

DISABILITY MATTERS

9 TH EDITION

Towards A Resilient University For All



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY FUNDAMENTAL STATEMENTS

VISION STATEMENT

To be a dynamic, an inclusive and a competitive centre of excellence in teaching, learning, research and service to humanity.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide quality education and training, promote scholarship, service, innovation and creativity and inculcate moral values for sustainable individual and societal development.

IDENTITY STATEMENT

A community of scholars committed to the generation and dissemination of knowledge and cultivation of wisdom for the welfare of society.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Sensitivity and responsiveness to societal needs and the right of every person to knowledge.

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From the Director's Desk

Kenyatta University plays a critical role in creating an environment that supports special needs learning as well as developing institutional structures that promote the development of resilience. It does this through the development of mechanisms for the protection of persons with special needs within the University experiences which might be overwhelming and stressful. In this regard, we are deeply appreciative of the support the University Management has continued to give the cause of disability mainstreaming. We note also the increasing awareness of disability issues amongst both the student body as well as staff; certainly such knowledge has grown from when the Directorate was set up a decade ago.

This year's Disability Matters focuses on the progress made so far in the implementation of the University's 2014 Disability Policy and Guidelines through the sharing of experiences by the different departments and directorates regarding their service provision to persons with special needs. We seek to show how both the institution, staff and students have developed structures and skills of resilience over time. Articles in this issue highlight the challenges experienced, as well as the steps taken to ensure that engaging with persons with special needs is empowering and inclusive thereby enabling them to foster positive relationships with their peers, educators as well as the university community at large. This is in line with this year's theme *"Towards a resilient University for all"*.



**Kenyatta University Nyayo Zone
railway cross footbridge ramp**

Directorate of Disability Services (DODS)

Vission

To mainstream disability inclusivity into all operations of the university

Mission

To ensure the full participation of students and staff with disabilities in all aspects of the Kenyatta University experience



From the Vice-Chancellor

Kenyatta University has over the years striven for inclusiveness as part of the software that enables us to achieve institutional resilience. Indeed, mainstreaming disability into all core activities of the University is part of the institution's 2016-2026 Strategic plan. This has enabled us to plan with the needs of students and staff with disabilities in mind. One of the more visible ways in which we have achieved this is in the area of transport. Students with severe mobility needs are ferried around the campus in three dedicated vans to ensure they attend classes and to their other commitments in time. We have also endeavored to continuously achieve universal access to learning especially for students with hearing impairment by having sign language interpreters as part of their instructional experience. As well, the Academic office offers different types of interventions to students with severe disabilities that require exceptional accommodations during the examination

process. To enhance learning, the Kenyatta University Library has a section that caters exclusively for students with disabilities where those with hearing and visual impairments are served by members of staff who have undergone training in specific areas of educational technology and sign language.

Another area in which we have built structures that enhance the on-campus experience of individuals with disabilities at the University and that is worth mentioning is that of environmental access. Recognizing that environmental barriers are a significant way of disabling individuals, the University has set out to create a barrier-free environment. The ramps and paved walkways constructed all over the campus and the adapted bathroom facilities in Lukenya and Longonot hostels where a majority of students with disabilities reside demonstrate our efforts towards the achievement of a disability-friendly

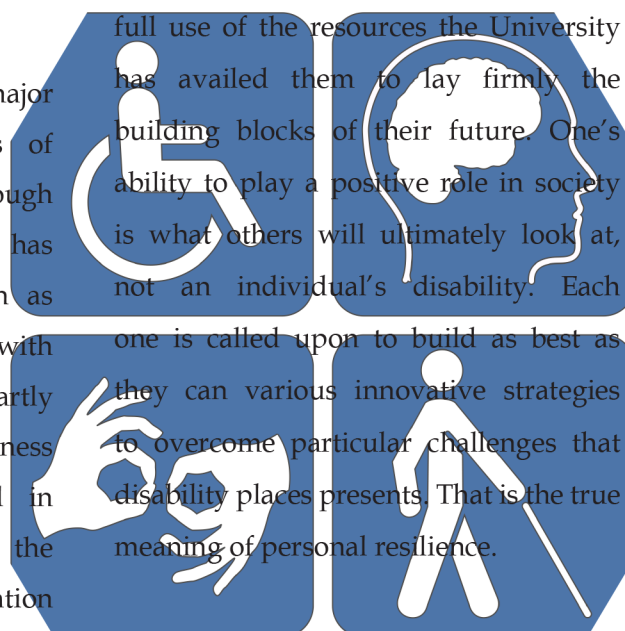
environment. Indeed, as a matter of continued commitment to the universal access principle, all new University buildings are barrier free. Aware that new challenges evolve as different types of disabilities emerge, the built environment is being continuously audited across our campuses with a view to making them fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

The University recognizes that disability mainstreaming requires systematic and sustainable implementation. As such, the University has established the Directorate of Disability Services to be the central coordinating unit in facilitating comprehensive services to individuals with disabilities as well as for sensitizing the University community on disability-related issues. This work is done as set out within the framework of the University's Disability Policy and Procedures inaugurated in 2014.

We do recognize that one of the major means through which structures of resilience can be created is through collaborations. Kenyatta University has partnered with organizations such as the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) which has partly funded this year's Disability Awareness Day and was also instrumental in sponsoring the setting up of both the Department of Special Needs Education

and the Directorate of Disability Services. The Council has also continuously offered fees support for students with disabilities enrolled at the University. This year's celebrations have also had significant financial support from Kenya Commercial Bank. The Bank has also engaged three students with disabilities as interns. This is a most apt demonstration of the sort of public-private partnerships that add value to the lives of these students by equipping them with skills geared towards employability and, hopefully, a better quality of life. The Association of the Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK), the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya (NFDK), the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) and the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) are other key partners in the disability work we do at the University.

I urge students with disabilities to make full use of the resources the University has availed them to lay firmly the building blocks of their future. One's ability to play a positive role in society is what others will ultimately look at, not an individual's disability. Each one is called upon to build as best as they can various innovative strategies to overcome particular challenges that disability places presents. That is the true meaning of personal resilience.



9th Disability Awareness Day Talking points

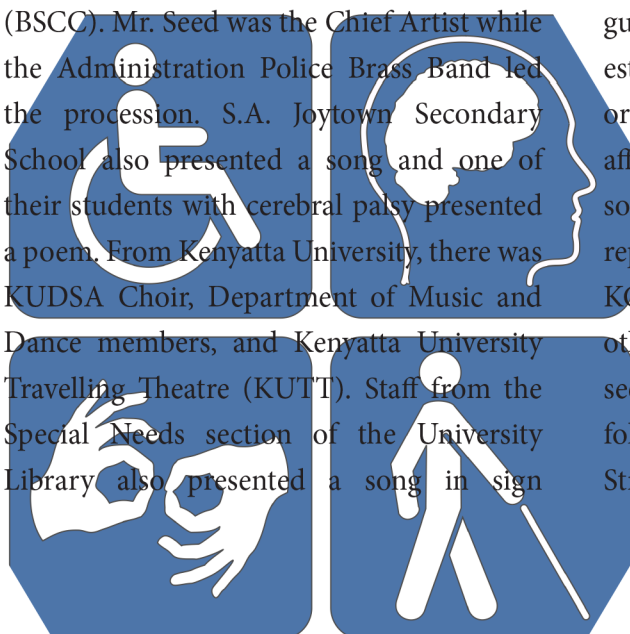
By Dr Mbugua Wa Mungai - Director DODS

Kenyatta University marked her 9th Disability Awareness Day on Friday 29th June, 2018 under the theme “Towards a Resilient University for All”. This is a critical event at the institution since it provides an opportunity to further raise awareness on disability mainstreaming as a cross-cutting educational issue and further scrutinize Kenyatta University’s efforts in promoting access both to its environment, services and learning for students and staff with disabilities. The day’s Chief Guest was Mr. Fredrick Haga, the Acting Deputy Director, Special Needs Education, Ministry of Education and an alumnus of Kenyatta University.

Various groups made their presentations during the event hosted at the Students’ Business and Communication Centre (BSCC). Mr. Seed was the Chief Artist while the Administration Police Brass Band led the procession. S.A. Joytown Secondary School also presented a song and one of their students with cerebral palsy presented a poem. From Kenyatta University, there was KUDSA Choir, Department of Music and Dance members, and Kenyatta University Travelling Theatre (KUTT). Staff from the Special Needs section of the University Library also presented a song in sign

language.

In his remarks, Dr. Mbugua wa Mungai, the Director of Disability Services (DODS) at the University extended a warm welcome to everyone who had turned up for the occasion. He also commended the Disability Awareness Day organizing committee for the tremendous effort they had put into planning for the day which is a major event for both KU and the Directorate of Disability Services. He then outlined DODS’ efforts to provide support services in line with the University’s disability mainstreaming objectives, viz.; Sensitize the university community about matters affecting Persons With Disabilities (PWD), facilitate comprehensive and quality services to students and staff with special needs, provide mentoring services, orientation, guidance and counseling to PWDs, and establish linkages within the University and organizations concerned with disability affairs. Some of the organizations that have so far partnered with the DODS and whose representatives were present during include KCB, NFDK, NCPWD and APDK among others. The Director stated that the office seeks to give effect to the Disability Act 2003 following the specifics indicated in the KU Strategic Plan for 2016-2025.



He highlighted some of the key achievements of the University in reference to Disability mainstreaming. These include: Construction and adaptation of existing footpaths for disability access to roads; adapted toilets with wide doors for easy access by wheelchair users; proper signage with large letters and numbers to cater for individuals with low vision, free shuttle transport to and from lectures and the library.

It was noted that the University has taken significant steps since inception to ensure students with disabilities acquire skills that will give them a bright future. Focused disability mainstreaming is one of the ways through which the University seeks to alter systemic and other barriers ranged against individuals with disabilities to enable it achieve fuller inclusivity. The Directorate of Disability Services applauds the Management of Kenyatta University for continuously striving to create a level playing ground for all persons with disabilities in the institution to excel.

The Vice Chancellor was represented by at the event by the Academic Registrar Dr. Andanje Mwisukha. He noted that Kenyatta University has committed to providing quality education to PWDs within the principle of inclusivity. In particular he stated that students with disabilities could now take courses in diverse disciplines of their choice. He noted that the University has continued to develop a barrier free environment for PWDs with all new buildings being made universally accessible and that the implementation of

the Disability Policy had enabled increased access to University education by students with disabilities. With the establishment of the Directorate of Disability Services and the support from the University management, together with the operationalization of the Disability Policy, the welfare of PWDs had become increasingly enhanced. He also hailed the collaborations that had been established between the University and other institutions and he specifically thanked Kenya Commercial Bank and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities for co-sponsoring the event.

While pledging his the Management's continued support to disability matters at the University, the Vice Chancellor also challenged students with disabilities to take full advantage of the facilities that the institution had put in place for them so that they could lay a firm foundation for their future.

Being an alumnus of the institution, Mr. Haga commended the University for the Many Strides the institution had made in improving the welfare of persons with disabilities since his student days. He noted that there had been significant improvement in service delivery to a point where a learner's disability did not preclude their taking a particular course as was the case in the past. The Chief Guest stated that at all times institutions have an obligation under the law to cater for persons with disabilities and because this involves huge resource demands, he challenged universities to



seek collaborations with actors outside government to enable them realize this particular goal. He observed that inclusivity was the key emphasis of the Ministry of Education's newly-launched policy framework for training of learners with special needs (2018). Mr. Haga commended Kenyatta University for having had the prescience to begin disability mainstreaming work ahead of other institutions.

The Chief Guest also challenged students with disabilities to work steadfastly to achieve their goals and to eschew the 'free pass' policy that some unfortunately seek to exploit in life. Noting that nearly everyone has a disability of sorts, he urged them to focus on their studies even more unwaveringly than others because educational training was the surest base they had for creating a better life for themselves.

Exhibitions and Visitors

The following external exhibitors attended the Ninth DAD. They included:

- National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya (NFDK)
- Kenya Speech Therapy Society Limited
- Kenya Institute of Special Education
- Kabianga University
- Salvation Army Joytown Secondary school
- Cerebral Palsy Society of Kenya
- Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf

Departments from KU that exhibited were:

- Directorate of Sports and Games
- Special Needs Department
- Post Modern Library (PML)
- Parents/Caregivers of Children with Disabilities

Guests

- Kenya Commercial Bank
- National Fund for the Disabled Kenya
- Kisii University
- University of Kabianga
- Egerton University
- United States International University Africa (USIU)
- Kenya Institute of Special Education
- Rev. Muhoro Secondary School
- Joytown Special Primary School
- Goshen Boys Nakuru
- Nandi County Government
- Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)

9th Disability Awareness Day Organizing Committee

Dr. Margaret Murugami
Prof. Paul Mbugua
Dr. Beatrice Kathungu
Dr. Priscillah Gitonga
Mr. Ndiritu Gikaria
Ms. Nancy Njambi
Mr. Vitalis Ojukwu
Ms. Phoebe Nalwa

Prof. Charles Onindo
Mrs. Lilian Boit
Dr. Nelly Otube
Dr. Francisah Wamocho
Mr. Wilfred Maina
Ms Martha Amanda
Mr. Geoffrey Kariuki
Mr. Billy N. Gacheru

Dr. Mbugua wa Mungai
Dr. Beatrice Bunyasi
Dr. Lucy Kathure
Dr. Anne Hinga
Ms. Jean Njagi
Mr. Abel Ojwang
Mr. Fadhili Kipkoech
Ms. Lennah Nyatichi



Development Of Resilience Among The Special Need Students

By Oleisa Valary Busaka - Second Year Student, Department of Gender and Development Studies

University education presents a unique opportunity for special needs students to develop skills and capabilities that aid them integrate in society. This is predicated upon the University creating an environment which is positive and supports learning for individuals with special needs. While the university experience presents positive opportunities for the student, risk and potential adverse and unknown consequences are part of the journey. Risk cannot be disassociated from any learning experience and over the course of their university education students will at some time experience feelings of self-doubt, stress and academic or social inadequacy. If it is assumed that stress and adversity are inextricably linked with opportunity, then the success experienced by special needs students at university is, in part, determined by their level of resilience. This positions the university in a critical role for the development of resilience amongst such students. Resilience at university is central to the creation and nurturing

of a successful participatory learning experience, and therefore, to the collective human and social capital of an individual.

Special needs students need a safe and caring learning environment fostered by positive relationships with both their peers and their educators. Learning requires positive language and attitudes. Failure is a central part of learning, but its associated connotations need to be re-conceptualized as a learning opportunity. Respect and empathy must be embodied by educators and students within a learning space if different perspectives are to be maintained and understood. Equally, academic expectations, standards and goal-setting, and behaviors such as listening and helping must be practiced if academic self-determination, competence, and resilience are to be achieved. This relates not simply to the individual, but also to the learning community so that collaborative learning is achieved. Additionally, students need to understand how they



Scientific Talking Calculators are provided by the University for Visually Impaired students taking mathematics-based subjects



can reduce stress through developing an understanding of stress control strategies, such as meditation, yoga, and exercise which can be built into extracurricular activities.

The university needs to enable a learning environment that is risk-free, positive and provides students opportunities to contribute and participate. Such environments are supportive and respectful, where critical but constructive feedback is provided, so that student confidence, identity and learning can all be nurtured. Resilience is developed when the educator-student relationship is positive and supportive. Learning must be situated in protective social environments as these allow students to take risks and be more open to negotiating their way through new and difficult ideas and perspectives. Support in high-risk situations is integral to the development of resilience. The development of resilience is contingent upon the ability of educators to nurture a learning environment that fosters the psychological well-being and healthy development of students.

The structure, type, and delivery of the curriculum is also important to

the students' learning experience and development of resilience. Central to this is a constructivist pedagogy that allows for the mutual development of knowledge and resilience. This is achieved through the development of capable individuals within their chosen disciplines and future professional practice. In order to achieve these objectives, students need to experience and achieve learning outcomes that develop their capability for managing unfamiliar situations and learning to make decisions with unknown impacts. Education should be founded on the development of learners' abilities to make sound choices in the face of uncertainty and complexities of the future. Education must facilitate capabilities that allow for individuals to successfully solve problems, develop relationships, make meaning, find purpose, and develop a healthy identity as well as become lifelong learners.

To achieve the foregoing objectives requires a curriculum and learning methods that facilitate students with positive connections and interaction with peers and educators, allow for creative, critical and systemic critical thinking structured around discipline-relevant problems that

require understanding from a range of perspectives, and through this promote the development of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Central to a positive learning experience is the fostering of effective interpersonal relationships that result in developing caring and responsible future professionals. Relationships of this nature must therefore be developed in the lecture hall from the very first contact between the educator and student. Results indicate that students respect and hope for educators that are caring and show concern for their educational and future professional attainment.

University special needs students desire educators who are able and willing to act as confidants, role models and mentors. Educators who enable students to become resilient have a critical, positive impact not only on students' academic achievement and behavior, but also on in their long-term success in life. Other opportunities for enhancing resilience include intervention programs aimed at different transition phases of a university degree such as student orientation and preparation for graduation. These intervention programs may be academic in their focus and assist students in the development of capabilities important to their studies. Alternatively,

programs may be designed to allow students to better understand the nature of the future work place and the demands that will be placed on them. Mentoring and leadership programs allow for such capabilities to be developed within the student body. Collaborative learning activities and academic intervention programs are important because they assist with the transition from adolescence to adulthood, and from student to worker. Resilience can also be developed through extracurricular activities and psychological well-being support programs which include assessment at counseling centers, wellness curriculum programs, sporting groups and social clubs. Such activities assist in the establishment of relationships with others, allow students with special needs to manage complex environments, and enable them to continue to grow and develop. It is vital that higher education co-evolves with its students, and this requires that their voice is central in relation to their identified needs. Supporting special need students to manage stress and adversity contributes to their overall current and future health and well-being. As such universities which seek to support special needs students develop resilience must look at the whole rather than the parts.

Special needs students who participate

in university life and extracurricular activities develop positive mental attitudes and well-being. These activities provide structure for such students living away from their families. Additionally, clubs and university societies provide a sense of belonging and reduce the loneliness experienced by some students. Friendships made within these activities and more

broadly across the university provide a social support network which can improve an individual's level of resilience. Additionally, students rely on friendship and family support networks to maintain well-being so the importance of maintaining these external relationships in the midst of studying needs to be made explicit.





Access to Training and Employment for Youths with Disabilities: Challenges and Opportunities

By Alfred Asande Ongoro - Project Officer at the Intellectual Disability Social Lab (Nairobi)

Development and the creation of jobs are a twinned phenomenon. Jobs allow families to escape poverty, individuals to develop skills, and excluded groups such as women and youth to gain economic independence. For persons with disabilities, education, training and access to employment are a deeply personal and sensitive priority. For youths with disability, employment reaffirms their self-esteem and self-worthiness, reduces

dependency on their caregivers and makes them happier. Employed people are healthier, meet new people and develop innovative skills which in turn lead to greater productivity and higher job retention.

In Kenya, while both legal and policy instruments are clear on the issue of inclusive education and access to employment, implementation is slow and there is hardly any data on what has been achieved.

Nevertheless, Kenya has made a lot of progress on inclusion legislation for persons with disabilities in education, training and access to employment, particularly through available legal instruments such as the constitution of Kenya 2010 and the Kenya Persons with Disabilities Act (2003). Other documents such as Kenya Vision 2030, TVET ACT 2014, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and Employment ACT 2007 set minimum standards for including PWDs in education and employment by setting legal thresholds against discrimination.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 and PWD Act (2003) address various disability issues including access to employment through the 5% staff quota reserved for persons living with disabilities and education. However, in order to achieve the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 'inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all' and SDG 8 'employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value', more needs to be done to ensure that youth with disabilities have access to

market-driven skills to enable them compete effectively in the job market. To achieve this, it is necessary to:

- i. Ensure that youths with disabilities have universal and inclusive access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
- ii. Create linkages between employers and TVET providers so as to realign TVET training to market-driven skills and;
- iii. Promote disability awareness and disability-specific concepts such as universal design, reasonable accommodation and decent work so that persons with disability can achieve their life dreams.

Among the many efforts and innovations seeking to increase universal access to education, training and employment opportunities for youths with disabilities in Kenya is the EmployAble project. The EmployAble Project works with mainstream Technical Vocational Training Institutions, Employability/soft skills providers, employers, Disabled Persons Organizations and parents and care-givers to facilitate access to market-driven skills by youths with disabilities.

The EmployAble project is funded by Light for the World Netherlands

and Liliane Fonds and runs in Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia. In Kenya the project is facilitated by Agency for Disability and Development in Africa (ADDA) and Cheshire Disability services Kenya (CDSK) and targets to put 200 youths with disabilities in training and wage or self-employment by 2019. The focus of this article is mental and intellectual disability.

Youths with mental and intellectual disabilities face significant challenges when accessing skills and employment. Generally, people diagnosed with mental disability have low job-retention rates due to the general public's limited knowledge of mental disability, poor on job support systems and workspaces, labeling and slow implementation of government disability-inclusion policies. As noted by the Kenya CRPD shadow report (2016), persons with intellectual disability are the most marginalized. Indeed, the EmployAble project implemented between 2014 and 2016 did not include youth with mental and intellectual disability.

To generate knowledge and document experiences of placing youths with mental and intellectual disability in training and employment, both ADDA and CDSK use social design labs to test training and employment

models. Some of the promising models include peer-to-peer support networks, supported-employment models, disclosure and dual training.

Youths with intellectual disability often forget the route home from school or work. As a result many parents are reluctant to let their youths go to school. Peer-to-peer networks bring parents and care givers together for group support, saving and learning. Through the network, parents can organize a roster where one parent offers support to youths enrolled in a TVET for an entire day thus allowing others parents/care-givers to continue with their daily economic activities.

The labs use simple tools and technologies. For example Google Maps and a simple Smartphone have been successfully used to track youths with intellectual disability between home and work. This works even when a matatu uses a different route from that known by the individual. Employers are co-actors here providing reasonable accommodations (adjustments), such as allowing the youths to leave early or calling parents to inform them that the youth has left work or to confirm that they arrived home. Employers are happy to provide this accommodation

because youths with intellectual disabilities are highly specialized as they perform repetitive tasks to perfection.

In dealing with mental health, a big challenge is that of relapse mostly when the youths are unable to take medication or face other external triggers such as stigma. The labs work with Kamili Organization, a Nairobi-based NGO that provides free medical and psychosocial support. The mental lab is testing the effectiveness of a feature phone to provide reminders on medication times both to the youth and the care giver.

Perhaps the most interesting model tested in the Mental Disability social lab and that presents mixed results is disclosure where an employer is made aware that a youth has mental disability. More often, the employers simply refuse to employ. In a few cases, employers have taken on board

youths with mental disability and provided accommodations; largely these are employers who have friends or family members with mental disability. In other instances however some employers have bought into the idea of employing such youth after being trained on mental health.

Youths with disabilities can, and do, work when given the opportunity and the right workplace with reasonable accommodations. Besides, employing youths with disabilities is not only ethical but also the Disability Act 2003 provides employers with incentives such as tax relief when they engage persons with disabilities in their workforce. To learn more about mental and intellectual social design labs, employAble project or how to comply with employment law ADDA can be contacted at office@addafrica.or.ke



Challenges and Experiences faced when serving Persons With Disabilities in the Administration Division

By the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)

The Human Resource thumb rule is that we should serve different people who come to our offices with respect and courtesy. This is the heart of excellent customer service. When communicating with people with disabilities, it is imperative to focus more on the person rather than their disability. Moreover, disability should only be empathized with and not sympathized with, nor looked at as an inability.

Serving Persons with Disability (PWDs) is a challenge since, more often than not, one is tempted to sympathetically offer help rather than empathize and listen keenly to their need. In our division we have learnt to be patient as things normally seem to take a little longer than usual. Below we set out common types of disabilities and challenges we face as a division in our day to day encounters with persons with disabilities.

Visual impairment reduces a person's ability to see clearly while blindness entirely removes the capacity for sight.

Some individuals have limited vision where a person has a low vision, side vision, or a lack of central vision, meaning they cannot see straight ahead. Visual impairment poses a challenge since it restricts one's ability to read, locate sign boards/landmarks or see hazards. Further, during meetings, presentations, and job-site demonstrations, persons with visual impairment and blindness tend to experience herculean challenges.

However, it has come to our realization that when we send out circulars and memos, we hardly take clients with visual impairment into consideration. There is dire need, therefore, to consider alternate ways of alleviating the above challenges. These include clear, concise narration (in visual aids) of the basic points being represented during meetings, and also use of clear signage and large prints which can be read by a people with low vision. Braille text has been used wherever possible, for instance in regard to service delivery charters. The division

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

**DIRECTORATE OF
DISABILITY SERVICES
DODS**



has also seen to it that staff who are totally blind are assisted through provision of assistants to aid them walk around campus and even when on international academic trips.

The Administrative division also deals with persons who have hearing impairments. Such individuals often have difficulty following instructions given to them orally and it is also be difficult for them to follow or participate in meetings or group discussions particularly when these are fast-paced and unmodulated. Plans are under way within the division to mitigate these challenges through encouraging departments to use Sign Language Interpreters, use of sound amplification systems, visual aids and electronic mail for meetings and discussions. Visual warning systems for emergencies have also been installed in the main and satellite campuses.

Some of our other clients have difficulties communicating on account of the speech impairment. Some have stuttering speech and they thus can't express themselves clearly while some are totally speech-impaired. Our staff have learnt to be patient and polite and give such individuals adequate time to get their point across. We have also seen the need to sensitize our staff to politely and calmly ask such clients to repeat what might not have

been clearly understood. Persons with total speech impairment are usually requested to put down their requests. Individuals with various types and degrees of physical disabilities also come to seek services at the Administrative Division. Such persons have been noted to take longer to get from one worksite to another, or to field worksites or off-site meetings. Some have experienced challenges writing, moving items, and using electronic devices such as computer keyboards, among other equipment. They are usually assisted through provision of office assistants, accessible office locations and disability-friendly washrooms, adjustable tables and special electronic devices. Notably, the University has ensured that the buildings, washrooms and other facilities are easily accessible to individuals with disabilities in line with the Disability Policy and Guidelines (2014).

Sometimes staff suffer from psychosocial disorders that may need unique accommodations to prevent inappropriate workplace behavior. In some cases, such persons may write incoherent letters, make alarming calls and are unable to take criticism well from their section heads, at times even taking offence. Some might write alarmist letters or claim to have been threatened or molested by colleagues.

At times such individuals might have difficulties controlling the symptom(s) of the condition and hence the need for interventions. Whenever such situations arise and they are escalated to our offices, we have advised section heads to do correction privately and in a friendly manner, guide the staff member to seek professional help, particularly at the University

Health facility, and ensure that work instructions are clearly written down and also explained verbally.

The division has also noted the importance of providing positive suggestions for improving performance, as well as rewarding and/or complimenting good performance of employees with psycho-social disorders.





Disability Matters

By the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences staff has had many pleasant encounters in dealing with Persons with Disabilities. In line with what the School of Humanities specializes in, students with special needs are always encouraged to cultivate positive relations with others as building bridges across diverse experiences enriches humanity. As such, blind and deaf students almost always have someone accompanying them for ease of movement within the offices and communication with the School staff and to assist them as they seek different services from the school.

Additionally, wheelchair users at times have assistants but in some instances they might choose to come to our offices alone. The only challenge here would arise if lifts the 4th floor of the Graduate School Building are not working but this is rarely the case.

On a few occasions when we have requested the Directorate of Disability Services to provide transport for a client with a disability it has been easily availed. We appreciate the effort the University has made in ensuring disability access at the Main Campus.





Design by Touch...

By the Department of Fashion and Design

During the second semester of 2016/2017, the Department of Fashion Design and Marketing mounted the Unit (HTS 301 Pattern Drafting) to a student with visual impairment. This was a challenging experience due to the practical nature of the unit. It required the student to draw garment patterns, cut out the garment and stitch it using a sewing machine. The unit also relied on illustration diagrams of parts of garments, calculations and written instructions. Creating the diagrams was a challenge because the student could not see them. The resource centre at the Directorate of Students Welfare helped in making a three dimensional version of one of the diagrams that had been presented in class.

The second challenge was how the student would access lecture notes for the Unit. We were informed by the student that the resource centre allud-

ed to above could convert the notes to Braille. As well it was brought to our attention that there is as a section for users with special needs at the University library that is equipped with resources that enable full access to information for persons with special needs. The support staff there is well-trained and dedicated. The Unit lecturer emailed the notes to the student who then accessed them from the library.

During the examinations period there was a dedicated exam room for students with low vision in the International Programs building. This was convenient for students who were using Braille machines.

We had an excellent experience with the support team members who translate Continuous Assessment Tests into Braille and transcribe Braille answer sheets. They were helpful and time conscious in meeting deadlines.

Let's go Platinum

By the Directorate of Sports and Games

The Directorate of sports embarked on a milestone plan to bring more athletes with disabilities on board during the 10th Eastern Africa University Games (EAUG) where KU Goal Ball teams of Visually Impaired athletes won silver in both men's and women's categories. Silver is where we are at the moment but the future looks better than gold. If our future was a precious metal it would be platinum. With the huge athletic sports potential that exists within our students with disabilities and evidence of the same through their victory during the just concluded games, the Directorate of sports has plans under way to introduce more sports for students

living with disabilities. These include sitting volleyball, swimming, throws in athletics and wheel chair sports.

Such sports will help to empower persons with disabilities in line with the goal of achieving greater integration of persons with disabilities into the community. This will be achieved through sensitization about disability sports through PWD forums at the University and the active inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport activities in Kenyatta University. The Directorate of Sports and Games is eager and pleased to assist these students excel beyond gold and attain platinum!



The Tables at the Door...

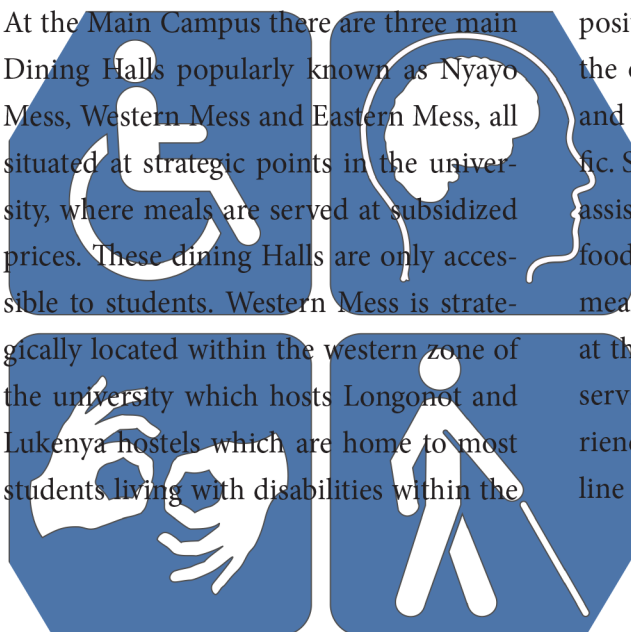
By Catering Services

The Directorate of catering services is an administrative unit within Kenyatta University that offers support services by way of ensuring quality in the procurement, production and distribution of tasty, affordable and nutritious meals that maintain a healthy and well-nourished University community. The Catering Services section is in charge of all the restaurants and student catering units at Main Campus, Ruiru, Parklands, Kitui and Kericho campuses which are tailored to suit the needs of our clients. In the various segments, our clients include students, members of staff and external customers who include persons with disabilities.

At the Main Campus there are three main Dining Halls popularly known as Nyayo Mess, Western Mess and Eastern Mess, all situated at strategic points in the university, where meals are served at subsidized prices. These dining Halls are only accessible to students. Western Mess is strategically located within the western zone of the university which hosts Longonot and Lukenya hostels which are home to most students living with disabilities within the

main campus. As such this Mess is the most accessible to persons living with disabilities.

Due to the very busy nature of the dining halls as well as the long queues experienced during meal times it was noted there was a delay in serving other customers during peak hours since persons with disabilities could not be rushed and the process of fetching food from the counters was in itself tiresome and stressful to them. This resulted in long queues. The Directorate of catering services therefore took steps to ensure that the experience of persons with disabilities was as comfortable, smooth and as fast as possible. Clearly-labeled dining tables strategically positioned were strategically reserved near the only entrance without a cash counter and as such with the least amount of traffic. Some staff were assigned to specifically assist students with disabilities obtain their food by reading out the menu, taking their meal orders as well as delivering the same at their. This is geared towards enhancing service quality as well as the overall experience of clients with disabilities. This is in line with the Directorate of Catering Ser-





vices' mission—to offer timely, affordable,
quality catering services in a hygienic,

conducive and relaxed environment.



Challenges and Experiences in serving People With Disabilities (PWDS)

By Transcripts, Graduation and Certificates Section

It is about 9.45am on a Tuesday morning. Anitah (not her real name) looks at her watch and begins to worry that she might be late for her lecture that starts in the next thirty minutes. The lecture hall is not very far from the Transcripts, Graduation and Certificates Section, where she is currently queuing to pick up her transcripts, but moving the few blocks to the lecture hall in a few minutes will take time in her wheelchair.

Like many other students with disabilities she often seeks services in diverse areas in the university ranging from admission, registration for courses, examinations, application for graduation, transcripts

and certificates. Typical services sought from the Transcripts, Graduation and Certificates section include: application for graduation, issuance of transcripts, issuance of certificates, credit transfers, printing of mark sheets, issuance of various letters, postage of academic transcripts, the certifying of certificates and transcripts among others. Addressing the needs of students like Anitah often presents varied challenges and experiences that also point to opportunities to make services more responsive to the individual and disability-specific.

There are many students in Anitah's situation. Other students have visual,

speech and hearing impairments. One of the major challenge often experienced in the Transcripts, Graduation and Certificates Section, is that of communication. Communicating with people with visual, speech and hearing impairments, for instance, calls for patience and willingness on the part of a member of staff to communicate helpfully. Students with these kinds of disabilities might take a little longer to understand and respond because the people serving them may not really know the best method of communicating. As such officers in charge need to listen carefully and give these students ample time to get their point across. Knowledge of and competence in Kenya Sign Language by staff is one of the basic skills for that would come in handy at such times.

Another challenge is provision of reasonable accommodation for students. For example in serving visually impaired persons or other cases where the need is obvious, officers assist them to fill out application forms/documents. While a proper sense of judgment is generally required when serving all clients, it becomes necessary to navigate with greater prudence while serving students with disabilities. While some appreciate concern and individualized service, some might be more sensitive and translate this to being patronized and singled out and thereby become offended. An officer usually has to exercise patience and keenly

observe nonverbal communication cues for productive engagement with such individuals who may otherwise feel frustrated.

Challenges are also experienced where services are linked to other sections such as the cash office, schools, departments, data verification and student finance. Given their functional limitations, it is difficult for people with disabilities to move from one office to another. For such cases, effort is made to ensure they get all the services at the same point and referrals are limited. Often, officers in charge go the extra mile to ensure that they can still give the services without the client being required to move around needlessly. Where referrals to other sections/departments are inevitable, a follow up is made on progress to fast track and reduce delays in service delivery. Some cases are, however, difficult and beyond the control of the section and it is therefore not always possible to ensure that all the services required are given from the same point.

Officers are usually on the lookout for people with disabilities whenever there are long queues to ensure they are given priority in service. For services which take a little longer a seat is provided for those who may have difficulties standing.

Facilitation is sometimes needed to call for the disability transport services where an individual needs to move to another department.



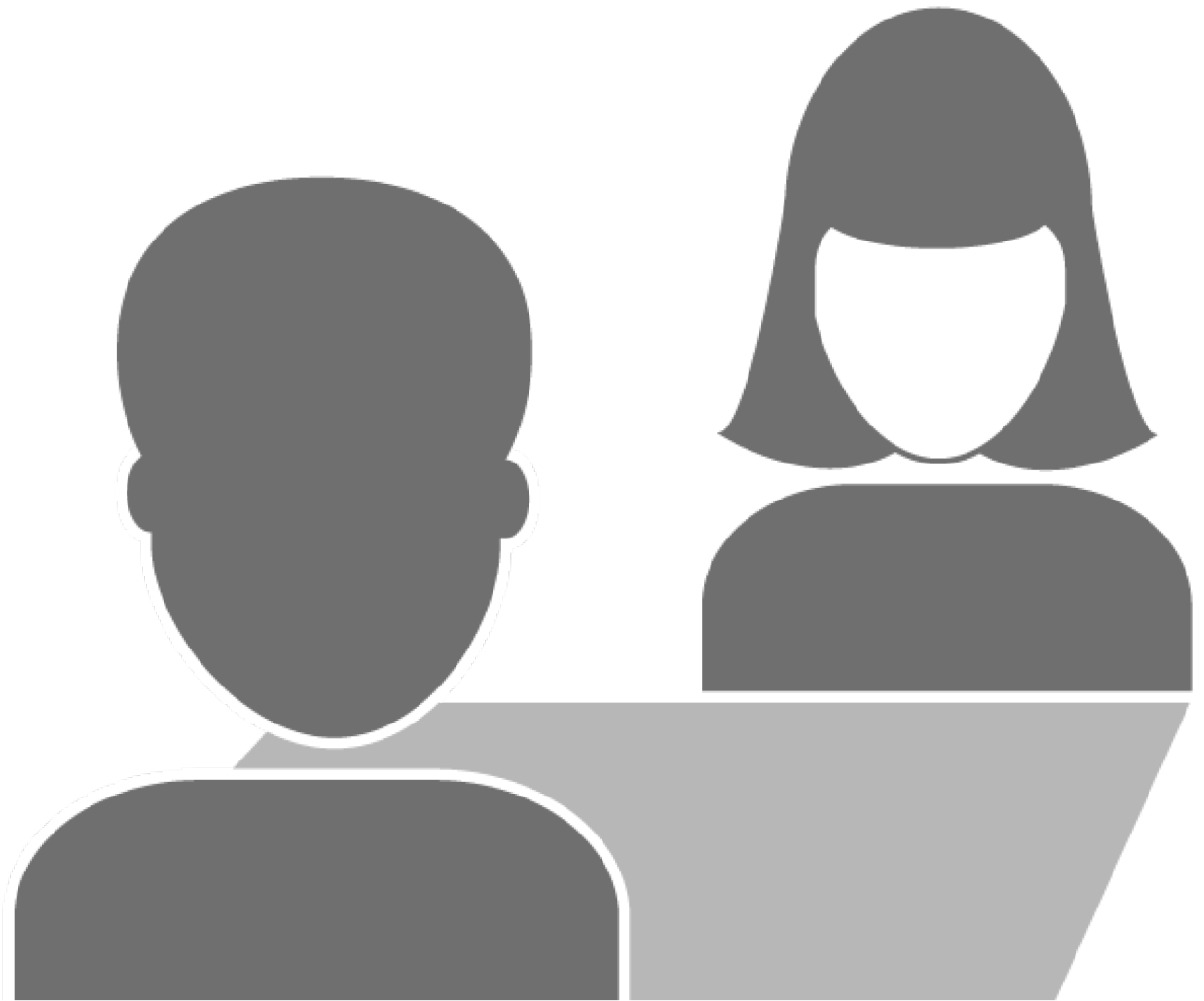
Just like other people, people with disabilities get frustrated when services are delayed or when they encounter issues that require them to visit other offices or come back at a later date for the same service. Some people with disabilities might be sensitive and could easily interpret delays in service delivery as discrimination or lack of empathy. Always, they are given priority in service and treated with respect and consideration to avoid incidents where they may feel as if they are being discriminated against. The ideal situation, however, would be to have a one-stop service Centre for persons with disabilities.





Invisible Counselors

By Centre for Career Development and Mentoring Programmes



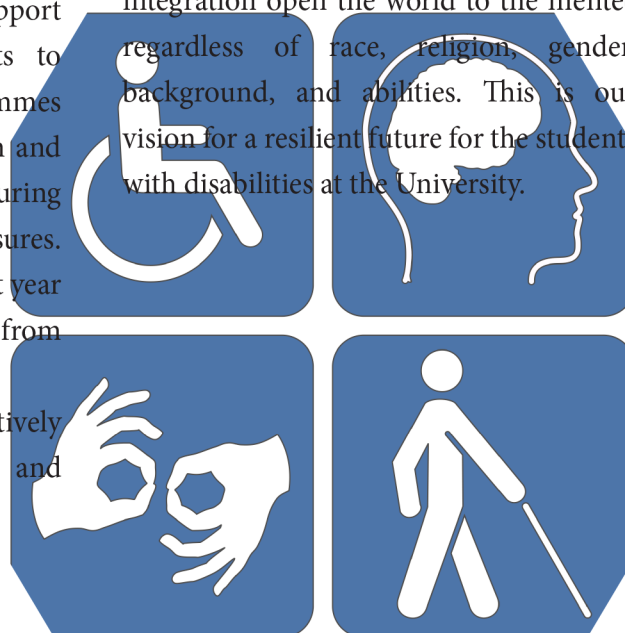
Career Counseling

Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish-American industrialist, led the enormous expansion of the American steel industry. He is often identified as one of the richest people, as well as a mentor to thousands of young entrepreneurs. Carnegie has often reminded business people the importance of finding a great mentor. Thomas Alexander Scott, an American businessman, railroad executive, and industrialist came to mentor Andrew Carnegie after hiring him, then a teenager, as his personal telegraph operator and later his assistant. Scott taught him much about railroads and business methods, and Carnegie went on to become one of America's leading businessmen of the late nineteenth century.

Welcome to the Centre for Career Development and Mentoring Programmes. The Directorate oversees the holistic mentoring and nurturing of all students in the University regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion and abilities. Among our objectives is to build strong support systems which can assist students to successfully finish their study programmes as expected, and to open unforeseen and hidden opportunities through nurturing talents and uncovering hidden treasures. Our other key objective is to help first year students to successfully transition from high school to university life.

To achieve our objectives, we proactively involve Departments, Schools and

Directorates in mentoring and nurturing the students. The Directorates of Disability Services, Accommodation, and Linkages are core in successful mentoring. We realize that the directorate of disability services serves students with special needs effectively by providing counseling and the much needed physical and moral support. But this is not enough. Students with disabilities should be integrated into the other University programmes, such as the University Mentoring programme, by breaking the barriers that isolate them. The Centre for Career Development and Mentoring Programmes links students with the rest of the world. They require mentors in their different professional and academic pursuits who will enlarge their world view. The Directorate is in the process of setting up an updated database of multi-sectoral and multi-faceted mentors from both the University community and industry. To us as a Directorate, seclusion and isolation close doors to opportunities while mainstreaming, inclusion and integration open the world to the mentee regardless of race, religion, gender, background, and abilities. This is our vision for a resilient future for the students with disabilities at the University.



Muscular

Compiled by Anne Kamau, John's ECD Teacher and a PhD candidate in the Department of Counseling Psychology at Kenyatta University



I am John Kiarie from Murang'a County, the third born in a family of five - two sisters and three brothers. My parents are small scale farmers and for sustenance we depend on selling the milk from our lone cow and the few farm products in case of surplus produce.

When I was born I was just like the next child and joined school with no physical disability. I enjoyed playing with my friends, especially football and hide and seek. One rainy morning, at the age of eight, I didn't feel like waking up to go to school. My whole body was weak; I just wanted to sleep but my mother would hear none of it. She was mad with me because she thought I was playing tricks on her in order to avoid going school. I took longer than usual to prepare and I could not explain to her what was happening to me because I could not understand either.

It was getting late so I tried to run but I

did not have the strength to do so. I got to school late and earned punishment from the teacher on duty. That day I was too weak to play with my friends and all I could do was watch them as they played on the field. Little did I know that it was the beginning of a new dawn; health-wise things began unravelling very fast for me. My mother took me to hospital but no serious disease was detected.

Progressively I started falling as I walked and later I had to have both hands in my pockets in order to support my legs as I tip-toed as I could no longer walk the way I used to since my legs were too weak. I realized that even my face was changing—I was becoming ugly! All this time I could not comprehend what was happening to my body and I had to contend with perpetual anxiety as I wondered what fate had in store for me. One day I was quite exhausted after the by-now usual tip-toe walk from school and I decided to rest at the back of our house before going

Dystrophy

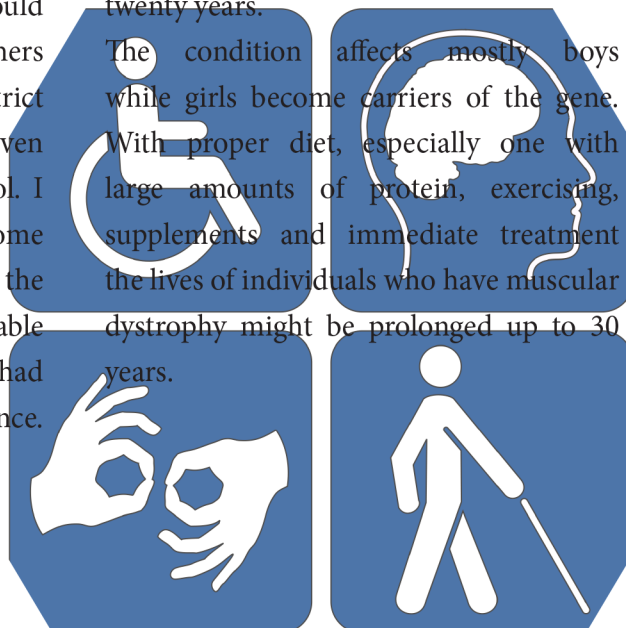
inside. I heard my parents quarreling. My mother was accusing my father's family of bewitching us. My younger brother had also started manifesting a problem like mine. Now I could understand what was happening to us; because we were boys we had been bewitched by our uncles so that we wouldn't inherit any family land. Incidentally, my older sisters did not have any health problems. I became very bitter with my uncles.

Later it became a routine for my mother to carry me to and from school since I could no longer walk there. One of the teachers advised my mother to take me to a District Assessment Center, where we were given a letter to take me to a special school. I was admitted immediately and after some time I was placed on a wheelchair. In the special school life was somewhat bearable because I found other children who had undergone through the same experience.

During a counseling session I learnt that I was suffering from a condition known as Muscular Dystrophy.

Muscular Dystrophy is a genetic progressive condition with a short life span. The body and heart muscles progressively become weak. As the condition progresses it affects mobility, limb functioning, chewing and swallowing. Later when all the muscles are weak and they can no longer function such individuals usually succumb to early death mostly at an age between eighteen and twenty years.

The condition affects mostly boys while girls become carriers of the gene. With proper diet, especially one with large amounts of protein, exercising, supplements and immediate treatment the lives of individuals who have muscular dystrophy might be prolonged up to 30 years.



Hugs for all friends. My name is Rachael. I am here to tell you my story. It all started when ruthless Al-Shabaab terrorists attacked our school – Garissa University, with their usual evil intention of killing innocent lives. I was not spared. I sustained several injuries; worst of all, a spinal cord injury that left me paralyzed from my waist down.

What a mess within such a short time! I could neither stand nor walk. I hated life and wished for death instead. Due to my Christian faith, I felt that I could not keep quiet while others were being rescued as that would have been an act of suicide. I therefore screamed for help and I was rescued by the Recce squad. I received first aid before being taken to hospital.

In hospital, life was unbearable and nothing made sense. I had lost hope and I didn't know how I would survive this new reality I was in. I spent a whole year in hospital but there was no change. I very much doubted the hope my family and friends gave me. In the midst of it all though, I knew I had to make a choice: I had to choose to live happy because of the blessings around me or to mourn and die young out of a condition that was beyond my control. I chose happiness.

On 9th May 2016, I decided to join school. It was not easy during my first semester at Kenyatta University. No one seemed to care whether I was on a wheelchair or not, in pain or not but I had to survive. I had to develop a strategy to push through the four years. And this was it: "I would never cry over anything no matter how bad; no

more straining, I would do things at my own pace; it does not matter how much I do, what does is how best I do it". This mantra worked for me.

People can be funny and nosy, and they will always challenge you even on things they know zero about. They coined a moniker for me: "The lazy girl". This never bothered me though. After all, I had already developed a positive attitude towards life and techniques to help me deal with life's challenges in the best way possible for me. With time, I gained enough strength to genuinely smile. Hope had been restored. I know I will always be happy with or without money, friends, walking, and riches. I'll always shine my way.

My piece of advice to all students with different disabilities and who feel discouraged is:

- Shine your own way as we are all different
- Dreams are predictions of reality so always dream
- Stay positive, speak positive and nothing will knock you down
- Keep good friends, they are better than many riches
- Be busy, the devil won't have a chance to deal with you
- Appreciate support, there are those who need it but can't get
- Be independent, never expect too much from anyone
- Your self-esteem is determined by you not counselors
- Success is not a gift, it is earned

A young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a grey hoodie over a white floral top and black leggings, sits in a wheelchair on a wet, paved street. It is raining, with visible raindrops in the air. In the background, a person with a white umbrella walks away. The scene is slightly out of focus, emphasizing the woman in the foreground.

DANCING IN THE DARK

By Rachael Muchiru Gikonyo Counseling Psychology 3rd
year student

- Moaning and lamenting all day will
add nothing but a severe headache.

Lots of Love



The Success of a ‘Naughty’ Lad

By David Ole Sankok, Nominated Senator

I was born on 11th December 1978 in Entontol, Mau Division of Narok County to a family of Masai peasant farmers. As a typical Maasai boy, my work was looking after my father's livestock in the Jungle. When I was 8 years there was a government directive that each family should send at least one child to school. When the area chief came to our home, my father told him: "take this naughty boy and tell the government or the white man, if he misbehaves, shoot him, you will have assisted this family eliminate a burden; I will know for sure it was not your mistake to shoot him, he must have provoked you." In 1989 I was taken ill with pneumonia and my family rushed me to a private

hospital in Maela, Naivasha. The doctor had gone home for the night and he had to be called five times for him to accept to treat me. Early the following morning, I tried to wake up but I realized I had no sensation in my right leg. My parents took me back to the same doctor who advised my mother to massage my leg using salty water. That didn't work and I was taken to Kijabe Mission Hospital where doctors sealed my fate by confirming that this was a permanent disability and I should start learning how to use crutches and calipers. This 'tragedy' turned out to be a disguised blessing. Now I began paying full attention to my studies, moving up from the bottom to the top of the class, a position

I maintained until I sat for my Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in 1991. My good pass then gained me admission to Kericho High school. The exciting journey that is my life had just begun in earnest. I was enthusiastic about being in this school where I played a myriad of leadership roles; school laboratory Captain, Chairman of five clubs and vice Chairman of three others. Since I could no longer run or play football, I actively participated in the science congress and debating clubs and I took part in music competitions.

I sat for my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examination in 1995 and scored straight A's and joined the University of Nairobi's College of Health Sciences. I also registered for a course in carpentry at Narok Youth Polytechnic. I am proud of my carpentry skills which enabled me to develop Osim Country Lodge. I had come realize that while white collar jobs are important, technical jobs are a key driver of the Kenyan economy.

My university education was laden with many challenges particularly due to the fact that my family could not raise the fees. Worried that I would lose my place at the University, they organized harambee to raise my fees which netted less than Ksh.80, 000.00, which wouldn't really have been enough to cater for my tuition and

other needs. At the same time, looking at my family's situation, I could not in good conscience take this money so I donated it all to my peasant family.

To survive at the University, I engaged in small businesses including selling second hand clothes, mitumba at Kiserian open air Market, buying groceries from Ndenderu, Kiambu and selling off the produce at Marikiti Market in Nairobi between 10:00 p.m. and 06:00 a.m. so that I could attend classes during the day. I would also take my knife-sharpening machine to shopping centers like Suswa, Ewaso Kedong and Ntulele during market days and earned a tidy sum from whetting the swords that Maa men carry around. However as my medical studies became more practical and time-intensive, it became difficult for me to do business outside the University so I had to creatively think of ways of making money within the institution to supplement the little I was getting from the Higher Education Loans Board. I ran one of the University canteens, showed videos in my room at a fee and I operated a photocopying machine.

In 1999 I ventured into campus politics by successfully being elected Chairman of the Nairobi University Student Association for the Disabled (NUSAD). The following year I was successfully elected Chairman



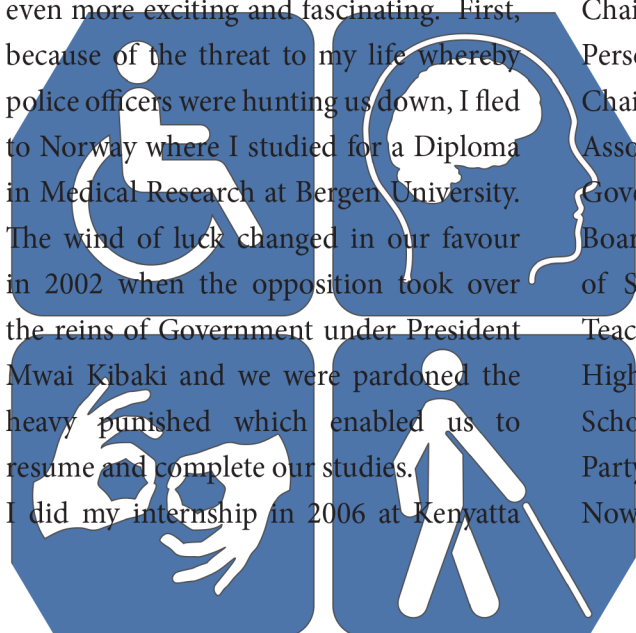
of the Students Organization of Nairobi University (SONU) where I immediately formed a shadow cabinet not only to discuss student issues but also issues of National interest. Christmas Eve of the year 2000 saw the beginning of turbulent times for the twelve members of the SONU cabinet—we were suspended from the University for stating that the parallel degree programme was a desecration of our public university system and that it would cause irrevocable damage to this great Nation. For most of us, it was for a duration of between two to five years but personally I was suspended for 3 years which was increased to fifteen years after appearing before the University disciplinary committee. I have always felt this stiff penalty was due to the fact that I stood my ground and refused to change my statement.

Life away from the University proved to be even more exciting and fascinating. First, because of the threat to my life whereby police officers were hunting us down, I fled to Norway where I studied for a Diploma in Medical Research at Bergen University. The wind of luck changed in our favour in 2002 when the opposition took over the reins of Government under President Mwai Kibaki and we were pardoned the heavy punishment which enabled us to resume and complete our studies.

I did my internship in 2006 at Kenyatta

National Hospital after which I decided to become self-employed by opening a 'clinic' under a tree; we used a portable call system, *simu ya jamii* from which we also allowed people to call at a fee. Through the clinic my people back home now had access to affordable healthcare. It was an amazing time for the business as with proceeds from the clinic and the phone business we were able to rent a room and expand the range of services on offer. We also began buying drought-stricken livestock that we later sold a profit when the rains finally came.

Now I wear many hats at once; a real estate developer, proprietor Osim Country Lodge Hotel and its subsidiary, Osim Jungle Master Travel Agency, owner of two medical centers, a farmer, father and husband. Being a defender of the rights of Persons with Disabilities, I was appointed Chairman of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. I am also Chairman of the Narok Central Business Association, a Director at the National Government Affirmative Action Fund, Board Member of the Kenya Institute of Special Education as well as Narok Teachers Training College, Kipsigis Girls High School and Ole Sankale Primary School. I was also a member of the Jubilee Party presidential election campaign team. Now I am a nominated senator in the



Kenyan legislature. It was a most humbling moment for me when on 20th October, 2016, President Kenyatta in his Mashujaa Day speech stated that 'Kenyans of courage and learning like David Ole Sankok who overcame his disability to study medicine, and who now leads the fight for the rights of Kenyans living with disabilities' deserved to be recognized as heroes.

My Journey has had its highs and lows; joyous but slightly shadowed by incidents of pain, heartbreak and fear. I have struggled against many odds and come out of these experiences to celebrate what life has brought my way. Thus with firm conviction I declare: *I am blessed*. Being human we all have different abilities. The same holds for us persons living with disability. Given the opportunity, we have no glass ceilings holding us at port.





Journey to Motivational Speaking

By Robert Mwangi - Kenyatta University Alumni

One morning on my way to school I noticed that something was amiss with my sight. Everything seemed misty and I could not see as far as I used to. I really didn't think much of it, assuming that the problem would go away within no time. On arrival, I attended the school assembly. As part of our daily routine, we were expected to read the bible, sing two choruses and listen to teachers' briefs. I could not read the text of my Revised Standard Version Bible that morning and in class I couldn't read the writings on the chalk board. I got worried

and my teachers allowed me to go home and seek medical attention.

After a number of referrals from one hospital to another, we eventually found our way to Kikuyu Eye Hospital which at the time offered specialized eye treatment. After a series of tests the ophthalmologist concluded I had an irreversible retina problem and that I was gradually losing my sight. This news shook my whole world to its core and put me in a very dark place. The thought of never seeing again did not even seem real. My family, friends and teachers were puzzled at the whole

situation and we all wondered how my life would turn out after losing my eye sight at the tender age of twelve years.

In the midst of darkness, I found new hope and strength in prayer. God really came through for me and I received unending support from my family. Eventually I came to terms with my condition. I was certain that life as I used to know it was over and it was time to begin adjusting to a different reality. All along my dream was to be a university professor, even though I did not have a very specific field in mind. However, when I lost my sight and went through special schools I developed a deep interest in special needs education, which I studied for my undergraduate degree and in which I hope to earn a PhD.

My experience at Kenyatta University was especially rewarding. I had all the resources I needed as well as access to the Directorate of Disability Services. Having completed my primary and secondary education in special institutions that catered exclusively for persons living with visual impairment, Kenyatta University provided me with an integrated environment that enabled me to think about inclusivity and to develop a positive mindset about it. Thus for instance every time I made a class presentation, my mind would flittingly toy with the notion of motivational speaking. My lecturers and classmates seemed to think that I had a latent in that area and they encouraged me to explore speaking.

Looking back at the challenges I had gone through as a boy I begun seeing light at the end a dark tunnel. I decided to take up

motivational speaking which was further strengthened by a course in Leadership which I took besides my first degree at the University. This course gave me strong, practical oral communication skills that I still apply in my work today as I interact with young people in churches, schools, seminars and on radio. Later I joined Radio Waumini 88.3 FM as the motivational speaker in the Barizi show every Thursday. This has been a great platform that has enabled me to reach millions of people advocating for various issues related to people living with disabilities. In my own case I have come to see that even though disability might define one's identity, it doesn't necessarily define one's life.





Lovely Encounter

By Joy Mbeva Kenyatta University alumnus and Tech Investor

Stanley and I met during a sports function that was organized by the Kenya Sports Association for the Visually Impaired (KESAVI). KESAVI is a sports organization registered and mandated to organize sports activities for the visually impaired in Kenya. I had escorted my roommate the late Sharon Kashemwa to attend the event as she was a member of the association. Stanley and I engaged in the usual small talk that two young nervous strangers of the opposite sex are likely to engage in—our life experiences, our backgrounds, growing up and the education journey. We exchanged our telephone numbers and promised to keep in touch. Subsequently, we went on dates and we had other opportunities to interact during other forums for the visually impaired that I attended as Sharon's guide.

Having spent most of my time with other visually impaired students at Kenyatta University such as Sharon, Silas Opanga, Kennedy Ndungi amongst many others, I easily got along with Stanley. I liked his character, especially his focus and grit. To him being visually challenged was not a big hurdle in life. He believed that he

could excel in his chosen career and other life activities through sheer hard work. His view of himself and the world inspired me. After dating for two years, we felt that we could take our relationship to the next level. During our dating phase we had the normal ups and downs that any relationship goes through. Some of my friends and relatives were curious about how we had met, how it was like to date a visually impaired person and whether he could live independently. Others wondered how he chose his clothes, how he managed his cooking when I wasn't around for example cooking or how he even moved around the house. Even though they were hard-punch questions, I calmly took them all in and answered them in the gentlest of manners: in the main, visually impaired people are just as independent as anyone else and they only need orientation to their environment. One only needs to live with them for a short time to understand this. They too have likes and dislikes, hobbies and fun activities. And just like any with every relationship, not everyone is happy about our union; some people have even tried to discourage me and make me think that I made the wrong choice but I've

always ignored them.

My parents, especially my mother, were at first were concerned about Stanley and I. During our first visit she was worried about how we were going to manage: 'who will cook in case you are sick or not around?' 'Will you be able to leave him alone?' 'How does he attend to work?' the machine-gun fire flow of questions came thick and fast. Well, I could see where she was coming from so I understood her. Indeed, after gently explaining to her how easy it is, and after we spent some time around our parents where they got to see Stanley going about his business they began taking our relationship positively and embraced it. Now they are among our most ardent supporters. Mrs. Mary Kimathi, Rupert Watson and his Wife Mary Anne, Nicky Brown, Manoj Pattni rank amongst have offered us the critical pillar of their deep supportive friendship.

I was anxious meeting Stanley's family for the first time. I had met his mother where he and I were merely casual friends. She had appeared to me to be a strict parent since she is a teacher. Stanley however convinced me that I would be welcomed and embraced by members of his family. After several visits to them, he formally introduced me as his girlfriend. They were happy to receive me and we have developed a great relationship over time. I feel like a part of their family now. I have come to learn that one should not judge a book by its cover and that each and every one of us

should be accorded an equal opportunity to live their lives to the fullest. I know this because every day I am with Stanley and I see him excel in his legal career. He works as a legal officer at the Judiciary, runs a law firm in partnership with his friend Benson Njuguna and he is very passionate about promoting Paralympics Sports. He also engages in sports and recreational activities like swimming, Tandem cycling and athletics.

I have also met his other friends some who are visually impaired and are in different careers like Education, Administration, and Public Service among others: Johnson Riungu is an adaptive technology teacher at Kenya society for the blind, Ferdinand Mwabara is a teacher, Wycliffe Juma works in the Public Service and Mathew Kimanzi is a Senior State Counsel. They all have their families and are doing well. I am happy and proud of Stanley and I know that he loves and cares for me. I am thankful to God for making our paths cross.

Editor's note: The author graduated from Kenyatta University in 2016 with a BA in Gender and Development Studies. She and Stanley have a three-month old baby girl.





Esther Becky

Nellie The Hype DJ

Becky Esther

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KCB Foundation: Towards Economic Empowerment for People Living with Disabilities



BANK

KCB Foundation is leading Kenya's private sector strategic partnership to promote economic empowerment for people living with disability (PLWD). The partnership was launched at the 2018 Global Disability Summit held in London on 23-24 July 2018 at a closed-door roundtable chaired by the British Government's Secretary of State for International Development Penny Mordaunt.

Pursuant to this KCB Foundation has initiated efforts to economically empower PLWDs in the formal and informal economy in Kenya with a partnership model that can be replicated to both enrich businesses and stimulate inclusive growth. The Foundation's strategic objective is to attain 10 per cent of the 10,000 annual target in enterprise development for PLWD. KCB Foundation will train 1,000 PLWD per year through its 2jiajiri programme that mostly targets out-of-school youth aged between 18 and 35 years for enterprise development. 2jiajiri is a wealth and job-creation programme launched in 2016, which seeks to formalise the informal sector and skill for self-employment and targets the youth and small businesses.

The programme was launched in March 2016 and thus far 23,059 youth have benefited from it, of whom 10,893 (47 %) are female and 12,166 (53 %) are male comprising 13,953 agricultural entrepreneurs, 2,119 beauticians, 4,459

construction artisans, 1,383 mechanics and 1,145 caterers/housekeepers. 2jiajiri is proud to have made a contribution to the Kenyan economy by skilling 23,059. To date, over 2,000 businesses have been established, over 6,000 individuals have accessed business incubation support while loans worth over Ksh 100 million have been disbursed to beneficiaries.

Currently the Foundation is undertaking a pilot programme for one hundred PLWD spread across vocational training schools in Nairobi through 2jiajiri's collaborative partnership model that pools both technical and financial resources. These PLWD will be sponsored for vocational training in food and beverage, organic farming, electronics, welding, farming, dressmaking, domestic services, building and construction, beauty and personal care, signwriting and leatherwork.

The programme will also impart skills on the youth to access, participate in and grow their enterprises through public procurement opportunities e.g. Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO).

KCB Foundation is working with a number of stakeholders to mobilise PLWD for support in technical, financial and entrepreneurial skills sets required for wealth creation and economic empowerment.

National Council for Persons with Disabilities



Background

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities is a state corporation established by an Act of Parliament; the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 14 of 2003 and set up in November 2004. The Council representation is drawn from key government Ministries and organizations of/for persons with disabilities.

Vision

A barrier free society for Persons with Disabilities.

Mission

To promote and protect equalization of opportunities and realization of human rights for PWDs to live decent livelihoods.

TOWARDS A RESILIENT
UNIVERSITY
FOR ALL

SPORTS

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY DISABILITY SPORTS DAY

By Oleisa Valary (Second Year), Department of Gender and Development Studies

Disability is a general term encompassing diverse disabilities. It accommodates various people who are abled differently. They include the visually impaired, physically handicapped, hearing impaired, persons with short stature and those with cerebral palsy among other. Sports is one of the activities people living with disability are involved in. Kenyatta University provides an inclusive environment for sports. The university ensures that persons with disabilities are involved in sports activities.

On 23rd June 2018, Kenyatta University held her 9th disability sports day. We had the pleasure of hosting different institutions that cater for persons with disabilities.

Those who made the day a success were Salvation Army Joytown Primary School, the Kenya Para-swimmers, Kenya Amputee team, Kenyatta University sports teams and their associates. The University's Directorate of Sports through the Directorate of Disability Services facilitated the day's activities and also availed referees. The disability sports coach, Mr. Vitalis Ojukwu, was the overall coordinator. Fadhili Kipkoech, then Kenyatta University Disabled Students Association disability chairperson, Duncan Wanyama, the sports captain and Olesia Valary, sports committee member were in tasked with student coordination and discipline.

Goal ball, played by the visually impaired,

was on offer that day. The ladies goal ball team was made up of Olesia Valary, Nyawira Sandra, Millicent Kiboi and Sharon Ndanu who secured a trophy. For both the men's and ladies teams, Kenyatta University students played against themselves since no opponents showed up. The men who participated included Emmanuel Wafula, Augustine Kilonzo, Brian Sang, Dennis Murage, Phestus Munyoki and Dell Deng. They made the game lively and that caught the eyes of every individual on the field.

Kenyatta University's physically handicapped students of Kenyatta University students who are physically handicapped played sitting volleyball against the Kenya Amputee team. The Kenya Amputee team won the in this particularly intense game.

Swimming competition events took place at the Kenyatta University swimming pool. It involved all members of the swimming teams with the Kenya Para-swimmers emerging the best. Discus, shot put and javelin were the final field events for the day. These were held as fun-events because the few participants available could not constitute teams.

Chess was quite an interesting competition which had a host of such highly-talented participants such as Peter Muraya, who also plays darts, Immaculate Wanjiru

and Priscilla Veke, all whom are students with physically disabilities at Kenyatta University. Peter Muraya emerged the winner here. Discus, shot put and javelin were randomly played in order to ensure incorporation of the students who are associates to students with disabilities. In so doing, the University has offered a practical model for the achievement of inclusivity. The day's concluding event was an award ceremony during which winners were presented with trophies and certificates.



Disability Sports Day Pictorial



Disability Awareness Day Pictorial



Making Disability Inclusion Work in East Africa:



About Us

Vision

We envision a society in which all persons have equal opportunities regardless of anyone's disability and special needs.

Mission

To enhance the potential of men and women with disabilities while advocating for their inclusion & active participation in mainstream development endeavours as well as celebrating their diversity, improved livelihoods and self-actualization

Core Objectives

1. Advocate for a skilled innovative & responsive workforce of PWDs through inclusive career/vocational training and increased retention in public and the private sector employment.
2. Advocate for quality of life, increased opportunities, & participation of PWDs in all sectors of development through Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) & Inclusive development.
3. Promote disability inclusiveness in disaster risk management.
4. Promote Research and Development.

Focus areas

Inclusive Education, Training and Employment: We advocate for Inclusive and equitable quality education, skilled innovative & responsive workforce of persons with disabilities through transition and inclusive market-driven career/vocational training and increased retention in the public, private and the informal sector productive work.

Community-Based Inclusive Development: Alliance building and partnership initiative with collective synergies between different stakeholders to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, increase opportunities and participation in all sectors of development to achieve inclusive and sustainable development at County Government Structures.

Inclusive Humanitarian Disaster Management: Facilitates disability inclusion in humanitarian and development actors sectors with the involvement of persons with disabilities taking a leading role in making practices, tools and resources inclusive.

Research and Development: Promotes inclusive learning and sharing for documentation of solutions that make disability inclusion work through Research, Training and Innovation (RTI HUB)

Projects

EmployAble: Creates opportunities for young people with disabilities by increasing access to technical and vocational education and employment.

Intellectual and Mental Disability Social Lab: Uses social design approach to develop innovative approaches for placing youths with mental and intellectual disability in training and employment.

Inclusive Education: A pilot project implemented in Machakos County to showcase best practices for implementing the Kenyan Sector Policy on Learners and Trainees with Disabilities (2018).

Public Participation Disability Inclusive Index: A project implemented in 5 Counties to develop and demonstrate models for including persons with disability in County Governance processes.

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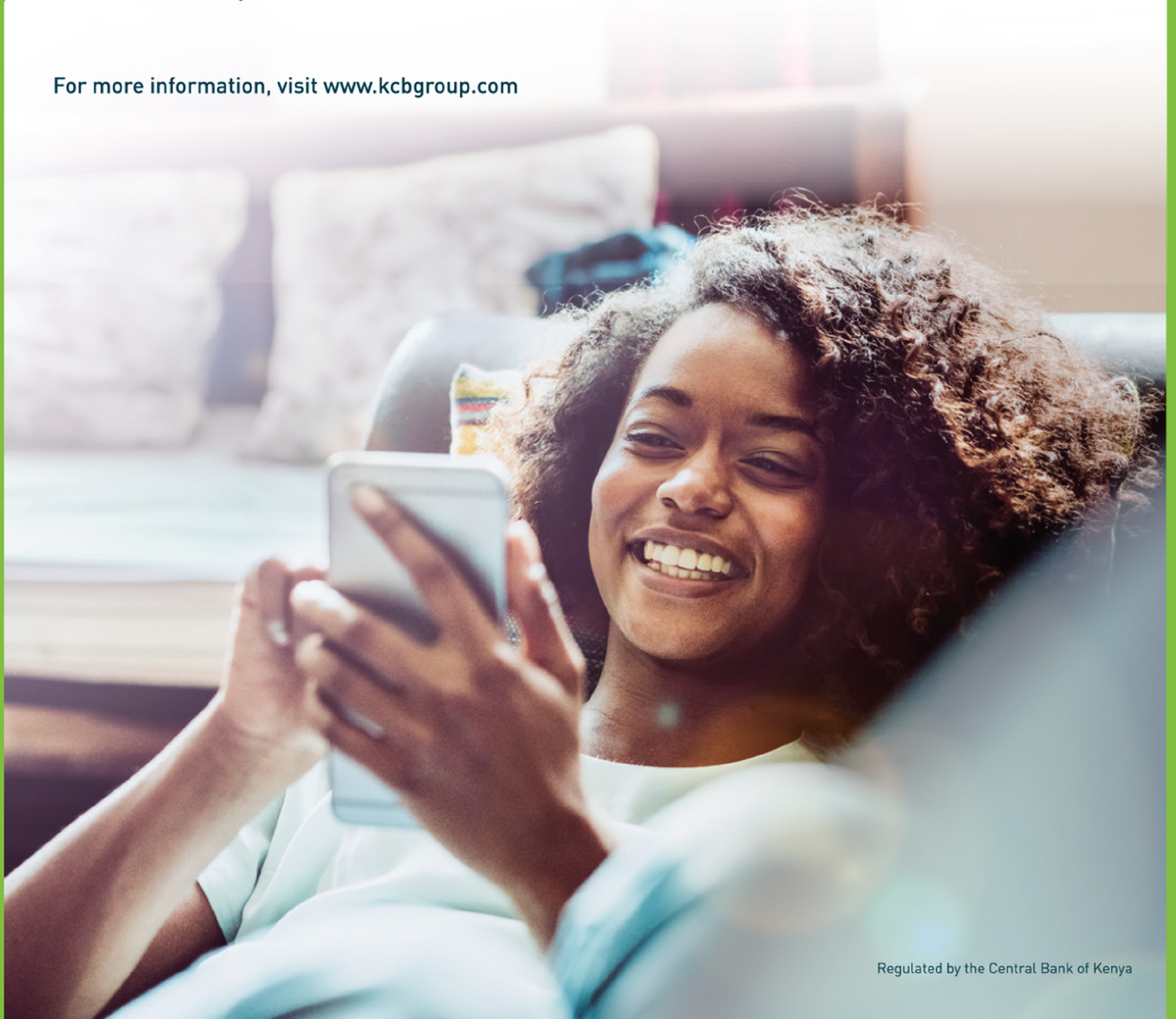
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