



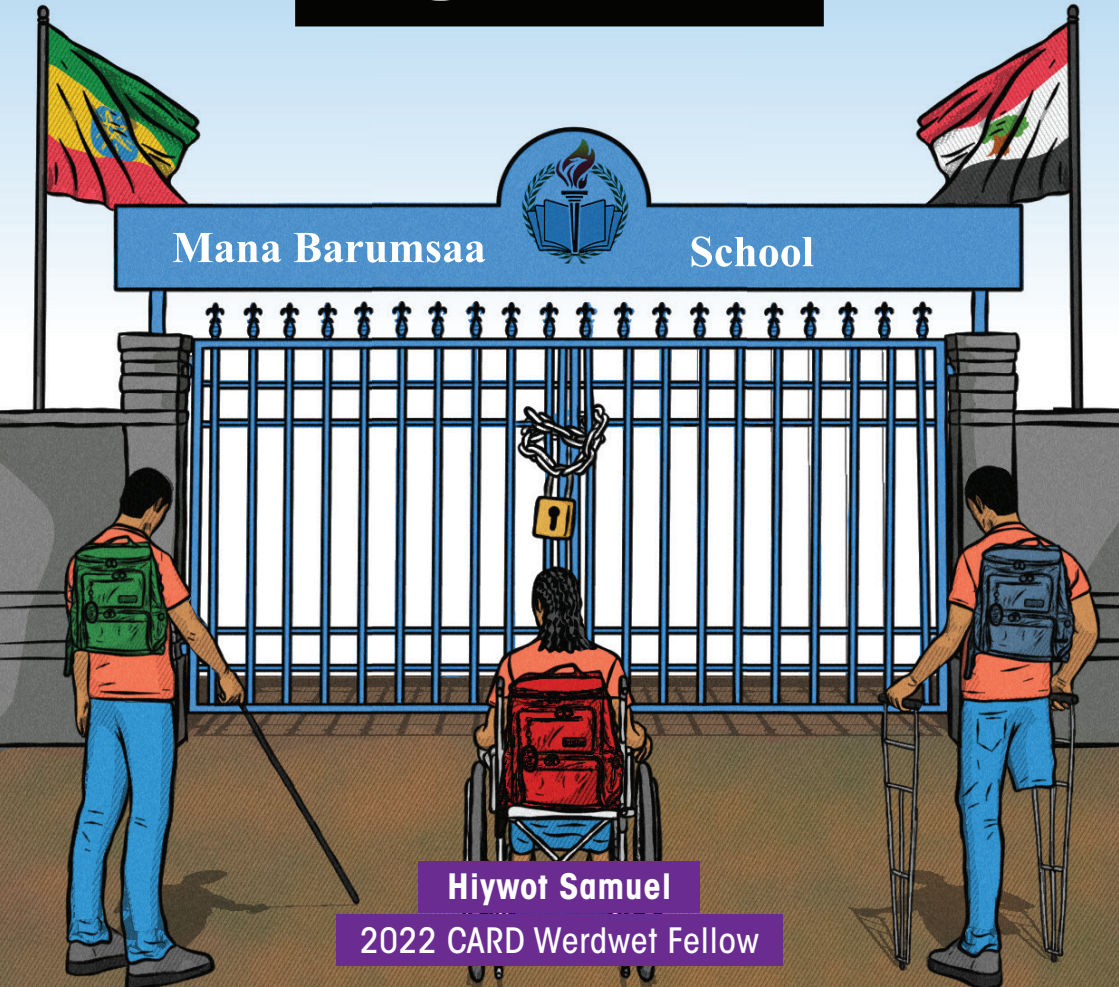
**CARD**

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CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT  
OF RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

MAKE DEMOCRACY THE ONLY RULE OF THE GAME!

**DOUBLE**

**BURDEN**



**Hiywoጥ ሳሙኤል**

**2022 CARD Werdwet Fellow**

## **About CARD**

The Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) is a board-led, for-profit organization registered in Ethiopia under the Civil Societies Law 1113/2019 with registry number 4307. CARD acquired its legal personality on 24 July 2019.

CARD aspires to see Ethiopia where democratic culture flourished on human rights values and has been working with a mission to empower citizens and groups of citizens to ensure their ability to promote and defend human rights and build democratic governance in Ethiopia.

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# DOUBLE BURDEN

**THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN OROMIA: PRACTICAL CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS IN SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



**Hiywot Samuel**  
2022 CARD Werdwet Fellow

# Declaration

I, the researcher, confirm that the research titled “the impact of political instability on the implementation of the right to inclusive education for students with disabilities in oromia: practical challenges and prospects in some selected secondary schools” contains my own work. All materials used in this work are appropriately acknowledged and cited.

**Hiywot Samuel**



# Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank the Almighty for helping me in every situation while I conducted this research. Next, I would like to gratefully acknowledge all the management team members of the Center for Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) for the golden opportunity they gave me to apply for the *Werdwet Research Fellowship*. I am forever grateful for this opportunity and the support they gave me throughout the process. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Mrs. Addisalem Gobena (Finance and Admin Director at CARD) for her valuable guidance and facilitation. Next, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Solomon Tekle, my advisor, for his wholehearted supervision.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff in CARD, my friends, and my family for all their assistance in every way so that I could accomplish this work.

# Foreword

The Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) aspires to see Ethiopia where democratic culture flourished on human rights values and has been working with a mission to empower citizens and groups of citizens to ensure their ability to promote and defend human rights and build democratic governance in Ethiopia. To this end, CARD implements various projects under five program areas namely Youth and Women Empowerment, Civic Engagement, Media Literacy, Digital Rights, and Democratization Index.

CARD Werdewet Research Fellowship is project under the Youth and Women Empowerment program with the objective of raising the capacities of youth and women to make knowledge-driven societal changes through the facilitation of research opportunities and promotion of gender rights and protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

The CARD Werdewet Reserch Fellowship was first introduced in 2020. It is named after the Guraghe legend, Yeqaqe Werdwet, who fought for women's equal marital rights in the second half of the 19th century. CARD decided to name this research fellowship after Yeqaqe Werdwet because Werdwet's story is historical, inspiring, and educating to address traditional challenges through traditional means by promoting and exhaustively exploring local remedies. Werdwet Fellowship will continuously take young researchers and assist their search for evidence to promote gender-sensitive values in Ethiopia's traditions and give their research reports a platform for the use of civil societies.

The Fellowship additionally gives women and the youth an opportunity to pursue their passion in researching and promoting indigenous knowledge and local medium to fight inequality and the rights of marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society. In 2022, CARD awarded the fellowship opportunity to five Ethiopian youth who aspire to scale up their research

## Foreword

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skills whilst helping knowledge-based advocacy for equality and promotion of a rights-oriented sociopolitical system. The research fellows have received financial support to cover all related costs of the research work. Furthermore, a research advisor have been hired to assist the fellows develop a quality research product. By doing so, CARD believes that it can empower the fellows as well as support its advocacy through evidence-based researches. Lawyer and rights' advocate Hiywot Samuel, 29, is a visually impaired person who was forced to stop going to engineering school at 19 when she had suddenly lost her sight; nonetheless, with her perseverance, she immediately went to the School of Law and Governance at the Addis Ababa University to persue legal studies. Hiywot has also later earned her LLM in International Human Rights Law at University of Gondar in 2020.

As a Werdwet Fellow, Hiywot has researched the impact of political instability to further diminish priorly low efforts on inclusion in education. Her study is a great contribution to raise awareness about how conflicts and instabilities double burden persons with disabilities. One of the six principles in the 2030 agenda of the United Nations Sustainable development is to "leave no one behind". Despite the fact that this phrase is meant to "represent the unequivocal commitment" of UN member States to "end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind", the Ethiopian government didn't manifest its commitment to protect the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of our society, i.e. persons with disabilities.

The on going conflicts and instability across Ethiopia is putting the situation from bad to worse. The Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) calls up on all governmental and non-governmental actors to join hands with long-term and systematic commitment to make discrimination and exclusion a history of the past.

**Befekadu Hailu,**

**Executive Director,** Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD)

# Abstract

*Education is recognized as a fundamental human right of everyone regardless of any difference. However, different groups of a society have been excluded from exercising this right for a variety of reasons. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) have been among these groups excluded from exercising their right to education because of their disability. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) recognizes inclusive education as a fundamental human right of every PWDs.*

*Ethiopia is a party to most core international and regional human rights instruments including the UNCRPD. Different national legislations and policies are also enacted in order to recognize the right to inclusive education, and there is some practical work done to implement the same, especially in Ethiopian higher education institutions. The implementation of inclusive education (IE) in primary and secondary schools should be closely examined and explored. In addition to economic challenges, there are other potential elements that can slow down the effective implementation of inclusive education.*

*Political instability can be one factor that can affect the implementation of the right. Ethiopia has been suffering from political instability at various times. And this instability is worsening in different parts of the country after the 2018 reform started. The Oromia National Regional State is among the areas where the political instability is getting worse.*

*This research mainly aimed to examine how political instability is affecting the implementation of IE in selected secondary schools in the Oromia National Regional State. The study used a qualitative approach to meet its objectives. Primary data were collected using interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions. International, regional, and national legislations on the right to IE have also been consulted. Moreover, the literature*

## Abstract

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*written on the issue was used as a secondary data source. This study concludes that students with disabilities in the selected research areas are not getting access to quality inclusive education. Political instability repeatedly arising in the study area has a significant impact on the effective implementation of inclusive education. SWDs living in such areas are facing multi-dimensional challenges in exercising their right to education, and there is no action taken to ensure their right to education.*

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**Key words:** political instability, inclusion, disability, Oromia



**Figure:** Blind students walking to class.

**Source:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpforeducation/48490650047/in/photostream/>

# Acronyms and List of Abbreviations

<b>AEB</b>	Ambo Education Bureau
<b>ASP</b>	Ambo School Principal
<b>ACHPR</b>	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
<b>BEB</b>	Bedele Education Bureau
<b>CBR</b>	Community-Based Rehabilitation
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CWD</b>	Children with Disabilities
<b>DAIT</b>	Disability Awareness and Inclusion Training
<b>DPO</b>	Disabled Persons' Organization
<b>EASNIE</b>	European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education
<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>ENAD</b>	Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf
<b>ENADB</b>	Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf-Blind
<b>ENAPH</b>	Ethiopian National Association of the Physically Handicapped
<b>ESDP</b>	Education Sector Development Program
<b>ETP</b>	Education and Training Policy
<b>FAT</b>	FGD Ambo, Teacher
<b>FAB</b>	FGD Ambo, Education Bureau
<b>FAO</b>	FGD Ambo, Organization of People with Disabilities
<b>FAV</b>	FGD Ambo, Vision Fund
<b>FAP</b>	FGD Ambo, School Principal
<b>FBT</b>	FGD Bedele, Teacher
<b>FBB</b>	FGD Bedele, Education Bureau
<b>FBO</b>	FGD Bedele, Organization of People with Disabilities
<b>FBP</b>	FGD Bedele, School Principal
<b>FBS</b>	FGD Bedele, Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FDRE</b>	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
<b>FENAPD</b>	Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of People with Disabilities

## Acronyms and List of Abbreviations

<b>FHT</b>	FGD Haromaya, Teacher
<b>FHB</b>	FGD Haromaya, Education Bureau
<b>FHO</b>	FGD Haromaya, Organization of People with Disabilities
<b>FHP</b>	FGD Haromaya, School Principal
<b>FHF</b>	FGD Haromaya, Federation of People with Disabilities
<b>FHC</b>	FGD Haromaya, Cheshire Ethiopia
<b>FnT</b>	FGD Nekemt, Teacher
<b>FNB</b>	FGD Nekemt, Education Bureau
<b>FNO</b>	FGD Nekemt, Organization of People with Disabilities
<b>FNP</b>	FGD Nekemt, School Principal
<b>FND</b>	FGD Nekemt, Disability Focal Person
<b>FST</b>	FGD, Shashemene, Teacher
<b>FSB</b>	FGD Shashemene, Education Bureau
<b>FSO</b>	FGD Shashemene, Organization of People with Disabilities
<b>FSP</b>	FGD Shashemene, School Principal
<b>FSF</b>	FGD Shashemene, Federation of People with Disabilities
<b>HEB</b>	Haromaya Education Bureau
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>IE</b>	Inclusive Education
<b>ICESCR</b>	International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
<b>LSEN</b>	Learners with Special Educational Needs
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoLSA</b>	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
<b>NPA</b>	National Plan of Action
<b>NEB</b>	Nekemt Education Bureau
<b>PWDs</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SNE</b>	Special Needs Education
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs
<b>SWDs</b>	Students with Disabilities
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>UNCRPD</b>	United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
<b>UDHR</b>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>WEB</b>	West Arsi Zone Education Bureau

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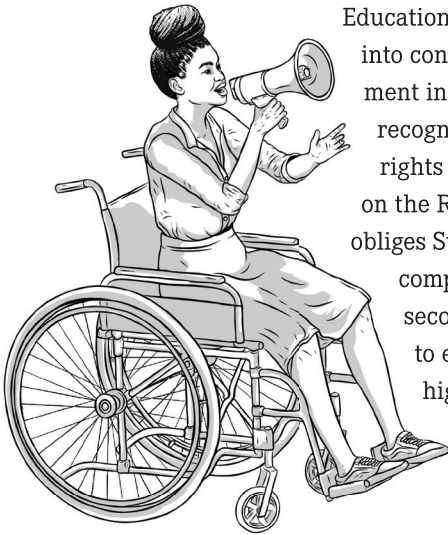
CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1. Background of the Study

**E**ducation plays a significant role in the improvement of the life standard of an individual and a society at large. Education is crucial for a nation's development as it develops its economy.<sup>1</sup> As such, education equips learners with the responsibility to participate in society and gives them a sense of purpose and the competencies they need to shape their lives and to contribute to others' lives.<sup>2</sup>



Education is also one of the indicators that is taken into consideration to measure the level of development in a given country. The right to education is recognized under different international human rights instruments. For instance, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) under Art. 28 obliges State parties to make primary education compulsory, free, and available to all and make secondary education available and accessible to every child. It also compels them to make higher education accessible to all.<sup>3</sup> In order to bring the desired outcome, ensuring access to quality education is the only choice.

- 1 Fazilah Idrisa, Zaharah Hassana, Azizah Ya'acoba. Saran Kaur Gilb & Noor Aziah Mohd Awal, *The Role of Education in Shaping Youth National Identity*. University of Kebangsaan, Malaysia, 2011, pp. 443.
- 2 The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. *The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030*. Position paper, V 14, 2018, pp.2. Available from: [https://www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20\(05.04.2018\).pdf](https://www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20(05.04.2018).pdf).
- 3 G.A. Res. 44/25, at Art. 25 (Nov. 30, 1989).

## INTRODUCTION

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The international community has been working to ensure the enjoyment of the right to education by all regardless of any differences. Persons with disabilities have equal rights with people without disabilities. Education is one of the rights that people with disabilities are entitled to enjoy equally without discrimination based on any grounds, including disability. The adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006 can be mentioned as one instance to show the commitment of the international community to ensure the enjoyment of the right to education for persons with disabilities. The right to inclusive education for PWDs is provided under Art. 24 of this Convention.

Different studies have revealed that political instabilities highly affect the quality of education. For instance, a study found out that the frequent political instability in Manipur has been highly affecting the quality of education in that country.<sup>4</sup> Our country Ethiopia has also been facing frequent political instability. And this instability is affecting the country in various ways. Education is among the sectors which might be affected by frequent bans, strikes, economic blockades, and other forms of protest that occur following political instability. Scarcity of resources and other factors can affect the quality of education in the country, but the impact of repeated political instability on the provision of quality education should be investigated. Furthermore, persons with disabilities are vulnerable groups of a society. And the provision of inclusive education for persons with disabilities is still at its infant stage in the country. Hence, how the political instability in the country is affecting the progressive realization of the right to inclusive education in the country should be closely examined.

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4 Leishangthem Linda Devi. Political Instability and Its Influence on Higher Education: A Study of Students' Perceptions in Manipur University. *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue V, ISSN: 2349-6711, 2017, pp 300-307, 307.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

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The UDHR adopted by the UN member states in 1948 recognizes education as a human right for every person including persons with disabilities. The Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (adopted in 2006) obliges State parties to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education, and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. Other instruments such as the CRC (adopted in 1989) oblige governments to ensure all children, including PWDS, enjoy their rights without discrimination. Ethiopia ratified CRPD on 7 July 2010. The country has also enacted several national legislations and policy frameworks that recognize education as a right for all regardless of any differences.

Despite the effort of the international community in giving a legal recognition for the protection of their rights, persons with disabilities still continue facing problems in various aspects of their lives. Not having equal access to education is one of the problems. According to the research conducted by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in 2017, many children with disabilities are never enrolled in school, and the number of children with disabilities out of school is rising.

A similar study undertaken by UNESCO in 2018 shows that even when children with disabilities are able to enroll in school, other challenges in the design of the education system create barriers for learners with disabilities and make it less likely for them, on average, to complete levels of education comparable to their peers without disabilities. Some of the challenges are lack of government prioritization of inclusive education in strategies and policies; lack of knowledge/resources for parents/caregivers to support their children in schooling; the prejudices, discrimination, and attitudes that many still hold against children and adults with disabilities; lack of qualified teachers, principals, and pedagogic supervisors to

## INTRODUCTION

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accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities; poor accessibility of school infrastructure; the low supply of accessible teaching and learning materials; and the low number of teachers with disabilities who can better understand and show empathy towards learners with disabilities.

In Ethiopia, there are hundreds of barriers that are affecting students with disabilities with regard to access to education. However, there is a gap in the existing literature to show these barriers. Only a few studies can be found which have addressed the problems of SWDs in Ethiopia in general and the Oromia Region, in particular. SWDs in the Oromia Region experience different obstacles while trying to get access to education. This research has attempted to analyze the extent to which the right to inclusive education of students with disabilities has been implemented in the Oromia Region, Ethiopia. As said above, there is a gap in the existing research on the status of the implementation of inclusive education in the research areas of this research.

In addition, there is unceasing political instability in the area, which is affecting the general population. The situation could be worse for persons with disabilities. Therefore, the challenges students with disabilities are facing due to this political instability should be closely examined and this was what this research aimed to do. It tried to explore how the unstable political situation in the region had been hindering SWDs from enjoying their right to education on equal basis with other students.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

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The general objective of this research is to examine to what extent SWDs have access to quality education and how political instability is hindering them from exercising their right to education in secondary schools in the Oromia National Regional State.



## Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:



- ① To investigate the impact of political instability on the implementation of quality education in some selected zones in the Oromia Region;
- ① To examine the access to quality education of SWDs in selected zones of the Oromia Region;
- ① To explore how the political instability is affecting the implementation of disability-inclusive education;
- ① To investigate challenges students with disabilities are facing due to the frequent political instability; and
- ① To investigate future prospects.

## 1.4. Research Questions

The central question of the research is:

**“How is the political instability in the Oromia National Regional State affecting the implementation of the right to inclusive education of students with disabilities?”**

### Subsidiary Questions

The research is also guided by the following specific questions:



- ? How is the political instability in the region affecting the quality of education?
- ? What is the status of access to quality education of SWDs in the Oromia Region?
- ? How is the political instability affecting the implementation of disability-inclusive education in the zones?
- ? What are the challenges students with disabilities facing due to the political instability?
- ? What does the future hold for SWDs?

### 1.5. Significance of the Study

---

The researcher believes that it is important to examine the state of access to quality education of SWDs and analyze the influence of frequent political instability in the Oromia National Regional State on the implementation of the right to disability-inclusive education in secondary schools. Moreover, it will help to explore the challenges that secondary school students with disabilities in the region are facing due to the

political instability. Furthermore, it will provide recommendations to the concerned organs so they can assist in the realization of the right to inclusive education. The study will also serve as an input to carry out further research on related topics.

## **1.6. Scope of the Study**

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This study only dealt with the challenges of students with disabilities in secondary schools within the Oromia Region. The study covered five towns from five different zones in the region, namely, Shashemene (West Arsi Zone), Naqamte (East Wollega Zone), Haromaya (East Hararghe Zone), Bedele (Buno Bedele Zone), and Ambo (West Shewa Zone)). It only examined the impact of political instability on the implementation of the right to inclusive education of students with physical (those who have difficulty moving from place to place) and visual impairment. Students with other types of impairment (enrolled in grades 9 to 12) were excluded. This research has not included primary schools and higher education institutions.

## **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

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The research has a number of limitations. Due to the frequent political instability that has prevailed in the selected research areas, traveling from place to place was hard. That limited the amount of data collected. Also, some research participants were not willing to give the required data. Furthermore, the schools had no screening mechanism used to separate students with disability from students without disability, and this made determining the exact number of students with disabilities enrolled in the schools challenging.

## 1.8. Organization of the Research

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This research paper has five chapters. The first chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study, research methodology, and methods. Under Chapter Two, theoretical concepts and legal frameworks of disability and inclusive education are discussed.

Definitions and models of disability, the theoretical concept of inclusive education, the importance of inclusive education, the right to inclusive education under international laws, the right to inclusive education under African human rights laws, States' obligations, and the impact of political instability on education are discussed under this chapter. Laws and policies relating to the right to inclusive education in Ethiopia, education of children with disability in Ethiopia, the right to inclusive education under national legislations, and institutional frameworks and factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education are discussed under Chapter Three of this research. Findings of the study are discussed under chapter four. And, under chapter five of the research conclusion and recommendations are provided.

# 2. Research Design, and Methodology

## 2.1. Research Design

---

The researcher employed a qualitative research design for the purpose of the study. The qualitative approach was selected to explore the respondents' attitudes, perceptions or views about the impact of political

instability on the implementation of the right to disability-inclusive education, the practical challenges, and future prospects of the implementation of the right.

## **2.2. Population of the Study**

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This research examined the impact of political instability on the implementation of the right to disability-inclusive education in secondary schools of the Oromia Region. Therefore, the target population for this research included secondary schools in some selected zones of the Oromia Regional State that are teaching SWDs together with students without disabilities.

## **2.3. Sample Size and Frame**

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In the Oromia Regional State there are 20 administrative zones, eight town administrations, 287 rural, and 46 woreda towns. There is at least one public secondary school in each administrative zone and town administration.

## **2.4. Sampling Techniques**

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In this research, judgement sampling, i.e. purposive or non-probable sampling technique, is used. In this technique, the researcher decides samples which she considers representative. Therefore, the researcher selected 5 towns from 5 different zones of the region which she thought are representative: Shashemene from West Arsi Zone, Nekemte from East Wollega Zone, Haromaya from East Harerghe Zone, Bedele from Illubabur Zone, and Ambo from West Shewa Zone. The researcher selected these towns as they are facing frequent political instability. They also have

mainstreamed schools in which SWDs are enrolled and learning together with students without disabilities. Other schools do not have SWDs or they are segregated special schools. In addition, the selected towns are relatively safe to travel and collect data.

Accordingly, 1 professional from the Federal Ministry of Education, 10 school principals from purposively selected schools, 2 principals from schools in each town, and 5 Adult Education and Disability Focal Persons from each of the 5 selected towns were interviewed.

In addition, all students with visual and physical disabilities learning in the schools have filled out the questionnaire. The researcher decided to take all SWDs enrolled in the schools because the number of identified SWDs in each school was small and, hence, manageable. Furthermore, 10 respondents (2 from the education bureau of each zone), 10 participants (2 from the education bureau of each town), 10 respondents (2 from disabled persons organizations found in each zone), 10 teachers (2 from schools in each town), 10 students with disabilities (2 from each town) – a total of 50 respondents – have participated in the Focus Group Discussion.

## **2.5. Sources of Data and Data Collection Tools**

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### **2.5.1. Sources of Data**

This research mainly applied four methods of data collection: questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion, and observation. The interviews were conducted with a professional from the Federal Ministry of Education, principals of selected secondary schools, and Adult Education and Disability Focal Persons. The questionnaire was used to find out about the problems students with disabilities are facing in their schools. Finally, focus group discussion was used to gather information from stakeholders

such as selected zonal education bureaus, experts from education bureaus of towns, experts from disabled persons' organizations, and teachers from selected secondary schools in each town.

In addition to the above primary data collection tools, secondary data was collected from books, articles, journals, manuals, and internet sources.

### **2.5.2. Data Analysis Technique**

A qualitative data analysis technique was used for this study. After data collection was over, each questionnaire, focus group discussion, and interview was interpreted thematically by narrating the respondents' response.

## **3. Knowledge Dissemination**

The findings of this research will be dispersed through publication and will be shared with key stakeholders in workshops, seminars, and academic conferences.

## **4. Ethical Considerations**

In order to collect data, ethical clearance was obtained from the Center for Advancement of Rights and Democracy. Taking into consideration the sensitiveness of the information they give and likely fear of the respondents to give information, the respondents were promised every information they give will only be used for academic purposes and will also be confidential. In doing so, the objectives of the study have been explained orally to the interviewees and focus group discussion and questionnaire participants. The neutrality of the researcher has also been maintained during the entire data collection time.

CHAPTER TWO

**2.DISABILITY AND  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
FRAMEWORKS**

02



## 2.1. Introduction

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Persons with disabilities (PWDs) have been facing multiple discriminations within the societies where they live. They have been excluded from different areas of development and from exercising their human rights like other people without disabilities. Education is one of these rights they have been excluded from exercising. They learned in segregated special schools and/or in integrated schools, but these systems of education have had a negative impact on PWDs and will not address their special needs. Therefore, the international community has agreed that inclusive education is the best way of helping students with special needs, including students with disabilities, to exercise their right to education. There are also indications that states are working to ensure quality education for PWDs as it significantly influences the life of every individual beyond functional literacy.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter starts with a discussion on the definition and models of disability as it mainly affects the implementation and recognition of human rights of PWDs, in general, and their right to inclusive education, in particular. Following that, the theoretical concept of inclusive education is discussed. Then, the importance of inclusive education; the right to inclusive education under international, African, and national human rights instruments; and factors affecting the effective implementation of

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5 Bakhshi, P. et al., 'What are the impacts of approaches to increase the accessibility to education for people with disability across developed and developing countries and what is known about the cost-effectiveness of different approaches?' (Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London) (2013), at 4.

inclusive education are entertained. This is followed by a description of state obligation to ensure the right to inclusive education. The chapter ends with a summary.

## 2.2. Definitions and Models of Disability

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### 2.2.1. Definitions of Disability

Disability might have been defined either as an impairment or used interchangeably with it. However, the understanding of disability has evolved over time from a simplistic conception that any person with an ‘impairment’ of mind or body is disabled to a more complex one that considers the relationship between an individual and their environment.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 1:** A blind student taking exam.

**Source:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpforeducation/48490650047/in/photostream/>

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6 Alicia Martin Diaz, *Inclusion Made Easy: A Quick Program Guide to Disability in Development*, at 3. (2012). Available from: <http://www.cbm.org/Inclumade-Easy-329091.php>.

As the two terms have significant differences, the misinterpretation of these concepts may have its own the effect on the realization of the rights of people with disabilities. Therefore, before defining disability and discussing the concept of disability, it is important to start by defining impairment. Impairment is any temporary or permanent loss or abnormality of a body structure or function, whether physiological or psychological.<sup>7</sup>

**An impairment is a disturbance affecting functions that are essentially mental (memory, consciousness) or sensory, internal organs.<sup>8</sup> According to this definition, impairment can be temporary or short-term loss; permanent or long-term loss; functional disorder of mental, physical, or sensory organ(s) of a person. Impairments are problems in body function or alterations in body structure – paralysis or blindness, for example.<sup>9</sup>**

**Concerning disability, there is no single agreed definition about it. Even the UNCRPD doesn't explicitly define disability. However, paragraph "E" of the UNCRPD preamble recognizes that disability is an "evolving concept and that it results from the interaction between the persons with impairment and attitudinal/environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in the society on equal basis with others".<sup>10</sup> In addition, the Convention provided the definition of persons with disability as follows: "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".<sup>11</sup>**

7 Eric Barbotte, et al. Prevalence of impairments, disabilities, handicaps and quality of life in the general population: A review of recent literature, 79(11) the International Journal of Public Health. 1047, 1048 (2020).

8 "Id."

9 World Health Organization & the World Bank, World Report on Disability, at 6 (2011).

10 G. A. Res. 61/106, at preamble (Dec.30, 2006).

11 "Id." at Art.1.

From the reading of both the Preamble's paragraph and Article 1 of the Convention, we can discern that disability is a dynamic concept which changes from time to time and from place to place. Disability is also the cumulative result of mental, physical, or sensory impairment and attitudinal or environmental barriers that hinder persons from fully and effectively participating in a society on equal basis with others. A person with disability is not the same as a person with impairment, according to the definition provided under Art. (1) of the Convention. A person cannot be referred to as a PWD just because he/she has impairment. Someone's impairment per se cannot make him/her disabled. But the impairment with different types of barriers will hinder a person from participating in a society on equal basis with others.

The definition of disability involves the interplay between 'impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions' whereby disability is the interaction between the impairment that a person has and the limitations imposed by their physical or social environment.<sup>12</sup>

As there is only a floor, and not a ceiling, for the level and types of impairment to be included in the Convention, states can extend the rights to other types and levels of disabilities in addition to those which are already mentioned under the Convention, i.e. those with long-term physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental impairment to be beneficiaries of the rights provided in the Convention and states.<sup>13</sup> For instance, states can extend the rights enshrined under the Convention to persons with short-term impairments.<sup>14</sup>

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12 Brittany Franck, *Inclusive Education and Children with Disabilities in Ethiopia*, at 3. (2015) Available from <https://www.du.edu/korbel/crric/media/documents/brittanyfranck.pdf>.

13 United Nations Division for Social Policy Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Toolkit on disability for Africa, Introducing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability*, at 6. Available from: <https://www.un.org/developdevelopment.html>.

14 "Id."

Moreover, it should also be noted that persons with disabilities are diverse and heterogeneous, while stereotypical views of disability emphasize wheelchair users and a few other “classic” groups such as blind people and deaf people.<sup>15</sup> Disability encompasses the child born with congenital conditions such as cerebral palsy or the young soldier who loses his leg to a land-mine, or the middle-aged woman with severe arthritis, or the older person with dementia, among many others.<sup>16</sup> Though the types of disability were limited to physical and sensory impairments for long periods of time, currently mental impairment is also becoming prominent. Even though the Convention under Art. (1) includes “... persons with mental, physical, or sensory impairment...” in its definition, due to the fluidity of the concept, a large number of cultural variations exist, as a result of which some cultures give recognition only to physical impairments while mental and intellectual impairments are not sidelined.<sup>17</sup>

From the statement provided under the World Health Organization’s report above, we understand that disability encompasses a variety of impairments, i.e., irrespective of the fact it is permanent or temporary, whether the person was disabled from birth or after getting older, etc. Understanding the different types of disabilities is important to understand the various needs and interests they have as these differ based on the types of their disability.

### **2.2.2. Models of Disability**

Approaches to the understanding or models of disability can be classified into two broad categories: ‘the Older or Classic Approach’ and ‘the Modern Approach’.

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15 World Health Organization & the World Bank, *Supra*, at 10.

16 “Id.”

17 Rachel Hussey, *Inclusive Education for Students with Visual, Hearing and Physical Disabilities: Barriers and Experiences in Gondar, Northern Ethiopia*, at 3. (Unpublished dissertation presented for the degree of MA in International Development, University of Sheffield, September) (2016).

**A.** **The Older Approach:** The older approach to disability is further classified as the charity and the medical models. The charity model considers disability as problems occurring to individual, and persons with disabilities are considered as charitable objects that should be supported by charity. This model focuses on the individual and tends to view people with disabilities as victims or objects of pity and their impairment as their main identifier, and PWDs are seen as recipients and beneficiaries of services.<sup>18</sup> This approach sees disabled people as passive or suffering and requiring care.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, the medical model, also known as the deficit model, views PWDs as “sick” and in need of medical intervention and locates the “problem” of disability within the person rather than in an environment that creates barriers to the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities.<sup>20</sup> According to this model, disability is considered as a disease and efforts were made to cure the same.

The older approach to disability is criticized for focusing only on individual impairment and disregarding the environmental factors that are barriers for the full and effective exercise and enjoyment of the rights of people with disabilities in the society. Defining disability simply as a medical situation or in terms of charity overlooks the many barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying full participation in society and contributes to the marginalization and dis-empowerment of persons with disabilities.<sup>21</sup> Even if a disease can be a single cause of disability, it doesn’t mean disability is necessarily a disease.

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18 Martin Diaz, *Supra*, at 20.

19 “*Id.*”

20 Arlene S. Kanter, ‘The development of disability rights under international law from charity to human rights’ at 8 (2015).

21 United Nations Division for Social Policy Development, *supra*, at 7.

**B. The Modern Approach:** Currently, the approach to disability has changed to the social and human rights model. The issue of disability is becoming a social and human rights matter.

**1 The Social Model:** In this model, disability is not an attribute of an individual, but rather a complex collection of conditions, created by the social environment.<sup>22</sup> Unlike the older models of disability, this model doesn't focus on the impairment of the individual; rather, it focuses on the disabling conditions in the environment, society, and etc. This model defines disability as a result of the inaccessible environment that hinders a person with impairment from participating in the society on equal basis with others. The management of the problem requires social action, and it is the collective responsibility of society to create a society in which limitations for people with disabilities are minimal. Disability is both cultural and ideological in creation.<sup>23</sup> According to this model, rather than trying to fix the individual's impairment, efforts should be made to create an accessible environment in order to include people with disability and ensure their equal participation in the society. Accommodating people with disabilities and ensuring their equal participation is the duty of the society and the state; it is not the responsibility of the individual person with disability.

**2 The Human Rights Model:** According to the human rights model, a person's disability is recognized and respected as an element of natural human diversity on the same basis as race or gender, and the human rights model addresses disability-specific prejudices, attitudes, and other barriers to the enjoyment of human rights.<sup>24</sup> This model is different

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22 Tessema Eseta, *Transport Problems of People with Disabilities and Its Policy Issues: Cases in Addis Ababa*, at 16 (Unpublished thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Management and Policy (MPMP), Addis Ababa University) (2017).

23 "Id."

24 United Nations Division for Social policy Development, *supra*, at 7.

from the above three models of disability because it is based on the social model, which focuses on finding solutions and creating an enabling environment for all rather than concentrating on the source of the problem.<sup>25</sup>

### 2.3. The Theoretical Concept of Inclusive Education

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Some scholars argue that inclusive education is not a recent phenomenon; it has been practiced for centuries.<sup>26</sup> They also state that the indigenous knowledge of Africa was and still is inclusive.<sup>27</sup> Indigenous learning or learning-by-doing in Africa uses flexible formats and locations, and responds to individual learning needs.<sup>28</sup> Based on these facts, indigenous knowledge of Africa is considered to be the foundation for the development of inclusive education.

Inclusive education is a constantly evolving system of education that acknowledges that all children can learn; respects differences in children; and facilitates education structures, systems, and methodologies to meet the needs of all children.<sup>29</sup> Inclusive education is a dynamic process and an evolving concept. The definition given to inclusive education and the understanding of the concept varies from place to place and from time to time. Depending on what the context of each circumstance suggests, it can be defined broadly or narrowly for its application to specific groups. Inclusion in education is an approach to educate students with special educational needs.<sup>30</sup> The phrase “students with special needs” is a general term that incorporates different groups of students with their own

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25 Alicia, *Supra*, at 20.

26 Sue Stubbs, ‘Inclusive Education: Where there are Few Resources’ at 25 (2008).

27 “Id.”

28 “Id.”

29 Susie Miles, “Family action for inclusion in education” at 6 (2002).

30 Nandini N. and Haseen Taj, *Inclusive Education: Key Role of Teachers for Its Success*, 1(9) *International journal of informative and futuristic research*. 201, 201 (2014).



distinctive needs different from other students. These students with special needs can be students with disabilities, children from linguistic or ethnic minorities, people with HIV, etc.

Inclusive education is the right of children with special needs to learn in general schools and the duty of the schools to respect their right.<sup>31</sup> This is the major characteristic of inclusive education that distinguishes it from special education systems. Inclusive education rejects the use of special classrooms and schools to separate students with special needs from other students without special needs.<sup>32</sup> In an inclusive education program, efforts are made to restructure the general school system so that it can accommodate the needs of every student, rather than separating the special education from the general education system.

UNESCO provided a comprehensive definition of inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education.<sup>33</sup> And, hence, children have the right to quality education though their needs vary.

The other major characteristic of inclusive education is its process, which helps learners to overcome challenges.<sup>34</sup> The implementation of inclusive education entails a process comprised of training, management, policies, enrollment, and attendance as well as achievement of scholars.<sup>35</sup>

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31 "Id."

32 "Id."

33 UNESCO, *Overcoming exclusion through inclusion approaches in education: A challenge and a vision*. Conceptual paper, 2003, p.7.

34 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: *A Guide to Ensure Inclusion and Equity in Education*. Paris, France, at 14 (2017).

35 Perpetua Masanja, *Role Of Teachers In Implementation Of Inclusive Education: The Case Study Of Songea Municipal Council*, at 10. (Unpublished, Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Education, Mzumbe University) (2016).

Though the understanding and definition of inclusive education has variation depending on contexts, places, and times, the following elements bring all to consensus:<sup>36</sup>

	Equal access to quality education is a matter of right, not a privilege;
	Togetherness means no exclusion or discrimination in admission and education based on any differences;
	Schools should adapt to the needs of children, rather than students adapting to the needs of the school; and
	Individual differences should be respected or shouldn't be considered as a deficiency; rather, disability should be accepted and respected as a natural difference between children.

## 2.4. The Importance of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education has multi-dimensional advantages including economic, social, and psychological. Inclusive quality education is both a goal in itself and a means for attaining all other SDGs.<sup>37</sup>

36 Monika, Role of Family in Inclusive Education. Department of Education, 2(6) International journal of advanced educational research. 258: 258. (2017).

37 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Supra, at 10.

Inclusive education can be a significant foundation for the achievement of development goals. As we know, education is an important element for the development and improvement of individuals as well as countries. An education program that accommodates and addresses all the diverse needs of all children is easy for all to access.

Inclusion gives students with disabilities skills they can use in and out of the classroom.<sup>38</sup> Mathew stated the importance of inclusive education as follows:<sup>39</sup>



**“Successful inclusive education requires school transformation and systems change. However, much of this reform is design-focused, and not resource-intensive. It is important to emphasize that inclusive education means that all children are together in mainstream classrooms for the majority of their day. This has demonstrated positive effects on student achievement and social wellbeing for all children and is far more efficient and effective than special schools and special classrooms. Often, the term ‘inclusive education’ becomes synonymous with education for children with disabilities. Whilst this may still be the primary motivation for inclusive education, successful inclusive practice will be successful for all children with many different attributes such as ethnicity, language, gender, and socio-economic status.**

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38 Nandini N, & HaseenTaj, Supra.

39 Matthew J. Schuelka, Implementing Inclusive Education. (2018).  
Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c6eb77340f0b647b214c599/374\\_Implementing\\_Inclusive\\_Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c6eb77340f0b647b214c599/374_Implementing_Inclusive_Education.pdf).

The implementation of inclusive education might be considered as expensive, costly, or uneconomical. However, according to Mathew, it is not about resource; it is all about design. What is more, the implementation of inclusive education benefits not only students with disabilities but also others. In addition, the diversity of individual needs is a rich source of inspiration to learn together and learn from one another how to excel in a particular field of one's interest.<sup>40</sup>

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) (2018) has provided ample evidence that inclusive education increases social and academic opportunities for both children with and without disabilities, as well as significantly increasing the likelihood that children with disabilities enroll in higher education and have better employment and life outcomes.<sup>41</sup>

## 2.5. The Right to Inclusive Education under International Laws

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The right to education is recognized as a fundamental human right under several human rights instruments at an international level. Specific provisions of these international legal frameworks deal with the right to education, in general, and the right to inclusive education in particular, which are discussed in the following sub-sections.

### A. THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) does not specifically mention the right to inclusive education or education of children with disabilities. However, under Art. 26 of the Declaration, it

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40 Monica, *Supra* at 209.

41 Mathew, *Supra*.

is proclaimed that everyone has the right to education and it is further stated that elementary education should be made free and compulsory; technical and professional education shall be available; and higher education should be equally accessible to all.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, by interpretation, we can say that PWDs are also entitled to education under the Declaration.

Though this document is a Declaration, its contents have already attained the international customary law status. It is also a foundation for other human rights treaties and conventions. Under this specific provision, the state parties are obliged to provide equal opportunities and access to education to everyone regardless of any differences. As disability is recognized as one form of human diversity like gender, race, ethnic group, age, and etc., states have the obligation to make the education system accessible and available to persons with disabilities on similar basis with others.

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## **B. THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

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The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), like the UDHR, didn't provide the right to inclusive education of PWDs specifically. But, under Art. 13(1), it recognizes the rights of everyone to education. According to General Comment No. 13, "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality."<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, state parties to the ICESCR further recognize that education should enable all to participate effectively in a free society.

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42 G. A. Res. 217, at Art. 26(1) (Dec.25, 1948.).

43 UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No: 13, The Right to Education (Article 13 of the covenant) at para 4, U.N. Doc. E/C.12/1999/10 (December 8, 1999)

The General Comment on Art. 13(2) of the Covenant provides essential features that education at all level should have. These features are:<sup>44</sup>

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- 1 **Availability:** As much as the level of development of a country allows, education institutions and programs should be available within the state's jurisdiction.<sup>45</sup> According to this paragraph, a functioning education institution includes sanitation facilities, safe water, trained teachers, teaching materials, libraries, etc.<sup>46</sup>

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  - 2 **Accessibility:** Education must be physically and economically accessible for everyone without discrimination based on any ground.<sup>47</sup>

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  - 3 **Acceptability:** Education systems, including curricula and teaching methods, must be relevant, appropriate, and culturally acceptable and must have good quality.<sup>48</sup>

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  - 4 **Adaptability:** Education programs and institutions must address or meet diverse needs of learners within the schools.<sup>49</sup>

Under paragraph 7, General Comment No.13, it is clearly stated that the best interests of the students should be taken into consideration while implementing the above-mentioned inter-related and essential elements of education.

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44 "Id."

45 "Id."

46 "Id."

47 "Id."

48 "Id."

49 "Id."

From Art. (2)(b) of the ICESCR, we can observe that secondary education should include the above-mentioned elements of education. The Committee to the ICESCR under paragraph 11 of General Comment No. 13 states:



**“ ..... Secondary school prepares students for vocational and higher educational opportunities. Article 13 (2) (b) applies to secondary education “in its different forms”, thereby recognizing that secondary education demands flexible curricula and varied delivery systems to respond to the needs of students in different social and cultural settings. The Committee encourages “alternative” educational programs which parallel regular secondary school systems.”**

The Committee also specified that the availability of secondary education should not depend on apparent capacity of the student and should rather be distributed throughout the state in order to make it available to all on the same basis.<sup>50</sup> In order to address the special needs of changing society, states should adopt creative and varied approaches. The state parties are also required to make secondary educations free progressively, which means state parties to the Covenant cannot raise the issue of material or economic limitations as excuses for not implementing the rights enshrined in the Covenant to the extent resources permit. Therefore, states are obliged to progressively introduce free education to all at all levels.

Even though the Covenant does not refer to persons with disabilities explicitly in any of its provisions, General Comment No. 5 on persons with disabilities confirms that the rights enshrined in the Covenant are for all members of society. Thus, as PWDs are part of society, they are entitled

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<sup>50</sup> Id. at para. 13.

to the full and effective enjoyment of the rights.<sup>51</sup> In addition, it obliges state parties to provide the necessary special treatment to PWDs in order to enable them to fully and effectively exercise the rights recognized in the Covenant.<sup>52</sup> The states should provide the special treatment to the maximum extent of their available resources. Also, in order to make the services more accessible to them, additional resources should be made available.<sup>53</sup> In this regard, states are required not to refrain from taking the necessary actions and steps towards the realization of the rights to people with disabilities.<sup>54</sup>

The General Comment further states that PWDs are facing multi-dimensional discriminations, including from education.<sup>55</sup> According to Art. 2(2) of the Covenant, the rights incorporated in the instrument will be used by everyone without discrimination based on gender, age ... or other statuses. The phrase “...other statuses” is also explained in General Comment 5 as it includes disability as one ground of discrimination.<sup>56</sup> Disability-based discrimination is defined as “including any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference, or denial of reasonable accommodation based on disability which has the effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of economic, social or cultural rights.”<sup>57</sup> It is clearly specified that the effect of disability-based discrimination is severe in education, employment, etc.<sup>58</sup> In addition, in order to compensate

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51 (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) General Comment No 5, persons with disabilities. at para. 5. (December 9, 1994).

52 “Id.”

53 “Id.”

54 Id, at para. 9.

55 Id. at para. 15.

56 “Id.”

57 “Id.”

58 “Id.”



for previous and prevent current and future discriminations based on disability, enacting anti-discrimination legislations and policies including social policies is an unavoidable measure.<sup>59</sup>

State parties also have an obligation to confirm that an educational fellowship system is in position to assist disadvantaged groups under Art. 13(2)(e). The violation of the right to education can occur through an act of a commission or through an act of the state or through omission when states fail to take the necessary measure to discharge their obligation.

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### C. THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) under Art. 28 provides the obligation of state parties to ensure the right to education of every child. According to the Convention, State parties recognize the right of the child to education and are obliged to make primary education compulsory, available, and free to all. In addition, State parties are obliged to make secondary education available and accessible to every child, while higher education shall be accessible to all.

According to General Comment No. 9 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, primary school and secondary school education has to be provided for children with disabilities free of costs and free from any forms of barriers, including communication and physical barriers.<sup>60</sup> For children with disabilities, in order to fully enjoy and exercise their right to education, all reasonable accommodations to the maximum resource available should be made available.<sup>61</sup>

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59 Id. at para 16.

60 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: General Comment, No: 9 the Rights of Children With Disabilities. at para. 65 CRC/C/GC/9 ( February 27, 2006).

61 "Id."

Art. 29(1) of the Convention stresses the concept of child-centred education. This is because the key objective of education is the development of the individual child's personality, talents, and abilities, in recognition of the fact that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, the curriculum should be relevant to the child's current and future needs. It must also consider the child's evolving capacities in addition to ensuring that the teaching methods address the different needs of different children.<sup>63</sup>

This Convention is the first international human rights convention that specifically referred to persons with disabilities under Arts. 2 and 23. As explicitly provided under Art. 2, State parties have an obligation to ensure all children are enjoying the rights provided in the Convention without discrimination on grounds of disability.<sup>64</sup> And discrimination can be excluding them from different services including education.<sup>65</sup> The State parties must comply with this provision of the convention through enacting or including explicit provisions that prohibit discrimination on grounds of disability, providing effective remedies when there is violation of the rights of children with disabilities, and creating awareness about the rights of children with disabilities to eliminate de facto discrimination within the society.<sup>66</sup>

The Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment No. 9/2006 on the rights of children with disabilities provides the necessary measures that should be taken to ensure the implementation of the rights of children with disabilities.

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62 UN Committee on the rights of the child: General Comment, No: 1 Article 29(1) the Aims of Education. Para. 09, CRC/GC/2001/1 (April 17, 2001).

63 "Id."

64 G.A. Res. 44/25, at art 2 (Nov.30, 1989).

65 UN Committee on the rights of the child: General Comment, no: 9, supra, at para 8.

66 Id. Para. 9.

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## D. D.THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

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The first comprehensive and legally binding convention that recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities was enacted in 2006. In fact, the instrument does not create new rights for PWDs; it rather contextualizes already existing rights under other human rights instruments. As it is discussed above, the rights of everyone to education enshrined under the above-mentioned conventions and declarations include those of PWDs as well.

Art. 24 of the CRPD recognizes the rights of PWDs to inclusive education as follows:<sup>67</sup>

“State Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of providing equal opportunities to everyone, State parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:

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- A) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;**
  - B) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents, and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.”**
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Inclusive education is a fundamental human right of all learners; it is a means to realize other rights; it values the well-being, respect, and inherent dignity, and autonomy of individuals; and it acknowledges individuals’ demands to use their abilities effectively and fully contribute

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<sup>67</sup> G.A. Res. 61/106, at art 24 (Dec. 30, 2006).

to society.<sup>68</sup> Accordingly, State parties are obliged to ensure the right of PWDs to inclusive education at all levels of education including primary, secondary, tertiary and technical and vocational trainings without discrimination.<sup>69</sup>

Inclusive education seeks to fight discrimination (including harmful stereotypes), recognizes diversity, promotes participation, and overcomes barriers to learning and participation in order to address the special needs and identities of all students, especially the well-being and success of students with disabilities.<sup>70</sup> This process requires a comprehensive transformation of culture, policy, and practice (including legislation); it also requires strategies and mechanisms for financing, administration, design, delivery, and monitoring of all formal and informal education environments.<sup>71</sup>

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in its General Comment No. 4 provides the core features of inclusive education.<sup>72</sup> Accordingly, inclusive education is a system of education that respects differences and values of diversity.<sup>73</sup> In order to implement it, the whole system of education must be modified, and it requires the commitment and collaborative work of different stakeholders.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, reasonable accommodation and the necessary special support should be provided for SWDs. The education system should also be continuously monitored in order to ensure segregations and integrations are not taking place.<sup>75</sup>

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68 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No:4 (2016), Article 24, right to inclusive education. at Para. 10. (Sep 2, 2016).

69 Id, Para. 8.

70 Id. Para. 9.

71 "Id."

72 Id, para 12.

73 "Id."

74 "Id."

75 "Id."

Art. 24(2) of the CRPD prohibits exclusion and discrimination of PWDs from the general school. In this respect, exclusion can be classified as direct and indirect exclusion. While direct exclusion entails considering certain groups of the society as uneducable, indirect exclusion is expecting or requiring PWDs to pass common exams or evaluations without providing the requisite accommodation and support.<sup>76</sup>

Students with disabilities are entitled to get the support they require that enables them to exercise their right to education on equal basis with other students.<sup>77</sup> According to General Comment No. 4 on inclusive education, personal support includes the provision of sufficient trained support staff; school counselors, psychologists, and other relevant health and social service professionals; and access to scholarships and financial support, which are necessary to the fulfillment of their potential to the maximum extent possible.<sup>78</sup>

States are required to provide reasonable accommodation to PWDs to enable them to equally exercise the right to education under Art. 24(2)(c) of the Convention. “Reasonableness” is understood based on a contextual test that involves an analysis of the relevance and the effectiveness of the accommodation and the expected goal of countering discrimination.<sup>79</sup> Economic or resource limitations should not be raised as issues not to provide reasonable accommodation for PWDs.<sup>80</sup> Policies that commit to reasonable accommodation must be adopted for institutions at national and education levels and at all levels of education.<sup>81</sup>

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76 *Id.*, para 18

77 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 24(2)(d)) (Dec.30, 2006).

78 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 4, *Supra*, at Para. 31.

79 *Id.*, Para. 27.

80 “*Id.*”

81 “*Id.*”

The duty to provide reasonable accommodation is different from general accessibility. Accessibility benefits a group of in a population and is based on a set of standards that are implemented gradually. Reasonable accommodation, on the other hand, is related to an individual and it is complementary to accessibility.<sup>82</sup> An individual can claim reasonable accommodation though the State has already discharged its obligation to make it accessible.<sup>83</sup> And States can raise disproportionality and undue burden on them as a defense for not providing reasonable accommodation but not for making it accessible.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, State parties are duty bearers to make education systems accessible to all.

As there is no formula for ‘reasonable’ accommodation, different students of the same impairment may require different ‘reasonable’ accommodations.<sup>85</sup> Failure to fulfill reasonable accommodations for PWDs constitutes discrimination. Further, the duty to provide reasonable accommodation is immediately applicable and is not subject to progressive realization.<sup>86</sup> In order to address the specific needs of individual students and provide them with reasonable accommodation, we need adequate and continuous personalized support under Art. 24(2)(e) of the CRPD. Individualized education plans include the provision of assistive compensatory aids; specific learning materials in accessible formats; means of communication and communication aids; assistive and information communication technologies; and qualified learning support, either shared or on one-to-one basis, based on the needs of the student.<sup>87</sup>

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82 “Id.”

83 “Id.”

84 “Id.”

85 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 4, *Supra*, at Para. 29. But here, it shouldn’t be related to material provisions only. For example, it may be reallocating the classroom or seats.

86 “Id.”

87 *Id.* at Para. 32.

In general, State parties are obliged to discharge their obligation to respect, protect, fulfil, and promote all the core features of inclusive education including availability, accessibility, adaptability, and acceptability.

## 2.6. The Right to Inclusive Education under African Human Rights Laws

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Like the international legal frameworks, the right to education for everyone is provided under different African human rights instruments. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), also called the Banjul Charter, adopted in 1981 and put into force in 1986 is the major human rights instrument in Africa. Under Art. 17 of the Charter, it is stated that "every individual shall have the right to education".<sup>88</sup> Under Art. 2 of the same Charter, "everyone is entitled to enjoy the rights enshrined in the Charter regardless of any differences".<sup>89</sup> Art. 25 also envisages State duties to promote and ensure the respect of the rights and freedoms provided in the Charter.

Moreover, every child's right to education is reaffirmed under the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.<sup>90</sup> The provision lists how the education of the child should be directed. The responsibilities of State parties to take all appropriate measures to achieve the full realization of the right to education are also provided under the provision.<sup>91</sup> Specifically, Art. 11(3)(E) provides the duty of State parties to take special measures in respect of female, gifted, or disadvantaged children in order to ensure the enjoyment of the right to education by everyone without any differences. Also, under Art. 3 of the Charter, it is recognized that every child

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88 African (BANJUL) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. at Art. 17(1). (1981/1986).

89 "Id." Art. 2.

90 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. at Art. 11(1). (1990/1999).

91 "Id." Art. 11(3).

can exercise and enjoy the rights enshrined in the Charter without any discrimination based on any grounds. As mentioned above, the right to education is one of the rights recognized in the Charter; therefore, children with disabilities have the right to enjoy the right to education on equal basis with other children without disabilities.

Art. 13 of the Convention specifically provides the rights of children with disabilities to get special support in order to fully and effectively participate in the society and enjoy and exercise the rights enshrined in the Convention without discrimination.<sup>92</sup> And State parties have an obligation to ensure that children with disabilities are getting special support to the extent possible and with available resources, and they should make the necessary effort to enable them to get full access to services and facilities.<sup>93</sup>

The African Youth Charter, which was adopted in 2006, contains provisions which specifically deal with the right to education. Art. 13 of this Charter states that every young person shall have the right to education of good quality. The provision also obliges State parties to embrace multiple forms of education to meet the diverse needs of young people and also states how education shall be directed. Though the Charter does not explicitly mention youth with disabilities, from the phrase “every youth”, we can infer that youth with disabilities are also included. In addition, State parties are also obliged to implement different methods of education in order to meet the diverse needs of youth with disabilities so that they can get quality education.

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa under Art. 16 also provides that persons with disabilities have the right to inclusive education. And

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92 “Id.” Art.13(1).

93 “Id.” Art. 13(2g)(3).



sub-Art. (3) of Art. (16) provides the obligation of State parties.<sup>94</sup> This provision of the Protocol exhaustively lists the obligation of State parties. as compared to the UNCRPD, although the Protocol is signed only by nine States with no ratifications.

## 2.7. State Obligations

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Every right entails a corresponding obligation and ought to be accompanied by access to remedy for alleged denials and violations.<sup>95</sup> States have obligations under every human rights, including under the right to education. Different international human rights instruments provide different obligations of States to ensure and recognize the right to education for everyone, including under the UDHR. Violation of the right to education can occur through an act of commission or through an act of the State or through omission when states fail to take the necessary measure to discharge their obligation. The right to education is routinely classified as economic, social, and cultural rights; these are often deemed to be lacking remedies and are accordingly treated as quasi-rights or not-quite rights.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, the violation or denial of rights under socio-economic rights is difficult to address. And this has a negative impact on the realization and implementation of these rights.

However, the UNCRPD incorporates all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights together. And there are provisions which have general application to all rights listed in the Convention. For instance, Arts. 3 and 4 of the Convention are uniformly applicable to all rights. Art. 4 provides general obligations of States. In order to respect, protect, fulfill

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94 African Union, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Article 16(3) (29 January, 2018).

95 Tomasevski & Katarina, Human Rights Obligations: Making Education Available, Accessible, Acceptable and Adaptable, at 8 (2009).

96 "Id."

and promote the rights of persons with disability, including the right to education, they should undertake general obligations provided under this provision.

Adopting legislations and taking administrative measures is one obligation under the Convention.<sup>97</sup> According to this obligation, State parties should enact new laws or modify existing legislations to promote the right to inclusive education of PWDs. Any national legislations, policies, strategies, programs or customary practices that discriminate PWDs or which are against the promotion of the right to inclusive education should be amended or modified. Repealing discriminatory provisions should be immediately applicable.<sup>98</sup> In addition, State parties to the Convention are obliged to take into consideration general principles listed under Art. 3 of the same Convention while enacting legislations and making policies and strategies.<sup>99</sup>

States are also obliged to take into consideration the promotion and protection of the human rights of PWDs.<sup>100</sup> Every action of State parties to the Convention must promote and protect human rights of PWDs. The right to inclusive education of PWDs is recognized as their human right in the Convention. Hence, a State has an obligation to promote the right to inclusive education. Similarly, States must ensure that public and private entities and individuals respect human rights of PWDs as provided under Art. 4 of the Convention. It is not only States that have a duty to respect the human rights of PWDs. All public and private entities, including individuals, also have a responsibility to respect the right to inclusive

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97 G.A. Res. 61/106, at art 4 (Dec.30, 2006).

98 The Committee on the Rights of Person with Disabilities, General Comment No. 6 on Article 5 of CRPD - Equality and Discrimination. at Para. 12, (March 9 2018).

99 G.A. Res. 61/106, at art 3 (Dec.30, 2006).

100 "Id", at Art. 4(1) (c).

education of PWDs. Therefore, State parties are obliged to protect human rights including the right to inclusive education of PWDs from being violated by organs or entities other than States.

Most obligations provided under Art. 4 of the Convention are similar to the obligations under other conventions. However, the one that is provided under Art. 4(1)(f) & (g) is found only under the CRPD. Art. 4(f) obliges States to undertake research on the development of universally designed goods and services and accessible technology for persons with disabilities and encourage others to do the same.<sup>101</sup> In order to accommodate the special needs of PWDs and enable them to exercise and enjoy their human rights provided under the UNCRPD and other human rights instruments, States must do research and develop universally designed goods and services and accessible technologies. This provision plays a significant role in the implementation of the right to inclusive education. In order to make the education system accessible to PWDs, States must introduce accessible technologies.

By the same token, States should provide accessible information on assistive technology to persons with disabilities.<sup>102</sup> Assistive technologies enable PWDs to access and exercise their right independently and participate equally in their society. Assistive technologies enhance access to information and promote education and lifelong learning.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, assistive technologies are important to ensure and promote equality of PWDs in education. The Convention also provides the necessary measures that should be taken by State parties to remove communication barriers of students with visual impairment and enable them to equally participate in the society and exercise their right to education. In addition, Art.

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101 "Id", at Art. 4(4)(1)(f).

102 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 4(1)(h) (Dec.30, 2006).

103 Kelefa Mwantimwa, ICT accessibility and usability to support learning of visually-impaired students in Tanzania, 13 *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology*, 87: 88 (2017).

24(3)(a) of the Convention states measures that should be taken to assist visually impaired students as follows: “facilitate learning through Braille, alternative scripts, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and peer support and mentoring”. Furthermore, according to General Comment No. 4, State parties should provide reasonable accommodation and personal support at all compulsory levels of education to all students with disabilities free of charge.<sup>104</sup> In addition to the CRPD, Art. 23 of the CRC obliges State parties to ensure the enjoyment of the child with disability to a full and dignified life and facilitate equal participation in a society. And States should fulfill relevant special care and assistance to the extent possible and with the available resource to children with disability free of charge so that they can get access to education and other services relevant for their personal development.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to making it physical accessible, State parties are obliged to make the education system economically affordable to all. As provided under Article 13 of the ICESCR, State parties are obliged to make primary education free and compulsory to all and to make secondary education free progressively. The CRPD also clearly stipulates that PWDs should get free and quality primary and secondary education on an equal basis with other students.<sup>106</sup> In addition, PWDs should be able to access primary and secondary schools within a community where they live or they should not be sent to other places seeking for primary and secondary schools.<sup>107</sup>

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104 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) General Comment No.4 Article 24, the Right to Inclusive Education. at Para. 17. (September 2, 2016).

105 G.A. Res. 44/25, at 23(2) and (3). (Nov.30, 1989).

106 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 24(2)(2)(b) (Dec.30, 2006).

107 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities(CRPD) General Comment No. 4 Supra, at Para. 26.

The other obligation provided under the Convention is promoting training on the rights of PWDs for professionals and staff who work with persons with disabilities.<sup>108</sup> The Convention also obliges State parties to hire qualified and trained administrative staff, teachers (including teachers with disabilities), and non-teaching staff in the schemes of inclusive education and help them acquire the necessary skills to teach students with disabilities, skills like sign language, use of the braille, mobility, and orientation.<sup>109</sup> Lack of understanding and capacity about inclusive education and disability is a major barrier for the implementation of the right to inclusive education.<sup>110</sup>

Art. 4(2) of the CRPD provides that socio-economic rights should be realized progressively with available resources.<sup>111</sup> The States should provide the special treatment to the maximum extent of their available resources and also to make the services more accessible to them. Additional resources should be made available.<sup>112</sup> In this regard, States are required not to abstain from taking the necessary action and steps towards the realization of the rights to people with disabilities.<sup>113</sup> In other words, the action of States should not be regressive. Moreover, they have the burden of proof to show that they have taken all the necessary positive measures to discharge obligations to respect, protect, fulfill and promote these rights.<sup>114</sup> The obligation to fulfill includes an obligation to facilitate and an obligation to provide.<sup>115</sup> States have also an obligation to consult

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108 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 4(1)(i) (Dec.30, 2006).

109 "Id.", at Art. 24(4)).

110 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) General Comment No. 4 *Supra*, at Para. 35

111 G.A. Res. 61/106, *supra*, at article 4(2).

112 UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) General Comment No. 5, *Persons with Disabilities*, at Para. 5. (December 9, 1994).

113 "Id.", at para 9.

114 UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) General Comment No. 13, *the Right to Education* (Article 13 of the Covenant) at Para. 45.(December 8, 1999).

115 "Id." at Para. 46.

with and involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in developing and implementing legislations and policies and in decision-making processes that concern them.<sup>116</sup> Active participation is an important component of inclusive education.<sup>117</sup>

### 2.8. The Impact of Political Instability on Education

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Education could be affected whenever there is insecurity and armed conflict. Situations of insecurity and armed conflict present grave challenges to the life and wellbeing of students and education staff.<sup>118</sup> Conflicts affect everyone in the education system, but children, women, persons with disabilities, minorities and indigenous peoples, and internally displaced persons could more be affected. Persons with disabilities are particularly more vulnerable to human rights violations in situations of insecurity and armed conflict.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, these situations may also result in disabilities, both physical and mental. Armed conflicts situations may result in the destruction and confiscation of private property or educational facilities. They may also destroy infrastructure such as water pipes, which, if not repaired by the State, may result in the violation of the right to health.<sup>120</sup>

The disruption of education during conflicts and crises places a high burden on children with disabilities. Children with disabilities are more likely to be out of school and without access to education provided by humanitarian organizations, which may have limited options for inclusive programs and lack trained staff. Armed conflicts result in the destruction

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116 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 4(3) (Dec.30, 2006).

117 UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, General Comment No. 4, Supra, at Para. 26.

118 An international law handbook in summary; Protecting education in insecurity and armed conflict, 1 British institute of international and comparative law.

119 "Id." at 13.

120 "Id.", at 14.

of infrastructure which can, in turn, create physical barriers that reduce access to education.<sup>121</sup> According to UNICEF report, attacks on schools can reverse progress on inclusion, pushing previously included children with disabilities into domestic isolation or exploitative work.<sup>122</sup>

It is clear that political instability negatively affects every aspect of the day-to-day life of every individual. Political instability can lead to demonstrations, violence, strikes coup d'état.<sup>123</sup> According to the political theory of Max Weber, political stability depends on government use of legitimate physical force.<sup>124</sup> Political instability has become prevalent in sub-Saharan African countries.<sup>125</sup> And it has significantly influenced the economic development of the continent.<sup>126</sup> The literature reveals the horrific effect political instability has on the socio-economic growth and development of a country, in general, and education, in particular.

When political instability occurs due to poor democracy, lack of proper rule of law, and ever-deteriorating security, access to education will be affected.<sup>127</sup> In Somalia, for instance, the frequent threats and terrorist attacks carried out by Alshabab on people are affecting access to education. As a result, school-going children are dropping out for fear of abduction and massacre on their way to school.<sup>128</sup> And this implies that a stable political system creates a favorable condition to access education.

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121 Children with disabilities in situations of armed conflicts. Discussion paper (UNICEF, 2018) at 8.

122 Ibid.

123 Asha Mohammed Esse Abdi, Political Instability and Access to Primary Education in Hodan District, Mogadishu, Somalia, A thesis submitted to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in partial fulfilment for the award of a Master of Arts in Public Administration, Kampala International University, 2018 , pp3.

124 "Id."

125 Id, pp2.

126 "Id."

127 "Id.", pp 11.

128 "Id."

Socio-political instability includes troubles and crises at a social level, bad social cohesion, terrorism, genocide, destruction of goods and economic infrastructure, reduction of production, political imprisonment, assassinations, civil war, and rebellion.<sup>129</sup> Accordingly, these factors can directly or indirectly affect the education system.

As a study in Nigeria found out, the political party in power has influenced the planning, administration, and management of the education sector.<sup>130</sup> It is difficult to separate the education sector from the political sector, as both work hand-in-hand in formulating policies. Hence, politics has an influence on the right to education starting from the policy formulation stage to the implementation stage.<sup>131</sup> During bandhs and strikes in a State, the educational environment often gets disturbed because groups that support bandhs expect schools and colleges to close. Sometimes bandhs supporters might even cause serious injuries on lives and school vehicles by throwing stones.<sup>132</sup>

Moreover, as political instability affects the economic situation of a country, it has a significant impact on access to education. When prices of petrol, diesel, etc. rise dramatically, the transportation system will be affected, and, as a result, access to education will be affected.<sup>133</sup> In addition, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and many other reading materials will not be available on time for students to get.<sup>134</sup> And even

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129 Jean Michel Roy Oualy. *Income Inequality and Socio-Political Instability in Sub-Saharan Africa*, University of Macerata, Italy, Vol. 19, No.1, 2021, (49-72), 52.

130 "Id."

131 "Id.", at 58.

132 *Supra* 1, at 304.

133 "Id." at 305.

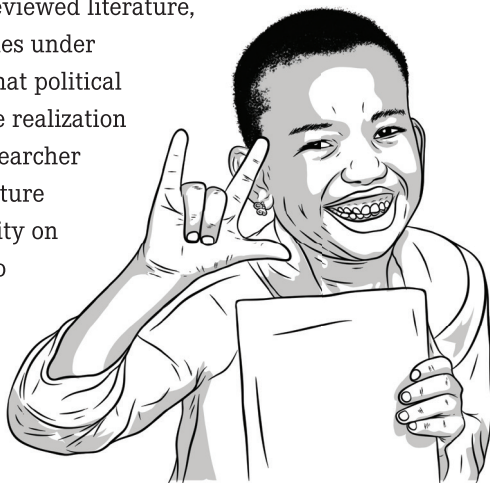
134 "Id."



when students get such materials, the prices will be very high.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, education is simply less productive in poorer or less politically stable countries.<sup>136</sup>

Areas where there is unstable politics are ‘no go’ areas where children will be forced to stop their education.<sup>137</sup> In the 1990s, some schools in South Africa were standing empty, not because there were no children to use them, but because children were scared to go to school, while other schools were closed completely.<sup>138</sup> In addition, in most countries where there is political instability, closure of schools out of normal school times and holidays is a common practice.<sup>139</sup> This will affect access to education for children and, hence, their academic achievement.

From the above discussion, the reviewed literature, and the experience of the countries under discussion, one can understand that political instability significantly affects the realization of the right to education. This researcher has extensively looked for literature on the impact of political instability on the implementation of the right to disability-inclusive education but could not find relevant literature on the topic. However, it appears that there are severe challenges in implementing inclusive education.



135 "Id."

136 James A. Kahn, Education, Political Instability and Growth, Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Research Paper, no. 9737, 1997, 4.

137 Isaac M. Ntshoe. The Impact of Political Violence on Education in South Africa, Current Issues in Comparative Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, Vol2(1), 65.

138 "Id."

139 "Id."

### 2.9. Summary

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In this chapter, it has been established that disability is not impairment; rather, it is a cumulative result of impairment and different barriers in society. Therefore, disability should not be connected to an individual person with impairment. Previously, disability was understood as an individual problem, and PWDs were considered as people who should be supported by charity. In addition, disability was considered as a disease and efforts were made to cure the disease, if possible. These understandings of disability were a major factor for the exclusion of PWDs from participating in their societies and for the failure of concerned powers to remove the barriers that hindered them.

Currently, the understanding of disability is changing from following a charity- and medical-based model to a social and human-rights-based model. As a result, world communities are working on removing barriers that prevented disabled persons with impairments from fully and effectively participating in the society and from exercising their rights.

In the past, PWDs were excluded from exercising their right to education, but nowadays, there has been progress towards the inclusion of PWDs in the education system. As I have discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, different international and regional (African) human rights instruments have recognized the right to education of children with disabilities and the duty of States to ensure and recognize the right to inclusive education of children with disabilities on equal basis with other children. This chapter has also discussed the importance of inclusive education.

The right to inclusive education in Ethiopia, the State's obligation, factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education, and the impact of political instability on the implementation of the right to inclusive education will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

**3. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
LAWS IN ETHIOPIA**

03

### 3.1. Introduction

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According to the joint report of World Health Organization and World Bank, the total number of children, adults, and the elderly with disabilities in Ethiopia is estimated to be around fifteen million, which represents 17.6 percent of the total population.<sup>140</sup> It is believed that the prevalence of disability in Ethiopia is under-reported because of lack of any national mechanism for regular collection of data on PWDs.<sup>141</sup> The main causes of disability in Ethiopia are poverty-related factors like poor nutrition and lack of access to basic services; internal conflicts arising in different parts of the country; infectious diseases; and harmful traditional practices.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, it can be said that the number of PWDs in Ethiopia can be much higher than reported, though the number on the report is still very high.

PWDs are facing multiple challenges and live under poverty as the majority of them dwell in rural areas where there are no sufficient basic services and infrastructures including education.<sup>143</sup> As in most developing countries, most PWDs in Ethiopia are excluded from education and only 0.7% of them have access to education in the country.<sup>144</sup> Although there are numerous international and national legislations that have recognized

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140 World Health Organization & World Bank, *Supra*, at 322.

141 Central Statistics Agency, United Nations Entity for Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women, *Representation of Persons with Disabilities in Ethiopian Labour Force: A Review of National Surveys on Disability Statistics*, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2020, 1.

142 Belay Tefera, et al. *Education of Children with Special Needs in Ethiopia: Analysis of the Rhetoric of "Education For All" and the Reality on the Ground*, xxxv (1) *The Ethiopian journal of education* 45:52 (2015).

143 Mahder Solomon, *Benefits and Experiences of Inclusive Education for Physically Disabled Pupils at Public Primary School in Bishoftu Town, South-East Ethiopia*. at 10. (A Dissertation submitted for the Partial Fulfillment of the MSW, Indira Gandhi National Open University) (2013).

144 Rachel Hussey, *Inclusive Education for Students with Visual, Hearing and Physical Disabilities: Barriers and Experiences in Gondar, Northern Ethiopia*. at 17. (Dissertation presented for the degree of MA in International Development, University of Sheffield) (2016)

the right to inclusive education of PWDs, there is still a gap in implementing these legislations.<sup>145</sup> Different factors can be mentioned for not fully and effectively implementing the right to inclusive education. This chapter discusses the education of children with disabilities in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the right to inclusive education under national legislations, policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks responsible for the promotion of inclusive education in the country; and state obligations and factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education are closely examined. Furthermore, it is clear that political instability has a significant impact on inclusive education. In this chapter, the effects of political instability on the implementation of the right to education and experiences of different countries in this regard are also discussed.

### 3.2. Education of Children with Disability in Ethiopia

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The education of children with disability is not a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia. The practice of educating children with disability is highly related to the introduction of Christianity in the country.<sup>146</sup> It is recorded in history that the Portuguese, who came to Ethiopia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, were surprised to see the inclusion of PWDs in the rank of priesthood.<sup>147</sup> At that time, the Orthodox Church played a significant role in the introduction of inclusive education by educating children of nobilities, children with physical and visual impairment, and talented or gifted children all

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145 "Id."

146 Meseret Assefa, *Implementation and Challenges of Inclusive Education in Harari Regional State in Selected Schools*. at 2 (Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Behavioral Studies, Department of Special Needs Education, MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University) (2018).

147 Zelalem Temesgen, *The Journey of Special Needs Education in Ethiopia*, 5(37) Bahirdar University, *Journal of Education and Practice*. 83, 83 (2014).

together.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, educating children with visual and physical impairment and talented children was also the responsibility of the Orthodox Church<sup>149</sup>, and the education was of religious nature provided orally.<sup>150</sup>

Modern education has a relatively recent history in Ethiopia. The first special school for students with visual impairment was established in Western Wollega Zone, Dembi Dollo town, in 1924 by American missionaries.<sup>151</sup> The opening of this special school marked a significant step in the special needs education as it introduced other choices of education for PWDs in addition to the existing church education in Ethiopia, particularly for visually impaired students.<sup>152</sup>

Following that, public schools started expanding and people with other types of disabilities were considered for inclusion in special schools that focus on vocational education, which uses a different curriculum from that of regular schools.<sup>153</sup> Almost all these special schools of the time were established and owned by private charitable organizations, and the involvement of the government was very low.<sup>154</sup>

Though it is not sufficient, it was in the 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP) that the government of Ethiopia recognized special needs education for the first time. After the enactment of the ETP, many special classes and units have been established for children with disabilities within regular schools.<sup>155</sup> However, this system of education of PWDs is found to have several gaps so it is still difficult to ensure the principle of

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148 "Id."

149 Meseret, *Supra*, at 2.

150 Zelealem, *Supra*, at 84.

151 Dawit Adem, *Attitudes of Teachers and Students towards Integration of Visually Impaired Students*, at 9 (MSc Thesis, Addis Ababa University) (2013).

152 Meseret, *Supra*, at 3.

153 *Id.* at 3.

154 "Id."

155 Meseret, *Supra*, at 4.

equal opportunity and the implementation of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action ratified by Ethiopia.<sup>156</sup> In order to fill these gaps, the importance of applying the concept of inclusive education became greater<sup>157</sup>, in addition to numerous other international instruments that recognize the right to education for all, in general, and special needs/inclusive education, in particular. Moreover, in addition to international agreements, the MoE and other relevant organs of the government of Ethiopia have adopted policies, strategies, and programs that recognize the right to education of PWDs. Some of these policies, strategies, and programs are discussed below.

### 3.2.1. The Right to Inclusive Education under National Legislations

Ethiopia is a party to most international human rights instruments that recognize the right to education of everyone, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). According to Art. 9(4) of the FDRE Constitution, any international instrument ratified by Ethiopia is an integral part of the law of the land.<sup>158</sup> In addition, the the Constitution further provides that “the interpretation of fundamental rights and freedoms provided under Chapter Three of the Constitution shall be consistent with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenants on Human Rights, and international instruments adopted by Ethiopia”.<sup>159</sup>

However, there is still an ongoing debate on the normative status of international legal instruments ratified by Ethiopia.<sup>160</sup> Also, it is not clear whether international legal instruments ratified by Ethiopia will

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156 “Id.”

157 “Id.”

158 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution, Proclamation No. 1/1995, art 9(4).

159 “Id.” Art. 13(2).

160 Takele Soboka Bulto, *The Monist-Dualist Divide and the Supremacy Clause: Revisiting the Status of Human Rights Treaties in Ethiopia*,

be applicable immediately after ratification or whether they have to be translated into the official language and published on the ‘Negarit Gazette’ before they are applied.<sup>161</sup> As this debate is broad and out of its scope, this research will not delve into a detailed discussion. It can, however, be mentioned that the blurred status of international legal instruments has its own negative effect on the implementation and recognition of human rights in Ethiopia. However, it is possible to refer to Art. 13(2) of the Constitution as it clearly provides that Chapter Three of the Constitution shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with international human rights instruments adopted by Ethiopia.<sup>162</sup>

Chapter Three of the FDRE Constitution provides a long list of civil, political, economic, social, cultural as well as group rights.<sup>163</sup> Though this chapter contains around thirty articles, economic, social, and cultural rights are provided only under Article 41.<sup>164</sup> However, this constitutional provision hardly provides for any clear economic, social, and cultural rights. The provision under Art. 41(4) provides that “the state has an obligation to allocate an increasing amount of resource to provide to public education, health, and other social services.<sup>165</sup> This specific provision establishes an abstract obligation on the government to allocate resources for education, health, and other public services rather than creating rights.<sup>166</sup> This poor formulation of rights creates ambivalence as it is difficult to clearly define the scope of the rights.<sup>167</sup> In general, though it is provided that “every Ethiopian national has equal access to publicly

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23 (1) *Journal of Ethiopian Law*, 136, 138 (2003).

161 “Id.”

162 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution, *Supra*, at Art. 13(2).

163 “Id.” at Art. 14-44.

164 “Id.” at Art. 41.

165 “Id.” at Art. 41 (4).

166 Meseret Kifle Ande, *The Right To Education of Children with Disabilities In Ethiopia*, at 39 (LL.M thesis, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa) (2013).

167 “Id.”



funded services”,<sup>168</sup> the right to education under the FDRE Constitution is not clearly provided in the same way as under different international human rights instruments.

In addition, Art. 41(5) of the Constitution obliges the State within available means to allocate resources to provide rehabilitation and assistance for physically and mentally disabled, aged, and to children who are left without guardians.<sup>169</sup> From the phrase “physically and mentally disabled”, it can be argued that this provision indicates that the Constitution follows the “charity model of disability” because it focuses on providing assistance and rehabilitation. Although providing assistance and rehabilitation can be one element for the implementation and recognition of human rights of PWDs, it is not the only way. Incorporating only the provision of assistance and rehabilitation makes it sound as though PWDs are assistance or charity seekers only, which is totally against the modern understanding of disability. Furthermore, the State has an obligation only “within available means”. This will have an effect on the implementation of socio-economic rights, in general, and the right to education, in particular, of PWDs.

The Constitution also provided the right to equality of all persons before the law and prohibited discrimination based on any social origin or status under Art. 25.<sup>170</sup> Though the Constitution does not expressly mention disability as a prohibitive ground for discrimination (like gender, age, etc.), But it can be included by interpretation as there is a phrase ‘other grounds’.

In addition to the Constitution, the Ethiopian Building Proclamation No. 624/2009 sets a minimum national standard for construction, modification of construction, and alteration of their use in order to ensure public

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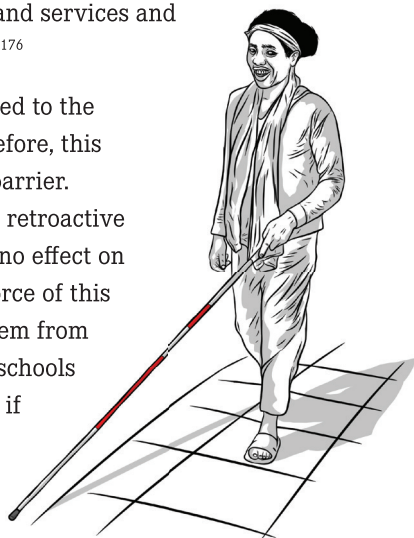
168 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution, Supra, at Art. 41(3).

169 “Id.” at Art. 41(5).

170 “Id.” at Art. 25.

health and safety.<sup>171</sup> According to Art. 36(1) of this Proclamation, any public building shall have suitable means of access for persons with physical impairments, including those who have difficulty using steps.<sup>172</sup> It also requires making toilets and sanitation services of any building suitable for use and accessible to PWDs.<sup>173</sup> The violation of the provisions of this proclamation will entail consequences including demolishing the building.<sup>174</sup> This proclamation promotes the creation of an accessible environment for PWDs. According to the UNCRPD, State parties are obliged to make the environment accessible to PWDs.<sup>175</sup> We can also say that Ethiopia complied with Art. 4(1)(f) of the CRPD, as it obliges State parties to promote the universal design of goods and services and research on accessible and assistive technologies.<sup>176</sup>

The major challenge that PWDs are facing is related to the physical inaccessibility of the environment. Therefore, this proclamation plays a vital role to overcome this barrier. However, since this proclamation does not have a retroactive effect,<sup>177</sup> the provisions of the proclamation have no effect on buildings constructed prior to the entering into force of this proclamation. When we specifically see the problem from the perspective of the right to education, though schools are inaccessible for physically impaired students, if they were built prior to the entering into force of the proclamation, they will not be obliged by the terms of the proclamation, which means they will continue to be inaccessible for PWDs.



171 The FDRE building proclamation, Proclamation No 624/2009, at preamble.

172 "Id." at Art. 36(1).

173 "Id." at Art. 36(2).

174 "Id." at Art. 14.

175 G.A. Res. 61/106, at Art. 9 (Dec.30, 2006).

176 "Id." at Art. 4(1) (f)).

177 The FDRE Building Proclamation, *Supra*, at Art. 3.

Proclamation No. 1097/2018 redefines the power and duties of executive organs of the FDRE government. In the former proclamation, i.e. Proclamation No. 691/2010,<sup>178</sup> the Ministry of Education (MoE), had the power and responsibility at all levels of education and training centers. However, this revised proclamation makes the Ministry of Science and Higher Education responsible for higher education and technical and vocational education and training centers.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, the MoE is responsible for all educational institutions, excluding higher education and technical and vocational training institutes.<sup>180</sup> Art. (10) of this Proclamation provides common powers and duties that different ministries have in their areas of jurisdiction.<sup>181</sup> As such, creating conditions by which persons with disabilities get equal opportunities and participate fully is one of the obligations of all ministries listed under Art. (9) of the same Proclamation.<sup>182</sup>

As the Ministry of Education (MoE) is one of the ministries incorporated in the Proclamation<sup>183</sup>, it is incumbent upon the same to ensure equal opportunities and full participation for persons with disabilities according to sub-Art. (4) of Art. (10). Therefore, ensuring access to quality and creating opportunities for education for children with disabilities so that they can fully and effectively exercise and enjoy their right to education is the duty of the Ministry of Education.<sup>184</sup>

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178 Definition of powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation, Proclamation No. 691/2010, at Art 28.

179 A proclamation to provide for the definition of the powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 1097/2018, at Art. 26 (2).

180 "Id." at Art. 25(3).

181 "Id." at Art. 10.

182 "Id." at Art. 10(4).

183 "Id." at Art. 9(13).

184 "Id." at Art. 25(3).

Furthermore, there are several policies and strategies that recognize the right to disability-inclusive education in Ethiopia. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) was the major strategic document adopted in 1994 to achieve an “Education for All” (EFA) goal in Ethiopia.<sup>185</sup> The policy document clearly recognizes that education plays a role in promoting the respect of human rights and democratic values, creating conditions for equality, mutual understanding, and cooperation among people.<sup>186</sup> It further provides that education in Ethiopia is inter-linked with multiple complex problems like quality, accessibility, and equity, and opportunities for high schools and technical and vocational education in big towns is limited.<sup>187</sup>

One of the objectives of education and training is to enable handicapped and gifted children to learn in accordance with their needs and abilities.<sup>188</sup> It seems that this policy recognizes that children with disabilities have special educational needs that have to be fulfilled. In addition, it also recognizes the importance of special educational programs for students with special needs.<sup>189</sup> Also, teacher training for special education shall be provided in regular teacher training programs.<sup>190</sup>

The 1997 Developmental Social Welfare Policy directly and specifically targets people with disabilities and sets out to protect their rights and to promote opportunities for vocational rehabilitation.<sup>191</sup> The policy recommended that one way to ensure the social welfare of persons with disabilities is to enhance education, skills training, employment

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185 Meseret, *Supra*, at 40.

186 Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia, ‘Education And Training Policy’ at 1. (1994).

187 “*Id.*” at 2.

188 “*Id.*” at 3.

189 “*Id.*” at 15.

190 “*Id.*” at 20.

191 International Labour Organization. Ethiopia Country Profile: Employment of People with Disabilities: The Impact of Legislation (East Africa) at 7, (2004).

opportunities, and other services and take appropriate legislative measures.<sup>192</sup> The strategy recommended to achieve this includes creating an accessible environment, promoting a positive attitude towards disability, and supporting NGOs and other action groups that work on the issue.<sup>193</sup>

In addition, the Education Sector Development Program was intended to implement the 1994 National Education and Training Policy, with the mission to maintain the momentum of expanding equitable access to quality general education, establishing technical and vocational education and trainings (TVET) in all Woredas, strengthening tertiary education, and providing lifelong opportunities in order to make sure that all can benefit from growth and economic changes.<sup>194</sup> The first Education Sector Development Program (ESDP I) started in 1996 and ended in 2001, and ESDP II was planned for the years 2002-2006.<sup>195</sup> Both programs promoted quality and equity in education and universal primary education. But equity was interpreted in terms of gender balance, distribution of schools in all regions, and provision of education in urban and rural areas.<sup>196</sup>

The third Education Sector Development Program (ESDP III) was enacted for the years 2006-2011 and incorporated special needs education. The aim was for all children to successfully complete eight years of primary education in 2015 consistently with the Millennium Development Goals and the International Education for All (EFA) goals. And one of its issues was minimizing budget barriers for the implementation of inclusive education.<sup>197</sup> It also states that the State has attached greater importance

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192 "Id."

193 Meseret, *Supra*, at 50.

194 The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Education Sector Development Program V Program Action Plan 2015/16-2019/20, at 15, (2015).

195 Meseret, *Supra*, at 53.

196 "Id."

197 "Id."

to the expansion of educational opportunities to children with special needs.<sup>198</sup> In the ESDP IV (2010/11-2014/15), the government recognized the prevalence of a negative attitude towards persons with disabilities overall. In addition, lack of knowledge, bad teaching methods, lack of adequate assessment procedures, etc. were identified as barriers for the education of children with disabilities. It was to overcome these barriers and achieve the Education for All (EFA) goals that the concept of inclusive education was incorporated in this program.

In the ESDP V (2015-2020), it was recognized that the number of students with disabilities enrolled in primary and secondary education was very low during the period of ESDP IV, which in turn influenced the number of students enrolled in technical and vocational education and training and higher education.<sup>199</sup> Furthermore, this program also recognized causes of poor progress in supporting children with special educational needs, which include lack of awareness; lack of commitment to support Special Needs Education (SNE) at all levels beginning from the Federal to school level; lack of a clear structure for coordination and administration from Federal to district and school levels; absence of financing mechanisms to support special needs and inclusive education; poor school infrastructure and facilities; teaching and learning materials with no standards and guidelines; and lack of skilled teachers.<sup>200</sup>

In this program, it is provided that the priorities in the education and training system of Ethiopia are providing equal opportunities and participation for all with a special focus on disadvantaged groups and developing quality education that will meet the diverse needs of all children, youth, and adults.<sup>201</sup> The program has six priority programs

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198 "Id."

199 ESDP-V Supra, at 29.

200 "Id."

201 Id, at 37.

guided by educational levels.<sup>202</sup> General education includes two priority programs, the first focusing on quality and the second focusing on access, equity, and internal efficiency.<sup>203</sup> The main goal is “to provide all children with access to pre-primary education for school preparedness and access to nearby institutions in which they can complete the full eight years of primary and two years of general secondary education”.<sup>204</sup> In addition, a fair treatment for all children is promoted and discrimination based on disability and any other grounds in education is prohibited.<sup>205</sup>

As discussed above, the FDRE Ministry of Science and Higher Education has prepared Education Sector Development Program to put the 1994 Education and Training Policy into action. During the period of ESDP III (2005/6-2010/11), the MoE designed and implemented the first special needs/inclusive education program, which started in 2006 and continued for the following five years. That clearly indicated the future direction of special needs and inclusive education by incorporating important strategies necessary for its implementation in Ethiopia.<sup>206</sup> In addition, it also improved the level of awareness on the education of learners with special educational needs (LSEN) among all stakeholders.<sup>207</sup> However, this strategic document did not provide a clear and adequate direction as to how to create awareness at all levels. It lacked clarity on allocating funds and on how to create an accessible environment and necessary school facilities. Nor did it provide an assessment of learning needs; it also failed to recognize the double disadvantages of female learners with disabilities.<sup>208</sup>

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202 Id. at 38.

203 “Id.”

204 Id. at 39.

205 “Id.”

206 The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Ministry of Education, Special Needs/Inclusive Education Strategy at 7, (2012).

207 “Id.”

208 The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Ministry of Education, *Supra*, at 8.

It was to fill these and other gaps of the strategy and address the drawbacks in its implementation that the MoE designed the second strategic document in 2012.<sup>209</sup>

In the revised strategic document, the general objective of inclusive education is:



**'.....to build an inclusive education system which will provide quality, relevant and equitable education and training to all children, youth and adults with special educational needs (SEN) and ultimately enable them to fully participate in the socio-economic development of the country...'**<sup>210</sup>

In addition to the above-mentioned general objective, the strategic document incorporated specific objectives, which include ensuring that PWDs have equal educational opportunities as non-disabled members of the society, increasing awareness of societies on the right to inclusive education of PWDs, and adapting the curriculum to meet the educational needs of all children.<sup>211</sup>

In order to achieve the above-mentioned and other objectives of the strategy, the MoE developed eight strategic issues including increasing access to all children, youth, and adults with SEN to all levels of education and training by strengthening awareness-raising activities; creating conducive and accessible facilities and a friendly school environment; and enhancing the education of female students with disabilities;<sup>212</sup> promoting

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209 "Id." at 11.

210 "Id." at 12.

211 "Id."

212 "Id."



inclusive curriculum via adapting flexible, relevant and adjustable characteristics of education at all levels of education; designing individual educational program; providing appropriate teaching-learning materials and stationery; improving learning assessments.<sup>213</sup> are the strategic issues.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA), currently named Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MWSA), in consultation with key government organs, DPOs, CSOs, PWDs, and parents of children with disabilities adopted a National Plan of Action of persons with disabilities (NPA), which will be implemented from 2012 to 2021.<sup>214</sup> The definition of PWDs was directly derived from Article 1 of the CRPD,<sup>215</sup> which states: “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”<sup>216</sup> In addition to adopting the definition from the CRPD, MWSA is enacting the plan based on the principles of the CRPD and has also consulted national, regional, and international legislations, policies, and strategies.<sup>217</sup>

The NPA incorporates both mainstreamed and disability-specific action. This is called the twin-track approach.<sup>218</sup> In the mainstreamed approach, services are not specifically designed only for PWDs like ordinary schools<sup>219</sup> while the disability-specific action refers to programs and services designed to address the specific needs of PWDs. Examples of such actions include CBR programs, orthopedic centers, and special schools.<sup>220</sup>

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213 “Id.” at 16,

214 The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), National Plan of Action for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, 2010-2020. at 2 (2012), available from, [www.MOLSA.gov.et](http://www.MOLSA.gov.et),

215 “Id.”

216 “Id.”

217 “Id.” at 5.

218 “Id.” at 13.

219 “Id.”

220 “Id.”

Both approaches are equally important to ensure equal opportunity and full participation for children, youth, and adults with disability.<sup>221</sup> The plan of action has thirteen priorities where education and training is the fourth priority sector for action.<sup>222</sup> The document recognizes the obligation of the State to enable persons with disabilities to access inclusive, free, and quality primary and secondary education on equal basis with others in their community.<sup>223</sup> The other obligations provided are the provision of reasonable accommodation and special support in general education. Effective individualized and disability-specific support measures are also taken in order to implement inclusive education.<sup>224</sup> The plan of action provides detailed goals, outputs, and actions to be taken to achieve the planned outputs and indicators for each priority sector including education.<sup>225</sup> Therefore, this comprehensive document promotes the right to education of PWDs as it incorporates the general principles of the UNCRPD and includes education as a priority sector for the action.

The Master Plan for special needs/inclusive education (2016-2025) is enacted to guide the full provision of inclusive education for all learners with special educational needs including PWDs.<sup>226</sup> It is primarily based on the FDRE Constitution, ESDP-V (2015/16- 2019/20), the special needs/inclusive education strategy (2012), and other related policies and strategies.<sup>227</sup> It has a purpose of giving more visibility to inclusive and special needs education and to strengthen the structures and environment enabling inclusion.<sup>228</sup> According to the Master Plan, special support

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221 "Id."

222 "Id." at .25.

223 "Id." at 26.

224 "Id."

225 "Id." at. 27-19.

226 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian Ministry of Education, A Master Plan for Special Needs/Inclusive Education (2016- 2025) at 1, (2016).

227 "Id."

228 "Id." at 2.

includes regular meetings and training of teachers; teachers' guides; itinerant resource teachers (with expertise) advising or counselling teachers; adapted learning and teaching materials and equipment; gradual or partial inclusion; classroom assistants; assistant teachers and co-teaching; special classes or units; and technical assistance to management (data collection, reporting, needs assessment, support design).<sup>229</sup> In order to improve the implementation of special needs and inclusive education, the special needs and support for each CWD should be identified and addressed.<sup>230</sup> It incorporates six pillars, namely, policy framework; supporting structures and administrations of education; capacities and human resources; provision of education; evidence-based policy making; and costing and financing.<sup>231</sup> In addition, each pillar has a set of priority strategies provided in the document.<sup>232</sup>

### 3.2.2. Institutional Frameworks

In the above section, the legal and policy frameworks pertinent to the implementation of the right to education of persons with disabilities in the national jurisdiction have been discussed. However, it is also equally important to discuss the institutional frameworks responsible for the implementation of the rights of PWDs.

In the past, all issues of PWDs fell under the power and responsibility of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA).<sup>233</sup> However, after the enactment of the proclamation that defined the Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs, all ministries have power and duty in providing equal opportunities and full participation to PWDs, which is a good progress towards the inclusion of the issues of people with disabilities in

229 *Id.* at 7.

230 *"Id."*

231 *"Id."* at 14.

232 *"Id."*

233 A proclamation to ratify the convention on the rights of persons with disability ratification proclamation, Proclamation No. 676/2010, at Art. 3.

all sectors. Hence, at the Federal level, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) is the main governmental organ responsible for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>234</sup> Under the policy framework established by the MoLSA, bureaus of Labor and Social Affairs in each region will handle all social matters including disabilities.<sup>235</sup> All other ministries are responsible for mainstreaming the issue of PWDs in their respective works.<sup>236</sup> Therefore, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ministry of Education have a duty to mainstream the issue of PWDs in education programs.<sup>237</sup> At regional level, regional education bureaus are responsible for the inclusion of PWDs, and the main responsibility for providing special needs and inclusive education in an enabling environment rests with the schools.<sup>238</sup>

In addition to government organs, there are other organizations working to realize or implement the rights of PWDs in Ethiopia. There are six Disabled Person Organizations (DPOs) established by PWDs under the umbrella organization of the Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of People with Disabilities (FENAPD).<sup>239</sup> These are: the Ethiopian National Association of the Blind (ENAB), the Ethiopian National Association of the Physically Handicapped (ENAPH), the Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf (ENAD), the Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf-Blind (ENADB), the Ethiopian National Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy, and the Ethiopian National Association on Intellectual Disability (ENAID).<sup>240</sup>

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234 "Id."

235 International Labour Organization, *Supra*, at 3.

236 A proclamation to provide for the definition of the powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 1097/2018, at Art. 10 (4).

237 "Id."

238 Master Plan, *Supra*, at 10.

239 ILO, *Supra*, at 4.

240 "Id."

There are also non-governmental organizations (NGO) and associations that play a key role in the promotion of equality and inclusion of PWDs in the country. In this regard, the Ethiopian National Disability Action Network (ENDAN), the Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD), and the Ethiopian Women with Disability National Association (EWDNA) can be mentioned.<sup>241</sup>

### **3.3. Factors Affecting the Implementation of Inclusive Education**

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As repeatedly mentioned, inclusive education is a process and can be implemented progressively. As a result, it is not something that can be realized immediately. The level of implementation of inclusive education also differs from country to country depending on different circumstances. In this sub-section, some factors for not implementing the right to inclusive education are discussed.

Lack of policy and legal support is one of the major challenges that hinder the successful implementation of inclusive education.<sup>242</sup> Policies and supportive legal frameworks play a significant role in the enforcement of human rights, in general, and the right to inclusive education, in particular. One of the obligations of States under different international human rights instruments is enacting new laws at the national level or modifying existing national legislations that are contradictory or barriers to the implementation and enforcement of human rights. Therefore, lack of comprehensive and supportive policy and legislation will slow down the realization of the right to inclusive education.

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241 "Id."

242 Mathew, *Supra*, at 6.

The other major challenge that impedes the effective implementation of inclusive education is inadequate school resources and facilities. Scarcity of resources and inadequate funding are mentioned in most developing countries.<sup>243</sup> For instance, most African nations have accepted the system of inclusive education easily and enacted national legislations that are consistent with UNCRPD, but when it comes to practical implementation, it is very slow and the major factor for this is lack of resource and funding.<sup>244</sup>

Inadequate specialized school staff and well trained teachers in inclusive thinking and change are also barriers to the implementation of the right to inclusive education.<sup>245</sup> In order to address the special learning needs of children, providing reasonable accommodation, allocating resources, and funding are not enough. School staff and teachers should also be well equipped with the necessary training on how to teach and treat students with special needs or, more specifically, students with disabilities.<sup>246</sup> Deductive and passive pedagogical techniques and rigid curriculums that offer no accommodation, modification, or personalization are also major hindrances to the effective and successful implementation of the right to inclusive education.<sup>247</sup> The mere registration and enrolment of children with disabilities cannot make the education system inclusive; rather, the teaching and learning methods and the curriculum should consider children with disabilities. The educational system should be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities in order to enable them to exercise their right to education equally.

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243 Elizabeth Akoto Ofori, *Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive Education in Ghana*. at 25 (Unpublished thesis, International Studies in Education, University of Iceland (2016).

244 "Id."

245 Mathew, *Supra*.

246 Peterson Ondieki OSERO, *Challenges Teachers Encounter In Implementing Inclusive Education In Public Primary Schools In Nyamira County, Kenya*. 3(3) *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 218, 228.

247 Mathew, *Supra* at 6.

Another major challenge is socio-cultural attitudes about schools and disability.<sup>248</sup> The socio-cultural perspectives towards persons with disability and causes of disability in most States are a major factor that delays the implementation of inclusive education.<sup>249</sup> Most societies consider disability to be caused by ancestral sins and curses. Therefore, children with disabilities are excluded from education. The existing education is also not favorable to them. Similarly, parents are the other factor for excluding children with disabilities from education.<sup>250</sup> Sometimes, parents of children with disabilities are not willing to send their children to schools because they are ashamed of their children with disabilities; they are also afraid of being ostracized from the society or community. These are the major factors that delay the effective realization of the right to inclusive education in most countries although they are not the only factors.

### 3.4. Summary

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In this chapter, the right to inclusive education in the national context and the impact of political instability on the right to education in general have been discussed. Accordingly, the beginning of the education of children with disabilities in Ethiopia is highly related to the introduction of Christianity. However, it was a religious education and was accessible only to persons with physical impairments and only to male students. Following that, different special schools were established in different parts of the country. The international community and the government of Ethiopia later recognized that a discriminating education system has a negative outcome on students with disabilities. As a result of this, the concept of inclusive education began to evolve.

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248 "Id."

249 J. D. Singh, *Inclusive Education in India: Concepts, Needs and Challenges*, 3(13) *Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science and English Language*. 3222: 3226, (2016).

250 Elizabeth, *Supra*, at 21.

## Inclusive Education Laws in Ethiopia

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The government of the FDRE is committed to implementing the right to inclusive education in the country. As such, the country has ratified different international instruments that have recognized the right to inclusive education. The government has enacted different national legislations, policies, strategies, and programs relevant for the implementation of the right to inclusive education in Ethiopia. There are many barriers that can hinder the full and effective implementation of inclusive education. Political instability highly affects the implementation of the right to education and children's access to education. The next chapter examines the impact of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education in the Oromia Region.



**Figure 2:** Blind Students walking in school.

**Source:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpforeducation/48490650047/in/photostream/>



CHAPTER FOUR

**4. POLITICAL INSTABILITY  
AND INCLUSIVE  
EDUCATION IN OROMIA**

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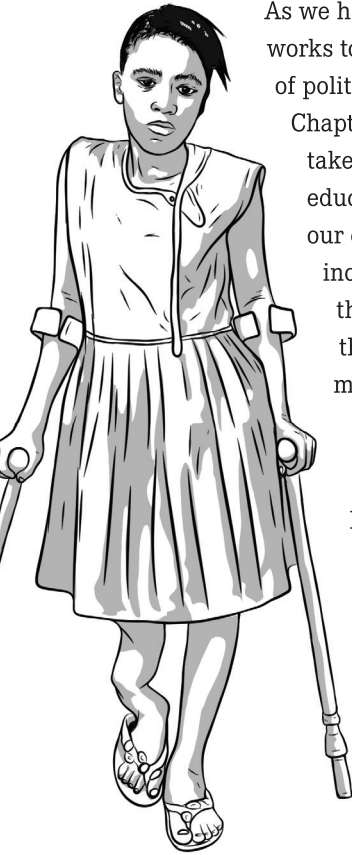
## 4.1. Introduction

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In Chapter Two, the theoretical frameworks on the right to inclusive education under international human rights declarations and conventions and African human rights instruments, to which Ethiopia is a party, have been discussed. In Chapter Three, we have seen the right to inclusive education in Ethiopia and the right to the education of PWDs under the national legislations, strategies, policies, and institutional frameworks.

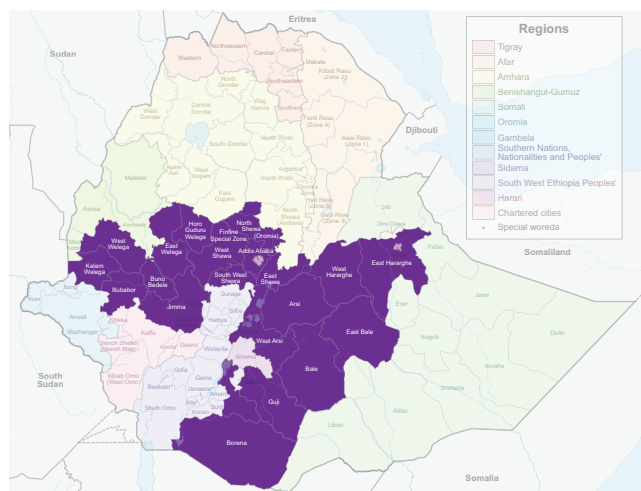
As we have seen, there is progress with regard to legal frameworks to ensure the inclusion of PWDs. In addition, the impact of political instability on education has been discussed under Chapter Three. However, there is a dearth of research undertaken on the impact of political instability on inclusive education. The influence of the frequent political instability our country is facing on the implementation of the right to inclusive education should be investigated. Therefore, in this chapter, the response of the research participants on the practical impacts of political instability on the implementation of disability-inclusive education in the Oromia National Regional State is discussed.

But before presenting the findings on the effect of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education, it is deemed appropriate to discuss the findings on access to quality education of students with disabilities in the research areas.



## 4.2. Participant Information

Oromia is the largest region in Ethiopia and shares its borders with all regions of Ethiopia except Tigray.<sup>251</sup> There are 20 administrative zones, eight town administrations, 287 woreda's, and 46 towns.<sup>252</sup> Data was collected from 196 PWDs from five purposively selected zones: East Wollega Zone, Nekemte town; West Shewa Zone, Ambo town; West Arsi Zone, Shashamane town; Buno Bedele Zone, Bedele town; and East Hararge Zone, Haromaya town. Data were collected using questionnaire from 60 PWDs from Haromaya town, 43 PWDs from Nekemte town, 38 PWDs from Ambo town, 22 PWDs from Shashamane town, and 33 PWDs from Bedele town. Data were also collected using focus group discussions organized in each selected town. Also, heads of education bureaus of each zone were interviewed.



**Figure 3:** Map of the Oromia Regional State

**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_zones\\_of\\_Ethiopia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_zones_of_Ethiopia)

251 UNICEF, Oromia Regional Brief, 2022, p.1.

252 "Id."

## Political Instability and Inclusive Education in Oromia

**Table 1:** Information on Interview Participants (2 participants from each town)

No.	Location	Position	Represented by	Sex
1.	Ambo Town	West Shewa Zone Education Bureau	AEB	Female
2	Bedele Town	Buno Bedele Zone Education Bureau	BEB	Male
3.	Haromaya Town	East Hararge Zone Education Bureau	HEB	Male
4.	Nekemte Town	Nekemte City Administration Education Bureau	NEB	Male
5.	Shashamane Town	West Arsi Zone Education Bureau	MP1	Male

**Table 2:** Information on Questionnaire Participants

No.	Grade	Sex		Type of Disability		TOTAL
		F	M	PhI	VI	
1.	Grade 9	4	7	2	9	11
2.	Grade 10	2	5	0	7	7
3.	Grade 11	4	5	3	6	9
4.	Grade 12	4	6	4	6	10
Total	-	14	23	9	28	37

N.B. In the above table:

F = Female, M = Male, PhI = Physically Impaired, and VI = Visually Impaired

## DOUBLE BURDEN

**Table 3:** Information on Ambo FGD Participants

No.	Represented by	Location	Institute	Position	Sex	Total No. of Participants
1.	FAT	Ambo	Secondary School	Teachers	Male	2
2	FAB	Ambo	Education Bureau	Representative	Female	1
3	FAO	Ambo	OPD	Representatives	Male	2
4	FAV	Ambo	Vision	Expert	Female	2
5	FAP	Ambo	Secondary Schools	Principals	Male	2

**Table 4:** Information on Bedele FGD Participants

No.	Represented by	Location	Institute	Position	Sex	Total No. of Participants
1	FBT	Bedele	Secondary School	Teachers	Male	2
2	FBB	Bedele	Education Bureau	Disability Focal Person	Male	1
3	FBO	Bedele	OPD	Representatives	Male	2
4	FBP	Bedele	Secondary School	Principals	Male Female	2
5	FBS	Bedele	BOLSA	Representative	Male	2

## Political Instability and Inclusive Education in Oromia

**Table 5:** Information on Haromaya FGD Participants

No.	Represented by	Location	Institute	Position	Sex	No. of Participants
1	FHT	Haromaya	Secondary School	Teachers	Female	2
2	FHB	Haromaya	Education Bureau	Expert person	Male	1
3	FHO	Haromaya	OPD	Representatives	Male	2
4	FHP	Haromaya	Secondary School	Principals	Female	2
5	FHF	Haromaya	Federation of PWDs	Representative	Female	2
6	FHC	Haromaya	Cheshior Ethiopia	Representative	Male	1

**Table 6:** Information on Nekemte FGD Participants

No.	Represented by	Location	Institute	Position	Sex	No. of Participants
1	FnT	Nekemte	Secondary School	Teachers	Female	2
2	FNB	Nekemte	Education Bureau	Expert	Male	1
3	FNO	Nekemte	OPD	Representatives	Male	1
4	FNP	Nekemte	Secondary School	Principals	(1) Male (1) Female	2
5	FND	Nekemte	Secondary School	Disability Focal Person	(2) Females (1) Male	3

**Table 7:** Information on Shashemene FGD Participants

No.	Represented by	Location	Institute	Position	Sex	No. of Participants
1	FST	Shashemene	Secondary School	Teachers	1 Female 2 Males	3
2	FSB	Shashemene	Education Bureau	Representative	Male	1
3	FSO	Shashemene	OPD	Representatives	1 Male 1 Female	2
4	FSP	Shashemene	Secondary School	Principals	Male	2
5	FSF	Shashemene	Federation of PWDs	Representative	Female	1

### 4.3. Access to Quality Education of Students with Disability

According to different international, regional, and domestic laws, everyone has the right to quality education without discrimination based on any ground, including disability. As discussed under Chapter Two of this research, the Committee on ICESCR under General Comment No. 13 on Article 13 provided inter-related key features of quality education. These are: accessibility, availability, acceptability, and adaptability.

In the process of implementing quality education, States must consider these essential elements of education. In this sub-section, how political instability is affecting the quality of education in the research areas are examined based on the collected data.

### 4.3.1. Accessibility

States are duty bearers to make the education system accessible to all without discrimination. According to Article 9 of the CRPD, accessibility has three overlapping dimensions, i.e. non-discrimination together with reasonable accommodation, physical accessibility, and economic accessibility. Based on this, accessibility of secondary schools and how the political instability is affecting accessibility of secondary schools in the Oromia Region has been examined.

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#### I. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

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According to the response of all interview participants, they all understand that everyone has the right to education, including persons with disabilities. They all mentioned that they have an obligation to teach students with special needs together with students without special needs in general schools. As a result, they are enrolling students with disabilities and teaching them together with students without disabilities. In other words, they are not excluding them from school due to their disability.

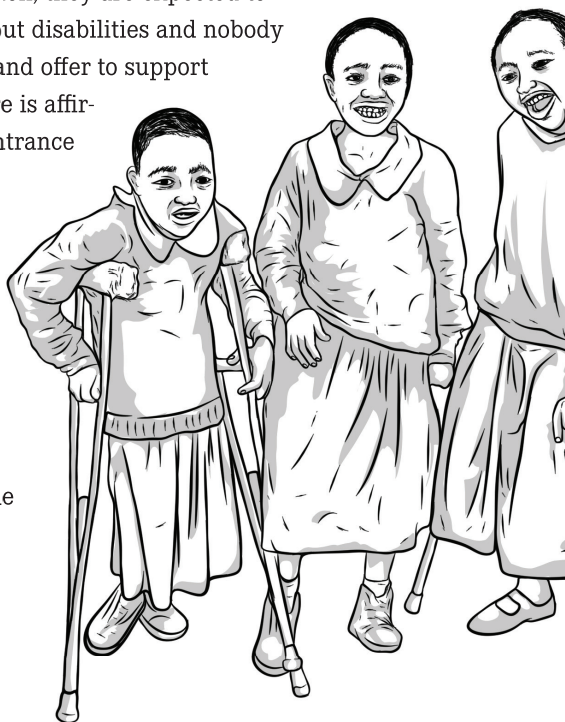
However, discrimination has two dimensions. The first one is direct discrimination while the second one is indirect discrimination. In the first one happens when certain groups of a society are considered as uneducable and are directly prohibited from learning. Indirect discrimination, on the other hand, takes place all students are accepted to learn without making the necessary special support, modification, or adjustment to enable them to fully enjoy their rights. In the research areas, students with disabilities are not directly prohibited from enjoying their right to education. But mere enrolment does not signify a full enjoyment of the right to education. In all focus group discussions (FGD) held in all the research areas, it was stated that students with disabilities are learning without getting the accommodation, support, and assistance necessary for



the full exercise of their right to education on equal basis with students without disability. In addition, there are no modifications and adjustments made to address the special needs of students with disabilities in the schools.

According to ASP, there were 17 students with disabilities enrolled in the school he is leading at the beginning of the academic year 2015 E.C. But currently, there are only 12 SWDs studying while the rest of them have dropped out. He said that they dropped out because there is no reasonable accommodation, and assistive devices have not been fulfilled to address their special needs so that they could learn equally with other students. The other thing ASP has mentioned is that even if these students continued to study in this inconvenient situation, most of them could not be effective and get the necessary pass mark. Hence, they would repeatedly fail and finally give up and leave school. Though these students are studying in a very difficult situation, they are expected to compete equally with students without disabilities and nobody seems to understand their situation and offer to support them. He further explained that there is affirmative action on higher education entrance exams for these students and other groups, but when it comes to class tests and exams, there is no affirmative action, which means that these students cannot take entrance exams without passing class tests and exams.

In general, all the respondents have mentioned that there is no reasonable accommodation fulfilled and there are no modifications and adjustments made for these students with



disabilities in the research areas. The students are merely enrolled in the schools to try their best. If they are lucky and strong, they will be successful.

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## II. PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

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The other dimension of accessibility is physical accessibility. Schools should be physically accessible to all learners, including to learners with special needs. In the research areas, all schools are not physically accessible for students with disabilities. According to the observations made and the responses of all respondents, the compounds of the schools in all the research areas are not accessible. There is no ramp in the compounds, classrooms, libraries, and toilets; offices are not accessible for students with physical impairment. According to respondents from Ambo and Nekemte, from 80 to 100 students study in one small classroom, and it is difficult to make adjustments to make classrooms suitable for SWDs. School entrances and classroom doors and chairs are not accessible for wheelchair users.

According to ASP, they are trying to adjust things to address their needs, for example by assigning SWDs in relatively better classrooms, but this cannot solve the challenges fully and permanently. Even when they say 'better', it is in comparison to other classrooms. In Nekemte, according to the response of NSP, ramps are built in a few places in a secondary school he is leading, but building ramps does not on its own make the school accessible for SWDs. In addition, there are no teaching materials and libraries accessible to students with visual impairment. Therefore, SWDs are facing challenges in accessing quality education. All participants have agreed that there is no physically accessible school for SWDs in their areas.



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### III. ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY

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As discussed in the previous chapter, PWDs have the right to get access to free primary and secondary education. In all schools in the research areas, there is no payment required from students with disabilities to be enrolled and learn in the schools. And education is given free of charge to them. In Nekemte, in addition to giving free education, some schools provide uniforms to needy students, including SWDs. They provide uniforms that they acquire from senior students who have completed Grade 12. Though nothing is done to address the economic needs of these students in all research areas, public schools do not impose a school fee, which makes them economically accessible to an extent.

#### 4.3.2. Availability

Educational institutions and programs for students with disabilities must be available in sufficient quantity within the jurisdiction of the State. According to the respondents, most SWDs are from rural areas. As there are no secondary schools in their areas, they are compelled to move from their areas of residence in search of education. If their families are economically capable and can afford it, they will rent a room near their school. But those who cannot afford it will have to walk long distances to school from their homes.

According to the responses from the 'BEBs', most SWDs are compelled to leave their families and residences in rural areas and live in the nearest cities to get secondary schools. Therefore, they are expected to engage in part-time jobs, and those who cannot work will come beggars on roadsides in order to meet their economic needs and cover their accommodation expenses. Similarly, 'BSPs' stated that there was a student with a physical impairment in a school she is leading. He used to walk to the school from a distant area. He had no one to support him and no assistive device that helped him for mobility. He used a simple stick to move. He asked them

to give him a room from the classrooms so that he could stay there and learn. Having discussed the request with the school administration, they allowed him to live in a classroom. Though he had overcome his housing need in this way, he couldn't afford to fulfill other necessities. Hence, he dropped out of school and became a beggar. There are other stories like this.

From the responses of the FGD participants, most females with or without disabilities face sexual harassment while going to school as they walk long distances from their homes to their schools. And this challenge is severe on females with disabilities. Therefore, as there are no secondary schools in their areas, most SWDs are forced to drop out after completing primary school.

### **4.3.3. Acceptability**

One aspect of acceptability is the choice of the language of instruction. For instance, the provision of sign language and instruction materials in alternative formats like braille books enables the choice. Though these students have the right to learn in a language they can understand and get learning materials in an accessible format, they have difficulty getting sign language interpreters, brailles, and other learning materials like audiobooks in the research areas.

As 'NSPs' mentioned, there was one sign language interpreter in their school for more than thirty students with a hearing impairment, but he joined Wollega University, having got a better work opportunity. Currently, these students with a hearing impairment have no sign language interpreter. Sometimes, the school requests volunteers from Nekemte Mekane Eyesus Church to support these students. He further elaborated that there were no accessible teaching and learning materials for students with a visual impairment. Even in the library, there are no braille books and other materials useful for the education of students with a visual impairment.

All participants in the research concurred with the responses of ‘NSPs’. Lack of accessible teaching and learning materials is not only affecting the students but it is also challenging their teachers and school administrations. Students with visual impairments usually sit in their classrooms simply to listen; they don’t take notes and have nothing to study. This obviously has an influence on their academic achievement.

#### **4.3.4. Adaptability**

It is essential to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. As discussed in Chapter Two of this paper, adaptability consists of reasonable accommodation and general accessibility, which includes hiring trained professionals and teachers. The findings on the provision of reasonable accommodation have been presented under Section 4.3.1. above. Therefore, in this section, whether or not the schools are making the necessary adjustments within the general schools (like hiring teachers and staff trained with disability inclusion and awareness training (DIAT)) are presented. The section also discusses to what extent the schools have organized any training for support staff and teachers to overcome the challenges the students are facing due to negative attitudes.

In addition to physical inaccessibility, students with disabilities face challenges due to negative attitudes. In all the research areas, there are no professionals who have taken disability awareness and inclusion trainings. According to the responses of all participants, most teachers and school support staff have a positive attitude towards students with disabilities. Since this positive attitude comes out of pity, and not not a genuine understanding of the victims, they do not know how to assist these students.

According to ‘SSP’, there is a teacher who studied special needs education; however, she is teaching Afaan Oromo and English. Due to her workload, she couldn’t fully support them. ‘NSP2’ also reported a similar experience and further elaborated that sufficient attention was not given to SWDs and

that their issue was taken as secondary. Where trained professionals are available in some schools, they work on issues of SWDs as an additional task during their spare time. Further, 'NFPs' stated that previously there was an NGO working on promoting disability inclusion and organizing DAIT for teachers and school administrations, but teachers were not willing to attend such trainings and the administration was not committed to sending teachers or administrative staff to the training. Instead, if they knew it was something related to SWDs, they would send school guards and other supporting staff most of the time. Hence, the teachers and other staff did not get awareness-raising training about disability, special needs, and inclusive education in most schools in the research areas. As a result, they are now facing challenges while teaching these students.

In general, interview and FGD participants stated that SWDs are not getting quality education and they don't believe that they are implementing inclusive education. Though they are enrolling SWDs in their school just because it is their duty, they are not making any adjustments and modifications. Nor are they doing anything to accommodate the special educational needs of students with different types of disabilities. In the next section, findings on the impact of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education in the research areas are presented.

### **4.4. The Impact of Political Instability on Inclusive Education**

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In the previous section, we have discussed findings on the state of implementation of disability-inclusive education in the selected research areas. And from the responses of the participants, we have observed that inclusive education has not yet begun to be implemented though general schools are accepting and enrolling SWDs in schools where students without disabilities are learning. There are different explanations given

for not fully and effectively implementing inclusive education. However, since it is out of the scope of this research, they are not going to be discussed here. In this sub-section, the responses of participants on the impact of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education are discussed.

All participants of the research stated that political instability is significantly affecting the implementation of inclusive education. According to 'SEB', ensuring access to quality education in general even for students without disability is very difficult where there is unstable politics. The implementation of inclusive education for persons with disabilities is even more difficult. He further elaborated that implementing inclusive education when there is relatively stable politics was already challenging in Shashemene town due to lack of resources and other factors and the political instability became an aggravating factor.

In Nekemte city administration, FGD participants stated that Wollega had been known for political instability for a long period of time. East Wollega Zone had had a stable politics as compared to other zones in Wollega. However, since 2015/16, frequent protests, demonstrations, bans, economic blockades, and strikes have been taking place. Due to this, even students without disabilities have been facing challenges in their education. When there is unstable politics, schools are forced to close and teachers face difficulty in completing their subjects, which affects the students' academic performance. Sometimes, schools are closed for one or two weeks during bans, strikes, or demonstrations. When schools open, most students with disabilities do not come back to school because, in the first place, their families do not send them back to school and the students themselves are not willing to return to school as they fear that the protests might resume, which would put them in trouble again. All interview and FGD participants in all research areas gave a similar response.

'HSP' further elaborated the above response with a particular example. There was a visually impaired student in her school. When a protest occurred, she said they would lock the door of her office on him to protect him. Other participants also reported that whenever there was political instability, getting transport services was difficult and, as most students with disabilities, especially students with physical impairment use taxis and other transport services, it was a challenge for them to get to school and attend classes.

All the respondents stated that one of the challenges of the current political instability is economic. According to 'CSER', as the value of the local currency is rapidly decreasing, implementing inclusive education is becoming increasingly more difficult because all assistive devices that can facilitate the education of students with disabilities are imported and there cannot be a sufficient amount of foreign currency to acquire such devices from abroad. Because of the lack of hard currency, most organizations are not able to work according to their plan. As most organizations plan their activities and budgets at the beginning of the year, when they find it difficult to secure the hard currency they need, they are forced to revise their plans and budgets in the middle of the year. Furthermore, the 'CSER' said that, most of the time, assistive devices are provided by the support of NGOs, most of whom depend on donors as sources of their budgets. Nowadays, getting assistive devices and basic education materials like brailles is very difficult because they are expensive and not available in the local market.

In Nekemte and Bedele, respondents stated that because of the political instability, there is no single non-governmental organization (NGO) working on the issue of people with disabilities, in general, and disability-inclusive education, in particular. In Nekemte city administration, there was one NGO working on the inclusion of PWDs, and one of its priority areas was organizing and supporting the training of academic staff on disability awareness and sign language. But due to the frequent political



instability prevalent in the city, they had to stop the support they were providing and leave. As the implementation of inclusive education needs the collaborative action of different stakeholders, it is difficult to realize it with the budget allocated by the government only.

The respondents confirmed that the budget allocated by the government is insufficient and that there were no NGOs or other organization supporting inclusive education. Surprisingly, even the small amount of budget allocated was taken back to support the war taking place in the northern part of Ethiopia. Impossible as it was to properly implement inclusive education and provide SWDs with the necessary support with the budget allocated by the government, channeling the budget to the military made the situation even worse.

#### **4.5. Challenges of Students with Disabilities During Political Instability**

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In the previous sub-section, the impact of political instability on the effective and full implementation of inclusive education in the research areas has been discussed. In this sub-section, practical challenges students with disabilities are facing due to political instability while trying to enjoy their right to education in the study areas are examined. Most SWDs learning in the research areas are from poor families and the market inflation occurring in the country is highly affecting their day-to-day lives. An SWD in Nekemte, for example, lives with her grandmother as her parents are divorced and she does not know her mother. Her father is remarried and is not supporting her in any way. It is her old grandmother that sent her to school and is supporting her, making a living out of selling firewood which she carries on her back for long distances and sells it for small amounts of money. Currently, as her grandmother is getting older, it

is becoming more difficult for her to collect and carry firewood. And due to the political instability, market inflation is high so meeting her basic needs is becoming very challenging for her.

Other SWDs also mentioned that students without disabilities can engage in labor work in their spare time and earn money to cover their expenses even if they are economically disadvantaged. But it is difficult for SWDs to engage in labor work. This can happen even during peaceful times but the instability this time has made things really difficult.

According to 'HSP', these students are facing challenges in accessing assistive materials necessary for their education. For instance, students with visual impairment need assistive devices like voice recorders and braille materials to be effective in their education. But due to market inflation, the cost of these devices has become very high, and it is difficult for them to get them.

Similarly, 'ChE' stated that getting assistive materials is becoming very difficult even for organizations, let alone for students, due to the current market inflation in our country. He further stated that, in the past, they used to buy a braille for ETB 200.00, but currently, it costs more than ETB 1000.00. Market fluctuation normally rises gradually but this time the situation is different; it is happening suddenly and with large amounts. And this is caused by the political instability in the country.

All SWDs reported that they need assistive devices in order to address their special needs and effectively and fully exercise their right to education, but the high inflation following the political instability is making things harder for them. As they are living in a politically unstable area, it is hard to find organizations that can support them with these materials. Especially students with a visual impairment stated that they are incapable of accessing written materials like textbooks and cannot use exercise books and pens to take notes while attending classes. It is clear that

they need assistive devices but getting these devices is difficult. This in turn is affecting their full and effective exercise of their right to education and has a significant impact on their academic achievement.

The other challenge that SWDs in the research areas are facing is that, due to frequent demonstrations, bans, and strikes in their school areas, they are facing challenges in pursuing their education. As the SWDs stated, during bans and strikes, the schools are closed but when they open, they are afraid to come back to school. This also applies to students without disabilities but when schools open, most of them immediately come back to school. When the SWDs are absent from school, they miss lessons, and this affects their academic achievement. An SWD in Nekemte reported an incident where he was absent from school after a demonstration and missed a class test. His teacher was unwilling to understand the situation and gave him a grade he did not deserve.

Similarly, a student with a physical impairment said that when she was in Grade 9, she was absent from school after a protest and missed a class test. Fortunately, her teacher considered her situation and arranged a make-up test for her.

Here, the most challenging thing is not missing classes or exams. Their teachers and the school administrations actually believe that these SWDs are part of the strike or protest and punish them on an equal basis with others. The teachers and the school principals participating in the research have corroborated this allegation. They stated that there are some teachers and school administrative staff that understand the special situation SWDs are in during instability, but most treat them in the same way as students without disabilities.

Likewise, all the students and teachers reported that there are no alternative ways of teaching during these times. The teachers said that there are no alternative ways of teaching like online classes, but they are expected to cover all the lessons within the academic calendar set at the beginning

of the year. Therefore, in order to cover the syllabus, they conduct classes in a rush. The school administrative staff are not willing to consider any situation that may occur in the middle of the academic year; they are not willing to review their schedule. Even if teachers were willing to reach the students at their homes, most of the students would not have phones or access to other devices useful for online learning.

The other problem these students are facing is transportation. According to physically impaired students, as they have difficulty walking long distances, most of the time they use taxis or 'Bajaj's. However, when there is a strike or a ban, transport facilities do not give service. At these times, these students are in trouble. The case is not any different for visually impaired students in the study areas.

During protests and demonstrations, there may sometimes be stone throwing and/or shooting. Since students with disabilities cannot run to save themselves like those without disabilities, they become more vulnerable to attacks. According to SWDs, when a certain group calls for strikes or bans, school administrations sometimes give them warnings and tell them to attend classes. And when they try to go to school, they may be attacked by members of the group that called for the strike while on their way to school. Similarly, when they miss classes, they miss tests and are punished for being absent.

Furthermore, as schools frequently close during political instability, covering all the subject matter in the semester or term will be difficult. This will affect their academic achievement and may also result in their dropping out of school or repeating in one class. In addition, when schools are closed, students with disabilities will find it difficult to meet their friends and ask them for assistance. These challenges may reduce their desire to keep on learning and become successful. They may even push them to drop out.

## **4.6. Actions Taken to Address the Impact of Political Instability**

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In this section, actions different stakeholders at different levels are taking to mitigate the impact of political instability in the implementation of inclusive education are discussed. The responses of teachers, school administrative staff, education bureau representatives, SWDs, and NGO representatives are provided as follows.

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### **I. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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As discussed in the foregoing sub-sections, SWDs are struggling to study and become successful under difficult conditions. Twenty-three students with disabilities have reported that in order to overcome their economic challenges, they are trying to sell tissue paper, gums, candies, and cigarettes on roadsides. As we can see, most of them are males because female students are afraid to stand on roadsides and sell goods. Though these students are trying to overcome their economic problems, there are times when protests and demonstrations suddenly occur, forcing them to abandon their goods and run to save their lives. Female students also face some form of harassment while working. According to their responses, most of the time, people are not willing to buy anything from SWDs. In addition to selling such items, seven students with disabilities engage in begging for money on the streets as a source of income in their spare time. They beg for money just because they have no alternative to meet their basic needs. Other SWDs that participated in the study live with their parents or caregivers. Even though their basic and special needs are not met, at least they do not have to work or beg. SWDs are doing everything they can but they are not getting what they need.

Students with physical impairments read their exercise books, textbooks, and other learning materials when schools are closed due to political instability. However, as the materials are prepared in text formats, only sighted students can access them. Hence, unless they find someone around their residence to assist them, visually impaired students cannot do that. All students with visual impairment reported that they do not have any voice recorders or braille materials. Therefore, these students learn only from sitting in classrooms and listening to teachers. This makes things even difficult when schools are closed.

All students with disabilities are going through a lot of hardships and doing their best to be successful in their academic life under unstable political situations in their areas of living and learning. Though the situation is challenging even when there is a relatively stable political situation, the challenges would be more severe when there is political instability. They all underlined that the situation is beyond their capacity and stated that this is draining their motivation to learn.

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## II. SCHOOL PERSONNEL

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Four school principals said that the teaching/learning process during political instability faces serious difficulty in general, not only for students with disabilities. Mitigating the impact of the instability on education needs the collaborative action of different stakeholders. However, at the school level, they said that they are doing their best to make the school environment safe. For instance, when there are protests or demonstrations, the police and special forces use disproportionate force on students to stop the protest. They use force on all students whether they are participating in the protest or not. Though it is beyond their capacity or mandate to stop the police from using excessive force, at least they try to keep students who are not participating in the protest in a relatively safe place. Students with disabilities are among such students.

Moreover, all teachers who participated in the FGD responded that when students with disabilities miss classes and exams because of protests, bans, or strikes, they give them make-up classes and exams. The problem they raised here is that the students do not identify themselves as persons with disabilities at the beginning of the academic year or upon registration. Especially those students who have invisible disability cannot be identified easily, which makes it difficult to assist them. Even those who have a visible disability and have identified themselves as persons with disability do not come forward and tell their problems and challenges to their teachers and other school staff, which is also a major barrier in the effort to support them. Still, school personnel said that they are doing all they can to support students with disabilities though it is not sufficient.

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### III. OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

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According to the response of FGD participants in Haromaya, there is one organization that is actively working in the East Harerge Zone giving support to people with disabilities. However, as the number of persons with disabilities is increasing, the support given is not sufficient. The organization works closely with schools and organizations of persons with disabilities in the zone. The organization provides students with disabilities assistive devices that can help them with learning and mobility. However, they are currently not giving as many assistive devices as they did before due to the inflation. As the representative of the organization stated, they plan their budget at the beginning of the year, and because the market price fluctuates frequently these days, it has become difficult to buy as many devices as planned. As the organization is dependent on donor, it is difficult to get additional funds. For this reason, they may buy only one device with the budget allocated for two or more devices. Fewer number of devices provided means that not all students can benefit from the donation.

Participants revealed that there is no action taken to overcome the impact of political instability on the education of students with disabilities in all the other research areas. There are organizations for people with disabilities in each town, but they are not active because they do not have sufficient resources. Especially in Nekemte and Bedele, there is no NGO working on the issue of persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities stated that they are not getting any special assistance from governmental or nongovernmental organizations; the little assistance they get comes from some of their teachers and school principals.

### 4.7. Future Prospects

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Asked if there was any prospect in the near future, all participants responded that there would be no hope in the near future because the issue of persons with disabilities was disregarded even when there was relatively stable political situation in the research areas. Though the government is the primary duty bearer to ensure the rights of people with disabilities in the country, the necessary attention has not been given especially to persons with disabilities living out of Addis Ababa. 'NOR' said that he sometimes thinks Ethiopia is only Addis Ababa. This is because most things are done in Addis Ababa and other major cities in different regions. Little attention is given to small towns and rural areas. He also said that, at this time, the number of students with disabilities is decreasing and the number of students with disabilities dropping out of school is increasing. This is because the education system is not suitable for them and the political instability is worsening their situation. The situation is becoming worse from time to time but there is no action taken to address the issue. Hence, all respondents agreed that the situation would not get better in the near future to ensure the right to education of students with disabilities even if the political situation became stable.



## 4.8. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the responses of the research participants have been presented. Also, the responses of the participants on the state of the quality of education of students with disabilities, the impact of political instability on the education of students with disabilities, challenges students with disabilities are facing due to political instability, actions taken to overcome the challenges, and future prospects have been discussed. In the next chapter, conclusions and recommendations are presented.



**Figure 2:** Blind Students walking in school.

**Source:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpforeducation/48490650047/in/photostream/>

CHAPTER FIVE

**5. CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

05

## 5.1. Conclusions

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The right to education is one of the inalienable, inherent, and universal human rights. As such, everyone has the right to education regardless of any differences. However, different groups of society were excluded from exercising and enjoying this right. Persons with disabilities are among the marginalized groups of society from exercising most human rights, including the right to education, even though different international and regional human rights instruments have recognized the right to education of persons with disabilities. The UNCRPD has comprehensively and specifically recognized the human rights of PWDs and obliges State parties to ensure their right to inclusive education.

Inclusive education is a system of education in which State parties are obliged to accommodate the diverse needs of students and eliminate barriers that hinder PWDs from fully and effectively exercising their right to education. All State parties to the Convention shall accommodate the special needs of students with disabilities and remove different barriers in order to enable them to fully enjoy their right to education on equal basis with other students.

Ethiopia is a State party to most international and regional human rights instruments that recognize the right to education of PWDs. In compliance with these instruments, Ethiopia has enacted numerous national legislations, policies, and strategies in which the right to inclusive education is incorporated.

Even though the FDRE Constitution has mentioned mentally and physically disabled persons under Article 41, the approach adopted is “charity approach”. This is because it only refers to providing assistance and rehabilitation for them rather than creating opportunities and enabling them to participate equally in a society. Moreover, in this provision, the government is obliged to provide assistance and rehabilitation as much as the available resources permit, which opens a room for unavailability

## Conclusions And Recommendations

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of resources to be presented as an excuse for the government's failure to discharge this obligation. Above all, PWDs are listed along with elders and children who have no parents or guardians, which clearly shows that PWDs lack certain capacities and are charity seekers, which is an outdated understanding of disability. In the constitution PWDs are referred as, "mentally and physically disabled person" which is regarded as derogatory terminology. As the Constitution is the supreme law of the land, framing the provision in this way will have an adverse effect on the implementation of the right to inclusive education and other rights of PWDs.

Apart from that, though there are legislations that recognize the right to inclusive education of PWDs in Ethiopia, the implementation is still at its infant stage. Especially in rural and small cities, the implementation of inclusive education has not even started adequately. In the study areas, SWDs go to general schools together with students without disability. However, their special needs have not been met. These students are learning in physically inaccessible school compounds and classrooms. The schools do not have accessible teaching and learning materials and are not implementing alternative teaching methodologies. There are very few students with disabilities enrolled in secondary schools in the study areas.

As discussed in Chapter Two of this paper, inclusive education is a system of education that can be implemented progressively whereby States should make positive changes towards its implementation. Although Ethiopia ratified the UNCRPD a decade ago, this study has confirmed that the implementation of inclusive education in the research areas is very poor. Students with disabilities are enrolled in general schools, but they have not been able to get quality education.

As it is stated in the aforementioned chapter, the schools are enrolling students with disabilities in mainstream schools together with students without disabilities. Since these schools are public schools, students with

disabilities are enrolled free of charge. This represents a commendable practice as States are required to make primary and secondary schools free of charge for SWDs. However, the schools are not physically accessible and lack reasonable accommodation and other special support. In addition, the curriculum and the teaching methods in the schools are not flexible and acceptable for SWDs. For this reason, they usually face different challenges. As provided under Article 13(3) and (4) of the ICESCR, the education must be adapted to address the diverse needs of the students in the schools.

Based on the data collected from the study areas, it is safe to conclude that the schools are not implementing the right to inclusive education; rather, they are only following the integrated approach. Furthermore, the progress in the implementation of inclusive education is very slow or it can even be said that there is no progress at all. Therefore, Ethiopia is not complying with the obligation to the progressive realization of the right to inclusive education as provided under the UNCRPD.

In the research areas, political instability has been identified as one of the major reasons for not effectively implementing inclusive education for PWDs. Implementing inclusive education imposes both positive and negative obligations. The schools in these areas are only discharging their negative obligation.

Discharging positive obligations requires the provision of goods such as assistive devices and other reasonable accommodations necessary for their education. However, due to political instability in the areas, there is high inflation. As a result, the society living in these areas is unable to accommodate their basic needs. Hence, assistive devices are a luxury for them. This has made both the State and the schools incapable of discharging their obligations to the full.

## Conclusions And Recommendations

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NGOs and other non-profit organizations that support SWDs in schools by providing assistive devices and making schools physically accessible in other parts of the country could not come and do the same in the research areas due to the political instability and fear of unwanted repercussions. Such organizations were hard to find in the study areas.

As the schools are not permanently and officially closed, students are learning when there is a relatively stable situation. Especially in East Wollega Zone, Nekemte city, schools are frequently closed due to bans and strikes. During this time, most SWDs stay at home. However, some SWDs go back to school together with other students when school activities resume. What is more worrisome is when a sudden protest or demonstration occurs, the law enforcement organs and other protesting groups do not take into consideration the situation of SWDs. According to some teachers, SWDs could be hit whenever the law enforcement organs take measures. Their teachers try to protect them during these times, but this does not guarantee adequate protection. Furthermore, as there is no strong screening process, students with disabilities enrolled in the research areas are not well identified. As a result, during protests and demonstrations, students with invisible disabilities are primary victims. On the other hand, students with disabilities who stay at home due to fear of demonstrations and protests that might suddenly occur cannot have their right to equal access to education respected.

Simply registering students with disabilities in a general school and denying them access to quality education by failing to make the necessary adjustments and modifications is equivalent to indirect discrimination. What is more, the State is failing to discharge its obligations stated under the UNCRPD as no progress has been seen towards the realization of inclusive education in the research areas. Political instability is one factor for the Ethiopian government not to discharge its obligation.

Although SWDs are not getting equal access to quality education, there are some students who still are fighting and trying to be successful. But during exams, their situation has not been taken into account and they are evaluated equally with students without disabilities.

The FDRE government has made a separate higher education entrance examination schedule for students from areas where there is political instability, but nothing special has been done for SWDs from these areas. Hence, special attention should be given to the students with disabilities in such areas.

Besides the political instability and the economic status of the country, lack of attention and commitment on the part of the government has contributed to the failure in the implementation of the right to inclusive education. Most of the schools do not incorporate the issue of SWDs during the annual planning and budget allocation times. The lack of prior preparation and attention to teach students with disabilities in turn delays the steps that should be taken to implement inclusive education.

Moreover, there is lack of awareness regarding the concept of inclusive education and some stakeholders consider the provision of reasonable accommodation as a luxury, which is indicative of the lack of awareness and understanding of the problem. In this respect, raising awareness is the obligation of the State, and it should be done immediately. Previously, different NGOs that have been operating in these areas had been organizing and giving disability awareness and inclusion trainings, but now, as most of the NGOs are closed and have left the country, the awareness creation programs have been halted.

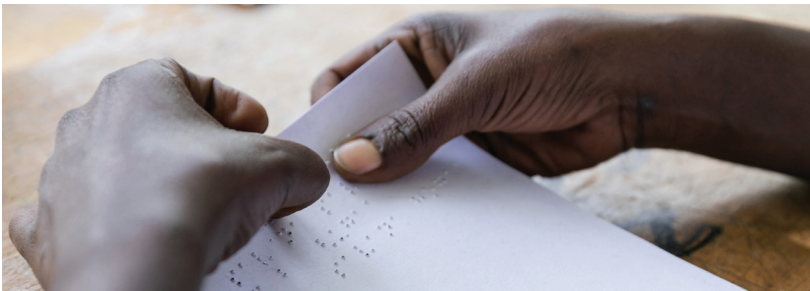
The other impact of the political instability on the implementation of inclusive education is that it is affecting the follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation system. As discussed in Chapter Three of this paper, comprehensive policies and strategies are important for the effective

## Conclusions And Recommendations

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implementation of inclusive education. However, there is no strong follow-up mechanism or system that monitors implementation in the study research areas.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the right to inclusive education is not implemented in all the study areas. Rather, the actual system of education in the areas seems to be following the integrated approach. The researcher believes that special or segregated schools are much better than integrated ones. This is because SWDs can get relatively better accommodation for their education in special schools. In integrated schools, students with disabilities are unable to enjoy and exercise their right to education on equal basis with other students. As said before, the political instability frequently occurring in the areas is one of the major reasons for not fully and effectively implementing the right to inclusive education. For this and other associated reasons, students with disabilities are facing multi-dimensional challenges, which are making the implementation of their right to education difficult.



**Figure 5:** Students read braille in class

**Source:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpforeducation/48490650047/in/photostream>

Therefore, Ethiopia should discharge its obligation to ensure the right to quality education to everyone, including PWDs. As a State party to the UNCRPD, the country must comply with its obligation of implementing the right to inclusive education. By denying SWDs access to quality inclusive education, Ethiopia is short of complying with her obligations



under different international human rights laws. Furthermore, national legislations, including policies and strategies on the right to education of PWDs, have not been able to make actual changes on the ground.






## 5.2. Recommendations

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Based on the above conclusion, the following recommendations are forwarded:


### A. GOVERNMENT


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-  The government should amend Article 41(5) of the FDRE Constitution and other legislations such as the Building Proclamation No. 624/2009 in a manner consistent with modern understanding of disability and in a way that better promotes the inclusion of PWDs.
-  Sufficient attention should be given to students with disabilities by all stakeholders at all levels. They should be considered beginning from planning, designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation stages.
-  The government should allow a tax-free import of assistive devices necessary for the education of persons with disabilities.
-  Non-profit and non-governmental organizations working in areas where there is political instability should be incentivized and encouraged.
-  Alternative teaching methodologies accessible to students with disabilities should be implemented in times of political instability.

## Conclusions And Recommendations

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 The government should design a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism rather than depending on reports to follow up the actual progress towards the implementation of the right to inclusive education even when there is political instability as long as the schools are open and are not officially closed.


 Separate affirmative actions for students with disabilities from areas where there is political instability should be implemented. Affirmative actions should be available at all levels of education.

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### B. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

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 NGOs should work collaboratively with the government, schools, OPDs, and other stakeholders on issues of students with disabilities in areas where there is political instability.


 They should create a platform through which they can work in such areas without residing there.

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### C. SCHOOLS

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 Schools should collaboratively work with concerned government and non-government organizations in order to address the needs of students with disabilities and provide them with reasonable accommodation.

 School teachers and administrative organs should consider the situation of students with disabilities during political instability and give them special attention.

When schools reopen after closing for some time due to political instability, organizing tutorials and make-up classes for students with disabilities should be made mandatory for all teachers.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### Questionnaire for Students with Disabilities

---

Dear respondent!

My name is Hiywot Samuel, a Werdwet Research Fellow. I am collecting data for a research titled “The Impact of Political Instability on the Implementation of the Right to Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in Oromia: Practical Challenges and Prospects in Some Selected Secondary Schools”.

This questionnaire is intended to gather data for research purpose only. You are not required to write your name while filling the questionnaire. The questions include personal information. I would like to assure you that privacy is strictly with regard to your responses to any of the questions. Your responses will not be revealed to anyone else and no report of the study will identify you by name. If a report of the results of this study is published, only information about the group will appear. I am kindly requesting you to take some time to fill in this questionnaire.

This questionnaire consists of two parts. The first consists of demographic information about you while the second part consists of questions related to the research.

## Part I

### Personal Information

Put “X” on the space provided in front of the correct answer you choose.

**1. Age**

- 15-18
- 19-35
- Above 36

**2. Sex**

- Female
- Male

**3. Type of disability**

- Visual
- Physical

**4. You are in grade:**

- Nine (9)
- Ten (10)
- Eleven (11)
- Twelve (12)

**5. Name of school:** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ Woreda/ City Administration \_\_\_\_\_

## **PART II**

**1. Is there any political instability in your location?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**2. If your answer to question no. 18 is 'Yes', does it occur frequently?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't Know

**3. If Yes please explain.**

---

---

**4. Do you think the political instability in your area negatively affected the effective implementation of inclusive education in your school?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**5. If your answer to question no. 4 is 'Yes', please explain how.**

---

---

**6. Do you think the right to education of students with disabilities is affected due to the political instability in your areas?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**7. If "Yes", please explain.**

---

---

**8. Do you think the effect or the impact of political instability is different for students with disabilities?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**9. If 'Yes' please explain how.**

---

---

**10. What practical challenges are you facing concerning your education due to the political instability?**

---

---

**11. Is the frequent political instability affecting your academic achievement?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**12. If your answer is 'Yes', please explain how.**

---

---

**13. Is the political instability affecting the fulfillment of your special education needs?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**14. If 'Yes', please explain how it is affecting your special needs.**

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---

**15. Is/Are there any action(s) taken to address the challenges you are facing in relation to your education due to political instability at your school level?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**16. If 'Yes', please explain.**

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---

**17. Is there any alternative way of teaching applied during strikes, bans, and blokades?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**18. If 'Yes', please tell us the mechanisms used.**

---

---

**19. If your response to question no. 18 is 'Yes', is the mechanism inclusive and accessible to you?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**20. If 'No', have you ever complained about the issue?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



**21. If 'Yes' to the above question, did you get any solution?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**22. If your response is 'No', please tell us the reason.**

---

---

**23. Is there any support given to you to support you in your education during instabilities?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**24. If 'Yes', please mention the support you are getting.**

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**25. Do you think there is any prospect to address or mitigate the impact of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education in the near future?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

26. If 'Yes', please explain the future prospect.

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---

27. If you have any recommendations to give, you are welcome.

Thank you for your cooperation!!

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Questionnaire for Students with Disabilities**

---

Dear respondent!

My name is Hiywot Samuel, a Werdwet Research Fellow. I am collecting data for a research titled "The Impact of Political Instability on the Implementation of the Right to Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in Oromia: Practical Challenges and Prospects in Secondary Schools". This interview is aimed to gather data for research purpose only. The questions include those that elicit personal information. I would like to assure you that privacy is strictly be maintained with regard to your responses to any of the questions. Your response will not be revealed to anyone else and no report of the study will ever identify you by name. If a report of the results is published, only information about the group will appear. I am kindly requesting you to take some time to respond to these interview questions.

This interview consists of two parts. The first consists of demographic information about you while the second part consists of questions related to the research.

## Part I

### Personal Information

Put “X” on the space provided in front of the correct answer you choose.

1. Age

19-35

Above 36

2. Sex

Female

Male

3. Type of disability (if any)

---

4. Educational background

---

5. Name of school

---

6. Responsibility

---

7. Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Woreda/ City Administration \_\_\_\_\_

## **PART II**

**1. What is the total number of students enrolled in your school?**

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**2. How many students with visual/physical impairment are enrolled in your school?**

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**3. Do you think these students with disabilities are getting as much education as those without disability?**

---

**4. If 'No', do you think the political instability can be a factor?**

---

**5. If 'Yes', please explain how it can be a factor.**

---

**6. Do you think the political instability in the Oromia region is differently affecting students with disabilities? If 'Yes', how?**

---

**7. Does the political instability affect the academic achievement of students with disabilities? How?**

---

8. Do you think the political instability is affecting the effective implementation of inclusive education of students with disabilities? How?

---

9. Do you think the political instability is affecting the fulfilment of reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities? How?

---

10. What actions have you taken to mitigate the challenges students with disabilities are facing due to the political instability? Please explain. (It can be actions taken at school, woreda, zone, regional or country level)

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11. Is there any alternative way of teaching applied during strikes, bans, and blockades?

---

12. If 'Yes', is the mechanism inclusive? Please explain.

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13. Is there any prospect to minimize the challenges that students with disabilities are facing due to political instability and effectively implement the right to inclusive education at school, woreda, zone, region, or country level?

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14. Finally, if you have anything to add or recommend, you are welcome.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Focus Group Discussion Questions**

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1. What is the quality of education in your school like?

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2. Do you think students with disabilities in your school are getting quality inclusive education?

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3. Do you think the political instability frequently occurring in your area is affecting the implementation of inclusive education and access to quality education of students with disabilities? If 'Yes', how?

---

4. What challenges are you and students with disabilities facing due to the political instability?

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5. What actions have you taken to overcome the impact of political instability on the implementation of inclusive education and ensure access to quality education for students with disabilities?

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6. What are the future prospects?

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7. Do you have any recommendations to make?

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**CARD**

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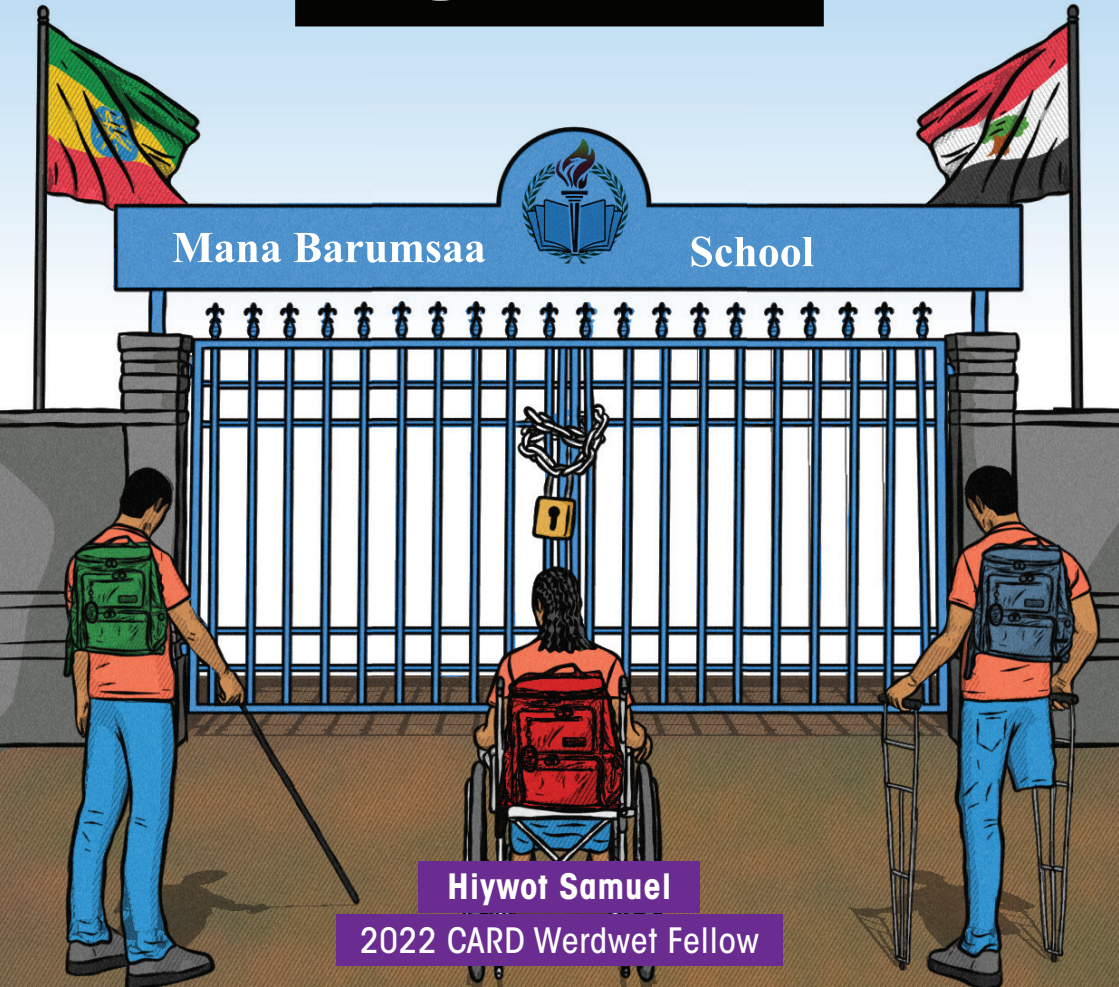
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# DOUBLE BURDEN



Hiywoጥ ሳሙኤል

2022 CARD Werdwet Fellow