



Report on Participation of Women with Disabilities in the Women Deliver Africa Regional Convening



The Regional Convening of the Women Deliver Africa

24th -26th November 2025

Nairobi, Kenya



Women and young women with disabilities from Malawi, Kenya participating in the conference

1. Introduction

The Women Deliver Africa Regional Convening took place as part of the broader preparations for Women Deliver 2026, bringing together diverse women's rights organizations, feminist movements, youth-led groups, and networks advocating for gender equality across the continent.

The Women Deliver Africa Regional Convening was a significant milestone in the continent's preparations for Women Deliver 2026, committed to advancing gender equality and human rights in Africa. Held over several days, the convening created an inclusive and dynamic space for dialogue, solidarity-building, and the co-creation of Africa's unified priorities ahead of the global Women Deliver conference.

The event brought together approximately 250–300 participants from across the continent, representing grassroots women's organisations, youth-led movements, feminist collectives, organisations of persons with disabilities, academia, donors, and regional bodies. The diversity of perspectives enriched the conversations and ensured that Africa's shared positions reflect the lived realities of women in all their diversities.

Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA), represented by its Executive Director, Ruth Mkutumula, actively participated to ensure that the unique priorities, voices, and lived experiences of women and girls with disabilities were strongly reflected in Africa's collective agenda. For DIWA, participation in this process was critical to ensuring that the priorities, leadership, and experiences of women and girls with disabilities were strongly represented and did not remain invisible within mainstream feminist spaces.

2. Background and Context

The Women Deliver conferences are among the world's largest multi-sectoral gatherings on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and the rights of women and girls. They influence global policies, strengthen movements, and generate commitments by governments, donors, and development actors.

Women Deliver 2026 is expected to be the largest gathering since the Beijing+30 processes, taking place at a time when:

- Women's rights are facing global pushback
- Feminist movements are confronting shrinking civic space
- Funding for gender equality is sharply declining
- Digital violence and new forms of inequality are rising
- Disability inclusion remains insufficiently prioritized

The Africa Regional Convening was therefore organized to collectively shape the continent's message going into WD2026 and ensure that Africa's diverse feminist voices, including youth, rural women, LGBTQI+ communities, and women with disabilities inform the global agenda.

The convening sought to produce a Regional Outcome Document, which represents Africa's shared priorities and advocacy demands. This document will be integrated into Women Deliver 2026 global platforms and influence commitments from governments, multilateral organizations, donors, and feminist networks.

3. Significance of the Africa Regional Convening and DIWA's Purpose of Participation

The regional convening served several strategic functions:

- Setting Africa's collective priorities for Women Deliver 2026
- Creating space for shared learning on key themes: SRHR, EAWG, gender financing, political participation, climate justice, and economic empowerment
- Strengthening collaboration among African feminist movements
- Ensuring that the most marginalised groups, especially women and girls with disabilities, shape the agenda
- Developing cross-movement solidarity and leadership pathways for 2026

Women Deliver 2026 is envisioned to be more inclusive, more intersectional, and more movement-led than previous years. A key emphasis is on shifting power, from global

North dominance to locally driven leadership, and amplifying the voices of women who have historically been excluded from global platforms.

DIWA's engagement in this process was therefore timely and essential, as it ensured that the framing of intersectionality acknowledges disability as a core dimension, not an afterthought.

DIWA participated with the objective to:

- To influence the development of the Africa Regional Outcome Document that will feed into the Women Deliver 2026 global process.
- To advocate for the full inclusion and visibility of women with disabilities within feminist spaces, discussions, and commitments.
- To present DIWA's perspectives, evidence, and recommendations on transformative gender equality and disability rights.
- To strengthen alliances with feminist organizations and policy actors ahead of WD2026.

4. DIWA's Contributions

4.1 Submission of a Joint Statement

DIWA, in partnership with COVAW, submitted a written statement to be incorporated into the Africa Regional Outcome Document.

The submission highlighted:

- The urgent need to integrate disability inclusion across all thematic areas.
- The persistent invisibility and marginalization of women with disabilities in gender equality financing, leadership, SRHR, and EVAWG agendas.
- The importance of recognizing intersectionality as a central principle in the WD2026 commitments.
- Clear recommendations on representation, financing, data, and accountability for governments, donors, and the Women Deliver ecosystem.

This submission was acknowledged among the contributions to be reviewed during the drafting of the final document.

4.2 Intervention in the Plenary on Inclusion

During one of the plenary discussions focused on equity, participation, and inclusion, Ruth Mkutumula delivered a key intervention on: The need for intentional inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in Africa's gender equality frameworks. The realities of intersectional violence, poverty, exclusion, and socio-cultural barriers that disproportionately affect women with disabilities. The lack of targeted financing, and how underfunding continues to shrink the civic and advocacy space for disability-led organizations. The importance of ensuring that the Women Deliver Africa process does not reproduce exclusion, but rather amplifies the leadership and agency of women with disabilities.

The remarks were well-received and sparked additional reflections from participants on how the outcome document should embed inclusion as a foundation—not an add-on.



Plenary discussions as the panel leads the conversations

5. Key Discussions Relevant to Women with Disabilities

Across the sessions, several themes emerged that had direct relevance to DIWA's mission:

- Financing for gender equality: Many organizations flagged the funding crisis affecting feminist movements. DIWA underscored that women with disabilities face the highest levels of underfunding and require flexible, long-term, disability-inclusive financing models.
- Leadership and political participation: Participants called for meaningful representation of diverse women, including disability inclusion in leadership spaces ahead of WD2026.
- EAWG and SRHR: The convening recognised that women and girls with disabilities face higher rates of violence and structural exclusion from SRHR services.
- Movement-building: There was a strong push for collective organising and creating safer, more diverse feminist movements including young people.

DIWA's contributions helped ensure that disability remained visible throughout these discussions.



With Honourable Ghati of Kenya on the middle and in green during the conference

6. Emerging Outcomes for the Africa Regional Outcome Document

Although the final document is still being consolidated, DIWA submission stressed the following:

- Commitment to intersectional feminist approaches, explicitly naming disability.
- Recognition of systemic barriers affecting women with disabilities.
- Calls for increased financing to disability-led and feminist-disability organizations.
- Emphasis on inclusive governance, participation, and leadership.
- Strengthened accountability for governments and multilateral actors in delivering commitments.

DIWA's recommendations are contributing toward shaping these priority messages that Africa will echo at Women Deliver 2026.

7. What Women Deliver 2026 Will Look Like

Women Deliver 2026 is expected to be:

- A Global Gathering with a Localized Approach
- Women Deliver is shifting towards a more regionalized model, placing stronger emphasis on African, Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern voices.
- A Hyper-Inclusive Feminist Space
- WD2026 is prioritizing the participation of: Women and girls with disabilities, Young feminist leaders, LGBTQI+ persons, Rural and grassroots women, Refugees, migrants, and conflict-affected women, Indigenous and minority communities
- A Platform for Real Commitments, It will include: High-level commitments from governments, Donor pledges to feminist organisations, Accountability mechanisms, Evidence-based advocacy dialogues, Plenary sessions, thematic forums, and youth hubs
- A Focus on Reversing the Funding Crisis, With feminist movements facing declining funds, WD2026 aims to push donors and governments to commit to flexible, predictable, and long-term funding.

- A Multisectoral Conference. Themes are expected to include: Gender and disability inclusion, SRHR access, Climate justice, Economic justice, Ending violence against women and girls, Technology, AI, and gender digital divides and Movement-building and leadership

DIWA's early engagement ensures that disability inclusion will feature prominently in these themes.

8. Reflections and Added Value of DIWA's Participation

DIWA's presence brought critical value to the convening by:

Ensuring that the voices of women and girls with disabilities are central not peripheral to Africa's gender agenda (We had 4 other women with disabilities from Kenya attending with COVAW).

Demonstrating leadership through evidence-based advocacy and lived-experience perspectives. Deepening partnerships with feminist groups, INGOs, and regional movements. Positioning DIWA as a trusted and influential actor in regional gender policy dialogues.

The participation also allowed DIWA to map opportunities for stronger engagement ahead of WD2026, such as speaking opportunities, co-leadership roles, advocacy spaces, and youth leadership pathways.



Participants at the conclusion of the women deliver conference in Nairobi

9. Conclusion

DIWA's participation in the Women Deliver Africa Regional Convening was strategic and impactful. By submitting a joint statement, contributing actively in plenary sessions, and amplifying the intersectional realities of women and girls with disabilities, DIWA has ensured that their priorities will influence the Africa Regional Outcome Document and ultimately help shape the global Women Deliver 2026 agenda.

The convening reaffirmed the need for inclusive feminist movements, stronger partnerships, and sustainable financing to ensure that no African woman, including those with disabilities is left behind.

List of participants participated by DIWA and COVAW

1. Ruth Mkutumula , Exeuteve Director, Disabled Women in Africa (Malawia)
2. Christine onyaga , program manager , COVAW (Kenya)
3. Josephine , Alumni of the regional training on leadership skills of the DIWA/COVAW leadership training

Annex 1.



Outcome Statement From African Women with Disabilities During the African Regional convening towards Women Deliver 2026 24-26 November 2025

As African women with disabilities participating in the African Regional Convening Towards Women Deliver 2026, we recognize that the discussions held from 24–26 November 2025 reflect the urgent realities shaping our lives, shrinking civic space, severe funding cuts, unequal access to SRHR, persistent violence, and the widening inequalities that continue to push us to the fringes of feminist and development agendas. We affirm that while Africa is advancing feminist leadership, youth organising, and SRHR advocacy, women and girls with disabilities remain structurally excluded from the very spaces, resources, and decisions intended to transform our lives. Our experiences during the sessions on funding crisis, feminist economic justice, SRHR in humanitarian settings, governance, and movement-building confirm that the global aid reductions and domestic financing gaps are disproportionately harming us, especially those in rural, conflict-affected, or disaster-impacted areas, and that without our inclusion, Africa cannot deliver gender justice or achieve the vision of Women Deliver 2026.

We therefore call for the WD2026 outcome document to explicitly centre the rights, leadership, and lived experiences of African women with disabilities by demanding a fundamental shift in financing, policy commitments, and accountability.

We urge donors, governments, and feminist movements to adopt disability-inclusive financing models that allocate direct, flexible, long-term resources to organizations of women with disabilities and embed accessibility, participation costs, assistive technologies, and reasonable accommodation into all budgets as mandatory commitments.

Strengthen partnerships between governments, private sector, philanthropies, and OPDs to protect essential gender and disability programmes from global aid fluctuations and promote the Amman Berlin declaration on 15% for 15% commitment to disability rights adopted in Berlin/Germany at global disability summit.

We insist that SRHR policies, services, and information fully address the barriers we face, including inaccessible facilities, discriminatory practices, lack of sign language, limited mental health support, and heightened risks of GBV, so that no woman is denied her bodily autonomy because of disability.

We call for our meaningful representation in civic processes, AU platforms, parliamentary advocacy, and local decision-making, emphasizing that inclusion without resources or power is symbolic and reinforces historic inequalities.

Our leadership must be recognized not as token presence but as essential to shaping policy, demanding accountability, and advancing SRHR and gender justice.

We further emphasize the need for solidarity-based movements that unite feminist, youth, disability, climate, and social justice actors to resist anti-rights attacks and strengthen collective action, ensuring that our stories, expertise, and solutions are respected as central to Africa's transformation.

Economic justice frameworks must confront the exclusion we face in employment, social protection, entrepreneurship, and access to credit, ensuring that economic policies uplift women with disabilities instead of deepening poverty.

Domestic resource mobilization must integrate disability inclusion so that African countries are not dependent on unpredictable external funding, particularly for SRHR, GBV prevention, and community-based services that directly serve us.

We call on the AU, regional bodies, and national governments to ratify and implement CEVAWG, the Maputo Protocol, and the African Disability Protocol with disability-responsive indicators, credible monitoring systems, and clear accountability measures. We demand that mental health and psychosocial support systems reflect the realities of women with disabilities, especially survivors of violence and adolescent girls, who continue to be left behind in mainstream services.

Finally, we affirm that African women with disabilities must be visible, heard, and recognized across all WD2026 processes, communications, advocacy, and outcome documents and ensure that the convening space is much accessible as possible.

Any further contacts

infodiwaafrika@gmail.com, ruthmkutumula@diwaafrika.org and info@diwaafrika.org

Disabled Women in Africa

Facebook: disabledwomeninafrica1

Contacts: +265999808031