

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS MALAWI:

Status on Disability inclusion

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02_ ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

PWDs	People with Disabilities
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
UN CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SCT	Social Cash Transfer
NSO	National Statistics Office
SNE	Special Needs Education
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
PODCAM	Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi



03_ INTRODUCTION

Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure where as an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.¹

Out of the world's total population, people with disabilities (PWDs) make up 15 percent.² PWDs are more likely to experience adverse socio-economic outcomes than persons without disabilities.³ They are less educated, experience poorer health outcomes, have lower levels of employment and higher poverty rates.⁴ Barriers to full social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities include inaccessible physical environments and transportation, unavailability of assistive devices and technologies, non-adapted means of communication, gaps in service delivery and discriminatory prejudice and stigma in society.⁵

However, at the global level, awareness of disability inclusive development and environment is increasing and this has led to several legal instruments that promote the rights of people with disabilities. Amongst the notable ones is the United Nations Convention on the rights of people with disabilities (CRPD) which promotes the full integration of PWDs in societies.⁶ The CRPD focuses on the importance of international development in addressing the rights of PWDs.⁷ The CRPD so far has been signed by 162 countries and ratified by 180 countries in the world which carries the force of binding law.⁸

¹ WHO and World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Geneva: WHO.

² WHO and World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Geneva: WHO.

³ Loeb, M.E., & Eide, H. (2004). *Living conditions among people with activity limitations in Malawi, a national representative study*. Zomba: Centre for Social Research.

⁴ Munthali, A. (2011). *A situation analysis of persons with disabilities in Malawi*. Zomba: Centre for Social Research.

⁵ Government of Malawi. (2006). *National policy on equalisation of opportunities for Persons with disabilities*. Lilongwe: Government of Malawi.

⁶ United Nations. (2008). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, advocacy toolkit*. New York: United Nations.

⁷ United Nations. (2008). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, advocacy toolkit*. New York: United Nations.

⁸ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>



04_ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THAT FOCUS ON DISABILITY

Disability is explicitly included in seven targets under five goals of the SDGs . These are on education, economic growth and employment, reduce inequality within and among countries and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all including PWDs, accessibility of human settlements, and data collection including monitoring of the SDGs. Several indicators that are intended to measure the progress made for PWDs in the implementation of the SDGs were established by the United Nations. The following are the SDGs and their indicators that are focusing on disability monitoring data.

05_ PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY IN MALAWI

According to 2018 Malawi Population and Housing Census, about 10.4 percent of the population aged 5 years and older in Malawi had at least one type of disability, 10 percent were males and 11 percent females. Out of the 1,556,670 persons with at least one type of disability, 49 percent had difficulty seeing, 24 percent had difficulty hearing, 27 percent had difficulty walking/climbing, 9 percent had difficulty speaking.⁹ 16 percent of the persons with disabilities, had intellectual difficulties while 8.5 percent had problems with self-care. Persons with albinism accounted for 0.8 percent (134,636) of the total population.¹⁰

The Ministry of Gender, Children Disability and Social Welfare is mandated to promote gender equality and protect the welfare of Malawian women, men, girls and boys with special focus on PWDs and older persons to become self-reliant and active participants and beneficiaries of the national socio-economic development agenda.

⁹National Statistical Office. (2018) 2018 Malawi Population and Housing Census. Zomba: National Statistical Office.

¹⁰ National Statistical Office. (2018) 2018 Malawi Population and Housing Census. Zomba: National Statistical Office.



06_ BACKGROUND POLICIES & PROGRAMS

Malawi is one of the countries that signed and ratified the United Nations CRPD in 2007 and 2009 respectively. Malawi has made notable progress in the domestication of the UN CRPD in its legislations and policies. The Malawi's 1995 constitution contains a number of provisions that directly address disability. These provisions focus on the welfare and the development of the people of Malawi. Furthermore, adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at PWDs in enhancing the dignity and quality of life, adequate and suitable access to public places, fair employment opportunities and fullest possible participation. Malawi Disability Act is Malawi's disability specific legislation that directly addresses disability related issues. These provisions range from right to health care services, non-discrimination in health care and rehabilitation services, right to accessibility, non-discrimination in accessing premises and the provision of services or amenities, right to education and training, non-discrimination in education or training institutions, right to work and employment. The National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities was launched in 2006.¹¹ This policy promotes the rights of PWDs.

Despite Malawi signing and ratifying almost all international human rights conventions and treaties and strengthened legal policy frameworks for human rights, marginalized groups such as women and girls, persons with disabilities, persons with albinism, and the LGBT population still continue to face strong hostilities that greatly undermine their freedoms including access to justice and services.¹²

6.1_ END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS

Earnings are a key aspect of quality of productive employment and living conditions. In order to measure the quality of productive employment and living conditions amongst PWDs, it is important to know the proportion of population of PWDs covered by social protection floors/systems. Malawi launched the Social Cash Transfer (SCT) which is an unconditional cash transfer program targeted at households that are both ultra-poor and labour constrained.¹³ This helps to increase school enrolment of children in the beneficiary households and it also helps to improve the nutrition, economic and general well-being of beneficiary households. The SCT transfers a monthly average of MK 4,500 to beneficiary households¹⁴.

¹¹ Government of Malawi (2006). *National policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. Lilongwe: Government of Malawi

¹² Government of Malawi, United Nations in Malawi (2019). *The United Nations Development Assistance Framework Malawi 2019-2023*.

¹³ The Transfer Project (2017). *Malawi's Social Transfer Programme: A comprehensive summary of impacts, Research brief 03*.

¹⁴ Malawi Cash Transfer Evaluation Team (2017). *Malawi's Social Cash Transfer Programme Increases Household Resiliency*. Innocenti Research Brief04



SOME PROGRAMS THAT PODCAM IS DOING IN MALAWI

Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi (PODCAM) is one of the organisations that focus on empowering parents whose children are living with disabilities in order to support their children. They give out revolving funds to the parents in groups of 10 people to start businesses so that they are able to provide for the needs of their children.

PODCAM is working in 16 out of 29 districts in Malawi.

Parents of disabled children from the following districts have benefitted: Mangochi, salima, Lilongwe Ntcheu, Dedza, Zomba, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Mzimba, Mzuzu, Karonga ,Thyolo and Nkhotakota.

PODCAM also sources funds and modify schools to become wheelchair friendly. They also lobby the government to build model schools that are disability friendly in all the districts in Malawi.

6.2_ ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR PWDS

Goal 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all puts focus on eliminating gender disparities in education ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including PWDs. In order to realise and measure progress on this goal, it is important to know the primary and secondary school net attendance ratio for children with disabilities, percentage of teachers in service who have received in-service training in service training the last 12 months to teach students with special educational needs, and lastly, percentage of schools (for both primary and secondary) who have adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities. In 2011, Malawi introduced mainstreaming learners with disabilities or special needs policy¹⁵. This policy aims at combining learners with special needs and learners without disabilities in the same classrooms. Traditionally, learners with special needs were handled by missionaries or specialist institutions. With the introduction of this policy, Malawi has seen an increase in the enrolment of blind, deaf or physically impaired students and students with learning difficulties.

¹⁵ Ministry of Education (2011). *Education Management Information System: education statistics 2011*. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education.



In 2016, 120,007 out of 4,901,009 of total primary enrolment were learners with special needs representing 2.4 percent.¹⁶ This shows an increase from 115,284 out of 4,795,194 of total primary enrolment in 2015.¹⁷ For secondary school enrolment, 1.5 percent representing 5,289 out of 351,651 were learners with special needs.¹⁸ The figures for secondary schools increased from 4,726 in 2015¹⁹ which shows a 12 percent increase. Malawi has seen an increase in percentage of schools for both secondary and primary who adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities in form of Special Needs Resource rooms. Special Needs Resource rooms that were complete and permanent were 207 and those who were temporary were 56. The total required Special Need Resource rooms for primary schools in 2014 were 3,132.²⁰ Permanent resource rooms that were in use in 2016 were 55 and temporary ones were 15²¹. The total number of required Special Needs Resource rooms in secondary schools in 2015 were 312 however the ones available were 65 and this number increased to 70 in 2016.²²

FIGURE 1: PARTICIPATION RATE IN ORGANIZED LEARNING (ONE YEAR BEFORE THE OFFICIAL PRIMARY ENTRY AGE), BY DISABILITY AND SEX, 2008

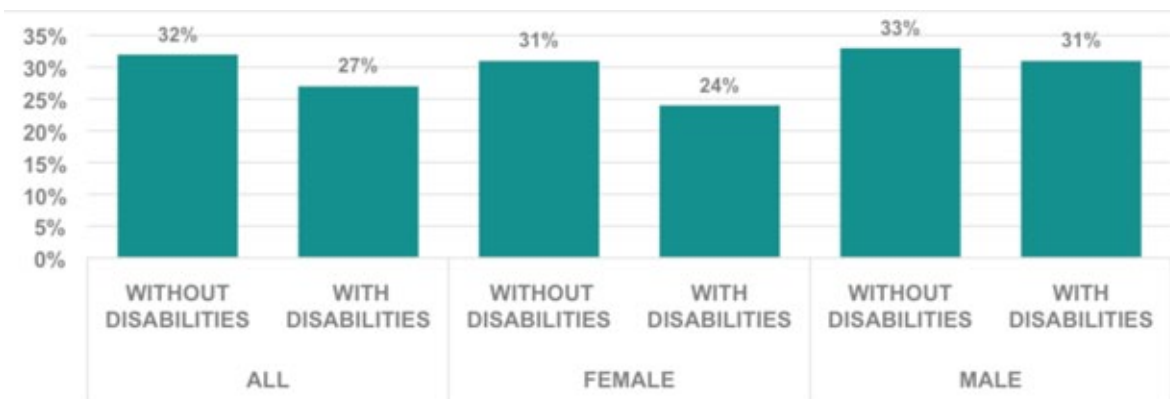


Figure 1 above shows the percentage of children without disabilities who participate in organized learning was slightly higher compared to children with disabilities. Male children who participate in organised learning are more than female children at 31 percent and 24 percent respectively.

¹⁶Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2016). Malawi Education Statistics 2015/16. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

¹⁷Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2015). Malawi Education Statistics 2014/15. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

¹⁸Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2016). Malawi Education Statistics 2015/16. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

¹⁹Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2015). Malawi Education Statistics 2014/15. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

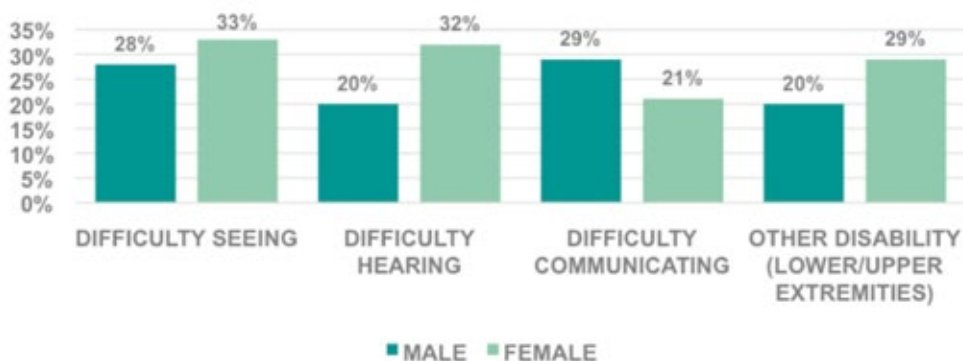
²⁰Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2014). Malawi Education Statistics 2013/14. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

²¹Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2016). Malawi Education Statistics 2015/16. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education

²²Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2016). Malawi Education Statistics 2015/16. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education



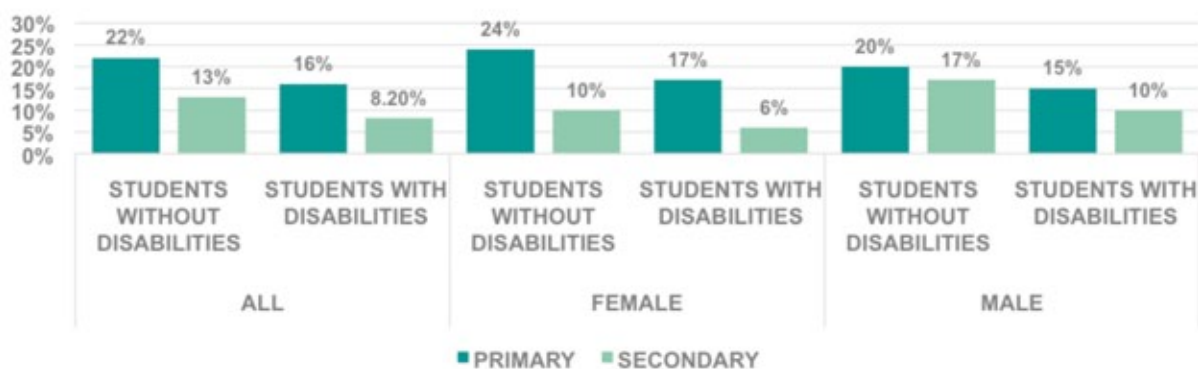
FIGURE 2: PARTICIPATION RATE IN ORGANISED LEARNING (ONE YEAR BEFORE THE OFFICIAL PRIMARY ENTRY AGE), BY DISABILITY TYPE



Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 2 above shows more female children who had difficulty in seeing participated in organised learning compared to female children who had difficulty communicating at 33 percent and 21 percent respectively. More male children who had difficulty in communicating (29 percent) participated in organised learning compared to male children who had difficulty hearing (20 percent) and other disabilities such as lower or upper extremities (20 percent).

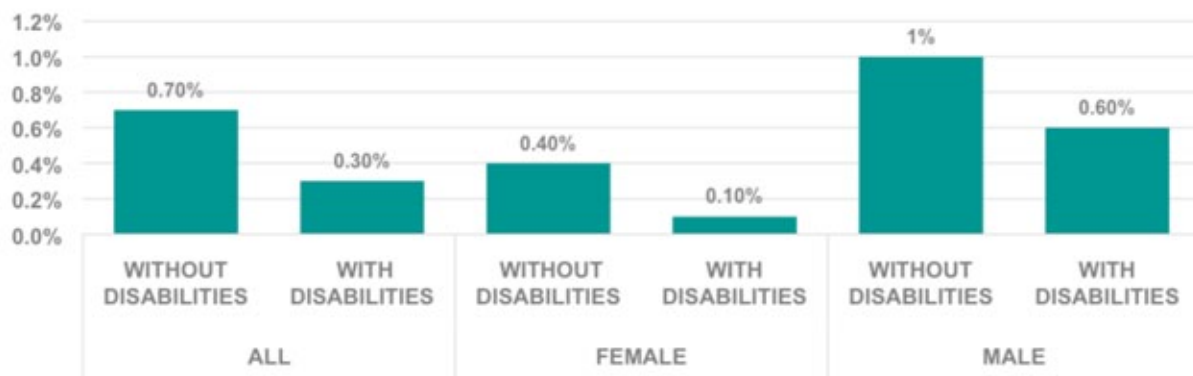
FIGURE 3: SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR BOTH STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES, 2008/2009



Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2018; National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 3 above shows primary school completion rates for students without disabilities was at 22 percent and for students with disabilities was at 16 percent. Primary completion rates for students with disabilities were higher amongst females at 17 percent compared to 15 percent for males. Secondary school completion rates for students without disabilities was at 13 percent compared to 8.2 percent for students with disabilities. Secondary school completion rates for females with disabilities was lower at 6 percent compared to males at 10 percent.

FIGURE 4: UNIVERSITY COMPLETION RATES BY DISABILITY STATUS AND BY SEX (25-54 YEARS OLD)



Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 4 shows university completion rates for students with disabilities is lower at 0.30 percent compared to students without disabilities at 0.70 percent. As the figure above shows, university completion rates were the lowest amongst female students with disabilities at 0.10 percent compared to females without disabilities at 0.40 percent.

6.2.1_ CHALLENGES PWDS FACE ACCESSING QUALITY EDUCATION

Accessing education and ensuring that PWDs remain in school is one of the major challenges that PWDs and their families experience in Malawi and this is true in most developing countries. Learners with disabilities are accepted in mainstream classrooms but they still face numerous challenges such as; the lack of specialist teachers who can teach learners with diverse needs, the school environment not being suited for learners who are deaf-blind, lack of instructional materials such as Braille; most teachers do not have communication skills for communication with learners who are deaf-blind, inadequate learning support as classes are too large, learners with mild deafness have problems following lessons and inaccessible infrastructure and information.²³

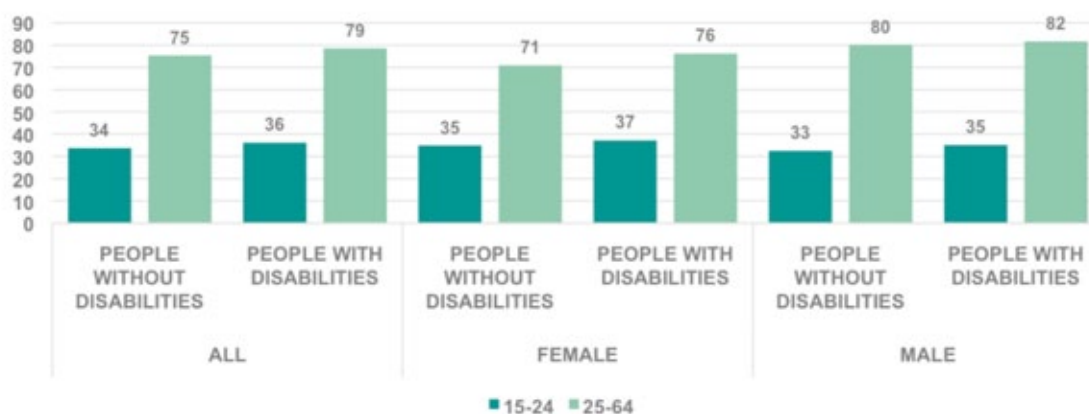
²³ Chavuta, A. (2010). Baseline survey report on inclusive education conducted in Phalombe, Thyolo, Machinga, Mangochi and Blantyre Rural Districts in Malawi. Blantyre: ODW – Malawi

The shortage of teachers who specialise in Special Needs Education (SNE) directly affects the quality of education delivered to learners with disabilities. The Ministry of Education indicated that there are only 1,000 specialist teachers but there is a need for 12,000 teachers.²⁴ Montfort Special Needs Education College in Chiradzulu trains special needs teachers at diploma level. After these teachers graduate, they are posted to various primary and secondary schools. Most of these are also picked up by NGOs. Lack of defined career path, some specialist teachers leave and join mainstream teaching, and this is directly related to the low enrolment of learners with disabilities in schools.²⁵ Negative community attitudes towards those with disabilities continue to stand in the way of Malawi achieving its goal of providing quality education for all.

6.3_ ACCESS TO DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR PWDS

Goal 8 promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men including PWDs, and equal pay for work of equal value. To measure this goal, it is of great importance to know unemployment rate by sex, age and persons with disabilities. Unemployment rate is the percentage of people in the labour force who are not employed.

FIGURE 5: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYMENT BY DISABILITY, SEX AND AGE (15-24 AND 25-54 YEARS OLD)



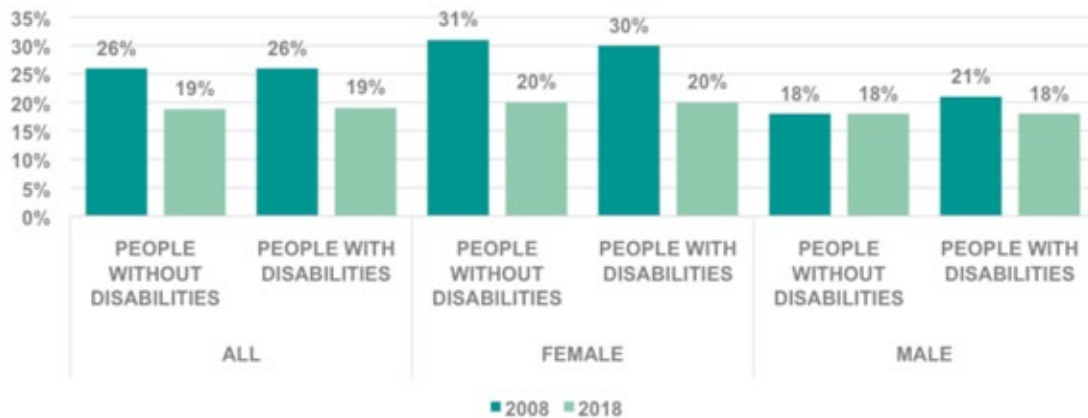
Source: National Statistics Office, 2018 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 5 shows Malawi has made a huge progress in terms of employing people with disabilities. According to the 2018 population and housing census, more people with disabilities who were within the age range of 25-64 were employed at 79 percent compared to 75 percent for people without disabilities. Percentage of employment among people with disabilities who were within the age of 15-24 were lower compared to the 25-64 age range.

²⁴ Ministry of Education. (2009). An investigation on the effectiveness of special needs education service delivery in Malawi primary schools. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education
²⁵ Ministry of Education. (2009). An investigation on the effectiveness of special needs education service delivery in Malawi primary schools. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education.



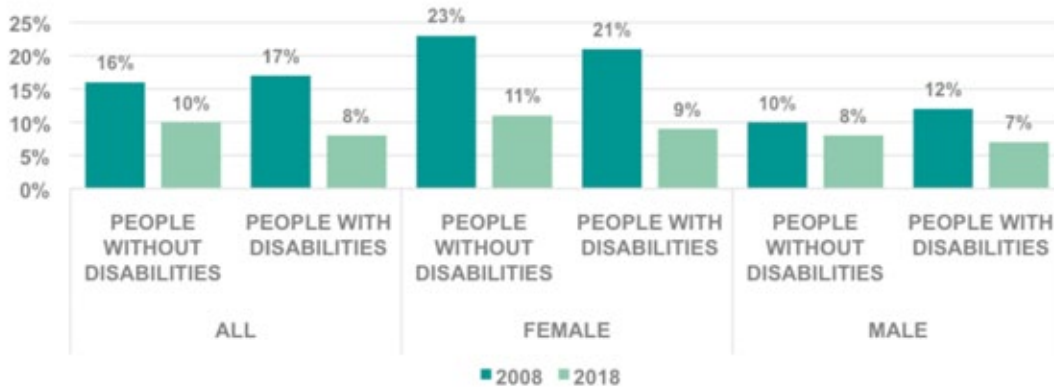
FIGURE 6: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY DISABILITY STATUS AND SEX (15-24), 2008 - 2018



Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census and 2018 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 6 shows unemployment levels among people with disabilities within the age range of 15-24 dropped drastically between 2008-2018. Unemployment among female with disabilities dropped from 30 percent in 2008 to 20 percent in 2018.

FIGURE 7: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY DISABILITY STATUS AND SEX (25-64), 2008 - 2018

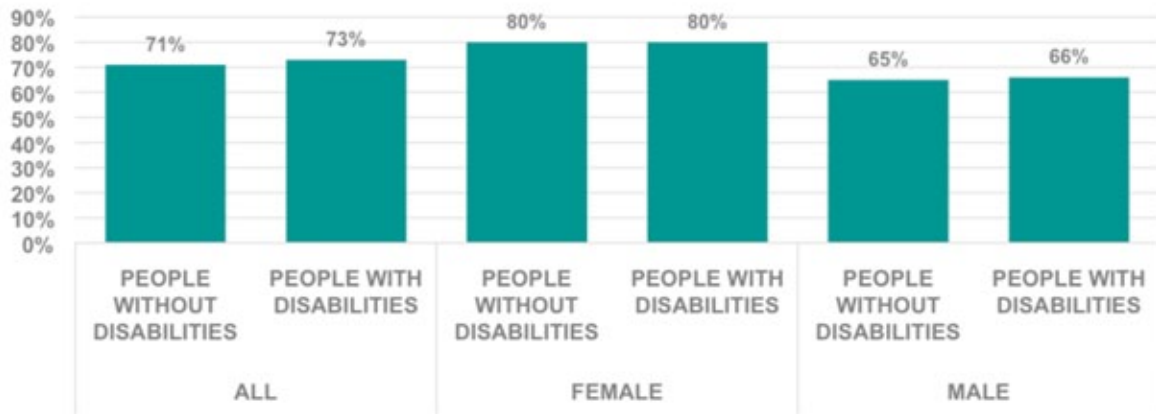


Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census and 2018 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 7 shows unemployment rates for both females and males with disabilities between the age ranges of 25-65 decreased between the years 2008 to 2018.



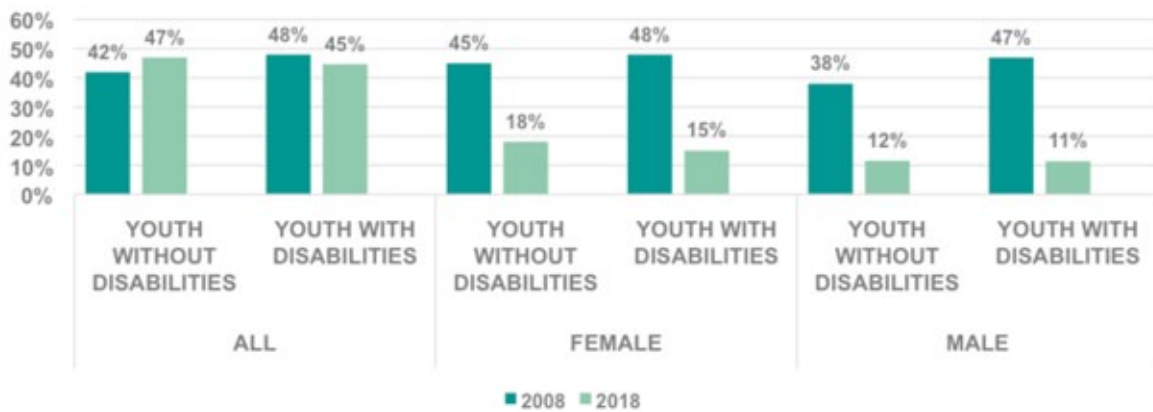
FIGURE 8: PROPORTION OF PEOPLE (15-64 YEARS OLD) EMPLOYED IN INFORMAL SECTORS (SELF EMPLOYED AS A PROXY) BY DISABILITY STATUS AND SEX, 2008



Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 8 shows that in 2008 people with disabilities in informal sector (self-employed) were slightly higher at 73 percent compared to 71 percent for people without disabilities. This shows that Malawi creates a favourable market condition for people with disabilities. This is also highly due to the training of people with disabilities in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

FIGURE 9: PROPORTION OF YOUTH (15-24 YEARS OLD) NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING, 2008-2018



Source: National Statistics Office, 2008 Population and Housing Census.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of youth who were not in education, employment or training dropped drastically from the years 2008 to 2018 among both female and male youths with disabilities.



6.4_ REDUCED INEQUALITIES AMONGST PWDS IN MALAWI

Goal 10 strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including PWDs. Equity is a priority in Malawi. This is reflected in the recent tripartite elections done in May 2019 in which more women were elected to the parliament and local government councils in comparison to previous elections. 45 women have been elected at parliament and 67 at local councils.

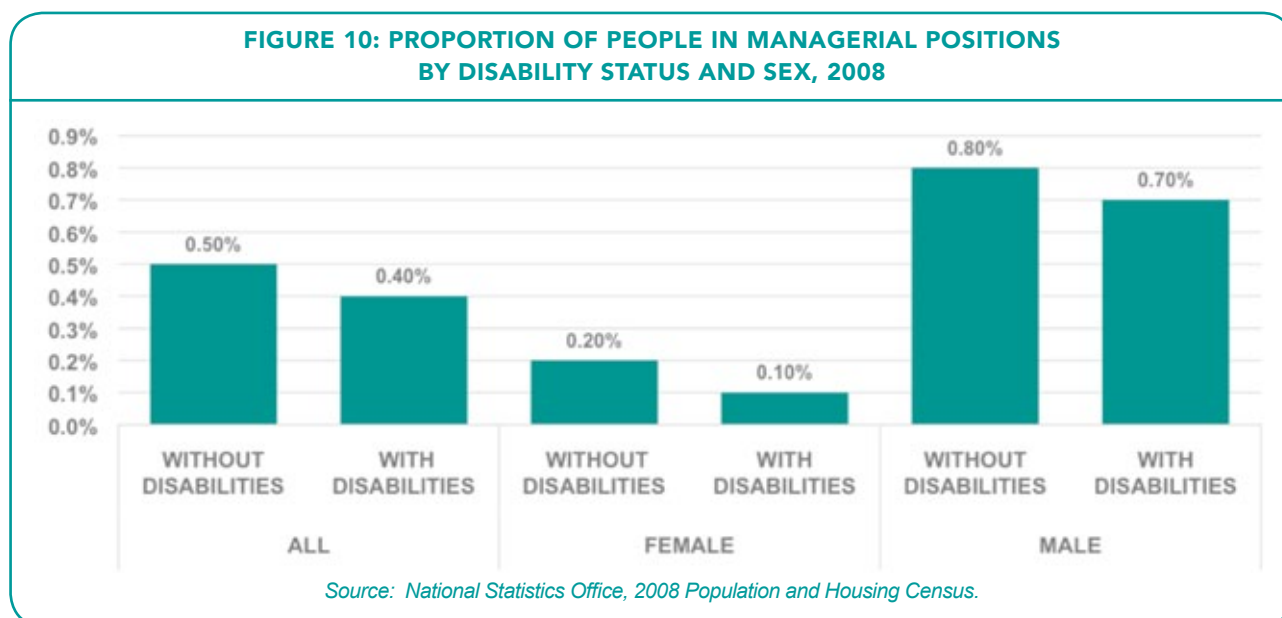


Figure 10 shows more males with disabilities were in managerial positions at 0.7 percent compared to females with disabilities at 0.1 percent.

6.5_ ACCESSIBLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES FOR PWDS

Goal 11 works to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. To realise this goal, member states are called upon to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, such as PWDs. In addition, the proposal calls for providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for PWDs. No data was available for this SDG goal.



07_ PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE SDGS

Finally, Goal 17 gives much stress on the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development, the collection of data and monitoring and accountability of the SDGs. Member states are called upon to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data that is also disaggregated by disability. No data was available for this SDG goal.

08_ CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve the development that leaves no one behind, there is a need to address challenges that people with disabilities face in realizing their full participation in both social and economic activities. This can be done by doing the following:

1. Eliminating the barriers causing exclusion of PWDs such as discriminatory laws and policies, lack of accessibility in physical environments and ICT, negative attitudes and stigma, lack of access to assistive technology and to health services, and lack of measures to promote independent living.
2. Mainstreaming disability in the implementation of the SDGs should be a must. This can be achieved by prioritizing areas that catalyse across all SDGs. These areas are social protection, education, employment, and basic services, including health care services, water, sanitation, and energy.
3. There is a need to invest in monitoring and evaluating the progress made towards the SDGs for PWDs. Data and research on the situation of PWDs is insufficient. This will help Malawi to make evidence based policies that will help in curbing and eliminating challenges that PWDs face.
4. To effectively mainstream disability, there is a need to address shortage of human resource at all levels and also make sure that all stakeholders understand what disability mainstreaming is.
5. Disseminate the disability policy widely and adequately allocate finance in various sectors.
6. Ensuring physical accessibility of schools may have a cost. revising discriminatory laws requires building legislator's capacity.
7. Ensuring accessibility and affordability of ICTs for PWDs may require partnerships between producers, donors, and organisations of PWDs.
8. There is also a need to explore cost-effective ways of assisting people with disabilities accessing appropriate transport, which should be seen as part of the healthcare system.



09_ REFERENCES

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NAPS
NUMBERS AND PEOPLE SYNERGY