

## Committed to Helping People with Disabilities



The partnership between the **Adecco Group Foundation** and the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** supports people with disabilities in achieving their full potential in society. The ICRC **Career Development Programme (CDP)** provides career training, enhances employer and governmental awareness, and increases access to jobs for people with disabilities – and Inclusion Advisors play an important role in it all.

**ICRC Inclusion Advisors** are the passionate people on the ground, delivering training and offering inspirational guidance to the participants of the Career Development Programme. They blend the CDP's content and approach with their own experience and know-how to support people with disabilities living in developing countries, fragile states, and conflict zones. We sat down with one of our ICRC Inclusion Advisors, **Haya Rawi**, to hear more about the CDP from her unique point of view.



### Meet our ICRC Inclusion Advisor

Name: Haya Rawi

Country of operation: Lebanon

ICRC Inclusion Advisor since: March, 2019

**Why did you decide to become an ICRC Inclusion Advisor and work as part of the CDP?**

Haya: I'm a person with a physical disability myself, as I was born with an upper limb amputation. I joined the humanitarian field six years ago, focusing on disability inclusion, because it's a topic that's close to my heart. Working in this field helped me confront my own challenging life circumstances. It helped me to accept my impairment and reframe it as a motivation to support other vulnerable people, especially others with disabilities.

In 2019, I had the opportunity to receive comprehensive training to become an Inclusion Advisor for the Career Development Programme. I jumped at the chance. From day one, I believed in this program because it gives people with disabilities the right skills to improve their employment capabilities and get themselves employed. This is an important and necessary service.

### **Why is employment-readiness important for people with disabilities?**

Haya: Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities talks about work and employment. It highlights how important it is to "promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment". That, in itself, speaks clearly to the importance of the CDP.

Employment-readiness is like the old proverb: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime". When we improve the employment skills of people with disabilities, we are helping them in accessing job opportunities and earning an income that will allow them to live independently and achieve their full potential in society.

### **What specific needs do people with disabilities have when it comes to employment-readiness and how does the CDP meet those needs?**

Haya: The CDP focuses on ensuring that people with disabilities are included in society and gaining meaningful employment. One of the ways we do this is through helping them improve skills such as successful networking, writing a captivating CV, and excelling at job interviews. These are specific skills which our programme participants are asking for help with and it's great to know that we are meeting their needs so head-on. While there are certainly difficulties with society not providing enough job opportunities for people with disabilities, it is also the responsibility of the person to improve their own skills and be employment-ready.

In addition, the CDP tackles the employment environment in which people with disabilities find themselves. Part of the programme's remit is to enhance employer and governmental awareness around the employment of people with disabilities. We promote people with disabilities as viable and desirable employees. We raise awareness to raise employment levels.

### **Please share with us one of your favourite Career Development Programme moments.**

Haya: Ahmad is a person with a disability who participated in the CDP last year. He is a wheelchair basketball player with a lower limb deficiency and has a real passion for sport. He needed some time off of his job at a butcher shop in order to participate in a national basketball tournament in Lebanon. His manager was inflexible with Ahmad's request for a few days off and fired him, leaving him without

a job and putting Ahmad in a difficult situation because his family depended on him for his job's income.

When Ahmad enrolled in the Career Development Programme, he was still struggling to find new employment. Thanks to the training and support of the CDP, I can happily say that Ahmad is now the proud owner of his very own bakery and is autonomous in supporting himself and his family through his new job. The CDP combines the experience and expertise of the Adecco Group Foundation with the reach and know-how of the ICRC to help people like Ahmad overcome obstacles to find meaningful employment. And I'm proud to be a part of it all!