

8. GB Club – What is disability discrimination?

Title of session:	What is disability discrimination? This episode introduces students to the concept of unfair treatment based on disability. It discusses children’s rights regarding discrimination, gives examples of misconceptions about disability and discusses why it is wrong.
Length of recording:	40 mins
Actors:	2 hosts, 3 young students (female) (Emencia, her sister Kadie, and her friend Mamawo), 3 young students (male) (Moi and Senneh friends of Emencia), 3 adult females (Mother of Emencia, Mother of Mamawo, Teacher Mrs. Rhoda), 1 adult male (Emencia’s father)
Sound effects (SFX):	Intro music, transitional music, hands clapping, people cheering

Content	
Intro:	‘Girls and Boys Club Theme Song’ (for 1 min)
Awa:	Hello everyone! This is me again, Awanatu, your host for the Girls’ and Boy’s club this week! This is a very special week to be at the club and I am joined by my good old friend Mohammed! As always!!!
Mohamed:	Hello everyone! Yes, I am back, I am back with you... You guys already know me! I am Mohammed and thanks for joining our Girls’ and Boys’ Club this week. We’re very glad that you’re here!
Awa:	Now, Mohamed and I are both part of the Leh Wi Lan programme sponsored by UK Aid.
Mohamed:	And Leh Wi Lan supports the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to deliver Free Quality School Education to <i>all</i> students in Sierra Leone.
SFX:	<i>Hands clapping, people cheering</i>
Mohammed:	Let us quickly remind ourselves that there are club rules to follow here today! Let me hear you say it! R-E-A-L! Time to keep it REAL! R is for Respect. E is for Equal participation. A is for Ask questions. L is for languages! The Languages of the club are English and Krio.
Awa:	Exactly.
Mohamed:	So, when we follow the club rules, we’re keeping it REAL.
SFX:	<i>Keeping it real song</i>
Mohammed:	Now Awanatu, let me check something with you. Last week we talked about Gender Discrimination . So, will this week will be similar?
Awa:	In some ways yes, we learned last week that discrimination takes on many forms and there can be different ways that people can experience unfair and unequal treatment.

Mohamed:	That's right, first we played the clapping game in which Team Number 1 were given some really unfair rules that Team Number 2 didn't have. This unfair treatment led to Team Number 1 losing the game. Which made them very frustrated and angry.
Awa:	And then we discussed how if you kept playing this game with the same rules every day for many years, both teams would just get used to the rules and start forgetting how unfair the game is.
Mohamed:	Exactly. And the reason we played this unfair game is because we wanted to demonstrate how groups of people are treated unfairly in society. There are a lot of groups of people who are treated like team 1. Which means that they are treated unfairly compared to other groups. And this unfair treatment puts them at a disadvantage. Which means they won't often win or succeed.
Awa:	Usually, this unfair treatment has happened over and over for many years, so people start to forget that the game is unfair. The group being treated unfairly just gets used to the treatment and never thinks they will win. And the other groups end up being in positions of power because they <i>always</i> win.
Mohamed:	Then we discussed how this <i>unfair treatment</i> of a group is usually based on common characteristic. Like age, gender, race, disability, or religion. And this unfair treatment is what we mean when we use the word 'discrimination'.
Awa:	That right, and 'gender discrimination' is when a person or group of people experience unfair treatment based on their gender.
Mohamed:	Then we discussed gender discrimination at our school by using a game example. If the aim of the game is to finish secondary school with good grades, then both teams – male and female - should be treated equally. Unfortunately, people on the 'female' team often experience unfair rules or treatment, like having to do extra chores at home, being discouraged by teachers, being vulnerable to sexual violence and having the burden of menstruation. We know these are unfair rules because people on the 'male' team do not experience them.
Awa:	So then we discussed some ways in which we can all fight gender discrimination at our school: first by having teachers and students ensure that everyone speaks and participates in class equally, second by having male and female students equally do chores at home and at school, and third, by making sure <i>everyone</i> knows about our zero-tolerance policy towards sexual violence and that we report it if it happens.
Mohamed:	Absolutely. And students should always think about other ways to fight gender discrimination at our school!
Awa:	Agreed. Now, I think that is everything that we covered last time. Girls and boys, are you ready to start today's session? If so, say 'yes!'
SFX:	<i>A group of people shouting 'yes!' but at a quiet/low mixing level. We want to give students an idea of what they should be shouting.</i>
Awa:	I couldn't hear you!
SFX:	<i>People shouting 'yes!' but at a quiet/low mixing level</i>
Awa:	Okay, let's get started!

SFX: Transition music

Awa: This week, we will still be talking about discrimination, but we will focus on Disability.

Mohammed: I think we need to make sure everyone understands what disability is. Do you mean something like a person with no arms or no legs?

Awa: Well, Mohammed, disability can be a physical or a mental impairment that prevents you from doing things other people can do easily. Like if you are not able to use your left leg, it will be difficult for you to climb up stairs. Or if you cannot use your fingers to hold a pen then you might struggle to use the same pens that other students are using. But disability is actually not only about people having a physical difficulty like being unable to walk or use an arm, or see or hear, or having any other problems in their body.

Mohammed: What do you mean?

Awa: Some people may find it difficult to arrange thoughts and letters in their heads, or to read something or remember it. Others may find it hard to understand or connect with people in social situations.

So, when we talk about disability, it is actually about how difficult it is for someone to take part in everyday activities, in their work, in school, in church, in social groups. The word 'disability' usually refers to severe physical or mental difficulties, but difficulties can also come in mild and moderate and mild forms. These mild and moderate forms are very common and might not prevent people from doing activities, but they will make it harder.

Mohammed: Ok, so let's take a step back. Let me see if I understand:
As you and I are sitting here, we both have difficulties. Our difficulties can be slightly difficult (we say mild difficulty), or more difficult (we say moderate difficulty), or very, very difficult (we say severe difficulty or disability).

Awa: Right. Take me for example, what am I wearing here on my nose for my eyes?

Mohammed: Glasses!

Awanatu: Yes, that is because without any glasses I have difficulty seeing the words on paper clearly. My difficulty is about seeing. For me this is a mild difficulty, and I can see again clearly by the help of glasses. I am not fully stopped by not seeing, because there are ways for me to still see – like wearing glasses, or if you would help me read something.

Mohamed: Okay.

Awa: Did you know that more than half of all the people who reach an old age will stop seeing clearly? So perhaps when I am an older lady, I will see less than I see now.
Our difficulties can change over time, but the important thing is how we make sure those difficulties don't stop us having a good life. And everyone needs to help to achieve that.

Mohammed: Do you mean disability is about all of us? Even me?

Awanatu: Exactly! Now you are getting it.
Imagine you were in an accident with a motorbike and your head was bumped very hard. Now, imagine that because of this bump you cannot sing words anymore, but you can still play your music? Do you want people to stop inviting you onto the radio because of the bump on your head?

Mohammed:	No, I want to keep coming on the radio! People can listen to my wonderful songs without words!
Awanatu:	See, that is what we will be talking about! We want to make sure that everyone, no matter what kind of difficulties they might have with their body or their mind, is given a chance to do the things they like. We don't want anyone to be stopped from achieving their dreams!
Mohamed:	Agreed. I think it would be good for students to take a moment to think about any difficulties that they or a member of their family might have. Students, remind yourself that you should support everyone, no matter what difficulties they have. Let's sit quietly and just think about this for a few moments.
SFX:	<i>Reflection music (30 seconds)</i>
Mohammed:	Thank you everyone. I think I am starting to understand what you are saying Awanatu. But what about people with more severe difficulties – what you called 'disabilities'? Like students who are blind? Are they the disabled or maybe special needs students?
Awanatu:	Well, in Sierra Leone there are some schools that support students with severe difficulties or disabilities. These schools are called special needs schools and they sometimes refer to students as special needs students. What is different about these schools is that they might be specialised to teach students a technique to help them with a specific difficulty.
Mohammed:	Like what do they teach?
Awanatu:	For students who are blind, a school for the blind can teach them how to read special paper called braille. This paper has small dots that you can feel with your finger. When a student learns how to read this, they can read a story or a text book by feeling the words without needing their eyes to see.
Mohammed:	So, this means they can read the same books as students who are able to see.
Awanatu:	Exactly! Another example is a school for the deaf, where students learn sign language. The teachers show students how to use hand signals to talk to others even if they cannot hear or speak.
Mohammed:	Does this mean that Sierra Leone has no discrimination for people with disability?
Awanatu:	Oh, unfortunately you cannot say that. Sierra Leone has the policies in place to say that all people should be treated equal and fairly, including those with difficulties. But not everyone in Sierra Leone knows about fair treatment.
Mohammed:	And maybe not everyone understands how to help someone when they have a disability.
Awanatu:	You are correct there Mohammed. Let's listen to a story so students can hear examples of how people still discriminate against someone with a disability.
SFX:	<i>(Story music takes us out of the studio to the village...village sounds, chickens, birds chirping, etc).</i>
Mother of Emencia:	Kadie, where is your sister Emencia? Did you not walk back together from school?
Kadie (sister of Emencia, 14yrs or so):	She is talking to that stupid girl who has no legs anymore.
Mother of Emencia:	Kadie! I will not hear you talk like that! That is very bad behaviour! Mamawo is Emencia's best friend and it is very unfortunate what happened in that car accident. You should take an example from Emencia and not start treating people differently just because they have a difficulty.

Emencia is doing the right thing standing by her friend.

Kadie: Pfff... *(SFX, footsteps walking away)*

SFX: *Short bit of music, taking us to Mamawo's house.*

Emencia: (16yrs or so, whispering) I asked the teacher to give me your exam forms, so we can complete them together. I know you can do it! The teacher does not believe me, but I know you can pass the exams with flying colours. We will show them. You are the smartest girl in the entire class and you will show them all.

SFX: *Footsteps coming...*

Mother of Mamawo: Oi, Emencia, what are you doing here? Are you wasting your time again with my silly daughter? You know she is not talking anymore after that accident. You should go make new friends for yourself, this girl is cursed now.

Emencia: (speaking in normal voice now) No mam, I will not believe what you are saying about her. She is the brightest student in our class and she will make the exams, I know it!

Mother of Mamawo: Ga, "*IS* the brightest in her class"? Maybe **WAS**, but I tell you my dear, she is not anymore. No...(sigh)...she is a lost case now. She is useful for nothing. She cannot even clean or cook or do anything. All she can do is sit in that chair and do nothing.

Emencia: How can you speak of your own daughter like that? Your own flesh and blood? I am going to help her and you will see, we will prove everyone wrong!

Mother of Mamawo: Og, my own flesh and blood? It is not my flesh and blood that is cursed like this. She was born like a normal person. No this thing is maybe a punishment for what she did herself. It is not my problem.

Emencia (passionately): You cannot say things like that mam, accidents can happen. Even for people who are born with difficulties it is nothing to do with curses and those things. We are all different and we all come into this world with our own struggles. Even you are not perfect! Nobody is cursed here, we all just need to work together!

Mother of Mamawo: Eeh, you are speaking to an adult like that? What is wrong with you child? Do you have a fever? Go help your mother or do something. Stop bothering me here. Go away.

Emencia (whispering): Goodbye Mamawo, I will be back tomorrow then we can start revising for the exams.

Emencia (normal voice): Good day mam. I want to you know that your daughter will make the exams, you will see.

Mother of Mamawo: Pfff...tsk...tsk....tsk....tsk...

SFX: *Footsteps leaving*

SFX: *Evening music and sounds, sun is setting.*

Mohammed: 'Poor Mamawo – she has suffered a great deal. It makes me feel sad that her mother thinks that way.'

Awanatu: 'Yes, people can be very hurtful. Let's go back to the story to hear what happens next.'

SFX: *Plates and spoons are being used, eating.*

Emencia's Father: Hmm, Emencia, mami tells me you were visiting Mamawo today. How is she doing?

Emencia: She is doing better father. The swelling on her face is down and she can nod yes or shake no with her head to me.

Kadie: Why is Emencia wasting her time there? That girl will never do anything again.

Emencia's Father (very stern, deep voice): Kadie, let me never hear those negative words from your mouth again! All humans are worthy of our time and attention and care and support. Even more so when they need our assistance to do things. You must never turn your eyes away from someone if they need your help.
How would you feel if the same happened to you? Huh?
What if it was you in that car instead of Mamawo? Hm?
Would you like people to say those bad things about you now?

SFX: *Uncomfortable silence, crickets chirping.*

Kadie (mumbling): Sorry father... I would not like it if it was me. I hope people would help me.

Emencia's Father (very stern, deep voice): Um, hmm. Very good. Now you remember that. There comes a time in our lives where we all need support and help from others. I expect better from you.

SFX: *Evening music fades out, the day ends.....*

SFX: *A new day begins, the sun is rising, crowing...etc.*

SFX: *Sound of small cart being pushed on the road, footsteps alongside.*

Mother of Mamawo: Og, you are back now? What is this huh?

Emencia: Good morning mam, I borrowed a cart from the farm to take Mamawo to school. Moi and Senneh are her to help me push.

Moi (boy 16yrs): Good morning mam.

Senneh (boy 16yrs): Good morning mam.

Mother of Mamawo: Eeeh, what is this? You want to embarrass me? Why are you just looking for trouble? My daughter will not be going anywhere on a farm cart!

Emencia: What if we ask her and she says yes? Can she come?

Mother of Mamawo: Are you silly now? She cannot do anything! Not even yes of no! If you can get anything from her you can do what you like.

SFX: *A few footsteps on the gravel*

Emencia (whispering): Mamawo, would you like to come to school with us?

Mamawo (whispering): YES.

Mother of Mamawo: Eh, what's that?

SFX: *A few footsteps on the gravel*

Mother of Mamawo (softer voice): Did you say something?

Mamawo (whispering): YES.

SFX: *Uplifting music, children laughing, cart rolling on the gravel, footsteps alongside*

Teacher Mrs. Rhoda: What is going on out here?

Emencia: Mamawo has come back to school Mrs. Rhoda.

Teacher Mrs. Rhoda: How is that so? Children, Mamawo has no use for school anymore. She was too badly injured. Her brain is not working anymore. She is not speaking. And she cannot walk right now, how will she go around?

Emencia: We are bringing her with the cart, and Moi and Senneh will carry her for the classrooms.

Teacher Mrs. Rhoda: No children, this will be a distraction. The final exams are coming up and Mamawo will not make them. You should focus on your own studies instead.

Emencia: We will all work together and revise together. We will all do well in the exams.

Teacher Mrs. Rhoda: Ok, if you insist, but you only have one week before the exams. If Mamawo does not pass the exam she can forget about coming back. Her mother should send her to a special school.

Emencia: Thank you Mrs. Rhoda. You will see, she will make it!

SFX: *Uplifting music, children laughing, cart rolling on the gravel, footsteps alongside, Emencia reciting mathematics, and history in faded background sounds. Moi and Senneh reading history in faded background, Mamawo whispering mathematics, music continues, Mamawo's voice becoming stronger...all four students reading history together in strong, full voices. Music fades.*

SFX: *Microphone sound (high pitch). Tap, tap tap, to test microphone.*

Teacher Mrs. Rhoda: Is it on? Is it on? Ok... Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the graduation ceremony for our students who have passed their final exams. I am very proud of all our students who have worked hard and passed this exam. I will now invite the top student of the class to say a few words.

Mamawo (load and clear): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Mamawo Karbo and I am proud to stand at the top of my class in the final exams. I would not have made it this far if it was not for my friends, Emencia, Moi, and Senneh who supported me all the way. I was in a car accident earlier this year and was not able to come to school, but they took my hand and helped me every step of the way.

Mamawo's Mother: —Good evening, I am the mother of Mamawo. I am so proud of my daughter! I am very sorry because in the beginning I did not believe that she can still go to school. I am very thankful to Emencia and all the friends of Mamawo. You have supported her so much and you have opened my eyes to see that she can enjoy school despite all the difficulties she has.

SFX: *People clapping, cheering and music starting*

SFX: *Music takes us away from the village and back to the studio*

Awanatu: Sniff, sniff....oh, what a beautiful, beautiful story! And what wonderful friends Mamawo has.

Mohammed:	Yes, <i>(deep sigh...)</i> , it is wonderful when people start working together! I could not believe my ears when so many people were being negative about Mamawo's recovery. It made me so happy to hear her mother say she was proud of her.
Awanatu:	People have many beliefs and misunderstandings about disability. But people like Emencia and her father can help to educate them.
Mohammed:	I really see now what you mean when you say we all have our different difficulties.
Awanatu:	We do, and it is very important that we work together. I want students to do Padi-Padi time now. Think back about this story and how the students helped each other. Imagine that you were the one who was injured or having a difficulty even from birth. How would you feel if people were calling you names like saying "you are stupid, cursed, useless"? How would you feel if no one will support you and you cannot go to school?
Mohammed:	Do you remember how padi padi works? First, pick a partner and you will have four minutes to discuss with each what it would feel like if you had a difficulty and how you would want others to treat you. Discuss with your partner what you can do for someone who has a difficulty. Okay, Padi Padi starts now! You have 4 minutes!
SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 2 minutes</i>
Mohamed:	Club Leaders, we have 2 minutes left!
SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 1 minute</i>
Mohamed:	Club Leaders, we have 1 minute left!
SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 50 seconds</i>
Mohamed:	Club Leaders, we have 10 seconds left! We will start our countdown now.
Mohamed/Awa together:	10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1! Okay stop your Padi-Padi!
SFX:	<i>Cheering and clapping</i>
Mohammed:	Thank you everyone. Let's make sure we use our group talk time to share with the group. How do you want others to treat you if you have any difficulty? How would you feel if people were calling you names because of your difficulty? How would you be willing to support someone else who has a difficulty?
Awanatu:	And remember students, nothing is certain in life. Anyone can face challenges.
Mohammed:	Remember you have four minutes for Group Talk. The background music will come on and we will let you know when you have two minutes left, one-minute left and 10 seconds left. Club Leaders, are you ready for group talk? Group Talk now!
SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 2 minutes</i>
Awanatu:	Club Leaders, we have 2 minutes left!

SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 1 minute</i>
Awanatu:	Club Leaders, we have 1 minute left!
SFX:	<i>Background activity music for 50 seconds</i>
Awanatu:	Club Leaders, we have 10 seconds left! We will start our countdown now. 10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1! Ok! That is the end of group talk!
Awanatu:	Thank you all for sharing! If there are any questions you still have or any important points you feel you need to discuss with a teacher, please write down your questions and remember that the club leader can ask a mentor or a teacher for advice.
Mohammed:	Wow Awanatu, what a day it has been today! That story really touched my heart. I wish more students would be like Emencia and her friends to help someone else.
Awanatu:	Yes I agree.
Mohammed:	Let's do a quick recap.
Awanatu:	Yes, I can start...
Awanatu:	We reminded students about what they learned in gender discrimination. Discrimination is when you treat someone else unfairly or do not show them the same respect and treatment as others.
Mohammed:	We also talked about what disability is and tried to show our students that everyone in the world has different forms of difficulty – some mild, some moderate, some severe.
Awanatu:	Anyone can have an accident or be born with a difficulty and you should never be blamed for something like that. In Sierra Leone the law is that everyone should be treated equally, but unfortunately many people still misunderstand why difficulties are there and how they can support someone with a difficulty.
Mohammed:	We listened to the powerful story of Emencia, Moi and Senneh who helped their friend Mamawo.
Awanatu:	We used our Padi-Padi time to talk about how we would feel if no-one was willing to help us when we have a difficulty. And how it would feel to be called names.
Mohammed:	During group talk, we shared our ideas about how it would feel to be discriminated against and we came up with ideas of how we can help students with difficulties.
Awanatu:	I now want to remind students that we are all in this together and we should work hand in hand to make sure everyone has an opportunity to fulfil their dreams!
Mohammed:	Thank you Awanatu. I think that is everything that we covered today. Now we'd like to wrap up with some 'Reflection Time'.
SFX:	<i>Small ping or gong.</i>
Awanatu:	We're going to take 30 seconds for everyone to sit quietly and reflect on what we've discussed today. Students, please think about what you liked most about today's session. Was there anything that you found interesting or that you didn't know before? If so, think about whether you'd like to tell your friends or family about it. Was there something that you disagreed with? Something that you'd like more clarification on? Something you have a

question about? If so, please write your questions down and give them to your Club Leaders.

Awanatu: Okay everyone, please be quiet now and enjoy your 30 seconds of Reflection Time.

SFX: Reflection Time music (30 seconds)

Awanatu: Okay, everyone, thank you for reflecting. Remember, if there was something that you liked from today's session – share what you learned with others. If there was something that you have a question about, I hope you wrote it down. Please give your questions to your Club Leaders now. We will now have question time. The background music will come on and you will have four minutes to discuss your questions. If no-one in your group can help with the answer, the club leader can take the question to a mentor or a teacher to help with the answer.

Awa: If you can't finish answering *all* the questions during these two minutes, feel free to continue after the session if there is time. Ready? Club Leaders, please read out the first question!

SFX: *Background activity music for 2 minutes*

Mohamed: Club Leaders, we have 1 minute left!

SFX: *Background activity music for 50 seconds*

Mohamed: Club Leaders, we have 10 seconds left! We will start our countdown now.

Mohamed/ Awa together 10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1! Stop Question Time!

Awanatu: Great. I think it is time to wrap up the session now. Did you have any other points to make?

Mohammed: Yes, I also want to let students know that if they have any suggestions on how the sessions could be run better, please write those down and give them to the Club Leaders or the Mentor.

Awanatu: Good point. We always want to improve the Club sessions and make sure everyone enjoys them.

Mohammed: And I want to make sure that everyone promises to *come to the next club session on time!*

Awanatu: Agreed.

Mohammed: Club Leaders, could you please remind us of the day, time and place for our next session?
(pause for 3 seconds)

Mohammed: Thank you. Students, do you promise to be on time?
(pause for 2 seconds) (YES)
I didn't hear you!
(pause for 2 seconds) (YES)
Great. See you then!

Awanatu: Okay, thank you again for your participation and we look forward to seeing you for our next session, which is called: **Is our school safe and welcoming?**

Mohammed: Hmm, this reminds me of the sessions we had about school safety and reducing violence in

school.

Awanatu: Yes it does, and we will revisit some of those points next week! See you all next week!

Mohammed: Count me in!

Awanatu: Great. By everyone! See you next time!

Mohammed: See you all soon! (in Krio)

SFX: Closing music (7 seconds)