

Disability Inclusion Helpdesk Report No: 121

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Key facts on disability inclusion in Jordan

- > Approximately 11.1% of the population aged 5 years and older in Jordan has a disability according to 2015 Jordanian census data. This translates to 651,396 individuals or one in nine people (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021).
- > Among Syrian refugees in Jordan, estimates of disability prevalence vary. A 2018 study found that 22.9% of Syrian refugees had a disability and 62% of households had at least one member with a disability (Humanity & Inclusion, 2018).
- > Jordan is widely regarded as a regional leader with respect to its legal and constitutional framework for disability rights. However, disability rights advocates flag that implementation of laws and policies is lacking and a charity mindset persists among decision-makers (KII) (US State Department, 2023).
- > Jordan hosts an estimated 3 million refugees, which has increased strain on education, health and social protection systems, including services for people with disabilities (Khawaldah & Alzboun, 2022) (Tayseer, 2023). The presence of humanitarian actors in Jordan has sometimes resulted in parallel service provision, which also impacts access to services among people with disabilities including Syrian and Palestinian refugees (Kelberer,

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2017).

- > People with disabilities in Jordan access education at a lower rate and are significantly more likely to be unable to read and write compared to those without disabilities. Only 5.4% of Jordanians currently enrolled in educational institutions have a disability (or one in 19 students) (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021).
- > People with disabilities in Jordan are less likely to be employed than those without disabilities. In 2017, the employment rate for men with disabilities was 32.8%, almost half that of men without disabilities (61.4%). For women without disabilities, the employment rate was 13.5%, compared to only 5.2% for women with disabilities (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023).

Methodology

An extensive literature review was conducted for the report, including academic and grey literature as well as Jordanian government websites, and supplemented by key informant interviews with representatives from OPDs and disability inclusion experts in Jordan (details are provided in the expert contributors section). The resources referenced meet the following criteria:

- **Focus:** evidence on the state of disability inclusion and rights in Jordan in line with the agreed research questions
- **Time period:** 2015 – Present
- **Language:** English
- **Publication Status:** publicly available and unpublished material shared with the research team by key stakeholders

Definition of Disability

Under Jordan's landmark Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 for the Year 2017, a person with disability is defined as "a person who has long-term physical, sensory, intellectual, mental, psychological or neurological impairment, which, as a result of interaction with other physical and behavioural barriers, may hinder performance by such person of one of the major life activities or hinder the exercise by such person of any right or basic freedom independently" (Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 2017).

This definition broadly aligns with the social, rights-based model articulated in Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which the Government of Jordan ratified on 31 March 2008. In contrast to the charity model of disability, which frames people with disabilities as passive victims, objects of pity or recipients of services, the rights-based model enshrined within the CRPD highlights that **physical, cognitive or sensory impairments become disabling when they interact with prevailing discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and policies or physical spaces to effectively bar the individual(s) from participating fully and on an equal basis in society**. For example, inaccessible signage or a lack of ramps and handrails are environmental barriers that deny access to schools or health facilities for individuals with visual or physical impairments. Other types of barriers include attitudinal barriers such as stigma and discrimination, and institutional barriers such as discriminatory laws and policies. Impairments can also combine with other key factors and characteristics to compound the level of marginalisation, for

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example characteristics based on age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, rural versus urban locations. People may also experience different levels of discrimination based on whether their impairments are visible or not. The experience of disability varies widely, with at least as much variation amongst people with disabilities as there is amongst those without disabilities.

Data on disability prevalence in Jordan

According to 2015 Jordanian census data, approximately 11.1% of the population aged 5 years and older in Jordan have a disability or functional difficulty. This translates to 651,396 individuals, or one in nine people (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021).¹ This percentage is lower than the WHO estimate of 16% of the global population, which suggests that there might be some underreporting.

Visual impairments are the most common disability among Jordanians aged 5 and above, with a prevalence of 6.0%, followed by difficulty walking at 4.8% and difficulty hearing at 3.1% according to the census data (ibid). Men are more likely to have a disability than women, with prevalence rates of 11.5% and 10.6%, respectively. Men have a higher prevalence than women with visual and hearing impairments, and women are more likely than men to have a difficulty with walking and personal care (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021). Almost half of the population aged 65 and older have disabilities (ibid). The majority of people with disabilities live in urban areas (84%); which broadly reflects the overall trend in Jordan, where 83% of the total population and 81% of the refugee population also live in urban areas (Thompson, 2018).

Globally, Jordan hosts the second largest number of refugees per capita. A 2018 survey found 22.9% of Syrian refugees aged 2 and older are estimated to have a disability, while two thirds of households have at least one member with a disability (Humanity & Inclusion and IMMAP, 2018). While no comprehensive data on the disability prevalence among Palestinian refugees is available, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) estimates based on global figures that at least 15% of the 2.3 million Palestinian refugees registered with the agency have a disability (UNWRA, 2015). Among Syrian adult refugees, difficulties with walking are the most commonly reported, affecting 20.9% of Syrian adult refugees, followed by anxiety (18.8%), fatigue (14.8%) and seeing (13.3%) (Humanity & Inclusion, 2018). Syrian child refugees are particularly affected by anxiety and depression, with almost 20% of children in the Za'atari camp experiencing intense anxiety on a daily basis (Humanity & Inclusion, 2018).

Policy and legislative context of disability inclusion in Jordan

Jordan is widely regarded as a regional leader with respect to its legal and constitutional framework for disability rights. However, disability rights advocates flag that despite ambitious, progressive laws and policies on paper, progress on reforming systems and implementing legislation to guarantee the full and equal participation of people with disabilities remains in its early stages (KILs).

¹ The 2015 Jordan census used the [short set of questions from the Washington Group on Disability Statistics](#), which asks respondents to rate their experience of difficulty in six domains of functioning: seeing, hearing, walking or climbing stairs, remembering or concentrating, self-care, and understanding/communicating with others.

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The Government of Jordan was among the first countries to ratify the CRPD on 31 March 2008. Implementation of the CRPD is monitored by the National Centre for Human Rights and the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), as outlined in the **Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017**. This landmark legislation takes a rights-based approach to disability inclusion, taking into consideration “respect for the inherent rights and dignity, individual autonomy and freedom of choice of persons with disabilities.” The 2017 act outlines the role of HCD as the main public institution to work with relevant ministries to develop policies and laws on the rights of persons with disabilities and support their access to services, including education, health services, social development and employment. Article 30 establishes a definition of violence against persons with disabilities as “an action or a denial that will deprive a person with a disability of a certain right or freedom, or one that will restrict his/her practice of either right or freedom, or will undermine his/her physical integrity, or will inflict mental and/or psychological harm to the person with a disability on the basis of, or because of, disability.”

In January 2022, the Jordanian Constitution was amended to affirm the participation and inclusion of people with disabilities: “The law shall protect the rights of persons with disabilities and promote their participation and inclusion in various walks of life.” This marked a change in language where people with disabilities “are now granted the right to take an effective role in all walks of life,” noted Muhannad Azzeh, secretary general of the HCD. Prior to the amendment, the law stated that people with disabilities should be taken care of and protected from abuse and exploitation, which represents a charity, rather than a rights-based, approach to disability. In addition, discriminatory language barring a person “who is insane or an idiot” from being a deputy or senator under Article 75 of the Constitution was replaced (Muheisen, 2022).

However, advocates have highlighted that Jordan’s Civil Code and Personal Status Law of 2019 includes discriminatory language denying full legal rights to people with disabilities. Article 204 of the Personal Status Law does not recognise the legal capacity of people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, stating that no one with “young age, dementia or insanity shall be eligible to exercise his civil rights,” while Article 215 does not grant free and informed consent for persons with audio-visual disabilities, stipulating, “If a person is deaf and dumb, or blind and dumb and is unable to express his will because of that, the court may appoint a guardian to assist him in the actions that require his interest” (King Hussein Foundation, 2021). In 2022, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recommended reform of this law as a priority (Quinn, 2022).

Governance and access to justice for people with disabilities in Jordan

There is a positive legislative environment for people with disabilities, though implementation remains a challenge as discussed above. The Jordanian government has committed to improve the status of people with disabilities, notably in the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 and evidenced by co-hosting the 2025 Global Disability Summit. The law sets time-bound commitments for ministries and thanks to recent lobbying, ministries have recently allocated at least 1% of their budgets to disability inclusion (KII with HCD). This review was unable to find details on how this budget allocation was being spent.

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People with disabilities rarely participate in elections either as candidates or voters, due to cultural stigma, the absence of accessible polling stations, and a lack of awareness of their electoral rights and the voting process (US State Department, 2023). Efforts are being made by the Independent Election Commission to address barriers to voting, including employing people with disabilities and requiring municipalities to have at least one fully accessible polling station and partially accessible stations at other voting sites. New political parties are also now required to include a person with a disability (Quinn, 2022).

Insufficient data collection makes it difficult to understand whether people with disabilities are accessing the justice system. In 2022, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities undertook a visit to Jordan and found that insufficient tracking of disability case law made it difficult to determine the extent to which people with disabilities are accessing the legal system to claim their rights (UNHRC, 2022). Efforts are being made to provide procedural accommodation to people with disabilities in legal proceedings, in line with CRPD commitments (Quinn, 2022).

The access of people with disabilities to mediation bodies is restricted by an absence of enforcement mechanisms, discrimination and a lack of awareness of different resource mechanisms (Al-Zu'bi & Hilal, 2024). An Equal Opportunities Committee established under the 2017 Disability Act serves as a mediating body for workplace violations. However, complaints are currently only accepted for employment discrimination cases and the extent to which people with disabilities feel comfortable to pursue cases is in doubt due to fears of victimisation and a lack of awareness of the mechanism and process from both organisations for people with disabilities (OPDs) and legal assistance centres (Quinn, 2022).

Women and girls with disabilities face increased risks of gender-based violence and face additional barriers to accessing justice. A 2020 survey of women and girls with disabilities found that 71.7% do not have a system of protection from violence directed against them, 42.5% said they do not seek help when exposed to violence, and 61% indicated that they do not have knowledge about bodies that provide legal aid (Thompson, 2018). Barriers to justice include challenges in reporting due to dependence on perpetrators who also provide care, lack of physical access to law enforcement centres and court facilities, and a lack of accessible information formats on legal rights and how to report. A Support Services for People with Disabilities office was established within the Palace of Justice in Amman in 2020; however, this service is limited only to the Palace of Justice building (King Hussein Foundation, 2021).

Pervasive use of physical, verbal and sexual abuse against children and adults with disabilities in institutions, rehabilitation centres and other care settings have been reported, along with unacceptable living conditions (US State Department, 2023). Cases of violence against people with disabilities or institutionalised persons are referred to the Juvenile and Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate (PSD) and centres have been closed or suspended for offenses. Launched in 2019, Jordan's 10-year National Strategy on Deinstitutionalisation for People with Disabilities developed by HCD and the Ministry of Social Development through a consultative drafting process aims to promote independent living. Jordan is the only country in the Middle East with such an ambition. The plan to replace the country's 34 residential institutions with inclusive community-based care services by 2029 is currently being rolled out with the support of the Lumos Foundation and the European Union aim (KII).

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Education and disability inclusion in Jordan

The government has committed to increase access to education for all children with disabilities, including refugees. In their [10-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education \(2020-30\)](#), the Ministry of Education defines inclusive education for children with disabilities as the process of ensuring their right to access, attend, participate and succeed in their mainstream local schools, by removing barriers to learning and participation (Jordan Ministry of Education, 2020). The strategy envisions that by 2031, all schools will be fully inclusive and the percentage of school-aged children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools reaches 10% of the total number of school-aged children with disabilities (Humanity & Inclusion, 2022).

Despite this, people with disabilities access education at a lower rate and are significantly more likely to be unable to read and write compared to people without disabilities. In 2019, the Department of Statistics found that 79% of school-aged people with disabilities are excluded from any form of education (Humanity & Inclusion, 2022). In 2015, only 5.4% of those enrolled in educational institutions have a disability (or one in 19 students) and 29.1% of people who had never been enrolled have a disability. Over one third (36.8%) of people who are illiterate aged 13 years and over are persons with disabilities, which is much higher than the proportion of people with disabilities in Jordan's population (11.1%) (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021).

Students with disabilities face many barriers to accessing quality education. Barriers to education equity include a lack of inclusive education training for teachers, inaccessible classrooms and discriminatory attitudes of parents who are unwilling for children with disabilities to attend school alongside children without disabilities (Humanity & Inclusion, 2022; Yaghi, 2021). Work remains to be done on improving the curricula to be inclusive of all students with disabilities. Students with intellectual disabilities, for example, follow the same curriculum as their peers without disabilities across all educational cycles rather than receiving tailored materials (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023).

Refugee children with disabilities face additional barriers to education. Among the Syrian refugee population, 22.9% of children aged 2 and older have a disability, and this group are less likely to attend school than both Syrian children without disabilities, and children with disabilities of other nationalities (Humanity & Inclusion, 2022). A 2018 survey found that 19% of Syrian refugees with disabilities had never enrolled in school and cannot read or write, compared to 6.7% of people without disabilities. Moreover, women with disabilities are nearly three times more likely than men with disabilities (74.2% compared to 25.8%) to have never attended school and be unable to read and write, with the gender gap being particularly large among older refugees. For the current generation of Syrian refugee children, boys with disabilities are most likely to never enrol in school and least likely to attend regularly due to stigma and bullying and because they are at higher risk of engaging in child labour (Humanity & Inclusion and IMMAP, 2018). Barriers to attending school for refugee children with disabilities vary by location. Caregivers of children with disabilities most frequently cited overcrowded classrooms, distance to school and safety fears. Children themselves also cited health conditions, financial constraints, inaccessible toilets and bullying. For children with disabilities who had never attended school, a fifth of caregivers cited their child's functional difficulties and psychological distress as the main barriers, while 12.5% reported their child had been refused entry (ibid)

Some progress has been made in addressing these barriers and enrolment numbers are rising. In coordination with the Ministry of Education and INGO partners, HCD is working with

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200 schools in a pilot phase to increase access to education for children with disabilities through improving physical accessibility and training support teachers, principals, counsellors and other school personnel (KII). In 2023, the Ministry of Education appointed approximately 600 individuals to build capacity for inclusive education services in each of the country's 42 directorates of education and provided financial subsidies for children with disabilities in regions lacking accessible public schools to attend better-equipped private schools (US State Department, 2023). In recent years, a growing number of schools have enrolled students with disabilities and overall enrolment numbers have risen. There was a 44% increase in the number of students with disabilities enrolled in schools from 2020/2021 from the previous academic year. Among the 1,002 schools that now serve students with disabilities, 132 are considered inclusive pioneering schools (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023). In 2023, UNRWA launched an emergency appeal which aimed among other objectives to provide additional support to 2,119 special education needs (SEN) students who experienced considerable learning challenges during the 18 months of COVID-19-related school closures via hiring 36 additional SEN teachers and providing assistive devices to 640 Palestinian refugee students with visual and/or hearing disabilities (UNWRA, 2023).

Health and disability inclusion in Jordan

People with disabilities face significant barriers to accessing health services. The coverage and accessibility of Jordan's primary health care system, specialist services and mental health is not sufficient to meet demand and public health facilities are often over capacity (KIIs) (Tayseer, 2023). For example, in 2022 there were only 3.16 practicing physiotherapists per 10,000 people in Jordan (compared to an average figure of 13.18 physiotherapists per 10,000 people in the Europe region) (World Physiotherapy, 2022). The pressure on the health system in Jordan has been heightened by the COVID-19, Syria Crisis and financial pressures (Institute of Development Studies, 2020) (Tayseer, 2023). People with disabilities face compounded challenges in accessing health services in Jordan, as they are more likely to live below the poverty line, are at higher risk of non-communicable diseases and require more specialised care (Quinn, 2022). Inaccessible transport infrastructure is an additional barrier for people with disabilities accessing health services and the in the delivery of assistive technology (Institute of Development Studies, 2020).

Women and girls with disabilities face barriers to accessing sexual and reproductive health services and exercising their rights, including reports of lack of consent for hysterectomies (US State Department, 2023). Although a fatwa prohibiting the practice of forced sterilization of girls with disabilities was issued in 2014, there are still reports of sterilizations that are not for medical reasons, performed by families the families of women and girls with mental disabilities (UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2017).

There are unmet health needs for Syrian refugees with disabilities. A 2019 survey found that 16% of Jordan's Syrian refugee population had a chronic health condition; 78% of whom were in need of medical follow-up (Tiltne, et al., 2019). Of these, 21% did not receive follow-up, 30% used services provided by an NGO, 26% used public services and 18% used services from private providers. 4% benefitted from UNRWA's health services. Since 2019, UNHCR began collaborating with the Ministry of Health to integrate refugees into the national healthcare system and grant Syrian refugees access to public health services in Jordan (at non-insured rates). In 2020, this access was expanded to refugees of all

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nationalities, with support from the World Bank and a consortium of international donors. Despite these efforts, the capacity of healthcare facilities for refugees is severely strained by increasing demand and declining humanitarian funding (UNHCR, 2024). A 2023 survey of Syrian refugees in non-camp settings found 71% of those with disabilities didn't receive any support for disability. 20% received medical support, 4% received psychological support, 3% received assistive devices and 3% physical rehabilitation. The most common barrier preventing receiving disability support was inability to afford the costs (54%). 16% said the needed service was not available and 10% didn't know where to go (Headway, UNHCR, 2024).

Jordanians with disabilities are offered free social health insurance, providing benefits such as hospital accommodation, medical treatment, medication costs and discounts or free access to various medical procedures, including surgeries, vaccinations and speech therapies. **However, one third of Jordanians with disabilities were not covered, and were slightly less likely to have health insurance than the general population (67.2% vs. 68.7%),** per the 2015 census. Youth are the age group that is least likely to be health insured – likely related to challenges young people faced in obtaining formal employment (Sieverding, 2022). Barriers to registration include coverage of and access to diagnostic centres (Institute of Development Studies, 2020) (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023). 11.6% of Jordanians who are health-insured are persons with disabilities, compared to 10.5% of people who are not health-insured (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021).

Social protection and disability inclusion in Jordan

Jordan lacks a comprehensive social protection system, with a patchwork of government and civil society service providers (Institute of Development Studies, 2020) (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023).

People with disabilities can access a number of social assistance services and benefits. The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) manages social assistance services and benefits to over 20,000 people per year, of which, approximately 20% are estimated to have disabilities and benefit from \$12.5 million per year (Institute of Development Studies, 2020). Families of people with disabilities are eligible to receive a small monthly cash stipend via the Rehabilitation Aid and the Disability Aid Fund.

However, many people with disabilities are not receiving these services and benefits. In 2017, an estimated 12,000 persons with disabilities were supported by the MOSD, constituting 12% of National Aid Fund beneficiaries (Humanity & Inclusion, 2023). This is low compared to the total number of people with disabilities identified in the census. In 2016 there were 43,407 Jordanian citizens registered with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requesting HCD services, 62.7% of whom were men (del Mar Logrono Narbona & Messieh, 2022).

Social protection stipends are low, increasing the risk that people with disabilities will be in poverty. Disability benefits are low and there is no specific child benefit meaning larger families are particularly at risk of poverty (del Mar Logrono Narbona & Messieh, 2022).

Eligibility requirements for these entitlements, including the need for a medical diagnosis and being unemployed, can present barriers for people with disabilities receiving social assistance. They are also signs of a charity or medical approach to

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disability inclusion rather than a rights-based approach (Soldà & Wapling, 2023). Access to MoSD services, the Rehabilitation Aid and the Disability Aid Fund is subject to the following eligibility criteria: 1) a medical diagnosis of disability within specified categories of impairment; 2) Jordanian nationality and permanent residency status; 3) the family's wealth must not exceed a threshold; 4) the individual with a disability must not be engaged in employment.

To access these entitlements and others outlined in the 2017 Disability Law (including benefitting from employment quotas or exemptions), Jordanians with disabilities must be registered as having a disability diagnosis through HCD. Launched in late 2023, the virtual registration of disability status is integrated with the national identity card and is designed to streamline access to disability entitlements and services without the need to produce medical records. So far, 12,000 Jordanian nationals have the disability ID card, which equates to about 2% of people with disabilities identified in the 2015 census (HCD). Barriers to health services can make it challenging to receive a formal medical diagnosis.

A range of actors offer social protection services to the estimated 3 million refugees in Jordan, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In 2015, UNWRA in Jordan assisted 6,139 Palestinian refugees with disabilities through their Disability Programme, which supports the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools and of adults and youth with disabilities in vocational training and employment, and 8,756 Palestinian refugees with disabilities through their Social Safety Net Programme (UNWRA, 2015). 80% of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Jordan rely on UNWRA cash assistance as their primary income source, receiving JD50 per family member every three months, often insufficient to cover living expenses for PRS with disabilities who face additional barriers to employment (UNRWA, 2023).

Employment and disability inclusion in Jordan

People with disabilities in Jordan are less likely to be employed than those without disabilities. The prevalence of disability among non-working people and job seekers was 15.5% according to the 2015 census, while of the total employed population aged 15 years and over, 10.2% are workers with disabilities (Department of Statistics Jordan, 2021). In 2017, the employment rate among men with disabilities was 32.8%, almost half that of men without disabilities (61.4%) (Institute of Development Studies, 2020). Women with disabilities face additional barriers to accessing education opportunities due to double discrimination; the employment rate for women with disabilities was just 5.2%, compared to 13.5% for women without disabilities.

Among Syrian refugees, families with members with disabilities have fewer opportunities to work, lower income and higher debt. A 2018 study found that 83.5% of Syrian refugees with disabilities were not working, a rate almost 10-percentage points higher than their peers without disabilities (Humanity & Inclusion and IMMAP, 2018). Furthermore, 29.2% of households with at least one member with disabilities reported a household cash income of 0-49 JOD, the lowest income bracket, compared to 19.5% of households without any members with disabilities.

There is a positive legal environment for the employment of people with disabilities in Jordan. The Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 for the Year 2017 forbids exclusion from employment or training on the basis of disability and requires employers to

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provide reasonable accommodation. In addition, the law stipulates a disability employment quota for both government and non-government organisations – for institutions with more than 50 employees, 4% of vacancies should be assigned to people with disabilities. Private organisations are required to report on the number of workers with disabilities. **Despite this, there is an absence of effective enforcement mechanisms for disability laws and a 2017 Shadow Report argues that due to legal loopholes, the law does not guarantee people with disabilities the right to work** (Al-Zu'bi & Hilal, 2024) (Institute of Development Studies, 2020).

Implementation of disability inclusive laws remains a challenge and this review found limited evidence of organisations being held to account for violating employment laws. Employers are often not prepared to employ or offer reasonable accommodation to workers with disabilities, whether due to negative perceptions of their abilities or a lack of accessibility of workplaces and the transportation system (KIs). To address some of these barriers, the HCD is training inspectors for the Ministry of Labour on disability inclusion, the legal framework and access requirements in employment, and developing practical guidance for employers on implementing inclusion in the workplace.

Key stakeholders on disability inclusion in Jordan

There is an active disability rights movement in Jordan and public commitment to disability inclusion from the highest levels of government. The Guide to CSOs in Jordan lists 153 OPDs ranging from special education and vocational training centres for people with disabilities to associations for specific types of disabilities (Guide to CSOs in Jordan, n.d.). KIs conducted for this review reported that the government is consultative with OPDs, but resource constraints and prioritisation hinder progress on the full implementation of progressive policies.

Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD). HCD is a public institution with a mandate to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life. Established by the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007 and with responsibilities outlined in the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 of 2017, HCD leads government policy making on disability in Jordan and provides technical support to executive bodies to implement programmes in accordance with disability rights legislations. The Council's President is Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein. HCD is the primary technical focal point on all things relating to disability, to assist national organizations in providing services in an inclusive and accessible manner for all. To ensure a participatory approach in policy and decision-making, the organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees that is comprised of 25 members, including the President of HCD –with 13 members representing people with different types of disabilities, 3 representing families and eight independent experts in the field.

Ana Insan I am a Human Society for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Founded in 2008 by Jordanian disability rights activists, Ana Insan is a leading advocacy organisation with over 5,500 members across Jordan, a majority of whom are women with disabilities. The organisation aims to change mindsets from charity to rights-based approach, and provides training and awareness raising for communities, the government and other OPDs. Ana Insan's president, Asia Yaghi, became the first woman with a physical disability to become a member of the Jordanian Senate in 2022.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

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(UNWRA) serves 2.3 million registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan with education, health and social protection services. In 2023, UNWRA signed a memorandum of understanding with HCD to consolidate cooperation to serve and protect Palestine refugees with disabilities until 2028. In particular, the MoU focuses on inclusive education within UNRWA schools, public awareness-raising via social and cultural initiatives, access to health and rehabilitation services, and assistive devices (United Nations Jordan, 2023).

A key agency for refugees with disabilities is the **Disabilities and Age Task Force (DATF)**, chaired by UNHCR and Humanity and Inclusion (HI). DATF is responsible for coordinating services, assessing the needs and collecting data on persons with disabilities, and quality assuring service provision. In addition to targeting refugees, DATF also serves vulnerable Jordanians (del Mar Logrono Narbona & Messieh, 2022).

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About Helpdesk reports: The Disability Inclusion Helpdesk is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), contracted through the Disability Inclusion Team (DIT) under the Disability Inclusive Development Inclusive Futures Programme. Helpdesk reports are based on between 3 and 5 days of desk-based research per query and are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues and expert thinking on issues around disability inclusion. Where referring to documented evidence, Helpdesk teams will seek to understand the methodologies used to generate evidence and will summarise this in Helpdesk outputs, noting any concerns with the robustness of the evidence being presented. For some Helpdesk services, in particular the practical know-how queries, the emphasis will be focused far less on academic validity of evidence and more on the validity of first-hand experience among disabled people and practitioners delivering and monitoring programmes on the ground. All sources will be clearly referenced.

Helpdesk services are provided by a consortium of leading organisations and individual experts on disability, including Social Development Direct, Sightsavers, ADD International, Light for the World, Humanity & Inclusion, BRAC, BBC Media Action, Sense and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). Expert advice may be sought from this Group, as well as from the wider academic and practitioner community, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged. Any views or opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of FCDO, the Disability Inclusion Helpdesk or any of the contributing organisations/experts.

For any further request or enquiry, contact enquiries@disabilityinclusion.org.uk

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