



Process documentation of positive Ga, Fanti, Mampruli and Gonja disability language development



Developed by HFFG with funding from UKaid from the UK government

Acknowledgement

With support from stakeholders who participated in the disability language guide workshops in Greater Accra, Central, Savannah and North-East regions, Hope for Future Generations developed, reviewed, and made valuable input into this guideline. The positive disability language guideline is one of the activities implemented under Ghana Somubi Dwumadie (Ghana Participation Programme) to reduce stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities, including people with mental health conditions.

We would like to thank all participants of these workshops, particularly representatives from Ghana Health Service, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAG), Social Welfare Department, Center for National Culture and Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Kwabenya District. Others include the University of Ghana Language Center, Ghana Association of Persons with Albinism, Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled, Ghana National Association for the deaf, Ghana Blind Union, and Mental Health Society of Ghana (MEHSOG), Media and Traditional Authorities from the various project districts.

We would also like to recognise the financial support from UKaid received through Ghana Somubi Dwumadie, who also provided technical support.

Contents

- 1. Background 3
 - About HFFG and The PsyKForum 3
 - 1.1. Overview of the Ghana Somubi Dwumadie project..... 4
- 2. The process used in the positive disability language development 6
 - 2.1. Planning..... 6
 - 2.2. Stakeholder mapping and initial engagement 6
 - 2.3. Language design workshop with key stakeholders 7
 - 2.4. Further interrogation of identified positive language 8
 - 2.5. Validation of developed disability language 8
- 3. Lessons learned..... 8
- 4. Conclusion and way forward 9

1. Background

About HFFG and The PsykForum

Hope for Future Generations

Hope for Future Generations (HFFG) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation seeking to improve women, children, and young people's health and socioeconomic status through innovative and acceptable participatory strategies in beneficiary communities. The organisation forms partnerships to roll out empowerment, capacity building and advocacy programmes for targeted beneficiaries at community levels. The organisation's primary focus is on women and children.

Hope for Future Generations was established in June 2001 and incorporated under the company's Code of 1963 (Act 179) as a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation with registration number G.8202 in Ghana. HFFG is also registered with the Department of Social Welfare, with registration number D/S/W 2410, and certified by the requisite statutory bodies in Ghana. The organisation is also registered in the Republic of Togo as a legal body and implements various Sexual Reproductive Health projects for teenage mothers in some communities in Lome, the capital of the Republic.

HFFG is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors (BoD), the organisation's highest decision-making body. The Board of Directors (BoD) is key in the organisation's resource mobilisation, approves all expenditures and monitors the implementation of programmes/projects. The Board of Directors (BoD) consists of individuals with varied backgrounds - health professionals, social workers, legal practitioners, Entrepreneurs, gender and women advocates and financial experts.

The vision of HFFG is to have a nation free of discrimination where women, children and young people have equal opportunities to develop to their full potential.

The mission of HFFG is to form partnerships that will facilitate and improve the health, Education and Socioeconomic status of women, children and young people through empowerment, right-based approaches, and innovative, acceptable, sustainable and participatory strategies.

HFFG operates in all 16 regions of Ghana, with eight offices located across the country. Since 2001, our interventions have helped over 2million women, children and the disabled in general health, education, reproductive health, and sanitation in over 500 rural communities through over 500 projects.

The PsyKForum

The PsyKForum is a registered N.G.O. designed to promote psychosocial and mental well-being through the life course, operating with a core team of Psychologists, Human Resources, Marketing, and Legal experts. It adopts a population health perspective on building partnerships to foster resilience and emotional well-being. Its work is informed by the cultural, traditional, and existing social support networks that promote people's well-being while supporting individuals, families, and communities to build new/additional networks and mechanisms that will empower them to take control of their well-being. The Psykforum is also registered with the Ghana Psychology Council - registration no. GPF 080119-14 and Department of Social Welfare D.S.W 7939.

Areas of Work

1. Build the capacity and knowledge of professionals and the general population in psychology and mental well-being
2. Develop and implement resilience-building and empowerment programs for schools, communities, and workplaces
3. Create awareness about Psychosocial and mental well-being.
4. Advocate, provide technical advice and guidance for policy formulation on Psychosocial and mental well-being
5. Conduct research on psychology and mental health issues
6. Provide therapy & counselling services and
7. Provide psychosocial care and support services in emergencies

Mission: We partner with individuals, families, communities, and policymakers to promote Psychosocial and mental well-being through advocacy, education, awareness creation, preventive and therapeutic interventions

Vision: We Promote Psychosocial and Mental Well-being through the life course.

1.1. Overview of Ghana Somubi Dwumadie

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection 2014 estimated that 20% of Ghanaians had some form of disability. Also, according to the Ministry of Health, this number continues to rise due to demographic trends and an increase in chronic health conditions, among other causes. This led to Ghana signing, ratifying and adopting several policies and programmes that protect the fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities and make provisions that safeguard their rights. Despite these positive strides, there are several obstacles to integrating and including persons with disabilities in all spheres of life.

Ghana Somubi Dwumadie, in November 2020, conducted a study that revealed that stigma and discrimination related to disability and mental health conditions are widespread in Ghana. It presents a major barrier that prevents people with disabilities, including persons with mental health conditions, from equitably accessing health care, education and other social opportunities.

The study identified key behaviours that need to change to address the problem of stigma and discrimination. The key behaviours are as follows; language around disability and mental health conditions, community and family support, culture and religion and lack of enforcement of laws on disability. Among the key behaviours, "language" stood out as a stand-alone driver of stigma and discrimination because it consistently emanated. It was clear that words mostly used in our communities to describe disability and mental health are insulting, and it promotes stigma and discrimination among persons with disability, including persons with mental health conditions.

In light of this study, HFFG and The PsyKForum as a consortium have been awarded a three-year grant from Ghana Somubi Dwumadie to promote mental health and disability inclusion in Ghana.

The grant is expected to support efforts to remove barriers that prevent persons with disabilities, including persons with mental health conditions, from reaching their full potential. One of such barriers is stigma and discrimination against persons with disability and mental health conditions. Issues of stigma and discrimination can be reduced if the derogatory language used against persons with disabilities is changed, which is one of the key deliverables for this project.

Ghana Somubie Dwumadie (Ghana Participation Programme) is a four-year disability programme in Ghana focusing on mental health. The programme is funded by U.K. aid from the U.K. Government. An Options run the programme led consortium consisting of Basic Needs-Ghana, Kings College London, Sightsavers , and Tropical Health. The programme focuses on four key areas;

- Promoting stronger policies and systems that respect the rights of persons with disabilities, including people with mental health conditions.
- Scaling up high quality and accessible mental health services.
- Reducing stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities, including mental health conditions.
- Generating evidence to inform policy and practice on the effectiveness of disability and mental health programmes and interventions.

2. The process used in the positive disability language development

The methods followed to develop the positive disability language in Ga, Fante, Gonja and Mampruli are categorised into four (4) as outlined below.

2.1. Planning

The first step was the planning stage. The consortium project team had several planning meetings, including meetings with management and some beneficiaries from the various Disabled People's Organisation. This stage was to develop steps to take in executing this particular activity.

2.2. Stakeholder mapping and initial engagement

The project team met to deliberate and mapped out key stakeholders that matter in the design of the positive disability language. Project officers then engaged with key departments and organisations/institutions at the regional and district levels of all four (4) regional implementing sites to identify specific schedule officers and groups that will contribute to the process. The following key stakeholders were eventually mapped out to participate in a workshop on language design:

S/N	Stakeholder category
1	Ghana Blind Union (G.B.U.)
2	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFDO)
3	Ghana National Association of the Disabled (GNAD)
4	Ghana Association of Persons with Albinism (GAPA)
5	Ghana Burns Survivors Association (GBSA)
6	Ghana Society of the Physically disabled (GSPD)
7	Linguistic Department of the University of Ghana
8	Mental Health Authority (M.H.A.)
9	Mental Health Society of Ghana (MHSG)
10	Ga Community
11	Ghana Institute of languages
12	Media

13	Social Welfare Department
14	Ghana Health Service
15	Ghana Education Service
16	Representative of the Traditional Authority
17	Representative of the Religious Authority

Representatives from the above groups were then engaged in planning the positive language design workshop and were also invited to participate in the workshop at various locations across the four project regions.

2.3. Language design workshop with key stakeholders

The objective of the positive language design meeting was to bring out derogatory words used against people with disabilities, including people with mental health conditions, and attempt to replace them with more positive words and phrases.

All ninety-two (92) participants were involved in the exercise across the four (4) implementing regions, out of which twenty-six (26) were persons with disability, two (2) were persons with mental health conditions, and three (3) were caregivers. Greater Accra Region had -six (26) participants, North East Region, twenty-two (22), Savannah Region, twenty-three (23) twenty and twenty (20) in the Central Region. At the end of the sessions in all regions, derogatory words used to describe persons with disabilities, including mental health conditions, were identified. The participants came up with suggested words and phrases that were more positive to each derogatory or stigmatising word.

All stakeholders appreciated their involvement in this exercise. The collaborative effort through group work/discussions, group presentations and open forums yields positive results in designing the positive disability words and phrases. This approach gave all participants a sense of ownership and advocated for using positive non-discriminatory language for persons with disability, including persons with mental health conditions.

At the end of the exercise, positive words were developed in English, Twi, Fante, Ga, Mampruli and Gonja using the template below;

No	Types of disability	Derogatory local language	Meaning in English	Less derogatory local language	Positive local language (singular)	Positive local language (plural)	The literal meaning in the English language
1							

2.4. Further interrogation of identified positive language

The collated words and phrases identified from the language design workshop were shared with key stakeholders, including the local language experts, to proofread in order to modify or make necessary changes to the document. The language experts were then tasked to have further engagement with key traditional and religious leaders who could not attend the language design workshop for their input on the identified words and phrases to not deviate from the local people's acceptable norms and culture. This stage was necessary to ensure a complete acceptance of the final words by the community if developed.

2.5. Validation of developed disability language

After further interrogation of the developed positive non-discriminatory language by participants from language experts, and traditional and religious leaders, in the workshop, a validation meeting with key stakeholders was held to validate the final words and phrases developed. During the meeting, the local language experts made presentations on the last words developed while the rest of the participants critically interrogated and argued out possible changes or modifications that should be made. Several discussions and viewpoints were raised, leading to well thought out positive disability words and phrases for the four (Fante, Ga, Mampruli and Gonja) local languages and English.

A final review of the Ga positive language developed was done by a professor from the University of Ghana to ensure a scholarly touch to the final document.

Finally, the validated positive disability languages developed were shared with the Ghana Somubi Dwumadie team for approval.

3. Lessons learned

The involvement of representatives from the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations in mapping key stakeholders led to a perfect blend of stakeholders from

the state agencies on the one hand and People With Disabilities on the other hand. This blend helped to unearth important points of departure between the two groups. For instance, whereas People With Disabilities believed some cultural terms used to describe them were derogatory, other groups thought they were acceptable terms handed down by their ancestors

Bringing together persons with disabilities and the institutions mandated to handle issues offered a vast opportunity for persons with disabilities to engage these institutions concerning systemic challenges affecting their well-being. Social welfare officers clarified issues such as delays in releasing the disability fund by the district assemblies.

4. Conclusion and way forward

The positive languages developed will be disseminated to community members and the general public in the project regions and districts using the media and other available means to reach all community members.

The positive non-discriminatory language developed when approved will be given to a consultant to develop them into SBC materials for further dissemination. We will develop, produce and share messages with positive non-discriminatory language using social media (Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok and Instagram).

Advocates and the media will also be trained to champion the course in the districts, including disseminating the languages developed. It will also serve as reference material for other organisations that might need it in their line of work.

Appendix 1: Final Versions of the Ga, Gonja, Mampruli and Fanti Positive Disability Languages

Positive Ga disability language guide – Ga – Greater Accra Region							
No	Types of disability	Derogatory Ga Language	Meaning in English	Less Derogatory Ga Language	Positive Ga Language (singular)	Positive Ga Language (plural)	Positive English Language
1	Albinism	onye heee/ yeee ηme gbese	Person who has red or yellow skin and hair.	Ofili yellow/yellow man red blofo ofli	-blofo ofili -blofonyo -ofili	-blofo ofilii -blofomei -ofilii	Person with albinism
2	Mental Health Conditions	sekeyelo jweηmo mli/ jweηmoη/yiη kāaa (le) ebe pepepe ebe noηa/noηba jeee sane'akpa	Some with mental illnesses no space in the mind mind is spacious not correct/not normal numberless/no code not a good matter	jweηmo mli hela shia fioo ye emama naa eno tsee le nyooη jeo le eloo'ε da fe ekomi'ε	jweηmo naagba mo ni yoo jweηmo naagba jweηmoηnaagbatse	jweηmo naagbai mei ni yoo jweηmo naagba jweηmoηnaagbatsemei	Person with a developmental disability Person with learning disability Person with developmental delay People with emotional disorders,

		sane ye ehe eyisεε ewo bu fala ye eyisεε	there's a hole at the back of his/her head there's a sore/wound at the back of his/her head				Person with mental illnesses Person with mental health disability Person with psychiatric disability
3	Cerebral palsy	Onufubi faabi/ faan̄bi/ wuon̄bi w̄on̄bi jimijimi buuluubuuluu/ bulubulu	snake child river child sea child deity child	m̄o ni dalε ekpe sεε helatse	m̄o ni dalε ekpe sεε helatse	m̄ei ni dalε ekpe sεε helatsem̄ei	Person with cerebral palsy

4	Persons with kyphosis (curvature of the spine)	afu/afutse	Person with a hunch	eje afu	eje afu mɔ ni eje afo	ameje afu mei ni ameje afu	Person who has a hunch
5	Persons with physical disability	Obubuafo akpake/akpake tse/tsutsɔɔ otsɔɔɔ	broken down person hunched person 'limpe'	helatse	nyiɛmɔ naagba mɔ ni yɔɔ nyiɛmɔ naagba nyiɛmɔnaagbatse	nyiɛmɔ naagbai mei ni yɔɔ nyiɛmɔ naagba nyiɛmɔnaagbatsemei	Person who uses a wheelchair, wheelchair user
6	Persons with visual impairment	I-look-me-I-look-London/ U-look-me-U-look-London shwilafo	I-look-me-I-look-London/ U-look-me-U-look-London/ squint (although you are looking at me, you are looking at London) blind person	G1&G2: hiɲmei naagba shelf	hiɲmei naagba mɔ ni yɔɔ hiɲmei naagba hiɲmeinaagbatse shwilafo	hiɲmei naagbai mei ni yɔɔ hiɲmei naagba hiɲmeinaagbatsemei shwilafoi	Person who is blind People who are blind Sight impaired

7	Impairment of the legs	alanta/ nane"; naji abekui enyo/	knock-kneed legs are all left/duck	G1: nane 'k' G2: alanta	nane naagba mɔ ni yɔɔ nane naagba nanenaagbatse alanta	nane naagbai mɛi ni yɔɔ nane naagba nanenaagbatsemɛi alantai	Person with knocked knees
8	Speech Impediment	tɛbɛlu/lilɛi tɛbɛlu/ lilɛi gbulu	person who lispies	tɛbɛlu lilɛi tsii lilɛi nɔ wielɔ	lilɛi tsii lileitsiilo/mɔ ni lilɛi tsii lilɛi nɔ wielɔ	lilɛii tsii lileitsiilɔi/mɛi ni lilɛi tsii lilɛi nɔ wielɔi	Person with a speech impairment Person who has a speech disability Person who has speech disorder Person with communication disability

Positive disability language guide – Gonja – Savannah Region							
No.	Types of Disability	Derogatory Gonja Language	Less Derogatory Gonja Language	Literal Meaning in English	Positive Gonja Language (Singular)	Positive Gonja Language (Plural)	Positive English Language
1	Hearing impairment	Kpowu	Emonε e maa nu	One who cannot hear	Emonε e maa nu	Bumonε bu maa nu	People with hearing impairment
2	Speech impairment	Namu	Emonε e maa malga	One who cannot talk	Emonε e maa malga	Bumonε bu maa malga	person who cannot speak
3	Blind /Visual impaired	Tanpo	Lasapo (anishibɔlpo)	One who cannot see	Emonε e bee bata a nite	Bumonε baa bata a nite	people who are blind person who is sight impaired
4	mental health disability	Ebonpo	Afuwura	One with slow mind	Esa monε afuu chala so	Baasa monε afuu chala so	Person with mental health conditions Person with learning disability
5	Physical Disability	Boobi	Eɔsopo	Better than a child	Esa monε e maa tij a nite	Baasa monε bu maa tij a nite	Person who has difficulties in walking Person with a disability Person who walks with a cane Person who uses leg braces
6	Leprosy	Botipo	Esa monε e kuu	One with Leprosy	Esa monε e kuu	Baasa monε bu kuu	Person who has leprosy

7	Epilepsy	Kegbungbu ɲwura	Kasawule be epɛlpo	Someone who shakes	Esa monɛ e bee pɛl nɛ kasawule	Baasa monɛ baa pɛl nɛ kasawule	Person with epilepsy Person with seizure disorder
---	----------	--------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---

NOTE: Generally, they can all be described as "Bebɔlp" meaning gentle persons.

Positive disability language guide – Mampruli – North East							
No.	Type of Disability	Derogatory Mampruli Language	Less Derogatory Language	Literal Meaning in English	Positive Mampruli Language (Singular)	Positive Mampruli Language (Plural)	Positive English Language
1	Visual Impairment	Zooma	Nintarima	Blind person	Nintarima	Nintaarima	Person who is blind People who are blind Sight impaired
2	Physical disabilities	Gbariga Wabga Gbarijinɲa	ɲonkanɔba Gbaribila	A physically disabled person	ɲonkanɔba Gbaribildaana Nɔbyinnidima	Bankanɔba Gbaribisidima Nɔbyinnidaa Nɔbyinnidima	Person with a disability, Person who walks with a cane Person who uses leg braces Person who has or had polio person who experienced polio Person who uses wheelchair

3	Speech Impairment	Zɔlga	Mukka	Someone who cannot talk	Mukka	Mukksi	Person with a speech impairment Person who has a speech disability Person with speech disorder, or communication disability
4	Epilepsy	Kpilinkpiiri	ηonlura	Epilepsy	ηonlura	Banlura	People with epilepsy
5	Albinism	Lajiapeeli	Lajia	Albino	Lajia	Lajiesi	Person with Albinism
6	Mental Health Conditions	Yinyaa	ηonzugudam	Someone with mental illnesses	ηonzugudam	Banzugudam	People with Mental health conditions/disabilities/difficulties
7	Speech Impairment	Briga	ηonbitta	Stutters	ηonbitta	Banbitta	People with speaking difficulties
8	Leaper	Tatila	Konηa	Leaper	Konηa	Konnsi	People with toes and finger injuries.
9	Hearing impairment	Tubkpira	ηonbuwumna	Someone who is deaf	ηonbuwumna	Baηonbuwumna	Hearing impaired

Positive disability language guide – Fanti - Central Region

N o.	Type of Disability	Derogatory Fanti Language	Less Derogatory Fanti Language	Literal Meaning in English	Positive Fanti Language (Singular)	Positive Fanti Language (Plural)	Positive English Language
------	--------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------

1.	Visual impairment	Enyiwa a abo Onnhu adze papa Quarter to one Mhwe mebebi	Ohu adze papa Onnhu adze	Cannot see clearly Cannot see	Onyimpa a onnhu adze Onipa a onnhu adze papa	Nkorɔfo a wonnhu adze Nkrofo) a, onnhu adze papa	People who are blind Partially sighted
2.	Hearing and speech impairment	Mum Otsitsifo Tsiw	Mum Onntum nnkasa papa ɔntse asem papa ɔy3 mum	Cannot speak Cannot hear anything Cannot hear properly	Onyimpa a onntum nnkasa papa Onyimpa a ɔntse asem papa Onyimpa a ɔy3 mum	Nkorɔfo a wonntum nnkasa papa Nkorɔfo a wonntse asem papa Nkorɔfo a ɔy3 mum	Persons with hearing impairment People who are deaf Person who is Hard of Hearing
3.	Albinism	Ofir gyato Borɔnyi Kɔkɔɔ Onntum mmue ewiaber	Ofir	Albino Yellow and red skinned Cannot come out in the sun	Ofir	Ofir	Persons with Albinism
4.							Physically challenged

	physical disabilities	Bubuafo Apakye 39/40 Onam a na odze famu Bafan	Ne nan ye no yaw Ne nsa ye no yaw Obubuafo	Some who cannot walk. A person with painful hands A person with broken legs or hands	Onyimpa a ne nan ye no yaw Onyimpa a ne nsa ye no yaw Obubuafo	Nkorɔfo a hɔn nan ye hɔn yaw Nkorɔfo a hɔn nsa ye hɔn yaw Ebubuafo	Persons with Physical disabilities
5.	mental health conditions	Bɔdamfo One touch N'ahoma or atsew Ne tsir bɔ mu ɔakyekyer bayer kor N'adwen ho aka N'adwen nko yie	Adwen mu yarba Adwen mu haw	Someone with mental illnesses	Onyimpa a ɔwɔ adwen mu yarba Onyimpa a ɔwɔ adwen mu haw	Nkorɔfo a wɔwɔ adwen mu yarba Nkorɔfo a wɔwɔ adwen mu haw	Persons with mental disorders Persons with mental illnesses Person with learning disability Persons with mental health conditions
6.	Burns Survivors	Enyim a ɔye huhuuhu Terɛnterɛn	ɔahyehyew	He is looking scary scary face	Onyimpa a ɔahyehyew	Nkorɔfo a wɔahyehyew	People who has Burns

				Ghost appears in the afternoon			
7.	Speech Impairment	Ɔpo dodow Scratches in speech	Ɔpo dodow	Someone with breaks in speech	Onipa a, Ɔpo dodow	Nkorɔfo a wɔpo dodow	Person with a speech impairment Person who has a speech disability Person with speech disorder, or communication disability

