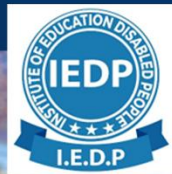


International Human Rights Day 10 December 2025 Event.



**Human Rights Week activities
From 25 November 16 Days of GBV,
3 December Week of Disability People and
10 December International Human Rights Day.**

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Executive summary

The Somali Disability Network (SDN) commemorated International Human Rights Day on 10 December 2025 with a public event in Mogadishu. The event brought together over 70 participants, including government officials, civil society organizations (CSOs), organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), persons with disabilities (PWDs), parents, and community advocates. The event highlighted the importance of dignity, equality, and inclusion for all under the theme “Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials.”

This celebration was part of broader Human Rights Week activities, coinciding with the conclusion of global campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25 November–10 December) and Disability Inclusion Week (3–10 December). SDN and its partners actively participated in multiple awareness initiatives across Mogadishu, raising public understanding of human rights, disability inclusion, and protection from gender-based violence.

The Human Rights Day event was jointly organized by SDN, the Institute of Education for Disabled People (IEDP), Rajo School for the Deaf, and Dayeel School for the Deaf, Diyaar Institute for Skills Training. This collaboration demonstrated strong partnerships and a shared commitment to inclusive education and equal participation for persons with disabilities.

A major highlight of the event was the recognition of contributions within the disability community. Teachers and administrative staff of Rajo Deaf School were honored for their dedication to providing quality education. Parents of children with disabilities were acknowledged for their unwavering support, while students and families expressed gratitude to sign language interpreters, school bus drivers, and gatekeepers who ensure accessibility and safety.

Key speakers addressed the structural and financial barriers affecting deaf, blind, and physically challenged learners. They emphasized the need for expanded school facilities, improved accessibility, and stronger support systems for learners with disabilities. Sign language, parental involvement, inclusive leadership, and advocacy by CSOs and OPDs were highlighted as essential tools for progress.

During discussions, participants raised concerns about shortages of curriculum books, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate exam support, poor sanitation, and unsafe learning environments during the rainy season. Teachers requested capacity-building, structured sign-language curricula, and modern teaching tools, while school administrators stressed the need for computers, libraries, and other essential learning materials.

The event concluded with recommendations to advance disability inclusion in Somalia. Stakeholders called for full implementation of the National Disability Act, alignment with the UNCRPD, increased investment in schools for deaf and blind children, and expansion of TVET opportunities for PWDs. Strengthened collaboration among government institutions, OPDs, donors, and international partners was also emphasized. The recommendations included supporting children affected by school dropout, ensuring access to safe learning spaces, and addressing discrimination in all forms, highlighting the importance of collective action for a more inclusive Somalia.



Background

The Somali Disability Network (SDN) organized an International Human Rights Day event in Mogadishu on 10 December 2025, bringing together over 70 participants from diverse sectors of society. Attendees included representatives from government institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), persons with disabilities (PWDs), parents of children with disabilities, educators, and community leaders. The gathering reflected a strong commitment to promoting human rights, inclusion, and equality for all members of society.

This event was a joint initiative collaboratively organized and participated in by SDN Somali Disability Network (SDN), the Institute of Education for Disabled People (IEDP), Rajo School for the Deaf, Dayeel School for the Deaf, and Diyaar Institute for Skills Training. This partnership highlighted the shared commitment of these organizations to promoting inclusive education, disability rights, and equal participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.

The event was held as part of the global observance of International Human Rights Day, under the theme “Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials.” Similar activities were organized across Somalia and worldwide to recognize the contributions of human rights defenders and advocates. In Mogadishu, the day was marked by ceremonies, awareness sessions, and open discussions highlighting the importance of human rights as a foundation for dignity, freedom, and social justice.

Participants engaged in speeches, panel discussions, and community reflections focusing on the protection and promotion of human rights, with particular attention to marginalized and vulnerable groups. Emphasis was placed on the rights of persons with disabilities, especially deaf children and learners, and the need to ensure equal access to education, healthcare, participation, and protection from discrimination. The discussions reinforced the principle that inclusion and equality must be embedded in everyday practices and public services.

As part of the ceremony, SDN recognized individuals and institutions that demonstrated outstanding commitment to disability inclusion and quality education. Teachers and administrative staff from Rajo Primary and Secondary Deaf School were honored for their dedication to supporting deaf learners. Parents of children with disabilities were also recognized for their active involvement and commitment to their children’s education, highlighting the importance of family engagement in inclusive learning.

Students and parents further expressed appreciation for support staff, including sign language interpreters, school bus drivers, and the school gatekeeper, acknowledging their vital role in ensuring accessibility, safety, and a supportive learning environment. These recognitions underscored the collective effort required to uphold human rights and create inclusive education systems.

The event also provided an opportunity for networking and sharing experiences among participants. Organizations and individuals exchanged ideas on best practices, challenges, and strategies for advancing the rights of persons with disabilities. This collaboration strengthened community bonds and reinforced the importance of joint action in addressing social exclusion and promoting equality.

Finally, the event concluded with a call to action for continued advocacy, awareness-raising, and policy implementation in support of persons with disabilities. Participants committed to championing human rights in their communities, promoting inclusive education, and ensuring that persons with disabilities are empowered to participate fully in society, reflecting the core values of dignity, equality, and social justice.



Key Speakers

Key speakers at the event provided supportive and inspiring messages that resonated with participants. Their words highlighted challenges, shared solutions, and encouraged community action, leaving attendees motivated and appreciative of their contributions to disability inclusion and human rights.

Mr. Hussein Botan, former Deputy District Commissioner of Wadajir and now a candidate, expressed his gratitude to parents for their tireless efforts in supporting their children's learning. He also commended the teachers for their active daily work and commitment to training students, as well as the school administration for providing strong leadership. In addition, he acknowledged the contributions of CSOs and OPDs who continue to advocate for human rights and disability inclusion within the community.

He highlighted his recent advocacy efforts focused on securing land for the expansion of Rajo School, aiming to improve accessibility and create more learning space for students. Mr. Botan noted that he has engaged with education actors, local authorities, and private individuals to request land that would allow the school to grow. He expressed hope that positive changes will soon be made, particularly in gaining access to public school land within the district. Such progress would enable Rajo School to enroll many more children with disabilities who are currently out of school.

Mr. Abdi Dek, a government officer and parent of a deaf student, expressed his appreciation to all parents for their continuous support in helping their children learn. He thanked the teachers for their active daily efforts in educating and training the students, and he acknowledged the school administration for its committed leadership. He also recognized the valuable contribution of CSOs and OPDs that work tirelessly to promote human rights and advocate for people with disabilities.

He shared his personal experience as a parent of a deaf child, emphasizing the importance of unity and collaboration among parents of deaf children who share similar challenges and experiences. Mr. Abdi noted that learning sign language has greatly improved communication within his family, allowing his son to connect more comfortably at home. He encouraged other parents to learn, adapt, and embrace the communication and behavioral needs of their children, stressing that collective support and understanding can help secure a better future for deaf learners.

Mr. Abdullahi Hassan from the Somali Disability Network (SDN) thanked the parents for their continuous commitment to supporting their children's learning. He also acknowledged the teachers for their active daily work, the school administration for its leadership, and the CSOs and OPDs that tirelessly advocate for human rights and disability inclusion. Mr. Abdullahi expressed appreciation for this year's focus on inclusive education and for the opportunity to engage closely with parents, students, teachers, and the school leadership. He noted that the number of deaf children enrolled in school remains very low, largely because many parents cannot afford school fees and transportation costs. He emphasized that public funding from NGOs and government institutions in Somalia can play a critical role in supporting the education of deaf, blind, and physically challenged children.

He further highlighted that inclusive education in Somalia is largely driven by the private sector, which limits access for many children with disabilities. Deaf, blind, and physically challenged learners face

multiple barriers including lack of learning materials, an unsuitable curriculum, inadequate infrastructure, weak school systems, and discrimination from teachers and students. These challenges significantly reduce the number of school-going children with disabilities. Mr. Abdullahi stressed the importance of strengthening inclusive education systems, improving accessibility, and ensuring that all children with disabilities receive equal opportunities to enroll, learn, and succeed.

Mr. Abdijali Moalim Hassan, the Director of Rajo Primary and Secondary School, expressed his gratitude to the parents for their continuous efforts in supporting their children's learning. He thanked the teachers for their active daily work and dedication, and he acknowledged the school administration for its years of committed leadership. He also appreciated the contributions of CSOs and OPDs that advocate for human rights and disability inclusion. Mr. Abdijali highlighted that the school currently serves 70 students—both girls and boys—from primary, intermediate, and secondary classes. However, the school faces serious challenges, including limited space, high rental costs, and insufficient salaries for teachers. The administration has worked voluntarily for over 11 years, and even single mothers working at the school have not received a salary due to financial constraints.

He emphasized that as deaf educators and leaders, they are striving to create better opportunities for deaf children. Parents pay only minimal fees compared to private schools, and students benefit from supportive teachers and accessible transport services. Mr. Abdijali appealed to OPDs and partners to support the school in securing adequate space that can accommodate hundreds of students. Although over 300 students are registered, the school lacks classrooms and enough teachers to admit them. He shared his personal journey, noting that he studied in a government school free of charge, which inspires him to educate deaf children today. While some colleagues receive small salaries, he serves without pay, motivated by the joy and progress of the students and the appreciation shown by their parents—many of whom face unemployment and poverty.



Discussion in the Event

Parents expressed concerns about the lack of curriculum books, exam assistance, and home-teaching support for their children. They also highlighted transportation challenges, narrow learning spaces, poor toilet facilities, safety risks during rainy seasons, and the absence of child-friendly environments for deaf students.

Teachers raised issues regarding unpaid salaries and the absence of a standard sign-language curriculum. They emphasized the need for capacity-building training, modern teaching tools, practical workshops, and recreational activities to support effective learning.

The school administration reported a shortage of essential equipment such as computers, a proper library, and sign-language books. Students also complained about overcrowded classrooms, lack of competitions and sports activities, and the feeling that deaf learners are not respected equally compared to others.



Recommendations In the Event

- Ensure that persons with disabilities (deaf, blind, and physically challenged) enjoy equality, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. Governments, CSOs, and OPDs should work together to guarantee access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.
- Fully implement the National Disability Act and align national policies with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to provide legal protection and accountability for PWDs.
- Develop and enforce disability-focused policies and strategic plans at national and regional levels, prioritizing accessibility, inclusion, and the well-being of PWDs, with regular monitoring to track progress.
- Invest in schools for deaf and blind children by providing learning materials, trained teachers, accessible classrooms, and child-friendly spaces to increase enrollment, retention, and academic success.
- Expand TVET programs for PWDs to provide practical skills, improve employment opportunities, and promote economic independence, ensuring training is adapted to their specific needs.
- Strengthen cooperation between government, OPDs, donors, and international agencies to mobilize resources, share expertise, and build capacity for sustainable disability inclusion initiatives.
- Implement programs to support students and parents affected by school dropout, providing counseling, learning assistance, and financial or material support to help children stay in school.
- Assist children who face challenges due to eviction from public or private land, ensuring they have access to safe school facilities and continuity in their education.



Implementing Partners of the Event

This event was a joint initiative collaboratively organized and participated in by SDN Somali Disability Network (SDN), the Institute of Education for Disabled People (IEDP), Rajo School for the Deaf, and Dayeel School for the Deaf, reflecting a strong partnership and shared commitment to promoting inclusive education, disability rights, and equal participation of persons with disabilities.

SDN Somali Disability Network (SDN):

SDN Somali Disability Network is a national coalition of 16 member organizations, including OPDs, schools, and vocational skills training centers, working collectively to advance disability inclusion in Somalia. SDN focuses on strengthening member capacity, mobilizing resources and fundraising, and coordinating joint actions to improve advocacy, service delivery, and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities across education, livelihoods, health care, and humanitarian response.

Institute of Education for Disabled People (IEDP):

The Institute of Education for Disabled People (IEDP) provides inclusive Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and skills development programs for persons with disabilities, including people with physical, visual, and hearing impairments. IEDP supports practical skills training, personal development, and employability, while promoting independence and social inclusion for learners with disabilities.

Rajo School for the Deaf:

Rajo School for the Deaf delivers inclusive formal education for deaf learners at primary, intermediate, and secondary levels. The school provides a supportive learning environment using appropriate teaching methods and communication approaches to ensure quality education, academic achievement, and life skills development for students with hearing impairments.

Dayeel School for the Deaf:

Dayeel School for the Deaf offers formal education for deaf children and youth at primary, intermediate, and secondary levels. The school is committed to accessible education, child protection, and inclusive learning, empowering deaf students with knowledge, communication skills, and opportunities for continued education and social participation.

Diyaar Institute for Skills Training:

Diyaar Institute for Skills Training focuses on equipping youth with practical and professional skills that enhance employability and self-reliance. Through market-oriented vocational and skills development programs, the institute supports young people to gain competencies needed for decent work, entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihoods.



Awrad Made for the Participants

The participants of the event presented award certificates to a group of students who successfully graduated from the intermediate class of the national exam. The ceremony celebrated their academic achievements and recognized their dedication and hard work throughout the school year.

Teachers and members of the Deaf demonstration team from Rajo Primary and Secondary School were also honored with gifts from the students and parents. These acknowledgments reflected the deep appreciation for their commitment to supporting the education and development of children with disabilities.

Rajo School, located in Mogadishu, provides formal education specifically for deaf children and youth, including those with multiple impairments such as combined deafness and physical disabilities. During the event, the school raised concerns about the urgent need for additional support for children with compounded sensory impairments, particularly those who are both deaf and blind, emphasizing the importance of inclusive education and specialized resources.

