



**HELPING HAND**  
FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT



**Disability  
isn't inability**

# Children With Disabilities Program

ANNUAL REPORT | 2023

## **HHRD Mission and Vision**

Helping Hand for Relief and Development is committed to serve humanity by integrating resources for people in need. We strive to provide immediate response in disasters, and effective Programs in places of suffering, for the pleasure of Allah.

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## **Children with Disabilities Program Mission and Vision**

“To rehabilitate and support children with special needs from marginalized communities, helping them achieve their potential and promoting social inclusion and equality.”

HHRD strives to provide quality health and rehabilitative therapy services, assistive mobility and learning aids, educational support, food and nutrition support, psychosocial upliftment and social inclusion.

## Introduction

Around 15% of the world's population has a disability according to the World Health Organization. Several million are thought to be displaced but often remain invisible within uprooted communities. Persons with disabilities are not a homogenous group – they have different capacities and needs and contribute in different ways to their communities. In times of crisis, they are at a heightened risk of discrimination, exploitation, and violence, and face numerous barriers to accessing humanitarian assistance.

**Above all, we are fighting  
the stigma that comes  
with being different**

# Program Design

## Health & Rehabilitation



*Hearing aids for children*

The Children with disability Program at Helping Hand for Relief and Development is dedicated to advancing the wellbeing of children facing disabilities. Our mission revolves around delivering essential health and rehabilitation interventions. We aim to provide access to medical care and therapy services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychotherapy and other specialized services that can help children with disabilities improve their physical and mental health. Through our dedicated efforts, we aspire to enhance the overall quality of life for these children, ensuring they receive the support needed to thrive and overcome challenges associated with their conditions.

Health & Rehabilitation services are given free of cost to all our beneficiaries, most of whom are immunocompromised. This fragile state makes healthcare incredibly important to avoid the increased risk of disease. At registration, a multidisciplinary specialty board of doctors diagnoses each of our children, developing a customized

rehabilitation program based on their unique disability before connecting them to trained HHRD clinicians for treatment.

For children who have lost one or both limbs due to accident or injury, HHRD is able to provide free prosthesis. These can be financially inaccessible for beneficiary families as they are very expensive and require a highly individualized level of care. They are subject to wear and tear and need replacing as the child grows older. Prosthesis are designed and manufactured to the specifications for each child by the HHIRS (Helping Hand Institute of Rehabilitation Sciences), a non-profit trust providing educational and clinical services for last two decades in Mansehra district, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa. These arm and leg replacements allow children to participate in home, school and community activities with greater ease, relieving the burden that a missing limb has placed on them.



HHRD believes the rehabilitation component of the program is of the utmost importance because we want our children to be confident and independent. We envision a time when they will be able to take care of themselves, and their families and communities and will not feel burdened by increased costs and caregiving expenses. Along with prosthesis,



*Assistance with daily activities.*

HHRD also provides assistive devices like wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, brail tablets and other support that improves the quality of life and helps these children with their mobility, communication and learning.

### Educational Assistance



The mission of CWDP's educational assistance intervention is to provide academic support to children with disabilities, including special education services, learning resources, and support from trained educators who understand their unique needs.

An important component of our community-based rehabilitation program is to help children with disabilities stay in school or go back to school if they have been absent.

Not all of our beneficiaries have a goal of attending school. Approximately 200 children in Jordan, 200 in Kenya and 600 in Pakistan can participate in formal education. The remaining beneficiaries are provided with learning opportunities that fit into their specific rehabilitation plan. Students who are visually and hearing impaired are equipped with assistive devices like hearing aids, brail tablets etc. so that they can be supported in school.

### Food & Nutrition



The mission of CWDP's food and nutrition intervention is to ensure that children with disabilities have access to nutritious food and supplements that can support their physical and cognitive development. Many of the children need specialized nutrition that goes above and beyond a regular diet. During the initial screening, we build a specific nutritional plan for each child and deliver appropriate food and supplements to their caregivers. With inflation on the rise, extended families struggle with the cost of food and this type of support is extremely valuable.

### Social Inclusion & Psychosocial Development

CWDP is committed to fostering social inclusion through targeted interventions. The social inclusion component's mission is to promote inclusion by creating opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in community activities and events, and by raising awareness and understanding of disability issues within the community. The mission of the psycho social development component is to provide psycho social



support to children with disabilities and their families, which includes counseling, emotional support, and referrals to other support services as needed.

Unfortunately, the recurring tragedy with these children with disabilities is the sense of rejection and neglect they receive from both peers and family members. At HHRD we strongly believe that fostering inclusion

and prioritizing psychosocial development are pivotal in unlocking the vast potential residing within these students. This sense of belonging impacts their physical and mental wellness, directly elevating their academic and social skills. Recognizing and addressing these challenges comprehensively, we strive to create an environment where every CWDP student can thrive.

# Pakistan

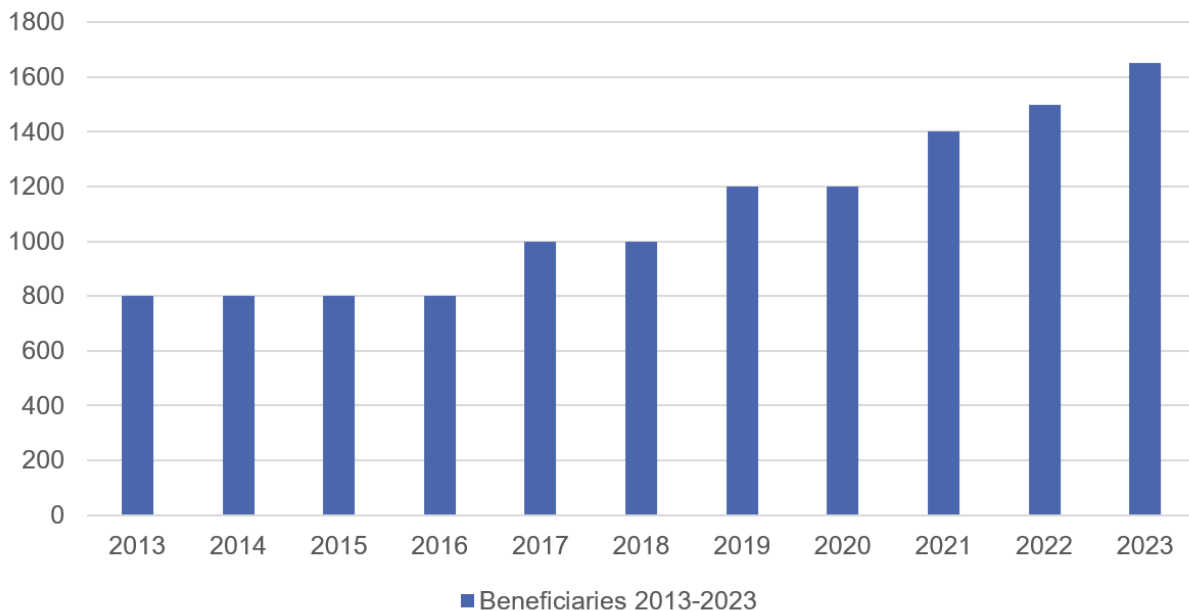
HHRD has been at work in Pakistan since 2005, taking swift action in response to a record-breaking earthquake in Kashmir. Over the years, activities in the country have increased to include beneficiaries of the Children with Disabilities Program.

The Children with Disabilities Program, a dedicated initiative designed to empower and uplift vulnerable beneficiaries, started in 2013. It is now active in ten districts of Pakistan. Our primary goal is to cultivate a supportive community that embraces diversity, enabling these children to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.



## GROWTH OF PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES IN PAKISTAN

Beneficiaries 2013-2023



# Jordan

A land-locked country about the size of Indiana, Jordan is bordered by the Palestinian West Bank, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Due to its location, it has become home for several different populations fleeing violence in their home countries. Many Palestinian refugees have been in Jordan for decades; some have become citizens and live in houses. Syrian refugees have recently arrived and often shelter in tents in desert camps.

The Children with Disability Program in Jordan was launched in June of 2022 with 100 children ranging from 6 to 18 years of age. HHRD is working with three certified centers in Jordan to provide safe and relevant rehabilitation services four days a week. In 2023, the number of children in the program was increased by 100, bringing the number to 200 children. HHRD collaborates with local childcare centers to provide therapies and activities for our children with disabilities.



#	Nationality	No. of Selected Children With Disabilities
1	Syrian (Refugees in Jordan)	60
2	Palestinian (Refugees in Jordan)	100
3	Jordanian (Local)	40
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>



## Success Story

Yara AL-Thalji is a 9-year-old girl with a hearing disability. When she was only ten months old, the doctor told her father that she was unable to hear. She is the eldest daughter in the family, the joy of the family.

Through generous donations, she got hearing aids but could not distinguish voices well. She still couldn't speak or understand. She was enrolled in the Community Rehabilitation Center for speech therapy and rehabilitation sessions to integrate into society. The family hoped she could attend school like her cousins, but the idea seemed very far away as she had to drop out due to financial constraints

With the support of blessed HHRD donors, Yara can continue therapy and strive towards a better future. The family is grateful as Helping Hand supports them with food packages to help her father make ends meet.

She is now fully integrated into the Community Rehabilitation School where she can study, learn and play with her friends. She is no longer afraid that her family's financial situation will force her to drop out.

Her family is overjoyed with the constant and remarkable development in Yara's personality and her interaction with others. "I cannot put my feelings into words," Yara says. "Allah and my HHRD donors are the reasons for my joy and my happiness."



# Kenya

Located in Western Africa, Kenya has a young population and a growing economy. Host to nearly 500,000 refugees from neighboring countries, it has been called the “Gateway to Africa” by some investors. Despite these claims, many residents live in poverty, in some of the biggest slums in the world. HHRD partnered with Sir Ali Bin Salim Primary School to serve children with disabilities in Malindi, offering an educational experience tailored for children with special needs.

The program supports disabled children with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis.

This integrated program delivery method ensures the children get access to basic necessities & receive support in a conducive environment so they may reach their full potential.

During 2023, we carried out several program activities to benefit the special needs children. There was also purchase of therapy equipment to help the HHRD occupational therapist to develop treatment & therapy plan for each child.



## Success Story



Josephine Amina is in a foundation-level class; she is a 7-year-old child with Down syndrome. She currently lives with her uncle as her father passed away a few years ago. Amina has been experiencing tough times when it comes to performance and functional skills acquisition. She struggles with learning new materials. After assessing her abilities and limitations, we came up with a treatment plan to improve her performance.

Vestibular stimulation is a very powerful tool for self-soothing and focusing attention. It works with the input given to the brain. Movement activities coupled with sounds through which the brain is artificially prompted to focus attention. In Josephine’s case, this therapy worked. We later initiated the facilitation of cognitive skills and fine motor skills. She has now started to develop an interest in meaningful activities and has developed comprehension patterns that enable her to hold a pencil or crayons effectively.