



Workshop Handout

Review of People with Disability Participation in Post 2015 General Elections

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations 3

1:0	Background, Problem Statement and Relevance	4
<i>1.1</i>	<i>Background</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>1.2</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1.3</i>	<i>Relevance</i>	<i>5</i>
2:0	Objective and expected outcome	6
<i>2.1</i>	<i>General Objective</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>2.2</i>	<i>Specific Objectives</i>	<i>6</i>
3:0	Approach and Methodologies	6
3.1	Engaging EMBs,	6
3.3	Carrying out Post Election Assessment	7
4.0	Findings of the post-election assessment exercise	7
<i>4.1</i>	<i>Findings of how things unfolded for the “Inclusive Project” and PWDs in general</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>4.2</i>	<i>Categories of barriers encountered by voters with disabilities</i>	<i>13</i>
5.0	A Glimpse on the Contestants’ (with Disabilities) Profiles.....	14
<i>5.1</i>	<i>Assessing aspirants by Sex.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>5.2</i>	<i>Assessing candidates by disability Categories</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>5.3</i>	<i>Propensity of Political Parties to give representation slots to PWDs</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>5.4:</i>	<i>How candidates with Disabilities fared in the 2015 General Elections</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>5.5</i>	<i>General Comparison of Experiences between the 2010 and 2015 General Elections</i>	<i>16</i>
6.0	Successes and Challenges	17
6.0	Successes	17
6.2	Challenges	18

7.0	Recommendations	18
7.1	Recommendations to the NEC.....	18
7.2	DPOS.....	19
8.0	Conclusion	19

Abbreviations

MKUKUTA	Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupambana na Umaskini
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DPOs	Disabled People’s Organizations
DPOs	Disabled People’s Organizations
EMBs	Election Management Bodies
LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre
PNVR	Permanent National Voters’ Register
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SHIVYAWATA	Shirikisho la Vyama vya Watu wenye Ulemavu
SAUTA	Sauti ya Umma Tanzania
TACEO	Tanzania Civil Society Consortium on Election Observation
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
ZEC	Zanzibar Electoral commission

1:0 Background, Problem Statement and Relevance

1.1 Background

Tanzania being a member of the United Nations has ratified key international human rights treaties including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that promotes *inter alia* the participation and inclusion of PWDs in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres with equal opportunities. The CRPD also recognizes challenges that prevent PWDs to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. Some of the itemized challenges include: accessibility both environmental, information and communication, transportation participation in political and public life, etc. The fact that women and girls are subject to multiple discriminations is also acknowledged and emphasized by the CRPD.¹ This instrument therefore calls for State Parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of all persons including women with disabilities for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the CRPD. The opportunity to enjoy political rights on an equal basis directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for PWDs to vote and be elected are dictates underscored by various articles of the CRPD.

In the bid to implement the CRPD towards promotion of political rights of PWDs, the government of Tanzania in 2010 enacted the Persons with Disability Act No. 9 (2010) section 51 (1) and (2) of which state that; “Every person” with disability who has attained the age of eighteen years and above shall be entitled to enjoy and exercise political rights and opportunity as any other citizen without any form of discrimination” in terms of voting, holding a public office and otherwise participate in the political rights and opportunities as any other citizen without any form of discrimination”. Section 51 (3) of the referenced Act obliges the Minister responsible for PWDs to consult with other organs such the National Advisory Council on disability and Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to ensure compliance in this regard by responsible organs.

The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977 (URT 1977 Constitution) and the Tanzania National Elections Act, 1985 (as amended 2010) recognize the rights of all other disability groups to vote or be voted except persons with mental disabilities. However, Article 67 (1) of the URT 1977 Constitution state that “An Act of Parliament may provide for the disqualification of any citizen from exercising the right to vote on any of the following grounds, namely (b) His suffering from mental infirmity. Nothing other than any of those grounds may operate to disqualify a person

¹ Article 6 (2) of the UN-CRPD of 2006: “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention”

from exercising the right to vote” and Section 11 (b) of the Tanzania National Elections Act states that “a citizen can be disqualified to vote; if under any law in force in Tanzania, he is adjudged or otherwise declared to be of unsound mind.

1.2 Problem Statement

Tanzania Poverty Reduction Strategy (*MKUKUTA II*) and other studies carried out in Tanzania also recognize the challenges PWDs face in terms of accessibility and social stigma hence, emphasizes on the need of having customized interventions to address social protection issues of PWDs and other marginalized groups that would improve their access to social services and contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction efforts. The project titled “Inclusive Elections” 2015 aimed at alleviating such barriers commonly encountered by PWDs during general elections. Specifically, challenges that have been identified by researchers include: i) Stigmatization that is tied with disability that has negatively affect the chance of the PWDs to be nominated or elected for public office. “PWDs are often regarded as dependants and less capable of ‘tough’ responsibilities like being a leader”. There is a great deal of prejudice and negative attitudes against PWDs which make it very difficult for them to excel in political life, ii) Lack of supportive infrastructure to enable them to participate in the political sphere e.g. poor accessibility facilities, equipment and facilities e.g. tactile clues for visually impaired people, iii) Lack of safety and security to the PWDs is one of the hindrances largely due to a series of Albino killings taking place in Tanzania, iv) Unlike women and youth, there are very few PWDs as elected leaders who can act as role models and mentors and therefore, encourage other PWDs to participate and voters to vote for them and v) Serious lack of systematic data on PWDs which limit the effectiveness of interventions as well monitoring and evaluations².

1.3 Relevance

It has been established that during the 2015 general elections, PWDs to the tune of 1 million were of adult age, hence eligible for voting and standing for public offices. Given the envisaged barriers that have been hindering PWDs from enjoying their political right SHIVYAWATA with support from the United Nations Gender Entity for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (UN Women) designed and implemented a project that aimed at addressing some of the challenges. The Project was titled “Support People with Disabilities’ Participation in Political and Electoral Process in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar” and aimed at strengthening capacities of National Electoral Commissions (NEC) and Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) officials, media practitioners and PWD leaders on political leadership of PWDs.

It was a prudent measure to come up and implement a project that could significantly illuminate and attempt to alleviate such stumbling blocks of attitudinal, environmental and institutional nature.

Apart from the introductory part, this presentation entails five sections namely: approach and methodology, findings, successes, challenges, recommendations and conclusion. The essence of this presentation is to spur participants to reflect on recently concluded 2015 general election and assess

² A study by Prof. Bernadetha Killian, commissioned by UN Women in 2014, key challenges that prevent PWDs from participating effectively in political and electoral process.

how inclusive it was by giving evidences of what made it so or otherwise and char out the way forward.

2:0 Objective and expected outcome

2.1 General Objective

The project's overall objective is to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity of people with disability in electoral processes as voters and candidates.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this project targeted three major areas of intervention as follows;

- i) To sensitize and dialogue with NEC and ZEC to raise their awareness on the key challenges affecting PWDs participation in electoral processes and propose appropriate measures to be taken to address those challenges to ensure inclusion and effective participation of PWDS in electoral processes.
- ii) To raise awareness of PWDs leaders in the selected regions on PWDs rights and opportunities to engage in democratic process including elections both as candidates and voters, This will facilitate mainstreaming of the acquired knowledge into their work including to encourage and mobilize their participation in the different electoral process, i.e. registration, contesting, campaigns, voting, etc.
- iii) To sensitize and raise awareness of the media practitioners on PWDs leadership, political rights, and challenges to facilitate availability of space in the media and sensitive reporting to reduce stigma and misconceptions.

3:0 Approach and Methodologies

In order to implement the project under consideration, agency (SHIVYAWATA) adopted a three pronged approach namely: holding dialogue with EMBs, organizing awareness raising campaigns for leaders of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) and the media as well as conducting post election assessment to established levels of successes and challenges.

3.1 Engaging EMBs,

The implementer organized sessions for dialogues and sensitization of respective commissioners and staff on envisaged key challenges likely to continue hindering the participation of different groups of PWDs in the electoral process. Given that general elections in URT are guide by two different legislations namely: the election act 1985 and the elections act of Zanzibar 1984, respectively, the targeted audiences were met in two different camps and dates. When it came to agreeing on action points to be implemented by EMBs: a tripartite i.e. SHIVYAWATA, NEC & ZEC reached a consensus on appropriate countermeasures to address identified barriers.

3.2 Raising Awareness among Leaders of DPOs and the Media

With regard to sensitization of leaders of DPO, the approach was to conduct training session at zonal level where participants were drawn from respective regions converged. Acquired knowledge was to be cascaded to potential voters with disabilities at lower levels in order to inspire them to come out as informed voters and contestants. PWDs were also expected to alert electoral systems in situations where their political right was threatened deriving from ignored apparent barriers.

The media being knowledgeable of barriers that hinder PWDs from enjoying their political right of equal footing as other citizens were counted upon to be sounding boards for the constituency of people with disabilities by furthering awareness campaign beyond the constituency to the larger society as well as blow whistles when unaddressed barriers were identified.

3.3 Carrying out Post Election Assessment

This exercise involved SHIVYAWATA taking stock of how people with disabilities actually fared in various stages of the election ranging from registration, campaigns to voting and/or being voted for.

SHIVYAWATA conducted post election assessment regarding how PWDs fared in the exercise. This was accomplished by (i) administering questionnaire forms, whereby, appointed people visited the sample area and conducted interviews with leaders of DPOs; (ii) follow up of media reports; (iii) participation in different functions organized by NEC such assessing the newly introduced tactile ballot folder. The sample area included kuusini Pemba and Mjini Magharibi in Zanzibar. Dodoma, Manyara, Dar es Salaam, Mara, Tanga, Mwanza, Tabora, Iringa, Mtwara, Ruvuma and Shinyanga. While the sample area constituted of 11 regions (in Tanzania Mainland), the sample size was 362 for 2010 and 217 for 2015 general elections respectively.

4.0 Findings of the post-election assessment exercise

4.1 Findings of how things unfolded for the “PWDs political participation in general

4.1.1 Results of assessment in view of agreed action points between UWZ and ZEC are shown by the table below:

Table (i): Level of ZEC’s Fulfillment of Agreed Action point

*Short Term

ACTIVITY	ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	Implementation Status (from UWZ’s view point)
Providing civic and voter’s education to PWDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of voter & civic trainings conducted by ZEC and DPOs increased ● Number of PWDs participated in electoral process increased 	No statistical evidence

Integrating PWDs issues and concerns in all ZEC interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZEC reports and documents 	No evidence
Producing and distributing voting materials in accessible formats e.g. tactile ballot papers	Large print, Braille and tactile ballot used in voting	Blind people who were given proper orientation on how to use the devices, casted votes on their own which ensured secrecy of their choices.
Conducting community awareness programmes on PWD barriers and democratic elections through media	Number of Mass media campaigns conducted to community increased	Not done
Monitoring engagement of PWDs in registration, nomination campaign, voting and election observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of voters, candidates, poll workers and observers with disabilities • Inclusion of PWDs in electoral monitoring bodies 	No evidence
Accessibility of polling stations by PWDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of polling stations made accessible by ZEC 	Adapted kiosks were available but this alone cannot ensure accessibility
Ensuring peaceful elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimization of electoral violence during 	Responses are contradictions (see figure___)
Ensure accessible information for PWDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of sign language interpreters for deaf and Braille for the blind 	In some polling stations this service was available

*Long Term

ACTIVITY	ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	Implementation Status (from UWZ's view point)
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Initiating sustainable programs on General Election capacity building	Continued training programmes on elections to PWDs	No evidence
Provision of special Identity cards for PWDs	Special identity cards provided to PWDs during elections	Accomplished
Corruption practices are controlled	Implementation of anti-corruption measures to political candidates and voters	No evidence
Stigma to PWDs candidates is adequately addressed	Deliberate measures taken to address stigma to PWD candidates	No evidence
Put into place effective complaints mechanisms by which voters may submit complaints about polling stations in breach of legal accessibility requirements;	Procedures for PWDs to lodge complaints are put in place	No evidence

4.1.2 Other Experiences besides the above action points drawn between ZEC and UWZ.

The post election assessment exercise illuminated both positive and negative experiences by PWDs.

a) On the positive note, the following are captured:

- Assessing the turnout of PWDs to register in the NPVR, get informed about what candidate and their respective parties stand for and eventually make informed decisions on the election day. In order to establish if there are any notable changes in this process, data for two subsequent general elections were collected and corroborated as indicated in figure (i).

Figure (i) Turn out of PWDs to vote

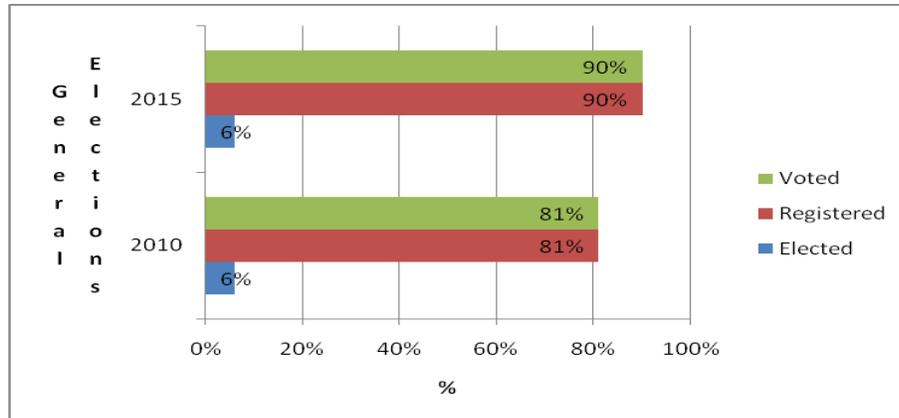
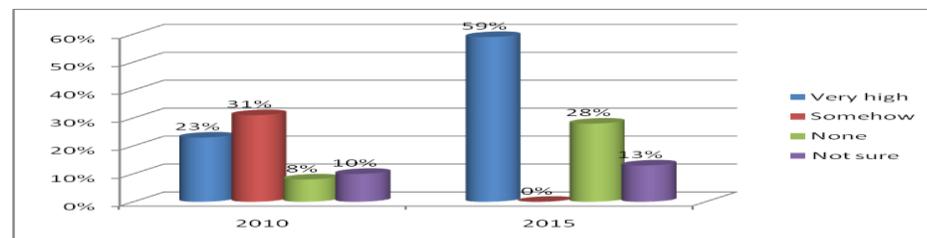


Figure (i) above indicates that despite prevalence of barriers, all PWDs who registered in NPVR turned out to cast votes in two succeeding general elections (2010 (81%) and 2015 (90%)). This is an indication that political awareness among PWDs is high as opposed to none-disabled people whose turn outs rates were 40% (2010) and 63% (2015)³. Respondents mentioned the following to be the driving force behind their motivation to vote:

- Registering in the NPVR and voting is a fundamental right for every eligible citizen;
 - Meeting required all general elections related prerequisites;
 - Some registered since 2000;
 - Responding to demands of democracy.
- Assessing the level at which ZEC at different levels consults with PWDs
- Given the fact that PWDs are unequalled experts of their own situations, initiatives were made to establish by how EMBs consulted them to seek advice regarding their full participation in the electoral processes.

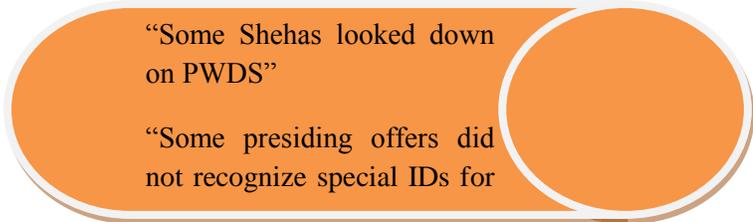
Figure (ii) Level of Consultations between EMBs and PWDs on Election Matters



Source: SHIVYAWATA Field Data

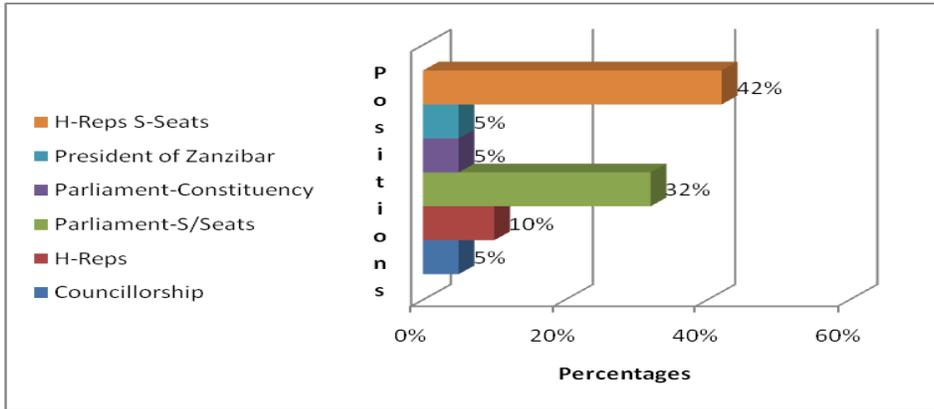
³ <http://www.idea.int/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=TZ>

Table (ii) above indicates an increase in the level of consultations between PWDs and EMBs i.e. the very high rate from 31% of 2010 to 59% in 2015. Ironically, also the rate of no consultations at all increased from 8% in 2010 to 28% in 2015. This could be interpreted to mean that consultations were not made systemically across the board. This could be verified by respondents' statements. See the box



- Establishing which representation positions PWDs vied for
- Representation in decision making organs in Tanzania range from the Presidency (Head of the Executive tier, to Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, the House of Representative (for Zanzibar) and District Councils. These positions are filled through periodic general elections. It was therefore in the interest of the assessment to establish who among eligible PWDs dared to stand for elections and for which positions as indicated by figure (iii).

Figure (iii): Positions for by PWDs in Zanzibar in the 2015 general Elections



Source: SHIVYAWATA Field data

Figure (iii) indicates that most contestants with disabilities went for Special Seats in the House of Representatives (42%), Special seats Parliament of the United Republic (32%), Representative in the House of Representatives (10%), President of Zanzibar (5%), Constituency for the Parliament (URT) (5%) and Councillorship (5%) respectively. However, these figures do not separate special seats from constituency/ward contested seats. This indicates that if and when special seats are abolished, the space for representation of PWDs in decision making organs will shrink miserably.

Interestingly, some PWDs were courageous enough to stand for the highest office in the land, i.e. the Presidency in the 2015 general elections. Reasons that kept other PWDs from the race included:

- Unpreparedness;
- Inadequacy of required qualifications;
- Poor motivation;
- Low interest in politics;
- Prevalence of various barriers;
- Capacities of PWDs being underrated by community members;
- Fragility of economic footing in very a corrupt environment;
- Poor self confidence
- Slim chances of being seconded by respective political parties which involve hurdles such as:
 - Trepidations to venture the unknown (doubting chances of being nominated by Political Parties, hence buying time to test waters)
 - Prospects were there but I declined contesting
 - Chances are very slim given societal negative attitudes
 - Prospects for being seconded lacked policy clout i.e. depended on internal arrangements of respective political parties
 - PWDs do not count in as assets by their communities
 - Fragility of financial footing among PWDs
 - Prevalence of negative social attitudes towards PWDs
 - Being overshadowed by popular figures
 - Inadequacy of experience in the political arena
 - No reserved lots for PWDs
 - Anatomic challenges
 -
- Some aspirants claimed to have been seconded without much ado and managed to withstand competition hassles by capitalizing on the following aspects:
 - Support from the seconding political Party;
 - Shrewdness, health condition notwithstanding
 - Some Party members looked beyond disability to discover and honour potentials and experience

b) On the negative note, the following are among such experiences

- Prevalence of barriers

It was prudent for the assessment to dwell on gauging by how far barriers likely to inconvenience or impede PWDs from participating fully in the general elections processes. This attempt was worthwhile given that past general elections formed the baseline.

Table (ii) Some Incidents Experienced by PWDs during 2015 General Elections

Type of Experience	Percentage
Corruption	(6%)
Communication barriers (S/Language interpretation, tactile ballot papers)	(25%)
Inaccessibility of polling stations	(44%)
Discriminative traditional cultures	(22%)
Fear for violence and unrest	(16%)
No civic and voter's education	(9%)

Despite initiatives made by ZEC and UWZ to ensure inclusiveness in the 2015 general elections, still PWDs experienced a number of barriers as illuminated by Table (ii) above. Barriers such as communication bottlenecks scored 25%, physical environment (especially polling stations) 44%, discriminative incidents 22%, violence and unrest 16%, inadequacy of civic and voter education 9%, and corruption practices 6%. Prevalence of such barriers at any rate is inimical to democratic processes in the sense that they definitely inconvenienced even impeded some constituents (especially those with disabilities) from participating fully in these essential processes.

4.2 Categories of barriers encountered by voters with disabilities

The challenges were categorized in three groups as follows:

- Attitudinal: which was experiences through prejudice, discrimination and use of derogative expressions against PWDs especially those who came in the fore to contest for public offices;
- “I stood in a queue for the whole day”

“My skin was affected by direct sun rays”
- Environmental: a situation where PWDs especially mobility and blindness failed or faced formidable difficulties in an attempt to participate in general election processes. Barriers of this type constituted encountering stumbling blocks such as distances between homes and polling stations, unsheltered polling stations exposing people with albinism to life threatening direct sun rays, rough and/or muddy roads, high door steps, narrow doorways and voting kiosks (vituturi) that hindered maneuvering of wheelchairs, voters with invisible disabilities forced to stand in queues) and inaccessible campaign rallies (44% of respondents registered such an experience and the way the voters register is mounted (at high heights) for voters to trace their names. Failure to access information such as lack of sign language interpretation services and publications transcribed in Braille or large prints were experienced as well (25%);

- **Institutional:** situations where tactile ballot folders were provided without prior orientation on how to use them properly; insecurities based on political camps (16%), lack of secrecy at polling stations for voters with visual impairments; lack of sign language interpretation services; unabated corruption practices in nomination of candidates and campaigning (6%); communication hurdles especially for blind and deaf people; limited knowledge of handling disability challenges among election officials that led to lack of proper and reliable support services at polling stations; printed election materials including manifestos of political parties illegible to those with visual impairments (use of small fonts); inadequacy of civic and voter’s education to PWDs, hesitation of the ZEC to consult and involve PWDs in decision making processes (see fig. (ii)) restriction of private candidacy, denying people with mental health problems to the right to vote.

“Wenye ulemavu wa mongo (sura mfanano) walikataliwa na jamii kutokana na ulemavu wao”.

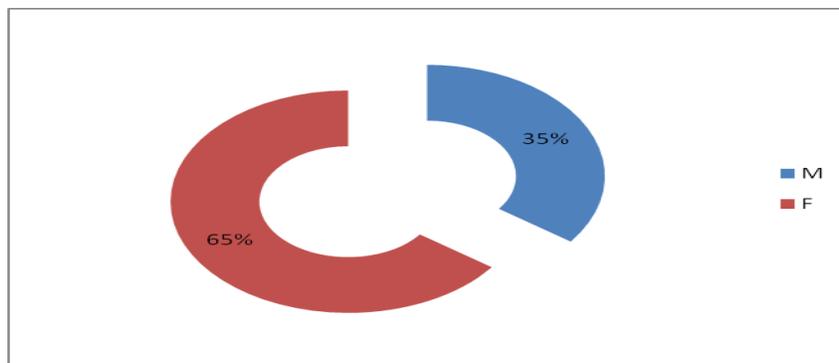
5.0 A Glimpse on the Contestants’ (with Disabilities) Profiles

Eligible PWDs like other citizens were encouraged to contest for leadership positions during recent general elections. Given that there was no categorical programme to groom all potential aspirants, PWDs with different backgrounds came out to contest. This section illuminates on the profiles of those who contested.

5.1 Assessing aspirants by Sex

In view of gender considerations, it was prudent to find out how PWDs of both genders fared in coming out to stand for general elections. Findings are presented by figure (iv).

Figure (iv): Aspirants by Sex



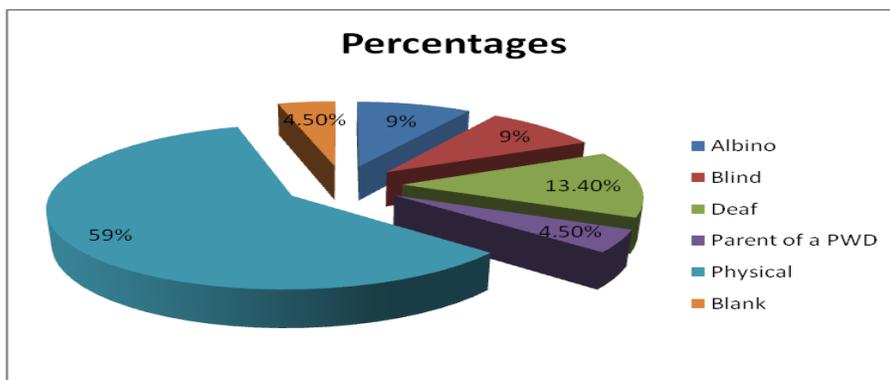
Source: SHIVYAWATA field data

Figure (iv) above indicated that in the 2015 general elections, more women with disabilities (65%) vied for representation positions as opposed to men who constituted 35%. The high turnout for women could attribute to the fact that they have special considerations in the special seat window especially in Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) in the Parliament of the URT as well as in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, there were initiatives of grooming some women who aspired to stand for elections made a difference.⁴

5.2 Assessing candidates by disability Categories

The constituency of PWDs constitutes different types of disabilities with equal rights. Article 29 of the CRPD requires that PWDs have to participate in political and public life not only as voters but to also be voted for. On this strength, it was therefore in the interest of the assessment to establish how these sub-groups came out to stand for the general elections let alone being elected. See figure (v).

Figure (v): Contestants by Disability Categories



Source: SHIVYAWATA field data

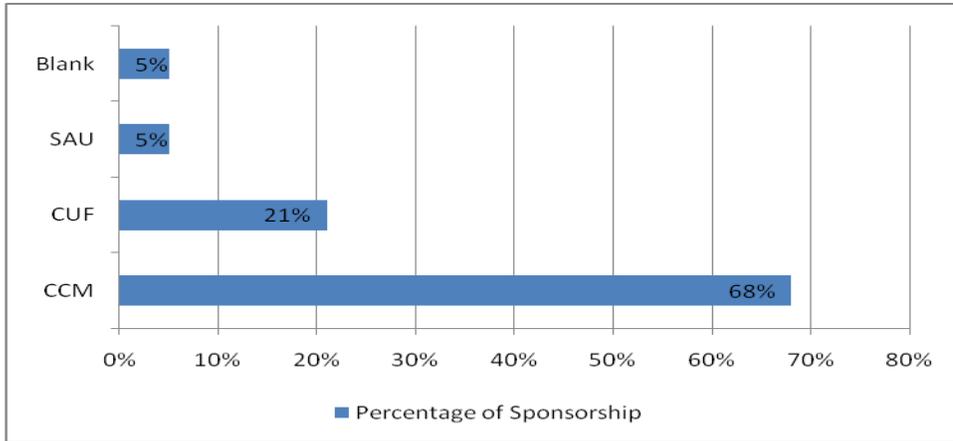
Figure (v) above indicates that people with physical impairments were the most motivated contestants (59%) followed by deaf people (13.4%), people with albinism and blind people (9%) each.

5.3 Propensity of Political Parties to give representation slots to PWDs

It is a constitutional requirement in the URT that anyone aspiring for representative position to be seconded by a permanently registered political party. In this vein, it was imperative for the project to establish how aspirants with disabilities fared in this regard. See figure (vi).

Figure (vi): Sponsoring Political Parties

⁴ TGNP, trainings conducted by TGNP, LHRC, Ulingo and TAMWA



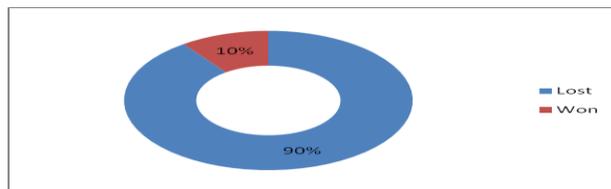
Source: SHIVYAWATA field Data

Figure (vi) indicates that CCM took the lead in sponsoring contestants with disabilities (68%), followed by CUF (21%) and SAU (5%) respectively. The Umoja wa Wanawake (an affiliate of CCM) has reserved slots for women (special seats) that take on board those with disabilities.

5.4: How candidates with Disabilities fared in the 2015 General Elections

The climax of the assessment and the project was to know how many PWDs made to the representative positions above all odds. See figure (vii).

Figure (vii): How PWDs who stood for Elections Fared



Source: SHIVYAWATA Field Data

Figure (vii) above indicates that only 10% of those who stood for elections won their positions as opposed to 90% who lost the elections. One male contestant won the councillorship and two female contestants won Parliamentary special seats. This means that PWDs in Zanzibar do not have a representation of their own in the House of Representatives which negates the whole concept of inclusion.

5.5 General Comparison of Experiences between the 2010 and 2015 General Elections

In order to establish how PWDs in Tanzania have been faring in the democratic processes, an effort was made to compare data on encountered challenges of the last two succeeding general elections i.e. 2010 and 2015. Table (viii) below indicates the trend.

Table (iii): Comparisons of Barriers Prevalence between 2010 and 2015 General Elections.

Type of Experience	Scores	
	2010	2015
Corruption	10%	6%
Communication barriers	31%	25%
Inaccessibility of polling stations	56%	44%
Discriminative traditional cultures	41%	22%
Fear for violence and unrest	23%	16%
inadequacy of civic and voter's education	8%	9%

Source: SHIVYAWATA Field Data

According to Table (iii) above, there was some amelioration with respect to barriers PWDs encountered in 2015 general election compared to that of 2010. However, the percentages of core barriers though considerably lower, but all means they negate strides towards realizing inclusion in the democratic processes. Hostility of physical environment constitutes (44%); in-access to information (25%) and discriminative practices (22%) respectively.

6.0 Successes and Challenges

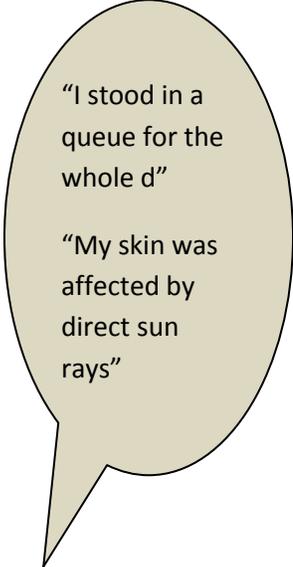
As the “Inclusive Election” Project is winding up, stakeholders are looking back to establish what have been its successes and failure from which future interventions could draw from.

6.0 Successes

- Everything went as planned
- Campaigns and elections were done peacefully
- ZEC facilitated equipment (especially for blind voters)
- PDWs were respected in the entire election process
- ZEC did its best regarding the accessibility of polling stations
- Most of PWDs voted without any incidents (most of them did not stand in queues but this depended on the understanding of election officials)
- PWDs were supported during voting where circumstances so demanded
- PWDs were provided with special IDs on the voting day
- A good number of PWDs turned up to vote

6.2 Challenges

- Presiding officers were not well versed with techniques for supporting PWDs
- Voting kiosks were not suitable for voters mobility disabilities (e.g. wheelchair users, users of armpit crutches, those with short stature;
- Physical environments were not very friendly for PWDs
- Campaigns were conducted in an uncivil manner
- Inadequacy of special equipment
- PWDs are not daring characters
- PWDs are not listened by authorities
- Some Shehas looked down on PWDS
- Inadequacy of civic and voters education
- Chances for a PWD to be nominated by his/her party are very slim
- Lack of sign language interpretation
- Tactile ballot papers were not available in some polling stations
- PWDs have no special constituency of their own
- Civic and Voter's Education was not given in time
- Sign language interpretation services was inadequate
- Voters with invisible disabilities such as hearing, mental and other such disabilities encountered identification wrangles when they attempted to jump queues like other PWDs. Such instances deprived them similar treatment as their counterparts with apparent disabilities;
- Responsible election officials failed to walk the talk



"I stood in a queue for the whole d"

"My skin was affected by direct sun rays"

7.0 Recommendations

The interpretation of the above data is that PWDs fared marginally in the 2015 general elections. In this view, complacency should be highly avoided if improvements are to be realized in future general elections. This is an opportune juncture for a reflection and charting out what to do differently as from now onwards in order to perform better in future similar circumstances. Below are some recommendations towards this end:

7.1 Recommendations to the ZEC

- 7.1.1 Design a comprehensive strategy plan geared to the practical inclusion of on how to PWDs in election processes as it is required by the CRPD;
- 7.1.2 Accessibility of polling stations has cost implications. Research needs to be done well in advance on how to handle the matter cost effectively;

7.1.3 Giving more across the board insights on disability issues should be done well in advance by engaging knowledgeable PWDs even if it means hiring external facilitators;

7.1.4 Access to information is basic for a voter to make informed decisions. Therefore to continue denying deaf, visually impaired and those with intellectual disabilities access to election related information is tantamount to disenfranchising them. IN view of the CRPD, earnest consideration (by ZEC) on this aspect is inevitable.

7.1.5 Sustain the good practice of making arrangements in advance to have IDs ready for voters with disabilities which reduces unnecessary inconveniences to voters with invisible disabilities;

7.1.6 Given that every type of disability has its categorical requirements, ZEC in collaboration with experts of disability issues should improve the exercise of disability needs mapping in order to have them ready by the time of general elections.

7.2 DPOS

8.0 Conclusion

Objectively, the winding up project intended to assert for the enfranchisement of PWDs in the 2015 general elections. As such it was titled “Support People with Disabilities’ Participation in Political and Electoral Process in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.” All PWDs were targeted; the issue of disabled women to participate in these processes was an ingrained aspect. This was kind of tripartite that involved EMBs, SHIVYAWATA as an implementing agency and leaders of DPOs/Media at regional levels. Round table discussions, training of trainers, training at zonal levels and assessment of achievements were key activities of the project.

As the project draws to the closing, it looks back with pride on the new relationships and developments particularly in the catchment area. The relationship between SHIVYAWATA and EMBs has improved, good practices such as the use of new technology of tactile balloting folders, appointing reps of PWDs to ZEC Committees and giving priority to PWDs during voting have intensified, people with disabilities in the catchment area vying for leadership positions has increased significantly than any general elections in history, spillovers of the project led to the appointment of PWDs to Parliament and other very senior positions, a sub-portfolio on disability head by a person with a disability has been establishes, etc

On the part of challenges, issues of accessibility of the physical environment and information, civic and voter’s education, improvement of knowledge on disability among election officials, knowledge on how to use the tactile ballot folder conveniently are some of the key unfinished business. Therefore given recommendation revolve around addressing unfinished business as well as sustaining and improving gains.