

# **OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES FACED BY DISABLED WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC CIVIL SERVICE IN TANZANIA: A CASE STUDY OF DAR ES SALAAM**

## **Abstract**

**As a signatory to several regional and international Human Rights instruments, the Tanzanian Government has gone some way in its Constitution and domestic laws to protect and promote the right to work of disabled women within its Public Civil Service and the rights of those who intend to join the Service. This dissertation reveals, however, that it has largely failed to translate this *de jure* (formal or legal) equality into a *de facto* or actual equality for these women who face various forms of discriminatory, abusive and degrading treatment not only from their employer (or prospective employer) (!) but, once they are employed, from their male colleagues (and even disabled male counterparts [!]) as well. This is largely due to the fact that Tanzania's male dominated and strongly patriarchal society harbours powerful negative social attitudes against educating its disabled girls and women. The cruel 'lived realities' of a sample of these silently suffering women is vividly brought alive by the writer who scientifically gathers, analyses and presents the data of the research using the Women's Law Approach. The data includes primary evidence (i.e., evidence taken from disabled women and key government informants) and secondary evidence (i.e., documentary research of relevant laws and literature). In order to make the Tanzanian Government a role model in the promotion of disabled women's rights, the writer finally suggests several well-substantiated recommendations in order for it to satisfy its various HR commitments. These recommendations include implementing legal reforms (e.g, to make current legislation gender sensitive to the needs of disabled women); providing the disabled with convenient housing and adequate support services to, from and at work; providing disabled women with human resource training and development; implementing positive discrimination schemes in favour of disabled women; adapting buildings and workplaces to suit the needs of disabled women and launching public awareness campaigns to improve society's attitudes towards them.**

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**A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a  
Masters in Women's Law, Southern and Eastern African Regional  
Centre for Women's Law,  
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**2010**

## **DECLARATION**

I Victoria Aidan Mgonela do hereby declare that this research is my own work and has never been submitted to any other University.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE.....

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents Aidan and Marry Mgonela for laying down a foundation for my education.

To my lovely husband and best friend Edson Mweyunge, thank you for your extreme support and encouragements which made this work a success.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study would not have been successfully done without the valuable contributions and support from various people. It is extremely difficult to mention all those who assisted me in one way or another. I accordingly take this opportunity to thank them all. Although it is impossible to mention each and everyone by his/her name, I feel the following few deserve my special mention.

First and foremost, I am greatly indebted to the God Almighty for his never ending grace, Thank you Lord for helping me to finish this work!

I acknowledge with gratitude the sponsorship offered to me by Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which enabled me to pursue this course.

Special thanks to my supervisor Prof. Julie Stewart for her professional guidance and constructive advice which helped me to come up with this piece of work.

I convey my profound gratitude to all my respondents; women and men with disabilities, Administrative Officer of President's Office Public Service Management – Diversity Management Unit, NGO's for disabilities, Acting Commissioner of Social Welfare, Librarian of the International Labour Organization Office Dar es Salaam and the Director of Information Center on Disability. Without you this work would not have been possible.

Lastly I convey my sincere appreciation to my friends Anna Magutu and Sakina Sinda for their kind support during my sickness when I was writing up my research. GOD WILL BLESS YOU.

However, any errors or shortcomings in this work remain solely mine and should not be ascribed to any of the acknowledged people.

## **LIST OF STATUTES AND POLICIES CITED**

1. Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 as amended
2. The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, no 2 of 1982
3. Government Notice No.464: Disabled Persons (Employment) Regulations, 1982
4. The Employment and Labour Relations Act, 2004
5. The National Policy on Disability, 2004
6. The National Employment Policy, 2008
7. Guideline for services to people with disabilities who are civil servants, 2008

## **HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS**

1. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006
2. The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled persons) Convention No.159 of 1983
3. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
4. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979
5. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with Disability
6. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003
7. ILO Convention No. 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958
8. Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons with disabilities, 1975
9. International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966
10. The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, 1981
11. SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 1995
12. Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADA1	Advanced Diploma in Accountancy 1
ADD	Action on Disability and Development
APPC	Appointments, Posting and Promotion Committee
BA Ed	Bachelor of Arts in Education
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
BASO	Bachelor of Arts in Sociology
BAMC	Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication
BE.d SN	Bachelor of Education in Science
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DDO	Disability Discrimination Ordinance
DPOs	Disabled People's Organization
DOSALED	Disabled Organization for Legal Affairs and Social Economic Development
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
ICD	Information Centre on Disability
ILO	International Labour Organization
L.L.B	Bachelor of Laws
MD	Medical Doctor
NGOs	Non Governmental Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
SNE	Special Needs Education Coordinator
TBA	Tanzania Building Agency
TLB	Tanzania League of the Blind

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable group in the society. They are often under-educated, untrained, unemployed and poor. They face many obstacles in their struggle for equality. Although men and women with disabilities are subject to discrimination because of their disabilities, women are at a further disadvantage because of the combined discrimination based on gender and disability.

Various readings show that people with disabilities in general face difficulties in entering the open labour market, but seen from a gender perspective, men with disabilities are almost twice more likely to have jobs than disabled women (Reilly,2003; ILO,2007).

My experience when I was working with UNHCR revealed that many people are hesitant in employing women with disabilities. I was a member of the Appointments, Posting and Promotion Committee (APPC); whenever a case of a disabled woman was coming up almost all the committee members were against it. This is despite the fact that UNHCR is among of the organizations which is promoting gender equality.

I have also seen very few disabled women in formal employment. Most of them run small businesses or beg on the streets. This impelled me to unearth the obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service in Tanzania.

This study restricted itself to two kinds of disabilities; women with visual impairments and those who are physically disabled.

## 1.2 Background of the Research

Disabled people represent the biggest definable disadvantaged group of people in the world. Over 600 million people worldwide have a physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairment of one form or another. This is approximately 10% of the world's population. Approximately 470 million are of working age. People with disabilities can be found in every country with over two thirds of them living in the developing world (ILO, 2007).

In Tanzania the total population is 34.4 million. It is estimated that people with disabilities constitute 10% of the total population which is equivalent to 3.4 million. The statistics<sup>1</sup> as per the kind of disability is as follows;

People who are physically disabled	967, 932
People who are visually impaired	933, 363
Deaf	691, 380
Mentally disabled	276, 552
Multiple disability	138, 276
Others	449, 397
Total	3, 456, 900

Despite representing a large part of the population, people with disabilities especially women are largely invisible. Their human rights are frequently and systematically ignored and abused. This has been the norm for a very long time.

Historically, people with disabilities were not accepted in their communities. They were associated with the incarnation of the devil and their disability was also regarded as a sign of God's punishment for the sins that a family had committed. It was therefore regarded as shameful to have a disabled child within the family. As a result most of them were hidden in houses and others were even thrown into the bushes or rocks and left in the open to die. In developed countries women even terminated their pregnancies once they had been for an ultra sound scan and discovered that they were expecting a disabled child (Gudafelsky and Madduma: 1992).

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<sup>1</sup> Guideline for services to people with disabilities who are civil servants, 2008 pg 3

Various efforts have been made to change the perception of disabled people in society. These include the enactment of various forms of legislation, conventions and various strategies aimed at improving society's perception of them. Despite some improvement, this negative perception is still a problem in many, especially, developing countries, including Tanzania.

People with disabilities especially women are still considered to be second class citizens. They are discriminated against and denied most of their rights. They are devalued firstly because of their gender, and secondly because of the myths and misconceptions about impairment. There are often far reaching and mistaken assumptions that women who are disabled do not need to work, that their financial security will be provided by their families and that their main role will be at home because their capacity to do much else is limited. These attitudes need to be changed in order to ensure that the right to employment for women with disabilities is realized.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Employment is a fundamental human right and is important for every human being including persons with disabilities and particularly for women with disabilities. It can provide economic security and independence and give them value and status as individuals. It helps with integration and acceptance by the non-disabled and most importantly it gives life a purpose (Boylan, 1991).

In Tanzania the percentage of disabled women employed in the Public Civil Service is relatively small, and they are under-represented at executive and managerial levels. Most of them face various challenges in employment opportunities in the formal sector specifically in Public Civil Service. Some of the challenges which they experience are: negative attitudes of employers or work mates, unfriendly infrastructures, lack of working aids / technical aids and insensitive office buildings. Other challenges include

unequal hiring and promotion standards, unequal access to training and retraining, unequal access to credit and other productive resources, unequal pay for equal work and occupational segregation, and they rarely participate in economic decision making (ILO, 1996).

Throughout the world, disabled women are less likely to be referred for vocational training and rehabilitation programmes, and if they do complete their training, are more likely to remain unemployed or work in part time jobs. Stereotypical views on sex and gender roles are often used as a justification for promoting the employment of disabled men, or for unnecessarily excluding women from particular jobs to prevent impairments (ILO, 2007).

Employment is one of the facets of full participation in society. Therefore, full participation of disabled persons in society cannot be achieved without providing them with equal employment opportunities. There are multiplicities of interrelated barriers which need to be addressed in order to ensure equal access to employment opportunities by all people from different sex and various backgrounds.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

**Overall objective:** To unearth obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service in Tanzania.

**Specific Objectives:**

1. To identify employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service in Tanzania that disabled women are able to secure.
2. To identify the critical problems faced by women with disabilities in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

3. To identify the coping mechanisms which disabled women are using to address the challenges they face in the Public Civil Service.
4. To evaluate Government's commitment in creating opportunities for employment for disabled women.
5. To identify ways forward that will mitigate the challenges faced by women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

#### **1.4 Research Assumptions**

This study was carried out using the following assumptions:

- i. The Labour Laws and policies in Tanzania do not adequately benefit disabled women with employment opportunities within the Public Civil Service.
- ii. Negative attitudes of employers towards women with disabilities are barriers that limit them from securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service (discriminated against because of gender and disability).
- iii. Infrastructural facilities, lack of working aids and insensitive office buildings work against women with disabilities and limit their accessibility in Public Civil Service employment opportunities.
- iv. There is a lack of Government commitment to create employment opportunities for disabled women within the Public Civil Service.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

- 1 Do the labour laws and policies in Tanzania create adequate employment opportunities for disabled women in the Public Civil Service?
- 2 Does the negative attitude of employers towards women with disabilities prevent them from securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service?
- 3 How do infrastructural facilities, lack of working aids and insensitive office buildings work against women with disabilities and limit their ability to secure employment opportunities within the Public Civil Service?
- 4 How does the Government's lack of commitment to create opportunities for the employment of disabled women work against them in securing employment in the Public Civil Service?

## **1.6 Demarcating the Field of Study**

This study was conducted in Dar es Salaam city, Tanzania (see Figure 1 below). Dar es Salaam is located between latitudes 6.36 degrees and 7.0 degrees to the south of Equator and longitudes 39.0 and 33.33 to the east of Greenwich. It is bounded by the Indian Ocean to the east and by the Coast Region to the west. The total surface area of Dar es Salaam City is 1,800 square kilometres, comprising of 1,393 square kilometres of land mass with eight offshore islands, which is about 0.19% of the entire Tanzania Mainland's area<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Dar es Salaam city profile

Dar es Salaam is the major City of Tanzania and the centre of Government administration, industry, commerce and banking activities. Dar es Salaam is also the major port City of Tanzania. It has more than 575 major industrial establishments, a Central Bank, Commercial Banks, foreign exchange bureaus, Insurance companies (including one state-owned) and the Dar es Salaam Community Bank – a Microfinance Bank jointly started and owned by City Council and the three Municipalities. The headquarters of almost all Ministries and departments under the Public Service are in Dar es Salaam.

Based on the 2002 Population and Housing Census, Dar es Salaam had 2,487,288 inhabitants, of whom 1,254,853 were males and the rest females. It is estimated that about 95 % of City residents are working in the informal sector, while the remaining 5 % are employed in the formal sector including the government and public cooperation. Based on statistics for 2002, unemployment in the City of Dar es Salaam was 46.5% while in other urban areas it was 25.5% and in rural areas it was 18%<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

Figure 1: A map of Tanzania showing the location of Dar es Salaam City.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.0 LAW AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This part of the study reviews the literature related to employment for people with disabilities especially women. It also reviews Human Rights Instruments and Tanzanian National Legislation.

#### **2.2 Discussion of Findings by other Researchers**

The obstacles and challenges faced by people with disabilities in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service have been discussed by various researchers. Most authors appreciate the fact that women with disabilities face more challenges in employment opportunities than their male counterparts. A study carried out in the United States indicates that almost 42% of men with disabilities are in the labour force, compared to 24% of women. In addition, while more than 30% of disabled men work full time, only 12% of disabled women are in full-time employment. Women with disabilities who work full time earn only 56% of the earnings of full-time employed men with disabilities (Bowe 1984). Only 3% of disabled women are registered in Ghana (1996), 0.3% in India (1991) and 19% in the Phillipines (1997) (Reilly, 2003). There is thus a need to examine and address the challenges faced by disabled women in the labour market.

The literature relevant to this study is twofold. Some authors have identified the obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities especially in developing countries; while others come up with measures that should be taken in order

to improve the situation. The second part is presented by looking at measures which are used by various countries in addressing the challenges.

Asch & Fine, 1988 noted labour policies to be one of the obstacles. They say that employment policies have devoted little attention to the disadvantaged employment status of women with disabilities. This seems to hold true of both generic state and federal employment policies as well as the employment policies directed specifically towards people with disabilities.

Braimah, 2009 explains that the major challenge faced by persons with disability is transportation. He says:

In developing countries and even in some developed countries, transportation is not made easily accessible to persons with disabilities. Where buses may be easily available, there may not be provisions for people in wheelchairs, no access ramps and other necessary facilities.

Braimah also noted that access to public buildings were another challenge which people with disabilities face in employment opportunities. As he put it:

Most if not all public buildings and facilities in poor countries, do not have disabled lifts and access ramps. This makes access to high rise buildings literally impossible. In cases where persons with disabilities have to access such buildings as a matter of necessity, they do so with extreme difficulty and that is even when a generous “abled” colleague decided to offer a generous helping hand.

The challenges identified by the above authors need to be looked at by developing countries especially Tanzania. Suggestions made by these same authors may also be helpful when seeking ways of improving the chances of disabled persons securing employment in the Public Civil Service.

Rao, I. noted that discrimination and inaccessibility are major obstacles that disabled women face in employment opportunities in India. He says:

“In addition to the prejudice and discrimination barrier, the inaccessibility of the physical environment (e.g., buildings, roads, transport and toilet facilities) is a serious obstacle to disabled women working outside their homes. They end up engaging in piece-work the most common form of income-generation available to them. Examples of piecework by disabled women and girls include labour - intensive and poorly paid activities such as weaving, sewing, basket making, the assembling of toys and production of handicraft items.”

Discrimination is also singled out in the report of the Director General of the ILO as a major challenge facing people with disabilities in employment opportunities (ILO, 2007).

The report states that:

“Discrimination is especially common at the hiring stage: a survey in France showed that under 2 per cent of people who mentioned their disability in their CV received an answer and were called for an interview. An important source of exclusion or disadvantage of people with disabilities is the fact that they are still often perceived as unproductive, unable to perform a job or too costly to employ.”

In explaining the gravity of the problem, the report also noted an increase in the number of court cases relating to discrimination against people with disabilities in the work place. In the United Kingdom, the Employment Tribunals Service records show that the year 2004 was particularly costly for employers: disability discrimination attracted the highest amounts of awards, with the average total (£28,889) more than double the next highest – race discrimination (£13,720). Tribunals awarded over £100,000 in 9 per cent of disability cases (only 1 per cent of sex cases and 0 per cent of race cases). In Australia, the number of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) complaints lodged before the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) fell between 1994–95 and 1998–99 and has remained stable since then. In 2002–03, as in most years, over half of all DDA complaints (53 per cent) were related to the employment sector.

Discrimination has been a major challenge facing people with disabilities especially women in all sectors including employment. Despite the above statistics showing an increase in the number of cases of discrimination in employment opportunities, it reflects a good image that people with disabilities have an opportunity to lodge complaints before

a court of law against discriminatory conduct. It will be good for other countries also to adopt such modalities and give opportunities to people with disability to fight for their rights. The same may bring positive impacts for the treatment of people with disabilities at the work place and increase their chances of securing employment.

The ILO noted limited education opportunities for people with disabilities as the major obstacle. In explaining a dilemma facing the world's disability community, it says;

Employment prospects for workers with disabilities are limited by initial barriers that they may have faced as children and young adults in acquiring a good basic education, vocational skills training, or higher education. ILO experience that in most developing countries, vocational rehabilitation services are either non-existent, or found only in urban centres. Even where they are provided, they are often under-funded and ineffective in preparing people with disabilities for work.

Russo and Jansen (1988) suggest that the combined effects of gender and disability stereotyping track women with disabilities into the most traditional female roles. As a result, women with disabilities are unlikely to have the educational opportunities that will allow them access to highly valued, well-paying professional positions.

Since education has a direct bearing on career advancement, it is therefore important to identify and dismantle all obstacles within the realm of education in order to ensure that people with disabilities will enjoy equal access to the employment market as their able-bodied counterparts.

Note should be taken of the various measures which have been noted from different countries which can help in improving the situation of disabled people especially women in employment opportunities in the public sector.

In China, the Government has put in place an executive structure which co-ordinates the formulation of policies and the provision of services for persons with disabilities. It also has committees which comprise members of the Government, public bodies, NGOs,

persons with disabilities, parents' organisations, self-help groups and local personalities. The roles of the committees are to deal with access, employment, public education and culture. In addition to that the Government provides rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities to facilitate their integration into the community. The rehabilitation services provide a full spectrum of services and **facilities catering for the special needs of women with disabilities**, on a par with their male counterparts.

The country also has legislation which helps in protecting people with disabilities and ensures that they enjoy their rights including the right to employment. These pieces of legislation are the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) and its Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> and the Building Ordinance<sup>5</sup>. The Social Welfare Department has also set up a "Marketing Consultancy Office" on a permanent basis, enhancing the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through innovative, effective and efficient business development and marketing approaches and by working in close collaboration with NGOs and business sector organisations. The department has also implemented a series of thematic programmes to assist persons with disabilities in finding employment and encouraging employers to recruit persons with disabilities. There is also on-going research which intends to identify other problems which people with disabilities, especially women, are facing in various fields of their life including employment (Hong Kong Labour and Welfare Bureau, 2007).

Despite those efforts, the ILO report on China shows that women with disabilities are still facing challenges in the labour market because the labour laws and policies of the country are not effectively implemented (ILO, 2007). However, the measures which have been taken by the Government of Hong Kong – China, are still sufficiently important to warrant consideration by other countries in the whole process of changing the situation of people with disabilities especially women in employment opportunities in the public sector. The most important thing is to ensure the implementation of those measures.

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<sup>4</sup> The Code provides guidance on the procedures and systems that can help to prevent disability discrimination and to deal with unlawful acts in employment.

<sup>5</sup> It prescribes design requirements so as to ensure buildings are accessible to persons with disabilities. It also provides that the new buildings and the existing buildings under major alteration are required to provide proper access and facilities to persons with disabilities.

In addition to China, other countries have also put in place various mechanisms in addressing the challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities.

In Mauritius, the training and employment of Disabled Persons Board work in close collaboration with employers and trade unions to ascertain that persons with disabilities do not suffer discrimination in the interviewing process or at the workplace<sup>6</sup>.

In India, the problem of accessibility to public buildings by disabled people especially women, was overcome after they had introduced representation of people with disabilities on accessibility audit teams. The representation of people with disabilities on Railway committees led to stations being made more accessible<sup>7</sup>.

In Thailand people with disabilities including women have been assisted to obtain more skills through vocational training in which they are equipped with computer skills, an ability to carry out electronic repairs and improve their English language skills. This helps them to attain more qualifications of competing in the labour market (Perry, 2003)

All of the above measures are significant in changing the situation of disabled women in the employment sector. Other countries including Tanzania should use those practices in order to improve the situation of disabled women. Various measures should be used to address the obstacles and challenges which disabled women face with regard to employment opportunities in the public sector. The State should work with other stakeholders in order to change the situation of this important group which is mostly marginalised in various fields including employment. People with disabilities, especially women, should also be involved in the whole process.

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<sup>6</sup> Employment of People with Disabilities: The Impact of Legislation, Report of a Technical Consultation, Addis Ababa - 2002

<sup>7</sup> Disability Dialogue: overcoming the Barriers to Mainstreaming and Inclusion of Disability, September 2005.

### **2.3 The Human Rights Framework**

The right to employment for women with disabilities is a fundamental human right which is enshrined in various human rights instruments to which Tanzania is a signatory. The instrument set the standards and measures that state parties are obliged to follow in order to ensure that this right is realized by disabled women.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) lays down guiding principles to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women in all areas including employment. It obliges states parties to refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions act in conformity with this obligation. It also requires State parties to take appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women<sup>8</sup>.

Article 11 specifically states that:

State parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular, the right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings; the right to the same employment opportunities...; the right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and re-training,.....; the right to equal remuneration...; the right to social security particularly in case of ...unemployment...; and the right to protection of health and safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

The Convention does not have any specific article on the rights of disabled women. However it guarantees the protection of all women including those who are disabled. Women with disabilities suffer double discrimination because of their gender and disability status. It is therefore important for States, in this case Tanzania, to take

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<sup>8</sup> Article 2(d) and (f) of CEDAW

measures in ensuring that discrimination is eliminated in all fields of life. This will allow disabled women to enjoy their rights including the right to employment.

It is also important for state parties to understand the situation of different categories of its citizens in order to create favourable conditions for living for each group and enable them to enjoy their rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>9</sup> provides that everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. This notion is also found in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights. Despite these provisions, the right to work cannot be fully realized without state parties taking into consideration the specific needs of various groups of people in its country. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities obliges State parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms<sup>10</sup>. Special measures are therefore required to be taken by the State in ensuring that disabled women, which are the most marginalized group in society, enjoy their right to employment.

Article 4 of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention No.159 of 1983 is in line with the above mentioned provision. It calls for an employment policy which shall be based on the principle of equal opportunity between disabled workers and workers generally. Equality of opportunity and treatment for disabled men and women workers shall be respected. Special positive measures aimed at effective equality of opportunity and treatment between disabled workers and other workers shall not be regarded as discriminating against other workers. Article 9 of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development requires State parties to adopt legislation and related measures to protect persons with disabilities that take into account their particular vulnerabilities. Rule 7(1) states that laws and regulations in the employment

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<sup>9</sup> Article 23(1)

<sup>10</sup> Article 6(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

field must not discriminate against persons with disabilities and must not raise obstacles to their employment.

The right to employment for disabled persons including women goes hand in hand with the accessibility to public buildings and transport. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability require states to ensure people with disability access to the physical environment. It states that States should initiate measures to remove the obstacles to participation in the physical environment. Such measures should be to develop standards and guidelines and to consider enacting legislation to ensure accessibility to various areas in society, such as housing, buildings, public transport services and other means of transportation, streets and other outdoor environments<sup>11</sup>. Creating an accessible environment for persons with disabilities is a very important component in facilitating their right to employment.

Empowerment is another important aspect under human right standards in providing more and better employment opportunities for various groups of people in society. States should recognize that persons with disabilities must be empowered to exercise their human rights particularly in the field of employment. In both rural and urban areas they must have equal opportunities for productive and gainful employment in the labour market<sup>12</sup>.

## **2.4 The National Legislative Framework**

The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 (as amended from time to time) which is the supreme law of the land recognizes the right to work as a fundamental right. Article 11(1) states that:

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<sup>11</sup> Rule 5(a)(1)

<sup>12</sup> Rule 7

The state authority shall make appropriate provisions for the realization of a person's right to work, to self education and social welfare at times of old age, sickness or disability and in other cases of incapacity. Without prejudice to those rights, the state authority shall make provisions to ensure that every person earn his livelihood.

The Constitution also sets the standard of equality and non-discrimination at the work place. Articles 22(1) provide that every person has the right to work. Article 23(1) states that every person, without discrimination of any kind, is entitled to remuneration commensurate with his work, and all persons working according to their ability shall be remunerated according to the measure and qualification for the work.

Other legislation which provides for the right to employment in Tanzania is as follows:

#### **2.4.1 The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, No 2 of 1982**

This Act makes provisions relating to employment of persons with disabilities. It provides for the establishment of a register of disabled job-seekers and for the establishment of the National Advisory Council whose functions include advising and assisting the Minister<sup>13</sup> with regard to the employment, self-employment or training of disabled persons; to coordinate policies and programmes and the provisions of grants to disabled persons; and to formulate programmes which may facilitate the educational, vocational and social integration of disabled people. The Act also provides a requirement for employers to employ disabled persons. Section 15(1) of the Act specifically states that:

It shall be the duty of every registered employer to give employment to persons who are registered as disabled persons to the number which may, from time to time, be fixed by regulations made on the behalf of the Minister and, where he is not already doing so at times when vacancies occur, to allocate for that purpose.

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<sup>13</sup> According to the 1982 Act 'Minister' means 'the Minister for the time being responsible for social welfare of the disabled persons'.

Exceptions can be made in the following circumstances if the employer can prove to the satisfaction of the Minister:

- (a) That even after a reasonable effort he has failed to get any disabled person;
- (b) That taking into consideration the nature of the employment, he cannot get a disabled person with the necessary skill or experience required for the employment; or
- (c) That taking into consideration the nature of the work or the circumstance of the place of work it may not be possible to employ a disabled person; or
- (d) That taking into consideration the condition of the disabled person he is not or would not be able to perform adequately the work genuinely and reasonably required for the employment.

The Act goes further and prohibits employers from discontinuing the employment of a disabled person<sup>14</sup>.

However, this Act lacks the necessary provisions requiring a friendly working environment for people with disability (especially women) in the Public Civil Service.

#### **2.4.2 Disabled Persons (Employment) Regulations, 1985 (Government Notice No 464/1985)**

These Regulations define the eligibility and registration requirements for disabled persons under Disabled Persons Employment Act 1982. They reserve for disabled persons two per cent of the vacancies in vocational training centres and require every registered employer<sup>15</sup> to reserve at least two per cent of jobs for registered disabled persons. They include schedules showing the towns and districts to which the Regulations apply and the registration forms to be used. These regulations should be

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<sup>14</sup> Section 16

<sup>15</sup> Under section 9(3) of the 1982 Act 'an employer shall be registered in the Register if he has the capacity to employ fifty or more employees'.

implemented by departments of the government, local authorities, parastatal organizations and private enterprises.

### **2.4.3 The Employment and Labour Relations Act, 2004**

This is the major law governing employment issues in Tanzania. Section 7 and 8 of the Act requires employers to ensure that they promote an equal opportunity in employment and strives to eliminate discrimination in any employment policy or practice. It also prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on all grounds including disability.

### **2.4.4 The National Policy on Disability, 2004**

It provides directives and measures that are supposed to be followed in order to improve the situation of disabled people in all sectors (including employment) in Tanzania. Paragraph 3.10 of the policy requires Government in collaboration with stakeholders to take measures to ensure people with disabilities are availed with work tools. It also requires the Government in collaboration with stakeholders to review the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act No. 2 of 1982. This is due to the fact that the legislation has not provided a solution to the employment problems of people with disabilities due to changes in the economic climate and globalization<sup>16</sup>.

It further requires the Government to take measures in ensuring that public buildings and other facilities are accessible to people with disabilities<sup>17</sup>. It further requires the Government in collaboration with Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) to ensure that people with disabilities are provided with information on the availability of technical aids, or provide technical aids to people with disabilities who have no means to buy them. The Government shall also waive fees for technical aids imported into the country and

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<sup>16</sup> Paragraph 1.2.7 of the National Policy on Disability, 2004

<sup>17</sup> Paragraph 3.11

those manufactured in the country. It should also put a mechanism in place to ensure the production of low cost technical aids in the country<sup>18</sup>.

Despite the fact that the National Policy on disability being very good on paper, it has not been of help to people with disabilities. This is because it can not be implemented because there is no law which can be used to enforce it.

#### **2.4.5 The National Employment Policy, 2008**

One of the key objectives of the policy is to promote equal access to employment opportunities and resources endowments for vulnerable groups of women, youth and People with Disabilities<sup>19</sup>. The policy also states the measures required to be taken in order to ensure that people with disabilities access equally both paid and self employment opportunities. Those measures include: Government undertaking affirmative action to enhance the employability of disabled people, to provide special facilities and equipments to enhance the capacity of disabled people, to make efforts in ensuring that friendly infrastructures, sensitize employers of their obligation to comply by employing a minimum set number of people with disabilities as set out in the law regarding people with disabilities.

#### **2.4.6 Guidelines for Services to People with Disabilities who are Civil Servants, 2008**

This guideline identifies the problems which persons with disabilities are facing in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. It narrates the obstacles which the disabled face in securing employment opportunities and the challenges which they are facing in the course of their employment. The guideline also provides for measures which are supposed to be taken by Government Institutions in order to change the situation of people with disabilities in the Public Civil Service. The measures provided are such as; it

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<sup>18</sup> Paragraph 3.7

<sup>19</sup> Paragraph 2.5.1(d) of the National Employment Policy, 2008

requires employers to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against at the workplace, all Government Institutions to ensure that office buildings are disability friendly and ensure that they acquire the necessary equipment to enhance their capacity, they should look into the possibility of assisting people with disabilities with transport to and from the office and they should make sure that there is equality at the workplace.

#### **2.4.7 Pending Law**

There is a draft bill for a Disability Act which intends to combine the Disabled Persons (Care and Maintenance) Act, 1982 and the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1982. It seems that the bill consists of all relevant provisions which will change for the better the situation of disabled people in employment opportunities in both private and Public Civil Service. Attempts to obtain a copy of the bill proved futile. This is discussed further in chapter three.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.0 THEORIES, METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES**

This chapter analyses the theories, methods and methodologies employed in carrying out this study. It also discusses the problems encountered in carrying out the research.

#### **3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Feminist theories were used to get an insight into the challenges which disabled women face in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Feminists have different views which explain the nature and forms of women's subordination and oppression. The study was informed by two theories, namely, radical feminist theory and liberal feminist theory.

Radical feminism is a philosophy emphasizing the patriarchal roots of inequality between men and women, or, more specifically, social dominance of women by men. Radical feminism views patriarchy as dividing rights, privileges and power primarily by gender, and as a result oppressing women and privileging men (Lewis, undated).

The theory helped me to understand how the patriarchal system in Tanzania affects women with disabilities in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Men have declared themselves the centre of everything. Women with disabilities are discriminated against because they are women and they have an added disadvantage as per the community's perception that they are disabled. The public service is male dominated hence they probably give priority to their fellow men. Disabled men are better off in securing employment opportunities because the system to some extent favours them. This makes it difficult for women with disabilities in securing employment opportunities. As a result there are few disabled women in the public sector and most of them are in the lower echelons of it.

Liberal feminist theory contends that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that block women's entrance and or success in the so called public world. Because society has the false believe that women are, by nature, less intellectually and or physically capable than men, it excludes women from the academy, the forum, and the market place. As a result of this policy of exclusion, the true potential of many women goes unfulfilled (Tong, 1989).

This theory helped me to understand that culture is one of the major obstacles preventing women with disabilities from securing employment in the public sector. The common negative attitude of some employers and heads of department towards women with disabilities emanates from cultural beliefs which exist within the community in which they live. This has acted as a barrier preventing them from them securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service because those employers and heads of departments are not interested in working with them.

The labour laws in Tanzania also do not favour women with disabilities in employment opportunities in the public sector. I found views of welfare liberal feminists helpful during the research. The theory holds that having a law which applies equally to all people might be discriminatory at times, that the law needs to treat differently people with different needs or in different situations (Tong, 1989). This view helped me to analyze the labour laws in Tanzania which do not incorporate gender for people with disabilities. The specific needs of women are not covered by the law. This has caused women with disabilities to be left behind unlike their male counterparts.

## **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES**

### **3.2.1 The Women's Law Approach**

I used Women's Law Approach as the main methodology of this research. This approach takes women's actual lived experiences and life situations as a starting point for the analysis of the position of women in law and society (Bentzon et al, 1998).

I applied this approach in my research in order to understand better the challenges and obstacles faced by women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. I found this method suitable for understanding the lived realities of disabled women in employment opportunities.

I interviewed various people working in the Public Civil Service and some who are working in NGO's for the disabled. This includes disabled men and women working in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; the President's Office Public Service Management; Legal and Constitutional Affairs; Tanzania Broadcasting Cooperation and Tanzania Braille Printing Press to mention just a few. During interviews cases were cited and disabled women shared their own experiences in explaining the obstacles and challenges they are facing or had faced in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. The respondents explained clearly that both women and men with disabilities are facing challenges in employment opportunities; however, women are further disadvantaged because of their gender.

The approach helped me to understand the actual challenges that disabled women are facing in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. It was useful in describing, understanding and explaining the problems that exist on ground. It helped me to gather empirical data because of its emphasis on grounded research.

The lived experiences of disabled women also helped me to appreciate the mechanisms they use to deal with their problems. The findings will therefore be used in developing recommendations for improving the situation.

### **3.2.2 The Human Rights based Approach**

Human Rights provide a standard set of measures on the rights that all human beings (including disabled women) are entitled to. It specifies states obligations as both bearers and guarantors of human rights.

Employment for disabled women is a human right issue. It has been reflected in both Regional and International Human Rights Instruments. The approach therefore enabled me to find out to what extent Tanzania has facilitated the realization of the rights of disabled women in employment opportunities as enshrined in Human Rights Instruments.

The interdependency and interrelatedness of human rights helped me to understand the factors I singled out in terms of my specific assumptions. I used the approach to translate core principles into research questions during the field research. I interviewed staff at the President's Office, Public Service Management and other staff working in managerial positions from various public institutions. I also interviewed disabled women who are civil servants and others who are working in private institutions. I further reviewed the labour laws and policies. All information gathered was compared with what the human right standard provides.

This methodology was very useful in understanding the actual status of compliance with human right standards. It is also a tool for sustainable change as through it, gaps were analyzed and through the same I will build up strong recommendations for the Government in order to change the situation of disabled women with regard to employment opportunities in Tanzania.

### **3.2.3 The Sex, Gender and Law Approach**

Bentzon et al, 1998 defines this approach as a theory which looks the position of women in law and society based on notions about sex and gender differences. Sex is based on the

physical distinctions between men and women; whereas gender is a social and cultural construct.

I employed this methodology in my research in order to establish which of the sexes is facing more challenges in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. I was looking at what the law says, and how it affects a particular sex on the ground.

This approach was useful because it helped me to understand that Labour Laws and policies in Tanzania are not adequately benefiting disabled women within the Public Civil Service. Issues of people with disabilities are treated as similar in labour laws, policies and guidelines without looking into specific needs such as gender, sex and disability.

The National laws require employers to ensure that they promote a policy of equal opportunity in employment and strive to eliminate discrimination in any employment policy or practice. It also prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on all grounds including disability. Despite this provision, women with disability have been facing both direct and indirect discrimination from employers.

There is also no provision of the law which provides for special consideration to improve the situation of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Service. Despite the fact that the Disabled Persons Employment Act No 2 of 1982 obliges all employers to set aside at least 2% of the total establishment, this provision was never implemented. There is also no specific quota reserved for women with disabilities. Issues of pregnancy, maternity leave and baby caring are also not covered under the law.

The approach used therefore identified different needs according to sex which are not reflected in the national law. This will be a starting point for other researchers to develop new perspectives which will help law makers to incorporate the issue of different needs according to sex in the law.

### **3.3 METHODS**

#### **3.3.1 Key Informant Interviews**

The key informants in this study were: Acting Commissioner for Social Welfare, Social Welfare Officers, Special Needs Education Coordinator (SNE), Administrative Officer President's Office – Public Service Management – Diversity Management unit. Other key informants were the heads of disability NGO's, Arbitrator - Commission for Mediation and Arbitration department Ministry of Labour, employment and youth development, Labour Officers, Database Manager and the Chief Architect - Tanzania Building Agency (TBA).

These key informants were interviewed so as to get an insight into the obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

Through key informants, I was able to gather statistics of disabled women employed in Public Civil Service, I managed to get information on the guidelines that have been developed in order to change the situation of people with disabilities in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. I was also informed of the draft of the Disability Act. The key informants also provided some insight into some efforts that the Government of Tanzania is making in order to change the situation of people with disabilities in the Public Civil Service. They further provided advice, assistance and guidance as to whom I might interview and from whom I then collected more data. This method was very useful as through it I formed new links with other stakeholders.

#### **3.3.2 Individual Interviews**

This method was used in order to capture life histories and or experiences that individual disabled women faced or are facing with regard to employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. The method was more workable and I used it to a large extent

throughout my research because women with disabilities who are civil servants are very few and are scattered in different offices which are located far from one another. It was therefore difficult to organize group discussions. This was only done in a few locations.

Twenty five individual interviews were conducted with disabled women. Among these, thirteen were women with physical disability and twelve with visual impairment.

The advantage of using this method was that it provided a broader picture of the lived realities and the experience of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. The method also helped me to probe issues better and clear up misunderstandings where there were inadequate or vague responses from other respondents.

**Table 1: Summary of the number of respondents covered in individual interviews**

S/N	Kind of disability	Profession	No. of persons	Current work
1.	Visually impaired	Teachers	11	4 working at Tanzania Braille printing press and the remaining 7 are teaching in primary schools
		Social Welfare	01	Social Welfare Officer
2.	Physical disability	Telecom operator	01	Telecom Operator
		Social Welfare	03	Social Welfare Officers
		Registry Clerk	01	Registry clerk
		Teacher	04	1Program officer ADD 3-Entrepreneurs
		Journalist	02	TV Program Producer
		Administration clerk	01	Administration clerk

### 3.3.3 Focus Group Discussions

This method helped me to get more information at on time and it also helped me to capture contributions from some of the respondents who felt inhibited during their individual interviews.

Through discussion, participants were able to cite examples of various cases, some of which were not possible to encounter in natural settings. This helped to give me a more accurate appreciation of the real (but hidden) extent of the problem.

Through focus group discussion I identified some respondents for individual interviews. The identification was made based on the personality of a particular individual noted during discussion. For example if a participant seemed to have more information but was reluctant to share it; others were identified by members of the group when giving examples of disabled women who faced or are facing problems in employment opportunities in the Public Service. In one group discussion I learned that sometimes you need to be careful in choosing respondents in a particular area. I was running a group discussion at the Tanzania Braille Printing Press. I invited women with physical disabilities and the ones with visual impairment. While the discussion was under way, one woman who is deaf came to the door complaining that she has been discriminated against because of the nature of her disability. I apologized and invited her into the discussion, but again I was challenged with sign language as I couldn't translate for her. Fortunately I was assisted by one woman with visual impairment who knows sign language. She was translating using a mixture of lip reading and sign language.

**Table 2: Summary of the number of respondents covered in each method**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Male respondent(s)</b>	<b>Female respondent(s)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Focus group discussion	02	10	12
Key informant interview	13	06	19
Individual interview	00	25	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>56</b>

### **3.3.4 Desk Research**

The secondary method of collecting data was used in this research. The information was gathered through reading various books, dissertations, flyers, national legislation, human right instruments and the internet.

I visited the International Labour Organization (ILO) Library, Information Centre on Disability, Tanzania Gender Networking Program Library, Disabled Organization for Legal Affairs and Social Economic Development (DOSALEB) Library and the Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs Library. I managed to get more information relating to employment which enriched my research.

This method was very useful as it laid a good foundation for me to be able to assess or examine the challenges and obstacles faced by disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

It gave me an insight of where to probe more, and which groups to interview in order to get more data.

### **3.3.5 Observation**

I applied this method through out my research. In all the offices I visited I was examining whether the physical structure and the environment were disability friendly. I made sure that I arrived very early at the public offices to observe the arrival at work of disabled staff. This included their arrival at the office and the way they climbed the stairs or walked uphill in order to get into their offices. I also observed the situation in the offices by examining equipment that was available and the layout of the office. Observation was also carried out at the bus stands to examine the transport system and see if it is friendly to people with disabilities. It was a passive kind of observation through which I was able to triangulate the information given during the interviews with the real situation. This method helped me to get the actual realities of the information I was looking for as compared to something which I was told.

### **3.4 Problems encountered during Field Research**

There were problems which I faced during field research. Some of them were:

- i. Failure to get a draft bill of the Disability Act - I was interested to see the bill in order to see what it contains. It could have been very relevant in my research as it might have provided an insight into how an improved law will go on to change the situation of disabled women in Public Civil Service. I could also identify the potential gaps and make the necessary recommendations. However my efforts to obtain the draft bill proved futile. No Government official was ready to give me the document. The reason given was that it is still a draft and they don't want people to rely on it because it could still change.
- ii. Difficulty in identifying disabled women who are civil servants – There are very few disabled women who are civil servants. It was not possible to get their names from the President's Office Public Service Management. I was therefore identifying them through the disability NGO's and I would ask one respondent if s/he knew of any disabled women who are civil servants. Another challenge is that women with disabilities are also working in different offices which are very far from one another in the three Districts of Dar es Salaam. In most cases I was only managing to talk to one person per day. The distance plus the problem of traffic jams in Dar es Salaam prevented me from making more than one appointment. Due to those problems, I only managed to interview a few disabled women who are working in the Public Civil Service.
- iii. Denied permission to talk to staff who are disabled - In some instances I was denied access to talk to disabled women who are civil servants. Example at Uhuru Mchanganyiko Primary School there are three female teachers who are disabled. But when I requested permission from the headmaster to talk to them he refused saying they are very busy and that there was a shortage of teachers at that time. I

used my own technique and managed to talk to one teacher during the week-end at her home.

- iv. Lack of cooperation from some respondents – Some respondents especially disabled women who are working in the lower positions were not ready to give me any information until I gave them some money. The situation was a bit complicated because they did not ask for money at first, they would tell you they are busy, or to come the next day, or that they were tired. After a while you discover what they needed. After fulfilling their needs they were very cooperative. As a matter of fact most of them were very happy that I was researching in the disability area. I think it is economic hardship which was making them sometimes behave in such a way because it seemed to be the norm exchanging information for money.

### **3.5 Assessment of Methods and Methodologies used**

The methodologies and methods used in this study were very useful. They were gender sensitive and helped me to get first hand information. They also helped me to use different approaches depending on the nature and level of respondent(s). This helped me to triangulate the information received from the employers in the Public Civil Service with the information of disabled women who are civil servants and those working in the private Institution. The data collected, plus the observation method helped me to get the real picture of what is actually happening on ground. Despite the limitations noted, the study achieved its objectives to quite a considerable degree as I was able to collect all the relevant data to the fulfillment of the study. The methods and methodologies proved to be very practical in uncovering the obstacles and challenges that disabled women face in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the major findings of the study on the obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service in Tanzania. The findings were generated in line with the research questions and objectives of the study mentioned in chapter one.

In presenting the findings, I incorporated the voices of various respondents which reflect the lived reality of the challenges that disabled women are facing in employment opportunities.

#### **4.1 Overview of Employment for Disabled Women in Public Civil Service**

In Dar es Salaam city, Tanzania, both men and women with disabilities face various challenges in employment opportunities in the Public Service. There are few people with disabilities who are civil servants. The research that was conducted by the NGO called Ernst and Young in 2005 revealed that disabled people who are working as civil servants comprise less than 1% of all employees in the Public Civil Service<sup>20</sup>. Also the report of the President's Office - Public Service Management unit, of July – December 2007, indicates that there is a total of 689 people with disabilities who are civil servants. This is equivalent to 0.2% of 354,000 employees in the Public Civil Service<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Guideline for services to people with disabilities who are civil servants, 2008 pg 3

<sup>21</sup> Ibid pg 4

Although both men and women with disabilities face challenges in finding employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service, women with disabilities are at a greater disadvantage and they are subject to multiple challenges because of their gender and disability. The statistics in Tanzania show that the number of disabled women is a bit higher than that for disabled men. The total number of women with disabilities is 1,221,506 while men are 1,145,435<sup>22</sup>. Despite this fact, the number of disabled female in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service is significantly lower than the number of disabled men. The chart below shows the number of disabled people who are civil servant as per gender.

**Table 3: Statistics of Disabled Persons who are civil servants**

S/N	Kind of disability	Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
1.	Physical disability (legs)	405	163	568
2.	Physical disability (hands)	27	9	36
3.	Blind / People with visual impairment	86	35	121
4.	Deaf	13	15	28
5.	Dumb	6	3	9
6.	Albino	5	5	10
7.	Other kind of disabilities	8	6	14
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>786</b>

*Source: President's Office Public Service Management, 2009*

The findings from the field are divided into two parts. The first part consists of issues falling under individual or family level and the second part consist issues falling under the President's Office - Public Service Management department.

<sup>22</sup> 2009 statistics obtained at President's Office, Public Service Management. The statistics are only for people with disabilities who are over 7 years old.

## 4.2 Individual / Family Level

Some challenges which disabled women face in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service are contributed by the culture, behaviour, status or background of an individual or families members and relatives.

### 4.2.1 Education

One of the contributing factors for the low number of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service is illiteracy. Most disabled women have low levels of education because their parents were unable to afford to develop their potential. This was due to cultural barriers where by disabled girls are not sent to school as they are considered incapable, a burden, a sign of bad luck or misfortune and it is regarded as shameful to have a disabled girl child. Most of them end up being confined at home. In explaining this point, the Acting Regional Social Welfare officer<sup>23</sup> reported that:

In most African culture it is shame for a family to have a disabled child. If is a girl is even worse. Disabled male children they are better off in getting their rights. Most of them they go to school and hence it becomes easier for them to get formal employment, but for girls, very few of them are taken to school. Like in my culture<sup>24</sup>, disabled girls are not allowed to go to school; most of them are just confined at home. Go and ask your husband<sup>25</sup> if in his village disabled girls are taken to school. This is the major obstacle to their career.

Some parents are also overprotective of their disabled children, especially girls. They do not allow them to go anywhere or do anything thinking that they may be harmed or get into trouble. They end up being confined at home not because their parents hate them or feel ashamed to expose them but because they want them to remain safe. As a result some of their basic rights like the right to education are curtailed as they are not even sent to

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<sup>23</sup> He is visually impaired

<sup>24</sup> The respondent is from Bukoba region in Tanzania, where negative attitudes against women with disabilities is still dominant.

<sup>25</sup> My husband is coming from the same region with the respondent.

school. Their future career is also distorted as they can not be professionals and hence it limits their chances of getting formal employment.

The research also revealed that sometime ago, some parents were not aware of the presence of schools in the country which accommodate children with disabilities. As a result those who were well-off, and who were aware of the rights of people with disabilities, used to send their children outside the country for schooling. Those who were economically poor had no alternative rather than to keep their children at home. In explaining this point one disabled female respondent<sup>26</sup> in an individual interview that was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009 reported that:

I got disability when I was five years old. I schooled at Kenya. My parents were not aware of the presence of schools for people with visual impairment in the country. My mother and other relatives didn't wanted me to go to school but my father insisted, other relatives were not happy, they were worried that it will be difficult for me to stay at school alone without any relative, and thought that I am supposed to remain at home as they thought education will not help me.

Due to these reasons there are few women who have gone to school and most of them ended their education at the secondary school level. The current statistics show that there are still very few women at the tertiary level. The chart below shows the statistics per gender of disabled students who are schooling in various universities in Tanzania.

**Table 4: Statistics of disabled students who are being educated at tertiary level**

S/N	Name of university	Total no. of students	Sex		Kind of disability	Course
1.	SWKUCO	5	F	4	2-Physical, 1-albino, 1-deaf	BE.d SN
			M	1	Visual Imp.	BE.d SN
2.	HKMU	1	F	1	Visual Imp.	MD
			M	0	-	-
3.	Saint Augustine University	7	F	2	1 – Albino 1 - Visual Imp	BAED BBAI
			M	5	3 – Physical 2 - Albino	ADA1,BAED,BASO BBA3,BAMC

<sup>26</sup> She is visually impaired. She is a social welfare officer working at the Social Welfare Office, Head quarters – Dar es Salaam. She is the former member of the Parliament.

4.	Morogoro University	4	F	1	Physical	BA Mass commun.
			M	3	2 – Physical 1 – Visual Imp.	BA Education BA Islamic studies
5.	Tumaini Dsm	4	F	2	1 – Physical 1 – Visual Imp.	LLB BBA
			M	2	Physical	LLB
6.	Mkwawa University	6	F	3	Physical	BA. Ed
			M	3	1 – Physical 2 – Visual Imp.	BSs Ed BA. Ed
7.	Huria University	12	F	1	Visual Imp.	BA. Ed
			M	11	2 – Physical 8 – Visual Imp. 1 – Deaf	BBA, BA Ed 6-BA Ed, LLB, BBA BA Ed

*Source: President's Office Public Service Management, 2009*

The table shows that there are 14 female and 25 male disabled students at various universities in Tanzania. This is a reflection of the low number of women with disabilities in higher learning institutions which has an impact on employment opportunities. Limited levels of education amongst disabled women result in restricting their job opportunities to certain occupations in the Public Civil Service.

#### **4.2.2 Different Levels of Ability**

Women with disabilities have different levels of abilities depending on the nature of their disabilities. Women with visual impairments have very different needs as compared to women with physical disability. The pressing nature of their needs determines their ability in performing their work.

##### **I. Women with visual impairment**

At an individual level they need personal assistance in various matters, including walking to and from the office and in the course of their work. The Government is not assisting people with visual impairment by providing personnel and assistants. They are therefore required to pay those assistants from their own pockets. Some of them decide to use their

relatives to assist them, but again most of them have experienced problems and sometimes this result in quarrels within the family.

When a woman with visual impairment becomes pregnant and when she starts nursing her baby she needs even more assistance than usual. She needs a personal assistant to help her in the course of her work and also she needs some one who will be taking care of her baby. At this stage women with visual impairment experience a lot of challenges which impact on their employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. They are denied official missions, training and educational opportunities because they are considered too costly. If she is allowed to go on an official mission, it means she has to go with two assistants. One who needs to take care of her baby and the other to assist her in the course of her work and walking with her to and from the office, reading for her if her documents are not in braille or on audio tapes. The system therefore escapes payment of assistants for women with visual impairment by simply denying her the right to go for training in the first place. Workshops or educational opportunities which could have helped her to progress professionally and obtain senior positions in the Public Civil Service are also denied.

Another challenge which women with visual impairment face at an individual level which has an impact on their employment as civil servants is that, most of them when they are nursing babies face challenges in maintaining maids. The maid will just stay for a short period of time and leave. This sometimes results in women with visual impairment not going to the office until they get other maids or going to the office with their babies. In one case at the Tanzania braille printing press, a visually impaired woman was not on good terms with her supervisor because she was going to the office with her baby. She was considered not to be serious about keeping her job.

## **II. Women with physical disability**

Women with physical disabilities often need technical aids in order to enhance their mobility. Issues of personal assistants only arise if they lack technical aids and if a

woman has severe disability such as mobility impairment of both legs, she will need some one to assist her to board the bus, and in accessing certain buildings which are not friendly to people with disabilities.

The above needs which women with disabilities have and require in order to perform their work effectively, are not covered by the law. This perpetuates the problems of women with disabilities in the Public Civil Service. Despite the fact that those issues fall under the individual and family level, there is a great role that Government is obliged to play in order to change the situation. This is discussed further in chapter five.

### **4.3 President's Office Public Service Management**

This is the major department which administers all employment opportunities under the Public Civil Service in Tanzania. The finding noted the following challenges which fall under this department:

#### **4.3.1 Attitude at the Workplace**

The findings revealed that most employers have negative attitudes towards women with disabilities. The same have been noted in the following areas;

##### **I. During a job interview**

Some Government institutions and departments are not interested in employing disabled women. This is because they think they are delicate and not capable of working hard, have difficult birth issues, they will need maternity leave and that they will need help with child care in addition to their disability. Others think it is difficult and expensive to work with disabled women. This causes employers to lose interest in employing them.

Due to these reasons, when a woman with disability appears for an interview, she is not considered for the post. Some of them are not even interviewed; instead they are given excuses by the interview panel and told to leave. In an individual interview that was held at one NGO office named Action on Disability and Development (ADD) on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009, one disabled woman<sup>27</sup> reported that:

“It is very difficult for a disabled woman to secure employment in the Public Civil Service. When I finished my diploma course in education I made applications for various posts but I was not able to get a job within the Public Civil Service. There is a time when I saw the vacancy announcement in the news paper for the post of a physics teacher. I applied and I was short listed. When I appeared for the interview the panel was like shocked! They communicated among themselves and then one panel member told me we are sorry madam, we short listed you by mistake as we need a history teacher and not a physics teacher. I latter noted that my fellow classmate, a male physics teacher, who was also a disabled, was offered the opportunity”.

The negative attitude of employers and heads of departments during job interviews have a great impact on disabled women who attempt to secure employment in the Public Civil Service. Some women with disabilities had lost interest and hope of securing jobs in the Public Civil Service and opted for private institutions instead. They were tired of the embarrassment they were facing during interviews. Others think it is impossible for a disabled woman to get a job in the Public Civil Service unless you have a “God father” to assist you. This notion is also held by disabled women themselves. In an individual interview conducted at the Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2009, a disabled female respondent<sup>28</sup> reported that:

“It is not easy for a disabled woman to get a job in the Public Civil Service even when she meets all the qualifications. This is because of the negative attitude of employers which is attributed by culture. I did not get any problem in getting a job because I am coming from a well off family and my parents knew some of the people who were in the interview panel”.

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<sup>27</sup> She is physical disabled – mobility impairment (both legs). She is a teacher by professional but she is working with ADD as a program Officer Department of gender.

<sup>28</sup> She is physically disabled, has only one leg. She is working at the Ministry of legal and Constitutional Affairs as a Registry Clerk.

Another female disabled person<sup>29</sup> reported that:

“I finished my diploma in education sometimes in 1999. I applied for various posts in the Public Civil Service without success. Sometimes in 2003, my father who is an engineer in Mwanza Municipality went to see the Minister of Education and reported the way I have been struggling to get a job without success. As a result I was told to bring application letters to the Ministry of Education. Few days later I was called for the interview and finally I got a job”.

## **II. When a disabled woman goes to report to her duty station**

Some heads of departments have been hesitant to receive disabled women in their duty stations. They are considered as burdens because of the assistance that they require from the office in order to work effectively. For example, people with visual impairment need assistants to assist them in reading, teachers need supporting teachers to assist them in marking students exercise books. This is considered a burden on the office. Some women moved through three to four duty stations without being accepted. This resulted in some of them reporting the matter to the Minister for intervention before they are accepted to work in a particular duty station. In an individual interview which was conducted at Toangoma primary school (Temeke District) on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009, the respondent who is a female teacher with visual impairment told me that:

“Getting a duty station to work on was really difficult. Whenever I was going to report I was told that the school is full while in reality it was not true. I kept on reporting to the Ministry of Education and they were posting me in different duty stations but nobody was receiving me. In some places like Kisarawe, I was plainly told by the Education Officer that they can not take me because I’m visually impaired. I was going up and down for a year and so. I then went to report to the Minister of Education. Again I faced challenges because the secretaries could not let me meet him. I spend some weeks looking on the possibility of talking to him in vain. One day when I reached there the secretaries complained of being tired of seeing me every day. They told me to leave and never come

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<sup>29</sup> Information given by a disabled female respondent on an individual interview conducted on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

back. I was “pissed” off; I cried so loudly, fortunately the Minister came out and invited me in. I reported my problems and as a result of his intervention I was accepted at Mbagala Kizuriani Primary school.”

It is worth noting that some disabled women have been giving up their employment opportunities because they are tired of the discrimination that was shown to them when they went to report to their duty stations. Some of them decided to leave aside their professional careers and became entrepreneurs in order to earn money and make a living.

### **III. In the course of their employment**

There is a perception that women with disabilities are not capable of working effectively. They are discriminated against by fellow staff and heads of departments. Fellow staff members perceive them as burdens because of the assistance that they need from them. Sometimes they even say nasty words to them and the head of department just keeps quiet and may even support those making the comments. In the Focus Group Discussion that was held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at the Tanzania Braille Printing Press, one female disabled respondent<sup>30</sup> who is a teacher reported that in her former school where she was teaching at Uhuru Mchanganyiko Primary School, there were four disabled women (visually impaired). One day when they were in a meeting one of the able bodied teachers asked the head master;

When are you going to transfer these burdens to other schools? They are too many here, we are really tired of working for them, we need assistance from other people.

All the able bodied teachers who were in the meeting supported the idea. The head master replied that he will work on the issue. Few months later, all four teachers were transferred to different schools.

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<sup>30</sup> She is visually impaired.

Sometimes even disabled males discriminate against women with disabilities in employment opportunities. In individual interviews that were held at Toangoma primary school on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009, the respondents reported that the headmaster of that school, who is a physically disabled man, has been discriminating against the female disabled teachers (visually impaired). He doesn't support them in anything including working tools like manila paper. He knows they do not have working tools in that school but when they go to other places like the Tanzania League for the Blind to prepare their work properly he becomes angry. Yet he wants them to give him reports on whatever they are doing. He does not even count them as teachers, and he normally says in his school he has fifteen teachers, while in reality there are seventeen. He also openly says;

A disabled woman can not work; this is very well known in African culture, I am wondering what these women are doing here.

Unlike men, most women with disabilities are not promoted to senior positions even when they qualify. In some instances women with disabilities have struggled by themselves to advance and some of them managed to attain a PhD. Despite those efforts and meeting all qualifications to get a higher post they were not promoted. This resulted to some of them finding jobs outside the country or to moving to the private sector. In explaining this point, disabled female respondents in the Focus Group Discussion that was held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009 reported that:

It is very difficult for a disabled woman to get promotion even when she qualifies. There is one teacher who decided to look for a job outside the country. She was a primary school teacher. She struggled to grow higher until she managed to get a PhD. She reported to the Ministry of Education but she was not promoted. She was demoralized and lost interest to continue working in the Public Civil Service. She got a job in a certain private company in Nairobi – Kenya where she is currently working.

Most women with disabilities are also denied chances for going on official missions, education opportunities and training. This limits their chances of progressing and is also an obstacle in securing senior positions within the Public Civil Service.

It is also important to note that people with visual impairment have limited choices of careers. Most of them are employed as teachers, probably because the first blind person in Tanzania in the Public Civil Service was employed as a teacher (1966)<sup>31</sup>. The perception among the community is that teaching is the job which a blind person can do successfully. A few of them work in the Social Welfare Department.

### **4.3.2 Mobility and Transport**

The challenges relating to transport for women with disabilities varies depending on the nature of the disability. Those with visual impairment face different challenges as compared to those with physical disability as explained below.

#### **I. Women with visual impairment**

Generally disabled public civil servants are not provided with transport to and from work. They use public transport called “**daladala**” which is not very convenient for them. They can not compete with the able bodied people in order to get into a car. In Dar es Salaam, during working days, public transport is a very serious problem especially in the mornings and in the evenings. It is not easy even for an able bodied woman to get into a car. You really have to struggle in order to get in. Sometimes people even climb through the windows in order to get into the buses. In the process of struggling to enter into the car, other people are harmed as they may be pushed and knocked about. Thieves also use that opportunity to pick pockets; it is just an un-conducive kind of situation, especially for a disabled woman. In an individual interview that was held with one female teacher who is visually impaired, and who survived from being knocked by a daladala reported that:

“Disabled women face many challenges in relation to transport. It is not easy to fight for the transport and arrive to the office on time. One day (sometimes in 2007) when I was struggling to board into the daladala I

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<sup>31</sup> Information obtained from the Regional Welfare Officer

was pushed and fell down near the car tyre. I was about to be knocked because the car was about to move while I was still down. Fortunately one person dragged me clear.”



*Figure2: People struggling to enter into “daladala” at the city centre of Dar es Salaam called Posta.*

In order to cope with this difficulty, women with disabilities wake-up very early in the morning, when there are not many people at the bus stop. This enables them to board the buses comfortably. They also leave their offices very late in order to avoid fighting for buses. However, it is not safe for them to walk very early in the morning or at night. In one Focus Group Discussion it was reported that there have been some cases of disabled women being sexually harassed on their way to the bus stop. In 2008 one disabled women, who was a telecom operator was raped when she came out from the office late. She finished her work early, but could not go to the bus stand as she knew she would not manage to fight to board the bus.

There is also a negative perception by the bus conductors that disabled women are unemployed therefore they do not have money to pay for the bus fair. They are perceived as beggars. As a result drivers and conductors do not allow them to board the buses. This

causes women with disabilities sometimes to spend much time at the bus stand and in the end they arrive late at their offices. In the individual interview that was conducted at the Ministry of social welfare on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009, the former Member of Parliament who is a visually impaired woman reported that;

“Disabled women are considered to be beggars and sometimes conductors are reluctant to allow them to board into the buses. Several times when I want to get into the car with my assistant who is able bodied, they ask her if she will pay for my transport fair. This is because they link disability with poverty”.

People with visual impairment have also another challenge of incurring double costs in transport charges. This is due to the fact that they can not walk alone. They have their own assistants who take them to and from their places of work. They therefore pay for transport for themselves and for their assistants. Sometimes they do not go to work because of the shortage of money for transport charges. This creates conflicts with their supervisors as they are perceived to be lazy.

Women with visual impairment have also been facing the problems of their white canes being broken during their struggle to board buses. On these occasions they cannot go to work until they buy another cane because it is difficult for them to walk without the white canes. This also in some instances caused conflict with their supervisors and also results in their underperforming.

## **II. Women with physical disabilities**

Women with physical disabilities need technical aids to enhance their mobility. They need special shoes (culpa), tricycles, motorized three wheelers, modified cars, scooters or similar vehicles. The provision of technical aids in the Public Civil Service in Tanzania varies from one office to another. In some offices people with physical disability are given scooters (in Tanzania the famous name for scooter is “**Bajaji**”). They are also given fuel and the office incurs expenses for repairing the scooter. The office also incurs

the expenses of buying special shoes and crutches. In other offices women with physical disabilities are given loans to buy the scooter, but they bear the fuel and maintenance costs of the car's expenses from their own pockets. In other offices even getting a loan to buy the scooter is difficult. There is no standardization of services provided to people with physical disability. The services provided to a woman with physical disability depend on the sensitivity and good will of the management in a particular office within the Public Civil Service. Some heads of departments and institutions are keenly aware of the needs of women with disabilities and they are responsible for initiating the whole process for their staff to obtain technical aids<sup>32</sup>.

In all the offices, the training of how to use technical aids, especially the scooter is not provided. A disabled woman is supposed to undergo that training at her own expense.

Women with physical disabilities, who do not get any technical aids from the office, use public transport and they face the same challenges which women with visual impairment face. Most of them do not manage to buy the scooter on their own because they are expensive. Initially they were sold for 2 million Tanzanian Shillings (approximately US\$2,000). But recently the scooters started being used as Taxis in Dar es Salaam. This made the cost rise to 4 million Tanzanian shillings (approximately US\$4,000).

Transport is a big challenge for women with physical disabilities. Sometimes they are not able to arrive at their duty stations on time. It also has an impact on their working standard as they sometimes under perform. This has a negative impact on their potential for promotion and also it causes conflicts with their supervisors.

### **4.3.3 Working Aids and Assistant Personnel**

This is a major problem for people with visual impairment. The Government does not issue them with working tools such as computers, writing frames with stylus, Perkins Braille, printers or manila papers. They have to buy these for themselves; some of the

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<sup>32</sup> Reported by the respondents in individual interviews held on 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct, 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct, 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov, and 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2009

tools are very expensive and it is difficult for an individual to buy them on their own. For example Perkins braille is sold for Tshs. 1.2 million (approximately US\$1,000). Very few people with disability are managing to buy them. These machines are also not available in the country; they are imported from South Africa. This makes the situation even more difficult for a disabled woman to get one.

In almost all the offices within the Public Civil Service, all the materials are in normal script (not in braille). This makes the working environment very difficult for women with visual impairments. They cannot read and write. This raises another need for assistant personnel to assist them in reading the materials. However, the Government is not providing assistant personnel to help women with visual impairment in carrying out their duties. In an individual interview that was held with a former member of the Parliament who is visually impaired she reported that;

“When I entered into the Parliament I found all the documents (the bills, reports etc) to be in normal writing (not in braille). I could not participate actively in the Parliament session because I could not read the documents. I went to report to the Speaker and requested to be given an assistant who will be assisting me in reading the documents. Initially the Speaker was surprised and said it is expensive and it had never happened that two people are employed under the same post. I stood firm and insisted that I have to be empowered by being assisted with all what I need in order to be able to work properly and effectively. He finally agreed.”

The situation is more difficult for teachers. Preparing the materials for teaching is difficult because they don't have the equipment. But also they cannot mark students' exercise books. They need some one to assist them. Some of them have been hiring assistants and they pay them from their own pockets. Others have been relying on their friends or relatives. But some of those friends and relatives are not qualified and hence not managing to do properly what they have been requested to do. In some instances, teachers with visual impairments have been requesting students who are in higher grades to assist them in marking exercise books for the students of lower grades. However, this has sometimes caused problems because sometimes the students who have been requested to mark the exercise books misbehave and they do not follow the instructions

that they have been given. They make funny pictures and comments in the exercise books which they have been given. As a result students get angry and they do not attend classes and or report the matter to their parents who come to complain to the Headmaster on how the exercise books of their children are being marked.

In order to cope with the problems of working aids, people with visual impairment (women inclusive) go to a disabled organization named Tanzania League of the Blind (TLB) where there are Perkins braille machines and all people with visual impairment are allowed to use them. But the challenges still persist because they cannot go there often enough. Also sometimes when they go there they find many people using the machines so they have to wait or go back and come back at another time.

Lack of working aids for people with visual impairment in the Public Civil Service is a serious problem and it causes them to work under very difficult conditions.

#### **4.3.4 Public / Office Buildings**

Most of the public buildings in Dar es Salaam are not disabled friendly. They are multi-storey, there are no ramps, and in the lifts numbers are not inscribed in braille. This poses challenges for people with disabilities in accessing public buildings and creates a difficult working environment. Some people have fallen downstairs and sustained serious injuries as a result of which they became even more vulnerable. In sharing her lived reality, one female who is working in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as a telecom operator reported that:

“My office was on the third floor and the building doesn’t have a lift. I was reporting several times to the management on the difficulties I was getting to go up and down every day, but they told me there is no any office on the ground floor. One day, sometimes in 2006, when I was getting out of the office I fell from the third floor. I sustained serious injuries on my spinal cord. I was hospitalized for six months, but I didn’t recover totally. I’m still feeling back pains, and sometimes I loose my memory. I am still going for medical check-ups. After the accident I was given the office on the ground flow.”



**Figure 3:** This is the building where the offices of the headquarters of the Social Welfare Department are located. The offices are in the third and fifth floor. This is the main department in the country which deals with issues of people with disabilities, yet its own building is not disabled friendly!



**Figure 4:** Most public buildings in Dar es Salaam city have these kinds of stairs. How can a disabled woman access the offices?

Even buildings which are not multi-storey, are sometimes located on a steep slope, thus becomes unfriendly to people with disabilities. In most cases they need assistants to be lifted up.



**Figure 5:** *This is Toangoma Primary School. There are three disabled teachers who are working in this school; two female teachers who are visually impaired and one male teacher who is physically disabled.*

Some buildings also have tiles which are very slippery; this is also a challenge for people with disabilities. Some of them have been falling and they also sustained injuries. Some requested for transfer to other offices but not all of them succeed in getting a transfer.

It is also difficult for people with visual impairment to use the lifts; they need some one to assist them. They are not self - reliant because in the lifts the numbers are not written in braille.

Some women with disabilities abandoned their posts in the Public Civil Service and went to look for other jobs in private Institutions because the environment at the workplace was very un-conducive for them. One female teacher who is mobility impaired (both legs) reported that when she went to report to her duty station, she could not manage to reach the office until fellow staff come and lifted her up. This went on for several days and she started feeling bad as she had to wait until her fellow staff colleagues could assist her. She then decided to look for a job in a private institution and fortunately managed to

get a job at NGO called Action on Disability and Development (ADD) where she is currently working. The environment there is very friendly for people with disability.



**Figure 6:** This is the ADD office in Dar es Salaam where one female disabled who is mobility impaired managed to get a job after she had failed to work as a teacher in her duty station in Mwanza because the office building was not disabled friendly.

The findings also revealed that initially there was no provision in the Construction Act relating to friendly buildings to people with disabilities. However, last year, a new law was drafted, including provisions for friendly buildings for people with disabilities. It also has a provision for punishment of any person who fails to comply. The bill was presented before the parliament on February 2010 for discussion and hopefully after being passed it will bring about changes.

#### **4.3.5 Government Commitment**

The study noted some efforts which are being made by the Government to change the situation of people with disabilities in employment opportunities in Tanzania.

In 2005, The President's Office Public Service Management – Diversity Management unit which was dealing with gender issues, was officially tasked to deal with issues of people with disabilities. The same year, the unit in collaboration with an accounting firm Ernst and Young conducted a study to find out the challenges which people with disability face in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Various challenges which face people with disabilities were noted including unfriendly office buildings, transport problems, negative attitudes of employers against people with disabilities, lack of working and technical aids etc. Following that research, in 2008 a guideline of services for people with disability in the Public Civil Service was developed and it was shared with all stakeholders.

The unit went further conducting trainings in various public authorities with the intention of changing their mindsets on the perceptions they have towards people with disabilities. It also intended to help them understand and be able to use the guideline which has been developed.

The Government in collaboration with disabled organizations and other stakeholders also developed a bill on the Disability Act, which I was told that it incorporates all the needs of people with disabilities.

It should however be noted that, specific issues focusing on women with disabilities are not taken on board. This was confirmed during the interview with the Acting Commissioner of Social welfare held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009. She reported that currently they are working on disability issues as a whole. The issue of gender will be looked at later if the need arises.

It is also still too early to know how effective the developed guidelines will be in changing the situation of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. This is because the implementation of some of the provisions provided in the guideline has budgetary implications. Also changing the mindset of employers and the community at large on their perceptions towards people with disabilities is not something that will happen overnight. This also has implications on how a department will be prioritizing the needs of the office (including needs of people with disabilities) and the money they have.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

Women with disabilities face various obstacles in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. The few who have managed to secure employment, work under very difficult conditions. As a result some of them have even left aside their opportunities in the public service. This shows that the right to employment for women with disabilities in Tanzania is not adequately realized. While appreciating the efforts which have been made by the Government to change the situation of people with disabilities in formal employment, it is worth noting that a lot still needs to be done. There are still a lot of gaps which need to be closed. The following chapter analyses some of the gaps and proposes measures that are required to be taken in order to change the situation of disabled women in the formal employment sector.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5.0 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Having looked at the real life experience of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service, this chapter seeks to establish what the state is doing and what it is supposed to do in ensuring that employment as a fundamental human right is accessed by all people especially disabled women who are the most marginalized. The overall analysis will be done in the context of examining the national legislation, human rights instruments and the lived realities of disabled women in the Public Service.

#### **5.2 The Extent of the State's Compliance with its Human Rights Duties**

The state is obliged (under the national laws, regional and international human right Instruments) to ensure that the right to employment is realized in the country especially for marginalized groups such as women with disabilities. The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 (as amended from time to time) recognizes the right to work as a fundamental human right. It requires the state authority to make appropriate provisions for the realization of a person's right to work. It further states that every citizen is entitled to equal opportunities and the right on equal terms, to hold any office or discharge any function under the state's authority<sup>33</sup>.

Rule 7(5) of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities states that:

“In their capacity as employers, States should create favourable conditions for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector.”

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<sup>33</sup> Article 11, 22 and 23 of the Constitution of United Republic of Tanzania, 1977

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities obliges State Parties to recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms<sup>34</sup>.

The reality on the ground revealed that despite the fact that Tanzania is a signatory to various Human Right Instruments, there are noticeable gaps in the employment of women with disabilities in the Public Civil Service. The gaps have not been addressed adequately by the Tanzanian Government. This has resulted in the presence of persistent obstacles and challenges faced by disabled women in employment opportunities. Some of those gaps are as follows:

#### **1. The Lack of Standardization of Services provided to People with Disabilities within the Public Civil Service**

Women with disabilities need technical aids in order to enhance their capacity. The reality on ground revealed that there is no standardization of the provision of technical assistance or aids to women with disabilities. In some offices they get all the technical assistance they need while in others they get nothing.

Article 15 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights provides that every individual shall have the right to work under *equitable and satisfactory conditions* (*my emphasis*). The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights obliges the state to recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work<sup>35</sup>. Article 22 of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action specifically states that:

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<sup>34</sup> Article 6(1) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

<sup>35</sup> Article 7

Special attention needs to be paid to ensuring non-discrimination and the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by disabled persons, including their active participation in all aspects of society.

The Government has failed to meet the above standard. Women with disabilities cannot enjoy their right to employment if there are no favourable conditions of work. Lack of standardization in providing technical aids constitutes discrimination which is a violation of human rights. Those who do not get the technical aids are working under very difficult conditions. The Government should make sure that there is an equivalent standard of services provided to people with disabilities within the Public Civil Service. This should be clearly stated within the Law which will oblige all employers to comply.

## **2. People with Disabilities are treated similarly in Labour Laws, Policies and Guidelines without regard to their diverse Needs on the basis of Gender, Sex and Disability**

Although women and men with disabilities face obstacles and challenges in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service, women are more disadvantaged than men.

Despite the fact that the right to work has been clearly stipulated in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, women with disabilities are still facing challenges and not benefiting from the existing laws. Disabled women as a group which is more marginalized in society and in employment opportunities in particular, need specific provisions within the labour laws and policies which will help to improve their status in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Treating them in the same way as disabled men results in leaving them behind and as a result they will continue facing obstacles and challenges in employment opportunities.

In discussing equality at work using the capability theory, Nussbaum 2003 noted the importance of the different needs of people as per sex and gender in reaching true equality. He says;

Equality of resources falls short because it fails to take account of the fact that individuals have differing needs for resources if they are to come up to the same level of capability to function. They also have differing abilities to convert resources into actual function.

This calls for the importance of labour laws in Tanzania to incorporate different needs of people with disabilities as per their sex and gender.

Article 23 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa obliges states parties to undertake to ensure the protection of women with disabilities and take specific measures commensurate with their physical, economic and social needs to facilitate their access to employment, professional and vocational training as well as their participation in decision making.

The Government of Tanzania in this case has failed to facilitate access to employment for disabled women in the Public Civil Service because its labour laws and policies do not take into consideration the status and specific needs of disabled women. Reforming labour laws, policies and guidelines to address specific needs of women with disabilities is therefore of particular importance.

### **3. The Lack of Education and Vocational Skills seriously undermines the Employability of Women with Disabilities**

The study noted that due to cultural barriers, most disabled women were not sent to school. The majority of them have limited education qualifications. In Tanzania, there is no anti-disability discrimination legislation or enforcement mechanism to act as a basis for taking legal action over parents who fail to send their daughters with disabilities to school. Hence, many unfortunate girls remain illiterate and neglected.

The lack of education and vocational skills seriously undermine the employability of persons with disabilities in the Public Civil Service and so women seem to be more affected than their male counterparts.

Rule 6 (5) of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities obliges states to recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary education opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system. Special attention should be given to very young children with disabilities, pre-school children and adults with disabilities, particularly women.

The Government of Tanzania has failed to put measures in place for ensuring that disabled people, especially girls, are sent to school. As a result most disabled women have limited opportunities for securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

Government should take measures to ensure that people with disabilities, especially women, enjoy their right to education. This should be done by making education for all people with disabilities compulsory. Education should be mainstreamed in schools with tuition fees for disabled persons being waived and supporting services being provided where necessary. This should also include adult literacy and other educational programmes. Disabled women should be encouraged to seek educational opportunities to enable them to advance their careers. It is also important to educate parents and family members of disabled girls and women on the right to education for a disabled person. Legal action should also be taken against all parents who are not sending their children to school. Government should also ensure that teachers are trained to educate children with disabilities within regular schools and that the necessary equipment and support are available to bring persons with disabilities up to the same level of education as their non-disabled peers.

#### 4. **The Lack of Affirmative Action/Special Consideration to improve the Situation of Disabled Women in Employment Opportunities in the Public Civil Service**

Despite the fact that Tanzania is making some effort at promoting the life of women in Tanzania in various fields, including employment, women with disabilities have largely been forgotten.

The Disabled Persons Employment Act No 2 of 1982 obliges all employers to employ at least 2% of the total labour force from among disabled persons. Despite evidence to the contrary, the Act considers that there is no difference between disabled men and women. There is no specific quota for women and this situation needs to be changed. The Government should put in place a specific quota for disabled women which will increase their employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service.

Rule 7(2) of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities requires states to actively support the integration of persons with disabilities into open employment. This active support could occur through a variety of measures such as vocational training, **incentive oriented quota schemes**, reserved or designated employment (*Emphasis is mine*). States should also encourage employers to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate persons with disabilities. Article 4 of CEDAW requires states to adopt temporary special measures in order to accelerate de facto equality between men and women in all fields. Rule 15 of the same Convention is drafted in the same spirit: it obliges states to use a combination of different approaches including affirmative action in order to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy their rights including the right to employment.

The Government of Tanzania has not taken affirmative action or made special consideration to improve the situation of disabled women in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Due to this, women with disabilities continue to be at a greater

disadvantage than their male counter parts and face various challenges in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. The State should change this phenomenon by putting special provisions in place which will help in improving the situation for this vulnerable and marginalized group.

## **5. Unfriendly Office/Public Buildings for People with Disabilities**

Most public buildings are not friendly to women with disabilities. Due to this they face challenges in accessing some buildings. Also the lived realities of women revealed that some of them sustained very serious injuries after falling downstairs.

The state is obliged under Rule 7(3) (a) of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities to take measures *to design and adapt workplaces in such a way that they become accessible to persons with different disabilities*. Article 9(1) (a) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities obliges the state to take measures to ensure persons with disabilities access to buildings, roads and other indoor facilities and *workplaces which will enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life including employment (emphasis is mine)*.

Paragraph 3.11 of the Tanzania National Policy on Disability of 2004, requires Government and other stakeholders to take measures to ensure that public buildings and other facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.

The situation on the ground shows that the State has failed to comply with international standards and also with its own policies. The Government is required to follow up and ensure that it puts in place policies which are enforceable. It should also make sure that public buildings are friendly to people with disabilities. Tanzania is a developing country; hence greater modification of old buildings which are not disabled friendly may be difficult due to its poor economic status. However, other measures should be taken into

place to ensure that people with disabilities access the public buildings without excessive difficulty. It can put in place simple access ramps to make it easier for people with disabilities to reach the offices. It can also ensure that offices are on the ground floor. Some offices are very crucial for people with disabilities. For example the social welfare offices not only employ staff with disabilities, but theirs is the main department which deals with issues of people with disabilities in the country. The picture of the office building as showed in chapter four is not disabled friendly. This makes it difficult for disabled staff as well as disabled members of the public to access the office. Issues involving people with disabilities may end up not be reported simply because of these difficulties relating to access.

As for new buildings, the Government should ensure compliance with human rights standards and with its National Policies and Legislation by making sure that public buildings are disabled friendly. The Government should also incorporate accessibility issues (such as the need to make buildings friendly for disabled users) into the curricula of engineering and architectural courses. This will help improve the integrity of the country's architects who will be obliged always to design public and private buildings which are friendly to their disabled users.

Furthermore, the Government should put a proper mechanism in place to ensure that employers and heads of departments are not forcing their disabled employees to work in offices and buildings which are not friendly to them. This should include a proper reporting mechanism whereby disabled women who face any such difficulties may be able to report them to a Government authority for rectification.

## **6. The Failure to provide Working Aids and Assistant Personnel for People with Disabilities in the Workplace**

The right to employment for people with disabilities goes together with the provision of working aids which enhance the capacity of disabled women especially those with visual impairments. The study noted that the Government is not providing working aids for people with disabilities including women. This makes their working environment very difficult and sometimes when it causes them to under perform (i.e., through no fault of their own) conflicts arise between them and their superiors. Teachers are also facing challenges and difficulties at work because they are not given the supporting teachers to assist them in marking students' exercise books.

Rule 6(6) of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities requires states to provide quality materials, ongoing teacher training and support teachers. Rule 7(3) of the same Convention obliges states to provide support for the use of new technologies and the development and production of assistive devices, tools and equipment and measures to facilitate access to such devices and equipment for persons with disabilities to enable them to gain and maintain employment.

The Government has failed to enhance the capacity of disabled women at their work place within the Public Civil Service. This is also in violation of the human rights instruments mentioned above to which Government is a signatory. As women with disabilities have less access to equipment and technical aids, Government should ensure availability of all necessary equipment in the country which may include equipment produced locally. The equipment should also be distributed to every woman with disabilities at a low cost and, where possible, free of charge. Teachers with visual impairment should be given supporting teachers to assist them. Government should also provide allowances to people with disabilities to cater for the additional costs they incur because of their disability in the course of their employment.

## 7. Discrimination against Women with Disabilities in the Workplace

Some women with disabilities have not been able to secure employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service because of the discrimination which they face during job interviews and when they go to report to their duty stations. The lived realities of disabled women also revealed that discrimination persists at the workplace. Disabled women are facing discrimination not only from their fellow members of staff but also from their heads of the department as well.

As stated by Deegan and Brooks ed, 1985, most women workers continue to be concentrated in lower paying occupations that provide limited opportunities for advancement, and as *discrimination in hiring, promotions, and pay scales continue to be a major obstacle to equality for women in the workplace*, women's rewards from work outside the home are significantly less than men (*my emphasis*).

Article 1(1) (a) of the ILO Convention no. 111<sup>36</sup> defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation.

Discrimination constitutes a violation of rights enunciated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other Human Right Instruments. The state is obliged to eliminate discrimination of all kinds against people with disability including at the workplace. Paragraph 10 of the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons requires the state to protect disabled persons against all exploitation, all regulations and all treatment of a discriminatory, abusive or degrading nature. Paragraph 63 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action provides that any direct discrimination or other negative discriminatory treatment of a disabled person is a violation of his or her rights.

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<sup>36</sup> Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958

The Government of Tanzania has therefore failed to eliminate discrimination against women with disabilities in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. Measures should be taken in order to change this situation. Government, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should make sure that legal action is taken against any person who discriminates against a person with disability. More efforts should also be devoted to sensitize the public on the rights of people with disabilities (especially women) in society through awareness seminars, mass media like radio, newspapers, TVs, etc. The awareness-raising should focus on changing the mindsets of employers and the community at large on the negative attitude they have against people with disabilities. The society should understand that education, vocational skills and employment are the tools of empowerment which can convert disabilities into abilities.

In addition to the above comments, there are other measures which are required to be taken into account in order to change the situation of women with disabilities in employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. These are as follows:

- i. Women with disabilities (in their capacities as staff, volunteers, participants, and evaluators) must be involved in all policy and decision making processes and at every level of projects which affect them. This will help to incorporate their needs at various levels of decision making which will help to develop workable mechanisms aimed at improving their employment environment and opportunities.
- ii. People with disabilities especially women, should be given priority in the provision of Government houses which are available near their working places. Transport arrangements can also be made to assist those who stay far from their working places.
- iii. Government should effectively implement and develop guidelines and policies in order to improve the overall working situation of people with disabilities especially disabled women.

- iv. Education, vocational training and rehabilitation programs must include women with disabilities, to prepare women and girls for careers and gainful employment.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The right to employment is a fundamental human right which every human being is entitled to enjoy. In fact, its exercise is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights such as the right to food, health, life and a reasonable standard of living.

The State plays a major role in ensuring that its people enjoy their right to employment. National laws and human rights instruments are binding on the government and they provide guidance on what should be done to remove obstacles and challenges that disabled women are facing in securing employment opportunities in the Public Civil Service. However, as has been shown, the state has failed in many instances to comply with these various laws and this seriously undermines the ability of disabled women to exercise this right. The state should comply with international standards, Labour Laws, policies and guidelines. These should also be implemented on the ground in order to change the current situation and give effect to their entitlements.

Women with disabilities are just like any other human beings in that, given the appropriate resources and opportunities, they may become just as valuable civil servants as their able-bodied counterparts. In order to bring this about the state should, in compliance of the various abovementioned laws, create for them a friendlier working environment and actively participate in a nationwide campaign to improve their status and image in the eyes of society at large.

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