

# Spring 2024 Professional Fellow

**Name:** Caroline Kanana Makena  
**Country:** Kenya  
**Job Title and Employer:** Head of Partnerships and Fundraising, Link 4 Change  
**Project Title:** Assessment Tools for Inclusive Workplaces

**Issue:** According to the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2003, the Kenyan government is responsible for ensuring that individuals with disabilities have access to employment opportunities. The Act prohibits discrimination by employers against persons with disabilities and offers tax incentives to those who provide reasonable accommodations. Despite the progressive nature of this legislation, the realization of employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities has proven challenging. The employment rate for this group remains alarmingly low, standing at just 1% (UN, 2015), directly impacting their economic independence, social integration, and overall well-being.

Various barriers contribute to the low employment rate, including inaccessible information regarding job vacancies, negative perceptions from employers, limited educational opportunities, and societal stigma (Opoku et al., 2017). Moreover, employers have cited a lack of knowledge about disabilities and reasonable accommodations as hindrances to their ability to hire individuals with disabilities (Ebuenyi et al., 2020).

**Project Objective:** Caroline's project aims to address workplace inclusivity and diversity issues by collaborating with employers and providing them with practical resources to assess and improve the accessibility of their recruitment and hiring procedures.

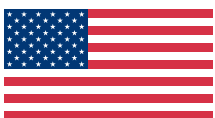
**Project Activities:** To realize her vision, Caroline plans to pilot an inclusive toolkit, which includes a disability scorecard, checklist, and an inclusive recruitment assessment tool. This toolkit will empower employers to identify barriers to inclusion and offer guidance on fostering a diverse workforce actively. The introduction of the scorecard presents a unique opportunity to ensure compliance with accessibility regulations among employers.

To launch this initiative, Caroline will design a survey to identify gaps and challenges in inclusive recruitment practices. Subsequently, she will collaborate with employers and individuals with disabilities, drawing insights from international best practices to develop the toolkit. Initial testing will involve a select group of employers, with refinements made as needed.

Ultimately, Caroline envisions transforming the toolkit into an online application or platform, enabling widespread access to these assessment and recruitment resources.

## References:

- Ebuenyi, I. D., van der Ham, A. J., Bunders-Aelen, J. F., & Regeer, B. J. (2020). Expectations Management; Employer Perspectives on Opportunities for Improved Employment of Persons with Mental Disabilities in Kenya. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 42(12), 1687-1696.
- Opoku, M. P., Kwadwo Mprah, W., Dogbe, J. A., Moitui, J. N., & Badu, E. (2017). Access to Employment in Kenya: The Voices of Persons with Disabilities. *International Journal on Disability and Human Development*, 16(1), 77-87.
- United Nations (UN). (2015). *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Concluding Observations on the Initial Report of Kenya*. Retrieved from: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/811095?ln=en>



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