

Enhancing Public Participation by Persons with Disabilities and Obligations of the Government Agencies in Kenya

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Abstract

Public participation is an integral part of the due process aimed at ensuring that the views of persons are taken into account in making policies. Public participation tries to find and include those with the capacity to be influenced by or concerned in a decision. Persons with disabilities have a right to be engaged in the concrete outcomes' decision-making process to be satisfactory and inclusive. Historically, persons with disabilities had limited public participation due to reasons such as negative attitudes, ineffective legislation, low educational attainment, inaccessible physical environment, a limited number of paraprofessionals or support staff such as interpreters for the hard of hearing and deaf, readers for the visually impaired, and mobility specialists among others. This article establishes the importance of public participation for persons with disabilities and identifies the role of selected factors that hinder effective public participation, such as the prevalence of disability, severity of impairment, level of education, readability of written materials, competence of service providers, and application of principles of reasonable accommodation and universal design. The article also identifies the obligations of the government in enhancing public participation of individuals with disabilities.

Keywords: public participation, persons with disabilities, government agencies

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Introduction

Public participation is a procedural tool that enables policymakers to involve citizens in a policy network and entrust them with its design tasks (Bobbio, 2018), and, as such, is a political practice or principle which is fundamentally regarded a right where the segment of citizens is involved. Marzuki (2015) notes that individuals likely to be affected by the policy have the right to be consulted before the decision is made. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Constitution of Kenya both recognize the importance of public participation. For instance, Article 4(3) of

UNCRPD states that “State parties shall liaise with and actively include individuals with disabilities in the decision-making processes and development and execution of legislation and policies regarding issues affiliated with individuals with disabilities,” while Article 29 calls upon Member States Parties to ensure that individuals with disabilities contribute to political and public life on an equal basis through their representatives.

This article highlights how public participation among persons with disabilities can be enhanced, how selected factors such as the prevalence of disability, the level of severity of impairment, level of education, readability of written materials, competence of service providers, reasonable accommodation, and universal design affect public participation. Finally, the article lists the obligations of government agencies in enhancing public participation for individuals with disabilities.

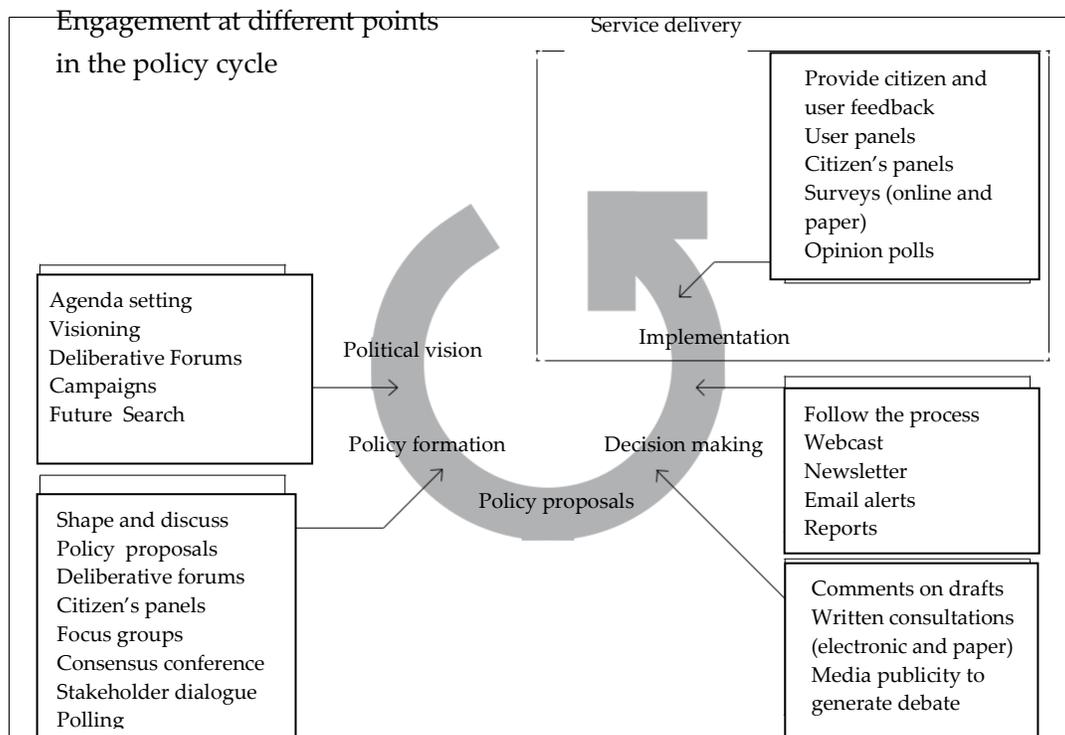
Processes and Models of Public Participation

Public participation is not merely involving citizens or target groups in decision making. Various processes are applied to ensure that participation leads to informed decision making. An example of public participation is shown in the steps undertaken by the Blair County Planning Commission (2011, p. 2), which ensured wider participation and included:

1. Conducting outreach to the public in the process of developing plans as well as programmes.
2. Providing public access to both technical and policy information employed during the process of developing plans and programs.
3. Ensuring sufficient notification associated with the public's activities to provide reviewing and commenting opportunities at key decision points by the public.
4. Providing feedback to contributors as a consequence of public comment made available at some stage in the planning process.

5. Organizing and carrying out evaluations on the public participation plan each year in liaising with concerned parties in order to ascertain whether it is effectively dispensing a satisfactory opportunity for inclusion.

The Diane Warburton model (2007) shown below notes that for public participation to succeed, it must consider how the process should be done, the scale of engagement, resources, timescales, methods, and who to include. If the process is not conducted properly, it damages the reputation not only of the policy but also the organization developing it. This model can also be used in involving persons with disabilities in matters that concerns them and for the government to ensure improved governance, social capital and social justice, improved quality of services, and capacity building and learning (Warburton, 2007).



Adapted from: Diane Warburton (2007)

Levels of Participation by Persons with Disabilities

Considering that public participation by people with disabilities significantly enhances their involvement in policy-making processes, we shall discuss five levels of engagement. These are zero participation, benevolent participation, sentimental participation, partial participation, and substantive participation, as discussed below.

Zero Participation

At this level, persons with disabilities are not involved in deliberations, the projects' effectiveness, or decisions regarding their needs. Instead, assumptions and presumptions are made about their needs. The result of this process is misplaced policies, priorities, dissatisfaction, and the subjugation of people with disabilities to lower levels of society. The perception of persons with disabilities as a homogeneous group has also resulted in policies that do not address each group's uniqueness with disabilities. The net effect of zero participation is lost generations due to inappropriate policies. For instance, between 1958 and 1986, deaf children in Kenya were perceived as incapable of intellectual achievement. They followed a curriculum tailored to preparing them for vocational education, thus denying them the opportunity to attend high schools, colleges, and universities.

Benevolent Participation

This is masked benevolence where persons without disabilities undertake to speak for persons with disabilities. It is an activist approach where persons with vested interests do so even when the people they purport to represent are present. They use high sounding jargon or propositions that sway the audience to their thinking. There are negative consequences with zero participation since policies are made in abstract terms and fail to pay particular attention to people with disabilities' concrete needs. Unless the process's outcome is tempered with moderation and realism, or the principles of public participation delineated earlier are followed, lost generations may also ensue.

Sentimental Participation

Sentimental participation resembles benevolent participation. In this process, persons with disabilities are invited to meetings, which may have a predetermined agenda. The involvement of persons with disabilities in this setup is peripheral, where they are asked minimal questions. This has disadvantages especially for deaf and hard of hearing persons who may have challenges in following proceedings because of the fast-paced discussions, or because interpreters have limited knowledge of the subject under discussion, or do not have an adequate technical vocabulary, their demeanour, and whether they were sourced by deaf participants or conveners of the public meetings. Another impediment to successful participation is where only a few persons with disabilities are invited, with one or two disability groups being dominant, thus making deliberations or proposals skewed. Unless these considerations are addressed, persons with disabilities participating in such forums feel their presence is being used to rubber-stamp predetermined decisions. This leads to resentment and dissatisfaction with the process with persons with disabilities disowning decisions arrived at during the meeting.

Partial Participation

Partial participation is akin to sentimental participation. The difference is that individuals with disabilities are involved. However, the resources to expedite their participation are lacking, and where they are available, are limited or of poor quality. For instance, resources such as interpreters may be provided or sourced by the organization convening the meeting. However, unless the interpreters are competent and qualified for the deliberations, there are likely to be hitches, thus diluting the participation process. Another instance is where the visually impaired participants' materials are not provided in large-sized print or Braille, thus necessitating the materials to be read aloud to the visually impaired participants during the meetings. As in sentimental participation, persons with disabilities may feel they have had only a token level of participation, and that outcome was not adequately exhausted.

Substantive Participation

Substantive participation occurs where mutual respect is anchored in inclusivity, and persons with disabilities feel part and parcel of the process. Where deliberations are on specific issues, persons with disabilities of specific category being discussed are involved. For instance, persons with mobility problems should be consulted closely in matters of environmental and structural accessibility. By the same token, deaf persons should be involved in sign language development, interpreting, examining interpreters, and related issues. In addition, the agenda of the meeting and those participating should also be mutually agreed upon. Furthermore, relevant documents must be circulated before the meeting to enhance the participation of all parties. This process leads to shared outcomes where persons with disabilities also become advocates of the policies and cooperate to support their implementation.

Factors Impeding Public Participation by Persons with Disabilities

Attitudinal and Environmental Factors

Disability is intertwined with attitudinal and environmental factors. Attitudes relate to how society views persons with disabilities. At the same time, environmental factors deal with how a person with a disability navigates the challenges occasioned by environmental factors such as inaccessible buildings, communication barriers, among others. In addition, terms that were outlawed by the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) still find their use in the society and constitute a significant impediment to concrete and effective participation. For instance, Kiswahili and ethnic languages are replete with terms that presume persons with disabilities have intellectual or physical incapacity, such as *wasiojiweza*, a Kiswahili term which means “those incapable of doing anything” (Ndurumo, 1993).

Low priority by government

Other factors that impede the participation of individuals with disabilities include the low priority given by the government in training, allocation of resources, the tendency by others to speak on their behalf, inaccessible media, limited numbers of

paraprofessionals or support staff such as interpreters for the hard of hearing and deaf, readers for the visually impaired, and mobility specialists. Discrimination and non-progressive laws, policies, and low economic status also restrict the empowerment and public participation of individuals with disabilities.

Preference for Low Prevalence of Disability

The 2008 Kenya National Survey on Persons with Disabilities gave a prevalence of 4.5%, while the 2009 census a prevalence of 3.5%, and the 2019 census a prevalence of 2.2%. Ndurumo (2001), in a paper presented to the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission, observed that the prevalence for Kenya could be as high as 20% and for poorer countries 25%. Daniel Mont (2007) provided stated that prevalence of 15% and above was used by developed countries such as Australia (20.0% in 2000 census), United States (19.4% in the 2000 census), and Canada (18.5% in the 2000 census). Coincidentally, less developed countries such as Kenya (2.2% in 2019 census), Uganda (3.5% in 2001 census), Mexico (2.3% in 2000 census), among others were using prevalence below 15% is used by countries. Considering that the WHO/World Bank Report (2011) states that the incidence of disability is higher in developing countries, one would expect developed countries reporting lower prevalence. However, there are some advantages using higher prevalence. First, higher prevalence requires higher allocation of government funding. Second, with availability of higher allocation of funds, more persons become inclined to reveal their disability in order to access government support. Third, disclosure and visibility increases levels of consultation and public participation. Fourth, there is an increase in higher education opportunities, which trickles down to the lower levels, necessitating providing quality education to learners with disabilities. Fifth, quality education, in turn, calls for the training of more professionals, including interpreters, readers for the visually impaired, orientation, and mobility specialists, among others. Sixth, disability becomes perceived as a human rights issue, and the society becomes more sensitized to the rights of persons with disabilities. Seventh, the field of disability

becomes more innovative and evidence-based enterprise which benefits the larger society. Finally, organizations of and for persons with disabilities become empowered and control the disability agenda and increase pressure on the government in legislation and policy-making processes.

Severity of Impairments

The role of severity of impairment is the least understood factor in discussing public participation by people with disabilities. A misunderstanding might lead us to believe people with disabilities are a homogeneous group needing similar services and amenities, even within a similar disability category. Table 1 shows that the degree of impairment can generally be grouped into mild to moderately severe and severe to profound within each type of disability. Understanding this set up helps us appreciate the diversity among persons with disabilities and how best to include them in public participation since the degree of severity calls for different approaches and divergent needs in the public participation process. Let us take an example of persons with hearing loss. On the surface, they appear to be one group. However, three groups emerge. The hard of hearing and the Cochlear Implant groups have residual hearing, use hearing aids, and prefer speech and speechreading. If deaf persons were placed together with this group, and speech and speechreading is used, they would be disadvantaged since their hearing loss ranges from severe to profound. Again, the age at which deafness occurred plays a significant role among deaf persons not only in the amount of residual hearing but also in communication and educational achievement. Understanding the degree of disability can also be extended to the visually impaired and the physically impaired, as shown in the table.

Table 1*Grouping of Disability According to Severity*

Mild/Moderate/Moderately Severe	Severe/Profound
Hard of hearing (oral oriented; Cochlear Implants)	Deaf (oral oriented)
Postlingually deaf person	Prelingually deaf person
Sign language deaf person	Oral deaf person
Low vision	Totally blind
Totally blind	Deafblind
Mild, moderate, moderately severe physical impairment	Severe to profound ambulatory impairment
Mild, moderate, moderately severe manipulation impairments	Severe to profound manipulation impairments
Stuttering and fluency disorders	Severe communication impairment

Source: Michael M. Ndurumo (August 19, 2010). Raising Children with Special Needs. A Paper Presented at Nairobi Baptist Church, Kenya.

Focus on Limited Types of Disabilities

The 2009 and 2019 censuses focused on seven main disability areas: mobility, visual impairments, hearing loss, cognition, self-care, communication, and albinism. This is because the Washington Group instrument was used to determine who had a disability.

The criteria are found in the World Bank/WHO Report (2011, p. 26):

- a) Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
- b) Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
- c) Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
- d) Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?
- e) Do you have difficulty with self-care, such as washing all over or dressing?
- f) Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating (for example, understanding or being understood by others)?

Ndurumo (2020) analyzed these items and noted that:

1. Question one is clear and direct since the person being asked the question is able to respond with a yes or no.
2. The second question which addresses persons with hearing loss, is not direct and requires an interpreter. It is doubtful enumerators would be able to communicate with families headed by deaf persons. The effect of this is that a low prevalence of this group would be obtained, yet the World Health Organization (2012) states that 5.5% of a country's population has a disabling hearing loss. This is way above the total prevalence of 2.2% of persons with disabilities in Kenya in the 2019 census.
3. The third question is aimed at one of the segments of persons with physical impairments like walking. However, there are various types of physical impairments like absence of upper limbs, cerebral palsy, and others.
4. The fourth question is ambiguous as does not indicate which category it intends to capture as there are various persons with disabilities who may fall in this category such as persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with specific learning disabilities, persons with Alzheimer's, ADHD, and so on.
5. The fifth question is also ambiguous as persons with memory loss, profound intellectual disabilities, disabling health impairment, paralysis due to accidents, neuromuscular disorders, and others fall into this category.
6. The last question is relatively ambiguous as different categories fall under it, including persons with speech impairments, children delayed language, persons with intellectual impairments, specific learning disabilities, deaf and hard of hearing, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism, Alzheimer's also have communication impairments.

By contrast, the Kenya's Ministry of Education (2018) uses 14 categories of disabilities, adopted from the America's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Using these

categories, the Ministry of Education achieved a prevalence of 11% which approximates the WHO/World Bank (2011) prevalence of 15%.

Educational Level

Education is the key cornerstone in the participation of people with disabilities in the affairs of their lives. The Kenya National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (2008) reported that 67% of individuals with disabilities have primary education, 19% secondary education, and 2% university education. Kiaritha, Ndurumo, Mulambula (, 2011) reported that in 2010 there were 325 students with disabilities attending public universities in Kenya. The implication of educational attainment levels has profound implications in that a large number of persons with disabilities only have primary education, thus affecting their ability to understand government policies. The physically handicapped comprised 77.2% of those with university education. This makes them the most articulate in deliberating issues and may sway deliberations in their favour compared to 15.4% of the visually impaired and 7.4% deaf and hard of hearing. This calls for appropriate balancing during public policy participation.

Readability of Written Materials

Data from the 1999 census revealed that 67% of persons with disabilities have only primary education. The implication of this is that the public participation process has to bear in mind the level of difficulty of written materials. Individuals with disabilities have different abilities in comprehending information according to the readability of written materials. For instance, eight words or less are very easy and are understood by 93% of the readers (Dubay, 2004). Hence, there is a need to use very easy to standard language (83% to 93%) to make the materials easy to understand and avoid materials that are fairly difficult to very difficult to understand to enable the majority of persons with disabilities to participate. While the information is based on the population without disabilities, it is probable beyond doubt that a significant number of persons with disabilities would have difficulty with reading regular materials. It is therefore incumbent that policymakers

should modify and validate the printed materials to a level that the majority of persons with disabilities are able to reasonably grasp before undertaking the public policy process.

Verbal Loading of the Content

There is a tendency to overload the public participation process with verbosity and, at times, speak rapidly during the presentation. We call this verbal overloading and jarring, which affect the processing of the information. Persons leading the public participation process should therefore be mindful of the audience and their ability to process the information.

Competence of Service Providers

The participation of people with disabilities is intertwined with the availability of service providers such as sign language interpreters, mobility specialists, readers for the visually impaired, among others. For instance, deaf persons require qualified interpreters in order to effectively participate in the meetings. This requires that interpreters should have specialist training and accredited by a professional body. The same requirement applies to Braille transcribers who transcribe regular materials into braille. Finally, there is need to have two or more service providers during public participation, especially interpreters when the meeting is likely to last more than one hour as fatigue interferes with quality of interpreting.

Compliance with Reasonable Accommodation and Universal Design Principles

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities notes that reasonable accommodation also incorporates modifications and adjustments that guarantee equal participation of individuals with disabilities in the areas of human endeavor. Universal design, on the other hand, means “a scientifically valid framework for guiding practices that provide flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways, students [persons with disabilities] respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills,

and in the ways, students [persons with disabilities] are engaged” (USA Higher Education Opportunity Act Section 103(a)(24)).

Obligations of the Government Agencies in Enhancing Public Participation

The government agencies have a role to play in enhancing public participation of persons with disabilities. The listed areas are some examples where persons with disabilities could be involved to ensure that their voices are heard when government agencies are executing their functions.

The Presidency

1. Ensure organizations and agencies that receive government funds provide services to individuals with disabilities.
2. Declare that constitutionally individuals with disabilities have equal rights and opportunities.

The Parliament

1. Translate policy guidelines into law.
2. Ensure that legislation infuses tenets of the Constitution of Kenya, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other suitable local and international laws that enhance access of individuals with disabilities to benefits.
3. Ensure accessibility to the Parliament by providing accessible seats, desks, interpreters, subtitles, material in Braille, etc.)
4. Enact an education of learners with disabilities act.
5. Enact laws that accredit boards of interpreters, Braille technicians, and other paraprofessionals offering services to people with disabilities.
6. Re-examine the constitutional safeguards for people with disabilities for nomination to the National Assembly and the Senate even when the prevalence of disability is lower as the burden of proof of accuracy lies with the enumerators.

The Judiciary

1. Recognize the equality of individuals with disabilities.
2. Outlaw any discriminatory practices concerning individuals with disabilities and their children.

3. Enforce the 5% principle and safeguard individuals with disabilities' rights in clauses requiring sharing resources, such as the 30% clause for women, youth, and individuals with disabilities.
4. Enforce the accessibility of buildings to persons with physical impairments.
5. Enforce the provision of qualified and competent interpreters (including deaf interpreters) who meet the requirements for interpreting for accused or aggrieved persons with hearing loss.

Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government

1. Police reforms to take cognizance of individuals with disabilities' participation, including teaching sign language to law enforcement officers.
2. Education of security on the participation of individuals with disabilities in disaster management.
3. Provide security personnel with elementary sign language courses.
4. Recruit qualified and competent sign language interpreters.

The National Treasury and Planning

1. Provide policy guidelines on the 30% of tenders to be booked for women, youth, and individuals with disabilities, and how the 30% would be judiciously shared.
2. Allocate adequate funds to the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and similar bodies to enhance public participation of persons with disabilities.
3. Enhance tax exemptions and incentives to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in public affairs.
4. Ensure mechanisms to capture all categories of disability are in place during the censuses and household surveys.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. Promote the universality of design in products designated for Kenya.
2. Promote Kenyans with disabilities in the international arena.
3. Seek international collaborations and partnerships to enhance the education and welfare of persons with disabilities

Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development

1. Ensure universal design of products and services.
2. Provide incentives for entrepreneurs with disabilities.
3. Utilize the talents of persons with disabilities in design, fabrication, and production.

4. In collaboration with other government ministries, develop mechanisms for reducing prevalence of disability.

Ministry of Health

1. Enhance early detection and registration of children and people with disabilities.
2. Prioritize services to individuals with disabilities.
3. Research on causes and prevention of disabilities.
4. Recruit sign language interpreters qualified in medical interpreting.

Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works

1. Enhance safety at pedestrian crossing and alighting points.
2. Incorporate principles of universal design of buildings and roads to enhance mobility and motors of persons with mobility issues.
3. Ensure modification of public vehicles to enhance accessibility and accommodation of persons with physical disabilities.
4. Incorporate communication alerts to assist boarding and disembarking by deaf and hard of hearing passengers.

Ministry of Devolution and the ASALs

1. Ensure accessibility of county offices and services.
2. Ensure public participation of individuals with disabilities at county levels.
3. Provide funding to organizations of individuals with disabilities to guarantee they play substantive roles at county levels.
4. Ensure in-depth data gathering on the prevalence of disability at national and county levels.
5. Liaise with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education to develop categories of individuals with disabilities for inclusion in the census for accuracy in measuring the prevalence of disability to provide accurate data for the broadening of services.

Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs

1. Ensure information is available to individuals with disabilities
2. Enhance sign language interpreting and captioning on TV.
3. Ensure ICT friendly technology for persons with disabilities is developed.
4. Strive towards universal design in information delivery.

Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage

1. Develop the talents of youths with disabilities.
2. Involve youths with disabilities in youth sports activities and fund their programmes.
3. Enhance the participation of youths with disabilities in national and international sports.
4. Support youth disability organizations at the national level.

Ministry of Education

1. Emphasize academic excellence to raise levels of transition to secondary schools and post-secondary schools, especially tertiary level and universities.
2. Training more professionals and paraprofessionals in the field of disability.
3. Ensure that regular curricula incorporate aspects of individuals with disabilities and teach about the empowerment and non-discrimination of individuals with disabilities.
4. Maintain database of students with disabilities at all levels.
5. Increase funding for research in the fields of disability.
6. Ensure that students with disabilities in regular institutions are provided with interpreters, readers, mobility specialists, and related services.
7. Ensure reasonable accommodation is an integral part of inclusive education.

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

1. Implement the ILO convention on the best practices for individuals with disabilities.
2. Ensure the implementation of the 5% principle for individuals with disabilities spreads through the spectrum of cadres of employment to enhance their mobility and infuse changes in policies.
3. Ensure reasonable accommodation and universal design in the workplace.
4. Legislate the retirement age of individuals with disabilities to be five years above the mandatory retirement age in their respective agencies.

Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning

1. Protect land belonging to special schools.
2. Ensure the land intended for special schools is not in peripheral areas but within the main society or community as per the Constitution's provisions.
3. Provide land in sufficient acreage for a comprehensive school system.
4. Consider reasonable accommodation and universal design concepts in the allocation of land for institutions for persons with disabilities.
5. Ensure the right to land ownership by persons with disabilities.

Ministry of Public Service and Gender

1. Ensure compliance by the government ministries and government agencies with the requirements of employment of 5% of persons with disabilities including affirmative action.
2. Ensure professionals with disabilities in public institutions including universities and research institutions are accorded five years above the mandatory retirement age.
3. Enhance the participation of youths and women with disabilities in national government programmes

Attorney General

1. Correctly interpret the concept of public participation for individuals with disabilities.
2. Scrutinize bills to ensure they include the participation and interest of individuals with disabilities.
3. Advise on the bills that need to be enacted in the interest of individuals with disabilities.
4. Clarify the equalization of elective and appointive posts in the Constitution to avoid marginalization of individuals with disabilities.
5. Ensure bills and government/public decisions infuse the concept of public participation of individuals with disabilities.
6. Ensure general bills incorporate the needs of persons with disabilities.
7. Ensure incorporation of Articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in policy and legal instruments.
8. Review existing laws to ensure they take cognizance of individuals with disabilities.

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

1. Recognize that persons with disabilities and their family members are equal before and under the law and are entitled without discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.
2. Make special arrangements and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.
3. Ensure courts are accessible to persons with mobility issues.
4. Provide sign language interpreters who have specialized in legal interpreting to accurately interpret legal jargon and court proceedings.
5. Ensure that the visually impaired are provided with audio and relevant materials in large size or Braille.

Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

1. Educate and train individuals with disabilities on the principle of democratic participation.
2. Ensure that voting facilities, materials, and procedures are suitable, available, and easy to comprehend and use by individuals with disabilities.
3. Correctly implement Article 54 of the Constitution and the 5% rule on elective and appointive posts.
4. Ensure implementation of Article 29 of CRPD on the participation in the public and political life of individuals with disabilities.

National Council for Persons with Disabilities

1. Enforce reasonable accommodation and universal design for persons with disabilities.
2. Ensure disability mainstreaming in all sectors of the devolved system.
3. Provide mechanisms for the implementation of issues related to persons with disabilities.
4. Liaise with relevant ministries and organs to agree on the types of disabilities to include in censuses and other government documents to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities.
5. Conduct or collaborate in research in areas of persons with disabilities.

Conclusion

This article focused on the definition, processes, and levels of participation of persons with disabilities. Weaknesses were explained, and some important issues related to enhanced participation for Kenyans with disabilities were discussed. This is because there is a need to bring persons with disabilities on board to benefit from the new constitutional dispensation and the UN CRPD. To achieve this, the various obligations of different arms of the government and its agencies were delineated. It is hoped that the government's multiple arms will institutionalize the principles of public participation of persons with disabilities in developing policies in their jurisdiction areas.

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