



# THE Next Step

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## Supporting victims of Typhoon Haiyan

### NEWS

Filipina-American Jessica Cox, the world's first person born without arms to fly a plane, knows the villages between Tacloban, Philippines, and her mother's childhood home of Guiyan as pockets of paradise.

That changed on Nov. 8, when the world's most powerful storm, Typhoon Haiyan, barreled through the region, claiming more than 6,000 lives, destroying homes and crops, and pushing huge ships ashore.

In the storm's immediate aftermath, Handicap International teams were among the first to respond. Present in the country since 1985, staff were able to set up a logistics platform to distribute vital humanitarian aid and shelter kits and to identify the disabled.

As a Handicap International Goodwill Ambassador, Jessica was keen to help. On Dec. 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, she mobilized more than 1,000 Americans to write Messages of Hope to typhoon survivors. That same evening in Washington, D.C., she delivered these messages to the Philippines Ambassador to the U.S. during a Handicap International fundraiser for the Philippines.

In February, she and her husband Patrick Chamberlain went even further. They packed copies of these messages, and flew to the Philippines to spend a week with Handicap International's teams, which had been working every day of the week since November. Jessica followed our mobile teams, which travel village-to-village, tent-to-tent to seek out anyone who cannot otherwise reach aid. These teams deliver rehabilitation and mobility aids to the injured and disabled, as well as first aid and psychosocial support.

Among the people they met was Dante, an older man who had risked his own life during the storm to save two men, only to have his foot crushed by a collapsed wall. Handicap International paid to have a local surgeon operate on Dante's foot. Iris, a Handicap International physical therapist from California, continues to help him recover, with a goal to see him back to his job as a fisherman soon.

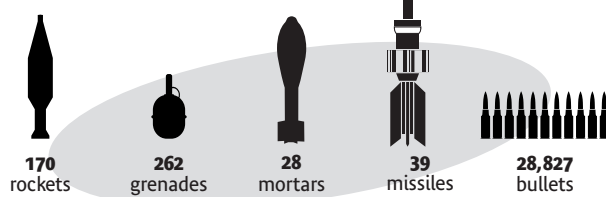
"I think of Iris as my sister... my everything," Dante told Jessica, holding his copy of the Messages of Hope. "Whenever I have a problem...she will help."

Your support provides shelter, care, and other assistance to thousands of the most vulnerable Filipinos affected by this disaster. About 100 Handicap International staff members, the vast majority Filipinos, are supporting victims of Typhoon Haiyan.



Jessica Cox stands between the hulls of cargo ships washed ashore in Tacloban by Typhoon Haiyan.

### Weapons clearance in Mali



# 29,326

EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR FOUND AND DESTROYED

by Handicap International's teams since the beginning of clearance operations of Mali through November 2013.

### Landmines update

The Landmine Monitor 2013 reported that Syria used antipersonnel landmines in 2012 and 2013, and Yemen used mines in 2011, the same year the country become a State Party to the treaty. Such violations tarnished the Monitor's good news—in 2012, it celebrated the lowest-ever number of new victims, and the highest level of funding for the fight against mines.

### South Sudan emergency

Since December 2013, 803,200 South Sudanese have been internally displaced and a further 270,000 have sought refuge abroad as a result of conflict. People have poured into displaced persons camps in the capital, Juba, where Handicap International teams work to identify highly vulnerable people, such as the injured, people with disabilities, and older people. Teams provide rehabilitation and mobility devices, and ensure that these highly vulnerable people can access aid.



Dante and Iris during a rehabilitation session.



# A fruitful harvest

Demining restores life and livelihoods in Lebanon

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

“Don’t forget our land.’ Those are the last words my father left me with before he died. I told him I would never forget,” says Mr. J. Aouad, speaking about the olive groves in Tulah, Batroun District, Lebanon, that had been in his family for generations.

“In 1979, it was taken from us. Landmines. In 1979, the Lebanese Civil War came to our land and a line was drawn across it. We were told to leave, and landmines were set. I remember as a boy my father crying as he looked at the olive groves becoming thick with weeds. He couldn’t even put one foot inside to stop it.”

In 2010, Handicap International began to clear mines in Batroun District. With their headquarters based on a windswept hilltop in Tulah, two teams of seven Handicap International deminers have cleared more than 170,000 square meters of land here since 2011.

Standing on a hilltop, Mohamed el Kaakour, the chief of operations for the demining program, surveys minefield No. 1268, a 25,000 square meter plot of terraced land— Aouad’s land. “We’ve finished 19,000 square meters so far but it’s difficult work,” Mohammed says. “The hillsides are steep and rocky so we can’t use any



J. Aouad holds an olive from his olive grove, which he was able to harvest in 2013 for the first time in decades.

machines; everything must be done by hand.”

Up the slopes from minefield No. 1268, Aouad walks among the olive trees on a piece of land that has already been returned to him. He touches the branches of the trees and finds a lone

olive still remaining despite the December cold. The rest have already been harvested and taken to market.

“I am so happy,” laughs Aouad. “The deminers have given us our land and saved our children from accidents and death.”



J. Aouad holds an olive from his olive grove, which he was able to harvest in 2013 for the first time in decades.

## Note from the Executive Director



As a valued friend of Handicap International, I hope you’ll enjoy our second issue of *The Next Step*.

Since I last wrote, Typhoon Haiyan’s destructive winds and waves put our teams to the test. As we watched the storm approach the Philippines, we deployed pre-positioned, emergency supplies in Dubai and London, and activated local and expatriate emergency teams to ensure that the Filipinos who needed our help would have it as soon as possible. Since then, these dedicated individuals have worked seven days a week, week after week, in tough physical and emotional conditions to deliver the aid that your support makes possible.

Your support has also reached the most vulnerable victims of the Syria crisis. Your gifts are bringing care and some peace of mind to Syrians who, in addition to fleeing their homes in devastating conditions, have lost more than 150,000 of their countrymen and women, and seen 500,000 others injured. You’re helping those who have lost limbs to stand tall again, and those who suffer from mental trauma to regain confidence.

For every Filipino kept dry under the shelter of a Handicap International tent, for every Syrian refugee taking his or her first tentative steps, and for the hundreds of thousands of other individuals growing stronger, your generosity is a gift beyond words.

Thank you for being part of this absolutely vital endeavor!

Beth MacNairn  
Executive Director

# Standing tall in Burundi



## THE BIG PICTURE

### Four months later →

Kévine and Anitha are back home in Tibikotu, a village close to the Congolese border. “Kévine can walk well in her shoes, but not as well as she can bare foot,” Anitha quips. “My neighbors said it was a waste to spend money on Kévine, that it was pointless. Now they say I did the right thing and that I was brave to visit the center.”



### ↑ June 2012

Kévine was born in Burundi with club foot. Her mother Anitha recalls feeling “ashamed and really angry” to have a child with a disability. Thanks to friends like you, Handicap International physical therapists arranged for her and her mother to travel to Gitega, where Kévine underwent corrective surgery. They then provided intensive physical therapy to Kévine.





Haya and her two children relax in their Irbid, Jordan, apartment.

# Defying a doctor's prognosis in Syria



## A mother's journey to recovery

### NEWS FROM THE FIELD

In November 2012, Haya and her children were riding in a taxi through the streets of Deraa, Syria when a stray bullet passed through the car, striking her in the back.

Doctors worked for hours to remove the bullet, and then to repair her spleen and kidney, but they could not remove the shrapnel in Haya's spine. When she woke from surgery, the doctors said she was suffering from irreversible paraplegia.

Not willing to accept the doctors' dire prognosis, Haya's husband decided to seek better medical care elsewhere. He evacuated the entire family to Jordan, now home to 613,000 Syrian refugees. There, Haya endured three more operations to remove the shrapnel.

Not long after, a Handicap International mobile team which seeks out vulnerable refugees, found Haya's family living in an apartment in Irbid. A physical therapist and social worker recognized that Haya would need support for months.

*Haya is slowly getting back to her normal, day-to-day life.*

At 30 years old, Haya is a young woman with a promising future. In Syria, she was finishing her studies to become a pediatric nurse. Surrounded by her lively children and devoted husband, she was fully focused on starting her career. Today her disability means starting again—almost from scratch.

The Handicap International team started with rehabilitation sessions to improve Haya's strength. Gradually, as her muscle tone improved, the team fit her for various mobility aids: a wheelchair, then crutches, and later a walking frame. Over the course of these rehabilitation sessions Haya learned to move from her bed into her wheelchair.

The physical therapist taught Haya the exercises she needs to do on her own. And the team taught Haya's husband how best to help and encourage Haya. The physical therapy

sessions are followed by discussions about understanding and accepting disability.

Haya is slowly getting back to her normal, day-to-day life. She can take care of her children again, help her seven-year-old daughter with homework, and cook for the family. As she grows more independent, her husband has started looking for work. He is more supportive than ever and extremely proud of her progress.

Indeed, Haya has made so much progress that she will soon graduate from Handicap International's care. "Independent, healthy, and strong enough to move around on her own—this is exactly the kind of personal success we strive for," says Elizabeth MacNairn, executive director of Handicap International U.S. "This is what our donors make possible."

## "I repair lives"

**Maha Qattam** helps injured Syrian refugees to walk



Choosing to work for Handicap International as a physical therapist is one of the best choices I have ever made. I have to commute two hours each way to work, but my job is worth it. Working in Irbid, Jordan, I primarily help injured Syrian refugees. Through rehabilitation, I give injured people the power to continue with their lives, even if they are facing new or very challenging situations.

Our beneficiaries have two wounds: physical and psychological. They are not only injured, they have also lost most everything else in their life. It's not easy to work in both areas, so when I treat beneficiaries I work with a team—a multidisciplinary and multicultural team including myself, a social worker, a psychosocial worker, and an occupational therapist.

The most touching part of my work is when I see a beneficiary start to walk again, start to be independent, or to show improvements. That is what gives me the motivation to come work every day. When I visit my patients, I start to earn their trust and we begin to have a special relationship. They learn to follow my instructions and work hard because they trust me. With this trust and motivation I have seen them move from lying on a bed to using a wheelchair, and from use a wheelchair to walking.

They change from being a fully dependent person to someone who is semi- or fully independent. I feel like I have lived up to Handicap International's motto of "repairing lives." At the same time, they repair my life by showing me their improvements. It is as though they give me a light of hope I can pass on to the next person.

## Background

### Crisis

Three years after the start of the war, there are no signs of a rapid resolution to the conflict nor an end to the fighting. More than 2.6 million people have fled to neighboring countries, with Jordan and Lebanon receiving the majority of refugees. More than 6.5 million people are internally displaced inside Syria.

### Mandate

Handicap International's activities are In June 2012, Handicap International deployed emergency teams to Lebanon and Jordan, and began work inside Syria in January 2013. More than 450 staff members are now working with the most vulnerable people, helping the injured and disabled at health centers and through mobile teams working in refugee camps, makeshift camps, and in the community.

### Beneficiaries

Since the start of the crisis and the beginning of Handicap International's intervention, more than 180,000 people have benefited from Handicap International actions.

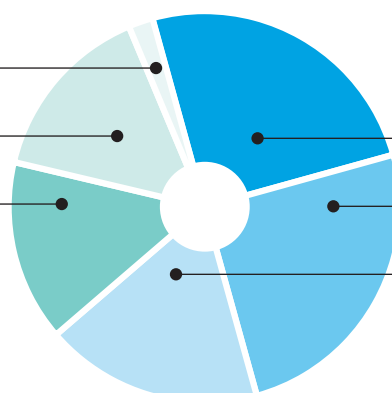
### CAUSES OF INJURIES AMONG REFUGEES IN JORDAN AND LEBANON

A joint 2013 survey of Syrian refugees by Handicap International and HelpAge International revealed that 5.7% of refugees had a significant injury, 80.3% of which were direct consequences of the Syrian conflict.

2% Torture

15% Other

15% Shrapnel



25% Life accident\*

25% Bombing

18% Gunshot

\* eg burns or falls



# Rwanda: Support for genocide widows

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

“The name of our group is ‘Heart of the Home’ because we want to be seen as wives and mothers again,” says Consolée, who runs a women’s support group. Present in Rwanda since 1994, Handicap International organizes support groups for survivors of the Rwandan genocide and other victims of violence and abuse.

Consolée is a genocide widow and rape survivor. Her face was mutilated when she was tortured, leaving her partially blind. But as soon as she starts talking, it’s clear she is not afraid to express herself.

Her group weaves baskets. “The first baskets we made were really awful,” says Consolée with a smile. “But we’re improving them and, thanks to the equipment supplied to us by Handicap International, we’ve been able to sell our products.”

What makes the biggest difference in the women’s lives, however, is the mental health counseling provided by



“Heart of Home” women’s group members share their lives’ joys and sorrows together

Handicap International. Therapeutic sessions are held in small groups or individually, depending on the member’s needs.

“The sessions have already helped lots of women to regain their self-confidence and enjoy their lives again,” says Consolée.

Handicap International first began working in Rwanda after the genocide with a mission to distribute food aid

and provide rehabilitation. The first mental health project began in 1996, providing psychosocial support to children who had lost their parents. The project has been running ever since, and has expanded significantly. With your support, 7,200 people received psychosocial support in the past year.

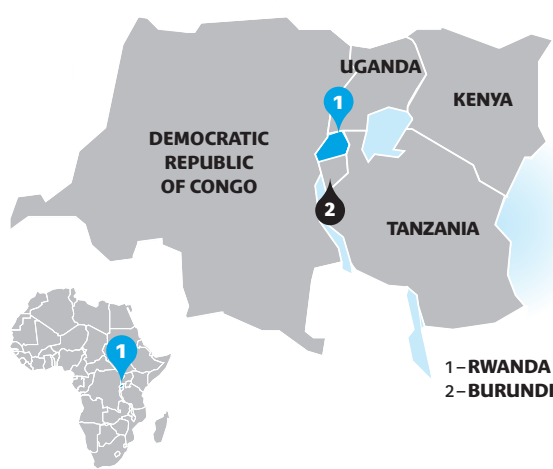
## Breaking the cycle

Psychologist **Augustin Nziguheba** speaks on overcoming trauma

“The need for mental health support in Rwanda is still overwhelming. Mental health problems can lead to isolation, the inability to earn an income, further violence, and other negative behavior. Our role is to break this cycle. The lack of communication about how one is feeling is a major issue. In Rwanda we speak very little about the past and even about problems we might be facing right now.

That is simply too much for anyone to cope with. Thanks to the our protection rules which all the participants in our discussion groups must abide by, victims find the courage to speak out, often for the very first time. Gradually, a feeling of mutual trust develops. The results of this process are often astonishing. I have met beneficiaries who have told me: “I have been able to speak to the people who killed my family.”

## HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT



**30**

district hospitals now offer mental health services.



Hospitals are supervised to ensure quality services.



Mental health professionals are benefiting from trainings

### THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

is a key partner for the prevention and awareness..

## Create your own humanitarian legacy

Please consider perpetuating your commitment to creating a landmine-free world and helping people with disabilities meet their full potential by including a gift to Handicap International USA in your will or estate plan. Called a charitable bequest, this type of gift offers benefits both to you and Handicap International:

**Simplicity:** Just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed to create a lasting legacy.

**Versatility:** You can structure the bequest to leave a specific item or amount of money, make the gift contingent on certain events, or leave a percentage of your estate to us.

**Tax Relief:** If your estate is subject to estate tax, your gift is entitled to an estate tax charitable deduction for the gift’s full value.

For more information about creating a humanitarian legacy, please call (301) 891-2138.



Moise takes his first steps with his new prosthetic at a Handicap International workshop in Haiti