

INSIDE THIS EDITION

TAF Africa, Sightsavers, and NCPWD Launch National Access to Work Scheme for Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria

With support from Sightsavers and TAF Africa, the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) launched the Framework for the National Access to Work ...

Page 1

TAF Africa Facilitates High-Level Meeting to Strengthen Disability Inclusion in Nigeria

TAF Africa took another step in advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities by facilitating a collaborative meeting with the Honourable Minister ...

Page 4

INSIDE
TAF Africa
... Disability Inclusion Champion

A monthly newsletter
January 2025
www.taf africa.co



TAF AFRICA, SIGHTSAVERS, AND NCPWD LAUNCH NATIONAL ACCESS TO WORK SCHEME FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA

With support from Sightsavers and TAF Africa, the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) launched the

Framework for the National Access to Work Scheme for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria. This initiative aims to support the full implementation of the



relevant provisions of the Disability Act by fostering a collaborative approach with the organized private business sector. The Scheme is designed to provide both technical and material support to private sector employers, ensuring that qualified PWDs have equal employment opportunities in Nigeria. The Framework mandates both the government and private sector to pool resources together to eliminate

barriers that prevent PWDs from accessing formal employment opportunities. In his opening remarks, the Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), Chief Ayuba Gufwan, expressed profound gratitude to Sightsavers, TAF Africa, and other partners for their support in developing and launching the Access to Work Framework. He announced that the Commission would

immediately inaugurate the Implementation Committee for the Scheme, consisting of representatives from NCPWD, relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), the private sector, international development partners, and organizations of PWDs. This Committee will develop an Implementation and Monitoring Framework for the Scheme, ensuring it is effectively executed.

Chief Gufwan also disclosed that within six months, the

first set of beneficiaries would receive their awards under the Scheme. To demonstrate the Commission's dedication, he pledged N50 million for the immediate take-off of the initiative. These funds will be used to procure assistive devices and technologies, as well as provide other technical support to private sector employers willing to integrate PWDs into their workforce.

"I'm therefore pleased to inform you that the NCPWD is poised to take the bull by the horns by committing to the full implementation of this National Framework on Access to Work for PWDs. As such, the Commission

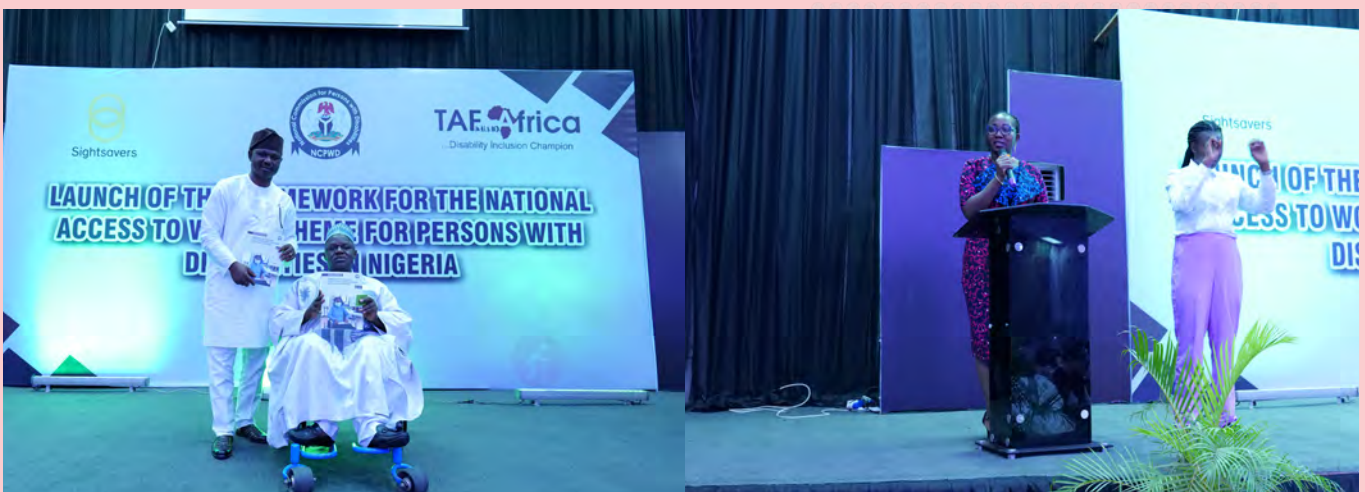
shall commit a sum of fifty million naira (N50,000,000) for the immediate take-off of the Scheme," Chief Gufwan stated.

TAF Africa's Senior Programme Officer, Mr. George Anwayi, emphasized that the private sector stands to gain significantly by employing persons with disabilities, benefiting from their diverse skills and knowledge. He urged private-sector employers to make commitments similar to that of NCPWD to deepen the implementation of the Framework.

In his goodwill message, former Executive Secretary of the NCPWD, Mr. James Lalu, acknowledged that

the development of the Framework commenced during his tenure and expressed his continued dedication to disability inclusion. He pointed out that employment for PWDs should not be limited to formal job roles but should also extend to entrepreneurship and business opportunities. He commended TAF Africa for its efforts in ensuring the realization of this crucial policy.

The launch event was attended by key stakeholders from various organizations, all of whom expressed their support for the initiative. Mr. Abdullahi Usman, National President



of the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), highlighted that systemic gaps have historically prevented PWDs from accessing employment and expressed excitement that the Framework addresses these issues.

Mrs. Olubukola Odesola, representing the Director General of the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA), reaffirmed NECA's commitment to promoting disability inclusion in workplaces and pledged to encourage member organizations to support the initiative.

Mr. Funmi Onasanya, Head of Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations at the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPM), described the launch as a significant milestone. He assured that CIPM would prioritize the implementation of the Framework across multiple organizations to ensure its sustainability.



Ms. Maria Akinsanya, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator at Sterling Bank, expressed enthusiasm for further collaborations aimed at promoting disability inclusion in the workplace.

Mrs. Vivian Omorogbe, Head of Employee Experience, Diversity & Inclusion at MTN Nigeria, stated that MTN was part of the Framework's validation process and is committed to ensuring its successful implementation.

Dr. Joy Shu'aibu, Country Director of Sightsavers, commended all contributors who made the development and launch of the Framework possible. She described the event as a major milestone in increasing employment opportunities for PWDs in the private sector and emphasized the shared responsibility of all stakeholders in making the initiative a success. "Today is a milestone that shows our shared responsibility," Dr. Shu'aibu remarked.

With the commitment of NCPWD, private sector employers, and development partners, the initiative is expected to create a more equitable work environment, where PWDs can thrive without barriers. As implementation begins, stakeholders remain optimistic that this Framework will set a precedent for sustainable disability inclusion across Nigeria's employment scene.

TAF AFRICA FACILITATES HIGH-LEVEL MEETING TO STRENGTHEN DISABILITY INCLUSION IN NIGERIA



TAF Africa took another step in advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities by facilitating a collaborative meeting with the Honourable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Professor Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda. The meeting brought together key stakeholders, disability community leaders, and government representatives to discuss actionable measures for enhancing disability

inclusion in Nigeria. In his welcome address, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Dr. Yakubu Adam Kofarmata, reassured the disability community of the government's firm commitment to their well-being. He emphasized that under the current administration, persons with disabilities would not face discrimination and would be provided with meaningful opportunities to improve their lives. He further

encouraged disability leaders to consider the ministry as their home and a reliable partner in their advocacy for inclusion and accessibility. The meeting also featured a goodwill message from Dr. Chris Nwanoro, Nigeria's Ambassador to Sao Tome and Principe and a Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). Dr. Nwanoro pledged to leverage his global platform



to attract more opportunities that would positively impact the lives of persons with disabilities in Nigeria. He reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that Nigeria's disability inclusion efforts align with international best practices and conventions. A crucial appeal was made by Dr. Adebukola Adebayo, the Technical Assistant at the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD). He urged the Honourable Minister to support the commission's participation at the upcoming Global Disability Summit. He stressed that attending the summit would not only showcase Nigeria's efforts in promoting disability inclusion but would also reinforce the country's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Moreover, he highlighted the significance of learning from global best practices to strengthen disability policies and implementation strategies within Nigeria.

In a key step toward institutionalizing rapid efforts, Professor Yilwatda approved the establishment of a nine-person reaction plan team. Without hesitation, Jake Epelle, CEO of TAF Africa, nominated the team members, who were promptly

assigned the responsibility of developing immediate, actionable demands for persons with disabilities. The Honourable Minister mandated that these recommendations be integrated into the ministry's programs to ensure that persons with disabilities receive adequate representation and benefits.

Furthermore, the minister announced plans for empowerment programs set to roll out in the first and second quarters of the year. He reassured disability leaders that the stipulated percentage of persons with disabilities in these programs would be strictly adhered to, as enshrined in the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act. He emphasized his readiness to provide the necessary support to drive disability inclusion beyond the ministry's scope and across all sectors of governance and development in Nigeria.

STRENGTHENING ELECTORAL INCLUSION: INEC INCLUSIVITY MANUAL REVIEW WORKSHOP

As part of the European Union-funded Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) programme, TAF Africa and the Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTF) partnered to organize a three-day workshop focused on enhancing electoral inclusivity. The workshop, held in collaboration with the Gender and Inclusivity Department of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), aimed to review the draft Inclusivity Desk Officer Facilitator Training Manual. The comprehensive manual was developed to equip INEC's inclusivity officers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address gender and disability-related issues during elections. The workshop sought to ensure that Nigeria's electoral process becomes more inclusive for women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, by refining the manual. Over three days, key stakeholders, including representatives from NWTF, TAF Africa, and INEC, meticulously reviewed the Facilitator Manual and Participant Handbook. The discussions focused on improving training methodologies, refining key content areas, and ensuring the manual aligns with international best practices on gender and disability inclusion in electoral processes.





The workshop reinforced the commitment of all partners to creating a more inclusive electoral system. This initiative, which strengthens the ability of INEC's inclusivity officers, is a crucial step toward ensuring that no voter is excluded from Nigeria's democratic process.

TAF AFRICA ORGANIZES A THREE-DAY STAFF RETREAT TO DRIVE IMPACTFUL CHANGE IN 2025

At the beginning of the year, TAF Africa recently organized a three-day staff retreat aimed at strengthening organizational capacity and enhancing team synergy. The retreat provided an opportunity for strategic reflection, leadership development, and program planning to drive impactful change in 2025.

A key highlight of the retreat was the Leadership Development session, which focused on building strong leaders to champion disability inclusion and empowerment. Additionally, Departmental Presentations facilitated collaboration, as teams shared insights on their achievements, challenges, adjustments, and plans. These sessions allowed for a comprehensive assessment of past efforts and helped align strategies for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The retreat also included a deep dive into Program Planning & Implementation, ensuring that TAF Africa remains well-positioned to advance its mission in the new year. Facilitating the departmental presentations was Mr. Tony Epelle, the Managing Consultant/CEO of Samuelson Advisory Partners Limited and a board member of TAF Africa. His expertise and guidance enriched discussions and helped shape forward-looking strategies.





A significant moment of the retreat was the visit of Ms. Paola Pace, the Deputy Chief of Mission at the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Nigeria. Her engagement provided a platform for discussions on advocacy opportunities for persons with disabilities, emphasizing the need for their inclusion in migration dialogues.

Additionally, the retreat welcomed Mr. Chuks Okpaka, the Azure Business Group Lead for Microsoft Africa Subsidiary Area, who shared insights on leveraging Microsoft Co-Pilot to enhance TAF Africa's work on disability inclusion. His presentation highlighted the potential of AI-driven tools to improve productivity and innovation in the sector.

As the retreat concluded, the team reflected on past achievements, exchanged innovative ideas, and aligned their collective vision for the year ahead.



TAF Africa

... Disability Inclusion Champion



GET IN TOUCH



info@tafafrica.co



www.tafafrica.co



Plot 990 Nal Blvd,
Central Business District, Abuja

TAF Africa

