

Fashionistas with disability rock the catwalk

By Solomon Muleyi

Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) are talented, but often times have no access to a platform to showcase their talents, let alone develop them into a form of livelihood.

That is exactly what The Hot Pink Catwalk Charity Fashion Show is out to change. The show held at Imperial Mall, Entebbe recently provided a platform for creative PWDs not only to showcase their talents, but also earn a living from them.

The event, a United Nations Mobilisation on Global Goals activity, was organised by Malengo Foundation, a local NGO. It was the first of its kind to feature, inclusive of designers, models and MCs.

The show started with a cocktail at 5:00pm. At 6:00pm, revellers were then ushered to their seats in an organised manner. The deaf and those with speech impairments sat

in a section where two

radio personality Malaika Nnyanzi and the flamboyant Martin Lubwama (who participated last year as an albino model) then set the night rolling.

After the Splash Dancers curtain-raising performance at around 7:00pm, the designer showcases from non-disabled youth alongside youth with disabilities started on the well-lit stage.

The models showcased attire from Mihunde, Elijah Mcquinn, Nagawa (who moves in a wheelchair), Just Kat Wear, Doris Sabiiti, Y&Y Fashions, Teeto Afrika (who also moves in a wheelchair), Muyomba, Khatimar, Umuringa Designs, Curiosity Arc & Kori House of Couture & Design.

The audience was of course mesmerised by how the models, some of whom were blind while others had missing limbs, confidently rocked the runway. Most of the sessions were punctuated by thunderous applause. Everything happening on stage seemed like a miracle to the

the executive director of Malengo Foundation, stepped on the stage and explained to the astounded crowd exactly how what they had seen came about.

"Many designers in Malengo cannot access essential raw materials such as fabrics, beads and more, but we are changing that. Malengo Foundation seeks to break the barriers. The Malengo Market, an artisan space for creative people with disabilities, will help provide everything for them to aid the process of their designs and also bridge the gap between them and the market of their products," she said.

At around 10:30pm, Yutta Dance Company stepped onto the stage with a powerful salsa dance routine that prompted segments of the audience to stand up and clap. Shortly after that, the models exhibited designs by famous designers

with a wrap.



He stood tall before the audience