



Helping Syrian refugee children with disabilities access school in Lebanon...

Life is very tough for Syrian refugees with disabilities...

People with disabilities suffer hugely during conflict and flight. Often they are much more

vulnerable if movement is harder for them and it can make them much more likely to be victims of assault, and tragically; much more likely to be left behind.

This Syrian conflict has also created many more people with disabilities. Whilst exact statistics have been hard to measure, reports suggest that more than 300,000 people have been injured or wounded;

“The (UNHCR) registration center is good and the way they behave is excellent...The attitude of staff towards persons with disabilities is really good, really different to other organizations. They are always smiling and concerned about us.”

Women with disabilities speaking

Eight-year-old Aya, right, dreams of becoming a doctor one day, but since becoming a refugee has not been able to attend school. She and her sister Labiba, 11, who has disabilities, write in notebooks in their family’s home in an informal settlement in Dalhamiyeh in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.
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many of whom will almost certainly experience permanent and life-long disabilities; *already over 2,000 children with disabilities are registered with us in Lebanon alone.*

We have established registration centres for refugees in Tripoli and Zahle and taken care that refugees with disabilities are able to access these centres. Where that is not possible, we have created special procedures where relatives can register disabled people in absentia using their Syrian disability cards, and we also have a mobile service which allows us to reach people and offer the same advice and information as we do for all refugees. Registration is vital as it opens us a raft of access to health and education services, and allows us to refer people with disabilities to specialist services in Lebanon.

We’re working to help Syrian children with disabilities hang onto their future...

We’re working to ensure that children don’t lose their tomorrow because of the horrific challenges they are facing today; education is one of the best ways to ensure children’s lives are not put on hold by a tragedy beyond their control. Going to school is about MUCH more than learning. It provides a safe space where children can be children, where they can enjoy activities that will equip them for the next part of their lives, where studies can distract them from the horrific experiences they have lived through, and where teachers can spot which children need more support to help them start to look towards a more positive future. So far we have enrolled thousands of children in education, supporting initiatives like a double shift scheme in schools to make the most of the schools, resources and teachers available. But with 80% of Syrian children in Lebanon alone still out of school, and we know that very few children living with disabilities have access to learning. We need to meet this need quickly. For the longer

term we are working hard to build and adapt public schools to ensure that they will be accessible for children with physical disabilities.

Help us sponsor the education of children with disabilities...

In the short and long term, we need to do more for refugees whose disabilities are not necessarily just physical. The main gap for these children to access school remains the specialist tuition fee for enrolling in private institutions that offer quality programmes. Only a small number of children has until now been referred to these institutions due to the high cost of the yearly enrolment fee. Right now, these private centres are the only option for the type of care and support these children need with their learning.

UNHCR has identified the most vulnerable children with disabilities in terms of the socio-economic situation of the family. We desperately need to support them into specialized education programmes as soon as possible. The average enrolment fee is just over US \$4,000 per school year and covers a comprehensive service package including education services, health facilities and counselling for families.

If you can provide support for the first 35 of those children, you will be making a huge impact on not just them, but also their families who are struggling to provide for and educate for these children adequately. With over 2,000 registered refugee children with disabilities needing access to specialized expensive educational programmes, UNHCR will seek further funding to cater for the needs of the remaining children.



For each of these children we need to invest \$4,280 for 12 months of tuition fees and an accompanying support package for each child and their family.

A donation of \$150,000 would completely change the lives and prospects of 35 children living in very difficult circumstances with disabilities.

His teacher says 8 year old Diyaa 'is one of the most confident children in class. He doesn't allow his injury to be a disability'. He is in Tripoli, where UNHCR and partners are providing classes to Syrian refugee children who don't go to school. UNHCR/D. Nandjikian