



The role of Communities in promoting Inclusive Education and Health for Persons with Disabilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: The Experience of Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation

By:

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Provides technical support and capacity buildings for:

- *Local authorities
- *Disabled people organizations
- Community based organizations
- *Community Centers
- *

Lobbies:

Duty bearers:
The government
(Ministries of Local governance,
Education, health,
Social Affairs, Labor)
Private sector
NGOs

BASR

Empowers:

- People with disabilities
- Their families
- Local committees
- Self-help groups

Provide comprehensive rehabilitative and psychosocial services for:

People with disabilities
Their families



Challenges faced

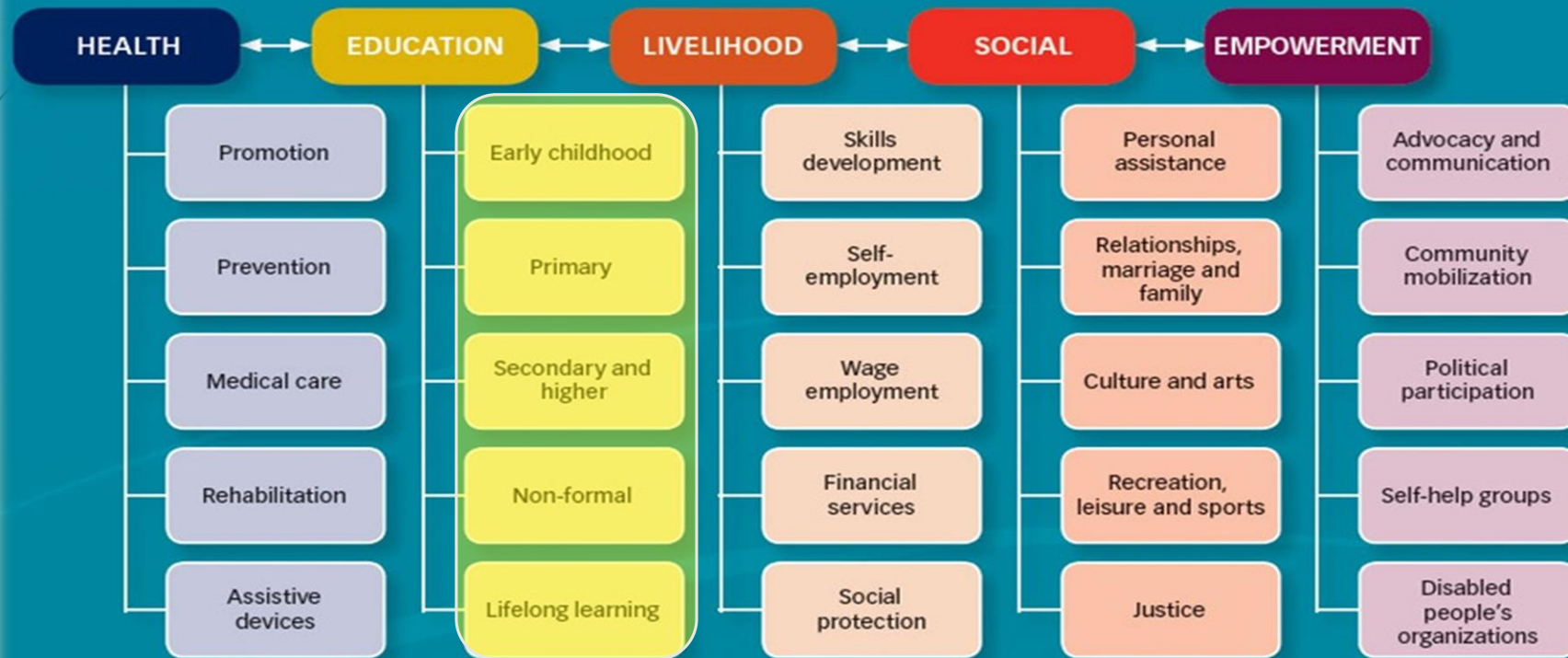
- Geopolitical challenges: the military occupation of the West Bank and lack of service provided.
- Administrative challenges: absence of the Palestinian authority until 1994 and lack of expertise in the field.
- Social challenges: negative attitudes towards people with disabilities and lack of social participation and community engagement.
- Economic challenges: financial instability, lack of funding sources.



CBR Strategy

- A strategy for rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion

CBR MATRIX



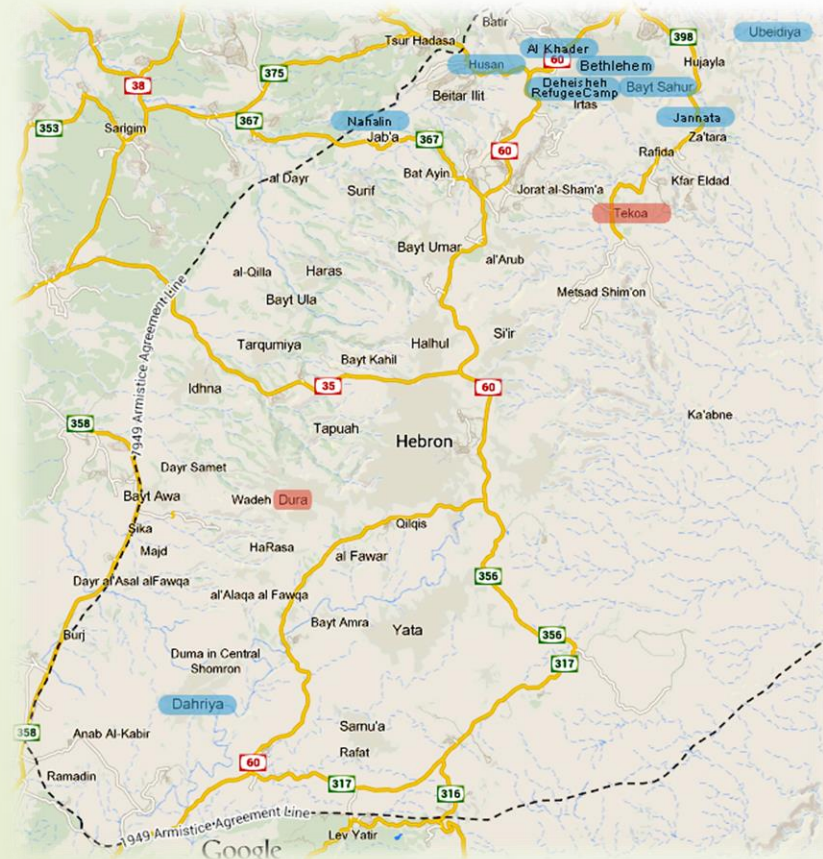


BASR's role in forming local committees and establishing community centers:

- Established in 1986
- Stressing on volunteerism and civil society involvement, participation and community accountability towards people with disabilities.
- Support access to essential services (i.e health and education)
- Believed in education as a tool for empowerment and social inclusion

Working areas

- Functions in 9 communities in the Southern area of the West Bank
- Have approximately 1000 students with and without disabilities in an inclusive setting (Attitudes, environment, policies).





Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities

- Raising the public awareness towards the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Empowering persons with disabilities to work as self-advocates for their rights.
- Advocating for a holistic rights based approach based on equality and social justice.
- Community mobilisation , social participation and stakeholders engagement.

Building the capacities of local stakeholders

- Worked on providing technical support and professional supervision for partner local authorities.
- Networking with the Palestinian Ministry of Education and relevant stakeholders to support and lobby for inclusion.
- Providing Financial, administrative and technical support for the community centers to provide adequate educational and training services for people with disabilities.



Education as a tool for inclusive and sustainable local development

- Community centers worked in favor of promoting inclusive education and enhance people's awareness towards their rights.
- Supports the idea of education as a tool for social empowerment and inclusion.
- Offer educational services to people who are unable to attend mainstream formal education.

Outcomes of having Community Centers:

On individual level:

- Promoting access to services (health/education) for children with disabilities.
- Raising awareness towards the rights of person with disabilities.
- Participation in inclusive community activities (pedagogical and recreational).

Outcomes of Community Centers

On a community Level:

- Enhancing the community involvement and participation to advocate the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The community centers has functioned as a hub/focal point for community engagement in relation to the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Lobbying government towards disability mainstreaming
- Enhanced community based inclusive development



Health and Education

- Facilitate access to various health and rehabilitation services offered by various healthcare providers.
- Refer people with disabilities to receive health services from BASR
- Work on promoting inclusion and the right to inclusive education in the localities where they function.

Future Plans & APEFE Support

- In partnership with APEFE, A plan to establish a number of educational and vocational training community centers in the Southern Region of the West Bank.
- Stresses on the importance of community ownership by establishing local committees and advocacy groups in the local communities where the community centers are established.
- Introducing new educational tools (digital and ICT) , pedagogical approaches and teaching methods to offer improved education.

The development of the community centers

- Deheisheh Community Center

1988



2017



The development of the community centers

- Obedieh Community Center

1995



2018



The development of the community centers

- Nahalin Community Center

1988



2018





Lessons Learnt

- The importance of community participation as an integral part of creating sustainable disability movement.
- The importance of having strong and active local committees supporting the Community Centers and stresses on their importance.
- The importance of having an agreement with the local authorities as consolidators and owners of the community centers.
- Health vis-à-vis Education: both as a mean for and result of.



Thank you very much for listening!