



**Disability and Change in the Society:**

**A Study on the experience of a group of people with disabilities in the West Bank  
and Gaza in advocating disability issues through**

**The Empowerment of People with Disabilities to Claim their Rights and  
Entitlements Project**

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**2014**

This study was developed in the context of the Empowerment of People with Disabilities to Claim their Rights and Entitlements Project. Funded by UKAID through the Department for International Development (DFID), this exercise was implemented by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University in partnership with Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP).



**Changing Lives, Delivering Results.**



**Medical Aid for Palestinians** works for the health and dignity of Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees.

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## Abstract

Can people with disabilities (PWDs) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip drive change in their own communities? Can PWDs change themselves so that they can turn into disability rights activists? This paper explores the change introduced by activities launched by a group of PWDs in the context of the Empowerment of People with Disabilities to Claim their Rights and Entitlements Project. Launched in September 2010, the project was implemented over a period of 42 months by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University in partnership with Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP). Informed by a database built at the project inception phase, the research paper analyses and compares the changes realised to data collated in the process of developing an impact assessment study. The impact assessment was provided at the end of the project lifespan. Highlighting change, concerns and difficulties the project team encountered, the research paper casts light on various aspects and experiences of the project. In addition to key recommendations, the research exercise emphasises that similar research activities or experiments should be carried out.

## 1. Introduction

This study is informed by a rights-based approach to disability issues and examines the role PWDs play in these issues so as to introduce a positive change to their current status. The rights-based approach is based on the fact that any change to the reality of PWDs depends on the roles of these people themselves in working towards materialising equality.

The research initiative stems from the experience of the Empowerment of People with Disabilities to Claim their Rights and Entitlements Project. Starting in September 2010, the project was implemented over a period of 42 months by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University in partnership with Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP). In addition to difficult access to public services, this significant exercise sheds light on challenges PWDs face, particularly in marginalised areas. The project team introduced appropriate modifications to ensure PWDs' effective participation in the project activities. These included adjustment of participants' houses, provision of assistive devices, and necessary modifications made at the CDS. Working experience in disability issues is a learning method PWDs and relevant disability actors can use. To introduce the desired change in participants' local communities, advocacy for disability related issues is the hub and goal of this project.

Primarily, this research paper summarises disability-related literature and current situation of disability and advocacy in Palestine. It provides a broader idea of the project and an analysis of data collated during the project life. To assess the changes materialised, databases are compared to data collected in the aftermath of the advocacy phase of the project.

## 2. Definition of disability

Definition of disability is variable. However, the ongoing debate over disability, activities of PWDs and international disability rights movements provide an in-depth understanding of disability related issues and generate a serious endeavour to drive change in the current situation of PWDs. Various models of disability are a translation of current practices. Any change introduced to the status of disability is associated with the models embraced to deal with relevant issues. Most prominent models of disability are as follows:

- The **medical model** views disability from a therapeutic perspective. Accordingly, disability is an “impairment” that affects an individual. The medical model, therefore, deals with disability on grounds of medical therapy and services. It isolates PWDs in the society as leaves the individual himself responsible for coping with the barriers they face.
- The **social model** illustrates a key development in the view of disability. It addresses disability as an interaction between a person who suffers from a physical or mental “impairment” and barriers in the society. When the latter are removed, disability is

no longer an issue. The social model is significant as it recognises disability as an interplay between the individual and society; disability it is not inherent in the individual *per se* (Mitra, 2006).

- The **rights-based model** is associated with the social model, sharing the definition of disability as an interaction between the individual and barriers in the society. However, the rights-based approach focuses on the person's right to live in a barrier-free society. It views disability and right to live in such a society on grounds of human rights. It is based on the Convention for the Rights of People with Disability (CRPD) (UN, 2006), which provides one of the most important components of the universal disability movement.

There are several other models of disability. However, a single ideal approach to the definition of disability is not in place. Different approaches to disability are significant to consolidate interaction with it. In this vein, the research paper and project adopt the rights-based approach to disability and advocacy for PWD rights.

### 3. Disability and the society

In many societies around the world, a stigma is often associated with disability. As a result of ignorance of disability causes, disability is viewed as a form of punishment (Delap and Saunders, 2012). Negative perceptions of disability still persist. To change these perceptions is a first step towards a positive change within societies.

Due to discrimination, PWDs face additional difficulties in education, labour, and other areas. PWDs are further impeded by a restricted participation in daily life activities. There is a dire need to develop service delivery and ensure PWD unfettered access to public service facilities (WHO, 2011).

PWDs are more vulnerable to poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Furthermore, they cannot access healthcare services (WHO, 2011).

In the Arab World, literature on disability indicates that disability-oriented policies and policy enforcement mechanisms are absent. Problems include lack of accessibility to buildings and means of transportation as well as negative attitudes towards interventions designed to reduce environmental barriers. Disability is not viewed as a rights issue (Axelsson and Barrett, 2009).

### 4. Disability rights movement in Palestine

A full documentation of former disability rights movements in the Palestinian territory is lacking. In an interview organised on 16 January 2010, Ziyad Amr, a founder and activist in

the Palestinian General Union of People with Disabilities (GUPWD), elaborated on experience of the Palestinian disability rights movement, which was launched in early 1990. The Palestinian Law on Rights of People with Disabilities was enacted as a result of pressure, lobbying and advocacy campaign, and PWD claims in early 1990. The campaign was led by the GUPWD, which was founded in 1991 by a group of Palestinian PWD rights activists.

It is worth noting that the Palestinian disability rights movement did not originally seek a law for PWDs, but it worked towards introducing the disability issue as a priority to the Palestinian decision maker.

In 1998, the Palestinian disability rights movement developed a draft law to facilitate accessibility to public places. However, the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) exercised pressure on the movement to draft a PWD law. At that time, the disability rights movement was not fully aware of drafting the law provisions from a human rights perspective. Additionally, Palestinian PWDs did not have access to or influence on decision makers to approve the draft law, which was more aligned with the disability rights movement's aspirations and expectations at the time. Combined, these factors contributed to enactment of the Palestinian disability law. Grounded in the medical approach to disability, the law defines a persons with disability as follows:

Any person who suffers from a permanent total or partial disability whether at birth or otherwise affecting any of his senses, or physical, psychological or mental capacities to the extent of limiting his ability to respond to his living needs under the same circumstances as lived by the non-disabled.

Article 4, Definitions, Palestinian Law No. (4) of 1999 on Rights of the Disabled.

This definition concentrates on difficulty a PWD faces, rather than on interaction between the PWD and environment, including all elements. Accordingly, unfavourable special policies and practices might be entrenched on official and nonofficial levels. It might also generate charity-based and medical models and approaches to disability issues in institutional and social contexts.

## **5. Theoretical framework**

The project in general, and this research paper in particular, are informed by a rights-based framework of disability. Based on the CRPD, this approach underlies the advocacy strategy of the project. Given that medical and charity approaches to disability are prevalent in the Palestinian society, this project views inclusion as a right. The society must change to assimilate PWDs, not vice versa. The CRPD also views PWD rights as indivisible. It is, therefore, important to provide protection to PWD rights. To this avail, Article 13 of the CRPD stresses that civil society organisations will represent PWDs with a view to provide

advocacy for their rights. This study focuses on the change devised as a result of advocacy activities launched by PWDs through the project. Pre- and post-advocacy results are presented and compared. A special attention is paid to the change introduced to local communities as well as to participating PWDs themselves. As explicated by the rights-based perspective, the project focuses on responsibility of the society. Disability is not viewed as an individual responsibility. In this vein, the research paper examines the theory of “learning from the oppressed”, which sees the society as a changing, rather than a constant, object. The paper also stresses the role of marginalised and oppressed groups in liberating themselves as well as the entities that discriminate against them in the society (Freire, 2000). The study attempts to answer the question of how capable PWDs are to emancipate themselves and their communities from discrimination and negative attitudes towards disability.

## **6. Introduction to the project**

The project was primarily tailored to empower PWDs to be key drivers of change within their communities. PWDs will be enabled to effectively defend their rights, using national and international legal frameworks as well as community-based rehabilitation principles. In particular, the project worked towards enabling PWDs by encouraging local government units and civil society organisations to adopt inclusive, streamlined standards and create comprehensive positive models, which could be used to effect change on the local level.

This project can be seen as the first of its kind in Palestine. It addresses disability related issues in an academic, community-based and developmental context.

### **6.1 Inception of the project**

Initial preparations and phases of the project were set to assimilate the real picture and reality of PWDs. Several field activities were implemented. In this inception phase, a database was designed to include background information to be used by the research team and participants throughout subsequent project phases. These data provided an opportunity to respond to the needs articulated in the field. Collated in the course of the project, this information was used to organise and provide training to a core team of PWDs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on field research skills, disability-related laws and frameworks, and community lobbying and advocacy. Several other training events were delivered to enhance participants’ skills.

Field research included a survey of institutions working with PWDs in the areas covered by the project, a survey of PWD households, and focus groups involving PWDs and other relevant groups. After data had been collected, the research team organised training courses

on disability laws and frameworks as well as community lobbying and advocacy activities. These targeted participating PWDs and community activists. In addition to outcomes, the project approaches and implementation mechanism were deliberated with PWDs and project participants. To this avail, learning workshops were organised to discuss the project outcomes and receive feedback for improvement in later phases of the project.

## **6.2 The Project Steering Committee**

Membership on the Project Steering Committee included the project research team, including CDS and MAP staff, and disability experts. Established to support the project activities, the Steering Committee convened once every three months to review progress of the project and discuss future endeavours. The Committee's role was of particular importance as it enabled the project team to utilise and benefit from various experiences in the area of disability, providing further guidance to the project implementation. Besides PWD opinions and assessments in local communities covered by the project, the Steering Committee provided ongoing feedback and an opportunity for the project team to reassess the project activities and devised changes, using available resources to fulfil PWDs' needs and reflect their reality.

## **6.3 Disability trainers/consultants**

The project also aimed to provide empowerment to the project team, including young persons with and without disability. In this context, "nothing about us without us" was a key approach adopted by the project.

Two disability and integration trainers were recruited in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Both are PWDs. The project took into account that necessary accommodative processes were provided to help trainers deliver assigned tasks fully, effectively and independently. In addition to delivering training sessions throughout the project lifecycle, trainers' role was to lead a group of participants and monitor the progress they registered.

## **6.4 Disability and equality training**

As part of the project, the project team organised training courses on disability and equality. Targeting relevant institutions, organisations, individuals and groups, training was based on two equally important principles: (1) redefining disability in line with the social model; and (2) consolidating the concept of disability rights as a human rights issue. Training sessions were designed to challenge discriminatory attitudes towards PWDs across various social

groups, establish an egalitarian participation of PWDs in all programmes and policies, and raise public awareness on disability related issues.

For example, training sessions addressed definitions and models of disability, discrimination on the basis of disability, disability from a human rights perspective, language and terminology, etc.

Delivered throughout the project lifecycle, training events were designed in tandem with the needs of each group. Before the project was launched, training had also targeted the project research team, including CDS and MAP staff.

Training provided an ongoing opportunity to enhance public sensitisation of disability related issues in the society. It also allowed an opportunity for the project to build working relationships with interested groups and organisations. It is worth noting, however, that training activities were not restricted to areas covered by the project.

## 6.5 Project areas

The project targeted four geographical areas in the West Bank and Strip: Rafah in southern Gaza, Beit Hanun in northern Gaza, Qabatiya in the northern West Bank district of Jenin, and Dura in southern West Bank district of Hebron. Three communities were targeted in each area: an urban community, a rural community, and a refugee camp. For the purposes of the project, this distribution took into consideration geographical proximity and participants' ability to travel between the said areas.

Based on these benchmarks, the following communities were selected:

Urban community	Rural community	Refugee camp	District
Beit Hanun	Um an Nasr	Jabalya	Northern Gaza
Rafah	An Nasr	Rafah	Southern Gaza
Qabatiya	Sanur	Jenin refugee camp	Jenin (northern West Bank)
Dura	Kharsa	Al Fawwar	Hebron (southern West Bank)

It should be noted that an advocacy activity was not implemented in some communities because participants either travelled or withdrew and had other opportunities. These included Kharsa, Sanur, and Al Fawwar refugee camp.

## 7. Background data

## 7.1 Household survey

The survey addressed 600 PWD households across areas covered by the project. Taking place from January through December 2011, field research included interviews with PWDs directly or through proxies, including sign language interpreters with people with hearing disability or families with members with learning and communication difficulties.

The survey targeted PWDs in the 15-35 age group. The survey sample included an equal number of male and female PWDs.

The survey also covered any other family members with disabilities in case they met age requirements.

In each project area, the survey questionnaires were distributed as follows: 70 in urban communities, 50 in refugee camps, and 30 in rural communities. This distribution generally reflected population census in target areas.

A total of 721 questionnaires were filled in. The survey addressed the current status of PWDs, including their daily activities, self-care, barriers to access healthcare and education services, awareness of rights and disability rights organisations, participation in social activities, and perceptions of empowerment.

## 7.2 Institutional survey

The institutional survey was designed to build a database of civil society organisations that operate in the project areas, identify lines of activity and target groups, and explore willingness to cooperate in disability related issues.

The survey involved a sampling technique using information provided by local residents and field researchers in each surveyed community. A questionnaire was compiled to collate information on organisations operating in target communities. In addition to exploring interest in cooperation with disability issues, the questionnaire addressed an organisation's areas of operation and staff, including employees with disabilities. It was also important to identify the scope of operation of organisations as well as the types of projects implemented in communities covered by the project. To this end, the project team visited and filled out survey questionnaires with a total of 137 organisations.

## 7.3 Focus groups

The institutional and household surveys were among the first steps conducted at the inception of the project. This activity was tailored to investigate the current status of PWDs, including their own lives, rights, and difficulties they used to encounter. However, a more in-

depth understanding of PWD issues in target areas had to be attained. To this end, an inclusive debate was launched with various groups in the project areas, including PWDs of various age groups, households, children with disabilities, and members of target communities.

In February 2011, the project team established 24 focus groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Six focus groups were organised in each district, targeting PWDs of various age groups, PWD families, local community activists, civil society organisations, and community members.

### 7.3.1 Focus group objectives

- Collate as much information as possible on PWD needs and priorities, providing the project team with necessary information to prepare and organise training sessions based on community needs.
- Collect and analyse information on the ability to drive a real change in the disabled community. This activity also analysed impact on the disability rights movement in target areas.
- Identify challenges and opportunities regarding the relationship between PWDs, other social groups, and institutions in the society.
- Establish communication networks between the project team and relevant individuals and organisations.

### 7.4 Selection of trainers

In 2011, the project team organised 17 training sessions, which targeted approximately 270 male and female PWD trainees as well as a group of community activists in the project target areas. Training courses addressed the concept and models of disability, disability rights and laws, and community-oriented lobbying activity. The training exercise also helped create the environment needed to raise trainees' awareness and select a smaller group of PWDs to implement subsequent phases of the project.

Against this background, the project team selected 45 PWDs from across the West Bank and Gaza Strip to be the nucleus for driving change in the reality and inclusion of PWDs in their local communities. This activity was informed by criteria set by PWDs, community activists and PWD family members, who attended the project-sponsored training. After the project first phase was finalised, participants attended a learning workshop organised simultaneously in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in October 2011. Also, selection criteria were developed by the Project Steering Committee. The project team then reviewed and used these criteria to approve a consolidated list, including the following standards:

1. Faith in disability issues
2. Communication capability
3. Spirit of voluntary action
4. Ability to contain the other
5. Working under pressure
6. Working in a team
7. Inclusive approach to disability issues
8. Punctuality / attendance
9. Creativity
10. Cooperation
11. Honesty and trustworthiness
12. Acceptance of others' opinions
13. Willingness to learn and acquire new expertise and skills
14. Motivation
15. Ability to influence others
16. Patience and endurance
17. Mastering PWD related issues
18. Entrepreneurship
19. Desire for positive self-change
20. Ability to win others' trust and love

It is worth mentioning that a model, including the aforesaid standards, was distributed to each trainee. In addition to geographical distribution and diversity as per disability/difficulty, the change that affected trainees as observed by the project facilitators was monitored.

Developed and provided by trainers, administrative assistants and Project Coordinator, the selection process was informed by a preliminary analysis of the models of disability. Accordingly, selected persons were assigned to implement the survey, which was designed to monitor barriers to PWD access to rights and service delivery in grassroots organisations, civil society actors and government agencies in the project target areas.

### **7.5 Barriers monitoring survey**

The barriers monitoring survey provided the ground for field activity implemented by participants in the project. Training workshops on field research were organised and field visits made in preparation of the survey. For many participants, this was the first time they visited organisations in their local communities. In this survey, participating PWDs visited various service providers, applied for services, and documented their experiences, using the survey questionnaire, photographs and reports. In the process, participants would not state that they were researchers carrying out a field research activity. The goal of the survey was to document the real experience of a PWD when they seek a service. Participants carried out a

total of 1,118 field visits to service providers in their local communities, including schools, commercial premises, healthcare centres, places of worship, municipalities, etc.

## 8. Advocacy stage

A female participant on an entertainment day, including children with and without disabilities



A sensitisation workshop on disability and equality



Advocacy was the main component of the project. At this stage, participants worked with their local communities with a view to advocate disability related issues. Advocacy introduced major changes to participants' personalities as well as to local communities. The idea of advocacy was to allow all participants to choose different advocacy areas and activities, which best suited them. The project provided a monthly subsidy (including a personal and advocacy allowance). Every other month, participants developed a new advocacy plan. In the meantime, the project team made regular visits and monitored implementation of advocacy plans. Participants documented advocacy activities, including by photographs, forms and reports. They also cooperated with one another to deliver joint plans and initiatives of mutual benefit. In the advocacy phase, participants provided training to 5,600 community members on disability related issues. 56 service providers, including government agencies, civil society organisations and commercial premises, made modifications designed to remove access barriers. Participants also made 23 field visits to PWDs, who do not leave their homes. In general, a total of 12,000 persons were estimated to have benefitted from the project activities.

## 8.1 Some advocacy activities

To illustrate the variety and nature of advocacy work, below are some advocacy activities carried out by the project participants:

- A female participant took photographs of and documented barriers in the local community in a handbook. Another participant held a meeting with Chairman of the Qabatiya Municipality and made a presentation about these barriers. The municipality responded favourably and removed all barriers. Thanks to the advocacy campaign, the Qabatiya Municipality employed two PWDs.
- Painted a mural on PWD rights at the Qabatiya school.
- Provided training to taxi drivers on sign language in the Gaza Strip.
- Organised several training sessions on disability and equality, targeting school students throughout the project areas.
- Designed sign language boards at the Um an Nasr Municipality, Gaza Strip.
- Advocated a bank (Bank of Palestine) to adopt PWD rights and provide publications in Braille. A staff member of the Bank of Palestine also received training on sign language.
- Trained participants to take part in a radio show on PWD rights.
- Made field visits to PWDs who do not leave their homes. Participants talked to PWDs and their families to encourage them to go out and engage in social activities.

## 9. Making modifications to institutions

Across target areas, the project provided a small fund to civil society organisations and commercial shops to make various modifications at respective premises in order to align with PWD needs. A variety of adjustments were introduced to a total of 25 institutions, including 19 in the West Bank and six in the Gaza Strip. Environmental and attitudinal modifications were also introduced. These included structural adjustments, sign language boards, sensitisation training targeting employees, Braille printing, educational games, sports tools, etc. Modified organisations were selected in the project areas based on field visits made by the project team and PWDs. Applications for modifications were submitted. A committee, including the project team members, participants and representatives of the Steering Committee, evaluated applications on grounds of attitudes towards disability and anticipated impact.

Rabi'a Cafeteria, Gaza Strip - Before modification	Rabi'a Cafeteria, Gaza Strip - After modification
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Rafah Municipality - Before modification



Rafah Municipality - After modification



Inshirah Workshop, Qabatiya - Before modification



Inshirah Workshop, Qabatiya - After modification



## 10. Project publications

The project produced advocacy tools for PWD rights. These included awareness manuals, training manuals, and short movies with an advocacy message. The project team and participants will distribute these advocacy products on a regular basis after the project comes to an end. Project outputs included:

- Training manual on *Disability and Equality: Models of Disability, Rights, Community Lobbying, Capacity Building and Barriers Monitoring*.
- Guidance manual on *Communication Ethics with People with Disabilities*.
- Guidance manual on *Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Society*.
- Guidance manual on *Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Kindergartens*.
- *Nothing about us without us* - a set of short movies on advocacy for disability related issues.

## 11. Impact assessment study

Impact assessment was informed by a quantitative and qualitative approach of data collection. Consultant Lama Jamjoum was contracted to provide an impact assessment of the project. To this avail, field research was implemented over the period from 9 September through 12 October 2013.

Quantitative data collection tools: Based on systematic sampling, three copies of initial survey questionnaires were abridged, using 20% of the preliminary survey sample. The household survey questionnaire was completed by 144 PWDs. Institutional survey questionnaires were filled out by 27 organisation representatives. 244 professional institutions or entities filled in barriers monitoring survey questionnaires. The project team completed survey questionnaires in field visits to community rehabilitation centres and civil society actors in respective areas. To document a more realistic and more accurate experience of obstacles that affected PWDs, participants sought to access a particular service without stating they were members on the project team in order.

Household and institutional surveys were compiled based on face to face interviews, which the project participants organised with respondents. Personal interviews were supervised by Dr. Lama Jamjoum in the West Bank and Mr. Khalil Shaheen in the Gaza Strip.

The table below shows the number of respondents interviewed to assess impact of the project in each target area:

Number	Gaza Strip		West Bank	
	South	North	South	North

Local community survey questionnaire	44	41	26	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>		<b>59</b>	
Institutional survey questionnaire	7	10	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>10</b>	
Barrier monitoring	98	50	29	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>		<b>69</b>	

Additionally, the project team members in all four areas filled in a one-page questionnaire on their opinions of the project impact and sustainability.

Qualitative data collection tools included discussions within 12 focus groups, including four with PWDs who participated in the project, four with participant families, and four with civil society organisations or commercial premises. Another 12 in-depth interviews were organised, including three in each project area and two with the project partners in the West Bank. To assess their viewpoints towards PWDs, a one-page opinion poll was filled out by the families of project team members and organisations that took part in focus group discussions.

The table below shows the number of interviews organised to assess the project impact throughout the project areas:

Data collection tools	Interviews examined			
	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	North	South	North	South
<b>Methodology</b>				
Focus groups (12)	Project participants (1) Participant families (1) Community members (1)			
In-depth interviews (14)*	3	3	3	3

\* 12 in-depth interviews in all four project areas and two interviews with MAP and CDS staff.

## 12. Analysis of results

The analytical framework of this research paper is informed by the concept of change and role of PWDs in leading change in their local communities and in themselves. Annex 2 below shows key results of the project impact assessment, providing a comparison to results of primary data collected at the onset of the project. A specimen of the original sample was

taken. Quantitative and qualitative aspects of materialised change are analysed through focus groups discussions, which were administered during the impact assessment phase.

### 12.1 Change introduced to participants' lives

In view of the project goal of promoting empowerment, change that affected participants themselves was a key indicator of successful project implementation. Change in participants' lives is intrinsically associated with that introduced to the broader community. Through the activities they implemented in the project, participants recognised their rights and acquired new skills, which enabled them to launch advocacy initiatives within their local communities. During the project lifetime, 14 out of 41 participants were employed. Participants attributed the reason to their community activity and improved awareness of their rights. Many participants stated they better knew their communities, enhanced self-confidence, and felt more freedom in their lives and with their families and community. 61% of participants assessed that the project had a very positive imprint on their lives. In contrast, 35% assessed the project impact as somewhat positive. Moreover, 70% of participant families stated that the project exerted a very positive impact on their lives. In regard of family relationships, participants used to feel they had posed a burden on their families. However, by participation in the project and advocacy for disability related issues, PWDs have scaled up their independence and confidence in their family life and in the broader society.

The following are some success stories narrated by participants in the project. These are included in the impact assessment study developed by Dr. Lama Jamjoum.

#### **Amal Shawamreh, Deir al Asal (in the vicinity of Dura, Hebron)**

Amal completed her undergraduate studies at the Al Quds Open University

Thanks to the project, my life has changed by 180 degrees. My participation in the project has the same impact on my life as my university degree. Before I joined the project, I did not accept myself or my disability. I used to view myself as the ugliest person in the world. At first, I hesitated to participate in the project. However, my father encouraged me to do so. At the first training session, I was shocked to see that the trainer herself was disabled. I come from a conservative community. Initially, my father used to accompany me to the project activities. Then, I gradually started to attend the project activities alone. Before I took part in the project, I was not sociable nor active. I did not talk much. I was accustomed to this situation due to problems between me and my relatives. I did not know anything about laws, which affected persons with disabilities. After I joined the project, I changed a great deal. Now, I feel better. I now take the initiative as I participate in community activities. I visited some people with disabilities at their homes. I built successful relationships with local organisations. My parents and brothers now trust me, trust my abilities, and count on me.

During my participation in the project, I was offered a job in a participating organisation. Indeed, I was employed by that organisation. I was also chosen to participate in a visit to Britain as a representative of PWD trainers in the West Bank. From now on, I will never give up. Now, I believe that nothing is difficult. Everything can be worked out. I can do anything easily.

### **Marwa Darwish, Dura**

Marwa did not complete secondary school education

The past three years of the project were the most beautiful in my life. Before I joined the project, I could not listen or talk. I was shy and fearful. I did not attend any social occasions. I did not like to see anyone. I used to suffer from psychological problems. I was not familiar with concepts, such as human rights of persons with disabilities. I admit that before I joined the project I used to have a negative attitude towards people with mental disabilities. At first, I was hesitant to take part in the project, but my parents encouraged me to do so. After I joined the project, I have been able to use sign language. I feel I am free. I go anywhere and can sit with anybody. I now go out with my friends and talk to them. I have also joined an organisation for people with hearing disability. As for me, it was the first time I ever slept in a hotel away from home as part of the project activities. In the future, I want to work in lobbying and advocacy campaigns for the sake of persons with disabilities all my life long. I dream of getting a job to support and defend people with disabilities, teach sign language to children, and learn to be a therapist. I do not feel as a person with disability. I feel like everyone else who talks and hears.

### **Latifah al Ja'bari, Jabalya**

Latifah is 30 years old and lives in the As Saftawi area in Jabalya. In 2006, she had a BA degree in history and geography from the Al Azhar University in Gaza.

Before I joined the project, I did not know anything about rights of people with disability. My family opposed the idea that I join the project, but I convinced them because it would allow me an opportunity to get a job. My family agreed after the project team visited us and made clear objectives of the project. It was very difficult for me to convince my family, especially when they realised that I would spend training days outside home in a hotel in Gaza and with other males with disabilities too. I started to discover the true meaning of the rights of people with disabilities. I felt I should take part in all activities of the project. I felt I have become a leader that defends all rights of people with disabilities at civil society organisations. I feel happy now because, through our work as a team, we have succeeded in doing something valuable. I have been successful in establishing a social media network, including ladies with disabilities. Jointly with international organisations, we carry out various activities in the field of rights of people with disabilities in Gaza city. Today, I am proud of myself as I will represent the Palestinian people in Britain. I will deliver a message to the

world: We, the Palestinians, live under occupation, but we look for love, peace and justice like other nations.”

Kamel al Ja’bari, Latifah’s brother, indicated that he expected a better future for Latifah after she had participated in the project. It has provided her with courage and strength, enhanced her skills, and empowered her in this conservative society.

### **Suleiman ash Shawi, Rafah**

Suleiman is 32 years old, lives in the Al Juneinah neighbourhood in Rafah, completed secondary school education, and holds a vocational diploma from the Rafah Vocational Training Centre. He also has a diploma in arts from the Islamic University in Gaza.

Before I joined the project, I used to feel I was a marginalised person in my family and community. Sometimes, people look at me with pity. At other times, they view me as a burden on the society. The project has given me strength in all walks of my life. It has given me power to change and belief that change is possible, rather than impossible. I have received a lot of support from the project team, particularly psychological support. This has encouraged me to visit organisations and associations in Rafah and organise awareness sessions on rights of people with disabilities. I have experienced the most difficult time after my home was demolished during the last Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012. However, I faced challenges and managed to hold 18 awareness sessions, targeting municipality staff, school teachers, and members of organisations and societies in Rafah. The law added more value to me as an active member of my community. The greatest success in my life is that I have managed to convince the Ministry of Education to accept that I organise awareness sessions with teachers and students at schools. Over the past period, I held 18 workshops to defend rights of people with disabilities. I am proud that after several lobbying and advocacy sessions with the Rafah Governor’s Office and municipality staff, the government made a decision on enhancing accessibility to people with disabilities.”

## **12.2 Change in the society**

### **12.2.1 PWDs**

Results indicate an improved awareness of PWDs of their rights. Awareness has also been raised about the Palestinian Law on Rights of People with Disability, Labour Law, Child Law, UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disability, Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights, and Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs. With regard to participation in various social activities, however, results do not show a positive change that would contribute to a broader participation of PWDs in social activities. PWDs who face a major difficulty in or are completely incapable of taking part in social engagements report increasing barriers that prevent access to social occasions. These include physical,

environmental and attitudinal obstacles. Predicaments can be explained with a view to social activities as a whole. Participation in these activities require that all barriers to removed.

### **12.2.2 Civil society organisations**

With a view to investigating the change in barriers that impede PWD access to service facilities, the impact assessment study reviewed part of the sample of service providers, whom participants visited in the barriers monitoring survey phase at the onset of the project. Results show a low percentage of PWDs who face access barriers (environmental, information-related, institutional, or attitudinal) at each phase of service delivery. Results also indicate a high degree of satisfaction and a low percentage of dissatisfaction with field visits. Colour codes were used to describe easy access to service centres. Indicating easy access and absent barriers, green reflected an upward trend. In contrast, yellow (some barriers) and red (many barriers and difficult access) marked a downward trend. Additionally, results indicate that 21% of civil society actors saw the project impact as positive. Another 27% believed that the project impact would continue on the long turn after the project expires. 54% said it would last on the medium run. Results reveal how attitudes of civil society organisations would change.

All our new branches will include accommodative facilities to ensure easy access to persons with disabilities and benefit from our services. Institutions have already interacted with people with disabilities and taken the matter more seriously. In these institutions, there is room now to employ persons with disabilities so that they can play an active role in their communities.

Madhi Abu Sheikah, Bank of Palestine Branch Manager, Qabatiya.

### **12.2.3 Local community and the environment**

As a result of the project implementation, project participants, including PWDs, have generally been more welcome in their own environment. Changes included modification of a number of buildings, increasing number of people who use sign language, more Braille publications, enhanced awareness of PWD rights, improved sense of stakeholders of adaptation methods, and easier access to PWDs. Overall, however, changes introduced within local communities was limited. This is attributed to the prevalent worldview in the society and attitudes towards PWDs. Hence, a more concerted effort is needed to change the society's worldview and attitude. As mentioned above, results demonstrate a generally absent participation of PWDs in social life. PDWs further face various barriers that deny easy accessibility. These include attitudinal and environmental obstacles (inaccessible buildings and means of transportation) as well as physical barriers. Changes most affected the lives of

participants, families, individuals and organisations targeted directly by the project or who took part in the project activities.

### 13. Conclusions

Of particular importance, the project experience and participants should be viewed from more than one perspective. Significant changes driven by advocacy activities can be felt. Still, a community-wide change requires a more concerted and broader effort of individuals and organisations in order to alter the society's prevalent view and consolidate an integrated, equitable participation of PWDs in the society. The project experience should be disseminated to ensure a wider benefit and to realise PWDs' potential of driving change in disability related issues. It cannot be hypothesised that the project has fundamentally changed target communities and current status of PWDs. However, it has left its imprint, raising public awareness and promoting interest in disability issues. The project also provided a significant avenue of direct communication with the society, including small commercial premises, large organisations, and a variety of social groups. At the inception phase, participants encountered major difficulties in reaching out to their local communities and accessing target organisations. Nevertheless, they overcame many difficulties and played an active role in their local communities. Now, they are advocates of their own cause. Additionally, participants were successful in leading change in themselves, their environment, and institutions in their communities. Informed by the rights-based definition of disability, the society and civil society organisation should play a significant role. PWDs have the right to live in a barrier free society. If expanded and similar initiatives are implemented, this experience of all 41 PWDs, who took part in this project, will exert a broader effect on the society. More PWDs will be involved, effectively turning down the culture of isolation.

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## Annex 1

### Main Results of the PWD Household Survey

As discussed in the research methodology, the survey questionnaire was designed to reflect on the current status of PWDs and access to services they need in all walks of their lives.

This Annex highlights key results of the household survey, which focused on barriers that impeded access to PWDs to service centres and crucial facilities. This survey is informed by a participatory approach to disability experience.

#### General background of the model

- A total of 721 survey questionnaires were completed, including 353 in the West Bank and 368 in the Gaza Strip. It should be noted that 198 households had more than one member with disability.
- **Gender:**  
52.6% were males and 47.4% females.
- **Age group:**  
As mentioned above, the survey targeted PWDs in the 15-35 age group.

#### Types of difficulties (functional restrictions/vulnerability)

- Almost 13% of the respondents said they had a sight/vision impairment.
- About 17% of the surveyed PWDs stated they had a hearing impairment.
- Almost 39.5% of the survey sample said they had difficulty in movement, walking and climbing the stairs.
- Around 39% of the respondents said they had a difficulty in recalling and concentrating .
- Approximately 35% of the respondents stated they had a self-care difficulty, including self-hygiene and putting on clothes independently.
- Around 13% of the surveyed PWDs stated they suffered from communication difficulties, including understanding others.

#### Education

- Around 66% (70% of males and 62% of females) of the survey sample said they attended or are still attending educational institutions. 60% of those who said they were enrolled or are still enrolled at educational institutions reported they completed basic school education.

### **Work**

- 16% of the respondents said they had or still a paid employment.

### **Marital status**

- 85.6% (94% females and 77% males) of the surveyed PWDs reported they were bachelors/spinsters, engaged, or have never been married.

### **Types of difficulties and daily activities**

- 50.2% of the respondents said they were unable to read at all.
- 48.1% of the survey sample said they were unable to write at all.
- 47.1% of the surveyed PWDs stated they were unable to go shopping.
- 48.3% of the respondents said they could not prepare a meal.
- 46.7% of the survey sample said they were unable to do the housework.
- 44.9% of the respondents stated they were incapable of using means of transportation.
- 63.8% of the respondents said they used assistive devices (a personal assistant is the most frequently used).
- 35.5% of the surveyed PWDs needed an assistive device, which was not available for them.

### **Vision impairment**

- 13% of the respondents said they had a major vision impairment or they were incapable of seeing at all.
- 50% said they were unable to go shopping nor access service facilities.
- 50% said they were unable to prepare their meals.
- 49.5% said they were incapable of doing the housework.
- 51.6% reported they were unable to travel, using means of transportation.
- 74.7% said they used assistive devices, personal assistants, or eyeglasses.

- 52.6% stated they needed other assistive devices, which was not available for them.

### **Hearing impairment**

- 16.6% of the respondents stated they suffered from a major hearing impairment or they were unable to hear at all.
- 39.2% reported they were unable to read at all.
- 36.7% stated they were unable to write at all.
- 30.8% said they were incapable of doing the shopping or accessing service centres.
- 28.3% of the respondents stated they were incapable of using means of transportation.
- 54.2% used assistive devices, Of these, 19.2% used a hearing assistive device.
- 56.7% needed other assistive devices, but these were not available for them.

### **Difficulty in walking / climbing the stairs**

- 39.5% of the respondents reported they suffered from a major difficulty in walking / climbing the stairs, or they were completely unable to walk.
- 51.9% said they were unable to read at all.
- 50.5% stated they were unable to write at all.
- 38.9% reported they were incapable of taking care of themselves.
- 58.6% reported they could not use means of transportation.
- 34.4% said they were incapable of putting on/taking off their clothes.
- 64.6% stated they were unable to go shopping.
- 67.4% report they were incapable of preparing meals.
- 79.6% used assistive devices.
- 48.1% needed other assistive devices, but these were not available for them.

### **Difficulty in recalling / concentrating**

- 39.3% of the surveyed PWDs said they had a major difficulty in recalling/concentrating, or they were completely unable to do so at all.
- 84.5% stated they were unable to read at all.
- 82% said they were unable to write at all.
- 47.2% reported they were incapable of communicating with others.
- 50% stated they were unable to take care of themselves independently (self-care, hygiene, etc.)
- 38% reported they were incapable of putting on/taking off their clothes.

- 77.8% stated they were incapable of doing the shopping.
- 79.6% reported they could not prepare meals.
- 73.2% said they were incapable of doing the housework.
- 79.6% stated they could not use means of transportation.
- 45.1% said they were incapable of understanding others.

### **Self-care difficulty**

- 36% of the survey sample said they found it difficult to take care of themselves.
- 76.6% said they were unable to read at all.
- 76.2% stated they were unable to write at all.
- 50.4% reported they were incapable of communicating with others directly.
- 41.2% stated they were unable to use the bathroom.
- 80.8% stated they could not go shopping.
- 83.5% reported they could not prepare their own meals.
- 76.9% reported they could not use means of transportation.
- 86.8% used assistive devices. Of these, 28.1% used a personal assistant.
- 35.4% needed another assistive device, but it was not available for them.

### **Difficulty in communicating with and understanding others**

- 43.5% of the surveyed PWDs reported they suffered from a major difficulty or were completely unable to communicate and understand others.
- 78.3% stated they were unable to read at all.
- 76.1% reported they were unable to write at all.
- 47.5% of the survey sample said they found it difficult to take care of themselves.
- 37.9% reported they were incapable of putting on/taking off their clothes.
- 69.9% stated they were unable to do the shopping.
- 71% reported they could not prepare their own meals.
- 66.9% said they were incapable of doing the housework.
- 69.7% reported they could not use means of transportation.
- 70.7% used assistive devices. Of these, 22.9% used a personal assistant/a family member.
- 39.9% needed another assistive device, but it was not available for them.

### **Services and barriers to access service centres**

#### **Healthcare services**

- The survey covered a number of healthcare services, including a general practitioner, specialist physician, hospitals, and physical therapy.
- It is worth mentioning that almost two thirds of the surveyed PWDs reported they were incapable of accessing a specialist physician.
- Half of the survey sample in the area of Jenin said they faced a difficulty in accessing a specialist physician.
- The majority of respondents said they did not need physical therapy.
- More than 60% of the surveyed PWDs stated they did not need a rehabilitation worker.
- Of particular note, 41% of the respondents in the area of Jenin admitted they were incapable of accessing a general practitioner.
- In relation to access to hospitals, results were alarming: Participants in the areas of Jenin and Rafah reported they could not access a hospital.

## Barriers

Of particular note, the survey questionnaire addressed a large number of barriers to access healthcare services. Taking account of financial, attitudinal and institutional impediments, the survey results showed the following major barriers:

- **Financial obstacles:** These involved barriers posed by costs, including service delivery cost. Transportation is also a major barrier that restricts access to the majority of the surveyed PWDs.
- **Environmental barriers:**
  - Due to their disabilities, almost 75% of the respondents reported they faced a difficulty in using public means of transportation.
  - More than two thirds of the survey sample reported difficult access to healthcare services. Healthcare buildings are not adapted, rendering access to healthcare providers impossible for PWDs.
- **Attitudinal barriers:**
  - Over two thirds of the survey sample stated it was difficult from them to use public means of transportation because of drivers' attitude, viewing them as PWDs.
  - Almost two thirds of the respondents reported they did not like the way service providers treated them.
- **Institutional barriers:**
  - Around 70% of the respondents stated that service providers were far from their places of residence.
  - Because of their disabilities, more than 36% of the surveyed PWDs reported a difficulty in communicating with service providers.

### **Educational services:**

- As mentioned above, almost 67% of the surveyed PWDs said they were enrolled or are still enrolled at an educational institution. Of these, approximately 20% received educational services at a specialised school or a disability centre.
- Almost half of the survey sample reported that ceased their education at a time earlier than they originally wanted.
- It should be highlighted that although the target group was in the education age, more than half of the respondents did not have an opportunity to receive or continue their education.

### **Barriers**

Similar to transportation impediments and difficult access to means of transportation, below are barriers to PWD access to educational institutions:

- **Attitudinal barriers:**
  - More than one third of those who were enrolled or are still enrolled at schools felt isolated from their peer students. Of these, 20% said that the school administration refused their applications to attend school.
- **Institutional barriers:**
  - Around 61% of the respondents reported they encountered a difficulty in learning.
  - Almost two thirds of the survey sample stated that educational institutions were far from their places of residence. 60% of the surveyed PWDs in Rafah highlighted this predicament.
  - Approximately 31% of the surveyed PWDs admitted that educational materials were not attentive of the difficulties they suffered from.
  - Around two thirds of the respondents reported a lack of qualified teaching staff, who would be aware of the needs associated with their disabilities. The majority of those who reported this problem were from the district of Hebron.
- **Household barriers:**

- More than one third of the surveyed PWDs reported their families' concern about their disabled children who go to school in another city. The percentage was higher by 10% among girls than among boys.
- In relation to seclusion, it is worth noting that 20% of educated PWDs were enrolled in a specialised school. Of these, 39.5% said they felt isolated in their relationships with their classmates. In contrast, 46.1% of the respondents were enrolled or are still enrolled in non-specialised schools.

**Negative attitudes towards PWDs** are of special note as well. School administrations refused to enrol 20% of children with disabilities. In relation to types of disability, this percentage was even higher among children with difficulties in learning, communicating with others and hearing. Of these children:

- 37.2% had difficulties in movement as well as physical impairments.
- 55.3% suffered from a difficulty in communicating with and understanding others.
- 52% had difficulties in recalling and concentrating.

#### **Employment/work:**

- As mentioned above, 16% of the surveyed PWDs reported they had or still have a payment employment. Of these, 23% were males and 7% were females.
- It is also worth noting that almost 70% of the respondents who are or were employed used to work in the private sector.

#### **Barriers:**

Given the significance and role of employment in promoting individual independence, the survey addressed several barriers to access the labour market. The following results are the most prominent:

- **Physical, attitudinal and institutional barriers**
  - 40% of the respondents reported they did not have access to or did not receive information on available employment opportunities. Of these, 38% were told by employers that their disabilities would not allow them to work. The majority of cases were reported to have taken place in the district of Hebron. Almost half of the respondents highlighted this predicament.
  - Over two thirds of the surveyed community stated that the work environment was not adaptable and, therefore, inaccessible.

- Almost half of the surveyed sample reported they did not find an employment opportunity that matched their qualifications.
- Around two thirds of the surveyed PWDs stated they felt isolated in their workplaces. The percentage was higher in Rafah and Hebron than in other target areas.
- Approximately half of the respondents said their families did not encourage them to work. The percentage was higher by 10% among women than among men.
- Almost half of the survey sample reported that they lacked the necessary experience and skills to get employed. The percentage was higher in Hebron than in other surveyed communities.

### **Social and civil life:**

The survey covered a number of social and civil activities. Results were as follows:

- 40-50-% of the surveyed PWDs reported they were completely unable to carry out the following activities:
  - Travel with their families and friends on a trip or workshop in another city.
  - Use the internet.
  - Go to the gym.
  - Visit municipalities and ministries.
  - Travel abroad.
  - Visit relatives and friends at home.
  - Vote and participate in the elections.

### **Barriers**

#### **Institutional and physical barriers;**

- In light of their impairment, more than half of the surveyed PWDs found it difficult to use public or private means of transportation. Of these, 40% said that buildings housing public institutions were not adapted to their needs, rendering them incapable of accessing and benefiting from public service provision.
- Almost half of the survey sample stated that people's attitudes are usually unfriendly.

- Around one third of the respondents reported that they did not use public means of transportation because drivers would view them as PWDs.
- More than half of the surveyed PWDs admitted they did not have financial resources necessary to participate in social activities.
- Over one third of the respondents reported a difficulty in finding someone to accompany them.

## **Rights and empowerment**

This section addresses PWDs' awareness of rights resources and organisations. It further explores surveyed individuals' interest to become activists who drive change in the current environment. Key results were as follows:

- 78-80% of surveyed PWDs stated they have never heard about the Palestinian Law on Rights of People with Disabilities, Palestinian Labour Law, and UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disability. Compared to 60-70% in other areas, 90% of the respondents in the Hebron area provided this answer.
- 78% of the survey sample said they have never heard about the Palestinian Disability Law.
- Almost 61% of the respondents stated they have never heard about the Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disability. The majority of the surveyed PWDs were also not familiar with the Independent Commission for Human Rights.
- Compared to one third of the overall survey sample, 46% of respondents in the district of Hebron replied they have never heard of the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- 68% of the surveyed PWDs reported they were not members on PWD organisations or self-assistance groups.
- Around one third of the surveyed community were members on such organisations or groups.
- More than half of the respondents wished they had taken part in training sessions on rights and advocacy work. In this context, the surveyed PWDs in Hebron area marked the highest percentage. In contrast with males, female participants stressed that their families did not encourage them to participate in training events. Additionally, negative family attitudes might affect PWDs' ability to participate in these exercises.

- Almost one third of the surveyed PWDs expressed their interest in participating in training courses. A high percentage of respondents in Jenin and Northern Gaza reflected this trend.

## Annex 2

### Key Results of the Project Impact Assessment Study

#### Household survey

Percentage of PWDs who were aware of their rights as enshrined in Palestinian law and international conventions.

		Never heard	Heard, but irrelevant to me	Heard, but did not use them	Heard and used them	Yes	Somewhat
Palestinian Disability Law	1	566 (79%)	42 (6%)	93 (13%)	20 (3%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)
	2	82 (57%)	8 (6%)	26 (18%)	28 (19%)	19 (70%)	5 (19%)
Palestinian Labour Law	1	585 (81%)	43 (6%)	84 (12%)	8 (1%)	2 (25%)	3 (38%)
	2	98 (68%)	9 (6%)	17 (12%)	20 (14%)	14 (70%)	4 (20%)
Palestinian Child Law	1	564 (78%)	52 (7%)	97 (14%)	8 (1%)	2 (25%)	4 (50%)
	2	92 (64%)	16 (11%)	21 (15%)	15 (10%)	11 (73%)	3 (20%)
Convention for the Rights of People with Disability	1	595 (83%)	35 (5%)	85 (12%)	5 (1%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
	2	79 (67%)	9 (6%)	18 (13%)	20 (14%)	12 (68%)	5 (26%)
Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disabilities	1	437 (61%)	27 (4%)	115 (16%)	141 (20%)	17 (19%)	24 (17%)
	2	63 (44%)	7 (5%)	20 (14%)	54 (38%)	22 (42%)	22 (42%)
Independent Commission for Human Rights	1	587 (82%)	33 (5%)	92 (13%)	7 (1%)	1 (14%)	4 (57%)
	2	97 (67%)	9 (6%)	17 (12%)	21 (15%)	10 (48%)	8 (38%)
Ministry of Social Affairs	1	124 (17%)	49 (7%)	231 (32%)	317 (44%)	133 (42%)	98 (31%)
	2	29 (20%)	12 (8%)	22 (15%)	81 (56%)	34 (42%)	39 (48%)
		<b>Mostly low</b>	<b>Almost equal</b>	<b>Almost equal</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Irregular</b>

**Note:** Numerical values in Row 1 indicate results of the project impact assessment study. Numerical values in Row 2 show results of the research paper (preliminary study).

PWD membership on disability organisations rose from 23% in the preliminary study to 32% in the project impact assessment study.

## Participation in social life

Activities	Unable		Great difficulty		Some difficulty		No difficulty		Lack of interest	
	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
Go out with the family/friends to a social place in your area (e.g. cinema, restaurant, coffee shop, etc.)	10%	15%	17%	12%	19%	12%	47%	49%	6%	11%
Participate in social occasions (e.g. wedding party, funeral, birthday party, etc.)	12%	14%	15%	11%	15%	12%	53%	51%	6%	13%
Travel with the family/friends/colleagues on a trip, workshop, etc. in another city	20%	18%	17%	13%	13%	15%	41%	44%	9%	11%
Visit relatives or friends at home	10%	15%	19%	12%	11%	13%	53%	49%	8%	11%
Vote in the elections	21%	33%	13%	5%	8%	6%	42%	35%	15%	21%
Go to the mosque or church	16%	34%	17%	7%	13%	7%	42%	36%	12%	16%
Volunteer at civil society organisations/clubs	25%	35%	17%	7%	8%	6%	30%	22%	20%	31%
Join membership of a civil society organisation / club	27%	33%	16%	6%	5%	6%	34%	24%	18%	31%
Use the internet	26%	48%	16%	7%	11%	6%	33%	25%	13%	14%
Travel abroad (e.g. to visit relatives/friends, for recreation, etc.)	23%	44%	22%	11%	10%	8%	33%	22%	12%	15%
Join a sports club or gym	21%	41%	22%	7%	10%	7%	26%	22%	22%	24%
Participate or attend artistic or cultural events	24%	35%	16%	8%	7%	7%	35%	27%	19%	23%
Go to the municipality or ministry district directorate offices	26%	39%	19%	8%	12%	8%	31%	23%	13%	22%
	<b>Low</b>		<b>Mostly high</b>		<b>Mostly high</b>		<b>High</b>		<b>Low</b>	

PWDs who reported a great difficulty or inability to participate in social life stated relevant reasons. The table below shows the number and percentage of PWDs who stated reasons of difficult or inaccessible participation in social life activities in both the preliminary study and the project impact assessment. The table also indicates a high percentage of PWDs who found it difficult to engage in social life.

Social and civil activities Household survey	Impact assessment study (107)	Preliminary survey
Reason	2	1

I don't have the financial resources to go out	75 (70%)	387 (54%)
I find it difficult to use or access public or private means of transportation because of my impairment	81 (76%)	363 (51%)
I find it difficult to use public transportation because of drivers' attitude towards me as a person with difficulty	79 (74%)	254 (36%)
Absent accessibility (adaptation) in buildings	74 (69%)	291 (41%)
Absent accommodations that meet my needs to access public institutions and benefit from public service delivery	82 (77%)	325 (45%)
Usually, people's attitudes towards me are unfriendly or negative	81 (76%)	348 (49%)
I find it difficult for me to find a person who accompanies me	54 (51%)	273 (38%)
Fear of or lack of encouragement on part of the family	57 (53%)	260 (36%)
My health condition does not allow me to do so	74 (69%)	452 (63%)
	<b>High</b>	

### Survey of barriers in the local community

The table below shows the barriers associated with the environment, attitudes, information, communication and institutions, which PWDs face in their local communities.

White indicates basic data and red the project impact assessment study.

Numbers reflect stages of visits: (1) When PWD leaves home; (2) when PWD attempts to access service; and (3) when PWD uses a service.

	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	1.3	2.3
<b>Environmental</b>						
Staircase	604 (54%)	129 (53%)	473 (42%)	89 (37%)	472 (42%)	109 (45%)
Slope (place for the wheelchair) is too steep	340 (30%)	48 (20%)	315 (28%)	56 (23%)	108 (10%)	23 (9%)
A lift is not available	146 (13%)	16 (7%)	90 (8%)	15 (6%)	111 (10%)	31 (13%)
There are no marks on the staircase	203 (18%)	34 (14%)	172 (15%)	20 (8%)	238 (21%)	43 (18%)
Difficulty to use the lift	19 (2%)	11 (5%)	40 (4%)	3 (1%)	36 (3%)	6 (3%)
Environmental signs are not in place			252 (23%)	36 (15%)		
Difficulty to use means of transportation			394 (35%)	44 (18%)		
Public transportation is far from the place of residence			545 (49%)	112 (46%)	384 (34%)	75 (31%)
Lack of accessible means of transportation			299 (27%)	55 (23%)	303 (27%)	48 (20%)
<b>Attitudinal</b>						
I have not received the support I need	218 (20%)	16 (7%)	254 (23%)	19 (8%)	309 (28%)	23 (9%)

I have not been treated as an adult person	93 (8%)	5 (2%)	84 (8%)	10 (4%)	108 (10%)	6 (3%)
I have been ignored	69 (6%)	10 (4%)	158 (14%)	9 (4%)	174 (16%)	9 (4%)
I have been exploited			189 (17%)	30 (12%)		
<b>Information-related</b>						
Information on the service was not appropriately made available to me	195 (17%)		252 (23%)	22 (9%)	234 (21%)	23 (9%)
Difficulty to understand information on the service delivered	122 (11%)	10 (4%)	152 (14%)	9 (4%)	152 (14%)	6 (3%)
<b>Communication-related</b>						
Difficulty to deliver the ideas I want	124 (11%)	18 (7%)	204 (18%)	12 (5%)	205 (18%)	11 (5%)
Others could not understand me	96 (9%)	18 (7%)	162 (15%)	18 (7%)	170 (15%)	11 (5%)
<b>Institutional</b>						
The service (product) is not designed in a manner that suits my difficulty			139 (12%)	16 (7%)	171 (15%)	17 (7%)
The service (programme) is not planned in a way that enables me to actively participate			129 (12%)	13 (5%)	121 (11%)	12 (5%)

	<b>1 Preliminary study</b>	<b>2 Project Impact Assessment</b>	
Achieved what he/she wanted	855 (77%)	204 (84 %)	High
Satisfaction			
▪ Fully satisfied	188 (17%)	69 (28%)	High
▪ Satisfied	295 (27%)	74 (30%)	Low
▪ Somewhat satisfied	293 (26%)	53 (22%)	Low
▪ Somewhat dissatisfied	152 (14%)	28 (12%)	Low
▪ Completely unsatisfied	184 (17%)	19 (8%)	Low
Colour			
▪ Green	88 (8%)	137 (56%)	High
▪ Yellow	370 (34%)	57 (23%)	Low
▪ Red	628 (58%)	48 (20%)	Low

- Colours are coded according to barriers: Green indicates “absent barriers”; yellow “some barriers”; and red “major barriers”.
- According to the Survey of Barriers in the Local Community, many PWDs achieved what they had planned in their visits. A larger number of PWDs were satisfied with

the outcomes of their visits. A large percentage of organisations were accessible (These were marked in green).

### Project impact on various groups

Impact	Very positive			Somewhat positive			No impact/negative impact		
	All	WB	GS	All	WB	GS	All	WB	GS
Participants	61%	64%	59%	35%	30%	38%	4%	6%	3%
Participant families	70%	66%	72%	28%	34%	26%	2%	-	3%
Participant friends	50%	44%	53%	43%	47%	41%	7%	9%	6%
Local organisations	21%	20%	22%	54%	57%	52%	25%	23%	26%
Local community	28%	13%	34%	43%	40%	44%	28%	47%	22%
Environment	12%	9%	14%	43%	52%	40%	45%	39%	47%

### Sustainability

Participants were requested to fill in a questionnaire on their opinion of whether the project impact would continue after the project activities were completed in February 2014. The table below shows opinions about every category of the impact in the project areas (West Bank vs. Gaza Strip).

Sustainability	To a large extent			To some extent			To a limited extent			No		
	All	WB	GS	All	WB	GS	All	WB	GS	All	WB	GS
Participants	87%	73%	93%	11%	18%	7%	3%	9%	-	-	-	-
Participant families	71%	55%	78%	24%	27%	22%	5%	18%	-	-	-	-
Participant friends	49%	18%	62%	49%	73%	38%	3%	9%	-	-	-	-
Local organisations	27%	27%	27%	54%	46%	58%	16%	27%	12%	3%	-	4%
Local community	21%	18%	22%	53%	46%	56%	18%	18%	19%	5%	9%	4%
Environment	21%	18%	22%	50%	36%	56%	24%	36%	19%	5%	9%	4%

### Annex 3

<b>Empowerment of People with Disabilities to Claim their Rights and Entitlements Project</b>				
<b>Local Community Survey Questionnaire</b>				
<p><b>Introduction to the Project and Survey</b></p> <p>In partnership with Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University is implementing a community-based, academic development project, which targets people with disabilities (PWDs) as well as civil society organisations and other institutions operating in various sectors. Over three and a half years, the project is designed to provide empowerment to PWDs with a view of real, effective and efficient integration in the society, including all sectors and walks of life, on an equal footing with other non-disabled persons. This exercise seeks to raise PWD awareness about their rights and enhance their skills so that they are more capable of claiming and enjoying their legitimate entitlements. The project aspires for creating a new generation of PWDs, who is competent and enjoys the opportunity that allows promotion of the local and national disability rights movement across the Palestinian territory. This initiative provides logical, serialised, multiple theoretical and practical training exercises, which primarily target PWDs.</p> <p>The project targets four areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Qabatiya, Jenin refugee camp, Sanur, Dura, Kharsa, Al Fawwar refugee camp, Beit Hanun, Jabalya refugee camp, Um an Nasr (Al Qarya al Badawiya), Rafah, Rafah refugee camps, and An Nasr (Al Bayuk).</p> <p>The project is significant as it looks for creating a new generation young male and female PWDs. The survey of organisations and individuals in target communities marks the first phase of operation. The survey will play a major role in planning, data collection, and provision of an overall picture of needs and challenges that face PWDs in target areas. Opportunities that can be invested to make the project successful will also be explored.</p>				
V1. Sites:	1. Qabatiya	2. Jenin RC	3. Sanur	4. Dura
	5. Kharsa	6. Al Fawwar RC	7. Beit Hanun	8. Jabalya RC
	9. Um an Nasr (Al Qarya al Badawiya)	10. Rafah	11. Rafah RC	12. An Nasr (Al Bayuk)
V2. Survey questionnaire serial number:	V4. Researcher name _____ (number) <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>			
<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
V3. Working day date:	V5. Interview start time: <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>			
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female				
Age: .....				

**A. Part One: Type and degree of difficulty PWDs face**

The following questions address functional and health-related difficulties you might face in your daily life

(1) No difficulty (2) Yes, some difficulty (3) Yes, great difficulty (4) Completely unable

	A1. Do you have a vision impairment even if you use eyeglasses or lenses?	A1-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....
	A2. Do you suffer from a hearing impairment even if you use a hearing aid?	A2-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....
	A3. Do you suffer from a difficulty in walking or climbing the stairs?	A3-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....
	A4. Do you suffer from a difficulty in recalling or concentrating?	A4-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....
	A5. Do you suffer from a difficulty in taking care of yourself? E.g. your personal hygiene or putting on your clothes	A5-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....
	A6. Do you suffer from a communication difficulty? E.g. in understanding and making others understand what you want	A6-a. Does any member of your family suffer from this impairment?  If yes, please state the name of that member(s) ..... .....

**B. Part Two: Daily life activities and reasons of difficulty or disability**

How do you carry out the following activities without using assistive devices or without assistance from others?



4. Injury caused by the Israeli occupying force	pregnancy or delivery 5. A direct or indirect result of a disease. Please specify: .....	with the Israeli occupying forces 6) I don't know	
7. Other (please specify): .....			
C6. At what age you started to face or feel this difficulty? .....			
D. Healthcare and rehabilitation			
Which of the following healthcare or rehabilitation services you have used or needed?			
1. I need this service without difficulty	2. I have used it or use it now	3. I have used it or use it now, but with difficulty	
4. I need this service, but I'm completely unable to use it	5. I don't need this service		
	D1. General practitioner		
	D2. Specialised physician (orthopaedist, gynaecologist, etc.)		
	D3. Emergency		
	D4. Pharmacy		
	D5. Hospital		
	D6. Day care centre		
	D7. Physical therapist		
	D8. Functional therapist		
	D9. Speech therapist		
	D10. Dentist		
	D11. Optician		
	D12. Domestic rehabilitation worker		
	D13. Domestic healthcare provider (male or female nurse)		
E. With respect to the healthcare or rehabilitation services which you have found difficult to access and use, please answer "Yes" or "No" to the sentence that best describes you:			
	E1. I can't afford fees/costs		
	E2. I can't afford the cost of transportation to the service provider		
	E3. I find it difficult to use or access public or private means of transportation because of my difficulty		
	E4. I find it difficult to use public transportation because of drivers' attitudes towards me as a person with difficulty		
	E5. Absent accessibility (adaptation) in buildings		
	E6. Service provider is far away		
	E7. I don't like the way service providers talk to me		
	E8. I find it difficult to communicate with service providers because of my difficulty		
	E9. I find it difficult to find a person to accompany me		
	E10. My family does not care about my needs and health condition, particularly in aspects not related to my difficulty		
	E11. Other (please specify): .....		
F. Education			
F1. Have you ever received, or do you receive, education services? (1) Yes (2) No			
F2. If yes, can you tell us more about your educational background?			
F2-1. Education phase	Basic education	Secondary education	Higher education
F2-2. The last education phase you completed, or are planning to complete now			

F2-3. If you stopped education, how old were you then?			
Education service provider	1) Government school, private school, UNRWA school 2) PWD school 3) Charitable association of PWDs 4) Government university 5) Private university 6) Community college		
F3. Did you stop your education at a time earlier than you had originally wanted? (1) Yes (2) No			
Please answer "Yes" or "No" to the sentence that best describes you and your educational background (whether you were a student or are still a student)			
	F3-1. I did not have the financial resources or I could not afford the cost of transportation to school		
	F3-2. I find, or found, it difficult to use or access public transportation because of my difficulty		
	F3-3. I find it difficult to use public transportation because of drivers' attitudes towards me as a person with difficulty		
	F3-4. I don't like the way teachers or lecturers talk to me		
	F3-5. I feel isolated from my colleagues or classmates		
	F3-6. Absent accessibility (adaptation) in buildings / Buildings did not meet my needs		
	F3-7. I find, or found, great difficulty in learning		
	F3-8. My health condition prevents me from attending classes on time		
	F3-9. I need, or needed, personal assistance, but I didn't get it (private tutor, personal assistant, special education specialist, etc.)		
	F3-10. I am not interested, wasn't interested, in getting educated		
	F3-11. The educational institution is far from my place of residence		
	F3-12. My family are afraid to send me to another city for education		
	F3-13. My family didn't encourage me or refused that I get educated in any educational institution		
	F3-14. Lack of educational materials that suit my difficulty		
	F3-15. The educational institution management refused to admit me		
	F3-16. Lack of teaching staff who understand or recognise the nature of services or needs required by my difficulty		
	F3-17. Other (please specify): .....		
G. Labour market and living conditions			
G1. Have you ever been employed, or are currently employed, with pay? .....			
(1) Yes (2) No (2) NA ( )			
G2. What profession you currently occupy, or you have the necessary qualifications to occupy it? .....			
G2. In any of the following sector you currently work:			
1. Government 2. Private sector 3. Civil society organisations			
4. International organisations 5. NA			
G4. Do you receive any appropriations or financial support as a result of you difficulties? If yes, please mention the source: .....			
(1) Yes (2) No			
G5. Please answer "Yes" or "No" to the sentence that best describes your professional life or the difficulties you face in getting an employment opportunity			
(1) Yes (2) No			

	G-1. I find it difficult to use or access public transportation because of my difficulty
	G-2. I find it difficult to use or access public transportation because of my difficulty
	G-3. My family does not encourage me to find a job
	G-4. I don't have access to information about employment opportunities
	G-5. Employers told me that my difficulty could make it hard for me to perform a job
	G-6. Absent accessibility (adaptation) at the workplace / The workplace did not meet my needs (e.g. staircase, toilet, computer programmes)
	G-7. lack of sign language interpreters / personal assistants
	G-8. My skills are not suitable / I don't have sufficient experience
	G-9. I feel, or felt, isolated from my colleagues at the work environment
	G-10. My health condition does not allow me to work
	G-11. I don't like to work
	G-12. I have not found a proper employment opportunity that fits my qualifications
	G-13. Other (please specify): .....
H1. Social and civil life	
Do you face any difficulties in carrying out any of the following activities because of your impairment?	
1. I don't like to carry out this activity      2. I don't face a difficulty      3. I face some difficulty	
4. I face a great difficulty      5. I am not able to carry out this activity	
	H1-1. Go out with the family/friends to a social place in your area (e.g. cinema, restaurant, coffee shop, etc.)
	H1-2. Participate in social occasions (e.g. wedding party, funeral, birthday party, etc.)
	H1-3. Travel with the family/friends/colleagues on a trip, workshop, etc. in another city
	H1-4. Visit relatives or friends at home
	H1-5. Vote in the elections
	H1-6. Go to the mosque or church
	H1-7. Volunteer at civil society organisations/clubs
	H1-8. Membership on civil society organisations, clubs
	H1-9. Use the internet to chat with people, access information, etc.
	H1-10. Travel abroad (e.g. to visit relatives/friends, for recreation, etc.)
	H1-11. Join a sports centre or gym
	H1-12. Participate or attend artistic or cultural events
	H1-13. Go to the municipality or ministry district directorate offices
H2. In regard of the activities you find difficult to participate, please answer "Yes" or "No" to the sentence that best describes you:	
(1) Yes      (2) No	
	H2-1. I don't have the financial resources to go out
	H2-2. I find it difficult to use or access public or private means of transportation because of my impairment
	H2-3. I find it difficult to use public transportation because of drivers' attitude towards me as a person with difficulty
	H2-4. Usually, accessibility (adaptation) in buildings is absent
	H2-5. Absent facilitations that meet my needs to access public institutions and benefit from public service delivery
	H2-6. Usually, people's attitudes towards me are unfriendly or negative
	H2-7. It is difficult for me to find a person who accompanies me
	H2-8. Fear of or lack of encouragement on part of the family

	H2-9. My health condition does not allow it		
	H2-10. Other (please specify): .....		
H3. What is your current marital status? .....			
1. Bachelor / spinster (not engaged / have never married) 2. Fiancé / fiancée 3. Married (Please indicate if you were married more than once): _____ 4. Divorced 5. Separated 6. Widow / widower 7. Other (please specify): _____			
H4. If yes, what is the best sentence that explains why you are bachelor / spinster?			
1. I have yet got married yet, I still have a chance 2. My family is very poor 3. I don't have enough money 4. No one would marry me because of my difficulty 5. I prefer to stay bachelor / spinster 6. This decision is left to my family 7. Other (please specify): _____			
I. Empowerment and rights			
Do know about the following organisations and resources that protect your rights a person with difficulty or disability?			
Organisations / resources	1. Never heard of them 2. Heard, but I don't think they are relevant to me 3. Heard, but did not use them 4. Heard and used them	If (4) is chosen, has the fact that you used this resource or organisation generated positive results for you? 1. Yes 2. To some extent 3. No	
I-1. Palestinian Disability Law		I-19.	
I-2. Palestinian Labour Law		I-29.	
I-3. Palestinian Child Law		I-39.	
I-4. Convention for the Rights of People with Disability		I-49.	
I-5. Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disabilities		I-59.	
I-6. Independent Commission for Human Rights		I-69.	
I-7. Ministry of Social Affairs		I-79.	
I-8. other rights and advocacy organisations (please specify)		I-89.	
I-9. Are you a member on a PWD organisation or self-assistance group (e.g. Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disabilities, Union of the Deaf, a community rehabilitation programme, etc.)			
1. I am currently a member                      2. I was a member, but I am not                      3. No any more			
I-10. If the answer is (1) or (2), please state the name of the organisation(s), on which you are still a member: .....			
I-11. In your life, are there any individuals who claim PWD rights? (e.g. a family member, a local leader, a disability activist)			
(1) Yes (2) No			

