

Check-list for Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Kisumu

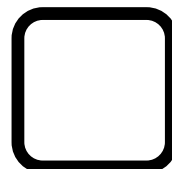
About 2.2% (KNBS, 2019) of the Kenyan population experience a form of disability with the majority residing in rural areas. This low prevalence rate compared to the 15% global disability prevalence has been singled out by experts, open public distribution systems, & researchers to be resulting from lack of reliable disability data, high levels of stigma & discrimination, and inaccurate translations/context when designing disability surveys among other things. At the highest peak of Covid-19 disruption, the youth unemployment rate hit levels beyond the 40% national average. The pandemic not only created a severe disruption to the Kenya economy but also further exacerbated the proportion of PWDs not holding formal or informal employment. Additionally, PWDs undergo stigma and discrimination that undermines their human rights principle to work, employment and adequate standard of living. Bearing in mind the pre-existing inequalities in accessing employment among the PWDs; at one time estimated at 1% employment rate for PWDs compared to 73.8% for the general population (IDS, 2020), there is an urgent need to have a deliberate strategy to dismantle existing barriers to ensure youth with disabilities are productive members in the society.



Check-list for Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Kisumu

Partner with the Private Sector

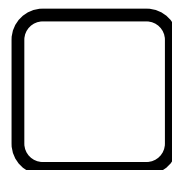
At least 68% of PWDs are familiar with available job opportunities with the majority having the necessary basic skills to apply for existing opportunities. 84% of the PWDs we spoke to were more inclined towards applying for government jobs. Some of the reasons given for this were government employers were more accommodative as opposed to private employers who still held to negative stereotypes, and private employers were not willing to bear additional costs on assistive devices and modification works.



Ensure accessible facilities for all PWDs

There exists disproportionate barriers within PWD communities. PWDs with physical/mobility disabilities have greater ability to access employment opportunities as opposed to those with other forms of disabilities. All forms of disabilities need to be considered.

"If you go to like National Council for PWDs they majorly focus on those with physical disability. They forgot about the visually and hearing impaired. There are many people like this in the village."



Address prejudice and stigma towards PWDs

There is continued negative perception towards skills & capabilities of youth with disabilities. This is evident among the employers and employees. At least 83% of the respondents noted that PWDs had to prove themselves - especially in their earlier days at work - before being accepted as qualified.

"...this is normally not easy because even after doing your work for the first time there are still customers who look at you in a way that is disgusting. However, if they realize your work is good, after some time you start becoming good friends and they trust you more and more. This is very nice."



Increase diversity of job opportunities for PWDs

Self-employment is the most attractive form of employment among PWDs. About 65% of the PWDs we spoke to in Kisumu County had experience in self-employment and running small businesses. On further probing, we noted that female PWDs prefer to engage in self-employment while Male PWDs were more optimistic in seeking job opportunities.

Disseminate opportunities for PWDs strategically

Only about one third of PWDs interviewed were aware of government efforts to support PWD to access self-employment, with over 60% having uncertainty or any knowledge on these efforts. More PWDs are aware of government efforts to support inclusion in order to access waged employment compared to self-employment.

"I just heard of government support but how to access them is a challenge. there are forms to be signed but basically I've never received any"

Reduce barriers to access funding mechanisms

79% of youth in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have difficulties in accessing loans and grants. Only 30% of the business owners we spoke to had run their businesses for more than 3 years with 21% requesting a loan or grant in the last three years (2019-2021). Some of the key reasons selected for not requesting for loan or grant was that 'we did not understand the process' and 'we had been turned down before'. The participants also requested for business training/courses.

Methodology: this product is the result of a mixed methods research, conducted by Tinada Youth Organization, that involved 286 participants from Kisumu Kenya, persons with disabilities, government, private and higher education institutions (HEI) sector representatives in Kisumu County. The data was collected through the following mechanisms:

- 221 Surveys
- 3 Focus Groups with 18 youth with disabilities
- 47 key informant interviews
- Observation in 3 sites in Kisumu County

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