



LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES REPORT AUGUST, 2016

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HIWAR Regional Project

"Strengthening Disabled People's Organizations' role in multi-stakeholder dialogues for democratic changes in Egypt, Jordan and Occupied Palestinian Territories



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Acknowledgement and Appreciation:

After extracting lessons learned and good practices from the three-year “HIWAR” Project, which required persistence and hard work by the project team, I would like to express my deep appreciation to those who have been part of this project’s success and to those who have also helped in the completion of this report. Furthermore, I would like to extend my gratitude to Mrs. Rola Abu Al-Rub, Regional Project Manager and Mrs. Ola Abu Al Ghaib, Disability and Social Policy Advisor, for their contribution to this project and for their support in all the project’s phases, particularly during the implementation, coordination and writing of the lessons learned and good practices report.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the Disabled People’s Organizations(DPOs), government representatives and civil society organizations (CSOs) in Egypt, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories, in addition to the Information and Research Center - King Hussein Foundation (Project Partner in Jordan) and the Center for Continuing Education - Birzeit University (Project Partner in the occupied Palestinian territories), for their relentless efforts and valuable time to share their work and expertise with me during the implementation of the project.

Technical Advisor
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1. Introduction

1.1 General Introduction to the Project



“HIWAR” is a regional project implemented in Egypt, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories. These countries have been selected given several similarities in the policies, practices and issues relating to persons with disabilities and the trend towards community mobilization of people with disabilities at the national level in both the government and civil sectors. Disabled People’s Organizations face difficulties in building political, organizational and technological capacity. They also need to identify their role as part of the civil society and as partners in development and peer-to-peer policy dialogue. Therefore, such Organizations need to maximize their efforts in terms of participation and influence on policy reforms, and seek recognition by the political bodies as part of the civil society system, a matter that will result in engaging Disabled People’s Organizations in comprehensive dialogues and reform process at the local, national and regional levels.

In partnership with the Information and Research Center at King Hussein Foundation in Jordan and the Centre for Continuing Education at Birzeit University in the occupied Palestinian territories, with a support from the European Union, Handicap International is implementing this three-years regional project (2013 - 2016) in Jordan, Egypt and the occupied Palestinian territories. The project aims to promote the participation of Disabled People’s Organizations as an effective, reliable and qualified representative in reviewing and analysing national policies with public authorities and civil society organizations.

This project has been implemented between April 2013 and September 2016, and has sought to support the community mobilization of people with disabilities in the Middle East

by strengthening the participation of people with disabilities in the economic and social fields in Egypt, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories through development and implementation of policies and programs that fulfil and promote their capabilities and rights.

1.2 Project Objectives:

1. Ensuring that Disabled People’s Organizations adapt their potential as a civil representative in the context of regional transformation, through promoting capacity building to raise awareness, supporting the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), as well as protecting and ensuring their enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. Enhancing and supporting scientific research and the issuance of national and regional reports on the implementation of existing policies, preparing advocacy strategies and translating them into prominent national initiatives to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, and supporting their participation in the policy reshaping dialogues among key stakeholders.
3. Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations and public authorities (PA) on the rights of persons with disabilities, promoting the mechanism of their inclusion in their organizations’ policies and activating sustainable impact on the importance of dialogue.
4. Monitoring and identifying best practices related to capabilities and influence of Disabled People’s Organizations in the policy making process, and the significance of their participation in the community mobilization of people with disabilities, civil society and public authorities at the national and regional levels.

1.3 Project Activities:

1. Conducting a baseline survey to identify the needs of Disabled People’s Organizations, improve their role and promote their capabilities as active advocacy NGOs in the process of national policy making with public

authorities and civil society organizations in Egypt, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories.

2. conduct regional trainings to develop the capabilities of Disabled People's Organizations in target countries on organizational development, scientific research methodology, policy analysis, as well as preparation and implementation of advocacy strategies.
3. Developing the training curriculum for e-learning as a support for capacity building program.
4. Analyzing policies related to the rights of persons with disabilities from a national perspective and on the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and preparing relevant national and regional reports.
5. Supporting Disabled People's Organizations in the preparation of national advocacy strategies, making recommendations, identifying intervention priorities and implementing local and national leading initiatives.
6. Organizing visits to exchange experiences between representatives of targeted Disabled People's Organizations, in order to identify the good practices and lessons learned among stakeholders.
7. conduct regional seminars and workshops for representatives of public authorities and civil society organizations to disseminate and share experiences on the rights of persons with disabilities, ways to integrate disability initiatives and projects, mechanisms of policy making and analysis as well as advocacy strategies for their rights.
8. conduct discussion meetings and national dialogues for representatives of Disabled People's Organizations, civil society organizations and public authorities to present the results of the study of challenges facing the inclusion of students with disabilities in public schools, discussing the findings and recommendations of policy analysis related to inclusion of students with disabilities in basic education, and identifying priority issues, strengths and priorities of intervention to support and direct leading initiatives.

9. Updating "Mubadara" website in terms of the project's achievements, and providing training materials and programs, publications and news related to community mobilization of people with disabilities.
10. Identifying and collecting the lessons learned and good practices through follow-up, evaluation and results comparison between target countries at the local, national and regional levels.
11. conduct a final workshop to discuss the political gaps in the field of disability inclusion, the lessons learned and good practices, and promoting exchange of expertise and networking mechanism at the regional and international levels between Disabled People's Organizations, civil society organizations and public authorities.

1.4 Introduction to lessons learned

The project aims to focus on the integration of practical experience with the effective dissemination of lessons learned and good practices. Disability is considered as a matter of human rights that affects different sectors and requires adoption of multi-sectoral approach. Accordingly, the participation of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) in policy formulation and reform process across all sectors is equally important as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (Articles 4, 29, 30, 32 and 33). However, despite the gradual spread of the Rights-Based Approach (RBA) in the disability field in the public sector and among civil rights activists in the community, the level of awareness and competencies among Disabled People's Organizations is still insufficient to ensure their full participation in such operations. In addition, the previous experiences of Handicap International in these countries did not reflect the limited exchange of information and low communication within the field of disability only, but also between political and civil rights activists in the community.

Objectives

The lessons learned focus on success factors/ challenges which in turn generate additional knowledge on how to design and implement future projects related to supporting Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) in the region.



The main objectives focus on:

1. Project design
2. Project management/implementation
3. Participation of all relevant stakeholders

Following are some of the factors that should be taken into account when trying to understand the success or failure of a project:

- Support and participation of stakeholders during project implementation.
- Communication between all relevant stakeholders.
- Proper selection of team members/partners to ensure availability of the skills required to achieve project outcomes.
- Motivation of partners involved in the project to strengthen cooperation in order to identify the duties of each partner.

The report aims to identify 2-3 potential good practices in terms of two different aspects.

The first aspect; grant initiatives activity , and report will be focused on the following factors :

- Cooperation and networking between Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) during design and implementation.
- Participation of various types of stakeholders during implementation.
- Achieving concrete results based on clear advocacy-related messages.

The second aspect; is study tour activity, which will focus on the following factors:

- Selection of countries.
- Benefits for Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) from participation in the tour.
- Diversity of organizations interviewed during the tour.



2. Approach:

Handicap International team developed a general and comprehensive methodology to take advantage of the lessons learned, and certain tools were designed for use throughout the implementation duration of the project. The team also directed stakeholders involved in the project in each country through participatory process in workshops/focus group discussions/semi-structured interviews. In addition, the team prepared documents that combine main consultancy resulting from working with stakeholders. The participatory approach was adopted as an essential approach to collect good practices and lessons learned in all phases.

Implementation of good practices and lessons learned is divided into four phases:

Phase One: preparation of terms of reference and tools

Phase Two: data collection

Phase Three: documentation and reporting

Phase Four: dissemination of findings of good practices and lessons learned

Under this approach, data was collected in two phases in each country of project intervention.. In phase one- which aims to highlight the lessons learned since the beginning of the project and the achievements made throughout the project term- various meetings were held with stakeholders. In Egypt, the following meetings were held: two focus group discussions with Disabled People's Organizations, three individual interviews with civil society organizations, two individual meetings with decision makers/ government representatives , one individual meeting with the researcher who supervised the national research, in addition to two individual meetings with the project team.

As for the occupied Palestinian territories, the following meetings were held: one focus group

discussion with Disabled People's Organizations, one focus group discussion with civil society organizations, four individual meetings with decision makers/government representatives, one focus group discussion with the partner of the project "Birzeit University- the Center for Continuing Education", as well as three individual meetings with the project team.

The following meetings were also held in Jordan: two focus group discussions with Disabled People's Organizations, one focus group discussion with civil society organizations, one focus group discussion with the partner of the project "King Hussein Foundation- the Information and Research Center", as well as two individual meetings with decision makers/ government officers.

In phase two, data was collected which aims to highlight the implementation of advocacy initiatives (small grants) and obtain the lessons learned and good practices from such initiatives. To obtain this information, the following meetings were held with those participating in the implementation and management of initiatives. In Egypt, a workshop was held with Disabled People's Organizations, and a focus group discussion was held with decision makers.

In the occupied Palestinian territories, the following meetings were held: a workshop with Disabled People's Organizations in the West Bank, (Skype) meeting with Disabled People's Organizations in the Gaza Strip, one focus group discussion with decision makers/government representatives, one focus group discussion with civil society organizations, as well as one meeting with some beneficiaries from the initiatives.

In Jordan, two focus group discussions were held with Disabled People's Organizations, as well as three individual meetings with the project management team.



3. Lessons Learned

3.1 Selection of Subjects



The lessons learned in all the project's activities and events were implemented with a focus on the following activities:

- Building the capacity of project participants (Disabled People's Organizations, civil society organizations, and government representatives)
- National Research
- National and regional meetings
- Exchange visits (Study tour)
- Initiatives
- Communication between project partners

Working on these subjects may yield certain good practices, particularly in the implementation of initiatives.

Based on the analysis results of data collected during various meetings held with the project stakeholders in the three countries, the lessons learned were divided in each of the subjects mentioned above into lessons shared among countries, and lessons for each country based on differences of context between countries.

3.2 Focus/Analysis of Subjects



Lessons learned:

First subject: capacity building of participants

• Subject content:

This subject is designed to transfer skills and knowledge relating to the rights of persons with disabilities, mobilization and advocacy strategies, project management through training and e-learning, analysis of national policy frameworks, as well as planning and implementation to develop a practical mobilization and advocacy plan. It is worth mentioning that the learning process in this way provides opportunities for strengthening relations and exchange of expertise between Disabled People's Organizations in each country, and among Disabled People's Organizations from the three target countries. In addition, various regional trainings were held on the rights of persons with disabilities as well as mobilization, advocacy and decision-making strategies. Such trainings helped promoting the knowledge of Disabled People's Organizations, which led to critical analysis of the situation, guiding and improving mobilization activities and increasing dialogue.

Training on organizational development was held, including training the beneficiaries on leadership and entrepreneurship skills, good governance, planning, institutional work organization, fundraising, analysis of needs and problems, preparation for projects, communication, coalition building and time management skill.

Training commenced on the principles and bases of quantitative and qualitative research, with an introduction to policy analysis. The beneficiaries were introduced to the empowerment of Disabled People's Organizations as well as the mechanisms and procedures of linking disability, scientific research, policy analysis and advocacy. The trainings included an introduction to the qualitative and quantitative research approach, training on how to identify the problem, research tools and methodology, information collection and coding mechanism, conclusions analysis, drawing and drafting as well as making recommendations.

- **Shared lessons learned among the three countries:**

Following are some of the positive practices unanimously recognized by all those who were interviewed during data collection in the project, which are advised to be adopted in future projects:

- work on empower project partners, particularly Disabled People's Organizations, at the beginning of the project leading to give them an active role in building a strong base for the project, which results in smooth implementation of activities and events. These trainings also help the organizations in achieving their objectives.
- conducting regional trainings that support exchange of expertise among participants from different countries, thereby contributing to improved disability rights movement in each country.

Following are the practices that need further focus, adjustment and work in future projects:

- To promote the capabilities of Disabled People's Organizations and to ensure sustainability, it is necessary to give more time for each training subject, and focus on other training subjects that support the institutional building of organizations and individuals. To ensure suitability of training subjects to the needs and capabilities of participants, an individual assessment of participants in trainings should be made in addition to the institutional assessment implemented at the beginning of the project, along with training more than one person from participating organizations.

- **Special Lessons Learned:**

- **Occupied Palestinian Territories:**
Practical activities should be enhanced in parallel with theoretical trainings, where representatives of Disabled People's Organizations unanimously agreed that the implementation of research and the support provided during the implementation process added much more to their skills than theoretical trainings.
- **Egypt:**
- In addition to the trainings regionally implemented during the project, the representatives of organizations preferred

national trainings that keep pace with the country's developments and the needs of organizations throughout the project time. The representatives also preferred that implementation of training be strengthened with multiple and adapted mechanisms to ensure full benefit for all participants with disabilities, particularly participants with intellectual disabilities and hearing impairment (not only using a sign language interpreter as was the case in the project but rather providing a trainer with hearing impairment, if possible)

Second Subject: National Research



- **Subject Content:**

The importance of field research lies in being a part of building the capacity of Disabled People's Organizations to promote evidence-based practices in support of disability-related research. Supporting research on disability issues and linking results to actions are vital measures for developing the capabilities of Disabled People's Organizations. The preparatory steps for research were also underlined to ensure developing the capabilities of Disabled People's Organizations through this research practice, and to verify their ability of analysing disability-related policies and practices and determining recommendations in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Based on the policy analysis trainings conducted with Disabled People's Organizations, teams from representatives of associations were formed to analyse the real situation of disability in each of the target countries, and analyse stakeholders including decision makers, civil society organizations, service providers and rights holders. A set



of social and economic issues related to education, health, rehabilitation and labour were tackled. According to the vote made among 35 male and female representatives from Disabled People's Organizations in Jordan, Egypt and Palestine, a significant issue was selected as a practical and effective model for the next phase, i.e. to guarantee the right of students with disabilities to access an inclusive education on equal footing with non-disabled students pursuant to Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Accordingly, Handicap International organized a research study on the difficulties and challenges faced by people with physical disabilities and visual and hearing impairment in inclusive education at public schools. The study sought to identify the "obstacles and barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities (hearing and visual impairment, as well as physical and intellectual disabilities) at public schools in Jordan, Egypt and Palestine.

- **Shared lessons learned among the three countries:**

Following are some of the positive practices unanimously recognized by all those who were interviewed during data collection in the project, which are advised to be adopted in future projects:

- Using results-based research mechanism and methodology helped Disabled People's Organizations to identify the reality of disability at public schools, in addition to identifying the needs in each region and developing appropriate interventions for each need.
- Using participatory approach in the implementation of research which based on the real situation and as a direct application of trainings associated with the capacity building program for organizations.
- Implementing research in cooperation with decision makers and civil society organizations contributed to highlighting the role of Disabled People's Organizations and enhancing their relationships with all stakeholders.

Following are the practices that need further focus, adjustment and work in future projects, from the perspective of Disabled People's Organizations and decision makers:

- Despite the significance of full coordination with all stakeholders in selecting research sample, everyone stressed the importance of neutral selection of the research sample and that the sample be more representative in future projects, if allowed by the financial resources (budget).
- Engaging decision makers in all phases of the project has been of paramount importance. Therefore, enhancing this aspect more in future projects has been emphasized.
- There was a unanimous agreement on the need to add additional activities and events to promote mutual learning, exchange of expertise and sharing of ideas among participating countries; in addition to studying the possibility of covering other countries in the project.

- **Special lessons learned:**

- **Occupied Palestinian Territories:**
 - Using research methodology and training Disabled People's Organizations to such methodology, and relying mainly on Disabled People's Organizations in the development and implementation of tools, as well as data analysis and reporting. This constitutes a strength that helped building the capacity of organizations, raising their competences and equipping them with the experiences of collaborative work and teamwork towards joint cause, as well as the ability to lead similar projects in the future.
 - The national report is considered a valuable document upon which projects and advocacy campaigns can be built in favour of people with disabilities.
- **Jordan:**
 - Sharing research results and recommendations with civil society organizations contributed to improving and raising awareness of these organizations in the disability issue, and including such issue in those organizations' upcoming plans.
 - Verifying the prior experience of partners in the field of disability and promoting their capabilities in



the event of a weakness in a certain subject are of the most important aspects that should be considered in the future.

– Egypt:

- Giving Disabled People's Organizations a leading role in research had a major impact on the capabilities of these organizations, as it helped them in boosting their relationship with the community, in addition to identifying the conditions of persons with disabilities and their needs.
- Different implementation plans should be used in participating countries in the upcoming regional projects, where the implementation plan is suitable in terms of activities, time, and financial resources (allocated budget) with the context in each country.
- Promoting collaboration with civil society organizations to take advantage of their expertise and knowledge in the field of research and disability.

Third subject: communication between project partners



• **Subject Content:**

Dialogue with key stakeholders from the public sector and civil society is very important and is one of the main objectives of the project. The project aims to establish good communication and dialogue between Disabled People's Organizations, civil society organizations and decision makers in the same country as well as in the three countries. The dialogue between various stakeholders has been achieved in several ways, such as national workshops, regional workshops, mobilization and advocacy initiatives and national research. In addition, communication between participants from Disabled People's

Organizations in the three countries was also enhanced through exchange visit to Tunisia and Morocco. Such visit helped to strengthen communication between the representatives of Disabled People's Organizations and gave them the opportunity to work as a team while participating in the exchange visit activities.

• **Shared lessons learned among the three countries:**

Following are the positive practices in the project which should be continuously used in any upcoming action steps as expressed by all participants in the lessons learned meetings:

- National meetings and local activities helped building good relations between decision makers and Disabled People's Organizations.
- Joint work between Disabled People's Organizations- particularly working within research study frameworks and analyzing inclusion policies of children with disabilities in basic education- considerably helped in creating much closer ties between Disabled People's Organizations and contributed to establishing good communication channels between them.

All participants also unanimously agreed on some practices that need further focus, adjustment and work in future projects as follows:

- Increasing and improving communication between participants in different countries. Therefore, it is necessary to allocate specific time for acquaintance activities between participants during the regional meetings.
- Creating an official communication channel using social media such as Facebook, e-mail and networking, and creating an atmosphere of open communication among participants from the three countries during and after the completion of the project.
- Increasing communication and interaction between different partners in the project at the national and regional levels to ensure effective dialogue between them and continuous cooperation between the involved parties.

Decision makers and civil society organizations also agreed on the points that



need improvement in the future, namely:

- Conducting regular meetings among all stakeholders to inform them of the project's updates and achievements so as to ensure their effective participation in the project.
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the project from the beginning of the project to ensure effective partnership and cooperation.

- **Special lessons learned:**

- Egypt:
Field work and communication with the team on the field are of the most important factors in the project's success.

To ensure sustainability after the project is completed, there must be a clear communication plan between various partners in the project.

To increase communication between Disabled People's Organizations and civil society organizations, activities should be created/designed for implementation in partnership between both parties, along with allocating an adequate budget.

Fourth Subject: National and Regional Meetings



- **Subject Content:**

Numerous national and regional meetings were held during the project implementation in the three countries. A national consultative workshop was held in each country for Disabled People's Organizations and representatives of decision makers and civil society organizations to display the results of policy analysis and priority areas. In this way, the level of awareness of disability among decision makers and representatives of participating civil society organizations is

increased. Preparatory meetings were also held- prior to regional meetings - with the participating Disabled People's Organizations to identify the required resources and logistics, plan the workshop's agenda and actual procedures and distribute roles and responsibilities. In addition, regional workshops were held for participants from Disabled People's Organizations to discuss and promote the national findings of policy analysis, determine recommendations and priority areas, and exchange views on national mobilization and advocacy strategies. A regional meeting was also held to launch the results of national studies, amend recommendations and commence the lessons learned in the presence of representatives of Disabled People's Organizations, decision makers, civil society organizations and key partners of the project in Jordan and Palestine.

As for national meetings in each of the target countries, several meetings were held with a view to conducting trainings during the stages of research study, following up accomplishment and implementation and presenting the national results of research and recommendations.

- **Shared lessons learned among the three countries:**

Following are the positive practices in the project which should be continuously used in any upcoming action steps as expressed by all participants in the lessons learned meetings:

- conducting national meetings help in establishing relations between Disabled People's Organizations on one hand and between DPOs and decision makers / government institutions on the other hand.
- National meetings help civil society organizations and decision makers to understand the disability situation in their country, which contributes to supporting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their future plans, and helps gaining their advocacy to the issue of disability.
- conducting regional meetings creates an appropriate environment for the exchange of expertise and ideas between participants, and provides an opportunity for participants to compare the real situation of disability in their country with neighbouring countries.

All participants also unanimously agreed on some practices that need further focus, adjustment and work in future projects as follows:

- Clarifying the roles for participants before each meeting to assist in the organization of work and well management of the meeting.
- Giving a specific time for communication during regional meetings to promote relations between partners from different countries.
- Considerably activating the role of civil society organizations and decision makers in the meetings, especially the regional ones, to take advantage of their experiences and knowledge.

Decision makers in both Egypt and the occupied Palestinian territories unanimously agreed on the need to nominate one representative from each organization to attend the events and activities in the upcoming projects to ensure more effective participation.

- **Special lessons learned:**

- Occupied Palestinian Territories:
 - Allowing more time for regional meetings to achieve their goals, and to ensure that all participants obtain the information in a clear and consistent manner.
 - Focusing on dedicating more time for practical trainings during regional meetings and avoiding the theoretical aspect and presentations to ensure participation and interaction of all participants.
- Jordan:
 - To increase exchange of expertise and get acquainted with the experiences of all countries involved in the project; it is preferred to hold regional meetings on a periodic basis in each of the countries participating in the project.

Fifth Subject: Exchange Visit (study tour)



- **Subject Content:**

The exchange of expertise activity between the leaders and representatives of Disabled People's Organizations in the Middle East and North Africa is considered of the main pillars in supporting exchange of expertise and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the national and regional levels, particularly through:

1. Identifying the best practices and advocacy models for the rights of persons with disabilities and engaging in policy making and best practices.
2. Conducting in-depth discussion of common challenges and experiences acquired.
3. Supporting participation and networking among Disabled People's Organizations in the Middle East and North Africa, and providing opportunities and innovative methodologies on policy making and analysis as well as the role of organizations in sustainable sharing of experiences in the long term.
4. Supporting continuity of learning and capacity building, through positive and purposeful communication between peers, thereby enhancing the regional dimension frameworks of the project.

Bilateral and mutual cooperation and coordination have been made between Handicap's two regional missions in the Middle East and North Africa in terms of promoting and raising the capabilities of Disabled People's Organizations to become more capable, effective and reliable in monitoring the challenges and difficulties faced by persons with disabilities, and more experienced in policy making and analysis as well as in developing bases for a constructive dialogue between representatives of civil society organizations and public authorities. In addition, Handicap International developed a mutual cooperation methodology in the Middle East and North Africa through "Hiwar" and "Decide" regional projects, and linked the similar objectives and activities between the two projects, in an endeavour to support organizations in building networks and learning about the experiences, optimal models as well as the difficulties, opportunities and challenges facing the disability rights movement in the Arab world.



To achieve this cooperation, two visits were conducted to exchange expertise and share disability experiences in both Tunisia and Morocco, as part of the exchange of expertise activity in Hiwar Project to promote action on capacity building and to enhance the experiences acquired in following up and monitoring policies and advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities in the Middle East. These visits included different meetings and workshops with government officers and civil society organizations as well as field visits to some schools and Disabled People's Organizations.

- **Shared lessons learned among the three countries:**

Following are the positive practices in the project which should be continuously used in any upcoming action steps as expressed by all participants in the lessons learned meetings:

- Getting acquainted with the experiences of different countries and the achievements made in these countries in the field of disability helps participants to take advantage of good experiences and avoid failures.
- Including field visits within the visits conducted to countries helped in informing participants of the real situation of disability in these countries and enabling them to make comparisons between such situation and the situation of disability in their countries.
- Decision makers in the occupied Palestinian territories and Jordan agreed on the need to engage decision makers in the upcoming exchange visits so as to give them the opportunity to take advantage of the experiences of decision makers in the countries visited.
- Disabled People's Organizations in both Egypt and Jordan agreed to increase the number of participants in each visit, select other countries that are more advanced in the field of disability in next visits, and engage non-disabled advocates for the issue of disability.

Following are some of the issues that should be worked on and improved in upcoming projects:



4. Good Practices:

4.1 Initiatives:

The initiatives of this project were implemented to fulfil the needs identified on the basis of the national research in each of the three countries. The objectives of the initiatives varied by the context and urgent priorities of each country. Six initiatives were implemented, at two initiatives for each country. Disabled People's Organizations had the most prominent role in the planning, implementation and follow-up process, along with providing the technical support by the project team at Handicap International.

4.1.1 Egypt



The first initiative "I Want my Rights" aims to make a positive change in public trends towards inclusion of people with disabilities in basic education in Egypt through an advocacy campaign to demand enactment of a uniform law for people with disabilities in the following governorates: Cairo, Giza, Beni Suef and Aswan. Such a campaign conducted through innovative methods such as art, media, theater and social media, direct communication with parliamentarians to sign a petition for a uniform law for people with disabilities, as well as networking and communication with civil society organizations and decision makers in the governorates where the initiative is to be implemented.

The second initiative entitled "Strengthening the educational rights of children with disabilities" aims to create an effective human rights system that ensures inclusion of students with disabilities in basic education in Egypt by including legal provisions in the Disability Law and accelerating

its promulgation. It is also necessary to integrate the educational inclusion in the Disability Law in each of the following governorates (Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Minya, Assiut, New Valley) and promote networking among Disabled People's Organizations and civil society working in the field of disability and education to create a social mobilization so as to participate in drafting the provisions related to inclusion and present them for community dialogue.

• Stakeholders' feedback:

1. Teamwork and periodic meetings helped strengthening relations and communication between Disabled People's Organizations.
2. Continuity and sustainability should be given more attention in the future.
3. Increasing the number of participating organizations in the implementation of initiatives.
4. Adopting one initiative for each country instead of two initiatives, to unify efforts and ensure that everyone can benefit from different ideas and avoid repetitive goals.
5. Despite specialized trainings implemented at the beginning of work on initiatives, Disabled People's Organizations still need to build capacity in terms of financial procedures and grants reporting. They also need in-depth training on fund raising and write project proposals.
6. Initiatives helped decision makers and civil society organizations to identify organizations operating in the field of disability and the nature of their work, provided them with an opportunity to think about how to include persons with disabilities in their work and encouraged them to support and believe in disability issues.
7. Some activities of the initiatives, such as marathon and interactive theater, received great resonance among recipients and drew the attention of the local community and decision makers to the disability issue and inclusion of persons with disabilities in education.
8. Timing and duration of initiative implementation were the most important challenges facing the implementation process, particularly in the holy month



of Ramadan which shortened the period of implementation. Therefore, additional efforts were required from Disabled People's Organizations to implement all activities and achieve the goals on time.

9. Proper selection of partners from experts and institutions operating in the field helped reaching the desired objective of the initiative.
10. The modest amount of financial support for each initiative affected the level of implementation of activities and the ability to expand in target governorates, and resulted in limitation of certain activities to one governorate or another.
11. Creating a webpage for initiatives on "Facebook" in upcoming projects; to provide an opportunity to disseminate and share the initiative's achievements and events with the greatest possible number of followers.

- Good Practice:

Effective cooperation and good communication with civil society organizations, major organizations, parliamentarians, journalists and decision makers on one hand, and Disabled People's Organizations on the other hand was a unique experience that considerably influenced the creation and consolidation of relations between them, and provided an opportunity for various cooperation areas in the field of disability in the future. This cooperation was achieved through engaging all stakeholders in the planning of initiatives and the implementation of activities in collaboration with Disabled People's Organizations.

4.1.2 Occupied Palestinian Territories:



The first initiative entitled "friendly educational environment for students with disabilities" aims to put pressure on decision makers and relevant ministries to adapt the school environment for all types of disabilities at public schools in the West Bank, and to provide opportunities promoting the

rights of persons with disabilities in cooperation with the civil society and public authorities through conducting advocacy campaigns and adapting the physical environment of a certain public school as a model example of the required adaptation in all schools.

The second initiative entitled "Together for Change" aims to contribute to the approval of model adaptation policies for persons with disabilities by decision makers at educational institutions in the Gaza Strip. Such approval is made by increasing awareness among professionals in the Guidance and Special Education Division on adaptation standards for people with disabilities, and through model physical environmental adaptation of a public school in the Gaza Strip, in addition to communicating with decision makers and civil society organizations in order to influence sectoral policies.

- Stakeholders' feedback:

1. Distributing roles among Disabled People's Organizations, each according to its strengths and distinctive field of work, enabled the success of the initiative's activities and events.
2. Ongoing follow-up and support by the project team at Handicap International was the most important facilitating factors for the implementation of initiatives, as well as facilitating communication and cooperation between the organizations participating in the initiative.
3. Civil society organizations played a good role in supporting the initiatives, submitting proposals and participating in the initiative's various events.
4. Continuing to implement similar initiatives in the upcoming projects that target education and other subjects such as health and vocational training.
5. Working experience in initiatives has been very useful to Disabled People's Organizations, as they became capable to identify the needs and appropriate interventions, estimate the appropriate cost of various activities, reflect on the achievements made and extract the lessons learned for subsequent experiences.
6. Cooperation of decision makers and their facilitation of initiatives implementation contributed to the success of initiatives and achieving their goals.

7. The administrative and teaching staff at schools should be educated of the importance of inclusion of persons with disabilities in schools and their rights, as well as how to deal with people with different disabilities. Physical adaptation of school alone is not sufficient because awareness is the supplementary element of environmental adaptation of any place.
8. Exchange of expertise between Disabled People's Organizations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was one of the good outcomes of the implementation of initiatives, as communication between organizations from the West Bank and Gaza Strip is rare due to the current political circumstances.
9. Initiatives helped to highlight the significance of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in education, and of the local community mobilization to put pressure on decision makers in order to make the necessary decisions and procedures to achieve inclusion.
10. Promoting the media aspect of initiatives, disseminating the activities and events of initiatives on an ongoing basis and using different means to reach the largest possible segments of society.
11. Increasing the number of schools being adapted, because one school is not sufficient as a model for the community and the Ministry of Education to encourage them to adapt other schools.

- Good Practice:

The main idea upon which initiatives were based is the teamwork of Disabled People's Organizations, and that application for these grants be made through a team of organizations rather than one organization. Perhaps this idea was one of the most successful practices in the West Bank where it helped to form a team of Disabled People's Organizations and create a permanent cooperation between these organizations. This is the first experience of those organizations in working as a team, so it is considered a rich experience during which organizations acquired multiple experiences such as collective planning, distribution of roles and responsibilities, sharing ideas and challenges and providing support for each other.

4.1.3 Jordan:



The first initiative entitled "adaptation" aims to achieve inclusion of people with disabilities in primary schools in Jordan, demand the application of the laws relating to environmental accommodations within public schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education, and enforcing the provisions related to these laws in accordance with Article No. 4(e) of the "Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" No. 31 for the year 2007 and the "International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Article 24". Such initiative implemented through advocacy and mobilization at all levels, starting from the families of students with disabilities, and ending with decision makers at Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan Engineers Association and the Ministry of Education in collaboration with all relevant authorities and various media agencies. The second initiative entitled "Our Chances at Your Hands" aims to enforce Article 4(e) of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities related to buildings at public schools. This initiative implemented through several activities, including a drama show that directs awareness messages in a comic and tragic manner, dialogue sessions for decision makers, awareness sessions, as well as a campaign to collect signatures in support of enforcing this Article.

- Stakeholders' feedback:

1. Some activities were considerably influential and received great resonance among the audience, particularly the drama show, which encouraged a number of universities to demand performing the show on their theatres.
2. The awareness sessions held as part of the initiatives helped to raise the awareness of participants in the field of disability and change some attitudes from charitable approach to human rights approach.
3. Initiatives helped to raise the capabilities of participating Disabled People's Organizations



in numerous areas such as reporting, follow-up and evaluation, technical and logistical support.

4. Implementation of the initiatives required more time, coupled with weak financial support that should be increased to fulfil the needs at the required quality and level.
5. There is still a need to educate people with disabilities and their families of the human rights approach and its significance.
6. Feedback mechanism on the work submitted by organizations to the project management needs to be further improved in terms of time of submission, due to its impact on the implementation and delay of activities.
7. Initiatives helped in winning support and advocacy of a good number of Disabled People's Organizations not involved in the project, as well as government departments and ministries and civil society organizations.

8. Initiatives helped decision-makers to get acquainted with the organizations implementing the project, which created a basis for future cooperation between them.
9. Increasing field experience by working on the ground and searching for resources and references to obtain the latest information and expertise to apply in action.

- Good Practice:

The ability exhibited by Disabled People's Organizations in mobilizing a large number of decisionmakers, civil society organizations and other Disabled People's Organizations in most activities, and getting acquainted with the achievements made through initiatives. This created a motivation for Disabled People's Organizations to participate in similar initiatives, and highlighted the needs of decision makers, which help supporting decision makers and providing the necessary suggestions and solutions for these needs.



5. General Recommendations:

- Forming and training a work team from Disabled People's Organizations; so as to become a task force to train and support the rights of persons with disabilities at the national level.
- Engaging organizations who are not working with persons with disabilities to introduce them to the reality of disability and to raise their awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and how to include them within their organizations.
- Increasing the role of audio and visual media and social media channels to spread the project's idea and success at the national and regional levels.
- Engaging new Disabled People's Organizations in the upcoming projects to provide opportunities for all organizations operating in the field.
- Shedding light on people with intellectual disabilities and further engaging them in the activities.
- Continuing work on the subject of inclusion in education given its utmost importance in the lives of persons with disabilities.
- Engaging decision makers in mutual visits to different countries in order to take advantage of the experiences of decision makers in these countries.
- Increasing communication and interaction between different partners in the project at the national and regional levels to ensure effective dialogue between them and continuous cooperation between the parties involved.
- Promoting the role of civil society organizations and decision makers in the upcoming projects given its commendable effect on the effectiveness and commitment of all parties to the required work.
- Focusing on the trainings that increase the capabilities and competencies of organizations and individuals.
- Increasing the duration of trainings for persons with disabilities to give them the opportunity to take advantage of all available information.
- Focusing on the media and marketing role of achievements by appointing competent media professionals in the initiatives.
- Exchanging venue of regional courses between the countries participating in the project, thereby providing an opportunity to better exchange expertise among participating countries.
- Increasing mutual visits to increase exchange of expertise in different countries, such as East Asia and Europe.
- Engaging non-disabled supporters of the disability rights movement in the trainings to ensure interaction between people with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, thereby achieving inclusion in general.
- Developing a plan for the transfer of expertise from participants to the members of their organizations through a training-of-trainers program, in order to be able to train other organizations on the experiences acquired during the project.



Annexes

Annex No. (1): Names of Participants in the Lessons Learned - Egypt

No.	Name	Place of Work	Type of Organization
1.	Nadia Abdullah	Egyptian Association for the Rights of the Deaf & Translators of Sign Language	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
2.	Sayyed Said	Al-Drouso Al Artqaa	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
3.	Amro Abbas	The Civil Association for the Deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
4.	Osama Taye'	7 Million Association – Persons With Disability	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
5.	Nesreen Shehdeh	Al Hayat Association for PwDs	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
6.	Maher Tal'at	Al Hayat Association for PwDs	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
7.	Mervat Al Samman	Egypt's Federation for the DPOs	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
8.	Mohammad Mustafa	Al-Mustaqbal Association for Physically Disabled	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
9.	Muna Abdul Shakoor	The Friends Association for Persons With Disability	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
10.	Nada Thabet	Village of Hope for Persons W. Intellectual Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
11.	Shadi Lutfi	Village of Hope for Persons W. Intellectual Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
12.	Emad Farooq	Special Education – the Ministry of Education – Bani Sweif	Decision Makers/ Governmental
13.	Mohammad Zghloul	The Ministry of Culture	Decision Makers/ Governmental
14.	Dr. Abdelhamid Kabesh	The Inclusive Education Network	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
15.	Amal Antoine	CARITAS	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
16.	Ejlal Shanouda	CARITAS	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
17.	Hani Helal	Egypt Coalition for Child rights	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
18.	Maha Alhilali	National Council of Disability Affairs	Decision Makers/ Governmental
19.	Amirah Al Refai	Ministry of Social Solidarity	Decision Makers/ Governmental
20.	Mohammad Abdul Hafeez	External Consultant	
21.	Yumna Ghaleb	Handicap International	Project Team
22.	Olivier Fabre	Handicap International	Project Team
23.	Rasha Rateb	Handicap International	Project Team



Annex No. (2): Names of Participants in the Lessons Learned - Jordan

No.	Name	Place of Work	Type of Organization
1.	Mustafa Alrawashdeh	The Jordan Coalition for Persons with Disabilities/ Al Shu'la Club for the Blind	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
2.	Nizar Hamdan	Abdallah Ibn Um Makhtoum Association	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
3.	Nafal Tashman	The Jordan Coalition for Persons with Disabilities/ Al Shu'la Club for the Blind	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
4.	Sameera Sabbah	The Jordan Coalition for Persons with Disabilities/ Al Shu'la Club for the Blind	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
5.	Zuhair Alshurafa	Al Kerak Association for the Persons with Physical Disability care	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
6.	Ali Nafe'	Al Tadamon for deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
7.	Suha Alkhateeb	Al Tadamon for deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
8.	Maisaa Khaled Mohammad	Al Shmou' Association for Blind people	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
9.	Bassam Odaibat	Al Shmou' Association for Blind people	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
10.	Kamal Tawalbeh	Al Nahda Association for Physical Challenges	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
11.	Khaled Ababneh	Al Nahda Association for Physical Challenges	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
12.	Wael Tawaf	Al Nahda Association for Physical Challenges	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
13.	Dr. Saleh Alshurfat	Al Nahda Association for Physical Challenges	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
14.	Adnan Fawaz	Ashab Al Hemam Association for disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
15.	Nasr Alqaramleh	Ashab Al Hemam Association for disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
16.	Cristine Fdoul	The National Center for Human Rights	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
17.	Raeda Alhmoud	National Forum for Women	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
18.	Dima Arabiat	JNCW	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
19.	Fatmeh Alhalabi	MIZZAN	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
20.	Mohammad Sawalqah	The Ministry of Social Development	Decision Makers/ Governmental
21.	Aliaa Jaradat	The Ministry of Education	Decision Makers/ Governmental
22.	Ayed Tayyem	Information and Research Center – King Hussein Foundation	Project Partner in Jordan
23.	Bilal Hammad	Information and Research Center – King Hussein Foundation	Project Partner in Jordan
24.	Majed Abu Azzam	Information and Research Center – King Hussein Foundation	Project Partner in Jordan
25.	Rula Abu Alrub	Handicap International	Project Team



Annex No. (3): Names of Participants in the Lessons Learned – Palestinian Occupied Territories

No.	Name	Place of Work	Type of Organization
1.	Ahmad Hanani	Aswat Organization for PW Mental Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
2.	Reem Althaher	Aswat Organization for PW Mental Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
3.	Waleed Nazzal	Al-Amal Association for the Deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
4.	Dalal Fawaz	Al-Amal Association for the Deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
5.	Mohammad Nazzal	Al-Amal Association for the Deaf	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
6.	Safeeh Al ali	Stars of hope Association for Women with Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
7.	Haneeh Harb	Stars of hope Association for Women with Disabilities	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
8.	Fahmi Masa'eed	Baseera Forum for Blinds	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
9.	Mohammad Nabil	Baseera Forum for Blinds	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
10.	Hamza Dardas	Disabilities Representative Persons Network (DRPN)/Ghaza	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
11.	Mohammad Al Arabi	Association of Visually Impaired Graduates League	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
12.	Samir	Himam Youth Center/ Ghaza	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
13.	Zareef	Advocacy Association for Development and Rehabilitation/ Ghaza	Disabled Persons' Organization (DPO)
14.	Dr. Najat Abu Baker	The Legislative Council	Decision Makers/ Governmental
15.	Mustafa Abu Alras	The Ministry of Awqaf	Decision Makers/ Governmental
16.	Shifaa Shaikha	The Ministry of Education	Decision Makers/ Governmental
17.	Khalil Zaqqoq	Directorate of Education / Nablus	Decision Makers/ Governmental
18.	Mohammad Al Khateeb	Ministry of Information	Decision Makers/ Governmental
19.	Buthina Salem	Ministry of Labour	Decision Makers/ Governmental
20.	Sonia Al Helou	Ministry of Social Affairs	Decision Makers/ Governmental
21.	Yehya Al qet	Beit Forek Municipality	Decision Makers/ Governmental
22.	Rula Al Qatami	Center for Continuing Education – Berzeit University	Project Partner in West Bank
23.	Rania Alqasem	Center for Continuing Education – Berzeit University	Project Partner in West Bank
24.	Mouris Baqle	Center for Continuing Education – Berzeit University	Project Partner in West Bank
25.		Community based Rehabilitation team	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
26.	Marco Abah	Hope School for the Deaf	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
27.	Intisar Hamdan	Teacher Creativity Center	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
28.	Islam Al Tamimi	Independent Commission for Human Rights	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
29.	Abeer Hamad	Jabal Alnejma Center	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
30.	Sumayya Al Safadi	Center of Women and Family Affairs	Civil Society Organization (CSO)
31.	Ayah Melitat and her Mother	Student	Beit Fourek School
32.	Rinda Saleh	Handicap International	Project Team
33.	Hadeel Rishmawi	Handicap International	Project Team
34.	Alice Repesse	Handicap International	Project Team
35.	Ola Abu Alghaib	Handicap International	Project Team





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