

## CWID'S NEWSLETTER- April Edition.



*From the communications officer  
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It's alarming that in the whole of this beautiful Mombasa city there are few or no institutions that teach sign language yet we have special schools around, how does the government expect citizens of this city to communicate to People With Disabilities-PWDs, how do we sensitize PWDs living in the communities that we target, how are PWDs expected to access public services if in most of the offices there are no interpreters to communicate with them? How many secondary schools for students with disabilities do we have around, what happens to those who have graduated from primary schools? Knowing that special schools are expensive, what happens to children with disabilities coming from poor families? This is our feature story in this second edition of our newsletter. I will share some statistics from the 2007 Kenya National Survey on People with Disabilities-KNSPWDs that was officially launched in Coast region on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at the Mombasa beach hotel.  
*Welcome.*

### **People With Disabilities PWDs concerns - 2007 survey.**

Picking on general key points, the survey indicated that:

- 4.6% of Kenyans experience some form of disability.
- More disabled persons reside in rural than in urban areas
- 15% of PWDs are likely to be affected by environmental factors
- 65% of PWDs regard environment as a major problem in their daily lives.
- 33% of PWDs work in their family business, 24% do not work at all while 16% of PWDs worked for pay.
- 16% of women with disability aged 12-49 years use some form of family planning method.

### **On the types of disabilities, the survey reveals that;**

- The most prevalent forms of disability are physical 34%, visual 30% followed by hearing 12% and self care 9%.
- Visual disability is highest in Nairobi 54%, followed by Coast 36% and Eastern 31%.
- More females 33% than males 28% experience visual difficulties.
- More males 54% than females 46% suffered mental disabilities.
- Most disabilities were caused by diseases 19%, congenital disorders 14% and accidents 12%.

### **Environmental factors on PWDs**

- 64% of PWDs indicated that access to transport is a major problem.
- More than 57% of PWDs had problems with accessing information.
- 69% of the proportions of PWDs cannot access health services with a percentage of 73 in rural and 64 in urban areas.

## Education

- 67% of PWDs attained primary level education but only 19% got to secondary school with 2% reaching university.
- 7% of PWDs reported being denied enrolment in school because of their disability and 6% dropped out of school because of their disabilities.

## Individual participation in family/social life

- 59% of PWDs were likely to be consulted about decision making in the households.
- 75% were likely to attend family events
- Lowest proportion of PWDs likely to be helped by family members were reported in Coast 35% and central province 44%, while the highest was in Western 71% and North eastern 77%.
- PWDs in rural areas 55% were more likely to participate in traditional practices than those in urban areas 53%.
- More men 60% than women 49% with disabilities took part in traditional practices.



*Charity Chahasi of Tunaweza Women with Disabilities giving a speech in a community outreach.*

## Community perceptions on PWDs.

- Qualitative data reveals that a majority of the communities in Nyanza, Western, Easter, Coast and Rift Valley still believe that disability is a curse.
- In some communities PWDs are abused and exploited especially by family members, some are used to conduct crimes, traffic drugs, and illicit drinks in exchange for food and drinks.
- In most clusters disability is considered as an additional burden for the family, and this is attributed to poverty.

- In most rural areas PWDs face lots of challenges in accessing modern healthcare and other essential services than those living in the urban.
- Most PWDs do not actively participate in family, social and economic activities more because of stigma and socio-cultural and economic prejudice.
- Most women with disabilities are not likely to make personal choices on FP methods and can't access first hand information on RH, HIV/AIDS and STDs.

### **Insight and Discussions.**

Though the participants at the launch appreciated the document and praise it as the first document ever in Kenya that has statistics on PWDs, the following were addressed as the main concerns that should have been captured in the survey.

- Use of words such as deaf, blind etc were noted during the presentation but the facilitators said words sometimes slip out of the tongue but they clearly indicated that the words have not appeared anywhere in the survey. The survey used the proper form of naming people with different disabilities.
- There was a concern that women faced a lot of Gender Based Violence- GBV and that has acted as a cause of some of their disabilities and that was not captured in the report. Facilitators pointed out that it was captured as domestic reasons.
- It was sighted that the report was long overdue, to have been conducted in 2007 and released in 2010 was quite a lot of time, the survey should have also captured the PWDs as a result of the 2008 post election violence.
- The survey should have suggested as at 2007 how much budgetary allocation was needed to fill the gaps realized from the survey. The facilitators made it clear that the government cannot work without a plan, and that the initiative came from the Ministry of Planning.
- Actors of education should tell why the education transitions gets lower as the PWDs student progresses, is it lack of money or less schools to handle the PWDs.
- Concerns over how the disabilities funds can be accessed with PWDs and be used to create impact that PWDs will access the implementations of this survey arose. There was fear that if the constitution passes some laws will deter PWDs from accessing facilities especially in public offices.
- In the marital status and spouse section, the survey would have included how the PWD knew about sex and how stable they are in their unions.
- Since the Disability Act has taken too long to be implemented, there were fears of the same happening to this report but participants felt there was need to start implementing some of the issues reflected in the surveys and not wait for the government.
- Data in this report needs to get to the district level because they are currently using estimated statistics. Facilitators answered and said NCAPD works at the provincial level but the government officials will ensure the reports get down to the districts.
- Issues of albinos was not captured, where do they fall in the survey?
- The percentage of PWDs living HIV/AIDS and those using ARVs did not appear in the report.
- Government should pay all the fees required in special schools and let PWDs also enjoy free education just like their other counterparts. More secondary schools for

- PWD were needed especially at the Coast, at least each district should have one and more integrated schools on the ground should also be encouraged.
- There were concerns in Coast Province about the ferry. It needs disabilities facilities and should be disabilities friendly, PWDs should not be merged with others in all the mayhem going on at the ferry during transportation.
  - Participants requested for a Swahili version of the survey report.
  - National Council of PWDS needs to be strengthened to push for the Disabilities Act.

### **GBV Women Rescue Centers.**

One wonders about the safety of women who have been either sexually abused or physically assaulted after they have reported their cases to the police and the perpetrator has either bailed himself out or is in hiding ready to appear at any unexpected time.

We recognize the availability of children rescue centers and orphanages but we also should look into the women safe homes. These women are survivors of GBV and their lives are in great danger if they do not have a safe home to stay when their cases are on going.

This has been a concern nationwide, it needs to be addressed because this has resulted as one of the reasons why some women do not come up to report their cases because they do not know where to go from there.

### **More education on the constitution needs to be done before going to the referendum.**

PEV has resulted to people especially women not casting their votes at the referendum on the proposed draft constitution, being the ones who suffered the most during the PEV, most of them have declared they won't involve themselves in voting fearing for scenes in the past chaotic election.



*People listening in a community activity.*

This only shows that no strong awareness creation has been done especially at the grassroots to educate the women on the importance of voting for the constitution. This

also shows that though we have tried to heal and reconcile, it is evident that most people are still not confident with the election processes.

While the government still has a lot to do to regain the confidence, women organizations have a big challenge to reach out to these women and empower them to understand their right to vote, and also remind them of the gains we have in the proposed draft constitution and encourage them to vote.

*Any comments or reactions are welcomed, kindly send an email to [cwid@coastwomen.org](mailto:cwid@coastwomen.org)*