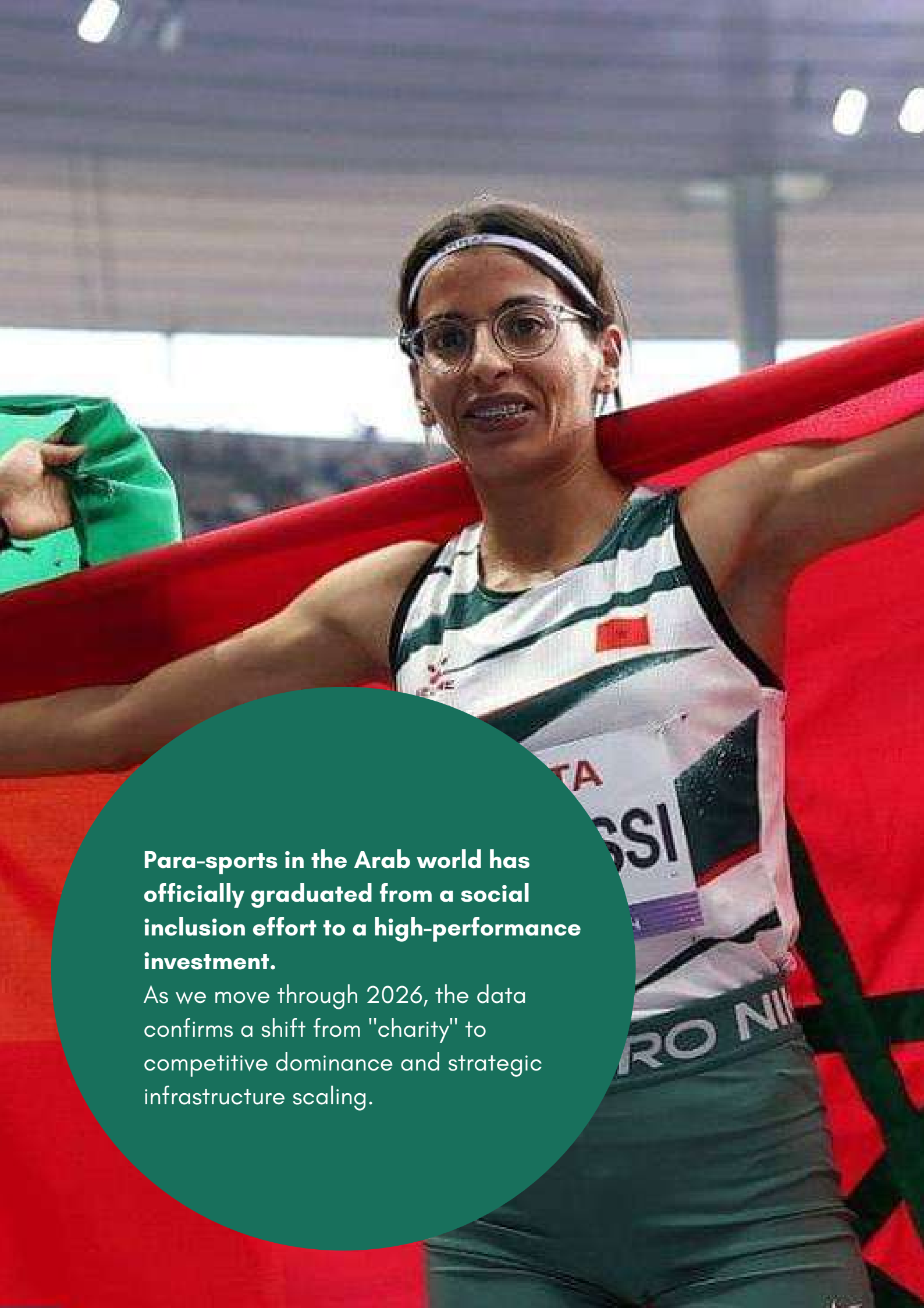


PARALYMPIC SPORTS IN



CHAMPIONS WHO KNOW NO IMPOSSIBLE



Para-sports in the Arab world has officially graduated from a social inclusion effort to a high-performance investment.

As we move through 2026, the data confirms a shift from "charity" to competitive dominance and strategic infrastructure scaling.

THE INVESTMENT PLAYBOOK:

Governments are moving with a "pro-sports" mindset, treating adaptive sports as a key pillar of national soft power:

Saudi Arabia: Allocated \$453 million (SAR 1.7B) for the 2024-2025 club strategy, prioritizing governance and specialized training centers.

Egypt: Effectively scaling grassroots participation, with 4,595 teams and a 14.9% growth in sport-specific organizations since 2023.

UAE: Committing \$11 million via the Mohamed Bin Zayed Foundation for global inclusive education in 2025.

Libya: Launched its 2026-2030 National Plan, setting a structured roadmap for professionalization.



GLOBAL PERFORMANCE METRICS: PARIS 2024

The Arab region's 55+ medal haul in Paris underscores a consistent elite-tier trajectory.

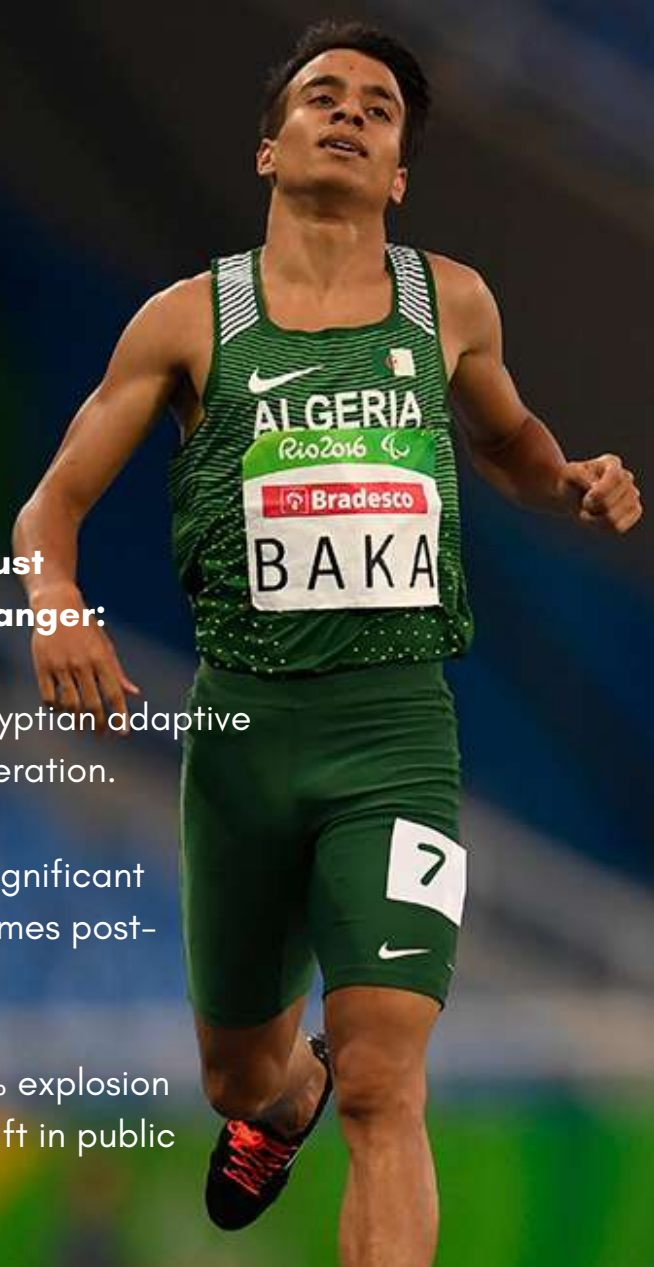
Country	Key Achievement	Global Context
ALGERIA	6 Gold Medals	Ranked 25th globally
TUNISIA	5 Gold Medals	Top 10 performance
MORROCCO	2:48:36 World Record Marathon (T12)	15 total medals
SAUDI ARABIA	100m T53 Gold	Ended 16-year gold drought

THE HUMAN IMPACT

MORE THAN TROPHIES

The data proves that physical activity isn't just about medals; it's a mental health game-changer:

- Social Connectivity: 84% of participants in Egyptian adaptive sports reported significant gains in social cooperation.
- Quality of Life: Meta-analyses show a major significant improvement ($p < 0.001$) in mental health outcomes post-participation.
- Digital Reach: The 2024 games saw a 2,625% explosion in YouTube engagement, signaling a massive shift in public perception.



THE HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF PRACTICING PARALYMPIC SPORTS IN THE ARAB WORLD AND THE MIDDLE EAST:

Recent studies in the Middle East indicate that Paralympic sports are no longer just a physical activity, but have become an effective tool for improving both mental and physical health and enhancing quality of life. In countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, research has shown that participation in sports helps people with disabilities develop a greater sense of independence, reduce stress and depression levels, and boost self-confidence.

Data shows that nearly half of participants in disability sports programs reported a clear improvement in their mental health and sense of social inclusion. Sports participation is also directly linked to improved physical fitness and reduced health risks associated with inactivity. This makes it a key element in inclusion policies across many countries in the region, as around 45% of participants reported improved mental health, leading to a noticeable improvement in quality of life and independence among athletes.

THE ROLE OF MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN SPREADING PARALYMPIC SPORTS IN THE ARAB WORLD AND THE MIDDLE EAST:

Sports media in the Middle East has witnessed major development in recent years, especially with the rise of social media as a primary platform for sports content. Despite this progress, Paralympic sports still suffer from a clear coverage gap compared to mainstream sports. However, this is gradually changing with the increasing global attention to the Paralympics.

Reports show that digital transformation in the region has significantly increased engagement with sports content, as Paralympic athletes' human stories have gained wide reach on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, helping to gradually change public perception. However, official media coverage remains limited and is mostly focused on major tournaments, creating a significant opportunity for growth in this field. Sports industry growth in the Middle East is estimated at 8.7% annually, which is expected to further increase digital engagement with sports content in the coming years.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND GROWTH OF THE SPORTS MARKET IN THE ARAB WORLD AND THE MIDDLE EAST:

The sports sector in the Middle East is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, opening major opportunities for developing Paralympic sports. Investment in sports infrastructure and major events has become part of development strategies in many countries, especially in the Gulf region.

Forecasts suggest that the sports sector in the region is growing above the global average, driven by major investments in sports facilities, hosting international events, and expanding digital sports media. This growth creates a fertile environment for increasing interest in Paralympic sports in terms of participation, sponsorship, and media coverage.

STATISTICS:

Sports sector growth in the Middle East reaches 8.7% annually.

Investments exceed \$65 billion in sports development and infrastructure.

SUCCESS STORIES AS A MODEL OF INSPIRATION IN THE ARAB WORLD AND THE MIDDLE EAST:

Success stories play a key role in raising awareness of Paralympic sports in the Arab world, becoming a real source of inspiration and an effective tool for changing perceptions of disability.

Egypt is considered one of the strongest Arab countries in Paralympic sports, with its athletes achieving major accomplishments in the Paralympic Games, especially in weightlifting and athletics. Egyptian athletes have won dozens of medals throughout their history, making Egypt a regional Paralympic powerhouse.

Saudi Arabia has also witnessed significant development in supporting athletes with disabilities, with several athletes achieving continental and international success, particularly in athletics and weightlifting, supported by official programs aimed at developing Paralympic sports.



INFLUENTIAL PARALYMPIC ATHLETE EXAMPLES IN THE REGION:

1. Sherif Osman Egypt – Weightlifting

A living legend in Paralympic weightlifting. He won 3 consecutive gold medals at the Paralympic Games (Beijing 2008, London 2012, Rio 2016). He lifted weights exceeding 200-211 kg, nearly four times his body weight in the 54kg and 59kg categories, breaking world records multiple times.



2. Fatima Abdul Razzaq Bahrain – Athletics

A 54-year-old Paralympic athlete specializing in shot put. She won gold for Bahrain at Rio 2016 with a throw of 4.76 meters, becoming an inspiring model for Arab women in sports.



3. MAhmedeshaima Bahrain – Athletics

An athlete competing since 2001 in discus and javelin. One of his notable achievements includes a bronze medal at Sydney 2000 in discus throw, maintaining long-term consistency in competition.



INFLUENTIAL PARALYMPIC ATHLETE EXAMPLES IN THE REGION:

4. Abdel Latif Baka Algeria – Athletics

A middle-distance runner (T13 visual impairment). He won gold in the 1500m at Rio 2016 with a time of 3:48.29, faster than the Olympic gold medal time in the same race for able-bodied athletes (3:50.00). He and other Paralympians were faster than the Olympic champion that night.



5. Raoua Tlili Tunisia – Shot put and discus

A Tunisian legend with 7 Paralympic gold medals across five consecutive Games (Beijing 2008 to Paris 2024). At age 34 in Paris, she won gold with a throw of 10.40m, outperforming younger competitors.



6. Mohamed Khamis Khalaf UAE – Weightlifting

The first Emirati to win a Paralympic gold medal (Athens 2004) and repeated the achievement in Rio 2016. At age 50, he still lifted 220 kg in world competitions.



INFLUENTIAL PARALYMPIC ATHLETE EXAMPLES IN THE REGION:

7. Ahmad Hindi Jordan – Shot put

Gold medalist at Tokyo 2020 and silver at Paris 2024. He also broke the world record with a throw of 12.07m at the 2018 Asian Para Games.



8. Amin Chentouf Morocco – Marathon

One of the greatest Paralympic marathon runners (T12 category). World record holder with 2:21:23 hours, winning gold in London 2012, Rio 2016, and Tokyo 2020.



9. Jarrar Nassar Iraq – Shot put

First Iraqi Paralympic gold medalist (Rio 2016), breaking the world record with 10.76m, and winning silver in Tokyo 2020.



INFLUENTIAL PARALYMPIC ATHLETE EXAMPLES IN THE REGION:

10. Ahmad Al-Mutairi Kuwait – Wheelchair racing

Gold medalist in 100m (Rio 2016) and silver (Tokyo 2020). He broke the Paralympic record with 16.61 seconds.



11. Najat Idrissi Morocco – Marathon

Won gold at Paris 2024, breaking the world record with a time of 2:54:35, becoming the first Arab woman to win marathon gold in this category.

