

University Accessibility Centers

Make Higher Education Accessible for All

Amideast supports academic success for persons with disabilities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and beyond by expanding access to higher education and skills development.

Working directly with universities, governments, and Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPDs), our programs assist in removing obstacles that impede persons with disabilities from acquiring the education, experience and skills critical to achieving their academic and career goals.

University Accessibility Center Model

University Accessibility Centers play a crucial role in facilitating equal access to higher education by reducing and removing barriers to students' full participation in university life. They provide a physically accessible environment, ensure reasonable accommodations, and offer access to assistive technology.

Additionally, these centers foster awareness on campus and within the community about the rights and available services for students with disabilities. These centers also advocate for fair admissions policies, support faculty in creating inclusive classrooms, and organize activities that engage individuals with and without disabilities.

Between 2018 and 2025, Amideast established accessibility centers at all 27 public universities across Egypt, building the capacity of center managers to implement sustainable strategies that maximize center impact. The initial pilot centers set up at 5 public universities have operated independently since 2021.

Key Successes and Impact

- ✓ *Ministry of Higher Education establishment of a Disability Committee*
- ✓ *14% increase in number of students with disabilities enrolling in higher education*
- ✓ *More extensive range of faculties and majors open to students with disabilities*
- ✓ *NGO funding secured for accessibility assessment and scholarships*
- ✓ *Institutionalization of policies to ensure fair and appropriate accommodations*



Program Components

Strategy & Governance	Accessibility & Infrastructure	Training & Capacity Building	Policy & Systems Building	Outreach & Engagement
MOU	Assessment	Disability Equality Training (DET)	Procedure Manual	Marketing
Vision & Mission,	Renovation	Disability Awareness Program (DAP)	Disability Law	Networking with Local NGOs
Gap Analysis	Furnishing & Equipment	Training of Trainers	M&E	Study Tour
Bylaws	Assistive Technology	Human Resources	Data Management	Disability Conference
Project Management	Universal Design for Learning			Inauguration
Sustainability	Digital Accessibility			

Amideast's Unique Model

- ✓ *University ownership for sustainability*
- ✓ *Co-creation with local stakeholders*
- ✓ *Capacity building and mindset change*
- ✓ *Hands-on application of training content*
- ✓ *Centers report directly to university leadership to ensure equal access and compliance with disability inclusion laws across the university*
- ✓ *Ministry capacity and structures to oversee disability inclusion strengthened*
- ✓ *Emphasis on center communication, advocacy, and outreach*
- ✓ *Core components customized to community needs and existing systems*

Disability Inclusion Matters

While persons with disabilities are an estimated 15% of the global population, barriers to their full participation in society remain.

Disability inclusion is essential for individual, economic and societal success. It is a globally recognized priority, as reflected in the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals that provide a framework for supporting people with disabilities. As awareness in this topic grows, there are increasing calls for more inclusive social development.

Disability inclusion in universities contributes to a more equitable, diverse, and accessible learning environment that benefits all students. It ensures that students with disabilities have the opportunity to pursue their educational goals and achieve their full potential.

ABOUT AMIDEAST

Amideast is a U.S. non-profit organization established in 1951 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., with country offices and programs in the Middle East and North Africa region and beyond. We provide transformational education, training, testing, and education and cultural exchange opportunities that enable individuals, companies, and international partners to better address 21st-century challenges at home and abroad.

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