

## Relief and Rehabilitation for people with disabilities during emergency situation in North Lebanon

The first case study shows how the Community Based Rehabilitation Association, a CBRA including staff members with disabilities, implemented a project aimed at providing emergency relief to people with disabilities in a Palestinian refugee camp in North Lebanon by using a community based approach.

**Area:** Middle East

**Sector:** LRRD

**Phase of PCM illustrated:** Implementation and Monitoring

**Degree of relevance:** Degree 3 – Disability highly relevant projects

**Implementer:** Community based rehabilitation association

### The organisation

The Community Based Rehabilitation Association (CBRA), established in 1990, is a grass roots organization focusing its work on the rehabilitation of persons with disability with special emphasis on children with disabilities in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps in the North of Lebanon Nahr el Bared camp and Beddawi camp. The CBRA has been partners with the Diakonia/NAD (Norwegian Association of Disabled) since more than a decade.

### Emergency relief for people with disabilities in Refugee camps

Due to the armed conflict between the Lebanese army and a terrorist group in the name of Fatah al-Islam, the CBRA had to shift its work to relief and emergency aid to the estimated 40,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who had left the conflict area, in particular the Nahr el-Bared camp (NBC).



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The CBRA immediately responded to the emergency in spite of the fact that most of the organization's staff and volunteers were themselves displaced and

## CASE STUDY North Lebanon



had lost all their belongings. The CBRA started with the distribution of available rehabilitation aids in their stores and immediately partnered with a number of local and international non governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide persons with disabilities rehabilitation aids, diapers, first aid kits, corrective devices, urine bags, and bed pans in order to meet their immediate needs. Moreover, the CBRA team, consisting mostly of persons of disabilities and parents of children of disabilities, continued rehabilitation activities under the crisis situation by referring physically disabled persons to physiotherapy sessions as needed and providing training to family members in the displacement centres on feeding, positioning, communication, and adaptation of the physical environment, as well as modification and adaptation of devices.

Under the crisis situation, the CBRA's focus expanded to the whole population and not only to persons with disabilities. With emergency funding support from SIDA, the CBRA partnered with Diakonia to support IDPs, providing emergency items such as clothes and beddings to most of the IDPs. CBRA could also provide psychosocial support and recreational activities for displaced women and children and raise awareness on children's rights including children with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

### **Lessons learned and how this is an example for disability inclusion**

- Adopting a community based approach in the project implementation allowed for responding efficiently to the emergency situation.
- Being an organization of and for persons with disability, CBRA could quite easily locate persons with disabilities in the displacement centre and identify their needs.
- The success of the interventions was particularly due to the highly motivated staff members, themselves mostly IDPs, who provided various skills but also important additional support by their friends and relatives.

*This is an abridged version of a case study written by Samar El Yassir and the Community Based Rehabilitation Association (CBRA)*

### **For further information please contact:**

Samar El Yassir

Consultant  
Rehabilitation Program  
Diakonia/Nad

[syassir@cyberia.net.lb](mailto:syassir@cyberia.net.lb)