



Towards health equity for persons with disabilities:

The Disability Inclusion Guide for
Action in AFRO

4 September 2025 | 11:30 - 13:00 (CAT)

About the speakers (in alphabetical order)



John AJIWOHWODOMA OVUORAYE //

**Director and Head, Gender, Adolescent, School Health and Elderly Division,
Family Health Department, Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria**

Dr John Ajiwohwodoma Ovuoraye, Director and Head of the Gender, Adolescent, School Health and Elderly Division at the Family Health Department, Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria, and the Secretariat lead on the Ministerial steering Committee on PWDs inclusive health and the FMOHSW lead on the development of the disability guide for action. Dr John Ajiwohwodoma Ovuoraye, a distinguished medical doctor and public health expert, boasts a rich career spanning over 20 years. Dr Ovuoraye's expertise and passion for family medicine, public health, sexual reproductive health, adolescent and school health, gender issues, elderly care, and disability care is evident in his unwavering commitment to improving health outcomes and quality of life for Nigerians. He has been instrumental in developing and implementing policies, guidelines, and strategies to improve the continuum of care across various health outcomes. He is a member of the Global Steering Committee to End Female Genital Mutilation and has received several awards and recognitions.



Darryl BARRETT //

Technical Lead, Global Disability Programme, Headquarters, World Health Organization

Darryl Barrett is an accomplished health and legal professional with over 30 years' experience in service delivery, public policy, regulatory reform, and programme development. He has advised governments, multilateral agencies, and civil society organizations in more than 72 countries, working across fragile, middle-income, and high-resource settings. Currently leading the Global Disability Programme at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Darryl drives the development of policies, advocacy strategies and capacity building to advance health equity for persons with disabilities worldwide. Previously, he led the disability and rehabilitation efforts at the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office. His expertise spans navigating political and operational complexities within UN agencies, government health and human rights institutions, and international development organizations to deliver impact.



Sarah COLLINSON //

Senior Policy Advisor, Sightsavers

Dr Sarah Collinson is a Senior Policy Advisor at Sightsavers, co-coordinator of the IDDC Inclusive Health Task Group and co-chair of the GLAD Network's Inclusive Health Working Group. Her work currently focuses on promoting health equity and strengthening the inclusion of persons with disabilities in health systems and services. Sarah has over thirty years' experience of international policy analysis and influencing and an extensive portfolio of publications spanning diverse aspects of international social justice. She has held senior research and advocacy positions at Chatham House, ActionAid and the Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI, and associate academic positions at the universities of Oxford, Reading and Bristol.



Galbert FEDJO TEFOYET //

Officer in Charge, Country Office Ethiopia, World Health Organization

Dr. Galbert Fedjo is a seasoned public health expert with 27 years of experience across Africa, currently serving as the Officer-in-Charge and Health System Coordinator at the WHO Country Office in Tanzania. His career spans key leadership roles in Cameroon, Chad, the DRC, Burundi, Uganda, and now Tanzania, focusing on health system strengthening, strategic health financing, public health planning, and universal health coverage. Before joining WHO, he led District Health Systems, major health programs, and technical advisory positions with the Belgian Development Agency. Dr. Fedjo holds a master's in public health from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp and sits on the editorial board of the *Pan African Medical Journal*, promoting African health knowledge globally.



Abayneh GUJO //

President, Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities

To be added soon.



Msafiri KABULWA //

Focal point, Health Services for Persons with Disability and Elderly People, Ministry of Health, Tanzania

Dr. Msafiri Kabulwa is a focal point for Health Services for Persons with Disability and Elderly People at the Ministry of Health Tanzania. Dr Msafiri Kabulwa is a dental surgeon who graduated from the University of Dar es Salaam. He also holds a master's degree in Dentistry (Community Dentistry) from Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences. He has experience of over 15 years serving within the country in various positions. He has served as a tutor at Tanga Dental Therapist Training Centre and focal person of Curative Oral Health Services at Ministry level. In his current role, he also serves as coordinator for continuous professional development within the Department of Curative Health Services and as a coordinator of ear and hearing care services in the Ministry of Health.



Tamrat KIFLE HAILEMARIAM //

Technical Officer for Rehabilitation, Country Office Ethiopia, World Health Organization

Tamrat is a Rehabilitation Officer at the WHO Country Office in Ethiopia. He is a physiotherapy specialist who earned his master's degree in physiotherapy from the University of Gondar, College of Medicine and Health Science. With more than 15 years of experience, Tamrat has worked as a physiotherapist in various hospitals in Ethiopia. He has also served as a Rehabilitation and specialty officer at the Ministry of health. In his current role, he is responsible for disability inclusive health services, eye health, ear and hearing care, and oral health.



Anne-Cécile KONAN //

Founder, National Union of Women with Disabilities of Côte d'Ivoire

Anne-Cécile Konan, born in 1970 in Dimbokro, is an iconic figure in the defence of the rights of persons with disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly for women. She is the founder of UNAFEHCI (National Union of Women with Disabilities of Côte d'Ivoire), an official member of the WHO Health Sector Group, and Secretary General of FAHCI (Federation of Associations for the Social Promotion of People with Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire). Anne-Cécile Konan has contributed to major legislative and institutional advances. With university degrees in geography, communication and management, she has held various technical and associative positions. Her expertise covers gender, health, employment and human rights. She collaborates with several NGOs, including Sightsavers, and leads empowerment and advocacy projects, embodying strategic and committed leadership.



Chiara RETIS //

Technical Lead, Disability Inclusion and Rehabilitation Programme, Regional Office for Africa, World Health Organization

Chiara Retis is a seasoned public health expert with a master's degree from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. With over 20 years of experience in international development across the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, she has collaborated with both government and non-government organizations in conflict-affected and low-resource settings. Her work focuses on capacity building and policy reform in physical rehabilitation, assistive technology, and disability inclusion. Since 2023, Chiara has been working at the WHO Regional Office for Africa, leading the technical assistance and strategy development on rehabilitation and disability inclusion.



Nassib TAWA //

Technical Officer, Disability Inclusion and Rehabilitation Programme, Regional Office for Africa, World Health Organization

Dr. Nassib Tawa is a Rehabilitation professional with over 20 years of international experience in service delivery, academia, governance, and implementation research. Currently working as Technical Officer for the Disability Inclusion and Rehabilitation Programme at WHO Regional Office for Africa, Dr. Nassib Tawa offers technical support to Member States in the implementation of programs and health systems reforms. Prior to this, he worked as a Rehabilitation administrator and Chief regulator in Kenya's Ministry of Health, overseeing training, licensure, service delivery programs, teaching and research in Kenya, South Africa and Rwanda. Over time, he has established mutual working partnerships and cross-cutting networks in rehabilitation, assistive technology and disability inclusion in the African region and globally.



Brooke WINTERBURN //

Global inclusive health technical specialist, Humanity & Inclusion

Brooke Winterburn is a Global inclusive health technical specialist, with Humanity & Inclusion (HI, formerly Handicap International), based in Nairobi. In her role, Brooke supports HI programmes and health partners to work in meaningful partnership with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), building capacity on disability-inclusive approaches to health systems strengthening focusing on interventions in health service delivery, capacity building of the health workforce, strengthening leadership and governance for inclusion, and civil societies role in accountability; as well as improving disability disaggregated data in health information management systems. Brooke has had the privilege to work with and learn from disability rights activists and leaders across the Middle East, Africa and the Asia Pacific, and is currently working in partnership with Down Syndrome on their global health campaign. As a protection, public health and disability inclusion practitioner, Brooke has over 10 years specializing in advancing human rights and social inclusion across the Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East, in a range of roles.
