

Disability Matters



Kenyatta 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

In**this**Issue

Messages	5
Technology in connection with people with special needs	8
Feel Encouraged Always	9
Disability Is Not Inability	10
Let Me Be Great	11
Disability Mainstreaming	12
Disability is not Inability	13
Technology For Individuals With Disabilities	14



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**

BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Prof. Paul Mbugua – Director, KU DoDS, **Dr. Charles Onido** – Chairman, Directorate of Disability Board
Dr. M. Runo – Board Member, **Dr. Mbugua Wa Mungai** – Board Member, **Rev. Dr. Moses Mutwiri** – Board Member
Mr. Nderitu Gikaria – Board Member, **Mr. James Mwangi** – Board Member, **Mr. Fanuel Ambani** – Board Member
Mr. Godfrey Kariuki – Board Member, **Ms. Monica Gitau** – Board Member, **Ann Mercy Wanjiku** – Board Member
Dr. Margaret Murugami – Committee Member, **Dr. Beatrice Bunyasi** – Chairperson, KU Disability Day Committee, **Dr. Nelly Otube** – Committee Member, **Dr. Isaiah Oyugi** – Committee Member, **Dr. Lillian Boit** – Committee Member, **Jane Wairimu** – Committee Member, **Phoebe Nalwa** – Committee Member, **Elizabeth Kanyoro** – Staff Member, **Beatrice Malika** – Staff Member, **Rose Ong'ong'a** – Staff Member



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.

The annual observance of the Kenyatta University Disability Awareness Day has been in place since 19th February 2010. The observance of the Day aims at sensitizing the Kenyatta University Community on disability issues and gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of University life. We thank the

Chief Guest Ms. Josephtha Mukobe and keynote speaker Prof. Michael Ndurumo for honoring our invitation and accepting to be with us in this auspicious occasion. The Sixth Disability Awareness Day was celebrated on Friday 20th February 2015 under the theme: **"DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING: TECHNOLOGY USE FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT"**. With the use of the right technologies, persons with disabilities are able to fully perform in their studies and job engagements. The degree of performance depends on the technology engaged and the disability level of an individual.

Kenyatta University continues to set pace in Disability mainstreaming in institutions of Higher learning as characterized by the many Universities coming over for bench marking. Last year we were privileged to host Multimedia University, Egerton University, Eldoret University among others. This year coincidentally we hosted University of Nairobi –Main Campus and Kikuyu Campus on 11th February 2015.

In February 2014, through the Directorate of Disability Services, we launched University's Disability Policy and Procedures which provide a framework for facilitating disability mainstreaming. As a University we aim to put in place measures to fully implement the Policy. In particular, we will continue to invest in various assistive technologies so as to increase access and retention of students with disabilities in the University.

We strive to make all our new infrastructure developments within the University Disability friendly. Central Administration Complex and Directorate complex, The Post Modern Library, Graduate School Building and the Campanile are equipped with lifts fitted with voice commentary for visually impaired. This goes to prove that the welfare of Persons with disabilities (PWDs) is being taken good care of by the university management.

Being an inclusive University that takes care of over 120 students with disabilities at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels, it is essential that we strive to make all of them fully accepted and respected as human beings. This includes the right to enjoy the privileges on account of being *bona fide* university students. The University is also an equal opportunity employer, therefore staff with disabilities have also been given opportunities to serve and despite myriad of challenges at individual level, most of them have over the years executed their duties diligently. We salute those hardworking colleagues for their diverse and noteworthy contributions to the University.

Prof. Olive Mugenda

Vice Chancellor



FROM THE DIRECTORS' DESK

Welcome to our Disability Matters Magazine, Third Issue which commemorates the Sixth Disability Awareness Day marked on 20th February 2015. The Theme of the Disability Day was **"DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING: TECHNOLOGY USE FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT"**. This theme presupposes that we have technology available to us – ours is to utilize it for University advancement. The truth on the ground is that there is much to be had, indeed

much exposure needed for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) to gain from the technology available today. An example is our Visually Impaired (VI) students' exposure to JAWS programme in our library, the access to modern phones and their applications, the access to modern banking facilities etc. Life would come to a halt without technology – these are but a few areas where technology is in use.

Our Chief Guest during our Sixth Disability Awareness Day was Ms Josephtha Mukobe, Principal Secretary Ministry of Interior Co-ordination for the National Government, while our Keynote Speaker was Prof. Michael Ndurumo, Professor of Special Needs Education, University of Nairobi. Our Vice Chancellor, Professor Olive Mugenda presided over the entire ceremony accompanied by the DVCs, Registrars, Deans, Directors, Chairmen of Departments and Heads of Units and Sections. For the very first time, KU parents of children with disabilities participated by showing how they cope with their children and also how they augment their resources as they meet the extra needs accompanying the special needs of their children, a visit to their stand was quite informative. To us as a Directorate, the setting up of a social support group is paramount since after these public events, all of us go back to our callings – but the parents continue to offer care and love to their children every day, 24/7. The question is, how do they coup?

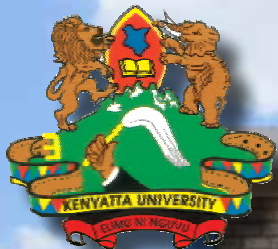
The Fifth Disability Awareness Day was on 21st February 2014 whose theme was **"Breaking Barriers: an Inclusive University"**. Since that theme, as a Directorate we have endeavored to keep the whole University on track to achieve the aspirations set by the University Management. The pointers on the ground indicate that KU still leads in admission numbers of students with disabilities in all our institutions of higher learning. Some of the indicators are the amount of money channeled to individual students' accounts by the National Council for Persons With Disabilities (NCPWD). This academic year, KU received well over 3 million shillings for fees support. We thank the NCPWD Board and the Director Hon. Mohamud - for coming out strong indeed even to save some of our vulnerable students with disabilities from calling off semesters on account of fees non-payment.

In this Third Issue of the Disability Matters Magazine, you will read about the various writers putting across views on life as PWDs, their technology uptake among other articles. Of interest is the article by Dr. Otube expounding on "Making Diversity Work in Institutions of Higher Learning- a Case of Kenyatta University" from an expert's view point. Have a great read.

Prof. Paul Kamau Mbugua, Director, DODS

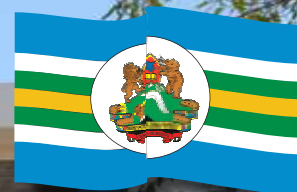


1. The Key Note Speaker, Prof maichael ndurumo receiving a gift from the Vice Chancellor Prf. Olive Mugenda
2. The Chief Guest, Ms. Josephta Mukobe having trying out one of the assistive technologies exhibited by the KU Post Modern Library.
3. Mr. KU-Special Needs 2014/2015
4. The Chief Guest and the Vice Chancellor at the VC's Lounge
5. Kenyatta University Disabled Students Association (KUDSA) Performing
6. The Audience during KU Disability Awareness Day- Replace with attached photo 6.



Kenyatta University

Transforming Higher Education. Enhancing Lives



SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Programmes

Diploma in Hospitality Management

Diploma in Travel and Tourism Management

Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management

Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management

Post-Graduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management

Master of Science in Hospitality Management

Master of Business Administration in Hospitality and Tourism

Master of Science in Tourism Management

PhD. in Tourism Management

PhD. in Hospitality Management



CONTACTS

School of Hospitality and Tourism, P.O. Box 43844-00100, Nairobi Kenya

Direct line: +254 020-2310714, Tel: +254 020-8710901 Ext. 57022, Email: dean-hospitality@ku.ac.ke

Technology in connection with people with special needs

► There is a lot that needs to be done for people with disabilities to become more independent and involved in their world. Good health is important to be able to work, learn and be engaged within the community and be able to progress well in their studies. Many PLWDs need to be encouraged and supported to join various schools and institutions such as Kenyatta University which is the best in providing services for people with special needs.

Having a disability does not mean a person is not healthy or that he or she cannot be healthy. Being healthy means the same for all of us—getting and staying well so that we can lead full and active lives. Assistive technologies have been provided for PLWDs to make it easier for them to participate in social and professional activities. Such assistive tools include

wheelchairs, walkers, magnifying glasses and special computers with enlarged-screen images, screen readers, Braille machines to type notes, tape recorders and keyboards to be used in taking notes. Those with impaired vision are provided with large-print handouts, signs and equipment labels. They should also sit where the light is best. All these measures enable people living with disabilities (PLWDs) to fully engage in life's activities. They enhance functional independence and make daily tasks easier through the use of aids that help them to get around, communicate, learn, work and participate in social activities.

Caro Chepkemai



Feel Encouraged Always

The story is told of a 24 year old lady at Kenyatta University taking Bachelor of Education(Arts) whose history of who she is today is a mystery. The lady having been born into a humble family never knew how she could make it in her life seeing that the lady is physically challenged. Our God is so faithful and kind to all his creatures.

Despite this lady being in such a situation, she is gifted with knowledge.

The question of how she could attend secondary school after scoring a total of 406 marks out of the possible 500 marks in her K.C.P.E examination was clicking not only in her parents' minds but also in the minds of those who wished her well in life.

Immediately after receiving her results, she was extremely overwhelmed with joy, having received a letter calling her to one of the best national schools in Kenya, Starehe Girls' Centre, in the year 2007.

Unfortunately, after taking her KCSE in 2011, she was not able to meet the cluster points to join a public University. She started getting worried again because what could this particular lady do to live a successful life without proper education which at that moment seemed to be a pillar of success in her life? After a short period, she was lucky to be among the few girls chosen by Global Give Back Cycle (GGBC) from Starehe Girls' Centre to have Tuition fees in any institution of tertiary learning that they could apply to join catered for. This particular lady decided to apply for a chance in her dream University, Kenyatta, Main campus, where she is at the moment.

Please allow me at this point to declare that this particular lady is myself. My name is Masline Atieno Dache. I am currently in my third year taking Bachelor of Education (Arts).

I strongly believe that disability is not inability and I know that with the help of God, I am aspiring to be among the top leaders not only in my nation, Kenya, but also in other parts of the world. It is at this point that I am kindly requesting for this information to reach the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda, that I am an aspiring lecturer come the year 2018, and that my chance should be secured in advance in the name of Jesus. My encouragement to persons with special needs especially students from Kenyatta University is to urge them to make use of what they have at hand, be it talents or something else that can make them achieve greater heights in their lives.

Let us stop viewing ourselves as wheelbarrows that can't make it to another level without being pushed. Maze days are gone for such things in our lives!

Remember people will gain an interest in you and help you to succeed in your life only if you yourself have that interest. We must learn to love ourselves the way we are and accept what we cannot change and change what we can. God, the creator has proper reasons why we had to be created that way and not like that friend of yours that you keep admiring each day instead of thanking God for who you are. Let me tell you that if I had fixed my mind into being a lesser being who could not depend on her own, I would not be where I am today. May God bless anyone who will spare a minute to go through this article. May God bless Kenyatta University at large! May you feel encouraged.

Masline Dache

DISABILITY is NOT INABILITY

Did you know: our beloved colleagues who are visually impaired are able to use desktops, laptops, android phones; or that the physically impaired are able to drive and write using their toes. Now you know.

Thanks to technology for making this statement that disability is not inability to be true,

How the visually impaired people use the phones and computers with the help of Non-Visual Desktop Access {NVDA}

NVDA (Non-Visual Desktop Access) is a free “screen reader” which enables blind and visually impaired people to use computers. It reads the text on the screen in a computerized voice. You can control what is read to you by moving the cursor to the relevant area of text with a mouse or the arrows on your keyboard.

NVDA can also convert the text into Braille if the computer user owns a device called a “Braille display”.

NVDA provides the key to education and employment for many blind people. It also provides access to social networking, online shopping, banking and news. These are the words of our beloved KUSA special needs secretary MR. DAVID MOGAMBI “When I came to know about an open source

screen reader NVDA, my joy knew no bounds. I installed it in my laptop and began my journey in the heaven of computers and Internet. I knew nothing about computers a year or so ago, but today my family members and friends often come to me to solve their computer queries. NVDA is my best teacher not only in the field of computer, but also in literature and many more things. NVDA has been a complete destroyer of my problems; those of studies, gaining knowledge, entertainment and all essential tasks to be performed with the help of a computer. I am on facebook which I enjoy to use like others. NVDA has made me what I longed to be.”

Technology has also manufactured automatic cars which have only two pedals: one for fuel and the other for breaks. This has enabled people who are physically challenged, but have one functional leg, to drive.

Now we are grateful to technology for helping people who are visually impaired. It is our hope that soon technology will make cars which are fitted with the country's road maps as well as sensors that detect traffic signs, speed bumps and traffic officers.

This article is prepared by Kenyanya Atancha Nicodemus from the school of business .



Mr. KU-Special Needs, Miss KU and Miss KU-Special Needs 2014/2015

LET ME BE GREAT

When I was born,
My parents had big dreams for me,
To be a renowned person in society,
But a dark cloud of the unknown,
Befell me when they discovered,

That I was a special child,
From the word go the world was harsh,
Therefore the challenges were numerous,
But I chose to soldier on,
So as to make a name for myself,

Everyday I was to grapple with,
Discrimination and discouragement,
As those around me thought I was doomed,
To fail for I was not “normal”
And for that reason I was forced,

To live in isolation,
Since I had no friends to stand by me,
As they considered me a half human being,
For I needed assistance to do,
Even the simplest of life’s tasks,

How I wish that a day would come,
Where the world would treat me,
As a person with talents and abilities,
That can positively impact on society,
All I am yearning for is freedom to let “let me be great”

BY WAMBERE MIGWI –
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY STUDENT

Guest Artist-Dennis Karanja, Visually Impaired-
Performing during the event

Disability Mainstreaming

Thursday, February 12, 2015, Kenyatta University by Peterson Macharia
Technology evicts Disabilities.

Photo by Edward Kanyi
Peterson Macharia: a Visually Impaired Student of Kenyatta University.

Persons with disabilities come across numerous barriers of all types in this world and technology has helped them to navigate around them.

The term technology to persons with disabilities means assistive devices and services. Disability refers to both the permanent as well as the temporary functional limitation experienced by people of any age within any circumstance.

Assistive technology is available to help individuals with many types of disabilities, from cognitive problems to physical impairment, to enhance effective learning for many children.

Students with learning disabilities often experience greater success when they are facilitated to use their strengths to work around their challenges.

Computer technology can be of great assistance to persons with disabilities in reading and writing documents, communicating with others, and searching for information. However, people with disabilities face a variety of barriers to computer use. Hardware and software tools adaptive or assistive to them have been developed to provide functional alternatives to these standard operations.

Today there are products, devices and services that are designed for people with disabilities through the concept of accessible design that ensures both direct access (unassisted) and indirect access, meaning compatibility with a person's assistive technology. Accessibility modifications have enabled persons with disabilities to gain access to education, employment, transportation, housing and recreation, as well as enabling them to exercise their right to vote in many countries around the world.

Innovations geared to enabling access are not limited to wheelchair ramps, but also extend to assistive devices such as Braille, signage, elevators, audio signals at pedestrian crossings, walkway contours, website design and reading accessibility.

Adaptive technology involves the modification or adaptation of existing devices and methods, or the creation of new uses for existing devices to enable a person to complete a task.

The use of remote controls and the auto-complete feature in computer word processing programmes have helped individuals with mobility impairments to complete tasks.

Adaptations to wheelchair tyres such as widening the tyres have enabled wheelchair users to move over soft surfaces such as deep snow on ski hills and sandy beaches.

A major advantage of technology is its flexibility. The inventions such as speech-generating devices, Teletypewriter devices and adaptive pointing devices to replace computer mouse devices have created accessibility to a range of tasks and are suitable for different kinds of disabilities.

One of the first areas where information technology has improved the quality of life for disabled individuals is the voice operated wheelchair which has increased mobility.

The modern method of dealing with speaking disabilities has provided a text interface for a speech synthesizer to assist those with vocal disability and this has been of great assistance to people who have limited use of a throat vibrator to produce speech. The Internet using email or word processing applications and the Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) have become available in the form of the teletype (TTY) to deal with profound hearing disability.

One emerging product that has made ordinary computer displays available to the blind is the refreshable tactile display, which is very different from a conventional Braille display. This has provided a raised surface corresponding to the bright and dim spots on a conventional display.

By Peterson Macharia

Technology For Individuals With Disabilities

By Fred MichoriOsege

A young child who cannot speak may use a communication device to express his or her needs in kindergarten. A young adult with vision impairment may use computer screen reading software programme to continue learning. A scholar with a physical disability may use the computer software, instead of a paper and pencil, to study or carry out research. Many people with varied disabilities use technology to enhance learning, work, and independence by use of assistive technology. It helps people with disabilities reach their full potential. Through increased independence and productivity, people with disabilities can be physically, socially, academically, recreationally, and vocationally integrated into the community.

Whether it is a common tool, a customized device, or a product system, technology can promote, increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Technology helps people get and keep jobs, and it allows people to enjoy greater participation in the community. People with disabilities who use technology discover how much it enhances the overall quality of their life; they see new possibilities and experience more of what life has to offer.

The fourteen categories of technology for individuals with disabilities.

There are Aids for Daily Living (ADL) for use in activities such as eating, bathing, cooking, dressing, using toilet facilities and home maintenance. There are Bed Modification Devices (BMDs) that make functioning in the bedroom easier. Examples include manual beds, side rails and transfer equipment. There are Communication Aids, devices, and methods that enhance personal expressive communication. Examples include manual and electric picture boards. There are Computer Access Software and hardware that allow persons with disabilities to use computers. There is Education Equipment that enables people with disabilities to carry out school or work-related tasks. There are Electronic Aids for Daily Living (EADL) Primarily electronic switches or systems that enable a person to control appliances, electronic aids, lights, telephones, security systems, etc. in a room, home or other surroundings. There are hearing devices that enhance hearing. Examples include hearing aids, visual and tactile alerting systems and telecommunications devices for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

There are Home/Building Modifications Structural adaptations to buildings that remove or reduce physical barriers. Examples include ramps and lifts, available in the K.U. Post Modern Library, as well as minor physical adaptations such as replacing doorknobs with

levers. There are Mobility/Ambulation Devices that enhance movement. Examples include transfer aids, patient lifts, all types of wheelchairs and wheeled vehicles, canes, crutches and walkers. There are Prosthetics and Orthotics Artificial limbs and devices used to replace, substitute or augment missing or malfunctioning body parts and thereby facilitate function. Examples include braces, splints and supports. There are Recreation/Leisure Adaptations that enable people to participate in sports or other fun activities in their free time. Examples include hand cycles or modified snowboards. There are sitting and Positioning Modifications to wheelchairs or other seating systems that provide greater body stability, improved posture or reduction of pressure. Examples include wheelchair cushions, supports, modular seating and seat lifts. There are transportation/Driving Items that enable personal transportation. Examples include cars and vans (K.U Disability Services Shuttle), fitted with boarding facilitation systems, child restraint systems and modifications to ensure vehicle access. There are Vision Devices that enhance sight. Examples include eyeglasses, magnification devices and other equipment (e.g., talking calculators and large button phones) for people with visual impairments.

It is important to remember that productive use of technology for people with disabilities requires more than just having access to equipment. Without services such as information, selection, acquisition, evaluation, and training, technology for individuals with disabilities is virtually useless. Below are types of services that support technology for people with disabilities:

Consultation/Observation is a preliminary service that gathers information about the range of potential technology that may be of value to a person with a disability. Assessment/Evaluation is a formal analysis performed by a skilled practitioner or a team of practitioners in the field of technology for people with disabilities. The evaluation will incorporate multiple techniques and include recommendations for technology products or systems that will enhance an individual's life in defined areas. There may be specific requirements for a technology evaluation in education. It is possible to get help in obtaining commercially available technology or components. It is possible to fit installations and modifications to optimize the consumer's ability to use the technology. Training helps in acquiring skills, knowledge and attitudes that maximize the use of the equipment. Maintenance/Repair refers to a systematic set of procedures aimed at keeping the device in good working order; an action taken to correct a problem in a device or system. It is possible to custom, fabricate, and make or modify devices/equipment when those which are commercially available do not meet a consumer's specific needs.

Benefits of Science and Technology to People Living with Disability (PLWDs)

The contribution of science and technology towards improving the comfort life of the life of PLWDs cannot be underestimated especially in recent times. The great and continuous inventions of science have not overlooked those living with disabilities. Indeed, it would seem that the advancement of science and technology has really focused on PLWDs to create a good platform for their comfort and access to various places in their areas of occupation. By this I mean that there has been tremendous contribution from science in coming up with tools and devices for supporting PLWDs.

Talk of hearing disability, and science and technology will offer you a vast number of answers and solutions with most recent tools and devices such as Bluetooth hearing aids and cochlea implants that have evolved and are in the market for PLWDs with hearing disabilities. These devices have acute sound detection and sensitivity to noise hence the disabled person is able to easily receive and perceive audio data conveniently. So much has been done in technology that today we have "driverless cars for the visually impaired". These cars employ the science of artificial intelligence and are just as comfortable as normal cars for persons of normal sight. For the visually impaired, there are devices such as the DynaVoxEyeMax System which uses complex and nexus eye tracking system as well as voice detection systems (for the paralyzed) for synchronizing verbal data and phrases to deliver correct information with definite meaning.

The breakthrough in devising travelling devices has been of great benefit to visually impaired persons. Whether at home, school, on the streets or anywhere else, these devices fitted with GPS tracking and audio feedback systems that tell you where you are turning or heading to, are a real blessing, all the more because these devices have been integrated into mobile devices for the visually challenged. Nowadays the visually impaired can navigate their way easily through streets and various places at their pleasure. I take this opportunity to salute and pay tribute to innovative minds in science and technology!

Furthermore, science and technology continues to play a major role in the lives of PLWDs, especially where the physically disabled are concerned. Right from innovation of wheelchairs to recent superb devices such as robotic arms and chairs, it's just a fabulous show which confirms that technology is still making headway in beating the odds for PLWDs. These robots assist those who cannot walk or cannot grasp items, thus making life easier for them in their day-to-day activities, hence making them fit in and feel as comfortable as normal persons!!

When in class it is easier for the visually impaired to use braille or the advanced device-DynaVoxEyeMax System - which has helped thousands of visually impaired and stammer to write or generate verbal phrases to create meaningful communication. It is worth saying that science and technology has been an intriguing part and parcel of PLWDs especially focusing on the visually challenged and those people who cannot move from one point to another. Ever heard of the Ibot stair-climbing wheelchair? It is just another great innovation which aids the physically disabled in balancing as well as climbing stairs. A lot more can be said about science and technology, suffice it to say that its contribution to PLWDs is substantially enormous and more is still in store to aid in improving the life of PLWDs. With creative and critical thinking course in our minds already, we too can think, scientifically and technologically, of something to help improve the lives of PLWDs!!!

Joseph Gathura Kibachia, 4th year BA student.



HIDDEN TRUTH ABOUT RESILIENCE AND DISABILITY

BY SOLOMON RATEMO, KU JOURNALISM

For PLWDs it is a world of rejection, stigmatization and discrimination in everything we lay our hands on. This is the obvious cry which can be heard by the Kenyatta University fraternity, not only from their fellow students, parents, neighbours and friends, but also from the whole country. The Kenyatta University community has different types of disabled individuals including the visually impaired, hearing impaired and physically challenged. The truth about this is underlined by the fact that these individuals face different challenges individually, despite the common ones they face generally. In order to know the hidden truth about disability you should face each individual. You will realize that there is a lot more to living with a disability than what you may have thought.

The term disability is used to refer to individual failure or absence of certain functions, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, as well as various types of chronic diseases. All these conditions are manifest in Kenyatta University. The institution is a world class university which hosts different scholars of different social classes. It is also home to many PLWDs. It incorporates and associates with different academic styles both regionally and globally. Special education finds its backbone in the institution where special need specialized professionals handle these groups with high technicality and in an advanced manner.

Resilience to adapt and accept the reality of life is what students with disabilities in Kenyatta University need. This is all about the individual attitude to the realities resulting from the prevailing conditions and situational challenges they face. In turn, this alters the way they see their environments as well as their self-belief which informs and alters their subsequent performances on the same social platform. The aspects of the psycho-social component, which encompasses the emotional, as well as the interactional pattern with people around them, gives a clear hope of resilience among the students with disabilities. This increases understanding, acceptance, affection and tolerance. Furthermore, the caring and supportiveness of other students on campus and the degree of sharing of responsibilities in their institutional affairs is also an important aspect promoting resilience. For all should accept the sharing of responsibilities and should be positive about

dealing with the psycho-social conditions of their immediate environment. Regarding sharing of responsibilities, most PLWDs are used to participating in certain household chores and also university activities like leadership, despite the doubts of their fellow students.

The trick about disability is to understand it in its totality. Caring and supportive relationships which create mutual understanding, love and trust, within the family as well as outside the family such as in schools and other institutions, are critical for the development of positive self-esteem and resilience in persons with disabilities. This is to say that individuals with disabilities may not need the material gifts you offer. They may just need your ability to promote resilience among them more.

Positive self-esteem and self-efficacy play a vital role in the effective functioning of persons with disabilities in the different spheres of life, including education, employment, family, and community participation. Therefore, the need to foster these positive attributes is crucial and has to be promoted as early as possible in a child's life. Particularly, the role that schools play in the formation of these attributes needs to be stressed.

Resilience is also required in university life since this is the place where personalities are molded and formed. PLWDs should be assisted by fellow students to accept themselves and their limitations. Spiritual strength, strong motivation, tolerance, hard work and persistent inquiry are key elements for unfolding and strengthening resilience. These internal forces are instrumental in combating the "dependency syndrome" and replacing it with independence. Possibilities of a successful and stable life are diverse and one should be flexible in exploring possible options that match one's abilities and interests.

Finally, making connections and seeking support from family members, friends and others are critical ingredients to building and expanding one's strength to successfully cope with life's challenges. Threads of interwoven socio-cultural factors, which operate against the adjustment of persons with disabilities in Kenyatta University, are widely prevalent. Among others, the pertinent factors serve as barriers which block educational and employment opportunities as well as community participation. In order to curb these deterring phenomena, short- and long-term intervention strategies need to be developed at a national level. There is need to train family members, lecturers and peers. Empowering them to offer quality care and support to students with disabilities at home and on the campus seems to be of paramount importance.



TECHNOLOGY MAINSTREAMING FOR DISABILITY

My experiences with technology

Before I got to the university, I used to be a normal sighted person. I studied in a normal school (Sawahongo High School). I did my Form 4 exams while sighted and I had no signs and symptoms of becoming visually impaired.

One day I got sick and was taken to KNH for treatment and while on medication, the drugs led to the loss of my sight. At first, life became difficult. I could not even accept myself. I thank God after a short while and several counseling sessions I finally accepted my condition and started moving on with life.

This is the time that I came into contact with technology. I was trained to use the computer e.g. typing, googling, reading notes via computer with software called JAWS or NVDA. Two softwares in particular (NVDA and JAWS) helped me to perform all kinds of academic tasks, which enabled me to continue with my university studies.

Through this technology, I am able to learn comfortably with other students who have no disability.

My experience with technology started when I joined Kenyatta University and I am a happy student because I have never experienced any difficulties in my studies because I am able to use technology. I carry out research and do all my assignments on the Computer and I am happy since I perform well.

In addition, technology has helped me a lot through the use of a white cane. A white cane helps one in getting around independently.

Technology has also helped me to be independent in my room. I am able to cook for myself, do the cleaning and washing through the skills and education we get online. For example, I can cook vegetables and Ugali on my own without any assistance.

This article is prepared by David Mogambi .

Special Needs secretary Kenyatta University



Prof. Michael Ndurumo receiving a painting from the Vice Chancellor. Looking on is Prof. Paul Mbugua and Dr. Beatrice Bunyasi

AM SPECIAL IN A GOOD WAY

Since time immemorial,
Iknew I was special,
For the uniqueness in me,
Was undeniably visible,
Everywhere I went people would turn,

Others would stare, whisper or sneer,
Just because I was different,
As if that was not enough, nobody,
Cared or was sensitive to my needs,
I would be pushed around or stepped on,

But through mastery of courage,
And endless encouragement from those,
Who understood and loved me,
I conquered the pain and ridicule,
To emerge victorious this made me,

A role model to be emulated by many,
Of my kind as I became a symbol of hope,
While in the wider society,
A gem to be treasured by many,
Who could testify to the truth,
That "disability is not inability."

BY WAMBERE MIGWI – KENYATTA UNIVERSITY STUDENT

NINAFAA VILEVILE

Kiliwaza mi nalia,najutiahaliyangu
Kitulianatabasamu,haliyanguijohari
Yanguyoteyaloswali,molawanguatajibu
Kongole yetu ipo wazi nami najivunia

Chetu chama sio haramu,twajijua tu jamii
Hapo si twajikuta,bila sajiliwa na yeyote
Simdharau yeyote wetu,hujuwi yalokungoja
Kongole yetu ipo wazi,nami najivunia

Kuumbwa mie silo dosari,dosari siwajibike
Yangumalengo 'yatimiza,kwavipawanilonavyo
Hamnalonisotenda,naaminikuchatafanya
Kongoleyetuipowazi,naminajivunia

Mengisisitwezafanyakufikakulekotekote
Stahayetu so uchawi,wakubwawatutambuwa
Siwafichi hivi mimi,yetu siri ijuweni
Kongole yetu ipo wazi,nami najivunia

Ukarimu tukaachiwa,sauti nzuri tamshi bora
Mapenzi hazina yetu,upevu wa kuona mbali
Kuchunguza na kutatua,vyote vyetu vipawa
Kongole yetu ipo wazi,nami najivunia
Jumuiya yetu twapendana,sikizeni,sikizeni tunavyocheka
Wastaarabu ni mandugu,nadra sisi kuzozana
Iwapo twakosana,vichwa vyetu chini pamoja
Kongoleyetuipowazi name najivunia

KiongoziBw.Mogambiviatuwyetuwavivaa
Wajuasisituumwapo,kilamarawashughulika
Ujuwewotetulowako,duajematwatakia
Kongole yetu ipo wazi,nami najivunia

Sikizeni!Sikizeni!La muhimu laja mwisho
Bi.Mugenda nina wetu,raha yake siteseke
Metajika kotekote,wetu wote mefurika hapa
Kongole yetu ipo wazi,name najivunia

Kazi hii imetungwa na kuhakikiwa na Bw.Peter Mogusu Omoke.



KUDSA presenting in a previous Disability Day-2013

BE JOYFUL ALWAYS

I woke up one morning as usual and embarked on normal morning activities before taking breakfast. When breakfast was ready, I took it and went out of the room. Once I was out of the house I realized that my eyes could not see as usual. When I looked at objects far away, my eyes began to tear due to the rays of the sun that seemed brighter than usual. Since I had not developed any serious illness before, I ignored this feeling for about three weeks after which it became clear that I could not look at bright objects directly. By now both my eyes were swollen and this made me to seek medical help. The local doctors told me that they could not diagnose what I was suffering from hence they had to refer me to a better medical facility, which was the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital. When I visited the referral hospital, the doctor in charge after observing me told me that they could not diagnose my case hence I needed to visit the clinic every Wednesday so that they could try to manage my situation. Though they prescribed some ointments for me to use, the situation worsened and my eyes began to develop sores making it difficult for me even to blink. The pain I felt was beyond description. It was during my frequent visits, and due to the rare occurrence of cases such as mine, that the doctor in charge of the eye unit introduced me to the lecturer for doctors-in-training. The lecturer began to use me as a specimen in their classes, making me feel more pain, and eventually making me develop a negative attitude towards the medical facility. Due to this, I began missing clinic sessions and after awhile I began to seek herbal treatment because it seemed to me that the doctors could not understand what really I was going through. I continued in this state for about three years, moving from one herbal medicine person to another where the situation continued to worsen.

It was one Sunday afternoon when my local church pastor realized that I had not been attending church services for awhile. When he enquired about my whereabouts, he was told that my eye issue had worsened to the extent that I could not come to church. My pastor had to drive to my place and when he saw how devastated I was, he offered to take me to the eye hospital. On Monday, the following day, he drove to my place and with his wife he took me to Friends' Hospital Sabatia, where I was diagnosed to be suffering from an eye condition known as cornea ulcer, a rare condition in Kenya although common in India. After the diagnosis, the doctor told me that I needed to undergo emergency eye surgery to save the one eye which was still seeing, although not as clearly as it used to. Due to my helplessness, I accepted to undergo the operation which to some extent succeeded. Nine months later, however, the issue re-emerged and this time when I went back to the hospital, I was told that I needed to undergo another operation in which my eye had to be sealed: a process known as cornea flap, meaning that it was the end of me seeing again though it did not register until after I came out of theatre.

"I'm finished", this was what went through my mind when I woke up from theatre and realized that my sight was all gone. To be sure about this, I asked the nurse lady who was helping me to locate my bed whether I would be able to see again and the words that came from her mouth were soft but did not stop my worries, "I cannot tell you for sure that you shall see again" she said. I spent the whole of that afternoon sobbing in bed. The night was no different. The fact that I could not see, and that I was alone in hospital - my parents, brothers and my guardian were all far away from me - constantly nagged me. In fact I had not informed any of them that I was going to hospital that week and my pastor, who had brought me, had since travelled to Mombasa on a business trip. The four days spent in hospital were like one year. On the third day, the doctor told me that I was going to leave for home the following day. I spent the whole of that night thinking about how I would get back to my home in Eldoret town. When morning came the doctor came and called those of us who were to be released, myself included. As it had been for the previous three days, one of the nurses got hold of my hand and took me to the reception, where I gave her some money to purchase for me whatever drugs I was to go and use back at home. When she was through she asked me about my guardian, or the person who had come to take me home. I told her that no one was aware that I was in hospital, other than the pastor who had brought me to the hospital, and that he had travelled to Mombasa. I requested her to take me to the gate and help me to get a matatu heading towards Eldoret. She accepted and took me to the gate and requested the security man at the gate to help me board a matatu to Eldoret town.

For the following one year I lived in denial. My mind was full of negative thoughts such as wanting to die, or getting back to the village to perish there. I lost my self-esteem. I felt that I had now become useless and that my life had come to an end. I actually lost interest in everything that I used to enjoy before. Due to the stress involved, I actually developed several other complications, ulcers being one of them. Due to all these complications, I also broke up with my girlfriend with whom I had been friends for a long time. We had actually been planning to get married but due to the hopeless state that I was in, the lady just lost all confidence in me.

What actually contributed to my hopelessness was the poverty that was in our family: the fact that there could be no money to take me to a special school; none of my brothers and sisters had a job to support me in any way. Also the situation was far worse now that I was far from home and none of my brothers or sisters had come to see and comfort me. I was now in the hands of people with whom I had no blood relationship at all.

During this time, I was blaming myself for not seeking medical help in good time. I also began to ask myself questions that I could not find answers to. These questions that kept on coming to my mind were whether I had wronged God or whether someone had actually bewitched me. As if that was not enough, I began to question God as to why He had to allow me to go through such a difficult situation and make me lose my sight. Indeed, I was angry with God. I further began to blame other people, including my parents, my brothers and sisters, for what I was going through.

In summary I wish to submit that for a whole year, my life was characterized by self-pity, self-blame, thoughts of suicide, low self-esteem, poor body image, lack of ambitions, poor self-care, hatred for self, others and God. These were the most difficult moments of my life.

Despite all the above, I am now in my final year of study at Kenyatta University, having taken the course that I love most. This was possible owing to the fact that I was able to acknowledge my new self, to forgive God, myself and others, and was able to develop good relationship with them after which I was able to receive overwhelming support from them too. Also may I say that another factor that strengthened me was my ability to take decisive actions against the adversity that was oppressing me. I had to take decisive actions rather than detaching myself completely from these problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away. The other great step I took was to move towards my goal. The fact that I was able to develop some realistic goals boosted my motivation to even strive for greater achievements which led to my decision to join Kenyatta University. Accepting that change is a part of life also enabled me to acknowledge the fact that certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of my disability. Indeed, this decision helped me to focus on circumstances that I was in a position to alter. Further still, being able to nurture a positive view of myself was crucial in enhancing my confidence in the ability to solve problems.

In conclusion, may I say that it was a combination of many factors that led to my success after being afflicted. These included, but were not limited to: the capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out; developing a positive view of myself and confidence in my strengths and abilities; the ability to develop good skills in communication and problem solving and the capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses. My plea to all who undergo or who find themselves in great or small predicaments is that they also should view the situation not as a stumbling block but a stepping stone to a better life, it is also important to add that during difficult moments, our greatest resource is ourselves and others come second, not forgetting the role of our maker. Be joyful always!

Shalom!

Benson K Cheserem.

MAKING DIVERSITY WORK IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING - A CASE OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

Dr. Nelly Were Otube and Prof. Paul Kamau Mbugua

Special Needs Education Department and Directorate of Disability Services-
Kenyatta University

ABSTRACT

Higher Education has its own importance in terms of employability, political power and national development. As at the apex of the educational system is an essential input for meeting the manpower requirements of the highest caliber in the crucial areas of national development. In the not too distant past, the accommodation of students with disabilities in higher education was not a priority. These students found themselves admitted to institutions and had to find ways to adapt or the harshness of the system, (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). The recent changes in policies on affirmative action has prompted higher education system to rethink about the strategies and give in to new areas of exploration so as to address the issues of the diverse needs of students existing within the higher education system,

This paper focuses on issues related to inclusion to academic programs by students with disabilities (SWD) and the resulting positive outcomes at Kenyatta University (KU). Second, it describes interventions strategies used by the institution to accommodate the needs of these students. Last, it shares lessons that can be applied to other universities or middle level academic institutions and career preparation programs for Students with Disabilities (SWD).

Introduction

Students with disabilities generally experience far less success in securing careers than their non-disabled peers. Those who join universities however experience more successful outcomes after completion (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). Their degrees give them opportunities to secure job placement in fields such as science, Engineering, Business, and Technology among others.

As the first public institution of higher learning to admit SWD to its academic programs in 1995, KU admits the highest number of SWD among the public universities in Kenya. Over the years, there have been are numerous success stories of SWD who have completed their studies from KU after having undertaken courses in both Sciences and Arts. These students have shown their resilience by performing just as well if not better than their peers without disabilities. This has significantly contributed to change in perspective by those who study or teach them.

Kenyatta University, through its diverse programs prepares them to successful transition from academic programs to career positions through the following practices.

- Inclusion in social interaction
- Access to technology
- Mentoring program.
- Directorate of Disability Services

Inclusion in Social interaction

In KU it is not unusual to find a SWD socializing with their peers without disabilities and making meaningful contribution towards joint efforts in participating in academic and non-academic activities. SWD at KU easily maneuver around the large campus, they successfully seek disability-related accommodations from the disability directorate (perhaps the first of its kind in any public institution), and attend the classes they register for each semester and eventually graduate just like their peers without disabilities. This enables the society to appreciate their inherent ability to succeed in a typical institutional setting if provided the necessary accommodations. Accommodations include accessible buildings and environments, adapted teaching and learning resources and instruction. Such accommodations allow them to be the best they can be. They help them develop positive social and self-determination skills that often lead to success in academics, employment, and adult life (Colley, 1998). Their peers without disabilities and lecturers on the other hand become more aware of the challenges they face caused by their disabilities which include sensory and physical impairments, (Stodden 2000).

Access to Technology

Access to electronic and information technology has the potential to promote positive postsecondary academic and career outcomes for students with disabilities. However, this potential will not be realized unless stakeholders as sure that all individuals with disabilities have access to technology that promotes positive academic and career outcomes; learn to use technology in ways that contribute to positive outcomes; and experience a seamless transition of availability of technology as they move through educational and career environments (Smith 1999)

Access to computer equipment and assistive devices for SWD has been made possible, in the student labs situated in different facilities in KU. This assistive technology includes speech output systems for those who are visually impaired or have disabilities that affect their reading ability and alternative keyboard for students who do not have full use of their hands. Students with visual impairment at rank computer and internet skills among the most valuable skills gained for supporting their access to information, (Stodden 2000). These students use computers as effectively as their peers without disabilities to conduct research on class assignments, (Burgstahler, 2001). Computer access has given SWD at KU has given them an advantage compared to their peers with disabilities in other institutions of higher learning in networking, gaining free access to information

and improving their employability skills.

The Student Work Induction Program

Student Work Induction Programs (SWIP), offer students an opportunity for job learning and personal development. For SWD this opportunity can be a key to the world of work from which they might otherwise be excluded. Work placements are increasingly becoming integrated into courses and the recognized institutions for vocational courses require work placement as part of the programme. It is important to ensure that SWD, irrespective of age, ethnicity and gender, have the same access to work placements as other students. For SWD to benefit fully from their courses, work placements need to be fully accessible to them. Institutions must take action to ensure these students have the same opportunities as others to benefit from work placements. Suitable placement provision is often in limited supply and SWD can face considerable additional barriers because employers may be unwilling to accept or support them, (DFes 2000)

The student work-induction program (SWIP) at KU offers opportunities for all students including those with disabilities to gain the necessary experience in the actual work environment. SWD are able to participate in this program that enables them bridge the gap between employers expectations and the skill market. For those students who participate in the program, they are prepared to participate in the job market once they graduate after gaining the relevant experience in their work. The employer has a chance to assess and give feedback to the university on the relevance of the curriculum offered to these students. It also helps SWD to access Their capabilities based on the work environments and the tasks expected of them. More importantly it prepares potential employers to provide the necessary accommodations to facilitate effective work output of these students.

Mentoring and Peer Support

Through the vibrant KU student-mentoring program, SWD use electronic communications and face to face meetings to connect with mentors, some of whom have disabilities themselves. Through their mentors, they learn about their career options and how to advocate for themselves. Later, the experienced SWD who have undergone mentoring are able to mentor new SWD. The mentoring skills gained extend beyond the academic program into life after college. After several years of being mentored and mentoring others, they are prepared for a future in employment and life after college.

Directorate of Disability Services

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned from including students with disabilities at Institutions of higher learning which helps them make successful transition to careers include:

The importance of ensuring that computer labs and educational software are accessible to students with various types of disabilities. This will improve their access to information and consequently their employment opportunities. Having student work induction programs that are deliberately tailored for SWD will further give them an edge over their peers in terms of job preparedness and employability prospects

The significance of having staff –student and student to student mentoring programs to help address issues of SWD and to connect “older” youth with disabilities with others who have disabilities who have just joined the University. There is need to create situations where young people with disabilities can gain access to role models who have disabilities and are successful in challenging careers. Mentoring relationships between young people and adults with disabilities should be promoted. SWD should be encouraged to participate in work experiences through internships, volunteer work, and other work-based learning experiences, they can prepare for future employment, learn how to self-advocate for accommodations, and practice job-related skills.

Conclusion

Experiences of inclusive practices of students with disabilities at KU suggests that Internet and computer access, peer and mentor support, and Student Work-Induction Program have had a positive impact on postsecondary academic and career outcomes for people with disabilities..

References

1. Blackorby, J., and Wagner, M. (1996). Longitudinal post-school outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study. *Exceptional Children*, 62, 399-413.
2. Burgstahler, S. (2001). A collaborative model promotes career success for students with disabilities: How DO-IT does it. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 16(3-4), 209-216.
3. Colley, D. A., (1998). Post-school results for youth with disabilities: Key indicators and policy implications. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 21, 145-160.
4. DFES Publications, (2000), Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ
5. Smith, S.J., and Jones, E.D. (1999, April). The obligations to provide assistive technology: Enhancing the general curriculum access. *Journal of Law and Education*, 28(2), 247-65.
6. Stodden, R. A. (2000), Post-secondary education and quality employment for adults with disabilities. *American Rehabilitation*, 25(3), 19-23.



Kenyatta University

P.O. Box 43844 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 254-20-8710901-12. Fax: 254-20-8711575.
Website: <http://www.ku.ac.ke>