

Deaf Bulletin

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Newsletter



DZT celebrates 10 years Anniversary In style

Empower Exhibitors wow DAA Detherage



Celebrating 10 years of successfully advancing the rights and interests of people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Zimbabwe.

DZT @ 10 Celebrated in Style



By Staff Reporter

Deaf Zimbabwe Trust recently held its much awaited 10th year anniversary celebrations by hosting disability stakeholders in a black-tie themed cocktail party that was marked with red carpet treatment.

The colourful event did not only seek to celebrate the organisations achievements and successes only but also put the spotlight on various individuals and organisation that contributed in the development of the organisation by honouring them with various accolades.

In his speech, disability rights advocate, and guest of honour Commissioner Kudzai Shava applauded DZT for its unwavering drive, in advocating for disability inclusion over the past 10 years.

“It is very gratifying to be part of these celebrations that do not only show the journey that Deaf Zimbabwe Trust has travelled, but also reflects on the successes and challenges that have been faced in reaching this milestone.

In line with the DZT Vision of “An inclusive society which respects diversity where all Deaf and Hard of Hearing people enjoy equal rights and choices, opportunities, dignity and independence”, these past years, have revealed the strategic commitment to long term dedication to improving inclusivity of all people with disabilities in Zimba-

bwe as enshrined in the Zimbabwe Constitution, by the organisation.” Commissioner Shava said.

Founding visionary, Mr Lyndon Nkomo shared with guests how a moment of hopelessness and despair was eventually turned into an idea that would help thousands of people who are Deaf all over the country.

“Deaf Zimbabwe Trust was born out of pain, frustration and despair. I was angry with the school and even the system. I saw a lot of injustice to the Deaf community and my child was in a hopeless situation. My anger reached a boiling point when she said that Deaf children do not pass and at that moment, I said to myself I will fight for the rights of Deaf people,” said Nkomo after enquiring if learners who are Deaf pass their exams at his son’s former school.

DZT Executive Director Barbra Nyangairi encouraged all stakeholders to ensure they play their part, if inclusion is to become a reality.

“Inclusion problems are usually too large and too complex for any one person or individual to tackle them. That is why Deaf Zimbabwe Trust has taken a collaborative approach were all of us do something, we all have a part to play in making this a reality.” Nyangairi said.

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Empower Exhibitors wow DAA Detherage



DAA Maria Price Detherage poses for a photo with Empower Project beneficiary Yolanda Munyengwa

By Staff Reporter

Beneficiaries of the Empower activity recently set up an exhibition in honour of Maria Price Detherage, the USAID Deputy Assistant Director African Bureau. The exhibition was meant to showcase the level of production young persons with disabilities can reach if they are empowered with skills, business training and financial resources.

The Empower beneficiaries showcased various products ranging from furniture, confectioneries, detergents, kitchenware and organic beverages amongst other things.

Speaking during the showcase, Pleasant Touch detergents owner and beneficiary Gamuchirai Uzande, expressed her gratitude for the assistance they had received so far from USAID and Deaf Zimbabwe Trust in her business journey.

“Being a young person with disability who is in business is tough. There is a lot of discrimination when it comes to accessing general information about business concepts and registration, as well as access to finance. Deaf Zimbabwe

Trust and their partners USAID have filled this gap by providing us with integrated business training as well as access to loans.” Uzande said.

Fellow exhibitor Yolanda Munyengwa, who is into manufacturing of skin care products mainly petroleum jelly also added her voice in thanking the Empower activity implementors in facilitating economic inclusion.

“Thorough my association with Deaf Zimbabwe Trust under the USAID Empower project, I managed to register my business. All along I thought persons with disabilities could not register a business due to stigma that we always face but through business training I am now confident enough to do anything,” said Yolanda.

The USAID "Empower" project which is being implemented by Deaf Zimbabwe Trust seeks to break down existing and potential barriers and ensure full inclusion of young people with disabilities in economic activities

Empower Exhibitors wow DAA Detherage



The Empower project is running with five pillars namely:
skills development
entrepreneurship
accessible financial services
legislative reform
socio-economic



Psycho-social support for PoCwDs



Stakeholder sharing her contribution during a positive parenting psycho-social session at DZT offices

By Chelsea Aridondia & Takunda Makunde

Parents of children with disabilities continue to face stigma and discrimination in their communities, a positive parenting psycho-social workshop has revealed.

The workshop was attended by parents and caregivers from Mufakose, Glen View, Budiriro and Kuwadzana and was centered on discussing the challenges faced by parents of children with disabilities as well as ways to achieve positive parenting skills.

Some parents in attendance reported having challenges in accessing accommodation because home owners prefer tenants with children without disabilities. Commenting on this issue, a parent from Glenview said, *“My landlady complained about my daughter’s wheelchair screeching and leaving marks on the floor, as a result I was told that I had to scrub those marks made by the*

wheel chair as it was unpleasant to her.”

Discrimination is also quite rampant at clinics or hospitals where they have to frequent for their children’s medication. *“The nurses will ask you of the child’s disability and expect you to know the name and treatments that the child must get, when at times you are not aware of what the child is going through at certain points and they refuse to offer treatment if you are unaware.”*

Deaf Zimbabwe Trust continues to work with parents of children with disabilities through psychosocial support sessions where there is promotion of positive parenting. Parents are urged to be more involved in their children’s lives and to push ideas and activities that are in the best interest of their children. Creation of support groups was identified as a sustainable way of ensuring positive parenting amongst caregivers.

Women with disabilities face digital divide in innovation hubs



By Irene Mhlanga

Deaf Zimbabwe Trust joined the rest of the world in commemorating International Women’s Day 2023 under the theme “DigitALL Innovation and technology for Gender Equality”. This came at a time where Zimbabwe have successfully established six innovation hubs at six universities and embracing technology is the core for these hubs. The establishment of innovation hubs aims to create a system of connections that puts individuals, firms, startups, incubators, and accelerators together to transform innovative ideas into technologically feasible solutions.

Deaf Zimbabwe Trust conducted research to understand the participation of persons with disabilities in innovation hubs and the visibility of women with disabilities. Women with disabilities are invisible in innovation hubs is due to several reasons high on the list is a lack of the digital hardware. Exclusion of women with disabilities in innovation hubs marginalizes them from achieving growth that generates economic value and social benefit hence exacerbating their poverty levels. Notably, most

computers that are found in most innovation hubs lack the vision-to-language tools that can describe text and objects aloud for people who are blind or have low vision. In addition, they don’t have the text simplification tools to help people with cognitive disabilities to understand content.

Disability inclusion in innovation hubs is vital to women with disabilities (WwDs) if we are to ensure that they are also given the chance to explore their ideas on an equal basis in an inclusive and barrier-free space. The use of digital technology in entrepreneurship through innovation hubs has tremendous potential in alleviating socio-economic problems as well as making employment opportunities available for WwDs. This is achieved through inclusive innovation hubs that offer computer programs and models that enhance their capacity, and by learning new skills. Therefore, if innovation hubs are disability inclusive, they have the potential to encourage collaboration, serve as a springboard for new ideas and help women with disabilities pursue creative solutions.

Ableism and access to education



By Nattashie Maunze, Blessing Mukono and Dorothy Nyika

Ashley Eisenmenger of Access Living defines Ableism as prejudice and the discrimination against persons with disabilities based on the belief that persons with abilities are superior. At the heart of Ableism is the assumption that persons with disabilities need “fixing”. Similar to racism, ableism classifies groups of people as “less than” and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions and generalisations of people with disabilities.

Ableism of children with disabilities by parents, relatives, institutions and the wider communities is an issue of concern. From assessments and psychosocial support sessions conducted by Deaf Zimbabwe Trust, it was noted that many children with disabilities have been deprived of their rights to education as a result of ableism, a misconception that they cannot learn and do not need education.

Ableism manifests in the form of assumptions that children with disabilities have no need to be educated as they are viewed less intellectually gifted than nondisabled chil-

dren. Evidence has shown that Heads of schools are not keen to enroll children with disabilities and not all schools have resource units to cater for children with disabilities. The lack of facilities that provide genuinely inclusive education is the result of stereotypes negatively affecting the outcomes of children with disabilities with long range implications for their futures.

It is important for parents of children with disabilities and school authorities to recognize the effects of ableism. Achieving this requires open and honest dialogue and not allowing ableist social expectations to shape parenting decisions. Parents of children with disabilities should take time to learn more about disabilities, join support networks, and advocacy groups and strive to create a positive environment where all children can thrive. By providing unconditional, positive support to their children, parents of children with disabilities can reduce the effects of ableism, create a more accepting and empowering environment, and give their children full potential.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES FOR ALL



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