



Building an Inclusive Kenya

Disability Inclusion Status Report 2025

(Behavioral Science and Macroeconomics Reframing)



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Foreword: Co-Chairs of the United Nations Common Services Management Team in Kenya

On behalf of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Kenya, we are honored to present the Disability Inclusion status Report 2025: Behavioral Science and Macroeconomic Reframing; a milestone study that underscores our steadfast commitment to disability inclusion as an essential pillar of sustainable development. This report, led by the United Nations Common Services Management Team (CSMT) and supported by UNDP, is the culmination of collaborative efforts across governmental bodies, especially the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection, and Senior Citizens; the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD); non-governmental organizations including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs); community organizations; private sector institutions; and the larger persons with disabilities communities in Kenya. This highlights our collective resolve to foster an inclusive society where persons with disabilities can thrive.

Persons with disabilities in Kenya have long faced systemic barriers to inclusion, rooted in cultural stigmas, fragmented service structures, and limited socioeconomic opportunities. With a future-focused approach, driven by the reframing impact of behavioral science and the disinflationary effects of digital technology, this report aims to spotlight disability inclusion by offering actionable insights to accelerate progress, not only within the framework of Kenya's Vision 2030, but in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030. By reframing disability as a societal and economic priority, we underscore the critical role that persons with disabilities play as contributors to national prosperity and social resilience.

Key findings of the study reveal both the challenges and the untapped potential within Kenya's disability community. For instance, while targeted social protection programs have reduced the poverty rate among persons with disabilities from 45.7% in 2019 to 38% in 2023, these figures remain significantly above the national average. Additionally, the report finds that the total economic loss from the exclusion of persons with disabilities amounts to up to 6.95 percent of GDP (KES. 1 trillion) due to a combination of factors including lower productivity, higher unemployment and higher labor market inactivity. Addressing these barriers can create immense economic value.

The recommendations of the report are insightful and they open up new grounds for understanding the complexities around disability inclusion in Kenya. We urge all stakeholders to leverage the insights herein to address the critical gaps in policy, program implementation, innovations and resource allocation that persist. Together, we can reframe disability from a lens of dependency to one of empowerment, paving the way for a future where no one is left behind.

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Acronyms

AfCFTA:	African Continental Free Trade Area
AI:	Artificial Intelligence
AIoT:	Artificial Intelligence of Things
FinTech:	Financial Technology
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GVA:	Gross Value Added
IoT:	Internet of Things
KNBS:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MDAs:	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MLSD:	Ministry of Labor and Social Development
MoU:	Memorandum of Understanding
NCPWD:	National Council for Persons with Disabilities
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
PWD:	Persons with Disabilities
PWSD-CT:	Persons with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer
Program SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCRPD:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

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Problem Statement, Strategic Intent and Theory of Change and Stability For Disability Inclusion In Kenya

Problem Statement: Disability Inclusion in Kenya – A Deeply Embedded Social and Economic Challenge

In response to global calls for actions, Kenya has made tremendous progress in advancing disability inclusion. These include progressive policies and actions such as Kenya's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities; Kenya's Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), Kenya's 2010 National Constitution mandating affirmative actions of a 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities across public and private institutions; the 30% Access to Government Procurement Opportunities for disadvantaged groups including persons with disabilities, amongst other rights guaranteed; the establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disability in 2004; and Kenya's consistent social protection programming and financing targeted at persons with disabilities amongst others. Undoubtedly, these efforts have contributed to the 7.7% drop in poverty rate for persons with disabilities experienced between 2019 and 2023, though still higher by national comparisons.

Despite these progress, **Kenya's journey towards disability inclusion remains hindered by systemic socio-economic and cultural barriers that reinforce the exclusion of persons with disabilities from essential services, employment, and full societal participation.** Actual integration into the workforce remains low. In 2023, only 41% of persons with disabilities labor force was integrated into the national workforce resulting in symptoms of tokenistic approaches rather than meaningful inclusion.

Cultural stigma, deeply rooted in historical beliefs that view disability inclusion as a societal burden, continues to marginalize persons with disabilities, with high rates of persons with disabilities internalization and self-exclusion, especially women and rural populations. The 2019 Census outlines that nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement, and in 2023, 45.7% remained in poverty, significantly above the national poverty rate. Between 2019 and 2023, up to 59% of persons with disabilities labor force was excluded from the national workforce resulting to KES 6 billion Gross Value Added (GVA) loss to the GDP, underscoring the urgent economic cost of exclusion.

Fragmentation among disability-focused organizations (public, private, civil society, etc.), insufficient funding, and inadequate evidence for planning and data for tracking and reporting; further complicate efforts to mainstream disability inclusion. For Kenya to realize its Vision 2030 goals and align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB) agenda over the next six years, disability inclusion strategies must shift from a charity-based model to a "Whole of Society Approach", centered on economic empowerment and participation at every level.

Hence the problem statement that *"Despite Kenya's progress in disability inclusion through policies and affirmative actions, systemic socio-economic and cultural barriers continue to exclude persons with disabilities from full societal participation, leading to significant economic costs and underrepresentation in the workforce amongst others. High poverty rates, persistent stigma, and fragmented coordination and support structures hinder persons with disabilities access to employment and essential services, resulting to KES 6 billion Gross Value Added (GVA) loss to GDP due to exclusion between 2019 and 2023 alone. To achieve Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, over the next six years, Kenya must transition to a strategic "Whole of Society Approach" that centers on economic empowerment and full participation of persons with disabilities at all levels."*

Strategic Intent (Futures) Statement/ Theory of Change and Stability by 2030: Behavioral Science and Digital Technology Fusion Accelerates Disability Inclusion in Kenya

Looking toward the future, the Kenya Vision 2030 seeks to “Transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality life to all its citizens by 2030”. Against this vision, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities envisions a “Barrier free society for persons with disabilities”;

i.e., in accessing the high quality of life promised by Kenya’s Vision 2030 which aligns with Kenya’s SDGs commitments of “Leaving No One Behind by 2030”. Through early identification and interventions, the National Disability Policy 2024 envisions a Kenyan Society anchored on “Inclusion, participation, and respect of persons with disabilities” mainstreamed in the social and economic life of the Kenyan Society- “Whole of Society Approach”.

Hence the emerging synthesis of patterns and evidence, this study accentuates that by 2030, Kenya envisions a transformative and inclusive society where persons with disabilities are not only integral to the economy but are also empowered entrepreneurs, innovators, contributors, and drivers of sustainable development. This future will be shaped by a strategic, data-driven approach combining the power of behavioral science to reshape socio-cultural, behavior patterns and reframe disability inclusion; and the disinflationary effect of inclusive digital technology on a whole of society approach to the “Empowered Person with Disability”, creating an environment where accessibility, representation, and economic empowerment are embedded across sectors. With this dual approach, Kenya can accelerate disability inclusion over the next decade and cultivate a stable and equitable society where persons with disabilities can contribute meaningfully to Kenya’s workplace, marketplace, and social spaces to drive cultural enrichment while playing a central role in the nation’s inclusive economic growth trajectory.

Hence the strategic intent/vision statement (Theory of Change): *“By 2030, Kenya envisions a fully inclusive society where the “Empowered Person with Disability” is recognized as an integral contributor to economic and social progress of the nation- an active entrepreneur, innovator, or leader, fostering a resilient, equitable nation aligned with Vision 2030 and the goal to “Leave No One Behind.” This transformative future will be driven by a data-led, “Whole of Society Approach,” harnessing behavioral science to reframe disability inclusion and the disinflationary effects of inclusive digital technology to accelerate rapid accessibility, full representation, and inclusive economic empowerment.”*

CHAPTER ONE

Background and Introduction

Historical and Institutional Context

Historically, the perceptions of disability inclusion in Kenya has been shaped by cultural, religious, and political ideologies that frame persons with disabilities (as defined by the 2019 National Census as 5 years and above) as objects of pity or societal burdens. The roots of these perceptions is anchored in traditional beliefs, where disability was often seen as a curse. Despite legislative advancements in recent past, including the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2003, the 2010 Constitution and subsequent constitutional provisions and policies, entrenched societal attitudes and systemic barriers persist. Efforts to promote disability inclusion have often fallen short, leading to symptoms of tokenistic approaches that fail to address the deeper challenges of social integration. The impact of the historical contexts on today's framing of disability inclusion underscores the necessity for a renewed focus on systemic and institutional change rooted in behavior sciences; and a new social and economic empowerment paradigm shift facilitated by technology disinflationary effect; amongst others, to foster genuine inclusion, challenge the prevailing narratives and intervention approaches to disability inclusion in Kenya.

Stakeholders Collaboration

The study involved collaboration among key stakeholders, including government ministries, departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), organizations for people with disabilities (OPDs), academia, international institutions, and the communities of persons with disabilities in Kenya themselves. Notably, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) plays a pivotal role in coordinating efforts towards disability inclusion. This collaborative approach aimed to leverage the expertise and insights of various actors to create a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities, fostering a multi-stakeholder engagement that enhanced the efficacy of the proposed solutions. Expert groups across Kenya and Africa were also consulted to strengthen the analysis and the authenticity of the study.

Justification and objectives

Either by design or neglect, persons with disabilities have been left behind. Yet, disability inclusion is at the center of the accelerated complexities of our times. Its effect is multidimensional, interconnected and graver at the intersections of society; and it is colossal in scale. Though World Health Organization reports that persons with disabilities constitute about 16% (1.3 billion people) of the global population¹, indicating approximately 8 M persons with disabilities population in Kenya, the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2023) estimates that people with disabilities account for 993,963 persons (2.2% of the population)² against the WHO global estimate. Amongst others, the United Nations Country Team (2023) reports that "... the census grossly underestimated the number of persons with disabilities ... additionally, it highlights that the 2019 census reflected a disability prevalence of only 2.2%, much lower than the global average of 16%, which raised concerns about data accuracy and representation.³ It furthers that (KNBS, 2019) they (persons with disabilities) impact 90% of the Kenyan Society⁴; and their impact has remained consistent despite persistent national efforts to mainstream disability inclusion through public policy and practice, for which Kenya has made tremendous progress.

1 World Health Organization. (2022). Global report on health equity for persons with disabilities.

2 KNBS, Economic Survey 2023

3 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya

4 KNBS, National Census 2019

Hence, for the purpose of this study, we adopt the WHO estimates for the rest of the analysis below. As an objective, this study seeks to:

1. Deepen the understanding of the context, and identify the systemic gaps in the current implementation approaches impeding disability inclusion in Kenya- in short, it seeks to understand **why** disability exclusion persists and is entrenched despite growing national efforts. This includes understanding the problem context.
2. Increase the spotlight on the macroeconomics of disability inclusion in Kenya by deepening the analysis around the “Cost of economic exclusion” (labor productivity gain/loss and impact on GDP) of people with disabilities- **what** is the macroeconomic impact of the persistent exclusion.
3. Recommend plausible, possible or desirable alternative futures as policy actions, programming, strategies, interventions and innovations to fast-track greater disability inclusion in Kenya (a shift from policy to practice- implementation)- **how** might we engender a new, integrated and alternative approach to addressing the problem.

Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations:

In response to investigating the hypothesis and testing 3 research questions (see below), the report arrived at a number of key findings as to **why** the persistence; **what** is the macroeconomic cost of exclusion; and how- a set of strategic recommendations to influence the status quo.

Summary of Key Findings:

1. **Current Negative Framing of Disability undermines Inclusion efforts:** Despite significant legal, policy and targeted programming efforts, disability inclusion in Kenya is currently framed as a societal burden, characterized by dependency, pity, and charity. The current framing cuts across different segments of society and it is undermining the significant progress of inclusion that Kenya has made in recent times. Amongst other sources, the UNPRPD Report (2023) points out that “Discrimination against women and girls with disabilities is manifested at the intersection of gender and disability. This discrimination results from deeply ingrained social, cultural, and systemic factors”⁵
2. **Symptoms of Tokenism undermining Implementation of targeted programmes to persons with disabilities:** By constitutional provisions, Kenya implements the 5% affirmative action quota targeting employment of persons with disabilities. While commendable, due to some inefficiencies in implementation, elements of superficial inclusion emerge toward actualizing the 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities in public and private sectors. These elements of inefficiency highlight a symptom of tokenism that are undermining the intent of the 5% disability inclusion in targeted government’s programming and implementation that needs to be addressed.
3. **Internalization of negative disability framing by persons with disabilities undermines their active engagements:** The internalization of exclusion, where persons with disabilities accept prolonged societal stereotypes, leads to self-oppression over time and fears, reducing their active socio-economic participation and self-drive for inclusion- passive rather than active participants to their own transformation.
4. **The Messy Middle of Disability Inclusion Sector hinders effective execution:** Disability inclusion policy implementation is hindered by inefficiencies in execution in Kenya including the lack of political will, and resource constraints. For instance, analysis from the UNPRPD (2023) report, amongst other things, established fragmentation within the disability sector, with multiple organizations, groups, and stakeholders working independently and without cohesive coordination.⁶ Similarly, Development Initiative (2020) reports that “Funds such as the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya and the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities have an overlap in mandates and support similar programmes, affecting efficiency.”⁷

5 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya

6 IBID1

7 Development Initiatives (2020). Government Funding to Support Disability Inclusion in Kenya. Development Initiatives; p 20

5. **Unemployment and Increasing Wage Disparities:** Unemployment for persons with disabilities remained stagnant between 2019 (10.4%) and 2023 (10.45%), but also remained consistently higher compared to the 5.2% national average. Average wage for persons with disabilities increased from KES 450,000 in 2019 to KES 491,031 in 2023, representing an average 2.2% year-on-year annual increase; but when compared to the national average of KES 888,743; persons with disabilities in the labor force experienced a wage gap of 44.7% in 2023 alone, limiting their ability to escape poverty regardless if there was any increase in the persons with disabilities labor force participation over the period.
6. **Decreasing Poverty Impact amongst Persons with Disabilities:** In 2019, the poverty rate for persons with disabilities was 45.7%, experiencing a 12.4 percentage points higher than the national rate. It dropped to 38% by 2023, a 7.7% decrease; the national poverty rate fell from 33.3% to 30% (a 3.3% drop) in the same year. Though still high above the national average, 7.7% drop is a significant gain indicating that current efforts at inclusive policies and employment opportunities, though minimal, for persons with disabilities have had a positive impact on reducing poverty. However, they are still more likely to live in poverty than the general population.
7. **Cost of Persons with Disabilities Exclusion from the Labor Force (2019-2023):**
 - 7.1 **Cost of macroeconomic exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labor force:** By 2023, at 100% persons with disabilities labor force participation in the Kenyan economy would have had a net estimate of KES 10 billion GVA. But only 41% of the labor force of persons with disabilities was included in the workforce resulting to **KES 4.2 billion GVA** addition to the GDP between 2019 and 2023. This means during the same period, up to 59% persons with disabilities labor force was excluded from the workforce and caused a cumulative GVA loss to GDP of **KES 6.056 billion**. The gap widened over the years. In 2019, the gap was **KES 36M**, and by 2023, it had widened to **KES 106M**.
 - 7.2 But what if:
 - Scenario One: 41% to 60% Persons with disabilities Labor Force Inclusion:** what if persons with disabilities labor force participation rate was to increase from **41% to 60%** during the same period, this increase would have moved GVA to **KES 6.1 billion**, yielding additional **KES 3.2 billion** to the Kenyan economy during the period.
 - Scenario Two: 60% to 75% Persons with disabilities Labor Force Inclusion:** Increasing persons with disabilities labor force participation in the work force further from 60% to 75% would have boosted GVA to **KES 7.7 billion** yielding additional **KES 2 billion** increase.
 - Scenario Three: 75% to 90% Increase:** Increasing the persons with disabilities labor force participation rate from 75% to 90% would have boosted GVA to **KES 9.2 billion** yielding additional **KES 1.7 billion** increase over the five-year period from 2019 to 2023 respectively.

Across the different scenarios, the unit efficiency that would have been gained, but that was lost per each 1 percentage point of persons with disabilities labor force inclusion in the Kenyan workforce stood at KES 102,659,265 million. This means, Kenya lost **KES 102,659,265 million** for every 1% persons with disabilities labor force excluded from the economy.
 - 7.3 **Impact of Equal Wage:** Average wage for persons with disabilities stood at **KES 491,031 in 2023; 44.7%** lower than the national average at **KES 888,743.5 in 2023**.⁸ Persons with disabilities labor force constituted **6.45% (1.4M)** generating employees' compensation of **KES 20,501,400 in 2023**. At equal wage, the Kenyan economy would have resulted to a GDP impact of an additional **KES 102.5M in 2023** alone. This means, the Kenyan economy lost approximately 45.8M in 2023 alone due to wage disparities.
8. **Technology presents the Biggest Risk, and yet; the Biggest Opportunity to Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities:** low level jobs being taken over by technology and AI, matched with the difficulties of getting employment, is worsening vulnerability and may put many persons with disabilities out of employment in the future. Yet the disinflationary effect of digital technology has the potential to mainstream disability inclusion in every area of society with opportunities to create new economic opportunities.
9. **The Future of Disability Inclusion is Behavior Science and Digital Technology:** The future of effective disability socioeconomic inclusion in Kenya will be driven by "Behaviour Science and Digital Technology" either as complementary parts of the whole or as a fusion based on the strategy of implementation. This is evident from the horizon scanning analysis and the human-centred empathy analysis.

8 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

Recommendations:

Option One: the report recommends the implementation of individual strategic interventions under option two below- a single integrated framework.

Option Two: The report recommends the implementation of a single integrated programming framework solution to “Shine the Spotlight” on Disability Inclusion in Kenya- accelerating progress to catchup ahead of six years to the completion of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030:

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA ONE: Behavior Science and Futures- Reframing Disability Inclusion

1.1. Create Observatory & Inclusive Futures Lab
1.2. National Behavior Change Campaigns

8 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

1.3. Voices of Inclusion Digital Storytelling Platform
1.4. Futures Literacy and Strategic Foresight Workshops
1.5. Inclusive Leadership Development Programs

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA TWO: Data, Digital Technology, and Innovation

2.1. National Disability Innovation and Inclusion Data Hub
2.2. Inclusive Digital Economy Programs targeting vulnerabilities including persons with disabilities
2.3. Establish the Africa Digital Free Trade Marketplace (e-commerce platform) to tap on AfCFTA's opportunities targeting vulnerabilities economic inclusion including persons with disabilities

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA THREE: Coordination and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

3.1. Enhance NCPWD Coordination Role and Capacity
3.2. Enhanced MEL Systems for Disability Inclusion
3.3. Public-Private Sector Partnerships

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA FOUR: Socioeconomic Empowerment- Accelerate Persons with disabilities Inclusion

4.1. Whole of Society Approach- Mainstream Disability Inclusive Practices across the Kenyan Society
4.2. Inclusive Employment Quota Expansion
4.3. Financial Inclusion and Access to Credit
4.4. Public Procurement and Disability Inclusion
4.5. Expand Social Protection Disability Cash+ Services as a means of Socio-economic Inclusion

CHAPTER TWO

Research Methods

Fundamentally, the methodology of this study adopts a mixed approach with a focus on **“Research for design”** that seeks to impact the next generation of policies, strategies, programmes, projects, systems; and products, services, business models innovation for rapid and sustainable disability inclusion into the future. By testing a hypothesis against the research questions listed below, this study is implemented as follows:

Deductive approach- applying objectivity in reviewing the body of literature (secondary literature review to outline the “State of the art”); we collected and analyzed a set of specific data to test the hypothesis (theory) through 3 research questions while manipulating the independent variable to observe the patterns in the dependent variable.

Inductive approach- a qualitative synthesis was conducted to deepen the contextual understanding of the factors hindering disability inclusion, but while propagating economic exclusion of disability in Kenya; deriving the problem statement. The approach draws on synthesis to observe patterns and trends in evidence; quantitative and qualitative; rather than analysis.

Abductive approach- the outcome of the deductive and inductive analysis strengthens understanding of the existing phenomena shaping the **“Problem context”** and deepening the understandings that are currently framing disability inclusion in Kenya. Derived as an outcome of the design (empathy) workshop, stakeholders’ engagement, and futures analysis, an **“Intent Statement”** is crafted and attempts to anticipate the alternative pathway to the futures of disability inclusion in Kenya. Deepening the futures analysis through horizon scanning (futures research) and applying the lenses of creativity, design innovation and foresight, the study seeks to reframe disability within the emerging future contexts and recommend alternative solutions as policy actions, strategies, interventions and social innovations to fast-track greater disability inclusion in Kenya targeting different stakeholder groups including the private sector.

Hypothesis: While Kenya has established a comprehensive legal and policy framework for disability inclusion, gaps in implementation, limited access to services, and socio-economic marginalization of persons with disabilities still persist. However, by integrating traditional data-driven insights and immersive human-centred approach including empathy-based evidence such as storytelling; stakeholders in Kenya can deploy new ways of knowing that unpacks the complexities, deepens understanding and reframes disability inclusion, while offering new solutions and innovations to impact inclusive alternative policies that not only address the current challenges, but that shape equitable futures for persons with disabilities in Kenya.

Research Questions:

The hypothesis was tested against the following 3 research questions as indicated below

Q#1: What are the existing systemic gaps impeding disability inclusion in Kenya, and how do these gaps affect the implementation and enforcement of disability rights and inclusion?

Objective: This question seeks to critically evaluate the adequacy of the current implementation environment (systems and structures). It aims to identify the underpinning factors influencing disability rights and inclusion policies and systems implementation; i.e. why are they falling short in practice.

Q#2: What are the macroeconomic (focus on GDP) consequences of excluding persons with disabilities labor force from the Kenyan workforce?

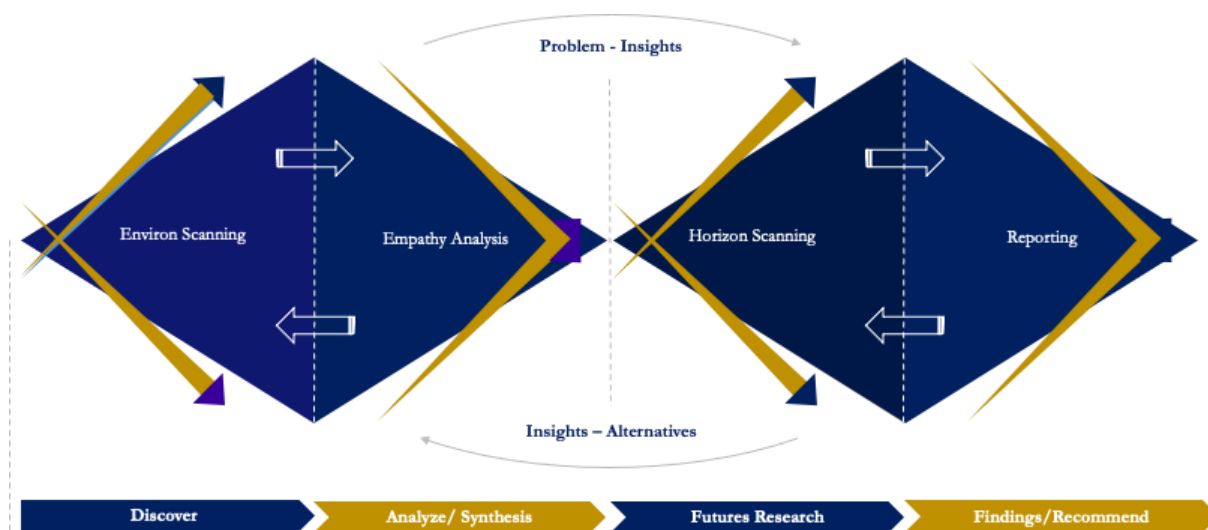
Objective: To explore, quantify and analyse key macroeconomic indicators framing the status of persons with disabilities in Kenya, and to investigate how exclusion results in higher macroeconomic costs such as increased dependency and marginalization, etc.

Q#3: How might a human-centred and futures focused approach to evidence offer alternative and innovative solutions to fast track the socioeconomic inclusion of persons with disabilities in Kenya?

Objective: This question seeks to explore how immersive engagements methods (e.g., empathy mapping, stakeholder engagements), co-creative processes and futures analysis impact existing practices and generate alternative solutions that are inclusive, frugal, and sustainable enough to trigger mass actions. It also considered how to leverage data and emerging trends (e.g., digital economy, remote work, gig economy, creative economy, circular economy, etc.) to foster an inclusive future for persons with disabilities.

The method of inquiry (knowledge generation) is the double diamond approach deploying the divergent and convergent analysis beginning from discovery to findings and recommendations.

Figure 1: Double Diamond Model

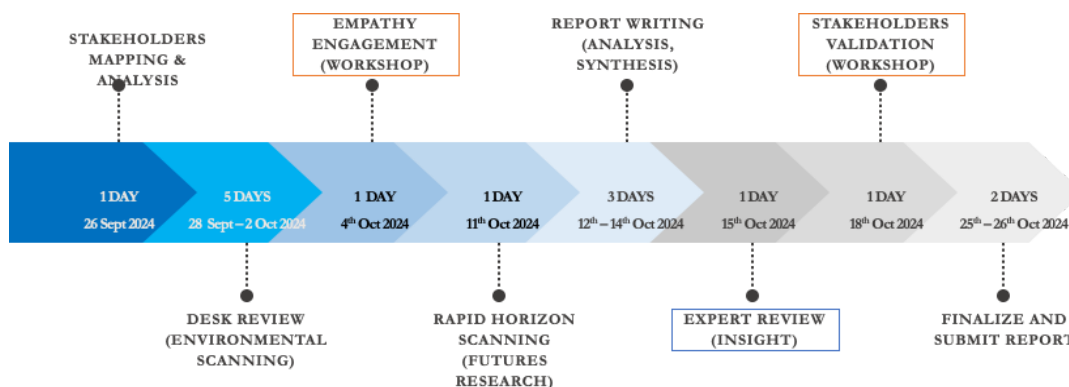


Source: Figure developed by the author

Though mixed methods, the primary approach to the study is desk review (**environmental scanning and horizon scanning**), combined with an immersive human-centered approach; and empathy-based stakeholders' engagement.

As a roadmap, the process systematically followed these steps:

Figure 2: Implementation Roadmap



Source: Figure developed by the author

Desk Review (Environmental Scanning and Horizon Scanning):

This includes the identification and synthesis of existing literature, reports, and data on disability inclusion in Kenya to deepen the understanding of the current context (socioeconomic status, gaps, trends in data and perception), stakeholders' analysis and opportunities in disability inclusion in Kenya.

Empathy Engagement (Immersive Stakeholders Engagement):

To achieve this, a one-day design thinking workshop was held under the theme "Enhancing Disability Inclusion in Kenya through Empathy, Storytelling, and Design Thinking". This workshop aimed to engage 25 organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs); engaging persons with disabilities to tell their stories and engage in a safe space in a way that deepens understanding of disability inclusion while also reframing disabilities inclusion in a way that influences alternative policy, programing and innovations. The specific objectives of the workshop include:

- **Build Empathy:** Deeply understanding the context of disability inclusion in Kenya including the challenges, fears, hopes, and aspirations of persons with disabilities.
- **Generate Insights:** Identify the key pain points and opportunities for enhancing disability inclusion.
- **Develop Tools:** Create empathy maps, value proposition canvases, and personas to inform future strategies.
- **Reframe Disability:** Based on the insights from the storytelling sessions, engage diverse stakeholders in co-creation, building shared understanding to reframe disability as a positive force for social change.

Out of the primary participants, 4 persons with disabilities with different disability types were identified to tell their stories. Adopting a design thinking and futures-focused perspective, four categories of empathy- based stories were crucial to deepening the contextual understanding of disability inclusion baselines in Kenya. These stories were told to not only highlight the pains, fears, and anxieties of persons with disabilities, but to also explore their aspirations and hopes for more inclusive alternative futures. The stories were structured and told around the following elements: storyline (theme of their specific struggle), focus (structural and systemic issues), design thinking angle (human-centered approach), systems thinking angle (capturing the complex systemic relationships that characterize the circumstances and settings of the story), futures thinking angle (capturing the storytellers deepest wish and dreams of a future in which they seek to live as persons living with disabilities); and key emotions (deep frustrations, pains, fears, anxieties they experienced). The four generic storylines included "Systemic Barriers and Opportunities in Policy and Governance; Education and Lifelong Learning Barriers; Economic Exclusion and the Future of Work for Persons with disabilities; and Technological Accessibility and Digital Inclusion".

Horizon Scanning (Futures Research):

This includes the systematic mapping and analyzing of the impacts of key global mega trends; national trends and emerging issues in Kenya, and fundamental theories of change and stability shaping the futures of disabilities inclusion in Kenya.

Experts Review and Stakeholders Validation:

This includes building upon the collective intelligence of independent experts around disability inclusion; design innovation and futures; and macroeconomics to deepen the analysis and insights around the findings and recommendations. To strengthen the collective involvement and ownership of the report, the validation exercise includes the presentation and discussion of the wider disability community and stakeholders in Kenya.

PART ONE

ISSUES SHAPING PRESENT DISABILITY INCLUSION EFFORTS

This section of the report and analysis focuses on understanding how events of the past are shaping the present to create or reinforce the current state of disability inclusion in Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

A. Desk Review and Empaty Research

Kenya is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the Global Disability Charter for Change and other global and regional agreements and protocols; and has committed to the economic, social and political inclusion of persons with disabilities. The country has made significant progress toward disability inclusion including the set-up, funding and implementation of specific social protection initiatives.⁹

In its Economic Survey 2024, building on more than 20 years of progress since the enactment of the 2003 Disability Act followed by the 5% affirmative action constitutional provision, the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics reports that the Government of Kenya implements several strategies to bolster social and economic inclusion of vulnerable segments of society including persons with disabilities. During the period under review alone, total government grants to the affirmative action funds increased by 38.7% from KES

1.1 billion in 2022/23 to KES 4.3 billion in 2023/24. The total amount disbursed to beneficiaries through the affirmative funds was projected to increase by a mega 73.3% from KES 3.0 billion in 2022/23 to KES

5.2 billion by the end of the 2023/24 financial year¹⁰. In its 2023 Needs Assessment Report for persons with disabilities and their primary caregivers, the Kenyan Government Ministry of Labor and Social Development reports that the Government, through the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), reserved KES 1 billion in the FY 2021/2022 budget to support enterprises owned by youth, women and persons with disabilities and awarded KES 2.08 million to businesses owned by persons with disabilities alone. It also procured and issued business startup tool kits to persons with disabilities to promote their self-employment and self-reliance. Similarly, the Kenyan National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), in the FY 2020/21, disbursed KES 25 million in the form of grants to registered self-help groups of persons with disabilities (MLSD, 2023). Articulated further; in its strategic plan 2023- 2027, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) outlines the 3 pillars of the Kenyan Vision 2030 as economic, social, and political; projecting that these are foundation on the socio-economic transformation of the Kenyan society. Amongst other things, it specifically calls for a national safety net programme that up-scales cash transfer for persons with severe disabilities up from 47,000 to 352,000 beneficiaries (86% increase) with the introduction of new interventions geared towards persons with disabilities¹¹ (NCPWD, 2023).

⁹ Report on Government funding to support disability inclusion in Kenya; by Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd, (2020).

¹⁰ Economic Survey 2024; Providing, Managing, and Promoting Quality Statistics by the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics (2024)

¹¹ NCPWD, 2023

Yet, disability issues in Kenya is at the center of the accelerated complexities of the time and it is colossal in impact. KNBS (2019) reports that persons with disabilities account for 2.2% (993,963 persons) of the Kenyan population, but it affects 90% of the Kenyan society.¹² Framed as a cultural curse¹³, it is probably the single most cause of marginalization and exclusion throughout all of Kenyan society; accentuating the importance of this study; why?

To deepen the understanding as to why, the hypothesis; as indicated above, is tested against the first question below.

RESEARCH QUESTION #1: “What are the existing systemic gaps impeding disability inclusion in Kenya, and how do these gaps affect the implementation and enforcement of disability rights and inclusion?” Synthesizing the data to deepen the meaning and find trends and patterns in response to question one, we deep-dived into the following:

Ideologies Shaping the Current Frame of Disability Inclusion in Kenya

Perhaps, what is by far the biggest problem worsening disability exclusion in Kenya is the “Negative framing of what disability inclusion is and the perceived effects of its conditions on the workplace, marketplace and social space in the Kenyan Society. This is mainly manifested as social stigma, cultural barriers and worsens at the intersections. They stem from decades of reinforced structural isolations and systemic biases. But (NCPWD, 2024) the policy and institutional landscape related to persons with disabilities in Kenya has steadily evolved since the 1950s, building from the establishment of specialized and statutory institutions for persons with disabilities during the colonial and post-independence periods¹⁴ in an attempt to foster greater inclusion at all levels. Both the the Persons with Disabilities National Policy (MLSD, 2024) and the Disability Landscape in Kenya (NCPWD, 2024) report attempt to present the chronology depicting the evolution of disability inclusion in Kenya. Analysed across different time periods, it includes the emergence of different ideological framings of disability inclusion over time as follow:

Figure 3: Chronology of Ideologies on Disability Inclusion in Kenya

Rise of Care and Institutions		Rise of Dignity, Rights & Inclusion		Rise of Social & Economic Empowerment	
Traditional Era Missionary Era	Ominde Commission (1964) (specialized learning)	Advocacy Era	Attorney General Task Force (1993) CRPD Ratified	Legal Era	PWDs Act of 2003 NCPWDs (2004) 2010 Constitution
Pre- Independence:	60s-70s	70s-90s	90s-2000s	2000s-2020	Present
Societal Worldview: - Lead: Family, Community, early missionary role - View: Curse/ Paternalistic & home care Dominant Ideology: - curse, punishment led to stigma, exclusion	Societal Worldview: - Lead: rise of church and institutionalization - View: Ailment to be treated, early role of state Dominant Ideology: - Dependence, care, support led to institutionalization	Societal Worldview: - Lead: rise of non-profit advocacy, state duty- dignity, rights - View: human dignity Dominant Ideology: - State recognition of PWDs-dignity; but society's social burden, pity	Societal Worldview: - Lead: rise of the state responsibility - View: human rights Dominant Ideology: - Rights and affirmative actions	Societal Worldview: - Lead: targeted PWDs interventions - View: social protection & inclusion Dominant Ideology: - tokenism emerge (symbolic inclusion); internalization (self oppression); messy middle (Data & MEL, weak coordination, poor accountability and weak execution, etc.)	Societal Worldview: - Lead: Whole of society approach - View: Cost of exclusion vs benefits of inclusion Dominant Ideology: - Alternative pathways to inclusion; but system is defined by tokenism, internalization & messy middle

Source: Figure developed by the author

12 Persons with Disabilities National Policy (May 2024); Ministry of Labor and Social Protection

13 Mugo, J. K., Oranga, J., & Singal, N. (2010). Testing youth transitions in Kenya: Are young people with disabilities falling through the cracks? International Journal of Educational Development, 30(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.12.001>

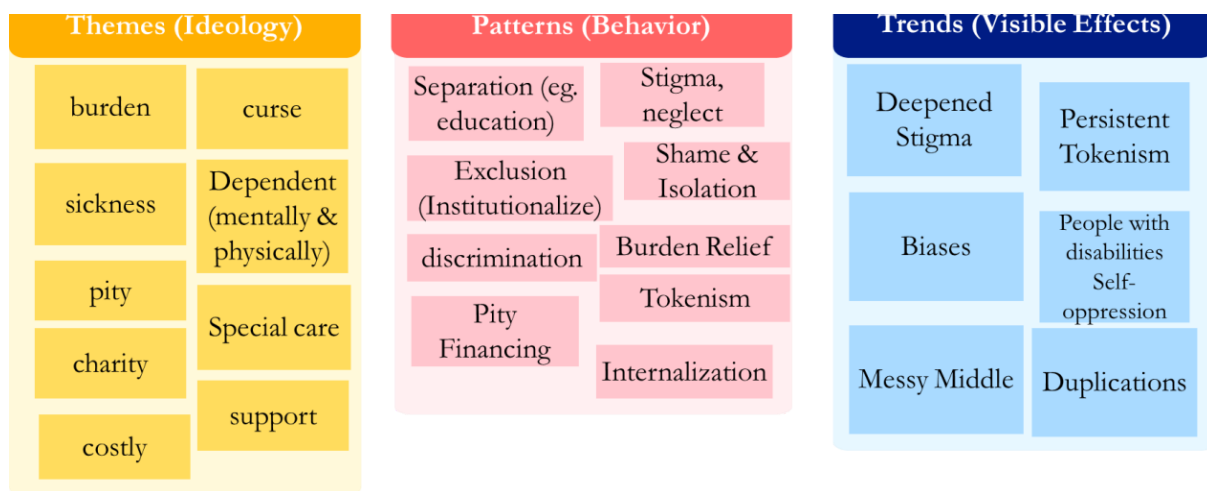
14 NCPWD 2024: Disability Landscape in Kenya

Analysis of Kenya's societal framing of disability inclusion presents a complex narrative that has evolved over time, influenced by cultural, religious, and legal milestones and deeply rooted in stigma, exclusion, and marginalization. The journey toward genuine disability inclusion continues to face barriers tied to historical, social, and institutionalized beliefs that persist today.

Superstitiously, during the traditional era, disability (Mugo et al., 2010) was largely interpreted as a form of divine punishment or curse, resulting in the persons with disabilities exclusion from community life. While Christian religious institutions provided care, the perception of persons with disabilities as dependents also persisted, framing them as recipients of charity rather than equal participants in society.¹⁵ These beliefs, though less prevalent today, still echoes in parts of rural Kenya, where traditional practices hold sway. The attitudes and practices embedded in cultural beliefs... create near-insurmountable obstacles to the participation of persons with disabilities in social and cultural activities"¹⁶ while discrimination against women and girls with disabilities, at the height of the practice, is manifested at the intersection of gender and disability resulting from deeply ingrained social, cultural, and systemic factors.¹⁷ This is while legislative frameworks seek to promote greater recognition of persons with disabilities. Societal attitudes towards them remained largely negative, reinforcing segregation in education and employment.¹⁸ The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (2023) further believes that despite affirmative action policies of goodwill, tokenism continues to pervade workplaces, with persons with disabilities often employed in low-level roles without real opportunities for advancement¹⁹ reinforcing the fundamental beliefs that they are objects of charity and pity, subjects of rights, but not agents of innovation, societal transformation and change.

Hence, the current societal framing of disability inclusion (a convergence of the advocacy and legal era) in Kenya continues to be shaped by a mix of historical, cultural, religious, and political ideologies influencing the perception that it is a **burden, object of pity and charity, subjects of rights, and dependents** whose inclusion is forced upon society in a period of the rise of human rights; justifying **tokenism** as a practice, and reinforcing persons with disabilities self-oppression or **internalization** as a normal course. As a result, the affinity analysis below clusters the emerging themes, patterns and trends defining the dialectics of present day interventions that must be addressed or reframed to engender a new era of accelerated and sustainable progress.

Figure 4: Affinity Analysis: Converging framings of people with disabilities in Kenya



Source: Figure developed by the author

15 Mugo et al., 2010, p. 395

16 Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. (2024). National Disabilities Policy 2024. Government of Kenya; p. 11

17 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya; p. 40

18 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019 Census, p. 55

19 National Council for Persons with Disabilities, 2023, p. 29)

The Role of Tokenism in Disability Inclusion in the Kenyan Society

Despite only 2.2% of the population, disability inclusion affects 90% of the Kenyan society (KNBS, 2019), explaining its magnitude and impact on the social and economic fabrics of the nation. Even worse is the fact that disability inclusion is at the bottom of the social pyramid. Despite the enormous impact it brings to their mobility, KNBS (2019) census reports that on a national scale, only 15.5% of persons with disabilities reported using any assistive devices; and over 30% reported facing barriers in performing daily activities such as bathing, dressing, and accessing public transportation. Only 9.3% were covered by any form of health insurance, compared to 22% of the general population despite the fact that over 50% reported not seeking medical attention when needed due to long distances to healthcare facilities and high costs associated with accessing care. Further alarming is the fact that nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement opportunities, citing barriers such as lack of access to public meetings, inaccessible information, and discriminatory attitudes.

Yet politically, it is associated with inadequate will to fully implement required programs and initiatives with low commitment and prioritization to ensure effective policies, programs, and measures promoting rights and inclusion²⁰. This lack of political commitment cascades across everywhere and everything disability. The 2022 report from NCPWD (2023) further revealed that less than 1% of the 404 public institutions evaluated had met the 5% employment quota²¹. In its public budget analysis to support disability programming, Development Initiatives (2020) reports that while tailored primary schools promote access to education, they lead to segregation of students with disabilities. Accordingly, budget allocations to such schools may not be compliant with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities²². All of this persist more than 20 years away from the 2003 Disability Act outlining fundamental rights to access, and 14 years after the 2010 Constitutional affirmation for 5% inclusion in public and private workforce across the nation.

Tokenism; the *superficial or symbolic effort* to include marginalized groups, in this case, the persons with disabilities in Kenya, often for the sake of appearances rather than meaningful change, is undermining legislative, budgetary and social protection programming efforts in Kenya. Symptoms of Tokenism manifests in various ways including poorly implemented employment quotas to *surface-level compliance* with international conventions. Instead of fostering genuine inclusion, tokenism is entrenching the exclusion of persons with disabilities by reinforcing structural inequalities while failing to address deeper societal and systemic barriers.

Tokenism and the 5% Employment Quotas:

The 5% mandatory employment quota in both private and public sectors provisions in the Kenya's Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), while it may appear progressive on the surface, the lack of enforcement and meaningful integration of persons with disabilities into workplaces makes it an example of tokenism. Reports indicate that compliance with this quota remains significantly low, with only 1% out of 404 public institutions complying in the 2022 NCPWD assessment. The failure to fully integrate persons with disabilities into the workforce leaves them excluded from economic empowerment and contributes to their continued marginalization. It also reinforces the idea that persons with disabilities are merely filling a quota, without being given opportunities for career advancement, skill development, or leadership roles.

Tokenism and Educational Segregation for Persons with disabilities

In the context of Tokenism, the provision of **special schools;** while provides focused support especially to children with multiple disabilities, may perpetuate segregation as they prevent the full integration of children with disabilities into mainstream educational systems. This separation can reinforce stigma and the perception that children with disabilities are different and less capable. It further isolates children with disabilities, limiting their interactions with peers and fostering environments where they are treated as "The others". By focusing on special schools rather than integrating inclusive tailored

20 UNPRPD (2023). *Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya*. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya; p 9

21 National Council for Persons with Disabilities, 2023, p. 29

22 Development Initiatives, 2020, p. 16

education policies into mainstream systems, Kenya's educational framework exemplifies symptoms of a tokenistic approach that does little to challenge deeper societal perceptions around disability inclusion.

*"While special primary schools promote access to education, they lead to segregation of students with disabilities. Accordingly, budget allocations to such schools may not be compliant with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities"*²³

Social Protection and Elements of Tokenism

Indeed, Kenya has established several social protection programs targeting persons with disabilities, such as the Cash Transfer for Persons with Severe Disabilities (PWSD-CT) implemented by the State Department on Social Protection (SDSP) with the objective to provide cash transfers to 47,000 households with persons with severe disabilities per year targeting health, education, nutrition improvements and monthly cash transfers to vulnerable groups in targeted counties such as Kilifi, Kitui, Marsabit, Turkana, and West Pokot.²⁴ With evidence of progress, segments of the targeted populations remain unreached. For instance, the programme also excludes deaf persons on grounds of ineligibility. This creates a disconnect between policy and practice and highlights symptoms of tokenistic measures that reinforce feelings of internalization within certain segments of the persons with disabilities communities leaving them in vulnerable situations, with minimal economic assistance and few pathways to escape poverty.

*"Only 11% of eligible households reported receiving any form of government support under the Cash Transfer Program"*²⁵

Political Representation and Civic Participation

Symptoms of Tokenism is also evident in the political sphere, where persons with disabilities are severely underrepresented. Although there are policies encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities in governance, their actual influence in decision-making remains limited. Persons with disabilities occupy only a tiny percentage of local governance positions and experience significant barriers in accessing political platforms. Despite Kenya's efforts to create space for persons with disabilities in political and civic participation, these actions often fall short of enabling genuine engagement and influence. Without strong political representation and civic engagements, they remain excluded from the governance processes that could advocate for more inclusive policies.

*"Only 2% of local governance positions were held by persons with disabilities, limiting their influence on policy and community planning"*²⁶

*"Nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement opportunities, citing barriers such as lack of access to public meetings..."*²⁷

*"Over 60% of persons with disabilities in rural areas reported feelings of social isolation, citing stigma and the lack of accessible community centers..."*²⁸

Internalization of Tokenism by Persons with Disabilities

Another negative impact of the symptoms of tokenism is the internalization of societal stereotypes by persons with disabilities themselves. When tokenistic measures are taken, and inclusion is only superficial, individuals may internalize the belief that they are only being included for appearances. This leads to reduced self-esteem, diminished ambitions, and lower social participation, particularly among women with disabilities.

23 Development Initiatives, 2020, p. 16

24 Disability Landscape in Kenya; 2024; pg. 49

25 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019 Census, p. 63. Reference is made to persons of disabilities population.

26 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019 Census, p. 167

27 IBID1 p. 210

28 IBID2 p. 161

“Women with disabilities were twice as likely to be denied inheritance rights compared to their non-disabled counterparts, citing cultural and familial biases against their ability to manage property”²⁹

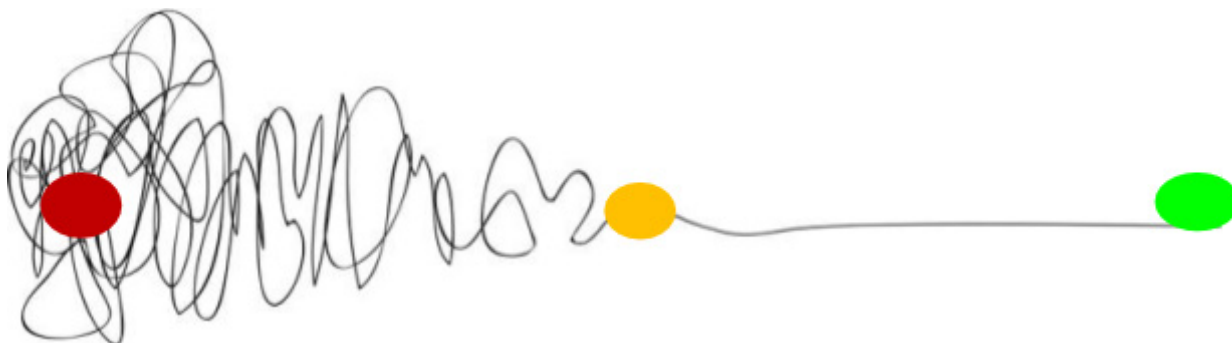
“Nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement opportunities, citing barriers such as lack of access to public meetings...”³⁰

The **internalization of tokenism** reinforces cycles of exclusion by making individuals feel that their contributions are not valued, and that meaningful participation is out of reach. This dynamic has deep psychological impacts, which, when combined with societal stigma, is further entrenching disability exclusion in Kenya.

The Messy Middle and Disability Inclusion in the Kenya Society

As Hood (1991), puts it, “The very mechanisms designed to ensure efficiency and accountability in public services often generate complexity and friction. In trying to balance accountability with flexibility, public services become tangled in a web of regulations, creating what is essentially a **“messy middle”**³¹ of inconsistent and inefficient outcomes”³²; and (Pierson, 2000) once set on this inefficient path, it becomes resistant to change, creating a **“path dependence”** that locks them in the inefficient practices, and resulting to a situation where the cost of shifting from the established routines leads to perpetuated inefficiencies, despite their obvious drawbacks”³³. In such an environment, Merton (1995) argues that adherence; the means, becomes more important than the goal itself, trapping and creating a web of inefficient practices.³⁴ This, Moore (1995) projects, results in a **“muddled middle”** where accountability is diluted and outcomes are suboptimal.³⁵

Figure 5: Design Clarity Pattern: Policy Intentions



Source: Figure developed by the author

Implementation often intends to provide clarity towards the middle and deeper results at the end.

29 IBID3 p. 182

30 IBID4 p. 210

31 31 In this context, the Messy Middle refers to the complex space where multiple barriers, fragmented services, underfunding, and weak implementation intersect, creating a web of inefficiencies that perpetuates the marginalization of persons with disabilities.

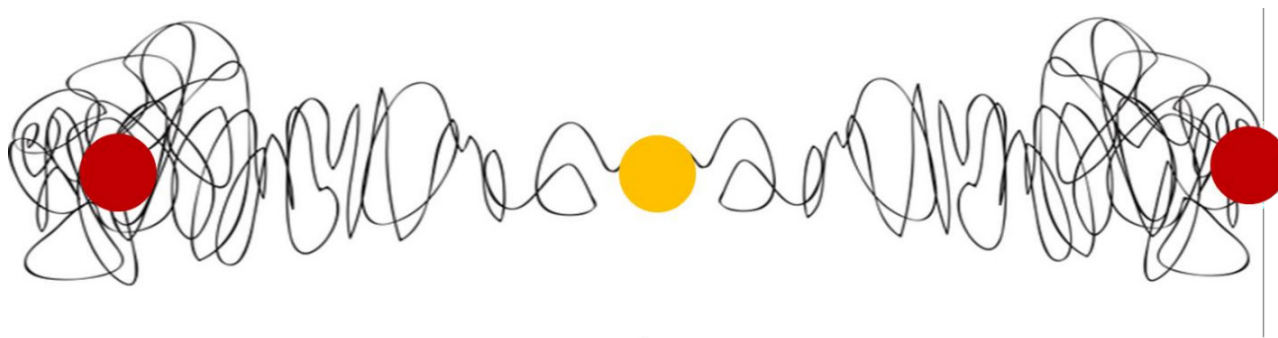
32 Hood, 1991, p. 7

33 Pierson, 2000, p. 253

34 Merton, 1957, p. 195

35 Moore, 1995, p. 112

Figure 6: Design Clarity Pattern: Messy Middle



Source: Figure developed by the author

But the messy or muddled middle (inefficiency) undermines implementation and clouds results. The analogy of the messy middle in the disability inclusion sector is evidenced in the (UNCT, 2023) weak coordination mechanisms; superficial disability inclusion practices (tokenism); internalization; insufficient financing for coordination and advocacy; fragmentation of stakeholders roles and responsibilities; inadequate political will, governance and accountability; disability adverse information formats and access points; inadequate research, poor data, misrepresentation and monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms; etc. These cause high barriers to access including quality of contact, increasing cost to access, long distances and lack of an institutionalized one-stop-shop approach to disability inclusion access, determination, and certification.³⁶

Over 60% (Development Initiatives, 2020) of disability-related policies do not incorporate accurate data on the persons with disabilities population while there is limited access to publically available budgetary and actual expenditure data, poor data disaggregation³⁷; coupled with the weak monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanism that results to the lack of clear national standards, indicators, and information management systems³⁸ mis-targeting the intended population and misrepresentation of the outcomes.³⁹ Overlapping mandates of the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya, and the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities have caused double funding of similar programmes⁴⁰ and results to poor coordination (only 12% of MDAs have coordinated strategies for disability inclusion and over 70% of persons with disabilities surveyed by NCPWD in its 2023 reporting, reported that they had to navigate multiple agencies for the same service⁴¹) of the sector which include other state and non-state actors⁴²

Similarly, the messy middle also impacts execution and completion rates of public funded disability focused programmes. NCPWD (2022) reports that 35% of disability-related projects remain stalled due to delays in procurement processes and resource disbursement; and only 45% of planned programs are completed across government terms⁴³

36 United Nations Country Team in Kenya (2023) joint assessment report

37 Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd, 2020

38 National Council for Persons with Disability, 2024

39 Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, 2024

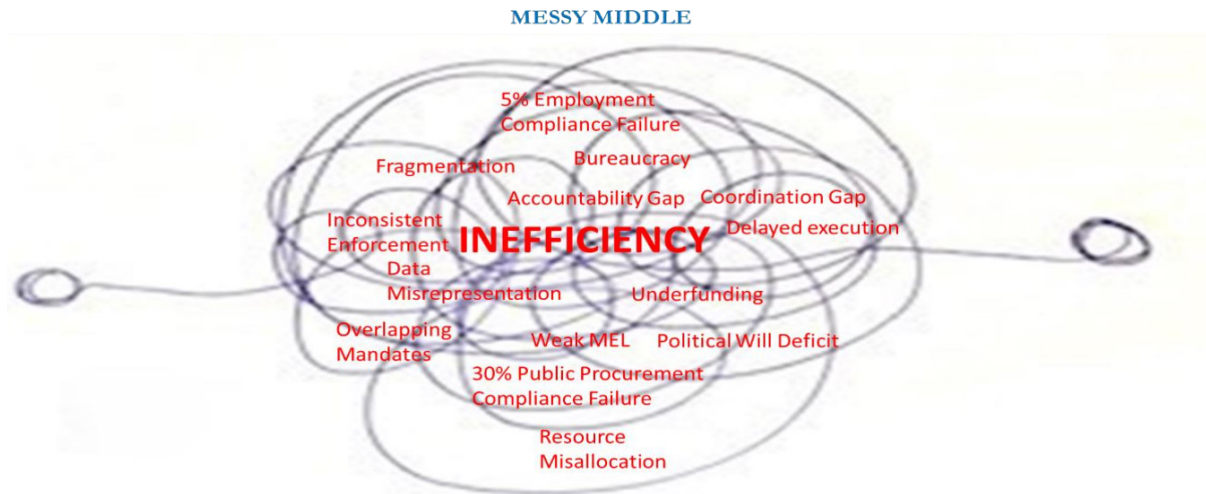
40 Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd, 2020; p. 20

41 National Council for Persons with Disability 2023

42 Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (2022). *Kenya Country Report on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/124 on Follow-Up to the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family and Beyond*. Government of Kenya

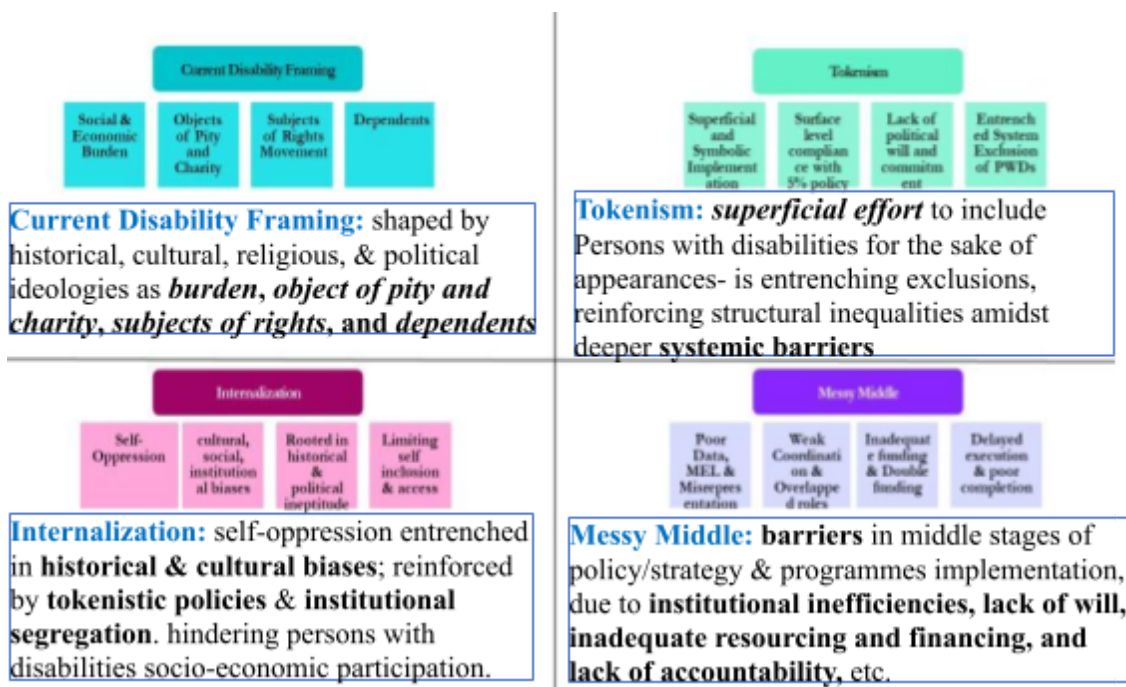
43 National Council for Persons with Disability 2024; p. 42

Figure 7: Design Clarity Pattern: Messy Middle Demystified



Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 8: Emerging Trends Framing the Context of Disability Inclusion in Kenya



Source: Figure developed by the author

In response to question one, the emerging trends framing the context of disability inclusion in Kenya include the current negative framing, tokenism, internalization, and the messy middle.

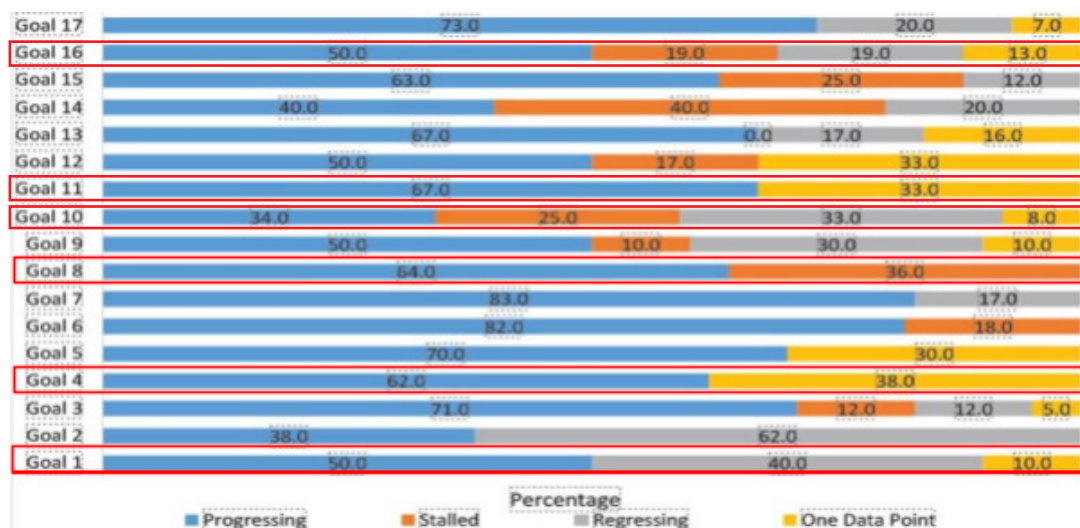
RESEARCH QUESTION#2: What are the macroeconomic (e.g. GDP, etc.) consequences of excluding persons with disabilities?

Macroeconomics of Exclusion and Disability Inclusion in the Kenya Society: Leaving No One Behind

UNDESA (2024) Global Disability and Development Report 2024 reveals that six years into the completion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a mere 5 global indicators are on track, i.e., with progress consistent with achieving their respective targets for persons with disabilities by 2030 – these include remarkable progress in education laws on equal access, disaster early warnings in accessible formats, online services for persons with disabilities, government ministries accessible for persons with disabilities and monitoring of bilateral aid dedicated to disability inclusion. But wide gaps persist between persons with and without disabilities, particularly on food insecurity, health, access to energy and ICT with gaps above 10 percentage points and on multidimensional poverty and employment with gaps above 20 percentage points respectively. For women with disabilities, indigenous persons with disabilities, persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and persons with disabilities living in rural areas, the gaps are wider. Moreover, although countries have increasingly involved persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, overall, this involvement remains low.⁴⁴

Premised on Article 43 of the Constitution, Kenya has adopted a human rights-based approach to development including implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This includes ensuring economic and social rights and right to the highest standard of health, education, freedom from hunger and adequate food, and decent livelihoods; and as addressed in Article 69(1), the rights of the environment. Though mixed, the country has made good progress towards the attainment of the SDGs, including: strengthening of institutional frameworks and stakeholder engagement; awareness creation through various platforms and community dialogue at the local level; capacity building; tracking and reporting; development of SDGs Recovery and Acceleration Strategy (2022-2030); and SDGs roadmap to accelerate implementation beyond the midpoint. Across the 17 goals, some indicators show positive progress while others are either stagnating or regressing. The progress reported is based on the 168 indicators in the National SDGs Indicator Framework 2024 constituting 68% of the Global indicators (248). Out of the 168 indicators, 60% (101) registered positive progress, 12% (20) stalled/stagnated, 17% (28) are regressing, with progress on 11% (19) not discernible due to lack of comparable data given that they only have one data point.⁴⁵

Figure 9: Kenya SDGs Indicators Analysis (2015-2023)



Source: Kenya National Treasury and Economic Planning (2024)

44 UNDESA (2024): Disability and Development Report 2024: Accelerating the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities

45 The National Treasury and Economic Planning (2024): SDGs Third Voluntary National Review

The goals that have exhibited significant positive progress include:

1. SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being)
2. SDG 4 (Quality Education)
3. SDG 5 (Gender Equality)
4. SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)
5. SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)
6. SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)
7. SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)
8. SDG 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and
9. SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Kenya (National Treasury and Economic Planning, 2024) has also identified groups at risk of being left behind, including persons with disabilities, rural communities, ethnic minorities, street children and families, women and girls, youth, and mobile populations. As reported by UNDESA (2024), despite the fact that all 248 global indicators remain relevant to improving disability inclusion, (marked red in figure 9 above), the following goals, targets and indicators earmark specific measurability for disability inclusion:

1. Goal One: target 1.3; indicator 1.3.1 (on social protection and poverty)
2. Goal Four: targets 4.5 and 4.a; indicators 4.5.1 and 4. a1 (inclusive education)
3. Goal Eight: target 8.5; indicator 8.5.1 (wage and employment)
4. Goal Ten: target 10.2; indicator 10.2.1 (inequality)
5. Goal Eleven: target 11.2 and 11.7; indicators 11.2.1; and 11.7.1, and 11.7.2 (inclusive cities)
6. Goal Sixteen: target 16.7; indicators 16.7.1 and 16.7.2 (peaceful and inclusive societies)

SDG 1 (No Poverty), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) are progressing at a slow pace while SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), 10 (Reduced Inequalities within and Among Countries), and 14 (Life Below Water) are the least progressing.⁴⁶

In relations to the disability indicators, this means, Kenya is progressing slowing against goals one (No Poverty) and sixteen (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions); and underperforming on goal ten (Reduced Inequalities) respectively.

Effects of macroeconomic exclusion of persons with disabilities

The Kenyan economy (KNBS, 2024) remained resilient in 2023, with an overall growth rate of 5.6%, up from 4.9% in 2022. This positive growth was observed across key sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which registered a 6.5% growth, largely due to favorable weather conditions. The service sector also contributed significantly, with sectors like accommodation, food services, information and communication, and transportation playing key roles. Nominal GDP increased by 12.0% to reach KES 15.1 trillion, with the GDP per capita improving from KES 266,473 in 2022 to KES 293,229 in 2023. The private consumption expenditure increased, suggesting stronger household income and resilience in the economy. Employment also grew steadily, with the formal and informal sectors creating a total of 848.2 thousand new jobs. Hence, employment in the formal and informal sectors, excluding small-scale farming and pastoralist activities, increased from 19.1 million in 2022 to 20.0 million in 2023. Wage employment in the formal sector increased by 4.1%, translating to the creation of 122.8 thousand new jobs while the informal sector created 720.9 thousand new jobs, accounting for 85.0% of all new jobs.⁴⁷

46 The National Treasury and Economic Planning (2024): SDGs Third Voluntary National Review

47 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). (2024). Economic survey 2024. Government of Kenya.

The persons with disabilities labor force participation (formal sector) increased modestly from 39% in 2019 to 41% in 2023. However, this remains below the national labor force participation rate which stands at 73% in 2023.⁴⁸ The informal employment of persons with disabilities increased from 65% in 2019 to 69% in 2023, but remains lower than the 85% national share of new jobs in the informal sector. Unemployment among persons with disabilities rose slightly from 10.40% in 2019 to 10.45% in 2023, indicating stagnation in employment growth despite increasing labor force participation while the national unemployment rate dropped from 10% in 2019 to 5.2% in 2023, reflecting significant employment improvements for the general population compared to persons with disabilities. Average wage for persons with disabilities increased from KES 450,000 in 2019 to KES 491,031 in 2023, representing a mere 2.2% year-on-year annual increase. In comparison, the national average wage in 2023 stood at KES 888,743.5,⁴⁹ highlighting a substantial wage gap between persons with disabilities and the general workforce wage. So, despite wage growth for persons with disabilities, their average wage remains significantly lower (approximately 44.7% lower) than the national average in 2023. This wage disparity limits persons with disabilities' ability to escape poverty, even as their labor force participation improves. Closing the wage gap between persons with disabilities and the general workforce could further accelerate poverty reduction.

In 2019, the poverty rate for persons with disabilities stood at 45.7%, gradually declining to 38% by 2023, indicating a significant 7.7% reduction in poverty over the five years period while the national poverty rate declined from 33.3% in 2019 to 30% in 2023, representing a 3.3% reduction.⁵⁰ The poverty rate for persons with disabilities has been consistently higher than the national average, though the gap is narrowing due to increased inclusion efforts through targeted government programming. In 2019, persons with disabilities experienced a poverty rate of 12.4 percentage points higher than the national rate. By 2023, this gap had decreased to 8 percentage points. The faster decline in person with disabilities poverty rate (7.7%) compared to the national average (3.3%) indicates that inclusive policies and employment opportunities, though minimal, for persons with disabilities have had a positive impact on reducing poverty among this population group.

Generally, persons with disabilities continue to face challenges in securing employment and decent wage, as seen in the stagnant unemployment rate and the wage disparity compared to the marked improvement in the national unemployment and wage rates. This stagnation and decline respectively, reflects potential barriers, including accessibility issues, discrimination, and insufficient support mechanisms for integrating persons with disabilities into the workforce due to factors such as the current framing of disability inclusion as a burden, tokenism, internalization and the messy middle. Below, we attempt to analyze the effect further.

Table 1: "Persons with Disabilities estimated population and labor force rate based on WHO 16% estimates"⁵¹

Year	Kenya's Population	Total # of Workers (All Industries)	16% PWD Pop	PWD Labor Force: 42.8% ⁵² of PWD pop	41% PWD Labor force participation
2019	47.5M	18,510,000	7,616,000	3,259,648	1,336,456
2020	48.6M	19,110,000	7,768,320	3,324,841	1,363,185
2021	49.5M	20,160,000	7,923,686	3,391,338	1,390,448
2022	50.5M	21,240,000	8,082,160	3,459,165	1,418,257
2023	51.5M	22,410,000	8,243,803	3,528,348	1,446,623

Source: Table developed by author

48 KNBS (2024): Economic Survey 2024

49 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

50 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

51 Table constructed using KNBS 2019 Census Data and WHO global 16% persons with disabilities population estimates.

52 42.8% of persons with disabilities labor force population estimated from 2019 rate (KNBS) labor force 490,575 as % of 918,270 persons with disabilities population.

Figure 10: Formula for calculating productivity

Formula

- 1. Wage Productivity Efficiency:** measures the economic output per unit of compensation. It indicates how efficiently wages are generating economic output.
Formula:

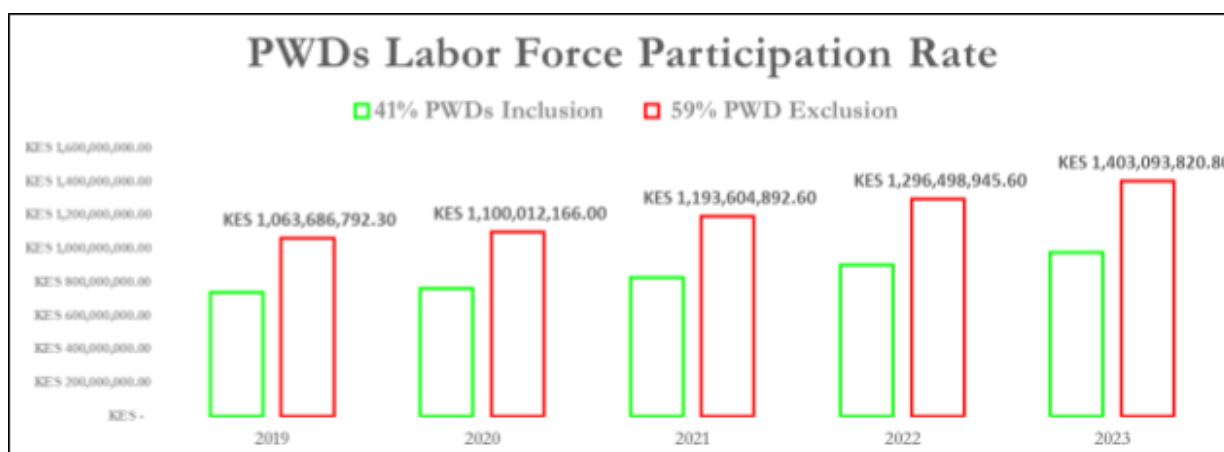
$$\text{Wage Productivity Efficiency} = \frac{\text{GDP}}{\text{Employee Compensation}} = n$$
- 2. GVA (Gross Value Added) Per Worker:** This metric represents the economic contribution of each worker to the gross value added.
Formula:

$$\text{GVA Per Worker} = \frac{\text{GDP}}{\text{Number of Workers}} \approx n$$
- 3. Average Compensation per Worker:** This metric represents the average wage or compensation received by each worker.
Formula:

$$\text{Average Compensation of Employee} = \frac{\text{Compensation of Employee}}{\text{Number of Workers}} \approx n$$

Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 11: Kenyan Disability Exclusion and GDP GVA/Efficiency Impact Analysis

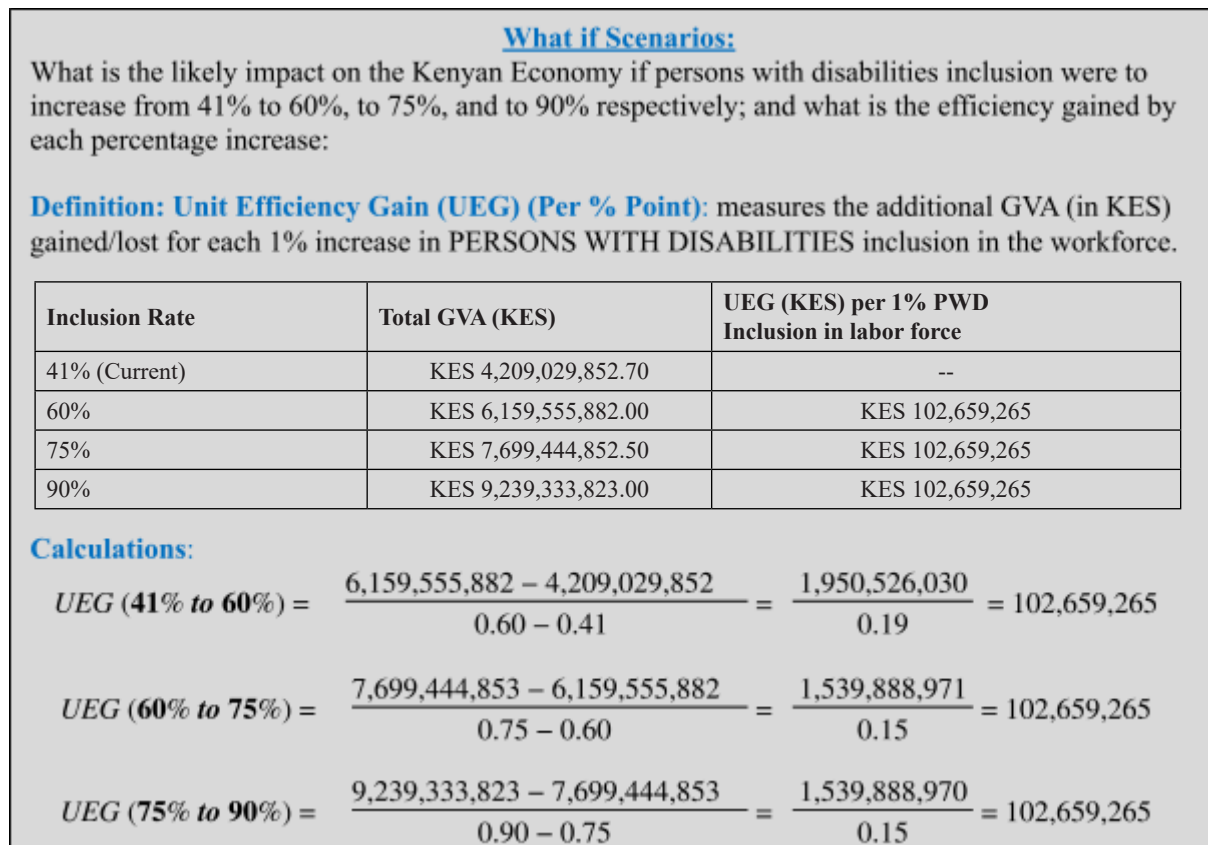


Source: Figure developed by the author

Year	GVA/GDP @100 PWDs	41% PWDs Inclusion	59% PWD Exclusion	Gap (Year-On-Year)
2019	KES 1,802,858,970.00	KES 739,172,177.70	KES 1,063,686,792.30	
2020	KES 1,864,427,400.00	KES 764,415,234.00	KES 1,100,012,166.00	KES 36,325,373.70
2021	KES 2,023,059,140.00	KES 829,454,247.40	KES 1,193,604,892.60	KES 93,592,726.60
2022	KES 2,197,455,840.00	KES 900,956,894.40	KES 1,296,498,945.60	KES 102,894,053.00
2023	KES 2,378,125,120.00	KES 975,031,299.20	KES 1,403,093,820.80	KES 106,594,875.20
Total	KES 10,265,926,470.00	KES 4,209,029,852.70	KES 6,056,896,617.30	KES 339,407,028.50

Whereas the current 41% persons with disabilities labor force inclusion yielded only **KES 4.2 billion GVA**, excluding **59%** of persons with disabilities labor force from the workforce amounts to an estimated GVA loss of **KES 6.056 billion** between 2019 to 2023. The gap grew wider over the years. In 2020, the gap was KES 36M, and by 2023, it had widened to KES 106M.

Figure 12: What If Scenarios; Disability Inclusion Macroeconomic Efficiency Gains



Source: Figure developed by the author

Whereas the current 41% persons with disabilities labor force inclusion yielded only KES 4.2 billion GVA over the five years, moving from 41% to 60% would have moved GVA to KES 6.1 billion yielding additional KES 3.2 billion to the Kenyan economy; increasing persons with disabilities labor force inclusion from 60% to 75% would have boosted GVA to KES 7.7 billion yielding additional KES 2 billion increase; and from 75% to 90% would have boosted GVA to KES 9.2 billion yielding additional KES 1.7 billion increase over the five-year period from 2019 to 2023 respectively. Note that 100% persons with disabilities labor force participation would have added GVA KES 10 billion to the Kenyan economy over the period.

The unit efficiency gain per each 1% percentage point of persons with disabilities labor force inclusion in the Kenyan labor force would have yielded KES 102,659,265 million. This means, Kenya lost KES 102,659,265 (as GDP lost) million for every 1% persons with disabilities labor force excluded from the economy.

Figure 13: Equal Wage and GDP Impact-Expenditure Multiplier Effect

What if Scenario:

What may have been the GDP impact (Expenditure Multiplier Effect) if persons with disabilities average income (KES 491,031 in 2023) equaled the national average of KES 888,743.5 in 2023?

Definition and Notation:

The **Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC)** is the fraction of additional income that individuals spend on consumption rather than saving. For example, an MPC of 0.8 means that 80% of any increase in income will be spent, while 20% will be saved. The assumption is high for persons with disabilities.

Impact on GDP: A higher MPC amplifies the impact of income changes on GDP through the **multiplier effect**—as individuals spend more of their income, it generates additional rounds of spending throughout the economy, thereby increasing overall GDP.

Persons with disabilities Labor Force (2023): 1,446,623
National Labor Force (2023): 22,410,000
MPC (Marginal Propensity to Consume): 0.8
National Average Wage (2023): KES 888,743.5
Persons with disabilities average wage (2023): KES 491,031
Total Compensation of Employees (All Industries, 2023): KES 317,944 million

Calculations:

Step 1: Proportion of persons with disabilities labor force to total labor force:

$$\frac{1,446,623}{22,410,000} \approx 0.0645$$

Proportion of PWDs in Labor Force = _____

Step 2: Total compensation of employees for persons with disabilities

$$\text{PWD Compensation of Employees} = 317,944\text{M} \times 0.0645 \approx \text{KES } 20,501,400$$

Step 3: Calculate the GDP Impact Using the Expenditure Multiplier

$$\text{Multiplier} = \frac{1}{1 - 0.8} \approx 5$$

Step 4: GDP impact:

$$\text{GDP Impact} = \text{KES } 20,501,400 \times 5 = \text{KES } 102,507,000$$

Source: Figure developed by the author

Average wage for persons with disabilities stood at **KES 491,031 in 2023; 44.7%** lower than the national average at **KES 888,743.5 in 2023**.⁵³ Persons with disabilities labor force constituted 6.45% (**1.4M**) generating employees' compensation of **KES 20,501,400 in 2023**. At equal wage, the Kenyan economy would have resulted to a GDP impact of an additional **KES 102.5M in 2023** alone with a multiplier of 5. But Kenya gained only about **55.3% (KES 56.7 million)** of the projected GDP impact on the economy due to low wage.

Amongst other things, with impact on the microeconomics and social protection of persons with disabilities, this means:

Unemployment and Wage Disparities: unemployment should be declining, but stagnated at about 10.45% from 2019 to 2023, doubling the national rate of 5.2%, creates a substantial drag on productivity and limits the workforce contribution to Kenya's GDP. Given that persons with disabilities face a wage gap of 44.7% compared to the national average, their limited income potential reduces aggregate demand and consumption power by an additional KES 10 billion, crucial drivers for economic growth. Without substantial policy intervention, maintaining high unemployment and wage disparity will continue to escalate government social protection spending in addition to the potential lost to the economy. At the micro level; for individual persons with disabilities, sustained unemployment and wage gaps perpetuate economic hardship, hindering their capacity for financial independence and increasing reliance on social protection programs; that under a rights based approach, government must continue to provide.

Poverty Rates: the poverty rate for persons with disabilities decreased from 45.7% in 2019 to 38% in 2023, which, though promising, remains notably higher than the national rate of 30%. This sustained poverty rate among persons with disabilities signals a need for increased social protection measures to bridge the gap as the higher rates impede access to education, healthcare, and economic mobility. Although the poverty rate has decreased due to inclusive employment efforts, the persistent gap continues to drive persons with disabilities into financial insecurity, leading to increased social protection dependency.

Labor Force Participation: Between 2019 and 2023, only 41% of persons with disabilities labor force were active in Kenya's work force, leading to a cumulative GVA loss of KES 6.056 billion. Projecting forward, raising persons with disabilities labor force participation to 60%, 75%, or 90% would have yielded additional KES 3.2 billion, KES 2 billion, and KES 1.7 billion, respectively, in GVA. With each 1% increase in persons with disabilities labor force participation translating to KES 102.6 million in GDP impact, higher workforce integration would significantly boost Kenya's economic output and reduce reliance on welfare programs.

Wage Parity and Equal Wage Impacts: In 2023, the wage for persons with disabilities (KES 491,031) was 44.7% lower than the national average of KES 888,743. If wages for persons with disabilities were aligned with the national average, the economy would have gained an additional KES 102.5 million through increased consumption in 2023 alone, a result of higher disposable income. Wage parity initiatives, supported by a strong social protection framework, could help equalize opportunities for persons with disabilities, boosting economic output and stimulating growth. This would strengthen economic independence and reduce social welfare dependency, creating a self-sustaining cycle of economic improvement for persons with disabilities. With higher wages, persons with disabilities could invest in education, healthcare, and small businesses, leading to broader economic stability. Wage parity would allow persons with disabilities to engage fully in Kenya's economy, enhancing both individual and collective financial health.

RESEARCH QUESTION #3: How might a human-centred and futures focused approach to evidence offer alternative and innovative solutions to fast track the socioeconomic inclusion of Persons with disabilities in Kenya.

53 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

Empathizing Disability Inclusion in the Kenyan Society

Deepening the evidence, the empathy stories of persons with disabilities as sampled, reaffirm the impact of the current state of being in Kenya. This includes the current framing of disability inclusion as a societal burden premised on dependency, object of pity and charity, and subjects of rights; internalization- feeling and act of self-oppression among persons with disabilities, reinforced through historical & cultural biases and long term societal rejections, tokenistic policies & institutional segregation; tokenism- the superficial effort to include persons with disabilities amidst deeper systemic barriers and the messy middle- barriers in middle stages implementation, due to institutional inefficiencies and bureaucracy.

Figure 13: Empathy Story One: (Deaf Storyteller)

Storyline #1: Deaf Person Storyteller- Positioning the deaf community within the Kenyan Economy	
STORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a child, Dorothy started school at age 7 and completed secondary school Her professional journey has been extremely difficult. When she first worked as an attachment with her local government office, she felt deep exclusion due to the office inability (not understanding what deafness meant; and how to accommodate me based on the cost related to accommodation)
SAYS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "I got my first smart phone in 2011, but was only able to fully use it in 2015 after 4 years as I had to teach myself to use it" I love my disability. If I am to be reborn into this world, I will ask God to give me my deafness (no more noise and gossips, affect me) I pray that the public supports me rather than pity me. I want to become a professional counselor
THINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sees my disability first before my abilities; and as an object of pity Employers assume cost of persons with disabilities employment outweighs benefits Disability restricts her employment; finding job takes a lifetime
FEELS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excluded and rejected from society Workplace is not doing much to accommodate deaf employee
DOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belief in self- abilities Self-empowerment (technology)
PAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deaf access to technology very limited and is behind other disability types Deaf gets information 2-3 months after the public, due to communication gap Low public understanding, acceptance and economic inclusion
GAINS	<p>Aspirations and Hopes: The public is trained in sign language including all teachers. Full Acceptance First - a society perception of deaf changed with the full capacity to communicate and engage. A world where I am seen for who I am rather than my disability Can deaf civil society institutions be contracted to teach the sign language as part of 5% affirmative actions for economic inclusion?</p>
EMPATHY JOURNEY	<p>Emotional Journey: It took me a long time to get employed. I initially felt like an economic burden when I was first employed. But as workplace accommodation and colleagues' acceptance improved, my self-worth and confidence improved.</p> <p>Cognitive Dissonance: empowered from the efforts of workplace accommodation</p> <p>Behavioral Response: improved self-confidence, very engaged at storytelling, sharing my story in different scenarios.</p>

Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 14: Empathy Story Two: (Person with physical disability Storyteller)

Storyline #2: Person with a physical disability storyteller- My journey to access education	
STORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony is a person with a physical disability whose condition was acquired from polio at age 2. He is the first borne in a family/household of 7 siblings. He started school at age 11 (specialized school and began at class 1 due to age difference). He later completed secondary education (Alliance High School) at a general high school and later joined the University of Nairobi and graduated with a BA in Sociology and Economics. • He tells of the extreme difficulties he had fitting in the school activities as there was none designed to accommodate physical disabilities. He tells that his public high school had various facilities at different floors of the building (public facilities not designed to support Persons with disabilities). • I had difficulties accessing school facilities including the science lab.
SAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My father was a peasant farmer. But he remains my hero of all times. I appreciate the support from my father who financed my education equally along with the rest of my siblings and who picked and dropped me at school for 12 years (from age 11) until I completed secondary school. • At one time, my parents had to sell a parcel of land to pay our school fees including me as a person with disability despite the community pressure. I have been a Sunday School Teacher in my church for 32 years and I love • impacting hope in the lives of my Sunday School Students.
THINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community views disability investment as a waste (with no economic importance whatsoever); • Public facilities not designed to support persons with disabilities;
FEELS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High community stigma and rejection
DOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sense of self-acceptance due to audacity from my family support • Pushed through education because of the support from my parents
PAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community perception of disability education as an economic waste • Community stigma and rejection • Transitioning from specialized to general public school, and later to university was a nightmare at every stage
GAINS	<p>Aspirations and Hopes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General national transitional educational preparation (infrastructure, systems, etc.) to accommodate persons with disabilities, especially those in higher education and workplaces • A world of full economic integration and acceptance of persons with disabilities in society • Educational system needs to prepare persons with disabilities for • integration into the real world
EMPATHY JOURNEY	<p>Emotional Journey: At the start of my education, I was excited and more comfortable at the specialized school for persons with disabilities; but transitioning to higher education was a nightmare. Today, I am very inspired by my educational success and my role in society.</p> <p>Cognitive Dissonance: inspired and driven by the audacity from my father</p> <p>Behavioral Response: confident contributor to society with my work at a communications company and as a Sunday School Teacher. I live a life of purpose and meaning.</p>

Source: Figure developed by the author

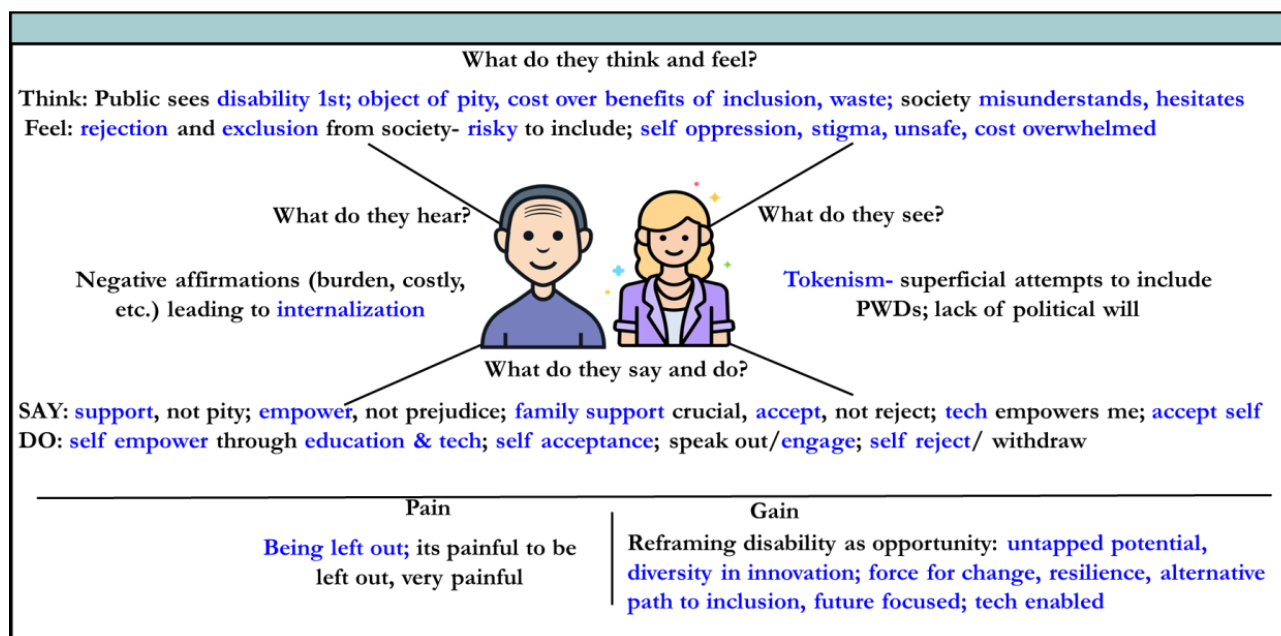
Figure 15: Empathy Story Three: (Person with silent disability Storyteller)

Storyline #3: Person with silent disability Storyteller- Complexities of Society Misconception	
STORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flominah is a person with silent disability. Her condition includes PTSD, Bipolar, Dyslexia, and epilepsy. She tells that the is genetic and explains her life's journey in her story. • It is difficult to identify persons with silent disabilities; the society does not understand the condition and so it does not know how to provide support. • Throughout my life, the cost of managing my condition has been extremely high as insurance does not cover mental health issues in Kenya. I have been subjected to the worst public health services due to the lack of belief from the medical workers and doctors who often misdiagnosed me, misunderstood me, did not believe me and did not support me when I tried explaining the symptoms of my conditions. • Living has been expensive. The average daily cost of medication is KES 5,000 and I do not have a permanent job. Besides, I have to live on a special diet. • My journey has been full of deep rejection and confusion as well as lack of family support as they just did not understand my condition and thought of me as a lazy or stupid child. • Growing up with severe anxieties and various attacks made my life difficult and my conditions were often overlooked. • My school life was a real challenge. Teachers and parents did not understand me. My siblings isolated me. I was always in needs of care and support. • At age 5, I was sexually abused by my father who used the Bible as a justification for abusing me; and so I grew up fearing men. This made dating men as a young adult very impossible for me. I dated late and got married early. I got pregnant at age 19 and could not give birth normally. Due to my condition, I some time experience domestic violence (But I believe that my husband beats me out of frustration). When my condition is worse, I am out of my mind. At once, I abused • my husband and left my child to get hurt. This happens especially when I am out • of my medications.
SAYS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I attempted suicide once due to the fact that my doctor (medical) doubted my health conditions; thereafter I was institutionalized; 2. The last 2 years of my life had the highest level of self-acceptance as I have now come out. 3. I am more comfortable with the use of personal tech. Tech empowers me as an individual to engage and learn (she prefers online education to physical education)
THINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society misjudge me without fully understanding my condition
FEELS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel unsafe always as I am so frequently misunderstood • I lived with so much fear and self-rejections.
DOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak out very often to tell the world about my experience so that others like me can be helped
PAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system lacks mechanisms to support silent disability • Educational system has no clue in addressing children with metal health issues • The cost of managing my condition is overwhelming
GAINS	<p>Aspirations and Hopes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around SDGs 3 and 4- there is a need to deepen public understanding of the mental health conditions
EMPATHY JOURNEY	<p>Emotional Journey: I live in so much fear and self-rejection, but the last 2 years have been my best. Cognitive Dissonance: I love to tell my story Behavioral Response: Telling my story helps me overcome come out more and be a better person</p>

Figure 16: Empathy Story Four: (Person with Albinism Storyteller)

Storyline #4: Person with Albinism Storyteller- My life was a confusion	
STORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel works as a programme manager at the Albinism Society of Kenya. He tells his experience through life. • I was borne to a family of 6 siblings and I am the only person with albinism in my family. I am the 2nd child. In my early age, I grew up as normal child but later recognized myself as albinism at age 4 and went to regular school. My condition made me partially blind. • I school, I was treated differently from other student. I suffered bullying from both students and teachers. • Transitioning from special school to regular school was difficult due to design challenges. I felt left behind in school due to lack of attention from the teachers in regular schools. The society did not understand the nature of my albinism. • In the workplace, my employers first see my condition before seeing my ability. • My family did not understand my skin condition under sunlight. I struggled to fit in and suffered society prejudice. • I had to drop out of school due to sight challenges. My teachers did not give me personal attention. There were many cases where I was unable to copy my notes from the chalkboard before the materials were removed from the board. • But I found solace in primary school when I was in a specialized school for the blind comingling with colleagues. • I was later able to attend university despite the challenges and studied early childhood education and graduated with a diploma). I was elected as assistant chairperson of the college • I remember being asked this question by my employer; "Will you not melt in the sun"? Do you want to work?). • The cost of management of my condition is high (purchasing suns screen lotion cost minimum 2000 KES).
SAYS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The world accepts me better when I accept my authentic self 2. Persons with disabilities without education has minimum economic potential and truly becomes a societal burden 3. Persons with disabilities self-acceptance is the key (authentic self)
THINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society misjudge me without fully understanding my condition
FEELS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I felt left behind
DOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I dropped out of school but later reentered
PAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being left behind is painful, very painful. • Society lacks understanding of albinism • Rejection, prejudice and bullying • Difficulty in finding employment • Interactions at home outside of the blind community was difficult
GAINS	<p>Aspirations and Hopes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacture suns screen lotion in Kenya for Albinism. But most women also use it. • Release approved sun's screen budget timely to people living with albinism. • The last budget was approved 10 years ago and has not yet been released.
EMPATHY JOURNEY	<p>Emotional Journey: Early in my life, I was confused for a normal child; later in my life, my family subjected me to harsh conditions of the sun due to lack of understanding, in school, I was prejudiced and bullied, often left behind. At work, I was asked if I would not melt from the sun and if I could stand the harsh working conditions.</p> <p>Cognitive Dissonance: I felt left behind and I hate being left behind</p> <p>Behavioral Response: Self-acceptance is the first step to changing society's perception about you and your abilities.</p>

Figure 17: Disability Inclusion Empathy⁵⁴ Analysis (Journey) in Kenya



Source: Figure developed by the author

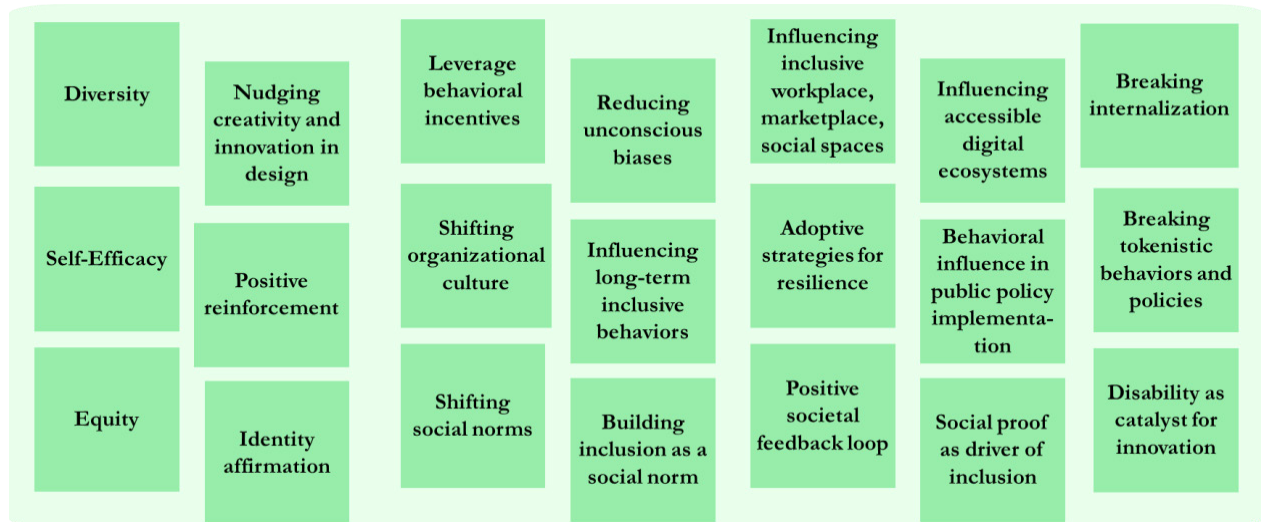
The empathy story of disability inclusion in Kenya highlights the deep emotional, psychological, and social challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Despite these barriers, many people with disabilities as individuals exhibit resilience, self-empowerment, and a desire for societal change. Key patterns that emerge across the stories include:

1. **Systemic exclusion:** Across education, employment, healthcare, and public infrastructure, systemic barriers hinder the full participation of Persons with disabilities in society.
2. **Lack of understanding:** Many disabilities, especially invisible ones and albinism, are misunderstood by both society and institutions, leading to misjudgment and inadequate support.
3. **Economic disempowerment:** The cost of managing their disabilities, combined with limited job opportunities and economic exclusions exacerbates poverty and marginalization among Persons with disabilities.
4. **Empowerment through technology:** throughout the various stories, technology is often cited as a means of empowerment, allowing Persons with disabilities to access information, education, and drive personal development.

54 Empathy map is analyzed along four quadrants and the Pains and Gains capturing the users'/stakeholders emotions as follow:

1. **What the user says:** This includes direct quotes or feedback from the user about their experiences, needs, or preferences.
2. **What the user thinks:** This quadrant captures the thoughts or beliefs that may not be explicitly stated but can be inferred from the user's actions or attitudes.
3. **What the user does:** This refers to the user's behaviors or actions in response to certain situations, focusing on observable patterns.
4. **What the user feels:** This quadrant focuses on the emotions or feelings that drive the user's decisions and behaviors, which can often highlight pain points or desires.
5. **Pains:** refer to the **problems, frustrations, and obstacles** that users encounter in their daily lives or in specific interactions with products, services, or systems.
6. **Gains:** represent the **positive outcomes or benefits** users desire or expect from solutions, services, or interactions. These can include **aspirations, needs, or wants** that users aim to achieve, either practically or emotionally.

Figure 18: Stakeholders Brainstorm-Reframing Disability: Behavior Science for positive social change



Source: Figure developed by the author

A key outcome of the empathy engagement with the stakeholders was the attempt to reframe disability as opportunity rather than a curse to society: untapped potential, diversity in innovation, resilience, alternative path to inclusion, future focused, etc. and with a strong focus on behavior science for positive change.

PART TWO

DISABILITY INCLUSION FUTURES

This section of the report and analysis focuses on the emerging trends, opportunities and threats shaping the future and their impacts on disability inclusion in Kenya. It also attempts to envision inclusive plausible, possible or alternative futures of disability inclusion in Kenya over the next ten years.

B. Horizon Scanning

Rapid Horizon Scanning Around the Six Mega Trends shaping the future of the world

Objective: to identify the trend, emerging issues and weak signals likely to impact disability inclusion in Kenya during the last 6 years' period in the acceleration of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome is intended to inform policies, programmes and innovations required to accelerate the economic inclusion of persons with disabilities in Kenya.

Key Questions:

- What is the futures analysis of focused? Disability inclusive society
- What is the time horizon? Next 10 years (2025-2035)
- Who are the key stakeholders? Policy Makers (Government, Development Community, Private Sector)

Approach: instead of a standard STEEP or PESTEL research framework, to strengthen the relevance in the context, we align the analysis along the (University of Sydney Business School; (2003) Six Outstanding Global Mega Trends shaping the future of the world⁵⁵ and their implications on disability inclusion in Kenya **(see detailed matrix analysis in annex 4 below)**

Table 2: "Summary of Horizon Scanning of Six Mega Trends and Impact on Disability Inclusion"

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Impactful Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech, digital impact every facet of human society; shaping rapid development of technology and will advance disability inclusion 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancements in AI, machine learning, robotics, satellite tech, 3D printing, and 5G • Technology's disinflationary effect <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing concerns about automation replacing jobs, particularly in low-skill sectors and especially impacting people with disabilities • New job/industries/ fields emerging (Digital Economy, Gig Economy, Creative Economy, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology disinflationary potential can drive rapid economic acceleration and include disability Growing concerns about automation replacing jobs, particularly in low-skill sector

55 Sydney Business Insights. (2023). Our megatrends. Sydney Business School. <https://sbi.sydney.edu.au/our-megatrends>

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Evolving Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of regionalization (influencing how people live, work, engage) shifting supply chains, demographic, urbanization, migration and tech advancement The AfCFTA to boost regional trade Rise of Silicon Savannah in Kenya 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AfCFTA driver of social / economic change in Africa Digital literacy bridging digital divides Rise of AI, Internet of Things (IoT), 5G networks, e-commerce transforming how communities interact, widening access gaps. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inclusive tech policies; satellite internet Emergence of community-led digital inclusion projects in low- income, marginalized areas globally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive identity; inclusive communities, inclusive technology and disability Disability empowered and tailored integrated and inclusive programming
Rapid Urbanization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rising population in Africa and Asia, aging populations, growing diversity, poverty reshaping labor market, Push for intentional and inclusive urban redesign 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of cities/ urban hubs as economic centers <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fusion of smart cities tech and integrated urban planning emerging as a key future trend in policy shifts Rise of urban slums, urban poor entrapping urban persons with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart cities, inclusive infrastructure and disability inclusion Age of abundance and slum co-existence (need to reframe slums)
Empowering Individuals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New work models such as gig work and freelancing are creating opportunities for marginalized groups. Digital tools & personalization transforming individual access to information, services, and opportunities 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of access to technology, information, and digital services Rise of new global economic opportunities (digital society, digital economy, gig economy, etc.) Rise of digital entrepreneurship <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing recognition of alternative work models Global push for inclusive technologies as part of human rights-based approaches, particularly in the healthcare sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital society- access to services (edu, health, finance, e- governance, etc.) and disability Alternative Economic Pathways and Disability inclusion (Gig economy, digital economy and e-commerce, etc.) Digital workplace employment and disability Disability entrepreneurship and targeted private financing
Economic Power Shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of AfCFTA trade opportunities and regional digital economies Africa's potential in technology-intensive global supply chains is growing, Disparities in global economic growth are deepening due to unequal access 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African economies becoming key players in global supply chains Inclusive trade policies are increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities especially in technology-driven sectors across Africa. Shift to knowledge- based economy drives diverse workforces. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocacy for inclusion of marginalized groups, including the disabled, in global economies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AfCFTA trade, the digital economy and disability targeting Fair play and disability inclusion in the private sector

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Resource Scarcity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global push for inclusive solutions to improve access to and sustainable use of basic resources (food, water, energy, etc.) Digitalization and Sustainability: environmental footprint of digital technologies and the need for sustainability 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The push towards green technologies is driving investments in renewable energy and sustainable infrastructures, particularly in digital infrastructure. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on circular economy models and sustainable consumption practices. Green tech solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frugal innovations and sustainability for mass social access including disability inclusion

Figure 19: Three Horizon Framework Analysis of the Emerging Futures/ Opportunities of Disability



Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 20: Futures Narrative One: Harnessing the Rise of Silicon Savannah for Disability Inclusion

1st Horizon: Accelerate (1-3 Years):

Key Shift: Harnessing the Rise of Silicon Savannah for Disability Inclusion:

Context: Kenya's **Silicon Savannah** has rapidly evolved into a regional technology hub, positioning the country as a leader in **Africa's digital economy ecosystem**. The integration of the persons with disabilities into the sector will mainstream **assistive technologies (AT)** within this ecosystem and provide substantial opportunities for **disability inclusion**. This shift focuses on ensuring that persons with disabilities are integrated into the **mainstream economy** through technology.

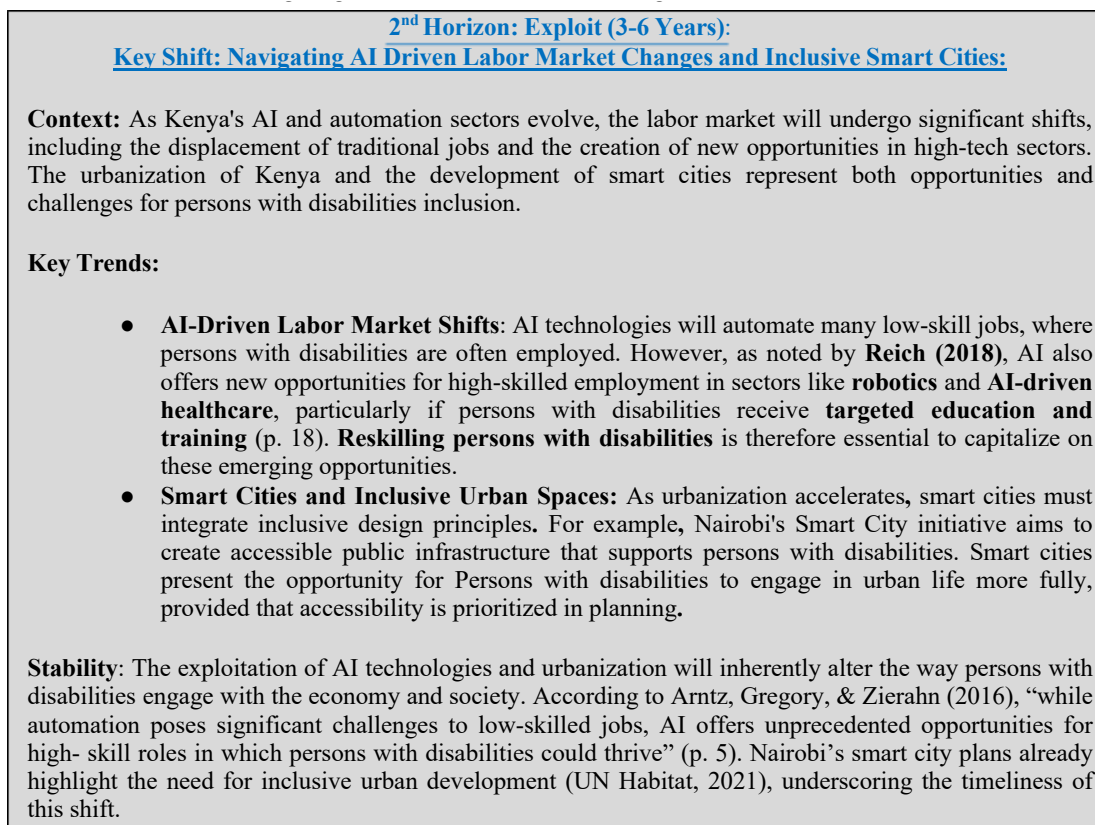
Key Trends:

- Assistive Technology Adoption:** The expansion of internet infrastructure and the proliferation of Internet of Things (IoT) can be harnessed to mainstream AT, enabling persons with disabilities to participate in the digital economy. As Munyaka (2019) notes, “technological advancements in East Africa are uniquely positioned to transform the lives of persons with disabilities, offering tools for accessibility and independence” (p. 54). The affordability of these technologies will play a key role in determining the success of their adoption in the early stages.
- Behavior Science and Policy Shifts:** The intersection of behavioral science and disability inclusion aims to reframe societal perceptions of persons with disabilities eliminating tokenism and disability internalization (self-oppression). Policies that focus on the economic empowerment of disability are critical for enabling persons with disabilities to become contributors to the digital economy. According to WHO (2017), behavior science “can be instrumental in driving shifts in perception that enable more equitable access to employment and economic opportunities” (p. 22).

Stability: These shifts are well-aligned with Kenya's existing focus on digital growth and trade through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The integration of persons with disabilities into digital platforms not only fulfills national growth goals but also meets the sustainable development goals (SDGs) for inclusive economic development. This mirrors success in other developing nations, where digital platforms have significantly boosted economic opportunities for marginalized groups (World Bank, 2020).

Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 21: Futures Narrative Two: Navigating AI Driven Labor Market Changes and Inclusive Smart Cities



Source: Figure developed by the author

Figure 22: Futures Narrative Three: Building Inclusive Digital Economies and Urban Digital Twins



Source: Figure developed by the author

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings and Discussions

4.1 Findings

- 4.1.1. **Current Negative Framing of Disability undermines Inclusion efforts:** Kenya has made tremendous progress toward disability inclusion mainstreaming and financing (e.g. The 2003 Disability Inclusion Act; the 2010 Constitution including the 5% Affirmative Employment Quota; the National Disability Policy 2024, the establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) in 2004; the NCPWD Strategy of 2023-2027, the 30% public procurement quota vulnerable populations including persons with disabilities, etc.). But disability inclusion in Kenya is currently framed as a societal burden, characterized by dependency, pity, and charity. The current framing cuts across different segments of society and it is underpinning the significant progress of inclusion that Kenya has made in recent times. The UNPRPD Report (2023) points out that “Discrimination against women and girls with disabilities is manifested at the intersection of gender and disability. This discrimination results from deeply ingrained social, cultural, and systemic factors”⁵⁶
- 4.1.2. **Symptoms of Tokenism undermining Implementation of targeted programmes to persons with disabilities:** By constitutional provisions, Kenya implements the 5% affirmative action quota targeting employment of persons with disabilities. While commendable, due to some inefficiencies in implementation, elements of superficial inclusion emerge toward actualizing the 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities in public and private sectors. These elements of inefficiency highlight a symptom of tokenism that are undermining the intent of the 5% disability inclusion in targeted government’s programming and implementation that needs to be addressed. A critical finding from the Disability Landscape in Kenya, a report developed from a comprehensive disability survey at the counties and national levels (NCPWD, 2024), indicates that “...even in cases where efforts have been made to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities, respondents often perceive these initiatives as primarily meeting legal compliance requirements rather than as ensuring substantive participation in county legislative, policy, planning, budgeting and implementation processes”⁵⁷ Similarly, the UNPRPD Report (2023), underscored that “There is inadequate political will to fully implement disability programs and initiatives with low commitment and prioritization by political leaders and policymakers to ensure effective policies, programs, and measures promoting disability rights and inclusion”⁵⁸. As a strategic response, the National Plan of Action on Implementation of Recommendations Made by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Relation to the Initial Report of the Republic of Kenya (2015-2022) adopted immediate measures to foster compliance with employment quotas for persons with disabilities in both the public and private sectors, including effective enforcement mechanisms.⁵⁹ The national disability inclusion policy (2024) calls for enacting legal provisions in statutes to ensure enforcement due to poor adherence.⁶⁰
- 4.1.3. **Internalization of negative disability framing by persons with disabilities undermines their active engagements:** The internalization of exclusion, where persons with disabilities accept societal stereotypes, leads to self-oppression and fears reducing their socio-economic participation and self-drive for inclusion. For instance, as an outcome of the 2019 Census, 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement opportunities with over 60% in rural areas experiencing social isolation. Only 15% of eligible voters with disabilities participated

56 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya

57 Disability Landscape in Kenya; 2024

58 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya

59 Ministry of East African Community, Labor, and Social Protection. (2016). 2016: National Plan of Action on Implementation of Recommendations Made by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Relation to the Initial Report of the Republic of Kenya (2015-2022). Government of Kenya

60 Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. (2024). National Disabilities Policy 2024. Government of Kenya; p 11

in the last national elections, citing inaccessible polling stations and inadequate voter education... while only 15% of cases of abuse against persons with disabilities were reported due to fears of stigma and inadequate reporting structures...⁶¹

4.1.4. **The Messy Middle of Disability Inclusion Section hinders effective execution:** Disability inclusion policy implementation is hindered by inefficiencies in execution in Kenya including the lack of political will, and resource constraints. For instance, analysis from the UNPRPD (2023) report, amongst other things, established fragmentation within the disability sector, with multiple organizations, groups, and stakeholders working independently and without cohesive coordination.⁶² Similarly, Development Initiative (2020) reports that “Funds such as the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya and the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities have an overlap in mandates and support similar programmes, affecting efficiency.”⁶³

4.1.5. **Unemployment and Increasing Wage Disparities:** Unemployment for persons with disabilities remained stagnant between 2019 (10.4%) to 10.45% in 2023, but remained consistently higher compared to 5.2% nationally. Average wage for persons with disabilities increased from KES 450,000 in 2019 to KES 491,031 in 2023, representing a mere 2.2% annual increase; but when compared to the national average of KES 888,743; persons with disabilities in the labor force had a wage gap of 44.7% in 2023 alone, limiting their ability to escape poverty regardless if there was any increase in the Persons with disabilities labor force participation over the period.

4.1.6. **Decreasing Poverty Impact amongst Persons with Disabilities:** In 2019, the poverty rate for persons with disabilities was 45.7%, experiencing a 12.4 percentage points higher than the national rate. It dropped to 38% by 2023, a 7.7% decrease; the national poverty rate fell from 33.3% to 30% (a 3.3% drop). Though still high above the national average by 8%, 7.7% drop is a significant gain indicating that current efforts at inclusive policies and employment opportunities, though minimal, for persons with disabilities have had a positive impact on reducing poverty. However, they are still more likely to live in poverty than the general population.

4.1.7. **Cost of persons with disabilities exclusion from the labor force (2019-2023):**

4.1.7.1. **Cost of macroeconomic exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labor force:** By 2023, only 41% of the labor force of persons with disabilities were included in the workforce resulting to **KES 4.2 billion GVA** addition to the GDP between 2019 and 2023. This means during the same period, up to 59% persons with disabilities labor force were excluded from the workforce and caused a cumulative GVA loss to GDP of **KES 6.056 billion**. The gap widened over the years. In 2019, the gap was **KES 36M**, and by 2023, it had widened to **KES 106M**.

4.1.7.2. But what if:

Scenario One: 41% to 60% Persons with disabilities Labor Force Inclusion: what if persons with disabilities labor force participation rate was to increase from **41% to 60%** during the same period, this increase would have moved GVA to KES 6.1 billion, yielding additional **KES 3.2 billion** to the Kenyan economy during the period.

Scenario Two: 60% to 75% Persons with disabilities Labor Force Inclusion: Increasing persons with disabilities labor force further from 60% to 75% would have boosted GVA to **KES 7.7 billion** yielding additional **KES 2 billion increase**.

61 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019 Census

62 UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya

63 Development Initiatives (2020). Government Funding to Support Disability Inclusion in Kenya. Development Initiatives; p 20

Scenario Three: 75% to 90% Increase: Increasing the persons with disabilities labor force participation rate from 75% to 90% would have boosted GVA to KES 9.2 billion yielding additional KES 1.7 billion increase over the five-year period from 2019 to 2023 respectively.

Across the different scenarios, the unit efficiency that would have been gained per each percentage point of persons with disabilities labor force inclusion in the Kenyan workforce would have yielded **KES 102,659,265** million. **This means, Kenya lost KES 102,659,265 million for every 1% persons with disabilities labor force excluded from the economy.**

4.1.7.3. **Impact of Equal Wage:** Average wage for persons with disabilities stood at **KES 491,031 in 2023; 44.7%** lower than the national average at **KES 888,743.5 in 2023.**⁶⁴ Persons with disabilities labor force constituted 6.45% (1.4M) generating employees' compensation of **KES 20,501,400 in 2023.** At equal wage, the Kenyan economy would have resulted to a GDP impact of an additional **KES 102.5M in 2023** alone. This means, the Kenyan economy lost **This means, the Kenyan economy lost approximately 45.8M in 2023 due to wage disparities.**

4.1.8. **Technology presents the biggest risks, and yet; the biggest opportunity to economic inclusion of persons with disabilities:** low level jobs being taken over by technology and AI, matched with the difficulties of getting employment, is worsening vulnerability and may put many people with disabilities out of employment in the future.

4.1.9. **The Future of Disability Inclusion is Behavior Science and Digital Technology:** The future of effective disability socioeconomic inclusion in Kenya will be driven by "Behaviour Science and Digital Technology" either as complementary parts of the whole or as a fusion based on the strategy of implementation. This is evident from the horizon scanning analysis and the human-centred empathy analysis.

4.2 Discussions:

To question **one** "What are the existing systemic gaps impeding disability inclusion in Kenya, and how do these gaps affect the implementation and enforcement of disability rights and inclusion?"

The study found that there are four reinforcing patterns as systemic gaps that have emerged within the disability inclusion context of Kenya:

1. **Current Disability Framing:** disability inclusion is negative framed in Kenya as a societal burden premised on dependency, object of pity and charity, and subjects of rights. It is shaped by deep rooted historical, cultural, religious, & political ideologies that serve as a social and behavioral strong hold that must be address as a root cause if Kenyan must see significant progress over the coming decades.
2. **Tokenism:** Indeed, Kenya has made significant progress in advancing an inclusive environment for disability. But due to administrative lapses, these have appeared superficial without addressing root causes and have further entrenched exclusions, and reinforcing structural inequalities. While a solution may appear technical and operational, behavior science- impacting mindset change and instilling a sense of urgency is critical.
3. **Internalization:** reinforced from years of negative framing and tokenism manifested in a system of rejections, Persons with disabilities have developed a sense of self-oppression- feelings and act of worthlessness resulting. These are caused by entrenched historical & cultural biases and is resulting to a state of Persons with disabilities self- socio-economic exclusion. Amongst other interventions, behavior science principles remain critical to effect change.

64 KNSB (2024): Economic Survey 2024

4. **Messy Middle:** within the impressive attempts for take-off toward building a barrier free society for all including Persons with disabilities, somewhere in the middle, lapses have resulted to inefficiencies and have undermined effective execution- persistent Data & Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) inefficiencies; Poor Sector Coordination due to fragmentation of roles & responsibilities; poor and delayed execution including bureaucratic delays and red tape; and inadequate financing, poor budgeting and accountability, etc.

To question **two** “What are the macroeconomic (e.g. GDP, etc.) consequences of excluding persons with disabilities?”

The study found that at a current 41% (2033), persons with disabilities labor force participation rate, the economy gained only KES 4 billion Gross Value Added (GVA) to GDP over 5 years. At full persons with disabilities labor force participation, the economy would have gained KES 10 billion over the period. Hence, efficiency lost is KES 6 billion. This means, from 2019 to 2023, the exclusion of 59% persons with disabilities labor force from the workforce caused a cumulative GVA loss to GDP of KES 6 billion.

At equal average wage for persons with disabilities, the Kenyan economy would have gained GDP impact of an additional KES 102.5M in 2023 alone. But it gained about KES 56.7 million and lost approximately 45.8M in 2023 due to wage disparities.

To question **three**, “How might a human-centred and futures focused approach to evidence offer alternative and innovative solutions to fast track the socioeconomic inclusion of Persons with disabilities in Kenya?”

By deepening the analysis through empathy-based research (a human centred approach including storytelling) and rapid horizon scanning, the study found that the future of effective disability inclusion in Kenya will be driven by “Behaviour Science and Technology” either as complementary parts of the whole or as a fusion based on the strategy of implementation.

For instance, a significant outcome of the empathy engagement with persons with disabilities stakeholders was the attempt to reframe disability within the context of the likely emerging opportunity rather than a curse to society including as an untapped potential waiting to be harnessed as is the case of the GDP loss due to disability exclusion from the workforce; diversity in innovation and technology; force for change, resilience, alternative path to inclusion, future focused, etc. but with behavior science approaches mainstreamed to reverse the negative framing of disability, tokenism and internalization.

A similar pattern emerged from the three horizon scanning results around the six mega trends shaping the world and their subsequent impact on disability inclusion. Technology disinflationary potential to drive rapid economic acceleration and disability inclusion was underscored permeating nearly every facet of society. Economically, the pattern showed technology enabling the “Empowered persons with disabilities” to participate in digital trade, the digital economy, gig economy, creative economy, etc. This include the deployment of behavior science approaches to drive persons with disabilities involvement at every level taking advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area and disability inclusion as well as the Silicon Savannah.

CHAPTER FIVE

Limitations and Recommendations

5.1 Limitations:

The following are the limitations to the study for which we recommend either additional detailed and independent studies and further analysis to complement this report:

1. **Time and Resource Constraint: Data Disaggregation, Intersectionality and Disability:** the study was conducted for 15 days over 30 days. Additional time would have improved the outcomes and dig deeper into regional (rural versus urban disaggregation), gender and disability types disaggregation; intersectionality and disability including women with disability inclusion, etc.
2. **Additional Studies:** During the stakeholders' validation corroborated by the experts' review, it was clear that the focus of the study; identifying the root causes of, and the macroeconomic impact of excluding people with disabilities from the Kenyan labor force; the study is breaking new grounds and opening new doors for deepened investigation and to generate new knowledge in understanding the inherent limitations to disability inclusion. Hence, additional areas for analysis in future studies stemming out of this study include:
 - 2.1. **Macroeconomic Exclusion versus the Cost of Including People with Disabilities:** to ensure full inclusion in terms of public budgeting, strategic planning, policy implementation and programming, without determining the unit cost of preparing a person with disability from childhood to adulthood until he or she is ready to make significant economic contributions, beyond the social cost; it might be difficult to forecast and determine the economic cost benefits analysis of people of disabilities inclusion in the economy over time.
 - 2.2. **Macroeconomic Impact of Children with Disabilities and Caregivers:** the study adopted the 2019 Census definition of persons with disabilities at age 5 and above and kept a specific focus on persons with disabilities due to the time limitations amongst others. This leaves very little data around the macroeconomic impact on children with disabilities including those above age 5. Another significant segment of the persons with disabilities population are the caregivers providing full or partial caregiving support to persons with disabilities on a daily basis. A deep dive into these segments of population will widen the scope of the macroeconomic impact on the full persons with disabilities population in Kenya.
 - 3.4. **Sector Coordination and the Messy Middle:** stakeholders agreed that, perhaps one of the biggest challenges of the messy middle is the complex coordination mechanism both at the national and county levels that are impeding collaboration, planning and execution. Hence, stakeholders called for a specialized and focused study on demystifying coordination and providing specific recommendations to address the situation.
 - 3.5. **The Role of the Media in Disability Reframing:** across the spectrums; empathy analysis, horizon analysis, experts review and stakeholders' validation; it became widely believed that the media plays a very significant role in shaping the future of disability reframing in the Kenyan society from the perspective of behavior science. This includes, amongst other things, the use of disability recommended languages, public perception change, policy advocacy, etc. Hence, to strengthen the analysis around behavior science and disability reframing in the Kenyan Society, the stakeholders call for a detailed study around the impact of the media in shaping public perceptions and behavior in support of disability inclusion and empowerment.
 - 3.6. **Behavior Science and Corporate Institutional Culture Preventing Disability Inclusion:** supporting behavior change for greater disability inclusion in the workplace, the stakeholders call for a deeper study and analysis on workplace corporate culture and practices currently serving as hindrances.

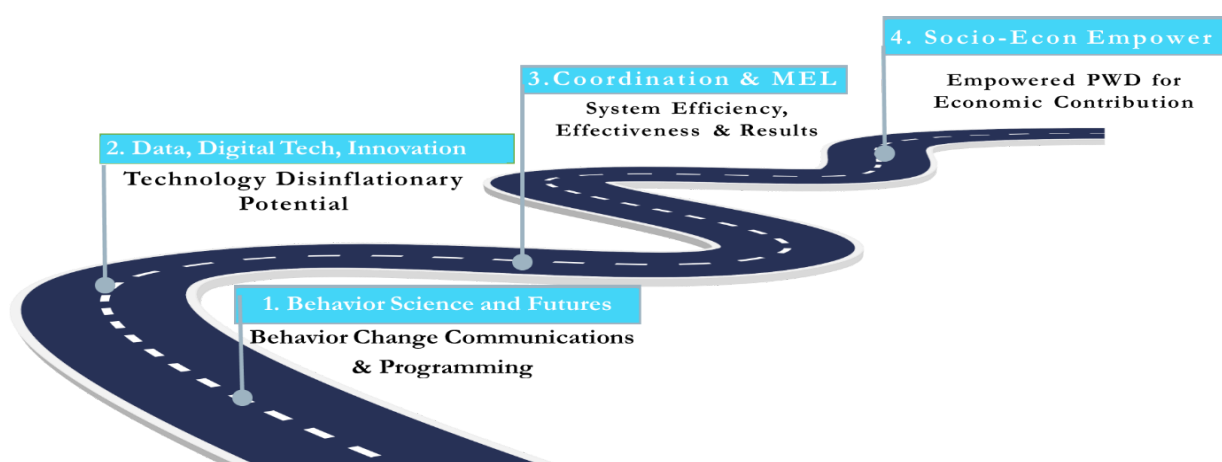
5.2 Recommendations:

Based on the outcome of the analysis, the complexities of the sector, and the current fragmentation of interventions targeting disability inclusion in Kenya, the report recommend one of two approaches to interventions.

Option One: the report recommends the implementation of individual components list as strategic interventions under option two below- a single integrated framework.

Option Two: The report recommends the implementation of a single integrated programming framework solution to “Shine the Spotlight” on Disability Inclusion in Kenya- accelerating progress to catchup ahead of six years to the completion of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030.

Figure 22: Pillars of Disability Spotlight Initiative: Accelerating Disability Inclusion- Race to 2030



Source: Figure developed by the author

Programme Title: Disability Spotlight Initiative: Accelerating Disability Inclusion- Race to 2030

Background: Based on the key findings and discussions from the 2025 Baseline Report on Disability Inclusion in Kenya, the “Disability Spotlight Initiative: Accelerating Disability Inclusion- Race to 2030” will be a multi-stakeholders integrated framework focus on accelerating disability inclusion in Kenyan mainstream economies. The initiative will strategically address four core outcome areas including **Behavior Science and Futures, Data, Digital Technology, and Innovation, Coordination and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL),** and Socioeconomic Empowerment. Each area is designed to address the systemic gaps identified in the report and to reduce fragmentation, enhance coordination and advance sustainable change for persons with disabilities (Persons with disabilities) in Kenya ahead of the 2030 Agenda.

Justification for the Integrated Framework on Disability Inclusion:

1. Amongst other things, the report finds that despite the Government’s recent policy for disability, the NCPWD’s strategic document, and the national action plan for the commitment of the global disability summits 2018 and 2022, critical factors driving the messy middle is the fragmentation of development interventions, the lack of coordination, weak data and monitoring, evaluation and learning system, poor sector accountability and transparency hampering implementation.
2. Critical to Kenya’s national commitment to implementing the recommendations of the 2018 and 2022 global disability summits, eliminating stigma; enhancing the role of data, digital and technology; advancing sector coordination, monitoring, evaluation and learning; and advancing persons with disabilities economic empowerment remain central commitments and constitutes 75% of the programming recommendations of the Disability Spotlight Initiative.
3. The “Disability Spotlight Initiative: Accelerating Disability Inclusion- Race to 2030” will seek to mobilize external stakeholder’s support, infuse new energy, innovation and advance progress- increasing the spotlight on disability inclusion.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA ONE: Behavior Science and Futures- Reframing Disability Inclusion

Strategic Outcome: Transforming Societal Mindsets and Building an Inclusive Future for persons with disabilities

Justification: The Baseline Report identified entrenched societal views that frame persons with disabilities as a societal burden and drive tokenistic inclusion. A shift from these perceptions to one that views persons with disabilities as valuable contributors to society is critical. By applying behavior science and futures thinking, this outcome will seek to change mindsets at the individual, community, and systemic levels.

Key Activities:

- 1. Create an Observatory and National Inclusive Futures Lab: Description:** Anchored within the National Council for Persons with Disabilities architecture, develop the capacity for:
Observatory: dedicated capacity to monitor societal attitudes and behavioral changes regarding disability inclusion, assessing the efficacy of behavior change campaigns, and providing real-time data on public perceptions. Through partnerships with universities and behavioral science institutes, the unit would conduct longitudinal studies to track progress and emerging challenges. The observatory would facilitate evidence-based insights which can then inform policies and real-time adjustments to campaigns. It would also become a platform for research on inclusive design and provide the government and private sectors with actionable data; and
Inclusive Futures Lab: that would bring together persons with disabilities, futurists, behavior scientists, designers, and policymakers to co-create inclusive policy scenarios. The lab would use strategic foresight tools, scenario planning, and design thinking to generate innovative solutions and future-proof policies for disability inclusion. Unlike conventional policy think tanks, this lab would involve persons with disabilities in futures design, ensuring that their voices lead the envisioning of inclusive societies. The lab could also incubate pilot projects that integrate future trends (e.g., AI, smart cities) to create accessible solutions for persons with disabilities.
- 2. National Behavior Change Campaigns:** Utilize behavior science methodologies (e.g., nudging, framing, and social norms interventions) to challenge negative stereotypes about persons with disabilities. These campaigns should use storytelling and real-life examples to show how persons with disabilities can contribute to economic and social development.
- 3. Implement a “Voices of Inclusion” Digital Storytelling Platform:** Develop a dedicated online storytelling platform featuring narratives from persons with disabilities, highlighting their contributions to society, achievements, and challenges. This platform could partner with media houses and social media influencers to broaden reach, with content shared in multiple formats (videos, podcasts, written stories). By humanizing disability inclusion through powerful narratives, this platform would help break down stereotypes and celebrate the diversity and resilience of persons with disabilities. Data analytics from the platform would also gauge audience engagement and sentiment, helping refine future campaigns. Increased public awareness and appreciation for the capabilities of persons with disabilities, leading to greater societal acceptance and reduced stigma.
- 4. Futures Literacy and Strategic Foresight Workshops:** Equip policymakers, persons with disabilities advocates, and key stakeholders with futures-thinking tools. These workshops will enable stakeholders to anticipate emerging trends, co-create inclusive futures, and embed disability inclusion in long-term planning across various sectors.
- 5. Inclusive Leadership Development Programs:** Establish training programs to cultivate inclusive leadership in both the public and private sectors, focused on creating spaces for persons with disabilities in leadership and decision-making roles.

Expected Results:

1. Significant reduction in negative stereotypes about persons with disabilities across society.
2. Future-focused policies that prioritize persons with disabilities' inclusion. Developing policies that are proactive and adaptable to emerging technologies and societal changes, establishing a foundation for sustainable inclusion well into the future
3. Increased leadership and civic engagement of persons with disabilities in national and local decision-making bodies.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA TWO: Data, Digital Technology, Innovation and Trade Strategic Outcome: Harnessing Digital Transformation and Innovation to drive disability inclusion Justification: The report highlights the disinflationary effects and potential of digital technology and innovation to empower persons with disabilities, particularly in the labor market, digital economy, gig economy, creative economy; including driving the empowered person with disability to access information and basic social services including education, health, etc. Leveraging data and technology can accelerate their integration into mainstream economies, especially in sectors driven by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and digital trade.

Key Activities:

1. National Disability Innovation and Inclusion Data Hub: Anchored within the NCPWD architecture, establish a centralized platform that collects, analyzes, and disseminates real-time data on persons with disabilities participation in key sectors (e.g., employment, education, and healthcare, social protection inclusion, budgeting and spending, Aid, etc.) while also integrating with Silicon Savannah to position disability in technology innovation in Kenya- support persons with disabilities-led startups, providing mentorship, funding, and networking opportunities. This will foster innovation in areas such as assistive technologies, inclusive design, and digital platforms. This will both advance evidence for policymakers and businesses to track progress and identify gaps while positioning the empowered persons with disabilities in participate in the Kenyan economy.
2. Inclusive Digital Economy Programs: Develop initiatives that focus on equipping persons with disabilities with digital skills and access to the tools needed to participate in remote work, the gig economy, and digital entrepreneurship. Collaborate with tech companies to create accessible software and assistive technologies.
3. Establish the Africa Free Trade Marketplace: In alignment with the African Union Vision 2063 for a prosperous Africa; in 2018, all 54 African countries aspire to establish a continent-wide single African market designed after the European Single Market, with the objective of improving trade and commerce between African countries. By 2021, nearly all countries on the continent signed for the establishment and implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Amongst other benefits, which include removing all trade and non-trade barriers to Intra-African Trade; and investing in Africa physical and digital infrastructure, the World Bank estimates that the implementation of the AfCFTA will:
 - Lift 30 million Africans out of extreme poverty and boost the incomes of nearly 68 million others who live on less than \$5.50 a day.
 - Boost Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035 (a gain of 7 percent) while adding \$76 billion to the income of the rest of the world.
 - Increase Africa's exports by \$560 billion, mostly in manufacturing.
 - Spur larger wage gains for women (10.5%) than for men (9.9%); and
 - Boost wages for both skilled and unskilled workers—10.3% for unskilled workers, and 9.8% for skilled workers.
 - It is the world's largest free trade area since the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994 (Signé 2022, pg. 2).

But some of the biggest challenges to implementation include:

- the poor state of infrastructure- roads network, telecommunications, and technology; and
- high cross border customs and tariffs

As trade and commerce rise across the continent, the cost of trade remains a key problem to access of goods and services targeting the poor. Despite the huge challenges, African Governments, along with their international development counterparts, have been identifying ways to kick start the AfCFTA and accelerate trade in the short and mid-terms as Africa grapples with its infrastructure challenges. As pioneered and clearly articulated by the Africa Digital Strategy 2030, the digital economy holds the center-piece solution driven for a continent digital marketplace.

The Africa Free Trade Marketplace (AFTM), as a continent-wide digital e-commerce ecosystem, shall be designed to accelerate the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), targeting the enhancement of intra-African trade in cross-border goods and services while also offering neo-banking services to the unbanked specifically targeting the

economic inclusion of vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities. The Africa Free Trade Marketplace (AFTM) is poised to become a digital beacon for the continent's burgeoning digital economy while also enhancing the gig economy, creative economy, etc. Envisioned as the "Single

Digital Gateway to African Economies," AFTM aims to capitalize on Africa's impressive growth trajectory in the digital economy.

Expected Results:

1. Increased availability of reliable data on disability inclusion in the economy and society; infuse innovation
2. Higher participation of Persons with disabilities in the digital economy and tech-driven sectors.
3. Growth of persons with disabilities-led businesses and startups, contributing to economic growth and innovation while jump-starting the acceleration of AfCFTA implementation in the short and mid- terms.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA THREE: Coordination and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

Strategic Outcome: Establishing Strong, Coordinated Systems for Disability Inclusion Accountability

Justification: The Baseline Report identified significant gaps in coordination and inefficiencies in the implementation of disability policies, often referred to as the "messy middle." Strengthening coordination among government agencies, private sector actors, and civil society organizations, while enhancing Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) frameworks, is essential to overcoming these barriers and ensuring accountability.

Key Activities:

1. **Enhance Capacity of NCPWD Coordination Role and Capacity:** strengthen the capacity of NCPWD to lead multi-stakeholder coordination that integrates disability-related functions across ministries, agencies, and development partners. It shall seek to streamline efforts, minimize overlap, and enhance accountability as well as develop a standard set of disability inclusion indicators for mainstreaming across all sectors of the Kenyan society (public, private, non-profit).
2. **Enhanced MEL Systems for Disability Inclusion:** In collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, conduct nation-wide community mapping/ needs assessment exercise that includes persons with disabilities as key stake holders in forming and coordinating strategic partnerships, and develop a robust civil society led National MEL system with real-time (digital platform) tracking and reporting on disability inclusion initiatives including public, private, non-profit sectors and the public interface. This should involve setting up digital dashboards, impact evaluation tools, and feedback loops from persons with disabilities themselves to ensure the system is participatory and transparent.
3. **Public-Private Sector Partnerships:** Foster stronger partnerships between the government and private sector to implement disability-inclusive policies and programs. These partnerships should include joint monitoring efforts and shared learning to drive continuous improvement.

Expected Results:

1. Improved coordination among key actors in disability inclusion, reducing inefficiencies and overlaps in roles and responsibilities.
2. Enhanced monitoring and reporting systems that track progress in real-time and adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities.
3. Strengthened accountability mechanisms with clear benchmarks for disability inclusion across sectors.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME AREA FOUR: Socioeconomic Empowerment- Accelerate Persons with disabilities Inclusion

Strategic Outcome: Creating Inclusive Economic Opportunities for Persons with disabilities Across All Sectors

Justification: The Baseline Report shows that persons with disabilities face significant challenges in accessing meaningful employment and economic opportunities. High unemployment rates, wage disparities, and exclusion from the labor market limit their ability to escape poverty. Addressing these barriers through inclusive economic policies and targeted interventions will foster socioeconomic empowerment and reduce poverty among persons with disabilities.

Key Activities:

1. **Whole of Society Approach- Mainstream Disability Inclusive Practices across the Kenyan Society:** in alignment with the MEL platform, develop labor force inclusion indicators, set-up and conduct policy research to continuously influence the legislative agenda. In partnership with Kenya Bureau of Registry, sponsor regulations and mechanisms that ensure that the bylaws and constitutions of all public and private institutions/corporations/ companies in Kenya include disability inclusive indicators in alignment with national affirmative actions, laws and policies. Ensure that all the job applications across Kenya prioritize disability inclusive employees in their adverts, and that all recruitment process in Kenya are accessible for all persons including persons with disabilities independently; and that all job application platforms are disability accessible. Ensure that all public procurement contracting procedures and practices are inclusive for all including for persons with disabilities. Ensure that reasonable accommodations must be a priority with legislative and financial cover/framework to support it across all of Kenyan Society. Develop mechanisms that make senior leadership disability inclusion champions across key public and private sector institutions, and that there is public indorsement of their disability inclusive practices. Develop legislations and statutes that ensure and enforce mandatory annual public budgeting and financing for disability inclusive infrastructure and smart cities technology across all urban centers in Kenya.
2. **Inclusive Employment Quota Expansion:** Strengthen compliance with the existing employment quotas for persons with disabilities, while expanding the program to target high-growth sectors such as technology, green energy, and manufacturing. Introduce tax incentives for companies that exceed quotas and penalties for those that do not comply.
3. **Financial Inclusion and Access to Credit:** Partner with financial institutions to design financial products and services specifically targeted at persons with disabilities entrepreneurs. This could include digital loans, microloans, grants for entrepreneurship, and financial literacy programs tailored to their needs. Link their trade to the Africa Free Trade Marketplace giving them access to broader national, regional and global markets. Sponsor mainstreaming inclusive practices in the banking procedures, in addition to providing accessible e-banking tools, ensuring that there are no institutional barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from having a confidential and independent financial processes.⁶⁵
4. **Public Procurement and Disability Inclusion:** advance the 30% government procurement policies that prioritize businesses owned or led by persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
5. **Expand Social Protection Disability Cash+ Services as a means of Socio-economic Inclusion for persons with disabilities in Kenya:**
 - **Expand and Enhance Cash Transfers with Tiered Disability Benefits**
 - **Recommendation:** Establish a tiered cash transfer system that provides higher levels of support for persons with disabilities with greater needs. This tiered approach can be based on the degree of disability, cost of living adjustments, and regional disparities in Kenya.
 - **Rationale:** Differentiated benefits recognize the varying levels of support needed across different disabilities, addressing both urban and rural cost discrepancies. According to the Kenya Population and Housing Census (2019), the poverty rate for persons with disabilities is disproportionately high, requiring financial interventions that are customized to individual circumstances.
 - **Implementation:** Introduce eligibility assessments via county-level disability offices to set up personalized benefit plans that vary by disability type and household needs.

65 "In some countries like Egypt, a person with visual impairment cannot open a bank account independently. S/he has to get an "assistant" and register this assistant in the government contracting agency, make a signed delegation, get this delegation to the bank, and sign additional documents in the bank that reliefs the bank from any responsibility in case the credit/debit card is stolen or hacked. Moreover, any financial transaction inside the bank cannot be done by the person with visual impairment independently, there has to be an assistant present. Even if the assistant is present, the person with visual impairment has to call customer services each time the transaction is conducted to approve that this assistant has consent to do this transaction. It presents deep confusion". Abdelkader Heba; Disability Inclusion Consultant, UNDCO New York (October 2024)

- **Link Cash Transfers with Employment Support Programs**
 - **Recommendation:** Develop pathways from cash assistance to job training, entrepreneurship programs, and incentives for employers who hire persons with disabilities.
 - **Rationale:** While cash assistance addresses immediate financial needs, employment support provides a long-term solution for economic independence and reduces reliance on social protection. The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) could collaborate with organizations to design programs that improve job-readiness and incentivize hiring.
 - **Implementation:** Partner with vocational training institutions and employers to create internships and apprenticeships for persons with disabilities, focusing on high-demand sectors and self-employment initiatives.

- **Integrate Health and Rehabilitation Services with Cash+ Initiatives**
 - **Recommendation:** Link cash transfer programs with access to health, assistive devices, and rehabilitation services to promote overall well-being and productivity for persons with disabilities.
 - **Rationale:** Many persons with disabilities face higher healthcare costs due to their conditions. By covering essential health and rehabilitation services, the Disability Cash+ model can improve persons with disabilities' ability to participate in the workforce and community life.
 - **Implementation:** Expand partnerships between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to ensure that persons with disabilities receiving cash benefits can access regular health check-ups, subsidized assistive technology, and therapy services.

- **Community-Based Support Services and Caregiver Stipends**
 - **Recommendation:** Provide support for caregivers of persons with disabilities, offering stipends, training, and community-based services that reduce the care burden and support persons with disabilities' independence.
 - **Rationale:** Many persons with disabilities rely on caregivers for daily support. Training and financial support, for caregivers help them provide better care while enabling persons with disabilities to live independently and engage in community activities.
 - **Implementation:** Develop a caregiver support module that includes both training and stipends, ensuring quality care. Leverage community centers as service hubs to facilitate access to training and peer support groups.

- **Implement Conditional Transfers Linked to Education and Skill Development**
 - **Recommendation:** Offer conditional cash transfers tied to educational attainment and skills training, encouraging persons with disabilities to pursue opportunities for personal and professional development.
 - **Rationale:** Education and skills are essential for socio-economic mobility. Conditional transfers that incentivize participation in skill-building and educational programs help bridge the employment gap for persons with disabilities, enabling them to transition from cash dependence to workforce participation.
 - **Implementation:** Provide additional cash incentives for families that keep children with disabilities in school or for persons with disabilities who complete TVET or other employable forms/ levels of education. Collaborate with educational institutions to create accessible curricula and on-campus support for persons with disabilities.

Expected Results:

1. Increased employment and wage equity for persons with disabilities across all sectors, with a focus on high-growth industries.
2. Greater access to financial services and economic opportunities for persons with disabilities, leading to reduced poverty and enhanced socioeconomic resilience.
3. Enhanced representation of persons with disabilities in public procurement and government contracting processes, creating more inclusive economic participation.

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Appendixes/Annexes:

Annex 1: Emerging Patterns: By reviewing recent reports and outcomes of various studies on disability inclusion in Kenya, deepening the synthesis of the evolving themes, there is an **“Emergence”** of specific patterns across the various time periods through thematic modelling as follow:

Reference (APA Style)	Emergence (Themes)	Direct Quotes and Insights
UNPRPD (2023). Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Kenya	Policy Gaps and Weak Implementation	“There is inadequate political will to fully implement disability programs and initiatives with low commitment and prioritization by political leaders and policymakers to ensure effective policies, programs, and measures promoting disability rights and inclusion” (p. 9)
	Fragmentation and Coordination Challenges	“The analysis also established fragmentation within the disability sector, with multiple organizations, groups, and stakeholders working independently and without cohesive coordination” (p. 8)
	Employment and Economic Exclusion	“Poor compliance with the 5% reservation of employment opportunities, inaccessible health infrastructure, low coverage of persons with disabilities by social protection programs...” (p. 22).
	Social Stigma, Cultural Barriers and Intersectionality	“Discrimination against women and girls with disabilities is manifested at the intersection of gender and disability. This discrimination results from deeply ingrained social, cultural, and systemic factors” (p. 40)
Development Initiatives (2020). <i>Government Funding to Support Disability Inclusion in Kenya.</i> Development Initiatives	Underfunding and Budget Reductions for Disability Programs	“The national government allocated a total of KES 6.7 billion to facilitate the implementation of education programmes that target persons with disabilities between FY2016/17 and FY2020/21. Allocations for special needs education reduced by 8% in FY2019/20 and by 6% in FY2020/21.” (p. 14)
	Social Protection and Economic Empowerment Programs	“Allocations to the PWSD-CT amounted to KES 6 billion between FY2016/17 and FY2020/21, but the percentage of the total SDSP budget for disability inclusion reduced from 5.2% to 2.7% by FY2019/20.” (p. 10)
	Fragmentation and Overlap of Disability Funds	“Funds such as the National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya and the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities have an overlap in mandates and support similar programmes, affecting efficiency.” (p. 20)
	Segregation, stigma	“While special primary schools promote access to education, they lead to segregation of students with disabilities. Accordingly, budget allocations to such schools may not be compliant with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.” (p. 16)
Ministry of East African Community, Labor, and Social Protection. (2016). <i>National Plan of Action on Implementation of Recommendations Made by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Relation to the Initial Report of the Republic of Kenya (2015-2022).</i> Government of Kenya	Policy and Legislative Gaps; Legal Capacity and Access to Justice	“Ensure the full domestication of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by amending or repealing laws that include derogatory terminology against persons with disabilities” (p. 9) “Eliminate all forms of formal and informal substituted decision-making regimes and replace them with a system of supported decision-making, in line with the Committee’s general comment” (p. 18)

Reference (APA Style)	Emergence (Themes)	Direct Quotes and Insights
	Accessibility to Services	“To ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, and other facilities and services open to the public in rural and urban areas” (p. 15)
	Awareness-Raising and Combating Stigma and Discrimination	“Carry out mass-media awareness-raising campaigns and workshop to foster a positive image of persons with disabilities and their contributions to society” (p. 14)
	Employment and Economic Empowerment	“Adopt immediate measures to foster compliance with employment quotas for persons with disabilities in both the public and private sectors, including effective enforcement mechanisms” (p. 27)
	Monitoring and Accountability	“Establish a national mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Convention, with the participation of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights” (p. 31)
National Council for Persons with Disabilities (2023). Disability Mainstreaming Status Report for FY 2021/2022. Government of Kenya	Policy Implementation Gaps	“Despite a robust policy and legal framework... Kenya is still not mainstreaming disability effectively. The Performance Contracting Framework Disability Mainstreaming Indicator... is not broad enough to support disability mainstreaming in all key areas” (p. 30)
	Economic Inclusion and Low Compliance with Employment Quotas	“The evaluation revealed that less than 1% of the 404 institutions ⁶⁶ evaluated had met the 5% employment quota” (p. 29)
	Insufficient Reporting and Data on Disability Inclusion	“During the period under review, 320 out of 404 institutions reported to NCPWD... 84 institutions did not report at all” (p. 19)
	Underfunding and Resource Constraints	“Inadequate financing has routinely hampered MDAs’ efforts to mainstream disability... resources required to finance mainstreaming activities are not embedded in their budgets” (p. 30)
Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (2022). <i>Kenya Country Report on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/124 on Follow-Up to the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family and Beyond.</i> Government of Kenya	Fragmentation and Coordination Challenges Across Sectors	<p>“There are other State and Non-State Actors involved in the implementation of family promotion and protection policies and programmes, including the Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health” (p. 1).</p> <p>Insight: the statement connotes that despite the government’s policy frameworks, there is a lack of coordination between various governmental and non-governmental actors, leading to fragmentation in the implementation of disability-inclusive policies.</p>
	Weak Implementation of Disability Mainstreaming	<p>“National disability mainstreaming and strategy developed and disseminated by the Government... however, the strategy is yet to be fully realized across all MDAs” (p. 5)</p> <p>Insight: the statement connotes that although there is a national disability mainstreaming strategy, its implementation remains weak, and many sectors have not fully integrated disability-inclusive practices into their operations and services.</p>

66 The statement on 404 institutions here, refers to the list of public institutions evaluated during the period.

Reference (APA Style)	Emergence (Themes)	Direct Quotes and Insights
	Accessibility Gaps and Inadequate Support	<p>“There remains a gap in the accessibility of healthcare services for persons with disabilities, particularly in rural areas where infrastructure is not designed to accommodate their needs” (p. 7)</p> <p>“Government continues to disseminate and sensitize on laws and policies addressing positive parenting, marriage, and property for persons with disabilities, yet vocational training programs remain underfunded” (p. 6)</p>
Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. (2024). <i>National Disabilities Policy 2024</i> . Government of Kenya	Policy and Legislative Gaps	“The policy seeks to address challenges encountered by persons with disabilities... [and] provides a broad-based framework for implementation through strategies that will enable persons with disabilities engage in meaningful participation in development processes” (p. 14)
	Accessibility Barriers	“Despite having laws and regulations on accessible public transport, there has been non-adherence to this policy provision, therefore the need to enact these legal provisions in statutes to make them enforceable” (p. 11)
	Social Protection and Economic Empowerment	“Economic barriers prevent persons with disabilities from fully participating in employment, commerce, and economic empowerment programmes... barriers can be overcome by empowering persons with disabilities into economically productive members of society” (p. 12)
	Cultural and Attitudinal Barriers	“Attitudes and practices embedded in cultural beliefs... create near-insurmountable obstacles to the participation of persons with disabilities in social and cultural activities” (p. 11)
	Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms	“The Government shall ensure early identification of disability and effective intervention measures... [and] full participation of persons with disabilities, their families, and communities” (p. 15)
National Council for Persons with Disabilities. (2023). <i>NCPWD Strategic Plan 2023–2027</i> . Government of Kenya	Data Collection and Disability Statistics	“The Council will work with various stakeholders to ensure comprehensive disability data and statistics are collected and maintained to guide planning and decision-making processes.” (p. 7)
	Socio-Economic Empowerment; and Disability Mainstreaming in Public and Private Sectors	<p>“The Council will strengthen the economic empowerment of Persons with disabilities through vocational training, provision of assistive devices, and supporting self-help groups to enhance their income-generating capacity.” (p. 14)</p> <p>“Disability Mainstreaming across all sectors will be enhanced, ensuring compliance with the 5% employment reservation for persons with disabilities in public service.” (p. 16)</p>
	Awareness and Sensitization Campaigns	“Public awareness campaigns will be intensified to eliminate stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities, promoting a culture of inclusion in society.” (p. 17)
	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Mechanisms	“An integrated M&E system will be implemented to track progress and evaluate the impact of the various initiatives aimed at enhancing the welfare of persons with disabilities.” (p. 20)
	Access, Inclusion and Technology	<p>“Inclusive education remains a critical agenda, and we aim to ensure children with disabilities have equal access to quality education, by addressing infrastructural and resource limitations in public schools.” (p. 10)</p> <p>“The Council shall advocate for the provision of free disability-related medical services and devices in all health facilities to alleviate the financial burden on persons with disabilities.” (p. 13)</p>

Reference (APA Style)	Emergence (Themes)	Direct Quotes and Insights
Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019).	Access to services	"Mental health disabilities were severely stigmatized in rural communities, with 80% of families reluctant to seek formal treatment..." (p. 191)
<i>Kenya Population and Housing Census Analytical Report on Disability</i>		<p>"Over 50% of persons with disabilities reported not seeking medical attention when needed due to long distances..." (p. 52)</p> <p>"Only 9.3% of persons with disabilities were covered by any form of health insurance, compared to 22% of the general population..." (p. 93)</p> <p>"Only 4% of children with disabilities aged between 6-17 years were enrolled in schools, compared to 81% of their counterparts without disabilities..." (p. 34)</p> <p>"Only 2.1% of persons with disabilities aged 20-29 had enrolled in higher education, and dropout rates were significantly higher than the national average..." (p. 135)</p>
	Economic Empowerment	<p>"The labor force participation rate for persons with disabilities was significantly lower at 39% compared to 70% for the general population..." (p. 45)</p> <p>"Nearly 68% of persons with disabilities working in urban areas were employed in the informal sector..." (p. 197) "Only 5% of persons with disabilities reported successful access to financial services, primarily due to the lack of collateral..." (p. 164)</p>
	Social protection programs	<p>"Only 11% of eligible households reported receiving any form of government support under the Cash Transfer Program..." (p. 63).</p> <p>"Only 10% of households with persons with disabilities reported receiving agricultural subsidies, compared to 25% of households without disabilities..." (p. 207)</p>
	Social Inclusion and Governance	<p>"Nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reported feeling excluded from civic engagement opportunities, citing barriers such as lack of access to public meetings..." (p. 210)</p> <p>"Only 2% of local governance positions were held by persons with disabilities, limiting their influence on policy and community planning..." (p. 167)</p> <p>"Over 60% of persons with disabilities in rural areas reported feelings of social isolation, citing stigma and the lack of accessible community centers..." (p. 161)</p>
	Legal and Human Rights	<p>"Only 15% of eligible voters with disabilities participated in the last national elections, citing inaccessible polling stations and inadequate voter education..." (p. 115)</p> <p>"Only 15% of cases of abuse against persons with disabilities were reported due to fears of stigma and inadequate reporting structures..." (p. 146)</p>

Annex 2: Labor Force and Poverty for Disability in Kenya (2019-2023)⁶⁷

Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	National Comparison
Total Population (Persons with disabilities)	7.6m	7.7m	7.9m	8.0m	8.2m	Total Population: 47.6M (2019), 52M (2023)
Labor Force Participation (Formal Sector) (Persons with disabilities)	39%	39.5%	40%	40.5%	41%	National Labor Force: 65.5% (2019), 73% (2023)
Informal Sector Employment (Persons with disabilities)	65%	66% (1% increase)	67% (1% increase)	68% (1% increase)	69% (1% increase)	Informal Sector Employment: 85% of new jobs in 2023
Poverty Rate (Persons with disabilities)	45.7%	44%	42%	40%	38%	National Poverty Rate: 33.3% (2019), 30% (2023)
Unemployment Rate (Persons with disabilities)	10.40%	10.41%	10.42%	10.44%	10.45%	National Unemployment Rate: 10% (2019), 5.2% (2023)
Average Wage (Persons with disabilities, KES)	450,000	460,000 (2.2% increase)	470,120 (2.2% increase)	480,462 (2.2% increase)	491,031 (2.2% increase)	Average Wage (National): KES 888,743.5 in 2023

⁶⁷ Year-on-year population projections are estimated based on KNBS 2019 estimated annual rates as indicated herein

Annex 4: Six Mega Trend and Horizon Scanning

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Impactful Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of AI, automation and cognitive computing are rapidly transforming economies and industries (CMA Report 2024) • AI-Driven Labor Market Shifts: Rapid deployment of AI is reshaping labor demand • Assistive Technology (AT) Ecosystem: Increased emphasis on the development and integration of AT in healthcare, education, and workspaces in Kenya. • The Emerging gap between technology innovation and equitable distribution of its benefits is widening especially impacting marginalized communities 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancements in AI, machine learning, robotics, satellite tech, 3D printing, and 5G • Increasing government support and global funding, as seen in Kenya's AT ecosystem network <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tight labor markets and higher commodity prices may offset technology's disinflationary promise • Advances in assistive technologies, including AI for people with disabilities, are under discussion as a way to bridge accessibility gaps\ • Growing focus on AI ethics and AI assistive technologies in healthcare and workplace inclusion • The rise of eco-friendly packaging in e-commerce, modularized devices for recycling • Growing concerns about automation replacing jobs, particularly in • low-skill sectors, but also new job creation in AI and tech fields emerging. • Mainstream AT for non-disabled populations is growing in response to usability improvements, while specialized • AT systems are advancing slowly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology disinflationary potential can drive rapid economic acceleration and include disability • AI-powered assistive technologies (e.g., voice-to-text software, mobility aids) can enhance the autonomy of individuals with disabilities • Growing concerns about automation replacing jobs, particularly in low-skill sector (those most likely to be occupied by Persons with disabilities); but need to train/ retrain Persons with disabilities for new job created in AI and tech fields.

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Evolving Communities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of regionalization (influencing how people live, work, and engage with one another) due to geopolitics, shifting of supply chains, demographic, urbanization, migration and tech advancement • The AfCFTA aims to boost regional trade and employment, but requires rapid domestication and operationalization • Digital Divide: As digital technologies spread, the digital divide persists, especially in marginalized populations like those with disabilities. • Social Stigma and Uptake of AT: Despite increasing awareness, AT uptake is low in Kenya due to stigma and affordability • Rise of Silicon Savannah in Kenya • Increasing polarization due to unequal access to education and healthcare services, impacting marginalized groups. 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AfCFTA represent major drivers of social change in Africa • Digital literacy and policies aimed at bridging digital divides. • The growth of the Internet of Things (IoT), 5G networks, and digital platforms are transforming how communities interact with technology, widening access gaps. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on economic inclusivity under AfCFTA present opportunities for tailored disability inclusion programs • Efforts to bridge the digital divide through inclusive technology policies in developing regions, focusing on accessibility. • Emergence of community-led digital inclusion projects in low-income and marginalized areas globally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive identity; inclusive communities through inclusive technology and disability • Disability empowered and tailored inclusion programming
Rapid Urbanization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging populations and growing diversity within societies are reshaping the labor market, including the need for inclusive work environments • Push for intentional and inclusive urban redesign • Increasing infrastructure and social services demands; but presenting a chance to design accessible, inclusive urban spaces • Increasing population in urban centers without corresponding increases in accessibility for disabled individuals. • Urban areas are expanding, but many remain inaccessible to disabled populations. 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of cities/ urban hubs as economic centers <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fusion of smart cities tech and integrated urban planning emerging as a key future trend in policy shifts • Rise of urban slums, urban poor entrapping urban disabled • Urban digital twins being trialed in smart cities for better planning • Slow adoption of accessible infrastructure in rapidly urbanizing regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart cities, inclusive infrastructure and disability

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Empowering Individuals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gig Economy and Freelancing: New work models such as gig work and freelancing are creating opportunities for marginalized groups. • Digital tools are transforming the way individuals access information, services, and opportunities • Shaping digital access: healthcare, education, employment, digital entrepreneurship, social life, financial inclusion (fin-tech, etc.), etc. • Increasing personalization of digital technology through AI and machine learning 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of access to technology, information, and digital services • Rise of new global economic opportunities (digital society, digital economy, gig economy, etc.) • The growth of digital platforms (Upwork, Fiverr, etc.) is enabling more independent work • Rise of digital entrepreneurial, but non- targeted private financing to Persons with disabilities may undermine speed • Gig economy platforms are increasingly focusing on inclusivity and accessibility features to accommodate diverse workers, including those with disabilities. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing recognition of alternative work models such as freelancing, gig work, and remote work. • Emerging health-tech and assistive technologies enhancing personal agency among the disabled population. • Global push for inclusive technologies as part of human rights-based approaches, particularly in the healthcare sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital society- access to services (edu, health, finance, e-governance, etc.) and disability • Alternative Economic Pathways and Disability (Gig economy, digital economy and e-commerce, etc.) • Digital workplace employment and disability • Disability entrepreneurship and targeted private financing • Remote and freelance work models create new opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in the labor force without facing physical accessibility barriers
Economic Power Shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of AfCFTA trade opportunities • Africa's potential in technology-intensive global supply chains is growing, driven by its critical resources • Emerging Markets in Tech: The rise of technology in emerging markets, particularly in Africa, presents both opportunities and challenges for inclusivity. • Regional Digital Economies: The digital economy is shifting toward emerging markets in Africa and Asia, creating opportunities for local tech development. • Disparities in global economic growth are deepening due to • unequal access to opportunities for marginalized populations. 	<p>Drivers of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shift towards African economies becoming key players in global supply chains • Inclusive trade policies are increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, especially in technology-driven sectors across Africa. • Shift towards a knowledge-based economy that values diverse workforces. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging economic models advocating for inclusion of marginalized groups, including the disabled, in global economies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AfCFTA trade, the digital economy and disability targeting • Fair play and disability inclusion in the private sector

Six Mega Trends	Emerging Trends	Weak Signals & Drivers of Change	Likely Impact on Disability Inclusion
Resource Scarcity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global push for inclusive solutions to improve access to and sustainable use of basic resources (food, water, energy, etc.) • Digitalization and Sustainability: There is a strong focus on the environmental footprint of digital technologies • and the need for • sustainability 	<p>Drivers of Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The push towards green technologies is driving investments in renewable energy and sustainable infrastructures, particularly in digital infrastructure. <p>Weak Signals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on circular economy models in digital technologies and sustainable consumption practices. • Green tech solutions for reducing energy consumption in data centers are emerging, as are energy-efficient cloud services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frugal innovations and sustainability for mass social access including disability

Annex 5: Persons with disabilities exclusion analysis:Real PWD Efficiency

Real PWD Efficiency									
Kenya 100% Labor Force Participation (All Industries)					Real PWDs Workforce Efficiency				Average
Year	Total GVA/GDP (All Industries) (KES)	Total Compensation of Employees (All Industries) (KES)	Total Number of Workers (All Industries) (#)	Wage Productivity Efficiency (All Industries Added) (KES)	GVA (Gross Value Per Worker (All Industries) (KES)				
Compensation									
2019	KES 10,237,700,000.00	KES 260,331,000.00	18,510,000	KES 39.33	KES 553.09	KES	KES	KES	14.06
2020	KES 10,715,100,000.00	KES 269,279,000.00	19,110,000	KES 39.79	KES 560.71	KES	KES	KES	14.09
2021	KES 12,027,700,000.00	KES 312,861,000.00	20,160,000	KES 38.44	KES 596.61	KES	KES	KES	15.52
2022	KES 13,489,600,000.00	KES 317,519,000.00	21,240,000	KES 42.48	KES 635.10	KES	KES	KES	14.95
2023	KES 15,108,800,000.00	KES 317,944,000.00	22,410,000	KES 47.52	KES 674.20	KES	KES	KES	14.19
Total	KES 61,578,900,000.00	KES 1,477,934,000.00	101,430,000	KES 41.51	KES 603.94	KES	KES	KES	14.56
Kenya 100% PWDs Laborforce Participation (All Industries)									
Year	Total GVA/GDP @42.8% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total Compensation of Employees @42.8% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total PWDs Labour Force (All Industries) (#)	Wage Productivity Efficiency (All Industries Added) (KES)	GVA (Gross Value Per Worker (All Industries) (KES)				
Compensation									
2019	KES 1,802,858,970.00	KES 45,844,289.10	3,259,648	KES 39.33	KES 553.08	KES	KES	KES	14.06
2020	KES 1,864,427,400.00	KES 46,854,546.00	3,324,841	KES 39.79	KES 560.76	KES	KES	KES	14.09
2021	KES 2,023,059,140.00	KES 52,623,220.20	3,391,338	KES 38.44	KES 596.54	KES	KES	KES	15.52
2022	KES 2,197,455,840.00	KES 51,723,845.10	3,459,165	KES 42.48	KES 635.26	KES	KES	KES	14.95
2023	KES 2,378,125,120.00	KES 50,044,385.60	3,528,348	KES 47.52	KES 674.01	KES	KES	KES	14.18
Total	KES 10,265,926,470.00	KES 247,090,286.00	3,392,668	KES 41.51	KES 603.93	KES	KES	KES	14.56
Kenya @41% PWDs Labor Force Participation (All Industries)									
Year	Total GVA/GDP @41% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total Compensation of Employees @41% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total Number of Workers @41% PWDs (All Industries) (#)	Wage Productivity Efficiency (All Industries Added) (KES)	GVA (Gross Value Per Worker (All Industries) (KES)				
Compensation									
2019	KES 739,172,177.70	KES 18,796,158.53	1,336,456	KES 39.33	KES 553.08	KES	KES	KES	14.06
2020	KES 764,415,234.00	KES 19,210,363.86	1,363,185	KES 39.79	KES 560.76	KES	KES	KES	14.09
2021	KES 829,454,247.40	KES 21,575,520.28	1,390,448	KES 38.44	KES 596.54	KES	KES	KES	15.52
2022	KES 900,956,894.40	KES 21,206,776.49	1,418,257	KES 42.48	KES 635.26	KES	KES	KES	14.95
2023	KES 975,031,299.20	KES 20,518,198.10	1,446,623	KES 47.52	KES 674.01	KES	KES	KES	14.18
Total	KES 4,209,029,852.70	KES 101,307,017.26	1,390,994	KES 41.51	KES 603.93	KES	KES	KES	14.56
Kenya PWDs Efficiency Gain/Loss @59% PWDs Exclusion (All Industries)									
Year	Total GVA/GDP @59% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total Compensation of Employees @59% PWDs (All Industries) (KES)	Total Number of Workers @59% PWDs (All Industries) (#)	Wage Productivity Efficiency (All Industries Added) (KES)	GVA (Gross Value Per Worker (All Industries) (KES)				
Compensation									
2019	KES 1,063,686,792.30	KES 27,048,130.57	1,923,192	KES 39.33	KES 553.08	KES	KES	KES	14.06
2020	KES 1,100,012,166.00	KES 27,644,182.14	1,961,656	KES 39.79	KES 560.76	KES	KES	KES	14.09
2021	KES 1,193,604,892.60	KES 31,047,699.92	2,000,889	KES 38.44	KES 596.54	KES	KES	KES	15.52
2022	KES 1,296,498,945.60	KES 30,517,068.61	2,040,907	KES 42.48	KES 635.26	KES	KES	KES	14.95
2023	KES 1,403,093,820.80	KES 29,526,187.50	2,081,725	KES 47.52	KES 674.01	KES	KES	KES	14.18
Total	KES 6,056,896,617.30	KES 145,783,268.74	2,001,674	KES 41.51	KES 603.93	KES	KES	KES	14.56

Annex 5: Desk Review Documents Selection Method

Document Title	Relevance to Objectives (1-5)	Authority/Credibility (1-5)	Recency (1-5)	Geographical Focus (1-5)	Depth of Analysis (1-5)	Unique Insights (1-5)	Total Score (30 Max)	Summary of Key Insights
Document 1 (e.g., National Disability Policy 2024)	5	5	5	5	4	4	28	Provides key policy reference to disability inclusion, directly aligned with objectives of study.
Document 2 (e.g., National Statistical Report)	4	4	4	3	3	3	21	Useful for evidence and trends but less focused on policy context.
Document 3 (e.g., NGO Report on Inclusion Efforts)	3	3	2	4	2	2	16	Offers qualitative insights on inclusion efforts, with moderate relevance to objectives.
Document 4 (e.g., AfCFTA Policy Brief)	5	5	4	5	5	4	28	Highly relevant to the study with detailed analysis of trade policies.
Document 5 (e.g., Academic Journal on Digital Economy in Africa)	4	5	4	4	5	4	26	Provides in-depth academic analysis with high credibility, relevant for digital economy strategy.

Annex 6: Empathy Storytellers Consent Form

UNDP Kenya Empathy Workshop Storyteller Consent Form

Storyteller Name:
Workshop Date:
Facilitator/Organizer
Name: Contact Information:

Introduction:

The UNDP Kenya Empathy Workshop is committed to fostering understanding, inclusion, and awareness by amplifying the voices of persons with disabilities. During this workshop, you may choose to share your personal story and experiences, which could be recorded, documented, and shared for educational and advocacy purposes.

This consent form ensures that you, as a participant, are fully informed about how your story will be used, and it gives you the right to make decisions regarding its distribution.

1. Purpose of Story Collection:

The stories shared during this workshop are intended to:

- Promote awareness and empathy toward the experiences of Persons with Disabilities
- Inform the design of inclusive policies, programs, and initiatives.
- Educate a wider audience, including government officials, development practitioners, and the public, on the importance of disability inclusion.

2. Rights of the Storyteller:

By signing this consent form, you acknowledge the following rights:

- Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this workshop and sharing your story is completely voluntary.
- Anonymity: You may choose to share your story anonymously. If you would prefer not to be identified, please indicate your preference below.
- Control Over Story Use: UNDP shall have exclusive rights on deciding how your story is used, including where and how it is shared (e.g., internal reports, public advocacy materials, social media).

Acknowledgment and Signature

By signing this form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided above, and I agree to the use of my story as specified. I understand that I may not have the right to withdraw my consent as the story usage include public consumption.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Facilitator/Organizer Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Economic Costs of Excluding Persons with Disability from Employment

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 16 percent of the world's population (approximately 1.3 billion individuals) experience significant disability.¹ Of these individuals, about 80 percent are of working age (between 15 and 64), representing a similar share of the world's working age population of 65 billion. Further, the International Labor Organization estimates that 80 percent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries.² Persons with disabilities are much more likely to be inactive; on average, 70 percent of persons with disabilities are not in the labor force, in comparison to a 40 percent inactivity rate for persons without disabilities.³ Additionally, only about one-third of individuals of working age with disabilities are employed, which is roughly half the corresponding share of persons without disabilities. And further, persons with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed, with their median global unemployment rate standing at 7.6 percent in comparison to 6 percent for those without disabilities.⁴

The exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labor force results in significant economic costs, with the ILO estimating that developing countries lose up to 7 percent of their gross domestic product due to the impact of exclusion.⁵ However, there are only a few empirical papers that estimate the economic costs of excluding persons with disabilities from employment. An early study by the Roehrer Institute in Canada used a bottom-up approach to calculate the annual GDP loss related to disability in Canada, using 1993 data. The study estimated that a total of US\$ 55.8 billion was lost, equivalent to 7.7 percent of Canada's 1993 GDP (see Buckup, 2009). Metts (2000) extrapolated these results to calculate the annual value of global GDP lost in relation to disability. Buckup (2009) used labor market data categorized by level of disability (from mild to very severe) to calculate economic losses arising from the exclusion of persons with disability based on lower productivity of employed individuals, higher unemployment rates, and higher rates of economic inactivity. Ananian and Dellaferrera (2024) estimated logistic regressions to study the employment and wage outcomes of persons with disabilities.

Economic Costs of Exclusion in Kenya

a) Baseline estimates

Kenya's total employment as of 2023 was approximately 20 million individuals, of which 3.1 million were wage earning employees employed in the formal sector, and 16.7 million were individuals employed in the informal sector.⁶ Labor force statistics indicate that the labor force participation rate is 66.7 percent and the unemployment rate is 4.9 percent.⁷ The shares of Kenyans employed, unemployed and inactive as a percent of the working age population are illustrated in Table 1.

To estimate the economic costs of exclusion, we follow the approach in Buckup (2009), where economic losses relating to disability accrue due to three main reasons: i) reduced productivity of persons with disabilities that are employed, relating to a number of factors such as lower education, physical accessibility or fewer hours worked; ii) the unemployment rate, which is often higher amongst persons with disabilities relative to those reporting no disability; and iii) the often significantly higher rate of labor market inactivity amongst those with disabilities in comparison to those reporting no disability.

The cumulative economic losses due to the three forms of exclusion above are given by:

$$L_d = Pn \gamma$$

$$\text{where } \gamma = \left[\beta^* - \beta e + \beta^* u - u \left[\left(\beta^* i \right)_d - i \right] \right] \left(\begin{matrix} d \\ n \end{matrix} \right) \left(\begin{matrix} d \\ n \end{matrix} \right)$$

1 See World Health Organization; <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>.

2 International Labor Organization, "ILO and Disability Inclusion", September 2015.

3 See International Labor Organization, "New ILO database highlights labor market challenges of persons with disabilities"; <https://ilostat.ilo.org/blog/new-ilo-database-highlights-labour-market-challenges-of-persons-with-disabilities/>. The statistics are calculated by ILO based on an unweighted average for 61 countries.

4 Ibid.

5 International Labor Organization, "ILO and Disability Inclusion", September 2015.

6 KNBS, Economic Survey, 2024, Table 3.1.

7 The most recent statistics are given by KNBS, Quarterly Labor Force Report, Quarter 4, 2022.

where P is the average productivity (output per worker) in the economy, n_d is the number of persons with disabilities and y is the productivity adjustment factor for persons with disabilities relative to those without, accounting for the three forms of exclusion. The potential level of productivity for persons with disabilities is denoted by β^* relative to the actual level of productivity β , while the shares of those with disabilities that are employed, unemployed and inactive are denoted by e_d , u_d and i_d respectively.⁸ The overall labor market inactivity rate in the economy is denoted by i_n , and the overall share of unemployed individuals in the working age population is given by u_n .

Our baseline estimate of the economic costs of exclusion makes the following assumptions: i) the overall share of persons in Kenya with disabilities is equivalent to the global average of 16 percent; ii) the shares of labor market inactivity and unemployment of people with disabilities are equivalent to other lower-middle income economies (LMICs). Estimates from Ananian and Dellaferrera (2024) indicate that for LMICs, the likelihood of labor force participation is 27 percentage points lower relative for persons with disabilities relative to those without, and the likelihood of unemployment is 1.7 percentage points higher for persons with disabilities relative to those without (see Table 1).⁹ The shares for persons with disabilities based on the calculations in Table 1 are in line with the global averages calculated by ILO.

Table 1. Labor force characteristics (Percent of working age population)

	Persons with no reported disabilities	Persons with disabilities	Difference (based on LMIC likelihood)
Not in labor force	33.3	60.3	27
Employed	63.4	34.7	
Unemployed	3.3	5.0	1.7

Notes & sources:
Percentages of persons with no reported disabilities are taken as the average labor market statistics from the KNBS Quarterly Labor Force Survey, Q4 2022.
The percentages for persons with disabilities are calculated based on the likelihoods for LMIC countries. The share of persons with disabilities employed is calculated as a residual.

Our estimates are based on average monthly productivity per worker of KES. 62,965, taken as 2023 GDP at market prices divided by total employment in 2023 (approximately 20 million individuals) within the formal and informal sectors. Under these assumptions, the total economic loss in local currency from the exclusion of persons with disabilities is estimated at KES. 1.05 trillion, equivalent to 6.95 percent of 2023 nominal GDP (see Table 2).

b) Comparison with official 2019 Census and DHS Survey statistics

There are significant variances in global statistics on persons with disabilities, whereby countries have major differences in terms of the reported share of the population with disabilities, in addition to reported statistics in terms of labor force participation and unemployment in comparison between persons with disabilities and those without. The 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census Analytical Monograph on Disability provides statistics on the prevalence of disability within the country. Disability prevalence indicators show that 2.2 percent of Kenyans have disabilities, with a higher prevalence of disabilities amongst females (2.5 percent) relative to males (1.9 percent), and also a higher prevalence in rural areas (2.6 percent) relative to urban areas (1.4 percent). As a share of the working age population, those with disabilities are 1.8 percent. These statistics are significantly lower than the global average of 16 percent, and may reflect a number of factors

8 The estimates of β^* and β are 0.625 and 0.4, which are calculated as the average across all categories of disability as indicated in Buckup (2009), Table 1.

9 Ananian and Dellaferra (2024) run a logistic model on 65 countries within the ILO Harmonized Microdata collection, where country surveys include information on employment status and earnings. Most surveys cover the period 2019 to 2022 (excluding 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic) and the dataset includes 14 countries from Africa, 7 low-income countries and 14 lower-middle income countries. The average marginal effects account for educational attainment and age.

including a lack of universally accepted standards for defining and classifying disabilities and issues related to stigma in data collection methods (National Council for Persons with Disabilities, 2024), in addition to differences in the perception of disability within society, all of which contribute to challenges in the accuracy of collected data.

Additionally, the 2019 Census indicates that economic inactivity rates are lower amongst persons with disabilities (23.1 percent) relative to those without disabilities (26.5 percent). This percentage is significantly below the reported global average of 70 percent. Additionally, the 2019 Census indicates that employment rates are higher, and unemployment rates are lower, amongst persons with disabilities relative to those without.

The 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) includes a series of questions based on the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG) questions, addressing six core functional domains (seeing, hearing, communication, cognition, walking and self-care). This information was comparable to that collected worldwide via WG disability tools. According to the survey, 5 percent.



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