Accessibility of Government Websites to Persons with Disabilities

Scorecard

About this Research…

This study is driven by the KICTANet Digital Accessibility Team with the goal of **engaging policymakers** in the ICT industry with **evidence** to develop **inclusive policies** that serve persons with disabilities. The team examined the accessibility of government services and communications, at the national level including Nairobi county government website, through the scans and analysis of 46 public websites. The websites were selected based on their levels of **essentiality**.

A Little Background Information and Data…

- The **2019 census** was an attempt at disability-inclusive data collection exercise in Kenya so far. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) worked closely with organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs) and civil society to formulate inclusive disability questions and train the enumerators.

- **KNBS** adopted the use of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics' set of short questions to collect disability data.

Why W.G Questions and Definitions of Disability

Using W.G set of questions was intended to minimise the instances of the stigma that happens during data collection when it is associated with the word "disability."

Are our definitions of Disability fostering this stigma?

The Constitution of Kenya Disability Act 2003 defines disability in section 2 as a "physical, sensory, mental or other impairment including any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapacity which impacts adversely on social, economic or environmental participation.

On the other hand, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006) defines persons with disability as those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Viewing disability as an interaction means that disability is not an attribute of the person. We can therefore improve social, economic and political participation by addressing the barriers.
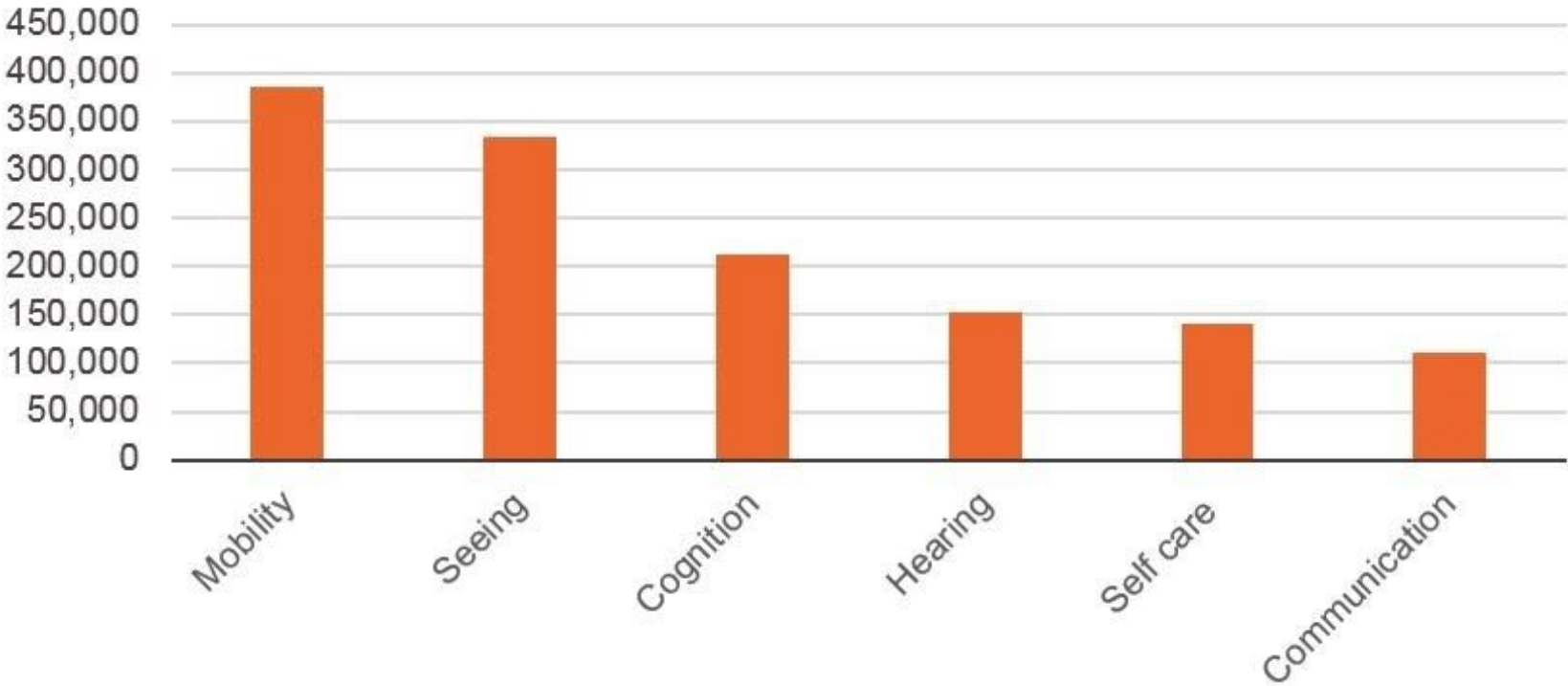
Kenya's Disability Data Breakdown

The 2019 census shows that:

Overall Disability in Population	2.2%	900,000
Men	1.9%	
Women	2.5%	
% in Rural Areas	2.6%	700,000
% in Urban Areas	1.4%	200,000

Prevalence of the Type of Disability

Gaps in Kenya's Disability Data

The Global Disability prevalence is 15% and Kenya's reported rated 2.2% according to the 2019 census.

There is an opportunity for further research to determine the reasons behind this disparity and ways to improve the accuracy of collecting disability data in Kenya.

Inaccurate disability data result into structural and systemic exclusions in national policies and programs intended for persons with disabilities.

Methodology and Scope

- This research examined the accessibility of Kenyan public service websites under the **POUR (perceivability, operability, understandable and robust)** principles developed under the Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG.)
- We used the **Accessi and Wave** evaluating tools to scan the websites for comprehensive reports detailing elements of compliance and non-compliance to accessibility standards.
- The evaluating tools were **supplemented** by 3 researchers using **ethnographic method** to score levels of accessibility.
- Each researcher gave scores which were **averaged** to come up with the levels of compliance for the individual websites.
- Wave and Accessi evaluation tools used for scoring were used on **Chrome and Firefox** browsers to test their compatibility with the browser's in-built assistive tools.
- Additional analysis was obtained through **focus group discussions** and through the **validation** of the first draft of the report.

Scope

Excluded mobile phone applications. This is an opportunity for further research on accessibility on this aspect.

Assumptions Made…

- Access of government services from cyber cafes and Huduma centres for assistance.
- Disparities in access to ICT services in the real and urban areas for persons with disabilities.
- Language barrier as a constant.

- While reliance was placed on using technology to assess, there are aspects of assessment that would have to be observational.

- The assessments covered in this report consider the averaged experiences of persons with visual, hearing and cognitive disabilities but does not take away the individual experiences of each.