

**AT2030**  
Case Study

**Prepared by**  
Loughborough London  
University

**Cluster 4 Capacity  
& Participation**  
Para Sport Against Stigma

**Country**  
Malawi

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# Andrew Mtegha's Story: Infusing disability rights advocacy into Paralympic sport broadcasting in Malawi



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## Context

As part of the Para Sport Against Stigma programme, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) provided free-to-air coverage of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games to 49 Sub-Saharan African territories. For the first time African viewers (estimated over 250 million) watched the opening and closing ceremonies broadcast live on 24 August and 5 September 2021. Daily 52-minute highlights packages of African centred content were provided in English, French and Portuguese. However, with the aim of informing planning for Paris 2024, in Malawi, however, the broadcast was also provided in Chichewa (national language of Malawi). This was part of focussed research to examine local media practices and local understandings of disability stigma, with the aim of informing planning for Paris 2024.

## About AT2030

AT2030 tests 'what works' to improve access to Assistive Technology (AT) and will invest £20 million over five years to support solutions with a focus on innovative products, new service models, and global capacity support. The programme will reach nine million directly and six million more people indirectly to enable a lifetime of

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potential through life-changing AT. The programme is funded by UK aid and led by the Global Disability Innovation Hub.

The Para Sport Against Stigma programme - led by Loughborough University London, International Paralympic Committee, and University of Malawi – aims to use Para sport (i.e., Paralympic Sport) to tackle disability stigma in Sub-Saharan Africa. Stigma against disabled people is one of the barriers to the adoption, development, and delivery of better AT in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). Stigma around disability leads to exclusion and poor standards of living for disabled people, and as a consequence, creates a barrier to better AT adoption. The programme will use a four-pillar approach, consisting of educational initiatives, athlete and coach development, Paralympic broadcast, and action research activities in Malawi, Zambia, and Ghana.





## Introducing Andrew Mtegha



An image of Andrew with his co-commentator in a recording studio with a laptop on the table in front of them, commenting on the Tokyo Paralympic Games

Andrew Mtegha is a disability rights advocate and presenter of several programmes about disability inclusion on the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), such as *Disability is Not Inability*. The aim of these programmes is to give a platform to people with disabilities to voice out their views about their own issues in Malawi. Although Andrew has never done any sports reporting he was invited to be part of the MBC commentary team for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, provided in Chichewa.

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### Andrew's engagement through Para Sport Against Stigma

Including Andrew as a commentator for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games was progressive as very few people with disabilities are broadcasters in Malawi. As a person with a visual impairment, he said he was able to provide insights and relate to other people with disabilities (i.e., audiences). As a disability rights advocate, throughout the commentary of the Games, Andrew played an 'activist' role to draw attention to social inequalities and disability rights. For example, at times, he used humour to highlight very low disability sport participation rates in Malawi so that the corporate world and those in authority would listen.

Andrew feels that Paralympic sport broadcasting is a good place to promote these conversations because he can get his message out to people with disabilities, people without disabilities, as well as those in authority with the power to make changes. He said the Paralympic Games broadcasting put Malawi on the international map; it could help bring in needed funding and resources for athletes and inspire people with disabilities to think differently about possibilities in life. Andrew also stressed that in families in Malawi there are serious problems with disability stigma, highlighting how some parents will choose not to bring their disabled children to schools. However, he said the broadcasting of Games can help parents understand that disability does not mean inability; as he said

"The Paralympic Games have helped a number of parents understand that disability is not inability and if they have a disabled child that know that the

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child can participate in sport. For example, after the broadcasting, I met a parent who has a disabled child who asked me how the child can get a chance to participate in Para sport in Malawi”

The Malawian National Paralympic Committee was also very impressed with Andrew's contribution to the commentary of the Games, reporting it was authentic and meaningful.

### Impact of the Para Sport Against Stigma on broadcasting going forwards

Looking towards Paris 2024, Andrew said it is important to learn from mistakes of the Tokyo broadcasting. For example, he mentioned how he needs better equipment to communicate , such as a headset to hear sound better. He also hoped that the Para Sport Against Stigma programme can facilitate opportunities for him to share his knowledge with other countries and learn from them. Andrew highlighted that Tokyo Games broadcasting was merely the launch pad to social impact. He stressed that more awareness is needed to reduce disability stigma and increase access to much needed sports equipment and assistive devices, for more athletes to represent Malawi in Paris 2024. There are challenges in take-off and then in the context of sustainability. He explained that marketing departments becoming interested in prompting such programmes is a good sign because this can help generate interest in Para sport from businesses, NGOs and government ministries in Malawi. He asked for Para Sport Against Stigma programme to keep generating evidence and interest so that Malawian athletes can participate in future Paralympic Games and that the MBC produce these disability sport programmes themselves in the future.

