



THE PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN TANZANIA'S 2010 GENERAL ELECTION

A Report on the Observations and
Recommendations Made by Voters
with Disabilities

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This report has been produced in a
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The questionnaire used to compile
this survey is available in Kiswahili
and can be downloaded from the
advocacy section of the CCBRT
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Executive summary


In October 2010, CCBRT conducted a survey to assess the level of participation of people with disabilities in Tanzania's general election which was held on 31st October 2010. The survey was carried out in three districts in Dar es Salaam region: Temeke, Ilala and Kinondoni. 100 people with disabilities were involved with four types of disabilities represented. These were: physical impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment and albinism. All respondents were registered as voters and voted at polling stations that were located in various constituencies within Dar es Salaam.

The survey was mainly motivated by inadequate participation of people with disabilities in previous elections which has resulted in their low representation in various decision and policy making bodies. Prior to the election, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) had promised to address some of the challenges encountered by people with disabilities that limit their effective participation in election processes. The objective of the survey was therefore to assess and determine the participation of people with disabilities in the 2010 election process and to determine the extent to which NEC's promises were successfully implemented. It also sought to determine different methods used by people with disabilities to access information on elections.



“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” – Article 51(1) of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2010. ”

Among the key results, it was found that 63% of people with disabilities surveyed participated directly in the election campaign while 37% did not. Moreover, most people with disabilities (also 63%) accessed information on the general election through print and electronic media (newspapers, radio and television) as opposed to other methods such as friends, seminars and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). With regard to the adequacy of the information provided, just over half of respondents said that the information provided was adequate in terms of meeting their needs and expectations but that leaves a large proportion of respondents – nearly 40% - who said that the sources of information were not adequate. Regarding accessibility of the polling stations to people with disabilities, 58% of respondents reported that polling stations were not accessible. Many polling stations had no parking areas or adequate signage to provide direction to people with disabilities. Also the doors were not wide enough for wheelchair users to get through and most of them had no ramps or pathways to enable access for people with disabilities.



With regard to assistance provided to people with disabilities in the polling stations, the majority (72%) said that they were assisted when placing their votes. With respect to queuing, 70% affirmed that they did not have to queue at polling stations although the remainder of the respondents did. This indicates that to a large extent NEC kept its promises of providing assistance to people with disabilities when voting.

However, only two out of 27 of respondents with a hearing impairment and three out of 10 of respondents with a visual impairment said that sign language interpreters and tactile ballot papers were available in the polling stations respectively. This is contrary to NEC's promise of ensuring that all polling stations would have tactile ballot papers for people with visual impairment to cast their votes secretly.

Generally, the survey revealed that most of the respondents (70%) felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the electoral process whilst 20% said the opposite and the remaining 10% indicated that the process loosely involved them.



The survey concludes that during this latest election, there have been some improvements in enabling the participation of people with disabilities compared to previous elections. This is evidenced by the assistance given to people with disabilities during voting, preparation of a booklet to guide people with disabilities through the election process, people with disabilities not queuing when voting and the preparation of tactile ballot papers for visually impaired people.

Despite these achievements, there still a number of shortcomings continuing to limit the full participation of people with disabilities in the electoral process. These include: inaccessible polling stations; inaccessible information; limited involvement of people with disabilities in political parties; failure of NEC to implement all of its directives; stigma towards people with disabilities and inadequate voters' education. If there is to be full participation of people with disabilities in future election processes, the mentioned challenges need to be adequately addressed.

Rationale

Tanzania has a population of over 40 million people. According to the United Republic of Tanzania's 2008 Tanzania Disability Survey, nearly 2.4 million people in the country experience some type of disability such as blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, physical impairment, intellectual impairment, and albinism. The disability survey further indicates that the disability prevalence for the population aged seven years and above is 7.8% and that it is almost equal between males and females.

CCBRT is a locally registered NGO established in 1994. Its overall objective is to improve the quality of life of people living with disabilities, their family members and caregivers to enable them to become full and active members of the society. Apart from providing disability and rehabilitative services, it also promotes disability inclusive development in which diversity is valued and respected as part of life. As such, it is concerned with the need to minimize barriers which limit the full participation of persons with disabilities in developmental activities as active citizens. One such activity is participation in the election process.



An estimated 2.4 million people in Tanzania live with a disability

Research indicates that participation of people with disabilities is still limited, not only in election processes, but also in policy processes and development programmes. For several reasons many people with disabilities are unable to enjoy their constitutional rights including effective participation in the whole election process. This includes registration, campaigning, voting and being elected. Representation of people with disabilities in decision and policy making bodies is also very low making it difficult for their voices to be heard and their needs taken into account when developing policies and development programmes. Recent meetings and workshops between people with disabilities and NEC identified a number of challenges which limit their participation in elections (see box overleaf).

Challenges to effective participation for people with disabilities:

- **inaccessible polling stations and election information;**
- **inadequate civic and voters' education;**
- **negative attitude of community members towards people with disabilities;**
- **lack of sign language interpreters for people who are deaf in campaigns, polling stations and in media programmes;**
- **insensitive election officers.**

As a response to these challenges, NEC promised to take the following measures, among others, so as to increase the participation of people with disabilities in Tanzania's 2010 general election:

- **prepare and distribute tactile ballot papers to all polling stations for people with visual impairment to cast their votes secretly;**
- **train election supervisors on how to assist people with disabilities when they come to cast their votes at the polling stations;**
- **prepare and distribute a voter's guide for people with disabilities (in normal print and Braille) as part of voters' education for people with disabilities;**
- **involve people with disabilities in various committees of NEC;**
- **ensure that people with disabilities do not have to stand in a queue when coming to vote.**

Against this background, CCBRT decided to conduct a short survey in Dar es Salaam to assess the participation of people with disabilities in the 2010 general election and the extent to which NEC's promises were fulfilled, as well as document the experience(s) of voters with disabilities.

Survey Objectives



Main objective

The main objective of the survey was to find out the extent to which people with disabilities were involved in the 2010 general election process in Tanzania and how far NEC's promises to them were successfully implemented. Thus the survey was specifically seeking to:

- assess the accessibility of polling stations and election information to people with disabilities;
- assess the participation of people with disabilities in the election campaign;
- determine whether the participation of people with disabilities in the election process was satisfactory or not and to what extent;
- determine whether visually impaired people were provided with tactile ballot papers for casting their votes as promised by NEC and whether they were trained on how to use them or not;
- assess different ways used by people with disabilities to get information about the election;
- determine if there is any relationship between an individual's specific disability and their participation in the election process;
- determine what went well and what did not go well;
- assess and determine the challenges encountered by people with disabilities before and during the voting day;
- get recommendations on what should be done to improve participation of people with disabilities in future elections.

Survey Methodology



100 people with disabilities were surveyed

The survey was designed and conducted by CCBRT. An independent consultant coordinated the data entry process and analysed the data. Respondents gave their consent to participate. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire, focus group discussion and a documentary review in which the 2008 National Disability Survey, the Persons with Disability Act, 2010 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were reviewed.

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted in Dar es Salaam amongst 100 people with disabilities. Four types of disabilities represented: physical impairment; visual impairment; hearing impairment; and albinism. 61 participants were female and 39 male. All participants were registered as voters and/or voted in polling stations that were located in various constituencies within Dar es Salaam.

Data was collected in the period prior to and during election day. All 100 participants filled in a questionnaire which was divided into two parts. The first part was used to collect information prior to the voting day and the second part was seeking information during election day. 20 out of the 100 participants were involved in a focus group discussion during the Election Observers Experience Sharing Seminar. At this seminar, each of the four types of disabilities was represented by five people.

Number of Respondents According to Type of Disability

Type of disability	Male	Female	Total
Physical Impairment	20	29	49
Visual Impairment	5	5	10
Hearing Impairment	10	17	27
Albinism	4	10	14
Total	39	61	100

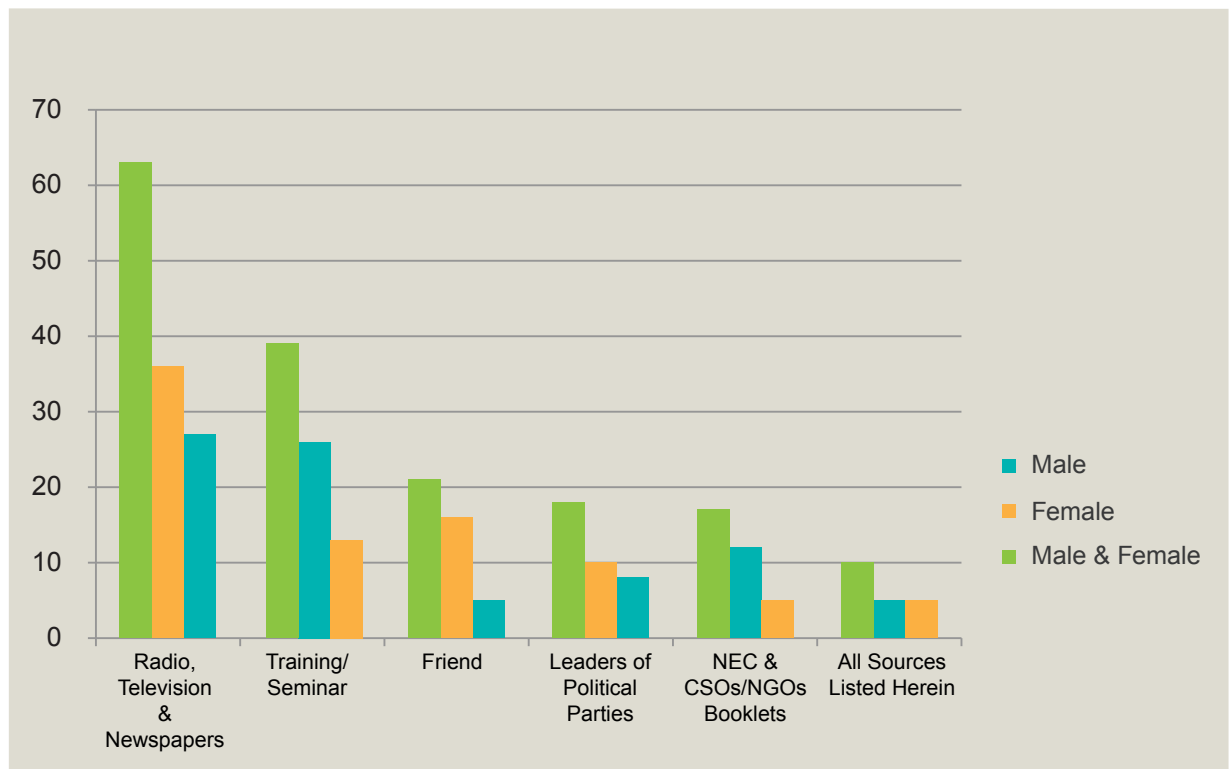
Survey Results



Educating and Informing Voters

The sampling involved participants who accessed voters' education and information on the election. However, it was important to determine the sources for such access. Most of the respondents - 63, accessed information via print and electronic media (radio, television and newspapers) while 39 mentioned training and seminars. Friends (21) ranked higher as a source of voters' education and information on the election than leaders of political parties (18) and NEC and civil society organisations (CSOs)/NGOs (17). As the numbers illustrate, some people used more than one source but tellingly, very few respondents (10) said that they used all five sources.

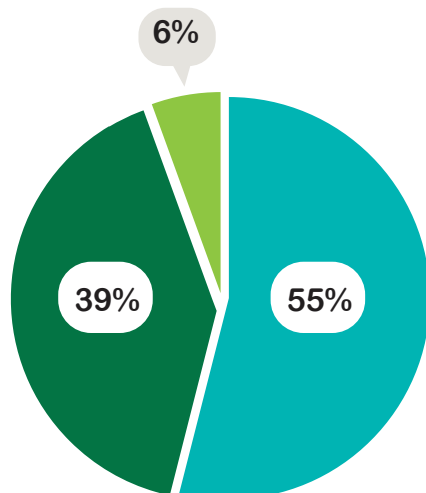
How Respondents Accessed Voters' Education and Information on the General Elections



Data disaggregation by gender revealed that, relative to males, very few females mentioned training and seminars. Out of 61 female respondents, only 13 mentioned this as a source (21%). In contrast, 26 out of 39 males (67%) mentioned this as a source. A slightly similar pattern was observed in the case of NEC and CSOs/NGOs booklets with five out of 61 females (8%) compared to 12 out of 39 males (31%). Females were more inclined than males to mention friends as a source (16 compared to five). In the case of radio, television and newspapers, 69% of males used this as a source of information compared to 59% of females who said they did. These patterns suggest that there is gender bias in the accessibility of voters' education and information on elections.

Even though very few respondents used NEC and CSOs/NGOs booklets to access information, 41% of respondents said that they had read 'Mwongozo kwa Watu wenye Ulemavu katika Kupiga Kura 2010' (a NEC booklet entitled: '2010 Voting Guidelines for People with Disabilities'). Out of these 17 were male whilst 24 were female. Nevertheless most respondents (59%) said they had not read the booklet.

It was also important to ascertain how participants assessed the adequacy of the sources used to access voters' education and election information. 55% of respondents said that, overall, all sources were adequate, as in they met their needs. 39% said the opposite, implying that they were not only concerned with the quantity, but also the quality, of the education and information provided. 6% failed to respond. However, when responses are disaggregated by gender there is a slight difference with 7% more men than women expressing satisfaction with the methods used.



How Respondents Assessed Adequacy of Sources Used to Access Voters' Education and Information

- Said sources were adequate/met needs
- Said sources weren't adequate/didn't meet needs
- Said nothing/didn't respond

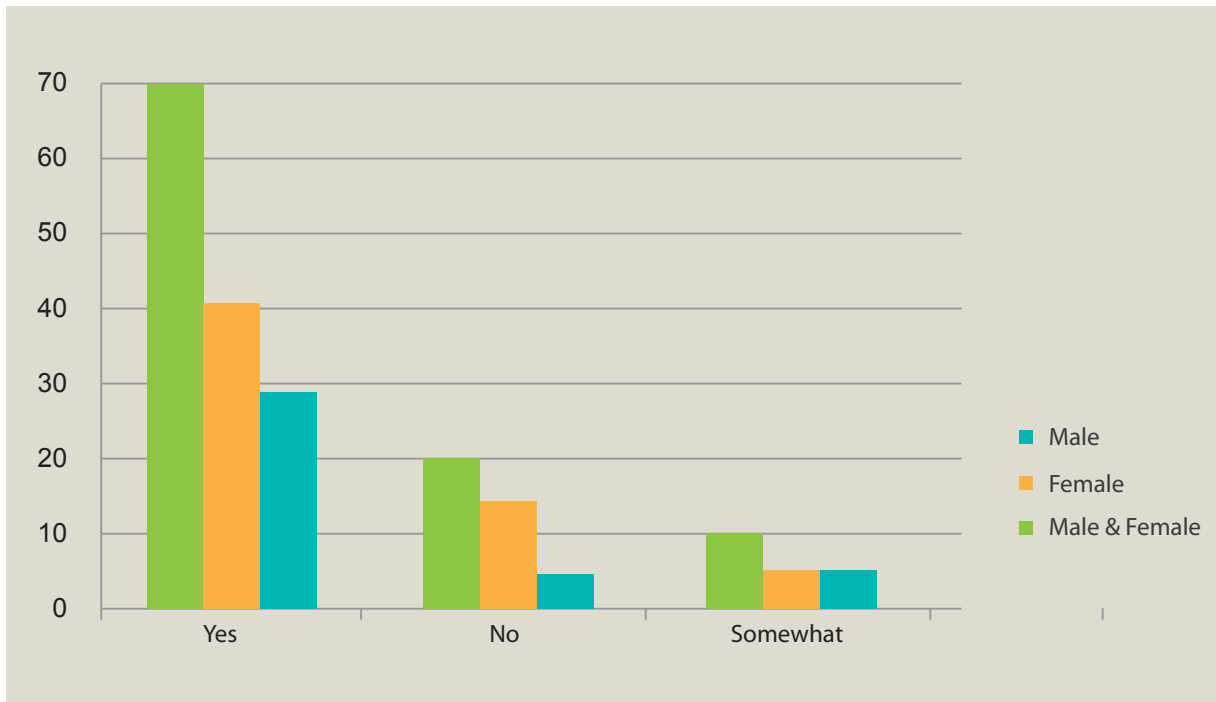
Participating in Election Campaigns

Election campaigns are essential building blocks of the electoral process. As such, participating in this phase is important as it gives a potential voter an opportunity to assess the election manifestos and promises of candidates and, if one is campaigning, to share such information with the electorate. 63 out of 100 participants affirmed their participation in the campaigns. Although this constitutes the majority it indicates that a significant proportion of the respondents did not participate in this important electoral phase.

The reasons for their lack of participation were as follows: people with disabilities not being involved in the political parties' policies(1)¹; the campaigns being conducted during working hours(4); campaign areas lacking enabling infrastructure for people with disabilities (1); lack of transportation (2); long distance to and from the campaign areas (5); delays in getting information about campaign rallies (1); challenge of being a person with disability and fear of violence (3); lack of protection for people with disabilities (1); exposure to sunlight in the case of people with albinism (4); government not valuing people with disabilities (2); political parties not providing information/ schedules of the campaign rallies (5); not having/knowing the election schedule (2); not having an interpreter in the case of people who are deaf (9); not having an escort (2); newness of political parties (1); being away/travelling (1); and not being encouraged/ motivated by political leaders (1).

¹ The numbers in the brackets indicate the frequencies of responses. The total frequencies is higher (45) than the number of respondents (37) due to the fact that some of the respondents gave more than one response.

Did the Electoral Process involve you sufficiently?



70% of the participants said that the whole electoral process did not involve them sufficiently while 20% believe they were involved. The remaining 10% indicated that the process somewhat involved them, with each gender constituting 5%. When looking more closely at gender, 74% of males felt involved sufficiently compared to 67% of females.

Designation of Parking Areas

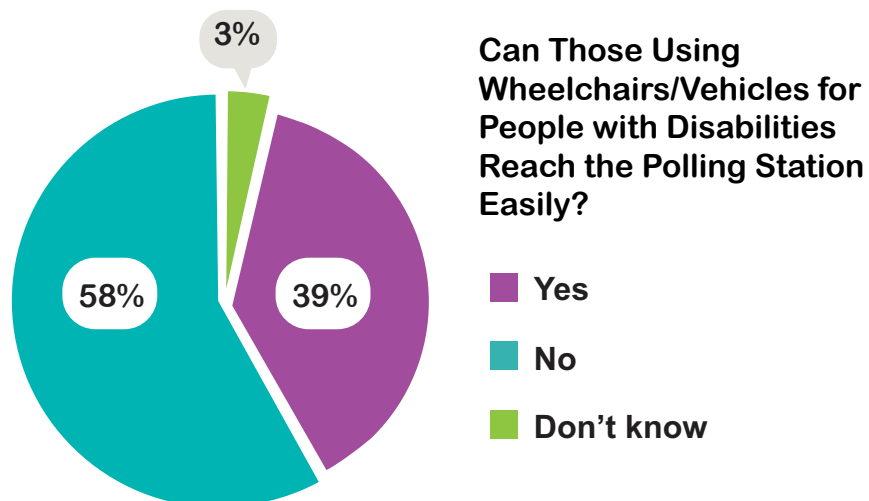
Lack of adequate parking areas and signposts was one of the areas in the survey that met with most dissatisfaction amongst those surveyed. 66 out of 100 respondents said there were no parking areas for vehicles used by people with disabilities. However, 86 people said that there were no signs to point out these areas. Only 10 respondents said that such signposts were there in their respective polling stations. The stations were: Magurumbasi, Temeke, Yombo Vituka, S/M Ukombozi-Vituka, Saba Saba and Keko Mwanga in Temeke constituency; Chuo cha Usafirishaji in Ubungo constituency; Yombo in Temeke constituency; as well as Mtendaji D and Magomeni in Kinondoni constituency.

In regard to whether these parking areas were close to the polling stations, the majority of the respondents (73) said that was not the case. Only 21 said the areas were close to the stations.

Accessibility of Polling Stations

Access to information about the logistics of voting itself is important in enabling access to polling stations. This includes information on where to find the relevant station. In this regard 67 out of 100 respondents said there were signposts directing them to their polling stations. However, 27 respondents said there were no signposts in the actual stations themselves.

Over half of all respondents said that it was not easy for those using vehicles/wheelchairs for people with disabilities to reach polling stations. Only 39 respondents said it was easy to do so.





“ My polling station is in a primary school.... This school is very close to a big road and therefore it is relatively easier to reach this station than many other stations. However, the surrounding environment has sand and there are no special paths for people with disabilities hence the need to have an escort if you are using a tricycle or a wheelchair. ”

Voter with physical impairment from Kinondoni constituency

Doorways

The structure of doors (principally width) can enable or hamper movements of people with disabilities. 45% of respondents said the doorways were wide enough for a wheelchair to pass easily. But, more than half said their polling stations didn't have doors that were wide enough for wheelchairs.

Similarly, 53% of all the respondents said the doorknobs/doorhandles could not easily be used by a person who is standing or sitting. Only 32% of the respondents said the knobs/handles could thus be used easily. Nearly half of all the respondents, i.e. 48%, reported the presence of physical obstacles in these doorways whilst the others, approximately half, i.e. 47%, reported their absence.

“ The station had three staircases therefore I could not get in. They brought the ballot papers outside, under a tree, about 15 metres from the voting station. I voted and returned the papers to the officer who gave them to me. When I asked him how I could be sure that s/he will put my paper inside the ballot box given that long distance, he told me that I should not be worried as other officers had seen him/her giving me the papers so they will ensure that s/he put them in the boxes. ”

Voter with physical impairment in Kawe constituency

In general, according to respondents, about half of the polling stations had doors that were not user-friendly to people with disabilities particularly the physically impaired.

Stairs

More than half of all the respondents, 55 out of 100, said there were no stairs in their polling stations thus indicating user-friendly stations for physically impaired voters. However, the remaining 45 respondents said such stairs were there and 41 of them said those stairs had no handrails.

Ramps

The vast majority of respondents (93) said that their polling stations did not have special paths/ramps that are normally constructed to enable people with disabilities, particularly those who are physically impaired, access buildings easily. Only seven out of 100 respondents said that ramps were there. These were in the following five polling stations: Msisili in Kinondoni constituency; Temeke, Keko Mwanga and Yombo Vituka in Temeke constituency; and Chuo cha Usafirishaji in Ubungo constituency. It was further reported that, of the five mentioned stations with ramps, only two had handrails.



“ The classrooms where votes were being cast had a staircase only. There were no ramps to enable wheelchair users access. Voting ballots had to be sent to them outside the rooms or their wheelchairs had to be carried inside the voting rooms. ”

Voter with physical impairment in Kawe constituency


With regard to the width of the ramps, only four out of seven respondents described the ramps as being wide enough and that they did not have steep slopes. These were observed at Yombo Vituka and Keko Mwanga in Temeke constituency. However, this was not the case observed in the other stations: Msisili and Temeke in Kinondoni and Temeke constituencies respectively in which the ramps were narrow and a bit steep.

Conditions Inside Polling Stations

When it comes to access inside the polling stations, 52 out of 100 respondents said that the paths inside the polling stations were wide enough for a person with a wheelchair and others to pass through. Slightly less than half of the respondents (45), however, said such paths in their stations were not wide enough. Nearly three quarters of the respondents said there were no physical obstacles in the paths inside the polling stations (such as tables, chairs and steps) whilst slightly above a quarter of all respondents (28 out of 100) noted the presence of obstacles in their respective stations.

In regard to access to information, only 33 respondents said there were signposts inside the stations to direct voters, particularly, with disabilities. In contrast, 62 respondents noted the absence of such signposts. Information access was thus slightly better outside the stations than inside.



When you ask [voting supervisors] where your name is or the whereabouts of the door to your voting room, you are told to go to the notice board, something that is very difficult for people with disabilities since the whole area has inaccessible paths, and the names are posted very high on the wall, making it hard to read for a person with disability. The voting table is also very high, which is difficult for people with disabilities. 

Voter with physical impairment in Temeke constituency

When constructed without regard for people with disabilities, storey buildings are clearly a major obstacle to their mobility. In this survey, however, only five respondents reported that their polling stations were in a storey building with two of them noting that there were no elevators in those stations.

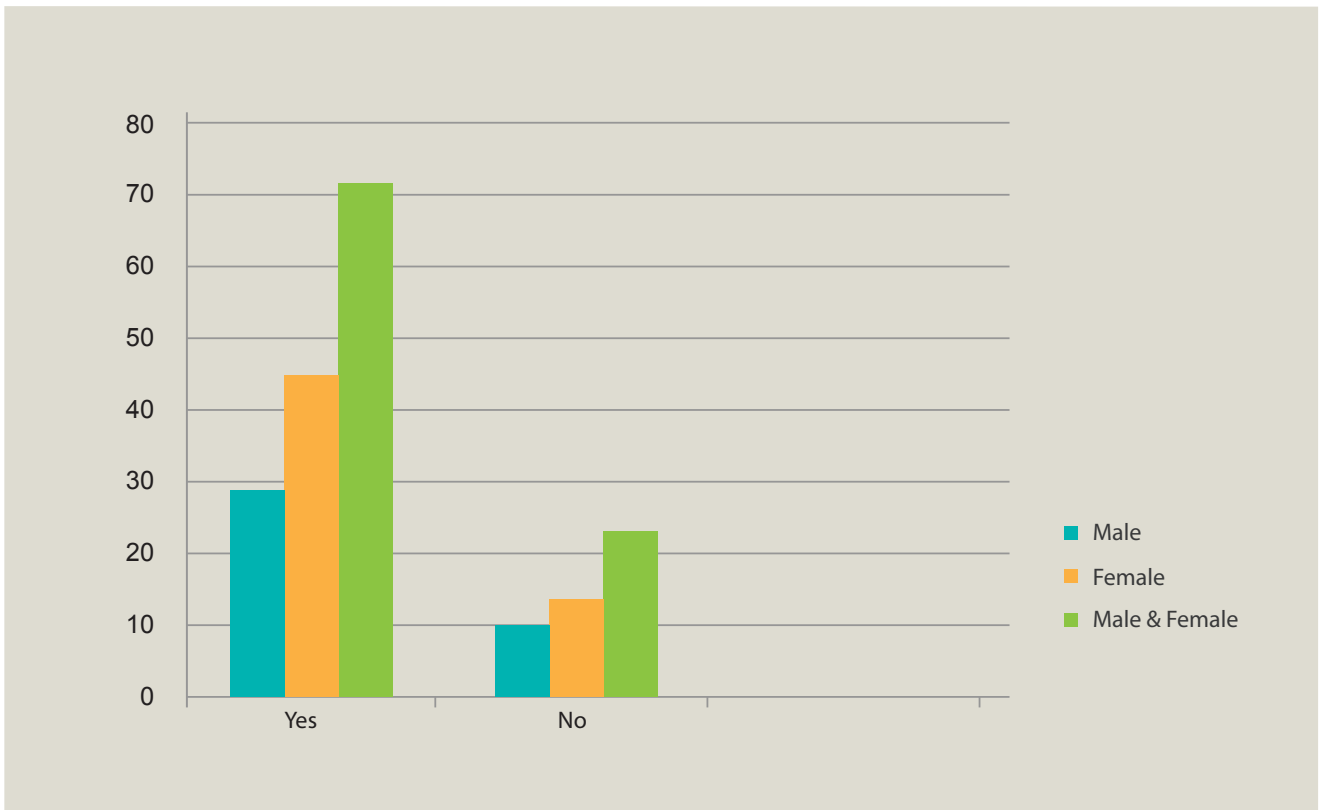
Nevertheless, despite the conditions inside the polling stations, the overwhelming majority (89) were able to vote inside with the rest saying they voted outside.

Assistance Provided During Polling

Prior to the election, NEC had pledged to train election supervisors to assist people with disabilities during the voting process and to ensure they did not have to queue. In line with the former promise, most of the respondents (72) affirmed that they did receive assistance. However, 24 respondents said they were not assisted whilst the remaining four participants did not respond to the question. Looking at the gender breakdown, 4% more women than men said they received assistance.

An interesting observation raised by most respondents is the assistance they received from other voters. This included being helped to locate names that were very inaccessible due to the fact that they were written in small fonts and, in many case, posted high on the wall. This indicates that, in general, members of the community are sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities and are aware of the limited assistance available to them.

Did You Receive Any Assistance from Electoral Officers in/at the Polling Station?



In the case of NEC’s pledge regarding queuing, while 70% said they did not have to queue at the polling station, the remainder did have to wait indicating that a significant number of stations that did not fulfill that pledge. For those who did queue, it should be noted that waiting time varied from three hours to one minute.

“ “ Some of the voters said let him pass in front of the queue but others said ‘kwani msimamizi hamuoni’ [i.e. but, can’t the officer see him/her], until we exchanged words ... I got help from my fellow voters, not from voting officers, and that was after queuing for about 2 hours. ” ”

Voter with albinism from Temeke constituency

“ “ After I cross-checked my name, the election officers ordered me to queue and wait for my turn to vote; I complied and queued for half an hour. I did so, not because I didn’t know my right, but because I wanted to observe society’s awareness with respect to the rights of people with disabilities...After voting I asked the officer: ‘Do you know the rights of people with disabilities particularly in regard to voting?’ S/he responded that s/he has forgotten. I went on my way. ” ”

Voter with albinism from Temboni/Ubungo constituency

Assistance for people with hearing impairments

People with hearing impairments expected the presence of sign language interpreters in polling stations. However only 5% of all respondents said that an interpreter was present in their stations. Only two out of the 27 respondents with hearing impairments reported the presence of a sign language interpreter.



This type of disability is not well known by many people therefore it is difficult to recognise a deaf person until you talk to him/her. Thus I had to explain myself a lot until they allowed me not to queue even though those queuing complained because they did not see any sign that indicated of my disability until they were told about it.....But, in general, I was well received and directed; I voted without any problem and left. It seems awareness has increased in the society regarding the special needs of people with disabilities. 🗳️🗳️

Voter with hearing impairment from Kawe constituency

It was reported that some election officers made their own attempts at sign language. These were not entirely well received as some efforts appeared to be mocking in their approach and in some cases the voters with hearing impairments could not understand what the officers were trying to say. Thus it is important for polling stations which have hearing impaired voters to have election officers who know sign language or to have a sign language interpreter. Identification of disability types could happen during the registration process so that NEC, with its responsibility for election preparation, is aware of the polling stations needing sign language interpreters.



There is a need for more sign language interpreters to be available in future elections.

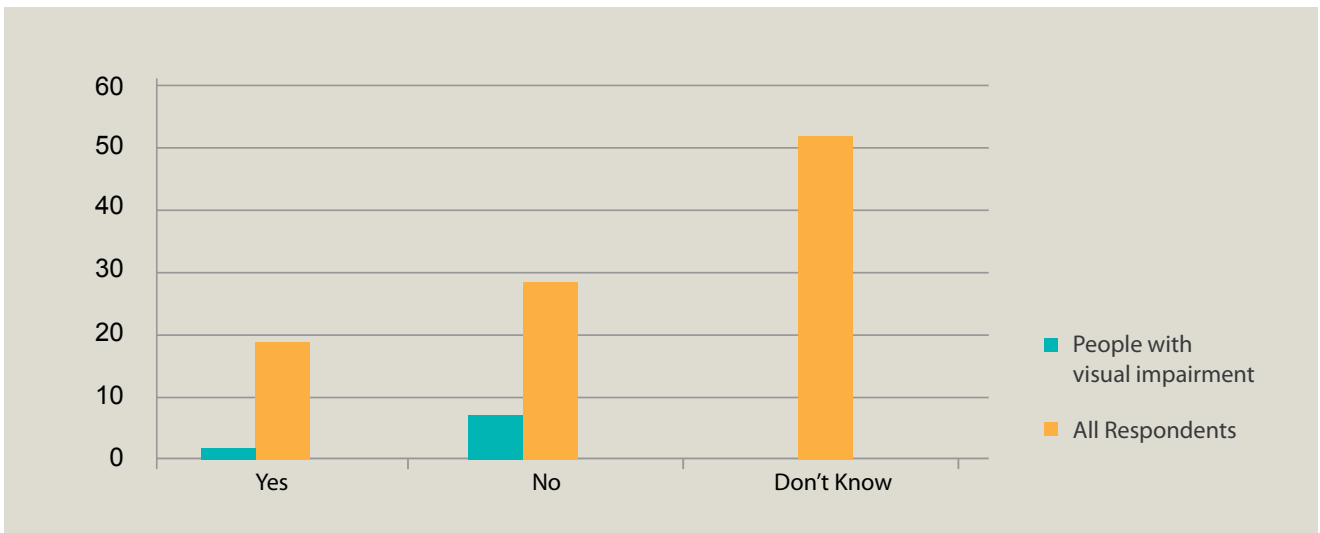
Assistance for people with visual impairments

54% of all respondents said that visually impaired voters were permitted to be escorted by assistants of their own choice. Nine out of the ten visually impaired respondents confirmed this. Just one person with a visual impairment said they were not allowed to choose who to escort them.

Most of the visually impaired respondents said their polling stations did not have tactile ballot papers even though NEC had assured voters of their availability. Just three of the 10 people with visual impairments interviewed noted the availability of tactile ballot papers at polling stations. Out of the 10 visually impaired respondents, six said they did not receive training on how to use tactile ballot papers whilst four said they did.



Does the Polling Station Have Tactile Ballot Papers?



When looking at the response to this question from all the survey participants, only 19% said that such papers were available whilst 28% noted their unavailability and 53% were not even aware whether the papers were available or not. Thus NEC's promise to provide the said papers to all polling stations in the country was only partially fulfilled.



“ The officer told me to wait for two people who were in front of me to vote... I stood in front of him as there was a shade...When I opened the ballot papers the fonts were too small, I think about the size of 10, but since I had carried my magnifier I asked the officer to allow me to use it, s/he was surprised so I had to explain to him/her, that is when s/he gave me permission...Awareness on disability especially albinism is still low. ”


Voter with albinism from Ubungo constituency

Assistance for people with albinism

Extensive exposure to sunlight is detrimental to people with albinism. This is particularly so in the absence of protective lotions and headgear. However, the survey reveals that less attention was paid to this need especially in voting stations where people with albinism had to queue to vote. Additionally, all people with albinism are affected by low vision.

Conclusion





This survey has revealed that during the 2010 general election in Tanzania, some improvements were made to enable the participation of people with disabilities.

Compared to previous elections they have better access to voting, and they are increasingly participating as candidates. The first person with albinism to be elected in a constituency as its Member of Parliament attests to this.

Conclusion

However, there is more work to be done to ensure the full participation of people with disabilities in the whole electoral process. The extent of success in this undertaking depends on how the shortcomings discussed in this research and listed here will be addressed by various stakeholders: inaccessible polling stations, inaccessible information, limited involvement of people with disabilities in political parties, failure of NEC to ensure that all directives to supervisors and promises to people with disabilities are effectively implemented, stigma towards people with disabilities and lack of an intensive voters' education programme for people with disabilities. This necessitates a systematic follow-up of government and NEC promises and monitoring of polling stations in-between election years.

These challenges need to be quantified and progressively monitored to ensure quantitative increases or decreases reflect qualitative improvement. Thus, for instance, an increase in the provision of tactile ballot papers to the visually impaired from 30% in the sampled Dar es Salaam polling stations in 2010 to, presumably, 100% during the 2015 election should go hand in hand with 100% provision of the training on how to use them and actual use during voting. The same should apply in advocating for an increase from the 5% provision of sign language interpreters in 2010 to 100% in 2015 and a reduction from 29% of people with disabilities queuing in 2010 to 0% in 2015.

Recommendations

The stakeholders concerned ought to respond to the following recommendations which stem directly from what voters with disabilities experienced in 2010.

Recommendations for action

No one feels or understands the needs of people with disabilities than people with disabilities themselves. With this in mind, this section presents their recommendations on what can and should be done to ensure their full participation in the electoral process.

People with Disabilities:

1. Participate effectively in the electoral process as voters and/or candidates;
2. Advocate for more inclusion in policymaking and decision-making processes;
3. Conduct education programmes and ensure budgetary allocation for educators;
4. Disseminate manifestos, which have been prepared by people with different types of disabilities, to political parties.



Central/Local Government(s):

1. Involve people with disabilities in policymaking and dissemination of information to citizens;
2. Prioritise the needs of people with disabilities in government programmes and plans;
3. Provide sunglasses, lotions, hats and t-shirts to protect voters with albinism from the sun's rays;
4. Reform the Constitution and laws so as to elect/appoint more people with disabilities;
5. Include disability as a constitutional category and legally provide for a leader therefore;
6. Conduct a survey on people with disabilities in villages/streets to monitor and thus identify and meet their needs;
7. Add studies on people with disabilities and their needs in primary school curriculum;
8. Appoint a person with disability among the presidential appointed Members of Parliament;
9. Ensure peace and safety in polling stations to enable people with disabilities to vote.

National Electoral Commission:

1. Prepare and provide timely user-friendly information on elections to people with disabilities;
2. Ensure that people with disabilities do not queue to vote;
3. Ensure special election officers are available to assist people with disabilities;
4. Give tasks to people with disabilities during elections;
5. Set a special voting day for people with disabilities when necessary;
6. Deploy sign language interpreters and disburse tactile ballot papers;
7. Prepare special identity cards for people with hearing impairments for easier identification;
8. Ensure the representation of people with disabilities in various NEC committees;
9. Ensure as much as possible that polling stations are accessible to people with disabilities.



Political Parties:

1. Include the agenda of people with disabilities in election manifestos;
2. Consider the needs of people with disabilities without discrimination;
3. Prioritise candidates with disabilities when picking party candidates;
4. Institute a quota system to ensure people with disabilities can become leaders.

Election Candidates:


1. Visit and consider the views of people with disabilities and their associations;
2. Evaluate and monitor the state of people with disabilities in their own party.

Party Leaders:

1. Include the needs of people with disabilities when preparing election campaigns;
2. Consider the schedule, distance, accessibility and safety of campaigning venues;
3. Hold leaders who don't prioritise the needs of people with disabilities accountable.

All Stakeholders:

1. Provide practical voters' education frequently and not only during the election campaign;
2. Ensure there is adequate infrastructure and transportation for people with disabilities;
3. Conduct various seminars that consider/cater for different types of disabilities;
4. Disseminate literature on the electoral process that can be easily read at home;
5. Give information in a language/form that is accessible to particular types of disabilities;
6. Provide more education about people with disabilities so as to sensitize all citizens;
7. Increase media programmes on disabilities and the needs of people with disabilities;
8. Ensure that society/community stop discriminating against people with disabilities.



The author of this report and CCBRT endorses these recommendations with a minor reservation in regard to having a different election day and specific constituency for people with disabilities. This, in the humble opinion of the author, could impede the process of ensuring that people with disabilities fully and equally participate together with those without disabilities in elections and end up marginalising and stereotyping them further. Thus, this author recommends that people with disabilities continue to advocate being – and participate as – voters and/or candidates with full election privileges as any active citizen.

In addition to what the respondents recommended above, the study also generated the following recommendations on the basis of CCBRT's monitoring of the election process:

1. Develop and implement a follow-up system that will ensure directives given by NEC to the polling station supervisors are effectively implemented during election day.
2. Ensure that all polling stations are accessible to people with disabilities or alternative arrangements are made for them to use their constitutional right of voting or being voted in to office.
3. Review the registration forms to include the aspect of disability and type of disability and use the collected information for planning and providing the required services.

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