzy, as politicians and political parties across the echelons jostle to woo voters. The political fever has already begun but the temperatures are still slightly low. As political temperatures begin to rise, we will soon start seeing choppers flying all over our air spaces as politicians show case their might. We will see politicians and their supporters donning their political party colors together with their supporters in campaign rallies. On its part, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has hit the road running.

The Commission after being injected with new blood after the appointment of four new commissioners, has already kicked off the process of mass voter registration with the recruitment of temporary staff to undertake the exercise. The Registration exercise will commence in October 2021. As politicians are realigning and gearing up for the



PWD in a civic education exercise.



Voting in a polling station
photo courtesy of IEBC

campaign season, it is well established that participation of persons with disabilities is still limited, not only in election processes, but also in policy processes and development programmes.

For several reasons many persons with disabilities are unable to enjoy their constitutional rights including effective participation in the whole election process. This includes registration, campaigning, voting and being elected. Representation of persons with disabilities in decision and policy making bodies is also very low making it difficult for their voices to be heard and their needs taken into account when developing policies and development programmes.

The Electoral participation is foundational to liberal democracies. The electoral process helps determine the nature of politics and the kind of society in which we live. If certain groups, because of economic and social barriers and disadvantages, do not participate in elections regularly and visibly, particular issues, concerns and needs central to their lives will most likely remain at the margins of our politics and policy-making.

As we gear for the elections perhaps it is time we reflect on some of the challenges that have hindered effective participation of persons with disabilities. It is also critical that the electoral commission addresses these challenges which among others include: Inaccessible polling stations and election information; inadequate civic and voters' education; negative attitude of community members towards people with disabilities; lack of sign language interpreters for people who are deaf in campaigns, polling stations and in media programmes; insensitive election officers.

Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides that: States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake to: (a) Ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and

be elected, inter alia, by:

- (i) ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
- (ii) Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;
- (iii) Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;

Although the Council is apolitical, it has a duty to educate the public and persons with disabilities on their universal suffrage and their rights to actively participate in the electoral process including to be elected as leaders.

In conclusion, As the drums of elections have sounded, it is incumbent upon all of us to lobby and ensure that persons with disabilities participate in the electoral processes in whatever capacity they are interested without any hindrance. That is when we shall attain a fair, free and credible elections.

MY TESTIMONY AS A PERSON WITH DISABILITY

By Duba Wario (Mr.)

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities has continued to empower persons with disabilities through its programmes. In this article, Duba Wario gives a testimony on how the Council programs have impacted persons with disabilities.

I am a person with disability, a resident of Marsabit county; Sololo District-. Specifically, I have been blind for the last thirty-five years. I became blind as a result of meningitis that struck me while herding cattle. I am indebted to the Comboni Missionaries, local staff of Sololo Mission Hospital then, friends and well-wishers; I am jolly glad that I ever met them and grateful for my upbringing and above all, for my education.



The writer, Mr. Duba Wario at the Dr. Gurracha Girls' Memorial School precinct holding a white cane with sensor shortly after receiving it from the Marsabit Disability Services officer.



PWDs registering on the NCPWD Career Portal

As a person with disability, I am proud and grateful for the enactment of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2003 and the subsequent establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. May be, I would urge the government now and for posterity to implement in full this Act to realize its full benefits to its disability Populace or even align it to the 2010 Constitution.

Since its inception, the Council has been at the forefront in ameliorating the lives of its registered members in many aspects. For instance: -

Job placements:

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities has made it an obligation to accord its esteemed members letters of introduction during job recruitments for affirmative consideration. As a result of this, many of us secured job opportunities.

Bearers of such letters are accorded due respect and thus take their rightful positions in the job market. With Persons with Disabilities Act 2003 and the 5% progressive employment enshrined in the 2010 Constitution, the future is far brighter.

With creative digital platform FUZU in place, I only hope the job placement business will go a notch-higher because of the much-needed shot in the arm.

Enhancement of working conditions:

Through the involvement of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities; working conditions for Persons with Disabilities has been enhanced immensely. The Council plays a vital role in ensuring that workers with disabilities enjoy tax exemption which goes a long way in boosting their income. On the same vein, those of us with either profound visual impairment or physically immobilised enjoy a disability guide allowance. This enables us to hire or engage a person to assist us when performing duties at our work places. This enhances dignity and sense of belonging that despite our vulnerability, we have something to offer in building our nation. Extension of retirement age by 5 years upon request is another lifeline the PWD employees are entitled to.



One of the NCPWD funded infrastructure project

Educational support: The National Council has continuously supported education of Persons with Disabilities from primary, secondary to tertiary levels. Through its County Disability offices, learners are able to access bursaries from time to time to ease their educational needs. Its various educational programmes such as bursaries, NCPWD Scholarships and the newly-introduced Wezesha will go a long way in empowering the Disability fraternity.

Assistive Devices: The Council is fronting provisions of learning aids to learners with disabilities. Such learning aids or equipment include: Braille, Braille papers, laptops equipped with speech software, white canes, wheelchairs, hearing aids, among others. Unfortunately, these devices are expensive.

The government must ensure that Council gets enough allocation in order to meet these basic needs. The Council must not also sit on its laurels. It must partner with like-minded organizations to reach as many persons with disability as possible. This is a wakeup call to the Board of Directors and those tasked with day-today management of the Council.

Businesses or income generating activities:

The establishment of the Council has catapulted the ability of persons with disabilities to engage in businesses. Through the Council's Economic Empowerment and Tools of Trade Programmes, persons with disabilities groups and individuals are able to engage in businesses and income generating activities instead of begging for their livelihoods. From time to time, the Council provides grants to groups of persons with disabilities to create wealth; hence boosting our lives and dignity. The challenge is to scale up and reach as many deserving persons as possible.

In conclusion, they say that a journey of a thousand miles start with the first step; Kenyans! We have made many POSITIVE strides towards the objectives of the (PWD ACT OF 2003) We are enjoying many benefits but the full realization of the objectives of enacting this law entirely depends on awareness of population with disabilities demanding for its full implementation and the goodwill of the Government of the day.

Kudos National Council for Persons with Disabilities and Kenyans, God bless KENYA.

Duba Wario is teacher of History/Government,

**French & Special Needs
at Dr. Gurracha Girls' Memorial- SOLOLO.**
His email is dubawario4@gmail.com



Economic empowerment beneficiaries displaying products in a past exhibition.



How the Media Mirrors Disability. Inclusive Aspects of Society.

By Harun M. Hassan

In this article, Harun Hassan examines some of the disability stereotypes witnessed in the media coverage on persons with disabilities and how this negative coverage can be reversed to eliminate stigmatization of persons with disabilities through mainstreaming disability in the media sector.

In his famous 1922 book on Public Opinion, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Walter Lippmann examined the role of the media in shaping public opinion. While pointing out that one gets facts in news more than truth, he noted that stereotypes play a huge role in how news is presented. This then skews public opinion as regards a given topic.

A century later, this strongly resonates with how the media covers persons with disabilities (PWDs). Disability groups have throughout history relentlessly pushed for better coverage of their issues in the media. Colin Barnes, university professor, leading activist and renowned disability studies scholar, in his study, "Disabling imagery and the media", identified various stereotypes media give to persons with disabilities (PWDs). They're presented as pitiable, unable to take part wholly in life, sexually abnormal, super cripple, bitter cripple, and so on. In Kenya, a 2018 study by Mauryne Abwao of Southern Illinois University showed that 18 per cent of media disability stories label PWDs as stigmatised and marginalised, social pathology (as seeking aid) at 13 per cent and medical (viewed as an illness) at 12 per cent. Visible or physical disabilities receive more than twice as much coverage as invisible ones, such as intellectual disabilities. This further marginalises those with disabilities not immediately apparent or observable.

The study also says PWDs largely feature only during commemoration of disability-related days, when seeking medical support or having made achievements. But this does not signal a lack of experts with disabilities who are worthy of getting covered. Predictably, a PWD presumes that any call for a media interview has to be about their disability. However, the media isn't entirely an absent player in the disability movement; it plays a crucial awareness and advocacy role as PWDs have for a long time

been disenfranchised. Unfortunately, over time, such stories create an over-representation of the subjects' disabilities and little about their other socioeconomic capabilities and potential.

But stereotypes are difficult to uproot. Research by the US Geena Davis Institute on top 100 US movies of 2019 that also usually hit the global audience showed eight per cent of them had lead characters who had disabilities — a historic peak, having stagnated at one per cent over the previous 10 years. But they were more likely to die (20 per cent) than those not disabled (12 per cent) and to be rescued, at 34 per cent, against 21 per cent. How many times have you come across a movie scene where a character with disability has a villain role, or watched an African film where a person is 'supernaturally' punished with blindness for a wrong they did? There is a lot of work to be done. The stereotypes hamper fair coverage of disability matters. This is where the media comes in — to help promote a disability-inclusive society through mirroring an all-round perspective of what the world of disability entails.

First, we should mainstream disability in our media houses by employing PWDs. That will diversify story ideas and shape editorial decisions on how PWDs are covered. Also, tapping into experts and opinion shapers who are PWDs goes a long way towards changing the public perception of them from people in need of help to crucial and productive members of our socioeconomic society.

Second, mainstreaming will change the language in disability stories. While phrases such as 'persons living with disabilities' and 'the disabled' sound disarming, they actually promote stigmatization. To PWDs, they present the disability as a side-burden. The portrayal of PWDs as achieving 'unexpected' success feeds into the 'super cripple' stereotype, excessively praised over relatively usual feats. Finally, creating specialized desks in our newsrooms will spearhead the disability agenda greatly and ensure a steady flow of related stories to firmly place it in the national dialogue. In a bid to promote women empowerment, some media houses have established gender desks manned by gender editors to help mainstream gender equality.

Through changing the lens of disability coverage, we will avoid what Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi called the "danger of a single story" - That stereotypes not only erode equality but also put heavy stress on what differentiates us and little on what we share.

This article was first published in the Daily Nation of Thursday, August 12, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS TRAINED ON CORPORATE GOVERNANCE.



A section of NCPWD Board members following proceedings during the training

A three day training on corporate governance for Board of Directors for the National Council for Persons with Disabilities was held on 27th to 29th July 2021. The training brought together all the members of the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees. The objective of the training was to enhance the understanding of the board members on the operations and management of a state corporation entity.



The Training was necessary in consideration of the role of the Board as a catalyst, initiating, influencing, evaluating and monitoring strategic decisions and actions of NCPWD and also holding the management accountable.

The training was facilitated by key government institutions that are mandated to build capacity of state corporations in order to ensure that the management and the Board have established mechanisms that ensures the State corporation operates within its mandate. The training was also critical in ensuring that the council utilizes its

resources entrusted to it efficiently and effectively in pursuit of its mandate, and meets the legitimate expectations of its various stakeholders. The facilitators included Kenya School of Government; State Corporations Advisory Committee (SCAC); Inspectorate of State Corporation and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

The training covered a number of areas including Principles of Public Service, Procedures for Conducting Board Meetings, Liability of Board Members, Board Charter, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Programmes among others.

REINSTATEMENT OF PERSONS WITH SEVERE DISABILITY CASH TRANSFER BENEFICIARIES



Training of 47 County DSOs on retargeting of exited households under the PWSD CT Programme. The Training was officially opened by the PS State Department for Social Protection Nelson Marwa, CBS and joined by Board Members of the NCPWD

The Government of Kenya kicked off a countrywide exercise to reinstate 12,464 households that were previously benefiting under Persons with Severe Disabilities Programme - Cash transfer (PWSD-CT) but are currently out of the Consolidated Cash Transfer Programme Management Information System (CCTPMIS).

The exercise commenced on September 1, 2021 and will run up to November 5th 2021 and involves locating households previously benefiting from the Persons with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme.

This exercise is not targeting additional new beneficiaries. The exercise is being conducted through the State Department for Social Protection led by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities in all the Counties.

To successfully undertake this exercise, the Council

conducted a one-week physical training of all the County Disability Services Officers on 26th to 30th July 2021 and also held subsequent virtual meetings to adequately equip the officers to undertake the retargeting activities.

Additionally, the Council has recruited and trained 290 data clerks to serve as enumerators. The enumerators will be undertaking the listing and registration exercise for households traced and meeting eligibility criteria for PWSD programme.



Officers during the training on Retargeting of PWSD CT beneficiaries held on 26th to 30th July 2021 at Pride Inn Flamingo Hotel Mombasa

National Council for Persons with Disabilities Programs' support 2020/2021

BENEFICIARIES OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND PROGRAMMES FOR THE PERIOD 2020/21					
COUNTIES	ASSISTIVE DEVICES & TECHNOLOGIES	EDUCATION ASSISTANCE		ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT - GROUP GRANTS	
	ASSISTIVE DEVICES	BURSARIES		GROUP GRANTS	
COUNTY-CODE	DEVICES REQUESTED AND ISSUED	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES	TOTAL AMOUNT UTILIZED	NO. OF GROUPS AWARDED	AMOUNT
001 – MOMBASA	39	64	1,147,674.00	5	500,000.00
002 – KWALE	33	66	839,390.00	4	400,000.00
003 – KILIFI	54	80	1,429,519.00	7	700,000.00
004 - TANA RIVER	11	22	347,990.00	2	200,000.00
005 – LAMU	6	16	341,900.00	2	200,000.00
006 - TAITA TAVETA	22	24	253,500.00	3	300,000.00
007 – GARISSA	14	24	540,060.00	5	500,000.00
008 – WAJIR	11	37	812,990.00	6	600,000.00
009 – MANDERA	17	26	887,450.00	5	500,000.00
010 – MARSABIT	9	50	840,720.00	5	500,000.00
011 – ISIOLO	7	34	855,580.00	2	200,000.00
012 – MERU	135	103	1,853,880.00	8	800,000.00
013 - THARAKA NITHI	35	57	1,144,290.00	4	400,000.00
014 – EMBU	65	90	1,558,191.00	4	400,000.00
015 – KITUI	73	0	-	10	1,000,000.00
016 – MACHAKOS	86	74	1,498,414.00	7	700,000.00
017 – MAKUENI	98	96	1,607,340.00	7	700,000.00
018 – NYANDARUA	44	78	1,518,555.00	5	500,000.00
019 – NYERI	59	105	1,906,210.00	6	600,000.00
020 – KIRINYAGA	51	85	1,589,550.00	4	400,000.00
021 - MURANG'A	95	28	524,190.00	6	600,000.00
022 – KIAMBU	121	90	2,003,700.00	10	1,000,000.00
023 – TURKANA	22	15	562,000.00	5	500,000.00
024 - WEST POKOT	14	22	480,050.00	4	400,000.00
025 – SAMBURU	9	0	-	2	200,000.00
026 - TRANS NZOIA	47	71	1,818,510.00	4	400,000.00
027 - UASIN GISHU	41	51	1,317,495.00	5	500,000.00
028 - ELGEYO MARAKWET	13	36	804,160.00	3	300,000.00
029 – NANDI	39	53	1,251,203.00	5	500,000.00
030 – BARINGO	24	45	791,440.00	5	500,000.00
031 – LAIKIPIA	22	61	985,740.00	4	400,000.00
032 – NAKURU	92	116	2,140,390.00	8	800,000.00
033 – NAROK	24	45	1,047,500.00	5	500,000.00
034 – KAJIADO	28	55	1,318,200.00	5	500,000.00
035 – KERICHO	23	46	1,037,660.00	5	500,000.00
036 – BOMET	25	37	855,910.00	4	400,000.00
037 – KAKAMEGA	130	115	2,163,200.00	10	1,000,000.00
038 – VIHIGA	54	87	1,705,058.00	4	400,000.00
039 – BUNGOMA	79	69	1,241,285.00	8	800,000.00
040 – BUSIA	55	92	1,759,590.00	5	500,000.00
041 – SIAYA	96	55	1,446,226.00	5	500,000.00
042 – KISUMU	108	80	2,062,326.00	5	500,000.00
043 - HOMA BAY	115	95	1,992,125.00	7	600,000.00
044 – MIGORI	80	46	1,186,200.00	6	600,000.00
045 – KISII	98	73	1,797,430.00	8	800,000.00
046- NYAMIRA	47	57	1,515,260.00	4	400,000.00
047 – NAIROBI	116	154	4,118,010.00	8	800,000.00
TOTALS	2,490	2,833	57,740,000.00	251	25,000,000.00

SCHOOLS SUPPORTED WITH INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT GRANTS FY 2020/2021

CODE	COUNTY	CONSTITUENCY	SCHOOL	PROJECT	PWDs	DISABILITY	PROJECT AMOUNT	AMOUNT APPROVED
005	Lamu	Lamu West	Mokowe Arid Zone Primary School Hearing Impaired Unit	Construction of one classroom	47	Deaf	1,998,900	1,998,900
	Sub Total							
006	Taita Taveta	Voi	Mwanyambo School for the Deaf	Construction of Gilrs Dormitory	170	Deaf	1,998,042	1,998,042
	Sub Total							
010	Marsabit	Moyale	Kinisa Nomadic Girls Primary School	Purchase of classroom equipment	60	Mixed Disabilities (PH, VI, HI, MH)	500,000	500,000
	Sub Total							
039	Bungoma	Bumula	Joyvalley Special Secondary School for the PH	Purchase of classroom equipment	100	Physical Disabilities	500,000	500,000
	Sub Total							
043	Homa Bay	Ndhiwa	Ndhiwa Primary School	Construction and Equipment of one classroom and construction of ablution block	93	Mixed Disabilities	2,198,805	2,000,000
	Sub Total							
047	Nairobi	Makadara	Nile Road Special School	Renovation of classroom and hostel Roofing	311	Intellectual Disability	2,117,750	2,000,000
	GRAND TOTAL							8,996,942

During the Financial Year 2020/21 the Council provided grants to 25 DPOs to carry out sensitization and awareness creation on disability during various disability Days/events worth 2.3 million

National Council for
Persons with Disabilities
Opp. ABC Place,
Along Waiyaki way, Nrb.
P.O. Box 66577 - 00800
Nairobi.

-  NCPWD
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Manufacturing



Food Security



Universal Health Coverage



Affordable Housing

KENYA
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