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TAF AFRICA TRAINS DISABILITY CLUSTER LEADERS ON DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE BUDGETING IN RIVERS STATE

With a vision to transform budget processes into tools of equity and social justice, TAF Africa, with funding support from the Disability Rights Fund (DRF), organized a 2-day Capacity Building Workshop on Disability-Inclusive Budgeting and Budget Analysis

for disability cluster leaders. The training, held under the DRF Disability Inclusive Governance Project, brought together 25 disability cluster leaders representing diverse disability groups to strengthen their ability to engage meaningfully in governance processes.

The workshop, which aligns with the Rivers State Disability Law and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was designed to build the skills of participants in



budget analysis and advocacy, enabling them to push for inclusive and equitable budgetary allocations that respond to the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Delivering a presentation on “Advocating for Disability-Inclusive Budgeting: Strategies and Best Practices”, Mr. George Anwayi, Senior Programme Officer, emphasized that inclusive governance is not only about resource allocation but also about social cohesion. “Inclusive governance will enhance peaceful co-existence and curb stigmatization in society. Budget analysis is key for persons with disabilities to be able to engage. When PWDs participate in budget processes, they break down barriers and strengthen their place in governance,” he said.

The participants also had the opportunity to learn directly from government institutions. Dr. Igochukwu Wali, Director of Budget, Rivers State Ministry of Budget



and Economic Planning, led sessions on “The Basics of Reading and Interpreting Government Budgets” and “Identifying Allocations Relevant to Persons with Disabilities in Rivers State.” He provided hands-on guidance, supporting participants in developing and presenting an Action Plan for PWD Engagement in the Rivers State Budget Process.

In her presentation titled

“Engaging Government Stakeholders: Communication and Negotiation Skills for Budget Advocacy”, Ms. Lynn Agwuncha, Senior Communication Officer at TAF Africa, urged participants to be intentional about relationship-building. “Advocacy is most effective when it is built on strong relationships with government officials and institutions. PWD leaders must be proactive in

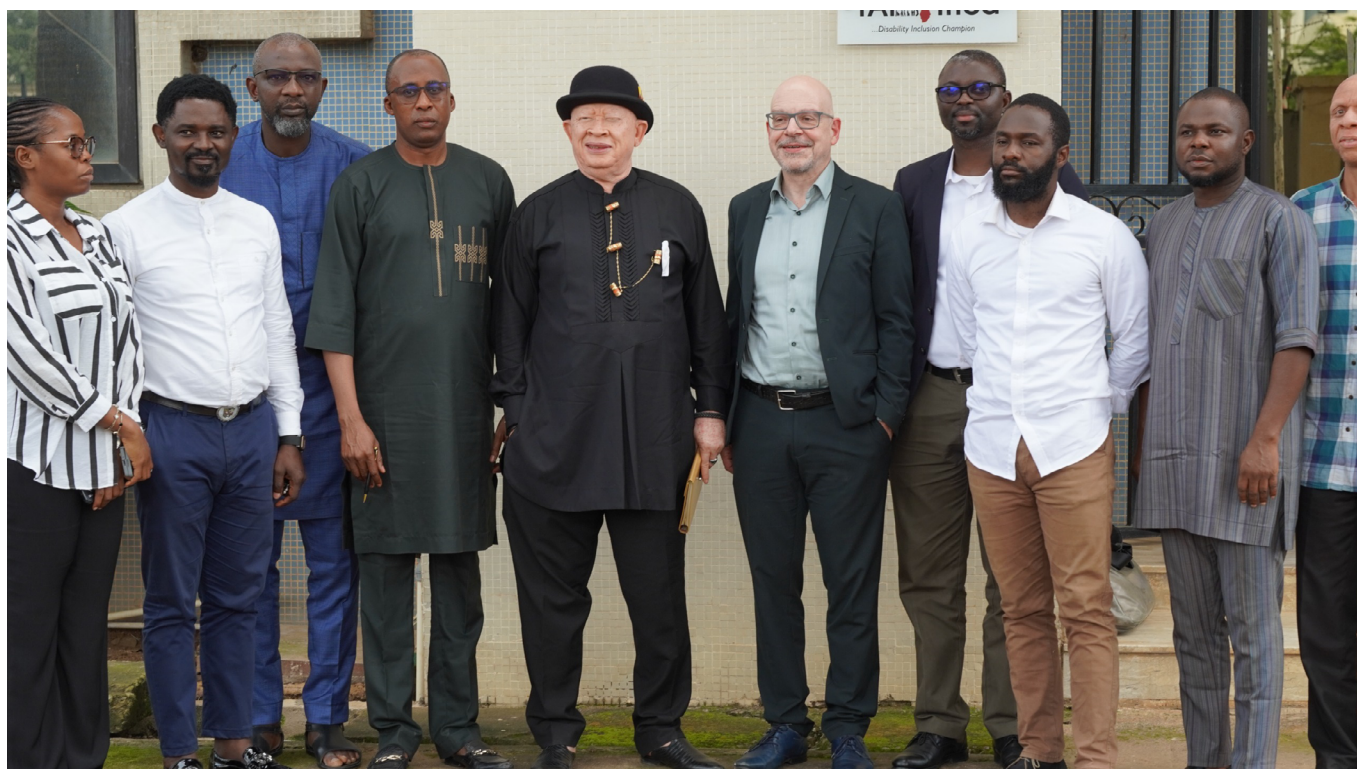
submitting proposals and influencing budget decisions that reflect the realities of their communities,” she advised.

The workshop ended with participants developing concrete action points to ensure sustained advocacy for disability-inclusive budgets in Rivers State. These action points include consistent engagement with government ministries, budget monitoring,



evidence-based advocacy, and stronger collaboration among disability clusters. Through this initiative, TAF Africa is aiming to position disability cluster leaders as key partners in forming a more inclusive development and governance agenda in Rivers State, in addition to strengthening their technical proficiency.

EU ELECTION FOLLOW-UP MISSION ENGAGES TAF AFRICA ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS



The Team Leader and Political Analyst of the European Union Election Follow-up Mission to Nigeria, Mr. Ralph-Michael Peters, has engaged with TAF Africa to review the implementation status of recommendations from the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to Nigeria's 2023 General Elections, with a particular focus on disability inclusion.

Mr. Peters visited the Abuja office of TAF Africa as part of the EU's ongoing assessment of progress made on key recommendations. He was received by the CEO/Founder, Ambassador Jake Epelle, alongside members of the TAF Africa team, who delivered a detailed presentation highlighting achievements, ongoing

efforts, and persisting challenges in advancing disability-inclusive electoral reforms. During the session, TAF Africa highlighted its interventions under the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) II programme, which has significantly strengthened the voice and participation of PWDs in Nigeria's political space.

Progress on Key EU-EOM Recommendations

1. Recommendation 7 (Voter Registration for Young and First-Time Voters):

TAF Africa has championed disability inclusion in Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) through measures such as launching the Able2Vote campaign to boost PWD voter participation and collaborating with the Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTF) to review INEC's inclusivity manual and train gender and disability desk officers.

2. Recommendation 18 (Accessible and Inclusive Voting Environment):

Building on lessons from the 2023 elections, where challenges included unsuitable polling locations and inadequate assistive materials, TAF Africa has pushed for systemic change. Efforts include advocacy with INEC for disability-disaggregated voter data, training 60 journalists and 45 security officers on inclusive practices and deploying innovative platforms such as the Disability Inclusion Election Hub and Mobile App. Nationwide sensitisation through 110 radio episodes on the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria has also amplified the message of inclusion. Ahead of the Anambra Governorship Election, TAF Africa is preparing to train and deploy 25 sign language interpreters to support hearing-impaired voters.

3. Recommendation 19 (Internally Displaced Persons' Voting Rights):

To address the voting challenges faced by IDPs, TAF Africa extended its Able2Vote campaign to IDP communities across Abuja, Kaduna, Yola, Benue, and Bayelsa. These efforts have empowered over 1,000 IDPs with knowledge of their voting rights and processes, including 201 IDPs sensitised during the Bayelsa off-cycle election. Training of camp coordinators has further ensured grassroots-level voter mobilisation.



While acknowledging persisting issues such as weak legal provisions, limited assistive devices, and the absence of a comprehensive framework for IDP voting, TAF Africa stressed that its work under the EU-SDGN II programme is laying the groundwork for long-term, disability-inclusive electoral reforms in Nigeria. Amb. Epelle reaffirmed TAF Africa's firm commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities are not excluded from democratic processes.

Mr. Peters noted the importance of sustained collaboration and follow-up to achieve the EU EOM's vision of credible, transparent, and inclusive elections in Nigeria. Through evidence-driven advocacy, capacity-building, and citizen engagement, TAF Africa continues to play a pivotal role in ensuring that democracy in Nigeria is inclusive and representative of all citizens.



STRENGTHENING SECURITY AND SAFEGUARDING: TAF AFRICA ATTENDS D-RAPID CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP



In a significant step towards enhancing operational resilience, representatives from TAF Africa participated in a comprehensive 3-day Security and Safeguarding Training from September 15th to 17th, 2025. The workshop was organized by CBM Global under the D-RAPID Project, a project co-funded by the European Union and CBM, for its implementing partners, TAF Africa and the Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTF).

Held from the 15th to the 17th of September, the intensive training was designed to equip participants with the critical awareness, skills, and tools

needed to establish and manage robust security and safeguarding systems in their field operations. The curriculum blended theoretical frameworks with practical, real-world applications to ensure immediate relevance and impact.

Over the three days, TAF Africa's team engaged in a wide range of vital topics, including:

- 1. Personal Security & Risk Assessment:** Learning core principles like situational awareness, maintaining a low profile, and conducting contextual risk assessments for project areas.

- 2. Crisis Management:** Gaining essential knowledge on mitigating and surviving critical incidents such as kidnapping and active shooter situations.
- 3. Journey Management:** Mastering protocols for safe road movement, from pre-travel vehicle checks to convoy procedures and threat identification.
- 4. Safeguarding Fundamentals:** Understanding the principles of safeguarding, the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH) in the workplace, and the consequences of safeguarding failures.



A key highlight was a practical group work session where partners conducted a contextual risk analysis for the D-RAPID project, identifying specific threats in operational states and developing actionable mitigation strategies.

The training underscored that security and safeguarding are two sides of the same coin—both are fundamental to protecting staff, beneficiaries, and the integrity of humanitarian and development work. TAF Africa is committed to cascading this crucial knowledge within the organization and integrating these best practices into our daily operations to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.



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