

Persons with disabilities form a diverse segment of Palestinian society that is making important contributions in a wide range of fields – despite numerous challenges in addition to, and in some cases exacerbated by, the difficulties posed by the political situation. This issue gives you a glimpse into their lives. It focuses both on trials and achievements and shows the efforts undertaken with the aim to

create the circumstances necessary for allowing their full participation in society. We need the contribution of their diverse skills and frequently extraordinary strength and wisdom. Much has been done in recent years, more measures are planned, and even more needs to be accomplished.

Many thanks go to the Palestinian Consultative Staff for Developing NGOs, Jenin (PCS), for their financial support of this issue. The PCS offers economic empowerment to persons with disabilities and monitors violations of existing laws that compel employers to hire competent persons with disabilities to fill a quota of 5 percent among their staff. Our gratitude for financial support goes also to the World Health Organization, the Princess Basma Centre, and Bank of Palestine. Read about their endeavors to improve the equity towards and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Palestine, be it through rehabilitation, vocational training, or employment.

Our authors (Thanks to all of them!) share about rehabilitative measures and inclusive education, vocational training and our obligation to provide employment, the empowerment of women with disabilities and the care of persons with emotional impairment. The International Labor Organization focuses on better implementation of the legal provisions that are currently in place. Handicap International points out the danger that persons with and without disabilities are facing in mine-infested Gaza and deplores the lack of access to adequate facilities, services, and infrastructure in Area C of the West Bank. Do not miss the personal stories by Kathy Baroody and Joyce Ajlouny.

We have two inspiring personalities of the month who are working tirelessly to improve the lives of their peers; our artist of the month is a young person with disability from Gaza, and our book of the month is the autobiography of a visually impaired professor of English literature – all further illustrations of the fact that persons with disabilities make considerable contributions to our society and culture. The untapped potential is vast, a situation that is unacceptable also from an economic point of view. Where to Go leads you to the small town where one of Palestine’s major festivals will take place this month. Our rich events section lists many cultural and artistic activities for your enjoyment.

All of us at TWiP wish you a good and peaceful month and a happy Eid al-Adha to those who are celebrating.

Warmly,
Tina Basem
Editor



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October 2016: **Tapping into Palestine’s Diaspora**

November 2016: **High Tech in Palestine**

December 2016: **Religious Celebrations in Palestine**

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