

## REHAB NEEDS HIGH AFTER QUAKES ROCK SYRIA, TÜRKIYE

Two earthquakes of 7.8 and 7.5 magnitudes struck Türkiye and Syria on February 6. Powerful aftershocks continued to topple buildings and unsettle residents across a 250-mile radius in the following weeks.

The effects were devastating, claiming more than 52,800 lives and injuring more than 125,000 people.

Thousands of buildings, including schools, hospitals and homes collapsed to ruin. Millions of people lost everything.

With more than 330 staff already present in Syria, Humanity & Inclusion launched a multi-faceted emergency response.

"We are providing immediate rehabilitation care for hospitalized patients and long-term follow-up for patients with multiple or complex injuries," explains Myriam Abord-Hugon, HI's country director for Syria. "Rehabilitation is essential because it helps a person regain mobility and avoid complications and permanent disabilities."

HI specialists are working in hospitals and rehabilitation centers, along with mobile units targeting those who cannot access health services. HI provides assistive mobility devices such as crutches, wheelchairs and walkers for people with injuries or disabilities.

Another 50 mental health specialists are delivering psychological first aid. Mehdi Firouzi, who supervises the Syrian psychosocial teams, describes this as "the psychological equivalent of putting a blanket on someone and giving them a hot cup of tea."

Adding to the situation's complexity, Syria is entering its 13th year of war. Hundreds of thousands of explosives contaminate the country. Gary Toombs, HI's global land release technical operations manager, explains that "it is extremely likely that the quakes have moved many of the explosive ordnances that litter the buildings, streets and waterways."

HI hosts awareness sessions on the risks posed by explosive devices for local communities, displaced persons and rescue teams.

Thanks to generous donors, teams continue to support the healing process for people in Türkiye and Syria. The work will take years to complete.



Left: Rema, 13, recovers at a hospital in northwest Syria. Right: Personal belongings are shown in debris from a collapsed building in Türkiye.

## I SPENT 30 HOURS UNDER THE DEBRIS

### Rema survives building collapse, emergency operation

"We were asleep when we felt the first violent tremors," 13-year-old Rema recalls. "We were on the third floor. The higher up you are, the more you feel them. They were really strong."

On February 6, Rema was among millions of people in Syria and Türkiye who awoke to the first of two intense earthquakes and their aftershocks.

"I had almost reached the door when something fell on me," Rema explains. "I tried to lift it off, but I couldn't. Then there was an aftershock and the roof came down on top of me. I couldn't move anymore."

Rema's sister heard her cries, and her family came to clear the debris around her. "They started digging and there was a body just next to me. It was a child; he must have been about 10 years old. They



kept digging and cleared a space around me. I was in a lot of pain because of the stones on top of me, but clearing the debris brought some relief."

Rema spent 30 hours under rubble. Her right leg was crushed and she underwent an on-site amputation.

She was admitted to one of Humanity & Inclusion's 13 partner hospitals in northwest Syria. It's important, after an amputation, to begin rehabilitation sessions as soon as possible. Rema began working with Asma, a physical therapist.

Asma worked with a psychologist to gain Rema's trust and assess how she was coping with the life-changing event.

"We started with simple breathing techniques to help her deal with phantom pain," Asma explains. "Then I gave her exercises to develop her balance and strengthen her muscles. Our objective is to help Rema get around on crutches. That's the first step toward regaining autonomy."

Rema has shown courage and determination. "From the beginning I was optimistic," she says. "They told me they were going to fit me with an artificial limb and I would be able to live normally. That really boosted my morale."

Rema hopes to become a pediatrician so that one day she can in turn save the lives of children.

## Remembering Judith Heumann

HI mourns the passing of Judith Heumann, a beloved member of the U.S. Board. She died on March 4.

Judy was unflinching in her demands for equal rights for Americans with disabilities. She poured her advocacy expertise, lived experience, energy and compassion into extending those same rights to persons with disabilities in every country. Her legacy will continue to effect positive change across the world.

"Her international reputation as a vigorous, effective human rights advocate etches her in history," says Jeff Meer, U.S. Executive Director. "She was an extraordinary and visionary

leader who understood that no dream is impossible."

Judy mentored activists with disabilities and inspired generations to realize the rights she fought to secure.

"Judy dragged me kicking and screaming into the disability rights movement and I have loved her dearly ever since," says John Lancaster, a founding member of the U.S. Board. "She convinced me to become Executive Director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America."

As Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the U.S. Department of State, Judy worked to embed the tenets of the Americans

with Disabilities Act in the department and encouraged an inclusive approach to U.S. foreign policy.

Judy joined HI's U.S. Board in 2017, supporting efforts to respond to the essential needs of persons with disabilities and improve their lives.

"There is no doubt that Judy left her mark on HI," says U.S. Board President Nancy Kelly. "We'll miss her energy, persistence and humor. Judy worked hard to make HI itself more inclusive, insisting that the U.S. Board and the organization set high expectations for its global inclusion projects and advocacy."



Judith Heumann at the 2022 Harkin Summit in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

To learn more about Judy, you can visit her website [judithheumann.com](http://judithheumann.com), read her autobiography titled "Being Heumann," or watch the Oscar-nominated film, "Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution."

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# In Pakistan, inclusive response ongoing

Almost one year ago, catastrophic floods devastated Pakistan, leaving one-third of the country underwater and affecting more than 33 million people.

Ajab Khan, 77, describes a nightmare scenario: "Our belongings were washed away, our animals died, and our crops were ruined, forcing us to become homeless. In my entire life, I have never faced such difficult or tough circumstances as becoming a refugee in my own country."

Displaced individuals have begun to return home. Still, communities are struggling in the absence of shelter, food, hygiene, health, livelihood and income. There's an increasing reliance on negative coping strategies, like selling income-producing assets, increasing debt, withdrawing children from school and skipping meals. Women and children, aging individuals and people with disabilities face particularly difficult circumstances.

**Nutrition:** Most of the 14.6 million people in need of food support live in rural areas. Floodwater washed away livestock and crops, and heavy layers of poisonous sludge destroyed fields of



Ajab Khan, 77, meets with a Humanity & Inclusion staff member after the floods in Nowshera, Pakistan.

sugarcane and vegetation. Approximately 1.6 million malnourished children need life-saving assistance and nearly 80,000 children need urgent medical care.

**Health:** Public health concerns are high with reports of malaria and cholera, which could spread if residents cannot access safe water and sanitation.

**Education and Gender Disparity:** 3.5 million children, especially girls, are at high risk of dropping out of school. Prolonged education disruptions increase learning disparities. In flood-affected areas, 5.7

million women and girls are vulnerable to gender-based violence, compounding pre-existing inequality and lack of access to lifesaving services.

**HI's response:** HI's emergency actions prioritize people with disabilities, aging individuals, women-led households and their families. Initially, HI staff were unable to locate residential landmarks as the entire area had been swamped by floodwater.

After initial assessments, more than 1,500 families received food and basic goods. In addition to

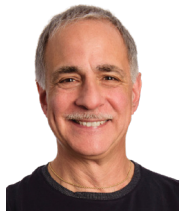
supplies, teams delivered psychosocial support to help individuals cope.

"To support us during this time, HI provided us with essential household items and a food package containing rice, sugar, lentils, ghee, flour and other foods," Khan explains.

"More than anything, we want to rebuild our homes and return to how life was before the flooding," Khan adds. "We will need support to make this happen."

HI's long-term inclusive disaster response will assist the people of Pakistan as they recover and rebuild.

## Note from the Executive Director



Should the United States send cluster munitions to Ukraine?

That might have seemed unimaginable less than two years ago, but is actively before the Biden Administration. It would require a Presidential waiver, since the weapons fail at such high rates, endangering civilians, and Congress has wisely placed a general prohibition on transfer.

Yet there are voices, including powerful members of Congress like Senators Jim Risch (Idaho) and Roger Wicker (Mississippi) and Congressmen Mike McCaul (Texas) and Mike Rogers (Alabama), urging President Biden to send them. This is a bad idea, and one that HI actively opposes.

Cluster munitions are banned by the Oslo Treaty, which 111 nations have joined—though not the United States, Russia or Ukraine. And we know these destructive, indiscriminate weapons bring with them immediate and long-term harm to civilians.

Take the Vietnam War, for instance, which ended 50 years ago this past January. According to one estimate, of the 270 million cluster munitions the US Air Force dropped on Laos between 1964 and 1973, 80 million did not explode on impact and have killed or injured around 20,000 civilians since the war ended. Five decades later, HI's deminers are still clearing weapons contamination there.

HI provides services in dozens of countries to those who must live in proximity to cluster munitions and other unexploded ordnance. Even if sending cluster bombs to Ukraine potentially yields a small tactical advantage in defending the country from Russia (a debatable question), the risk these weapons represent in the years to come is completely not worth it. Just remember Laos.

**Jeff Meer**  
U.S. Executive Director  
Twitter: @Jeff\_HIUS

# THEN & NOW

## EMILIE FROM CAMBODIA

**Emilie Pin Vath was six years old in 1982 when her family fled the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and headed to Thailand.**

"We passed some men running in the opposite direction," she recalls. "As they went by, one of them pushed me and I fell onto a landmine. There was a deafening bang. After that, all I remember is a black veil descending. Everything went dark."

**"When I woke up, I saw that my left foot was gone. It had been torn off in the mine explosion."**

Seeking treatment for her, the family carried Emilie on a stretcher through a forest for 15 days. "I had no medicine, no painkillers—nothing," she explains. "When we arrived at Khao I Dang camp, I saw many people with missing arms or legs, most of them children."

At the camp, doctors amputated her leg. Once she could get around on her crutches, Emilie went to investigate a noisy workshop. There, she met HI's founders, who were teaching locals how to construct artificial limbs from bamboo.

**Emilie is one of the very first people to ever receive an artificial leg from HI.** She remembers saying to herself, "At last, I can walk like everyone else!"

Today, Emilie is 48 and lives a life without limits in France. She hopes to return to Cambodia one day.



↑ **1982** ↓



↑ **2022** ↓





# LOSS - FEAR - HOPE

## Reflections after one year of war in Ukraine

With 238 staff on the ground in Ukraine and Moldova, Humanity & Inclusion's teams have reached thousands of displaced and injured Ukrainians since the war began in February 2022.

Our experts in basic needs, rehabilitation, armed violence reduction, mental health services, and logistics are working around the clock and alongside local partners to deliver inclusive care.

This work is possible thanks to HI's generous donors like you. Thanks so much!



**Lilia Tkachuk**  
Health Project  
Supervisor,  
HI Ukraine

February 24 was the same for every Ukrainian, and yet everyone has their own story to tell.

It was frightening. My husband worked in Kyiv as a construction worker. He called me early in the morning and said that the war had begun. It took him 12.5 hours to get home from Kyiv. He told me to take our children, pack the bags and wait for him. After that, we were watching news around the clock, everyone in the same room. Everyone was afraid. We were just waiting under a lot of stress.

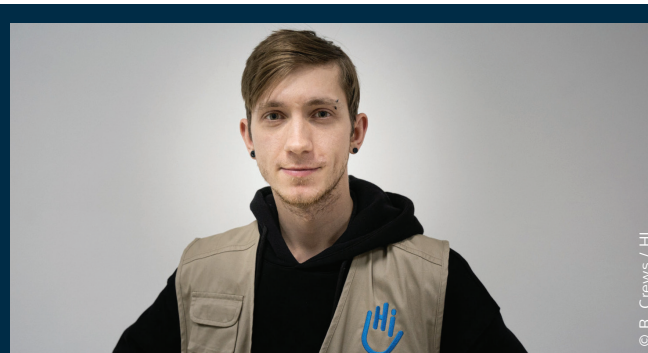
My husband wanted to get us abroad, but we didn't want to go. I have a mother and two children. We kept watching the news and my kids kept asking: "Mommy, mommy, do we really have to go?" My husband went to the east of Ukraine, and I stayed with my two children. He was wounded in Severodonetsk when he stepped on a mine. The explosion was very powerful and he was lucky to survive. His lungs were punctured and there are a lot of deep scars. Now, he has gone through a long rehabilitation process.

The most difficult thing for me in this war is uncertainty. When there is no connection with your husband, you don't know what happened to him or where he is. You don't know if his guardian angel is powerful enough to save the dearest person you have. It's a terrifying experience and a great source of pain.

The war has given us a different understanding of the value of family. You just have each other.

If I could speak to the global community, I would say that what's done is not enough. It's good that they're helping us, but we need to save lives and do anything possible to stop the bloodshed. It's one thing to have no gas in Europe, but it's quite different when children won't be able to see their parents anymore. You can't compare these things. The global community has to realize that there are real people here and anyone could one day be in a situation like this.

I think of these words from a Ukrainian poet: "How can you be so blind, oh, nations? Today's our turn, tomorrow—yours."



### Mykola, HI Ukraine

"I woke up at half past 5 to the sound of explosions. The explosions started on the outskirts of Mariupol, but they were loud and you could feel the ground vibrating and the windows shaking. It was very clear: the war had begun.

"I know a lot of people who were able to leave the city and survived somehow. At the same time, I know a lot of people who died. My friends, colleagues, people I grew up with, many of them are gone.

"I miss my home. I miss being near the sea. I want to see my relatives in person and hug them."

Mykola is an explosive ordnance risk education supervisor for HI Ukraine. By informing his fellow Ukrainians of the risks posed by explosive remnants of war, Mykola feels "we can protect our loved ones."



### Irina, 35

After armed fighting broke out in Odessa, Irina and her family made the difficult decision to leave Ukraine and started over in Moldova.

"Everyone is asking for some kind of material help—money or food—but they forget that each of us needs psychological support. At the end of the day, our mind is always with us.

"Thursday is my favorite day now because that's when we meet for a group session with HI's psychologist, Caroline. I've started to love myself and take time for myself.

"Like everyone, all I want is peace and to go home. But, if I have to stay here and build a new life, that will be okay, too."



### Tamara, 89

After a missile destroyed her home, Tamara is temporarily living at a collective center in Dnipro.

"I already survived one war during my childhood; I lived through the Second World War. I thought something like this would never happen again. And now I'm distressed all over again. I don't know how to carry on. Thanks to HI's psychologists, I have had someone to share this pain with, to cry with. I'm grateful to them for hearing me out and for their compassion."



### Nazar, Physical therapist

"Since the start of the war, our hospital in Kyiv started to admit both children and adults. There were a lot of people wounded, and I've treated a lot of patients with war-related injuries. The whole approach to rehabilitation is changing.

"We want to use our hospital to create a large-scale prosthetics and rehabilitation hub. HI has helped us to take the first big step by providing temporary artificial limbs and training medical staff on how to properly care for people with amputations."

## MICRO NEWS



### BENIN

Created by the Organization of Blind Women of Benin, the Girls' Club brings together girls and young women with visual disabilities. It provides a safe space to discuss topics including women's rights, leadership, menstruation and gender-based violence. HI is proud to support these activities.

### HAITI

With support from USAID, Humanity & Inclusion's teams in Haiti are responding to a massive cholera outbreak. Staff is providing logistics services to transport humanitarian supplies, support to local health facilities, and protection and psychosocial support for impacted communities.

### UKRAINE

In February, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and Humanity & Inclusion signed a memorandum of understanding to improve access to quality health services in the country. Viktor Liashko, Ukraine's Minister of Health called HI "one of our most trusted partners" in the rehabilitation sector.



# John Prine's family, fans fund inclusive earthquake response

In the middle of February, Humanity & Inclusion received news of a matching gift campaign launched by The Hello in There Foundation—named for the legendary singer-songwriter John Prine. The goal? To bolster HI's emergency response to the earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye.

"Our mission is to offer a 'Hello in There' to people in the smaller corners of our world, where needs may otherwise remain unmet, unheard, or unseen," says Fiona Prine, Founder & President of the Hello in There Foundation. "The Hello in There Foundation honors the life of my husband, John Prine, who passed away in 2020 from Covid-related complications. We want to honor his life and his songwriting legacy by continuing to offer others the same love, kindness and generosity he shared with us—his family—and the world."

The Foundation helps to keep Prine's



generous spirit alive, allowing his friends, colleagues, and his incredibly loyal fan base a way to fuel vital programs with a history of supporting women's empowerment, housing, disaster relief, immigrant and refugee populations, and more. The Foundation raises funds through individual donations, special events, and periodically does matching campaigns to bolster crisis funding.

"We were deeply inspired by the work

of Humanity & Inclusion in the wake of the terrible earthquake in Türkiye and Syria. Often, we know that the needs of the disability community are not prioritized in emergency response efforts. We are proud to support HI, and know that their hard work in the region will have a significant impact on the lives of people facing an enormous and difficult recovery. We are glad to be able to help."

The Hello in There Foundation's community came out strong, raising \$22,500 for the people impacted by the disaster.

These gifts will support people who need mobility aids, physical rehabilitation after complex and acute injuries, mental health and psychosocial support, and will absolutely support persons with disabilities.

We are so grateful for The Hello in There Foundation's generosity.

## Want to race the NYC Marathon?



We're looking for three more runners to join our marathon team. You'll fundraise \$4,000 to support HI's inclusive actions, then run 26.2 miles on November 5!

Interested? Let us know at [hi-us.org/nyc-marathon](https://hi-us.org/nyc-marathon)

# CHANGEMAKER SPOTLIGHT

## Couple gifts Apple stock to support emergency actions

When Dave and Val McClung first learned about the conflict in Ukraine, they felt deeply called to act. They researched organizations, looking for groups they could count on to assist and provide much-needed aid.

"We started to understand how Humanity & Inclusion was helping people in Ukraine and elsewhere, and have come to love their work supporting refugees, people with disabilities, and so many others in this region," Dave explains. "HI is a wonderful organization and does important work all over the world. The needs are still great in these areas."

Dave and Val took their support to a higher level by making a gift of stock at the end of 2022.

"At the end of the year, we always like to support local organizations in Central Oregon, as well as our alma maters," Dave continues. Giving a gift of stock to HI worked well for us. It's been a nice way to give back in a bigger, more impactful way.

"We listened to one of Humanity & Inclusion's webinars and appreciated learning more about HI's work. We also did research into the ways that HI stewards money. We were very pleased to learn that HI has high ratings and good processes. As a former finance guy, that kind of thing is important to me."

Dave and Val continue to bolster Humanity & Inclusion's programs. They recently supported efforts

to meet the acute needs of people injured by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

"When we think about what guides our support, we always look for organizations that help preserve the outdoors and the natural habitat," Dave notes. "In addition, we have also supported other humanitarian organizations, but haven't recently donated much outside of the U.S. Humanity & Inclusion's mission to work alongside people with disabilities and those who are going through hardships is really important, and we're glad we can support this work."

Dave grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia and graduated from Penn State. He majored in healthcare administration, which turned into a career in healthcare finance, and he worked in the field for more than 40 years. Val grew up in the south New Jersey suburbs of Philadelphia and has degrees from the University of Maryland and Old Dominion (Physical Therapy).

Dave and Val have lived all over the country, including New England, Denver, Chicago, Richmond, and New Jersey, and they have experienced a lot of great areas of the U.S., including many beautiful national parks. Dave and Val currently split their time between Bend, Oregon and Avalon, New Jersey, where they enjoy hiking, paddleboarding, golf, skiing, craft beer, and live music. They have three children and two grandkids, who love



coming to visit them. Dave also volunteers at a nature reserve in Bend, Oregon, and Val volunteers at a farm animal sanctuary in Sisters, Oregon.

We are so incredibly grateful for Dave and Val, and supporters like them, who make a profound difference in the lives of the people we serve.

## YOUR PLANNED GIFTS CAN TRANSFORM A FUTURE WE ALL SHARE

### Interested in gifting stock?

When you gift stock or securities that you've owned for more than one year and itemize, you can receive a charitable income tax deduction. And your generous gift will be used to support people with disabilities in times of peace, conflict and disaster in the 60 countries where we work.



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Questions? Email us at [DonorServices.USA@hi.org](mailto:DonorServices.USA@hi.org)

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And, if you'd like to join HI's First Responders giving community, simply choose to make your donation a monthly gift. It will be processed automatically for you. You can change or cancel your recurring gift at any time.



Scan to make your gift or visit [hi-us.org/donate](https://hi-us.org/donate)