

- Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) – Working together to evaluate and enhance academic sign language in primary and secondary education, thereby improving educational opportunities for deaf students in Jordan. This initiative has led to the development of approximately 2,000 new academic sign language terms by a team of deaf experts, which have been made freely available on the global sign language platform, SUSL, for deaf educators and students.
- Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS Italy) – Partnering to improve access to integrated and inclusive services for the prevention and protection of persons with disabilities from gender-based and sexual violence, including refugees and host community members. This initiative resulted in the development of a disability-inclusive gender-based violence manual and the adaptation of three emergency shelters to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities who may need refuge.



- Supporting the *Al Hussein, Young Muslim Women and Al Dia Kindergarten* associations to provide rehabilitation services and educational programs for persons with disabilities.
- Partnering with the Public Security Directorate to provide technical support for the preparation of ten inclusive and accessible police stations across various governorates, financed by the Directorate's own budget.
- Collaborating with the Independent Election Commission to offer technical guidance, resulting in the preparation of 95 polling centres to ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities during the 2024 parliamentary elections.
- And many more...

What is the purpose of HCD's national awards, and what do they recognise?

HCD has introduced two national awards in the fields of media and accessibility to inspire individuals and organisations to develop innovative and creative initiatives that uphold the rights of persons with disabilities. These awards aim to promote best practices, inclusion, and accessibility across various sectors.

The Media Award

This award recognises outstanding media contributions that creatively address issues related to the rights of persons with disabilities while adhering to a human rights-based approach. It aims to challenge stereotypes and promote authentic, empowering portrayals of persons with disabilities.

- The award is open to a variety of media formats, including visual, print, drama, and podcast.
- Awardees receive financial prizes and are widely disseminated across media platforms to amplify their impact.
- The award is structured into three tiers: First, Second, and Third place within each media category.

The Accessible Buildings Award

This award encourages both governmental and non-governmental entities to ensure that their buildings, facilities, and services comply with the Building Code for Persons with Disabilities, fostering greater accessibility and inclusion.

- The award evaluates physical accessibility, information accessibility, and effective communication with persons with disabilities.
- It is awarded in three categories—gold, silver, and bronze—based on the level and extent of adaptations made.
- The Gold category recognises organisations that not only meet accessibility standards but also demonstrate commitment to employing persons with disabilities and ensuring a fully inclusive environment.

Through these awards, HCD promotes a culture of innovation, accessibility, and inclusivity, ensuring that disability rights remain at the forefront of national development efforts.



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**Higher Council for the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities (HCD)**





Who are we?

The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD) is a national institution committed to promoting and safeguarding the rights of more than 1.2 million persons with disabilities across Jordan. Through its specialised directorates and technical and administrative units, HCD monitors the implementation of national policies and frameworks to ensure full participation and inclusion in all aspects of society.

What is the main legislative framework governing HCD?

HCD operates by virtue of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 of 2017. This law is widely recognised by stakeholders, experts, international organisations, and specialised bodies as a pioneering piece of legislation. It incorporates progressive human rights principles in defining disability and violence while aligning with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The law is founded on the principles of non-discrimination and full inclusion and clearly delineates the responsibilities of government entities in upholding the rights of persons with disabilities.

What are HCD's key priorities?

HCD has developed four national strategies and policies to implement the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These include:

1. The Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education – Aims to transform the education system in Jordan to ensure that students with disabilities are fully included in an accessible, supportive, and safe learning environment.
2. The National Strategy on Deinstitutionalisation for Persons with Disabilities – Seeks to phase out institutional care, transferring persons with disabilities back into their biological, extended, or foster families while strengthening the system of community-based support services.
3. The National Strategy for Rectifying the Status of Existing Buildings and Public Facilities – Focuses on assessing and modifying buildings constructed before 2017 (the year in which the aforementioned was issued) to ensure accessibility, independence, and privacy for persons with disabilities.
4. The National Strategy for Inclusive Tourism – Aims to make tourist and archaeological sites fully accessible, including the provision of reasonable accommodations, accessible formats such as Braille, large print, audio descriptions, electronic formats, and sign language. It also promotes tactile models of artefacts to enhance the experience of blind tourists.



What are the main responsibilities of HCD?

HCD carries out three core functions, each encompassing a set of detailed tasks aimed at ensuring the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.

1. **Providing technical and knowledge-based support to governmental and non-governmental entities.** HCD offers expert guidance to support the effective implementation of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 of 2017 and related policies. Key activities include:

- Supervising the accessibility of public infrastructure projects, such as the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in Amman and the Amman-Zarqa corridor, ensuring compliance with accessibility standards and the provision of adapted buses for persons with disabilities;
- Ensuring that Queen Alia International Airport's facilities and services are fully accessible to travellers, employees, and visitors with disabilities;
- Overseeing accessibility improvements in vocational training institutions, ensuring that buildings, facilities, and curricula are inclusive and fully accessible;
- Facilitating the adaptation of urban areas in various governorates, including Jabal al-Hussein in Amman, Yarmouk University in Irbid, Petra, and Aqaba, to enhance accessibility;
- Conducting qualitative research and disability assessments in specific regions of Jordan. Notably, HCD implemented an international-standard survey using the Washington Group's extended set of questions in the Koura District of Irbid Governorate to evaluate the status of services and disability inclusion;



- Supervising accessibility improvements in public universities, such as adaptation projects at the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University in the north, and Mu'tah University in the south, ensuring inclusive higher education environments.



2. **Monitoring government compliance with disability rights legislation.** HCD evaluates the extent to which government institutions are upholding their obligations per the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by:

- Conducting surveys, verification exercises, interviews, and consultations with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) to assess progress;
- Producing detailed monitoring reports outlining findings and recommendations for government entities, with copies submitted to the Prime Minister and Parliament;
- Following up on the implementation of recommendations to ensure that government agencies take concrete action towards greater inclusion and accessibility.

3. **Policymaking and ensuring disability-inclusive national strategies.**

HCD plays a central role in ensuring that national policies and strategies mainstream disability rights by:

- Reviewing key national strategies in areas such as women's rights, social protection, population policies, reproductive health, and the elderly, mainstreaming disability-inclusive measures and requirements;
- Advocating for policies that align with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and promoting a rights-based approach across all sectors.

Does HCD have partnerships with non-governmental organisations?

HCD has established a wide range of international and local partnerships, reflecting the trust and expertise it has built over the years. These collaborations support the advancement of disability rights and the promotion of inclusive policies and services.

International Partnerships:

- Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) - Collaborating on a project aimed at advancing the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities, improving mental health services, and ensuring their full inclusion within local communities, making them accessible to all.
- German Development Cooperation (GIZ) - Partnering to implement the pilot phase of the action plan under the Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education, supporting the transformation of Jordan's education system into a fully inclusive model.
- Christian Blind Mission (CBM) – Engaging in a project to promote Comprehensive Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID) by strengthening local associations in three governorates. As part of this initiative, a field survey was conducted to assess the situation of persons with disabilities in targeted communities, measuring service quality and accessibility. Additionally, 20 homes were adapted to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities.

