

# Inclusive Economic Empowerment: An Approach Towards Inclusive Access to Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities

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# The CBR Program at BASR

- BASR has been established in 1960 as the only rehabilitation center in Palestine.
- In the early 1990s, BASR adopted the CBR philosophy and established the CBR Program.
- The program targets PWDs from all types of disabilities, age groups, and gender, as well as their families, Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), government and civil society organizations.
- Works in the West Bank of Palestine.
- Adopts a right-based holistic approach.
- Implements a twin-track approach in the design of its interventions: working with PWDs themselves, while working on inclusive community development



# Reality of PWDs in Palestine

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- The reality of PWDs in Palestine is that of marginalization, exclusion and limitation for 3 main factors:

- The Israeli occupation and its implications on access and movement
- Weak legislative and political systems and their inability to respond to the needs and issues of PWDs
- Negative societal attitudes towards PWDs which still looks at disability from a charitable and medical perspectives, and labels PWDs as “unproductive” or “incapable”.
- Lack of physical and information accessibility in the different fields, such as education, health, work, and social participation.

# Reality of PWDs in Palestine

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- Over 53% of PWDs in Palestine are illiterate
- 87.3% of PWDs are unemployed
- 75% of PWDs are unable to use public transportation due to lack of accessibility
- 37% of PWDs under 15 years have dropped out of school

# Solutions to enhance inclusive access to decent work:

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- Formal education is considered key for enhanced access to employment in the Palestinian context.
- Given lack of access to PWDs to education, due to inefficient policies and lack of accessibility, this has become an obstacle towards decent work for PWDs.
- In order to create inclusive access to decent work, the CBR Program works with local communities and the Palestinian Ministry of Education with the aim of creating an accessible formal educational system, allowing many children with disabilities enhanced access to education, which will subsequently enhance their chances for employment.
- In addition to this pathway of intervention, the program focuses on other solutions that could enhance PWDs access to inclusive decent work.
- Vocational training, In this sense, considered one key elements for generations that missed formal education, and for PWDs who can't access suitable formal education.

# Solutions to enhance inclusive access to decent work:

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- Given all these limitations, PWDs' access to decent work has been very limited, especially that PWDs do not have the means to gain the skills needed for the labor market, due to lack of accessibility and inclusive educational settings.

- To counter this, the CBR Program at BASR has worked in a twin track approach:

- (1) Equipping PWDs with the vocational/ technical skills needed to enhance their access to work
- (2) Building inclusive training settings accessible for PWDs

# Career Counseling and Vocational Assessment:

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- One of the main issues facing PWDs who did not have previous access to education is the lack of clear career vision.
- Career counseling aims at working with persons with disabilities to better analyze their values, interests, and abilities – with the aim of developing a clear career plan.
- Career counseling and vocational assessment utilizes Valpar Assessment Unit – a set of tools used to simulate many job tasks, through which PWDs can better understand their abilities and the needed environment adaptation needed.
- As a result of career counseling and vocational assessment, PWDs develop a clear career plan, indicating the types of vocational or technical trainings needed for them to gain relevant skills.

# Vocational Training:

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- As previously explained, Vocational training is key for PWDs in the Palestinian context.
- Given continued restricted access to educational opportunities due to lack of accessibility at many educational settings, vocational training becomes key.
- There is a great potential for vocational jobs in the Palestinian labor market.
- Vocational training programs and centers remain inaccessible to PWDs. To counter this, the CBR Program at BASR has developed a methodology to create accessible vocational training programs.



# Inclusive TVET Audit Tool:

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- The CBR Program has developed an audit tool that measures the level of inclusivity of TVET centers in Palestine.
- The audit tools includes a set of indicators that measure the following modules:
  - Institutional policies: measures available policies adopted by the center, including policies and procedures related to discrimination based on disability.
  - Physical and informational accessibility and adaptation: measures the physical and information accessibility of the center, its facilities, buildings, website... etc

# Inclusive TVET Audit Tool:

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- The social and cultural environment: measures the social and cultural values, participatory approaches... etc
- Training programs and methodologies: measures the flexibility and inclusivity of registration procedures, the design of existing training programs, methods and tools utilized by trainers.
- Training curricula: measures the accessibility of training curricula and its ability to respond to the different needs of persons with different abilities.

# Inclusive TVET Audit Tool:

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- The tool includes a total of 40 questions/indicators.
- Each indicator is assessed on a scale from 1 to 4 (4 being the highest).
- The audit tool is done through 1 or more visits to the TVET center.
- Following the assessment, and based on the measures of each indicator, a report is produced highlighting **gaps and areas of focus**.

# Inclusive TVET Audit Tool:

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- An intervention plan is then developed in order to respond to these gaps, that could include the following:

- **Capacity building for administrative staff on inclusive policies and inclusive procedures**
- **Recommendations on required physical and information accessibility**
- **Capacity building for trainers on the rights of persons with disabilities, the design of inclusive vocational training programs, sign language, etc.**

- The intervention plan varies based on the identified needs of each TVET center.

# Access to employment:

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- Following successful vocational training, the CBR Program at BASR works with PWDs through 2 main pathways of employment:

- Formal employment: matching qualified PWDs with mapping job opportunities in Palestinian companies and institutions.
- Self employment: facilitating access to micro-enterprise management training, support in the development of feasibility studies, provision of equipment to start own micro-businesses.

# Results

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- The CBR Program at BASR has been able to ensure the accessibility and inclusivity of 6 major TVET centers in Palestine this far.
- 80 PWDs are enrolled at accessible vocational training programs (in the different vocational fields) on annual basis.
- Number of PWDs enrolled at targeted centers have increased by 40% on an annual basis.
- Percentage of PWDs who drop out of TVET program has been reduced by 80%.
- Out of those who successfully complete their TVET programs, 15% successfully manage to receive permanent or temporary employment opportunities within 3-6 months of graduation.

# Recommendations

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- Tackling disability issues should take into consideration a twin-track approach: working with individual PWDs to enhance their capacities and skills, while on the other hand creating the enabling environment for inclusion through working with organizations and institutions.
  
- Mainstreaming disability rights and issues in TVET could be replicated in programs focusing on TVET and inclusive decent work.

Thank You