

# ADA International Fellowship Program: 2017 Fellows

Fall 2017 ADA alum **Susan Masila** serves as the national director of [Special Olympics Kenya](#). Susan is a certified coach in Unified Sports®, a Special Olympics initiative that brings together athletes with and without intellectual disabilities to train and compete together, and has implemented this model in school sports teams across Kenya. She has also directed the Young Athletes Program, an international initiative that provides inclusive sports activities for children between the ages of 2 and 7, exposing them to different sports and other children with and without disabilities. Susan intended to use her ADA International Fellowship to further her work in this area.

For her follow-on project, Susan planned to implement an inclusive sports program for youth between the ages of 6 and 14 in two different primary schools in Nairobi, and to collect data on student outcomes to assess the program's impact. Susan spent her fellowship training at the [University of Massachusetts Boston's School for Global Inclusion and Social Development](#) under the supervision and mentorship of Dr. Paddy Favazza, a professor of early childhood special education.

As of August 2018, Susan had surpassed her initial goals for her follow-on project, enrolling 817 out-of-school

children with intellectual disabilities into 113 regular primary schools in Nairobi county, using the Unified Sports® model. Susan is partnering with UNICEF to expand her project, targeting a larger number of out-of-school children with intellectual disabilities in counties beyond Nairobi (see Figure 1). Later this fall, Susan will present on her work along with fellow ADA alum Jackline Lidubwi via Skype to students at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, where Dr. Fazazza is currently teaching.

Concurrently, Susan has been working on a study that aims to measure the impact of Unified Sports® on promoting inclusive education in Kenya, sampling 20 out of the 47 counties in Kenya for data collection. This effort is part of Susan's thesis research for a master's in sports science that she is pursuing at Kenyatta University.

Susan is also involved in supporting the development of inclusive education national policies and representing



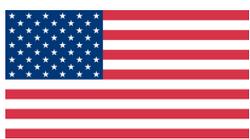
Susan Masila

Figure 1: Unified Sports® inclusive play in a target primary school.



**“The ADA International Fellowship Program was an incredible experience. The networks and learning have been very helpful in our work at The Action Foundation. I’m very grateful to have had the opportunity to participate, and am excited about the collective impact the Fellows will have on inclusive education in Kenya and beyond.”**

*—Fall 2017 ADA alum Susan Masila*



The ADA International Fellowship Program was funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and implemented by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) in partnership with the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

her organization on disability issues at international events. She participated in a forum that informed the development of the Kenya Ministry of Education’s May 2018 Sector Policy on Education for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities. She was also part of a team that developed an easy-to-read version of the sector policy for Kenyans who have grade 3 and below literacy skills.

In September 2018, Susan together with two other ADA alums (Martin Kavua and Elizabeth Shiakamiri) participated in the review and ratification of national standards for Educational Assessment and Resource Centers (EARCs). Operated by the Kenya Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, EARCs are responsible for educational assessment, referral, and school placement of learners with intellectual disabilities. There is an EARC in every county and sub-county in Kenya.

Internationally, Susan participated in a technical round table, hosted by the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning in partnership with UNICEF, in July 2018 in Paris, France. The purpose of the round table was to support ministries of education in planning inclusive education systems (see Figure 2). Kenya was one of seven countries invited to participate for their contributions to disability-inclusive planning. Susan represented Kenyan non-governmental organizations alongside the Kenya Ministry of Education.

Figure 2: A social media update from Susan about her work for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities in Kibera.



Figure 3: A social media update from Susan about her collaboration with Martin Kavua, another ADA alum.



Susan broadened her network through the ADA International Fellowship and is clearly using these contacts and connections to engage in new collaborations that further her work. In January 2018, she collaborated with Martin Kavua on an inclusive education capacity-building workshop for 100 special needs education and regular education teachers in Nairobi (see Figure 3). This effort was part of Susan’s UNICEF project.

In March 2018, Susan partnered with ADA alum Maria Omare’s The Action Foundation (TAF) on an event that engaged children with disabilities from Kibera, the largest informal settlement in Africa. TAF treated the children to a day of inclusive fun, games, and sports at the Embassy of the Philippines, courtesy of Special Olympics (see Figure 4).

In August 2018, Susan, Martin Kavua, and another Kenyan Professional Fellows alum, Vincent Odhiambo Ogotu, participated in a stakeholder forum for non-governmental organizations where they contributed to the 2018–2022 Kenya National Education Sector Strategic Plan, working on the special education chapter.

Reflecting on the impact of the ADA International Fellowship Program, Susan said, “The ADA Fellowship

opened me to the global scope of inclusion, not only in education but in other sectors as well. This exposure enhanced my capacity to respond and contribute to the disability inclusion agenda, both at national and international levels.”

Figure 4: 2017 ADA alum Maria Omare posted about her collaboration with Special Olympics Kenya, tagging Susan.



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