



TESFA Refugees with Disabilities Association

Organizational Profile

A Refugee-Led and Disability-Led Organization
Promoting Rights, Dignity, Inclusion and Empowerment

Our Commitment

TESFA works to strengthen the rights, dignity, protection, inclusion and socioeconomic empowerment of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

www.tesfa.com.et

Organizational Profile

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1 About TESFA

TESFA Refugees with Disabilities Association (TESFA) is a refugee-led and disability-led organization established to promote the rights, dignity, protection, inclusion and socioeconomic empowerment of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities in Ethiopia.

TESFA was established by refugees with disabilities and is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are meaningfully included in humanitarian, development and community-based responses.

The organization works to address the barriers faced by refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities, including barriers to education, health and rehabilitation, protection, livelihoods, information, participation and access to essential services.

TESFA combines lived experience, community engagement, professional expertise and partnerships to develop inclusive and sustainable solutions for refugees with disabilities.

TESFA seeks to ensure that refugees with disabilities are not only beneficiaries of services, but active participants in decisions that affect their lives and communities.

2 Vision

A society where refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities live with dignity, equality, inclusion, protection and opportunities to realize their full potential.

3 Mission

To promote and protect the rights, dignity and inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities by providing inclusive services, strengthening community capacity, advocating for equitable access to opportunities and essential services, and building effective partnerships for sustainable impact.

4 Core Values

TESFA's work is guided by the following core values:

- **Dignity and Respect** – respecting the inherent dignity, rights and choices of every person.
- **Inclusion and Equality** – promoting equal participation and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- **Accountability and Transparency** – maintaining responsible, transparent and accountable organizational practices.
- **Integrity** – conducting organizational activities ethically, honestly and professionally.

- **Empowerment** – supporting individuals and communities to strengthen their capacities and become active agents of change.
- **Participation** – ensuring meaningful participation of refugees with disabilities in decisions affecting their lives.
- **Compassion and Solidarity** – responding to vulnerability with humanity, compassion and community solidarity.
- **Partnership** – working collaboratively with government institutions, humanitarian organizations, civil society, academia, donors and other stakeholders.

5 Who We Serve

TESFA serves refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities residing in Ethiopia, regardless of nationality, gender, age or type of disability.

Particular attention is given to people experiencing multiple or heightened vulnerabilities, including:

- Persons with severe or multiple disabilities;
- Women and girls with disabilities;
- Children with disabilities;
- Older persons with disabilities;
- Persons facing urgent protection or health concerns;
- Refugees experiencing significant socioeconomic vulnerability; and
- Individuals facing barriers to essential services and community participation.

6 Key Objectives

TESFA's key objectives include:

1. Promote and protect the rights and dignity of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities.
2. Improve access to inclusive education, scholarships, skills development and learning opportunities.
3. Improve access to health, rehabilitation, protection and psychosocial support services.
4. Strengthen livelihoods, entrepreneurship and socioeconomic empowerment.
5. Provide humanitarian and community-based support to refugees with disabilities experiencing vulnerability.
6. Strengthen disability-inclusive research, documentation and evidence-based advocacy.

7. Promote digital inclusion, information access and communication opportunities.
8. Strengthen the organizational capacity of TESFA and refugee-led disability organizations.
9. Develop strategic partnerships and mobilize resources for sustainable and inclusive programming.
10. Promote participation, leadership and meaningful engagement of refugees with disabilities in decisions affecting their communities.

7 Programme Areas

TESFA implements its work through interconnected programme areas designed to respond to the multidimensional needs of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities.

7.1 Education, Research and Advocacy

This area promotes access to education and learning opportunities while strengthening evidence-based advocacy.

Key areas include:

- Education and scholarships;
- School enrolment and educational support;
- Vocational and skills development;
- Adult education and lifelong learning;
- Digital learning opportunities;
- Career guidance;
- Research and documentation; and
- Advocacy and rights protection.

7.2 Health and Protection

TESFA promotes equitable access to health, rehabilitation, protection and inclusion services.

Key areas include:

- Health and rehabilitation;
- Disability-inclusive protection;
- Gender and child protection;
- Inclusion of vulnerable groups;
- Referral and access to specialized services; and

- Community-based support.

7.3 Community Development

TESFA supports refugees with disabilities to strengthen their social and economic participation.

Key areas include:

- Livelihood and economic empowerment;
- Entrepreneurship;
- Humanitarian and community support;
- Community mobilization;
- Membership and community engagement; and
- Capacity strengthening.

7.4 Capacity Building and Partnerships

TESFA recognizes institutional capacity and partnerships as essential components of sustainable impact.

Activities include:

- Training and capacity development;
- Organizational strengthening;
- Partnership development;
- Resource mobilization;
- Networking and collaboration; and
- Knowledge and experience sharing.

7.5 Culture, Digital Inclusion, Sports and Recreation

TESFA promotes social participation and inclusion through culture, arts, sports, recreation and digital technologies.

Key areas include:

- Information and digital inclusion;
- Sports;
- Culture and arts;
- Recreation;
- Digital communication; and
- Community awareness.

8 Governance Structure

TESFA operates through a governance structure designed to provide accountability, strategic direction and effective organizational management.

8.1 General Assembly

The General Assembly is the highest decision-making body of TESFA. It provides the overall mandate of the organization and elects the Board of Directors.

The General Assembly brings together members and community representatives and provides an important mechanism for participation and accountability.

8.2 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is elected by the General Assembly and provides strategic governance and oversight.

The Board:

- Provides strategic direction;
- Oversees organizational accountability;
- Approves key policies and plans;
- Provides oversight of organizational resources;
- Oversees the performance of the Chief Executive Officer;
- Supports strategic partnerships; and
- Represents the interests and priorities of the communities TESFA serves.

The Board does not manage the organization's daily operations. Day-to-day implementation is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and Operational Management.

8.3 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer provides executive leadership and is responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of TESFA's programmes and organizational priorities.

The CEO reports to the Board of Directors and supervises the Operational Management structure.

9 Operational Management Structure

TESFA's Operational Management is organized into specialized departments that work collaboratively under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer.

The eight operational departments are:

1. Finance, Human Resource and Administration
2. Health, Protection and Inclusion
3. Education, Research and Advocacy
4. Programs, Projects and Community Services
5. Information, Communication and Digital Services
6. Partnerships and Resource Mobilization
7. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)
8. Sports, Culture, Arts and Recreation

This structure enables TESFA to integrate humanitarian response, development, advocacy, organizational strengthening and community empowerment.

10 Human Resources and Volunteer Capacity

TESFA draws on a multidisciplinary pool of professionals, community members and volunteers who contribute their expertise to the organization's programmes and institutional development.

The organization has mobilized professionals from different fields, enabling TESFA to combine lived experience of displacement and disability with professional knowledge in areas such as:

- Programme and project management;
- Finance and administration;
- Education and research;
- Health and rehabilitation;
- Protection and inclusion;
- Information and communication technology;
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning;
- Partnerships and resource mobilization;
- Community services; and
- Sports, culture, arts and recreation.

TESFA's volunteer model enables the organization to access professional expertise while maintaining a strong connection with the refugee community.

11 Organizational Capacity and Systems

TESFA has established core organizational systems to support responsible and accountable operations.

These include:

- Organizational governance structures;
- Operational management structures;
- Programme and project planning systems;
- Financial and accounting procedures;
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning systems;
- Complaints, feedback and whistleblowing mechanisms;
- Safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) measures;
- Code of Conduct;
- Human resource and administrative systems;
- Research and documentation systems; and
- Communication and digital information systems.

TESFA continuously seeks to strengthen these systems in line with good governance, accountability, safeguarding and professional standards.

12 Partnerships and Collaboration

TESFA believes that sustainable impact requires strong collaboration among refugee-led organizations, government institutions, humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations, development partners, academic institutions, donors and other stakeholders.

TESFA therefore seeks to develop strategic partnerships in areas including:

- Disability-inclusive humanitarian response;
- Education and scholarships;
- Health and rehabilitation;
- Livelihoods and entrepreneurship;
- Research and innovation;
- Advocacy and rights protection;
- Organizational capacity strengthening;

- Digital inclusion;
- Resource mobilization; and
- International cooperation and networking.

TESFA's partnership approach emphasizes mutual learning, complementarity, accountability and sustainable impact.

13 Strategic Direction

TESFA's organizational development and expansion are envisioned through three broad strategic phases.

13.1 Phase I – Institutional Foundation

The first phase focuses on strengthening TESFA's organizational systems, governance, human resources, programmes, policies, partnerships and operational capacity.

13.2 Phase II – National Expansion

The second phase focuses on expanding TESFA's programmes and services to reach refugees with disabilities in different locations across Ethiopia.

13.3 Phase III – Financial Sustainability

The third phase focuses on strengthening long-term financial sustainability, diversified resource mobilization, institutional partnerships and the organization's capacity to maintain and scale its impact.

14 TESFA's Approach

TESFA applies a community-centered and rights-based approach to its work.

The organization's approach is based on the following principles:

- **Nothing About Us Without Us:** refugees with disabilities should meaningfully participate in decisions affecting their lives.
- **Rights-Based Programming:** programmes should promote dignity, equality and fundamental rights.
- **Disability Inclusion:** disability inclusion should be integrated across humanitarian and development interventions.
- **Community Ownership:** communities should participate in identifying needs, designing solutions and monitoring results.
- **Evidence-Based Action:** research, assessment and documentation should inform programming and advocacy.

- **Partnership and Collaboration:** TESFA works with relevant stakeholders to maximize available expertise, resources and opportunities.
- **Sustainability:** interventions should contribute to long-term resilience, empowerment and institutional sustainability.

15 Why TESFA?

TESFA brings together several distinctive strengths.

Strength	Description
Refugee-Led	TESFA is led by people with lived experience of displacement and understands the realities faced by refugee communities.
Disability-Led	Persons with disabilities are central to TESFA's leadership, participation and programming approach.
Community-Centered	TESFA works directly with refugee communities and prioritizes participatory solutions.
Multidisciplinary	The organization brings together professionals and volunteers with diverse expertise.
Rights-Based	TESFA places dignity, equality, protection and inclusion at the center of its work.
Partnership-Oriented	TESFA seeks collaboration with humanitarian, development, government, academic and international partners.
Evidence-Informed	TESFA promotes assessment, documentation, research and learning to strengthen its interventions.

16 Commitment to Accountability and Safeguarding

TESFA is committed to conducting its activities responsibly, ethically and transparently.

The organization recognizes that accountability and safeguarding are essential to maintaining trust with communities, partners, donors and other stakeholders.

TESFA has established and continues to strengthen relevant organizational policies and mechanisms, including:

- Code of Conduct;
- Complaints, Feedback and Whistleblowing mechanisms;
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH);
- Financial and Accounting Policy;
- Governance and organizational oversight mechanisms;
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems; and

- Community feedback and participation mechanisms.

TESFA seeks to ensure that its programmes are implemented with integrity, transparency, respect for human dignity and accountability to affected communities.

17 Partnership Opportunities

TESFA welcomes strategic collaboration with organizations and institutions interested in advancing disability-inclusive humanitarian and development programming.

Potential areas of collaboration include:

- Programme and project implementation;
- Grants and financial support;
- Education and scholarship programmes;
- Health and rehabilitation services;
- Livelihood and entrepreneurship initiatives;
- Research and innovation;
- Capacity building and training;
- Disability-inclusive humanitarian response;
- Advocacy and policy engagement;
- Digital inclusion and technology;
- Institutional strengthening; and
- International networking and knowledge exchange.

TESFA is particularly interested in partnerships that enable refugees with disabilities to move from vulnerability and exclusion toward dignity, participation, resilience and self-reliance.

18 Conclusion

TESFA Refugees with Disabilities Association is committed to building a more inclusive environment in which refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities can live with dignity, exercise their rights, access essential services and participate meaningfully in their communities.

As a refugee-led and disability-led organization, TESFA combines lived experience, community participation, professional expertise and strategic partnerships to address the interconnected challenges faced by refugees with disabilities.

TESFA remains committed to strengthening its institutional capacity, expanding inclusive services, building partnerships, mobilizing resources and contributing to sustainable, rights-based and disability-inclusive solutions in Ethiopia.

Together for Dignity, Inclusion and Empowerment.

Contact Information

TESFA Refugees with Disabilities Association

Location: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Website: www.tesfa.com.et

Email: info@tesfa.com.et

Administration: admin@tesfa.com.et

CEO: ceo@tesfa.com.et

For partnerships, collaboration, programme support and resource mobilization, please contact TESFA through the official channels above.