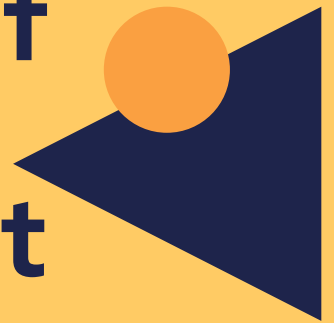


Njema Disability
Self-Help Group

The Challenges of Kisumu's 10% in Accessing Decent Livelihoods



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Kisumu has a population of approximately one million people, **with close to 10% of the population being persons with disabilities (PWDs)**. With the majority of PWDs not having higher education, this greatly reduces their opportunities for decent work. Notably, the government has put in place favorable interventions to economically support PWDs such as legal notice NO. 114 of the 2013 public procurement and disposal act (30% procurement reservation for youth, women and PWDs) and the 2010 persons with disabilities act that speaks to non-discriminatory practices against PWDs in the workplace and advocating for 5% job reservations for PWDs. Despite this, there seems to have been no significant change in the economic empowerment of youth living with disabilities in Kisumu. Therefore, Njema Disability Self-help Group conducted research to understand how youth living with Disabilities in Kisumu could be better supported to enable them to prosper economically and identified some key challenges that need to be addressed to improve young PWDs livelihoods.

Main Challenges of Youth with Disabilities in Kisumu, Kenya

Few Employment Opportunities

The majority of PWDs are self-employed, and merely make out a living. Of the youth surveyed, 56% are self-employed while 33% are unemployed. Of these, close to 60% are unable to sustain their families with their earnings.

Inaccessible workplaces

The workplace remains largely inaccessible. For the minority who are employed, Inclusivity at workplaces presents a major challenge for YWDs, with 61 % of YWDs indicating that workplace accessibility was an issue for PWDs.

Limited awareness on available funding

Despite affirmative action funds available, there is limited awareness on accessing funds. Over 85% of YWDs don't have access to information on how to access funds, only 20 YWDs mentioned they could access funds. YWDs have then turned to mobile loaning applications for financing despite the high interest rates.

Inadequate knowledge on registration procedures

Youth are not familiar with registration procedures. Over 90% of YWDs were not aware that they are supposed to register their enterprises, with only 10 of the total respondents having access to online business registration.

There is a **disconnect between channels used to disseminate information on action funds, and the channels YWDs are able to access**, leading to limited awareness that restricts their opportunities to grow their businesses with external financing.

Businesses young PWDs run are not sustainable, pointing to a need for more support for them in business.

Employment is significantly out of reach for young PWDs, increasing their economic vulnerability.

Lack of business registration could be a **major impediment to business growth**, as both action funds and microfinance have the basic requirement of registration in order to qualify for financing.

Online registration for businesses is not accessible to the majority of young PWDs, hence increasing barriers they face in accessing opportunities.



There should be **accessible information for young PWDs on fund access** through the State Department of Youth, ICT and Innovation. The department should provide a specific PWD mobilization officer drawn from the PWD community and include PWDs when developing their information dissemination plans.

The County Government of Kisumu should **make business registration easily accessible for young PWDs at the ground-level** through the state department of Social Protection. This could include digital skills training for PWDs and offering paper-based applications as a short-term measure.

There needs to be an **enforcement by the County Government and lobbying by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) of the 2010 persons with disability act**, more so on the section stating, "Persons with disabilities are entitled to a barrier-free and disability-friendly environment to enable them to have access to buildings, roads and other social amenities, and assistive devices and other equipment to promote their mobility."



Organizations supporting PWDs especially Youth Led and Youth Serving Organizations should include in their programming:

- Training on business requirements to access action funds, microfinance and business opportunities for YWDs, such as the 30% tender reservation as per the public procurement and disposal act.
- Business registration services as part of their offerings.
- Entrepreneurship skills including financial literacy skills to help the YWDs know how to run sustainable businesses and scale them

Methodology: this product is the result of a mixed methods research, conducted by Njema Disability Self-Help Group Kenya, that involved 260 participants from Kisumu Kenya. The research respondents comprised of Youth with disabilities from Kisumu East, Kisumu Central, Nyando and Nyakach sub counties as well as stakeholders from the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), The Association for Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK), Kisumu East Constituency (Uwezo department), National Government-Ministry of Innovation, Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and youth affairs. The data was collected through the following mechanisms:

- 250 Surveys
- 10 key informant interviews

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