



TOP STORIES INSIDE THIS EDITION



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August brought the electoral process and TAF Africa's commitment to inclusive democracy into sharp focus. With the Osun State Governorship Election at the centre of this month's work. From final preparations and voter education to the deployment of election observers, real-time monitoring and post-election advocacy, TAF Africa worked to ensure that the experiences and participation of persons with disabilities were captured before, during and after the polls.

In Osun, we brought together voter education, election observation, accessibility support, technology, media engagement and stakeholder advocacy. The approach was designed around a simple principle: persons with disabilities should not merely be counted among those eligible to vote; they should be able to participate safely, independently, meaningfully and without discrimination.

Beyond Osun, TAF Africa continued to advance electoral inclusion through a stakeholder engagement on the INEC Framework for Voting by Internally Displaced

Persons, bringing together the electoral institution, emergency management agencies, IDP camp coordinators and community leaders to address barriers to displaced citizens' participation. The month also saw continued engagement with stakeholders through the advocacy with the NSCDC on disability-responsive security and safe electoral participation.

This edition of Inclusion Digest brings together stories documenting the work, evidence and partnerships shaping TAF Africa's pursuit of a more inclusive democracy.



FROM PREPARATION TO THE POLLS: BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE ELECTION IN OSUN

An inclusive election cannot be improvised on election day.

By the time voters arrive at a polling unit, many of the factors that determine whether they can participate have already been shaped: whether electoral officials understand disability-inclusive procedures, whether polling locations are accessible, whether assistive materials are available, whether deaf voters can communicate with officials, and whether there are mechanisms for documenting and responding to barriers as they occur.

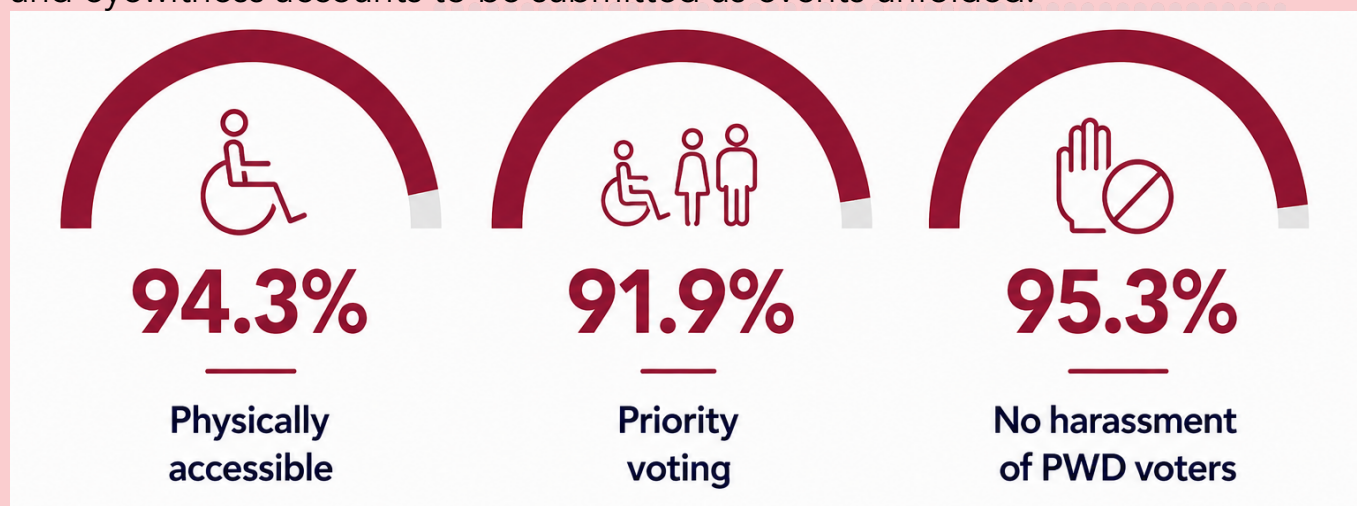
This understanding shaped TAF Africa's approach to the Osun State Governorship

Election which was supported by the European Union through the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Programme.

One of our interventions was the deployment of 24 trained Sign Language Interpreters to polling units where registered deaf voters had been identified. The interpreters were deployed across 29 polling units in 12 LGAs, reaching 84 deaf voters. The deployment was deliberately data-driven. TAF Africa worked with disability stakeholders to identify locations with registered deaf voters and determine where communication support was most needed. In Olorunda, for example, nine interpreters supported 24 deaf voters across nine polling units.

At the same time, observers documented what happened beyond the visible arrangements. At 8 a.m. on election day, the question was no longer whether preparations had been made. It was whether those preparations would work.

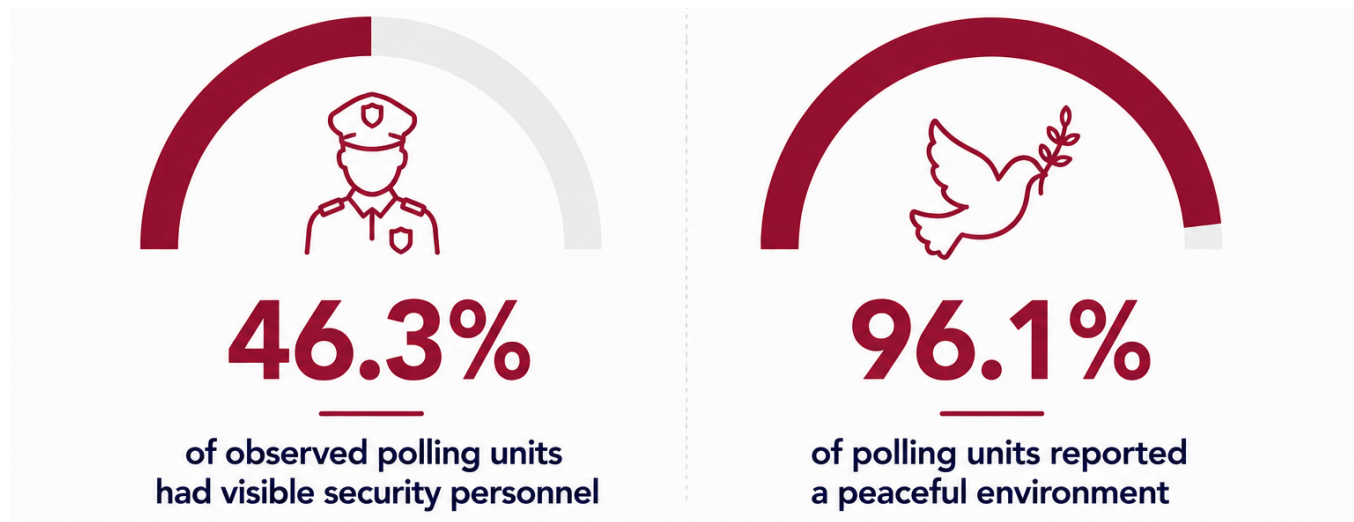
Across Osun State, trained observers documented the experiences of voters with disabilities, while the the TAF Election Hub monitored reports coming in from polling units. The TAF Disability Hub Application connected field observers to the central monitoring team, allowing observations, photographs, incident reports and eyewitness accounts to be submitted as events unfolded.



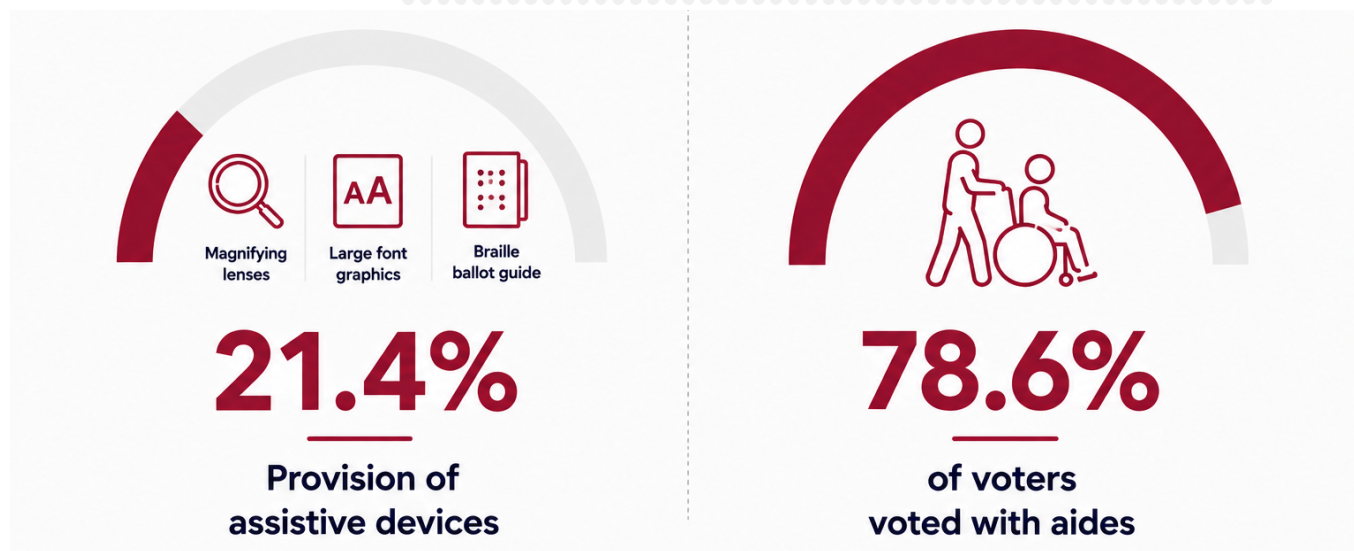
The picture that emerged was mixed, but important.

On one hand, many polling units demonstrated encouraging levels of accessibility and peaceful participation. **94.3%** of observed polling units were physically accessible, while **91.9%** recorded priority voting. The observation also found that **95.3%** reported no harassment of voters with disabilities. These findings suggest that some disability-inclusive electoral provisions are increasingly becoming part of the practical conduct of elections.

Yet the numbers also exposed areas requiring attention.



Only **46.3%** of observed polling units had visible security personnel at the time of poll opening, leaving more than half without visible security presence. Despite this, **96.1%** of polling units reported a peaceful environment, while the absence of harassment of PWD voters remained high.



Assistive devices remained another significant gap. Our report identifies their

provision as generally inadequate, particularly for voters with visual impairments. Among the sampled polling units, only **21.4%** of those requiring assistive devices had them available, leaving **78.6%** of voters who needed such devices dependent on aides or other alternative forms of support to cast their ballots. This means that physical accessibility alone cannot guarantee independent participation when voters do not have access to the tools they require.

The data therefore presents neither a story of complete success nor one of failure. Instead, it shows an electoral process making measurable progress while still carrying structural and operational gaps that must be addressed before the next election.

The central lesson is clear: **electoral inclusion must move beyond access to meaningful, safe and independent participation.**

AFTER THE BALLOTS: TURNING ELECTION LESSONS INTO ADVOCACY



The announcement of election results marked the end of voting, but it did not mark the end of TAF Africa's work.

The evidence gathered through the Election Hub provided a basis for examining what worked, where gaps persisted and what should change before the next electoral cycle. One of the most important lessons was that accessibility cannot be treated as a one-time intervention. It requires planning, coordination and

accountability throughout the electoral cycle.

The observations also reinforced the need for stronger preparation of polling and security officials before election day. TAF Africa subsequently took some of these concerns through an advocacy visit to the **Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC)**. The engagement focused on strengthening disability-responsive security arrangements and ensuring that voters with disabilities can participate safely and without discrimination.

The meeting with the Commandant General and the Corps' leadership produced a commitment to collaborate with TAF Africa to safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthen access to justice and safe electoral participation. The message was straightforward: a voter should never have to choose between exercising a democratic right and feeling safe while doing so.

This post-election engagement illustrates why election observation matters. Observation is not simply about recording what happened. Rather, it creates evidence that can be taken back to institutions and translated into changes that improve future elections.

BEYOND OSUN:

**ENSURING DISPLACEMENT DOES NOT BECOME
DISENFRANCHISEMENT**



TAF Africa's commitment to inclusive democracy extended beyond the Osun election.

In Abuja, we convened a stakeholder engagement on the implementation of the INEC Framework for Voting by Internally Displaced Persons, bringing together INEC, State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMA), IDP camp coordinators, civil society and IDP community leaders.

At the heart of the two-day engagement was a fundamental question: **How can Nigeria ensure that citizens displaced from their homes are not also displaced from their democratic rights?**

The discussions reinforced three important principles.

First, inclusion cannot be an afterthought. Electoral arrangements must anticipate the realities of displaced populations rather than attempt to address their needs only after barriers have emerged.



Second, IDPs must have a voice in shaping solutions that affect their political participation. Policies designed for displaced communities are more likely to respond to actual needs when those communities are part of the conversation.

Third, dialogue must lead to action. Bringing institutions and communities together is valuable, but the ultimate measure of such engagements is whether commitments translate into coordination, implementation and measurable improvements.

The engagement, supported by the European Union through the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Programme, reinforced TAF Africa's broader position that **displacement must never become disenfranchisement**.



The right to participate in democracy does not disappear because a citizen has been forced to leave home. Ensuring that this principle becomes reality requires sustained collaboration among electoral institutions, emergency management agencies, civil society and displaced communities.

FAITH AS A BRIDGE: TAF AFRICA ENGAGES CAN, RIVERS STATE ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

Faith communities carry an influence that reaches into homes, families and everyday life, long before any government policy does. It was this understanding that took TAF Africa to the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rivers State, opening a new front in the pursuit of disability inclusion.

The engagement introduced TAF Africa's disability inclusion agenda and made a simple but far-reaching case: persons with disabilities are not outsiders waiting to be included in the Church, they are already present, in congregations, choirs and church programmes, often unseen and unsupported. The conversation centred on how CAN's structures across Rivers State could become active partners in advancing their rights, dignity and participation.

Discussion quickly moved from principle to practice, exploring capacity building for Church leadership, awareness creation within congregations, and a broader engagement strategy reaching Church leadership across the State.

The visit closed with five clear commitments. TAF Africa will work towards an **interfaith workshop** to strengthen CAN's understanding of disability inclusion, and will share a proposed **work plan** outlining areas for collaboration. **The Ecumenical Centre, Rivers State** was identified as a potential venue for future engagements, while CAN committed to inviting TAF Africa to **a larger meeting of its officers** to explore broader collaboration. Both parties also agreed to work towards developing and signing a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to formalise the partnership.



For TAF Africa, the significance of the visit lies less in what was said than in what was agreed to. An interfaith workshop, a shared work plan and a pending MoU point towards a partnership built to last, one that positions the Church not merely as a moral voice on inclusion, but as an active partner in delivering it.

TAF Africa will follow up on each agreed action, working towards a Rivers State where faith communities help lead, rather than lag behind, the movement toward disability inclusion.

FROM IDENTIFICATION TO INDEPENDENCE: ADVANCING ECONOMIC INCLUSION IN DELTA STATE



Behind every number in TAF Africa's economic empowerment work in Delta State is a person whose path to independence had, until now, been blocked by a system that was never quite built with them in mind.

Under the **EU-CBM funded Disability Rights Advocacy Project (D-RAPID)**, TAF Africa spent August placing persons with disabilities into economic empowerment opportunities. Working in Oshimili South and Warri North LGAs, TAF Africa completed the placement of 12 persons with disabilities, 5 men and 7 women, into training and empowerment opportunities suited to their individual needs, skills and interests.

Similarly, TAF Africa took on a more ambitious task: identifying and profiling persons with disabilities for entrepreneurship and tech skills training.

In partnership with the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), the team selected 54 participants based on their assessed needs and interests. The team then profiled each individual and matched them to specific tracks, including confectionery, phone repair, fashion design, hairdressing, and ICT.

The initiative **reached 66 persons with disabilities** this month, bringing each participant one step closer to economic independence.

The month's work was not without friction. Some beneficiaries could not be placed within their original timeframe, requiring their placement to be carried over. Diverse skills preferences meant that a single training vendor could never suffice, and TAF Africa had to work carefully to ensure that whichever training centres were eventually chosen would be accessible and appropriate for persons with different disabilities, not simply willing to accept them.

Yet the month also surfaced valuable lessons: that early identification saves time later, that beneficiaries' own preferences should anchor placement decisions, and that **partnership with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities such as JONAPWD** strengthens both selection and community ownership of the process.

With profiling of the 54 beneficiaries ongoing and vendor selection underway, the next phase of the work turns from paperwork to practice: matching each person, deliberately and individually, with a skill, a vendor and a future they helped choose for themselves.





TAF Africa's MicAbility Podcast is just a click away!

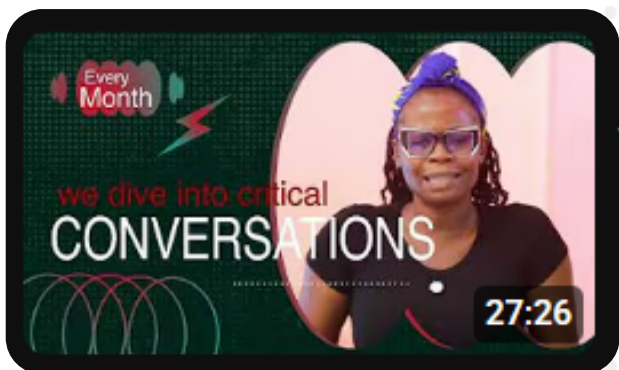
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Part 1: Love or Fetish? The Struggles...



Can you marry a person with disability?

Binge on knowledge, humor, practical insights and more ...

From highlighting disability rights, breaking down obstacles in education and employment inclusion, to sharing the inspirational tales of Nigerian changemakers, there is something for everyone—whether you are a student, professional, advocate, or simply curious about creating a more inclusive society.

Your view counts, your voice matters, and together we can amplify change!

Watch now and be part of the movement: bit.ly/taf-micability

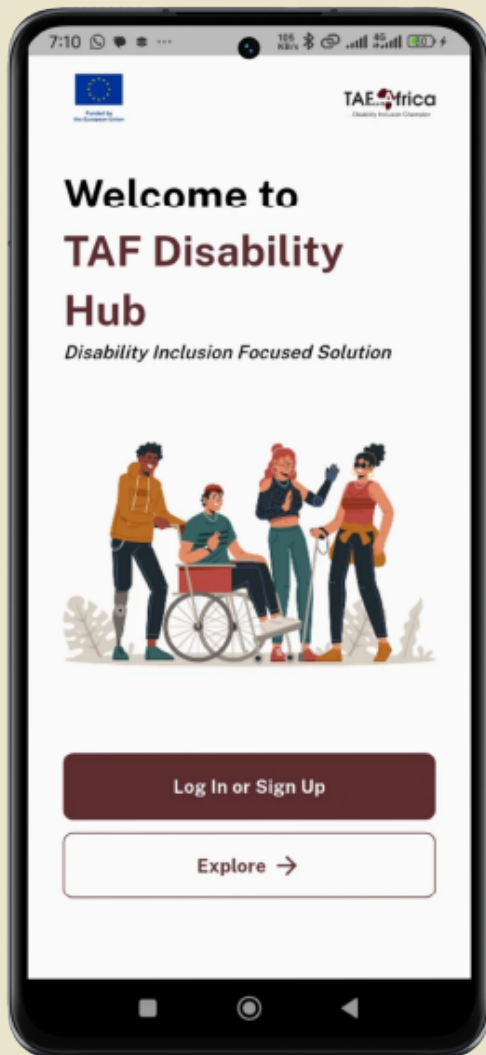
The Osun Governorship Election has provided more than a snapshot of disability inclusion in one election. It has provided evidence that can shape the next stage of the conversation.

There is measurable progress to build upon: high levels of physical accessibility, widespread implementation of priority voting, relatively peaceful participation, targeted deployment of sign language interpreters and stronger use of technology for real-time election observation.

There are also clear gaps to address: inadequate assistive devices, inconsistent documentation of PWD participation, limited visible security presence, delays in commencing voting, uneven application of inclusive procedures and the need for stronger representation of persons with disabilities within electoral structures.



TAF Disability Hub App



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to report violations against
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track polling unit opening
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