



Disability and Age Task Force Minutes of Meeting

Date: 11 August 2021

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Venue: Remote Via Microsoft Teams

Chairs: Huda Al-Shabsogh (UNHCR) and Marwa Mubarak (HI)

Minutes prepared by: Shatha Malhas (UNHCR)

Participants: ARCS, HI, UNHCR BO Amman, Caritas, HelpAge International, UNHCR Azraq camp, UNRWA, CVT, JOHUD. HCD, DRC, MPDL, IMC, UNRWA, UNHCR Irbid SO, and Be Positive Association

Meeting Highlights

Agenda Item I. Disability-Inclusive Education in Jordan Factsheet produced by HI

Presenters: Madiha Aljazi (HI) and Marwa Mubarak (HI)

- Humanity & Inclusion recently published two factsheets about disability inclusion, one on Inclusive Humanitarian Action and another one focused on Inclusive Education.
- Highlighted that UNESCO defines inclusive education as a transformative process that ensures full participation and access to quality learning opportunities for all children, young people, and adults, respecting and valuing diversity, and eliminating all forms of discrimination in and through education. The Ministry of Education in Jordan defines inclusive education as the process of ensuring the right of all children with disabilities, to access, attend, participate and succeed in their mainstream local schools, by removing barriers to learning and participation for inclusive education of children with disabilities.
- According to the 2015 General Population and Housing Census, around 11% of the total population in Jordan aged 5 and above have disabilities. The Department of Statistics highlights there were around 2.4 million children aged 5 to 14 in Jordan in 2019.
- Statistics from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Development combined show that for the academic year 2018/2019, only 1.9% (27,694) of the total 1.4 million children enrolled in primary education are children with disabilities. The Department of Statistics (2019) confirms that 79% of persons with disabilities of school age are excluded from any form of education.
- The situation of Syrian refugees requires specific attention: within this group, 22.9% of children aged 2 years and above have disabilities. Furthermore, Syrian refugee children with disabilities of primary school age in Jordan are less likely to attend school than their peers without disabilities, than children with disabilities of other nationalities.

- As a State Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Jordan commits to promoting disability-inclusive education (Article 24). Its commitment has been translated into a number of national policy documents.
- Barriers that restrict children with disabilities' access and stay in school include limited data and evidence on the situation of children with disabilities in accessing inclusive education; prevailing negative attitudes of families and communities towards disability resulting in poor recognition of the importance of education of children with disabilities; lack of the education system's capacity to welcome and support children with disabilities in mainstream education.
- Recommendations to promote inclusive education include actions at the:
 - Policy level: Support the Ministry of Education in fulfilling its commitment to disability-inclusive education by investing human and financial resources to implement action plans in alignment with strategies. This includes a focus on inclusive education at all stages, from early childhood development through to secondary level.
 - Family level: Strengthen parental and family support, by raising awareness of parents and family members on the importance of education of children with disabilities and by providing opportunities for household's economic independence.
 - Community level: Enhance understanding and capacities of local communities to promote disability-inclusive education through communication campaigns, advocacy, and awareness raising activities.
 - Service level: Increase capacities of mainstream schools to welcome and adequately support children with disabilities, through better prepared teachers and staff, adapted curricula and learning tools, as well as through collaboration with interconnected services (including early childhood development, WASH, health and rehabilitation, transportation, and protection).

Agenda Item II. Presentation about the organization MPDL and its activities in Jordan

Presenters: Maite Serrano (MPDL)

- MPDL has been working since 1983 for the defense of and access to Human Rights, the promotion of women's rights and the rights of migrants and refugees, democratic governance, equality, solidarity among people, education for peace, and social mobilization; to protect people affected by violence and human rights violations, with special attention to women; to promote models of sustainable community coexistence based on the culture of peace; to promote, monitor and evaluate laws and policies respectful of human rights and conducive to a culture of peace.
- MPDL's actions are directed towards the refugee population and host communities with disabilities and the most vulnerable. They work strengthening the capacities of CBOs working with persons with disabilities; networking; promoting visibility and participation and access to rights; improvement of community rehabilitation services; prevention and response to sexual and gender violence (SGBV) against people with disabilities; and promoting socioeconomic inclusion.
- Community Rehabilitation services (CBR): MPDL is working in Zarka through the Rehabilitation Based Centre (CBR) and in Mafray through the Children Care association (CCA) through a community-based rehabilitation approach. Rehabilitation services include psycho-social support, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and special education.
- Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: SGBV is included as a component in every project through staff training; detection, management and referral of cases; and awareness raising sessions.

- Economic empowerment: Provision of life and interpersonal skills training programmes; English and other training; job orientation and psycho-social support; management and entrepreneurship training; awareness raising with the private sector.
- Areas of collaboration with DATF members and other organizations include SGBV protection and response regarding persons with disabilities; joining efforts in advocacy to campaign for the rights of persons with disabilities and women; sharing of experiences on disability inclusion and relevant projects; referring persons with disabilities interested in life skills and other trainings; use of online learning platform once it is finalized.

Agenda Item III. Presentation of the Irbid Disability and Age Task Force

Presenters: Mohammed Al-Mustafa (UNHCR)

- The Irbid Disability and Age Task Force was established in February 2021.
- The group is comprised of UNHCR IMC, JOHUD, NHF, IOCC, NRC, HI, Mercy Corps, and World associates.
- The objective of the task force is to connect organizations and coordinate the efforts of all actors working in disability and age inclusion in the Northern region of Jordan (Irbid, Ajloun and Jerash); enhance and activate the referrals among the focal points and DATF members; build the capacity of the members to improve outreach to persons with disabilities.
- Organizations interested in joining the task force are welcomed to contact Ms. Ola Al-Shraideh (UNHCR; Alshraio@unhcr.org) and Mr. Mohammed Al-Mustafa (UNHCR; almustaf@unhcr.org).

Agenda Item IV. DATF Member updates

Be Positive Association

- Be Positive Association is working to support persons with disabilities and build their skills in collaboration with MPDL, HCD and the Ministry of Labour, targeting Jordanians and Syrians with disabilities. The association provides support to persons with disabilities aged 18 to 35 to help them find jobs and develop their soft skills and time management.
- Focal point for referrals is Ms. Lina Hajo (Be Positive Association, Lina.hajo@gmail.com).

HelpAge International

- HelpAge International has started a three-year regional project in July 2021 which will be implemented in partnership with two local partners, Noor Al-Hussein Foundation in Jordan, and Eddrak local in Lebanon.
- The projects aim to enhance protection and implement community health interventions targeting at risk Syrian refugees and members of the host community, in particular older people and persons with disabilities.
- Interventions include accessible health services, provision of mental health services and psycho-social support, home-base care, inter-generational support groups, outreach, awareness raising and orientation sessions on issues related to protection, health, SGBV, abuse and neglect.
- HelpAge International will also focus on advocacy and trainings to support age mainstreaming and prevention and response to SGBV among older men and women. The organization will continue providing comprehensive training services to humanitarian actors.

ARCS

- ARCS is implementing a new cash assistance project for five months in Karak targeting Syrian refugees, particularly those with disabilities.

- For referrals, please contact Mr. Taqi Wash (ARCS, protection.jo@arcsculturesolidali.org).

AOB

- DATF co-chairs reviewed and requested DATF members to update the Service Mapping Matrix.
- DATF members proposed to meet on the 8th of September of 2021.