



Kenyatta University

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Kenyatta University

DISABILITY MATTERS

THE 5TH DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY & OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF
DISABILITY POLICY

Issue No. 3

Theme: Breaking Barriers: An
Inclusive University



Fundamental Statements

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

Our Identity

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

Our Philosophy

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

Our Core Values

- Truth
- Moral Integrity
- Excellence
- Democracy
- Creativity
- Corporate Governance
- Self-Reliance
- Institutional Culture of hard work
- Innovation
- Competitiveness
- Quality & Relevance
- Academic Freedom
- Equal Opportunity
- Respect for diversity
- Professionalism

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Dr. Charles Onido – Chairman,
Disability Day Steering Committee

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Directorate of Disability Services Mission

**Ensure the full and
effective participation
of students and staff
with disabilities through
implementation of
Disability Policy and
Procedure**

Kenyatta University Directorate of Disability Services DODS



Renowned fountain of knowledge
Well of learning experience
A bubbling spring of wisdom

A promise of a better tomorrow

A granary of Higher Education

Seat of literary flowering

Enhancing national culture

Illuminating our future

A beacon of national pride

Tower of learning might

A star shining bright and clear

Ensuring a richer posterity

Kenyatta, Kenyatta

Oh Kenyatta, our nation's star

Kenyatta our nation's pride

Kenyatta, University of our time

FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



It is with great pleasure that Kenyatta University hosted the Fifth Disability Awareness Day on 21st February 2014. Our Chief Guest was Ms Kristina Kenyatta Pratt, the Chairperson of the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya. She has great interest in the Special Needs Education since it is her specialist area of interest and training. During the celebration, she contributed to KU a number of wheelchairs, hand and shoulder crutches and white canes. The day being

part of the University Almanac brought forth strongly the commitment of the University Management in taking care of persons with disabilities including visitor's welfare while in the University. We do this believing that this increases the level of awareness on the needs, aspirations and capacities of persons with disabilities so as to enhance their acceptance, participation and integration in our community.

Kenyatta University is committed to the principles of equality in all aspects of operations of staff and students. Through the Directorate of Disability Services (DoDS), we have developed the Disability Policy and Procedures which was officially launched in this year's Disability Awareness Day. Kenyatta University has committed herself to providing access to higher education to persons with disabilities within the mainstreaming concept. It is also worth noting that Kenyatta University boasts of admitting the largest number of students with disabilities among universities within Eastern and Central Africa. Majority of students with disabilities at the University are those with visual impairments followed by students with physical handicaps and a few with hearing impairments. Majority of our students with disabilities are being housed in the Department of Special Needs Education. However, they take courses in diverse disciplines ranging from Chemistry, Mathematics, Pharmacy, Humanities, Languages and Fine Art.

We at Kenyatta University are proud to be the first public university within East Africa to have initiated the first Bachelor of Education degree programme targeting persons with special needs. The Department of Special Needs Education has expanded to become one of the largest in programmes and the actual student numbers – over 1000, while students with disabilities taking Special Needs Education number upwards of 60. This is one of the highest in East and Central Africa. The resources allocated to the running and also preparation of the Disability Policy and Procedures document shows the great commitment Kenyatta University has in the welfare of persons with disabilities. Kenyatta University is among the very first if not the first to launch and utilize its own Disability Policy and Procedures in a public university in Kenya. This document will help the University offer services to persons with disabilities without hesitation and in a predictable manner. The policy applies to all people and implemented by authorized university officers.

Prof. Olive Mugenda. PhD, EBS, CBS
Vice Chancellor

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



It is with great joy that we invite you to the Third Issue of the Disability Matters, a publication of the Directorate of Disability Services (DoDS) Board. In this issue, we have great contributions from students and members of staff, Kenyatta University Disabled Students Association (KUDSA) and their alumni and the principal of Joyland Special School, Kisumu. For the first time, we have an article from a hearing impaired engineer working in Garissa with **Save the Children** Organization. His article brings out the agony

of going through regular institutions yet not hearing what the teachers were teaching, but he soldiered on to become a great success without support. Quite an inspiring story!

Among the various services rendered at the DoDS is assisting students with disabilities acquire assistive devices through linkages with national and international organizations. During our Fifth Disability Awareness Day on 21st February 2014, we received a number of assistive devices from the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya. These were handed over to the Vice-Chancellor by the chairperson of the fund Ms. Kristina Kenyatta Pratt. The devices included, shoulder and hand crutches, wheelchairs and white canes. Collaboration in other projects is ongoing.

The main thrust advocated by the University is mainstreaming disability. This year, we captured it through our theme: **"Breaking Barriers: An Inclusive University"**. Why break barriers? Why mainstreaming disability?

The strengths of mainstreaming disability include enabling people with disability to participate in daily society. It helps decrease attitudinal, institutional and environmental barriers. In addition, it is cost-effective and capable of servicing many more people than charity approaches. It also allows for people with disability to be independent and make their own decisions for life.

Way forward after launching the Disability Policy and Procedures

After launching the Disability Policy and Procedures, we must develop a good strategy of implementation and continually review it. Advocacy is not a one-off process but ongoing, and we must continue once a policy is in place. Policy adoption is not the final goal. Effective Implementation is.

Why employ persons with disabilities?

People with disabilities make good, dependable employees. Many cases document comparable productivity, lower accident rates and higher job retention rates between employees with disabilities and a company's general workforce. People with disabilities represent an untapped source of skills and talent, including technical skills if they have access to training, and transferable problem-solving skills developed in daily life. People who develop disabilities while working often have valuable skills and experiences learned on the job. In addition to their formal qualifications, Persons with Disabilities, their families and friends are often an overlooked market segment. Many have significant disposable income. Hiring people with disabilities contributes to the overall diversity, creativity and workplace morale while enhancing a company's image among its staff, in the community and among customers.

Welcome aboard. Safe reading!

Prof. Paul Kamau Mbugua
Director, DoDS

We are in Charge of Our Destiny

All of us have stories to tell. Some good, others bad. The good make us jovial and full of will. The bad can either make or break us. One too many times life presents us with very tough and trying moments. More often than not, many of these circumstances are way beyond our reach or control. Some even lead us to doubt our **MAKER** and our minds are filled with many negative combinations.

We can say, 'life is unfair'. Maybe so; maybe not. I don't know. All I can tell is that how you react to the 'lemons' that we are offered is all that matters. We can choose to be beaten or we can choose to stand up when we are beaten. We can choose to use our situation as an excuse for failure or rather as a stepping stone for success. Yours, is a choice. Failure has no scapegoat, it never had. There are many people who have gone through worse situations but they have made it in life. We aren't the first ones of our kind. Against all odds we will weather the storm and in the end we will have much to reminisce and smile about.

Occasionally we can retreat to our nests and start whining about how weak we are. Yes, we are all weak, and who isn't? All we have to do is derive strength from our perpetual weaknesses.

To some of us things would be totally different if only we stopped wishing for 'normal'. We are normal. Look at the bigger picture, the one in which Our Creator is involved in. He has a purpose for each and every one of us. We might not know how many people we inspire by our actions-just the way we are. Maybe, we make some find purpose in life. Some even take it as a challenge and they even resolve to be better people. We are a gift to the world by the difference we make. Sometimes we undervalue the good things we have, chasing after the mirages of false treasures.

A cat is so lucky, it has seven lives. We have one life. Am not saying we are less privileged. We should make the most of our life especially in campus. Make friends, entertain them, change them positively, learn things, make mistakes and learn from them. Also engage in absorbing hobbies if we can. Be happy.

If you have a problem, big or small, talk to a brother or a sister.

Need I say, don't forget to decorate your scorecard. Work hard at something, win something, and achieve something.

"It matters not how straight the gates are because I am the master of my destiny, I am the captain of my soul."

Ann Mercy Wanjiku is the Special Needs Secretary, (KUSA) 2013/2014. Physically handicapped and confined to a wheelchair.

Message from Rwanda: to You

Jean Twagirimana is 28 years old, a Masters student enrolled in Kenyatta University since September 2013. This student is physically handicapped- his all arms are functionless. He uses his toes to write.

Jean is interested in the collaboration between Kenya and Rwanda. He loves Kenyans due to their sociable nature. He also likes how they coexist mostly when they speak their diversified languages and the famous mix of Swahili and English.

Jean is particularly interested following the good treatment of students with disabilities at KU by the Directorate of Disability Services. This makes it very different from other countries in the East African community. His target is to complete his studies as soon as possible.

Jean is a staunch football fan and an ardent supporter of Chelsea

Languages used;	-Kinyarwanda
	-French
	-English
	-Kiswahili

(The article is written in reported speech to express Jean's thoughts)

Hearing Problem That Never Put Me Down

(A personal Story of Antony Nderitu, how he travelled the journey of being normal to being in a special condition)

38 years ago, a child is born to peasant rice farmers in Mwea. The Child who would later attend Karira primary School in the same area is the writer of this piece.

Turning Point

My primary was coupled with blessings manifested in my splendid academic performance. However, while in class 3, my life took a turn. In second term, I developed swelling in my thyroid glands and my mum took me to the local dispensary where I was diagnosed with mumps and was recommended for injections. I took the first one on that day, and was to take one every other day. I would go to school in the morning and then run to the hospital during lunchtime for the injection. However, I noted that my hearing system was going down each day during the time I was going for the injection and when I was to go for the fourth and final one, I

realized I could not hear a thing. That was when my life changed completely. From the talkative boy who loved school debates to one who needed assistance to follow such class debate. My mother took me to the dispensary that morning, and I was referred to the Embu provincial general Hospital, where I was referred to Kenyatta National Hospital. After a series of test, I was declared completely deaf, and my mum was advised to take me to a special school. I spent the second term in the usual school, and during third term, I was taken to Kerugoya School for the Deaf where I met the late Mr. Joe Morrissey who admitted me to the school. That is how my journey in a special school began. I was 10 years old then.

Normal School to Special School

Having come from a hearing school that had been following on the normal curriculum, I was a bit ahead of the rest of the children. I regret this was not noticed early. Some normal pupils were attending the nearby 'normal' school and slept in the school for the deaf because of hearing problems (several

of them had undergone ear operations in Italy). I would regularly be called to show them how to read. Nevertheless, I studied with the deaf children up to class seven, when we got a new headmaster, Mr. Joseph Murigu, who I credit for the life I lead now. I owe him a lot for the directions he showed me.

While in class seven, Mr. Margie one day came to our class and told my teacher then, Mrs. Migwi, that I would not be doing the test the other deaf pupils usually do – Nyangoma and Mumias tests - that enable them to join these vocational schools. Instead, I would attempt the KCPE. To me it was a shocker, and I could not understand how I would be able to cope among hearing pupils. Nevertheless, egged on by my teachers and parents, I finally accepted to take it on. The following year, I joined KCPE class at a neighboring primary school. I was actually a guinea pig, to see how a deaf person would cope.

The curriculum for the deaf pupils at the time was just Maths and English, and it was common to see

Hearing Problem That Never Put Me Down...Cont

class 7 pupils covering class 5 textbooks. Therefore, when I joined KCPE class, I had so much to catch up. There was sciences, agriculture, music, arts, etc etc. and then there was Kiswahili, which I had last spoken in class 3 at the hearing school. I needed to be very disciplined to go through all these in one year. Fortunately, this is one of the things I am blessed with.

I managed to get through the KCPE in the first year, even though I had option to repeat if I had done poorly, and got an impressive 57 points out of 84. My performance opened the door for the other deaf children, as the school started a KCPE unit the following year where several deaf pupils who were deemed bright were enrolled. Though a person of my caliber has not been found yet, several bright pupils have come out of this class in the last few years.

Kerugoya Boys

I joined Kerugoya Boys High School where my real schooling began. Despite being so young, I knew I had to work harder than the next person. Integration was easier for me because I never lost my speech when I lost my hearing. Most of the teachers were good and understanding even though they were coming in to direct contact with a deaf person for the first time. But there were some who do not have a heart, and would make disparaging comments without a care for your feelings. There was this one teacher who wondered why I was in the school when there were special schools such as Rev Muhoro, perchance just to show them he knows of their existence. These are remarks that would kill in totality the motivation and morale of a weaker person but I am made of stunner stuff. I silenced such teachers by concentrating in their subjects and beating the next student by a wide margin. However all was not rosy for me when in form one as I needed to get someone to assist me with notes and following the classes. I was position 17 during the first term. By the end of the second term, I had already established friends and I had a good desk mate whose notes I used through-out my high school life. My discipline and hardwork also made me liked by the teachers and they would come to see if I was ok after a lesson. By the second term I was clinging to the top 5 position until I left the school in form 4 where I scooped a B. That year the school sent to the university a record number of students. We were the best in Kirinyaga District, and I am proud to have been part of that bright class.

Higher Education:

I was admitted to JKUAT to take a 5-year course in Soil, Water Resources and Environmental

Engineering. There I took time to settle, as even the person who ended up being my closest friend took long to understand me. There were times we would go to do a CAT that I had not been aware of, yet my friend was with me all the time. However if I did badly in such CAT I would request the lecturer for a repeat. Despite all these problems, I never had a re-sit during my 5 years in the university. I eventually trudged through it and graduated with a second class honours upper division.

Job Market

When it comes to jobs, I admit I have been lucky in life. Though I have done many interviews for bigger posts including with the United Nations in the past few years, which I believe I lost due to my hearing issue, I have never tarmacked or been jobless. While at JKUAT, for my industrial attachments, I had been working at with the National Irrigations Board at Mwea Irrigation Scheme. During my time there, a position had come about and the management trusted me enough to assign me to it, even though I was just a student. So when I returned to college, I kind of left a vacancy, which was left open because I had just six months to graduation. So immediately after graduation, I returned and took up the position on full time basis. And there began my working life.

After 4 years on the job, I returned to the JKUAT for my masters. I thank my employer for giving me 2 years fully paid up study leave. I completed my studies on schedule and in 2007 I received my masters in a colourful Ceremony. I dully dedicated the degree to Mr. Murigu.

Two years after returning to my job, I resigned and joined Care International in Kenya based in Garissa where I worked for 2 years before joining Save the Children as Programmes Coordinator. My discipline and hard work saw me go through the ranks and I am currently Programmes Manager.

Three things have contributed to my success – discipline, hardwork and the desire and willingness to adapt. For a deaf person, and I think for everyone else but more so for someone with a challenge, these three character traits are vital. The desire to adapt is one that has to be learned. I joined the hearing schools knowing fully well that there are other options, such as Rev Muhoro, Kuja among others. However I knew these could not give me the competition and pressure I needed to succeed. Therefore joining Kerugoya Boys then whining about lack of interpretation services would have ruined my chances. At the university level, Kenya has some miles to go before it can reach to the levels of USA where most deaf advocates went to school such as Galaudet, but we will get there.

Nevertheless those living now have to adapt to the system in place. The people in the school, such as teachers and fellow colleagues, may not know the sign language but they are all ready to help. A positive attitude is important. One does not always have to ask to be understood. One has to strive to understand others too. I have taught hearing students at JKUAT on part time basis and they have been very good to me.

There are people who question why I do not participate much in the life of deaf people. I would think it is because of where life has taken me. I work in North Eastern Province so I tend not to know much of what is happening in Nairobi, as that is where all activities of the deaf persons are concentrated. I also have some ideological differences with most deaf people, who draw most of their beliefs from the United States, where life for a deaf person is well choreographed, from nursery all way to university. One of my biggest differences with them is the use of Kenya Sign Language. I am deeply opposed to the use of this mother tongue of the deaf in school. For it is going to fully ruin our children. I have always advocated for Signed Exact English, but I am a lone voice. Schools for the deaf are doing so poorly these days due to use of mother tongue in school. To think that this language is even examined makes me sick. KSL is just a mix-up of gestures perfected overtime by the deaf persons who know no other language. A person who is not taught English will never find it easy to communicate with someone who cannot communicate in sign language, since even reading written English is not possible. That means such a person remains totally dependent on someone who can hear and can speak in sign language. By insisting on the use of KSL in schools, this is the future we are carving for our children. It is a big mistake and has to be corrected sooner than later. It is a sorry state to subject our children to.

My Ambition

My main regret is that I have not yet managed to do my Ph.d which I applied and was allowed to present my proposal 4 years ago before I can be admitted to the degree. I needed a sponsor for this before I could do so. Sadly I have not managed to find one, and I am still looking for sponsorship and have confidence that one day I will get one. My interest is the application of earth science and ASAL engineering to solving food security problems in ASAL areas.

“Three things have contributed to my success – discipline, hardwork and the desire and willingness to adapt.”

APOSTASY

ME,
There's no dragon I couldn't slay for you,
For you, I went to war, even with no armour,
Was number one on your speed dial,
Sure as the sky is blue,
I received your call at the first beep of my cell ,
Show me, any cliff I didn't jump for you, even the wrong ones,
I was by your side come scorching sun, come winter,
Some even confused me for your shadow,
I was your black swan,
You could even call me, the knight on a white charger,
I did soak you in love,
YOU,
Just a small water puddle, you couldn't jump for me,
All your excuses are at my finger tips,
For me, you were busier than busy,
Am done playing ROMEO reincarnate ,
I despise myself, for riding a 'donkey' yet, I had options of riding a 'horse',
No more waiting for a jumbo jet at a train station,
Don't bother realizing how important I was,
Thanks for making me realize,
Life ain't nothing near a romantic novel.

Dennis Okova, 3rd Year Pharmacy.

Disability and Education Inclusion

Disability can be summarized as a number of different functional limitations happening in any country of the world. The following are some of the conditions; Visually Handicapped, Mentally Handicapped, Physically Handicapped, Albinos and the Hearing Impaired.

Disability and Education Inclusion should be viewed as a National agenda where their needs and aspirations are considered in the National Education Curriculum, where the disabled are involved in the formulation of policies that relate to them. Some years back most disabled children could not go to school due to traditional beliefs, ignorance, discrimination and bias by the parents.

Later, Missionaries came up with the passion of helping children with special needs such as the start of Thika Schools for Visually and Physically handicapped by the Salvation Army Church and small homes by the Catholic Church. Other organizations supported education of handicapped children. The Government gave grants, teachers and support staffs to these Institutions.

In the recent past, the Ministry of Education introduced Inclusive Education through the Kenya Institute of Special Education. A number of teachers have been trained to handle children with special needs in regular schools. For those who are severely handicapped, they are referred to Special Institutions for further care and close medical attention by Education Assessment and resource Services which are in every District . Other places such as Kijabe Centre for Disabled Children provide surgeries.

The Associations for Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK) known for its service delivery to Institutions and communities provides Community based Rehabilitation which is a strategy aimed at improving the quality of life of

persons with disabilities in the communities. However the family is viewed as an important pillar in community based rehabilitation programmes.

Education Inclusion demands that learners with special needs should learn together with regular learners and not being segregated to their own world of disabled persons. The disabled children should be given an opportunity and not sympathy in order to compete with other regular learners. This also requires adjusting regular school environment so that learners with special needs maximize learning opportunities alongside regular students. It is also a process of adjusting home and the larger society to accommodate persons with special needs.

Inclusion therefore requires that learners/persons with special needs to participate in all aspects of life.

Reuben K. Dali

Educational Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Kenyatta University

Dr. Nzoka

INTRODUCTION

This article quite strongly agrees with the assertion that:

“Disabilities do not necessarily become handicaps when appropriate services are timely secured to reduce the severity of a disability”.

What is Inclusive Education?

Educational inclusion is both a product and a process. As a process, it refers to schools, centres of learning and educational systems that are open to all children. For this to happen, teachers, schools and the entire educational system may need to change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of needs that learners usually have and that they are included in all aspects of school life. Indeed, it is a process of identifying and removing any tangible barriers within and around the school environment that hinder learning, mobility and intellectual developments.

Inclusive education for any child, should essentially begin at home. In this sense, it is just a way of social life, varying from family to family and community to community. In any good family, all children should be included in all spheres of life. Analogously, any good school should be able to include all learners with their diverse needs. Educational inclusion, is broader than normal schooling. It includes the home, community and other social institutions. It acknowledges that all children can learn through all enabling educational infrastructure, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all learners. It acknowledges and respects differences in children, age, gender, ethnicity, language, religion and disability. It is a dynamic process which constantly evolves according to the culture and context. It is part of a wide strategy to promote an inclusive society (Stubbs, 2002)

The term, “disability is not a disease it is rather a condition which renders someone unable to use a part (s) of his or her body effectfully while the causes may vary from disability to disability although they might have a high co-

relation, for instance multiple disability it is also in this sense that the term is better used in its plural form rather than its singular form. Disabilities are either congenital or adventitious among them are: children with physical and health impairment; hearing impairment; Speech and language disorders; visual impairment; intellectual challenges; intellectual gifts and talents; and emotional and behavioral disorders (Ndurumo 1993).

Historical perspective: certainly, formal education for persons with disability has undergone through various transitional changes of which a few deserve a mention:

The first phase is institutional education in which learners resided within an institution away from home. This was the trend between 1940s and 1970s. These schools were mainly established and sponsored by various churches such as the Salvation Army and Roman Catholic Church. The cost of special education was greater than that of the ordinary system hence, families gave it second priority. Educational opportunities were therefore significantly limited to children with disabilities (Anderson, 2004.)

The second phase was educational integration. It opened more opportunities for persons with disabilities as integrated units were opened and attached to various secondary schools. The phase became most practical between 1970s and 2000s following some comparative studies carried out in the West by Hampshire, (1975), Kusajima, (1974); Nolan and Kederis (1969) among others. Consequently, children with disabilities could be educated in regular schools though using special equipment, facilities and assistive devices (Kamunge, 1988).

The third and current phase was inclusive education to which Kenya ascended in 2002 (Mwaura, 2009). It is to this end, the Sessional Paper No One (2005) acknowledges that Special Education in the country has, for a long time, been provided in Special Schools and Units attached to regular schools; that recently, the country has changed to inclusive education through regular schools. However, Special Schools and Units continue to cater for children with special needs in the categories of hearing, visual, intellectual and physical impairments. It is noted that this leaves out other areas of special needs such as gifted and talented, psychosocially different children, autism, multiply handicapped learners, children with specific learning difficulties and communication disorders.

It is noted here that while the above information is somewhat true, this change is still in primordial stages of growth. This is in line with the spirit of the Persons with Disabilities Act, (2003) and the Kenyan Constitution (2010.) Take Kenyatta University as an example, there is deliberate and determined effort to include various categories of students and staff through envelopment and employment; establishment of a Special Needs Department which has been graduating hundreds of student each year, including those with disabilities; academic and professional services in Post Modern Library; a Braille Center within the Office of the Dean of Students; the Directorate of Disability Services; Annual Disability Day ;and various allowances, including readers/interpreters allowance all provided by the University. We still have some way to go, but the University effort is commendable.

On the other hand, learning institutions can still effect more inclusion by:

1. Ensuring effective service delivery of materials, equipment and facilities by each section, centre, department, and school.

2. Coordinating all services for persons with disabilities from a central point so that they do not appear to be offered in isolation.
3. Making student enrolment more user-friendly as possible by building ramps to high buildings, putting all suggestion boxes at an appropriate level, removing all posts from pavements; covering various dangerous drainage systems.
4. Employing interpreters for students who are deaf to make them feel more included, and ensuring regular review of allowances for staff with disabilities.

Challenge the Challenge

By Chemutai Fancy,

Are you challenged at any angle of your life? Come on. Remember you can also challenge the challenge as the challenge can challenge you. Allow me shortly to tell you who I am and why I have always believed beyond the shadow of a doubt that it is possible to challenge the challenge.

Look, I am one of the few who have been described as «challenged» since I am visually impaired suffering from myopia and nystagmus since birth. I understand and know very well the suffering, pain and frustrations we go through as persons with disabilities. Friends at times run away from us, we may feel we can't fit into any group in the society, isolated and many other "mountains".

I had all these challenges for a period of time since I had no knowledge on self acceptance and many are times I did my work alone with a sense that no one loved me at all because I don't

look like them. Such thoughts can lower our self esteem.

Friends', attitude is the key to a healthy and successful life. I began doing well in Form Three and four when Mrs. Clara Mitei took her precious time to encourage me and change my attitude towards life. Learn to accept yourself and appreciate the much you can do despite the challenge. As Joel Osteen stated, «never talk to God on how big your mountain is, but talk to your mountain on how big your God is». Let us stand on our feet and thank God for creating us in his own image and for the purpose He has in our lives. We are created in the image of God. As we all know, disability is not inability, great are the things we can do. You may be visually impaired but are able to sing, physically challenged but can knit and draw or write books and novels to make a life.

Let us not feel that we are not like other human beings. We do. Why? It is because not everyone is anyone. You are yourself and not a copy and people you may wish to be like will never become you. What makes a person not to feel free in his/her the society is not accepting oneself and their situation. Once we know that we do not have to waste our time thinking of something we cannot change, then we are out of all these destructive bonds of feeling isolated.

Things change with time just like seasons. So, be patient and never underestimate yourself because you have a great future. Where you have been rejected before, you will be celebrated soon.

Chemutai Fancy is a First Year student, in Special Needs Education



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda receives assistive devices from Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda and Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta (L) during the official launch of Disability Policy and Procedures booklet



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda and the Chief Guest, Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta are taken through exhibition stands during the ceremony



Miss KU Disability 2014 and runners up parade during the Disability Awareness Day.



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda hands over the document to DODS director, Prof. Paul K. Mbugua



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda and the Chief Guest, Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta tour Physical Education exhibition stand during the ceremony

Joyland Special Secondary School...A Ray of Hope for the Disabled

By Mr. Raphael Aura, Principal Joyland Special Secondary School.

Joyland Special Secondary School offers learning opportunities, care, protection and hope to many physically disabled students from Kenya and beyond, some of which have faced the harsh realities of a society which is still struggling with discomfort with disability. In 2010, Kenya adopted a Constitution that outlines policies to protect the rights and interests of people living with disabilities. However, the law of the land has remained only true on paper. In reality, Kenyans with disabilities face harsh and sometimes cruel challenges. Even in the 21st century, the birth of a disabled child is rarely welcomed or celebrated in some Kenyan communities. A 2005 UN summary report "Violence Against Disabled Children" found that such children are either considered a curse or a bad omen, often their mere presence is considered evil. They are locked in the house to avoid embarrassing the "unlucky parents" in public. That is, if the child is fortunate enough to escape being killed in some communities.

The widespread discomfort with disability in Kenya prevents many such children from attending school. Support for disabled children comes largely from sponsors and sympathizers. Securing and maintaining this kind of sponsorship is no easy task for these handicapped students. Sponsors tend to seek out students with the greatest academic potential and drop their sponsorship if the student does not do well in school. Finding sponsors for students whose disabilities limit their performance is nearly impossible. The difficulties experienced by students living with disabilities do not however end with the coming in of sponsors. The principal of Joyland School Mr. Raphael Aura says that some parents of disabled students think that their obligations and responsibilities to provide love and support end once the child becomes sponsored. Some of these parents use Special Schools as dumping grounds to get rid of these "unwelcomed" children. It's common to find parents bringing their children at the beginning of the term and never coming to collect them during holidays.

Joyland Special Secondary School however, offers shelter, care, a ray of hope –and even a sense of

family to these valuable students. Joyland School is situated in Kisumu Central Constituency, within Kisumu City, the county's Headquarters of the Lake region in Kenya. It started operating in 1994, with an enrollment of 20 physically challenged learners. Currently the enrollment stands at 186 students. The Salvation Army, a Christian church engaged in Evangelical and charitable Missions in Kenya is the official sponsor and patron.

Disability and Education Inclusion

Joyland special secondary school was established to serve the needs of learners with physical disability. However, for the purposes of integration and preparing students for societal life, the school also admits regular students to encourage an environment in which all learners participate as far as possible to mainstream ordinary school culture and curricula. Through this, the school has continued to register improvements in KCSE with many of her students joining different public and private universities such as Kenyatta, Moi, Kabianga, Masinde Muliro, Egerton, Maasai Mara and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. In the first graduation ceremony of Kabianga, Collins Omondi, a former student of Joyland Special Secondary school emerged as the best overall student despite his physical disability. What is the secret of Joyland exemplary performance? The school derives its force from the School's Vision, Mission Statement and Guiding Philosophy namely:

Vision Statement

To be a model inclusive institution that enables learners grow into responsible, self reliant, confident and economically productive global citizens.

Mission Statement

To provide a safe, caring and friendly environment conducive to all our students irrespective of the nature or extent of their special needs.

School's Guiding Philosophy.

At Joyland Special Secondary School, we believe that every student should have equal rights;

- To be included in their educational setting as valued, responsible and equal member of the learning community, with other children and young people of the same age.
- To have access to an inspiring, broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum which reflect diversity, and is delivered through differentiated teaching and learning opportunities.
- To have access to all facilities, activities and information essentials as their peers.
- To have access to adult role models and opportunities to meet others who share their experiences.
- To have their views heard, gifts and talents recognized, their differences celebrated and contributions acknowledged.

In its endeavors of ensuring all that is achieved, the school has a teaching force of experienced teachers, trained to handle learners with special educational needs and regular students.

The school has spacious classrooms to accommodate learners who use assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, adapted shoes and walkers.

The learning environment is accessible to all learners since all the buildings including classrooms, laboratory and library can be accessed by all learners.

The school has a well equipped computer library to equip all the learners with computer knowledge and makes them fit in the fast advancing world of ICT.

The school also ensures a forum for her alumni who are an inspiration to the learners hence all learners strive for excellence.

Joyland hopes to run a vocational training program alongside its academic programs to provide practical skills to students who do not have high academic performance due to extreme physical disabilities.

Disability is not Inability

By Rev. Dr. Moses Mutwiri M'Ithinji

Philosophy and Religious Studies

Introduction

Encounter with the disabled started in my childhood. Having three cousins who were deaf-dumb, we had to develop our own sign language through which we communicated. Besides this, there was a visually impaired old man whose leg was broken during the emergency. As I grew up I learned that disabilities were culturally not appreciated. Some people said they were bewitched, cursed while others claimed it was a punishment from God for the sins committed.

In this paper I would like to bring to your attention some officially registered disabilities, namely: deaf-dumb, physically handicapped and visually impaired. From here, we note there are other types of the disabilities that are found in our society today, namely: Cerebral Palsy, Albinism - (low-vision), mentally-handicapped, and deaf-blind which is rare.

Cultural beliefs on disability

Schreiter's (1986) book: 'Tools for Listening to Culture' regarding beliefs that were held due to disability stated that disability was due to a curse and punishment of God. Besides this belief there was stigma and the fear to be laughed at by the African society.

Traditionally it was found out in a research done for Makerere University in Meru traditional society that children with disability were thrown to the hyenas. However, healthy children were allowed to live.

Biblically too followers of Christ wondered whether the visually impaired acquired it or was due to sin, but Jesus answered, "neither the parents nor the child sinned". Luke 4.... It was for the Glory of God. Therefore, let us examine the causes of disabilities with openness and understanding.

Causes of Disabilities

It was discovered that causes of disability are many, it could be congenital thus genetical, diseases such as German measles, usage of family planning drugs without consultation with doctors, STDS diseases such as Syphilis which blinds the children of those

who were not fully treated after contracting the disease.

Therefore, it is important that a pregnant mother be thoroughly checked quite often so that the growing foetus lives to see the light of day. There are many other causes of disability which we may not understand or even know. We leave it to God and accept them for His own glory. Anyhow, whatever the causes of disability, there is need for accepting and creating favourable environment for the disabled to live in harmony. This calls for understanding and living according to God's will in accepting the situation while we mitigate whatever is humanly possible.

Educationally this study shows there is need for informing people in the rural areas and other universities the challenges that people with disability face. Besides this, there is need to advise the parents and guardians that being disabled is not inability. Equipping the disabled will go a long way in them being productive in society. Therefore parents are reminded of being mindful of the welfare of the disabled noting that in the modern society the disabled persons could be utilized in many areas of life. Persons with disability could also enjoy utilising their expertise and talents serving humankind.

Encounter with disability

My experience in Germany where I worked in a home for the disabled persons was a real challenge. I found a young man who had stayed in bed for 30 years and could only know his name. In appreciating this person with disability I understood there was need for being committed in serving persons with disability and understanding their plight.

Further experience in Kenyatta University with visually impaired persons who have been participating in my classes for a long time has given me an opportunity to comprehend what disabled persons undergo while pursuing their studies.

Working in a parish gave me a chance to teach a deaf-dumb in a catechism class. He later was confirmed and he was very happy and contented.

My other experience is in Directorate of Accommodation, where the persons with disability came quite often to confirm with me whether they had a room. It is from here that I learnt that persons with disability could be very aggressive, dissatisfied and very impatient. But I always became firm and told them we were thinking about them and they would be considered for accommodation. When it was missing marks due to the Braille answers not being transcribed, they were usually perturbed by the situation.

Lessons to learn from disability

- First disability is not a curse or punishment from God. PWDS are God's creations and should be accepted as they are.
- Second, there is need for positive attitude for parents/guardians in accepting PWDS situation.
- Third, PWD have other talents that others do not have and they should be utilized for the good of all.
- Fourth, educating PWD challenges other people who did not go to school since God has endowed them with normal life with very few challenges.
- Fifth, let the PWDS be motivated and inspired to do greater things and not giving up.
- Sixth, let the PWD develop resilience so that they are able to cope with lecturers, parents and fellow students' demands.

Conclusion

Disability is not inability an example being the deaf students of the Karen Institute who perform the Scottish dance seamlessly and in style. On the other hand we have PWDS who are lecturers in the universities having graduated with PhDs in different areas of specialisations.

We also note that Kenyatta University can do more than it has done through the Directorate of Disability Services sensitizing the rural areas of the possibilities of studies that the persons with disability could pursue at Kenyatta University.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education there is need for better equipped teachers who are able to teach using appropriate in all subjects. This will lead to an inclusive education which creates a conducive environment where persons with disability learn with minimum problems.

There is need for a census by the Chiefs to know how many children live with disability and this will go a long way in planning education for persons with disability.

All in all, engaging in detailed discussions on disability matters will go a long way in providing the participants a forum for sharing their experiences and weights regarding their conditions, problems and promises.

Finally, the Kenyatta University Disability Policy and Procedures will go a long way in breaking the barriers leading to inclusive education in all our universities. Special reference is made to Kenyatta University as the pioneer and proposer of inclusive education in all levels of life.

Never give up

By Mugambi Paul

It was 27th October 1997. light became darkness I reaveal. life has never been the same again. Blindness became a committed friend for ever. I know **Sometimes our light goes out but is blown into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light. Thanks to those who have been with me and those who are yet to join me in this voyage. Know that dreams are the seeds you plant today, that you water with hard work and fertilize with determination. Then they blossom into a beautiful future.** I shall allow my inner joy to radiate out to everyone around me. To my pals, know that the potential of an average person is like a huge ocean unsailed, a new continent unexplored, a world of possibilities waiting to be released and channeled toward some great good. Cheers to everyone; lets celebrate life. Remember, though circumstances and people may disappoint you, God never will. His strength will hold your hand and your heart through those times when your world is shaken. Never never ever give up. During times of deep challenges, make a choice to trust God. Make a decision to allow God to equip you with spiritual understanding and wisdom for your next step. This has been my secret. Remember those who have been disabled or facing challenges of different kinds in life.

You should be positive about life and you shall make it and you can become what you want in life. Most people pay attention to what you cannot do. Especially professionals who think that the person with a disability cannot make the best choice thus concentrating on the inabilities instead of building up on the abilities. Few make the effort to see what you can do. And some of what you can do looks different as compared to others, so it's still "wrong" or doesn't count.

If invisibility,exclusion and powerlessness are common themes emerging from the experience of persons with disabilities and older people, then consultation,inclusion and empowerment through partnership have emerged as primary indicators for good practice' an extract from his coming book Never to give up.

He is also a reknown disability artist. Mugambi Paul is a masters student at Kenyatta university Dadaab Campus. he is also the first Blind humanitarian worker at the Dadaab refugee camp. He was awarded Champion on Disability in emergency and development by CBM International. He is a former student leader in Kenyatta university.

“ ”

“To enable the University fulfill its mission, we need to build an inclusive and supportive environment which meets the needs of all staff, students and visitors to the University. Our aim is to provide an environment where there is equality of opportunity and where Persons with Disabilities can enjoy a quality experience while studying, working or visiting the University.”

*Prof. Olive Mugenda
Third Disability Day 2012*

“ ”

I am happy to learn that K.U has a department for people with disabilities. When I go back to Italy, I will tell the people there is a very unique University in Kenya.” Simona Atzori , Visitor to KU in 2011.

*Simona Atzori ,
Visitor to KU in 2011.*

WILL YOU WALK WITH ME???

By Ouma Ajuong’.

The world could be a multiplicity of organisms and non-organisms, albeit not ornamental but for the very purpose of interdependence. The interdependence, a lesson well nurtured in the animal kingdom and maybe, the natural order of things, that one way or the other, we relate and rely on one another. As the moon and the sun dangle in the sky, so are the animals both on land and sea, and so are human beings meant to be, as they are arguably the greatest of all species. Why should lions in the jungle take care of each other yet human beings apply “men eat men principle?” We are no doubt independent, with a mind, a body and a soul, with the habits and character but our very life will depend on all that is around us, if not the people around us. A baby will depend on its mother from the time it comes to this world, as said, the dependency reduces as the time goes by but it is a mirage to think that we are our own people. The English language puts it, that no man is an island but perhaps the saying does not explain that it is predominantly due to the element of not being perfect, and therefore, the tendency of belonging to a chain, a people, a clan a community, a nation.

It could be the perfection of the universe that we live dependent on one another and therefore; as human beings ,we would do better if we embrace this very principle, that by nature we have weaknesses that should not necessarily be tolerated but understood. Religion and culture could be two things that fortify this idea be it that they have a normative function and even in the normatively, there is nothing more profound than the insistence on blood ties, community ties and in addition love, even the Christians will insist that where two or more are gathered, then the Lord is with them, in one word, fellowship and the very definition of love involves not really a public relations exercise, but really taking another person’s concerns into your hands and hearts, it is the realization that in the society we have the underprivileged in many ways and even those who live with special ability. We have poor and sick persons and no matter how tough we are, many of the times we need people to walk with us.

A person in a wheelchair may need to be wheeled or a blind man need to be guided, a deaf and dumb may need translation and help from time to time, indeed profound weaknesses but don’t we all need to be guided, wheeled or helped in one way or the other? Don’t we all need others to walk with us?

The need for a beautiful harmonious world is not a subjective feeling but one that mankind as well as the other creatures in the world yearn for. Therefore, perhaps the questions to ask ourselves would be, are we ready to hold one another and walk in the way of life, with love, selflessness and lots of laughter? And maybe... just maybe cultivate happiness in our hearts.

**All I am and hope to be, I owe it to my Angel mother- Abraham Lincoln
(The writer is a 4th year Law student in Kenyatta University)**

Inclusive Education

“I want to go to school because I want to learn, and I want to be educated and I want to define my life, to be independent, to be strong, and also to live my life and be happy.”

Inclusive education is the universalizing access to education for all children, youth and adults, and promoting equity. This means being proactive in identifying the barriers that many encounter in accessing educational opportunities and identifying the resources needed to overcome those barriers. Inclusive education therefore seeks to address the learning needs of all children, young people and adults, with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. Where education opportunities are made accessible, people with a disability have greater access to further learning and employment and in turn are more likely to engage in social and economic opportunities. Inclusive education acts as a broad strategy to address marginalization and promotes the rights of all children to participate in mainstream education. Inclusive schools create an improved learning environment for all because its approaches ensure participation from all members of society allowing for experiences of people with a disability to be included into the broader social context hence feeling included in the society. People with a disability have the right to access the most relevant education option. This could be inclusive education at their local school, mainstream education with specialist support, a specialist unit connected to a mainstream school, partial integration or learning in a specialized setting. Addressing barriers such as poor teacher training, inaccessible school buildings, discrimination and exclusionary policies enable improved access to education for all. In resource poor communities, especially remote areas, children with disabilities who are not included in their local school tend not to attend school at all.

How then should we practice inclusion of these people? There are numerous approaches to ensure people with a disability participate in education. No one single approach will be correct for every child because of individual differences

and other factors e.g. community capacity, attitudes, education policies and funding. Partial integration and specialist school settings can be considered as the most relevant places of learning for some students with a disability. Awareness should be raised to identify the number of people with a disability within the community. This information can be gathered, for example, through meeting local people with a disability, census data, household surveys and disability services and facilities for inclusive education. Use billboards, posters or other information that depicts people with a disability in their mainstream school environment as a part of the general population. Highlight capacity of people with a disability in education, showcasing diverse tertiary, vocational and employment pathways including access to scholarships as viable opportunities. Education should be understood as a basic human right. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the CRPD, the ‘education for all’ (EFA) platform and MDG 2 all identify education as a priority for all.

In addition, highlight talents and abilities of people with a disability and promote their participation in education programs. Work with early childhood educators and providers on identification and inclusion of young children with a disability as these maximize inclusion from an early age. Mainstreaming in such settings increases acceptance of children with a disability and improves their pathway into formal schooling. Share program information at all stages with people with a disability including parents of children with a disability, and children with a disability themselves. Consult with people with a disability and their parents to seek their active input at key stages of the program, especially during design and evaluation. Invite someone with a disability or a parent of a child with a disability to be on program reference committees. Work with classmates without a disability in developing their capacity for fostering participation through student-to-student inclusion strategies. Employ people with a disability or a parent of a child with a disability to work within the project.

Comprehensive accessibility is another important aspect of inclusion. It refers to physical, communication, policy and attitudinal access. Identify the preferred communication mode for individuals with a disability. Be prepared to source alternative communication options including large

print, Braille, pictorial, audio and sign language based on individual requirements. These may be arranged through local partners, inclusive education services and disability organizations. Identify and overcome barriers in travelling to school for people with a range of disabilities. Look at terrain, transportation, safe and accessible walking paths. Review policies and legislation through identifying existing country, local and Ministry of Education policies regarding inclusive education or anti-discrimination laws.

Teacher capacity should be built to ensure confidence in including children with a disability in education programs. Encourage Ministry of Education and school governance to train teachers in inclusive education using universal design principles. Ensure that the environment is disability friendly. Raise disability awareness for classmates and all school staff to build a culture of support and inclusion. Raise aspirations of students with a disability to ensure diverse education and employment pathways. Encourage creative teaching strategies that focus on diverse strengths and different learning styles to foster inclusion for all.

How then do we check disability inclusion in education? Ask yourself these questions:

- Are children with a disability attending school? If not, why not?
- What is being done already for children with a disability?
- Are there local success stories to learn from and community mentors to use?
- Are the voices of girls with a disability being heard when promoting access to education?
- Is data being collected for students from different disability groups?
- Have people with a disability been involved in the decision making process?
- Is disability included in all phases of the program cycle?
- Are disability measures included in design process?
- What opportunities will be provided to women and children with a disability to take an active role in decision-making processes?
- What strategies are there to ensure the needs and rights of women and children with a disability are adequately addressed?
- Have mainstream teachers received training in inclusive education?

.....Langat Cosmas.....



Ann Mercy KUSA Special needs Rep. makes her contribution during the 5th Disability Day



A guest artist performs during the 5th Disability Day



Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta, Chairperson, National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya, addresses participants during the 5th KU Disability Day



Vice Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda and Mrs. Kristina Pratt-Kenyatta pose with staff members during the 5th KU Disability Day

The Mirrors of Inclusion (Disability and Education Inclusion)

A sophisticated society is that which gives prominence to education inclusion for persons living with disability. It's a common saying that "education is strength", that is, [Elimu Ni Nguvu](#) as Kenyatta University elucidates.

Education inclusion does not only involve incorporation of PWD'S (Persons With Disability) into the learning environment, but it also means an efficient provision of the necessary facilities needed by the latter. Today let me focus on the mirrors of education inclusion - individuals or institutions that have made the lives of thousands of PWD'S comfortable. It's of no doubt KU remains a role model in this course. She has among other things, created an independent office, Kenyatta University Directorate of Disability Services (DoDS), a fundamental instrument for catering for individual interests of PWD's.

Education sectors should emulate KU by creating Special Departments if total inclusion is to be achieved. It is true that education inclusion comes along with great challenges to stakeholders, take a case where a lecturer wants to spell out 'technical words' by just pointing at the

projector, how will a totally blind student interpret this? Thanks to KU for her lecturers, who will tell you that you need to spell out the word verbally as you project it in order to serve the interests of everyone.

It would be unfair today if we never mentioned that the Kenyan Government has strived to embrace inclusion by creating special bodies like The National Council for Persons With Disability (NCPWD) in order to add value to lives of PWD's. However, we expect more to be done especially on the provision of necessary texts and assistive devices for the visually impaired at all education levels; formulating necessary policies pertaining to physically-handicapped on transport and personal aids; incorporating sign language and sign language interpreters in important national activities; and providing necessary protective devices for persons living with albinism. When we are there we will be proud that we are far above the best.

Thanks to all the allies of PWD's. You have not only been humanitarian but you have also shown the world that "disability requires not an application form to be a member". Again, let us not hang on the sympathy strings but instead offer opportunities to PWD's in a free, fair and conducive manner.

Now you're sensitized, and I honor you.

By Ogah Collins (ogah.colins@yahoo.com)

SPINA BIFIDA

Neural tube defects are birth defects of the brain and spinal cord that vary in severity. **Spina bifida** is an example of a birth defect in which one or more vertebrae (bones of the spine) fail to fuse completely hence creating an opening which allows the protrusion of the spinal cord, in a fluid-filled sac which is visible on the back of the baby. It occurs within the first 28 days after conception, due to the deficiency of folic acid. It is the most frequently occurring birth defect that results in disability. In Kenya, about 1.3/1000 children are born with [Spina bifida](#).

TYPES OF SPINA BIFIDA

SPINA BIFIDA OCCULTA

This type of [Spina bifida](#) is mild and a sac is not formed at the back. An opening occurs in one or more vertebrae without apparent damage. It is not easily detectable and may be discovered through an x-ray taken later for some other condition. Loss of sensation on the lower abdomen is mild, and may require the child to move using the assistance of walking aids such as crutches.

MENINGOCELE

In this type of [Spina bifida](#), spinal fluid leaks out of the spine and pushes against the skin forming a sac at the back. Apart from the spinal fluid, the sac also contains meninges thus the name meningocele. It can be treated through surgery in order to close the gap after birth, but it doesn't restore normal functioning of the affected part of the spinal cord. The nervous system remains undamaged.

MYELOMENINGOCELE

This is the most severe form of spina bifida in which portions of the unfused spinal column allows the spinal cord to protrude through an opening. The meningeal membranes that cover the spinal cord form a sac enclosing the spinal elements (tissues and nerves)

1. Spina bifida occulta
2. Meningocele
3. Myelomeningocele

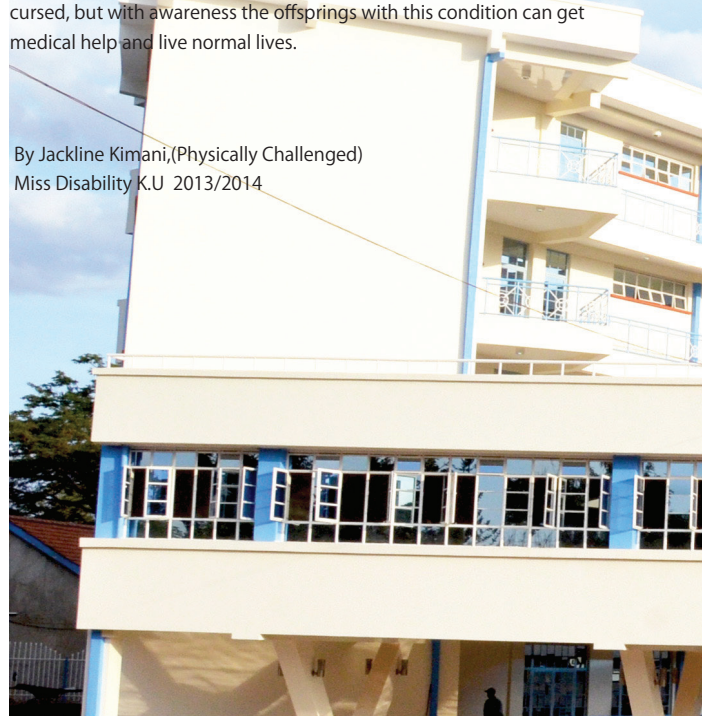
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

1. Leg weakness and paralysis
2. Orthopedic abnormalities (club feet, hip dislocation, scoliosis)
3. Bladder and urinary control (it depends with severity of the spina bifida)
4. Pressure sores and skin irritations.

Spina bifida cannot be cured but it can be managed and treated through surgery. Parts of the body that has lost sensation, should be looked after, in order to avoid complications since this child cannot be in a position to sense whether they are hurt. They should be provided with proper walking aids that enable them to live a normal life just like any other person in the society. Regular check up by the doctor is required in order to know how the child is fairing on.

All people need folic acid, but it is very important for women who are in their reproductive age to have enough in their body before and during pregnancy, in order to prevent major birth defects like spina bifida. Folic acid is found naturally in green vegetables like kales, broccoli, spinach and others but it is of low quantity, since a woman who is able to get pregnant requires 400-800mcg of folic acid. For this reason women planning to get pregnant or not should be taking folic supplements. By educating the public on the importance of folic acid, we can prevent many children from being born with spina bifida. Creating awareness in our communities, can shed light to families who think that children with this condition are cursed, but with awareness the offsprings with this condition can get medical help and live normal lives.

By Jackline Kimani, (Physically Challenged)
Miss Disability K.U 2013/2014



SIKU NJEMA

Lydia Chesa

“Siku njema naomba, kwa rabuka sikike,
Duala yangu naomba, kwa Mungu kubalike
Siku zote naomba, siku moja sikike.
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Duniani zunguka, siku njema nijie
Mwenzio tatazika, katu sipati mie
Mwenzio kazunguka, uchovu pata mie
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Shuleni chekwami, uchungu rohonini
Langu swali jibuni, utoweke rohoni
Mtu kweli simimi, ambieni jueni,
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Ulizipo chekwani, nambiwa macho yangu,
Uliza shida gani, kuwa nayo macho yangu
Uchungu mwingi rohoni, italapo chongo mwenzangu,
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Wenzanguni elewani, ulemavu hauna kinga
Kungekuwa ulenzanguni, ulemavu tunge kinga
Siku njema takuweni pendana bila kinga
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Kikomo nimefika, dawa yangu sikikani
Siku njema tafika, kiondolewa baguzini
Walemavu sitaka, ni watu wenzanguni
Siku njema ni lini, taonekana maishaini?

Dhamira kuu ya mshairi nikuwa, siku njema itakuwa walemavu
watakapoacha kubaguliwa.
Shairi hili limetungwa na malenga mashuhuri ajulikanaye kama Lydia
Chesa ukipenda niite msaani mcheshi.”

WALEVU TUWAPENDE WALA TUSIWABAGUE

Lydia Chesa,
Special Education, 2nd yr.

DID YOU KNOW...

The stairs I get as I walk down the road,
or struggle my way as the tuk-tuk I board,
Makes me wonder and sometimes fill with anger,
Retaliating with my eyes hateful daggers.

The raised eyebrows, wide mouths and quiet whispers,
In my heart feels like a million blisters.
I may say I don't really mind,
but even in your world, that's deemed unkind.

How long must we live here for y'all to accept,
There are different kinds of people, t'was God's concept.
Showing His uniqueness and creativity,
Making everyone with different abilities.

Don't think I'm not worth telling,
or a burden that just keeps yelling.
I have feelings just like everybody else,
and a great mind that's more than blessed.

So if you see me on the road, don't hesitate to say hi,
I know we've been branded but it sure is worth a try.
Just don't look at me with a face written all 'EEW!'
P.S. I love you!

.....**NOW YOU KNOW**

Grace Wanjiku

Film and Theatre Arts, 2nd Year student





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