



## Disability and Age Task Force Minutes of Meeting

**Date:** 10 March 2021

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Remote Via Microsoft Teams

**Chairs:** Huda Al-Shabsogh (UNHCR), Lauren Schoenster (UNHCR), and Marwa Mubarak (HI)

**Minutes prepared by:** Shada Malhas (UNHCR)

**Participants:** ARCS, ARDD, IOCC, Terres des Hommes (TdH) Italy, UNHCR (Amman BO, Azraq and Irbid FO), Care, AVSI, Vento di Terra (VdT), AIDOS, HCD, HelpAge, JOHUD, ICU, Un Ponte Per (UPP), Humanity & Inclusion (HI), AICS, Mercy Corps, UNICEF

### Meeting Highlights

#### **Agenda Item I. Presentation about the National Rehabilitation Strategy**

Presenter: Hamzeh Aqel (Humanity & Inclusion)

- The Strategic Plan is the outcome of a collaborative effort led by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Humanity & Inclusion.
- Jordan is the first country in the eastern Mediterranean region to develop a strategic action plan, guided in all the steps by the WHO 'Rehabilitation in Health Systems: Guide for Action' package which was approved by the MoH in 2019.
- The creation steps for the national rehabilitation platform started in 2016 aimed to identify and include all the relevant stakeholders from the rehabilitation sectors at different levels; which includes representatives from government (MoSD, MoH, service provider (hospitals, health clinic and centers, professional associations and universities). The platform objective was to raise awareness at the governmental level on the situation of the rehabilitation sector/needs in Jordan. In 2017, the First Sustainability Analysis Process (SAP) workshop was organized in order to collect more data on rehabilitation situations in Jordan. This was followed by the Systematic Rehabilitation Situation Assessment (STARS) which was done in 2018.
- In January 2021, the National Rehabilitation Strategy in Jordan was endorsed by all the relevant stakeholders.
- Noted that rehabilitation is about functioning and reducing the experience of disability. Rehabilitation is for both the individual and the environment. The need for rehabilitation is large and growing.
- The value of rehabilitation is realizing the rights of persons with disabilities; it restores function and well-being, leads to significant cost savings and improves social outcomes.
- The vision of the National Strategy is that all people in Jordan enjoy quality of life and function to their fullest and effectively participate in the sustainable development of Jordan.

- The goal of the strategy is to increase access of all Jordanians to equitable and quality rehabilitation services, delivered by qualified multi-disciplinary professional teams.

## **Agenda Item II. Presentation of services provided by the Inclusive Education Project in Southern governorates**

Presenter: Abdel Awamreh (Mercy Corps)

- This project is funded by UNICEF and ECHO.
- The aim of the project is to include children with mild and moderate disabilities in public schools. The schools are selected in coordination with the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- The needs of children with disabilities are assessed and a public school close to their place of living is identified. Children with disabilities have access to rehabilitation services and schools are made accessible to them, including through the creation of a resource room.
- Mercy Corps conducts awareness raising of the surrounding community to encourage parents of children with disabilities to enrol their children in schools, sensitization and awareness raising activities inside of the schools about children with disabilities' right to education and disability inclusion, and capacity building of teachers and admin personnel.
- Teachers are accompanied by 'shadow teachers' who follow up on the progress achieved by children with disabilities based on the educational plan that is developed for them and provide one-to-one support.
- The project was also designed to include qualified teachers with visual and hearing impairments to support children with disabilities in the schools.
- Assistive technology is provided and a sensory room was created to make playgrounds more accessible to children with disabilities and specific workshops have been developed with reasonable accommodation for children with disabilities in Zaatar and Azraq camps.
- Speech, occupational and physiotherapy sessions are provided in the Northern, Central and Southern regions of Jordan.
- Visual kits, loop systems and tablets were used as assistive technologies in some schools (i.e. Khawala bent Al-Azwar school in Sahab and another school in Karak).
- The loop system is used for children with hearing impairments and it has been very successful.
- The resource room is equipped with interactive activities using technologies (i.e. smart board) rather than papers and pens.
- They have many schools in the South one in Aqaba, one school in Wadi Mousa, 3 schools in Ma'an, one school in Al-Husseinih, one school in Hashmih, 3 schools in Tafileh, one in Al-Bseirah in total 10 schools.
- Not too many challenges in terms of school capacity; the project was able to integrate all children with disabilities who wanted to attend public schools.
- Mercy Corps/UNICEF are phasing out from this project as the Ministry of Education fully takes over the inclusive education initiative. A checklist was developed and is being revised in order to assess which inclusive schools will be visited and fully managed by the MoE.
- Mercy Corps/UNICEF will continue to work in collaboration with the MoE on the National Strategy and other initiatives in the coming years.

### **Action points:**

- Any referrals to be submitted to Mercy Corps focal point (Abdel Awamreh; aawamreh@mercy Corps.org) or contact the UNICEF helpline (06 5509677).
- UNICEF to share the inclusive education school list and checklist with DATF members.

### **Agenda Item III. Good practices presentation**

Presenter: Muammer Fuad (NHF)

- Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is a strategy within community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities and social inclusion of all people with disabilities.
- The main objectives of CBR are to:
  - Work with people with disabilities and their families.
  - Maximize their physical and mental abilities as well as improve their feelings of general well-being.
  - Access regular services and opportunities and minimize any challenges that prevent persons with disabilities from accessing different humanitarian sectors such as health, education, and livelihoods.
  - Become active contributors to the community and society and actively participate in the national sustainable development strategy.
  - Work with families and communities to remove any barriers that prevent the participation of people with disabilities on an equal basis with others.
- The five components of CBR include health, education, livelihoods, social and empowerment.
- NHF's CBR initiatives are being implemented under the Sawa project in Sweileh, Hay Nazzal and Abu-Nusair. Activities include handicrafts, clay, music, art, puzzles, puppet shows, lego, storytelling, movies, theatres, and gardening, as well as computer skills.
- NHF's CBR team is also participating and organizing campaigns and events (i.e. Environment Day, which took place in the American University of Madaba) in order to raise awareness among the general public about disability and promote inclusion of persons with disabilities.

#### **Action points:**

- NHF to present their CBR response during the COVID-19 pandemic during the next meeting.

### **Agenda Item IV. Services provided to persons with disabilities**

Presenter: Eman Mohammed (ARDD)

- The Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) organization provides free legal services to persons with disabilities.
- Legal aid services are provided free-of-charge to all nationalities, Jordanians and non-Jordanians, registered or not registered, and to all age groups.
- The most notable legal aid cases of persons with disabilities who received services provided by ARDD in 2020 were the following:
  - Financial claims due to medical treatment - 17 cases.
  - Child custody – 12 cases.
  - Physical abuse by other children - 11 cases.
  - Complaints from neighbors – 6 cases.
- ARDD provided aid (i.e. cash, food, and medical assistance) during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 to 500 persons with and their families (70% refugees, and 30% Jordanians).

#### **Action points:**

- For any referrals to legal services provided by ARDD, please use the following e-mail address: [consult.amman@ar-dd-legalaid.org](mailto:consult.amman@ar-dd-legalaid.org).

### **Agenda Item V. DATF Members Updates**

UNHCR Irbid office

- In Irbid, UNHCR, HI, HelpAge, IMC, JOHUD, and NHF/IFH have launched the Persons with Disabilities Sub-Working Group in the Northern areas ( Irbid, Jerash and Ajloun).
- The purpose of the sub-working group is to coordinate the efforts related to disability inclusion and enhance the coordination and referrals between humanitarian-development actors.
- The group is looking for humanitarian actors that are working/interested in working in the North area of Jordan to join the meeting.
- Any organization interested in joining, are welcome to contact Mohammed Al-Mustafa (UNHCR Irbid, Community-Based Protection) at [almustaf@unhcr.org](mailto:almustaf@unhcr.org) or through phone 0790604104.

#### DATF updates

- DATF co-chairs have been conducting meetings with the chairs of the different sector working groups in order to appoint disability and age focal points based on the TOR agreed by the DATF.
- The DATF Inter-Agency Needs Assessment has been postponed as per the request of the Protection Working Group (PWG). The assessment will be conducted as part of the PWG participatory assessment in July. The DATF co-chairs will contact interested agencies to participate in the assessment at a later stage during the year.
- The DATF has created a Microsoft Teams group for members of the DATF which will be populated by the group's minutes of meetings, information products, data, studies, etc, in addition to having a chat functionality so DATF members can talk and exchange information.
- The disability good practices template has been reviewed and shared with DATF members for their feedback.

#### **Agenda Item VI. AOB**

- The next meeting of the DATF is taking place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April of 2021.