Syria Protection Cluster (Turkey) in coordination with Humanity and Inclusion (HI):

Technical Working Group on Inclusion

Terms of Reference

Inclusion of persons with disabilities in the North West Humanitarian Response

In line with the humanitarian principle of humanity, the humanitarian response in North West Syria is committed to provide assistance on the basis of need, without distinction to nationality, race, gender, disability, religious belief, class or political opinion. Linked to and part of the Protection 2020 Strategy as well as the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, cluster response strategies are required to take into account the principle of inclusion and the differential risks of exclusion, including those which reinforce or create inequalities among the affected population, whether based on societal discrimination, power structures, vulnerability, disability, age, and gender and any other factors.

There is an intersection between humanitarian crises and persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities and their care givers are disproportionately affected by conflict and often face a specific and aggravated set of challenges due to both discrimination and to the barriers that limit their access to essential protection and humanitarian assistance.[1] "The costs of humanitarian interventions that are not designed to respond to the specific needs of the diversity of persons with disabilities are counted in human lives."**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Recent evidence suggests that the individual prevalence rate of persons with disabilities living in Syria, aged 12 years and above is 27% [2], which is almost twice that of the global average (15%)[3]. Also important to note is that in Aleppo and Idleb governorates, the individual IDP prevalence rate exceeds these figures where females are more likely to experience disability. That is, 59% of females and 27% of males (Aleppo) and 42% of females and 30% of males (Idleb) have

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[1] UNOHCHR. World Humanitarian Summit: Inclusion of persons with disabilities into Humanitarian Action, 2016
[2] Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP). Disability: Prevalence and Impact, 2019
[3] WHO, World Report on Disability, 2011

disabilities[4]. Further, for IDP heads of household across the whole of Syria, the rate of disability is 38%.[2] These striking figures reflect the impact of severe environmental challenges on individual functioning and the way in which poverty and reduced access to essential services compounds the experience of disability. Finally, with regards to age, across Syria 99% of females and 94% of males over the age of 65 years have a disability,[2] which is also important to note when considering the intersectionality of gender, age and disability in policy and programming.

Monitoring inclusion of persons with disabilities includes ongoing sector-specific analysis of the impact of conflict on persons with disabilities and their caregivers, especially in relation to their specific needs and ability to access services. Strengthening evidence and contextual understanding through this monitoring, while taking a human-rights-based approach to inclusion,[5,6] aims to inform measures to address exclusion include those related to:

-   **Programmatic design and targeting** by response partners which involves inclusion mainstreaming;
-   Ensuring that staff have the **skills to identify physical, attitudinal and institutional barriers** relevant to the communities which they work and having the means to mitigate these barriers to enable equal access for all people;
-   Ensuring that staff at all levels of the response, have the skills, knowledge and confidence **to identify and engage persons with disabilities** on an equal basis with all others.

To further strengthen inclusion of persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 response and the overall humanitarian response, engagement with humanitarian leadership on practical measures related to the HPC and the SCHF, as well as other strategic coordination processes, remains a required measure.

All persons with disabilities must be considered when operationalizing inclusion in the Syria response, however it is understood that the intersection between gender, age and disability can compound exclusion and in turn, vulnerability[7].

Gender, age and disability considerations in North West Syria

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[4] Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP). IDP Insight: Disability, 2019 Overview, 2020
[5] Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Guidelines, Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, 2019
[6] United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006
[7] Syria Resilience Consortium. Hidden, overlooked and at risk: The role of Gender, Age and Disability in Syria, 2019

Women (including older women) and girls with disabilities are exposed to a multitude of GBV risks, exacerbating their vulnerability and resulting in very few places where they feel safe. Further, women and girls with intellectual disabilities in particular are far more likely to experience sexual abuse when compared to their peers without disabilities; this is often due to power dynamics and the decreased likelihood of reporting.**Error! Bookmark not defined.** Persons with disabilities are at increased risk of separation from their families, care providers, and the assistive products which support their independence. Relocation to a new environment can impede dignified access to basic services. Girls and boys with disabilities are often at heightened risk of forms of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation. Many struggle against marginalization, stigma and discrimination.[8]Older persons with disabilities face barriers in accessing information and services, and they are more likely to be affected psychologically by crises**Error! Bookmark not defined.**,[9]. Further they are at great risk of poverty and more likely to have health problems that require costly medication, and yet they face significant difficulty in accessing humanitarian services which reduce vulnerability while humanitarian actors may not consistently identify and/or respond these specific needs.[9]

The North West Technical Working Group on Inclusion

Recognizing the exclusion and vulnerabilities that persons with disabilities experience in the Syrian crisis, with particular regard to accessing basic humanitarian services including protection, The Protection Cluster, represented by Lead Agency UNHCR and Humanity & Inclusion will establish a technical working group in February 2020. The working group will support the implementation of inclusion mechanisms in the response and strengthen existing efforts.

The Technical Working Group will work in coordination with relevant clusters, in particular Shelter/NFI, WASH, and CCCM, and their partners to identify key barriers to inclusion and to design and implement inclusion mechanisms for an initial period of 12 months with an initial review of the ToRs (key functions and membership/participation) in July 2020. **The key functions of the Technical Working Group include:**

- Working with the Protection Monitoring Task Force, as well as other clusters and assessment initiatives, **monitor the access and participation of persons with disabilities in protection services**, as well as in relation to community representation mechanisms/structures where feasible (e.g. camp committees, etc.)

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[8] 2020 Syria *Response* HNO findings
[9] HelpAge. Missing Millions: How older people with disabilities are excluded from Humanitarian Response, 2016

- To **advocate towards Humanitarian Leadership on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the humanitarian response**; this includes promoting awareness of inclusion related issues amongst all stakeholders, and ensuring relevant fora and processes take inclusion issues into account (e.g. HLG, HRP, SCHF, etc.)
- To **develop capacity of humanitarian partners to better understand disability**, the human rights approach to inclusion, and the specific issues experienced by this population in the Syrian crisis aiming to ensure uptake of inclusion principles
- To **provide practical support to partners regarding inclusive project design and targeting of persons with disabilities**; support will entail engagement with members of other clusters through workshops to jointly develop practical cluster and context specific guidance with the aim of strengthening:

Partners' capacity to identify barriers to access and protection for persons with disabilities in the communities which they work.Partners' approaches to remove barriers to access and protection in their programmes.In order to strengthen responses addressing the risk of exclusion and marginalization, the following immediate practical actions are recommended:

	Actions	Focal point
1.	Establish a North West Technical Working Group on Inclusion co-led by UNHCR and Humanity & Inclusion (HI), with membership of a diversity of clusters and organizations with various technical backgrounds, with nominees from: - FSL, ERL, S/NFI, Health and WASH clusters + protection monitoring task force - GBV and child protection sub clusters - Two INGOs and up to 6 NGOs who meet selection criteria as outlined in section 1.1	Protection Cluster staff and HI
1a.	INGOs and NGOs will be requested to submit a letter of application for membership of the Technical Working Group. These applications will be scored via a points system in order to ensure transparency. Selection criteria for I/NGO selection: - Geographic Coverage and thematic focus on protection - Protection cluster participation and expertise - The I/NGO should be able to demonstrate that their programs take into account the	Protection Cluster staff and HI

	needs of persons with disabilities, have a means to identify persons with disabilities and/or have resources (or planned resources) to dedicate to inclusion mainstreaming - I/NGOs which can demonstrate existing HR capacity e.g. inclusion advisors and/or staff with training on disability will receive additional points - Current relevant relationships & partnerships - I/NGOs which can demonstrate targeting of persons with disabilities within their programs is of benefit - I/NGOs have formal/informal presence in Gaziantep and can commit to monthly meetings - Ability to dedicate staff/focal point to the group - Respect for Core Humanitarian & Protection Principles - (For the scoring mechanism please see Annex 1)	
2.	Conduct consultations and a needs assessment of partners regarding their technical support needs with regards to inclusion mainstreaming	Protection Cluster staff and HI
3a.	Support the cluster(s) to monitor inclusion of persons with disabilities in assessments as well as assistance and service provision through monthly and quarterly reports; additionally a disability-specific review of inclusion rates in services will be conducted	TWG
3b.	Based on contextual analysis, develop key messaging and recommended tools/indicators for clusters and organizations on including disability in needs assessments, including COVID-19 response needs assessments	TWG
3c.	Based on contextual analysis develop key messaging and recommended tools/indicators for organizations on including disability in (third party) monitoring	TWG
4.	Develop, in collaboration with prioritized clusters, practical, achievable, and meaningful measures to inform and guide the ongoing and forthcoming scaled up emergency response, with priority given to COVID-19 response activities and modifications of pre-existing activities. Clusters of initial focus will be:	TWG

	• Shelter/NFI • WASH • CCCM • Health This action is to be taken within the shortest feasible timeframe possible due to the rapidly evolving situation in NWS and the foreseen scaled up response.	
5.	In collaboration with clusters and their partners, produce contextualized chapter notes and general guidance on the relevant sectors to complement the IASC guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, 2019	TWG
6.	To develop and roll out trainings for partners and other relevant organizations on key topics as defined by the context and needs assessment. Some topics may include: - Inclusive messaging and communication in the COVID-19 response - The rights of persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 response - An introduction to disability and inclusion mainstreaming in programming within the North West Syria Response - Inclusive project design and identification of persons with disabilities - Methods for targeting persons with disabilities in programs - Methods for mitigating barriers and engaging persons with disabilities in programs: the twin track approach (a combination of mainstreaming and targeted strategies), communication considerations, physical accessibility, staff training, inclusive complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) etc - Monitoring rights violations of persons with disabilities and risk mitigation measures	HI and TWG with support of Protection Cluster staff
7.	Advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities towards Humanitarian Leadership and in relevant coordination fora and processes	TWG

8.	Contribute to and/or establish a specialized service mapping for persons with disabilities. This may include mapping of face-to-face and remote services during the COVID-19 restriction period.	TWG

Expectations of task force/working group members:

- Active monthly contribution to meetings of the TWG in Gaziantep or via remote attendance when necessary
- Active ad hoc communication relating to the tasks of the group via email and skype throughout the year
- To actively support and contribute in a results-based manner to the tasks of the group as outlined in the action table above
- To demonstrate an ongoing commitment to inclusion in their organizations
- A review of key functions and outputs of the group and members will be carried out in July 2020. At this time, consideration of the relevance and impact of the work achieved so far and the contributions of members should be evaluated and updated in order to better meet needs on the ground and respond in the evolving context
- All people trained will be required to sign a code of conduct

Annex 1: Selection criteria for membership selection

Criteria	Points available
Geographic Coverage and thematic focus on protection "Organization's geographic coverage and breadth of thematic, protection-related technical expertise, current Protection programming and related technical capacity (e.g. number and type of staff)	5
Prior active participation in protection Cluster meetings; relevance of the various bodies (technical working groups, task-forces etc.) in which the organization actively participates	5
Protection related technical Expertise	3

Current programs: have analyzed the needs to persons with disabilities in the communities which they work; have a mechanism to identify persons with disabilities; disaggregate data by GAD in programs; can demonstrate ready resources or planned resources for inclusion mainstreaming; other relevant (1 point for each element)	5
Can demonstrate existing HR capacity e.g. inclusion advisors and/or staff with training on disability (1 point for each element)	2
Current relationships and partnerships: the organization's level and modes of engagement with local NGOs, INGOs, UN and other stakeholders	3
Can demonstrate purposeful targeting mechanisms built into program(s) (one point for at least one or more)	1
Have formal/informal presence in Gaziantep or other relevant location and can commit to monthly meetings	1
Ability to dedicate committed staff with the necessary capacity. The organization should nominate a focal point and alternate focal point with technical experience for standing participation in the group (non-negotiable)	3
Respect for Core Humanitarian & Protection Principles	2
Total	**30**