

Network Research

We are delighted that Dr Nazmi Al-Masri from the Islamic University of Gaza visited the University of Birmingham for two weeks in October, giving two lectures to academics and students, as well as networking with Disability under Siege colleagues, strengthening academic ties and creating new ones. It wasn't all work and no play, Dr Al-Masri visited the local area with friends and colleagues and even shared the culinary delights of his home with the DuS team.



The lecture “Education Under Siege: Challenges to inclusive education facing pupils and students with disabilities in Palestine”. This talk explored the challenges faced by Palestinian school and university students in accessing equal and inclusive education in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. It focused on challenges associated with inclusive policies and practices in consistency with UN Sustainable Development Goals No. 4, but also shared stories of success in how universities and schools have been resilient and inclusive, even under siege. The lecture is now available to view on the [Disability under Siege YouTube channel](#).



Early Career Researchers

The Disability Under Siege Network is committed to developing critical disability research from social science and arts perspectives. The project is pleased to announce that we have recently funded two Early Career Fellowships based at the Centre for Lebanese Studies and Birzeit University. The fellowships will start in January 2023 and will run for 12-months, paving the way for a long-lasting legacy of disability research in the region.



Rula Ghandour is a researcher at the Institute of Community and Public Health (ICPH) at Birzeit University, Palestine. She is currently completing her PhD addressing adolescents' menstrual health among Palestine Refugee camp dwellers. She worked previously as a research and teaching assistant at the ICPH. Rula's research seeks to understand the lived disability experience of Palestinian West Bank adolescent girls aged 15 to 18 years old, at home and in their communities.



Joelle Boutros is a researcher at the Centre for Lebanese Studies, working on the history of social movements in post-war Lebanon. She has worked previously at the Legal Agenda's Archiving and Documentation Department, documenting key cases and historical incidents related to social and judicial movements in Lebanon. Joelle's research will track the history of the Lebanese Physically Handicapped Union, its evolution and development, tactics used and its role in promoting the full inclusion of people with disabilities in society from the 1980s to our current time.

Disability History Month 2022

To celebrate Disability History Month, our Project Manager and former Research Fellow Vera Kubenz will present as part of an **online panel on Tuesday 6th December 12:30-13:30pm UK time**, focusing Disability, Health and Wellbeing in education for a post-covid world: lessons from the field. Vera's presentation will focus on key findings from the Disability Under Siege network's research on the impact of the first wave of COVID-19 on disabled people in the Global South. The discussion will explore how the pandemic has exposed the integral connection between education, health, and wellbeing. She will join colleagues from the University of Birmingham's School of Education, Dr Francesca Peruzzo who will speak about her research Rethinking Inclusive (Digital) Education, and Dr Valentina Migliarini, who will focus on Disabled Forced Migrant Students in Post-Pandemic Italy. Professor Julie Allan will act as discussant.

The event is free, open to anyone, and will have automatic captions. For further information about this event and details on how to register [please visit the website](#).



Network and Knowledge Exchange

The projects funded by the Disability Under Siege network earlier this year are now well under way and we are excited to be working with such an energetic and diverse group of participants.

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

The Disability Hub at the Centre for Lebanese studies celebrated the first graduates of the Towards Inclusive Media Production training course. Three workshops for media organizations and media educational programs at Lebanese Universities aimed to educate professionals about working with people with disabilities in media reporting and using inclusive language. The workshops received fantastic feedback from attendees.



Mainstreaming Strategies and the Application Mechanisms in Higher Education Institutions

Colleagues from 3 Palestinian universities, Al Quds, An Najah and Islamic University of Gaza, held the first of their training courses for academic staff in the West Bank as part of the project “Disability Mainstreaming Strategies and the Application Mechanisms in Higher Education Institutions”.

The project aims to discover the extent of the integration of persons with disabilities in higher education institutions, and to contribute to the formulation of educational policies and strategies in universities and for the protection of the right to education of persons with disabilities. Further information can be accessed on their [project website](#).





Art Advocacy: Youth Views of Disability

Operating in Jordan, the Art Advocacy: Youth Views of Disability project held its first workshop in November. Students with disabilities engaged in a week of photovoice activities documenting their lived experience using cameras to capture their daily lives, while students without disabilities shared their understanding of disability. The two groups came together in conversation to share and disrupt the current narrative surrounding disability in Jordan.

Following on from the successful workshop, the Arts Advocacy project will exhibit their photographs at the Jordan National Gallery for Fine Arts between 13th and 20th March 2023. The gallery show will highlight and bring together the viewpoints of disabled and non-disabled youth through photography and mind-mapping exercises.



Giant puppet making at Al Harah Theater



Al-Harah Theater Company

“It is said that this training seeks to integrate people with hearing impairments and people of hearing to learn the skill of moving large dolls and create a work force in this field”, Al Harah Theater welcomed students with hearing impairments to their Giant Puppets Workshop in August. The students worked together to make and assemble their giant puppets and then visited a local school to perform. They have also been invited to parade their puppets at a local festival in Ramallah at the beginning of December!



Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center “63 Days of Sit-In

The first phase of researching, discussion panels and talks have now been conducted with those involved in the 63 days sit-in protest by people with disabilities of the Palestinian Legislative Council. Participants included individuals, collectives, and organisations who were actively supporting the movement to share their experience and the knowledge they gained with the extended community. A series of creative workshops that includes people with disabilities and local artists have also been conducted to conceptualise and document the sit-in. The project now moves towards the production of a stage performance.



16 November to 16 December is Disability History Month and the University of Birmingham will be exploring the theme of ‘Disability, Health and Well Being’ with a comprehensive programme of events.

For further information about all events and details on how to register [please visit the University of Birmingham website.](#)

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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