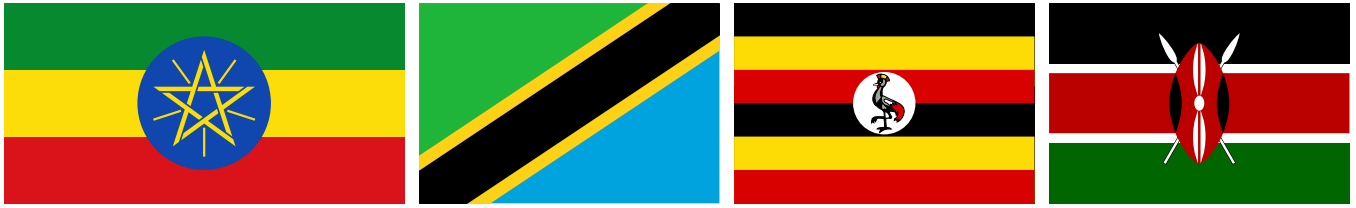


The Professional Fellows Program on Inclusive Civic Engagement



Spring 2024 Professional Fellow



Yohannes Teklay Syoum **Inclusive Education Project Coordinator** **Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD)**

“Through the Fellowship Program, I hope to more effectively work towards an inclusive Ethiopia where persons with disabilities actively engage in every sector without hindrance.”

Yohannes serves as the Inclusive Education Project Coordinator for the [Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development \(ECDD\)](#) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He is currently leading the “Empowerment and Mainstreaming of Persons with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ethiopia” (EMPOWER) project, a collaborative initiative funded by the National Union of University Students in Finland and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this role, Yohannes helps facilitate the establishment and growth of Associations of Students with Disabilities on various campuses.

Prior to his current position, Yohannes held the position of President at the Ethiopian Sports Federation and worked as a Project Coordinator at the Deaf Development and Information Association (DDIA). Yohannes holds a master’s degree in special needs education from the Addis Ababa University.

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, he will focus on Kotebe University of Education (KUE), a prominent training institute for teachers, school administrators, and education professionals in Ethiopia. He believes that by demonstrating inclusion at the university, graduating teachers can promote inclusive practices throughout their careers at all educational levels.

Yohannes will conduct a situational assessment to identify barriers to inclusion and make adaptations to ECDD’s existing training curriculum and materials to provide disability inclusion awareness training to 20 members of the KUE’s management.

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.

