

Spring 2024 Professional Fellow

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Country: Ethiopia
Job Title and Employer: Inclusive Education Project Coordinator
Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD)
Project Title: Enhancing Disability Inclusion in Ethiopian Higher Education:
The Example of Kotebe University of Education

Issue: The Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MOE) mandates inclusive education across all levels, including higher education, emphasizing the importance of educational environments meeting the needs of students (MOE, 2006). Additionally, the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation of 2009 requires institutes of higher education to ensure physical accessibility and academic support for all learners. However, many universities lack necessary supports for students with disabilities, such as educational materials, assistive devices, staff awareness of accessibility needs, and infrastructure modifications (Tamrat, 2018). To achieve inclusive education, universities must prioritize accessible designs, provide educational supports and resources, and empower students to locate, evaluate, and use resources (Beyene et al., 2020).

As part of his work at ECDD, Yohannes has collaborated with three universities in Ethiopia known for their inclusive practices. For his follow-on project, Yohannes will focus on Kotebe University of Education (KUE), a prominent training institute for teachers, school administrators, and education professionals in Ethiopia. Yohannes believes that by demonstrating inclusion at the university, graduating teachers can promote inclusive practices throughout their careers at all educational levels.

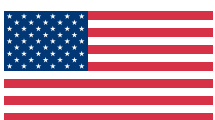
Project Objective: Yohannes' project aims to enhance disability inclusion at KUE by providing disability inclusion awareness training to management, supporting the implementation of inclusive policies, and training students with disabilities to advocate for reasonable accommodations.

Project Activities: Yohannes will review KUE's disability inclusion policies and conduct a situational assessment to identify barriers to inclusion. Using the assessment results, he will adapt ECDD's existing training curriculum and materials to provide disability inclusion awareness training to 20 members of the university's management. The training will cover a range of topics, including understanding disability and using appropriate terminology, models of disability, national and international policy frameworks for inclusion, fostering positive attitudes, accommodating students with diverse disabilities, and integrating inclusive instructional methods. Following the training, Yohannes will support and monitor progress in implementing inclusion policies through targeted interactions.

Concurrently, Yohannes will recruit 35 students with disabilities through the university's disability support center and train them to advocate for reasonable accommodations. He will use a training curriculum and materials he developed at ECDD, which includes peer mentoring.

References:

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- Tamrat, W. (2018). Disability in Higher Education - From Policy to Practice. *University World View, Issue 216*. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323696144_Disability_in_higher_education_-_From_policy_to_practice



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