



**THE EAST JERUSALEM
REHABILITATION PROGRAM**

ANNUAL REPORT

2014

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In the midst of the year 2014, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program completed its twenty fifth year of working, giving and responding to the different needs of our Palestinian society in general and of the most needy groups in particular.

Our silver jubilee calls upon us to remember the very early beginnings of the Rehabilitation Program which constituted of a group of Palestinian specialists who responded to the needs of rehabilitating the injured of the first Palestinian Intifada, wherein we were distinguished of operating to respond to the psychosocial needs of the injured, the survivors of the Israeli occupation's bullets and torture in the horrible investigation cellars, in addition to persons who developed permanent physical disabilities and lost the ability to live life normally.

Our work began in a humble centre at the branch of the East Jerusalem YMCA in Beit-Sahour which has currently become a national Program with its eleven offices and teams that cover all the districts of the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and the idea of the Program came at a time when talking about psychological intervention and counseling was labeled with some shame to become today a fundamental title in the rehabilitation process and a genuine component in the social reintegration.

We are very proud that our Program began Palestinian and that it developed maintaining its being based on the local professional experiences along its broad openness to the global experiences, to become a title in counseling and training at the local, national and international levels, wherein it rendered its services and benefited organizations that serve numerous nations in our Globe and developed the capacities of several organizations in El-Salvador, Colombia, Peru, Indonesia, SriLanka, Philippines, Chechnya, Kosovo, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria and has become a member in national, regional, and international networks.

The space here doesn't allow mentioning all the successes of the Program. Nevertheless, I would say that - despite the big difficulties we have undergone- yet, serving tens of thousands of beneficiaries did not change our spirit and did not deviate our direction. We maintained our professional identity as a Program to rehabilitate the survivors of political violence from one hand, and as a provider of holistic rehabilitative services for persons with physical disability from the other hand.

We maintained the continuation of responding to emergencies; we were and still are a title of emergency intervention and a national reference in this sphere.

During the year 2014, we planned to celebrate our silver jubilee. However, we then preferred to respond to the call of our people who suffered in Gaza and participate in responding to the needs of Gaza strip upon the latest war against it. That was our celebration; to ensure that the spirit of response to emergencies did not die, and that we will not be transferred to a quantitative addition to what exists; we will rather remain a title to renewal and qualitative response to the needs of our people holding the logo of " Restoring Hope" to be as God wants from us; "to act justly, to love mercy and walk humbly with our God."

Last but not least, we cannot but express our sincere thanks and deep gratitude to our dedicated and loyal staff who do not hesitate to exert every effort possible to lead our Program through the path of success, and of course, we cannot forget our supporting donors, partners and friends; it is through their non-stopping care, interest and support that we can go on to fulfill our human mission in which we as well as they believe.

Thank you.



Director
Nader Abu Amsha

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OBJECTIVE 1: INCREASE THE BENEFICIARIES' ACCESS TO PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Living in a country where stability has been an unreachable dream for over than 60 years, we have undergone continuous states of conflicts and numerous situations of emergency. As a result, our teams have accumulated quite a long and rich experience that enables them to intervene with cases during emergencies, particularly with people who were injured, traumatized and persons with disability who have become even more marginalized.

Such an experience leaves us- on a continuous basis- in front of a big responsibility to face the non-stopping situations of emergencies in our country, and puts on our shoulders the burden of being always ready to face such circumstances.

This was what actually happened at the beginning of June of this instant year in the aftermath of the latest political incidents and the escalation of settlers' violence in the West Bank.

Despite the difficulties and impediments which resulted of these incidents, particularly the attacks of the settlers on Palestinian civilians as well as the closures of roads and the flying checkpoints, yet, our teams were able to confront the challenges and reach people who need urgent interventions. Furthermore, and despite the dramatic deterioration in the psychological status of people and their feelings of depression and hopelessness, we managed to continue and restore hope.

Alongside our urgent interventions, we continued our work with our beneficiaries to meet their needs and achieve the set-forth goals with them using the holistic approach which distinguished our work all throughout 25 years which registered a positive impact on their psychological status, thereby helping them to reach a stage where they could go on with their life.

Through the holistic approach in rehabilitation, we have worked on the difficult psychological situations of our beneficiaries who suffer of numerous symptoms such as inability to control oneself, isolation, inability to sleep, nightmares, avoidance, and intrusions, amongst other symptoms. This is besides working with the family to support its members. This synchronized with working with the community to raise awareness and develop better understanding for the beneficiaries as well as reintegration into school or vocational rehabilitation depending on the case, reaching ultimately to allocating a future plan and restoring hope.

In fact, children constituted 55% of our beneficiaries during the year in question, and amongst the most significant accomplishments we have achieved with them was their reintegration process into schools and helping them overcome the difficulties they face at the psychosocial, family, environmental, and awareness levels by means of providing them with intensive services including counseling, awareness-raising activities, assistive aids, academic rehabilitation and adapting their residences and schools to be accessible for their situations. This reporting period was also distinguished of the diversity of the cases we worked with.

As for the geographical distribution, 70% of our beneficiaries were from the villages of the West Bank as well as the remote and marginalized area wherein the need for our services and assistance was utmost.

It is worth to be mentioned, herein, that reaching some of these areas constituted a real challenge for our staff who overcame all the impediments and managed to meet the needs of the needy people there while having no other choice but to use primitive and sometimes unsafe transportation means, or sometimes through coordinating with some organizations who have suitable vehicles to reach these areas such as UNRWA and OCHA.

The first half of the year has as well witnessed a real challenge in intervening with the beneficiaries in Jerusalem area. This is due to the fact that East Jerusalem is exposed-on a continuous basis-to attacks by the settlers, Israeli defense forces, and the Israeli police. In the same context, children in East Jerusalem are mainly targeted either through detention or compulsory home imprisonment and financial fine.

The majority of our beneficiaries who are between 12 and 16 years of age and who live in East Jerusalem have been exposed to political violence either through being subject to detention or compulsory home imprisonment. Through our intervention, we have noticed that the impact of such imprisonment has left a negative impact on the psychological status of children which is not less than the impact of detention in the Israeli prisons. From one hand, the parents who become responsible of making sure that their children do not leave the house are perceived as the prisoners and hence their relationship with their son deteriorates. From the other hand, the parents who become financially exhausted due to paying the financial fine blame their son, thereby adding more gaps between both parties.

Moreover, such a type of imprisonment is considered one of the main reasons which lead to leaving school and completely withdraw academic life.

During the war on Gaza, which has left a dramatical impact on the Palestinian society as a whole, our efforts have multiplied wherein the need was utmost to intervene and extend our help not only to the Gazians who were injured and transferred to the hospitals of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, but also with survivors of the war who were either severely injured or/and developed permanent disabilities.

In the same context, and during the second half of the year 2014, our intervention was focused on traumatized Palestinians who were negatively affected by the brutality of the war on Gaza. During that period, emergency plans were allocated for intervention, numerous meetings and visits were held, and agreements were signed with different hospitals to work with the injured of the war on Gaza at the psychological level.

The incidents which these cases underwent were extremely tough, and the traumas were severe to the extent that our counselors needed ventilation sessions upon working with these cases. Nevertheless, we have used special protocols of crisis intervention which –from one hand- supported the cases we have worked with, and from another hand, helped them not to reach the stage of collapsing.

This was mainly the responsibility of our supervisors and key counselors who have the long, sufficient and needed experience to work with such difficult and complicated cases.

A very positive feedback was registered by the cases, their family members who were accompanying them, as well as the doctors, nurses, and social workers of the hospitals. As

they expressed, the impact of intervening with them, helped these survivors of political violence to lessen their suffering, thereby positively affecting the treatment process-and results.

In terms of rendering support to the services-providers in Gaza, we only managed to get permission for one of our staff – Hebron team supervisor – who spent about two weeks in Gaza. Simultaneously, we have worked intensively with individuals and families particularly those who were displaced from their houses and those whose houses were invaded by the settlers and/or demolished.

One of the families we have worked with were exposed to fire-shooting while being at home. Besides, part of their house was demolished. Counseling sessions were held for the father, mother and three children in the purpose of lessening the severity of the negative feelings especially fear.

The oldest daughter said:

“I am strong now, and I can deal with this incident. I can feel secure and stable again, and I love life.”

The youngest daughter said:

“Before working with me, I was very afraid. I couldn’t go to the toilet alone. Now, I’m not afraid and I love our house.”

The life of many of our beneficiaries has changed to the better. Upon intervening with them, not only their approaches towards life altered, but also, they adjusted to their situation and reality and upon getting rid of the symptoms which accompanied their traumas, they developed a new positive future vision.

Upon intervening with a 21-year beneficiary- who suffers of a disability because of losing his left leg- at the counseling level, he said:

“I’m now adjusted to my health situation and I have become optimistic. I’m also sociable; I like to make friends and take part in occasions. I want to have a role in my society.”

Another young man who suffers of paraplegia in the aftermath of an injury has become capable of interacting with others after restoring hope in his life. He said:

“I feel myself just like others and I accept myself. I have hope in life and I’m comfortable. I feel that I can overcome my difficulties. I used to be shy when dealing with people. But now, I am not shy anymore; I can deal with people.”

There’s no doubt that counseling contributes to building the self-confidence of our beneficiaries, thereby getting them out of the social isolation in which they used to live and giving them the opportunity to see hope in their future.

An example is a young woman with disability who said:

“I have become comfortable and I know how to deal with myself. I’m not ashamed of myself anymore. I can express myself and I accept myself. I now know how to deal with people and I have many relationships with people. I go out and I have future goals.”

Expressing the ability to see the future was obvious in the words of a 17-year girl:

“I now know what I want, and I want to plan my life and improve myself.”

What ought to be pointed out is that the holistic services we provided played a very significant role in serving our beneficiaries and leading them to the stage of stability.

An example of our services in this sphere is an eight-year old young girl with whom we have worked at different levels including supporting her at school, adapting her house and contributing to the costs of her physiotherapy sessions.

Her father expressed his gratitude for the Rehabilitation Program saying that it is the only organization which showed such a concern.

He also added that the follow up was positively reflected on the life of his daughter leading her to feel her self-importance, to become self-dependent in meeting her needs, and to go out of home without the need of her family members.

Over the year 2014, 11688 individual counseling sessions were provided for our beneficiaries all over the districts of the West Bank, and a total of 925 beneficiaries both females and males from the entire West Bank were served according to the following distribution:

Area	Gender		Age Group				Location		
	Male	Female	0-11	12-18	19-25	< 26	Town	Village	Camp
Hebron	191	33	22	113	66	23	68	106	50
Ramallah	155	28	8	91	60	24	21	153	9
Jenin and Tubas	56	20	6	23	30	17	12	57	7
Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jericho	111	17	8	77	27	16	26	92	10
Tulkarem and Qualqilia	101	23	7	53	44	20	27	90	7
Nablus and Salfet	155	35	20	78	67	25	25	149	16
Total	769	156	71	435	294	125	179	647	99
Percentage	83%	17%	8%	47%	32%	14%	19%	70%	11%

It is worth mentioning that 70% of our beneficiaries were villagers and 79% were between 12 and 25 years of old.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Over the year 2014, the service of vocational rehabilitation was provided to the needy beneficiaries of the Program including persons with disability as well as ex-detainees children and youth who- upon being released from Israeli prisons- came out different, unstable, frustrated and hopeless persons who are in need of help to allocate new plans for their future.

During the year 2014, we have participated in the Higher Committee of Vocational Counseling and Direction in Palestine wherein we efficiently took part in all its meetings in the belief that this role will contribute to develop and unify the concepts and procedures of the vocational work in Palestine.

What distinguished the service of vocational assessment for this year as well is the noticeable increase in the number of beneficiaries who benefited of the vital service of the mobile unit in the field. 269 out of 439 beneficiaries were assessed either at their houses or in the offices of the Program all over the districts of the West Bank.

As a result of receiving career counseling, 1012 beneficiaries were assisted to set a vocational goal through bridging any possible gap amongst their abilities, interests and the job market in the local community. This was followed by cooperation and coordination with different local vocational training centers, organizations, workshops and factories in the purpose of helping these beneficiaries find suitable vocational training opportunities, thereby enabling them to obtain the needed skills and be prepared to join the job market.

This reporting period has witnessed the facilitation of vocational training for 368 beneficiaries and the employment of 185 beneficiaries, thereby constituting a turning point in their lives and leading them to live independent and decent life.

In the same context, 19 self-employment projects were carried out for the beneficiaries, thereby contributing to enhancing their self-confidence and self-esteem and enabling them to become self-dependent, productive individuals who can earn their living and live a stable life after being exposed to different types of suffering as a result of disability, detention or/and being exposed to different forms of political violence.

The following table illustrates the self-employment projects carried out for the beneficiaries over the reporting period:

Type of self-employment projects	Number of projects
Developing a grocery	4
Sewing machine	2
Kiosk	1
Aviculture	1
Raising sheep	2
Developing a kiosk	1
Sponge shredder	1
Grocery	1
Handcrafts shop	1
Play station shop for children	1
Cars washer	1
House and glass cleaning utensils	1
Hot drinks mobile cart	1
Stationary shop	1
Total	19

Academic Rehabilitation

There's no doubt that the difficult economical and the dangerous political situation which Palestinians in the West Bank have undergone over the last period negatively affected students with disability to access their schools. In fact, the threats at the roads and the difficulty of walking to reach schools constitute a real impediment in front of them to continue their studies.

There's no doubt that the imperative service of academic rehabilitation has apparently contributed to supporting students with disability and enhancing their commitment, thereby improving their academic achievement and raising their self-confidence. Reintegrating them into school life and with their colleagues was the result that crowned this process.

A 15-years old student with disability said:

“My health situation is so difficult, and my parents’ financial situation is not good. My disability used to prohibit me from accessing school, and when I used to go, I felt very tired. However, contributing to the transportation costs helped me to access school safely. Thanks God, my academic achievement has become excellent.”

Another 14-years old student with disability said:

“I can reach school comfortably and without being tired. I’m not absent anymore.”

The remedial classes of which a young student with disability benefited greatly contributed to leaving a positive impact on his life as he said:

“The remedial classes helped me become a self-confident person who can interact with students in a better way. My academic reality improved and I began thinking that I can succeed. Now, I have the ability to manage my time and study.”

During the counseling sessions, a 16-year old student has become aware of the important of studying. Besides helping her to manage her time, the remedial classes she received led to a significant progress in her academic achievement. Furthermore, her self-confidence at school has increased, thereby strengthening the relationship with her colleagues and teachers. She said:

“Now, I pay attention to my studies. I am happy that my relationship with the teachers and students are better than before. My teachers encourage me to study and my colleagues look at me positively.”

The impact of contributing to the transportation to and from school was reflected in her words:

“Now, I’m very comfortable, much more than before, I don’t reach school tired. I feel happy.”

During the year 2014, 58 beneficiaries in the aftermath of receiving the vital service of academic rehabilitation were able to overcome the difficulties and impediments they face.

The following table sheds more light on this service:

Type of Service	Beneficiaries
Transportation to and from school/ university	34
Remedial education courses	17
Illiteracy eradication lessons	4
School fees	2
Kindergarten fees	1
Total	58

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE THE BENEFICIARIES' PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCY

Adaptations:

By means of our accumulated experience in rehabilitating persons with disability, it has become obvious that house adaptations which constitute a fundamental part of the holistic approach in rehabilitation – have always left a very significant positive impact on the reintegration process of this marginalized and disadvantaged sectors in the Palestinian society.

This is true due to the fact that without having their residence, schools and public places accessible, persons with disability cannot neither go out completely of their isolation nor reintegrate into their communities.

The adaptations carried out during this reporting period have apparently contributed to the interaction of our beneficiaries with and reintegration into the local community. Furthermore, these beneficiaries have become self-dependent persons who are not anymore a burden on others.

Besides the adaptations at the residences of persons with disability, two public buildings were adapted during the reporting period namely Dura Association of Persons with Disability in Hebron district and the Directorate of the local governance in Tulkarem district.

A father of a 15-year-old beneficiary has approached the Program asking to help his son who used to face several difficulties related to accepting his disability and accessing school wherein he was always dependent on the family members to carry him when going out of home.

Adapting his house synchronized with the counseling process. Consequently, the beneficiary accepted himself and his situation and developed incentives and hopes for the future.



Moreover, he has become self-dependent to go out of his house, the thing that was reflected on his commitment and stability at school. The final result was a significant progress in his academic achievement and a better interaction with his social surrounding.

The satisfaction of the beneficiary was obviously reflected in his words:

“Since the YMCA has adapted my house, my whole life changed; at least I now feel that I am a self-dependent person who does not depend on others.”

His mother said:

“You are the only organization that took care of my son and helped him with all what he needed, you changed his life.”

Another person with disability who benefited of this vital service said:

“I don’t need anyone to help me in using the toilet anymore. I now depend on myself, and this is something that made me feel comfortable.”

A wheelchair-bound young girl used to face a big movement impediment which disappeared upon adapting her residence. Now, she goes to school independently and accordingly, her self-esteem was enhanced. As she expressed, her social interaction with her surrounding was improved since she can meet her needs in a human way.



Another wheelchair-bound young man who has hemiplegia expressed his happiness upon adapting his house, he said:

“I always needed people to help me especially in meeting my basic needs as well as in going out of my house. Now, I am capable of moving by myself. I am very happy.”

Over the reporting period, 56 adaptations were carried out at the residences of persons with disability as illustrated in the following table:

Adaptation	Number of Beneficiaries
Adapting a bathroom	26
Building ramp + adapting bathroom	11
Adapting entrance of the house	4
Adapting the stairs + bathroom	1
Adapting bedroom + bathroom	1
Adapting entrance of the house +installing handrail	1
Adapting entrance of the house + bathroom	2
Building ramp +installing handrail	1
Adapting kitchen + bathroom	1
Installing handrail + Installing bathroom bars	1
Building ramp	7
Total	56

Medical urgent assistive aids

There's no doubt that no matter how simple the medical assistive aid is, yet, it always leaves an impact on the life of our beneficiaries wherein it complements the rehabilitation process and assists in accomplishing the psychological goals.

A 13-year young girl with disability said:

“Girls at school used to always criticize how I walk. I used to become upset of their looks. After having the medical boot, I can walk in a better way and I’m not ashamed of myself anymore.”

Upon breaking his crutches, a 23-year old man who suffers of muscular dystrophy has become a nervous person who used to be always depressed. The very poor economical situation of his family prevented them from buying him new crutches which he needed to – at least – move freely and safely.

Securing new crutches for him not only facilitated his movement, but also contributed to regain the feeling of stability and security.

A university student with disability benefited of this service through receiving medicines and crutches. The improvement he felt in his life was reflected in his words:

“My health situation has improved, I have become more self-confident and I can now move easily, especially at the university. My academic achievement also improved and I can interact with people easier.”

During the reporting period, 77 beneficiaries, both females and males received the vital service of urgent medical and assistive aids which included:

- Artificial limbs
- Crutches
- Medical Apparatus
- Maintenance of artificial limbs
- Medical boots
- Medicines
- Physiotherapy sessions
- Transportation to hospital
- Walkers
- Wheelchairs
- X-Rays
- Bathroom stands
- Medical Mattresses

OBJECTIVE 3: PROMOTE THE SUPPORTIVE ROLE OF THE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TOWARDS THEIR AFFECTED MEMBERS

The positive impact of our intervention with the beneficiaries extended to positively affect the family as a whole.

One of our beneficiaries with disability said:

“I have become more self-confident, I accept myself and I perceive myself much better than before. My marks have improved. I understand my disability and I have become less nervous; this helped me to have a better relationship with my parents.”

Through family counseling, we have intervened with either the family as a whole or with some of its members in the purpose of raising the level of their awareness regarding the needs of their children as well as guiding them how to deal with them.

A mother of one of our beneficiaries said:

“Without your intervention with us, I wouldn’t have known how to deal with my daughter. I used to be always nervous of her and her behavior. But now I understand her case, I understand her, and I can support her.”

A 17-year old girl with disability who is the only daughter for her old parents said:

“My psychological situation was very difficult, and I was only thinking of death and of leaving my mother alone after me. This was reflected on my mother wherein I always used to see sadness in her eyes”.

Our intervention with this young girl has left a very big positive impact on her life as well as on her vision towards the future. It was also of importance to intervene with the mother who is the only source of support to her daughter.

The beneficiary added:

“My mother now has a big hope that I’ll be better; her ways of dealing with me have changed to the better.”

Working with groups

The majority of groups we worked with during the year 2014 encompassed mothers who were either exposed to political violence or whose sons were affected due to their living in hot areas where confrontations take place, were subject to settlers’ violence or were detained and released.

A group of mothers from Hebron whose children were detained and who are exposed themselves to political violence on a continuous basis expressed a big stress in the aftermath of the detention of their sons. They also suffered of difficult symptoms such as fear, worry, tension and inability to express their feelings and perform their roles as mothers.

Upon intervening with them and helping them to ventilate their feelings and stresses, they gained skills and mechanisms that contribute to leading them to a state of stability and psychological balance. They became more capable to interact with their family members as well as with their surroundings.

In an evaluation session, the group members expressed their feelings of comfort as they said:

- *“In this small room, I have found what I couldn’t find in any other place.”*
- *“The group members are my sisters and friends; they shared with me their feelings and embraced me as if I have known them since a very long time.”*
- *“I anxiously waited for each meeting because I know that after each session I feel that my concerns are gone away.”*
- *“I have become able once again to give.”*
- *“I have become a stable person and can face the stresses and difficulties.”*

A mother of an ex-detainee child from another group said:

“My eldest child was arrested at 2:00 a.m.; it was a very difficult experience. Our house was invaded in a brutal way. This affected my psychological situation and I have become very nervous and isolated. Although I am holding a university degree in counseling, however, I couldn’t help neither myself nor my children. It was such a big trauma. I thought I was strong; but I realized that I’m very weak. Upon participating in the counseling groups, I was able to lessen my stresses and I found who can take care of me. I used to feel that I care about everyone but no one care about me. Now, I’m stronger and more capable to help myself and my children.”

Another mother of an ex-detainee child who was detained several times said:

“I lost hope in my son; he used to scream and destroy everything around him on a continuous basis. I got tired of him. Now, he is calmer and I am calmer. Now, he works as a barber. I thank God and thank you; I’m comfortable now.”

A mother of two young Palestinian children who are still in prison said:

“I’m undergoing a very difficult psychological situation. My house is located near a military point and we are subject to many home raids. I’m always afraid and worried about my children. I don’t know what sleep is. No one feels with me. Upon taking part in the group, I felt a big comfort. I felt that I’m not alone and that there are others like me. There’s someone who can hear and understand me. Now, I use ways that make me feel comfortable; I write and draw and then I sleep. I feel more comfortable. Thank you.”

At the community level, a series of meetings were held with organizations working in the sphere of disability and rehabilitation as well as human rights organizations and community-based organizations of which the outcomes are illustrated under (objective 5) of this report.

Advocacy Work

In general, the advocacy action plan 2014 which was designed by the advocacy team focuses on the following objectives:

1. Raising awareness among families, persons with disability, students with and without disability, teachers, governmental and non-governmental organizations and different community members on the concepts of disability and diversity, and techniques on how to interact and communicate with persons with disability with respect to the rights-based approach; aiming at contributing to designing supportive, positive and inclusive cultural environment for persons with disability in different fields in the society.
2. Increasing the sensitivity and commitment among the private sector representatives and companies towards the right of persons with disability to decent work on an equal basis with other Palestinian citizens, and eliminating all types of disability-based discrimination faced by persons with disability in the processes of seeking job opportunities, employment and economic sustainability.
3. Improving and activating the roles of the districts' disability network organizations in order to become more effective and efficient on advocating and lobbying for equal access to rights and services by persons with disability, through the partnership with the Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disability (GUPWD) and the enhancement of the networks' members skills in planning and advocacy.
4. Putting pressure on the Ministry of Health to improve the health insurance system so as to benefit of a larger number of persons with disability and offer better and holistic medical needs and requirements particularly medicine.



On one hand, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program succeeded to achieve several outcomes as planned. On the other hand, a number of internal and external challenges negatively affected the advocacy working process in ways that slowed down the implementation of the action plan such as:

- The huge load of tasks which the advocacy team members have to do besides their advocacy work.
- The very slow response and interaction from different governmental and non-governmental organizations which work in other fields.
- The fact that advocacy is a long and complicated process which requires long time, big efforts and different kinds of resources.

Nevertheless, this report summarizes the most important achievements which the Program achieved at the regional, national and district levels.

Awareness raising activities:

Awareness raising activities aim at reformulating the societal understanding and attitudes towards persons with disability and challenge people's roles and responsibilities in this context. Each group requires different raising awareness tools according to age, interests, field of work and other considerations. In this regard, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program has focused on specific subjects in the awareness raising activities namely: the Palestinian law on the rights of persons with disability no 1999, advocacy concept and tools, inclusion and diversity concepts and mechanisms, inclusive environment in the job market and techniques on how to communicate positively with persons with disability. Many different tools and methods were used by the team to work on this section such as: workshops, trainings, entertainment activities, group support activities, inclusive activities and meetings.



A large number of awareness raising activities were held all over the districts of the West Bank targeting the following groups:

1. Governmental and non-governmental organizations working on issues related to persons with disability directly and indirectly.
2. Persons with disability.
3. Family members of persons with disability and families who do not have members with disability.
4. Students with and without disability.
5. School teachers.
6. Children with and without disability in kindergartens.
7. Inclusive activities and camps.
8. Representatives of the private sector: chamber of commerce, trade unions, business forums and companies.
9. Groups in marginalized areas.

The specific objectives of those activities for the year 2014 are summarized hereunder:

1. To raise awareness among different stakeholders on the rights of persons with disability and specifically the Palestinian law on the rights of persons with disability no 1999.
2. To develop holistic knowledge and technical skills on advocacy tools among persons with disability, different stakeholders and parents of persons with disability, aiming at strengthening the disability demanding movement in Palestine.
3. To contribute to facilitating the inclusion process for persons with and without disability in the social, academic and economic aspects, through different mutual activities, tools and trainings.
4. To raise awareness among workers of the disability organizations regarding the better terminology and techniques when talking and interacting with persons with disability.
5. To build awareness and to advocate for the rights of persons with disability to decent work

Outcomes:

1. A guideline on disability etiquette was prepared and published by the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program which includes terminology and techniques on how to communicate and talk to or speak about persons with disability with respect to human rights, dignity and diversity. 5000 copies were printed and distributed among all offices of the YMCA, universities, different organizations and schools.
2. A training course was held targeting a group of women from different Bedouin areas mostly from the middle of the West Bank, which included different subjects such as concept of disability, situation analysis, self-empowerment, terminology and techniques about positive communication with persons with disability, inclusive plan of activities, introduction about problem identification and definition and tools of advocacy. This training aimed at developing knowledge and practical skills of the participants about the disability frameworks, intervention tools in the marginalized areas and disability etiquette as mechanisms to enhance their role in advocating for persons with disability's rights, and to facilitate their access to services in their areas on the basis of human rights approach.
3. Two training days on advocacy concept and tools were held targeting the psychosocial support and emergency team in Jenin and Tubas districts. The training aimed at developing the team members' skills and knowledge on how to identify and implement advocacy interventions and action plans.
4. The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program has strongly participated in several national and district events and conferences where the advocacy coordinator and other members in the advocacy team presented papers on disability and inclusive development, specifically on mainstreaming disability in women and children programs and movements.
5. Nine supportive committees were formulated in different governmental schools aiming at facilitating the inclusion process for students with disability in the academic environment.
6. Around 40 awareness sessions were held in the different districts of the West Bank targeting parents of persons with disability and those who do not have members with disability in their families. Those families have become more aware of the rights of persons with disability and the services provided.
7. Around 60 awareness sessions were held in the governmental schools specifically where students with disability are included. Students without disability had the opportunity to be introduced to different points of views, perspectives and techniques on how to approach their classmates who have disability with respect and acceptance.
8. Several awareness sessions, meetings and workshops were held in different marginalized areas in the West Bank, aiming at disseminating information about rights of persons with disability and services rendered for them. In addition, activities were important chances for tackling the issue of disability from a different perspective in those areas.
9. Five workshops at the district level were held targeting representatives of the private sector: people who work at the chamber of commerce, directors of companies and banks, heads of the human resources departments at central companies and representatives of the businessmen forum. Those workshops were very obviously flexible and constituted an important environment for this target group to gain new information on the rights of persons with disability, particularly right to decent work and challenges faced by persons with disability in approaching the employment services and the job market, technical information on how the job environment could

be designed for all employees, including persons with disability and disability-related concepts and approaches.

10. Publications on the right to decent work for persons with disability were distributed among 80 institutions representing the private sector and the governmental and non-governmental organizations.
11. A series of raising community awareness activities regarding the rights of persons with disability were held all over the districts of the West Bank and targeted school and university students, those who are working in the educational sector, teachers of governmental schools, parents, and representatives of community organizations and persons with disability. As a result, the participants were provided with the right terminology to be used when interacting with and talking to and/ or about persons with disability.
12. Ventilation and recreational activities as well as sport days were carried out with the participation of children with disability in the purpose of raising their awareness regarding the issue of persons with disability in order to enhance the concept of diversity and raise awareness regarding the capacities of persons with disability.
13. A film tackling the reality of the accessibility of persons with disability to the different services was presented within an activity that was carried out with students from different schools, colleges, and universities including persons with disability.
14. Work plans and mechanisms were allocated to facilitate the access of persons with disability to the different services.

Activities and campaigns targeting decision-makers:

Decision-makers are one of the key target groups which the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program insists to approach continuously. In this context, this group represents Ministries and other governmental bodies at the national and district levels.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program uses different tools and methods to approach this group, depending on the objectives, the target's attitudes towards the issue of disability and the level of interaction. These tools are mainly: workshops, meetings, demonstrations, mobilization activities, negotiation and submitting letters.

During this year, the target groups in this context were :

1. Municipalities and local and village councils.
2. Ministries, specifically the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labor.
3. The General Personnel Council.
4. The districts' governorate offices.
5. The governmental health services' centers and hospitals.

Objectives:

1. To put pressure on municipalities and local councils to reinforce their commitment and follow up the implementation of physical accessibility in public buildings and streets, in the planning and building process.
2. To represent persons with disability's needs and priorities which should be reflected in the governments' strategies, programs and services.

3. To put pressure on governmental bodies in order to achieve their participation and involvement in the advocacy work at the districts' level.
4. To put pressure on the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of its educational services for students with disability and to adopt and practice equal procedures in the employment process.
5. To contribute to the revision process of the Palestinian law of labor and put representative and comprehensive recommendations on how it should be sensitive to the right of persons with disability's right to decent work.
6. To put pressure on the schools Counseling Department at the Ministry of Education to reintegrate students with disability into schools.
7. To put pressure on the School's administrations to accept the registration of students with disability.
8. To allocate- in cooperation with a number of relevant organizations- an awareness work plan targeting all schools at the level of Nablus district to raise awareness regarding the rights of persons with disability.

Outcomes:

1. Two national workshops were conducted targeting different stakeholders working in the fields of disability, human rights and labor-related issues, aiming at reviewing the law of labor, discussing, identifying and drafting the main issues which should be modified to guarantee a more inclusive law and sensitivity to the rights of persons with disability's access to job services and employment opportunities on an equal basis with others.
2. Three meetings were conducted with different general departments at the Ministry of Labor to discuss the recommendations' draft and the next steps. In this regard, it is worth to be mentioned that the head of the legal unit at the Ministry stated that the Ministry has adopted this draft and will defend it in the process of the law modification.
3. The same draft was discussed and adopted by three of the most popular workers' unions in Palestine; those who are members in the national committee of the labor policies. In addition, it has been submitted to the International Labor Office ILO in the country.
4. A series of activities were implemented in different districts by the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program in partnership and coordination with several other organizations, targeting the offices of the Ministry of Education such as: meetings, demonstrations and drafting official agreements, which resulted in the following:
 - A committee was established in Hebron which includes representatives of the municipality, the district office of the Ministry of Education and some disability organizations to follow up the accessibility issue at schools at the organizational and practical levels.
 - A demonstration which took place in Jenin targeted the office of the Ministry of Education where group of persons with disability and the network of disability organizations were participating actively. A letter was submitted to the director of the office which included demanding the Ministry to change the criteria of employment so as not to be discriminatory on the basis of disability or the level and type of impairment.
 - A series of trainings and awareness workshops were held in most of the districts' targeted teachers, schools' directors and employees who work in the inclusive

education departments at the Ministry of Education, aiming at identifying obstacles facing the inclusive education process for students with disability, discussing solutions and making decisions regarding implementing different interventions in the field in partnership between the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program and the Ministry.

5. An initial agreement took place between the YMCA and the General Personnel Council on drafting and adopting a MOU that regulates the organizations' roles and responsibilities regarding the right to employment for persons with disability in the governmental organizations. The main goal of this MOU is to improve and follow up the process of employment starting from reaching job-seekers, and adopting safeguards that guarantee fair and equal evaluation process for jobs' applicants and procedures on the identification of required assistive devices and reasonable accommodations in the job environment.
6. Making the entrance of Al-Quds Open University in Nablus accessible for persons with disability.
7. A series of coordination meetings were held with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor to prepare for the Employment Day which was carried out in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce in numerous districts of the West Bank.
8. Paying a visit- with the Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disability- to Al-Quds Open University in Nablus in the purpose of putting pressure on its administration to make it accessible for persons with disability. The adaptation was executed.

Data gathering activities:

A big effort was exerted by the advocacy unit to improve the skills of the team in data gathering values and tools, in order to support the advocacy campaigns, better identify the Program's interventions and facilitate the field work activities.

The advocacy team had achieved different accomplishments in this regard, which can be summarized as follows:

1. At the national level, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program collected data regarding persons with disability who are in need of medicines, especially those that are unavailable at the Ministry of Health.
2. Data was gathered regarding persons with disability who are qualified and seeking job opportunities in different districts.
3. Data was gathered regarding companies and institutions at the private sector in several cities, number of workers in these companies and workers with disability.
4. In Tulkarem, the Program has actively participated in working on a survey which was initiated by the GUPWD branch in the city. It aimed to assess persons with disability's medical and assistive devices needs and requirements.

Utilized tools:

1. Household and field visits.
2. Networking with other stakeholders.
3. Questionnaires.
4. MoUs signed

Outcomes:

1. The process of gathering data regarding persons with disability who are seeking jobs was very helpful in many different ways: training the Program's beneficiaries on writing CVs and other needed skills to approach the job market, inviting them to workshops which targeted the private sector in order to represent themselves and sending the data to organizations and companies that announce job opportunities.
2. The private sector database was used: holding meetings, awareness sessions and workshops and establishing database and partnerships.
3. In terms of the national survey which was done to assess the medical needs, 238 questionnaires were filled with 238 respondents of those who need medicine continuously. The findings showed that 184 respondents said that the medicine they need is not available at the Ministry of Health and 229 of them said that the medicine they need is not available regularly at the Ministry.
4. The district survey in Tulkarem contributed to identifying the needs and priorities regarding the medical and assistive devices required by persons with disability. This database was used and yet will be used in many different ways. On one hand, it is an advocacy tool which puts pressure on the governmental organizations in order to increase their commitment and responsibility in this regard. On the other hand, it is a basic reference to identify priorities and interventions in the district.
5. A research was made tackling the reality of the services rendered to children with disability in the sectors of education, health and social services.
6. Through interacting with the Palestinian Injured Organization, data was gathered including the names of new persons who were injured.

Media activities:

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program recognizes the importance of media at the political and social levels, as well as the importance of improving and activating the media roles and involvement in tackling personal, social, civic and economic issues related to persons with disability referring to and based on the disability human rights and developmental approaches.

In this context, the Program has been working on different dimensions targeting media networks, channels and broadcasters, aiming at achieving different objectives that could be summarized as follows:

1. To establish a national media framework which is capable of leading the media roles and interventions related to persons with disability issues and rights.
2. To mobilize the largest number of media people and institutions that adopt and advocate for the rights of persons with disability.
3. To highlight the challenges and barriers faced by persons with disability and other organizations, which negatively affect the implementation of the Palestinian Law on the Rights of Persons with Disability no 1999 and consequently increase different types of discrimination on the basis of disability in the processes of access to rights and services.
4. To use local and national channels in the process of distributing or correcting information related to disability services and rights of persons with disability among community members and persons with disability.

5. To create better understanding and awareness among media channels and networks on tackling the issues of disability based on the human rights approach.
6. To use the media networks and channels to put pressure on different governmental organizations and specifically those who show ignorance and discrimination in the processes of designing and implementing public projects, programs and services.

Outcomes:

1. Different efforts are put to activate the Media Network which was established during the last year in partnership between the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program, the GUPWD, Teacher Creativity Center and the Ministry of Media, aiming at improving and strengthening the role of media in advocating for the rights of persons with disability in Palestine. Those efforts included drafting the internal rules that regulate the network roles, tasks and responsibilities and drafting the national media action plan.
2. A draft of the media guidelines on tackling the issue of disability based on the human rights approach was produced.
3. Most of the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program teams were careful to approach media institutions to cover disability-related activities as a tool that brings this issue into the public and raise awareness among people without disability on issues and challenges faced by persons with disability.
4. In Hebron, the Program's team led a campaign against some media institutions, as they were spreading incorrect information about services offered to persons with disability. Those institutions apologized in public and clarified that this information is not appropriate.
5. In Bethlehem, a TV interview with representatives of the network of disability organizations in the city was recorded and published targeting Bethlehem municipality. It focused on demanding the municipality to consider accessibility criteria in its new projects, particularly the ones implemented in the main streets.
6. On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disability, a series of news and ads were transmitted at the local and national TV stations and networks in the purpose of raising awareness regarding the issue of disability and the rights of persons with disability.

Monitoring actions and follow up records and violations and discriminatory acts:

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program believes and recognizes that monitoring is a core advocacy tool and one of the major responsibilities that should be carried specifically by field workers who are in direct contact with people in the field. In general, the monitoring systems and programs existing in the country are not sensitive enough to all requirements of access for persons with disability. Consequently, there are many indicators and events which show that persons with disability have been exposed to different types of violation without any systematic interventions. As a result, the Program is careful to strengthen and enrich related knowledge and skills among its team in order to contribute to eliminating, documenting and following up such acts.

In this regard, there was a trial during June 2014 to carry out a training course on the monitoring tools targeting the advocacy team and other focal social workers at the Program in partnership with the Independent Commission for Human Rights. However, due to the political situation, the training had been delayed.

Throughout the reporting period, few interventions were carried out in this context as follows:

Violations:

1. Changing the area of work for a person with disability to a far one by the Ministry of Education in an unfair manner.
2. Complaint by a lady with disability working at the private sector (lawyer office) regarding her low and delayed salary.
3. Two female students were excluded and refused by two of the governmental schools in Nablus.
4. Firing a person with disability from the Directorate of Education south of Hebron.

Actions:

1. Mobilizing allies working in the fields of disability and human rights.
2. Encouraging people to complaint and supporting them in this process.
3. Raising awareness among people and organizations that practice discrimination, abuse and exclusion.
4. Discussion and agreement with the organization or person who practices discrimination acts.
5. Complaining and following up with organizations on behalf of children with disability.
6. A prompt meeting was held with the director of the Directorate of Education along with other senior staff at the Directorate who gave an excuse that this person has movement reactions in his body as a result of his disability.

Outcomes:

1. The teacher was back working in a school which is closer to his house.
2. An agreement was done with the lawyer which satisfies both parties.
3. The Program's team succeeded to bring one of the students back to school.
4. The person with disability was returned to his job, but was moved to the resources department which is more adequate for his situation.

Supporting the Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disability (GUPWD):

Different efforts were exerted by the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program to empower and support the GUPWD through the advocacy unit. GUPWD is the largest national DPO in terms of membership criteria and community-based availability, which indicates that it is recognized by different stakeholders as the central dynamic in the disability movement in Palestine.

As a result, The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program is careful to reinforce the GUPWD's efficiency and effectiveness in order to strengthen and activate the disability movement through persons with disability themselves.

The most important efforts which were done during the year 2014 in this regard are as follows:

1. Leading the process of drafting an advocacy strategy for the union by the advocacy coordinator at the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program.
2. Facilitating the empowerment of a group of youth with disability who are members at the union representing most of the West Bank cities through trainings and follow up sessions, practical methodologies on planning and implementation and continuous coaching.
3. Drafting a set of recommendations on how the government's policies and procedures can be more sensitive and considerate to persons with disability's access requirements. This work was done through interviews with representatives of the Ministries, workshops with persons with disability who are members at the central union at a central level and reviewing relevant literature.
4. Representing the union by the advocacy coordinator in different national bodies and committees such as the Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disability, the technical committee of the inclusive education for students with visual disability, the national committee of the social protection sector and the national committee for women employment. In addition, this representation requires commitments to several tasks and responsibilities which are part of the advocacy coordinator work. In this regard, it is very important to highlight that this representation includes different techniques of empowerment to the GUPWD's members through facilitating the process of their full and effective involvement and participation in those bodies and committees specifically members who show seriousness, readiness to learn, and commitment. Besides, it should be highlighted that the advocacy coordinator at the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program is a conference member at the GUPWD, the fact that facilitates such cooperation with the union.
5. Representing the union and Palestine at the Arab DPI office which includes attending all the meetings that were held during this year, initiating to establish a national network of persons with disability in Palestine, following up the establishment of the committees, data gathering and participating in the second conference of the office which was held in Egypt during April 2014.
6. Holding a series of coordinating meetings with the administration and representatives of the GUPWD all over the districts of the West Bank in the purpose of coordinating to carry out activities related to persons with disability as well as planning to mutually carry out these activities. This is in addition to coordinating the mutual support within the coordinative committees at the districts' level. It is worth to be mentioned here that some members of the youth groups participated in these meetings.

Celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disability:

To celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disability, a series of activities were carried out with the GUPWD as well as with a number of organizations working in the sphere of disability. Part of these activities focused on raising awareness and promoting the issue of disability, wherein the other part focused on advocacy and putting pressure on the decision-makers to implement the disability law.

The team of the Program all over the West Bank, along with the volunteers as well as members of the youth groups participated in the preparation, coordination and execution of these activities which can be summarized hereunder:



- A central activity was held in Hebron in participation with the UNRWA, Bethlehem Arab Society, the Social Centre for Rehabilitation, the Evangelic School, Rashid Ben Maktum School, Hope for Hearing Impairments, and Al-Kafeef School. The activity encompassed sports activities in the purpose of reintegrating persons with disability.
- Another central advocacy activity was carried out in cooperation with Al-Sheikha Fatma Centre and the Independent Commission for Human Rights in the aim of raising awareness regarding the rights of persons with disability. This is in addition to two awareness raising activities which were held in Dura and Hebron.
- In Tulkarem, a community awareness campaign was held wherein a brochure and a flower were distributed in the main street in the purpose of raising awareness of the citizens regarding the issues of persons with disability. The activity was covered by the local media.
- A march was organized in Nablus with the participation of representatives of GOs and NGOs, persons with disability, and their parents. The march, which started from the headquarter of the GUPWD in Nablus, encompassed different banners tackling the rights of persons with disability and ended with a festival that included speeches and artistic shows which were presented by persons with disability.
- A human chain was formed in one of the streets of Jenin holding logos reflecting the demands of persons with disability. All the organizations working in the sphere of disability in the district participated in the activity. Furthermore, a sticker holding the text of the law of employment of persons with disability was distributed with a flower at the four main entrances of the district. In the same context, visits were paid to 24 governmental organizations and banks with the participation of volunteers and persons with disability from the youth groups who distributed flowers and the legal text of the law of employing persons with disability.



OBJECTIVE 4: UPGRADE THE SKILLS OF THE PALESTINIAN SOCIAL WORKERS AND COUNSELORS

During the year 2014, the Training Unit of the Program carried out a series of training courses at the internal and external levels in the purpose of building the capacities of the social workers as well as those who are working in the sphere of mental health, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation in the governmental and the non-governmental organizations as well as the organizations of the local community.

At the external level

529 trainees received training in a variety of topics including the curriculum of working with groups through butterfly hug, intervening with groups, counseling standards of mental health and psychosocial support during emergencies, the psychological psychodrama, psychological first aid, how to integrate the ex-detainees children into schools, the concept of disability and how to deal with persons with disability, psychological interventions during emergencies, how to build supporting groups and post-traumatic stress disorders in the aftermath of emergencies, raising the awareness of teachers to be acquainted with the psychological difficulties and problems which children face in the aftermath of emergencies, and filling questionnaires and managing interviews and focus groups.



The training which was held for the members of the psychosocial support teams in Hebron districts in “intervening with groups” aimed at providing the social workers with practical knowledge and skills about psychosocial interventions with groups especially youth and adolescents. As a result, a deeper understanding and more positive practices were acquired by the trainees, thereby helping them to better intervene during crises and emergencies.

- The “psychological psychodrama” training course which was held in Tulkarem and Qualqilia districts, contributed to raising the knowledge of the psychosocial support teams members in intervention mechanisms which aims at lessening the level of the psychological symptoms of children who are facing traumatic experiences.
- Gaining good knowledge in the butterfly hug protocol and how to implement it with children who face difficult and traumatizing experiences in their life was one of the outcomes of the training which was carried out for members of the psychosocial support teams in Hebron.
- The training in counseling standards of mental health and psychosocial support during emergencies which were held in Hebron, Tulkarem, Qualqilia, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Nablus and Salfeet, contributed to giving the trainees the opportunity to be acquainted with the manual and how to behave at the moment when a crisis occurs.

- Obtaining preliminary skills in psychological first aid was one of the outcomes of the training which was held for members of the psychosocial support teams in Ramallah and Jericho districts, thereby contributing to helping them respond to the humanitarian needs during emergencies. The same course was repeated during the second half of the year targeting more social workers, counselors and volunteers.
- As a result of the training entitled “how to integrate ex-detainees children at schools”, teachers who attended the course have acquired knowledge regarding the problems and difficulties that face ex-detainee children, besides, they were provided with preliminary skills in how to deal with these children.
- In the purpose of raising their awareness regarding how to deal with persons with disability, a training course was held for volunteers of the UNRWA in the Bedouin areas in Jerusalem. The training, which was entitled “concepts of disability and how to deal with persons with disability”, contributed to providing the participants with deeper knowledge regarding the concept of disability, besides obtaining some preliminary skills in communication.
- The course which was carried out for the social workers of the UNRWA in the West Bank in “the psychological interventions during emergencies” contributed to providing the trainees with skills to be used with children in emergency situations, thereby helping them to lessen the severity of the psychological symptoms that result from emergencies. The same course was also held for volunteers and members of the local community in Nablus, Salfeet, Jenin, Tulkarem, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron in the purpose of raising their readiness regarding how to react when an emergency occurs.
- A three-day training course in how to build supporting groups was held for the social workers and volunteers for the Children’s Village (S.O.S) in Hebron district. As a result, the trainees received skills and knowledge on how to build and manage groups, thereby enabling them to work with the marginalized sectors in society.
- The course in post traumatic stress disorders in the aftermath of emergencies which was carried out for the social workers and volunteers of the Early Childhood Programs contributed to raising their awareness regarding the changes on children in the aftermath of being exposed to an emergency, thereby being able to distinguish between children who suffer of psychological disturbances and those who adjusted.
- A one- day training course which was held for teachers from Ramallah district aimed at raising their awareness to be acquainted with the psychological difficulties and problems which face children in the aftermath of emergencies.
- As a result of the training in filling questionnaires, and managing interviews and focus groups, 33 volunteers have acquired new skills that helped them in filling questionnaires and conducting interviews for the purpose of the study which the Program is carrying out regarding the accessibility of children with disability to educational, health and social services. Furthermore, these volunteers worked with nine focus groups in the West Bank.

At the internal level

During the first half of the year 2014, 37 social workers and specialists of the Rehabilitation Program received a training course in Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Consequently, basic skills and knowledge were acquired by the trainees, thereby gaining the know-how of a new technique that effectively contributes to lessening the psychological symptoms of which children suffer.

During the second half of the year, 37 social workers and specialists of the Rehabilitation Program received training in Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) in the purpose of developing their skills and theoretical knowledge so as to become more specialized in treating difficult cases through using EMDR.

Furthermore, a social worker of the Program received a 2-day training of trainers course in child and family protection and one of the supervisors received a 3-day training of trainers course in Psychological first aid.

Training university students

44 university students who are studying social work and/or psychology received training and supervision at the Rehabilitation Program.

As a result, the capacities of these students in the sphere of their specialization were developed. This is besides acquiring technical and therapeutic skills and enhancing their experience with professional counseling and intervention mechanisms at the individual and group levels. Moreover, raising the level of self-awareness and developing their professional identity was amongst the outcomes of this training, thereby preparing them to become capable and ready to find adequate job opportunities in the future.

International training

During the first half of the year 2014, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program conducted a training course in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) level 2 for 28 social specialists and psychiatrists who are working in different Arab countries in the sphere of mental health with the Syrian and Palestinian Refugees.

The training, which was held in Turkey, aimed at revising the knowledge and skills acquired by the trainees during level 1 of the training, besides setting forth the difficulties they faced while implementing the approach. This is in addition to providing them with the theoretical knowledge and in-depth practices to better use EMDR with their beneficiaries within the framework of special protocols.

As a result, these specialists have become capable to implement EMDR with difficult cases, particularly with persons who suffer of traumatic experiences and psychological disturbances.

A training course also in EMDR was held during the month of September for 14 social workers and psychiatrists who are working in the sphere of mental health in Lebanon. The aim of the course was to review the skills and knowledge obtained during level 1 of the training, besides deepening their practical knowledge and handling the difficulties they faced while implementing EMDR with the cases they worked with. Amongst the outcomes of this training was the ability to work with more difficult cases, particularly with persons who

developed traumatic experiences as well as some cases that suffer of psychological disturbances.

It is worth mentioning here that our colleague Mona Zaghrou, Head of Counseling and Supervision Department was nominated by Francine Shapiro – originator and developer of EMDR- to be a trainer of trainers as of September 2014.

OBJECTIVE 5: PROMOTE THE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG DISABILITY AND REHAB ORGANIZATIONS

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program believes that networking is one of the most important advocacy tools which help achieving success in a complimentary manner and within the minimum time possible. However, it is important to mention that the cultural context in Palestine is not opened and ready enough yet for such tool.

In general, the following were the main target stakeholders in the networking process:

1. Schools.
2. Ministries, specifically the Ministries of Education, Health, and Labor and the General Personnel Council.
3. The Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disability (GUPWD).
4. Municipalities.
5. The chamber of commerce.
6. The districts' networks of disability organizations.
7. The Independent Commission for Human Rights.
8. The Higher Council of Disability.

Objectives:

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program works on building and strengthening networks in addition to contributing to supporting this culture which remains to be one of the biggest needs and the most powerful tools that enrich the disability movement.

The most important objectives which the Program aimed to achieve in this regard were the following:

1. To find and implement practical steps aiming at reinforcing the right to access public buildings and specifically schools for persons with disability fully and independently.
2. To facilitate a positive environment where stakeholders can plan and implement several action plans and activities together in a complimentary manner.
3. To conduct and follow up with the stakeholders and partners' several agreements regarding the rights and issues of persons with disability.
4. To coordinate between the different efforts, services and programs driven by non-governmental organizations, aiming at decreasing duplication and unfair service provision and benefit among persons with disability.

5. To benefit from the organizations' database in order to facilitate and ease the process of collecting needed information related to persons with disability.
6. To exchange experiences and knowledge among organizations and sectors in order to push towards obtaining more achievements in the process of access to rights and services by persons with disability on an equal basis with others.
7. To facilitate the work of the Program in the field through pre-coordination with related bodies.

Outcomes:

- 1 A committee was established in Hebron in order to follow up the physical accessibility at schools and include this condition in the pre-building plans.
- 2 Several mutual referral agreements were signed between the Rehabilitation Program and other organizations working in the field of disability or other fields such as human rights, children, vocational training and women affairs.
- 3 Identifying ten companies in Hebron in partnership with the Businessmen Forum. Both the Rehabilitation Program and the Forum will sign MOUs with these companies in order to activate the right to employment for persons with disability.
- 4 Several workshops were held in different districts targeting representatives of the private sector organizations and companies, aiming at drawing their attention to approaches and techniques regarding the right to decent work for persons with disability in partnership with the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program, the GUPWD, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Labor and the Forum of Businessmen.
- 5 Several agreements were signed to facilitate persons with disability's access to holistic services through different organizations in an organized and complimentary way.
- 6 42 MOUs were signed with companies to facilitate access to decent work for persons with disability on an equal basis with others and in inclusive work environments.
- 7 Employing persons with disability in different companies and organizations.
- 8 Identifying several public places in Jenin and putting parking signs for persons with disability in the city, in partnership with the municipality.
- 9 An agreement was signed between the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program and four organizations to facilitate access to vocational training services for persons with disability in Nablus.
- 10 Adapting the entrance of Al-Quds Open University in Nablus to be accessible for persons with disability.
- 11 A memorandum of understanding was signed with the members of Disability and Rehabilitation Affairs in Hebron in the purpose of preparing for advocacy activities in the sphere of health, labor, and education. This in addition to agreeing upon carrying out a series of activities to call for the implementation of the law.
- 12 A partnership agreement was signed with The Association of Relieving Children of Palestine in the purpose of enhancing the referral of cases to receive services.
- 13 A memorandum of understanding was signed with the Council of Disability and Rehabilitation Affairs in Hebron in the purpose of following up the yearly work plan of the activities.
- 14 In general, The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program played a very prominent role in bringing a different culture among local disability networks, based on data-gathering and good planning. As a result, most of these networks worked on designing an advocacy action plan and implementing it together. Those advocacy action plans were closer to the social and the rights-based approach of disability.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

In order to assess the effectiveness of the work we do and measure the degree of achievement of the Program's objectives, a list of indicators was set to measure the results achieved. The indicators were examined for a random sample using different tools and questionnaires including the quality of life scale questionnaire, the parents' assessment questionnaire, amongst other questionnaires and tools.

The results of the indicators are summarized hereunder:

- 92% of persons with disability and traumatized who received psychosocial support and counseling services have an increased ability to cope with their disability and have developed a more positive perspective towards their situation, and are more integrated into the Palestinian community.
- 82% of persons with disability and traumatized (beneficiaries of the Program) have better access to their residences, schools, and public buildings and have accessed or been referred to appropriate vocational training and/or employment.
- 88% of the family members of beneficiaries are more aware of the needs of their affected children and know how to deal with them.
- 94.5% of the trained social workers and counselors who received training have an increased capacity, particularly in the sphere of counseling and rehabilitation and use advanced constructive counseling methodologies and approaches with their beneficiaries.
- 71% of the organizations with whom the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program coordinated efforts have become more involved in coordinating efforts for the sake of these groups.

DIFFICULTIES

Just like all Palestinian citizens who are affected by the non-stopping wave of violence in the West Bank, our staff – especially during the previous period – have undergone a general feeling of worry, stress, fear and anxiety. Not only they were delayed on the roads due the existence of numerous flying checkpoints, but also they felt unsafe to move, especially in the areas that are subject to settlers' violence, near the wall, or in the hot areas. Particularly in the areas of Jerusalem and Hebron, fear of being kidnapped by settlers has as well become a phenomenon.

Furthermore, the lack of a suitable vehicle that can reach some remote areas constitutes a challenge for our staff who work in the field, this is in addition to the fact that due to the deteriorating economical situation of the Palestinians and the increase in the level of poverty, the contribution and participation of the local community and organizations to the services we provide had dramatically decreased, thereby adding more burdens on our shoulders.

Given the big load which our staff have to bear on their shoulders, the need to employ more staff in different aspects of work has become apparent.

In fact, due to this work load, the level of burn-out has registered a remarkable increase, add to this that sometimes, the delay in transferring some financial amounts to the Program negatively affects the salary payments on their due date, thereby adding more stress on the staff.

During the war on Gaza, the need to intervene with the affected Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank has dramatically increased. Accordingly, not only the load on our staff has registered a noticeable increase, but also, we were obliged to cancel the united annual vacation of the Program.

It ought to be pointed out as well that permits to enter Gaza were denied for four out of five experts from the Program who have been nominated to be part of the national team of experts to go to Gaza to support in stress-management and capacity development of the mental health practitioners in Gaza.

STRESS-MANAGEMENT FOR THE STAFF

Living in a country where stress has become an inevitable part of the daily life, and given that our work at the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program has overwhelming demands, we believe that giving the employees the opportunity to release their stresses within a professional and systematic context is a priority.

The stress-management program for this year was held in cooperation with the Institute of Light Finders – Korea and was distinctively successful and efficient.



According to the staff, the distinguished techniques and skills they practiced and learnt during two days of stress-release have contributed to lessening their stresses and improving their well-being, thereby helping in maintaining a positive environment within the workplace.



A STORY TO TELL...

He was a strong young man full of energy, hope, enthusiasm and optimism.

In a glimpse of an eye, a bullet penetrated his body and destroyed all his dreams and ambitions. One bullet was more than enough to turn his life into a turmoil.

Becoming a person with disability meant the end for Ramez*, the early end at the age of 28... Ramez has become a different person; he felt unworthy, hopeless, frustrated, incapable and could not accept his new reality.

Life was much easier before the injury; now he has to fight to live a stable life. Everything changed; his relationship with his wife and three kids, his relationship with his friends, his self-esteem, his movement, his economical situation, everything.

When our counselor began intervening with him, she found out a destroyed, hopeless person whose dreams were lost amidst the psychological stress. She found a young man who cannot see but barriers that forbid him of living a decent life.

Besides working with him at the psychological level, his house was adapted to facilitate his movement and meet his new needs.

Ramez said:

“At the beginning, I felt that no one is there to help me. I believed that I will not change and that my life will never change. When I sat with the counselor, I realized that I need someone to help me, support me, and lessen my problems. My relationship with my wife, children and relatives deteriorated. I couldn’t accept or understand anyone.

My house and its entrance needed to be adapted; I used to stay at home for long months without going out. I could only go out with the help of my brothers. I was a burden on others.”

The impact of our intervention with Ramez was reflected in his words:

“I changed a lot, I changed 180 degrees. At the beginning, I was disabled, weak, frustrated, depressed and extremely nervous. Although I am- in my nature- a calm person, but the trauma was very big. Now, after working with me, my life turned upside down and I returned to my nature. I feel comfortable, happy and stable.”

The hopeless young man has changed to a person who has ambitions, a person who believes- once again- in his dreams, a person who- despite his disability- has a strong reason to live life happily.

Ramez added:

“I learnt to be patient, and I realized that despite my disability, nothing stands in front of my abilities. Now, I’m a person who has high self-confidence and I can overcome all my difficulties with wisdom and patience.”

*** Real name and details of the beneficiary are reserved at the documents of the Program.**

SEPARATE PROJECTS

Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams in the West Bank Project:

The “Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams in the West Bank” project was initiated in 2003 in response to the arising psychosocial needs of children during and after the second Intifada.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program provides psychosocial support to children and caregivers through 11 psychosocial emergency teams. The teams are operational across 11 districts of the West Bank and serve more than 3000 children and 2000 caregivers per year.

Due to lack of funding from UNICEF, Save the Children International decided to support the Psychosocial Emergency Teams in the West Bank through the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Programme to respond to the psychosocial emergency needs of children and their caregivers resulting from incidents of political and social violence.

The teams responded to the emergency incidents as part of a child protection response composed of 11 YMCA psychosocial teams across the West Bank with 11 counselors and 22 volunteers. These teams have been providing swift remedial assistance to children and their families following such incidents.

Emergency incidents in the West Bank:

While 135 emergency interventions were held during the first half of the year 2014, during the second half of the year, 863 emergency interventions were held reaching 9290 persons both children (Males 3015, females 1870) and adults (Males 2465, females 1940) all over the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

The teams worked with both the children and the caregivers in these areas helping them ventilate and overcome difficult situations. Emergency interventions were also conducted with families whose relatives were killed or arrested by the Israeli forces; these interventions included psychological first aid counseling, ventilation and support. Children and families were then encouraged to join the group sessions. Some cases were referred to specialized organizations for in-depth treatment and intervention.



Nature of emergency incidents:

House demolishing, homes incursions by the Israeli military forces and arresting of young children all over the West Bank including East Jerusalem remain the main incidents to which the Psychosocial Emergency Intervention Teams responded. Furthermore, settlers continue using violence behavior to threaten



life of the Palestinian people through attacking the villages, uprooting the olive trees, burning and destroying the field and agriculture, throwing stones on Palestinian cars which were reported by local and international organizations. Most of the cases referred by the inter-cluster and working groups were addressed by the Psychosocial Emergency Teams who respond to more than 70% of them during the first 48 hours.

Table 1: numbers and nature of incidents during the reporting period

Nature of incidents report	Number of incidents	Nature of incidents report	Number of incidents
Home incursions and searching	279	Killing	24
Arrests	279	Checkpoint assaults	17
Home/ structure demolition	85	Confiscation of lands and homes	15
Injury	43	Incidents occur near Separation Wall	9
Demolition orders	40	Incidents occur near settlements	5
Settler attacks	41	Other	26

Psychosocial groups counseling:

During the first half of 2014, 34 group counseling sessions were held covering 289 children. Children were able to overcome their fears and anxiety from the surrounding violence through expressing their thoughts and feelings.

During the second half of the year, 617 group counseling sessions (7 counseling sessions for each group) were held for 88 groups of children all over the West bank covering 1296 children (554 females, 742 males).

67.8% of the children rarely used violence in dealing / solving their problem (pre 35.6%) while 59% of the children rarely felt uncomfortable and stressed when remembering the incidents (pre 10.6%) , furthermore, 67.7% of children can talk freely about their feeling (26.9 % pre) while, 70.8% of the children have the ability to improve their academic achievements (41.3% pre).



Recreational/ fun day activities for children:

During the first half of the year, the teams worked with 2137 both children and caregivers helping them ventilate and overcome difficult situations. During the second half of the year, they organized and conducted 45 psychosocial activities/days for 3430 children (1844 males, 1586 females). Besides, 340 caregivers (101 males, 239 females) joined the activities.

Ventilation Day Activities for children:

The targeted and affected children also participated in 16 ventilation days, 1447 children (885 Males, 562 females). Moreover, 121 caregivers (39 males, 82 females) joined children during these days.



Sensitization Sessions and Psychosocial Support for Caregivers:

During the first half of the year, 45 Caregivers sensitization sessions were held covering 419 caregivers who were provided with skills and techniques on positive communication with their children and were offered support and guidance. Furthermore, the teams conducted 89 parents and caregivers psychosocial groups all over the 11 districts of the West Bank. Through the 282 sessions, 835 Caregivers (825 mothers and 10 fathers) were provided with skills and techniques on positive communication with their children and were offered support and guidance. Caregivers were educated on issues like how to avoid violence and abuse in order to create a more secured environment at home for children.

During the second half of the year, 340 caregivers (101 males, 239 females) participated in the recreational activities, and 121 caregivers (39 males, 82 females) participated in the ventilation activities. They accompanied their children (parents), their students (teachers and schools counselors), their community members (local leaders) and provided assistance to the project staff and volunteers during these days. Caregivers realized the importance of such psychosocial activities since they provided some space to ventilate their stresses and express their feelings in a different atmosphere.



National Referral Protocol:

During the second half of the year 2014, The Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams referred 133 cases (89 children and 44 adults) for further individual and in-depth psychological counseling and other services. These cases referred to specialized organizations for more treatment and intervention and for in-depth counseling and /or for assistive aid and services provided by the team members' organizations or other partner organizations according to their specialty.

Table 2: A breakdown of referral cases

Referral reason	Number of cases
Martyr (family member)	4
In prison and Ex-detainees	60
Injuries	32
Disability	7
Trauma	14
Social violence	1
Academic reintegration	1
Medical assistance	4
Financial assistance	2
Behavioral problem	8
Total	133

Empowerment and Training of CBOs:

Eight training sessions were conducted for 125 CBO members (33 males and 92 females) who participated in a capacity building training. These training sessions concentrated on the psychosocial intervention and case studies. During these training days, the trainer provided the participants with new techniques and models which can be used during the intervention and when responding to the emergency incidents while working with children and caregivers. 80.8% of the participants indicated that the group activities and tools used by the trainer were very good. Furthermore, 84.7% of the participants mentioned that the training contents answered most of their questions. 95.3% indicated that the training helped to improve their capacities while 97.3% indicated that it fits with the beneficiaries they work with.

Social and Economic Inclusion of People with Disability in the Middle East Project

The project of “Social and Economic Inclusion of People with Disability in the Middle East” was launched in April 2012 and is currently carried out in partnership with Christian Aid/ UK and the Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union- LPHU and funded by the European Commission. The project aims at contributing to improving the living conditions of persons with disability in the Middle East, enabling them to become confident, active members in society and with the opportunity to participate in all aspects of social, economic and political life. Furthermore, it specifically aims at enhancing the skills of persons with disability to engage in sustainable income-generating activities or employment, and to break down the structural barriers that prevent full inclusion.

In continuation of the efforts exerted within the framework of intervening with the private sector companies, and in coordination with the chambers of commerce and the municipalities in the purpose of spreading the concept of diversity and emphasizing the rights of persons with disability, especially the right to work, two workshops were carried out in Hebron district and 45 visits were paid to the private sector companies all over the districts of the West Bank to follow up with the outcomes of the workshops that were previously held in the same context.

Amongst the outcomes of these visits, light is to be shed on the following:

- A remarkable alteration took place in terms of the language used by the participants in the workshops, thereby indicating a change at other levels in the future.
- Many companies and organizations expressed their willingness to develop their cadres at the approach level, as well as to adapt their environment to employ persons with disability.
- Signing 42 MOUs between the Rehabilitation Program and the private sector companies all over the districts of the West Bank. These MOUs will contribute to facilitating the access of persons with disability to the right to decent work- just like other citizens- within clear and specific roles and responsibilities.
- Employing 46 persons with disability in the private sector companies, municipalities and schools.
- Upon signing MOUs with 12 municipalities, eight of them in Tulkarem district were adapted to be accessible for persons with disability.
- A national body was established in Ramallah to support the issues of employing persons with disability by means of a clear plan. The body, which encompasses big companies at the country level, carries out periodical and organized meetings and allocates plans on a three-month basis. This body is continually getting bigger through the involvement of many additional companies.
- Developing the database related to the companies and persons with disability in the purpose of using this data to linking the private companies with the qualified persons with disability to get jobs.

In addition, the reporting period has witnessed the publication of three main publications namely:

- 1- Reference Guide for Media and Disability.
- 2- Arab Newsletter.
- 3- Diversity at Workplace Guide.

In terms of intervening with the public sector, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program has exerted strenuous efforts to institutionalize a system in the bureau of civil personnel that are more sensitive towards the rights of persons with disability, especially the rights to work. Different visits were conducted in this respect and consequently, a vocal agreement has been declared to sign a MOU in January, 2015 that regulates the right to work in the public sector.

Besides the achievements which were mentioned under part of the advocacy work of this report, the project- of which the targeted groups include the public sector, the private sector, the regional civil society, and persons with disability- achieved the following:

- 168 beneficiaries received psychosocial counseling.
- 140 beneficiaries were vocationally assessed.
- 128 beneficiaries received career counseling.
- 194 beneficiaries were subject to vocational training.

“Post- trauma Rehabilitation of the Palestinian Ex-detainee Children in the West Bank” project

This report covers the period between January through December 2014 , within the 'Post-trauma Rehabilitation of the Palestinian Ex-detainee Children in the West Bank' Program which has been running since April 2009 in partnership with Save the Children and funded by the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection. The covered period witnessed additional funding from the Sweden Post Code Lottery Fund to cover the costs of some activities that complement and add-value to the ongoing phase.

Information of beneficiaries and services provided through the Program during the reporting period:

During the reporting period, the Program continued to provide psycho-social rehabilitation services to ex-detainee children through the counseling sessions conducted either individually or within groups. Beneficiaries also received educational and career counseling sessions to help them get back to school as a first option. Those who were above fifteen years old, and were not able to continue school, were referred to the vocational assessment unit to examine their physical and mental abilities as well as their inclinations, and accordingly received vocational training. In addition, beneficiaries enjoyed participating in ventilation weekends where they found an opportunity to release their stress and exchange experiences with other children facing their same situation in a fun atmosphere.



The Program also provided psychosocial support to families of ex-detainee and detainee children through the counseling sessions provided either individually through the family intervention or within groups through family support groups. Families as well were involved in ventilation weekends that gave them a chance to release their stress of the detention experience in a fun day away from home and the daily routine.



The reporting period witnessed the liaising with the ministry of education and higher education to facilitate the reintegration process of children into their schools following release. Under this mission, a number of awareness-raising workshops were organised in February targeting school principals and teachers to inform them about the issue of child detention, its negative impact on the children and how they can contribute to the reintegration of those children back into their schools. The effectiveness of these workshops was measured through pre and post surveys completed on the day of the workshops. Awareness raising sessions were also conducted with school children during December as a tool to explain to them what it means for a colleague to be detained and how hard it is to go back to his school bench. Issues of interaction with the colleague ex-detainee were raised.

Table 1: Psychosocial sessions conducted with ex-detainee children and families of detainee and ex-detainee children based on areas of intervention and numbers of beneficiaries

Area	Ex-detainee Children				Families of Detainee and Ex-Detainee Children			
	Individual psychosocial counseling		Group psychosocial counseling		Family intervention counseling		Group support counseling	
	beneficiaries	sessions	beneficiaries	sessions	beneficiaries	sessions	beneficiaries	sessions
Jerusalem/Bethlehem	81	576	19	16	32	116	26	20
Ramallah	144	1080	50	58	6	20	46	68
Tulkarem/Qualquilia	65	390	12	25	16	50	23	24
Jenin/Tubas	37	289	16	10	11	40	16	15
Nablus/Salfeet	94	702	18	13	56	242	11	15
Hebron	106	700	50	63	33	157	40	43
Jericho	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	527	3737	165	185	154	625	162	185

Table 2: Vocational Assessment conducted for ex-detainee children based on areas of intervention

Area	Number of Beneficiaries
East Jerusalem and Bethlehem	23
Ramallah	42
Tulkarem and Qualquilia	8
Jenin and Tubas	8
Nablus and Salfeet	23
Hebron	46
Jericho	0
Total	150

Table 3: Ventilation Weekends for beneficiaries

Area	Number of Beneficiaries	
	Ex-detainee Children	Families of Detainee and Ex-Detainee Children
East Jerusalem and Bethlehem	25	53
Ramallah	70	70
Tulkarem and Qualquilia	0	19
Jenin and Tubas	51	28
Nablus and Salfeet	47	0
Hebron	89	63
Jericho	0	0
Sub-totals	282	233
Total	515	

Table 4: Awareness workshops for school students

Area	Participants (school students)
East Jerusalem and Bethlehem	60
Ramallah	100
Tulkarem and Qualqulia	38
Jenin and Tubas	36
Nablus and Salfeet	34
Hebron	58
Jericho	0
Total	326

Table 5: Awareness workshops for school principals and teachers

Area	Number of schools
East Jerusalem and Bethlehem	11
Ramallah	8
Tulkarem and Qualqulia	4
Jenin and Tubas	9
Nablus and Salfeet	10
Hebron	10
Jericho	0
Total	52

During November, Helping the Helpers program was organised in Jericho, Oasis Hotel for the Rehabilitation Program staff. The program included entertainment activities as well as stress release, meditation and expressive arts therapy sessions. The program was a successful one based on the feedback of the participating counsellors and staff. They reported that it was necessary to ventilate the stressful emotions accumulated during their intervention with our targeted groups and that similar entertaining and spiritual activities left them feeling anew.

Assessing the impact of the Program:

To assess the effectiveness of the Program, a list of indicators is set to measure the results achieved. The indicators were examined for a random sample of the targeted beneficiaries who were assessed and finalized the intervention. Results of the main indicators came as follows:

During the first half of the year 2014:

- 84.62% of the targeted child ex-detainees have a higher self-esteem. (It exceeds the target of 70%)
- 86.96% of child ex-detainee report using more positive coping mechanisms. (It exceeds the target of 70%)
- 48.19% of the child ex-detainees are referred to educational or/and vocational training. (It exceeds the target of 25%)
- 95.71% of family members are positively interacting and communicating with their children following detention. (It exceeds the target of 70%)
- 98.57% of the targeted family members are more aware and understand the psycho-social needs of their children. (It exceeds the target of 70%)
- 95.71% of the targeted families are being more supportive to their children and advocate for their rights. (It exceeds the target of 70%)
- 88.75% of the school teachers/ principals are aware of the repercussion of detention and how they can contribute to the re-integration of child ex-detainees.

During the second half of the year 2014:

- 89.79% of the targeted child ex-detainees have a higher self- esteem.
- 86.66% of child ex-detainee report using more positive coping mechanisms.
- 86.95% of child ex-detainees show an increase in their ability to articulate and express plans for the future.
- 57.38% of the child ex-detainees are referred to educational or/and vocational training.
- 100% of family members are positively interacting and communicating with their children following detention.
- 97.62% of the targeted family members are more aware and understand the psycho-social needs of their children.
- 95.24% of the targeted families are being more supportive to their children and advocate for their rights.
- 91.70% of the school teachers/ principals are more aware of the repercussion of detention and how they can contribute to the re-integration of child ex-detainees.

The future of the Program:

Following the recent Israeli military offensive attack on Gaza, the whole West Bank witnessed tension and increased rates of arrest and violence, especially towards Palestinian children. The violent attacks conducted by the military against children mounted to shooting and killing in some cases. Given the reality that the Israeli occupation continues to dominate Palestinians' life and continues to target Palestinian children, it is crucial that the Post-Trauma Rehabilitation of the Palestinian Ex-detainee Children in the West Bank Program continues to serve this marginalised group. Therefore, it is held a high priority at the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program to look for funding to sustain the Program beyond March 2015 when ECHO unfortunately terminates its funding.

Serious work was done by the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program, Save the Children - Italy and Save the Children International - oPt Country Office during November 2014 to request funding from the Italian Government, and we are still waiting for their reply.

This plan entailed a sustainable program for three years to cover the same geographical areas of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Extensive meetings were held with potential stakeholders to investigate further opportunities that would maintain and enhance the Program. Fortunately, the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, Labor and Social Affairs and the Commission of Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs ensured their collaboration and support to the implementation of a development intervention in the field of child protection in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, with the objective to enhance the psychosocial well being and coping capacity of children detainees and ex-detainees.

Response to Gaza War

Psychosocial support in Gaza and the West Bank emergency project

Gaza has been severely affected by the most destructive armed offense launched by Israel, which included shelling from land, sea and airstrikes against the Palestinian civilians. As of August 8th, 2014, the offense resulted in 1920 deaths, of whom 448 are children and 242 are women. 9825 were injured, around 400,000 children required psychosocial support and 520,000 were displaced leaving their homes in search of secure shelters. This left severe physical and psychological impact on a large population. Consequently, the majority of the population of Gaza required substantial support to meet immediate basic psychosocial, physical and economic needs that were raised since the hostilities have started.

Basic human needs of children and adults became the highest priority as stated in the Child Protection Groups meeting conducted in parallel in the West Bank and in Gaza. The psychological support was severely needed and it was recommended that counselors from relevant experienced organizations should be deployed to Gaza to ensure sufficient and proper response especially that about 373,000 children would need psychological support and counseling as reported by The United Nation Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

As a response to this crisis, the East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation canceled its unified annual leave and held several meetings to plan for this response. The response was divided into two components; one inside Gaza and the other in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

The psychological support in Gaza and the West Bank emergency project was launched as of September 1st, 2014. Mainly funded by Christian Aid, the project's objectives were as follows:

- Working with the injured -and people who accompany them- coming from Gaza to the hospitals of the West Bank and Gaza.
- Working with the injured in the West Bank (due to Gaza crisis).
- Working with Gaza YMCA to help in building their capacity and helping the helpers and work with the most urgent cases in Gaza.

The beneficiaries served were as follows:

From the West Bank:

92 beneficiaries (87 males and 5 females) from all over the West Bank..

From Gaza:

- 12 employees and volunteers (9 males and 3 females) from YMCA Gaza.
- 11 substitution mothers (women who work in the SOS and play the role of mothers for children who don't have mothers, coming from broken families, or are now orphans) from the SOS.
- 18 (males) employees and volunteers from the Agricultural relief.
- 43 employees and volunteers (75% females) that were working within crises.
- 23 home visits (2-3 people per house, 90% females) in seven different areas (Al Shojaeyya, Beit Lahya, Beit Hanoun, Khoza'a, Deir Al-Balah, Rafah)

Outcomes of the project:

1. 31 (20 males and 11 females) severely injured and traumatized persons and 36 companions from Gaza have been served in the West bank and Jerusalem through therapeutic approaches in individual and group sessions.
2. 92 (87 males and 5 females) in the West Bank were provided with the following services: individual and family psychosocial counseling, house adaptations, assistive aids, training, and medical follow ups.
3. 43 employees and volunteers working during the crisis in Gaza were helped through a stress-release workshop.
4. 11 employees and volunteers from Gaza YMCA participated in a workshop to share experiences.
5. Counselors were accompanied in 23 home visits to provide psychological first aid in seven different areas (Al Shojaeyya, Beit Lahya, Beit Hanoun, Khoza'a, Deir Al-Balah, and Rafah).
6. A visit to SOS village in Rafah was paid where recreational activities were carried out with 75 children and youth.
7. A ventilation meeting was held with 11 substitution mothers and aunts.
8. A meeting was held with the director of the Islamic Relief who expressed the need for stress relief and psychological support to their 20 employees.
9. A stress-management meeting was held with employees of the Agricultural Relief at the Gaza YMCA. In total, 10 employees, 7 volunteers and 1 CA Gaza consultant attended. The meeting was effective and witnessed a high interaction amongst the participants.
10. A training session on working with support groups was held for 6 staff and 6 volunteers from Gaza YMCA. The meeting was effective and witnessed a high interaction amongst the participants.

OUR WORK IN NUMBERS

Direct beneficiaries served	925
Individual counseling sessions	11688
Vocationally assessed beneficiaries	439
Beneficiaries who received career counseling	1012
Beneficiaries who received vocational training	368
Facilitation of employment	185
Self-employment projects	19
Academic rehabilitation	58
Adaptations of residences and buildings for the use of persons with disability	56
Medical urgent assistive aids	77
Trainees from other organizations who received training	529
Trainees from our staff	37
University students trained	44
International training	2
Emergency interventions	998
Children and adults reached through emergency interventions	9290
Group counseling sessions for children	651
Children and caregivers who attended recreational/fun day activities	5907
Children and caregivers who attended ventilation day activities	1586
Caregivers attended sensitization sessions	1715
Signed MOUs to facilitate the access of persons with disability to the right of decent work	42
Employed persons with disability in the private sector companies, municipalities and schools	46
Ex-detainees children worked with	374
Families of ex-detainees children worked with	248
Beneficiaries (affected by the war on Gaza) from the West Bank helped	92
Beneficiaries (Gazians injured and traumatized during the war on Gaza) helped	31