

# Disability-Inclusive Education and Employment: Understanding the Context in Ethiopia



January 2023

**Recognizing barriers to the inclusion of young people with disabilities in education and employment, a landscape report on Ethiopia was developed by the International Centre for Evidence on Disability at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Addis Ababa University, in partnership with Mastercard Foundation. This brief summarizes trends related to employment and education for young people with disabilities the report.**

## Key Findings

- There are promising rights-based policy frameworks for young people with disabilities' education and employment.
- Due implementation gaps, however, marginalizations endure, with women and people with intellectual disabilities facing the greatest exclusion.
- Promising initiatives were identified to promote disability-inclusion for youth including vocational and business trainings, and provision of start-up capital.
- Government, funders and programs must ensure that programming is sensitive to intersectional vulnerabilities (including gender and impairment type).
- Particular attention needs to be paid to addressing the risk conferred by conflict, drought, and the effects of COVID-19 pandemic, on people with disabilities
- Research is needed to understand what types of interventions are needed to improve education and employment outcomes among people with disabilities.

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## The Ethiopian Context in Brief

**2.8%**

of Ethiopians have disabilities according to analyses of survey data, but this is likely an underestimate.

**40%**

of the country's population of 118 million people are under the age of 15 years old.

Young people with disabilities are nearly

**2 x**

more likely to never have attended school than peers without disabilities.

Between youth with and without disabilities, there is a

**22%**

gap in rates of being not in education, employment, or training.

## Disability has been included in mainstream policies and plans, but coordination and monitoring is lacking

A National Plan of Action of Persons with Disabilities 2012 – 2021 was developed based on the UNCRPD, and has integrated the rights of persons with disabilities into its constitution. The policy framework aims to mainstream disability across society, making provisions for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in education, skills training and work, and full participation in the lives of their families and communities. This is echoed in the new National Development Plan (2021 – 2030) and Proclamation No. 691/2010. However, there is lack of coordination and monitoring of policy implementation.

- ✓ Disability discussed in the Constitution
- ✓ Standalone Policy on Disability
- ✓ Disability discussed in National Development Plan
- ✓ People with disabilities have a right to employment, free from discrimination
- ✓ Reasonable workplace accommodations for disability
- ✓ Quotas in contracts or jobs or incentives for employing PWD
- ✓ Legislation enshrining right of people with disabilities to equal access to education
- ✓ Access to inclusive education, including provisions required for specialised education

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## Implementation Gaps Result in Education, Employment Exclusion of Youth with Disabilities

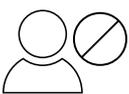


People with disabilities in Ethiopia are less likely to have completed primary education, secondary education or to have attended tertiary education, compared to their peers without disabilities. Data from a 2015 survey found that primary and secondary school completion rates were low in general ( $\leq 15\%$ ) and even lower among children with disabilities (5%).



Youth with disabilities in Ethiopia are 32% more likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to those without disabilities. The inactivity rate among adults with disabilities is also much higher (46%) than among people without disabilities (18%). Monthly earnings for adults with disabilities who are working are also estimated to be lower (by 59%) than their peers without disabilities.

### Key challenges include...



Some impairment groups and women with disabilities are more excluded.



While disability inclusion is gaining momentum, a charity-based approach to disability still prevails.

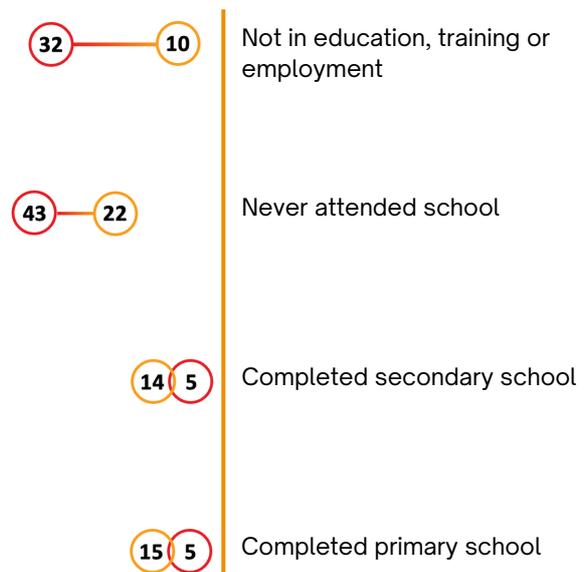


Lack of learning materials, assistive devices, and accessible infrastructure.



Lack of employment opportunities linked to training.

### Education, employment, and training disparities between people **with** and **without** disabilities (%).



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## Initiatives to Promote Disability Inclusion for Youth Include...



Involving people with disabilities as trainers to provide mentorship for trainees with disabilities.



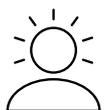
Piloting models for support such as access to rehabilitation labs in universities.



Providing training in disability rights for trade union officials and affiliated organisations.



Establishing e-learning and online resources to better include students with disabilities.



Addressing teachers' attitudes and efficacy to deliver inclusive education.



Providing vocational training and micro-finance opportunities for people with disabilities.

## Opportunities to Strengthen Practice and Research Insights are Clear

- Amend policies to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities, and women, are included.
- Ensure disability inclusive education programming is gender sensitive from primary school levels.
- Conduct wide-scale awareness raising activities, to better understanding of disability and move to rights-based models.
- Increase focus on disability in leading economic sectors of the country (agriculture and manufacturing), and develop digital skills development.
- Engage youth with disabilities in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs which are meant to benefit them.
- Promote livelihood opportunities and employability for youth with disabilities through training, capacity building and start-up capital for small businesses.

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## Acknowledgements and References

**Data sources:** The report upon which this brief is based drew from four main sources of data: a rapid online literature review to identify relevant policy and programs regarding disability and inclusion of youth with disabilities in education and employment; in-depth qualitative interviews with key informants in Ethiopia; the 2021 Disability Data Report, the Disability Data Portal and ILOSTAT databases.

**Notes:** All graph figures are rounded to the nearest whole numbers. Estimates should be interpreted with caution and considered as indication of trends rather than precise estimates. Reasons for this caution include challenges with disability measurement in surveys and small sample sizes. Further data and references are available in the full report. Image credit: Light for the World Ethiopia.



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