

SPEECH BY THE KISUMU COUNTY GOVERNOR, PROF. PETER ANYANG NYONGO DURING THE INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY DAY ON 3RD DECEMBER 2018 AT NITA GROUNDS, KISUMU

The Cabinet Secretary, State Department of Labour and Social Protection, **Amb. Ukur Yatani**

Principal Secretary, State Department of Social Protection, **Mr. Nelson Marwa Sospeter**

Members of the Parliament Present,

Speaker of the County Assembly Hon. Onyango Oloo

County Cabinet Members Present,

The County Commissioner, Madam Pauline Dola

Officers from both the National and County Governments,

The Organizing Committee that has put together this wonderful event,

Persons with Disabilities that we are celebrating today,

Invited guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It gives me great pleasure to join you in celebrating this year's international disability day here in Kisumu. I, on behalf of the county government and the people of Kisumu, wish to extend a warm welcome to all of you to this auspicious occasion. It is always a joy for the people of great County of Kisumu to play host to wonderful guests as gathered here today!

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is a special day to celebrate those with various forms of disabilities amidst us. The number of people with disabilities have continued to be on the rise world over and Kisumu is no exception. According to National Council for persons with disabilities, there are 96,980 persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Kisumu County out of which 5,911 persons already registered by the same council. This special population has formed about 21 disability community based organizations and are duly registered by the National Council for persons with disabilities. However, there is a lot more that can be done on sensitization and registration of people with disabilities within our borders. My government has established a Service Delivery unit (SDU) within my office to spearhead coordination of issues of PWDs among other activities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The county government of Kisumu has gained for herself palpable achievements with regards to improvement of PWDs welfare. Kisumu County is among the first counties in Kenya to have successfully enacted a bill on Disability dubbed The Kisumu County disability Act 2016. The Disability act which is also available in Braille, underpins the formation of a County disability board which has already been constituted. Anchored on the Act is establishment of county disability development fund, as well as the protection of the rights of people with disabilities. The establishment of Kisumu Disability act is also a shrewd affirmation of our county aspirations with regards to disability issues that is in tandem with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN-conventions on rights of persons with disabilities and the constitution 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our County has endeavored to progressively implement the recommendations of National Action Plan (September 2015 – June 2022) that were made by the committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in relation to the initial report of the Republic of Kenya. The high profile visit of our County by the International Disability Alliance and UN committee of experts on 8th November 2018 to benchmark on our progress on implementation of the (UN-Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and SDGs is a clear testimony that our achievements are not only relevant in our local context but has also been recognized by our international partners.

Ladies on gentlemen,

My Government has continued to progressively train and mainstream Disability issues across most of its line departments. In this quest, a number of PWDs have got opportunities of representation in various committees at various levels of county operations and platforms. On the same breath, about 112 PWDs (50 male and 62 female) have been employed across the county departments and development activities.

Our health department for instance, has constantly played a key role in advancing the Disability agenda. The department has aided in medical assessments of various disabilities among the population to achievement of early identification. The deliberate effort to improve access of healthcare services by the PWDs cannot be gainsaid. The HIV/AIDS & Reproductive programs have been deliberately customized to match the needs of the PWDs. The medical staff in our main referral hospital (JOOTRH) and those from other major sub county health facilities have been trained on Sign language to improve the delivery of

healthcare services to those in need. Attempts have also been made in our health facilities as well as other public places and tourist attraction sites to be disability-friendly.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Just recently, about 60 amputees received prosthesis in partnership with Doshi group & Jaipur foot trust. I must also commend the County for provision of mobility to the hospitalized accident Victims in most of the county health facilities. To improve access, more medial outreach programs have been conducted through mobile clinic to the ward levels.

A Gender-based violence centre has been deliberately set up at JOOTRH to attend to gender related violence meted on all persons including the PWDs. Notably, our county UNICEF Immunization champion is a person with disability to lead in the immunization campaign.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The county government has deemed it fit to empower the PWDs on agricultural and entrepreneurial skills to make them self-reliant. A number of PWDs have been equipped with skills in poultry, goat, and dairy keeping. The national award for Best Farmer Award by a PWD from Nyando within Kisumu County is a clear testimony that disability is definitely not inability. My government continues to train various disability groups on business opportunities and has gone ahead to disburse a total of Ksh 1.3 m as a revolving fund for business startups. The PWDs have also been given opportunity to own trading stalls and to sit in various market committees. In line with the Public procurement and disposal Act, the PWDs have been able to win tenders and business opportunities within Kisumu County owing to the enabling business environment in Kisumu. The PWDs in business have also been exempted from tax to help them grown and sustain their entrepreneurial ventures in line with the National Disability law.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The county government has built two Disability resource centers at Ahero and South East Nyakach Wards to further cascade the Disability agenda. The County government in collaboration with other partners has in the past one year alone distributed to the PWDs various disability utilities like 100 white canes, 105 Elbows, 105 crutches, 100 wheel chairs among others. We have also committed to support the upcoming disability tournament in Kisumu to take place in December 2018.

Finally Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciations to various organizations like Kisumu County Persons with Disabilities, National Government, National Council for persons with Disabilities, Crutches for Africa, Turkey Foundation, the NGOs, International partners, UDPK, CSO and Kisumu County Citizens in general for their invaluable support towards the PWDS within Kisumu County. I wish to appeal for more support from like-minded partners for even more robust collaboration in order to make the implementation of the Kisumu County Disability act a reality. **People with disability + Kisumu County Government = Development.**

THANK YOU

God Bless you

God Bless Kisumu County & God Bless Kenya.