



# TAF Africa Visits Colony of Persons with Disabilities within Karon Magiji Community Abuja

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## Partnership for Health protection of PWDs

TAF Africa partners stakeholders to drive policies to protect the health of persons with disabilities

## Advocacy for Inclusive Election for PWDs in Sokoto

TAF Africa continues advocacy to sokoto state government for approval of the revised inclusive guidelines for the conduct of local government elections in sokoto state

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# MONTHLY News**letter**



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**MARCH 2024**

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## TAF AFRICA, NIA SIGN MOU TO DRIVE INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUSION FOR PWDS



TAF Africa and the Nigerian Institute of Architects (NIA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to jointly advocate for the effective implementation of the disability act 2018 within the built environment, with a focus on architectural considerations and accessibility standards.

The president of the Nigerian Institutes of Architects NIA Arc. Mobolaji Adeniyi said that the Federal Government signed into law the Discrimination Against Persons With Disabilities (Prohibition) Act in 2018, to provide integration of Persons with Disabilities in all aspects of the society, as well as their participation in public life, and accessibility to public structures. In her words, "Our main agenda focus is to unite the key points. The agenda is inclusiveness. We must design buildings that cater to everybody and ensure that citizens have access to them. The Nigerian Institutes of Architects NIA is committed to ensuring that architects in Nigeria recognize the importance of inclusiveness in their design. We are synergizing with TAF Africa to interact with the person with disabilities to ensure that we provide for their special needs regarding access to public structures."

She emphasized that the collaboration between the TAF Africa and the Nigerian Institutes of Architects seeks to promote inclusive policy, strategic development, and reforms by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies of the federal government in Nigeria to better the well-being of Persons Living with Disabilities in Nigeria. Arc. Adeniyi added that the institute will partner with the government to audit public buildings to ascertain their accessibility to the community of persons with disabilities and make recommendations where necessary.

While making his remark, TAF Africa's CEO/ Founder, Jake Epelle, commended the institute for being sensitive and aligning themselves with the demands of the time and for giving women the opportunity to lead the great institute. In his words, we are delighted in tears of emotions that we have come together not only to do what I'd morally expect of the institute but also what is legally expected that every building design must be inclusive. And from now henceforth every architect must take into cognizance the need for a structural environment accessible for the person with disabilities in the county.



## TAF AFRICA TRAINS STAKEHOLDERS ON DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AT THE GRASSROOTS.

During a two-day capacity building on disability inclusion in the electoral process at the grassroots level for Electoral Management Bodies in Kaduna state, organized by TAF Africa with funding from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives, Prof. Joseph Gambo Akpoko,

the Electoral Commissioner of Information and Public Affairs for the Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission, urged the community of persons with disabilities to overcome all fears and actively participate in politics within the state.



According to him, Persons with disabilities should show interest by registering with political parties, picking their forms, and coming out to show the public what they can offer in leadership, in his words, "How do we know you have the capacity when you don't come out?"

Despite legal provisions made to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in Elections, Mr. George Anwayi, assistant program manager, at TAF Africa stated that the disability community continues to face significant barriers partly because Voter education programs developed by electoral management bodies often overlook the specific needs of persons with disabilities, leading to low awareness of their voting rights and voting procedures.

While providing an overview of the state of disability inclusion in Elections, Mr. George noted that implementing inclusive policies and practices, such as the provision and adequate deployment of assistive

tools, training election officials on disability rights, collaborating with disability advocacy groups and civil society organizations to raise awareness, and encouraging political parties to include persons with disabilities in their internal democracy will enhance the cause of disability inclusion.

TAF Africa's Senior Communications Officer, Lynn Agwuncha, spoke with the commission about effective communication tactics to be used to guarantee disability inclusion in the state's local government elections, considering the diverse needs and abilities of the marginalized population.

In addition to expressing a desire to integrate disability inclusion into the Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission through interventions and programs tailored to the needs of people with disabilities, the commission's management also pledged to establish a disability desk to promote inclusive policies.

# TAF AFRICA PARTNERS STAKEHOLDERS TO DRIVE POLICIES TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

TAF Africa met with the National Association of Government General Medical and Dental Practitioners (NAGGMDP) and disability cluster heads in the Federal Capital Territory to discuss strategies for safeguarding the healthcare of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). During the meeting, the CEO/Founder, of TAF Africa, Amb. Jake Epelle announced that actions are underway

to support interventions and official paperwork to ensure adequate healthcare for persons with disabilities in Nigeria. He mentioned that discussions are ongoing among stakeholders and added that Hon. Bashiru Dawodu, the Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Disability, had been briefed about the initiative.



In his words, "So, this was the meeting that we carried out to debrief on the activities that we planned and also to see where they are legislative guards for him to begin with and how those legislative bills and motions can be factored into their activities". Dr Sofiri Peterside, the National President of the National Association of Government Medical and Dental Practitioners (NAGGMDP), emphasized the urgent need for the government and stakeholders to prioritize the healthcare of persons with disabilities. He said the goal

of stakeholders coming together is to find common ground and to ensure that they have adequate medical care, social interventions, and existing laws and assess the effectiveness of those laws. It should be recalled that TAF Africa had earlier signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Association of Government General Medical and Dental Practitioners to drive access to affordable health care for persons with disabilities in the country.





## TAF AFRICA VISITS KARON MAGIJI COMMUNITY

As part of its continuous efforts to help people with disabilities, the TAF Africa team, led by CEO/Founder Amb. Jake Epelle paid a visit to the disability colony within the Karon Magiji community in the Federal Capital Territory. In keeping with its mission to improve the welfare and empowerment of people with disabilities, TAF Africa expressed its dedication to this goal by making a sincere monetary gift to the disability colony during the visit.

The visit to the Karon Magiji community serves as a reminder of TAF Africa's commitment to advancing the development of an inclusive society in which persons with disabilities are accepted, cherished, and given equal opportunity to succeed. However, we recognize that sustainable change requires collective action from stakeholders and governmental

support. Therefore, TAF Africa calls upon all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, businesses, and community leaders, to join hands in championing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, we urge the government to prioritize the implementation of policies and initiatives that support persons with disabilities. This includes ensuring accessible infrastructure, inclusive education, healthcare services, and employment opportunities.

TAF Africa remains committed to its mission of promoting disability inclusion and will continue to work tirelessly towards creating a more inclusive and accessible society for the community of persons with disabilities.



# TAF AFRICA CONTINUES ADVOCACY TO SOKOTO STATE GOVERNMENT FOR APPROVAL OF THE REVISED INCLUSIVE GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN SOKOTO STATE

TAF Africa is being funded by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the Electoral Process at the grassroots in Sokoto State. This is in furtherance of the results of previous interventions in 2022 which sought to review the Sokoto Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) Guidelines for the Conduct of Local Government Elections.

The purpose of the review was to strengthen the electoral process and to articulate specific provisions that speak to disability inclusion such as the provision of waivers for aspirants with disabilities, and the provision

of relevant assistive devices and processes for voters with disabilities. The revised document will enhance the participation of persons with disabilities both as aspirants and as members of the electorate.

Under the last project, the document was reviewed and validated by stakeholders within the Sokoto State political landscape, awaiting approval of the State Government. With the emergence of a new government in Sokoto, it became imperative for further advocacy action to be conducted to push for the prompt approval of the revised guidelines.



To this, the TAF Africa team paid an advocacy visit to the Deputy Governor of Sokoto State, His Excellency Engr. Idris Muhammad Gobir. Also present at the meeting was the Special Adviser to the Governor on NGOs and Development Partners, Abdulrahman Hassan, and the Special Adviser to the Governor on Disability matters, Aliyu Umaru Ubandoman Rabah (represented).

At the visit, the CEO/Founder of TAF Africa, Mr. Jake Epelle gave a brief update to the Deputy on the Project and the need for prompt approval of the revised guidelines to enable the printing of same.

The Deputy Governor, in his response, stated that no matter how little the contribution, every impactful intervention was appreciated and would receive maximum cooperation. He said that the government was ready to support the implementation of the guidelines, especially since the governor had committed to holding Local Government elections. The draft documents were presented to and received by the Deputy Governor who committed to taking the matter further.



# TAF AFRICA CONTINUES ADVOCACY FOR ENHANCED PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING IN CROSS RIVER STATE

TAF Africa continued its advocacy in Cross River State towards improving the participation of persons with disabilities in governance and decision-making. The

visit, funded by the Disability Rights Fund (DRF), was among other things, seeking the following:

- i. To push for the establishment of the State Disability Affairs Board. A memorandum had already been sent to the Governor through the Secretary to the State Government (SSG). Further follow-up with both the Governor and the SSG needed to be made to ensure follow-through on recommendations made.
- ii. To Secure approval of the Framework for Disability-Inclusive Governance. The document was developed during a technical session of relevant stakeholders in Cross River State. The Final draft was forwarded to the Governor and the SSG, for approval and adoption by the State Government.
- iii. To Advocate for the approval of the revised CROSIEC Guidelines: The revised guidelines were developed during a stakeholder review and validation exercise conducted in collaboration with the Cross River State Independent Electoral Commission. While the Commission was making efforts to secure the Governor's "no-objection", it was also imperative that TAF Africa showed due diligence by following up for approval.

The TAF Team was privileged to meet with the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Anthony Owan-Enoh, who stated that the Government had begun consideration of the advocacy tasks.

Also visited was the speaker of the House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Elvert Anyambem, who promised to give the requests the required legislative support as practicably as possible.





Funded by  
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**TAF Africa**



**LIVE All FRCN Radio Stations Nationwide**

# **DISABILITY INCLUSION RADIO SHOW**

**Saturdays at 7pm**



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#### Implementing Partners



**TAF Africa**

TAF Africa has evolved to become a focus organization that advocates for the recognition and respect of the rights, and socio-economic and political inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and other vulnerable groups in Nigeria. The Foundation contributes to legislative and policy action that promotes the rights, effective mainstreaming, and general well-being of Persons with Disabilities as well.

## **CONTACT WITH US**



**Corporate Headquarters:**

Plot 990 NAL Boulevard Central Business District, Federal



+234 8171576797, +234 8035335444



info@albinofoundation.org | Info@tafafrica.co



tafafrica.co



TAF Africa



taf\_africa



TAF\_Africa