

COMMUNITY-BASED INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT
A PARTICIPATORY DIAGNOSTIC STUDY ON THE RIGHTS AND
NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

IN THE TOWN OF AL-UBEIDIYA
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QADER for Community Development bears sole responsibility for the content of this study, which does not necessarily reflect the views of CBM Global Disability Inclusion or BMZ.



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1. Overview of the Study and the Methodology

Objectives and Significance of the Study

This study aims to provide a participatory diagnosis of the reality and needs of persons with disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya, through engaging the local community in analyzing challenges and identifying relevant opportunities. This approach stems from a firm belief in the pivotal role that local communities can play in driving development efforts, ensuring that persons with disabilities are engaged as active contributors across all aspects of life, and preventing their marginalization or exclusion.

The study also seeks to enhance coordination and strengthen linkages among governmental organizations, the municipality, development organizations, community-based organizations, volunteer and civic initiatives, and the private sector. This is to develop more inclusive and effective responses to the needs of persons with disabilities. The study supports the inclusion of persons with disabilities into community services and activities, based on the human rights principles set forth in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), particularly in the areas of education, health, employment, social protection, and community participation.

Furthermore, the study aspires to reinforce community partnerships in shaping local policies and programs, building a knowledge base grounded in local realities to inform decision-making and guide development interventions that align with the rights and needs of marginalized groups in general, and persons with disabilities in particular. The findings of this study are expected to form a strategic framework for partnership between QADER for Community Development, Al-Ubeidiya Municipality, local organizations, and the community accountability team in the town. This partnership will contribute to implementing direct interventions and activities that aim to bridge existing gaps in the enjoyment of rights and to strengthen the active participation of persons with disabilities.

QADER will also facilitate networking and coordination between Al-Ubeidiya Municipality, local initiatives and organizations, as well as governmental, civil society, and international development actors. This will promote joint action on agreed priorities and mainstream inclusion across all areas of life.

Methodology:

The study follows a participatory approach that combines field research with secondary data analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation of persons with disabilities in the targeted communities. This approach is guided by rights-based and developmental standards that ensure the inclusion of disability issues while taking into account social, economic, and political factors affecting access to basic services and rights.

To ensure data quality and accuracy, a series of methodological steps were implemented—starting with capacity building and training. QADER formed inclusive youth accountability teams in the targeted areas and trained them on various topics including field research tools, the rights of persons with disabilities, inclusion requirements, advocacy, and community accountability.

The methodology of the study relied on diverse data sources, including:

Primary data: collected through direct interviews, focus group discussions, and community meetings.

Secondary data: obtained from official reports, national statistics, the local strategic plan, and data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics—particularly disability-related data for the targeted towns—along with updated information from the Ministry of Education regarding schools in the targeted areas.

The process of collecting primary data in the town of Al-Ubeidiya included the following:

- **Questionnaires:** Surveys were completed with 62 households that have family members with disabilities, and 62 persons with disabilities themselves, to identify their current situation and needs. Additionally, surveys were filled out with 68 community members to explore their attitudes and perceptions toward persons with disabilities and their rights.
- **Interviews:** Interviews were conducted with representatives of local institutions, including municipalities, community-based organizations, kindergartens, and public and private health institutions, to assess the inclusiveness of the services provided.
- **Focus groups:** Three focus group discussions were organized, involving 15 participants, including persons with disabilities (children, adults, and women), their families, and representatives of local and educational institutions in Al-Ubeidiya.
- **Community meetings:** A community meeting was held to review preliminary data. It brought together representatives from various sectors to discuss the findings, verify their accuracy, and identify local priorities based on field data. The meeting also aimed to agree on possible interventions to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities and ensure their access to rights across different sectors. Participants included representatives of local authorities, persons with disabilities and their families, and representatives of local institutions.

2. Context

2.1 Overview of the Town

Al-Ubeidiya is situated east of Bethlehem City, approximately 6 km away. It is bordered to the north by As-Sawahira Ash-Sharqiya, to the south by Dar Salah and Ash-Shawawra, to the east by the Dead Sea, and to the west by Bethlehem. The town is situated at an elevation of approximately 550–650 meters above sea level. Its location is considered strategic, as it serves as a passageway between the northern and southern parts of the West Bank.

The population of Al-Al-Ubeidiya is estimated at 18,000, distributed across various age groups. Children under the age of 15 account for approximately 41% of the population, while those aged over 65 account for about 3.5%.

Water: Al-Al-Ubeidiya relies on the public water network, which covers 95% of the homes, in addition to domestic rainwater harvesting wells.

Electricity: All residential units in the town are connected to the electricity network provided by the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, with services available around the clock.

Sewage: There is no sewage network in Al-Al-Ubeidiya. Residents depend on cesspits, which pose environmental and health challenges.

Waste Management: The municipality provides daily waste collection services using a garbage collection vehicle.

Roads and Transportation: Al-Al-Ubeidiya has an internal road network totaling 45 km, of which 30 km are paved. However, 8 km require maintenance, and 7 km remain unpaved. In terms of transportation, the town relies on 12 public transport vehicles and 25 licensed taxis, which help facilitate movement between the town and nearby areas.

2.2 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Families of Persons with Disabilities

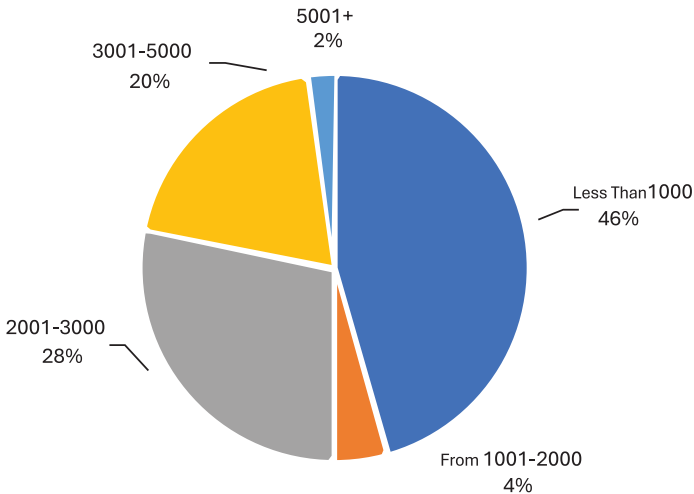
Household Size and Members with Disabilities: The average household size of families that include persons with disabilities in Al-Al-Ubeidiya is approximately 6.8 individuals, compared to an average household size of about 4.7 individuals in the West Bank in 2022, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Findings also show that around 89% of the surveyed heads of households are persons with disabilities themselves. Moreover, 80% of the households include one person with a disability, 16% include two persons with disabilities, and 4% have three or more.

The types of disabilities varied among respondents. About 37% of individuals with disabilities reported difficulty with mobility and hand use, 3% had hearing disabilities, approximately 16% had visual disabilities, and 44% had multiple disabilities. These multiple disabilities include combinations of physical, sensory, and intellectual disabilities.

About 11% of the surveyed households that include persons with disabilities reported having at least one family member with a disability who is unemployed, while 7% of these households have two or more unemployed members with disabilities.

Economic Status and Income Level: Field data revealed that around 46% of households with persons with disabilities in Al-Al-Ubeidiya have a monthly income that does not exceed 1,000 shekels. Approximately 28% of the households have a monthly income ranging between 2,000 and 3,000 shekels, placing them below the poverty line of 2,470 shekels per month. Only about 2% of these households have a monthly income exceeding 5,000 shekels.



“Relative distribution of the income of households of persons with disabilities by different income categories – Shekel.”

Monthly Household Expenditure: The average monthly expenditure of households that include persons with disabilities in Al-Al-Ubeidiya is approximately 2,500 shekels. This is significantly lower than the average monthly expenditure of households in the West Bank, which stood at 5,800 shekels for a household with an average size of 5.2 members in 2017, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. This gap is mainly attributed to the lower average income of households that include persons with disabilities compared to their monthly expenses. On average, these households spend about 500 shekels per month on healthcare and treatment, of which 400 shekels are specifically allocated for the needs of persons with disabilities. The average monthly spending on food amounts to approximately 1,150 shekels.

2.3 Organizations in the town of Al-Ubeidiya

In addition to the municipality, the town of Al-Al-Ubeidiya hosts five key organizations working across various sectors, including social and economic empowerment, educational and health services, and community development.

Al-Al-Ubeidiya Municipality: The municipality provides a range of services aimed at improving the lives and well-being of residents, including infrastructure and social development services. The municipal council consists of 13 members, 3 of whom are women, with no representation of persons with disabilities. The municipality employs 26 staff members, including 7 women, and no persons with disabilities.

The municipality offers several benefits and interventions for persons with disabilities in the town, such as exemption from electricity and water fees. It is also working to make public facilities more accessible and collaborates with the local association for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, “Al-Amal Center.”

The municipality has provided assistive devices and medical supplies to persons with disabilities. Through partnerships with organizations in Germany, it successfully secured assistive devices, with surplus items donated to Al-Hussein Governmental Hospital.

Regarding strategic planning, more than 10% of participants were persons with disabilities or their family members. The strategic plan includes priorities related to disability, such as supporting and meeting the needs of Al-Amal Center and adapting public facilities and roads.

We Are Here to Develop Women’s Capacities: Established in 2016 and licensed by the Ministry of National Economy as a non-profit company, this organization aims to empower women in the town. It serves women, marginalized groups, children, and the elderly. The administrative body includes 7 members (3 women), with 8 employees (7 women) and 5 volunteers—none of whom are persons with disabilities. It operates in Al-Al-Ubeidiya, Dar Salah, and Al-Shawawra. Activities focus on employment projects for women, legal and health awareness, and psychosocial support. Currently, it does not implement any disability specific programs.

Insan Charitable Association for Women’s Development: Founded in 2023 and registered with the Ministry of Interior, this association aims to empower women and support persons with disabilities in the town. The general assembly includes 35 women, 2 of whom have disabilities. The administrative body consists of 7 women, none with disabilities. The association relies on volunteers, including 5 women with disabilities. It implements activities such as training courses for women, recreational events for persons with disabilities and their families, in-kind and financial assistance (including assistive devices), awareness campaigns on disability issues, and networking with organizations to provide disability services and support.

Al-AI-Ubeidiya Charitable Association for Development and Improvement: Established in 2016, this association aims to improve the living conditions of marginalized groups in the town, such as poor families, orphans, widows, and school students. The administrative board consists of 13 members (3 women), and the general assembly has 100 members (15 women). There are no persons with disabilities among them. The association mainly provides in-kind and financial assistance. While it does not target persons with disabilities directly, they represent about 5% of its beneficiaries.

Local Association for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled Al-Amal Rehabilitation Center:

Founded in 1993 as a community-based organization registered with the Ministry of Interior, the association aims to promote the inclusion and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities through a variety of programs and services. Its general assembly consists of 88 members, including 60 women, with no persons with disabilities among them. The administrative board includes 11 members, 2 of whom are women, and the association employs 54 staff members. The organization primarily focuses on providing educational and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, including special education programs, speech therapy, and community-based rehabilitation, in addition to awareness-raising activities to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. The association operates several specialized facilities: a kindergarten that offers an inclusive learning environment for children with disabilities alongside their peers, aimed at developing their basic skills and preparing them for school; a school that provides specialized education tailored to the needs of students with disabilities, supported by assistive learning materials and individualized support programs; and a rehabilitation center that offers physical and occupational therapy, vocational training, and life skills development to support the independence and social inclusion of persons with disabilities. Currently, the association does not offer programs for individuals over the age of 12.

Al-AI-Ubeidiya Agricultural Cooperative Association: Established in 1982, this association supports and develops the agricultural sector, including both crop and livestock production. It has 126 members, including 4 women, with no persons with disabilities among them. The administrative board consists of 7 male members, and the oversight committee includes 3 male members—none with disabilities. The cooperative mainly serves households in the town by implementing community-focused agricultural projects such as seed distribution, home garden establishment, and well digging. While it does not offer programs specifically for persons with disabilities, the presence of a person with a disability in the household is considered during the application process.

Main Challenges and Obstacles Facing Local Organizations in Including Persons with Disabilities:

- **Lack of Comprehensive Strategic Plans:** Most local organizations in Al-Al-Ubeidiya lack inclusive strategic plans, and there is an absence of structured planning to mainstream disability inclusion into their programs and services.
- **Lack of Representation in Governing Bodies:** Persons with disabilities are not represented in the administrative bodies of any local organizations, and their presence in general assemblies is minimal, leading to their exclusion from decision-making processes.
- **Lack of Qualified Staff:** The majority of staff, volunteers, and board members in local organizations have not received training on how to engage with or understand the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. This limits their ability to respond effectively or adopt inclusive approaches in their work.
- **Limited Funding and Partnerships:** A heavy reliance on external funding—often earmarked for specific donor-driven objectives—restricts the capacity of organizations to develop or implement disability-inclusive programs. Additionally, limited partnerships with local and international actors hinder organizational development.
- **Inaccessible Infrastructure:** Most organizational buildings lack inclusive design features such as accessible entrances, elevators, wide hallways, and adapted restrooms, creating physical barriers for persons with disabilities.
- **Inaccessible Programs and Services:** Organizational programs often fail to incorporate universal design and reasonable accommodations, such as accessible transportation, communication materials, and other facilitative arrangements, limiting participation by persons with disabilities.
- **Community Awareness and Stigma:** Negative societal attitudes, stigma, and low awareness—among both the general public and families of persons with disabilities pose significant obstacles to their inclusion and active participation in community life.

3.The Reality of Persons with Disabilities in the Town

3.1 The Right to Access Education

The right to education is a fundamental human right guaranteed by both national legislation and international conventions without discrimination. The Amended Palestinian Basic Law (the Constitution) explicitly prohibits discrimination based on disability, including in access to education, as stated in Article (9) under Chapter Two on constitutional rights and freedoms. This right is further reinforced by Law No. (4) of 1999 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly in Article (10), which guarantees equal opportunities for students with disabilities to access educational organizations, including schools and universities. The law obliges the Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with all relevant authorities, to provide the necessary educational assessments to

Data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics for 2017 shows that the illiteracy rate among individuals with disabilities aged 10 years and older in the town is approximately 40.3%, while the illiteracy rate at the level of Bethlehem Governorate is about 3.6%. The data also indicates that about 73% of individuals with disabilities in the town of Al-Ubeidiya have either never attended school or started their education and then dropped out.

determine the nature and degree of disability, as well as to develop appropriate curricula and teaching materials, and ensure the provision of facilities that support an inclusive educational environment. It also emphasizes the need for preparing qualified personnel to work with students with disabilities, ensuring they have access to all forms and levels of education in a way that meets their needs and enhances their active participation in society.

With the publication of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in the Official Gazette under Decree-Law No. (36) of 2023, these commitments must now be grounded in the text of the Convention itself, particularly Article (24), which addresses the right to education and promotes an inclusive approach. This includes, among other obligations, establishing an inclusive and disability-friendly educational system, ensuring that no person with a disability is excluded from the education system on the basis of disability, accommodating individual differences, promoting the learning of Braille and sign language, and providing teachers—preferably persons with disabilities—who are proficient in these methods.

3.1.1 Early Education

The town of Al-Ubeidiya is home to seven kindergartens that are geographically distributed and vary in size and services, welcoming children aged 4-6 years. The total number of children enrolled in these kindergartens is approximately 500, with 51% being male and 49% female. The children are taught by 28 female educators, with an

average of 23 children per educator. As for the classrooms, the average number of children in each room is approximately 24. Interviews with the management of the kindergartens in Al-Ubeidiya revealed that the percentage of children with disabilities enrolled in kindergartens is around 4% of the total number of children.

The kindergartens face social challenges, particularly the reluctance of some families to enroll their children with disabilities, as 15% of surveyed families of children with disabilities reported having children of kindergarten age who are not currently enrolled, due to concerns about social stigma or the possibility of bullying. On the other hand, some families expressed concern about having children with disabilities in the same classrooms as their children, viewing it as an additional challenge for the educational process.

The tuition fees for kindergartens in Al-Ubeidiya are around 150 shekels per month, and financial exemptions are provided to some families of children with disabilities who have limited incomes.

Regarding facilities and infrastructure, each kindergarten in Al-Ubeidiya has one toilet for every 23 children. There are also outdoor playgrounds with an average area of 150 m², most of which are covered with artificial grass and have shaded areas covering about 40% of the space.

Results from interviews and field visits to the kindergartens in Al-Ubeidiya indicated weaknesses in accessibility and the design requirements of the buildings. Most kindergartens lack the necessary accommodations for children with disabilities to access and use the facilities, including poorly adapted entrances, corridors, bathrooms, and the absence of elevators and accessible playgrounds and outdoor equipment.

Additionally, most kindergartens lack modern electronic educational tools that support early learning, and there are no curricula or educational materials that cater to the specific needs of children with disabilities, negatively impacting their inclusion in the educational process.

Moreover, the transportation used by kindergartens is not accessible for children with disabilities, making it more difficult for them to travel to and participate in educational activities.

Although most of the educators in Al-Ubeidiya's kindergartens hold university degrees and have participated in training courses in early childhood education, they lack specialized training in dealing with children with disabilities, including their rights and specific laws. The activities provided in the kindergartens do not take into account the needs of children with disabilities, with physical activities being avoided without providing appropriate alternatives.

3.1.2 Basic and Secondary Education

3.1.2.1 Key Indicators for Basic and Secondary Education at the Community Level

Students in Al-Ubeidiya receive their education through 12 schools (11 public and 1 private), employing 207 teachers. The distribution is as follows: three secondary schools and nine primary schools for both boys and girls. The total number of students in these schools is 4,284 (2,032 boys and 2,252 girls), including 55 students with disabilities (25 boys and 30 girls).

Indicators of Primary and Secondary Education in the Town Compared to National Indicators:		
General Indicator	Al-Ubeidiya	National-level figures
Number of students per teacher	20.6	19.4
Number of students per counselor	535	200-300
Number of students per class section	29	26.4
Classroom space per student (m²)	1.4	1.5
Number of students per toilet	43.7	30.1
Number of students per drinking fountain	40	32.5
Number of students per sink	47.6	49.7

The table above shows a comparison of education indicators in Al-Ubeidiya with national indicators. The student-to-teacher ratio in Al-Ubeidiya is 20.6, compared to the national average of 19.4. The average number of students per class is 29, compared to the national average of 26.4. This reflects moderately sized classrooms and an acceptable academic workload for teachers.

3.1.2.2 School Accessibility in Al-Ubeidiya from the Perspective of Persons with Disabilities.

Most people with disabilities and their families in the field study and focus groups reported that the schools in Al-Ubeidiya are not suitable for accommodating students with disabilities. They indicated challenges in accessing both primary and secondary education, due to financial costs and physical barriers.

One of the main issues highlighted was the inadequate design of educational facilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The findings showed that four schools, representing 33% of the schools in the town, lack ramps to facilitate movement for students with disabilities. Additionally, there is a lack of general design considerations and reasonable accommodations in school facilities, such as libraries, computer and science labs, classrooms, and restrooms, among others.

Students with disabilities and their families in focus groups described the educational tools, computers, and curricula as unsuitable and not meeting their needs. There is only one resource room available for students with disabilities.

Participants in the focus groups also pointed out a shortage of qualified staff to work with people with disabilities. Approximately 90% of surveyed persons with disabilities believe that there are no teachers trained to work with students with disabilities in schools. The teachers themselves confirmed in the focus groups that they lack the knowledge and skills needed to deal with students with disabilities.

3.1.2.3 Enrollment Rates in Basic and Secondary Education among Students with Disabilities

The enrollment rate of students with disabilities in primary and secondary education in Al-Ubeidiya, based on the surveyed sample, is about 13%. The presence of the Al-Amal private school contributes significantly to integrating students in the primary stage. However, when students transition to government schools, they face challenges related to the accessibility of buildings and educational curricula.

Within the school environment, students with disabilities face multiple challenges, the most significant of which is a lack of acceptance from their peers. Ten percent of students with disabilities reported feeling rejected by their classmates. Additionally, 19% of surveyed students with disabilities reported experiencing bullying or violence from their peers and sometimes from teachers. Moreover, the families of people with disabilities noted that their children's presence in government schools is often merely formal due to ongoing marginalization and exclusion.

3.1.3 Enrollment in Higher Educations

People with disabilities face significant challenges in accessing higher and intermediate education organizations. The field study results indicated that only about 2% of the total surveyed people with disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya are currently enrolled in higher or intermediate education.

The main challenges include the lack of accessibility in the buildings and facilities of higher education organizations, as well as the absence of transportation options suitable for the needs of students with disabilities in the town.

Within the university campus, lecture halls are not adequately equipped to support the interaction of students with disabilities with educational content, hindering their ability to participate. The field study results also revealed a complete absence of qualified teachers trained to work with students with disabilities, a concern raised by all people

with disabilities in the survey. Additionally, the curricula themselves pose an additional challenge, as they do not consider the individual needs of students with disabilities.

3.1.4 Enrollment in Vocational Education and Training

The results of the field study revealed a low percentage of people with disabilities enrolled in vocational training, primarily due to several challenges. One of the most significant issues is the lack of information regarding the procedures and mechanisms for enrollment. The vast majority of people with disabilities surveyed had not received appropriate awareness and guidance programs related to enrollment in both public and private vocational education.

Additionally, people with disabilities and their families considered the absence of vocational education and training organizations nearby as a major obstacle. The closest government vocational center is located in Bethlehem, which impacts accessibility, especially given the lack of suitable transportation options.

On the other hand, most of the people with disabilities in the interviews and focus groups mentioned the poor design of educational facilities, including infrastructure issues in classrooms, laboratories, workshops, etc. They also pointed out that the educational materials and curricula are not adapted to their needs, and that the qualification of the educational staff is insufficient. They emphasized that many vocational education workers lack the necessary training and experience to meet their specific needs.

3.2 The Right to Economic Empowerment and Employment

The right to work and employment is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed under Palestinian legislation. The amended Palestinian Basic Law (the Constitution) explicitly affirms in Article (25) the right of every citizen to work and mandates that labor relations be organized in a way that ensures justice for all and provides workers with health and social protection. Article (9) strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, including in access to employment.

Furthermore, Article (10) of Law No. (4) of 1999 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities outlines the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with all relevant parties, to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in vocational training, rehabilitation, and employment based on the principle of equal opportunities. It also obliges governmental and non-governmental organizations to employ at least 5% of persons with disabilities among their staff and to adapt workplaces to meet their needs. Additionally, it encourages private organizations to hire persons with disabilities by offering tax incentives.

According to Cabinet Decision No. (40) of 2004, which issued the executive regulations for Law No. (4) of 1999, Article (12) stipulates that any company or organization failing to employ persons with disabilities in accordance with the law (i.e., at least 5% of staff) must pay the equivalent of a minimum-wage salary for a person with a disability into a “Special Fund for Persons with Disabilities.” This fund, to be established by a decision from the Minister of Social Development, would be used to provide financial assistance to unemployed persons with disabilities.

Despite the importance of this provision in promoting the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities, and despite the many years that have passed since the executive regulations came into effect, this fund has yet to be established — in clear violation of the law’s implementation framework.

3.2.1 Economic Participation and Employment

The majority of families of persons with disabilities surveyed in Al-Ubeidiya (40%) believe that accessing the labor market is difficult, while 32% consider it moderately difficult due to a range of challenges that limit the economic participation of persons with disabilities, both male and female.

Based on interviews and focus group discussions involving employed and unemployed persons with disabilities, their families, and employers, several key barriers to economic participation were identified:

Lack of workplace accessibility:

According to the field study, 60% of persons with disabilities reported that public and private organizations in Al-Ubeidiya are not adequately adapted to accommodate their employment needs. This situation contradicts the provisions of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its executive regulations, as well as the obligations stemming from the official publication of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Official Gazette under Decree Law No. (36) of 2023.

Discrimination and bias in the workplace:

Discrimination remains one of the most significant barriers. About 68% of respondents confirmed that persons with disabilities face discrimination at work, which manifests in the refusal to hire them, lack of equal opportunities for promotion or training, and the imposition of unjustified restrictions. This bias is often rooted in cultural and societal attitudes, including a lack of awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and persistent stereotypes about their abilities.

Limited access to training and educational opportunities:

The study revealed that 67% of persons with disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya had not participated in any capacity-building workshops or training programs that could

help them enter the labor market. This is due to several factors, including the lack of disability-inclusive training programs, inaccessible training environments, and a general lack of organizational awareness about the importance of inclusive skill development. Financial and social constraints, such as limited family support or the absence of suitable opportunities, further compound the issue.

Weak support for self-employment initiatives:

Only 7% of surveyed persons with disabilities and their families reported receiving support to launch income-generating projects. However, most of these ventures eventually failed. The reasons include a lack of preliminary market research, leading to support for projects misaligned with local demand, and reliance on repetitive or oversaturated business models. Furthermore, recipients often lacked the skills needed for project management (e.g., livestock or poultry farming), resulting in operational failures. Many also depleted their initial capital without being able to cover ongoing costs or reinvest to sustain the business.

3.3 The Right to Health

Article (22) of the amended Basic Law (the Palestinian Constitution), under the section on public rights and freedoms, affirms the state's responsibilities on two distinct levels.

In its first paragraph, the provision leaves the regulation of social and health insurance, as well as disability and old-age pensions, to ordinary legislation. This means that the Palestinian Authority is not strictly obliged to provide these services for free; rather, they are subject to legal regulation as determined by the relevant authorities.

However, the second paragraph is worded in a much more binding and definitive way. It states that caring for the families of martyrs, prisoners, the wounded, the affected, and persons with disabilities is a “duty” of the Palestinian Authority. Most importantly, it uses the term “shall guarantee” in reference to the provision of education, social insurance, and health insurance services for these groups. In constitutional language, “guarantee” implies a direct and binding obligation—the state must fully ensure the provision of these services, free of charge and without requiring beneficiaries to pay for them. Any law or policy that falls short of this standard is, in effect, unconstitutional.

Further reinforcing this obligation, Article (10) of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. (4) of 1999 explicitly assigns the Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with relevant bodies, the responsibility of ensuring free access to government health insurance for persons with disabilities and their families.

Despite these strong legal organizations, the reality on the ground tells a different story. Although the Governmental Health Insurance Regulation for Persons with Disabilities (2021) has been formally adopted by the Council of Ministers, published in the Official Gazette, and entered into force, actual implementation remains inconsistent and inadequate. Many

persons with disabilities still report having to pay for services or facing bureaucratic obstacles that directly contradict the free and guaranteed nature of their entitlements under both the Basic Law and disability legislation.

3.3.1 Available Health Services

Persons with disabilities in the town of Al-Ubeidiya receive healthcare services through both public and private health centers located in the town. These include the *Masqat Medical Center*, a government clinic classified as a second-level facility that provides primary healthcare services, general medicine, a pediatric clinic, and a laboratory, in addition to private health centers and clinics.

In addition, the town hosts the *Ghaffar Medical Center – Red Crescent*, which offers a variety of specialized healthcare services including physical therapy, radiology, and emergency services. The center provides its services to persons with disabilities and low-income individuals at nominal fees and offers assistive devices free of charge in most cases.

Despite the availability of healthcare services in the town, there are several challenges affecting persons with disabilities' access to them, as indicated by persons with disabilities and their families. These challenges include the lack of specialized healthcare services for persons with disabilities, the inadequate accessibility of healthcare facilities, and the absence of qualified staff trained to deal with persons with disabilities. Families of persons with disabilities also pointed to the unavailability of early detection services for disabilities, which may lead to delayed diagnosis or lack of appropriate care. As a result, some are forced to seek services in private centers outside the town, which adds financial burdens that may not be affordable for all families.

3.3.2 Health Services Covered under Health Insurance

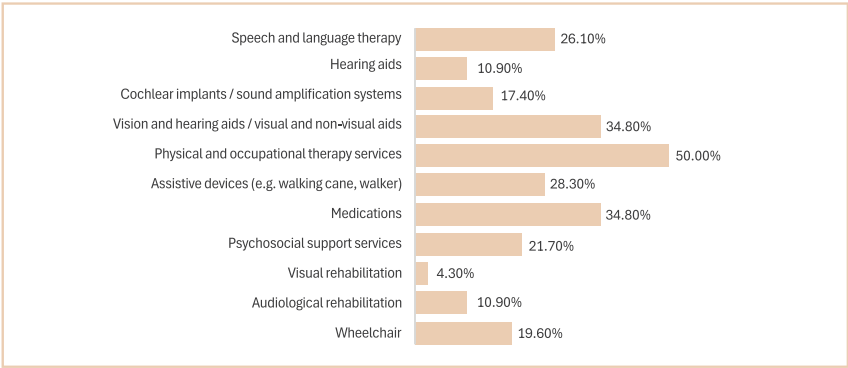
Although 52% of families of persons with disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya have free health insurance, the level of coverage does not meet the health needs of most families. In fact, 72% of these families cover medical expenses out of their own pockets, including treatment, medications, nutritional supplements, physical therapy, and transportation costs. This places a significant financial burden on families of persons with disabilities, particularly those with limited income.

3.3.3 Needs of Persons with Disabilities (Coverage and Accessibility)

Persons with disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya face a clear lack of access to basic healthcare services, which forces them to rely heavily on their own resources or on irregular organizational support. According to the findings, 24% of persons with disabilities surveyed in Al-Ubeidiya reported needing rehabilitation services (such as physical and occupational therapy), but these services are often paid for out of pocket since they are not covered by the Ministry of Health’s insurance.

More than one-third of persons with disabilities expressed a need for psychosocial support services, but noted that the limited number of specialized centers and the lack of qualified professionals restrict access to such services. As for assistive devices, 20% of respondents stated they needed wheelchairs, 11% required hearing aids, and 22% needed visual or auditory aids. Despite this, 45.7% of families reported covering the cost of these devices on their own.

Additionally, nearly half of persons with disabilities require medications on a regular basis, which are often either not provided regularly by the Ministry of Health or not included in the insurance coverage, compelling families to pay for these medications out of pocket.



“Distribution of health and rehabilitation needs for people with disabilities in AL-UBEIDIYA

3.4 The Right to Participation in Cultural and Recreational Activities

The participation of persons with disabilities especially children in cultural and recreational activities in Al-Ubeidiya is extremely limited and largely dependent on modest efforts by local organizations.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law No. (4) of 1999 affirms the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with all relevant entities, to provide opportunities for sports and recreation for persons with disabilities. It also requires the adaptation of playgrounds, halls, camps, clubs, and their facilities, and supports the inclusion of persons with disabilities in national and international sports programs. The law stipulates a 50% reduction in entrance fees to government cultural and recreational venues for persons with disabilities.

More than one-third of persons with disabilities confirmed that they feel marginalized by the local community and organizations. This marginalization is reflected in the lack of attention given to their participation in various community activities carried out in the town, as well as the absence of necessary measures to ensure their inclusion.

Despite these legal provisions, persons with disabilities and their families emphasized the lack of culturally and recreationally inclusive programs tailored to their needs in the town. According to the study's findings, only about 8% of persons with disabilities participate in cultural and recreational activities. About 37% of respondents stated that local organizations do not consider universal design standards or provide the necessary accessibility arrangements to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities. This includes a lack of accessible transportation, adapted communication materials (such as inclusive advertising), and other accommodations needed for access and participation.

Families of persons with disabilities noted that local organizations often implement accessibility measures only when required by funding agencies. Furthermore, poor economic conditions were highlighted as a major barrier preventing persons with disabilities from accessing and participating in cultural and recreational activities. Local organizations, for their part, cited the inaccessibility of public facilities in the town and their dependence on external funding to implement programs and activities as key challenges to including persons with disabilities in cultural and recreational events.

They also pointed to weak community awareness as a factor affecting participation, noting that families of persons with disabilities often lack awareness of the importance of cultural and recreational activities in promoting the mental and social well-being of persons with disabilities. This issue is compounded by the limited availability of awareness programs on the cultural and recreational rights of persons with disabilities and the significance of these rights.

3.5 The Right to Participation in Political Life

Article (2) of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 1999 states that a person with a disability has the right to enjoy a free life, a dignified standard of living, and access to various services on an equal basis with other citizens. They have the same rights and are subject to the same duties, to the extent that their abilities and capacities allow. Disability must not be a reason to deny them access to these rights. Article (3) of the same law imposes a broad obligation on the state to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and facilitate their access to them.

Although the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not explicitly mention political rights, they are legally guaranteed under the aforementioned provisions, as these clearly refer to all rights of persons with disabilities, which naturally includes political rights. Furthermore, Article (4) of the law addresses the right of persons with disabilities to establish their own organizations and associations, which falls under political rights. This indicates that political rights for persons with disabilities are indeed legally protected.

The participation rate of persons with disabilities in political life (including running for office, voting, or attending public meetings) in Ubeidiya has not exceeded 23%.

The issuance of Decree Law No. (36) of 2023, which published the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in the Official Gazette (Palestinian Gazette), further strengthens the framework for the rights of persons with disabilities, especially their political rights.

Interviews, focus groups, and field research conducted with persons with disabilities, their families, and local organizations revealed various challenges to the political participation of persons with disabilities, including:

Lack of inclusive design: Persons with disabilities identified the inaccessibility of public facilities and registration/polling centers as one of the main obstacles they face in Al-Ubeidiya. 73% of respondents with disabilities reported difficulties accessing registration and polling stations, attending public meetings, and participating in political activities due to the lack of necessary accommodations—such as accessible buildings, transportation, and other reasonable adjustments.

Social perceptions: Negative societal perceptions present a significant barrier to political participation. The field study revealed that half of the persons with disabilities feel that the local community views them as incapable of making political decisions.

Tribal and partisan influences: Persons with disabilities and their families noted that tribal and partisan dynamics are a major challenge to political participation. These

influences shape political affiliations and individual positions, making it difficult for persons with disabilities—especially those without strong tribal backing—to attain political positions or influence decision-making.

Lack of awareness programs and accessible media: Most persons with disabilities and their families pointed to the absence of accessible media materials such as brochures in sign language or Braille as a barrier to understanding their political rights and how to exercise them. While the Central Elections Commission has made some efforts, such as issuing Braille brochures and using sign language in informational videos, these efforts remain limited. A more coordinated effort is needed between official bodies, media outlets, and civil society organizations to ensure the production of inclusive, accessible, and sustainable awareness and media materials that meet the needs of persons with various types of disabilities, in order to raise awareness of political rights.

3.6 The Right to Social Protection and their Access to Services

The right to social protection is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by both international and local laws, including the Palestinian Disability Law No. 4 of 1999, which emphasizes the need to provide a safe and supportive environment that ensures persons with disabilities have access to care services and protection from all forms of discrimination and exclusion.

3.6.1 Access to Social Services

Twenty-two percent of the families of persons with disabilities surveyed in the town of Al-Ubeidiya reported receiving financial or in-kind assistance from various sources such as the Ministry of Social Development, UNRWA, and local organizations. The average number of times they received assistance over the year was about 7 times, with the average monthly value of assistance per family being approximately 460 shekels.

37% percent of the families of persons with disabilities surveyed in Al-Ubeidiya face significant difficulty in accessing services provided by the Ministry of Social Development and other organizations.

Persons with disabilities face challenges in accessing social services provided by the Ministry of Social Development, UNRWA, and other organizations. These services include financial and in-kind assistance, health insurance, assistive devices, customs exemptions, and more.

Thirty-seven percent of the families of persons with disabilities indicated that bureaucratic procedures and administrative complications, which require repeated transactions and visits to service-providing organizations, pose a challenge for persons with disabilities, particularly due to the lack of accessibility in the buildings and facilities of these organizations and the absence of accessible transportation. This was confirmed by 69% of the persons with disabilities and their families. They also pointed out that the complex and difficult eligibility criteria prevent the majority of persons with disabilities from obtaining these services.

Moreover, two-thirds of the persons with disabilities considered the long waiting times for social services and their irregularity as challenges, especially since they largely depend on the assistance provided to meet their basic needs in the absence of a stable income source.

3.6.2 The Reality of Protection and Community Support for Persons with Disabilities.

The field study results revealed a lack of awareness among the families of persons with disabilities regarding their rights to protection and access to services, available measures, and mechanisms for reporting cases of violence and abuse against persons with disabilities. Participants in the focus groups indicated the absence of effective protection mechanisms in the town.

It is estimated that about 15% of families of persons with disabilities hide their children with disabilities due to fear of social stigma.

The focus group participants noted that persons with disabilities are subjected to various forms of violence, including verbal and physical abuse, neglect, marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination, with children and women being the most affected. They emphasized that gender-based discrimination is most prevalent among females with disabilities, with families imposing many restrictions on the participation of females in different community activities compared to males.

Violence in schools: Over a third of persons with disabilities reported experiencing violence in schools, either from their peers or, in some cases, from teachers. Participants in the focus groups indicated that males are more likely to experience physical violence in schools compared to females.

18% of persons with disabilities reported experiencing violence within the home.

On the other hand, the teachers and counselors participating in the focus groups confirmed that they intervene directly when incidents of violence occur between students, particularly those with disabilities. If the incident has a psychological impact on the student, they are referred to individual counseling sessions. Teachers also participate in awareness-raising and violence prevention efforts through classroom activities, school radio, and informational sessions on the risks of violence. It is worth noting that most families of persons with disabilities believe that teachers lack sufficient training to handle cases of violence faced by students with disabilities in school.

3.7 Community Attitudes towards Persons with Disabilities

The field results showed that 97% of the local community in Al-Ubeidiya have positive attitudes toward persons with disabilities, believing that they do not pose a burden on families and society. 82% of community members believe that persons with disabilities can contribute positively to their community, and 49% think that persons with disabilities can be independent in meeting their basic needs.

22% of community members feel anxious and fearful about having a person with a disability in their family.

98.5% of community members consider access to education and free healthcare services to be fundamental rights for persons with disabilities, and believe that granting them full rights, including modifying laws and legislation, can ease their access to services.

88% of community members believe that providing the necessary support for persons with disabilities to participate in elections (such as facilitating access to polling stations and providing appropriate explanatory materials) gives them a better chance to participate in voting and elections. 88% of community members agree that persons with disabilities can influence decision-making if they participate in elections.

20% of community members believe that persons with disabilities are able to work effectively in various sectors, while 97% believe that providing job opportunities that accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities enhances their inclusion in the labor market.

4 Findings

1. The Most Deprived Groups:

All persons with disabilities in the town of Al-Ubeidiya face a range of obstacles that prevent them from active participation in all sectors, limiting their well-being and dignity. These barriers impose psychological, social, and economic burdens on them and their families. The severity of these challenges is greater for families with more than one person with a disability, families with more than six members, low-income families, families headed by women, or those where the head of the household is unemployed or elderly. The challenges are even more intense for children of school age, individuals with intellectual disabilities, especially those with severe or complex disabilities, those with chronic diseases, people with disabilities seeking employment, and boys and girls who are outside the formal education system.

2. Weak Infrastructure Services:

There is a lack or weakness in essential services. The town suffers from problems related to water availability through the network during summer, forcing many families to rely on purchasing water tanks. There is also a lack of sewage services, with residents relying on septic tanks. The town's roads and pavements are poorly constructed and not suitable for persons with disabilities. The absence of public transport systems that are accessible to persons with disabilities further hinders their access to various services and imposes financial burdens, as they rely on private taxis for transportation.

3. High Poverty Levels and Their Impact on People with Disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya:

Poverty rates are higher among families of persons with disabilities, due to high unemployment rates, especially after the war on Gaza and the halt of work in the occupied territories. The dependency ratio is high due to the increased average number of family members in households of persons with disabilities. The situation is exacerbated by the low number of families receiving financial or in-kind assistance from the Ministry of Social Development, UNRWA, and other organizations. Poverty is even more severe for families that need medications not covered by health insurance, either for persons with disabilities or those with chronic illnesses. Poverty contributes to the exclusion and deprivation of persons with disabilities, especially children, from accessing essential services like education, health care, and rehabilitation. It significantly affects their participation in recreational, cultural, and political activities.

4. Access to Quality Education for Persons with Disabilities in Al-Ubeidiya:

Although there are 12 schools and 7 kindergartens, as well as the Al-Amal Center, which includes a special school and kindergarten providing inclusive educational services for persons with disabilities up to the age of 12, this has not positively impacted the access of children with disabilities to pre-school or primary education. The majority of children and adolescents with disabilities are still outside the education system, leading to high illiteracy rates and limited opportunities for vocational training. The causes of unequal enrollment rates between persons with disabilities and their peers in educational organizations are mainly due to the lack of early disability detection services, the severe lack of readiness of educational organizations and their staff to meet the needs of students with disabilities, the absence of qualified and specialized

teachers in public schools and most kindergartens, and the lack of support services in schools or kindergartens. Additionally, families are unable to register their children beyond the age of 12 in schools outside the town due to the high transportation costs and difficulties.

5. Access to Higher Education, Vocational, and Technical Training for Persons with Disabilities:

Persons with disabilities face significant challenges in enrolling in higher education and vocational training. The most prominent challenges include the lack of accessibility in the infrastructure of educational organizations, the unavailability of accessible transportation, and the lack of equipped classrooms, workshops, and laboratories to support their engagement with the content. Additionally, curricula and teaching staff do not adequately meet their needs.

6. Access to Comprehensive Health Services:

Despite the presence of a secondary-level government health clinic, as well as several health centers and private clinics in the town, this has not translated into adequate access to necessary health services for persons with disabilities. There is a shortage in some services such as early disability diagnosis, the unavailability of certain medications, and the exclusion of physical and occupational therapy services from health insurance coverage. Furthermore, there is a lack of psychological counseling, psychiatric services, vision and hearing rehabilitation services, and the unavailability of certain assistive devices, especially for hearing disabilities. The referral services are also weak. Many persons with disabilities are still not covered by health insurance, whether government or private, due to a lack of awareness or other barriers in obtaining disability-specific insurance.

7. Employment and Economic Empowerment:

The majority of young persons with disabilities, as well as adult men and women, are outside the workforce. This is due to: firstly, the negative societal perceptions about the abilities and potential of persons with disabilities, especially women and those with intellectual disabilities; and secondly, the lack of opportunities for young people with disabilities to enroll in vocational and technical training and higher education. Additionally, many economic and organizational establishments are not accessible for employing persons with disabilities, contributing to increased poverty among these families and a higher dependency ratio.

8. Protection from Violence and Access to Psychological and Social Counseling Services:

The living conditions of persons with disabilities and their families lead to several psychological and social issues, especially for women, which are often accompanied by violence both within and outside the family. There is also a lack of awareness among families of persons with disabilities about their rights to protection and access to services, available measures, and reporting mechanisms for cases of violence and abuse against persons with disabilities. Effective protection mechanisms are absent in the town, and there is a lack of psychological, social, and legal counseling services, which exacerbates the marginalization and suffering, making it difficult to identify cases of violence against persons with disabilities and leading to impunity, especially given the culture of tolerance towards violence and bullying against children, women,

and persons with disabilities.

9. Participation in Cultural, Sports, and Recreational Activities:

Despite the presence of several active local organizations in women's, charitable, sports, and cultural fields, this has not been reflected in opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in cultural, sports, and social activities. Most families of persons with disabilities are interested in involving their children, boys, and girls with disabilities in these activities. Furthermore, the participation of persons with disabilities in shaping policies and interventions related to the work of organizations, particularly the municipality, and in formulating the local development strategy remains limited.

10. Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Political Life:

Participation in political life is limited for persons with disabilities due to several challenges that hinder their ability to participate actively. The lack of accessibility in public facilities, registration centers, and polling stations is one of the main obstacles preventing them from accessing the electoral process and political activities. Additionally, negative societal perceptions of persons with disabilities and the influence of partisan and tribal factors contribute to weakening their participation in political life and decision-making. This lack of participation is further deepened by the low awareness of their political rights and how to actively participate, in addition to the scarcity of awareness programs and the absence of accessible media materials.

11. Community Awareness and Interest in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

There is a lack of awareness in the community and among families about the rights of persons with disabilities. This is reflected in the community's approach to disability issues, which is often from a charitable perspective, with pity for persons with disabilities. Local culture remains relatively tolerant of the exclusion or marginalization of persons with disabilities in most sectors, with limited programs for support, volunteering, and community assistance.

12. Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Local Organization Programs and Services:

Many organizations still view disability through an aid/charitable lens and adopt a perspective of pity towards persons with disabilities. This approach has excluded disability as an issue rooted in human rights values, resulting in weak visions and interventions by these organizations. This has led to a lack of policies aimed at long-term change to empower persons with disabilities to access various services based on rights. Despite the presence of active local organizations in the fields of social development and the municipality of Al-Ubeidiya, which is active in providing essential services for the population, this has not significantly impacted the inclusion and enhanced participation of persons with disabilities based on a rights-based approach.

13. Community Accountability and Influence on Policies:

Persons with disabilities and their families are affected by the extent to which national legislation aligns with the rights of persons with disabilities, or how well these laws and policies are implemented regarding access to services and rights. This is due to weak political will, limited accountability tools, and insufficient advocacy and influence on decision-makers to adopt and enforce disability-responsive policies and legislation at the national and local levels. There is also a need to compel duty-bearers to include

persons with disabilities in all sectors, especially in education, health, employment, and social protection programs.

5. Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of the study file and the final community meeting organized in the town of Al-Ubeidiya to review and discuss the results and issues in order to come up with recommendations and agree on priorities for action to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, a set of priority interventions were identified to improve the situation of persons with disabilities and include them in various aspects of life:

1. Enhancing the Role of the Municipality in Including Persons with Disabilities:

- Institutionalizing the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the policies and services of Al-Ubeidiya Municipality, and enhancing their participation in planning, policy-making, and local development strategies, as well as in decision-making.
- Enhancing access to water and energy services for persons with disabilities and their families, particularly for low-income households with persons with disabilities, which requires municipal council decisions to provide discounted water and electricity rates for these households.
- Supporting persons with disabilities and their families, particularly low-income or below the poverty line households, by exempting them from a reasonable percentage of taxes (e.g., property tax, waste tax, etc.) collected by the municipality.
- Adapting and modifying roads, sidewalks, buildings, and public spaces, especially health centers and schools, to facilitate access for persons with various disabilities.
- Strengthening partnerships between the municipality, civil society organizations, international organizations, and private sector organizations to improve the quality of existing services and develop new services, especially psychological, social, and legal counseling, as well as organizing vocational training programs and productive activities to employ persons with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities.

2. Enhancing the Role of Local Organizations in Providing Specialized and Comprehensive Services to Persons with Disabilities:

- Strengthening the role of local organizations in Al-Ubeidiya to provide specialized services for persons with disabilities, including physical and occupational therapy, services for severe and intellectual disabilities, special education, provision of assistive devices, medical supplies, and other needs.
- Enhancing the role of local organizations in raising community awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities, including informing the families of persons with disabilities and the local community about their rights and promoting a rights-based developmental approach among various community groups.
- Strengthening the role of local organizations in providing protection and community support services for persons with disabilities and their families, and activating the role

of organizations in the referral system between various government and community frameworks to facilitate the transfer of persons with disabilities to relevant organizations outside the town.

- Working on creating an integrated database for persons with disabilities, including all data related to them and their families, which is regularly updated and serves as a reference for planning, interventions, and working with persons with disabilities. This database will be managed and updated by the municipality and local organizations and will serve as a reference for all organizations inside and outside the town.
- Adapting the facilities of local organizations in the town to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Ensuring the representation of persons with disabilities in the administrative and public bodies of local organizations.
- Building the capacity of local organizations in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities, appropriate ways of dealing with them, planning inclusive programs and services, advocacy, and community accountability.

3. Inclusion in Health Services:

- Providing health and rehabilitation services in health centers in the town, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other specialized services for persons with disabilities.
- Facilitating the procedures for obtaining health insurance cards and necessary medical referrals.
- Enhancing mental health programs targeted at persons with disabilities and their families.
- Adapting health facilities in the town to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.

4. Inclusion in Education Services:

- Adapting educational facilities in the town to ensure access for children with disabilities.
- Establishing additional resource rooms in schools and rehabilitating and upgrading existing resource rooms.
- Building the capacity of educational and administrative staff in schools and kindergartens to ensure that children with disabilities have access to education according to the inclusive education approach.
- Working on adapting curricula, teaching methods, and educational materials to provide students with disabilities with equal opportunities in education, including in kindergartens.
- Implementing awareness programs in schools and kindergartens to promote positive attitudes and awareness among students and staff towards persons with disabilities.

5. Inclusion in Employment and Work:

- Influencing the municipality and various organizations in Al-Ubeidiya to employ persons with disabilities and provide them with decent work opportunities that match their abilities and skills, while ensuring necessary accommodations for them to perform their jobs efficiently.
- Advocating with official authorities to enforce the Palestinian Labor Law, particularly regarding the employment of persons with disabilities, ensuring that no less than 5% of

employees in any establishment are persons with disabilities.

- Facilitating access to equal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through self-employment, promoting economic independence, and enabling them to live with dignity.
- Enhancing opportunities for persons with disabilities to access vocational training services or workshops to build their capabilities and facilitate their inclusion in the labor market.
- Working on providing sustainable entrepreneurial projects to enhance self-employment for persons with disabilities, preceded by a needs study to offer projects that match their abilities and the local market needs.

6. Advocacy and Community Accountability:

- Activating community accountability tools to hold the municipality and local organizations accountable for their commitment to including disabilities in their services, programs, and development plans, including reviewing budgets and their responsiveness to actual needs.
- Organizing community advocacy campaigns based on rights to demand that official authorities develop and implement policies and legislations related to persons with disabilities, ensuring their participation in planning and decision-making processes.
- Advocating for the activation of the comprehensive government health insurance system for persons with disabilities in 2021, ensuring access to rehabilitation services, medications, supplies, and assistive devices through lobbying directed at the Ministry of Health and relevant authorities.
- Demanding the implementation of inclusive education policies in the Ministry of Education, including universal design in schools, curriculum adaptation, teaching methods, teacher training, and providing a disability-friendly learning environment.
- Organizing campaigns to enhance access to higher education and vocational training for persons with disabilities, including adapting the infrastructure of organizations, modifying educational policies, and providing accessible curricula and teaching tools.
- Strengthening the role of persons with disabilities and their families as key drivers in advocacy and community accountability campaigns by building their capacity to use advocacy tools, document violations, file complaints, and participate in community initiatives that monitor the performance of organizations and services provided to persons with disabilities at the local level.



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