



June was a defining month for disability-inclusive democracy. As Ekiti State Governorship Elections and the Continuous Voter Registration exercise gathered momentum, TAF Africa worked to ensure that persons with disabilities were not left behind.

From the Election Hub deployment which has us advocating with electoral stakeholders, training election observers, and monitoring accessibility on election day to taking voter registration directly into communities of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, our work focused on removing barriers to political participation.

This edition of Inclusion Digest highlights how partnerships, evidence, and community engagement are helping to build an electoral process where every eligible citizen can register, vote, and participate without discrimination.

Read the full newsletter for Disability Inclusion. Democratic Participation. Real Stories.

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TAKING VOTER REGISTRATION TO THOSE OFTEN LEFT BEHIND



Long before election day, the tide of democracy is felt and whether it is able to carry everyone or not tells its strength or weakness. Ensuring that every eligible citizen has the opportunity to register to vote is a key marker of an inclusive democracy.

For many persons with disabilities, particularly those living in underserved communities or displacement settings, the opportunity for participation is often limited by distance, accessibility challenges, inadequate information, or institutional barriers. Recognising these realities, TAF Africa expanded its Able2Vote initiative to support the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise in communities where access remains a challenge.

In June, TAF Africa mobilised persons with disabilities across Kaduna State and in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in Benue State. This partnership with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) extended voter registration support to these vulnerable groups under the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Programme.

Interacting with over 600 persons across both locations who came to be registered revealed that the issue is not the non-participation of vulnerable groups, but the deliberate efforts to cover the gaps that hinder full participation. Inclusion cannot



depend on citizens overcoming barriers alone. Institutions must actively remove those barriers by taking services closer to the people.

These engagements served as an opportunity to remind participants that political participation is their constitutional right regardless of disability or displacement. Through community mobilisation and direct engagement, TAF Africa reinforced the message that every citizen deserves an equal opportunity to influence decisions that shape their lives.

Follow the #Able2Vote CVR outreach as we go to more communities within Nigeria.

ADVOCACY THAT OPENS DOORS FOR INCLUSIVE ELECTIONS



Meaningful inclusion often begins with sustained engagement with institutions responsible for delivering democratic processes. In June, leading to TAF Africa's

Continuous Voter Education interventions we also embarked on strengthening partnerships with electoral stakeholders in Benue State through a series of strategic advocacy visits designed to improve electoral access for persons with disabilities and persons living in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps.

Before visiting any IDP camps, we first engaged with the Benue State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and secured the institutional commitment required to facilitate Continuous Voter Registration within IDP camps. The Admin Manager, Dr. Komgbenda Donald, received the TAF Africa team on behalf of the Executive Secretary gave assurance of a smooth, hitch-free Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) for persons living in IDP camps across Benue State. He reaffirmed the agency's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote the inclusion of persons living in IDP camps and ensuring that displacement does not limit access to civic rights and opportunities.

While having the support of the Independent National Electoral Commission headquarters, further discussions with the Resident Electoral Commissioner in Makurdi resulted in two significant commitments. INEC approved dedicated voter registration outreaches directly within IDP camps and also approved polling unit transfers to enable displaced citizens to vote at locations closer to where they currently reside.

These commitments represent more than administrative decisions. They remove practical barriers that have prevented many displaced persons and persons with disabilities from exercising their voting rights.

June reminded us that successful advocacy engagements strengthen the systems required to make elections more inclusive, accessible, and representative.



Preparing Disability-Inclusive Election Observation for Ekiti 2026

Credible election observation depends on observers who understand both electoral processes and the realities faced by marginalised voters. Ahead of the Ekiti State Governorship Election, TAF Africa recruited, trained, and deployed 150 election observers drawn from persons with disabilities and able-bodied citizens to monitor disability inclusion across the state.

Before election day, we ensured that the observers were equipped with practical knowledge on documenting accessibility, priority voting, assistive devices, voter participation, and compliance with electoral guidelines. The goal was to ensure that as our eyes and ears on election day, participants were prepared to capture the lived experiences of persons with disabilities, not only observing electoral procedures.

Data Insights from our Election Hub

As observers dispersed across polling units, they became an important source of evidence from which we get a clear picture of the current realities of disability inclusion in our electoral process. The #Able2Vote Election Hub framework evaluated four core pillars: PWD Voter Turnout, PWD Priority Voting, Accessible Polling Units, and Assistive Devices Provision.

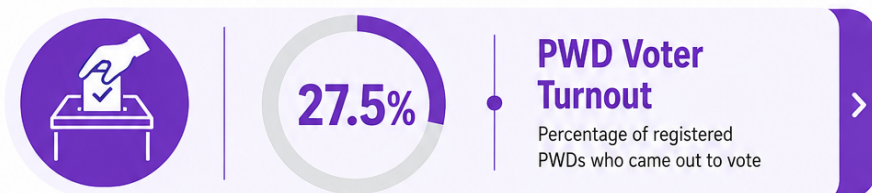
Our field data revealed both encouraging progress and critical areas that demand urgent intervention:



• **Accessible Polling Units (90.6%):** A highly commendable milestone, showing that the physical setup of the vast majority of observed polling units allowed for basic entry and navigation.



• **PWD Priority Voting (84.3%):** Great compliance from polling officials on-site, ensuring that persons with disabilities didn't face grueling wait times to cast their ballots.



- **PWD Voter Turnout (27.5%):** Out of 804 eligible PWD voters observed across these locations, turnout stood at just over a quarter, highlighting the ongoing need for targeted voter education and mobilization.
- **Assistive Devices Provision (40.1%):** This remains our biggest challenge. Fewer than half of the observed units were equipped with necessary tools like braille ballot guides, magnifying glasses, or accessible signage.

While physical access and priority voting compliance are moving in the right direction, the low availability of assistive devices remains a significant barrier to truly independent voting. True democratic inclusion means ensuring that every voter can cast their ballot secretly and independently, without relying on someone else to mark it for them.

As a disability inclusion champion, TAF Africa will continue to leverage these insights to advocate for systemic reforms, ensuring that future elections leave no one behind. You can visit electionhub.org.ng for more insights.

Strengthening Electoral Integrity Through Collaborative Observation



Election observation is most effective when organisations work together to provide timely, evidence-based assessments of electoral processes.

As part of the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Election Observation Hub, TAF Africa joined partner organisations in providing key updates to stakeholders about the Ekiti Governorship Election.

The Joint Situational Statement released on election day acknowledged that voting generally proceeded peacefully across much of the state due to adequate security deployment. However, observers also documented isolated incidents of violence and organised voter inducement that threatened aspects of the election's integrity. TAF Africa's contribution ensured that disability inclusion remained part of broader conversations about electoral credibility. Alongside broader governance issues, attention was consistently placed on whether persons with disabilities could participate safely, independently, and without discrimination.

The election reaffirmed that credible elections are measured not only by peaceful conduct but also by the extent to which every eligible citizen can participate equally.

STRENGTHENING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE LEGISLATION IN DELTA STATE



Inclusive societies are built not only through good intentions but through laws that are effectively implemented. While Nigeria's **Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018** provides a strong legal foundation for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, meaningful change depends on how these protections are reflected in state laws, public policies, and government institutions.

Recognising the pivotal role of state legislatures in translating national commitments into practical realities, TAF Africa under the Disability, Rights, Advocacy Project for Inclusive Development (D-RAPID) supported by the European Union convened an orientation for members of the Delta State House of Assembly to strengthen their understanding of disability-inclusive legislation, oversight, and governance. Legislators, legislative staff, government ministries, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), disability advocates, and development partners, together examined how the Assembly can advance inclusion through its lawmaking and oversight functions.

A significant part of the meeting was the detailed review of the Delta State Disability Protection Law against the provisions of the National Disability Act. Participants identified critical areas requiring amendment, including increasing the employment quota for persons with disabilities from one per cent to the nationally recognised five per cent and aligning with global best practices that promote learning environments where everyone can participate.

The discussions challenged participants to rethink disability as a matter of human rights, equality, and sustainable development not merely the traditional charity and welfare ventures. As for who is responsible for what, participants explored Nigeria's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and the responsibilities of legislators in ensuring that state laws, budgets, and public institutions promote equal opportunities for all citizens.

A monumental part of the orientation was the practical commitments made by participants to accelerate the legislative amendment process, integrate disability considerations into the review of future bills, appoint disability desk officers within the State House of Assembly, improve accessibility within public health facilities through sign language interpretation, and deepen the involvement of persons with disabilities in policy development and implementation.

As Delta State advances the process of strengthening its disability legislation, the orientation marks an important step towards ensuring that legal protections are matched by effective implementation. Through sustained engagement with policymakers and institutions, TAF Africa continues to champion a future where the rights of persons with disabilities are protected not only in law but also in everyday governance and public service delivery.

LOOKING AHEAD

As Nigeria continues preparations for the Osun and general elections, June demonstrated that inclusive democracy requires more than policies—it demands practical action, institutional collaboration, and sustained advocacy.

Through voter registration support, strategic engagement with institutions, disability-inclusive election observation, and evidence-based reporting, TAF Africa continues to advance an electoral system where every citizen, regardless of disability or circumstance, can exercise their democratic rights.

Because inclusion is not complete until every voice is heard and every vote counts.



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

Missed an episode?

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!

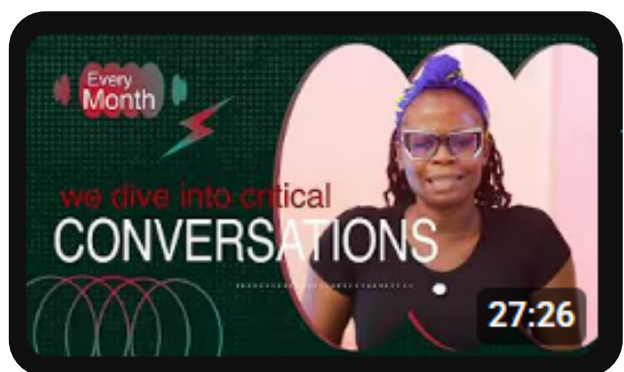
Watch now and be part of the movement: bit.ly/taf-micability



Part 1: Access to Work Scheme ...



Part 2: Love or Fetish? The Struggles...

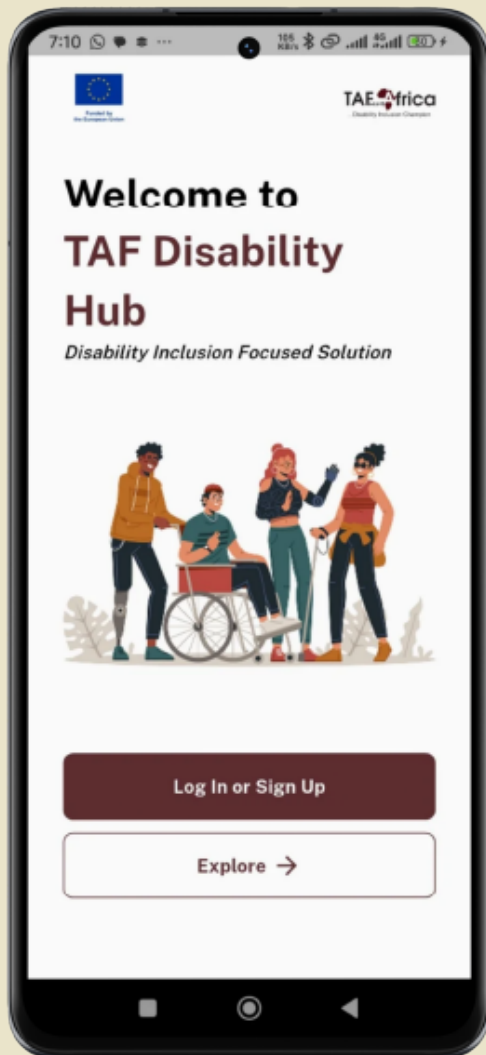


Part 1: Love or Fetish? The Struggles...



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TAF Disability Hub App



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