

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

On the 3rd of December, 2025, the Youth Advocacy Network (YAN) celebrated International Day for Persons with Disabilities.

The program started with an opening prayer, after which we moved to the welcome address. The welcome address was successful and was followed by the introduction of the chairperson, who happened to be Mr. Brima Thorunka.

After that, participants introduced themselves successfully. We then moved to the purpose of the program, which was presented by Fatmata Jagitay. The theme of the program was “Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Leadership Future.”

The Chief of Kathobo welcomed the YAN very well and expressed that he was very happy about the program. After that, we moved to the question and answer session.

Question one

What is leadership and some qualities of leadership

During the discussion, it was stated that persons with disabilities possess leadership qualities. A good leader should not be autocratic but should be caring, tolerant, and firm. It was also said that although there are laws, many of them are not well implemented.

The headmaster explained that a leader should have strong leadership qualities and should not be harsh but firm, just like vinegar. He also said that the relationship between leaders and followers should be good. At the School for the Blind, the chief made a law that no one should steal within the school compound. Before then, the compound was not fenced, but there was no stealing because the community people were inclusive.

Question 2

Are there laws that protect the disabled.

Mr. Michael Bundu stated that leaders should make laws practicable because many laws are only implemented on paper without proper enforcement.

Question 3

Barriers and challenges faced by them

The discussion later moved to barriers and challenges faced by persons with disabilities. Mr. Michael said they face challenges in public places, sidelining, and restriction from certain public works. He explained that even though the chairperson studied an election course, he never had the opportunity to get a job.

The chairperson for persons with disabilities said that discrimination sometimes starts among themselves because associations are formed for persons with disabilities, yet some people believe a disabled person should not lead because of their disability. He continued by saying that Chief Gbaworo had given one disable position

They thanked Chief Gbaworo Thomas for giving leadership positions to persons with disabilities. Madam Esther added that families also discriminate against persons with disabilities. Some families believe that disabled people should not have children, and even when they inherit property, they are sometimes denied their share. They are also discriminated against in marriage.

Madam Roseline stated that one of the major challenges faced by persons with disabilities occurs in hospitals, especially during childbirth. She explained that when she went to the hospital to deliver her baby, the nurses demanded money before attending to her and her child. When she asked them to bring the baby for her to touch, they refused. She was only attended to after paying money. Even after delivery, she was asked to pay discharge fees before she could leave the hospital.

Elizabeth also shared her experience. She said that a hospital nurse once asked her inappropriate questions, such as how she had sexual relations with her husband. The nurse continued by saying that she was disabled and yet she had given birth. This made her feel discriminated again and disrespected.

After that, the program moved to innovations and solutions aimed at stopping discrimination. Participants suggested that strong laws should be written and enforced to protect persons with disabilities. They emphasized that rights should be written as child rights is clearly stated and protected by law, so that anyone who discriminates against persons with disabilities can be punished according to the law. They will quotes from the book.

We move to advocacy to help them.

They said we should provide finance for them to meet some stake holders to help them to implement them, while Ferumusu S. Marah says we are doing voluntary and because that only our donor help us do celebrates activity.

We moved to school comfortableness

They said we should help them educate in order to stop dependability.

WE MOVED TO STATEMENT FROM VAROUS PEOPLE

1. FROM SOLID: The coordinator says let we serve as ambassador to protect the children at school for safe education and lets advocate for better health facilities. He said they should have respect one and other as disable.
2. **(i) FROM THE CHIEFS:**
 - (i) **Pa Josphere** said he is very happy for the activity. He said as leader would like to tell YAN thanks for this wonderful day. He continued by saying their power is not to look back the people around you
 - (ii) **Chief Koroma** says he is keep happy for YAN because. these days the disable were not considered but now they are considered. He encourages the people to make sure that the council is aware of the challenges.
3. **FROM YAN:** vice president (Bailor Marah) told a lot of thanks to the person with disability and she continued by saying let them feel free and secure from anything bothering them.

Vote of thanks by their head boy

SUCCESES MADE BY YAN

1. Gave recognition to chiefs who have supported persons with disabilities by giving them leadership roles.
2. Created a platform for persons with disabilities to freely share their experiences, challenges, and opinions.
3. Promoted awareness on inclusive leadership and the leadership potential of persons with disabilities.
4. Engaged traditional leaders, community members, and stakeholders in discussions on disability inclusion.
5. Advocated against discrimination in schools, hospitals, families, and public places.
6. Encouraged unity and self-respect among persons with disabilities.

7. Strengthened collaboration between YAN, chiefs, disability groups, and other partner.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DISABLE

1. Strong and enforceable laws should be made to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, not just laws on paper.
2. Government and leaders should ensure proper implementation of disability-related laws.
3. Discrimination against persons with disabilities in hospitals, schools, families, workplaces, and marriages should be stopped.
4. Health workers should be trained to treat persons with disabilities with dignity and respect.
5. Financial support should be provided to persons with disabilities to enable advocacy and engagement with stakeholders.
6. Persons with disabilities should be given equal opportunities in leadership, employment, and public service.
7. Families should be educated to stop discriminating against relatives with disabilities.
8. Education and skills training should be supported to reduce dependency among persons with disabilities.
9. Community sensitization should be strengthened to promote inclusion and acceptance.