



SHIJUWAZA

NEWSLETTER

APR-JUN 2026

THE STORIES OF ZANZIBAR OPDs

That Transforming lives, shaping inclusive
policies, and driving meaningful action
towards disability inclusion.



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President of Zanzibar Names SHIJUWAZA Vice Chairperson to Lead National Disability Council

On 15th May 2026, the President of Zanzibar, Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, appointed SHIJUWAZA Vice Chairperson, Mr. Ali Omar Makame, as the new Chairperson of the Zanzibar National Council of Persons with Disabilities, following the six years of outstanding service by his predecessor, Ms. Salma Saadat.

In Zanzibar, the name Ali Omar Makame is well known among all stakeholders advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Before his appointment, Mr. Makame made remarkable contributions to disability advocacy at both the grassroots and national levels by bringing regional and global experience in disability rights. During his six years of service as SHIJUWAZA Vice Chairperson, SHIJUWAZA nurtured his visionary and ethical leadership.

At SHIJUWAZA, we do not only celebrate his achievement, but we also reaffirm our full support to ensure that disability rights receive the recognition they deserve in Zanzibar.



Zanzibar President, His Excellence Dr. Hussein Mwinyi (at left) shaking hands with SHIJUWAZA Vice Chairperson Mr. Ali Omar Makame during International Disability Day on 3rd of December 2025

OPDs' Affairs Addressed by Zanzibar President:



On 20 April 2026, at the Zanzibar State House, the President of Zanzibar, H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening autism awareness, early identification, and quality support services for children with autism across Zanzibar. During a meeting with leaders of Zanzibar Autism Care and Support Organization (ZACSO) and Lukiza Autism Foundation, the President emphasized that autism is a growing social concern that requires coordinated action between the Government, Organizations of Persons With Disabilities, Civil Society Organizations, professionals, and communities. His Excellence Dr. Mwinyi highlighted the need to expand public awareness, increase the number of qualified specialists, strengthen early diagnosis and intervention services, and integrate autism awareness programmes into schools. The President also directed the Ministry of Health to collaborate closely with autism experts and OPDs to improve access to timely and inclusive services for children and their families. To join the call of President of Zanzibar, His Excellence Dr. Mwinyi, SHIJUWAZA supported ZACSO to conduct the first ever National Forum of Autism in Zanzibar to expand the national awareness on the rights of children with autism.

SHIJUWAZA Unites Zanzibar OPDs to Set the Stage for the International Inclusive Education Symposium.

SHIJUWAZA intends to convene the International Inclusive Education Symposium in November 2026, bringing together more than 200 experts from around the world. The two-day symposium aims not only to facilitate knowledge sharing but also to generate practical resolutions that will inform policy development and drive systemic reforms towards inclusive education.

Realization process

To realize this objective, on 13 June 2026, SHIJUWAZA, in collaboration with the Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD-Zanzibar), convened a multi-stakeholder forum that chaired by Principle Secretary of Ministry of Education and Vocational Training Mr. Khamis Abdulla Said. Through the forum OPDs recommended the convening of Global Inclusive Education Symposium in November 2026.

Assured Gvt Commitment

During the forum, the Principal Secretary of the Zanzibar Ministry of Education, Mr. Abdulla, applauded that SHIJUWAZA has become a most trusted federation coordinating OPDs to effectively advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities. He commended the federation for strengthening collaboration among disability organizations and promoting inclusive development across Zanzibar. Because of these reasons, he further assured that the Ministry would work closely with SHIJUWAZA to make the symposium possible, foster broad stakeholder participation, and ensure it delivers practical recommendations that create a lasting impact on inclusive education policy and practice.



SHIJUWAZA Commends ZEEA for Advancing Economic Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities



27 June 2026 – SHIJUWAZA's Programme Manager, Ms. Sophia Leghela, commended the Zanzibar Economic Empowerment Agency (ZEEA) for its continued commitment to promoting the economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities through inclusive initiatives and opportunities.

Speaking during the International Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day celebration held at the ZEEA Offices in Migombani, Zanzibar, Ms. Leghela explained that the Agency's efforts demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that Persons with Disabilities actively participate in entrepreneurship, economic growth, and national development. However there are some challenges faced by persons with disabilities in economic empowerment that needs to be addressed.

She further called upon the Government to strengthen Business Doing Environments (BDS) for Entrepreneurs with disability. Additionally asked Development Partners, Financial Institutions, Private Sector, and Public Institutions to strengthen their support for entrepreneurs with disability by expanding access to emerging E-Business, financial literacy, affordable credits, market opportunities, and assistive technologies.

Ms. Leghela emphasized that inclusive economic empowerment is a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable and equitable development, where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and thrive.



OPDs appreciate the empowerment initiatives; however, they question whether the number of persons with disabilities reached reflects the overall population of persons with disabilities.

From Partnership to Empowerment: Two Disability Groups Graduate in Bakery and Pastry Following Collaboration Between SHIJUWAZA and Tanzania Mwangaza.



On 17th June 2026, two groups of persons with disabilities proudly graduated in Bakery and Pastry Business through the partnership between SHIJUWAZA and Tanzania Mwangaza, building on the CADiR Project implemented by SHIJUWAZA and TAMWA with support from NAD Zanzibar. The graduation of the Tupendane (KIJALUBA) and Tustahimili (Deaf) groups marks an important milestone in promoting inclusive skills development and economic empowerment. The event celebrated the graduates' dedication, resilience, and readiness to transform their newly acquired skills into sustainable businesses. It also demonstrates that when persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities, practical training, and the right support, they can build sustainable livelihoods and make meaningful contributions to their communities.



Zanzibar OPDs Embraces the Move towards Digital Advocacy

On April 14 and June 16, SHIJUWAZA empowered OPD leaders and CBID coordinators respectively on effective utilization of emerging digital technologies to foster disability rights. This was possible through NAD and DRF supports. As of now, the OPDs are implementing the strategies developed from these series of trainings to increase disability rights visibility in Zanzibar.

Summary

50+

OPD Leaders were trained on Digital Advocacy

30+

CBID Coordinators were capacitated on effective use of emerging digital technology for fostering disability rights

15

OPDs Capacitated



Call to Action

On 13–14 May 2026, SHIJUWAZA participated in a two-day training on Media and Digital Literacy for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) organized by Tech and Media Convergence (TMC) in collaboration with Zanzibar Fighting Against Youth Challenges (ZAFAYCO) at Golden Tulip Hotel, Stone Town. The training strengthened SHIJUWAZA's understanding of digital laws, policies, and emerging digital issues, enhancing the Federation's capacity to use digital platforms for effective advocacy and community impact. SHIJUWAZA have utilised this knowledge to capacitate OPDs to foster disability rights through digital advocacy.

For the second quarter of 2026, SHIJUWAZA continued with the implementation of Digital iSAVE activities under the CADiR Project. On 9–10 May 2026 SHIJUWAZA conducted the training to established Community Resource Persons (CRPs) to strengthen and support expansion of inclusive KIJALUBA iSAVE groups for Persons with Disabilities across six districts of Unguja and Pemba. The CRPs will work closely with Field Officers to support group registration, monitoring, capacity strengthening, and the development of operational by-laws for savings and lending systems. The sessions, conducted in Unguja and Pemba with participation from CADiR implementing partners including TAMWA Zanzibar and ZANAB.



The Disability Rights Fund representative-Chrissy Zimba (in a wheelchair) in joint photo during her CDDS Evaluation Program Visit to SHIJUWAZA on May 5, 2026



Digital Advocacy

APRIL-JUNE 2026

182

Digital Advocacy contents generated

167,794

viewership from Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn and Facebook.

45,075

People reached through social media engagements.

New Strategic Move for SHIJUWAZA



As SHIJUWAZA moves towards the final stages of developing and launching its Strategic Plan 2026–2030, the Federation continues to welcome collaboration from government institutions, development partners, corporates, and stakeholders committed to advancing disability inclusion and equal opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

On 23 May 2026, SHIJUWAZA commenced a series of strategic stakeholder engagement meetings with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Government Agencies and other partners from Unguja and Pemba as part of the Human-Centered Design process. The engagement strengthened collective ownership of the plan by gathering valuable insights, experiences, and priorities that will shape a responsive, sustainable, and impactful roadmap for disability inclusion in Zanzibar over the next five years.

On 28 June, SHIJUWAZA NEC Reviewing Second Quarter Progress and Approves Q3 Priorities.



On 26 May 2026, SHIJUWAZA, through its member organization-the Zanzibar Association of Persons With Developmental Disability (ZAPDD), hosted a Finnish delegation comprising representatives from the Embassy of Finland in Tanzania, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Disability Partnership Finland, and the Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The visit strengthened partnerships and promoted knowledge exchange to advance disability inclusion in Zanzibar.

On 15 May 2026, SHIJUWAZA welcomed a delegation from Comunità Solidale Nel Mondo, Italy, to explore potential collaboration in advancing the rights, inclusion, and wellbeing of Persons with Disabilities in Zanzibar. The engagement provided an opportunity to exchange experiences and strengthen partnerships towards inclusive development, community empowerment, and social justice. SHIJUWAZA also welcomes all other like minded stakeholders to partner with us to advance the disability rights.

On 15 May 2026, SHIJUWAZA, together with key supporter NAD Zanzibar and CADiR partner MECF-Z, participated in Norwegian constitution day at the Norwegian Ambassador's Residence in Dar es Salaam to showcase collective efforts towards advancing the rights and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Zanzibar. The event provided an opportunity to highlight ongoing initiatives and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders committed to creating an enabling environment for disability rights



SHIJUWAZA Drives a New Era of Stronger OPDs Through OCA



On June 2026, SHIJUWAZA commenced the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) for its member OPDs, beginning with the Zanzibar Association of Persons with Disabilities (UWZ). Sparking the process on 23–24 June, through OCA, SHIJUWAZA enabled UWZ to develop an internal action plan to address identified gaps in finance, programmes, and management. On 26–29 June 2026, SHIJUWAZA advanced the OCA process to the Zanzibar Albinism Organization(ZAAO). The assessment is ongoing and is expected to progressively reach all 15 SHIJUWAZA member OPDs.

During April–June 2026, SHIJUWAZA member OPDs implemented initiatives to improve access to assistive devices for persons with disabilities. For example, UWZ facilitated the provision of prosthetic legs at Mbuzini District Hospital, while JUWAUZA conducted screening functional prosthetic arms at its offices in Kikwajuni.





ZAAO Gathered Zanzibar Disability Stakeholders to Commemorate International Abinism Day

On 11 June 2026, SHIJUWAZA supported the Zanzibar Albinism Organization (ZAAO) to commemorate the International Albinism Awareness Day by supporting a skin health outreach at Kivunge District Hospital, North Unguja. The initiative included free skin cancer screening, skin care education, distribution of protective items, and referrals for specialized care, reaffirming a shared commitment to promoting the health, dignity, and inclusion of persons with albinism under the theme, "Proudly in My Skin, Celebrating All Skin Tones"

JUWAUZA takes Action to Strengthen Gender Awareness to support Disability Inclusion

At the end of June 2026, SHIJUWAZA member, the Organization of Women with Disability Zanzibar (JUWAUZA), conducted a capacity-building training for Gender Desks in higher learning institutions across Zanzibar, equipping participants with knowledge and practical skills to prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) while strengthening collaboration to promote safer, more inclusive, and gender-responsive learning environments. This initiative needs invites stakeholders to channel resources on increasing disability awareness on established gender desks.

Stakeholders who wish to support inclusive Education now Knows Where to Start by Contacting ZANAB and SHIJUWAZA

In May 2026, SHIJUWAZA member, the Zanzibar National Association of the Blind (ZANAB), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education through Inclusive Education and Life Skills Unit, conducted an assessment in 10 schools across Unguja and Pemba to evaluate learning...



accessibility, school environments, and the challenges facing learners with disabilities and their teachers, with the aim of informing practical solutions for more inclusive education. Like minded stakeholders who wish to support inclusive education in Zanzibar, now knows where to start as SHIJUWAZA and its members have baseline assessment on inclusion in Zanzibar Education.

On 15 June 2026, SHIJUWAZA had the pleasure of hosting the team from Barefoot College Zanzibar at its headquarters for a discussion aimed at exploring a potential partnership to advance disability inclusion and expand life skills training opportunities for persons with disabilities. The engagement focused on identifying areas of collaboration that will support a more inclusive learning environment while enhancing access to soft and technical skills that contribute to empowerment, independence, and sustainable livelihoods.

SHIJUWAZA welcomes and appreciates Barefoot College Zanzibar's commitment to strengthening disability inclusion within its programmes and interventions. This partnership reflects a growing recognition among stakeholders that meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities is essential for sustainable development.



On 11th June 2026, SHIJUWAZA had the privilege of hosting Liz Weintraub, Senior Policy and Advocacy Specialist from the Association of University Centers on Disability (AUCD) in Maryland, USA. The visit provided a valuable platform for exchanging experiences, best practices, and lessons learned in advancing the rights and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

SHIJUWAZA highly values this engagement as an important step toward building stronger international partnerships and enhancing collective efforts to advance disability rights. We also extend our sincere appreciation to Bakari Hamadi for his significant role in facilitating communication and coordination that made this visit possible. His dedication to connecting stakeholders and promoting collaboration continues to create opportunities for knowledge sharing and collective action toward a more inclusive society for all.

20 June 2026 – SHIJUWAZA joined fellow Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Unguja for a stakeholder engagement session organized by the Office of the Zanzibar NGO's Registrar at Tumekuja Conference Hall. The meeting introduced stakeholders to the transition from the old CSO registration system to the new digital registration system, marking an important step towards improving the efficiency, transparency, and management of civil society registration in Zanzibar.



30 June 2026 – SHIJUWAZA Executive Director Ali Machano, together with Members Relations Officer Nasri Salum and Project Officer Jordan Kiango, participated in the Tanzania Shadow Report Validation Workshop at the UN House-PSSSF Tower in Dar es Salaam. The workshop brought together key stakeholders to validate the Tanzania CSO Shadow Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reinforcing SHIJUWAZA's commitment to ensuring that the rights, voices, and priorities of Persons with Disabilities are reflected in national and regional sustainable development processes.



24 June 2026 – SHIJUWAZA, alongside CADiR partners NAD-Zanzibar and TAMWA, supported the Zanzibar's first-ever National Dialogue on Combating Human Trafficking, organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs through the Anti-Human Trafficking Secretariat. The landmark forum brought together key stakeholders to strengthen coordinated action against human trafficking and online exploitation, with SHIJUWAZA advocating for the full inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in prevention, protection, and response efforts.



11 June 2026 – SHIJUWAZA participated in a dissemination and handover workshop organized by UNDP under the Joint Programme on Unpaid Care, Disability Inclusion and Gender-Transformative Approaches in Unguja. The workshop presented a georeferenced database and digital mapping platform for disability-related services across Zanzibar, marking an important step towards evidence-based planning, improved service coordination, and greater access to information for Persons with Disabilities, while complementing the objectives of SHIJUWAZA's Centralized Disability Data System (CDDS).

New Employee Spotlight



SHIJUWAZA is delighted to welcome Nasri Salum, who joins us as Members Relation Officer – Intern. We are confident that his enthusiasm and dedication will strengthen our engagement with members and support our mission of promoting disability inclusion



We are also welcome Mohamed Juma, who joins SHIJUWAZA as our Driver. We look forward to his contribution in supporting our daily operations and ensuring efficient service delivery across our programs.



A warm welcome goes to Jordan Kiango, our new Project Officer – Intern. His passion and fresh perspective will contribute to the successful implementation of projects that advance the rights and empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in Zanzibar.

Join us to wish Mohamed, Nasri, and Jordan every success as they begin this exciting journey with SHIJUWAZA. We are proud to have them on board as we continue working towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

LET'S CONNECT WITH US!

SHIJUWAZA sincerely appreciates the Government, donors, development partners, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the private sector, Persons with Disabilities, and the general public for your valuable support throughout April–June 2026. Your continued partnership has been instrumental in advancing disability inclusion across Zanzibar, and we look forward to strengthening this collaboration as we embark on implementing our Strategic Plan 2026–2030 to create lasting, inclusive change.

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