

Network Research Activities

DuS team delivers workshop on creative and co-production methods



In March 2022, the Disability Under Siege team organised a joint workshop with 7 other case studies that investigated the impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities in various Low- and Middle-Income Countries. The “Innovative methods for researching disability & COVID19 in the Global South” workshop shared learning from case studies on how to use creative and co-production approaches in research with persons with disabilities. Aimed at academics and

practitioners alike, the workshop attracted over 300 registrations, and with sessions focussing on how to work equitably with Disabled Person’s Organisations, conducting research with children with disabilities, working with people with disabilities as co-researchers, and disability research in contexts of conflict and crisis. The event was concluded by a keynote presentation from Dr Ola Abu Alghaib from the UN Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Recordings from the event are available to watch on the [Disability Under Siege Youtube channel](#).

Accessibility to Higher Education for Palestinian Students with Disabilities: Inclusive Policies and Practices Review

The Inclusive Education Study Team at Palestinian Universities in collaboration with the Disability Under Siege Network organized a [research workshop](#) on assessing inclusive education policies and practices for students with disabilities in Palestinian higher education institutions. The workshop was held under supervision of the Network’s Co-Investigator Dr Nazmi Al-Masri, head of the project team and Ms Nesma Al-Ghoul, coordinator of Centre for Disability and Integration Services at the Islamic University. The activities of the workshop were held in Irada Centre for Training and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, in cooperation with the Centre for Disability and Integration Services of Deanship of Community Service and Continuing Education at the university.





Disability Under Siege: decolonising knowledge on disability in contexts of conflict and crisis

On 10th May 2022 Professor Dina Kiwan, Principal Investigator, Disability under Siege Network, gave her inaugural lecture at the University of Birmingham. The event was held in person and online, with over 100 people worldwide in attendance.

About the lecture

Did you know that 15% of the world's population – 1 billion people – experience some form of disability? The prevalence of disability is even higher in lower- and middle-income countries, exacerbated by poverty and conflict (World Bank, 2018).

Not only is disability higher in these countries,

and its effects exacerbated by the socio-political conditions, infrastructure and attitudes to disability, but disability also arises as a direct result of conflict and armed violence.



Most research and knowledge of disability in lower- and middle-income countries has been produced in the Global North, despite the majority of disabled people being in the Global South. In this lecture, Professor Kiwan examined dominant discourses of disability, outline key areas of research in the field, and proposed priority research areas for the future.

National Conference on the Health Rights of Persons with Disabilities



A research team from ICPH participated in the national conference on health rights of persons with disabilities which took place on Wednesday July 20th 2022 in Ramallah. The conference was organized by QADER for Community Development in partnership with the Palestinian Disability Coalition and Save the Children International.

Suzan Mitwalli, an academic researcher at ICPH, presented on behalf of Prof Rita Giacaman and Lina Abdul-Samad in the first session of the conference entitled “The reality of the enjoyment of health rights by persons with disabilities, in relation to the obligations articulated in the government health insurance system for persons with disabilities.”

Suzan focused on the obstacles facing people with disabilities in accessing health services during and prior to the pandemic. Her presentation was based on the findings of a case study that was prepared for the Disability Under Siege Network on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities in the West Bank of the occupied Palestinian territory.

Network News

Commissioning

Earlier this year the Disability Under Siege Network funded the 5 Network and Knowledge Exchange projects (details of projects below). The projects support knowledge exchange and partnership building projects, especially between new partners, in order to develop innovative approaches, as well as to consolidate and develop sustainable partnerships. The aim is to create opportunities for learning and co-production of new knowledge and sustainable practices for education from an interdisciplinary perspective for those with disabilities, with a focus on Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.



Mainstreaming Strategies and the Application Mechanisms in Higher Education Institutions

Led by Al-Quds University in Palestine, this research project works in collaboration with An-Najah National University and the Islamic University, to study the mainstreaming of people with disability in higher education institutions, and to identify strategies followed by higher education institutions for educational quality and mainstreaming facilities for different types of people with disability.



Al-Harah Theater Company

The project aims at enhancing the inclusion of people with disabilities into the performing arts sector while opening further and new opportunities for people with disabilities for work and participation in Palestine. The project will work with Qader for Community Development, to create awareness and changing social stigmas through theater where people with disabilities are included and their messages are conveyed.

Towards inclusive media production: Training workshops for media organizations and media educational programs at Lebanese Universities.

This project is a coordinated training investment drawing from the experiences of the Disability Hub, coordinated by Dr Itab Shuayb, and audio-visual media organizations and university media communication programs in Lebanon. It is devised to respond to increasing demands for training on the principles of the CRPD and inclusive development, including inclusion, accessibility, reasonable accommodations, and inclusive and universal design.



Art Advocacy: Youth Views of Disability

In accordance with global and national calls Jordan's government has been heavily investing in projects to promote inclusivity. A small pilot project in Jordan, conducted by the University of Jordan, with non-disabled students has shown there is still a prevalent narrative of disability that excludes and 'others' disabled persons. To counter this view this project will bring disabled and non-disabled youth together through conversation and art.

63 Days of Sit-In

In October 2021, amid the pandemic, people with disabilities in Palestine initiated a movement to administer their right to have a just and an inclusive health insurance. 63 days after their sit-in in the Palestinian Legislative Council under difficult circumstances, the social movement of people with disabilities were able to realize their first goal of providing an inclusive health insurance for the people with disabilities. "63 Days of Sit-In" is a project that aims to creatively document and reflect on the powerful experience of the movement led by people with disabilities in Palestine.



مركز خليل السكاكيني الثقافي
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center

Congratulations!



Dr. Maha Shuayb, co-investigator, Disability under Siege Network, has been appointed as the British Academy Bilateral Chair in Education in Conflict. The chair is based at the Centre for Lebanese Studies at the Lebanese American University and the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. With a research programme entitled “Unpacking the industry of refugee education and research towards an equitable theory and practice”, the Chair will focus on strengthening and widening the opportunities for early career scholars and researchers focused on education in emergency and conflict.

Pilot Projects

In partnership with the AM Qattan Foundation in Ramallah, Palestine, the Disability Under Siege Network have been working together to commission 4 disability in arts and culture projects in the region. Hosted and guided by the A.M. Qattan Foundation, the pilot projects are encouraged to explore a range of media and art forms to generate immersive spaces for the codesign and production of disability-led projects, to develop public understanding of disability in contexts of conflict and crisis and enhance local, regional and international capacities to address issues of access, and participation.



Commissioned Research Projects

The Disability Under Siege Network are delighted to announce the successful recipients of the Research and Engagement funding call. There were a total of 10 applications and all went through a comprehensive selection panel including external experts. The Disability under Siege Network look forward to working more closely with the following successful research projects;

#DisabledVoicesfromGaza – narrative methodologies with media and information literacy (MIL) to empower university students with disabilities in Palestine

Led by the Islamic University of Gaza and Action on Armed Violence, this capacity-building oriented research project brings together academics and third sector organisations from the creative and advocacy sectors, based in the UK and Palestine. In collaboration, the team will empower 100 Palestinian university students with disabilities living in besieged Gaza, Palestine, to effectively communicate and produce narratives about their lived experiences. Mainly UNRWA registered refugees, these students will gain skills and experience in narrating stories of their lives during ongoing conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic using creative and storytelling methods bolstered by media and information literacy (MIL) training.

A Human Centred and Community Based Participatory Research Approach to Education Among Young People with Disabilities Living Under Occupation

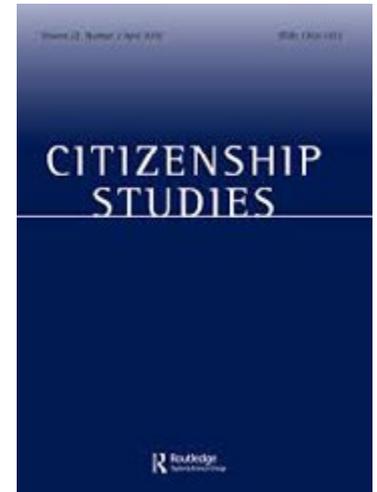
With partners from Birzeit University and King's College London, the research seeks to explore evidence that people with disabilities (PWDs) in Palestine face accessibility difficulties in reaching main services, and still lack basic rights like education, health and a decent livelihood. Moreover, PWDs as all Palestinians experience protracted Israeli violence which exacerbates their suffering even more. The project aims to contribute to the research on young people with disabilities in conflict-affected countries focusing mainly on education.



Network Publications

Disabled decolonial human and citizen futures

Professor Dina Kiwan has recently published an article in the journal *Citizenship Studies*. The article utilises the dual methodological lens of disability and decolonisation in order to critically examine, in interdisciplinary and global perspective, what it will mean to be both a 'human' and a 'citizen' in the 21st century. The article is [available to read online](#).



THE CONVERSATION

Disabled people are being left out of COVID recovery. Here are five ways to change that

In April 2022, DuS Research Fellow Vera Kubenz published an article in *The Conversation* on 5 key steps to ensure a post-COVID world is disability-inclusive. This concluded the work of the UNPRPD Analytical Framework project, which focused particularly on the impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities in Low-and Middle-Income Countries. In addition to the *Conversation* article, a peer-reviewed paper based on our literature review has been accepted by the *Social Inclusion* journal for publication in early 2023. [Read the full article online](#).

Communications and Media

For any further information or details about the Disability Under Siege project please visit our website at www.disabilityundersiege.org or email us directly at disabilityundersiege@contacts.bham.ac.uk.



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