

DISABILITY MATTERS

Creating an Equitable Society

10TH EDITION



Word from the Vice Chancellor

Prof. Paul K. Wainaina



The occasion of the tenth Kenyatta University Disability Awareness day is fitting for us to reflect upon the idea of equitability and its practices. At the basic minimum, the concept is a call to fair and just treatment of people regardless of their age, gender, race or any other personal conditions. This point is particularly relevant when talking about persons who are differently abled: they must not be stigmatized or treated with bias. This means not just according opportunities for all but also ensuring that there are clear processes and support structures to enable full participation in all human activity.

Kenyatta University has a fairly entrenched tradition of achieving this, thereby enabling students with disabilities find a 'home'. Indeed, for a long time the principle of inclusivity has been part of the strategies for ensuring that everyone comes along in the academic journey. Since inception, the institution has admitted students with different types of special needs, and the numbers have continued to grow from a mere handful in the 1980s to the present situation where there are about 200 students with disabilities spread across the different

campuses. As well, there are 69 members of staff with disabilities—from professors and accountants to various cadres of support staff—working at the institution. Each of these individuals contributes their unique talents and abilities to the common pool of Kenyatta University's values that make it a highly respected institution of higher learning.

Kenyatta University recognizes that the realization of an equitable society requires everyone's contribution—government, public and private institutions, civil society and individuals. The government, through parliament, formulates laws and regulations, hence the enactment of the Persons With Disabilities Act of 2003 and the signing up to and ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008). The adoption of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya was also a significant milestone given its extensive Bill of Rights particularly where it touches on persons with disabilities. Among others, these legal instruments provide the human rights framework within which matters related to disability are addressed.

Kenyatta University's Disability Policy is underpinned by the human rights principles enshrined in the documents cited above. The Policy guides the University's efforts to create a fair playing ground for persons with disabilities.

Over the years, the University has endeavored to put in place various mechanisms to achieve equitability for persons with disabilities within the academic and workplace experience for both students and staff. One of the ways of doing this is to put in place measures that help level the field for persons with disabilities. This led to the establishment of the Directorate of Disability Services in 2010 in order to coordinate service delivery on a large scale. Through the Directorate, the University seeks to ensure progressive achievement of its Disability Mainstreaming goal as set out in our Strategic Plan. The need to factor in disability in every process of the University arises from the recognition that the institution cannot be said to be a truly transformative space for individuals if a significant component of its membership is not catered for. Further, the Directorate is charged with the task of carrying out continuous sensitization on disability issues across the University. The Disability Awareness Day is the culmination of year-long disability mainstreaming work.

Academics is the core reason why students join Kenyatta University. To this end, reasonable accommodations are made in order for them to thrive in the learning environment. In most instances assistive

devices are availed to students who might need them. The braille section in the University Library offers technical assistance to students who are blind. Such users are encouraged to take advantage of advances in computer technology, for instance Orbit Readers, to make their learning process more efficient. As well, Sign Language Interpreters are availed for hearing impaired students to enable them participate better in the instructional process.

Recognizing that mobility across the vast Thika Road campus is a daunting task for many persons with disabilities, three dedicated vans have been set aside to ferry such individuals to various points within the University. Furthermore, environmental barriers are removed so that those using assistive devices can navigate the campus with ease. Accommodation facilities are also being improved to ensure they become user friendly for students with disabilities.

As an institution, Kenyatta University appreciates that Kenya Commercial Bank, Safaricom and Coca Cola have continued their partnership in disability mainstreaming work. Both KCB's and Safaricom's products and services targeting persons with disabilities amply demonstrate the need for organizations to pool their energies and resources to effectively address a common cause. Partnerships in disability mainstreaming work make it possible to jointly undertake the important task of creating an equitable society.

From the Director’s Desk

By Dr. Mbugua Wa Mungai



Kenyatta University holds a unique identity as an institution committed to the generation and dissemination of knowledge for the welfare of society. This is more so where such undertakings involve the welfare of persons with disabilities. The institution, guided by inclusivity as a core value, has over the years worked to give greater visibility both to persons with disability as well as issues that affect them. This is based on the awareness that such persons need to be actively engaged in University activities if the true meaning of inclusion is to be realized.

Kenyatta University has been robustly implementing its 2014 Disability Policy and Procedures which is anchored by local and international instruments that address issues related to the welfare and rights of persons with disabilities. These include The 1975 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, The Kenya Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008), and the Constitution of Kenya (2010) among others. The common thread running through these laws and treaties is the idea that a fair and more equitable society can be created by empowering persons with disabilities to participate in the everyday life of their communities; safeguards have been built into these regulations to protect such

individuals from discrimination on the basis of disability.

On its part, Kenyatta University has sought to create an inclusive community into which not only are students with diverse disabilities admitted but also the employment of persons with disabilities across all levels of staffing has become a priority within the principle of equal opportunities. Crucially, such individuals can be seen playing visible roles within the University.

Equitability is the key value upon which the Directorate of Disability Services was launched on 26 February 2010 during the inaugural Kenyatta University Disability Awareness Day. The Directorate aims at helping achieve the mainstreaming of disability within all operations of the university in order to ensure the full participation of students and staff with disabilities in all aspects of the Kenyatta University experience.

One of the Directorate’s main objectives involves creating awareness among the University community about issues and needs of persons with disabilities. And thus, the tenth edition of *Disability Matters* contains articles in line with this spirit, guided by the theme: *Creating an Equitable Society*.

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KCB in Deliberate Initiatives to Drive Diversity and Inclusion

By KCB Group Plc

KCB Group Plc continues to deepen its focus on inclusion and diversity agenda, rolling out targeted initiatives which are increasingly transforming millions of lives across East Africa.

The KCB Foundation, through its flagship youth empowerment programme, '2jiajiri' will this year alone equip over 1,000 persons living with disability with technical and entrepreneurial skills.

The beneficiaries will receive vocational training at technical training institutions across the country in various trades that form the backbone of the informal economy namely: agribusiness, automotive engineering, beauty and personal care, building and construction and domestic services.

Out of this year's recruitment target the Foundation will extend business development services and financial support to PWDs operating Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and apprentices who will be recruited through the KCB Bank branch network in the country. The Foundation will offer Business Development Services and financial support to the out-of-school youth to start their own enterprises upon completion of training.

Speaking at the launch of the programme, UK High Commissioner Nic Hailey noted that, "Almost 90% of the jobs created in Kenya are from the private sector, so it's really inspiring to see KCB launching this project to bring people with disabilities onto their job creation programme to help them get the market for their products, because that's where the real change is going to happen. It's out there in creating opportunities for people" he added.

KCB Foundation Managing Director Jane Mwangi said the Foundation's objective is to empower persons living with disabilities to run businesses that can allow them to utilize existing opportunities such as access to the 30% of Government procurement opportunities set aside specifically for enterprises owned by youth, women and PLWDs through the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) programme.

"This will be achieved by working with stakeholders to mobilize the youth living with disability for them to benefit from technical, financial and entrepreneurial skills required for enterprise development," said Ms Mwangi.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of



Former British High Commissioner Nic Hailey displays a gift from PWDs flanked by KCB Foundation Chairman Austen Baraza (on his right), KCB Foundation Managing Director Jane Mwangi (centre) and other guests during the PWDs roundtable held in Nairobi 2019.



Nominated Senator Isaac Mwaura makes a point during the corporates PWDs roundtable convened by KCB Foundation in Nairobi. Looking on is KCB Foundation Managing Director Jane Mwangi.



KCB Foundation Managing Director Jane Mwangi (left) and former British High Commissioner Nic Hailey admire the work of the Foundation's 2jiajiri programme beneficiary at the Mathare Special School stand during the PWD's roundtable.



KCB Foundation Chairman Austen Baraza (left) hands over a gift to former British High Commissioner Nic Hailey during the PWD's roundtable.

Statistics (KNBS), nationally, three out of every 100 people live with a disability. Unfortunately, poverty and disability are closely linked, and PWDs are more likely to face a socio-economic disadvantage.

"2jiajiri was started to drive employment and wealth creation among our youth. Our objective to support persons living with disability is to enable them to actively participate as contributing members of society. The term youth is all inclusive in nature which is why we have started this journey with the PWDs," added Ms Mwangi.

The initiative is in line with KCB Foundation's resolve to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities, which requires states to provide persons living with disability an inclusive, quality, and free primary and secondary education.

Moreover, KCB Group has increased its level of commitment to diversity and inclusion by onboarding 17 staff and 3 interns who are people living with disabilities. We commit to make a deliberate effort in ensuring these numbers gradually increase to 20 interns by 2020.

At KCB Group, we value diversity and inclusion, and our current focus is achieving fair and transparent employment opportunities that encourage gender balance, youth and persons living with disabilities within teams and at all levels of the business.



KCB Foundation Chairman Austen Baraza (right) gifts KCB Foundation Managing Director Jane Mwangi during the PWD's roundtable.

Creating Accessible Built Environments in Kenya

Arch. Billy Gacheru Njeru, PMP.

Architect and Project Manager, Kenyatta University

Accessibility of built environments is based upon the principles of universal design which advocate for the design of products and environments usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for assistance, adaptation or specialized design. Developers, designers and owners of buildings therefore have responsibility to ensure that the built environment is accessible to everyone including anyone who has a mobility or other impairment, whether permanent or temporary, such as:

- * Wheelchair users, their caretakers and people with walking difficulties.
- * People with pushchairs and children.
- * People with sight or hearing impairments.
- * Elderly people.
- * People with co-ordination or respiratory problems.

Current situation.

Efforts to make the built environment in Kenya accessible have majorly concentrated on meeting regulatory requirements rather than a genuine attempt at accessibility. This has been achieved mostly by adaptation of existing built environments to accommodate accessibility with mixed results. These include having tiny lifts installed, wrongly sized and fitted accessible washrooms and steeply sloped ramps with inappropriate

surface treatments tucked away in the far end of most buildings and urban landscapes to achieve ‘compliance’.

Above this, these adaptation interventions concentrate on physical disability, showing inclination towards wheelchair users and ignoring other disability groups such as visual and hearing impaired who require additional interventions beyond grab bars, ramps and widened corridors and doors. The use of sensory and tactile responsive material finishes and technology is at appalling levels in Kenya.

Why is this so?

Accessible installations and adaptations are viewed as unnecessary and expensive by developers and stakeholders of the built environment for a small group of people. Given the return on investment mentality in the construction industry one can empathise with the argument. However, it is clear that people, with disability or otherwise, tend towards accessible installations for movement. This is evidenced by the regular use of the ramp by students at the Kenyatta University Footbridge across the Thika Superhighway instead of the staircase. It is therefore safe to say that these interventions can be made part of major circulation spaces or even replace most solutions with a little

creativity from architects and other players in the built environment.

Law and regulations

The statutes direct that govern built environments in Kenya are silent on matters accessibility. These include the building code, physical planning act, county by-laws among other. Kenya ratified the UN Convention for persons with disability which came into force in 3 May 2008. By doing so it reaffirmed that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

While developed countries have legal documentation based on the UN Convention for persons with disability that details the requirements for accessibility that should be met, Kenya has no laws that prescribe any accessibility criteria for buildings and urban landscapes. The Kenya Persons with Disabilities Act (2013), while safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities, falls short in the domain of the built environment. This means that industry players have to rely on experience and the apathy of developers to determine how accessible the built environment requires to be. The community at large is apathetic towards persons with disabilities with low levels of awareness exhibited by the populace. This means we have persons parking their cars in areas designated for accessible parking and accessible washrooms are used as storage areas. Our reception desks are not tailored to meet the needs of persons with disability and our outdoor paved areas are a nightmare for them to manoeuvre. There are known cases of parents hiding children with disabilities away from the public due to the assumed stigma associated with disability. We forget that every individual is only one freak accident away from an acquired disability.

What can be done to remedy the situation?

Awareness creation on matters disability cannot be stressed enough. The National Council for persons with disability, the overall umbrella

body tasked with ensuring issues of persons with disability are highlighted, should ensure Project management offices in organizations undergo training on various aspects of disability. The same applies for various bodies tasked with regulating the various professionals in the built environment such as Board of registration for Architects and Quantity Surveyors, Engineers Board of Kenya, National Construction Authority among others. Furthermore, they can partner with the institutions that train these professionals so that disability matters are inculcated into them early on just as safety, ergonomics, design and planning principles are. These would include tertiary and technical institutions.

The law gives reference for avoidance of doubt and direction in most matters. The various bodies tasked with disability matters should improve the act to set minimum standards that should be met for a building to considered accessible as well as regulations for the progressive adaptation of existing buildings. This, for example, would require developers to demonstrate accessible strategies included into their projects for approval by statutory bodies. Architects, engineers and to some extent project managers are by and large the creators of the built environment. They shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that Universal Design principles, and by extension accessibility, are enshrined within their projects. This requires a shift in the mindset of designing projects from ROI based to value adjustment. An accessible building will after all be more desirable to informed tenants and their clients resulting in added value.

Let us see floor finishes such as tiling patterns that aim to communicate arrival at key areas to the visually and hearing impaired in our society. Textured walls with contrasting colour arrangements will not only improve the aesthetic quality of space but also enhance the experience that our visually impaired brothers and sisters have when they interact with the built environment. Landmarks can be strategically



Kenyatta University, Nyayo Railway-Cross foot bridge

placed to guide them across various obstacles and help them keep track of their movements in our urban landscape. These can take the form of physical monuments or flora landscapes with unique smells or waterfalls that give an audible response. Let us use technology that assists them to negotiate dangerous points such as zebra crossings, kerbs and sharp turns in pavements. Last but not least, let us desist from having steep ramps with smooth surface

treatments and having bourgeoisie installations such as touchscreen control panels. We have seen famous architects use service ducting and vertical circulation as elements of façade design employing the “inside out” concept where all of the service functions are removed from the interior and placed at the exterior of the building. Examples include the Centre Georges Pompidou by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano that uses exterior escalators

on its façade as well as Lloyds Building by Richard Rogers that achieves an exterior aesthetic by placing services on the outside. The Alioune Diop University Extension by IDOM architects in Senegal is an appropriate example of the use of a ramp to achieve a healthy exterior aesthetic. Why can’t we get a little creative and use

accessible installations to achieve more than just accessibility thereby making them viable options due to their aesthetic value at marginal cost implications? Whatever you build in your community ... make it accessible for everyone!



Too White To Be Black

Too Black To Be White

Too white to be black, too black to be white photo art

Beyond Color

By Jairus Ong'eta

1st Year Student School of Creative Arts,
Film, Theatre and Communication Studies

I am too white to be black too black to be white
I defy the definitions of sight.
How hard it is to be different in a world full of mirrors
With a belief that the reflections should always be the same
That the sun should always shine the same..... but it never does.

Some skins embrace the warmth from the heat,
while others detest it's rays like pain – like a death portion.
Walking on these streets you'd feel piercings of arrows from eyes; angry.
Ironical how people hate money ...
You see source of money is what they say my skin is yet a curse.
A beauty so ugly.
That's why i have painted my thoughts colorless
And now I use my pain as pen to rewrite the story
To redefine the norm
to change perspective.
Because who said.. that sometimes color can determine what one can or cannot do?
I know I'll get opposition from the *I'm proud to be black* but...
I wonder if that's right because I'm left thinking.

Does color portray strength or weakness?
Does it portray inability in a certain way? or maybe... or maybe huanity class..??
But I'm also not a painter
So i don't know which color shouts loudest –
I would use it to paint my words so that they not only be loud but be allowed to sink deep.
Louder than the *kilumi* drum beats to send away curses...
louder than the *riddim* beats in Githurai 45 buses
Louder than the *tutti*play of a full orchestra.
Because I want to fit into those shoes.... mmh no actually I don't want to, i just want to try.
So together let's try and fit into this shoe of a zebra with black and black strips. That *grate wall tv* with a
black and black screen
Because when color becomes a crisis then a cry this is.

Today in this ring –
 We have the greatest match of all time.
 Black and white
 Mayweather and Pacquiao.
 But even as they threw their jabs... left... right hooks – upper cuts
 I realized at the end that their rewards were the same despite who won or lost
 Ask McGregor.
 But their significance in that ring was still important.

So I'm speaking of *love*
 Love beyond the copper sign
 Love beyond red roses on Valentines
 Beyond forwarded messages
 Beyond hugs kisses and massages.
 Social media *R.I.P* when tragedy occurs
 Forgiven messes
 People fighting to live but...

It pains me to know that there are still people living to fight.
 To fight for acceptance in society... Just living between hope and anxiety.
 That there is still stigma!!! I think we should style up.

Because it will always remain that black boards need white chalks
 Whiten Bible pages. Black inscriptions.
 So white in Kenya doesn't just stand for peace.
 It means a people, a face.
 Not just to be seen through peep holes... because this is a new phase.

When are we going to act our parts if we keep standing on these
 stages whose curtains are never open.
 we want to close that Cross back Cause dark...to shine?
 On these papers we shall write our new story.
 So if you dare call this disability...
 Then it is a diss to the abilities all those people like me have.
 So I will not end my piece with I'm out because I will be in this until every ear is able to hear...
 Each and every word that I have come to say here.



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Image: NHIF Super Cover Surgical Package poster with an image of a surgeon smiling

A Journey Through Disability and Back: A Friend's Experience

By Charles Kyangu M.A
Psychologist

Disability is a condition that may be congenital or acquired. Most people imagine that disability is only a problem for the person it affects. However, there is another facet of it (and which is mostly ignored) of the significant others like relatives, friends and colleagues. It is this part that affects many people as it did to me when my friend lost sight, the emotional reactions and feelings, as I came to realize are more or less the same for all people.

My friend, who is now a grown up, had a gradual loss of sight. It all seemed like a dream as he began complaining of constant headaches. Neither he nor I was aware that this was going to culminate into visual impairment. After a short time of observing his condition, my friend discovered that he had become allergic to light from bulbs which marked the beginning of the struggle. He visited several hospitals where he was prescribed with medication for allergy. None of these seemed to reverse the condition. Meanwhile his sight started deteriorating at a faster rate and within a period of around six months he went blind. His medical treatment could not yield anything conclusive. It was only after various tests that he was found with a brain tumour that affected his optic nerves.

How the tumour was treated is not a big deal. My concern was my experience with him acquiring a visual impairment. It never occurred to me that losing sight affects even the way we converse. I would tell him to look at this or that only to remember he cannot see! I had to explain first then wait

for his response. I also kept on giving him hope that he will recover his sight. However, nothing was forthcoming from my promises: everything kept on getting worse. I was not alone, even relatives and close friends felt a lot of sympathy for him and to make it worse; it was accompanied by denial – the feeling that this can't be true. This is a normal experience. The problem was the different suggestions for remedying the situation. Some would say, "This is the work of the devil," or "this is a spiritual war," and similar stories. All the same, nothing was forthcoming.

I would get angry at people because everyone was bombarding him with questions and suggestions of what he should have done or should do. That was normal anyway, everyone seems to have an opinion leave alone his own. Sometimes my friend would be like, "I wish I did not visit the first hospital, they wasted my time". I could identify myself with such stories, the wishes we could have done. It is normal to have these "ifs" and "wishes" anyway as I came to realize. All this time, I would talk with my close associates on my feelings and plans and this would give me relief. I sometimes would pity my friend and feel sad; the situation was taking a toll on me – a thing I never imagined. I even realized that if this went unchecked, I was slowly slipping into depression. I later came to learn it is normal to feel sad and pitying myself. I started understanding myself better.

In this confusion, my friend made a decisive move and we sought assistance from the head of our department at the university.



Man with a white cane

Through him, we were able to get in touch with the directorate of disability services. This is where I heard the most inspiring words for the first time. "There is no correlation between disability and completion of studies, the opportunities are unlimited." With these words my friend discovered that even after losing sight, he can still complete his masters degree. The university has a very rich welfare for persons with disability that my friend was going to utilize in order to remain comfortable. Furthermore, he met with other people who were visually impaired and their stories were even more agonizing than his. That is when I learned that getting in touch with people who have gone through similar experiences can be healing. We left the room renewed and energized.

After learning that disability could actually lead to new possibilities I undertook to become even

more supportive to my friend, regardless of the cost or dwelling too much on my feelings. With time, I was feeling better and when others were getting overwhelmed with sympathy, I was filled with insight and patience. Meanwhile, my friend was undergoing treatment and after a head surgery, he recovered his sight. Nevertheless, I realized that those who provide care of people with disability go through different emotional experiences and being aware of them, talking about them, getting help from the right people and maintaining a positive outlook can cushion you from wasting away in loss.

In Pursuit of a Dream...a Personal Journey

By Faith Mburu - Administrative Assistant

Capacity Development & Consultancy Services,
Kenyatta University

Disability found me. I was five years when an injection rendered my left limb paralyzed. To my then-in-denial parents, this marked the start of another journey although they still hoped that I would get well—soon if not immediately! I was hauled along to every pastor's crusade, given the best meals, was dipped in hot water every evening, dragged from one hospital to another, put on therapy and caliper, and wishes invoked to reverse my fate.

At that point in my life crawling like a snake was my best effort at mobility. When I saw my siblings going to school, I would always cry to go with them. Instead, when my yearning for schooling persisted, my mother used to carry me to school on her back and then pick me up again at noon for the homebound piggy-ride. The journey through this first phase of my disability was quite a rough stretch, but my now-without-an-option parents, teachers and I braved it on, stoic in our resolve to get to the finish line. By the end of the year, I moved on to class one to and from which my father used to drop me using his bicycle and pick me in the evening.

In 1999, I sat for my KCPE and scored 536 marks, ranking position one amongst girls from Cherangani Division who took the national examination that year. Momentarily I felt a head-spinning high when I was admitted to Kenya High School, where unfortunately I schooled for only two terms. My peasant farmer parents could not sustain me at the school and I was forced to transfer to Kapcherop Mixed Secondary School. "So,

you have chosen to shift from Kenya High to Kenya low?" A teacher in my new school remarked sarcastically. Regardless of the turn in my fortunes, I promised my parents that one day I would link up my Kenya High classmates at Kenyatta University, which I had this raging desire to join. That my teachers believed in me further boosted my self-esteem. Being a class representative and chairperson of the peer counselors' association, I had an office in which I used to hide and do some extra study. I had quite a bit of fun too participating in the Science Congress contests up to national level.

In 2003 I sat for my KCSE and attained a B grade, two points lower than the university cut-off points and thus I was admitted to study for a Bachelor of Commerce degree at Kenyatta University in August 2005. Considering the poverty that wracked my family, I knew that raising the kind of fees required for this endeavor was going to be a daunting task but then I refused to dwell on the impossibility of its availability.

Faced with this daunting reality, my father trudged from the door of one well-wisher to another; Catholic Diocese of Kitale came through for us and I organised a going-to-campus party which raised Kshs.17, 000. Sometimes the devil just used to like making fun of my efforts to succeed; on reaching Nairobi the entire amount that I had collected was picked from my father's pocket! On the spur of the moment he decided that we should just go back home but I firmly refused. As fate would have it, at Kenyatta University's Graduation Square I met a friend agreed who

agreed to accommodate me. Subsequently I knocked on many office doors, and this led me all the way to the corridors of the Ministry of Education with whose assistance I finally accessed Higher Education Loans Board funding.

In January 2009, I used my final year HELB loan to rent a single room in Githurai and buy a bed; I was determined not to go back to Kitale after my studies, of which I had two units pending. To make the ends meet, I sold chips and fruit juice when I did not have classes. I also had tuition classes for primary school pupils beginning at 5.30pm. This enabled me to pay my bills. In time I completed my studies and in December 2009 I begun working at Riflo Industries Ltd, as an accountant.

I started working at Kenyatta University's

Finance Department at the level of a cashier on seasonal contract terms in October 2011 before eventually moving on to the Directorate of Research Dissemination and Uptake, in May 2016. In January 2019, I was transferred to Capacity Development and Consultancy Services where I work to date. Currently, I am studying for my Masters' degree in Business Administration (Entrepreneurship).

It has been an arduous journey to get to this stage in my life, and I have absorbed many lessons along the way. Most critically, the need to stay focused on one's goals despite the odds. Others may not share in one's dreams and that is what makes the story of every person with a disability a personal journey. Follow yours tenaciously.



Hand with surgical gloves holding a syringe

Impact of Inclusive HRM Practice

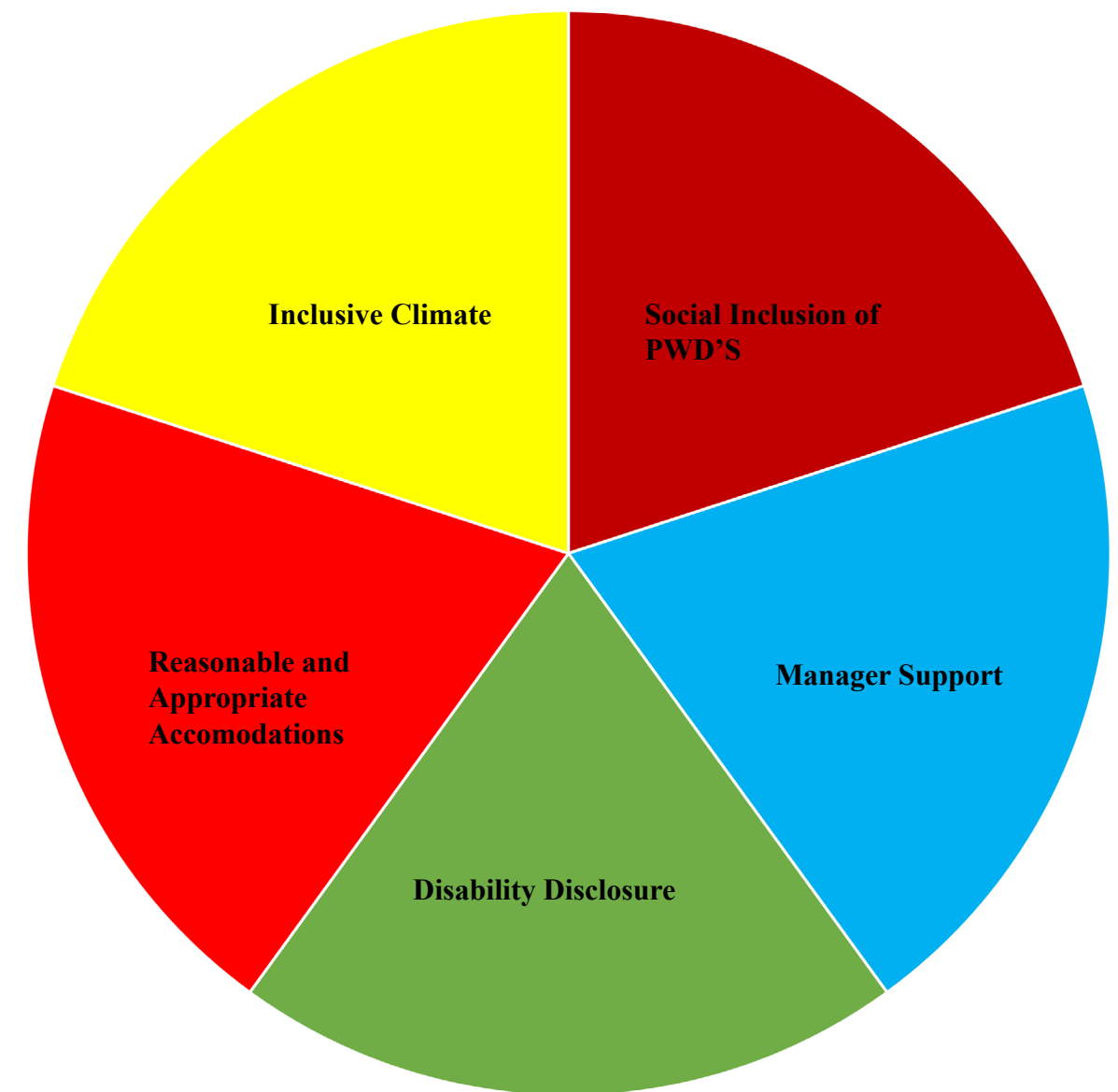
By Martin Jabiri
1st Year Student, School of Business

The adjective 'inclusive' means encompassing all elements within a range whether they lie within or at the extremities of a scope. In human resource management inclusivity can be defined as the formulation of policies that focus on catering for all its employees' welfare including non-discriminative procedures in recruitment, promotion and compensation, career development, motivation, and equitably providing opportunities to women, youth and persons with disabilities. The physical work environment also needs to accommodate everyone's needs in order for employees to contribute optimally to the organization's goals and thereby ensure fair job evaluation. Through fair recruitment and selection procedures, organizations are beginning to attempt reducing discriminative assumptions in employment. This helps to lower stigmatization and stereotype amongst employers who believed that youth, persons with disability and women are low performers. The objective of adopting non-discriminative hiring procedures is to encourage women, youth and persons with disabilities to engage in economic activities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that persons

with disabilities can perform efficiently, effectively responsibly and are more innovative.

human resource divisions are also striving to come up with technology that is simple to use in the organization. The human resource information system has made it possible to easily enter and assess data from various departments. This has enhanced departmental transfers and reasonable compensational scale which is equitably distributed. The system also collects data on years of employees and groups it according to age brackets thus ensuring a balance between, low, medium and senior aged employees with a department. This leads to skills sharing among them hence cross-learning.

Inclusive human resource practices provide an avenue for creation of awareness on ecofriendly infrastructure and work relations. This affects both employers and employees as it develops policies that define the relationship of an employer-employee, employee-employer, and employer-work environment. Here, the human resource manager identifies the roles and responsibilities of both the employer and employee to each other.



Pie chart showing components of inclusive HRM

Criteria for handling disciplinary cases are also based on this foundation. How ecology of the workplace can be made favorable for persons with disabilities can be worked out within this inclusivity principle.

It can be argued therefore, that the achievement of better-functioning organizations requires the adoption of inclusive human resource management approaches. This will inculcate values, norms, principles and virtues of a unified, cooperative and highly motivated workforce. Ultimately, such a uniquely

distinctive environment will prompt focus and determination, hence, full actualization of the objectives of the organization. Further, through this will be realized the socially-desired principle of equitability.

Creating an Enabling Environment

By Safaricom PLC

At two years old, Richard Waiganjo was diagnosed with polio which affected part of his shoulders and legs leaving him with a physical disability.

Julius Ogayo was also born without disability. At eight months, he fell from the back of his brother and sustained a spinal injury which led to permanent disability.

Richard has worked at Safaricom since 2001 and was in fact the first Safaricom employee with disability. He is currently a Team Lead at the Eldoret Contact Centre while Julius, an Administrator at the CEO's office, is currently in the United Kingdom pursuing a Masters degree in Public Policy under the coveted UK government Chevening scholarship.

Both Richard and Julius represent the over 4.44 million Kenyans with disability. Globally, the World Health Organisation estimates that at least one billion people live with some form of disability.

Majority of these Persons with Disabilities face exclusion and are not able to go through formal education like other ordinary children. "The lack of educational opportunities for Persons with Disabilities means that as businesses, we are limited in terms of getting the right talent from this pool. This is one of the reasons why our journey of Diversity and Inclusion at Safaricom, though progressive has been slow," says Paul Kasimu, Chief Human Resources Officer, Safaricom.

According to Global Disability Rights Now, only 19 percent of Persons with Disability in Kenya are receiving Secondary Education.

And even those who undergo formal education still face a major challenge in securing job opportunities with Global Disability Rights Now reporting that only 33.3% are employed.

Take the case of Richard and Julius for instance, they both went through formal education. Richard is a holder of a higher Diploma in Information Systems while Julius holds two Bachelor degrees in Business Management and Project Planning Management.

Despite their various qualifications, both of them stayed for long periods without a job owing to their disabilities.

"I hustled for a long time before I landed a job at Safaricom. At one time, I was invited for a job interview with a potential employer. I had not indicated on the CV that I have a physical disability. On physically presenting myself, I was denied an opportunity based on that. I felt distraught. Rather than consider what I could offer, they focused on my disability and perceived limitations," Richard says.

"Securing a job was not as easy. I sent out hundreds of applications but I would be disqualified during the interview process because of my disability. And this was because of a misconception that I could not discharge my duties and responsibilities due to my physical disability," says Julius.



Happy members of staff in an inclusive work environment

Julius and Richard were victims of unconscious bias and stereotyping. Such discrimination is what has rendered majority of Persons with Disability lack opportunities to be self-reliant with an estimated 67 percent of Persons with Disabilities (2.97million people) in Kenya living in poverty. This is against the national statistic of 52 percent.

"As an organisation, we are keen to attract and retain talent based on physical ability. We are keen on giving equal opportunities to all persons regardless of their disabilities," says Paul Kasimu, Chief Human Resources Officer, Safaricom.

Currently, Safaricom has 2.3 % of its staff as Persons with Disabilities. The disability types range from visual, hearing impairments, paraplegic, Persons with albinism and little persons /persons of short stature. The goal is to reach the constitutional threshold of 5% by 2025.

Achieving this, Kasimu says, calls for more intentional effort towards ensuring inclusivity of people with disabilities, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals. Safaricom has integrated nine of the goals into its core business strategy.

"Our intention is to not only offer employment opportunities to persons with disabilities, but also ensure we provide a conducive working environment for them to realise their full potential," he says.

Since 1980 when the Kenya government declared the National Year for People with disabilities to promote awareness, there has been a steady growth in Diversity and Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities.

Kasimu however says it is important for all in the public and private sectors to purpose to remove the barriers that still exist to full social and economic inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

He says, they should be provided an equal opportunity to advance their education, work and earn a livelihood like any able-bodied persons.

This is echoed by Richard who says, "Colleges and universities should give an opportunity to Persons with Disabilities to advance their education to fit in the job market."

And throughout its journey to fully embrace Persons with Disabilities within the workforce, Safaricom has learnt that "we have so much talent among differently abled persons. What we focus on as a company is creating an enabling environment within which Persons with Disabilities can execute their duties with ease. We are keen to involve them in making decisions that affect them hence embracing the slogan "nothing for us without us" It is unfair to discriminate against a person based on a disability."

Towards an Inclusive Education

By Clifford O. Owino -Lecturer

Department of Early Childhood & Special Needs

Persons with Disabilities (PWD) face profound discrimination and exclusion as a result of the education system which affects them in various ways. Various efforts have been taken by the global community to recognize education as a fundamental human right for every person. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) and United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) recognize education as a basic human right for everyone, including PWD. Article 23 of UNCRC (1989); Article 54 of Constitution of Kenya (2010) and Basic Education Act of Kenya (2013) are specifically concerned with PWD, who are recognized as being one of the country's most vulnerable groups in terms of discrimination and stigma. Articles 28 and 29 of the UNCRC cover the right to education and entreat state parties, of which Kenya is one, to ensure that every child has access to free and quality primary education on equal basis. Article 24 of the UNCRPD

particularly emphasizes the right of PWD to education without discrimination and urges state parties to ensure inclusion of PWD in the mainstream education system.

Inclusive education is one of the strategies through which the Kenyan state has attempted to ensure disability inclusion in the education sector. This is the process of responding to the diversity of children through enhancing participation in classrooms and reducing exclusion from education (UNESCO 2007). An education system which addresses the needs of all children including those with disabilities studying in mainstream schools is known as an Inclusive Education System. This type of education is an acknowledgement of the state's obligation to provide every child with quality education in Kenyan schools, to the maximum extent possible, with teacher training in SNE, ensuring the existence of a policy to guide inclusive education in mainstream schools, enhance inclusion and develop a positive attitude for it in teachers through relevant sensitization.

An inclusive education system in institutions



Graphic image on the components of inclusive education

of higher learning enables educational services to be taken to learners, rather than the way around. This system of education focuses upon learners with disabilities who are admitted in colleges and universities, but are excluded from learning; who have no capability to walk to lecture halls, or even locate them and hear teaching because they have various types of disabilities. Such learners can be supported by making for instance the university environment and curriculum accessible to those with special needs. Learners with severe disabilities have specific learning needs and require a specialized environment.

In conclusion, inculcating a positive attitude amongst educators is critical to promoting learner participation in all learning contexts. Lack of awareness of relevant policies and stigma towards those with disabilities generally

contribute to persons with disabilities being denied their right to education. In the University context, both teaching and non-teaching staff have a role to play in order to achieve the goal of inclusivity in education.

Debunking Disability Myths

By Valary Oleisa

3rd Year Student, School of Humanities and Social Sciences



Students conversing using Sign Language

It was the beginning of the first semester of their first year at the university. The three friends had arrived at the People's University of Fountain (PUOF). The fountain from where they would sip, nay, gulp the succulent waters of knowledge to their fill. And grin with utter satisfaction. Their story was rich in style and content. The People's University would be their residence for at least their four years of study.

Benbelle, a tall and dark young woman with sparkling inquisitive eyes was one of them. If it were not for her national identification documents, her spotless chubby cheeks could pass for a young lass' hardly out of her early teens. Her red floral dress completed her girly mien which would have easily found a coveted place in the national beauty pageant. Another crucial though inconspicuous aspect of her appearance was a tiny gadget behind her ears which gave a cursory onlooker the impression that she was a cutie with an unconventional sense of beauty, fashion or both. Or perhaps that she had a proclivity towards listening to her choice music,

secretly, away from the rowdy crowd. But alas, they were all like the Six Blind Men of Hindustan.

Benbelle was a belle who had had a bout of meningitis in her infancy and the bacterial infection served her a full plate of what it had on the menu: hearing impairment. The 'hidden' gadget looped to her ear was to aid her auditory perceptions. Reveal to her whatever else had been concealed in the acoustic world. Unlike her peers, she considered herself lucky for having topped her Form Four class to gain admission into the harrowed lecture halls of this world class university, The People's University of Fountain.

The second friend was not any different but different, all the same. He had seen it all with his sightless vision. It was thought that right from the time he was brought on this terrestrial ball, he had never seen either a soul or a moving tree, as it happens in vehicular motion. He was the sixth born in a family of eight. All the other seven sisters were visually impaired. Blind. He was lucky

to have had some sight at birth but his vision of 1/6 on the Snellen Chart kept deteriorating with age. He knew. As had been predicted by the ophthalmologist, eventually his sight would ultimately disappear. He was prepared.

As he entered the gates of the prestigious university that Monday morning it every soul could clearly see that, yes, he had lost his sight but not his vision. It had been boldly spelt in his admission letter. He would join the School of Law and study his childhood passion. Fight for the rights of the downtrodden. Fight for the liberation of the so-considered 'weak'. Emancipate himself and people with disabilities. His intention really, his childhood dream was to join the university, any university to trim the myriad wayward social misconceptions and myths. The innuendos about persons with disabilities. Such was deeply etched in the mind of Dylon Mahaki.

Ferdinand Malutu was the last among the trio. Actually, not the least. His was not congenital. It was acquired. He was

born in the Eastern State of Paletu, a hundred miles away from The People's University of Fountain. After a series of misdiagnoses, the raging flames of polio had licked away his ability to use his lower limbs. And now? People saw him heave his own weight, crutches in his armpits, trudging courageously into his future. The future of the nation. An explicit message to the naysayers. He had got used to his way of mobility to the point that as bystanders lazily sympathized and commented in hush tones, he kept on moving. Unperturbed. Moving in the direction of his dream. His degree was to be earned in the School of Engineering. It would help him do some social engineering. Social prejudice against those with disabilities might be re-engineered

So, each of the three friends arrived through their own route, and in in their own fashion. With one goal in mind. With resolute steps. To debunk the age-old myths about persons with disabilities.



Changing the Way things are Done

**Millions of children in Africa don't get the surgery and rehabilitation they need.
BethanyKids wants to change that**

Nearly two decades ago, a missionary doctor in Kenya named Richard Bransford learned to care for children with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, teaching himself to insert shunts by doing surgery with a textbook open beside him in the operating room. He opened his hands and heart to accept God's call to serve children in need, and with that choice sparked the beginning of BethanyKids.

BethanyKids is a faith-based group that offers surgical and rehabilitative care to children and families who have "no other place to turn". Families bring their children to us because of our ability and willingness to provide excellent care to their children – at little or no cost to those

families who cannot afford it.

In addition to providing direct care for children in need, BethanyKids is dedicated to multiplying this care by training and equipping African doctors. Our surgeon training program has been in place for almost a decade now, and many of our graduates have returned home as some of the first pediatric surgeons in their countries.

Finally, we recognize that for every physical need, there are also emotional and spiritual needs. Our desire is that, in everything we do, we would point people back to a God who loves them and is calling them to himself.



BethanyKids, Childrens Ward at AIC Kijabe Hospital

Surgery

Children who might be dismissed as worthless can, through surgery, gain independence and a chance to succeed in life. BethanyKids has enabled operations for thousands of children since we began work at AIC-Kijabe Hospital in 2004. Many of these children can now attend school and ultimately have the opportunity to earn a living independently instead of relying on someone else to care for them. But medical care, especially surgery,

is expensive. One of BethanyKids' key values is that no child should be denied surgery because of lack of funds. BethanyKids offers highly subsidized care for children whose families would otherwise not afford the life-saving and life-transforming surgical care we provide.



BethanyKids, ongoing surgical procedure at AIC Kijabe Hospital

Mobile Clinics

Supporting the Surgery program is a Mobile Clinic team which visits about 17 sites across Kenya several times a year. These Clinics allow families to bring their children for follow-up post-surgery care. It means they can do this closer to home and without the cost of travelling once again to Kijabe. The Clinics also provide a means of identifying children who can benefit from surgery.

The team consists of three nurses, an

occupational therapist, a social worker, a parent mentor and a driver/logistician. Some of their clinic outings are one-day trips while visits to more distant sites require several days. Visitors to Kijabe frequently travel to a one-day clinic to observe the team in action.

Medical Training

In 2007 BethanyKids became the first institution in East Africa for training pediatric surgeons accredited by the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA). Ours is also the first specialty training program under the Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS), which ensures that professional training is coupled with spiritual discipleship.

The physicians who train at BethanyKids come from as far away as Madagascar and Sierra Leone, and many of them return to their homes as pioneer pediatric surgeons. BethanyKids' commitment to training local pediatric surgeons has a chance to impact tens of thousands of people that currently do not have access to this kind of care.



BethanyKids mobile clinic

Rehabilitation

While surgery may be the most drastic and immediate provision for a child in need, many children also require follow-up rehabilitation. It is the long, often painful process of therapy that moves a child from the recovery room to the playground. BethanyKids is dedicated to providing the rehabilitation that our clients need so that they can begin their

lives anew after surgery. We also partner with Joytown Primary School; a special needs school in Thika, to provide daily therapy for over 250 children with a wide range of disabilities.

Wheelchair Services

BethanyKids has a wheelchair provision service whose goal is to give wheelchair users the mobility dividends of independence and freedom. It also allows greater opportunities in the recipient's

future through health improvements and access to education and employment. This service is undertaken in line with the WHO guidelines for wheelchair provision in low resource settings.



BethanyKids, wheelchair provision service beneficiary

Spiritual Ministry

In everything we do, we strive to minister to the spiritual needs of the children and families who come to us for medical care. We have chaplains or Christian social workers in three of our five partner hospitals, and all of our staff recognize the important role they play in investing in the lives and hearts of their patients. Our surgical training program includes spiritual mentorship under the Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS), and because of this support they are better equipped to provide hope and holistic care from a heart of love. The heart of our spiritual ministry is clearly reflected in Mercy, our chaplain at the AIC-Kijabe Hospital in Kenya. She has pioneered what she calls the Disciplers Ministry, which is successfully integrating

the spiritual and practical sides of God's call to minister to those in need.

Finally...

Every child who comes to BethanyKids for treatment has a story. Some are newly born while others have lived with their disabilities for years. Some are fearful and ashamed and others are outgoing and winsome despite the challenges they have faced. Yet others come with a strong trust in God while some do not know Him. We are deeply grateful to take part in the stories of these children, hopefully leading them towards fuller freedom, greater confidence, and a deeper relationship with the God who loves them

To learn more about us visit our website www.bethanykids.org

Disability Awareness Day 2019

Pictorial



a) 2019 Disability Awareness Day procession b) Chief guest Sen Mwaure receiving a bouquet of flowers c) Chief guest at a wheelchair presentation at the Brace and Bracket exhibition stand d) Chief guest addressing the 2019 DAD audience e) Registrar Corporate Affairs receiving white canes from Safaricom HR Manager, Mr Peter Njoka f) Chief guest receiving a portrait of himself from fine artist John Kironji g) Chief guest, Director DODS Dr. Mbugua Wa Mungai and other members of the 2019 DAD organizing committee h) Chief guest with representatives from different learning institutions



Portrait image of Audrey Chibole

Dear Audrey: 'Tuko Sawa'

By Grace Ndegwa
4th Year Student, School of Education

It is painful to imagine that you went away and you will never come back. Since you left us on 27th August 2019 we have been wondering why such a young brilliant mind, multi-talented, left us so soon.

You impacted many at Kenyatta University, especially through your music that you so much loved composing and performing. You also worked so hard in your academics—that First Class (Hons) degree was surely yours to take at graduation. Clearly you were an all-rounder and through your art a cultural icon. The future was yours.

Your hit 'Niko sawa' still sings to those who don't believe that persons with disabilities can achieve anything. Indeed you were a good

example of the principle that we can all rise above our various limitations and achieve what most believe we can't.

You did not allow your situation to dim your lamp. Those of us who knew you still feel the loss, a big gap. However, as your beautiful voice stated in the song 'Mapenzi yako', God must have a reason for doing what He does. We believe that given your immense love for music, once you passed through the Pearly Gates, St. Peter must have dutifully ushered you, in a beeline, towards Heaven's Choir. And with that knowledge we are at peace.

We—your family, classmates, friends and KU community—still remember you. Sing on, Audriana, sing in peace.

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