

ACTIVITY HANDOUT: CASE STUDIES – A

[MODULE 1: Understanding Disability and Inclusion]

As you read each case study:

- Underline any contextual factors that could *negatively* impact the infant's life
- Circle any contextual factors that could *positively* impact the infant's life

Then, discuss the following questions:

- What is the context in which each infant lives?
- How might this context impact their experiences of disability and participation in everyday life, in a positive or negative way?

Case Scenario 1

Maya is a 5-month-old infant with Down syndrome living in a rural village in northern Lebanon. Her father works as a farmer and her mother stays at home with her. Maya has low muscle tone, which makes breastfeeding difficult.

Maya's diagnosis of Down syndrome came as a shock to her parents, who had limited awareness of Down syndrome and were initially uncertain about how to care for her. Access to specialized services in their area is limited and traveling to the nearest specialist requires significant time and cost. A local primary healthcare center connected them with a community health worker who provided basic guidance on feeding and early stimulation.

Recently, Maya's mother joined a parent support group organized by a local NGO working with families of children with disabilities. Maya's grandmother, who lives nearby, is now actively involved in her care. She loves making Maya handmade toys.

While Maya does not have access to specialized services, her family is committed to making sure she has opportunities to progress in her development.

Case Scenario 2

Rami is a 5-month-old infant with Down syndrome living with his family in a densely-populated, low-income neighborhood on the outskirts of Beirut. His parents moved there with their two other young children in search of better opportunities but struggle to find stable jobs.

Rami has low muscle tone and has struggled with breastfeeding since birth. His father is often away from home for long hours looking for work, leaving Rami's mother without much support. She often places Rami in a playpen for long periods while attending to the needs of her two other young children.

His mother feels overwhelmed by his diagnosis and isolated saying that she often feels judged by her neighbors. Rami's parents are unsure of where to turn for help and rely on sporadic advice from overburdened community health workers who tell them that they have little experience working with infants with Down syndrome.

Despite these challenges, Rami's parents are trying to do their best for him. They are open to connecting with support networks if given the opportunity.