

# **DATA FOR** INCLUSION

**Using Data to Improve Voting Accessibility for Persons with** Disabilities in Nigeria









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Braille ballot guide	A rubber/plastic material with braille inscriptions of political party acronyms to provide voters with visual impairment opportunity to vote unaided.
CVR	Continuous Voter Registration
ЕМВ	Electoral Management Body
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFA	Inclusive Friends Association
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
JONAPWD	Joint National Association for Persons with Disabilities
LGA	Local Government Area
NAPVID	Network for the Advancement of Persons with Visible Disabilities
NOA	National Orientation Agency
ODWA	Ondo State Disabled Welfare Agency
OPDs	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



**Inclusive Friends Association (IFA)** (IFA) is a Person with Disability (PWD) woman-led non-profit and non-governmental organization that employs data to address inclusion and participation challenges of over 30 million PWDs in Nigeria through advocacy, training, and research. IFA focal areas of work are Democracy, Good Governance and Gender.

IFA through its Access Nigeria campaign conducted Africa's first, second, and third accessibility audits of polling units by PWDs in Edo, Ondo, and Kogi states in Nigeria, and made independent voting for Blind voters possible through the design of the braille ballot guide with its allied organizations.

Located in Abuja, IFA is an innovative and consistent leader within the Disability community as well as in the democracy and governance space with a wide network of allies, stakeholders, and various PWD groups nationally, which are instrumental to the success of its programs. IFA is currently leading this coalition to collect disaggregated data of PWDs in Nigeria.

**Network for the Advancement of Persons with Visible Disabilities (NAPVID)** is a non-profit organization in Benin Edo state that advocates for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and advances their Social Inclusion in Governance and Development Initiatives in Nigeria. With their vision for a society without discrimination, but with Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, they work across the following thematic areas:

- Social Justice
- Inclusive Education
- Social Protection
- Inclusive Governance
- Economic Empowerment

Ondo State Disabled Welfare Agency (ODWA) was set up through a law in the Ondo state house of assembly. The agency works to oversee the welfare of all PWDs in the state. A member of the board works on this project as a project officer. The coalition is jointly implementing the Data for Inclusion project. The project aims to increase the participation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria's electoral processes by collecting disaggregated data of PWDs to support INEC to make an informed decision for accessibility and inclusion of PWDs in our elections.

The project is funded by Voice, an innovative grant facility to support rights holders and groups facing marginalisation or discrimination. It is an initiative of and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

#### Acknowledgement

IFA, NAPVID, and ODWA wish to acknowledge and congratulate all our state coordinators and leaders of the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) at the state levels that worked with us to carefully select all 280 PWDs in 280 LGAs to work on the project together with us. Your efforts and sacrifices through the process of collecting and sharing this data despite the restrictions are greatly appreciated. And to all the 280 LGA supervisors that went into communities to directly collect these pieces of information, your time and dedication are contributing to inclusive and accessible elections for all PWDs in Nigeria already.

We also wish to appreciate all staff, volunteers, and data clerks that worked to ensure that the process of collection was given full attention. And to the data clerks who went through the rigor calling PWDs to address all concerns, we appreciate your resilience. Data collection is a painstaking process that involves multiple stakeholders to fully implement. We also extend gratitude to the Department for Secret Services (DSS) across the states we worked in. We appreciate you for ensuring that all this sensitive information is collected without any form of harassment meted out on any of the state coordinators or LGA supervisors.

The project also extends sincere gratitude to the INEC Chairman, Prof Mahmood Yakubu, Dr. Ladipo Ogunmola Chair, Outreach, and Partnerships Committee, past INEC National Commissioners Amina Zakari and Anthonia Simbine for their support for this process to begin. We also recognize the contributions of INEC's Public and Voter Education (VEP) and the Information and Communication (ICT) departments to the methodologies to the data collection process. And to all the Resident Electoral Commissioners across the various states that provided support through this process, we appreciate the support.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to VOICE and the Nigeria team for working with us through the grant process and funding the project to ensure that data speak to disability inclusion in Nigeria's electoral process. This implementation phase has been seamless. We look forward to sustained partnership towards ensuring PWDs in Nigeria experience the joy of participating in the political and public life of their country.

Grace Jerry
Executive Director
Inclusive Friends Association





n Nigeria, about 30 million persons (representing 15%1) of the total population possess one form of disability or the other. Several credible studies indicate that persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria are largely excluded from, and lack access to basic social and public life/services including elections, politics, education, employment, economic empowerment, etc. Although disability rights laws and policies now exist at national and few sub-national levels, with disability agencies set-up across these jurisdictions, there are still significant inclusivity and accessibility gaps that must be filled to improve the quality of lives and participation of PWDs in their communities across Nigeria.

Political participation is a fundamental aspect of democratic governance, the rule of law, social inclusion, and human rights approaches aimed at eliminating marginalization and discrimination.<sup>2</sup> Political participation is often defined as the actions of private citizens by which they seek to influence government and

politics.<sup>3</sup> Voting is one way that individuals may exercise their voice but participation in electoral processes is more than just voting: it includes the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs, the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected, and to hold office at all levels of government.<sup>4</sup> Without the opportunity to participate in politics, an individual is effectively denied citizenship and potentially becomes invisible and voiceless to those who hold power.

Article 29 (1a) of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) mandates States Parties like Nigeria to guarantee to PWDs political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others; and to ensure that voting procedures, facilities, and materials are accessible and appropriate, easy understand and use by PWDs to effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives,

 $<sup>1\,</sup>https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability$ 

<sup>2</sup> https://brill.com/view/journals/ejhl/14/3/article-p273\_6.xml

<sup>3</sup> https://inclusion-international.org/

<sup>4</sup> https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2018.1431108

including the right and opportunity for PWDs to vote and be elected.<sup>5</sup> The 1999 Nigerian constitution as amended and the Nigerian Disability Law<sup>6</sup> clearly makes provision for the participation of all citizens irrespective of their disabilities. And section 14 of Nigeria's 2010 Electoral Act as amended makes provisions for special measures for PWDs. The INEC Framework on Access and Participation of PWDs<sup>7</sup> aims at inclusion and the reduction of barriers PWDs face as voters, aspirants, candidates, and staff within the Commission.

To collect data and document the challenges PWDs face in the electoral process, IFA and its partners conducted Nigeria's first and second ever polling unit accessibility audits during the 2016 governorship elections in Edo and Ondo states.8 IFA collected data on the accessibility of polling units and election materials for PWDs from a representative random sample of all of the polling units in both states. The findings showed that 65 percent of the polling units observed in Edo and 77 percent of those in Ondo were located in places that were inaccessible for PWDs. The report<sup>9</sup> also showed that it was difficult for PWDs to enter 64 percent of the polling units observed in Edo and 79 percent of those in Ondo. Observer reports also showed that ballot boxes were not placed in such a way that PWDs could independently cast their ballots in 48 percent of the polling units observed in Edo and 77 percent of those in Ondo. And braille ballot guides were not available in all polling units in both states.

Post-2015 election gave rise to an increased engagement between the INEC and various electoral stakeholders like organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), who were not adequately engaged in the past. Specifically, objective 5 of INEC's 2017-2021 strategic plan provided the threshold for OPDs like IFA and others to engage with INEC and introduce specific reforms towards ensuring Nigeria's elections are also made accessible to all voters with disabilities who have been denied the opportunity to participate in the process of electing their representatives or participate actively in the process despite the huge demography they constitute in Nigeria. Barriers to the political participation of PWDs in Nigeria 10 occur at three different stages: lack of civic voter education; stigma and negative social attitudes; and inaccessible physical environment/infrastructure. <sup>11</sup>

In January 2019, the Government of Nigeria signed into law the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2019<sup>12</sup> to ensure the full integration of PWDs society, establishing the Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) and giving the Commission responsibility for their social, economic and civil rights. The activity of the NCPWD is still at an elementary level.

However, the 2019 elections saw some policy and inclusivity measures implemented by INEC to improve the participation of PWDs in the electoral process. Notably, 2019 was the first time that the visually impaired were allowed to vote independently through the use of braille ballot guides. Findings show that the deployment of braille ballot guides for voters with visual impairments was at 46 13 percent of sampled polling units with very minimal utilization by blind voters because they were deployed to polling units that had no PWDs voting. Also, magnifying glasses, sign language interpretation and priority voting were provided and observed for PWDs. 14 INEC accredited a number of OPDs and PWDs as observers. However, it was noted that although INEC had a disability desk officer in each of the 36 states, none of these officers were themselves a PWD. Concerns were also expressed on the extent of awareness among ad hoc officials on disability reasonable accommodation during elections for PWDs. Regarding the inclusion of PWDs in core politics, about 9 PWDs were on the ballot paper as candidates while only two PWDs won their seats<sup>15</sup> into the state houses of assemblies in Adamawa and Zamfara states.

The dearth of data is a major barrier to effective planning, decision-making, and progress in many sectors of Nigerian society, including the electoral process. The unavailability of data on the disability status, type of disability and location of voters with disabilities substantially limits INEC's ability to effectively plan for the inclusion and participation of voters with disabilities in our elections

 $<sup>5\</sup> https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-29-participation-in-political-and-public-life.html\\ 6\ https://nigeriahealthwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2019/02/1244-Discrimination-Against-Persons-with-Disabilities-Prohibition-ACT-2018.pdf$ 

<sup>7</sup> https://www.inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FINAL-INEC-FRAMEWORK.pdf 8 http://inclusivefriends.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/11/DISABILITY\_VOTES\_MATTER\_REPORT\_FINAL\_PRINT.pdf

<sup>9</sup> http://inclusivefriends.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/11/DISABILITY\_VOTES\_MATTER\_REPORT\_FINAL\_PRINT.pdf

<sup>10</sup> https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability

<sup>11</sup> https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2018.1431108

 $<sup>12\</sup> http://inclusive friends.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/KNOW-YOUR-RIGHTS.pdf$ 

<sup>13</sup> https://leadership.ng/2019/02/28/2019-polls-increasing-consideration-for-pwds/14 https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/NigeriaCOGFullReport.pdf

<sup>15</sup> https://inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/REPORT-OF-THE-2019-GENERAL-ELECTION.pdf





# INEC's Work Towards Collection of Data of PWDs for Election

Building on the gains of the Access Nigeria campaign, IFA deepened engagements with INEC Nigeria to strengthen its use of data to inform the provisions towards disability inclusion in all phases of elections. Series of meetings were held with INEC's National Commissioner and directors towards ensuring that data are collected with the emergency of off-cycle elections to be used and ensure that more PWDs can vote without or with limited barriers. Other OPDs like the Albino Foundation have also collected data of PWDs using a different methodology.

For a common methodology to be developed for use by different organizations to collect data of PWDs towards election access and inclusion, INEC converged IFA, the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), and other OPDs to harmonize different methodologies into one. The meeting was unable to produce the desired

out and so INEC and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) organized the regional consultative forum in Kano (northern) and Lagos (southern) with different OPDs in the country working on election access and inclusion, to harvest ideas on what thresholds to be used in determining the type of data to be collected when conducting data collection on PWDs for election purposes.

# The Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) Process and Data Collection

Since engagements with INEC in 2017, IFA has Since engagement with INEC in 2017, IFA has continued to stress the need for the data of PWDs in Nigeria, especially to assist INEC and other agencies in Nigeria to effectively plan for PWDs in and location, relocation, and creation of new polling units. Incrementally, INEC met with different groups including OPDs to discuss the state of voter access to polling units in Nigeria in February 2021. INEC acknowledged that most polling units are not

<sup>16</sup> https://inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/The-State-of-Voter-Access-to-PUs-in-Nigeria\_mini.pdf

physically accessible to PWDs, and steps would be taken in the relocation, and creation of new polling units to ensure accessibilities for voters with disabilities. These are steps in the right direction, and the data of voters with disabilities becomes very crucial for INEC to appropriate accessibilities and accessible voting materials to polling units where they would be used.

However, all the data collected by IFA and other OPDs are data of PWDs who are already registered to update INEC's voter register so that each voter is identified with their peculiar voter needs. The CVR process stands to be the best place to address the identification and classification of PWDs by collecting their disability status and disability at the point of Additionally, registration. the barriers experienced by PWDs in polling units are also the same at the registration centres. PWDs across the states have expressed concerns especially regarding attitudinal barriers that exist at registration centres, and non-observance of priority during the CVR process. As INEC plans for the next phase of the CVR process, we are presented an opportunity eliminated all forms discrimination/exclusion during the process.

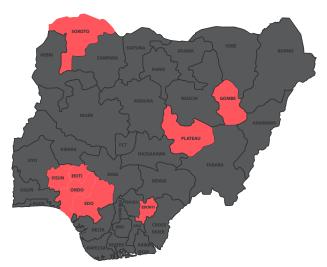
## Piloting Disaggregated Data in Polling Unit Deployment

The first pilot of the braille ballot guide was conducted by INEC in 2018, during the Osun state governorship election. The data of 89 voters with visual impairment / blind were collected and traced to their polling units, where the braille ballot guides were deployed to. On the day of the election, over 75% of the sampled persons were able to use the guides. This gave rise to the need for data to be taken seriously to reduce the chances of creating loss or wrongful deployment of voting materials to polling units that PWDs may not be present to use them. Where there is disaggregated data of PWDs, deployment of election materials to serve all voters is more effective.

#### **Data for Inclusion**

The goal of the Data for Inclusion project is to increase the participation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria's political and electoral processes by collecting disaggregated data of PWDs and influencing

the reduction of physical barriers and stigma that make it difficult for PWDs to participate in elections. The project set out to collect data of PWDs in 13 states and support INEC to use the data in deploy election materials in these states. IFA and its partners, NAPVID ODWA worked with PWD leaders and collected data of registered voters with disabilities in the following states: Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Gombe, Kano, Kwara, Ondo, Osun, Plateau, Sokoto.



#### Specific objectives of the project included:

- Support INEC to update its voters' register to capture the disability status and types of voters already existing in its database.
- Set precedence for disaggregated data collection of PWDs at the point of registration by INEC whenever the Continuous Voters Registration (CVR) process commences.
- 3. Support INEC to make strategic and effective decision around the number of PWDs, their type of disabilities and deploy election materials in usable formats to polling units serving voters with different forms of disabilities.
- 4. To know the actual number of PWDs registered as voters in the 13 target states to enable OPDs and other election stakeholders to plan civic engagement initiatives to increase participation of PWDs in all political and electoral processes.
- Empower PWDs in Edo and Ondo state with tools for building active citizens engagements with state executives to foster PWD inclusive policies through manifesto debates.

### Training amidst the Covid 19 Pandemic

The Covid 19 pandemic is a reality that disrupted numerous activities and programs globally. The Data for Inclusion project was also affected by the pandemic, leading to the reschedule of planned activities and changes in the mode of trainings and other methodologies employed for the data collection process. The major challenge of recruiting 280 PWDs who are tech savvy to connect to a virtual program and train on the methodologies towards a seamless exercise set in. consequently, the duration for the training of all the target data enumerators was prolonged.

Virtual trainings were the first line of action by the project to ensure that both state coordinators and supervisors fully understand how to collect these data effectively using both methodologies. Consequently, a large majority of the state coordinators were trained virtually. However, transferring their learning to the LGA supervisors through a virtual process was very challenging, as many LGA supervisors were not using mobile devices optimized for communication software like zoom. Consequently, the training exercise extended the start up dates for many states, and all states operated based on their unique challenges or context.

#### **Data Collection Methodology**

IFA, and its partners deployed a combination of manual and electronic methodology to collect the disaggregated data of PWDs across the 13 states. The manual methodology was deployed through a specialized checklist, where the data of PWDs was collected by LGA supervisors and entered carefully into the checklist to aggregate the disability status, location, polling unit details, type of disabilities, etc. Refer to appendix for checklist.

While the electronic methodology used information and communication technologies (ICTs), to collect the data, and aggregate them in a central database setup on a computer application. On this methodology, PWDs sent their data through short text message format (SMS) using their mobile phones from the comfort of their homes.

#### **Formatting Text Messages**

For those sending in their data electronically, they started their text messages with IFA

followed by space, full name, gender, disability type, polling unit number, employment status, age, educational qualification and voter identification number and send. All typed without space. Example:

#### IFA Adejo Esther,F,deaf,29/02/05/008,employed,39, Bsc,692375

The database code recognized all telecommunication networks. And all text messages were sent to the short code 7447. If text was sent correctly, the final message that comes is "Thank you, your data have been recorded". For those that sent in the wrong order, they got a prompt message that asked them to resent in the right order. Example:

#### "Thank you, but kindly resend in this format. e.g. IFA FULLNAME, GENDER, DISABILITY, POLLING UNIT NUMBER, EMPLOYMENT, AGE. EDUCATION. VIN NUMBER."

The project combined both approaches based on the peculiarities of the location of PWDs (urban and rural dwellers). Where as the manual method worked well for those in rural areas, the electronic method was mostly used across urban settings. Overall, it was subject to convenience for each of the persons that provided their data in throughout the process.

Altogether, the Data for Inclusion project team deployed 280 LGA supervisors to work across 280 LGAs in the 13 states to mobilize PWDs to send / or give out their disaggregated data to during the data collection process using the following plan:

- Radio Jingles: Radio jingles were produced and disseminated to reach local communities in all the states where data was collected. These messages were further translated into the predominant languages used in each of the target states.
- Television Jingle: Knowing that audio messages would not be useful to persons with impaired hearing and or the deaft, television messages were also produced and broadcast on popular television stations in each of the states with messages on why the data was collected and how PWDs can send or provide their data to be captured.

**Community Outreaches:** Due to the spread of the pandemic, it was difficult to converge PWDs in certain locations or worship centre to collect their data. Consequently, the LGA

supervisors moved round as many communities as they could to collect the data from PWDs in various communities.

Text and WhatsApp messaging and phone calls: State coordinators and LGA supervisors also utilize text and WhatsApp messages to reach PWD leaders in various communities within their LGAs to mobilise PWDs to send in their data either directly through the short code or via the checklists provided. They also used phone calls to

reach community mobilizers who assisted some of the LGA supervisors that were unable to reach some communities due to movement restrictions and other restrictions.

Throughout the project, 7 data clerks worked to troubleshoot inaccurate data sets and reach out to LGA supervisors for any data error to be rectified before the aggregation of all disaggregated data was put together.





The PWD data collected was based on IFA's unique data collection methodology that allows PWD leaders to directly collect data based on the data on the Permanent Voters Cards (PVC) of PWDs. Accordingly, the data presented here would deliberately leave out certain thresholds that are strictly for INEC's use to integrate the data with its voter register and update the disability status of those whose data have been collected across the states.

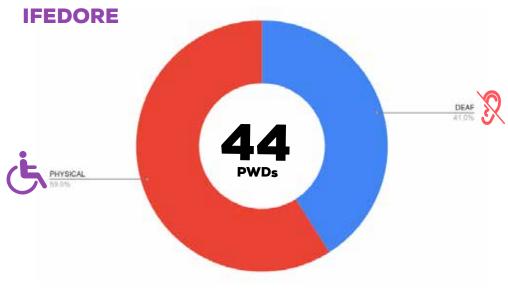
Findings from this data collection also show that registered voters even among registered members identifying with the JONAPWD across the states are only around 9%. This clearly shows that the majority of PWDs are not registered as voters. However, a lot of factors responsible for hindering PWDs from voting during elections were also reported to be

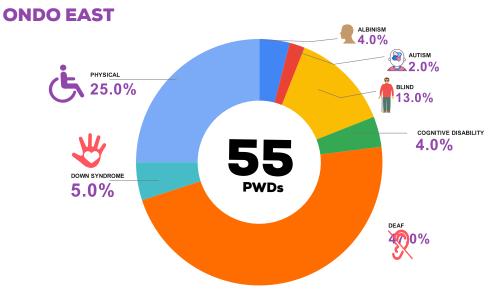
responsible for low voters' status among the PWD community.

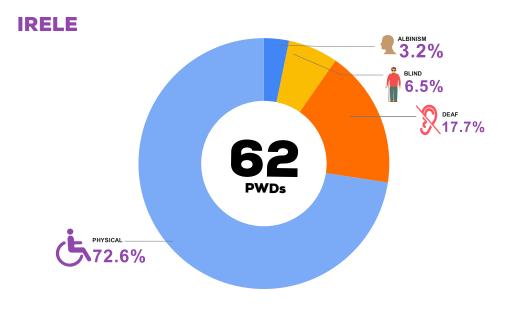
The findings below are classified according to states and LGA distribution. This data does not explicitly reveal the polling unit and other vital information of voters as those would only be used by INEC to update its voters' register to reflect the disability status and type of PWDs whose data have been collected. But even more, the data would provide a visible map to guide civic and voter education initiatives across these states also bearing in mind that over 91% of PWDs across the states are not registered. Also, the data reveal LGAs that need more work, especially public and civic education to get PWDs to participate in community and public life generally.

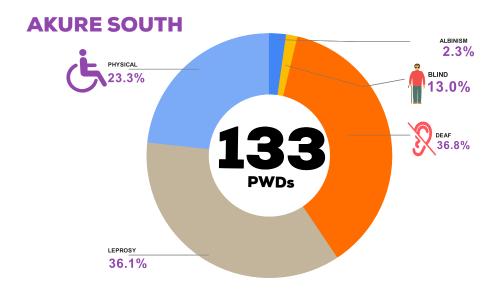
# A. Ondo State 18 1,680,498 Registered Voters 3,010 Polling Units

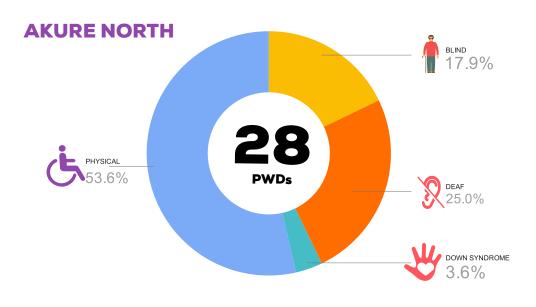
Data of 1,422 registered PWDs presented here are from the 18 LGAs, representing only 0.08% of registered voters in the state.

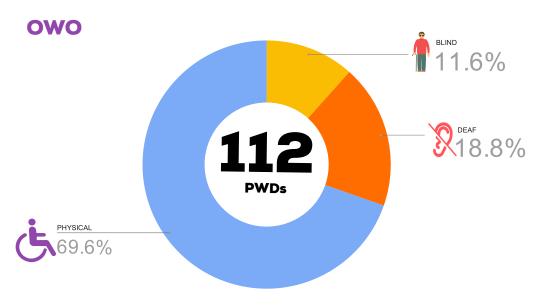


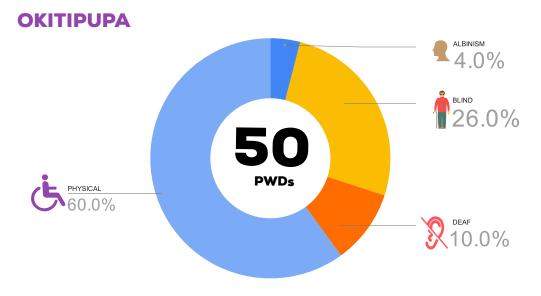


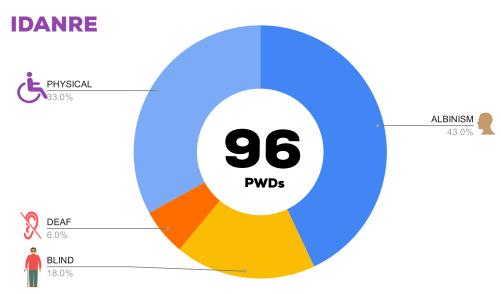


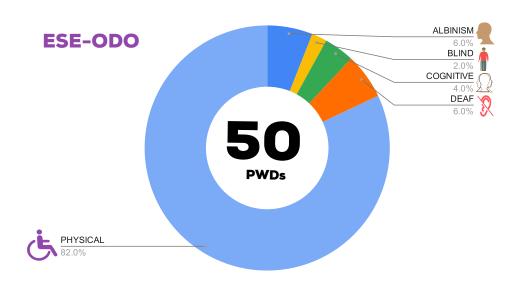


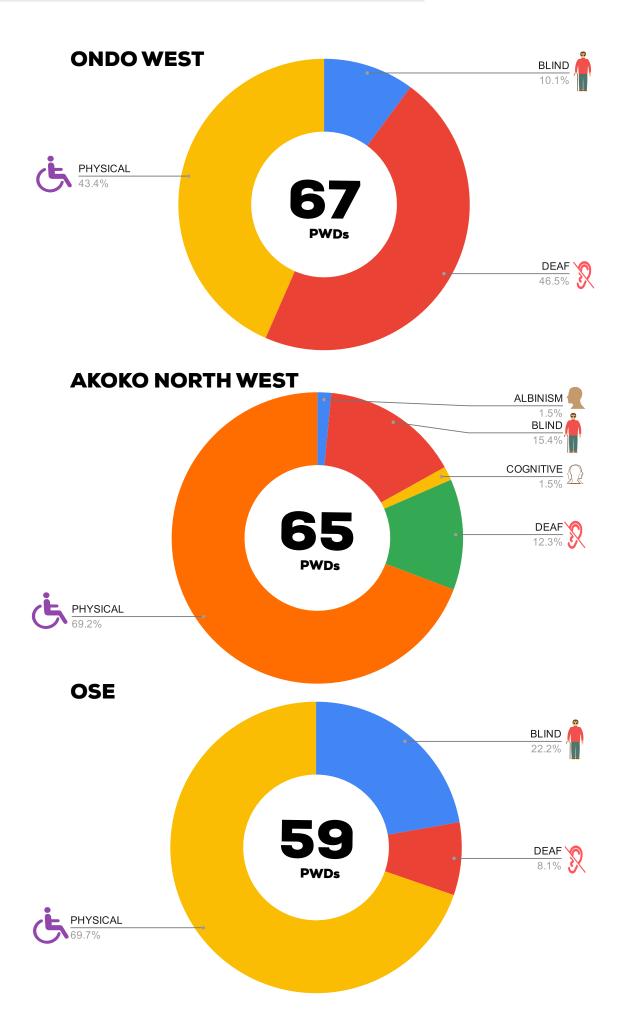


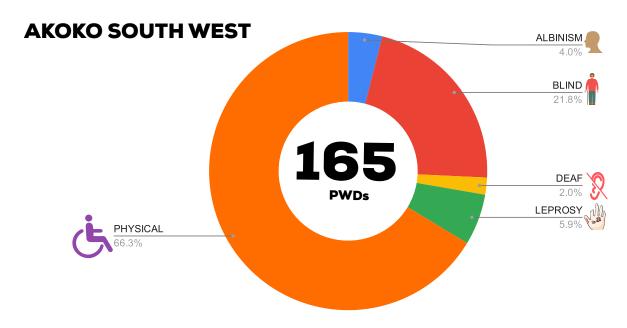


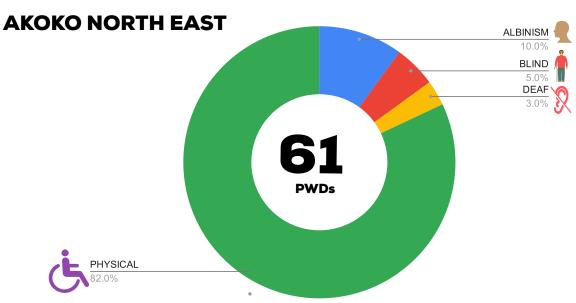


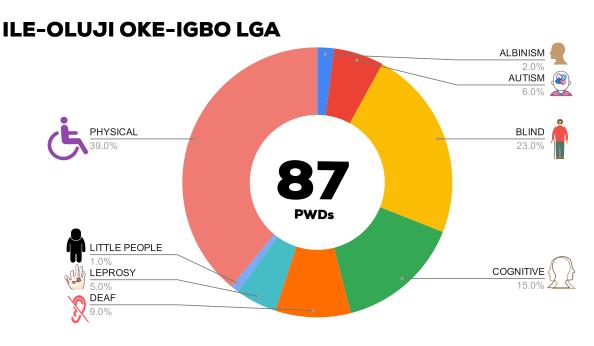


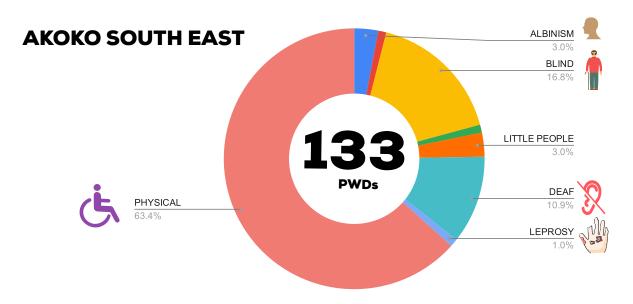


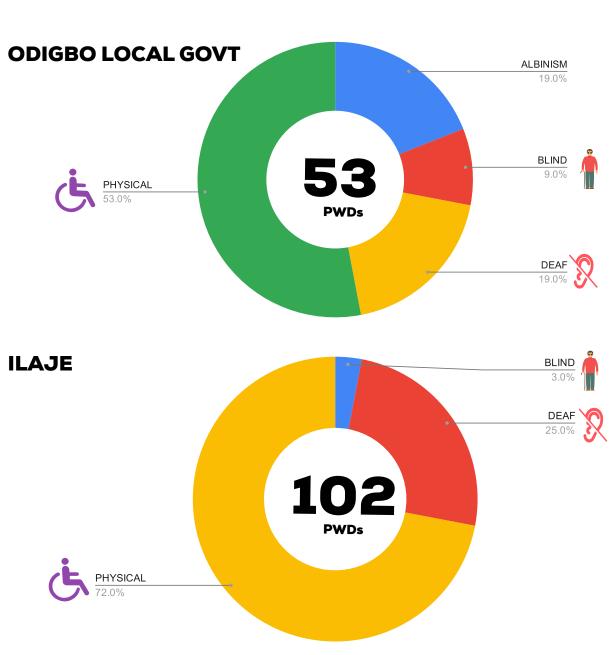




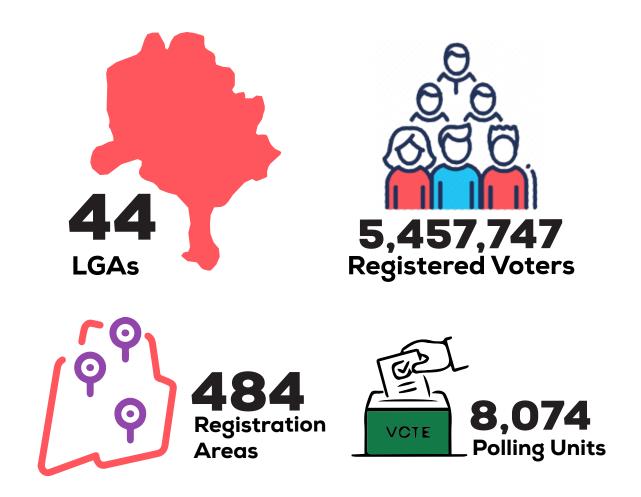




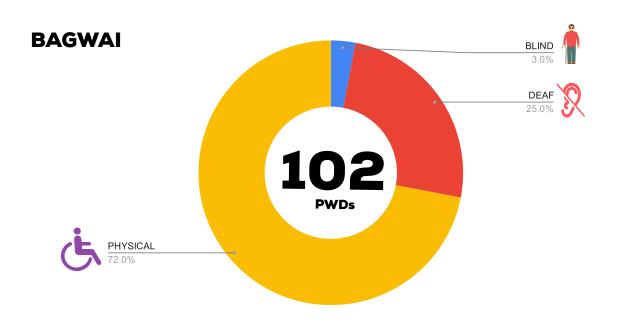


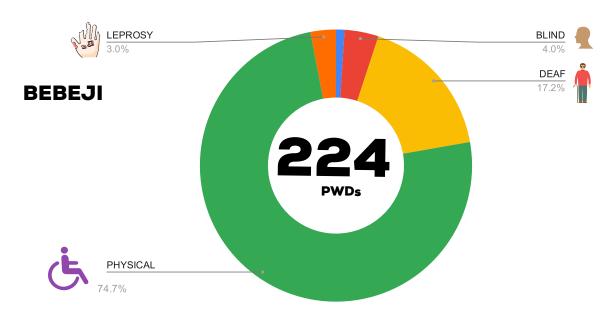


#### **B. Kano State**

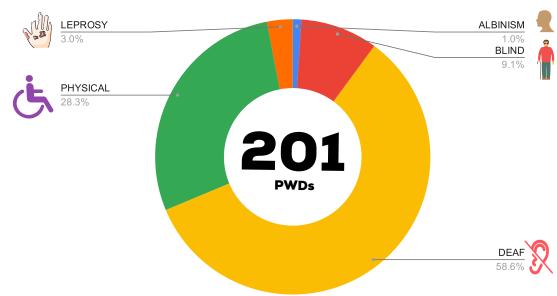


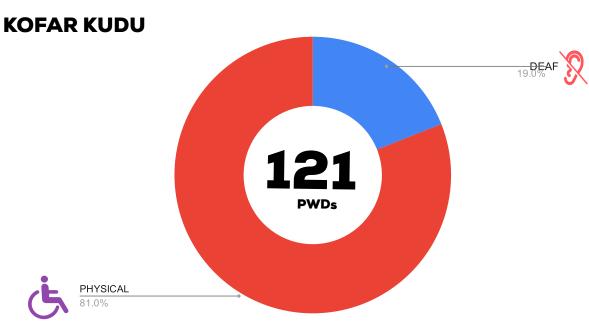
The data of 3,963 registered PWDs presented here are from 29, out of the 44 LGAs, representing only 0.07% of registered voters in the state.

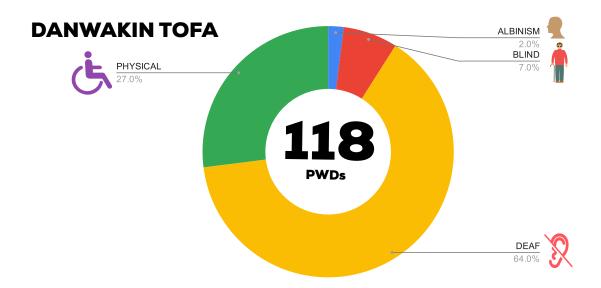




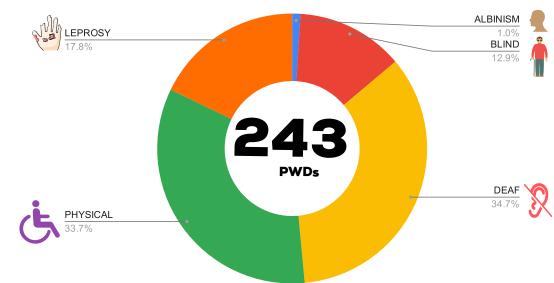
#### **GAJUYA**



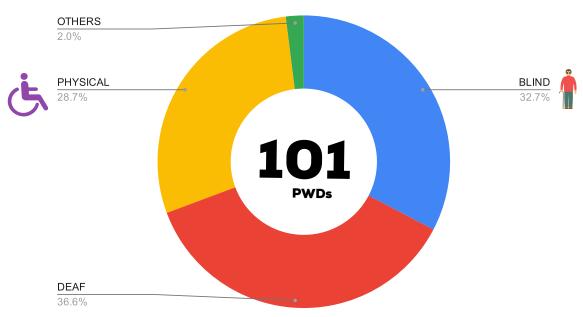


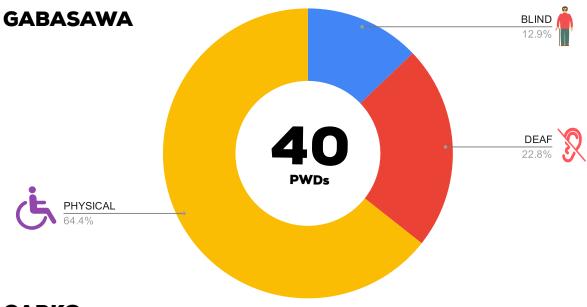


#### **DOGUWA**

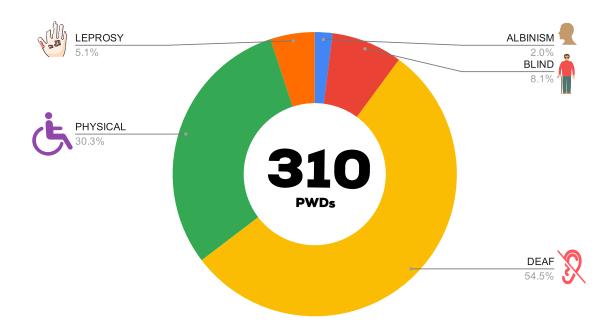


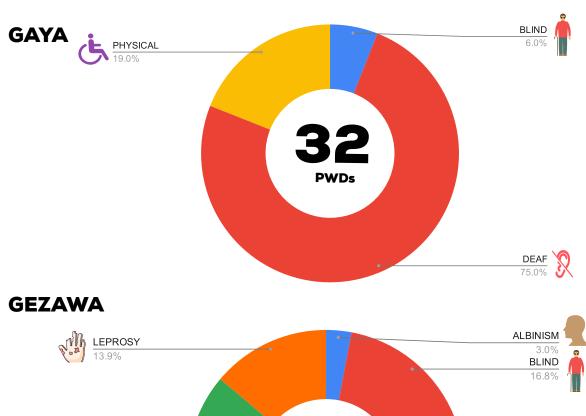
#### **FAGGE**

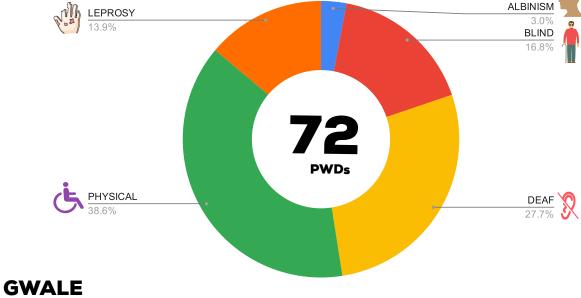


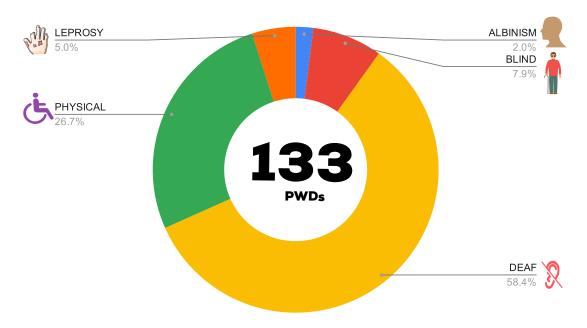


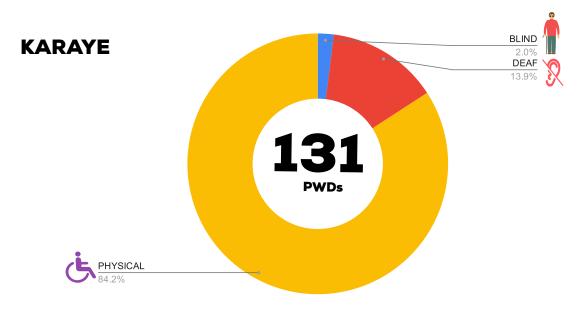
#### **GARKO**



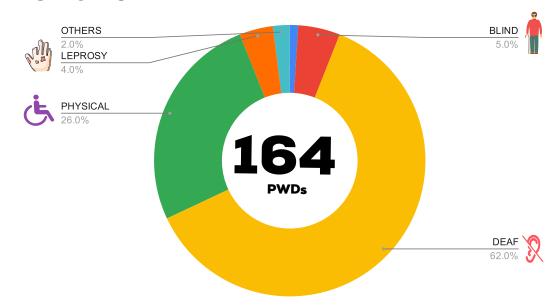




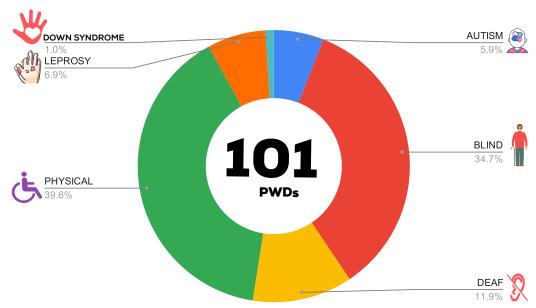




#### **KANO MUNICIPAL**

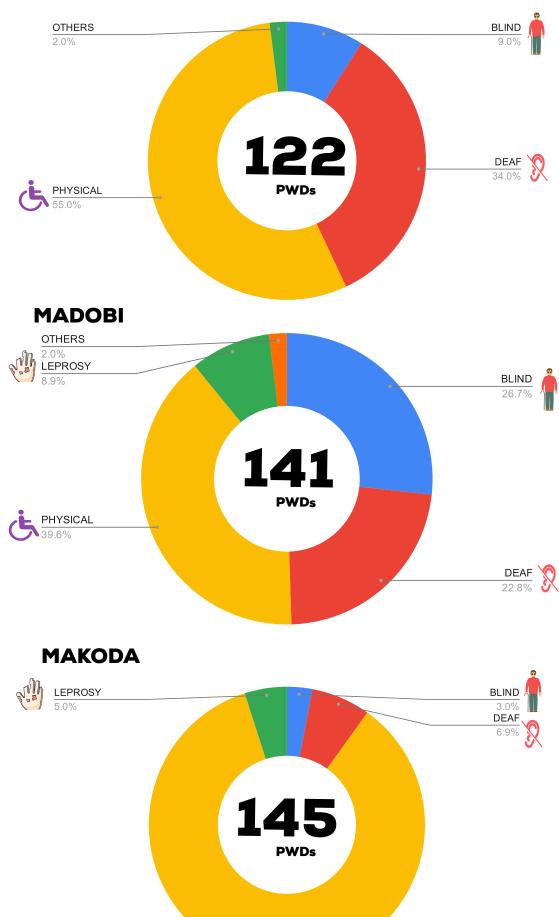


#### **KUMBOSTO**

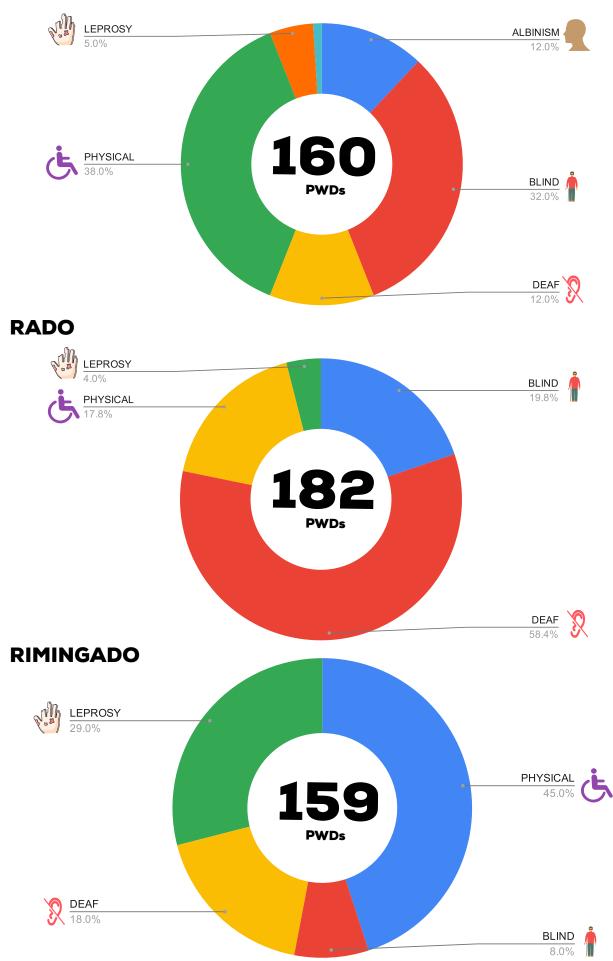


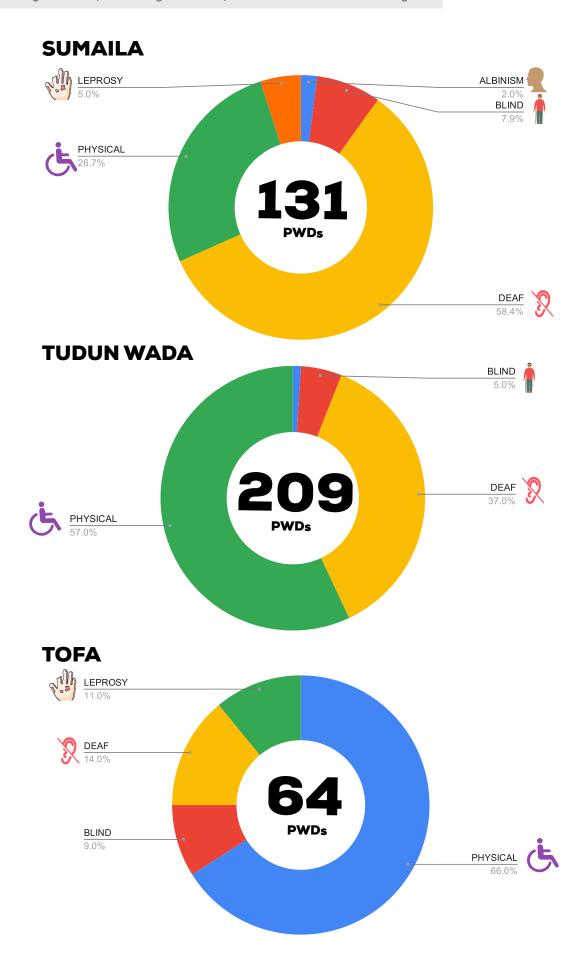
#### **KUNCHI**

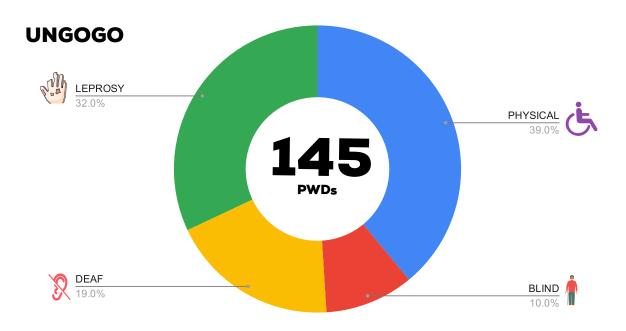
PHYSICAL



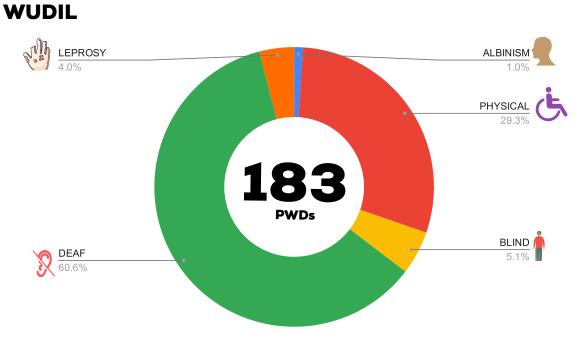
#### **NASSARAWA**

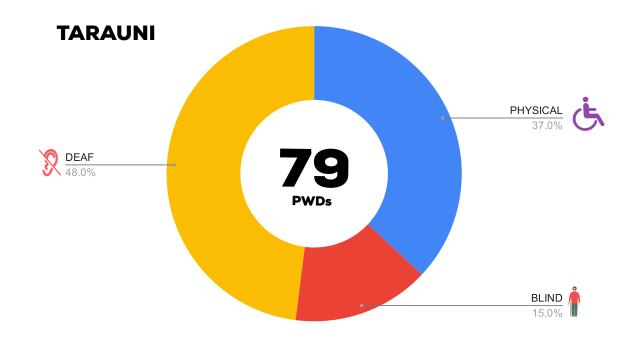




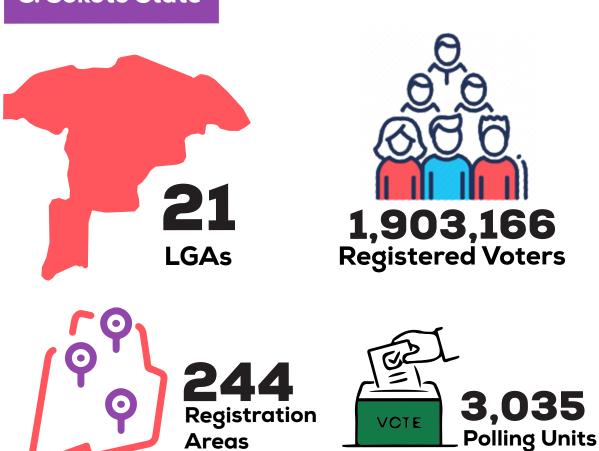


# WARAWA | DEAF | 14.0% | | BLIND | 1.0% | | 1.0% | | PHYSICAL | 85.0% | | Example | 1.0% | | Example | 1.



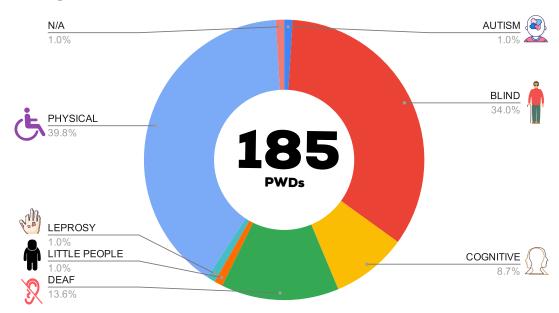


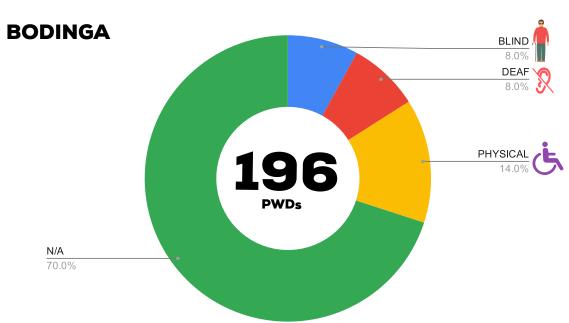
#### C. Sokoto State

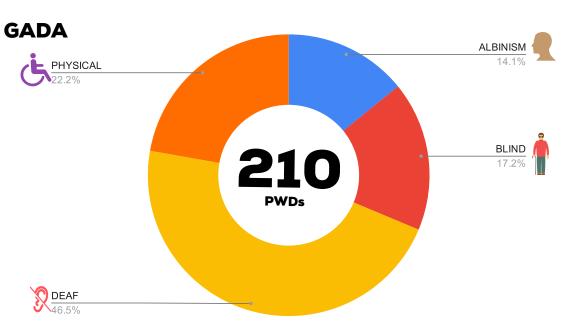


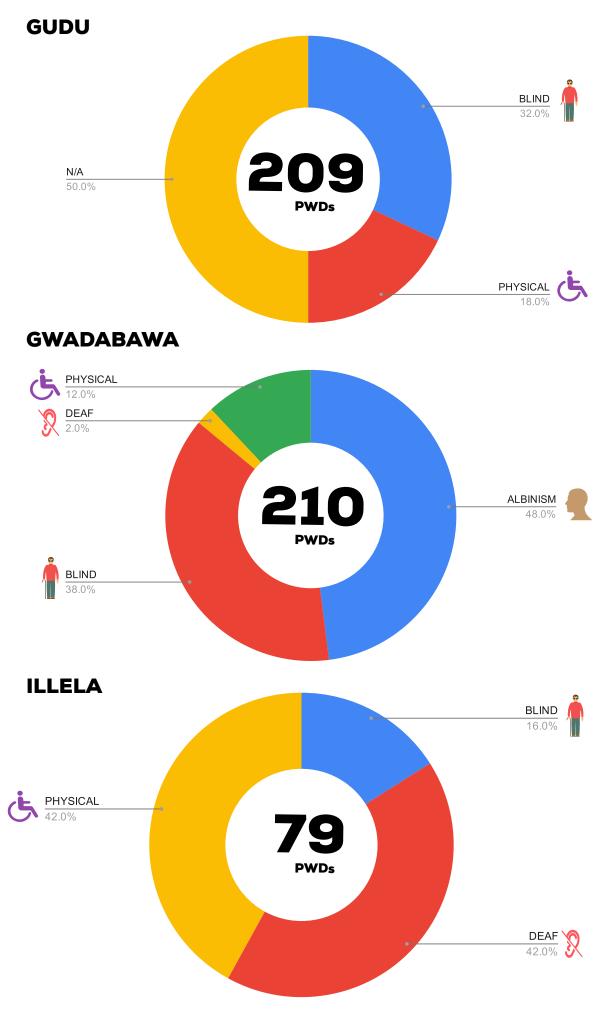
The data of 3,963 registered PWDs presented here are from 28, out of the 44 LGAs, representing only 0.07% of registered voters in the state.

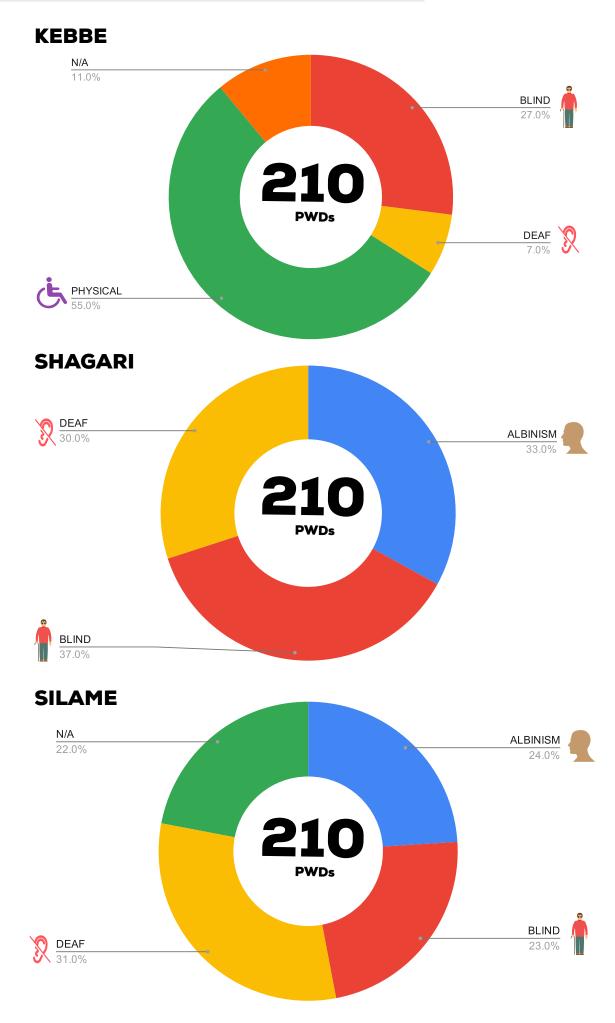
#### **BINJI**

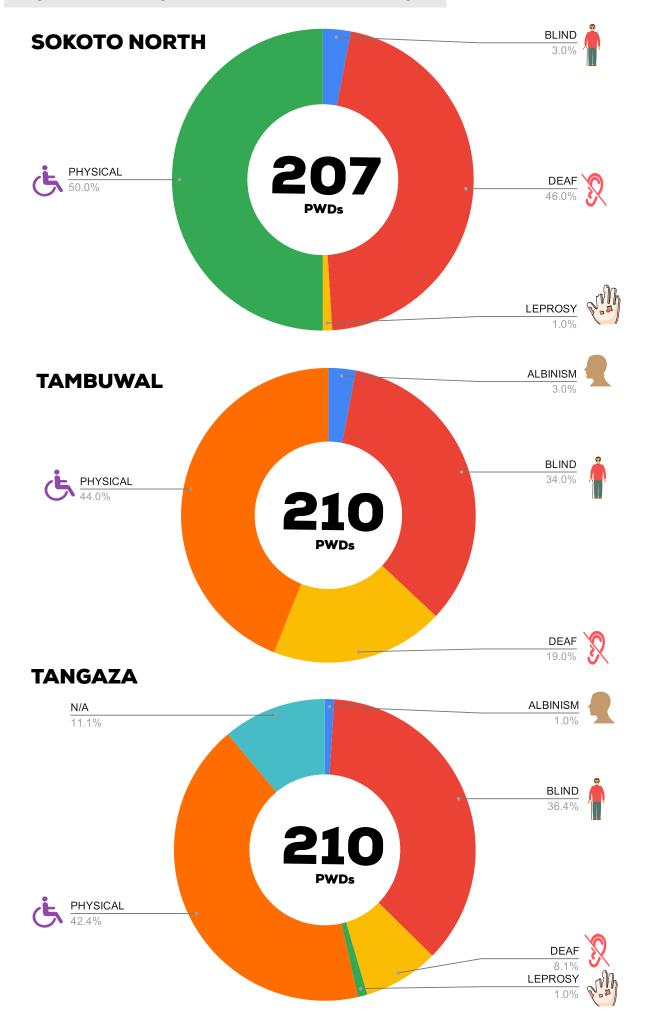


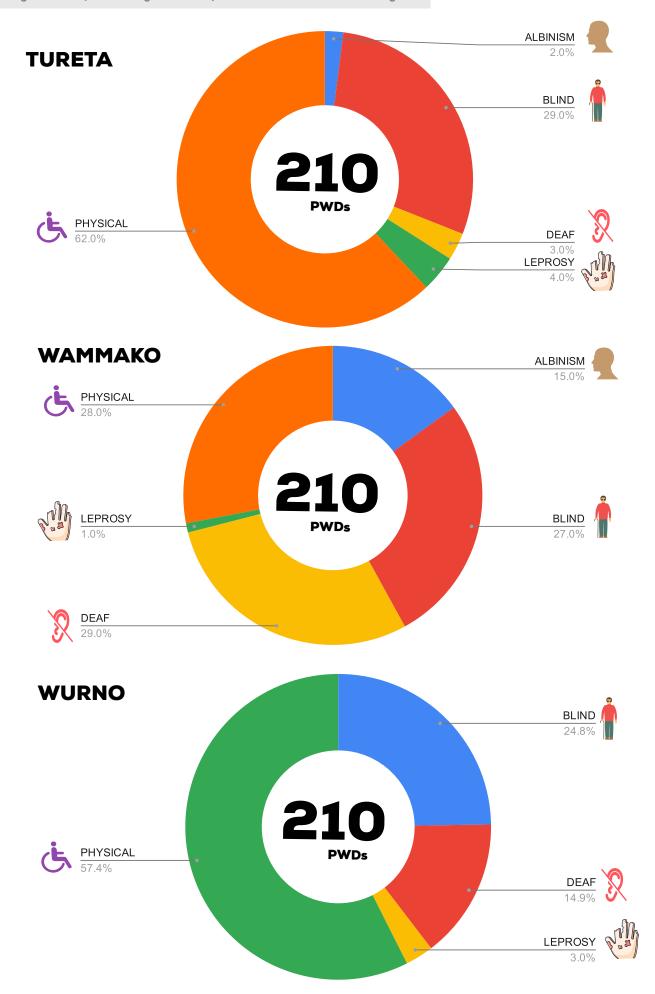




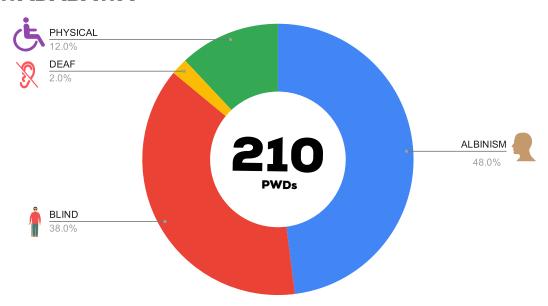




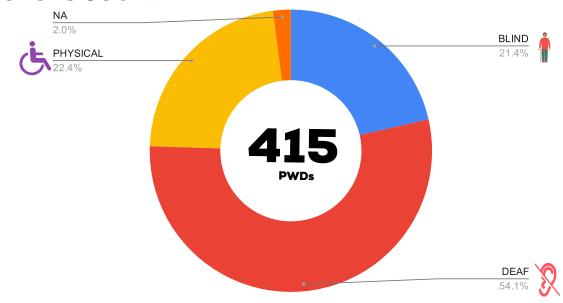




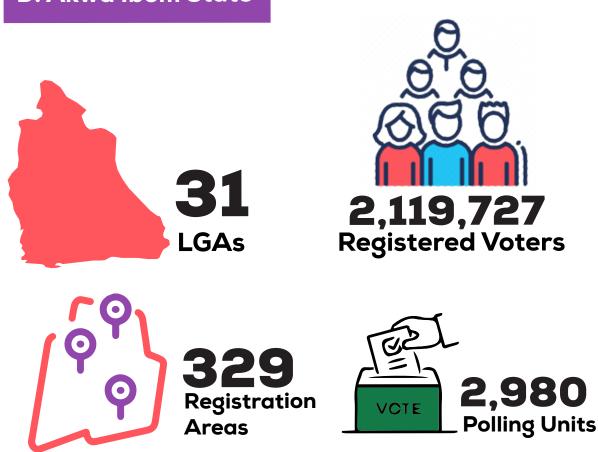
#### **GWADABAWA**



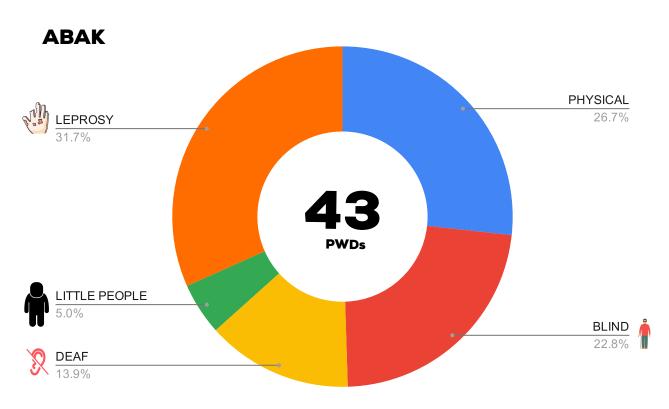
#### **SOKOTO SOUTH**

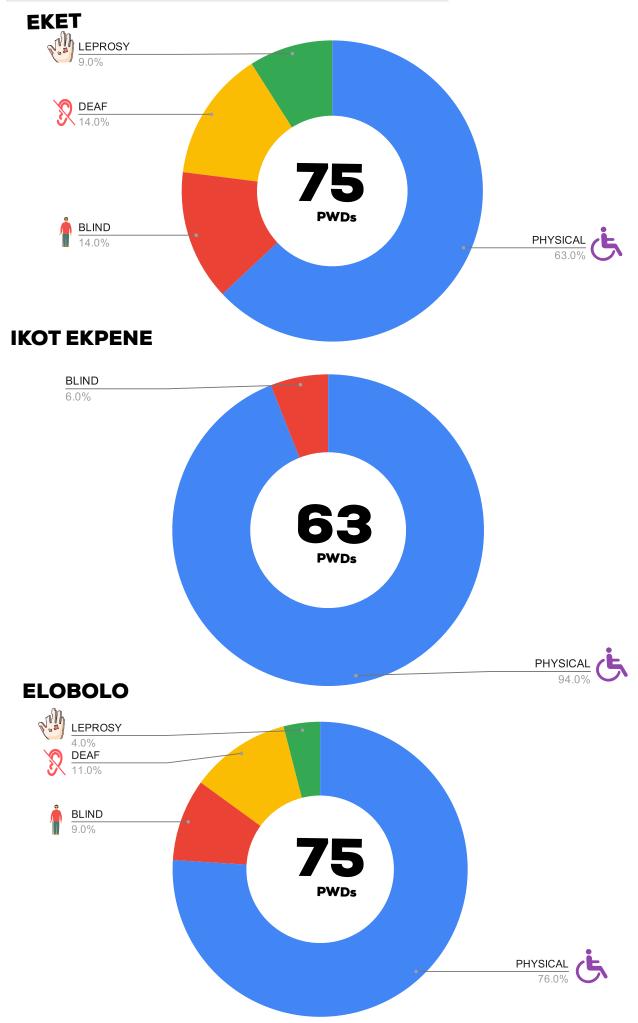


# D. Akwa Ibom State

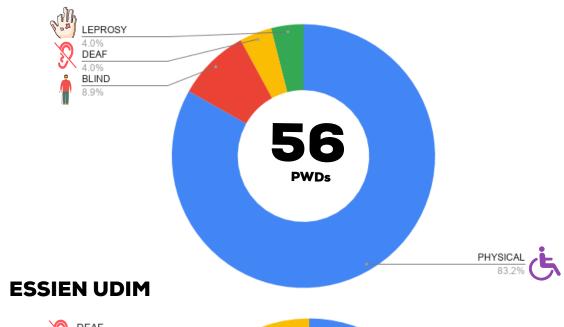


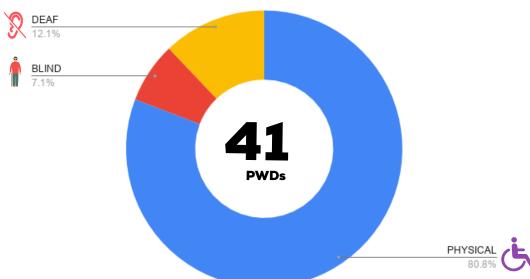
The data of 1,703 registered PWDs presented here are from 28, out of the 31 LGAs, representing only 0.08% of registered voters in the state.



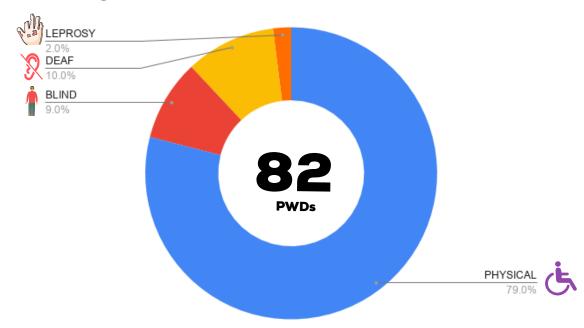


#### **ESIT EKET**



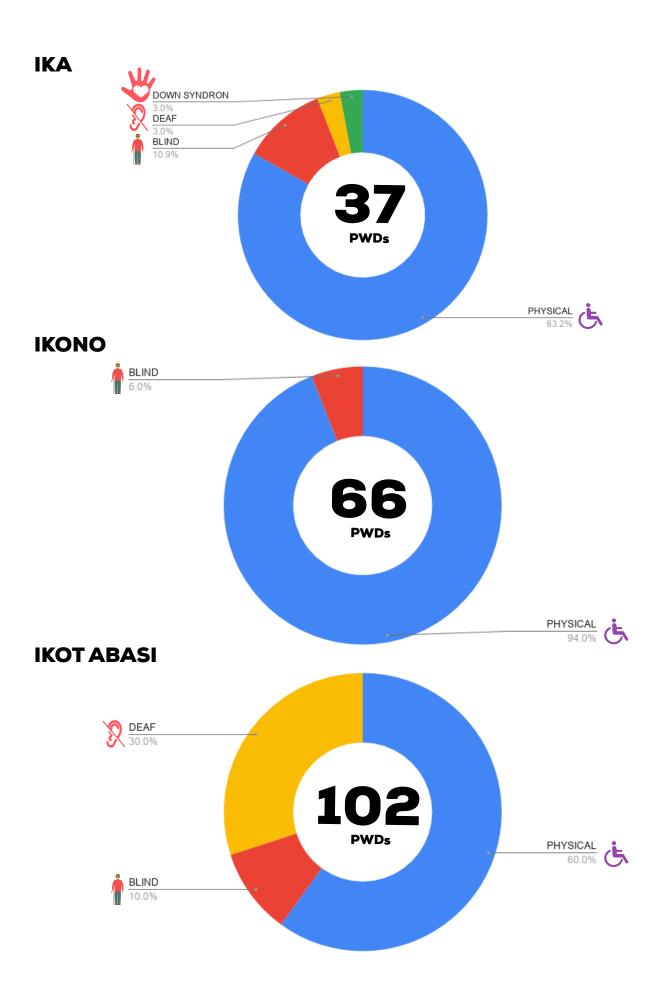


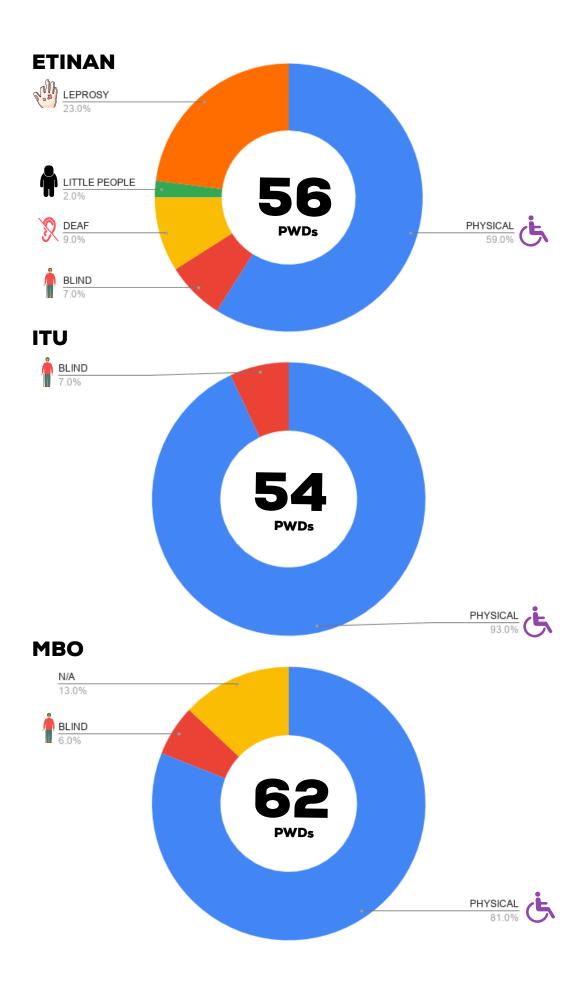
#### **ETIM EKPO**

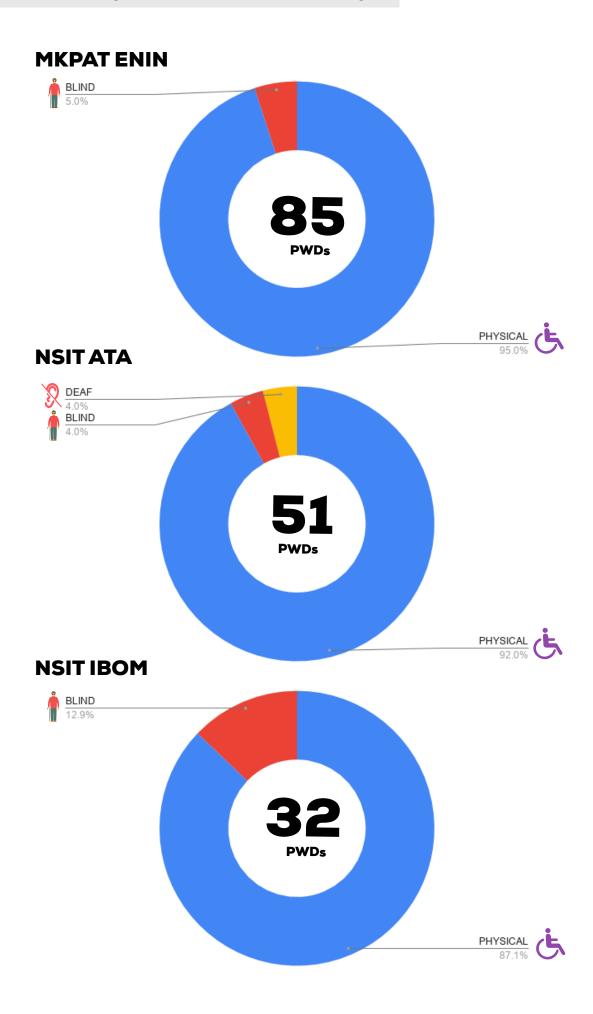


# **ETINAN** LEPROSY DEAF 16.0% PHYSICAL 51.0% BLIND 30.0% **IBENO** LEPROSY DEAF BLIND 6.0% **PWDs** PHYSICAL 85.0% **BONO IE** BLIND **PWDs**

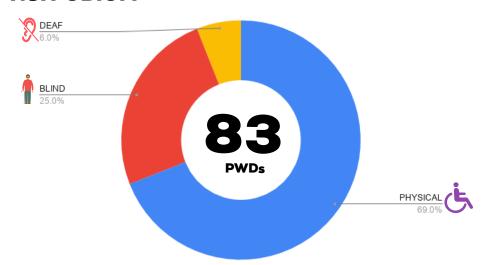
PHYSICAL 91.0%



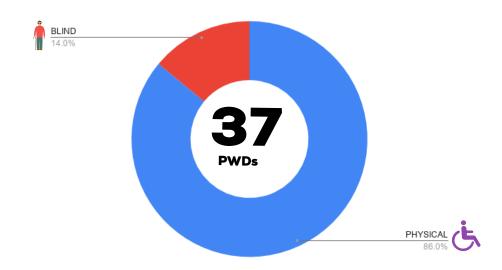




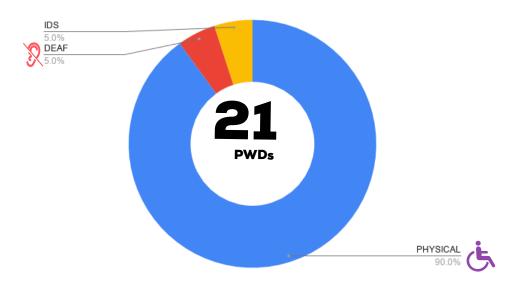
#### **NSIT UBIUM**

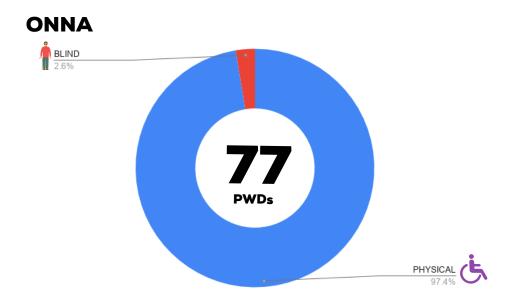


## **OBOTAKARA**

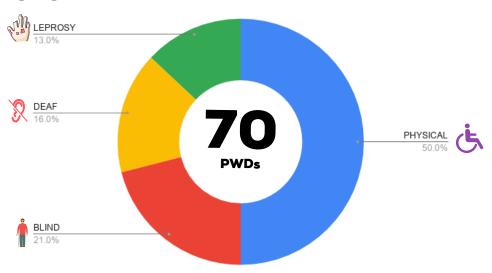


## ОКОВО

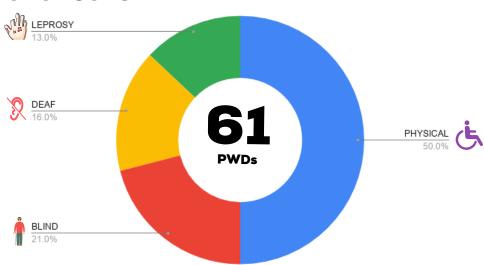




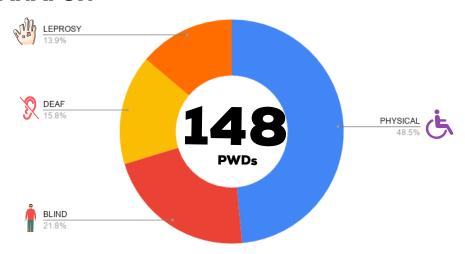
## **ORON**



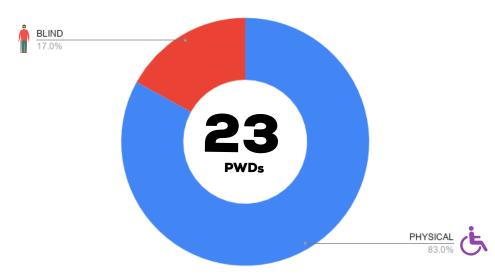
## **UDUNGUKO**



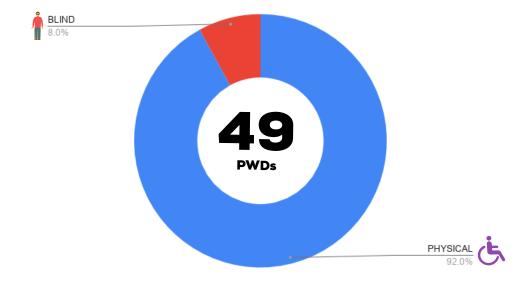
#### **UKANAFUN**



## ITU



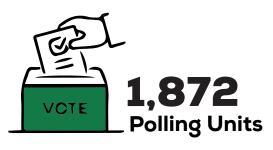
# UYO



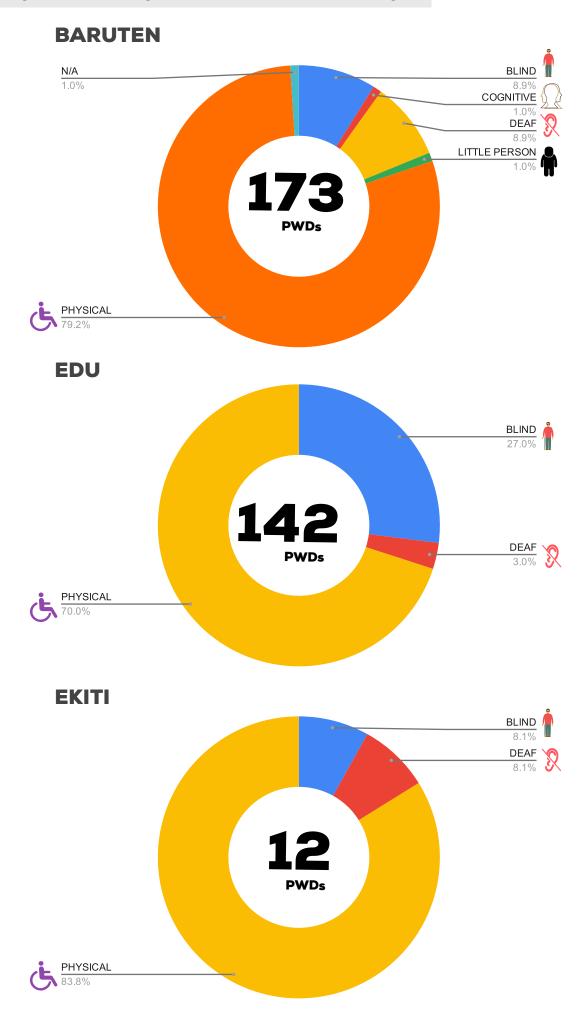
# E. Kwara State



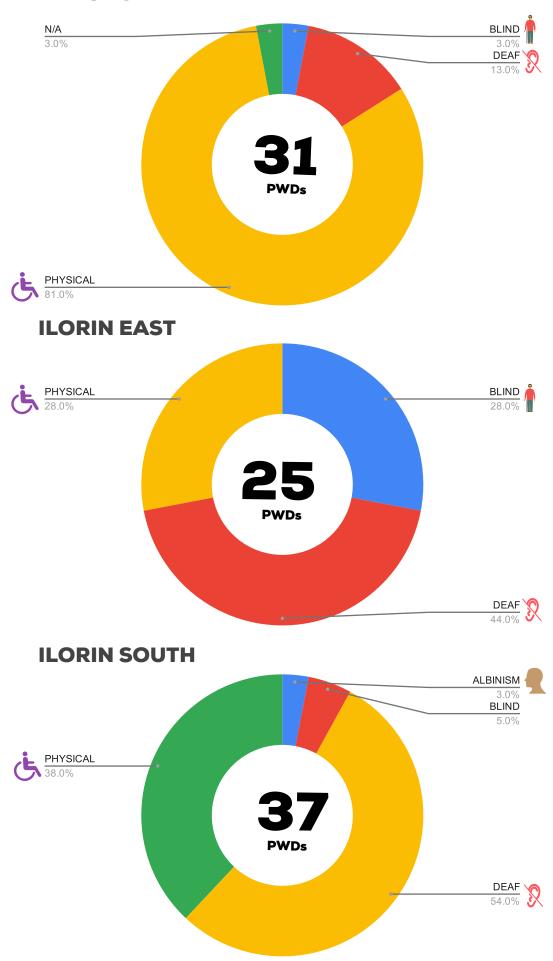


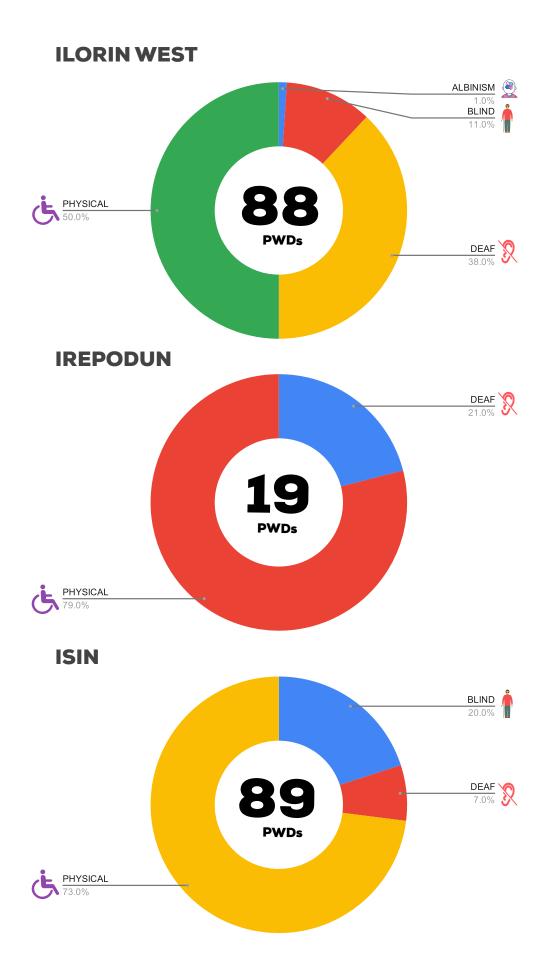


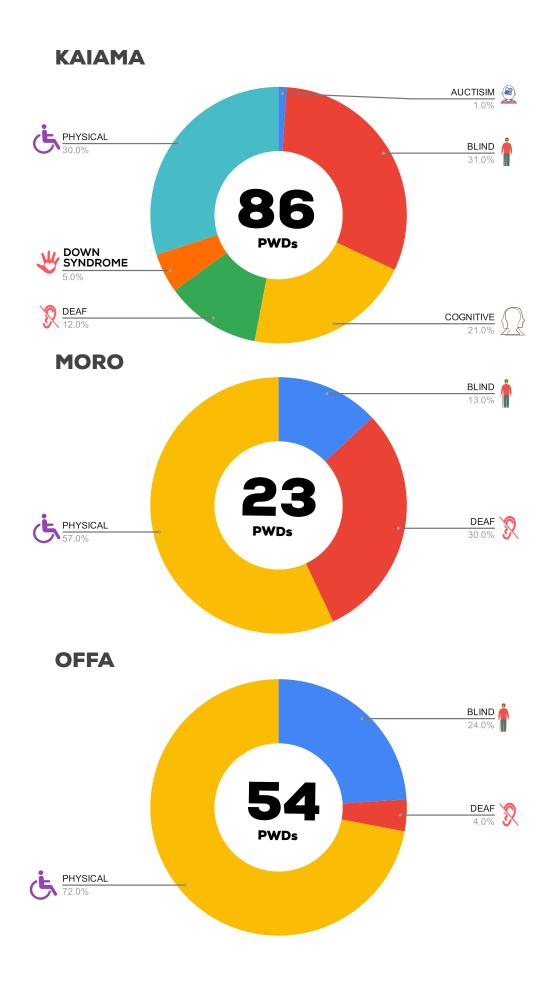
The data of 1,703 registered PWDs presented here are from 28, out of the 31 LGAs, representing only 0.08% of registered voters in the state.

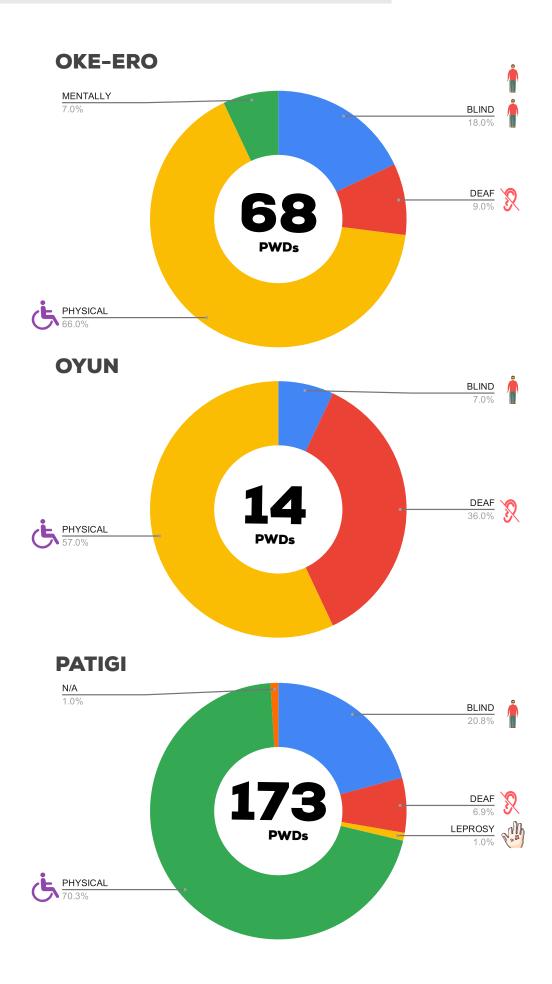


#### **IFELODUN**









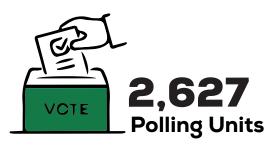
# F. Edo State



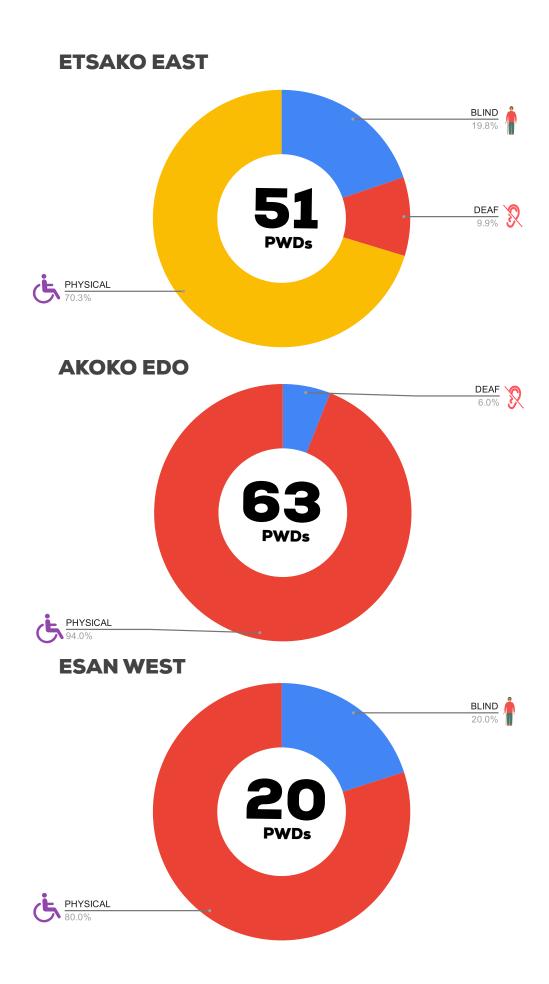
**18** LGAs



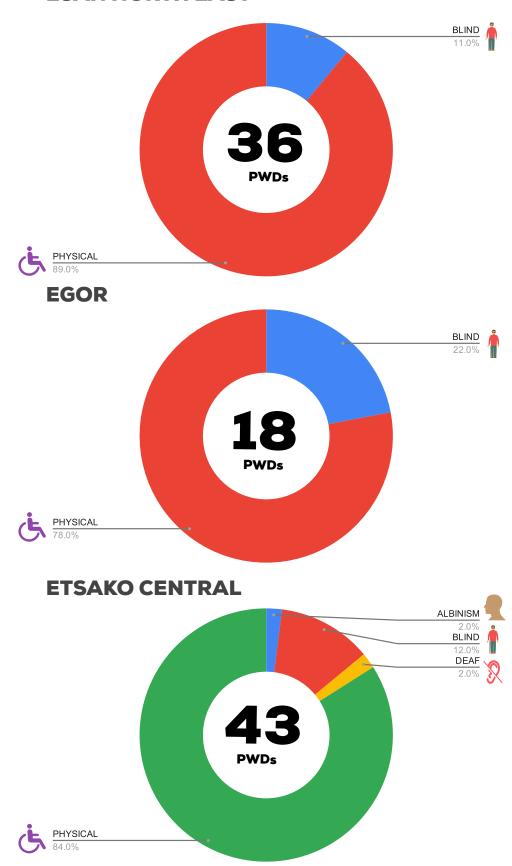


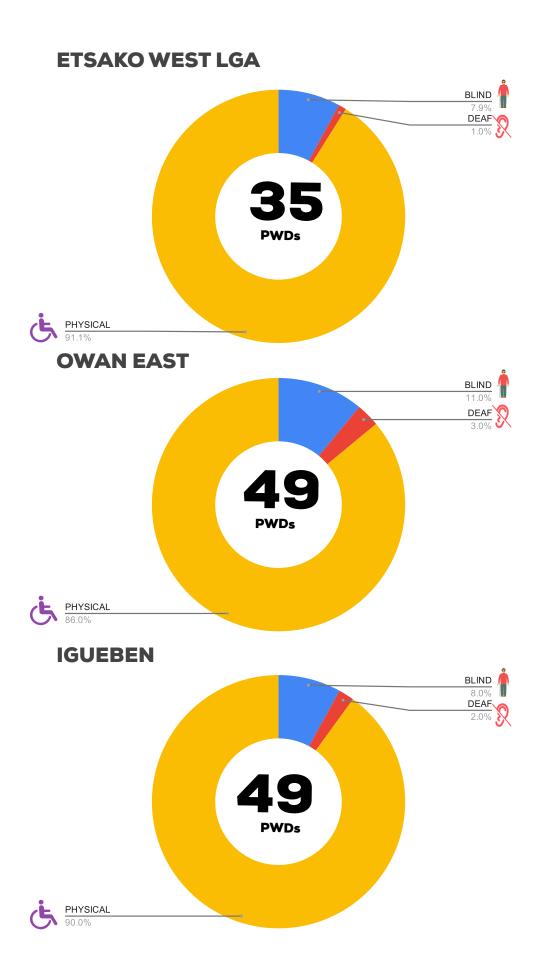


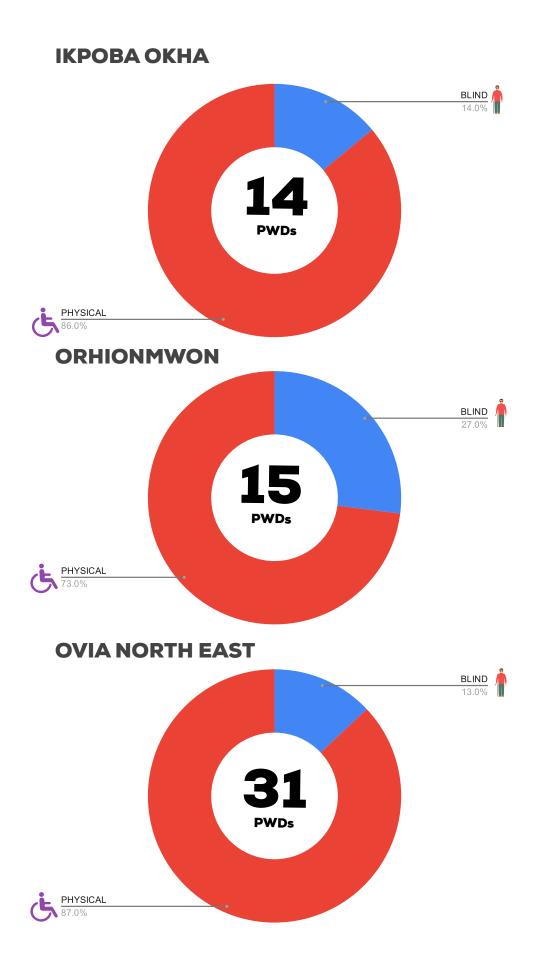
The data of 1,703 registered PWDs presented here are from 28, out of the 31 LGAs, representing only 0.08% of registered voters in the state.

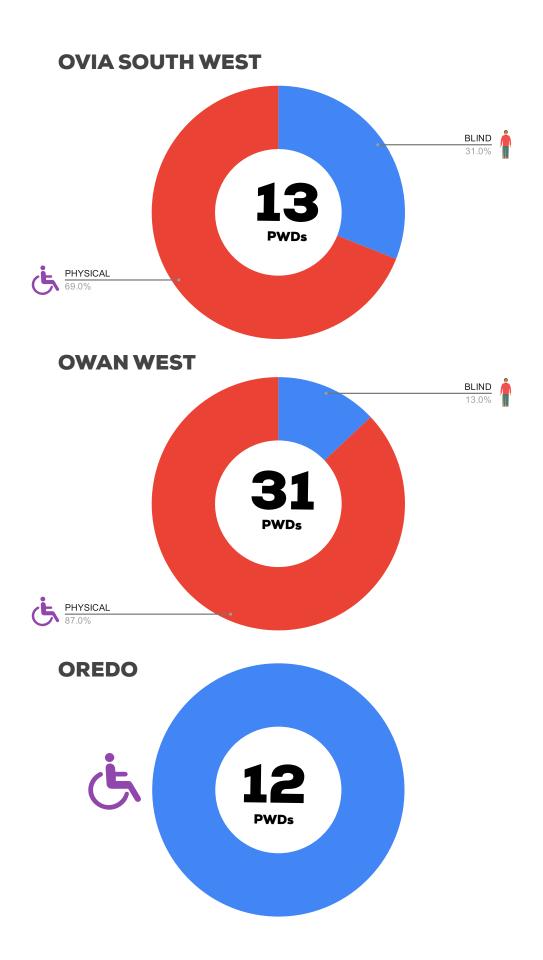


#### **ESAN NORTH EAST**

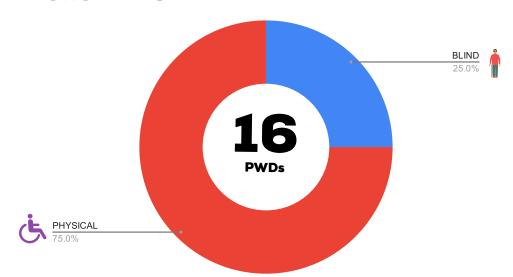




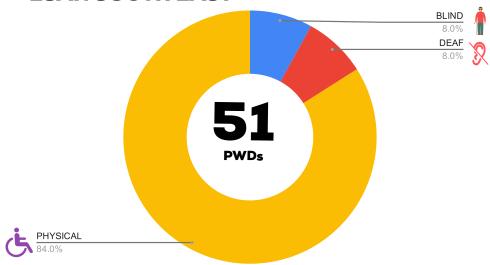




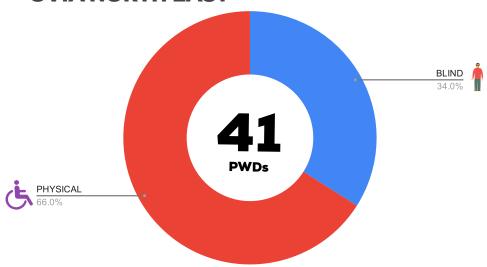
#### **UHUNMWONDE**



#### **ESAN SOUTH EAST**



## **OVIA NORTH EAST**

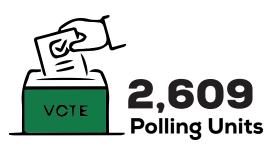


# G. Adamawa State



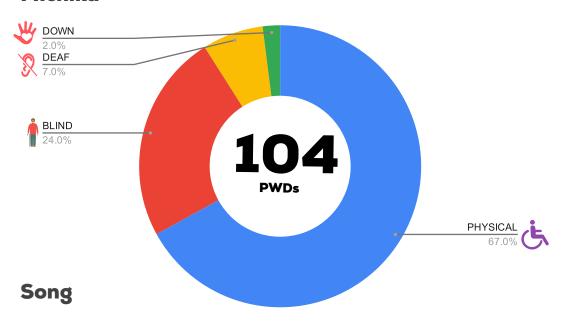


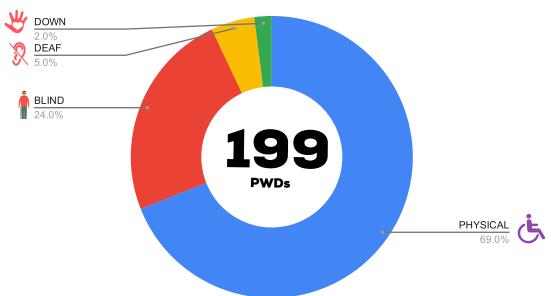




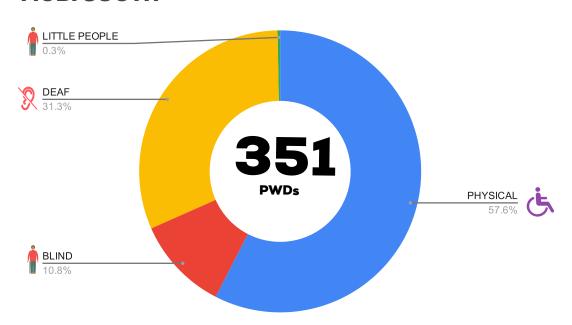
The data of 2,037 registered PWDs presented here are from 16, out of the 21 LGAs, representing only 0.1% of registered voters in the state.

#### **Michika**

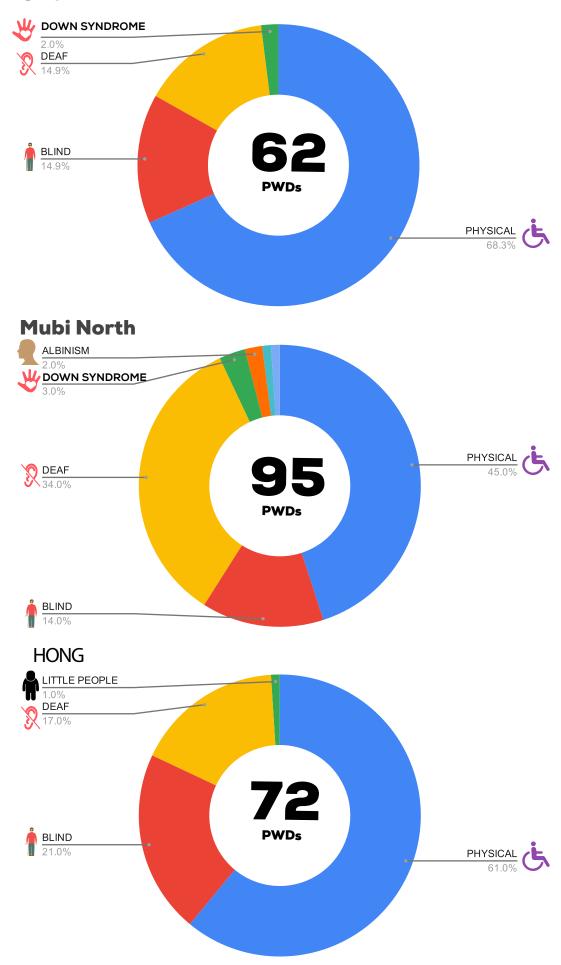




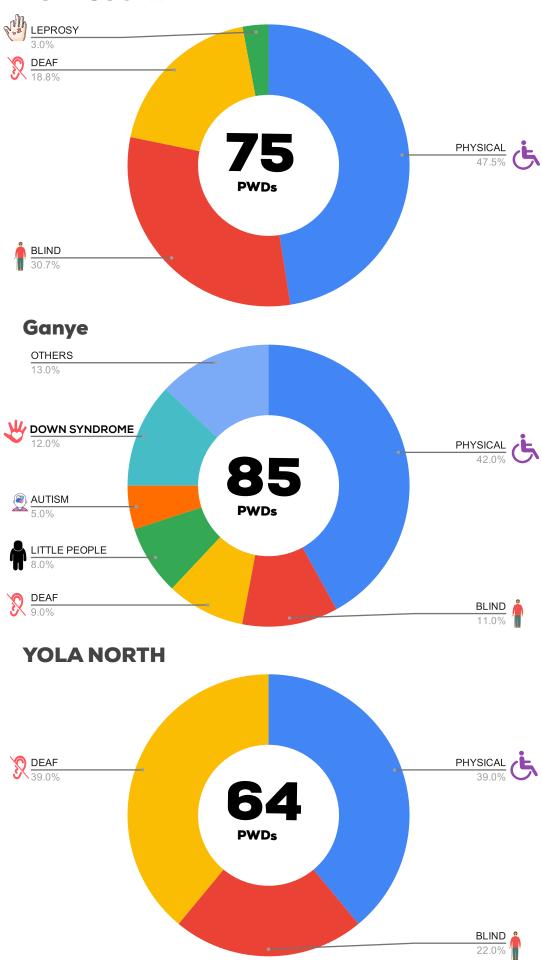
#### **MUBI SOUTH**

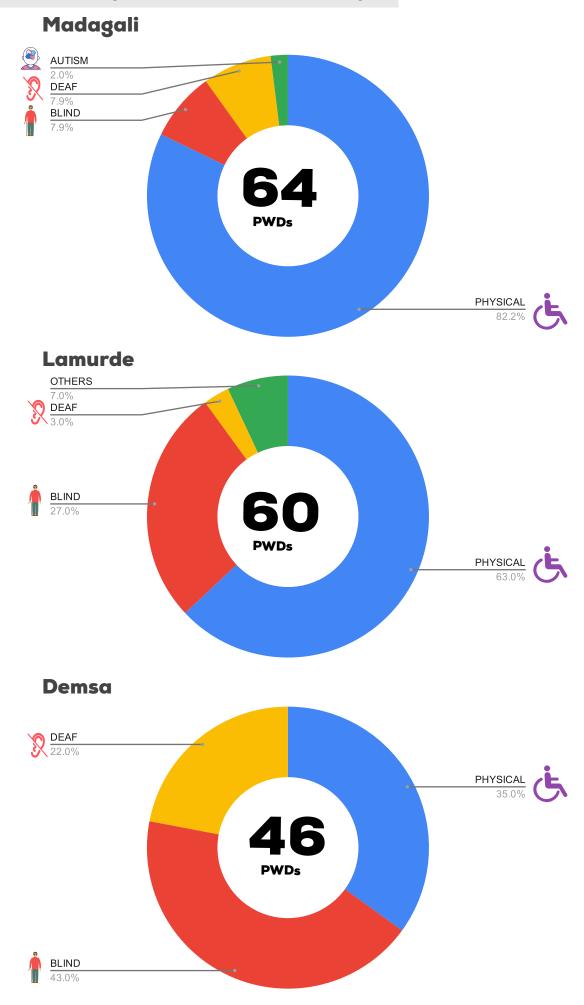


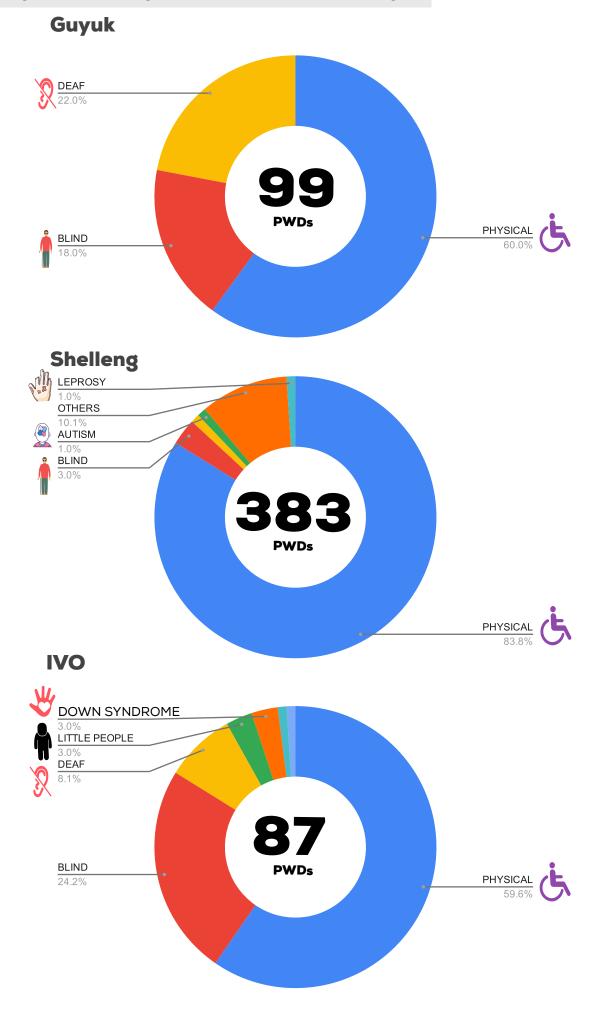
#### Girei



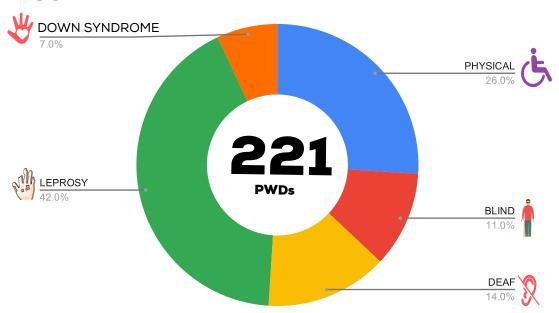
#### **YOLA SOUTH**







## **GOMBI**



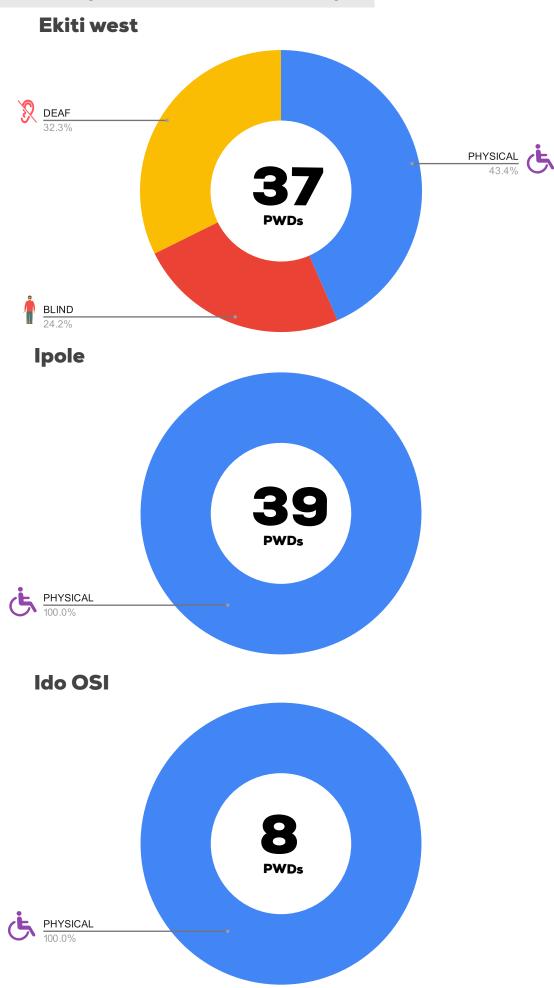
# H. Ekiti State

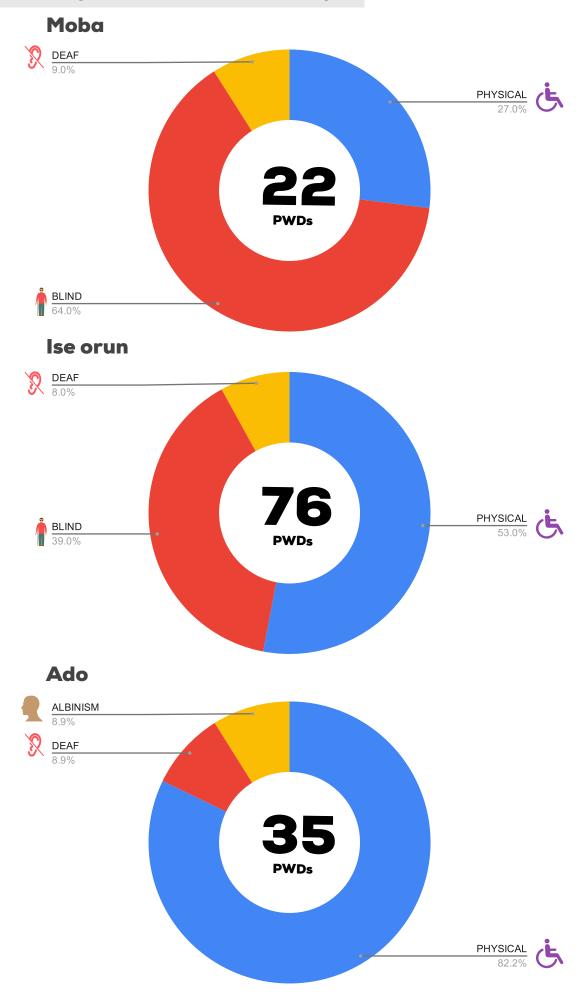


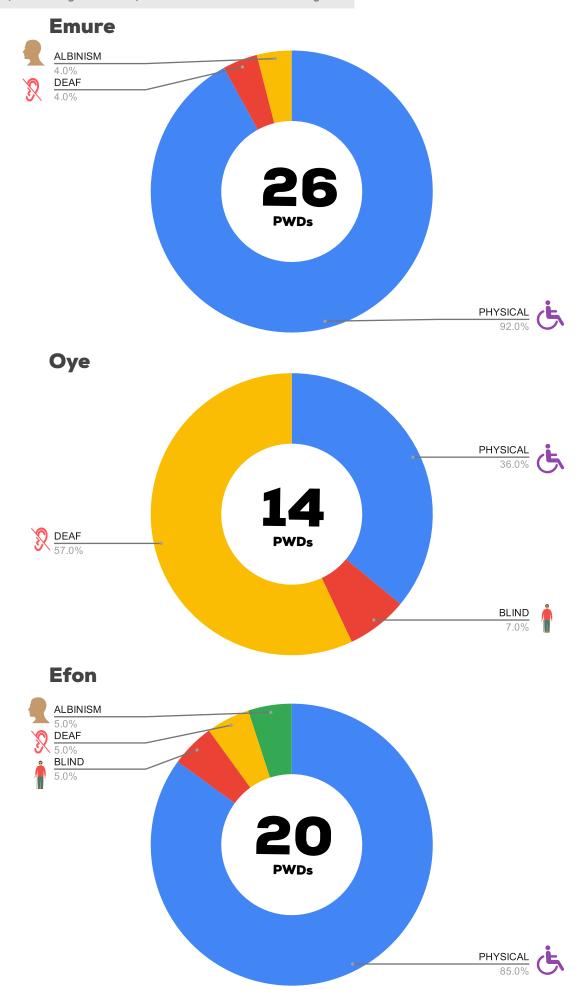


The data of 505 registered PWDs presented here are from 12, out of the 16 LGAs, representing only 0.06% of registered voters in the state.

# **Ekiti East** ALBINISM 6.0% **DEAF** 4.0% BLIND 9.0% **PWDs** PHYSICAL 81.0% lleyemeje ALBINISM 5.0% DEAF 2.0% **PWDs** PHYSICAL 93.0% **Ekiti South East** ALBINISM 3.0% DEAF BLIND 3.0% PHYSICAL





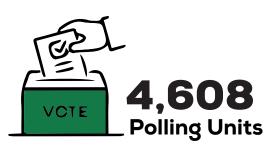


# I. Anambra State

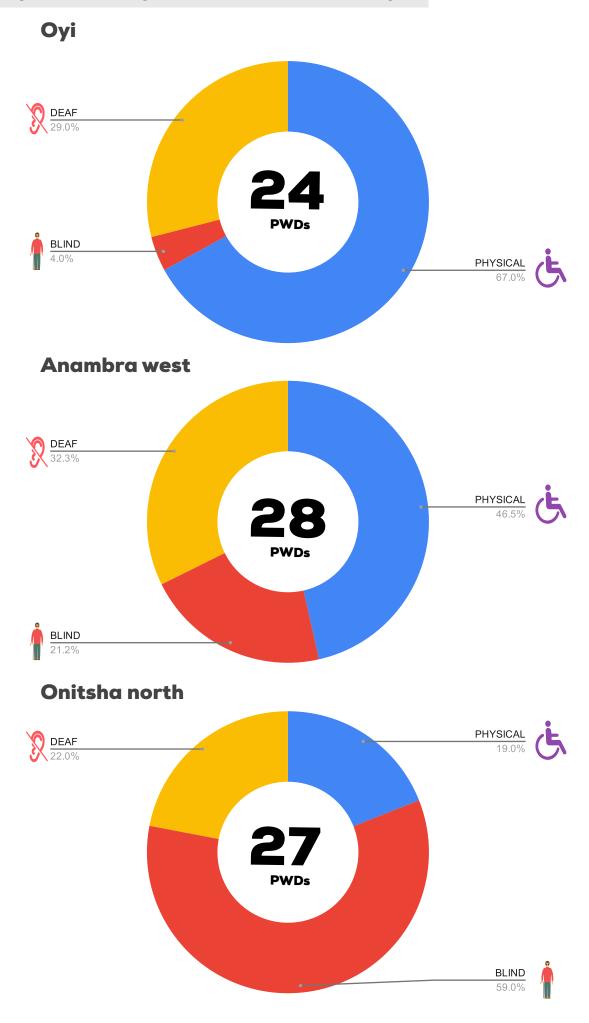




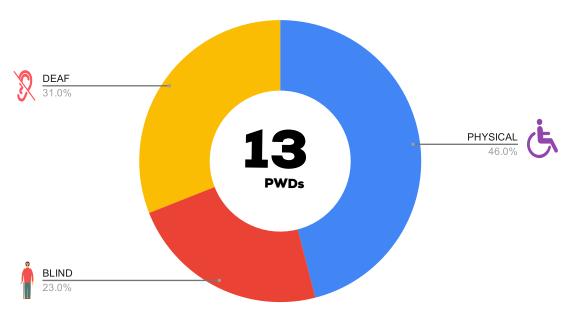




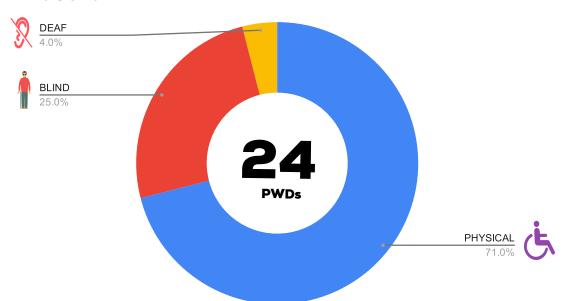
The data of 495 registered PWDs presented here are from 19, out of the 21 LGAs, representing only 0.02% of registered voters in the state.



# Onitsha south

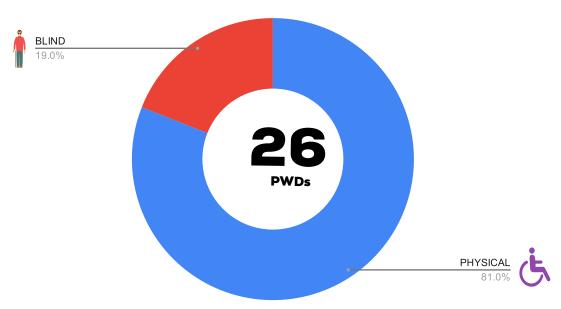


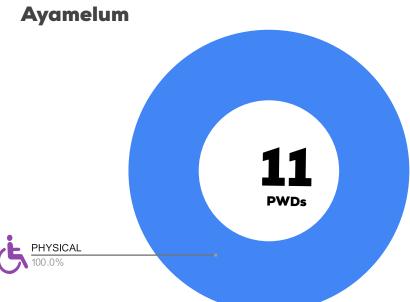
## **Anaocha**

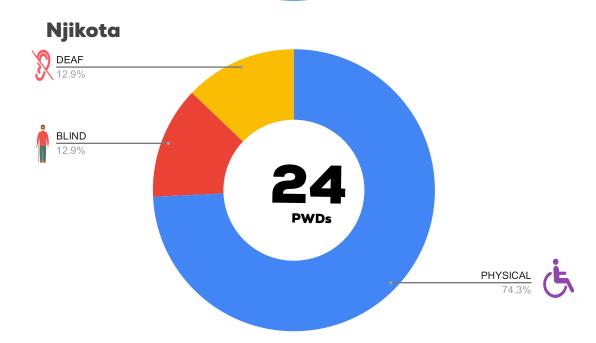


# Aguata 23 PHYSICAL 100.0%

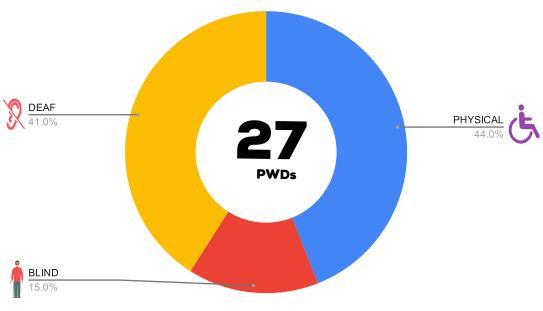
# **Nnewi south**

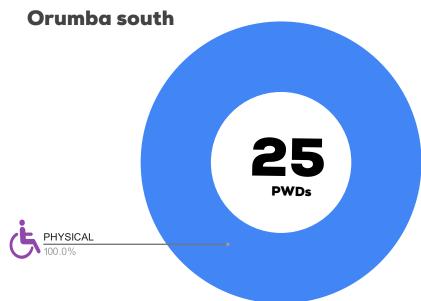


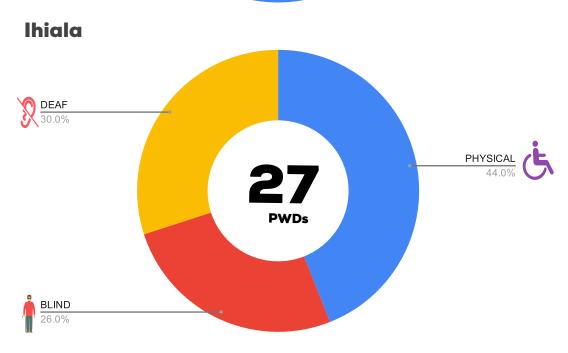




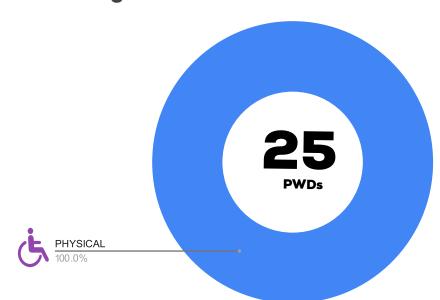
# Nnewi north



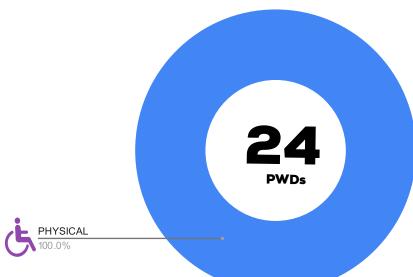




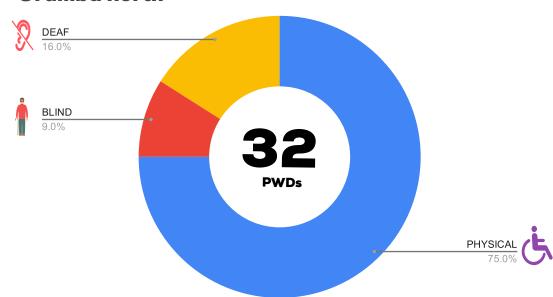
# Ekwusigo



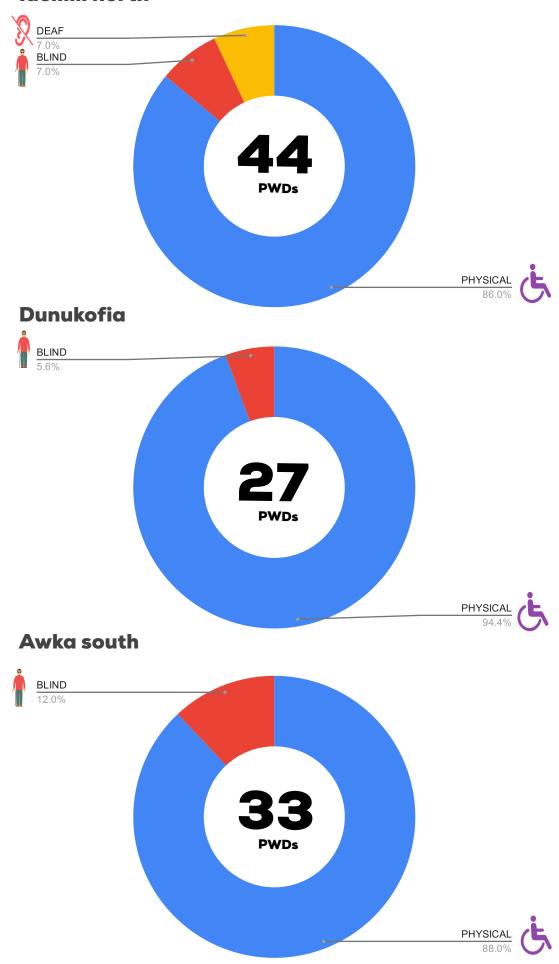
# **Idemili south**



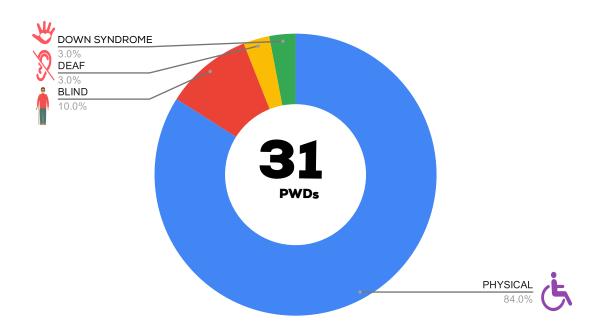
# Orumba north



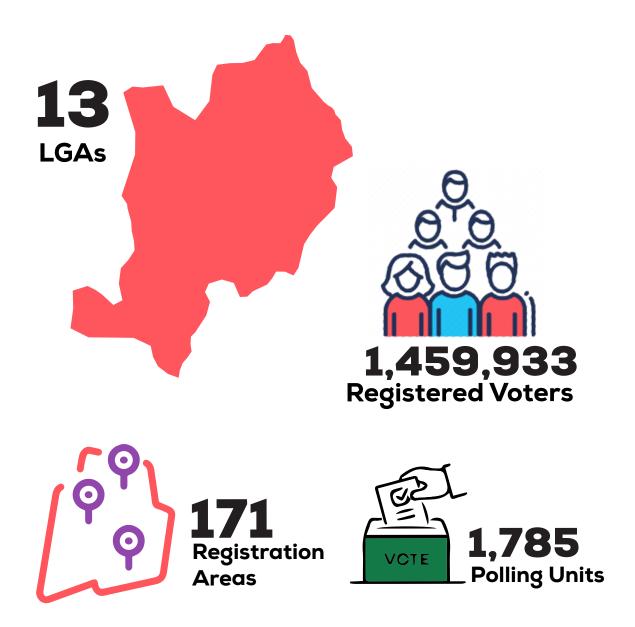
# **Idemili** north



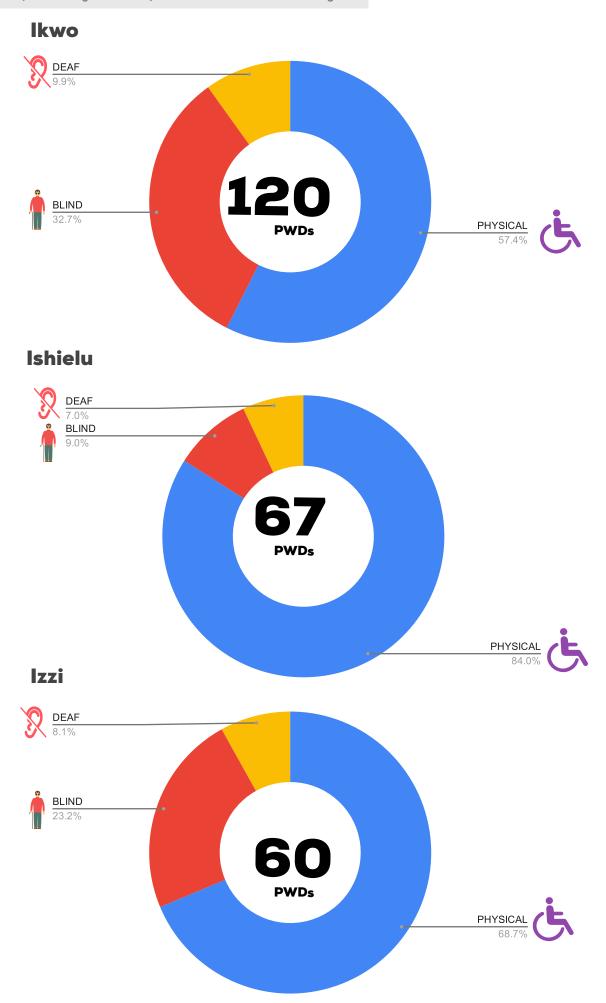
# **Awka north**

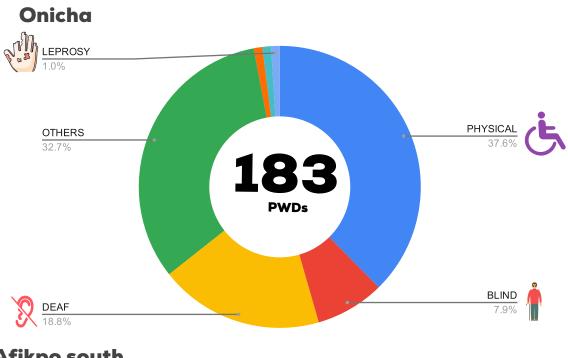


# J. Ebonyi State

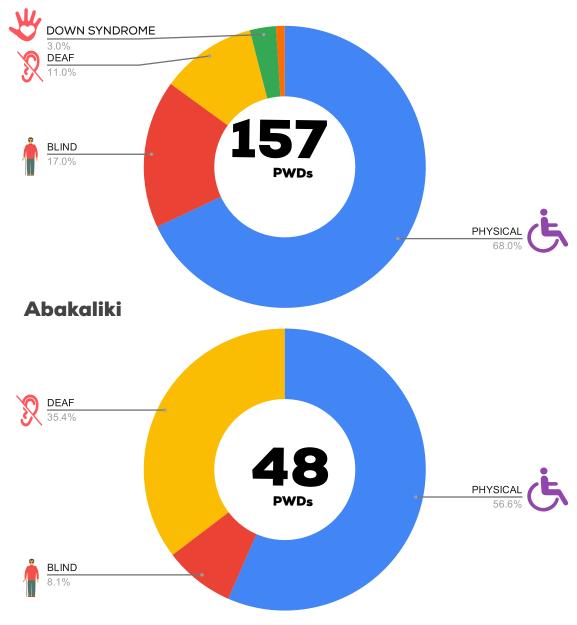


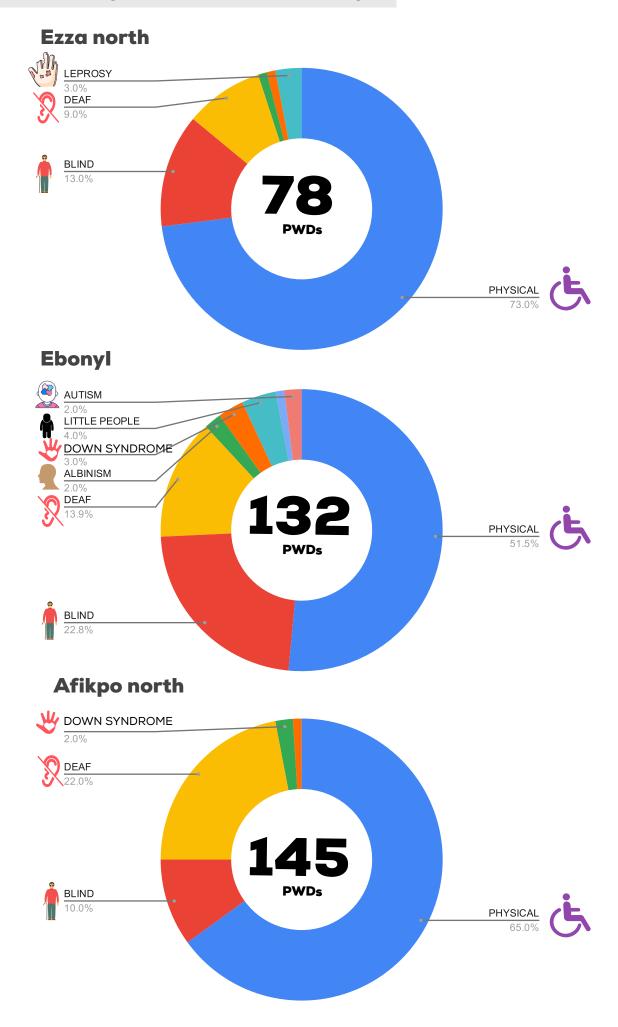
The data of 1,022 registered PWDs presented here are from the 13 LGAs, representing only 0.07% of registered voters in the state.



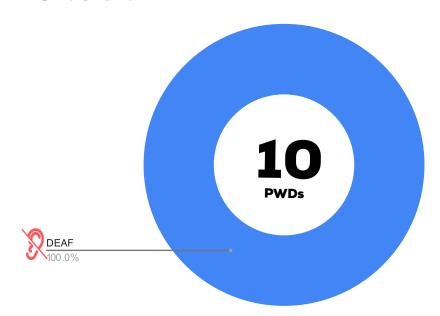


# Afikpo south

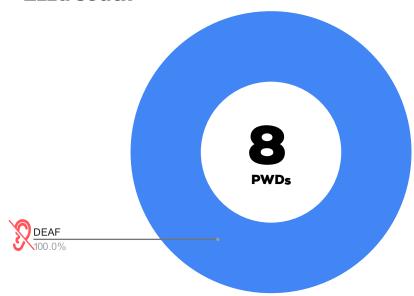




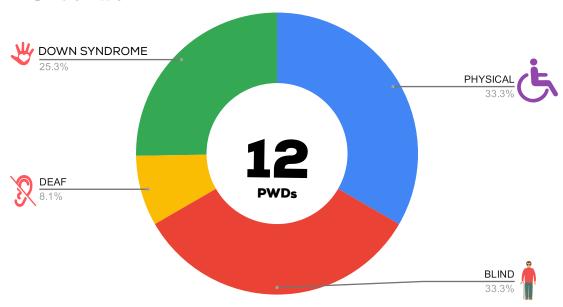
### Ohaozara



## **Ezza south**

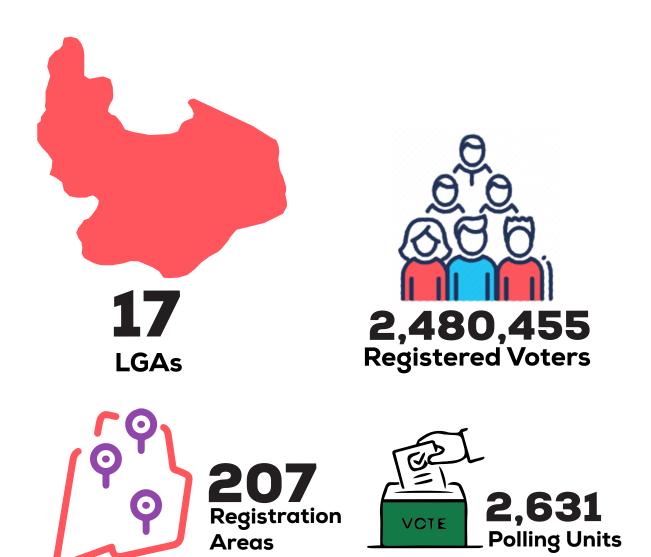


### **Ohaukwu**



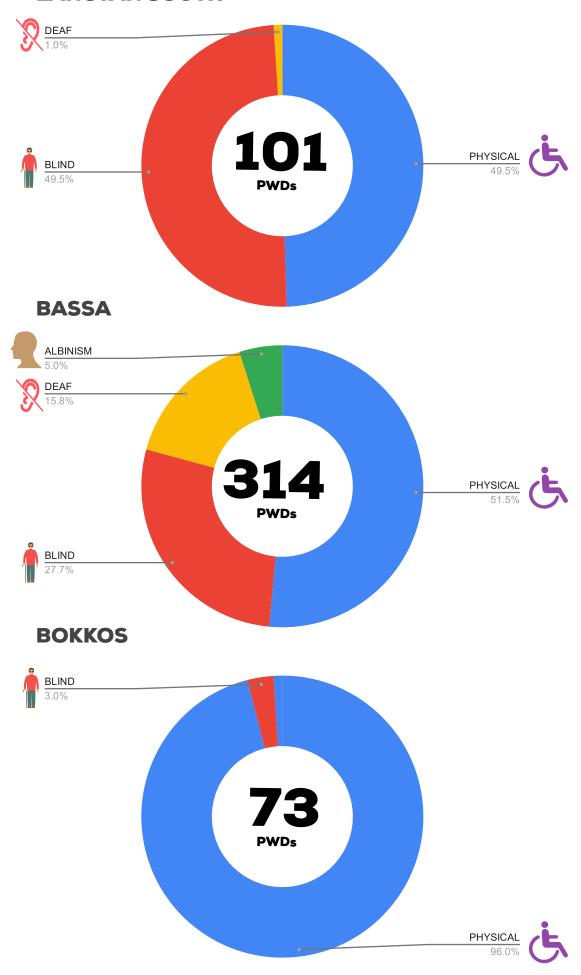
# PWDs DEAF 100.0%

# K. Plateau State

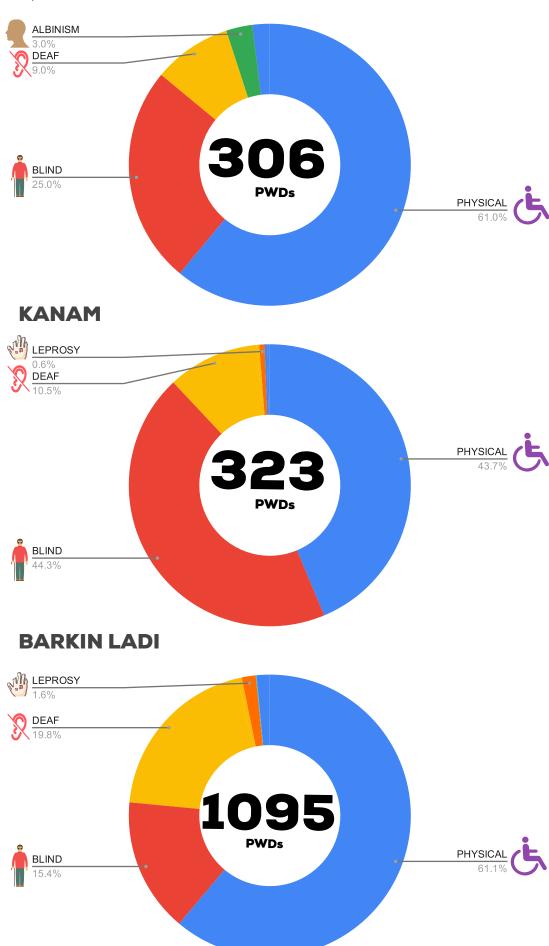


The data of 2,983 registered PWDs presented here are from 13, out of the 17 LGAs, representing only 0.1% of registered voters in the state.

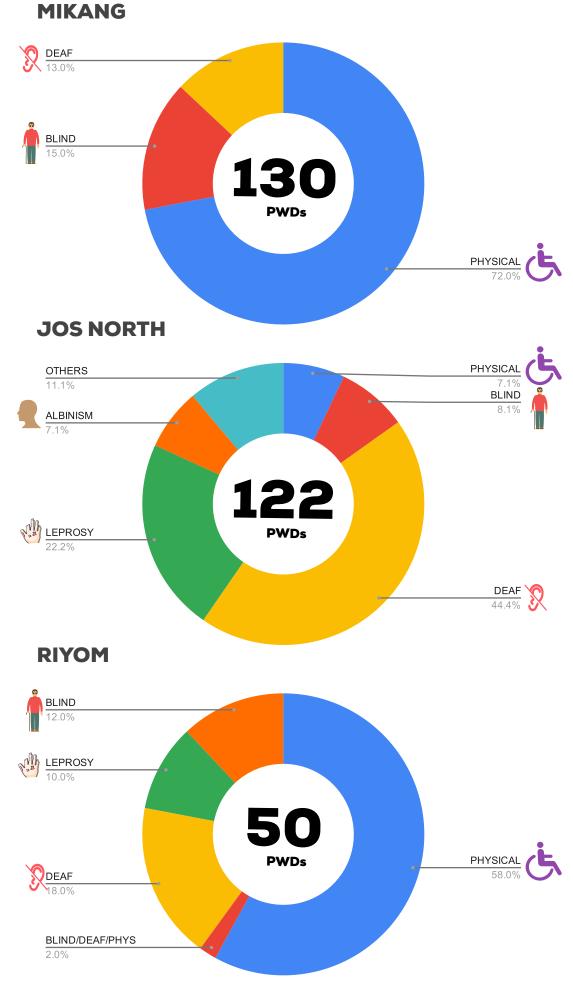
## **LANGTAN SOUTH**



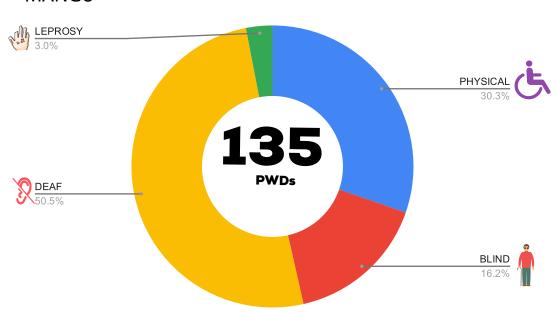
### **QUAN PAN**



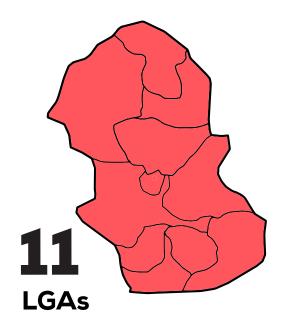
# **JOS SOUTH** <u>ALBIN</u>ISM PHYSICAL **70** DEAF 43.0% BLIND 16.0% **JOS EAST** LEPROSY 5.0% DEAF 15.0% PHYSICAL **PWDs** BLIND 25.0% **KANKE** OTHERS 1.0% DEAF 23.0% PHYSICAL 56.0% **PWDs** BLIND 20.0%



# MANGU

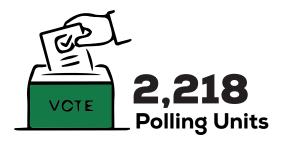


# L. Gombe State

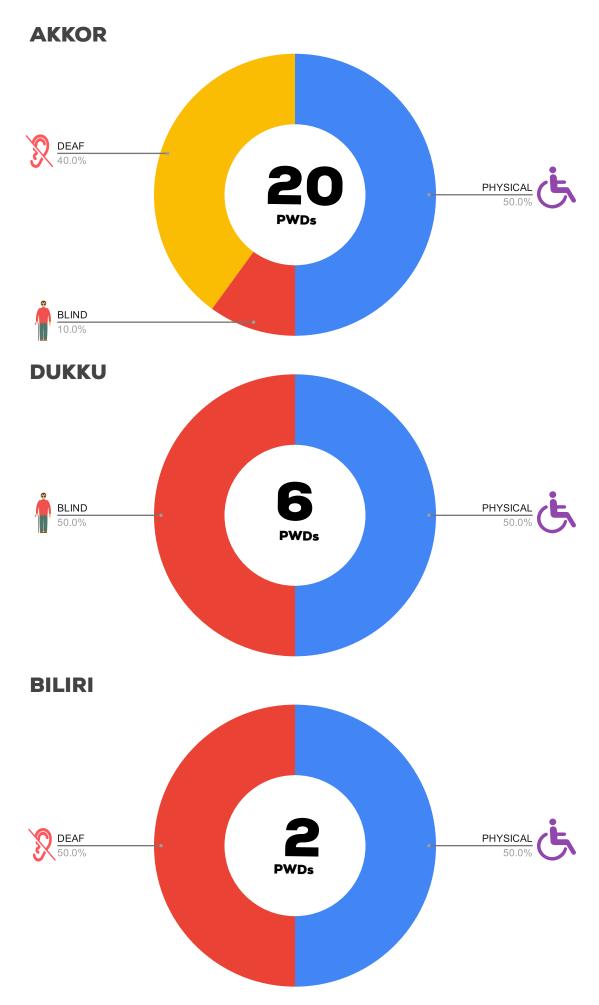




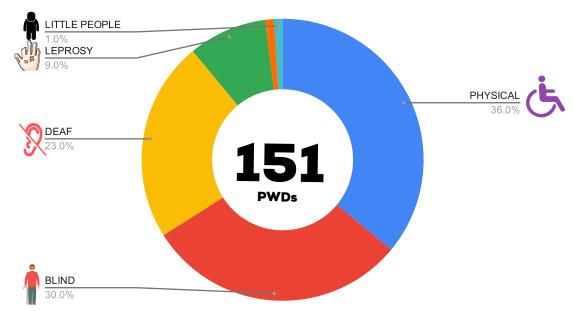




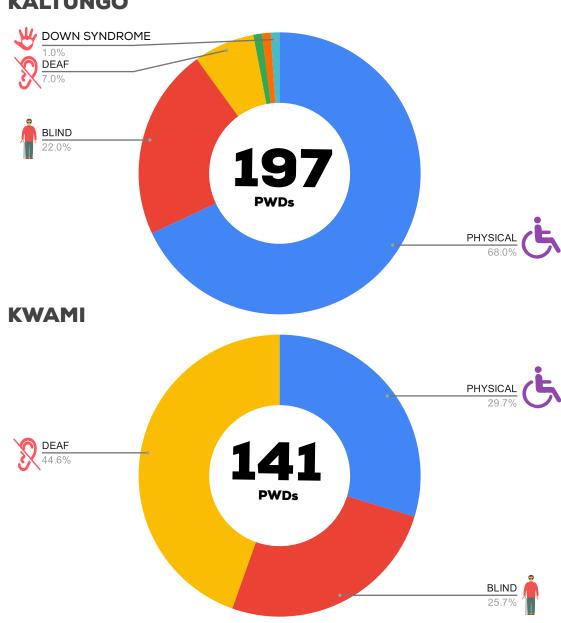
The data of 2,983 registered PWDs presented here are from 13, out of the 17 LGAs, representing only 0.1% of registered voters in the state.

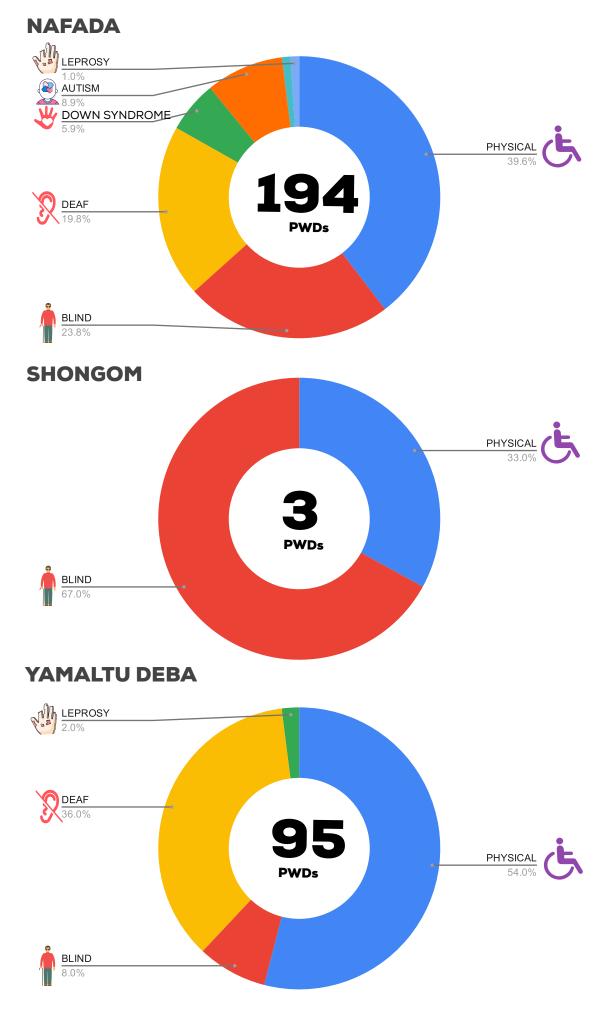


### **GOMBE**



### **KALTUNGO**







The project allowed me for the first time to understand the problems that exist first hand because we now know the level of work that needs to be done. Additionally, more PWDs are now approaching me asking when INEC would commence the CVR and that has pushed me to visit the INEC office to ask questions. I feel so empowered right now and I know we would achieve better results in terms of PWD participation in elections. – Fancy Phaloma, Adamawa State

The data collection exercise exposed us to know those that are registered within our different cluster networks. And immediately after the data was collected and it was few, I noticed that there is a shift in the way PWDs in Osun state now perceive how non-participation in elections. They now feel non-participation is responsible for our exclusion in governance inclusion. And I think this is a good way to wake up and push for what we want. – **Onitiju Kehinde, Osun state** 

Collecting the data shows clearly that PWDs in the rural part of Sokoto state are not registered, voters. The major reason they gave us for not registering is that they were not aware of what and how to register and collect their voters' cards. Disability needs were not captured in civic education messages – Maigwandu, Sokoto State

There is a rekindled interest among PWDs to get registered and possess their voters' cards. I hope that more organizations would key into initiatives to empower PWDs with knowledge on what to do and how to be active in public life generally. Leading this project in my state also allowed me to grow my relationship with all the cluster group heads and we are already seeing things we can do as a group to benefit PWDs - Patricia Gyang, plateau state

I had a situation, some group of aggrieved PWDs who felt their data was not captured because they didn't have any voter cards came to me requesting that we register them. So I was able to educate them that INEC does registration for voters cards, and told them that as soon as the process starts, we would ensure they get registered. This also shows that INEC needs to sensitize people when the CVR starts.

I was marveled by the zeal of PWD LGA supervisors in collecting information on PWDs across different communities in the state. They just wanted to be part of the great work happening to change the exclusion story. Some LGA coordinators crawl on the floor, but it

didn't deter them from getting results. – Stella Ohanusi, Gombe state

I am seeing that the challenges we faced during the data gathering are giving birth to ways to make things better. In March, we sent a letter to the INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner asking for the audience to address some of the concerns of our people, especially regarding

the CVR. We hope to see how we can collaborate with the REC and increase sensitization on participation in elections considering that in 2020, we would be having our next gubernatorial elections. We must start making amends now. – Owolabi Kayode, Ekiti State

PWDs now see the importance of possessing their voter's cards. I also noticed that voter and civic education messages are done in languages that most PWDs don't understand due to the low literacy levels among our people. After the data collection, I got invited to the radio Nigeria to talk about the problems we encounter as PWDs, and possible solutions to improve PWD participation. – Stella Ugwu, Ebonyi state

The project itself is an eye-opener on how we ought to do things. Low awareness was responsible for the low data we have collected. INEC, national orientation agency (NOA), and other organizations should invest more into voter sensitization and the next Anambra November 6 election should see the different outcome – Ugochuckwu, **Anambra state** 

First of all, our people need basic education, to understand how to read and write. Then we need to proceed to why they should be part of the life of their communities because most of them are timid and stay indoors. Some see the voter's card as an identity card, they have never used it to vote. So there is a lot of work that is to be done but thank God for this project with Voice . We also encountered accessibility challenges in getting to different communities to collect this voter information. But we have just begun – **Offiong Edet, Akwa Ibom** 

Like the polling units, most registration centres are not accessible so it discourages our people from registering. Also, there is so much hunger and reduced opportunity for PWDs, so they rather use their money to solve immediate problems than travel distance to go for registration of voter's card. Registration should be brought closer for PWDs. – **Abiodun – Ondo state** 

For too long PWDs' civic rights don't mean anything. This project has exposed us to so much that we can achieve when we work together. Right now, we have started engaging our traditional rulers on other aspects of inclusion beyond elections. This project has done a lot of empowerment for us. – **Bashir**, **Kwara state** 

# Challenges in the Data Collection Process

The collection of data sets such as those of the voting population comes with so many challenges. This is due to the sensitivity of the information and the peculiarity of the population. All data collectors were PWDs, as such, the barriers they experience everyday interacted with some unforeseen circumstances to present huge challenges that they had to overcome in the course of the work.

- Accessibility to certain terrain was very difficult, as such; some LGA supervisors were unable to reach those locations. Where they relied on a third party to collect such data, the data had integrity issues. This explains why some states have incomplete data coverage in this report.
- Due to travel restrictions in some parts of the country, the data collection process began late in some states. This affected the timing for sorting, and data reconciliation between the data clerks and the voters whose data was sent into our database.
- While the project sponsored publicity on radio and television stations in the target states, it was not adequate to convince doubting voters of the non-partisanship of the exercise because most of the LGA supervisors who directly collect this information have been identified with certain political parties.





# Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

- 1. Ahead of the update of the voters' register, INEC should ensure that all voters with disabilities in Nigeria update their disability status and type to complement to avoid blind spotting during deployment.
- 2. In the rollout of the CVR, PWD information should be fully captured including their disability status and type of disability. This would ensure that all new registrants have their complete data in INEC's database.
- Voters registration should also be brought closer to PWDs due to reduced mobility and poor standard of living among the community. Most PWDs cannot
- 4. Priority should also be given to PWDs that visit registration centres to ensure they register early and escape the long wait that impacts negatively on their health.
- 5. Like our polling units, the registration areas also share the same features; consequently, INEC should ensure that reasonable accommodations are created across these registration areas.
- 6. Ahead of the creation of additional polling units from existing voting points, disability should be used as an accessibility measure for the creation of the polling units.
- 7. For the over 10 thousand new polling units requested by citizens nationally, INEC should ensure that the polling units are model for all forms of disabilities.

# National Orientation Agency (NOA)

- 8. Civic and voter education is never enough. At the commencement of the CVR process, the NOA should design PWD-specific civic and voter education messages to create better awareness of the need for civic engagement among the disability community.
- 9. The NOA should also organize pieces of training for its staff spread across the 36 states and 774 LGAs on effective civic education to ensure that messages are localized for more PWDs to understand and participate in community life generally.

## National Population Commission

#### (NPC)

- 10. The NPC should consult widely with OPDs to ensure that tools/instruments for the data collection on the census are built to suit properly capture different forms of disability.
- At the recruitment stage for data enumerators, qualified PWDs should also be hired as data enumerators to participate in the data enumeration process.

#### **National Assembly**

- 12. The national assembly should expedite action for the transmission of the amended electoral bill for assent by the president.
- 13. The National Assembly should also make clear budget provisions to cover all provisions of voting materials that would assist PWDs to participate in our electoral and political processes without barriers.

# Executives at the Federal, State Levels

- 14. On the transmission of the amended electoral bill to the president, the president should assent to it as it would grant recognition to PWDs in the electoral process and ensure that accessible voting materials are adequately provided during elections.
- 15. State governments should work to provide ramps and other physically accessible measures across public buildings to provide access for citizens with disabilities.
- 16. The national commission for persons with disabilities should also facilitate the process of creating a national database of PWDs in the country to ensure that PWDs are identified with their reasonable accommodation needs.
- 17. The disability act should be fully implemented to ensure that PWDs have access to opportunities that would promote their participation in public life.

# Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

18. OPDs and CSOs should design voter

- education initiatives that appeal to differentforms of disabilities considering the level of ignorance that exists at the grass root levels.
- National OPDs and CSOs should also work collaboratively with local grass-root initiatives to drive civic and voter education campaigns in their communities.
- 19. OPDs and CSOs should design training programs for grass root organizations and individuals who would work in creating awareness on civic rights in local communities.
- 20. OPDs should also endeavor to implement actions that empower the community of PWDs with the knowledge to engage with power at the local and sub-national levels.

#### Nigerian Media

- 21. There is no single organization that can afford to create enough civic awareness for Nigeria. The media should endeavor to publish disability-inclusive civic and public education messages to create more awareness to reach citizens with disabilities.
- 22. The media should also provide very reduced costs for civic and voter education jingles and programmes in their media.

Inclusive Friends Association and its partners are available to provide technical support to for any partner to successfully implement these recommendations.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The availability of appropriate and disaggregated data of PWDs would provide different ministries, departments, and agencies of government bases for making an informed decision regarding the inclusion of PWDs in all socio-economic spaces in Nigeria. The unavailability of such data would only give room for waste, and decisions that may not meet the needs of PWDs in their quest to participate in the political and public life of their communities.

The ever-growing request coming from PWDs from all the states where data was collected shows that PWDs want to get more involved in the process. These calls included inquiries about when the CVR would commence and if it would be brought closer to them because they may not be able to travel to their local government secretariats severally for the registration, etc. These are all examples of commitments. These commitments need to be encouraged by ensuring that the next CVR thinks disability in the approach of implementation.

We need you all as allies to make disability inclusion a reality.

#### **APPENDIX I**

#### **Data Collection Checklist**

Name of Voter

**Local Government Area** 

**Polling Unit Number** 

Disability Type (Type as Appropriate)

**Employment Status** 

**Education Level** 

**Phone Number** 

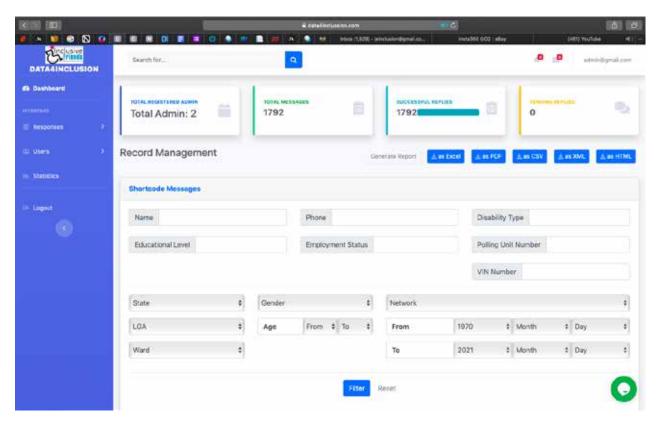
Gender

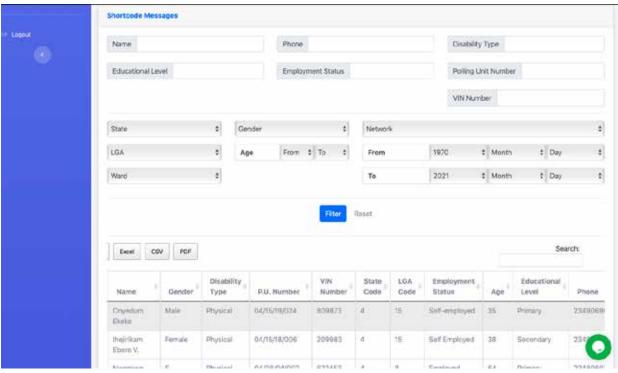
Age

**Last 6 Digits of VIN** 

#### **APPENDX II**

#### **Database Outlook**





### **APPENDIX III**

#### **Names of State Coordinators**

NAME	DESIGNATION
Fancy Faloma	Adamawa State Coordinator
Stella Ohanusi Chiemeka	Gombe State Coordinator
Egwu Stella Udoka	Ebonyi State Coordinator
Ugochukwu	Anambra State Coordinator
Kingsley	Edo State Coordinator
Abiodun	Ondo State Coordinator
Edet Offiong	Akwa Ibom State Coordinator
Engineer Musa Shagga	Kano State Coordinator
Maigwandu Abubakar	Sokoto State Coordinator
Bashir Yusuf	Kwara State Coordinator
Owolabi Kayode	Ekiti State Coordinator
Onitiju Kehinde	Osun State Coordinator
Patricia Gyang	Plateau State Coordinator

