

2026 Program Impact Report: 6th Cohort Enrollment

On **January 12th, 2026**, Jipange Special Needs Center proudly welcomed its **6th Cohort**, consisting of 12 determined individuals. These participants, all of whom are blind or visually impaired, have journeyed from diverse rural regions across Kenya to join our community.

Over the next six months, Jipange will provide these enrollees with intensive **life skills and vocational empowerment training** designed to foster independence and career/job readiness.

Class of 2026 Participant Directory

- **Markson Oleserian** – Bungoma County
- **Harun Chepnandi** – Uasin Gishu County
- **Alphas Ruto** – West Pokot County
- **Millicent Anyango** – Kisumu County
- **Gloria Ayuma** – Kakamega County
- **Jackline Andawa** – Trans Nzoia County
- **Brevin Otiende** – Kakamega County
- **Thaddeus Mugire** – Kisii County
- **Hillary Limo** – Baringo County
- **Faith Chemtai** – Kericho County
- **Eunice Khaemba** – Trans Nzoia County
- **Patrick Kioko** – Machakos County

Our Mission is To bridge the gap for the visually impaired by providing accessible, high-quality training that transforms lives from the grassroots up.



It is truly inspiring to witness ambitious individuals who are blind or visually impaired reframing their perspective—viewing their unique experiences as a strength rather than a limitation. By taking charge of their own destinies, these participants at **Jipange Special Needs Center** are eager to elevate their quality of life through essential skill-building.

In an exciting development, our participants recently benefited from a collaborative initiative between the **Kenya Institute for the Blind** and **BookShare India**. This registration drive has granted our students access to the **BookShare online library**, a massive digital repository. This opportunity opens doors to a vast world of knowledge through a diverse collection of eBooks tailored for their needs.

Key Highlights

- **Empowerment:** Students are actively reclaiming their independence and redefining disability.
- **Strategic Partnership:** A joint effort between local and international organizations to boost literacy.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Access to BookShare provides a nearly limitless library of accessible educational and leisure resources.

<https://youtu.be/WY9uA3Ss5AA?si=m3G1w6BinFOsJUFV>

Jipange Special Needs Center celebrated the official welcoming of its **6th Cohort** on Saturday, **March 15th, 2026**. The event featured **Sammy Luvonga**, an associate of the center, who presided over the ceremony as the guest of honor.

Event Highlights

- **Official Welcome:** A formal reception for the newest group of determined learners.
- **Keynote Presence:** Sammy Luvonga shared insights and encouragement with the incoming participants.
- **Community Spirit:** The ceremony marked a significant milestone in the cohort's journey toward empowerment and skill acquisition.

<https://youtu.be/SjBxVV-T6cU>

Sammy Luvonga provided immense insight on the rights for the blind and the disabled during the 2026 opening ceremony.

<https://youtu.be/firMUnTKbY0>

It was a truly rewarding moment to welcome back the **Jipange Special Needs Center Alumni**, who returned to inspire the current enrollees. By sharing their personal training journeys, the former students demonstrated how the center served as a vital springboard for their success. Their stories highlighted how the skills and confidence gained at Jipange have provided lasting support and opened new doors and opportunities in their lives.

Alumni Engagement Impact

- **Mentorship:** Current participants gained firsthand perspectives from those who have successfully navigated the program.
- **Success Stories:** Alumni showcased the tangible, long-term benefits of the center's life and job skills empowerment training.
- **Motivation:** The visit reinforced the idea that the training is a powerful foundation for a more independent and empowered future.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1o9iXfRwiv0>

Earlier this year, **Christ Is The Answer Ministries (CITAM) Kitale** visited Jipange Special Needs Center as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. This meaningful visit provided the **6th Cohort** with a day of encouragement and fellowship led by the CITAM leadership team.

The visit was marked by generous donations of clothing and food supplies, but the highlights were the shared experiences: the participants and visitors enjoyed an energetic game of **Goalball** together before concluding the day with a communal meal.

Highlights of the CITAM Kitale Visit

- **Spiritual, Emotional and social Support:** Leadership provided words of motivation and hope to the new enrollees.
- **Material Contributions:** Essential donations of funds, food and clothing were provided to support the center's needs.
- **Inclusive Recreation:** A shared game of Goalball fostered connection and showcased the athletic talents of the participants.
- **Community Bonding:** Sharing a meal together strengthened the ties between the ministry and the Jipange community.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Z8RhP-BqeE&t=1s>

THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

The **Mastercard Foundation**—founded in 2006 by Mastercard as an independent, Canada, Toronto-based philanthropic body—works to improve access to education and financial services to drive youth employment across Africa.

On April 22, 2026, the Foundation partnered with the **Jiinue Growth Programme (JGP)** to provide handicraft and beadwork training for blind and visually impaired women at **Jipange Special Needs Center**. This effort is part of the JGP, a five-year (2022–2027) Kenyan initiative funded by the Foundation alongside various local and international partners. The program's primary goal is to bridge the financing gap for **MSMEs**, with a specific focus on empowering women-led businesses and youth aged 18–35 across all 47 counties.

AN ADDITIONAL TRAINING SPACE AT JIPANGE SPECIAL NEEDS CENTER

The Jipange Special Needs Center community is deeply grateful for the newly constructed administration block and training wing, which provides a significantly improved environment for both staff and students. This expansion is a transformative milestone for the center, as the added space allows for a more diverse and specialized curriculum. By broadening its course offerings, Jipange is now better equipped to provide personalized support that addresses the unique requirements of every blind and visually impaired trainee who walks through its doors.







Opening of the Additional Training Space and Administration Block

On Friday, April 24, 2026, Jipange Special Needs Center celebrated the official opening of its new facility, generously funded by the Vera Ahlemann Schoeller Foundation. The expansion features a dedicated administrative block and an additional training wing designed to enhance the learning experience. The unveiling ceremony was presided over by Pamela Sabwami, the Chairlady of the Board of Directors at Jipange Special Needs Center.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GXMrBRdZEI&t=326s>

PRESENTATION OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL TRAINING AUTHORITY CERTIFICATES

The opening ceremony also served as a proud milestone for Jipange Special Needs Center alumni Dean Masika, Walter Onyango, and Charles Nandi, who were officially presented with their National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) certificates. These credentials serve as

formal recognition of their success in the NITA examinations held in August 2025. By receiving these awards during the inauguration of the new building, the three graduates highlighted the center's ongoing commitment to professional excellence and student achievement.



NYOTA (The National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancements)

From Monday, April 20, to Thursday, April 23, 2026, Jipange Special Needs Center participated in a four-day NYOTA workshop held in Saboti, Kenya. Mark Sabwami, Director of Jipange, and Phillip Khamasi, an Assistive Computer Technology Trainer, served as facilitators for the event. Drawing on their respective backgrounds in Business Leadership and Commerce, they provided essential training to young entrepreneurs aiming to launch or scale small enterprises.

The NYOTA (National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement) Project is a collaborative initiative between the Government of Kenya and the World Bank designed to combat youth unemployment. By offering business capital, vocational training, and apprenticeships to individuals aged 18 to 29—and up to 35 for those with disabilities—the program empowers participants with the seed funding and practical skills necessary to drive economic growth across the country.

