



Disability Readiness Assessment **REPORT**



DISABILITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

2025

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Foreword

n Nigeria, Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) continue to face significant challenges in achieving full acceptance and inclusion, despite their educational accomplishments and remarkable capabilities. When the talents, knowledge, and skills of individuals with disabilities are harnessed equitably, particularly through inclusive employment practices across all sectors, it contributes meaningfully to economic development, poverty reduction, and a more productive society.

Over the years, the Nigerian government has made commendable efforts to align with international frameworks, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and in force since 2008. A key step in fulfilling Nigeria's obligations under this treaty was the enactment of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, which was signed into law in 2019. While the Act granted a five-year moratorium to achieve accessibility in public infrastructure, this period has since lapsed, with limited evidence on the level of compliance. The absence of reliable data continues to hinder informed decision-making and targeted action on disability inclusion.

It is against this backdrop that the Disability Readiness Assessment (DRA) was undertaken, using Abuja, the nation's capital and symbol of unity, as a case study. The insights from this assessment are not only relevant to Abuja but serve as a practical reference for other states across Nigeria. The findings offer actionable tools to support planning, budgeting, enforcement, and progress tracking for disability inclusion.

Reliable data is essential to meaningful development. The DRA provides a timely and strategic resource for government institutions, civil society organizations, advocates of equity and inclusion, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities. Its application spans critical sectors such as education, healthcare, employment, transportation, security, infrastructure accessibility, and social interventions, including emergency response and disaster management.

Furthermore, the report offers valuable insights for policymakers seeking to strengthen existing policies and design new ones that enhance the quality of life for persons with disabilities. It also underscores the urgency of building an inclusive society, starting with inclusive education. Inclusion in education must not only integrate learners with disabilities into mainstream systems but also foster empathy, understanding, and acceptance among learners without disabilities, thus cultivating social inclusion from the roots.

Let this report serve as a call to action for all stakeholders committed to building a society where everyone, regardless of ability, has the opportunity to thrive.

Mr. Muyiwa Timothy Afolayan

Chairman, Advisory Council Deaf-in-Tech

Acknowledgements

This Disability Readiness Assessment Report is the product of collaborative effort, shared purpose, and a deep commitment to advancing inclusive development in Nigeria. We are grateful to all who contributed their time, expertise, and resources to make this work possible.

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We are especially thankful to **Dr. Arowolo Ayoola,** Executive Director of Data-Lead Africa and Founder of Deaf-in-Tech, whose leadership and passion for inclusive innovation guided the assessment from inception to delivery. Special thanks to **Mr. Muyiwa Afolayan**, Chairman of the Board of Advisors for Deaf-in-Tech, for his visionary leadership and for inspiring the team to maintain focus, ambition, and excellence throughout the process.

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- Inclusive Skills Development Initiative (ISDI)
- Layer 3
- National Association for the Blind (NAB)
- National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)
- Nigerian National Association for the Deaf (NNAD)
- Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Special Needs and Equal Opportunities
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- Women and Girls in Albinism

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This publication stands as a testament to the power of inclusive collaboration and the importance of centring disability perspectives in policy, research, and development practice.

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Acronyms

ACRONYM FULL MEANING

PwDs Persons with Disabilities

NCPWD National Commission for Persons with Disabilities

JONAPWD Joint Association of Persons with Disabilities

OPD Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

ICT Information and Communication Technology

MDAs Ministries, Departments, and Agencies

CBM Christian Blind Mission

UNCRPD United Nations Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act

WHO World Health Organization

WASH Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

HR Human Resources

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility

UDL Universal Design for Learning

AT Assistive Technology

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Introduction

The Disability Readiness Assessment (DRA) is an in-depth study evaluating the preparedness of key sectors in Abuja, Nigeria to foster disability inclusion. Despite the existence of progressive policies such as the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018, and the 5% employment quota, findings indicate critical gaps in awareness, implementation, and enforcement. The assessment highlights sector-specific challenges, institutional gaps, and opportunities for strengthening disability inclusion efforts across employment, healthcare, education, transportation, and security services.

This study, conducted by Data-Lead Africa, utilised mixed-methods research, integrating quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and policy analysis to examine the state of disability inclusion in workplaces, public services, and community settings. The findings offer data-driven insights for policymakers, businesses, and civil society stake-holders to improve accessibility, equity, and participation for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Key Findings

1. Awareness and Commitment to Disability Inclusion

- Awareness of disability policies remains low across all sectors. The healthcare sector reported the highest awareness (40%), followed by employment (31%) and education (26%). Security (17%) and transportation (12%) exhibited the lowest awareness levels.
- A lack of awareness directly translates to inaction, preventing employers, service providers, and policymakers from making meaningful changes.
- Employers often cite ignorance or loopholes to justify non-compliance with inclusion mandates. One respondent from the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) noted: "Employers often claim ignorance or exploit loopholes to avoid hiring PwDs. We have sensitised organisations, but without penalties, many do not take it seriously."



2. Accessibility of Public and Private Services

- Physical accessibility remains a significant challenge across all sectors. 44% of healthcare facilities have ramps or elevators, while only 12% provide accessible restrooms or priority queues for PwDs.
- Transport services are largely inaccessible, with 88.5% of public transport lacking disability-friendly features. PwDs frequently encounter high steps, narrow doorways, and a lack of clear route information, making independent mobility difficult.
- Digital accessibility is also a major issue. Many government websites lack screen reader compatibility, and virtual learning platforms rarely accommodate Deaf or visually impaired users.

3. Employment and Economic Inclusion

- 15% of PwDs reported being employed, but workplace discrimination and lack of accommodations remain widespread. 85% of PwDs remain unemployed, citing lack of job opportunities (36%), absence of workplace accommodations (19%), and employer discrimination (10%) as major barriers.
- 90% of surveyed organizations reported not employing PwDs, citing reasons such as perceived high accommodation costs (23%), lack of knowledge about hiring PwDs (18%), and concerns about managing a diverse workforce (41%).
- Workplace accommodations are almost nonexistent, with only 5% of employers providing necessary adjustments, such as assistive technologies or flexible work arrangements.

4. Education and Learning Accessibility

- 48% of PwDs remain out of school, reflecting deep-rooted accessibility barriers and lack of support services.
- Only 26% of educational institutions offer an inclusive curriculum, meaning that most PwDs lack access to Braille materials, assistive devices, or adapted teaching methods.
- A Deaf student expressed frustration, stating: "I struggle every day because my school does not have an interpreter. I miss out on lessons and discussions."

5. Healthcare Readiness

- Only 16% of healthcare facilities provide assistive technologies such as screen readers or Braille materials, leaving visually impaired patients without access to critical medical information.
- Sign language interpreters are present in just 4% of hospitals, creating major communication barriers for Deaf patients.
- A PwD respondent shared their experience: "I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.'"

6. Security and Legal Protections

- Only 16% of healthcare facilities provide assistive technologies such as screen readers or Braille materials, leaving visually impaired patients without access to critical medical information.
- Sign language interpreters are present in just 4% of hospitals, creating major communication barriers for Deaf patients.
- A PwD respondent shared their experience: "I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.'"

7. Social Inclusion and Attitudinal Barriers

- Negative stereotypes remain a significant barrier to employment, education, and social participation.
- Many employers perceive PwDs as burdens rather than contributors. A business owner stated: "There is a perception that they require too many accommodations, which we cannot afford."
- PwDs remain underrepresented in leadership roles, with only 23% of respondents believing that PwDs are adequately represented in decision-making spaces.

Recommendations and Action Plan

1. Strengthening Policy Enforcement and Compliance

- Establish a national disability compliance task force to monitor adherence to disability laws.
- Introduce financial penalties for non-compliance with employment quotas, modeled after successful international frameworks.
- Mandate annual disability audits for public and private institutions to assess progress.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 through the National Assembly to assess its effectiveness, address implementation challenges, and propose amendments that strengthen enforcement and advance disability inclusion.

2. Expanding Accessibility in Key Sectors

- Mandate accessibility guidelines for public transport, ensuring that all new vehicles meet minimum disability-friendly standards.
- Invest in assistive technologies for education, including Braille materials, digital accessibility tools, and teacher training on inclusive education.z
- Improve healthcare accessibility by integrating sign language interpreters, assistive communication devices, and disability-sensitive medical training.

3. Enhancing Employer Commitments to Disability Inclusion

- Incentivize disability hiring through tax breaks, wage subsidies, and accessibility grants.
- Launch nationwide disability awareness training and campaign for businesses, addressing biases and misperceptions about workplace accommodations.
- Create centralized job placement platforms to connect qualified PwD candidates with employers.

4. Strengthening Multi-Sector Collaboration

· Formalize OPD representation in government decision-making

bodies to ensure disability rights are prioritized.

 Establish public-private partnerships to drive sustainable funding for disability inclusion initiatives. Expand cross-sector disability working groups to enhance coordination, data-sharing, and policy alignment.

Conclusion and Call to Action

The Disability Readiness Assessment (DRA) provides a comprehensive, data-driven understanding of disability inclusion gaps in Abuja. Despite existing policies, PwDs continue to face systemic barriers in employment, healthcare, education, security, and transportation. Limited awareness, weak enforcement, and infrastructural inaccessibility remain key challenges.

To bridge these gaps, immediate and coordinated action is required from government agencies, private sector leaders, civil society organizations, and OPDs. Stronger enforcement of disability policies, expanded accessibility initiatives, and structured multi-sector collaboration are critical to ensuring that PwDs are fully included in social, economic, and civic life.

This is not merely a policy priority it is a human rights imperative.

Part 1 INTRODUCTION



1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Disability inclusion has gained increasing global and national recognition as a critical element of social equity and human rights. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 15% of the world's population lives with a disability, yet many countries, particularly in low- and middle-income regions, continue to struggle with full inclusion (WHO, 2023). In sub-Saharan Africa, less than 10% of children with disabilities have access to formal education, and employment rates among PwDs remain significantly lower than those of their non-disabled peers (World Bank, 2022). Despite international commitments, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), many African nations, including Nigeria, continue to face systemic barriers to disability inclusion.

In Nigeria, policy efforts have been made to improve disability inclusion, most notably through the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018, and the 5% employment quota for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in public and private sector employment. However, significant gaps remain in implementation, enforcement, and societal attitudes toward disability inclusion. Many organizations and institutions lack structured policies or readiness frameworks to effectively integrate PwDs into employment, education, healthcare, and public services. While the 5% employment quota policy was introduced to promote workplace inclusion, its impact has been limited due to low employer awareness, weak enforcement mechanisms, and inadequate incentives for compliance (Solidarity Center, 2022).

Workplace accessibility remains a significant challenge, as many employers cite communication barriers, the perceived cost of accommodations, and a lack of guidance on implementing inclusive hiring practices (ILO, 2023). Moreover, there is a disconnect between the skills of PwDs and job market demands, as training programs often do not align with industry needs, leaving many PwDs unemployed despite their qualifications. Without a structured monitoring system or accountability framework, compliance with disability employment policies remains low, further exacerbating economic disparities for PwDs.

To better understand these challenges, Data-Lead Africa launched the Deafin-Tech project in August 2022. Deaf-in-Tech is a non-profit initiative dedicated to equipping Deaf individuals with tech skills to enhance their employability. Through programs such as the Deaf Learn Digital LMS, which offers high-demand tech courses with Sign Language (ASL) as the primary mode of instruction, and Digits and Signs, which introduces young Deaf individuals to STEM, the initiative aims to bridge the digital divide for the Deaf community. The Deaf Centre serves as a collaborative hub where Deaf individuals receive mentoring, training, and access to resources to support their transition into the tech industry. Additionally, Deaf-in-Tech supports organizations through Inclusion Readiness Assessment Services, helping workplaces become more disability-inclusive.

Despite these efforts, a recurring challenge persists even after completing training programs, many Deaf participants still struggle to secure employment. Employers frequently cite concerns about communication barriers, the perceived cost of accommodations, and a lack of awareness about the contributions of Deaf professionals (Mastercard Foundation, 2022). This highlights the broader systemic gaps in disability readiness across various sectors.

Recognizing these challenges, Data-Lead Africa initiated the Disability Readiness Assessment (DRA) to evaluate the preparedness of key stakeholders including government agencies, private sector organizations, civil society, and service providers to foster an inclusive society. This assessment will generate data-driven insights to inform policies, enhance institutional capacity, and promote best practices in disability inclusion.

A key outcome of this initiative is the Disability Readiness Toolkit, which will serve as a practical guide for improving accessibility and inclusion practices in Nigeria. The toolkit will provide stakeholders with actionable strategies to ensure PwDs can fully participate in social and economic life, thereby aligning national disability inclusion efforts with global best practices.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to assess disability readiness in Abuja by identifying challenges, opportunities, and actionable steps to strengthen disability inclusion across multiple sectors. The study specifically aims to:

1. Assess the level of awareness and commitment to disability inclusion

- among key stakeholders.
- 2. Evaluate the accessibility of public and private services, including healthcare, education, transportation, employment, and security.
- 3. Examine employment and educational opportunities for PwDs and the barriers they face.
- 4. Investigate societal attitudes, discrimination, and inclusion challenges encountered by PwDs and their caregivers.
- 5. Assess the readiness of employers, healthcare providers, educational institutions, transport providers, and security agencies to accommodate PwDs.
- 6. Identify policy gaps, institutional challenges, and systemic barriers hindering disability inclusion.
- 7. Explore multi-sectoral collaboration and stakeholder engagement in disability-related initiatives.
- 8. Develop a Disability Readiness Toolkit containing best practices, accessibility audit tools, policy templates, and training materials.

1.3 SCOPE AND STUDY LOCATION

The Disability Readiness Assessment focuses on Abuja, Nigeria, as a representative urban setting where national disability inclusion policies are tested in real-world implementation. Abuja was selected due to its role as the country's administrative and policy hub, making it an ideal case study for national-level disability readiness.



DISABILITY READINESS ASSESSMENT: INTRODUCTION

The assessment covers five key sectors:

- 1. Employment (hiring practices, workplace accessibility, employer perspectives)
- 2. Healthcare (accessibility of medical facilities, training of healthcare workers)
- 3. Education (inclusion in schools, assistive learning technologies, curriculum accessibility)
- 4. Transportation (public transport accessibility, awareness among service providers)
- 5. Security and Law Enforcement (engagement of security agencies with PwDs, accessibility of emergency services)

The study targets diverse stakeholders, including:

- » Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)
- » Caregivers and family members
- » Employers and business owners
- » Healthcare providers
- » Education providers
- » Transport service providers
- » Security personnel and law enforcement agencies
- » Government policymakers
- » Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)

By assessing multiple sectors and perspectives, the study aims to present a comprehensive picture of disability readiness in Abuja, laying the groundwork for improved policies and practical interventions.





2.1 STUDY DESIGN

The Disability Readiness Assessment employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative research techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of disability inclusion in Abuja. This approach ensured that both statistical insights and in-depth contextual narratives were captured. The study design was structured to assess the perspectives of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), caregivers, employers, service providers, and policymakers, offering a holistic view of disability readiness across key sectors.

2.2 SAMPLING STRATEGY AND DATA COLLECTION

A purposive and stratified sampling approach was adopted to ensure inclusivity and representation across key sectors involved in disability inclusion. The study engaged Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), caregivers, employers, education and healthcare providers, security personnel, and transport service providers, among others. The inclusion criteria focused on individuals with lived experiences, service providers, and policymakers actively engaged in disability-related issues, ensuring a well-rounded perspective on disability readiness.

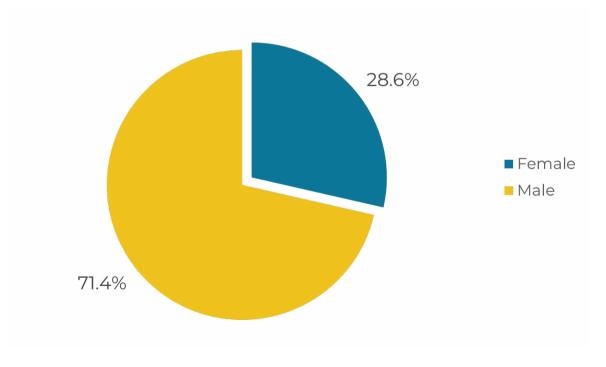


Figure 1: Gender Disaggregation of Respondents

A total of 294 individuals were approached for interviews, out of which 216 consented to participate, yielding a response rate of 73.5%. The gender distribution was predominantly male (71%), while 29% identified as female. The largest proportion of respondents were PwDs (20%), ensuring the study captured firsthand experiences of accessibility, inclusion, and challenges in various sectors. Employers and business owners (18%) formed the next largest category, providing insights into hiring practices, workplace accessibility, and compliance with disability employment policies. Security personnel (14%), transport service providers (12%), and healthcare professionals (12%) were included due to their direct impact on accessibility in public services, mobility, and healthcare for PwDs. Education providers (11%) shared perspectives on inclusive education practices, curriculum adaptations, and accessibility in learning institutions. The "Others" category (11%) included respondents from diverse professional backgrounds with indirect but relevant roles in disability inclusion. Caregivers and family members of PwDs (3%) were also included, though their lower representation may reflect barriers to participation due to caregiving responsibilities or limitations in outreach.

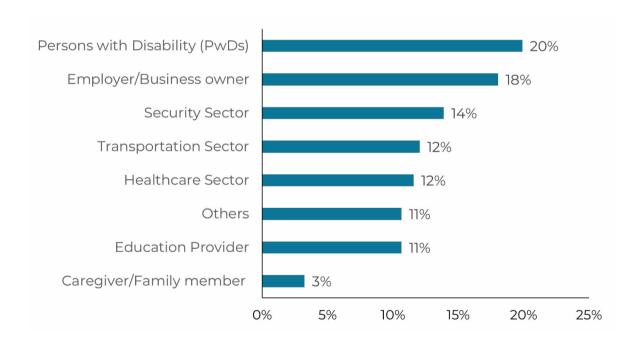


Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of the Respondents Categories

By ensuring representation across key service sectors, employers, and PwDs themselves, the study was designed to identify sector-specific challenges, gaps in disability readiness, and opportunities for strengthening inclusion frameworks. The findings from these diverse groups provide critical insights into systemic barriers, policy implementation gaps, and the effectiveness of current disability inclusion strategies across different sectors.

- » Data Collection Methods: To ensure comprehensive and high-quality data collection, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, incorporating quantitative and qualitative techniques. The study utilized the following data collection methods:
- » Surveys: Structured questionnaires were administered using Kobo Toolbox, a mobile data collection platform that enabled real-time data capture and submission. This ensured efficient and accurate data collection, even in locations with limited internet access.
- » Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including government officials, disability rights organizations, and private sector representatives. These interviews explored systemic challenges and institutional perspectives on disability inclusion.
- » Desk Review: A comprehensive analysis of existing policies, disability inclusion frameworks, and global best practices was undertaken to benchmark the study's findings and contextualize them within broader policy and institutional frameworks.

By combining survey data, in-depth qualitative interviews, and policy analysis, the study was able to triangulate findings, ensuring a holistic and evidence-based assessment of disability readiness across different sectors.

2.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study adhered to strict ethical protocols to protect participants' rights and privacy:

- » Informed Consent: Participants were fully briefed on the study's purpose and voluntarily consented to take part.
- » Confidentiality: ResZponses were anonymized to safeguard participants'

identities.

» Data Protection: Information was securely stored and managed in compliance with ethical guidelines for disability research.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

To ensure robust and reliable findings, a triangulated approach was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. This approach ensured that findings were cross-verified, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of disability readiness across different sectors.

Quantitative Analysis

Survey data were processed and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and STATA 15, applying descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations to identify key trends and patterns related to: Accessibility of services and infrastructure; Employment and workplace inclusion; and Policy awareness and compliance levels.



Qualitative Analysis

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and open-ended survey responses were analyzed using NVivo 12, enabling thematic coding to identify recurring themes and narratives on disability inclusion and narrative synthesis to capture the experiences of PwDs, service providers, and policymakers.



Triangulation Approach

Findings from both quantitative and qualitative data sources were cross-validated to ensure consistency and deeper insight:



Survey results were compared with qualitative interview responses to assess whether self-reported accessibility levels matched real-world experiences of

DISABILITY READINESS ASSESSMENT: METHODOLOGY

PwDs.

Employer-reported compliance with the 5% employment quota was cross-checked with PwD accounts of hiring challenges, exposing gaps between policy claims and actual implementation.

The desk review provided a policy benchmark, allowing researchers to compare Nigeria's legal framework with actual institutional practices reported by study participants.

This triangulated approach strengthened the validity of findings, ensuring that policy recommendations were grounded in both statistical trends and real-life experiences of PwDs.





3.1. AWARENESS AND COMMITMENT TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

Awareness is the first step toward real inclusion. Without it, policies remain ineffective, and commitments fall short. The 5% employment quota for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) is a key policy designed to improve workforce inclusion, yet many employers, institutions, and even PwDs themselves remain unaware of its existence. This gap in awareness limits access to opportunities, weakens enforcement, and ultimately hinders progress. Understanding where awareness is strong, where it is lacking, and why commitment remains inconsistent is crucial for turning policies into action.

3.1.1. Awareness Levels of Disability Policies & Rights Among Stakeholders

Findings from the study highlight low awareness of disability policies and rights among key stakeholders across sectors. The transportation sector recorded the lowest awareness (8%), while security personnel (17%) also showed minimal knowledge of disability rights. Awareness levels among employers (28%) and healthcare providers (28%) suggest that organizations responsible for service delivery and employment of PwDs often lack the necessary understanding of their legal obligations. Education providers showed slightly better awareness (30%), though still below an acceptable threshold.

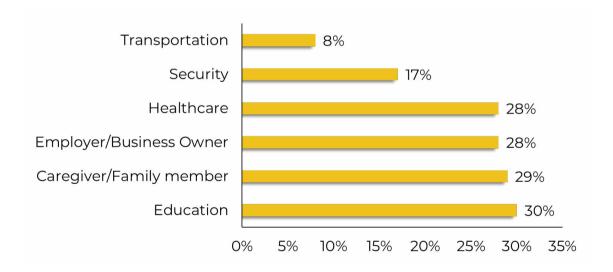


Figure 3: Stakeholders awareness of Laws/policies for disability inclusion in the workplace

One major concern is the absence of structured awareness programs to ensure disability policies are widely understood. Many government agencies have disability inclusion policies, but implementation is inconsistent due to weak dissemination and enforcement. A respondent from the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) explained: "Employers often claim ignorance or exploit loopholes to avoid hiring PwDs. We have sensitized organizations, but without penalties, many do not take it seriously."

Even among PwDs, awareness of their rights remains limited. A representative from an Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) noted: "Even among OPDs, many are unaware of their rights. They need capacity-building to effectively demand inclusion."

3.1.2. Challenges in Policy Implementation (5% Employment Quota)

Despite the existence of legal frameworks supporting disability inclusion, the implementation of disability policies remains weak, particularly regarding the 5% employment quota for PwDs in public and private organizations. Findings reveal that a lack of monitoring and accountability mechanisms allows many organizations to bypass their obligations, leaving PwDs with limited job opportunities despite legal protections.

3.1.2.1 Low Awareness Among Employers

A significant barrier to policy implementation is the low level of awareness among business owners about disability inclusion laws. Findings indicate that only 28% of employers are aware of disability workplace policies, meaning that most companies do not actively implement inclusive hiring practices.

A respondent from the private sector explained: "We don't exclude PwDs deliberately, but we honestly didn't know there was a legal requirement to hire them." This gap in awareness contributes to continued exclusion, as employers are not incentivized to create accessible hiring processes or accommodations

3.1.2.2 The Charity-Based Mindset vs. Rights-Based Obligation

Even among organizations aware of disability inclusion policies, many employers view hiring PwDs as an act of charity rather than a legal or moral obligation. This mindset reinforces workplace exclusion and prevents PwDs from being treated as equal contributors in the labor force.

A CBM Global representative highlighted this issue: "Employers still think hiring PwDs is charity work. They don't see it as a legal or moral obligation." Without a shift toward rights-based inclusion, PwDs will continue to struggle for meaningful employment opportunities, despite existing legal mandates.

3.1.2.3 Compliance Challenges in Government Institutions

Government agencies, which should lead by example, are also failing to meet the 5% employment quota. Instead of open recruitment, findings indicate that some government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) use replacement hiring tactics to bypass compliance requirements.

A respondent from the Office of the Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the President on Special Needs noted: "Government MDAs avoid compliance by hiring through replacement rather than open recruitment."

This loophole allows public sector institutions to evade their obligations, further weakening the impact of the employment quota policy.

3.1.2.4 Weak Enforcement and Lack of Accountability

Without structured enforcement mechanisms, compliance with disability employment quotas remains largely voluntary. Findings highlight several enforcement gaps:

- 1. No independent monitoring body to track compliance levels.
- 2. Lack of penalties for non-compliant organizations, reducing accountability.
- 3. Absence of employer incentives, such as tax breaks or funding support for workplace accommodations.
- 4. These weaknesses render disability employment policies ineffective, as organizations face no consequences for non-compliance.

3.1.2.5 Strengthening Compliance and Policy Implementation

To ensure that the 5% employment quota is effectively implemented, the following steps must be taken:

- 1. Mandatory awareness programs for employers on disability hiring policies and workplace accommodations.
- 2. Creation of an independent compliance body to monitor and enforce disability employment quotas.
- 3. Incentive structures (tax benefits, grants, or subsidies) to encourage employers to hire and support PwDs.
- 4. Legal penalties for non-compliance, ensuring that organizations take inclusion policies seriously.

Without structured enforcement mechanisms and employer sensitization, the employment landscape will remain inaccessible to PwDs, further deepening economic disparities.

3.1.3 Sectoral Variations in Commitment to Disability Inclusion

Disability inclusion varies widely across sectors, with some making progress while others remain largely inaccessible and uninformed. Awareness of disability policies is low across the board, with transportation and security ranking the lowest. Employment of PwDs is nearly nonexistent in education, healthcare, and transportation, and most workplaces lack the necessary accommodations and staff training to support inclusion. Public services, particularly transport and employment centers, remain difficult for PwDs to access, reinforcing barriers to independence and economic participation.

To determine sectoral variations in commitment, four key parameters were analyzed: awareness of disability policies, workplace accommodations, staff training on disability inclusion, and accessibility of public services.

The table below gives an overview of the findings of the sectoral variations to commitment across the various stakeholder groups.

Table 1:Sectorial variations to Disability inclusion commitments

Sector	Aware of Disability Inclusion Policies	Provides Workplace Accommodations	Staff Trained in Disability Inclusion	Accessibility of Public Services for PWDs
	Yes	Workplace Accommodations	Yes	
Education	26%	Accessible classrooms (e.g., ramps, elevators, seating) Assistive devices or technologies (e.g., screen readers, Braille materials) Specialized	26%	Medium
Healthcare	40%	instructors or aides Ramps or elevators for mobility-impaired individuals Accessible restrooms Sign language interpreters Assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers, Braille materials) Priority queues for PWDs	28%	Medium
Employment	31%	Accessible workspaces (e.g., ramps, elevators) Assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers, hearing aids) Flexible work hours or remote work options Workplace training for staff on disability awareness	5%	Low
Security	17%	Ramps or elevators for mobility-impaired individuals Signage or information in Braille Accessible restrooms Priority queues or special assistance desks	20%	Medium
Transportation	12%	Priority seating for PWDs Wheelchair ramps or lifts	4%	Low

1. Awareness of Disability Inclusion Policies

Awareness of disability inclusion policies remains low across all sectors, with healthcare reporting the highest level at 40%, followed by employment at 31%, and education at 26%. Security and transportation fare the worst, with only 17% and 12% awareness, respectively.

A lack of awareness translates directly to inaction. Employers who are unaware of disability hiring laws do not actively recruit PwDs. Organizations that do not know about accessibility regulations fail to provide reasonable accommodations. Service providers who have never heard of disability rights laws are more likely to ignore the needs of PwDs.

A respondent from the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) noted: "Employers often claim ignorance or exploit loopholes to avoid hiring PwDs. We have sensitized organizations, but without penalties, many do not take it seriously". Without targeted awareness campaigns and strong enforcement mechanisms, sectors such as security and transportation will continue to neglect disability inclusion.

2. Workplace Accommodations

Reasonable accommodation for PwDs is almost nonexistent in many sectors. Only 5% of employment-based organizations report providing workplace accommodations, while education, healthcare, and transportation sectors report none at all. Security, which has some level of compliance, reports 20% accessibility measures through priority seating, accessible restrooms, and Braille signage.

Even PwDs who manage to secure employment often cannot function effectively in the workplace because of barriers such as the absence of ramps, elevators, and assistive devices. A disability rights advocate stated: "Many offices do not have ramps or elevators. Even in organizations that claim to be inclusive, PwDs struggle to access basic facilities like restrooms or meeting rooms." – CBM Global Representative

In the healthcare sector, where accessibility is essential, a respondent admitted: "Hospitals lack basic accessibility features, from ramps to sign language interpreters. Many PwDs struggle to receive medical attention." Without in-

clusive workplaces, PwDs remain excluded from professional life, reinforcing economic dependency.

3. Staff Training on Disability Inclusion

Training on disability inclusion is critically low across sectors. Only 5% of employment-based organizations and 4% of transportation providers have provided any form of disability training. The education and healthcare sectors, where disability knowledge is most essential, report training rates of only 26% and 28%, respectively.

Without training, service providers, educators, and employers remain unprepared to support PwDs. A transport service provider admitted: "Retrofitting vehicles is expensive. Government has not made it a requirement, and most transport businesses just don't see the need because we don't get many PwDs using our services". This lack of training leads to neglect, leaving PwDs without accessible transportation, proper healthcare, or inclusive education.

4. Accessibility of Public Services for PwDs

Public services should be universally accessible, yet ratings vary widely. Education, healthcare, and security sectors rank "medium" in accessibility, while employment and transportation rank "low".

The transportation sector's low accessibility rating is reflected in everyday challenges faced by PwDs. A wheelchair user described their experience: "I use a wheelchair, and I cannot enter public buses in Abuja. There are no ramps, no provisions for people like me. Even tricycles don't have accessible spaces. We are just left to figure things out ourselves."

Similarly, healthcare facilities lack essential accommodations, making routine medical visits challenging: "I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.' I had to leave without receiving treatment."

3.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES

Accessibility remains one of the most pressing challenges for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Abuja, affecting their ability to move freely, access es-

sential services, and participate fully in economic and social activities. Findings from both quantitative data and qualitative insights reveal widespread inaccessibility in public transport, healthcare, workplaces, education, and digital platforms.

Employment Facilities

3.2.1. Physical Accessibility

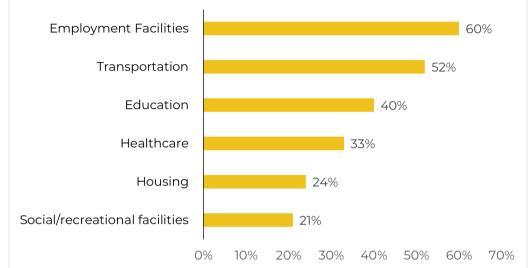


Figure 4: Public access ratings by Persons with disabilities (PwDs)

For PwDs, navigating public spaces remains a major obstacle. Survey data indicates that transportation and employment facilities are the least accessible services, with access ratings of 52% and 60%, respectively. This highlights the significant challenges PwDs face in securing jobs and commuting independently, often due to mobility barriers, workplace discrimination, and inadequate accommodations. Education (40%) and healthcare (33%) also present accessibility issues, limiting opportunities for learning and essential medical care. Housing (24%) and social/recreational facilities (21%) are the least difficult to access but still pose obstacles, affecting PwDs' ability to secure safe living environments and participate in community activities.

1. Transport Sector

Findings from the survey highlight that 88.5% of transport services in Abuja do not have accessibility features, meaning that most PwDs cannot use public transport independently

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A wheelchair user described the impact of this exclusion:

"I use a wheelchair, and I cannot enter public buses in Abuja. There are no ramps, no provisions for people like me. Even tricycles don't have accessible spaces. We are just left to figure things out ourselves." – PwD respondent.

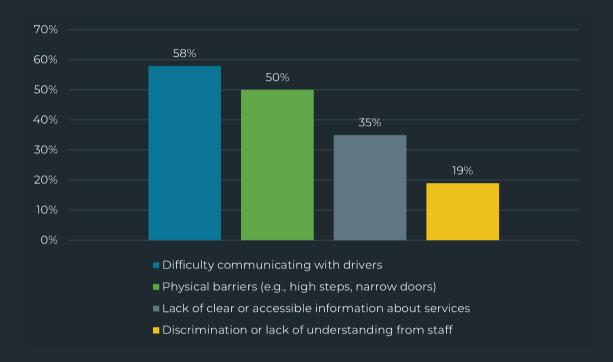


Figure 5: Barriers PwDs face in the Transport Sector

Beyond the lack of accessible infrastructure, PwDs also face additional barriers when attempting to use transport services. Communication challenges with drivers (58%) make it difficult to request stops or understand fare structures, while physical obstacles such as high steps and narrow doors (50%) hinder access for those with mobility impairments. A lack of clear or accessible information (35%) further complicates trip planning, and some PwDs (19%) experience discrimination or insensitivity from transport staff. These barriers not only limit mobility but also contribute to the broader exclusion of PwDs from economic and social activities.

Transport operators recognize the issue but cite financial constraints as a barrier to improvement. "Retrofitting vehicles is expensive. Government has not made it a requirement, and most transport businesses just don't see the need because we don't get many PwDs using our services." – Transport service provider

2. Health Sector

Survey data reveals that hospitals often lack essential accessibility features, with ramps and sign language interpreters among the most frequently missing reasonable accommodations. Eighty percent of respondents identified the absence of ramps or elevators as a major barrier to accessing healthcare, while 20% cited the lack of sign language interpreters.

A PwD shared their experience at a hospital that refused to accommodate their mobility needs:

"I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.' I had to leave without receiving treatment." – PwD respondent.

Without accessible healthcare, PwDs face a higher risk of preventable illnesses and worsening medical conditions, further exacerbating their vulnerability.



3. Workplaces and Government Buildings

Analysis of the assessment reveals that most workplaces and government offices lack essential accessibility features such as ramps, accessible restrooms, and assistive technologies, making it difficult for PwDs to function independently.

A disability rights advocate highlighted the daily struggles faced by PwDs in professional environments: "Many offices do not have ramps or elevators. Even in organizations that claim to be inclusive, PwDs struggle to access basic facilities like restrooms or meeting rooms." – CBM Global Representative

Without accessible workplaces, PwDs are often excluded from job opportunities, reinforcing cycles of poverty and dependence.

4. Education Sector

An analysis of the education sector reveals that many schools lack essential assistive learning materials, such as Braille textbooks and trained sign language interpreters, making it difficult for students with disabilities to learn effectively.

A school administrator acknowledged these gaps: "We have some ramps in the school, but beyond that, we don't have a structured plan for students with disabilities. We don't have trained teachers for them, and we lack the right materials." – School Administrator

For students, the absence of accessible learning resources has significant consequences. A visually impaired student shared their experience: "My school does not have Braille textbooks, so I have to rely on friends to read for me. Sometimes, I miss important things in class because of this." – Student with visual impairment



"My school does not have Braille textbooks, so I have to rely on friends to read for me. Sometimes, I miss important things in class because of this"

 Student with visual impairment

3.2.2. Digital Accessibility

Survey results reveal that most government and business websites are not accessible, leaving visually impaired users unable to access critical online services

Most government websites are not accessible for people who use screen readers. Important information is often in image format with no alternative text, so visually impaired people cannot access it.

Similarly, most online workspaces do not provide captions or sign language interpretation, making virtual meetings and e-learning inaccessible to Deaf individuals

- Digital Bridge Institute Representative

"Most online meetings do not have captions or sign language interpretation. It makes it difficult for Deaf people to participate fully in discussions."

- Deaf professional.

Without accessible digital platforms, PwDs are excluded from remote work opportunities, online banking, e-learning, and government services.

3.2.3. Barriers Identified

1. Transport Sector

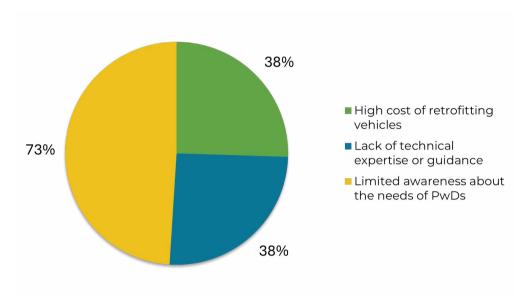


Figure 6: Challenges of transport service accessibility to PWDs

Accessibility challenges in transport services remain a significant barrier for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Correspondence with transport workers revealed that limited awareness of PwD needs (73%) is the most critical factor hindering accessibility. Many operators lack a clear understanding of accessibility requirements, leading to inadequate service provision and the exclusion of PwDs from public transportation. Additionally, the high cost of retrofitting vehicles (38%) presents a financial burden for transport companies, discouraging investments in wheelchair-accessible buses, ramps, and priority seating. Further exacerbating the issue, 38% of transport service providers cite a lack of technical expertise or quidance on implementing inclusive transport solutions effectively. Without clear policies, financial incentives, and targeted training programs, accessibility remains a low priority, leaving PwDs with limited mobility options. Addressing these challenges requires awareness campaigns, capacity-building initiatives for transport operators, and stronger policy interventions to mandate and support accessible transport infrastructure.

2. Health Sector

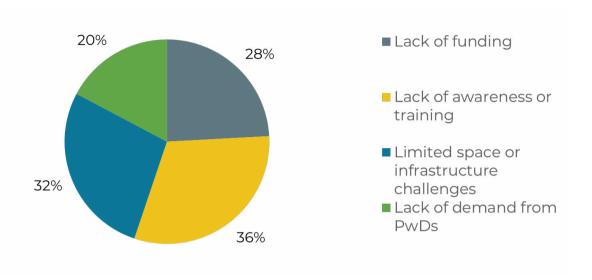


Figure 7: Barriers to non-provision of accommodations for PWDs

The healthcare sector faces multiple barriers in providing accommodations for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), with the lack of awareness and training (36%) emerging as the most significant challenge. Many healthcare workers are unfamiliar with assistive communication methods such as sign language or disability-sensitive care approaches, limiting their ability to serve PwDs effectively. Infrastructure challenges (32%), such as narrow hallways, inaccessible restrooms, and the absence of ramps, further prevent PwDs from receiving equitable healthcare. Financial constraints (28%) also hinder accessibility improvements, as hospitals often prioritize other infrastructure needs over disability-friendly modifications. Additionally, a perceived lack of demand from PwDs (20%) contributes to low prioritization of inclusive services, as some healthcare providers assume that accessibility is not a pressing need. These barriers result in systemic exclusion, forcing many PwDs to forgo necessary medical care due to past negative experiences or inaccessibility concerns. To address these challenges, healthcare facilities must invest in mandatory disability awareness training, infrastructure upgrades, and stronger policy enforcement to ensure equitable and inclusive healthcare services for PwDs.

3. Security Sector

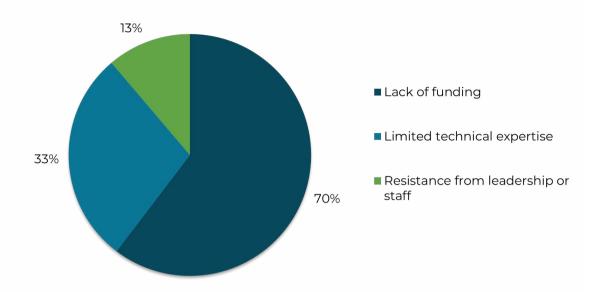


Figure 8: Barriers to improving accessibility in the security sector for PWDs

Accessibility improvements in the security sector face significant challenges, primarily due to lack of funding (70%), limited technical expertise (33%), and resistance from leadership or staff (13%). Financial constraints remain the biggest barrier, preventing security facilities from investing in ramps, elevators, assistive communication devices, and disability-inclusive security protocols. Additionally, limited technical expertise means that even when resources are available, security personnel often lack the training or guidance to implement effective accessibility measures. Compounding these issues is leadership and staff resistance, where accessibility improvements are deprioritized due to misconceptions about feasibility, cost, or necessity. This reluctance weakens the enforcement of disability rights within security institutions, further marginalizing Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Addressing these barriers requires increased funding, specialized training for security personnel, and stronger policy enforcement to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

Holistic View of the Barriers to Accessibility of Public and Private Services

Overall, findings across the transport, health, and security sectors reveal three major barriers to accessibility: financial barriers, attitudinal barriers, and policy-related barriers. While these challenges manifest differently in each sector, the underlying issues remain consistent—lack of investment, negative

perceptions about accessibility, and weak enforcement of disability policies continue to hinder meaningful inclusion for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Financial Barriers

Survey responses indicate that many businesses and institutions cite cost as the primary reason for not investing in accessibility improvements. In the transport sector, 38% of service providers reported that the high cost of retrofitting vehicles is a major barrier to making public transport accessible. Similarly, in the health sector, 28% of respondents cited lack of funding as a key reason for failing to provide accommodations such as ramps, sign language interpreters, or specialized medical equipment. The security sector reported the highest financial constraints, with 70% of respondents stating that funding limitations prevent them from making security facilities disability-friendly. A private sector employer also acknowledged the issue that: "If we had government incentives or funding, we would definitely invest in accessibility. But right now, it's just too expensive for small businesses."

Without financial incentives or policy-driven funding allocations, accessibility upgrades remain deprioritized across all sectors, leaving PwDs excluded from essential services.

Attitudinal Barriers

Negative perceptions and resistance toward accessibility improvements persist across multiple sectors. Limited awareness about PwD needs (73%) was reported as the biggest challenge in transport services, suggesting that many transport providers do not view accessibility as a necessity. In the health sector, 36% of respondents cited lack of awareness or training, reflecting a service delivery system that is not prepared to accommodate PwDs effectively. Within security agencies, 13% of respondents reported resistance from leadership and staff, further slowing progress toward disability inclusion. A disability rights activist highlighted the broader issue: "People still think of accessibility as a luxury. It is not a luxury. It is a right."

This mindset leads to inaction and neglect, as service providers often fail to prioritize accessibility unless mandated to do so. Without strong awareness campaigns and sector-wide disability training, these attitudes will continue to reinforce exclusion.

Policy-Related Barriers

Survey responses highlight weak enforcement of disability laws, allowing businesses and institutions to ignore accessibility requirements without consequences. In the transport sector, 38% of providers cited lack of technical expertise or guidance, pointing to the absence of clear regulatory frameworks or enforcement mechanisms. In the health sector, 32% of respondents attributed inaccessibility to infrastructure challenges, often due to lack of mandated accessibility standards in building codes and health facility requirements. Meanwhile, security facilities struggle with compliance, as 33% of respondents identified limited technical expertise, meaning accessibility remains a secondary concern rather than a legal requirement. A government official acknowledged this gap: "There are laws in place, but there are no penalties for non-compliance. Many businesses know they can ignore accessibility rules without consequences."

Without proper monitoring, enforcement mechanisms, and penalties for non-compliance, institutions continue to overlook accessibility requirements, leaving PwDs excluded from essential services.

3.3 EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMIC INCLUSION

3.3.1. Employment status of PwDs (hiring trends, industry representation)

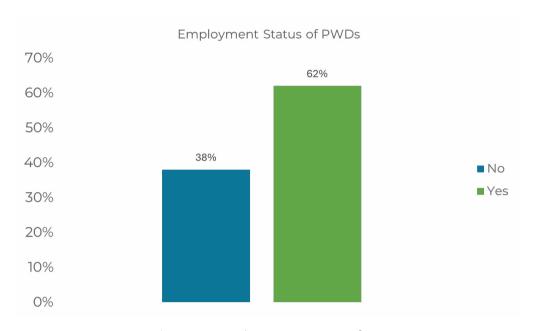


Figure 9: Employment Status of PWDs

The findings indicate that 15% of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are currently employed with majority been deaf and few with physical impairedness while 85% remain unemployed, reflecting widespread challenges in workforce inclusion but also persistent barriers that prevent full economic participation. While a few percentage of PwDs have gained employment, qualitative insights reveal that many still face challenges in securing and maintaining jobs due to discriminatory hiring practices, workplace inaccessibility, and limited reasonable accommodations. A respondent noted, "Many employers are still hesitant to hire PwDs because they assume we need too many adjustments, even when that's not the case."

Among those who are unemployed, 36% cited a lack of job opportunities, indicating that many sectors do not actively recruit PwDs or provide pathways for inclusion. Another 19% pointed to the lack of accommodations, highlighting how inaccessible work environments prevent PwDs from participating effectively. Additionally, 22% reported that their lack of skills or education has been a barrier to securing employment, underscoring the need for vocational training and inclusive education programs. Lastly, 10% of PwDs reported facing outright discrimination in hiring, reinforcing the prevalence of bias

that limits economic opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Even for those employed, significant workplace challenges persist. Communication barriers emerged as a major concern, particularly for Deaf employees, who reported a lack of sign language interpreters in office settings. One respondent shared, "There is no reasonable accommodation. As a Deaf person, most times I don't even know what is going on in the office." Another stated, "In the workplace, one of the biggest difficulties is finding full access to information." These barriers isolate PwDs within the workplace and limit their professional growth.

Workplace accessibility remains another critical issue, with respondents describing difficulty accessing buildings, lack of mobility support, and limited access to assistive technologies. One PwD employee explained, "Majority of the time, accessing the building is a challenge I face daily, but my boss was kind enough to assign me to an office on the ground floor." Others highlighted a lack of adaptive work equipment, such as assistive software or ergonomic office tools, that could improve efficiency.

Discrimination and exclusion continue to shape workplace experiences for many PwDs. One respondent shared, "Being seen as a person with a disability means not being able to deliver results. That's what I often encounter. In short, marginalization." Another noted, "I feel left out most often as they don't give me the same attention as hearing people." These biases reinforce negative stereotypes and prevent PwDs from advancing in their careers.

Bridging the Employment Gap

To improve workforce inclusion, stronger enforcement of disability employment quotas, workplace accommodations, and anti-discrimination policies must be implemented. Employers must be trained to understand disability inclusion beyond compliance, ensuring workplaces are not only physically accessible but also socially and professionally inclusive. Providing assistive technology, sign language interpretation, and workplace accessibility audits will help break down systemic barriers. Without these deliberate measures, PwDs will continue to face workplace exclusion, limited career mobility, and systemic inequities in economic participation.

3.3.2 Employer perspectives (hiring challenges, workplace accommodations)

Employer Perception and Organizational Commitment

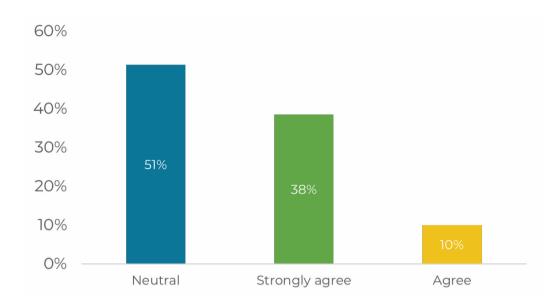


Figure 10: Perception levels on employment of PWDs by Employers/Business owners

Employers' attitudes toward hiring Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) reflect a cautious and largely passive stance, with 51% of business owners expressing neutrality on the issue, while only 38% strongly agree with the importance of hiring PwDs and 10% agree. This neutral stance suggests that many employers neither actively support nor oppose disability-inclusive hiring but instead lack the awareness, motivation, or policy pressure to take action. Despite existing employment quotas and disability inclusion policies, 90% of surveyed organizations reported that they do not employ any PwDs, reinforcing the significant gap between policy mandates and actual implementation in the workforce.

Findings from the assessment reveals that 10% of our sampled organizations spanning public and private organizations employ PwDs across different sectors such as retail and wholesale, education, technology and hospitality respectively. Even though the threshold surpassed the 5% employment quota allocated by the Federal Government, more needs to be done towards employment of PwDs in high-ranking positions and job roles moving fur-

ther away from the perception of been gainfully employed to do menial jobs. Qualitative insights suggest that barriers persist in terms of workplace accommodations and professional growth. PwDs in employment often struggle with inaccessible office environments, lack of assistive technologies, and limited career advancement opportunities. A respondent shared, "Even when we get jobs, promotions are rare. Employers don't see us as capable of leadership roles." Another PwD employee noted, "There is no reasonable accommodation. As a Deaf person, most times I don't even know what is going on in the office." These experiences indicate that employment alone does not equate to full workplace inclusion, as PwDs continue to face structural and attitudinal barriers that limit their ability to perform effectively and progress professionally.

Barriers to Hiring PwDs

Employers who do not currently hire PwDs cite four major barriers to disability-inclusive recruitment. The most significant concern is managing a diverse workforce (41%), indicating apprehension about how to integrate PwDs effectively into existing teams. Many employers lack experience in disability-inclusive work environments and fear potential difficulties in team dynamics, productivity, and workplace culture. A respondent explained, "Employers still think hiring PwDs is charity work. They don't see it as a legal or moral obligation." This perception reinforces hesitancy toward inclusive hiring and weakens employer-driven commitments to disability employment quotas.

Additionally, 28% of organizations pointed to a lack of qualified PwD candidates, highlighting an existing gap between disability employment initiatives and the availability of vocational training or inclusive education systems. However, this reasoning often overlooks the systemic barriers PwDs face in accessing education and professional development. Rather than a true lack of qualified candidates, many employers fail to implement inclusive recruitment strategies that would expand their talent pool.

Financial concerns also contribute to employer reluctance, with 23% of organizations perceiving the cost of workplace accommodations as too high. However, research has consistently shown that most workplace adjustments for PwDs require minimal investment and yield long-term benefits, such as

improved productivity, lower turnover, and higher employee satisfaction. Lastly, 18% of organizations cited a lack of knowledge about hiring PwDs, reinforcing the need for employer sensitization programs, disability-inclusive HR policies, and targeted workforce training on reasonable accommodations.

Workplace Accommodations: The Missing Link

Even when PwDs secure employment, the lack of reasonable accommodations remains a persistent challenge. Employers who do not provide work-place modifications inadvertently create an environment where PwDs struggle to perform effectively, reinforcing misconceptions about their capabilities. A PwD employee described their experience, "I had to bring my own assistive device to work because my employer wouldn't provide one." Another shared, "Majority of the time, accessing the building is a challenge I face daily, but my boss was kind enough to assign me to an office on the ground floor." These accounts highlight the need for systemic workplace modifications, including accessible office layouts, provision of assistive technologies, and structured disability inclusion policies.

Findings further indicate that employers often underestimate the importance of reasonable accommodations beyond physical accessibility. PwDs frequently face communication barriers, particularly Deaf employees, due to the lack of sign language interpreters in office settings. One respondent explained, "There is no reasonable accommodation. As a Deaf person, most times I don't even know what is going on in the office." Without structured communication support systems, PwDs are isolated in the workplace, limiting their participation and career progression.

3.3.3. Challenges Faced in Employing PwDs

Findings reveal that organizations face multiple barriers when it comes to employing Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), with financial constraints (56%) emerging as the most significant challenge. Many employers perceive the cost of making workplace accommodations—such as installing ramps, providing assistive technologies, or adjusting workstations—as prohibitively expensive. However, qualitative insights suggest that this perception is often

based on misinformation, as many PwDs require only minor adjustments to perform their roles effectively.

Another key challenge is the difficulty in identifying qualified candidates (46%), suggesting a gap between employment opportunities and access to skill development for PwDs. Similarly, 46% of employers cite a lack of internal expertise on disability inclusion, indicating that many organizations lack knowledge on how to integrate PwDs into their workforce effectively. One employer noted, "We want to hire PwDs, but we don't even know where to start. There's no framework or best practice model for us to follow."

Beyond internal limitations, 28% of employers highlight a lack of guidance or support from government agencies or NGOs, suggesting that policy implementation and employer incentives for disability hiring remain weak. Additionally, 26% of employers report resistance or biases from existing staff, reflecting deep-seated stereotypes that hinder workplace inclusion. A respondent shared, "Some employees think hiring PwDs means we have to lower performance standards, which is completely untrue."

To overcome these challenges, employers need structured training on disability inclusion, clear hiring guidelines, and financial incentives for work-place accommodations. Government agencies and disability-focused organizations must play a more active role in connecting employers with qualified PwD candidates and providing technical support for workplace integration. Without these interventions, PwDs will continue to face systemic exclusion from the workforce, reinforcing economic inequalities and social marginalization.

3.4 INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

3.4.1. Access to Education for PwDs: Enrollment Rates and Curriculum Inclusivity

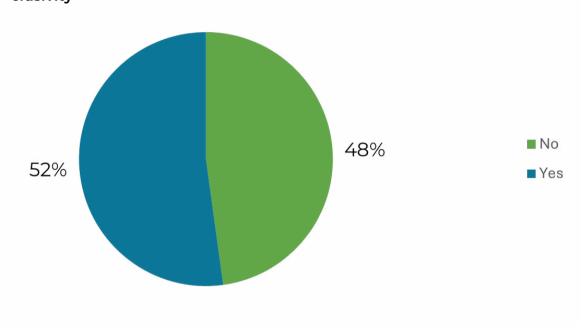


Figure 11: Enrollment Status of PWDs in the Education

Access to education remains a significant challenge for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), with both enrollment and curriculum inclusivity emerging as critical barriers. While 52% of PwDs are enrolled in educational institutions, a concerning 48% remain out of school, reflecting deep-rooted accessibility barriers, lack of support services, and inadequate outreach efforts. A representative from an educational institution remarked, "We do not have a system in place to track the specific needs of students with disabilities, so many of them struggle or drop out"

For those enrolled, learning experiences remain far from inclusive. Findings reveal that only 26% of educational institutions offer an inclusive curriculum, meaning that most PwDs lack access to essential learning modifications such as Braille materials, assistive technologies, or specialized teaching methods. One respondent shared, "We have a few students with disabilities, but honestly, we do not have the training or resources to fully support them" The lack of specialized teachers and assistive learning materials continues to restrict meaningful participation in education for PwDs.

These findings highlight an urgent need for systemic reforms. Expanding inclusive curricula, investing in assistive learning tools, and training educators in disability-friendly teaching methods are key steps toward bridging the gap. As a disability rights advocate emphasized, "The government needs to step in and make inclusive education a priority, not an option". Without these deliberate interventions, PwDs will continue to face systemic exclusion from quality education, ultimately limiting their opportunities for higher learning, employment, and social participation.

3.4.2. Availability of assistive learning technologies

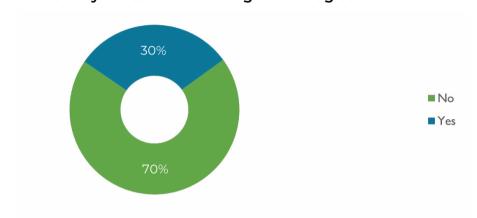


Figure 12: Accommodations available for student with Disabilities in educational institution

Findings indicate that educational institutions are largely unprepared to accommodate the learning needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), with only 30% providing any form of disability accommodations. Among these, assistive learning technologies remain severely limited, restricting PwDs' ability to engage in education on an equal footing with their peers.

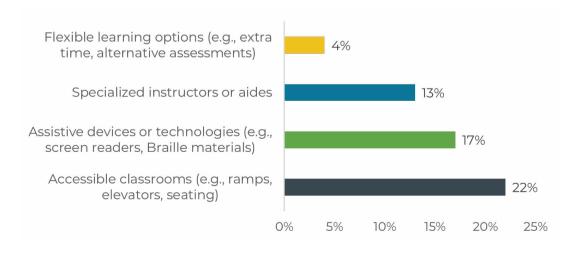


Figure 13: Accommodations available for PWDs in the education sector student

DISABILITY READINESS ASSESSMENT: FINDINGS

Only 17% of schools provide assistive devices or technologies such as screen readers and Braille materials, leaving visually impaired students without essential tools for independent learning. The lack of specialized instructors or aides (13%) further compounds this issue, as students who require individualized learning support are often left without guidance. A student noted, "I have to rely on classmates to understand lessons because there are no sign language interpreters in my school." These communication barriers significantly impact Deaf students and others with learning disabilities, reinforcing educational exclusion.

While 22% of schools have accessible classrooms, including ramps and elevators, these modifications address physical mobility challenges but do not enhance learning experiences for students with sensory or cognitive impairments. Flexible learning options, such as extended exam time and alternative assessments, are the least available accommodation (4%), reflecting a rigid education system that fails to adapt to the diverse needs of PwDs.

The absence of adequate assistive learning technologies limits academic performance, increases dropout rates, and narrows future opportunities for PwDs. To bridge this gap, educational institutions must prioritize investment in assistive technologies, train educators in inclusive teaching strategies, and enforce policies mandating equal access to learning resources. Without these interventions, PwDs will continue to face systemic barriers to quality education and meaningful academic participation.

3.4.3 Training Needs and Commitments for Teachers and Staff in Educational Institutions

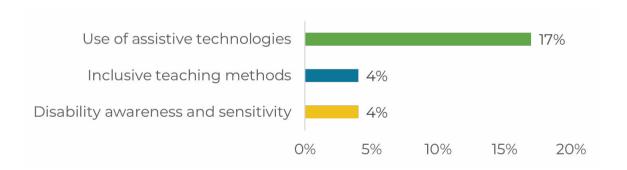


Figure 14:Types of training provided to Staff

Findings indicate that training on disability inclusion and accessibility remains significantly underdeveloped in educational institutions, leaving many educators unprepared to support students with disabilities effectively. Among the few institutions that provide training, the use of assistive technologies (17%) is the most common focus, suggesting a prioritization of technical solutions over broader inclusive teaching strategies. However, training on inclusive teaching methods (4%) and disability awareness and sensitivity (4%) remains critically low, reflecting a fundamental gap in preparing teachers and administrators to create equitable learning environments.

This lack of structured training directly impacts the learning experiences of students with disabilities, reinforcing barriers to education. Qualitative insights highlight communication difficulties, inaccessible teaching environments, and a lack of specialized support. A Deaf student expressed frustration, stating, "I struggle every day because my school does not have an interpreter. I miss out on lessons and discussions." Another student emphasized the broader issue, noting, "Teachers don't know how to engage students with disabilities. There is no training, so they either ignore us or assume we can learn the same way as others." These experiences reveal that the absence of disability awareness training not only limits accessibility but also isolates students with disabilities in mainstream educational settings.

Further emphasizing the need for training, 57% of institutions identified basic disability inclusion as the most urgent area of professional development, yet only 13% recognized communication skills (such as sign language) as a priority, despite widespread challenges reported by Deaf students. Even more concerning, only 4% of institutions identified inclusive curriculum development as a training need, underscoring the lack of commitment to integrating PwDs into the educational framework beyond infrastructural adjustments. One student shared, "There is no difference in how we are taught. There are no special materials, no extra time, nothing to support our learning needs."

3.5 HEALTHCARE ACCESSIBILITY & READINESS

3.5.1. Availability of disability-friendly healthcare services.

Access to healthcare remains a significant challenge for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), with critical gaps in physical accessibility, communication support, and service delivery. Despite existing disability inclusion policies, healthcare facilities lack the infrastructure and systems necessary to provide equitable medical services to PwDs.

3.5.1.1 Physical Accessibility Barriers

Findings indicate that only 44% of healthcare facilities have ramps or elevators, meaning that more than half of medical institutions remain physically inaccessible to PwDs. This forces individuals with mobility impairments to rely on assistance or, in some cases, avoid seeking care altogether.

Additionally, accessible restrooms are available in only 12% of healthcare facilities, making it difficult for PwDs to use essential hospital amenities. The lack of priority queues for PwDs (12%) further exacerbates challenges, leading to long waiting times and discomfort for individuals with mobility limitations or chronic health conditions.

A respondent highlighted the severity of these accessibility gaps: "I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.'" The absence of adequate infrastructure forces many PwDs to delay or forgo medical treatment, increasing their risk of avoidable health complications.

3.5.1.2 Communication and Assistive Technology Gaps

The availability of assistive technologies in healthcare facilities is alarmingly low, with only 16% of hospitals providing essential tools such as screen readers and Braille materials. This leaves visually impaired patients without independent access to critical medical information, including prescriptions, test results, and health instructions.

Furthermore, findings reveal that only 4% of healthcare facilities have sign language interpreters, making it extremely difficult for Deaf patients to communicate with medical personnel effectively. Without interpreters, many

Deaf patients rely on written notes or family members to translate, increasing the likelihood of misdiagnoses and miscommunication regarding treatment options.

A respondent from the Deaf community explained: "There is no sign language interpreter in the hospital, so I have to bring a family member. Sometimes, I don't understand what the doctor is saying, and it makes me anxious." These communication barriers not only hinder the quality of healthcare delivery but also discourage Deaf patients from seeking medical attention, contributing to worsening health disparities.

Thus, the adoption of a call-in service model through registered service providers should be mandated to ensure the deployment of registered sign-language interpreters at health facilities when needed; this system should include a guaranteed payment mechanism to address the issue of interpreters failing to appear.

3.5.1.3 Health Disparities and Consequences of Inaccessibility

The lack of disability-friendly healthcare services contributes to delays in care, medical errors, and heightened health risks for PwDs. Many PwDs avoid healthcare facilities due to physical barriers, long waiting times, or fear of inadequate treatment. This exacerbates pre-existing health conditions, leading to higher mortality and morbidity rates within the disability community.

A disability rights advocate noted: "The healthcare system is not designed with PwDs in mind. If you can't access a facility, you are effectively denied healthcare." The systemic exclusion of PwDs from healthcare services violates fundamental rights and further widens health disparities between PwDs and non-disabled individuals.

3.5.1.4 Strategies for Bridging Healthcare Accessibility Gaps

To address these critical gaps, urgent reforms are necessary to ensure that PwDs receive equitable healthcare services. Key recommendations include:

- Mandatory accessibility audits in all healthcare facilities to assess and improve physical accessibility.
- 2. Expansion of assistive technologies, including screen readers, Braille ma-

terials, and digital accessibility tools.

- 3. Integration of sign language interpreters into healthcare settings to facilitate effective communication for Deaf patients.
- 4. Integrate sign language interpreters into healthcare settings through a call-in service model to ensure effective communication and equitable access to care for Deaf patients.
- 5. Comprehensive training for healthcare professionals on disability inclusion, ensuring that medical staff can provide competent, respectful, and accessible care.

Without urgent action to improve accessibility, communication support, and disability-inclusive training, PwDs will continue to face unnecessary barriers in accessing the healthcare they deserve.

3.5.2 Training of Healthcare Professionals on Disability Inclusion

The role of healthcare professionals in providing inclusive and equitable medical care for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) is critical, yet findings reveal significant gaps in disability-related training among healthcare workers. The lack of awareness, communication barriers, and insufficient knowledge of assistive technologies continue to hinder effective healthcare delivery for PwDs.

3.5.2.1 Limited Disability-Inclusive Training Among Healthcare Workers

Findings indicate that 74% of healthcare facilities lack structured training on disability inclusion, meaning that a majority of medical professionals have never received formal guidance on accommodating PwDs in healthcare settings. This knowledge gap affects how healthcare workers interact with, diagnose, and treat PwDs, leading to miscommunication, improper treatment plans, and poor health outcomes.

A medical practitioner admitted: "We were never trained on how to assist PwDs. We treat all patients the same, but sometimes it feels like we don't have the right tools to support them effectively." Without comprehensive training programs, healthcare workers remain ill-equipped to provide patient-centered, disability-inclusive care, reinforcing health disparities and ac-

cess limitations for PwDs.

3.5.2.2 Challenges in Communicating with PwDs

One of the major barriers in healthcare settings is effective communication with PwDs, particularly Deaf patients. Findings reveal that only 4% of healthcare facilities have sign language interpreters, leaving a vast majority of Deaf patients struggling to communicate with medical personnel.

A Deaf respondent shared: "Doctors don't know how to communicate with me. I usually have to write things down, and sometimes, they misunderstand my symptoms." Additionally, visually impaired patients face barriers in accessing health information, as only 16% of healthcare facilities provide assistive technologies such as screen readers and Braille materials. Without adequate communication support, PwDs experience higher risks of misdiagnosis, delays in treatment, and medical errors.

3.5.2.3 Addressing Attitudinal Barriers in Healthcare

Beyond technical training, healthcare workers also need education on disability rights, sensitivity, and inclusive patient care approaches. Findings indicate that many healthcare professionals view disability through a medical model, seeing PwDs as patients with conditions to be fixed rather than individuals with rights and autonomy.

A disability rights advocate observed: "Many healthcare workers still treat PwDs as helpless. They often assume that we can't make decisions for ourselves." Changing these attitudes through structured disability sensitivity training is essential to ensure that PwDs receive respectful, dignified, and patient-centered care.

3.5.2.4 Key Training Areas for Healthcare Professionals

To bridge these gaps, structured disability inclusion training programs should be introduced across medical schools, hospitals, and healthcare institutions. These programs should focus on:

 Disability awareness and sensitivity training, ensuring that healthcare workers adopt a rights-based approach to disability.

- 2. Communication techniques for interacting with PwDs, including basic sign language training for medical staff.
- 3. Use of assistive technologies in healthcare, such as screen readers, adaptive communication tools, and mobility aids.
- 4. Developing inclusive healthcare policies, ensuring that hospitals and clinics integrate disability-friendly patient care practices.

A respondent from the healthcare sector noted: "If we had structured disability training, we would be able to provide better care. Right now, we mostly figure things out on our own." By integrating mandatory disability inclusion training for healthcare professionals, the healthcare system can become more accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of PwDs.

3.6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

Transportation is a major barrier for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), affecting their ability to access employment, education, healthcare, and social opportunities. Findings reveal that public transport systems remain largely inaccessible, with low awareness among transport service providers and a lack of enforcement of disability-inclusive policies.

3.6.1 Accessibility of Public Transport Services

Survey findings indicate that only 8% of transport providers are aware of accessibility policies for PwDs, demonstrating a significant knowledge gap within the sector. Additionally, 88.5% of public transport lacks disability-friendly features, such as:

- 1. Wheelchair ramps and lifts
- 2. Priority seating for PwDs
- 3. Audible announcements for visually impaired passengers
- 4. Visual displays for Deaf or hard-of-hearing passengers

A respondent from the transport sector noted: "Most transport operators do not even consider PwDs when designing routes and services. They assume PwDs do not travel as much."

This lack of accessible transport options forces PwDs to rely on private transportation, which is often costly and unsustainable. A PwD shared: "Public

transport is simply not an option for me. I cannot get on the buses, and even when I try, the drivers refuse to assist." These findings highlight a critical need for policy enforcement and transport sector reform to enhance mobility for PwDs.

3.6.2 Challenges PwDs Face in Using Transport

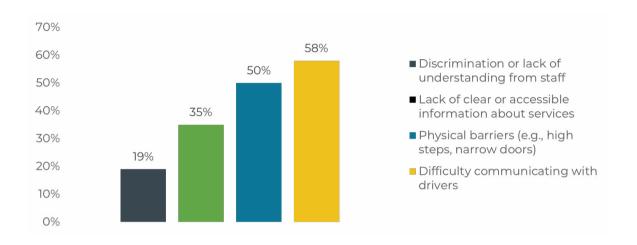


Figure 15:Barriers PWDs face in the transport Sector

Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) encounter multiple barriers when accessing transport services, significantly limiting their mobility, independence, and participation in society. Findings highlight four major challenges, including physical barriers, communication difficulties, lack of accessible service information, and discrimination by transport staff.

3.6.2.1. Physical Barriers to Transport Access

Findings indicate that 50% of PwDs face physical barriers, including high steps, narrow doors, and a lack of wheelchair-accessible vehicles. These obstacles make it difficult; if not impossible, for PwDs to board public transport without assistance.

A respondent shared: "Most buses and taxis are not designed for wheelchair users. I have to rely on private transport, which is costly and unsustainable." As seen in the chart above, physical barriers remain a leading cause of exclu-

sion for PwDs in transport access.

3.6.2.2. Communication Challenges with Drivers and Staff

The survey reveals that 58% of PwDs experience difficulty communicating with transport operators, particularly Deaf passengers and those with speech impairments. Many transport staff lack training on how to assist PwDs, leading to misunderstandings and unintentional exclusion.

A Deaf respondent noted: "Drivers don't know how to communicate with me. They get frustrated, and sometimes they just drive off without letting me in." This lack of disability-sensitive communication in transport services reinforces mobility barriers, preventing PwDs from traveling independently.

3.6.2.3. Lack of Accessible Information on Transport Services

For many PwDs, the lack of clear or accessible information about routes, pricing, and schedules (35%) is a significant barrier to independent travel. Without audio or visual announcements, Braille guides, or mobile-friendly accessibility features, visually impaired and Deaf passengers struggle to navigate public transport systems.

A visually impaired respondent explained: "I never know which bus to take because there are no audio announcements. If no one is around to help, I have no choice but to wait.". To address this, public transport systems must integrate digital and physical accessibility features, such as audio-visual announcements, mobile applications, and clear signage.

3.6.2.4. Discrimination and Lack of Awareness Among Transport Staff

Findings show that 19% of PwDs face discrimination or a lack of understanding from transport staff. Drivers frequently refuse to pick up passengers with disabilities, citing inconvenience, extra time required, or a lack of space for mobility aids.

A PwD stated: "When taxi drivers see me with my wheelchair, they often refuse to stop. Some say it's too much work to fold it and put it in their car." This exclusionary behavior highlights the need for disability awareness training among transport operators, ensuring that they provide equal service to all

passengers, regardless of ability.

3.6.3 Transport Providers' Knowledge of Disability-Inclusive Services

Findings reveal that only 17% of transport service providers have received training on disability inclusion, while 73% report limited awareness about the needs of PwDs. Additionally, 38% cite the high cost of retrofitting vehicles as a key reason for not incorporating accessibility features.

A taxi operator explained: "Adding ramps or modifying vehicles is expensive. Without financial incentives, most of us cannot afford it." Further complicating the issue, some transport providers view disability inclusion as a low priority, often assuming that PwDs do not travel frequently. A respondent from a major transport company noted: "We don't see many PwDs using our service, so we haven't prioritized accessibility features."

These responses reflect a need for targeted training, financial support, and regulatory enforcement to improve transport accessibility.

3.6.4 Recommendations for Improving Transport Accessibility

To address these challenges, urgent interventions are needed to improve transport accessibility for PwDs. Key recommendations include:

- 1. Mandating accessibility guidelines for public transport, ensuring that all new vehicles meet minimum accessibility standards.
- 2. Providing financial incentives for vehicle modifications, such as subsidies for installing ramps and priority seating.
- 3. Implementing disability awareness training for transport operators, covering customer service, communication strategies, and basic assistance techniques.
- 4. Expanding accessible transport options, including dedicated PwD-friendly public transport services and ride-hailing options with accessibility guarantees.
- 5. Enforcing strict penalties for transport operators who refuse to serve PwDs, ensuring accountability in the sector.

Without immediate action, PwDs will continue to face mobility restrictions, limiting their participation in social, economic, and educational opportunities. Addressing these transport challenges is critical to achieving full disabil-

ity inclusion and ensuring equitable access to essential services.

3.7 SECURITY & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ensuring security for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) remains a significant challenge in Nigeria. Findings reveal that security agencies lack engagement with PwDs, security services remain largely inaccessible, and multiple barriers limit PwDs' ability to access protection, justice, and emergency response services.



3.7.1 Engagement of Security Agencies with PwDs

The level of engagement between security agencies and PwDs is minimal. Many security agencies do not have structured frameworks for interacting with PwDs, either in terms of employment or service provision. Survey data shows that only 20% of security institutions have fully accessible services, while 67% are only partially accessible, meaning that PwDs still face significant hurdles in accessing protection and legal assistance.

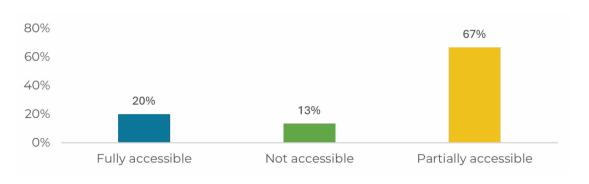


Figure 16:Accessibility of facilities and services, Security Sector

A security official admitted: "There are no structured protocols for engaging PwDs in our operations. It's not that we do not care, but there is no framework guiding us on how to interact with them."

The limited engagement between security agencies and PwDs means that PwDs remain largely unprotected, particularly in cases of violence, discrimination, and emergencies.

3.7.2 Accessibility of Security Services

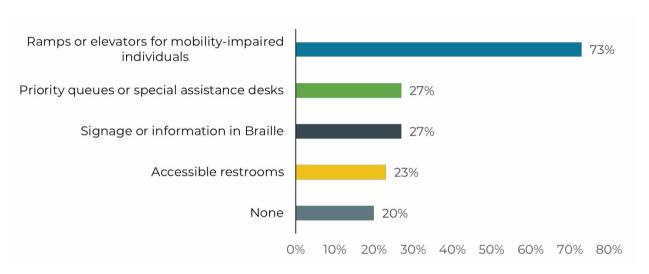


Figure 17:Accessibility features available for PWDs in the Security Sector

Security services remain widely inaccessible, with critical gaps in infrastructure, communication, and procedural accommodations. Findings indicate that:

- » Only 27% of security facilities have priority queues or special assistance desks.
- » Accessible restrooms are present in only 23% of security institutions.
- » Signage and information in Braille are available in just 27% of security offices.
- » 73% of facilities have ramps or elevators, which, while encouraging, does not address other forms of accessibility such as information access and communication tools.

A Deaf respondent highlighted a major challenge: "If I need to report a case at the police station, I have to rely on someone who can interpret for me. But what if I don't have anyone? They will not even try to help me."

This indicates that physical access alone is not enough; PwDs require communication-friendly policies, trained personnel, and accessible reporting mechanisms to interact effectively with law enforcement.

3.7.3 Challenges PwDs Face in Legal Protection & Emergency Response

PwDs face multiple barriers when trying to access legal protection or emergency services. The main barriers identified include:

- 1. Lack of Disability Sensitivity Training: Many security personnel do not understand disability rights or how to engage with PwDs.
- 2. Communication Barriers: Without sign language interpreters or assistive communication tools, Deaf and non-verbal PwDs struggle to report crimes.
- 3. Discriminatory Attitudes: Some officers believe PwDs are not fully capable of handling legal matters, leading to cases being dismissed or ignored.

A police officer acknowledged this gap:

"Our officers are not trained on how to engage PwDs. Sometimes, when a Deaf person comes to report an issue, we don't know what to do. The person just stands there, and we feel helpless."

Additionally, emergency response units, including fire services and paramedics, lack structured protocols for evacuating or assisting PwDs. This increases the risk of harm during crises, such as natural disasters, medical emergencies, or security threats.



3.7.4 Barriers to Improving Accessibility in Security Services

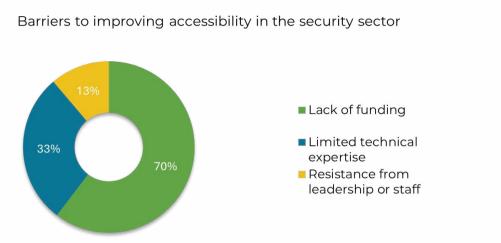


Figure 18: Barriers to improving accessibility in the security sector

Survey findings reveal that several barriers prevent security agencies from improving accessibility, including:

- » 70% cite lack of funding as a major limitation.
- » 33% highlight limited technical expertise on how to implement disability-inclusive policies.
- » 13% indicate resistance from leadership or staff in prioritizing accessibility reforms.

A security administrator explained: "Even if we want to make our offices more accessible, we don't have the budget for it. Accessibility modifications are expensive."

Addressing these barriers will require stronger government investment, targeted disability awareness training, and clear accessibility regulations for security agencies.

3.7.5 Recommendations for Strengthening Security Access for PwDs

To improve security access for PwDs, the following actions should be taken:

1. Implement Mandatory Disability Sensitivity Training: All security personnel should receive training on how to engage with PwDs, handle disability-related cases, and provide inclusive emergency response.

- 2. Expand Accessible Communication Channels: Law enforcement agencies must implement sign language services, text-based reporting options, and Braille communication materials.
- **3. Strengthen Inclusive Security Policies:** Government agencies should develop clear guidelines on how security forces should interact with PwDs, including emergency protocols for evacuations and crisis response.
- 4. Improve Physical and Information Accessibility in Security Facilities: Police stations, military bases, and emergency service offices must be equipped with priority queues, assistive communication tools, and properly trained personnel.
- 5. Increase Collaboration with OPDs: Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) should be involved in policymaking, security training, and oversight of disability-inclusion efforts.

Without these reforms, PwDs will continue to face security risks, legal discrimination, and barriers to justice. Creating an inclusive security framework will ensure equitable protection, emergency response, and legal access for PwDs in Nigeria.

3.8 SOCIAL ATTITUDES, DISCRIMINATION, AND INCLUSION CHALLENGES

3.8.1 Perceptions of PwDs in Communities and Workplaces

3.8.1.1. Prevailing Attitudes Toward PwDs

The perception of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in communities and work-places plays a critical role in determining their level of inclusion. Findings reveal that negative societal attitudes persist, often influencing employment decisions, social interactions, and policy implementation. Despite some progress in disability rights awareness, many employers, community leaders, and individuals still hold misconceptions about the abilities of PwDs.

A community leader explained: "People see disabilities as a limitation rather than just a different way of living. This is why PwDs are often excluded from leadership positions and job opportunities."

Similarly, employers remain hesitant to hire PwDs due to concerns about workplace modifications, productivity, and costs. One private-sector employ-

er noted: "We are not against employing persons with disabilities, but there is a perception that they require too many accommodations, which we cannot afford." This misconception reinforces exclusion in hiring and prevents PwDs from securing meaningful employment.

3.8.1.2. Workplace Bias and the "Burden" Perception

Findings suggest that PwDs are often perceived as a burden in workplaces rather than as contributors. Managers and co-workers may lack experience working with PwDs, leading to hesitation or outright rejection during hiring processes.

Survey results show that many employers prefer to remain "neutral" regarding hiring PwDs, with 51% expressing neither positive nor negative attitudes toward disability employment. This passive stance results in inaction, as employers do not actively pursue disability-inclusive hiring practices.

One respondent from a business association explained: "Employers don't necessarily discriminate openly, but they do not make any effort to recruit PwDs either. They just avoid the conversation."

Without deliberate policies and proactive inclusion strategies, PwDs will continue to face unspoken bias and exclusion in professional settings.

3.8.1.3. Community Perceptions and Social Participation

Beyond workplaces, negative societal attitudes hinder PwDs' full participation in community life. Findings indicate that many PwDs face social isolation, with communities perceiving them as dependent rather than independent individuals.

A respondent from an Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) stated: "People assume that because I use a wheelchair, I need someone to take care of me at all times. They don't see me as capable of leading a normal life."

Furthermore, PwDs are underrepresented in community decision-making spaces. Only 23% of respondents believe that PwDs are adequately represented in community leadership or local government structures.

A disability advocate emphasized: "If PwDs are not part of leadership, policies will continue to ignore our needs." This exclusion from leadership and decision-making further marginalizes PwDs, preventing their voices from shaping policies that affect them.

3.8.1.4. Implications for Disability Inclusion

The entrenched perceptions of PwDs as dependent, incapable, or costly to accommodate continue to undermine efforts toward full inclusion. These biases not only restrict employment opportunities but also reinforce systemic discrimination in education, leadership, and community engagement.

Addressing these challenges requires:

- 1. Workplace disability awareness programs to challenge stereotypes.
- 2. Incentives for employers to actively recruit and retain PwDs.
- 3. Increased representation of PwDs in leadership and governance structures.
- 4. Community sensitization campaigns to promote social acceptance and participation of PwDs.

Without a shift in societal attitudes, policies and legal frameworks will remain ineffective, as discrimination is often rooted in perceptions rather than regulations.

3.8.2 Discrimination Experiences Reported by PwDs and Caregivers

3.8.2.1. Prevalence of Discrimination Against PwDs

Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) remains a wide-spread issue, affecting their access to employment, education, housing, and public services. Survey results reveal that over 40% of PwDs report experiencing some form of discrimination in their daily lives. This includes explicit exclusion, subtle biases, and systemic barriers that prevent equal participation.

A PwD respondent described their experience: "Even though I am qualified, I was rejected from a job interview as soon as they saw I use a wheelchair."

This reflects a broader trend where PwDs are overlooked for job opportunities, not because of lack of skills but due to bias and misconceptions about their productivity and needs.

3.8.2.2. Workplace Discrimination and Hiring Bias

Findings indicate that employment discrimination is a persistent challenge, with many PwDs being denied job opportunities based on assumptions about their abilities. Employers often justify their reluctance to hire PwDs by citing concerns over accommodations, perceived productivity limitations, and workplace modifications.

A business owner shared: "It's not that we don't want to hire them, but we don't have the resources to make our workplace accessible."

Survey data further highlights these barriers:

26% of organizations cited discrimination as a key factor in not hiring PwDs.

23% indicated that perceived high costs of accommodations discouraged them from employing PwDs.

18% lacked knowledge on how to integrate PwDs into the workforce.

These insights underscore the need for stronger anti-discrimination policies and awareness programs to challenge employer biases and improve workplace inclusion.

3.8.2.3. Educational Discrimination and Exclusion of PwDs from Schools

PwDs also face significant discrimination in the education sector, where many schools lack inclusive policies, accommodations, or trained personnel. Caregivers reported instances where their children were denied admission into mainstream schools due to their disabilities.

A mother of a child with autism shared: "Schools keep telling me they are not equipped to handle my child's needs, but the truth is they do not want to try."

DISABILITY READINESS ASSESSMENT: FINDINGS

Findings reveal that:

Only 26% of educational institutions have an inclusive curriculum for PwDs.

70% of schools do not provide accommodations for PwDs, further limiting access.

The absence of inclusive learning environments leads to higher dropout rates among students with disabilities, reinforcing educational and employment disparities later in life.

3.8.2.4. Housing and Public Service Discrimination

PwDs also face discrimination in housing and public services, where land-lords and service providers impose barriers to accessibility. Some landlords refuse to rent apartments to PwDs, fearing that modifications such as ramps, elevators, or accessible bathrooms may be required.

One respondent shared: "Landlords refuse to rent houses to persons with disabilities, especially if they think we will need modifications to the property."

Similarly, public services including healthcare, legal aid, and transportation often lack accessibility measures, further excluding PwDs from essential services.

3.8.2.5. Implications and the Need for Stronger Anti-Discrimination Policies

The widespread discrimination faced by PwDs in employment, education, housing, and public services indicates a systemic failure to enforce disability rights laws. Addressing this issue requires:

Stronger enforcement of anti-discrimination laws in employment and education.

Targeted training for employers and service providers to eliminate bias.

Expansion of inclusive housing policies to ensure PwDs have access to accessible living spaces.

Awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and normalize disability inclusion.

Without stronger interventions, PwDs will continue to experience exclusion, limiting their ability to achieve economic independence and full participation in society.

3.8.3 Barriers to Social Inclusion

3.8.3.1. Limited Representation of PwDs in Leadership and Decision-Making

PwDs remain underrepresented in leadership roles, limiting their ability to influence policies that directly impact their lives. Findings indicate that only 23% of respondents believe that PwDs are adequately represented in community decision-making bodies. This lack of representation reinforces systemic exclusion, as policies and programs often fail to prioritize accessibility and disability inclusion.

A disability rights advocate emphasized: "If PwDs are not part of leadership, policies will continue to ignore our needs." Without PwDs in government, local councils, and corporate leadership, disability issues remain secondary considerations, further marginalizing an already vulnerable group.

3.8.3.2. Social Stigma and Stereotypes About PwDs

Negative stereotypes and stigma remain key barriers to social inclusion for PwDs. Many communities continue to perceive disability as a limitation rather than a form of diversity, affecting how PwDs are treated in social, educational, and professional settings.

A respondent shared their frustration: "People assume that because I use a wheelchair, I need someone to take care of me at all times. They don't see me as capable of leading a normal life."

This misconception leads to overprotection, exclusion from economic activities, and lack of independence for PwDs.

3.8.3.3. Physical and Environmental Barriers to Participation

Inaccessible environments further hinder PwDs' participation in society. Public spaces, workplaces, and even community centers often lack basic accessibility features such as ramps, sign language interpreters, or Braille signage.

Key accessibility gaps include:

Only 27% of security offices have priority queues for PwDs.

Signage and Braille information are present in just 27% of institutions.

Accessible restrooms are available in only 23% of public buildings.

A community member explained: "Even if a PwD wants to participate in community meetings, the venue is often inaccessible. So they are left out automatically." This physical exclusion translates into social exclusion, making it difficult for PwDs to engage in community activities, governance, and public life.

3.8.3.4. Limited Opportunities for Social and Recreational Engagement

Beyond workplaces and leadership, PwDs face barriers in participating in recreational activities and social gatherings. Many cultural and sporting events do not provide accommodations for PwDs, leaving them unable to engage in social experiences that foster belonging and community integration.

One participant noted:

"I would love to attend concerts and sports events, but the seating arrangements and accessibility are always an issue."

The lack of accessible public transport further limits PwDs' ability to attend events, religious services, and social activities, reinforcing isolation.

3.8.3.5. Implications for Inclusion and Equity

The exclusion of PwDs from leadership, public spaces, and social activities reinforces a cycle of marginalization and dependency. Addressing these barriers requires:

- 1. Stronger representation of PwDs in leadership to advocate for inclusive policies.
- 2. Public awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and promote social acceptance.
- 3. Improving physical accessibility in public spaces and workplaces.
- 4. Inclusive recreational policies that ensure PwDs can participate in cultural and social activities.

Without these changes, PwDs will remain excluded from key aspects of social and political life, limiting their potential and reinforcing systemic inequalities. Top of FormBottom of Form



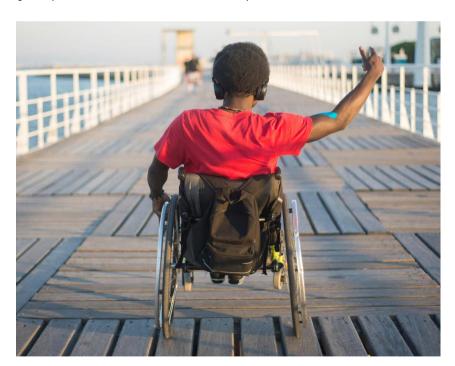


4.1 POLICY LANDSCAPE & IMPLEMENTATION GAPS

4.1.1 Legal Framework and the Reality of Enforcement

Nigeria has made significant legislative strides in promoting disability inclusion, particularly through the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018. The Act mandates accessibility in public spaces, prohibits discrimination, and establishes employment quotas for PwDs (Human Rights Watch, 2019). However, enforcement remains weak and inconsistent, with limited mechanisms to monitor compliance. Findings reveal that only 10% of organizations currently employ PwDs, despite these legal requirements, while 70% of employers remain uncertain about future commitments to disability hiring. This highlights a disconnect between policy and implementation, where organizations are either unaware of their legal obligations or confident that non-compliance carries no real consequences.

Qualitative insights reinforce these concerns. Mr. James Lalu, Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, stated: "The law exists, but enforcement is weak. Many businesses know they can ignore accessibility requirements without consequences."



Additionally, the absence of structured monitoring mechanisms allows organizations to bypass inclusion mandates, resulting in continued exclusion of PwDs from employment, education, and public services.

4.1.2 Institutional Barriers and Compliance Challenges

Beyond weak enforcement, many institutions lack the internal structures needed to implement disability inclusion policies. 41% of organizations cited concerns about managing a diverse workforce, while 28% reported a lack of qualified PwD candidates. This suggests that beyond legal mandates, organizations require practical guidance, employer training, and incentives to make disability inclusion a reality. A government official acknowledged: "We want to hire PwDs, but we don't even know where to start. There's no framework or best practice model for us to follow."

Similarly, findings from the education and healthcare sectors further illustrate institutional gaps. 74% of schools do not provide accommodations for PwDs, and only 26% integrate inclusive curricula, making access to education unequal and exclusionary. Healthcare settings fare no better, with only 4% of facilities offering sign language interpreters, creating significant communication barriers for Deaf patients. Without institutional accountability and structured frameworks for disability inclusion, policy mandates remain largely rhetorical.

4.1.3 Funding Gaps and Policy Implementation Failures

A critical factor hindering the implementation of disability inclusion policies is insufficient funding. Many disability initiatives rely on external donor support rather than sustained government investment, making progress fragmented and unsustainable.

A government official highlighted this issue: "Inclusion programs are rarely prioritized in budget allocations. When funding is low, disability-focused projects are the first to be cut."

These budgetary limitations explain why many institutions struggle to provide reasonable accommodations for PwDs. Findings indicate that 56% of employers cite financial constraints as a primary challenge to hiring PwDs, reflecting a lack of financial support for accessibility improvements, workplace modifications, and disability-friendly policies. Without dedicated funding streams and budgetary commitments, disability inclusion efforts remain underfunded and deprioritized.

4.1.4 Weak Inter-Sectoral Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement

Effective disability inclusion requires collaboration across government agencies, private sector actors, and disability-focused organizations. However, findings reveal that stakeholder engagement remains fragmented, limiting the impact of existing efforts. Many Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) operate independently rather than as part of a coordinated national strategy, leading to duplicated efforts and missed synergies. A respondent from a disability rights organization noted: "There is no central coordination. Everyone is doing their own thing, but we are not speaking with one voice."

Similarly, while some government agencies and institutions engage with OPDs on specific projects, there is limited long-term collaboration or structured engagement mechanisms. Strengthening partnerships between government agencies, OPDs, and private sector actors is essential for ensuring sustainable disability inclusion.

4.1.5 Global Best Practices and Lessons for Nigeria

Global best practices demonstrate that successful disability inclusion frameworks integrate strict enforcement mechanisms, financial incentives, and cross-sectoral collaborations. For instance, in Germany and France, employers failing to meet disability hiring quotas must contribute to a national disability employment fund, ensuring that inclusion efforts remain financially supported (European Disability Forum, 2021). Additionally, countries with high disability inclusion rates embed accessibility mandates into all major national development plans, making disability rights an integral part of governance rather than a standalone issue.

Nigeria can learn from these models by strengthening compliance monitoring, enforcing financial penalties for non-compliance, and integrating disability considerations into broader national policies. Without such structural changes, disability readiness in Nigeria will remain aspirational rather than a lived reality for PwDs.

Despite Nigeria's comprehensive legal frameworks supporting disability inclusion, weak enforcement, funding constraints, institutional gaps, and fragmented stakeholder engagement continue to hinder progress. The findings reveal that compliance remains low, with many organizations either un-

aware of or disregarding their obligations due to the absence of structured monitoring mechanisms. Financial constraints further limit policy execution, with inclusion programs often deprioritized in budget allocations. Additionally, lack of inter-sectoral coordination weakens advocacy efforts, leaving OPDs and institutions working in silos. Addressing these challenges requires stronger compliance monitoring, sustained funding, targeted institutional training, and structured collaboration between government, private sector actors, and OPDs. Without these reforms, Nigeria's disability inclusion agenda will remain largely rhetorical, offering little real-world impact for PwDs.

4.2 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO SUPPORT DISABILITY INCLUSION

4.2.1 Overview of Institutional Frameworks

Nigeria has established various institutions and policies aimed at promoting disability inclusion. The National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), established in 2020, serves as the primary agency responsible for ensuring the welfare and rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Nigeria. The NCPWD's functions include advising the government on disability policies, promoting public awareness, ensuring accessibility to government services, providing support services, conducting research, and monitoring compliance with disability laws (Wikipedia, 2023).

Additionally, the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), established in 1992, acts as an umbrella organization for disability institutions in Nigeria. JONAPWD focuses on raising awareness, advocating for disability rights, and supporting research to improve the quality of life for PwDs (Wikipedia, 2023).

Despite these institutional frameworks, Nigeria's capacity to implement disability inclusion remains weak, with challenges in funding, human resources, policy consistency, and stakeholder collaboration.

4.2.2 Capacity Challenges

Despite legal and institutional progress, significant barriers hinder effective disability inclusion:

Inadequate Institutional and Human Capacities: Many institutions lack the necessary resources and trained personnel to implement inclusive policies effectively. This hampers service delivery in key areas such as education and healthcare, limiting opportunities for PwDs (JONAPWD, 2021).

Funding Constraints: Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) often face financial limitations, which restrict their ability to advocate for disability rights, provide services, and participate in policy implementation (Disability Rights Fund, 2021). Without sustainable funding, many inclusion initiatives rely on short-term donor support rather than long-term government investment.

Inconsistent Policy Implementation: While national policies support disability inclusion, their enforcement and adoption vary significantly across states, leading to disparities in education, employment, and healthcare access (Mastercard Foundation, 2022). This inconsistency weakens national disability efforts and results in fragmented progress.

Limited Awareness and Advocacy: There is a pressing need for increased awareness and advocacy to ensure that PwDs are not deprived of education, employment, and healthcare opportunities. Strengthening the capacity of OPDs is critical for effective advocacy and sustained policy implementation (World Bank, 2021).

Stakeholder perspectives further reinforce these findings. A representative from a disability-focused NGO noted, "We want to engage more with government institutions, but many agencies don't have the technical expertise or knowledge on disability-inclusive programming."

Another respondent highlighted the role of advocacy in bridging these gaps, stating, "The society is critical in our wins against every form of marginalization. When social and behavioral change is strong, disability readiness will be easy."

These statements reflect the need for greater institutional collaboration and capacity-building efforts.

4.3 GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES IN DISABILITY INCLUSION

4.3.1 Comparative Analysis of Disability Readiness Frameworks Globally

Globally, countries with strong disability readiness frameworks integrate policy enforcement, accessibility mandates, and economic incentives into national development strategies. Nations such as Germany, Canada, and Australia have established comprehensive disability inclusion policies that mandate employment quotas, accessibility audits, and direct involvement of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in policymaking. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) further provides a global legal framework for disability inclusion, emphasizing the need for equal access to education, employment, health-care, and social services (United Nations, 2019).

One effective model is the European Disability Employment Quota System, where companies that fail to meet their disability hiring quotas must contribute financially to a national disability fund (European Disability Forum, 2021). This strategy not only encourages compliance but also provides financial support for disability inclusion initiatives. Nigeria could adopt a similar approach by enforcing compliance mechanisms within the private and public sectors, ensuring that disability employment quotas translate into real job opportunities for PwDs.

4.3.2 Adaptable Models for Disability-Inclusive Policies

Countries that have successfully mainstreamed disability inclusion in national policies have done so by integrating disability considerations across all sectors, rather than treating them as standalone issues. For instance, the United Kingdom's Access to Work Scheme provides funding for workplace accommodations, making it easier for employers to hire and support PwDs (Disability: IN, 2020). Similarly, Australia's National Disability Strategy embeds disability inclusion into education, healthcare, and transport policies, ensuring that PwDs receive equal access to essential services (Government of Australia, 2022).

Nigeria can adapt these models by establishing a structured enforcement framework for disability inclusion policies. Findings from this study show that only 10% of organizations currently employ PwDs, despite the existence of a

5% employment quota policy. Additionally, 41% of organizations cite managing a diverse workforce as a key challenge, indicating the need for structured employer training programs and financial incentives to facilitate workplace inclusion.

4.3.3 Strengthening Stakeholder Collaboration

In countries with successful disability inclusion policies, multi-sector collaboration between government agencies, OPDs, and private sector actors plays a key role in ensuring effective implementation. Canada's disability inclusion model, for example, requires federal and provincial governments to work directly with OPDs to design and monitor inclusion policies, ensuring that programs are informed by the lived experiences of PwDs (Government of Canada, 2021).

In contrast, findings from this study indicate that Nigeria's disability advocacy efforts remain fragmented, with OPDs working independently rather than as part of a coordinated national strategy. One OPD representative noted, "There is no central coordination. Everyone is doing their own thing, but we are not speaking with one voice."

To bridge this gap, Nigeria must formalize OPD engagement mechanisms, ensuring that disability organizations have a direct role in shaping and monitoring national disability policies. Structured engagement through policy roundtables, advisory councils, and legal mandates for OPD representation in decision-making processes can enhance coordination and accountability.

4.3.4 Leveraging Technology for Disability Inclusion

Technology plays a transformative role in improving accessibility and enhancing inclusion for PwDs. In recent years, companies such as Microsoft, Google, and IBM have developed Al-driven accessibility tools, including real-time captioning, screen readers, and adaptive communication software, enabling PwDs to participate more effectively in workplaces, education, and public life (World Bank, 2023).

However, access to assistive technologies in Nigeria remains limited, with only 17% of educational institutions reporting the availability of assistive learning devices. A respondent from an educational institution noted, "Students with

disabilities struggle because we lack resources like Braille materials and screen readers. Without these, they cannot compete equally with others."

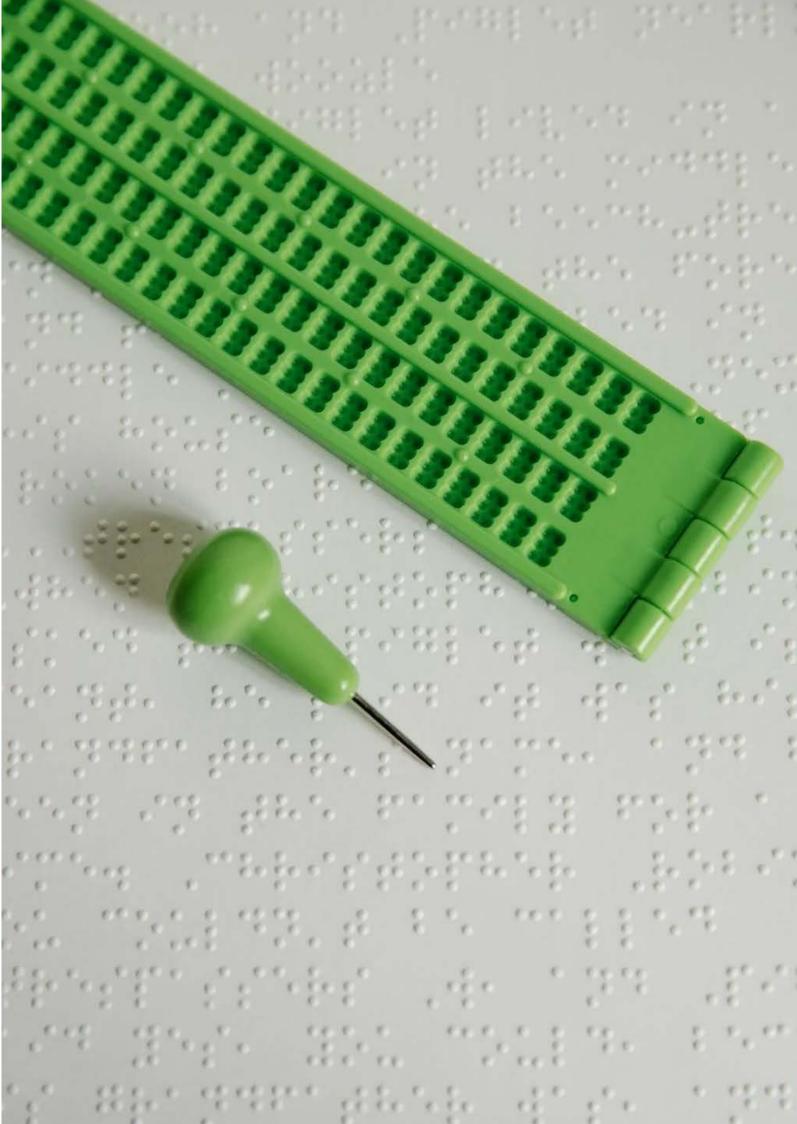
To address this gap, public and private sector investments in assistive technologies must be expanded. The Nigerian government can offer tax incentives for businesses that invest in digital accessibility and partner with tech companies to integrate disability-inclusive innovations into national education and employment systems.

4.3.5 Lessons for Nigeria and the Way Forward

From global disability inclusion models, key lessons that can be adapted for Nigeria include:

- 1. Stronger enforcement of disability laws and employment quotas, with financial penalties for non-compliance and incentives for inclusive hiring.
- 2. Mainstreaming disability considerations into all national policies, ensuring that accessibility, employment, and education reforms include disability inclusion as a core component.
- 3. Enhancing inter-sectoral collaboration between government agencies, OPDs, and private organizations, ensuring that stakeholders work together to design and implement policies effectively.
- 4. Expanding investments in assistive technologies and workplace accommodations, leveraging public-private partnerships to make disability inclusion sustainable.
- 5. Raising public awareness through national disability campaigns, targeting employers, educators, and service providers to shift societal perceptions about disability inclusion.

By adopting these best practices, Nigeria can strengthen its disability inclusion framework, ensuring that PwDs are not only protected by law but also meaningfully integrated into all aspects of society.





5.1 IMMEDIATE STEPS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Ensuring disability inclusion requires targeted and immediate actions from key stakeholders, including employers, healthcare providers, educational institutions, the transport sector, and security agencies. While long-term strategies are essential, immediate interventions can address pressing accessibility and inclusion gaps, laying the groundwork for sustained improvements.

5.1.1 Employers: Disability Hiring Incentives and Workplace Accessibility

Employers play a pivotal role in promoting economic inclusion for PwDs, yet findings reveal that only 10% of organizations currently employ PwDs, with 41% citing challenges in managing a diverse workforce. Key barriers include financial constraints (56%), lack of internal expertise (46%), and limited knowledge about inclusive hiring practices (18%).

- 1. Immediate actions for employers include:
- 2. Implementing workplace accessibility audits to identify and address physical, digital, and operational barriers.
- 3. Providing reasonable accommodations, such as assistive technologies and flexible work arrangements, to facilitate the inclusion of PwDs.
- 4. Launching disability awareness training programs for HR teams and employees to reduce biases and build inclusive workplace cultures.
- 5. Leveraging government incentives and corporate social responsibility (CSR) frameworks to promote disability hiring, ensuring compliance with the 5% employment quota policy.

A respondent from the private sector noted: "Employers still think hiring PwDs is charity work. They don't see it as a legal or moral obligation." This highlights the need for stronger employer engagement initiatives, where business associations, chambers of commerce, and disability-focused organizations collaborate to drive inclusive hiring practices.

5.1.2 Healthcare Providers: Disability-Inclusive Medical Training and Service Provision

Findings indicate that healthcare services remain largely inaccessible to PwDs, with only 20% of healthcare facilities having sign language interpret-

ers and 16% providing assistive technologies such as Braille materials and screen readers. Additionally, 74% of hospitals lack structured training on disability inclusion, leading to communication barriers and inadequate service provision for PwDs.

Immediate actions for healthcare providers include:

- 1. Mandatory training programs for medical staff on disability-inclusive healthcare, covering communication strategies (e.g., sign language interpretation) and assistive technology use.
- 2. Establishing priority service queues for PwDs, ensuring that they receive medical attention without unnecessary delays.
- 3. Expanding accessibility measures in healthcare facilities, such as wheel-chair-friendly infrastructure, accessible restrooms, and patient navigation support.
- 4. Improving and adopting of signages with contrasting colors for PwDs particularly for those with Albinism.
- 5. Explore the 'Register Service Provider model' for sign-language interpreters to effectively utilize resources and adopt the pay as your serve model for sign-language interpreters.

A PwD respondent shared: "I went to a hospital, and they told me to climb stairs to see the doctor. When I told them I couldn't, they just said, 'There is nothing we can do.'" These gaps in accessibility necessitate immediate reforms in hospital infrastructure, staff training, and patient engagement protocols.

5.1.3 Educational Institutions: Inclusive Curricula and Teacher Training

Findings indicate severe gaps in inclusive education, with only 26% of schools offering an inclusive curriculum and 74% lacking teacher training on disability inclusion. Additionally, flexible learning options, such as extra time for exams and alternative assessments, are provided in only 4% of schools, limiting academic participation for PwDs.

Immediate actions for educational institutions include:

1. Integrating disability-inclusive teaching strategies, ensuring that educators use adaptive learning materials and assistive technologies.

- 2. Training teachers and administrative staff on inclusive education, equipping them with the skills to support PwDs effectively.
- 3. Providing accommodations such as extended test-taking time, Braille materials, and accessible classroom seating arrangements.

A student from Nasarawa State University shared: "There is no interpreter in my school. I have to rely on classmates to understand lessons." This underscores the urgency of addressing communication barriers and strengthening disability-inclusive teaching methodologies.

5.1.4 Transport Sector: Immediate Guidelines for Accessibility

Findings highlight that transport accessibility remains a significant barrier, with only 8% of transport providers aware of disability-inclusive policies and 88.5% of public transport lacking PwD-friendly features. Challenges include high costs of retrofitting vehicles (38%) and limited awareness about PwD needs (73%).

Immediate actions for the transport sector include:

- 1. Developing sector-wide accessibility guidelines, ensuring that new transport infrastructure adheres to disability-friendly standards.
- 2. Providing mandatory disability-awareness training for transport workers, equipping them with basic communication and customer service skills for assisting PwDs.
- 3. Introducing pilot programs for accessible transportation, such as wheel-chair-accessible buses and designated transport assistance services for PwDs.

A wheelchair user described the exclusion faced daily: "I cannot enter public buses in Abuja. There are no ramps, no provisions for people like me. Even tricycles don't have accessible spaces." These challenges require urgent intervention through infrastructure adjustments, driver education programs, and accessibility compliance monitoring.



5.1.5 Security Agencies: Disability-Sensitive Policing and Legal Protections

Security services remain largely inaccessible, with limited training on engaging PwDs and inadequate accessibility measures in police stations and legal institutions. Findings indicate that security personnel awareness of disability rights is as low as 17%, raising concerns about the protection of PwDs in emergency and legal settings.

- 1. Immediate actions for security agencies include:
- 2. Incorporating disability-sensitivity training into police and security officer curricula, ensuring that PwDs are treated with dignity and respect.
- 3. Ensuring accessibility in police stations and courtrooms, including ramps, Braille documents, and sign language interpreters for legal processes.
- 4. Establishing rapid response teams for PwDs during emergencies, enabling specialized assistance for persons facing mobility, communication, or cognitive barriers.

A respondent from a disability rights organization noted: "PwDs avoid reporting crimes because they know the police won't take them seriously. Many officers don't even know how to communicate with Deaf people." This highlights the critical need for disability-sensitive law enforcement practices

and legal system reforms.

5.2 STRENGTHENING POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

To achieve sustainable disability inclusion, Nigeria must strengthen its policy and legal frameworks, ensuring that existing laws are effectively enforced, funding is allocated appropriately, and monitoring mechanisms are established. While the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 provides a foundation for disability rights, its weak enforcement, lack of funding, and fragmented implementation have limited its impact. This section outlines key policy reforms needed to enhance the effectiveness, accountability, and sustainability of disability inclusion efforts.

5.2.1 Strengthening the Enforcement of Disability Rights Laws

Despite legal provisions mandating accessibility, employment quotas, and non-discrimination policies, findings indicate that only 10% of organizations currently employ PwDs, while 70% of employers remain uncertain about their commitment to disability hiring. The absence of strict compliance mechanisms has allowed many businesses and institutions to bypass inclusion mandates without consequences.

Key policy actions include:

- Establishing a national disability compliance task force to monitor adherence to disability laws across employment, education, healthcare, and transport sectors.
- 2. Introducing financial penalties for non-compliance with employment quotas, similar to models in Germany and France, where companies that fail to meet hiring targets must contribute to a disability inclusion fund (European Disability Forum, 2021).
- 3. Conduct a comprehensive national review of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 through the National Assembly to evaluate its effectiveness, address implementation gaps, and recommend necessary amendments to enhance enforcement and promote disability inclusion in line with current best practices

A government official noted: "The law is there, but businesses know they can

ignore it without facing any consequences. There is no real enforcement." By prioritizing enforcement and accountability measures, disability rights can be transformed from theoretical policies into real, lived protections for PwDs.

5.2.2 Allocating Dedicated Funding for Disability Inclusion

One of the biggest barriers to implementing disability policies is inadequate funding. Findings reveal that many disability programs rely on external donor support rather than sustained government investment. In the health-care sector, 28% of facilities cited funding limitations as a primary reason for failing to provide accessible services, while education institutions report that financial constraints prevent investment in assistive technologies.

Key policy actions include:

- 1. Creating a dedicated Disability Inclusion Fund to finance accessibility projects, workplace accommodations, and inclusive education initiatives.
- 2. Expanding tax incentives for businesses that invest in disability-friendly infrastructure, making it more financially viable to comply with accessibility laws.
- Ensuring that national and state budgets allocate a fixed percentage for disability inclusion, reducing reliance on external donors and short-term grants.

A respondent from a healthcare facility noted: "When funding is low, disability-related programs are the first to be cut. Hospitals prioritize what they consider 'essential' services.". By guaranteeing stable funding, Nigeria can ensure that disability inclusion is not an afterthought but an integrated part of national development planning.

5.2.3 Strengthening Monitoring Mechanisms for Policy Implementation

Policy implementation gaps often arise due to lack of structured monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Findings indicate that many institutions lack internal frameworks to track progress on disability inclusion, leading to inconsistent compliance and limited institutional accountability.

Key policy actions include:

- 1. Mandating annual disability compliance audits for all public and private institutions, with results published for transparency.
- 2. Introducing a national disability readiness scorecard, ranking government agencies, businesses, and institutions based on their level of compliance.
- 3. Strengthening the role of OPDs in monitoring policy implementation, ensuring that PwDs themselves are involved in assessing institutional progress and identifying gaps.

An OPD representative emphasized: "There is no structured way to track disability policy implementation. Institutions claim they are inclusive, but no one verifies their progress." By establishing clear monitoring mechanisms, Nigeria can hold institutions accountable and drive tangible progress in disability inclusion.

5.2.4 Expanding Disability Rights Awareness and Legal Literacy

Many employers, service providers, and even PwDs themselves remain unaware of their legal rights and obligations under disability laws. Findings indicate that 74% of educational institutions lack structured training on disability inclusion, while only 17% of transport providers are aware of disability rights policies.

Key policy actions include:

- Launching nationwide disability rights awareness campaigns, targeting employers, educators, transport workers, security officers and healthcare providers.
- Integrating disability inclusion training into professional licensing and accreditation processes, ensuring that all teachers, medical practitioners, security officers, and transport providers are educated on disability rights and inclusive service delivery.
- 3. Developing accessible legal resources, including Braille materials, sign language videos, and easy-to-read policy summaries, ensuring that PwDs fully understand their rights and how to exercise them.

A respondent from the transport sector admitted: "We never received any

formal training on assisting PwDs. Most drivers don't even know how to communicate with passengers who have disabilities."

By strengthening disability rights awareness and legal literacy, stakeholders can actively contribute to fostering an inclusive society.

5.2.5 Integrating Disability Inclusion into National Development Plans

Global best practices indicate that disability inclusion is most effective when embedded within broader national development policies. Countries such as Australia and Canada integrate disability inclusion into all key sectors, ensuring that employment, education, healthcare, and infrastructure planning all incorporate disability-sensitive strategies (Government of Canada, 2021).

Key policy actions include:

- Mandating that all national and state development plans include disability impact assessments, ensuring that major projects such as road construction, school reforms, and healthcare system upgrades prioritize accessibility.
- 2. Ensuring that disability inclusion is a key performance indicator (KPI) in government evaluations, holding ministries and agencies accountable for inclusive policy implementation.
- 3. Strengthening inter-ministerial collaboration, ensuring that disability policies are not siloed but integrated across multiple government sectors.

A policy expert emphasized: "Disability inclusion is often treated as a side issue, rather than a national development priority. That has to change." By embedding disability inclusion within national policies, Nigeria can create an enabling environment for long-term, sustainable disability rights protections.

5.3 MULTI-SECTOR COLLABORATION STRATEGIES

Achieving meaningful disability inclusion requires coordinated efforts across multiple sectors, including government agencies, private sector organizations, civil society, and disability advocacy groups. Sustainable progress depends on integrated policies, cross-sector collaboration, and clear

accountability mechanisms. This section outlines key strategies to enhance multi-sector partnerships for disability inclusion in Nigeria.

5.3.1 Public-Private Partnerships for Disability Inclusion

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have proven effective in advancing disability inclusion through resource-sharing, capacity-building, and policy enforcement. Findings from global best practices highlight that countries with strong disability inclusion frameworks involve the private sector in policy development, accessibility improvements, and inclusive employment programs (Disability:IN, 2020).

Key strategies for strengthening PPPs include:

- 1. Incentivizing private sector investment in disability inclusion through tax breaks, subsidies, and accessibility certification programs.
- 2. Establishing joint funding mechanisms where government, businesses, and NGOs contribute to a national disability inclusion fund.
- 3. Integrating PwDs into corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, ensuring that disability inclusion is prioritized in private sector development plans.

A respondent from the private sector noted: "Many businesses want to be inclusive, but they don't know how. If the government provided clear incentives and guidelines, more companies would invest in accessibility." By formalizing public-private partnerships, Nigeria can leverage private sector expertise, innovation, and financial resources to advance disability inclusion efforts.

5.3.2 Role of OPDs in Policy Advocacy and Implementation

Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are critical stakeholders in disability advocacy, policy implementation, and community engagement. However, findings indicate that OPDs in Nigeria operate in a fragmented manner, limiting their ability to influence policy and monitor implementation effectively. Strengthening OPD involvement in policymaking will ensure that disability inclusion efforts are informed by the lived experiences of PwDs.

Key strategies include:

- 1. Institutionalizing OPD representation in government decision-making bodies, ensuring that PwDs have a direct voice in shaping disability policies.
- 2. Providing capacity-building support for OPDs, including training on policy advocacy, fundraising, and organizational management.
- 3. Enhancing collaboration between OPDs and mainstream development organizations, ensuring that disability inclusion is integrated into broader social and economic policies.

An OPD representative stated: "We are often consulted too late in the process. By the time policies are being implemented, our input is minimal." Strengthening OPD-government collaboration will ensure that disability policies reflect the real needs of PwDs and are effectively implemented.

5.3.3 Cross-Sector Disability Inclusion Working Groups

To improve coordination among stakeholders, establishing cross-sector working groups can facilitate regular dialogue, shared learning, and joint action planning. Successful models from countries such as Canada and Australia have demonstrated that inter-sectoral working groups improve policy coherence and accountability (Government of Canada, 2021).

Key strategies include:

- Creating multi-stakeholder disability inclusion task forces, bringing together government officials, OPDs, private sector representatives, and disability advocates.
- 2. Holding quarterly policy review meetings, ensuring that progress on disability inclusion is regularly assessed and adjusted as needed.
- 3. Developing shared performance metrics across sectors, ensuring that each sector is held accountable for its disability inclusion commitments.

A government official noted: "We have disability policies, but there is no structured coordination between ministries, private sector players, and advocacy groups." By establishing cross-sector working groups, stakeholders can align their efforts, share best practices, and track progress toward disability inclusion goals.

5.3.4 Joint Awareness and Capacity-Building Initiatives

Findings indicate that lack of awareness remains one of the biggest barriers to disability inclusion, with only 17% of transport providers and 74% of educational institutions lacking structured disability training. A unified national disability awareness campaign can shift societal perceptions and improve disability literacy among stakeholders.

Key strategies include:

- 1. Launching national disability awareness campaigns, targeting employers, educators, healthcare professionals, and the general public.
- 2. Developing disability inclusion training programs for institutions, integrating mandatory training on accessibility and disability rights into public service curricula.
- 3. Promoting media representation of PwDs, ensuring that positive and empowering narratives about disability are mainstreamed in public discourse.

A disability rights advocate emphasized: "People think disability inclusion is charity work. We need to change that narrative and show that inclusion benefits everyone." A coordinated national disability awareness strategy will help challenge stereotypes, build institutional capacity, and foster a culture of inclusion.

5.3.5 Leveraging Technology and Innovation for Disability Inclusion

Technology offers transformative opportunities for advancing disability inclusion across multiple sectors. From assistive technologies to digital accessibility solutions, leveraging technological advancements can break down barriers for PwDs.

Key strategies include:

- Investing in assistive technologies for education and workplaces, ensuring that PwDs have access to adaptive learning tools, screen readers, and Al-driven accessibility solutions.
- 2. Expanding digital accessibility initiatives, ensuring that government web-

sites, job application portals, and public services meet global accessibility standards.

3. Supporting tech-driven disability inclusion startups, encouraging entrepreneurs to develop solutions that address accessibility gaps.

A respondent from the tech sector noted: "We have the technology to make society more inclusive, but adoption is slow because decision-makers do not prioritize accessibility." By harnessing technology and innovation, Nigeria can accelerate disability inclusion efforts and improve the quality of PWDs.





6.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The Disability Readiness Assessment (DRA) has highlighted significant gaps in policy awareness, enforcement, and institutional preparedness for disability inclusion across key sectors in Abuja. Awareness of disability inclusion policies remains low, particularly in security (17%) and transportation (12%), sectors critical to mobility and public safety. While employment policies, such as the 5% employment quota, exist, implementation remains weak due to low employer awareness, weak enforcement mechanisms, and a lack of structured incentives.

Findings further reveal that workplace accessibility remains a major barrier, as many organizations cite communication challenges, perceived high costs of accommodations, and lack of guidance on inclusive hiring practices. Similarly, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and security services struggle with accessibility, with limited assistive technologies, inadequate training, and minimal representation of PwDs in decision-making roles. The transport sector remains largely inaccessible, limiting PwDs' independence and economic participation.

Despite these challenges, several opportunities exist to strengthen disability inclusion. Stakeholders across government, private sector, and civil society have expressed willingness to engage in disability-inclusive reforms, provided that clear guidelines, policy enforcement measures, and financial support structures are in place.

6.2 FINAL THOUGHTS ON IMPROVING DISABILITY READINESS IN ABUJA

To achieve meaningful disability inclusion, efforts must go beyond policy formulation to effective implementation and accountability. Targeted awareness campaigns must be launched to educate employers, service providers, and the general public on disability rights and legal obligations. Strengthening multi-sector collaboration through engagement with government agencies, OPDs, and the private sector is critical to sustaining disability inclusion efforts.

Key areas requiring urgent intervention include:

Strict enforcement of the 5% employment quota and the introduction of

monitoring mechanisms to track employer compliance.

Expansion of disability awareness training across healthcare, education, security, and transport sectors.

Incentivizing businesses to adopt inclusive hiring practices through tax benefits and financial support for workplace accommodations.

Improving physical and digital accessibility by enforcing compliance with accessibility standards in public spaces, workplaces, and service centers.

Without deliberate, well-coordinated action, PwDs in Abuja will continue to face exclusion from essential services, employment, and social participation.

6.3 CALL TO ACTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS

The findings from this assessment call for immediate, coordinated action from all stakeholders involved in disability inclusion.

Government agencies must lead the way by enforcing compliance with disability inclusion laws, implementing sector-wide reforms, and providing adequate funding for disability-inclusive programs.

Employers and business leaders must embrace inclusive hiring practices, ensure accessible workplaces, and support ongoing disability sensitivity training.

Educational institutions and healthcare providers must integrate assistive technologies, inclusive curricula, and patient-centered disability accommodations.

Security agencies and transport providers must ensure that PwDs can access safe, reliable services without discrimination or physical barriers.

Civil society organizations, OPDs, and advocacy groups must continue championing disability rights, holding institutions accountable, and providing capacity-building support to drive sustained change.

By acting collectively, Abuja can become a model for disability readiness, ensuring that PwDs are fully included in all aspects of economic, social, and civic life. This is not just a policy necessity; it is a fundamental human rights obligation.





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INTERVIEW GUIDES

KII Guide for High-Level Stakeholders

My name is [Your Name], and I am an enumerator from Data-Lead Africa, conducting a Disability Readiness Assessment to evaluate the state of disability inclusion in organizations, communities, and government agencies. Your participation in this Key Informant Interview will help us identify gaps, influence policies, and develop a toolkit to promote disability inclusion. The interview will take approximately 45–60 minutes, and your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. By proceeding, you consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your valuable insights.

Key Questions Probes	
key Questions	
Can you describe your organization/community/government agency's mission and primary activities?	- How does your work intersect with issues of accessibility, inclusion, or equity?
	- Have there been any past discussions or
	initiatives related to supporting marginalized groups, including PwDs?
	- Are there specific policies, programs, or
2. To your knowledge, how does your organization/community currently address the needs of PwDs, if at all?	actions in place?
	- If not, what factors have prevented
	engagement with this issue (e.g., lack of
	resources, knowledge, prioritization)?
3. How would you assess the overall accessibility of your organization's/community's services or facilities?	- Have you conducted any accessibility
	audits or received feedback on this?
	- What areas (e.g., physical access, digital
	platforms, communication) could be
	improved?
4. How aware are staff, community	- Are there training programs or
members, or leadership of the rights and needs of PwDs?	educational initiatives in place?
	- If awareness is low, what strategies could
	increase understanding?
5. Are there specific barriers preventing your organization/community from actively engaging with PwDs?	- Are these barriers related to funding,
	capacity, infrastructure, or attitudes?
	- Have you identified opportunities to
	address these barriers?
6. Have PwDs or disability advocates ever approached your organization/community for support or collaboration?	- If Yes: What was the nature of the request, and how did you respond?
	- If No: Why do you think there has been
	limited interaction?
7. Are there any mechanisms in place for gathering feedback from diverse groups, including PwDs?	- Do you engage with the broader
	community to identify service gaps?
	- How inclusive are these mechanisms for
	marginalized voices?
8. What role do you think your organization/community could play in supporting disability inclusion?	- Are there areas where your expertise or
	resources align with the needs of PwDs?
	- What would you need to start or
	strengthen engagement in this area?
9. How does your organization/community/government agency collaborate with other stakeholders on inclusion or accessibility	- Are there existing partnerships with NGOs,
	OPDs, or other sectors?
	- What are the successes and challenges of
	these collaborations?
issues?	
10. What are the biggest systemic	- Are these barriers related to policy gaps,
barriers to disability inclusion in your	resource limitations, or societal attitudes?

9. How does your organization/community/government agency collaborate with other stakeholders on inclusion or accessibility issues?	- Are there existing partnerships with NGOs, OPDs, or other sectors?
	- What are the successes and challenges of these collaborations?
10. What are the biggest systemic barriers to disability inclusion in your sector or community?	- Are these barriers related to policy gaps, resource limitations, or societal attitudes?
	- How do these barriers affect accessibility, participation, or equity for PwDs?
11. How accessible are public services (e.g., healthcare, education, transport) for PwDs within your jurisdiction?	- Are there specific sectors that are more accessible than others?
	- What initiatives are underway to improve accessibility?
12. Are there any legal or policy gaps that hinder accessibility or disability inclusion in your sector/community?	Are there existing laws or guidelines that are ineffective or outdated?What mechanisms exist for enforcing
in your sector/community?	disability-related policies?
13. What role could your organization/community play in addressing gaps in disability readiness?	- Are there specific actions (e.g., training, partnerships, resource allocation) you could take?
	- What challenges might you face in
14. What resources or support would your organization/community need to enhance disability readiness?	implementing these actions? - Would this include funding, training,
	infrastructure, or technical expertise?
	- How could these resources be secured or prioritized?
15. How do societal attitudes toward disability influence readiness in your sector/community?	- Have you observed changes in these attitudes over time?
	- What strategies could effectively address stigma or misconceptions about PwDs?
16. What would a disability readiness toolkit need to include to be most useful for your organization/community?	- Should it focus on accessibility audits,
	training, or policy templates? - What format (e.g., digital, workshops) would make it most effective?
17. Can you share an example of an initiative or policy (in your sector or elsewhere) that effectively advanced disability inclusion?	- What made it successful?
	- Are there lessons from this example that could apply to your
	organization/community?
18. If your organization/community has not yet engaged with PwDs, what steps would be necessary to begin this work?	Would it require leadership buy-in, training, or partnerships?What immediate actions could signal commitment to inclusion?
19. What systemic changes would have the greatest impact on achieving disability readiness in Abuja?	- Should these focus on policy, funding, capacity-building, or public awareness?
	- How could your organization/community contribute to these changes?



ABOUT DEAF-IN-TECH

Deaf-In-Tech is an ed-tech inclusion initiative of Data-Lead Africa, established in 2022 to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across STEM, data analytics, higher education, and employment. The project was envisioned by Dr. Arowolo Ayoola, whose commitment to inclusive development shaped its focus on addressing systemic skill gaps among underrepresented groups, particularly persons living with disabilities.

Despiteglobal efforts to advance DEI, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, especially Deaf and hearing-impaired individuals, remains critically low. Deaf-In-Tech responds to this gap by delivering tailored training in data science, data analytics, and educational technology, with a strong emphasis on accessibility, relevance, and employability.

Through its learner-centered approach, Deaf-In-Tech is building a pipeline of skilled professionals from marginalized communities, contributing to a more inclusive digital economy and ensuring that no one is left behind in the age of innovation.

PARTNERS



