



UDHAN ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Empowering Visually Impaired Youth for Inclusive
Development

Mogadishu, Somalia

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1. Acknowledgements

The Somali Visual Impaired Youth Organization (UDHAN) extends its sincere gratitude to all partners, supporters, and stakeholders whose collaboration and support made the successful implementation of the 2025 interventions possible. UDHAN deeply appreciates the contributions of donors and development partners who provided financial, technical, and strategic support, enabling the organization to expand its programs and strengthen its institutional capacity in a challenging operating environment.

We express our appreciation to government institutions at national and local levels for their continued engagement, cooperation, and commitment to promoting disability inclusion. Their collaboration has been instrumental in advancing inclusive policies, enhancing civic participation, and creating opportunities for visually impaired youth to engage meaningfully in public and development processes. UDHAN also acknowledges the invaluable role played by United Nations agencies, particularly in providing platforms for dialogue, learning, and coordination on humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding initiatives.

UDHAN is grateful to civil society organizations and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) for their solidarity, partnership, and shared advocacy efforts. Through joint initiatives, knowledge exchange, and collective action, these partnerships have strengthened the disability movement and amplified the voices of visually impaired youth across Somalia. The spirit of collaboration and mutual support among civil society actors remains central to achieving sustainable and inclusive change.

We extend special recognition to UDHAN's dedicated staff, volunteers, and members whose tireless commitment, professionalism, and passion drove the organization's work throughout 2025. Their efforts ensured the effective delivery of programs and upheld UDHAN's values of inclusion, dignity, and empowerment. Above all, we honor visually impaired youth across Somalia whose resilience, determination, and leadership continue to inspire our mission and guide our work toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

2. Executive Summary

In 2025, UDHAN implemented a diverse set of programs and initiatives aimed at empowering visually impaired youth and advancing disability inclusion across multiple sectors. The organization focused on vocational and skills development to enhance employability and economic independence, while also investing in advocacy and awareness-raising activities to address stigma and promote understanding of disability rights. These interventions responded directly to the needs of visually impaired youth and aligned with broader national and international inclusion agendas. UDHAN also prioritized civic education and leadership development to strengthen the participation of visually impaired youth in public and civic life. Through engagement in national-level forums, policy discussions, and civil society platforms, the organization amplified the voices of its members and contributed to dialogue on inclusive governance, humanitarian response, and peacebuilding. Collaboration with government institutions, UN agencies, and development partners was strengthened, enhancing coordination and increasing the visibility of disability inclusion issues. Overall, UDHAN's 2025 interventions contributed to improved skills, increased confidence, and greater social and civic engagement among visually impaired youth. The organization reinforced its institutional capacity and solidified its reputation as a trusted and influential advocate for disability inclusion in Somalia. Building on these achievements, UDHAN enters the next phase of its work with a strong foundation for expanding

impact, deepening partnerships, and advancing sustainable, inclusive development for visually impaired youth.

3. Introduction

The year 2025 represented a defining period of growth, consolidation, and increased visibility for the Somali Visual Impaired Youth Organization (UDHAN). Operating within a challenging humanitarian and development landscape characterized by protracted displacement, economic hardship, and fragile institutions, UDHAN continued to respond to the persistent marginalization of visually impaired youth in Somalia. These challenges disproportionately affect young people with disabilities, who often face compounded barriers to education, employment, public services, and civic engagement. Despite these constraints, UDHAN demonstrated resilience and institutional maturity by strengthening its internal systems, expanding its programmatic reach, and enhancing its engagement at community, national, and policy levels. The organization intensified its commitment to promoting inclusion, empowerment, and dignity for visually impaired youth through strategic advocacy, skills development initiatives, participation in national and international forums.

By centering the voices and lived experiences of youth with visual impairments, UDHAN contributed to shaping more inclusive humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding responses. Throughout 2025, UDHAN aligned its interventions with national priorities and global frameworks, including disability rights and inclusive development agendas.

The organization emphasized collaboration with government institutions, civil society actors, UN agencies, and development partners to promote coordinated and sustainable approaches to disability inclusion. This year also marked increased recognition of UDHAN as a credible civil society organization advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly visually impaired youth, within Somalia's evolving policy and development environment.

4. Organizational Background

The Somali Visual Impaired Youth Organization (UDHAN) is a youth-led, rights-based organization established to address the systemic exclusion of visually impaired youth from social, economic, and civic life in Somalia. The organization was founded in response to longstanding inequalities that have limited access to education, employment opportunities, leadership roles, and public participation for young people with visual impairments. These barriers are often reinforced by stigma, limited institutional capacity, and the absence of disability-inclusive policies and services. UDHAN is guided by the principle that visually impaired youth are not passive beneficiaries but active agents of change capable of contributing meaningfully to national development and peacebuilding processes. The organization works to empower its members through vocational and life-skills training, leadership development, advocacy, and civic engagement initiatives. By strengthening individual capacities and collective voice, UDHAN seeks to enable visually impaired youth to achieve self-reliance, social inclusion, and equal participation.

In addition to direct capacity-building interventions, UDHAN actively engages in advocacy and policy dialogue to promote disability-inclusive laws, strategies, and programs. The organization collaborates with government institutions, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and international partners to ensure that disability perspectives are integrated into humanitarian response, development planning, and peacebuilding frameworks. Through strategic partnerships and evidence-based advocacy, UDHAN aims to contribute to a more inclusive society where the rights and potential of visually impaired youth are recognized and protected.



5. Mission, Vision, Core Value



Mission

SVYO's mission is to empower visually impaired youth through education, inclusion, innovation, and employment opportunities. We work to ensure equal access to quality education, advocate for inclusive policies, promote innovative solutions, and support economic independence, enabling visually impaired individuals to live dignified, fulfilling, and independent lives in Somalia.

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Vision

SVYO, we envision a Somalia where the light of opportunity shines brightly for every visually impaired individual. Our vision is a society where visual impairment is not a barrier but a unique perspective, and where every individual, regardless of their visual abilities, enjoys equal access to education, employment, and a fulfilling life

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Values

SVYO is guided by strong core values that promote inclusivity, empowerment, equity, innovation, collaboration, integrity, compassion, sustainability, and continuous learning. These values shape our decisions and actions, ensuring ethical leadership, equal opportunities, and meaningful, long-term impact for visually impaired youth and their communities in Somalia.

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6.Activities Implemented in 2025

6.1. Commemoration of World Braille Day (4 January 2025)

UDHAN organized a national commemoration of World Braille Day to raise awareness on the critical importance of Braille as a fundamental tool for education, employment, and independent living for persons with visual impairments. The event highlighted the role of Braille in promoting literacy, lifelong learning, and equal access to information, while addressing ongoing gaps in the availability of accessible learning materials in Somalia.

The commemoration brought together government representatives, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), civil society actors, development partners, and visually impaired youth. Through speeches, discussions, and experience-sharing, participants strengthened advocacy efforts for inclusive education systems and increased investment in accessible formats. The event also provided a platform for visually impaired youth to voice their perspectives and reinforce collective action toward disability-inclusive policies and practices.



6.2 Call Center Capacity Building Training (7–9 January 2025)

UDHAN conducted a three-day call center capacity building training aimed at enhancing the employability and job readiness of visually impaired youth. The training focused on practical customer service skills, effective communication, time management, teamwork, and professional conduct within service-oriented work environments. Participants were also introduced to workplace expectations and basic problem-solving skills relevant to call center operations.

The training contributed to increased self-confidence and improved technical and interpersonal competencies among participants, positioning them for employment opportunities within the growing service sector. By equipping visually impaired youth with market-relevant skills, the intervention supported UDHAN's broader objective of promoting economic inclusion and self-reliance.



6.3. Secretarial & Administration Skills Workshop (26–28 February 2025)

UDHAN organized an intensive Secretarial and Administration Skills Workshop to strengthen the capacity of visually impaired youth to perform effectively in office-based roles. The workshop covered core competencies such as office administration, record keeping, filing systems, professional ethics, and formal communication. Emphasis was placed on accuracy, confidentiality, and organizational skills required in professional environments. Participants also gained practical knowledge on the use of assistive technologies and accessible software that enable visually impaired individuals to carry out administrative tasks efficiently. The workshop enhanced participants' understanding of inclusive workplace practices and expanded their employment prospects in administrative and secretarial positions, contributing to long-term economic empowerment.



6.4. Breaking Barriers: Disability Inclusion Advocacy (17–18 March 2025)

UDHAN conducted a two-day advocacy training engaging community leaders, educators, and local activists to address social, cultural, and infrastructural barriers faced by visually impaired persons. The training emphasized creating inclusive environments, promoting equal opportunities, and fostering community-driven solutions to challenges experienced by persons with disabilities. Participants explored practical strategies for raising awareness, improving accessibility, and implementing inclusive practices at the community level. Through discussions, role plays, and collaborative exercises, the initiative strengthened local networks and empowered participants to advocate for disability inclusion in schools, workplaces, and public spaces. This activity reinforced UDHAN's mission to build communities that actively support and include visually impaired youth in all aspects of social and civic life.



6.5. Advocacy Opportunities on Implementing the National Disability Act (22 April 2025)

UDHAN facilitated a national-level dialogue with policymakers, government officials, and civil society actors to promote the implementation of Somalia's National Disability Act. The advocacy forum provided a platform to review key provisions of the legislation, assess challenges in enforcement, and propose practical measures for compliance and accountability. Through evidence-based presentations and participatory discussions, stakeholders strengthened their commitment to disability-inclusive legislation and policy enforcement. The forum enhanced collaboration between government institutions, civil society organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), ensuring that visually impaired youth and other marginalized groups benefit from legal protections and inclusive policies. UDHAN's engagement further solidified its role as a trusted advocate for disability rights at the national level.

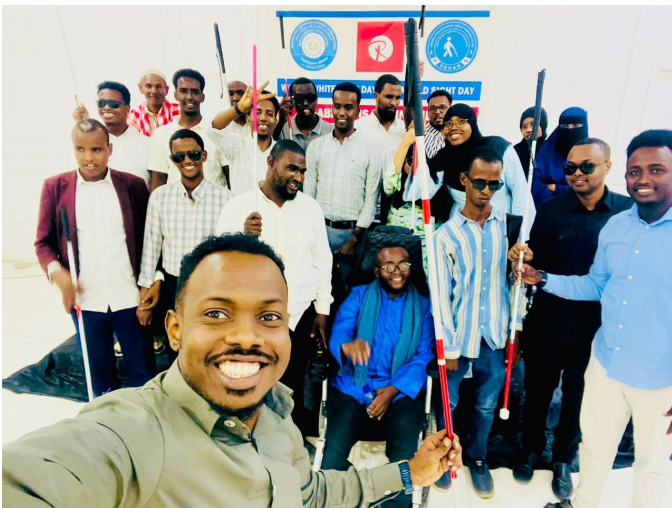
6.6. Supporting Electoral Process for Persons with Disabilities (24–25 September 2025)

UDHAN implemented a civic education initiative aimed at empowering persons with disabilities with knowledge of their electoral rights and promoting inclusive participation in the democratic process. The program provided participants with practical guidance on voter registration, electoral procedures, and advocacy for accessible polling processes. The initiative contributed to increased political awareness, confidence, and active participation among visually impaired and other disabled voters. By promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in elections and public decision-making, UDHAN reinforced democratic principles, accountability, and equal participation. This activity highlighted political empowerment as a key component of social inclusion and strengthened UDHAN's advocacy for an accessible and participatory electoral process in Somalia.



6.7. White Cane Day & World Sight Day (15 October 2025)

UDHAN organized a national commemoration of White Cane Day and World Sight Day to raise awareness on mobility, accessibility, and independence of visually impaired persons. The event highlighted the importance of assistive devices, safe mobility practices, and inclusive urban planning to ensure the full participation of visually impaired individuals in society. The commemoration brought together government representatives, civil society actors, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and visually impaired youth. Through panel discussions, demonstrations, and experience-sharing sessions, the event reinforced partnerships with government agencies and civil society organizations, strengthened advocacy for inclusive policies, and provided a platform for visually impaired youth to share their perspectives on accessibility and independence.



6.8 World Disability Day Commemoration (3 December 2025)

UDHAN hosted a national event to commemorate World Disability Day, focusing on inclusive education, disability rights, and the effective implementation of national policies. The event engaged students, OPDs, government representatives, and civil society organizations, fostering dialogue on challenges and opportunities for disability inclusion in education, employment, and civic life. Participants discussed practical strategies for promoting accessibility, inclusive teaching practices, and the enforcement of policies supporting persons with disabilities. The event also served as a platform for advocacy, knowledge exchange, and collaboration, amplifying the voices of visually impaired youth and highlighting their contributions to social, educational, and economic development in Somalia.



6.9. Civil Society Summit Participation (8–10 December 2025)

UDHAN participated in the Civil Society Summit organized by UNDP, which focused on operationalizing the Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) Nexus in Somalia. During the summit, UDHAN presented its organizational achievements, shared lessons learned, and outlined its future vision for disability inclusion. The participation reinforced UDHAN’s visibility among national and international stakeholders, strengthened partnerships, and provided opportunities for learning and collaboration with other civil society organizations, government institutions, and UN agencies. UDHAN’s contributions highlighted the importance of including visually impaired youth in humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding processes, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are integrated into national strategies.

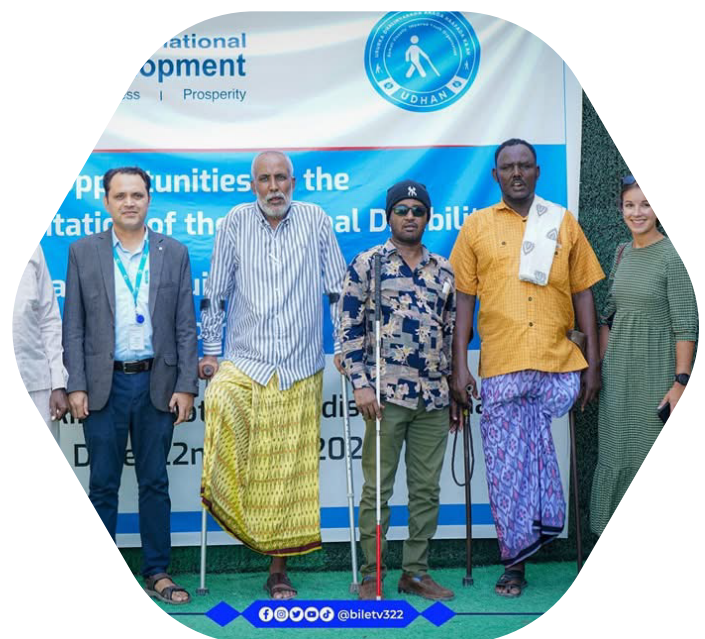


UDHAN
Somali Visually Impaired Youth Organization

7. Programmatic Impact

In 2025, UDHAN's interventions created a profound and measurable impact on the lives of visually impaired youth across Somalia. The organization's multi-faceted programs focused on enhancing personal skills, confidence, and leadership abilities, empowering young people to participate fully in their communities and society at large. Through tailored capacity-building initiatives, beneficiaries developed critical competencies in areas such as vocational skills, digital literacy, advocacy, and social engagement, which are essential for personal growth, employability, and self-reliance. UDHAN's approach was holistic, combining skills development with mentorship, community engagement, and advocacy opportunities. Visually impaired youth were encouraged to take on leadership roles within their communities, participate in civic activities, and voice their perspectives in decision-making processes. This empowerment strengthened their sense of agency and self-worth, enabling them to challenge stereotypes, overcome societal barriers, and contribute meaningfully to social and economic development. The organization's programs also reinforced the importance of policy engagement and public awareness. By conducting advocacy campaigns, workshops, and awareness-raising events, UDHAN successfully influenced local stakeholders, policymakers, and communities to recognize and address the challenges faced by visually impaired individuals. These efforts led to increased visibility of disability issues at national forums, ensuring that inclusion and accessibility are gradually becoming central to policy planning and community development initiatives.

The 2025 interventions not only benefited individual youth but also contributed to broader societal impact. Families, community leaders, and local institutions became more aware of the importance of creating enabling environments for visually impaired people. UDHAN's work demonstrated that when youth are empowered with skills, knowledge, and opportunities, they can become active agents of change, contributing to inclusive development and strengthening social cohesion. Overall, the programmatic impact of 2025 underscored UDHAN's strategic focus on empowerment, advocacy, and systemic change, making a lasting difference in the lives of visually impaired youth and the communities in which they live.



7.Conclusion

The year 2025 stands as a remarkable testament to UDHAN's resilience, vision, and leadership in advancing inclusive development for visually impaired youth. Despite facing persistent systemic challenges ranging from limited resources and societal misconceptions to infrastructural barriers UDHAN demonstrated an unwavering commitment to ensuring that visually impaired youth are not left behind in the development agenda.

Throughout the year, the organization's interventions reflected a strategic balance between immediate, individual-level empowerment and long-term, systemic change. By equipping youth with skills, confidence, and leadership opportunities, UDHAN enabled beneficiaries to participate fully in society and influence decisions that directly affect their lives. At the same time, advocacy initiatives raised awareness among policymakers, civil society, and the public about the critical importance of disability inclusion, fostering a more inclusive mindset across Somali communities.

The outcomes of UDHAN's work in 2025 highlight the organization's capacity to create meaningful social change even in challenging contexts. Visually impaired youth not only gained practical skills and enhanced self-confidence but also emerged as vocal advocates for their rights, inspiring peers and communities alike. UDHAN's achievements also underscore the importance of sustained collaboration with governmental bodies, international partners, and local organizations, which collectively strengthen the ecosystem for disability inclusion.

Ultimately, the year 2025 illustrates that progress is possible when determination, strategic planning, and inclusive principles guide development efforts.UDHAN's accomplishments serve as a benchmark for future interventions and provide a clear roadmap for how empowerment, advocacy, and inclusion can transform lives, communities, and society at large. The organization's resilience and commitment in 2025 position it as a recognized leader and trusted agent of change for visually impaired youth in Somalia.

8.Future Outlook

Looking forward, UDHAN envisions a future where visually impaired youth are fully included in all aspects of Somali society, equipped with the skills, confidence, and opportunities to lead fulfilling and productive lives. In line with this vision, the organization plans to expand its vocational training programs, providing youth with practical skills that align with market needs and emerging economic opportunities. By offering training in areas such as digital technology, entrepreneurship, and specialized professions, UDHAN aims to increase employment and income-generation prospects for visually impaired youth, fostering self-reliance and economic empowerment.


In addition to skills development, advocacy and policy engagement will remain a central pillar of UDHAN's work. The organization will continue to influence policymakers, raise public awareness, and promote the adoption of inclusive policies that ensure equal access to education, employment, and social services for visually impaired individuals. Through sustained campaigns, youth-led advocacy, and collaborative partnerships, UDHAN seeks to cultivate an environment where the rights and potential of visually impaired people are recognized and valued at all levels of society.


Youth leadership initiatives will also be expanded to nurture a new generation of empowered advocates who can influence change in their communities. By creating platforms for youth participation, mentorship, and peer learning, UDHAN will ensure that young people are not only beneficiaries but also active drivers of social transformation.


Furthermore, strategic partnerships with government agencies, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector will be strengthened to promote sustainable disability inclusion across Somalia. UDHAN's commitment to evidence-based programming, inclusive policy development, and community engagement will create a strong foundation for long-term social change. Through these efforts, the organization envisions a future where visually impaired youth can thrive, contribute meaningfully to national development, and enjoy equitable opportunities for personal and professional growth.

GET INVOLVED

Who we work with is just as important as the work we do. Collaboration with partners is essential to driving meaningful and lasting change. Through strong partnerships, we develop local solutions that create real impact. [If you would like to contribute to our journey, contact us.](#)

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