

# INCREASING ACCESS TO ASSISTIVE DEVICES IN KENYA

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# Introduction

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is one of the ministries in the Kenyan government where disability programs and policies are anchored.

Service provision to Persons with Disabilities in Kenya is guided by policy provisions in various international instruments, national policies and legislation among them being

- ✓ United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- ✓ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- ✓ African Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ East African policy on Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ Constitution of Kenya
- ✓ Persons with Disabilities Act
- ✓ Draft National policy for Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ Public service guidelines on mainstreaming disability at the workplace

Assistive devices and services are any product or service designed to enable greater independence for Persons with Disabilities. At the **Global Disability Summit, 2018** held in London UK, Kenya committed to developing an Assistive Technology Policy that would regularize and enforce standards on innovation for development and importation of assistive devices as well as guide on the establishment and management of the AT Hub. This was to be done by key stakeholders that currently offer Assistive devices such as **NFDK, NCPWD, APDK, KUB, UDPK** among others.

The **Persons with Disabilities Act 2003**, Section 33, subsection 2(d) put an application on the board of trustees of the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities to provide or contribute to the cost of assistive devices and services to Persons with Disabilities. The Fund was operationalised in the first Medium Term of Vision 2030.

The Fund gives priority to those who require assistance to participate in learning, training or in work environments. It allocates **Kenya Shillings 40million (USD 364,531)** to purchase of assistive devices with 2% of this allocation set aside to rehabilitate those that acquire disabilities while at work.

The **National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)** gives service providers funds to fabricate and distribute the devices to the beneficiaries after thorough assessment of the appropriateness of the devices has been undertaken. The service providers have to apply for the funds and account for them before requesting for money. The assistive devices are branded with the NCPWD logo.

- The **National Fund for the Disabled of Kenya** formed in 1982 is incorporated as a Trusteeship under the Trustees (Perpetual Succession) Act Cap. 164 of the Laws of Kenya. It is another institution that the Government of Kenya uses to provide different forms of assistive technologies through **Donation to individuals** such as wheelchairs, walking canes and **Donations to Institutions** to improve and increase the infrastructure within the institutions which they cater for Persons with Disabilities and thereby facilitate them to take care of more people to better their lives. **Flagship Projects** that include construction of classes and boarding facilities, purchase of therapy equipment, agro-economic projects and other facilities like **ramps** and resource centers in both integrated and special schools and homes for persons with disabilities catering for diverse disabilities.
- Over 4,000 individuals are assisted every year and the Fund gives assistance to 200 institutions with grants of up to Kshs.300,000.00 (2,891 USD) each.

		2018/2019 (KES)	2019/2020 (KES)
1	Assistive Devices & Tools of trade	60,000,000	60,000,000
2	Support to institutions/Covid19 response	40,000,000	50,000,000
3	Flagship projects	75,000,000	Yet to be utilized*
<b>TOTAL</b>		175,000,000	110,000,000

# Some of the recommended key policy interventions on Assistive Technology on progress in Kenya

## Assistive Technology Hub

- The Govt plans to coordinate the establishment of an innovation ecosystem dedicated to the continued creation of novel products, services and policies which advance the rights of persons with disabilities. This will also ensure that persons with disabilities are central to the decision making within the ecosystem. This is been done in collaboration with Disabled Persons Organizations and key stakeholders.
- The Hub will also ensure availability on large scale of good quality assistive technology to transform access and affordability of life-changing assistive technology for Persons with Disabilities regionally

## Assistive Technology Policy

- The government is in the process of developing an assistive technology policy. An overarching policy is crucial across all proposed areas supported by comprehensive data collection and effective financing mechanisms. Effective leadership and governance through national assistive technology policies will ensure adequate supply of quality, affordable products and appropriately trained personnel for effective service provision.

# Cont.

## Support needs survey

- **Objective** : The survey seeks to provide evidence on the met and unmet support needs of the diversity of persons with disabilities and their family members providing support in difference contexts to inform the design of social protection schemes.

## WHO rapid Assistive Technology Assessment (rATA)

- This is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Health in collaboayion with various organizations including the Ministry of Labour and Sp. The survey will be undertaken in all the 47 counites in the country to assess the national demand, need and the barriers to access AT in a population