“More than 60% of Syrian refugees households comprise a person with disabilities and 1/5 Syrian refugees has a disability in Lebanon and Jordan”, shows a large study conducted by Humanity & Inclusion (HI) and iMMAP.

Despite the increasing interest in disability in humanitarian contexts, very few information has been collected on the number of persons with disabilities and how various barriers affect their daily life. The lack of data is one of the main reasons why they face exclusion and discrimination, including during the distribution of humanitarian aid and in access to shelter, water, health and education services.

This is the main reason that led HI, in close collaboration with its partner iMMAP to launch an ambitious disability survey among Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan in October 2017. The findings of this survey were published on 18/09/2018, in two reports titled Removing Barriers: The Path toward Inclusive Access, and 4 summarising factsheets. The results are also available and can be viewed in an online data dashboard.

iMMAP’s mission is to harness the power of information to facilitate evidence-based decisions to improve people’s lives. Their services have facilitated and informed effective disaster risk management, emergency response, and development activities by enabling evidence-based decision making for cluster leads, Non-Governmental Organizations, United Nations agencies and government operations.

Humanity & Inclusion is an independent and impartial aid organisation working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster. It works alongside people with disabilities and vulnerable populations, taking action and bearing witness in order to respond to their essential needs, improve their living conditions and promote respect for their dignity and fundamental rights. With extensive disability expertise, Humanity & Inclusion designed the assessment, analysed collected data and produced the reports and factsheets.
Supported by the Australian Government, the study was conducted in areas with important concentration of Syrian refugees, such as Azraq and Zaatari refugees camps, and the governorates of Irbid (Jordan), Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel (Lebanon). 1,665 households and 8,876 people were surveyed.

The findings show that 22.8% of surveyed Syrian refugees have disabilities in both countries, and that 61.4% of households have at least one member with disabilities. The findings also suggest a strong relation between disability and poverty, as it is estimated that around 80% of children with disabilities reside in households with low incomes.

The study also describes the typical barriers both Syrian refugees with and without disabilities face in their daily lives: unaccessible health services due to costs, lack of transportation or discouraging behaviour of the frontline staff; but also ideas of solutions prioritized by the surveyed refugees to overcome these difficulties.

All collected data is disaggregated by disability, age, gender, and location: allowing to identify who has disabilities, where she/he resided, what difficulties this person faces and what actions she/he thinks are important. Thus, these publication are expected to be valuable sources of information for humanitarian actors, not only to advocate, but also to take concrete and appropriate action in the future, in favour of a better inclusion and consideration of the needs of persons with disabilities, in the way the Syrian response is implemented.

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