East Action Organization
Action for Betterment

DISABILITY INCLUSION SPECIAL REPORT (2024–April 2026)
EQUAL VOICES, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES, LASTING CHANGE

SAFE-MIT & INCLUSIVE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROGRAM

PREPARED BY:
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Narrative Report

Headline

Digital Inclusion and Humanitarian Response: Advancing Equal Voices, Mobility, and Dignity through SAFE-MIT and Inclusive Assistance (2024–April 2026)

Subtitle

From 2024 to April 2026, East Action Organization (EAO) combined digital inclusion, disability rights, and humanitarian assistance to empower marginalized communities in Ethiopia's Somali Region—supporting persons with disabilities, vulnerable households, and youth through integrated, inclusive programming.

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1. Executive Summary

Between 2024 and April 2026, East Action Organization (EAO) implemented an integrated program combining digital inclusion, disability empowerment, and humanitarian assistance across the Somali Regional State.

Through the SAFE-MIT initiative, EAO trained 11 persons with disabilities as digital advocates, equipping them with storytelling, media engagement, and online advocacy skills. In parallel, the Targeted Food Assistance program supported 70 vulnerable households (420 individuals) through food and cash assistance.

A major milestone was the provision of 180 wheelchairs to persons with disabilities in Degehabur and Jigjiga, implemented in collaboration with Vision Community Development Organization (VCDO). EAO led logistics, coordination, and distribution, mobilizing resources exceeding 5,00,000 ETB, including transportation from Harar to Degehabur via Jigjiga.

The program demonstrated that inclusive humanitarian action must go beyond food assistance to address mobility, accessibility, dignity, and participation. However, critical gaps remain in assistive devices, accessible transport, and infrastructure.

2. Introduction

Communities in Ethiopia's Somali Region continue to face recurring drought, economic shocks, and displacement, severely affecting livelihoods. Vulnerable groups—especially persons with disabilities, women, and elderly-headed households—experience compounded exclusion.

Persons with disabilities face systemic barriers to participation, including lack of mobility aids, inaccessible infrastructure, and limited inclusion in humanitarian programming. In many cases, individuals had to be physically carried to access services.

EAO responded by adopting an equity-first and inclusion-centered approach, integrating humanitarian relief with empowerment, advocacy, and accessibility solutions.

3. Program Objectives

- Provide inclusive humanitarian assistance through food and cash support
- Strengthen digital voices and advocacy capacity of persons with disabilities
- Improve mobility, dignity, and participation through assistive devices
- Promote inclusive systems in humanitarian and development programming
- Advance community awareness on migration, inclusion, and rights

4. Target Households and Population

- **70 households (420 individuals)** supported through food and cash assistance
- **11 persons with disabilities** trained as digital advocates
- **180 persons with disabilities** supported with wheelchairs
- Priority groups included:
    - Disability-affected households
    - Women- and elderly-headed households
    - Children and youth in vulnerable conditions

5. SAFE-MIT: Digital Inclusion, Advocacy & Mobility

5.1 Digital Storytelling and Advocacy Training

EAO conducted intensive training for persons with disabilities on:

- Digital storytelling techniques
- Social media advocacy
- Content creation (video, audio, and written narratives)
- Rights-based communication

Participants developed and shared real-life stories highlighting exclusion, resilience, and solutions.

5.2 Equal Voices Online Campaign

The campaign amplified voices of persons with disabilities through:

- Social media storytelling
- Community dialogues
- Youth-led advocacy initiatives

This shifted public narratives from charity-based perceptions to **rights, agency, and leadership**.

5.3 Migration, Inclusion & Transformation (MIT) Dialogue

SAFE-MIT promoted inclusive understanding of migration by:

- Facilitating community discussions
- Addressing stigma and misinformation
- Advocating for disability-inclusive migration policies

5.4 Assistive Devices, Mobility & Accessibility Support

A key intervention area focused on restoring dignity and access through:

- Distribution of **180 wheelchairs**
- Identification of mobility needs (crutches, prosthetics, walkers)
- Support for transportation during activities
- Advocacy for accessible infrastructure

Despite progress, mobility remains a major barrier requiring scale-up.

6. Targeted Food Assistance for Inclusive Communities

6.1 Food Distribution

Each household received:

- 25 kg rice
- 25 kg wheat flour

Total distribution reached approximately **1.75 metric tons annually**.

6.2 Cash Assistance

Each household received:

- **1,500 ETB** to cover essential non-food needs such as medicine, transport, and basic services

6.3 Inclusive Delivery Mechanisms

- Priority targeting of disability-affected households
- Community volunteers supporting mobility-limited beneficiaries
- Flexible distribution approaches to ensure access

7. Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) Indicators

- Households assisted annually: **35**
- Total beneficiaries: **420 individuals**
- Inclusion markers:
    - Disability inclusion
    - Gender equity
    - Age-sensitive targeting

8. Achievements and Outcomes

- 11 trained disability advocates leading digital campaigns
- 180 persons with disabilities gained mobility through wheelchairs
- 420 individuals supported with food and cash assistance
- Strengthened community awareness on disability rights
- Increased participation of persons with disabilities in programs
- Institutional inclusion:
    - 3 persons with disabilities employed in EAO
    - Dedicated Disability Inclusion focal leadership established

9. Additional Impact (2025–2026 Update)

- Expansion of disability inclusion programming
- Integration of SAFE-MIT into youth and governance programs
- Strengthened partnerships with disability-focused stakeholders
- Increased trust and visibility among communities and donors

10. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

- Limited funding restricted scale and quality of assistance

- Cash support below humanitarian standards
- Lack of sufficient assistive devices
- Absence of accessible transport systems

Lessons Learned

- Inclusion must be budgeted, not assumed
- Assistive devices and transport are essential, not optional
- Community-led approaches increase impact and sustainability

11. Sustainability and Next Steps

- Expand assistance to **100+ households annually**
- Scale distribution of assistive devices (wheelchairs, prosthetics, crutches)
- Introduce **accessible transport solutions**
- Upgrade infrastructure (ramps, toilets, safe access points)
- Establish **inclusive digital hubs** with assistive technologies
- Strengthen policy advocacy for disability-inclusive humanitarian systems
- Deepen partnerships with government and disability-led organizations

12. Conclusion

EAO's integrated model shows that **humanitarian assistance, digital inclusion, and disability empowerment are mutually reinforcing**. True inclusion requires not only services, but also **mobility, voice, and leadership**.

13. Donor Call-to-Action

Your support can transform lives by enabling:

- Provision of assistive devices (wheelchairs, prosthetics, mobility aids)
- Development of accessible transport systems
- Expansion of inclusive food and cash assistance
- Construction of accessible infrastructure
- Establishment of digital advocacy hubs
- Strengthening inclusive policies and systems

With your partnership, barriers become pathways—unlocking dignity, participation, and resilience.

14. Contact Information

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Photo of our staff member with a disability serving as the Disability Inclusion & Social Protection Officer at East Action Organization. He holds two Bachelor's degrees.







UNITY VOTE



“EAO staff supporting persons with disabilities to access training venues — highlighting the urgent need for wheelchairs and inclusive mobility support in the Somali Regional State.”





Call to Action

Call to Action for Partners and Donors

East Action Organization calls for urgent investment in **disability-inclusive humanitarian programming** to ensure equitable access, dignity, and participation.

Priority areas include:

- Provision of assistive devices (wheelchairs, prosthetics, mobility aids)
- Expansion of accessible and safe transport systems
- Development of inclusive infrastructure (ramps, sanitation facilities)
- Scaling inclusive food and cash assistance

We further call upon Humanity & Inclusion Ethiopia to collaborate in:

- Delivering rehabilitation and assistive services
- Strengthening inclusive emergency response systems
- Providing technical leadership on disability inclusion standards

Inclusive systems save lives, restore dignity, and strengthen resilience.