Waseela eagerly goes every day to open her new office of public services in the neighborhood to serve her community in the village of Teqou in the Bethlehem district. Her services include certifying passports, IDs, permits and other official documents. It’s a new sustainable project linked with the Palestinian local authorities, which started just three months ago under the management of Waseela, a woman with physical disability, through the facilitation of BASR’s CBR team.

Waseela lost her parents when she was a baby and lost her legs too by falling off a door sill in the same period, forcing her to live in an orphanage until she became 15 years old. “My childhood was so harsh; and because of my disability, I couldn’t finish high school, especially
that there were no inclusive public schools all over Palestine at that time. Besides, I had to bare all the negative attitudes of the local community in my village”, said Waseela.

However, with firm belief and strength, she stood up for herself and sought self-education. Later on, she enrolled in a two year training program and got a diploma in business administration at a skills training institute in Bethlehem city. “I believed that failure is not an option; and I had to go beyond my fears of people’s negative attitudes which held me back during my childhood, but when I became a young lady, I decided to triumph over it”, said Waseela.

Few years later, Waseela joined Teqou self-help group supported by BASR’s CBR Program, where she participated in BASR’s regular capacity building and training program targeting persons with disabilities. She was one of the leading figures of that self-help group. “I finally found a disability specialists organisation, which met my rehabilitative needs and provided me with elbow crutches that enhanced my independence and mobility and developed my professional skills to become a successful entrepreneur able to manage such a project. It is never too late in life”, expressed Waseela.

Waseela is a widow with four children, 3 young women and one young man. She is not responsible only for herself and her family, but she also sets group sessions with her neighbors with disabilities to provide them with peer support, hope and self-esteem. Waseela commented “I always say to the other women, don’t let despair sneak into your hearts; you have to be patient and persevere to find the right opportunity”.