



Asraa Alghali, UN Volunteer Education Sector Coordinator with UNICEF Libya.
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UN Volunteer with disability steps up for inclusive education in Libya

Asraa Alghali is the first national female UN Volunteer with disability to serve in Libya. She is currently serving with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). As an Education Sector Coordinator, she liaises with government and civil society representatives to support the implementation of inclusive education.

The [Libya Education Response Monitoring Dashboard](#) documents that some 326,000 people in Libya are in need of education support. UNICEF works to ensure access to safe, inclusive and quality education, particularly for children affected by the protracted crisis. In strengthening support to humanitarian coordination among education actors in the country, UNICEF has a special focus on engaging with community-based organizations and the Ministry of Education.

According to the World Health Organization and the World Bank, [about one billion people live with some form of disability](#), of which up to 150 million are

children. [Plan International](#) reports that children with disabilities are ten times less likely to attend schools.

The situation in Libya, exacerbated by armed conflict, socio-economic instability, and COVID-19 pandemic, is no different. Children with disability face barriers to accessing education.

The Education Sector is catering to the needs of 130,000 children, including 660 children with disabilities in Libya. It supports basic education services, particularly in areas where schools are damaged, closed, overcrowded or are not fully operational. Moreover, it seeks to foster inclusive education in the country for children at risk of dropping out, out of school children, including migrants and refugees, as well as children with special education needs.

As a person with a disability herself, the UN Volunteer stepped up to transform education, as promoted by the [new social contract for education](#), through inclusiveness. Asraa delivers on project management in the area of inclusive education.

“ Volunteering brings a lot to the table. Presenting something that benefits others is enjoyable, interesting and unforgettable! – Asraa Alghali, UN Volunteer Education Sector Coordinator with UNICEF Libya

Her experience has provided her with the necessary competencies and know-how to join UNICEF in the implementation of inclusive education. Through her assignment, Asraa supports the coordination of the Education Sector, provides translation support, and contributes to reporting and data management.

Only three months into her assignment, Asraa is already taking ownership of her work and inspiring inclusion in other sections. "My idea of making UNICEF's 75th anniversary celebration in Libya inclusive of persons with disabilities was appreciated by the head of communications section. We collaborated on the inclusion of two types of disability, by facilitating the participation of blind and deaf-mute people, with the help of a sign language

translator," Asraa shares.

“One of my key achievements is that I defied my situation. I didn't stay home, blame it on disability, and not fulfill my duties as a citizen,"Asraa explains.

"One of my goals is to continue working with UNICEF to help as much people as I can. I have an innate need to help and encourage others," she adds.

“People with disabilities shouldn't imprison themselves. They should have an impact on life regardless of their situation. A disability lies in the mind, not in eyes, arms or ears. If the mind is free, the person is not disabled. --Asraa Alghali, UN Volunteer Education Sector Coordinator with UNICEF Libya

Prior to her assignment with UNICEF, Asraa joined forces with civil society organizations to create an enabling environment for people with visual disability, taking part in activities such as reading clubs and the delivery of online English courses to visually impaired and other students.

Additionally, since Braille books were nearly impossible to find in regular libraries, Asraa also supported with the translation of a small library to Braille, making books accessible for blind readers.

Asraa Alghali's assignment is fully funded by the Government of Germany, under a special agreement with UNV to promote the integration of people

with disability in the United Nations workforce.

 Arab States

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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 4: Quality education](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)