



Somali Disability Empowerment Network (SODEN)

Profile

The Real Disability is a Bad Attitude:

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Background & Motivation

Being unable to move and walk like any average person is a burden that can make living impossible in circumstances like the one Somalia has been in since the last couple of decades. According to the records of some of the associations that deal with mobility-challenged individuals who have lost their legs during the civil war, naturally born with this handicap or disabled by diseases cite the estimation to be around 30,000 in Mogadishu but not sure.

During the reign of the last stable central government, the relevant agencies and ministries used to support this specific disabled group of the population through skill development initiatives and created employment opportunities for them. This has minimized the degree of dependency of the disabled people, while uplifting their morale and preventing them from being stigmatized. Some of them worked at government agencies, banks and factories; others worked as skilled labor and assisted in the rehabilitation of the amputated soldiers to cope with the challenges of their disability.

This role of the central government, like so many other roles crucial for the well-being of this society, have been left unfulfilled, creating a gap that needs someone to step up and empower the people with disabilities whose challenges go beyond the professional and financial security issues, and affect their social lives. Post Somali central state collapsed 1991, none profit organizations (Local and international NGOs) emerged to support stateless Society in Somalia. However, the non-profit organizations (local or international) that operate in Somalia do not have any specific programs to address short and long-term strategies to empower the people with disabilities.

For instance, the respond of the last emergence in Somalia, disables were not considered. Somali community may possibly consider them and mostly suffice giving them small allowances or food items to take them through the day. This short-term solution which is not more than band-aids to tackle the emergencies lacks to long-term vision of presenting the disability as a minor challenge in life. Currently, Disabled people in Somali are uneducated, unskilled, very poor, underprivileged community and stigmatized society.

Somali Disability Empowerment Network was founded on March 12, 2011 to address the issue in a more sustainable way, where the professional, economic and social lives of the disabled people are transformed into lives of interdependence and eliminating the stigmas that give the wrong impression about the people with disabilities. The bottom line is to emphasize that a person with a disability is not inability person.

Who We Are

Somali Disability Empowerment Network is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that assists the people with disability to build better lives through social integration, skill development, and useful representation in all aspects of life.

SODEN has been founded by individuals that have faced the real challenges of having a disability, and who have been touched by the success of other members of this group in their professional and social life. In an effort to replicate that success in the rest of the community, the idea of establishing a unique organization with a certain perspective has sprung.

Where we work

The organization operates in Somalia as a membership based organization. Based in Mogadishu, **SODEN** has representative in all over the regions of Somalia.

Vision & Mission

Vision

To see the people with disabilities participating in every aspect of the social, professional, economical and political lives

Mission

To provide a platform for people with mobility disabilities to develop the confidence to lead independent, sustainable social and professional lives through awareness campaigns, education, skill development, disability rights advocacy, social integration and employment generation.

Values & Principles

We uphold the following principles and values, and consider them the core of our existence:

- Equality
- Non-partisanship
- Sustainability, interdependence and sustainability
- Transparency and accountability
- Integrity

Objectives

The organization's broad goals are:

- To raise the morale and confidence of the people with disabilities
- To promote the equality of the people with the disabilities to those without the disabilities and eliminate the disability stigma
- To create awareness relevant to the social issues and rights of the people with disabilities
- To research and keep statistics on the issues of the people with disabilities
- To create employment opportunities by lobbying the private and public sectors
- To create a culture of volunteerism to cultivate support for the people with disabilities

How We Work

Somali Disability Empowerment Network focuses on the following areas to achieve its vision of disability equality and social assimilation:

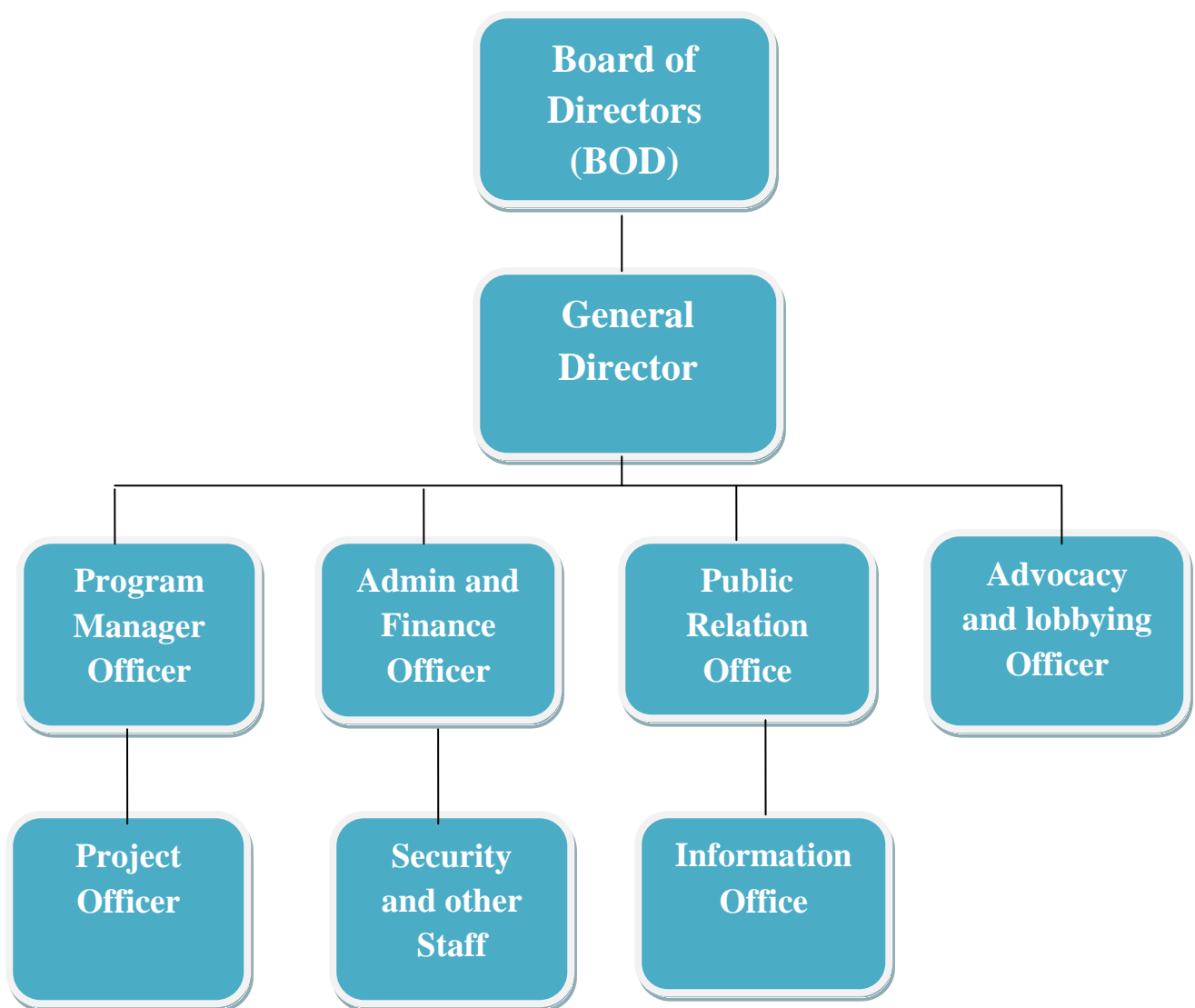
- Advocacy relevant to handicap empowerment including:
 - Awareness campaigns targeted at the people with disabilities to raise their morale and confidence
 - Social integration campaigns addressed at the general public to educate them about disabilities and eliminate the handicap stigma
 - Campaigns targeting the employment organizations and companies to remind them about the rights of the people with disabilities to get employed
 - Encouraging the building-owners, banks, companies and public service agencies to consider accessibility for the people with disabilities as a priority
 - Provision of special accommodation for the people with disabilities in their place of employment
- Implementation of projects that build the capacities of the people with disabilities:
 - Education and establishment of physically challenged individuals and people with disabilities
 - Facilitation of equipment to enhance the mobility of the people with disabilities
 - Provision of scholarships for the people with disabilities
 - Creation of employment opportunities for the people with disabilities
 - Research and publications on disability issues

We understand that doing all this requires the mobilization of the communities and organizations to do their share of the work. **SODEN** will establish and maintain good relations with the private and public sector to coordinate employment opportunities and raise funds to support the organization's initiatives.

Structure & Organization

Somali Disability Empowerment Network (SODEN) is run by two organizational bodies.

1. **Board of Directors:** includes members representing the various stakeholders of the organization, 70 percent of which are people with disabilities. They are in charge of providing the strategic leadership of the organization.
2. **Executive body:** headed by the executive director, this body comprises of the heads of the various functions of the organization including admin and finance, programs, public relations, legal advisor, and advocacy.



Stakeholders

Somali Disability Empowerment's projects and initiatives touch many aspects of the society, and its stakeholders include:

- People with disabilities
- Disable parents
- Public institutions
- Business sector
- Education sector
- Ministry of Labor
- Local and international NGOs

Implemented projects.

Project year	Implementing projects	Location	Donor	Budged Allocated	Key results
2013	Scholarships	Mogadishu Somalia	Some schools	free	7 boys and 5 girls
2013	Distribution food for persons with disabilities.	Mogadishu Somalia	Somali federal government.	\$70,151,00	397 boys 179 men 452 girls 161 women
2013	Income generation project for persons with disabilities.	Mogadishu Somalia	Hormuud foundation	\$ 15,000	16 men and 4 women
2013	Tailor training project for PWDs	Mogadishu Somalia	Qatar charity	67,540,00	40 men and 20 women
2014	CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT (14AF007-1) FOR MATURE	Mogadishu Somalia	ABILIS foundation	Euro: 9418.00	50 PWDs = 37 men 13 women

	PWDs				
2014	Iftar Program for persons with disabilities	Mogadishu Somalia	Hormuud Foundation	\$50,000.00	500 PWDs 220 female 280 male
2014	Commemoration of peace day 2014	Mogadishu Somalia	UNSOM	1,900.00	130 persons
2014	Commemoration of World Disability Day 3rd Dec. 2014	Mogadishu Somalia	AID THE DISABLE	1,000.00	100 person

Contact Us

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