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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



*Ikran, pictured with her twin brother Hassan, receives a disability allowance which allows her mother (Halima) to afford suitable foods for Ikran's special dietary needs. Photo: WFP/Arete/ Fredrik Lerneryd*

## KENYA

### DISABILITY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The World Health Organization estimates that around 16 percent of the global population have disabilities. Applying this estimate to Kenya's current population of approximately 55.8 million people, implies that roughly 8.9 million Kenyans have disabilities. Due to bias and discrimination, the majority of these Kenyans live in poverty and rely largely on their families for support, including social, financial, material, and psychological assistance. Research shows a strong correlation between poverty and disability, where each can exacerbate the other. Poverty can cause disability due to factors such as food insecurity, malnutrition, poor healthcare, and unsafe living conditions. Conversely, disability can lead to poverty through higher unemployment rates, limited job opportunities, and reduced income-generating activities. Kenyans with disabilities face multi-faceted barriers (i.e. infrastructure, economic, education, communications, etc.) to their full societal participation. Furthermore, Kenyans with disabilities often suffer abuse, abandonment, and concealment.

USAID/Kenya and East Africa's (KEA) 2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) documents the Mission's commitment to support Kenya's national and county governments to establish and implement systems that enable meaningful inclusion and engagement of people with disabilities, increase their skills, and ensure the provision of inclusive services. Throughout 2023, USAID/KEA implemented diverse initiatives aimed at assisting and empowering Kenya's disability community. These programs strived to achieve sustainable development goals and foster inclusivity while empowering Kenyans with disabilities.

## OUR WORK

USAID/KEA works to uphold the following operating principles: accessibility, accountability, anti-ableism, do no (more) harm; gender equality; nondiscrimination; and nothing without us. The Mission supports many programs that advance disability inclusion. Some of the programs include the Tusome Early Grade Literacy Program; the Empowered Youth Activity; the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Regional Leadership Program; the Electoral Conflicts Mitigation and Voter and Civic Education Program (ECCES); and the Global Labor Program - Inclusive Futures.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

**Tusome Early Grade Literacy Program** USAID/KEA partnered with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and its semi-autonomous agencies to support 110 public inclusive education schools. The program provided classroom observations and teacher support to 5,042 learners that included 2,399 girls and 2,643 boys. Of these 3,630 were deaf or blind learners. Further, Tusome worked with the MOE to adapt, print and distribute 9,173 English and Kiswahili teaching and learning materials for learners who are deaf, blind, or have low vision. Tusome built the skills of 80 education managers and 401 teachers on lesson preparation and delivery to strengthen their skills in teaching grades 1 to 3 for deaf and/or blind learners.

**The Empowered Youth Activity** reduced the vulnerability and improved the economic prospects of youth ages 18-24 and adolescent girls ages 15-19 in six Kenyan counties. To ensure the inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalized youth, the Activity partnered with Action Network for the Disabled, in which youth staff and networks were equipped with the tools and resources to ensure they meet the needs of youth with disabilities. The Activity also supported 20 youth with disabilities to access training and linkages to workforce opportunities.

**YALI Regional Leadership Center in Kenya** continued to provide reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities, including wheelchair accessibility, dedicated vehicles, sign language interpreters, braille training content, and closed-captioning videos for virtual and blended training. YALI worked with disabled persons organizations to encourage leaders with disabilities to apply to YALI. As a result, 15 percent of the 121 Kenyan youth attending YALI in FY 2023 had disabilities. USAID also strengthened the skills of 1,787 emerging leaders (fifteen percent of whom have disabilities) to promote peace, enhance civic space, and resist manipulation by politicians to violence in the post-electoral period.

**The USAID ECCES Activity** played a pivotal role in establishing the Isiolo Disability Umbrella. The Disability Umbrella collaborated with the County Government of Isiolo to prepare the Persons with Disabilities Bill, which aims to enhance service efficiency and resource allocation for Isiolo county persons with disabilities. The county government appointed a leader from the Isiolo Disability Umbrella to advocate for disability interests, particularly in accessing bursaries from the National Government Affirmative Fund (NGAF) and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). In Tana River, the ECCES Activity successfully influenced members of the county assembly to introduce the Inuka Fund, which provides seed capital for Tana River residents with disabilities to access economic opportunities.

**The Global Labor Program-Inclusive Futures** aims to embed inclusion of persons with disabilities within private sector companies in Kenya. It built the skills of Kenyans with disabilities to participate in private sector supply and distribution chains and increased access of smallholder sorghum farmers with disabilities to agricultural advice, farm inputs, and collective bargaining power to secure higher prices for their produce. The program also supplied 1,350 female retailers with disabilities with products to sell and business development training. In addition, the program completed a review, and widely shared the findings, of the Kenyan legislative and international framework governing the right to equal work and employment for persons with disabilities.

### DURATION

2020-2025

### ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

Mombasa  
Kisii  
Nakuru  
Isiolo  
Makueni

### KEY PARTNERS

National Council for  
Persons with Disabilities  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Labour and  
Social Protection  
County Governments  
Young African Leaders  
Initiative