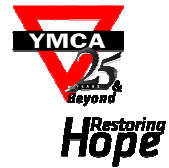

Annual Report
January 1st to December 31st, 2015



Brief:

This report aims at providing information on the work accomplished by the East Jerusalem YMCA - Rehabilitation Program (YMCA) during the year of 2015. The report relies on the four main objectives undertaken for the years of 2015-2017, providing thorough information on each one of them, and including the indicators relevant to each objective that help us assess our work and measure its impact on the target groups. The objectives are then followed by an overview of the main difficulties and challenges facing our teams, a narration of one of the success stories is included, and finally an overview of other main projects implemented by the YMCA. A quick index of our achievements in numbers is attached towards the end of the report.

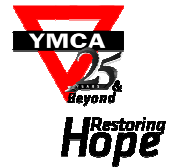
The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



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The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



Introduction

The year 2015, could be described as the year of vicious turbulence for Palestinians. It has witnessed an acceleration in human rights violations¹, especially after September, seen through the sharp increase in settlers' violence, unlawful killing, forced displacements, arrest and torture, movement restrictions, and many other illegal acts. The enormous effect of this unrest has taken its toll on the coping mechanisms and psychosocial and physical wellbeing of Palestinians, and a growing number of persons with disabilities. As a result the YMCA, through its dedicated staff and field teams, has invested huge efforts in supporting the marginalized groups of survivors of political conflict and those who live with disabilities to enable them to attain their rights and achieve their immediate and long-term psychosocial wellbeing.

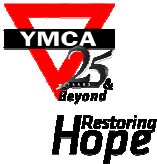
The year 2015 witnessed big achievements on the level of provision of rehabilitative and re-integrative support to its target groups as will be seen throughout the coming sections of this bulletin. But what is worth highlighting here is the unprecedented efforts exacerbated in 1930 emergency interventions conducted by the Psychosocial Emergency Teams distributed in all the West Bank districts. Not only the number of daily interventions was higher than planned for 2015, but also focused interventions were designed and implemented in highly conflicted areas, specifically in East Jerusalem, Hebron, and the eastern slopes of the West Bank where human rights violations were the highest.

On another level, we were able to pursue some of the results and recommendations of the last strategic planning done for the Program in terms of improving our communication tools, specifically the launch of the new bilingual website of the Program (www.ej-ymca.org/rehab), and issuing the first update bulletin in July 2015 that provided a holistic description of its achievements during the first six months of the year. The bulletin will continue to be issued on a semi-annual basis. Both the new website and the bulletin bring the valuable message and resources to people throughout the world and serve as a gateway and catalyst to attract other sponsors and resources that would further support our Program in reaching out to those who suffer most.

As we have survived quite a pressuring year, full of dedicated hard work, we look forward to 2016 as a new year that renews hope for Palestinian children and youth to live a better life where they obtain equal rights and opportunities and enjoy living in dignity.

¹ In the year 2015, Palestinian injuries caused by the Israeli forces in the West Bank reached 12500, of which many resulted in disabilities, while fatalities reached 127. The bi-weekly average of Israeli military search and arrest operations into the West Bank was 85. Settler-related violence in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), resulted in 132 property damage incidents and 89 casualty incidents. While the number of Palestinians displaced due to demolitions in area C reached 564, and in East Jerusalem it reached 72. www.ochaopt.org, 2015

**The East Jerusalem YMCA
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Objective I

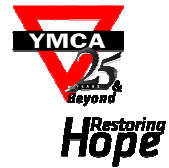
To enhance the targeted individuals' and groups' access to psychosocial support and counseling services and promote the supportive role of the families and communities towards their affected members



The YMCA continues to be the main provider of psychosocial rehabilitation support targeting persons with disability and the survivors of political violence in all West Bank Districts including East Jerusalem, through the holistic approach it adopts to make sure that its services enable its target groups, their families and their surrounding communities to practice their rights on the different levels.

The main support provided through the Program's eleven field teams is psychosocial support and counseling that is conducted on the individual as well as the group levels based on initial assessment. The most important achievements of counseling are seen when our participants develop increased levels of self-esteem and coping mechanisms, become able to plan for the future, and many other traits that eventually lead to re-integration into their communities and enhancing their psychosocial wellness.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



The Counseling and Supervision Department of the Program is keen to regularly build the capacities of its teams and update them on the latest theories and techniques in psychosocial counseling. Extensive and regular supervision of the interventions conducted with the participants takes place to ensure that our interventions enable the participants to practice their rights and affect a change in their lives. The counselors are trained to use case management techniques to follow up on the rehabilitation of the participant and make necessary referrals based on assessment. Full documentation of the interventions conducted with the participants is kept on the database of the Program.

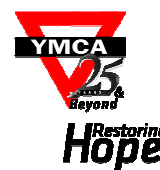
In order to contribute to the overall wellness of the participant, the key partner in this process is the family who happens to be a main source of support to him/her. Understanding, communicating with, and supporting their children is a vital step to attaining the children's psychological wellness. Family members are provided with techniques and skills to better understand their children's rights and needs and respond to them in addition to positively communicate with and encourage them. In many cases, family members receive counseling sessions and are taught techniques to manage their stress, especially those who have one of their children detained. Usually the minute of military attack on the house and brutal arrest of the child leaves parents traumatized.

O.S., a 14 year old boy from Qalqiliya, got detained twice at a very early age. Detention left him in deep fear from seeing military forces, feelings of rage and anger filled his soul, feelings of guilt controlled his mind, not to mention the continuous nightmares, heavily smoking, breaking of assets, isolation, and aggressive attitudes towards his family. His family felt helpless in front of his uncontrollable rage and fury and his withdrawal from society. The Program's team worked with him and his family. They gave him space to release his anger and regain self-control through the many counseling sessions conducted. The family as well was taught techniques to better communicate with and support their son. O.S. received academic rehabilitation services and was convinced to return back to school. Today he is a leading social young boy who participates regularly in local activities organized through the municipality. O.S. said, "I feel strong enough to revisit the place where I got arrested and I can talk to people about my experience... I feel relieved... my family understands my needs and treat me much better than before...today I am going to buy new clothes to wear upon my return to school".

In 2015, detention rates sharply increased in the West Bank, especially in two main areas; East Jerusalem and Hebron. According to Al-Quds Press², 2015 witnessed the detention of 2300 Palestinians in East Jerusalem only of whom 860 were children. In East Jerusalem, detention of children was done differently as many boys were sentenced to home arrest where the family became the oppressor in the eyes of the children. Working with these families was highly challenging as family relations and bonds were dramatically affected and children were losing their scholar years. Academic rehabilitation represented a major intervention in working with those children.

² Al Quds Newspaper, Wednesday, January 20th 2016, 16681
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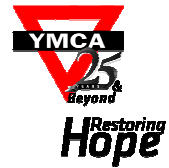


Our teams were confronted with the dilemma of mobilizing the limited human and financial resources available to meet the unexpected numbers of survivors of political violence. Our services targeted all those affected; military attacks, home raids, arrest, interrogation, detention, home demolition, home evacuation, etc. A special focus was made during the reporting period on supporting the wives of those killed in conflict. In such an oriental culture, widows not only live with the trauma of losing their partners in a brutal scenery, but they are also obliged to abide by the highly conservative society they live in where in most cases they are requested to marry their brothers-in-law. They carry their misery and lead unfortunate lives having no hope for tomorrow. Working with them is crucial to help them regain their psychological balance and most importantly to enable them to take adequate care of their children.

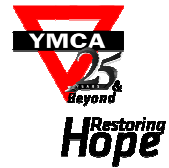
During 2015, 8053 psychosocial counseling sessions were provided either through individual or group interventions based on the assessment done by our counselors. The following table provides a demographic analysis of the participants that joined the YMCA during the reporting period and received rehabilitative and integrative support. It is worth mentioning that of the 796 direct participants that joined us during the reporting period, 48.61% were persons with disabilities, 48.24% were survivors of the political violence, and 3.15% suffered from both situations. The demographic analysis highlights the fact that 73% of our participants were youth, and 70% of our participants came from villages and remote areas where services are limited or non-existent. Youth being the biggest target group of our interventions is only expected as they are on the crossroads of surviving their trauma or disability and being able to move a step forward in their lives. An estimated value of as little as 3% were very young children of 6 years old and less, while an estimation of around 3.5% were older adults of 36 years old and more. The YMCA's eleven teams distributed in all West Bank Districts have been highly devoted and loyal in reaching out to those marginalized groups even in scattered areas that cannot be reached by vehicles.

District	Number		Age				Place of Residence			Total
	Male	Female	0-11	12-18	19-25	>26	City	Village	Camp	
Hebron	221	63	38	140	70	36	60	189	35	284
Ramallah	76	12	7	56	16	9	40	39	9	88
Jenin & Tubas	56	29	14	38	15	18	8	72	5	85
Jerusalem & Bethlehem & Jericho	90	17	15	63	16	13	19	84	4	107
Tulkarem & Qalqilya	63	27	2	28	45	15	18	61	11	90
Nablus & Salfit	95	47	25	46	44	27	24	110	8	142
Total	601	195	101	371	206	118	169	555	72	796
Percentage	76%	24%	13%	47%	26%	15%	21%	70%	9%	100%

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R.H., is a 15 year old girl from Jenin who lost her ability to move around easily or depend on herself to do daily tasks at the age of 8 due to a disease that affected her nervous system. She had to withdraw from attending school and gradually locked herself inside her home to observe in melancholy other kids playing outside. Her father was reluctant to allow the Program's team see her as he could not trust services provided by local organizations. When our team succeeded in gaining his trust and were able to provide help, he was impressed by the intervention plan they designed in full participation of his daughter, himself, and his family. The plan included psychosocial counseling sessions to help her accept herself and raise her self-esteem, the provision of a 'Rollator' to assist her in moving around freely depending on herself, and finally adapting the house entrance to support her mobility. R.H. after seven years of isolation was able to participate in social life and meet with people without feeling herself as a burden on her family. For her father, seeing her leaving home and making friends was as if she was born again.



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Objective 2

To enhance the targeted groups and communities' physical and economic independency

Vocational Rehabilitation

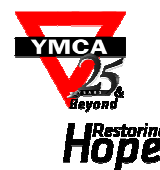
The YMCA continued to provide vocational rehabilitation support to children and youth, 15 years old and over, those who live with disability or trauma and need to set a vocational goal in their lives as they are unable to resume their academic path.

Within the year of 2015, the Program supported the vocational rehabilitation of 403 participants. Of those, 347 participants received career counseling through the support of our counselors that enabled them to set a vocational goal for their lives. The career counseling entailed discussing the abilities and interests of the participants and the economic reality of their respective communities. The Vocational Rehabilitation Department as well, was able to assess 235 participants from all over the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Of those, 137 were reached through the mobile unit which proved to be an imperative asset for the Program. As soon as the participants were clear about their goals, they were assisted to locate suitable training centers to develop their capacities and be prepared to resume their professional lives.

The YMCA was able to facilitate vocational training for 136 participants from the West Bank and East Jerusalem districts in the subjects of computer technology, maintenance of mobile devices, hairdressing, autotronics, etc. In addition, the Program facilitated the employment of 12 persons with disabilities in the private and public sectors. 20 self-employment projects were supported to help the participants become self-dependant and economically secured as part of the process to help them reach stability and wellness. These projects included establishing different kinds of income generating projects like groceries, shops for selling stationery and accessories, women's' clothes, livestock and poultry, barber shop, sewing machines, etc. 30% of those projects were established by empowered females.

A.M., a 34 year old young lady from the village of Beit Fourik – Nablus who lives with a short leg due to complications at birth, was one of the participants of the Program in early 1999. A.M. back then was a young lady leading a hard life, not accepting her physical disability and suffering from low self-esteem that resulted in withdrawal from school and social isolation. She received lots of support from the Program's team who enabled her to accept her reality and build her self-confidence. As returning her to school was not possible, she was assisted through vocational assessment and career counseling to receive training in sewing. A.M. succeeded in making a big change in her life as she became in peace with herself and started reintegrating into social life. In 2015, A.M. came back to the Program asking for support to further develop herself and she got enrolled in an expert training course in fashion design. The Program supported her in buying her own sewing machine and she is today leading her own business at a competitive level in the local market regardless of her disability.

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During the reporting period, 403 participants received vocational rehabilitation support as follows:

Vocational rehabilitation	Number of participants
Vocational assessment	235
Facilitation of employment of PWD's	12
Self-employment projects	20
Vocational training	136
Total	403

Towards the last few months of 2015, the Vocational Rehabilitation Department underwent a thorough review and evaluation of its work and the scales used. Adaptations to scales and questionnaires were proposed and discussed among senior staff.

Academic Rehabilitation

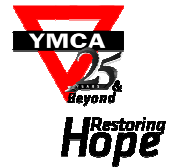
Following the YMCA's quest in enabling its participants to live a better life, huge efforts are made to reintegrate children into their schools. In general, children with disabilities and traumatized children, are facing a big challenge in going to school mainly due to restricted access and mobility in addition to lack of security. Other factors related to psychosocial challenges only add to the dilemma. As soon as counselors resume their psychosocial support with children, they try hard to investigate the reasons discouraging children from continuing their education and dedicate efforts to resolve those issues. During the reporting period, 229 participants received academic rehabilitation support as follows:

Academic rehabilitation	Number of participants
Remedial Education	183
Transportation (back & forth)	45
School fees	1
Total	229

In many cases the economic situation of the family affects the decision of the children to continue their school education especially for children with disabilities who live in remote areas. When the family can hardly provide for the basic needs of its children, it is hard to save money for the expensive daily transportation of one child and therefore leaving school would become a realistic choice.

A.S., is a 15 year old young boy from Tulkarem, who got detained for around a month and a half, during which he was brutally beaten and maltreated on the hands of the military. Upon release, A.S. suffered from PTSD, and because of absence to school, he was no longer able to resume his education. The Program supported him to receive remedial education classes as part of the planned psychosocial intervention. A.S. said: "I can better focus on my studying at school... my school marks

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



are better, I haven't failed any subject, and my teachers see the difference and always encourage me to proceed... I am thinking about what I should study beyond the Tawjihi class".

Accessibility

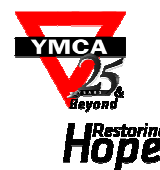
Through the YMCA's long experience in providing support to rehabilitate and integrate people with disabilities, it was evident that in order to affect real change in their lives, we need not only to provide adequate psychosocial support, but also we have to respond to one of the main problems hindering their integration within their communities which is accessibility. Therefore the Program is keen to continuously find ways to enable persons with disability to enjoy their rights in reaching the different services available and therefore the Program builds access facilities and adapts buildings that host people with disabilities and according to its set criteria. During the reporting period, the Program was able to adapt 60 residential units in all the districts of the West Bank including East Jerusalem through building ramps, installing handrails, and adapting bathrooms, kitchens, and home entrances. These adaptations enabled participants with disabilities to move in and out of their homes easily and use bathrooms by themselves the fact which developed their self-dependence, contributed to building their self-esteem and eventually enabled them to live in dignity.

H.H., a 6 year old girl from Bethlehem, was born with a congenital malformation in her right leg that hindered her mobility. She always needed her mother to accompany her to use their old squat toilet. Upon adapting the bathroom and adding to it a modern latrine with necessary rails, the mother said, "the adaptation of the bathroom helped me and my daughter a lot; whenever she wanted to go to the bathroom in the past, I had to hold her hand and accompany her, in most times I lost my temper on her, little by little she became afraid to ask me to accompany her, many times she urinated on herself to avoid seeing my anger. Today after the adaptation, she goes to the bathroom easily and by herself".

M.T., a 15 year old young boy born with stiff lower limbs, and spent his childhood on a wheel chair, got his home entrance adapted through adding a ramp with rails. His mother said, "After the adaptation, my son began going out of home and meet with his friends, without our help. He is committed to attending school. The adaptation changed our lives; we were always thinking about him and how we can help him depend on himself when he grows older... we are much relieved".

Within our quest to support the marginalized groups of people with disabilities in Palestine to attain their right to education, we have succeeded in adapting 17 schools in the districts of Ramallah, Jenin & Tubas, Nablus, Tulkarem, and Hebron currently hosting around 4825 students of whom around 38 students live with disabilities. Adapting schools has an added value impact on children. They develop a sense of independence as they can move freely inside the school facilities, they can socialize with their classmates while spending time in the playgrounds, and they feel that the school environment is friendly. At the same time the counselors work on sensitizing the school community on the rights of

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persons with disability in order to help them better support their peers who live with disability, and change the stigma and preconceived ideas about disability. Eventually all of these efforts contribute to encouraging school attendance among children with disabilities. Our work in the schools was coordinated with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to provide adaptation services and awareness campaigns.

In addition, the YMCA was able to adapt 4 public buildings operating within the health and educational sectors in the districts of Jenin, Tubas, Nablus, and Tulkarem to facilitate the accessibility of persons with disability in order to benefit from available services. The buildings received a daily average number of visitors reaching 550 persons of whom 88 live with disabilities.

In the District of Hebron, 7 clinics located in the remote and marginalized areas were adapted to facilitate the provision of health services to persons with disabilities within the local communities. The areas were chosen in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

During the year of 2015, the following was achieved:

Adaptations	Number of units
Houses	60
Schools	17
Clinics	7
Public buildings	4
Total	88

Medical urgent assistive aids

For many persons who live with disability, the rehabilitation process cannot be real without providing some basic and urgent assistive aids. Therefore the YMCA succeeded in serving 133 persons who live with disability by either subsidizing physiotherapy and occupational therapy or offering technical assistive aids (like wheelchairs, crutches, artificial limbs, etc.), medicine, and financial contributions to surgery costs. Some participants needed more than one aid. Further details to follow:

Medical urgent assistive aids	Number of participants
Technical aids	87
Physiotherapy	43
Medicine	2
Contribution to surgery costs	1
Total	133

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B.S., a 29 year old daughter for a very poor family from Hebron, who lost her right leg, was living in despair, unable to accept her disability, suffering from low self-esteem, and regularly annoyed by others' remarks on her. The Program's counselor worked with her through intensified individual counseling in addition to financial contribution to cover the costs of an artificial leg. The Program as well succeeded in networking with another stakeholder to cover the costs for adapting her house entrance. B.S. said, "I never thought that after losing my whole leg, I would ever leave my house or participate in social gatherings in my village. I cannot describe the joyful feelings I hold inside me after having a new leg. If it were not because of you, I would have never left my house".



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Objective 3

To upgrade the skills of the Palestinian social workers and counsellors

The Training Unit continues to implement a variety 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.

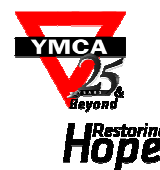


At the external level

The following trainings were provided to other NGOs and GOs:

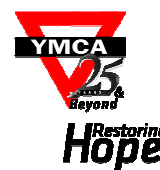
Training subject	Participants	Number	Duration
Building supporting groups	Children's Village (S.O.S), (social workers and volunteers)	18	2 days, May 5-6 th 2015
Post-traumatic stress disorders in the aftermath of emergencies (upgrading training)	Early Childhood Programs, (social workers and volunteers)	37	1 day, May 20 th 2015

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Guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings - IASC	Social workers and volunteers of a number of Community-Based Organizations , West Bank districts	136	8 trainings during the period of May 20 th – June 9 th 2015
Psychological First Aid	Social workers and volunteers of local organizations from Jerusalem	15	1 day, May 25 th 2015
Psychological First Aid	Social workers and volunteers of local organizations from Ramallah	24	1 day, May 26 th 2015
Guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings - IASC	Ministry of Education and Higher Education, West Bank districts of Jenin, Tulkarem, Nablus, Salfit, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron (counselors and social workers)	242	11 trainings during the period of April 8 th – May 11 th 2015
'Butterfly Hug' technique in working with children	Counselors of local organizations in Tulkarem	10	February 28 th 2015
Crisis Intervention	Counselors and members of local organizations in Jerusalem	22	2 Days, February 2 nd and March 9 th 2015
Right to health for persons with disabilities'	Ministry of Health in Hebron (field workers)	15	1 day, July 26 th 2015
Right to education for persons with disabilities'	Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Hebron (field workers)	16	1 day, August 4 th , 2015
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in the West Bank (counselors and volunteers)	32	1 day, September 29 th 2015
Positive parenting	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in the West Bank (counselors and volunteers)	32	1 day, September 30 th 2015
Psychological First Aid	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in East Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron (counselors)	13	2 days, November 29-30 th 2015
Psychosocial First Aid	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in Hebron (volunteers)	16	1 day, December 15 th 2015

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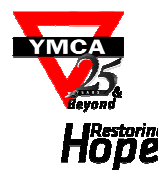


Initial skills in expressionist art	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in Bethlehem (counselors and volunteers)	14	1 day, November 7 th , 2015
Initial skills in expressionist art	Psychosocial Emergency Teams in Nablus (counselors and volunteers)	18	1 day, November 9 th , 2015
Positive adaptation in children	Psychosocial Emergency Teams (counselors)	27	3 days, December 1 st -3 rd 2015

At the internal level

The following trainings were provided to our staff:

Training subject	Organized by	Participants	Number	Duration
Accountability	ACT Alliance	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	1	February 2015
Group counseling - advanced	East Jerusalem YMCA – Rehabilitation Program	Rehabilitation Program, Hebron (counselors and volunteers)	19	2 days, May 14-15 th 2015
Adopting child safeguarding policy	Save the Children oPt	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	1 day, May 20 th 2015
Guidelines and procedures of UNICEF in partnership agreements	UNICEF	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	2 days, May 26-28 th 2015
Initial skills on EMDR	East Jerusalem YMCA – Rehabilitation Program	Rehabilitation Program (counselors)	32	1 day, September 29 th 2015
Basics of monitoring and evaluation	UNICEF	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	1 day, June 2 nd 2015
Resilience Practitioners' Manual	Save the Children oPt	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	3 days, August 11-13 th 2015



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Fundraising	Embrace the Middle East and Y Care International	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	7 days, September 2015
Quality Humanitarian Response	Save the Children oPt	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	2	5 days, November 22-26 th 2015

University students

The following internships were completed:

Training subject	Participants	Number	Duration
Enhancing the capacities of students in the sphere of their specialization, in addition to acquiring technical and therapeutic skills and enhancing their experience with professional counseling and intervention mechanisms at the individual and group levels.	Local universities – students of social work and/or psychology	67	4 months

At the international level

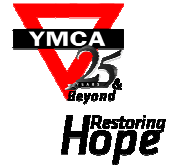
The following trainings were arranged abroad:

Training subject	Participants	Number	Duration
EMDR ³ – level 1 ⁴	Psychologists and mental health practitioners from Syria, Jordan, Sudan, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Palestine, who work with the refugees and the victims of political violence in their countries	28	4 days, May 12-15 th 2015
EMDR – level 2	Psychologists and mental health practitioners from Syria, Jordan, Sudan,	22	5 days, October 12-

³ Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing. EMDR therapy has proved highly effective in working with cases that suffer from repeated trauma and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorders in particular, and in maintaining their psychological wellness. It has been used in Palestine since 2005.

⁴ The training came as a response to the urgent need in various parts of the Arab world to intervene with cases that suffer from repeated trauma and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorders. It was implemented by the Rehabilitation Program in partnership with HAP UK & Ireland.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



	Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Palestine, who work with the refugees and the victims of political violence in their countries	16 th 2015
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Research

On April 1st 2015, the YMCA's Research and Training Unit in partnership with Save the Children International succeeded in producing a research document on "The Accessibility of children with disabilities to educational, social and health services in the West Bank". Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to conduct this research, which represents a professional asset of knowledge for advocacy and interventions, as the research shows that there is a huge lack of services available for children with disabilities on educational, health and social protection levels and that there are obstacles and barriers that limit their access to those services. The research revealed the hard reality of discrimination and poverty these children live through and the urgent need for making a change on the national level to enable this marginalized group to practice its rights. This research will be used as an important resource in addressing issues on the rights of persons with disability in the fields of education, health, and social affairs.

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Objective 4

To promote community responsibility towards persons with disability and traumatized through networking within the rehabilitation and disability organizations

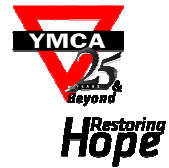
The main highlight of the year 2015, was the adoption of the **Disability Policy** by the mother organization, East Jerusalem YMCA, which has been produced and developed by the YMCA with consultation with groups of persons with disability. This policy which aims at preserving the rights of persons with disability either working within the Program or being participants within any of its projects. The policy is binding to the management as well as staff working for the Program.

In September 2015, the YMCA's Director and Development Coordinator were also privileged to attend Embrace the Middle East Annual Service in both the Cathedrals of Glasgow and London where they met with the main supporters of Embrace the Middle East and talked about the work of the Program, the challenges it faces given the conflicted areas it works in, and its partnership with Embrace.

During the reporting period, the YMCA through its field teams was able to implement many activities aiming at advocating and lobbying for the rights of persons with disability and the survivors of the political violence. More than half of those activities, specifically 193 activities were implemented in partnership with other organizations with whom the Program has established networks for cooperation.



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Following are the main highlights of the achievements during the reporting period.

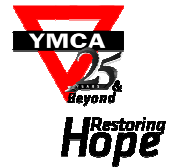
- 61 activities were implemented in coordination with organizations working in the field of disability.
- Representatives of youth advocacy groups participated in 24 activities.
- Awareness raising publications were distributed in 41 activities.
- 16 petitions were submitted to different organizations.
- 26 friendship committees were established in all West Bank areas.

Networking with local organizations, centres, committees, clubs, etc.

During the reporting period, 121 coordination meetings and field visits were held on the local level that aimed at raising public awareness on concepts of disability and diversity in addition to sensitizing and increasing the commitment of public and private sectors on supporting the rights of persons with disability and the survivors of political violence. Those efforts resulted in the following outcomes:

- A number of workshops were held with different target groups such as: school and university students, local community members, children with disabilities and their families, and the mothers of youth killed during political violence. On another level, workshops were also held in cooperation with the chambers of commerce and industry in the different districts in which private sector companies, representatives of municipalities, the ministry of local government, and service councils participated together with persons with disability.
- Coordination and participation with the Child Protection Network and the Palestinian Network for Children Rights in organizing the Palestinian Child Day in April 2015. The meetings among participating organizations aimed at distributing tasks and responsibilities for implementing the celebratory activities all over the West Bank. The activities called for the protection of the rights of children from all forms of violence and abuse and the need to adhere to international covenants and conventions.
- A number of periodic meetings were held for the Advocacy Coordination Committees for Disability at the districts level aiming at coordinating efforts to jointly implement advocacy activities. Most importantly, those meetings resulted in the re-activation of those committees and the review of their quarterly plans to enable them to share tasks and respond to emerging issues which need joint efforts.
- A coordination meeting between the Advocacy Committee and the General Director of Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Labor was held to discuss the need for adapting some articles within the law of labor concerned with the rights of persons with disability. A follow up meeting will be held later with a representative of the Higher Council for Persons with Disability.
- Visiting several institutions and companies that provide vocational and academic training for persons with disability in order to plan for tailor-made trainings in the near future. It is worth mentioning that the networking efforts resulted in providing a number of training courses to

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persons with disability in addition to referring many participants to medical rehabilitation and adapting spaces to facilitate the accessibility to services.

- Holding a series of coordination meetings with governmental organizations such as the Directorate of Education in the different districts in order to facilitate the work of the YMCA teams. The meetings also discussed the difficulties that children with disabilities face within the school environment. As a result, many awareness-raising activities and advocacy activities were implemented as well as a number of friendship committees were established in different schools. In order to improve the conditions of the workplace to needy staff, adaptations were conducted where necessary to help persons with disability do their tasks easily.
- Coordination field visits were carried out to governmental and private sector organizations to facilitate the employment of persons with disability. In addition, several field visits were carried out to monitor the adaptations implemented during the same period, and an unlimited number of visits were done to prepare for organizing the workshops with the private sector companies aiming at emphasizing the importance of inclusion and integration of persons with disability in the workplace. As a result of those visits, many cases were referred to the YMCA to receive rehabilitative support.
- Coordination and participation with the Coordination Committee of Persons with Disabilities Organizations to plan and arrange for the Disability Day celebrations in different areas of the West Bank.
- Visiting a number of stakeholders and partners aiming at setting clear referral mechanisms to ensure that participants receive comprehensive support. Among those stakeholders were the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, the Martyrs' Families Organization, etc. The meetings also helped in assessing the needs of those marginalized groups and currently missing services.
- A meeting was conducted in Jenin and included the YMCA, Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Health Work Committee, and Tubas Governorate to form a committee to enhance and activate referral mechanisms in their area for the benefit of persons with disability.

Main challenges that faced the team during its work:

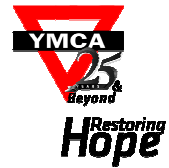
- The absence of representatives of some organizations and decision-makers to coordination meetings for the celebrations of the Disability Day.
- Inaccurate information provided through few governmental organizations which resulted in delays in reaching targeted groups.
- Limited financial resources at partner organizations which resulted in changes to some activities.

Awareness raising activities

During the reporting period, 138 workshops, lectures and meetings were held to affect societal understanding and attitude towards persons with disability. The aim was to trigger the society's responsibility towards persons with disability. The main outputs were as follows:

- Strengthening the role of persons with disabilities in their communities by enhancing their abilities and raising their awareness about their rights and responsibilities. A special attention was given to highlight the importance of activating the Palestinian General Union of Persons with Disabilities as a main body providing support to this group especially in marginalized areas by enhancing their access to services provided through public and private institutions. Most importantly the role of the Union was seen as the main body to monitor the violations being done against them in governmental, civil, and private organizations.
- Through the workshops held, we were able to familiarize the participants with the different types of disabilities, the rights of persons with disabilities, their crucial role in supporting them and in the process of applying the law in their favor. The impact of those workshops was positive especially in the case of the organizations' representatives who learnt the appropriate terminology to be used when addressing persons with disability. The participants in these workshops explicitly talked about the importance of their support to activate the disability law and the crucial role the persons with disability themselves can play in being part of advocacy campaigns.
- Reaching out to a number of local institutions from different areas to raise the awareness of persons with disabilities and their families on the appropriate terminology to be used when addressing them in addition to giving them space to talk about their stories, the challenges they face, and the way to cope with the disability.
- Addressing the mothers of children with disability in several villages and remote areas and raising their awareness on the appropriate terminology to be used when communicating with persons with disability in addition to enhancing their skills in positively communicating with their children, understanding their rights, and teaching them on disability prevention.
- The workshops held with private sector institutions resulted in signing 6 Memorandums of Understanding to facilitate the employment of persons with disability in addition to signing 10 Memorandums to facilitate the training of persons with disability.
- A number of awareness raising workshops were organized in Area C in Hebron targeting local mothers, persons with disabilities, decision-makers, and stakeholders in the field of disability, including the General Union for Disability, Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Palestinian Children Relief Organization, municipal councils, UNRWA, among others.
- The workshops conducted in the northern districts came out with significant outputs, including: making recommendations to the government on the main services needed within the health and educational sectors; setting priorities in developing services for persons with disability; assigning a staff member at Kafr Qaddoum municipal council to collect data on persons with disability in their area and to facilitate referral to other specialized service providers; capacity building of young women with disabilities to form youth leadership groups; reporting the main recommendations

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and outputs of the organizational meetings in Tulkarem District to the Governor who in his turn reached out to the Minister of Local Government.

Difficulties and challenges faced during organizing the workshops:

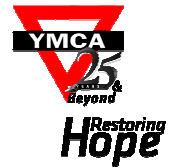
1. The commitment of the families in participating in the workshops was challenging due to their involvement in agricultural work and others in their jobs.
2. Lack of residential adaptations that help children with disabilities leave their houses and attend the different workshops and activities organized through the YMCA.
3. Remote areas and lack of public transportation to some areas.
4. Strikes at local universities delayed the arrangement of several workshops.

Activities with educational institutions

During the reporting period, 71 activities were organized with either schools or universities within the different districts of the West Bank. Those activities aimed at raising public awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities, their needs and the challenges they face in their lives. The participants were also informed about reasons for disability, the different forms of disability and ways for prevention. Educating the public on their supportive role to persons with disability and the appropriate communication to be used with them were the main concerns highlighted in those activities. The main outputs were as follows:

- Raising the awareness of the supervisors/counselors/teachers of the Directorate of Education in different districts on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities and the appropriate terminology to be used when addressing them. An agreement was reached to reactivate the school radio and the formation of a cultural committee to activate the school board where they can write success stories of persons with disability and hold interviews with students who live with disability who managed to reintegrate into their school.
- Different activities targeted school children and staff to sensitize them on issues related to disability and how to communicate with and provide support to colleagues with disabilities. The activities also aimed at raising their awareness on the reasons for disability, the different types and prevention methods. The impact of those efforts was evident when schools began forming friendship committees to provide support for students with disabilities. 26 friendship committees were established in all West Bank areas through which a positive attitude was evident within the school community to enable the students who live with disability to reintegrate successfully in their academic lives. Action plans were set to facilitate the accessibility of persons with disability to educational, medical and social services. Through forming those committees, we raised the community's awareness on the disability law and the challenges that persons with disability face and the importance of reactivating the role of the General Palestinian Union for Persons with

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Disability. A petition was submitted to the Ministry of Health to demand it to provide needed medicine for persons with disability.

- A set of activities targeted university students of Social Work during their internships as well as students of Law from the different universities of the West Bank districts. Those efforts resulted in the students' initiative to establish a 'legal clinic' for following up on complaints from and provide legal counseling to persons with disability as well as organizing a set of advocacy activities within their universities.
- The activities with schools and universities included theatrical performances that discussed the marginalization and exclusion of persons with disability within the work place and the community in general as well as the exploitation of children who live with disability in labor. Other activities included stress release activities and fun days at schools where students who live with disability interacted with their peers with the aim of enhancing their inclusion in their schools.
- Organizing a documentary show in Ramallah in partnership with Jerusalem Abu Dis University, Jerusalem Open University, and Palestinian Medical Relief Society which focused on the personal story of one of the YMCA's participants who live with disability, Duaa'.

Difficulties and challenges faced during organizing the activities:

- Limited time available within school programs to host similar activities.

Celebratory and public events

During the organization of the Palestinian Child's Day celebrations, the YMCA successfully implemented 27 centralized activities to emphasize the right of the Palestinian children to protection as well as to other rights as stipulated in the international conventions. Hundreds of children who came from villages affected by the Segregation Wall, and children suffering from political violence as well children residing in rehabilitation centers in the cities participated in those activities during which they received small gifts. It is worth mentioning that the YMCA participated in all activities organized by the Child Protection Network as well as the Palestinian Network for Children's Rights. Children with disabilities have participated in many of those activities which have contributed to raising children's awareness on the dangers of child labor as well and the importance of demanding for protection from exploitation and abuse by emphasizing the roles of the different organizations in providing safety measures in the fields of health, education and community participation.

The main outputs can be summarized as follows:

- Implement stress release activities and artistic activities like dance, sing, play, Muppets, circus, poetry, clowns, etc. in addition to theatrical performances that aimed at raising awareness on rights of children. Some areas witnessed drawing on the walls of the schools to call for the rights of children with disabilities. Many activities were implemented by the children themselves who called for their basic human rights and sent appeals to local and international stakeholders to provide them with protection and safety.

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- A number of initiatives and voluntary activities were implemented by children, which included the cultivation of forest trees and perennial trees, and cleaning the streets of the villages and water resources. Those initiatives aimed at raising children's awareness on the importance of volunteering and social solidarity. The children included areas endangered by the Segregation Wall in their planting efforts and organized a peaceful march along the side of the Wall holding banners calling for their rights. Among the initiatives, the children visited the elderly, the homeless and the children with disabilities residing in specialized institutions to share stories and experiences and socialize in a fun atmosphere while bringing roses for them as a caring gesture.
- The children participated with representatives of partner institutions in a peaceful march that started from the Governor's office in the district of Jenin and heading towards the office of the Red Cross carrying a letter to the Director of the Red Cross demanding the international community to provide protection and safety to the Palestinian children from the Israeli violations to their rights through the arrest, detention and violence used by the military against them.
- In another peaceful march in the district of Bethlehem that headed towards the office of the Governor, 200 children carried a letter to be submitted through the Governor to the President of Palestine to emphasize the rights of the children as stipulated by international conventions. The march was carried out with the participation of members of organizations at the Child Protection Network and the Palestinian Network for the Children's Rights. Similar letters were also submitted to the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights, the Director of Bethlehem Police Department, the Directorate of Education, and the Ministry of Labor. A special petition calling for protecting children from economic exploitation and enhancing their ability to question the accountability of decision makers and pressuring them to implement the law was submitted to the government and the private sector.
- Another march was done in Hebron calling for protecting children and abiding by the law on children rights. A session with decision makers was held and aimed at sending out a clear message to local and civil organizations on the importance of protecting children's rights. Decision makers represented the Governorate office, the Directorates of Education, Health, Labor, and Social Affairs, the police, the public prosecution and the civil defense.
- A number of festivals were held for children living in areas that are exposed to harassment and provocations by the Israeli military and settlers that purposely target children, particularly the areas of Madama and Qasra as well as in Hebron city and Jerusalem. Festivals were also held in remote and marginalized areas that suffer from political violence, military attacks, home demolitions and evacuations, particularly in Bedouin communities and the Jordan Valley. Another significant festival was organized for the children of Duma and Jorish after the burning and killing of the baby Ali Dawabsha by Israeli settlers, an incident that moved the whole nation in Palestine.
- As part of organizing the World Day against the Exploitation of Children, the YMCA in partnership with the Child Protection Network and Defence for Children International – Palestine Section carried out an awareness campaign on the risk of economic exploitation of children which included distributing leaflets , posters and other printed materials. The campaign was carried out in partnership with representatives of partner organizations and 40 children who

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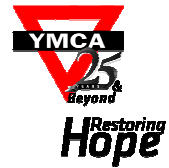
headed towards the industrial zones and targeted 150 children who actually work there and the owners of the workshops.

- Organizing an honorary event for students who live with disability who passed the General Secondary Examination 'Tawjihi' successfully in several areas of the West Bank.
- Organizing a protest in front of Jenin Governorate offices calling for the rights of persons with disability which was attended by 250 participants, and another protest in Bethlehem, attended by 100 participants.
- Organizing a debate among persons with disability and organizations working in this field on one side and the governor of Qalqiliya on another side. The Governor stressed the important role that persons with disability play in the society, while the representative of the Union of Persons with Disability highlighted the weak application of laws and the need for local organizations to stand together to call for law enforcement.
- In Tulkarem as well, the Governor was part of the public events organized for persons with disability and highlighted the importance of applying the law in saving the rights of persons with disability especially in employment at the levels of government and civil society organizations.
- The YMCA participated with the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Women Renaissance Society in Ramallah, in holding a three-day summer camp dedicated for persons with disability which included stress release activities, awareness on rights and responsibilities, and highlighting the importance of inclusion of persons with disability into the society.
- Organizing a number of festivals in different areas of the West Bank to celebrate the Disability Day during which clear messages were sent out calling for the rights of this marginalized group, and changing the society's attitude towards them to be based on a human-rights approach.
- A major output of the organized public events was the promise made by the Governorates and Country President's office to follow up on distributing wheelchairs to persons with disabilities as well as securing a number of bursaries to enroll persons with disabilities into higher education programs.

Difficulties and challenges faced during organizing those activities:

1. The lack of a safe place in some areas for the implementation of activities especially in areas adjacent to settlements where children are threatened by settlers' or military attack on a daily basis, in addition to the regular presence of the military near some schools.
2. The difficult access to some marginalized areas to implement the activities due to lack of public transportation and lack of adapted spaces for the accessibility of children with disabilities.
3. In few activities, the team was faced with unexpectedly high numbers of children attending due to the misjudgment of the Directorate of Social Affairs. The fact which burdened the team in hosting those children.

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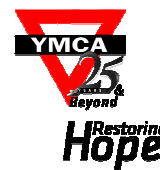
Meetings with decision-makers

- 4 meetings were held with a number of institutions and decision-makers who provide support to ex-detainee children. The meetings resulted in the formation of the “Child Detention Working Group” led by the YMCA with its main members being: Save the Children- oPt Country Office, Commission for the Affairs of Detainees and Ex-detainees, Defence for Children International – Palestine Section, UNICEF, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Ministry of Social Affairs. The group aims at planning on the longer-term for approaching child detention and making sure that all stakeholders are fulfilling their obligations, and being faithful to their mandate in child protection.
- 3 meetings were held with decision-makers through the Coordination Committee aiming at planning for the Disability Day at the national level, referring persons with disabilities to receive holistic services, and planning for setting a central debate to hold public and private sectors’ decision-makers accountable on applying the rules and regulations set for disability. The meetings targeted the Governorate of Hebron, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Justice, Chambers of Commerce, Business Men Consortium, Engineers Union, among others. One of the main outputs of these meetings was the announcement of the Chambers of Commerce to receive job applications from persons with disability, and arranging with companies and factories on facilitating the employment of this group within available potential.

Media activities

- A press conference was held in Hebron with the presence of a number of media outlets, TV stations, radio stations, the press, etc. aiming at advocating for the issue of child detention in Palestine and emphasizing the importance of the media role in exposing those violations, demanding for documenting similar acts, and calling for referring the issue of child detention to the International Criminal Court. Participating organizations of the YMCA, Defence for Children International – Palestine Section, the Commission for the Affairs of Detainees and Ex-detainees, and the Prisoners’ Club talked to the media about the impact of child detention on all aspects of children’s lives.
- The YMCA was hosted at ‘Mumken’, a program developed by Ma’an News Agency and aired through its satellite channel, to introduce the results of the research conducted on the services provided to persons with disabilities within the social, health, and educational sectors.
- Through the YMCA’s Media Unit, 91 media articles were disseminated through the different social media networks, newspapers, and YMCA website.
- Live coverage of the solidarity campaign organized in Hebron to support the victims of the conflict. A number of media outlets covered the scene including, Palestine TV, Al Quds TV, Palestine Today, and Ro’ya from Jordan.

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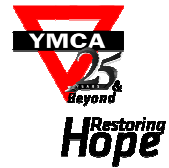
Advocacy and awareness activities in numbers

The following table provides a quick insight on groups targeted by the aforementioned advocacy and awareness activities implemented during the reporting period:

Target Groups	Females	Males	Total
Persons with disability	2,322	1,896	4,218
Ex-detainees	93	270	363
Children and families	9,441	10,939	20,380
Staff of educational institutions	1,126	834	1,960
Staff of local institutions	621	733	1,354
Staff of international institutions	46	78	124
Students of schools and universities	3,167	1,974	5,141
Total	16,816	16,724	33,540



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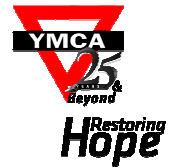


Looking forward

In April 2015, the YMCA was able to restore hope for one of its earlier plans to build a professional stress management center through an agreement with the Institute of Light Finders from South Korea. The center is planned to be built towards the year 2017, in the heart of the Shepherds' Field in Beit Sahour adjacent to the YMCA's premises, with the support of the Institute of Light Finders which will be able to put foundation for such an important center that will respond to the national need to heal the traumatised and care about the mental health practitioners. The YMCA is still looking for potential supporters to help it achieve its plan.



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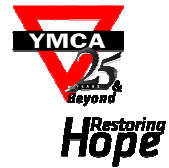


Indicators

In order to monitor and evaluate the impact of the conducted interventions, the East Jerusalem YMCA – Rehabilitation Program has developed a set of monitoring scales that are based on international scientific psychosocial scales which were adapted to suite the Palestinian context. Through those scales the Supervision staff regularly monitors and evaluates the results of the services provided. The main scales used are listed below and are followed by the results of the indicators achieved during the reporting period of 2015.

- The Impact of Event Scale - Revised (IES-R), developed by (Weiss and Marmar, 1997), based on the original indicator of (Horowitz, etak, 1979), to be equivalent to DSM-IV PTSD standards. It includes three main components: Avoidance Sub-Indicator, Emotional Interference Sub-Indicator, and Physical Reactions Sub-Indicator. In simple words, this scale provides knowledge on the level of trauma to which the participant has been exposed.
- The Quality of Life Scale, based on the brief version of the World Health Organisation's Quality of Life (WHO QOL – BREF 1996) to provide a short summary of the quality of an individual's life. It consists of 26 items which measure several life aspects including physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment.
- The Self-esteem Scale, developed by Rosenberg, 1965, to measure one's satisfaction of him/herself in addition to the influence of the incidents to which he/she was exposed on his/her level of self-esteem. It includes ten sections designed to measure the overall emotional status of a person.
- General Health Questionnaire, based on (Goldberg, D, 1972) General Health Indicator. It is made of 57 sections and it measures psychological problems developed from traumatic experiences and other psychological / behavioral symptoms. This scale includes psychometric symptoms, depression, aggressive behaviours and withdrawal.
- The Coping with Life Scale, based on (Folkman, Lazaras, 1988) scale and translated into Arabic by Abdul Aziz Thabet. It includes 29 sections. And it measures how someone deals with hardships and behaves under pressure. It is made of three main components: Personal Coping, Social Coping, and Psychological Coping.
- Life Orientation Test (LOT), developed by (Sceir and Carver, 1985), and translated into Arabic by Badr Eddin Al Ansari and Nawras Shaker Hadi, 2008. This indicator measures how someone approaches life and goals; positively or negatively. It includes twelve sections designed to show pessimism and optimism in life.

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- General Health Questionnaire, based on (Goldberg, D, 1972) General Health Indicator. It is made of 57 sections and it measures psychological problems developed from traumatic experiences and other psychological / behavioral symptoms.

Objective 1

94.88% of persons with disability and traumatized who received psychosocial support and counselling services have an increased ability to cope with their disability and have developed a more positive perspective towards their situation, and are more reintegrated into the Palestinian community.

92.5% of family members of participants are more aware of the needs of their affected children and know how to deal with them and the community at large have a more positive attitude towards persons with disability.

Objective 2

80.7% of persons with disability (participants of the Program) have better access to their residences, schools, and public buildings, as well as to job market.

74.77% of the project participants are more able to participate in the economic life and more economically independent.

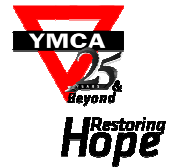
Objective 3

94.56% of the trained social workers and counsellors who received training have an increased capacity particularly in the sphere of counselling and rehabilitation and use advanced constructive counselling methodologies and approaches with their participants.

Objective 4

74.03% of the organizations with whom the East Jerusalem YMCA – Rehabilitation Program coordinated efforts have an increased responsibility towards persons with disability, traumatized, and have become more involved in coordinating efforts for the sake of these groups.

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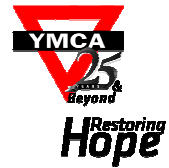
Difficulties and challenges



The challenges that faced the YMCA in 2015 were increased while witnessing the growing number of victims and survivors of political violence; the unprecedented wave of killing of children and youth was a big challenge for our teams to heal the wounds, and to give caring hands and listening ears to those mourning the loss of their family members, and the pain of living such a hard life. Mobility and access to areas were determined by many issues like road blocks, checkpoints, military operations areas, lack of proper transportation due to absence of paved roads, and more importantly by the fearful atmosphere created by the occupation, where killing and attacking civilians became a well spreading daily practice by the military wherever our counselors and social workers reach.

The violent chaos defining the year 2015, resulted in unlawful killings on the streets, where in most cases children were the victims. In many situations, the YMCA's field teams had to risk their own lives to be able to reach out to needy participants. Realizing the danger facing children on the streets, it became a concern for us and for the parents of the children to allow the children to go to the YMCA field offices to receive adequate support. Therefore the counselors were faced with an intensified work schedule where they had to conduct most of their work away from their offices. Due to sudden road closures, substitute roads had to be taken to reach some areas, the fact which endangered the safety of the staff, who lived several experiences where their lives have been jeopardized. In Hebron for instance, our intervention in Al-Shohada Street in H2 area, a highly conflicted area, was delayed and nearly stopped due to illegal arrest, interrogation and humiliating maltreatment of two of our female counselors at the checkpoint during rendering counseling sessions to school children there. Until today, the two counselors are forbidden from accessing that area.

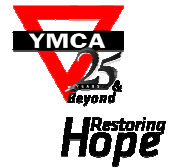
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On another level, the YMCA has been struggling during the last few months to further develop its appraisal and communication systems as recommended during its latest strategic planning. Several discussions were held internally to further explore our needs and the constraints we face to achieve them.

For developing and implementing an appraisal system, the YMCA needs to have a new salary scale in place to ensure that pay levels are competitive externally and equitable internally. Besides, the YMCA needs to have a well-structured incentive system that not only constitutes a professional management tool, but also highly contributes to preventing and overcoming poor performance, failure to meet organizational goals, poor morale, increased turnover, and the stress of increased demands on employees. However, the challenge remains for finding expert human resources in those areas and the difficulty of securing funds for their salaries in addition to changing the already existing salary scale to better fit the aforementioned points.

The YMCA as well has detected a need to set up a communications strategy that would help it in facilitating work on the internal level and amplifying impact on the external level. Although the YMCA has been the only national organization providing those services within a holistic approach, it could not position itself as the national premier emergency response organization in the minds of the local and international stakeholders. The YMCA believes that a solid communications strategy that tackles the organizational, identity and experiential levels should elevate its image and add to its success. To make this possible we have been enthusiastically looking for a Media and Communications expert, but again we were faced with lack of adequate human and financial resources to fill this gap. A few modest steps were achieved so far like the setup of a sophisticated tri-lingual website (Arabic, English, and German) for the YMCA, and launching an online English bulletin, in addition to planning for the set-up of an internal database for supporters and friends of the YMCA.



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Making a difference to live 'a better life'

On a plain land on the eastern hills of the Jordan Valley lies the village of *Ein Al-Beida*, a Palestinian village within Tubas Governorate which was established in 1952 by local farmers. The village is named after a well in the area *Ein al-Beida*, which is currently dry due to the exploitation of water by Israel in the Jordan Valley. *Ein al-Beida* is surrounded by hills and mountains, bordered by the Green (Armistice) Line to the north and the Israeli settlement of Mehola to the south. And thus its citizens depend mainly on agricultural work for income or on labor work inside the Green Line.

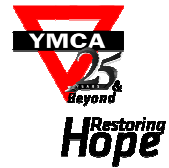
In this village lives the unfortunate family of A.F. consisting of nine members where the father is the sole breadwinner. The family has three children, A.F. and B.F. boys and K.F. a girl, who were born with physical disabilities resulting from sprained feet. All three of them underwent several surgeries and their communication with their surroundings was very limited. A.F. had several problems in dealing with his life and in following up on his studies.

The counselors at *Ein Al-Beida* School contacted the YMCA team in Jenin to refer A.F. for support. One of the YMCA's counselors promptly visited the school to meet with the children and the administration, and a visit to the family's house was done to further assess the needs and introduce the YMCA's work to them. Taking into consideration the area of residence of the family, the economic situation, and the health conditions of the children, the needs assessment came out to exceed the expectations of the YMCA, especially that no other organization has ever visited the family to offer support.

The family as a whole was supported with counseling sessions to provide space for releasing their emotions and restoring their hope. The siblings were helped to accept their disabilities and increase their self-esteem. A.F. who had reached a terrible situation at school, unable to read or write and about to start 11th grade, was provided with literacy and remedial education classes which helped him improve his reading and writing capacities, and gave him a feeling of self-confidence and a will to commit to school. His brother, B.F. as well was supported with remedial education classes which resulted in a significant improvement in his academic attainment. As for the sister K.F., and as she was referred to physiotherapy following her surgery but could not do it because of the financial situation of the family, the YMCA covered the expenses of the physiotherapy resulting in a substantial improvement on her health. To sustain the results and seek further improvement, she was referred to the Palestinian Medical Relief Society to receive physiotherapy services at home.

On the wider level, the YMCA's counselor conducted two sessions at the school targeting the teachers and the students separately, to increase awareness on the difficulties and challenges faced by children with disabilities. As a result, a friendship committee for persons with disabilities was established in coordination with the school counselor. Furthermore, the YMCA was able to adapt the school building and added in some modifications to its facilities to facilitate the mobility of children with disabilities and eventually achieve their rights.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



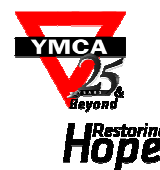
The impact of the interventions conducted by the YMCA’s team was evident. The flow of mutual understanding, care, and communication among the family members was improved, while the children’s self-esteem was increased. The intervention has significantly increased the children’s motivation towards improving their education, while at the same time it has facilitated their reintegration into the school community through the awareness sessions done with their peers and teachers, and through the adaptation of the school facilities.

Father of the three children, upon seeing the change incurred in his children’s lives, said: *“You have offered us what you promised to since you first entered our house. The YMCA is the first institution visiting us and providing my children with tangible services. The varied services offered by you had significantly changed the lives of my children. And for that I will always be thankful.”*

Distinguished Projects



The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



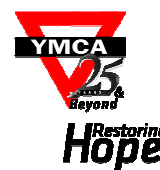
I. Psychosocial Support for Conflict and Societal Violence Affected Children: Child Protection in Emergency

This project was launched in February 2015 to be implemented by the YMCA, in partnership with Save the Children International. It plays an important role in responding to the psychosocial emergency needs of children and their caregivers resulting from incidents of political violence all over the West Bank, through the efforts of the psychosocial emergency teams - PSET in mainly providing the Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) and counseling sessions.

Summary of achievements during the reporting period is as follows:

Emergency visits using the inter-cluster response framework					
Emergency interventions	Participants				Notes
	Children		Adults		
1750	14168		10217		The teams responded to 72% of the incidents within the first 48 hours
Psychosocial group counseling sessions for children					
Groups	Children				Notes
	Males		Females		
136	1036		994		
Referral					
Children	Participants				Notes
	Children		Adults		
133	71				Referral is done for further individual and in-depth psychological counseling among other services to specialized organizations or projects.
Structured psychosocial activities					
Recreational Days	Children		Caregivers		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
227	11812	12113	718	1761	
Stress Release Days	Children		Caregivers		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
30	1425	1208	63	127	
Parades promoting children rights	Children		Caregivers		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
14	2481	2293	198	254	
Empowerment and capacity building					
Training sessions	CBO's members				Notes
	Males		Females		
7	20		95		The trainings provided the participants with new

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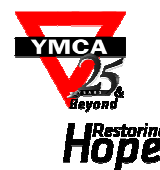


Training sessions	MoEHE school counselors		Notes	
	Males	Females		
11	107	117	tools and techniques to be used when responding to emergency incidents when targeting children and caregivers.	
Training sessions	Project Staff		Notes	
	Males	Females		
3	4	23	Child Resilience	
2	1	12	Psychosocial First Aid	
2	4	28	Art Therapy	
Sensitization sessions and psychosocial support for parents and caregivers				
Groups	Caregivers		Sessions	Notes
	Males	Females		
126	38	1269	402	Participants were provided with skills and techniques for positive communication with their children and were offered support and guidance.
Team Coordination meetings				
Meetings	Representatives of partner organizations and CBO's		Notes	
	Males	Females		
172	381	720	Those meetings provided a platform for networking, discussion and referral of children and caregivers for in-depth intervention and counseling.	

The interventions carried out with children had the following impact: 58.5 % of children can talk freely about their feelings (pre 25.9 %); 8.4% of them still can't concentrate during their study (pre 31.1%); 68.7% of the children have the ability to improve their academic performance (48.8% pre); and 10% of them still feel uncomfortable and stressed when remembering the incidents (pre 55.4%).

In addition the interventions with the caregivers had the following impact: 98.4 % of the caregivers reported that they can easily express their feelings and the challenges they face (81.9% pre); 89.6% of the caregivers reported that they follow up their children's achievements through talking with the teachers and visiting the school (pre 74.2%); 80.6% of the caregivers have enough information on who provides psychosocial support (pre 39.8 %); 98.3 % of the caregivers encourage their children to participate in social and cultural activities conducted during the school year (pre 61.75%) which was also confirmed by the children as 88.4% of them assured that their parents do so (pre 65.1%).

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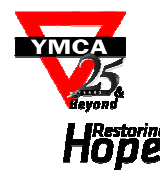
2. Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams in Hebron and East Jerusalem Rehabilitation Program

This project came as a continuation to the “Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams in the West Bank” project which was initiated in 2003 in response to the arising psychosocial needs of children during and after the second Intifada. The project was redesigned to function through two Psychosocial Emergency Teams only, namely Hebron and East Jerusalem to respond to the emergency incidents during the period of December 2014 to May 2015. The main aim of the new project was that Children most affected by the conflict have strengthened coping mechanisms and resilience and have increased protection.

The Psychosocial Support Emergency Teams were immediately mobilized in response to the conflict related emergencies. The survivors -children and caregivers- were visited and initial psychosocial support was provided through ventilation and expression of feelings. An initial needs’ assessment was conducted based on which a comprehensive intervention plan was developed. Team members in Jerusalem and Hebron who represented the partner organizations and CBO’s involved in responding to emergencies in the West Bank Team met on a monthly basis to discuss plans for the upcoming period. During the reporting period of January to May 2015, the following activities were implemented:

Psychosocial response including referral (rapid assessment and Psychosocial First Aid)									
Emergency Incidents	Direct Participants				Indirect Participants				Notes
	Children		Adults		Children		Adults		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	
180	897	689	436	477	1256	1068	1058	921	The teams responded to 72 % of the incidents during the first 48 hours.
Group counseling for children									
Groups	Males		Females		Referral		Notes		
18	84		180		28				
Stimulation social, cultural, and environmental initiatives									
Communities	Children		Caregivers		Notes				
	Males	Females	Males	Females					
24	663	797	144	273	Those initiatives aimed at increasing children’s participation and involvement in the community, the fact which would eventually develop and improve				

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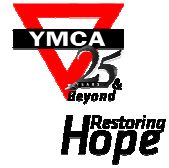


					their spirit of voluntarism and commitment.		
Recreational days							
Events	Children		Adults		Notes		
	Males	Females	Males	Females			
20	876	1060	150	301	Recreational days focus on ventilation and stress release activities.		
Open days							
Events	Children		Adults		Notes		
	Males	Females	Males	Females			
10	1816	2221	215	202			
Community advocacy and awareness raising sessions on child protection							
Community advocacy campaigns				Community awareness sessions			
Campaigns	Children		Adults		Sessions	Caregivers	
	Males	Females	Males	Females		Males	Females
2	700	770	130	135	10	237	481
Sensitization sessions and psychosocial support for caregivers							
Groups	Female Caregivers		Notes				
10	103		The impact of the sessions was substantial: 53.3% of the mothers reported that they can talk freely and express their feelings (pre 9.5%), 73.3% of the mothers now encourage their children and let them participate in school extra curricula activities (pre 28.6%), 73.3% of the mothers encourage their children when they make a positive behavior (pre 30.9%). Furthermore, most of the mothers (90%) who attended the counseling sessions reported that they have more knowledge on available organizations providing psychosocial support and able to help them in dealing with their stress and solving the problems they face with their children (pre 40.5%).				
Training of team members							
Trainings	Members of teams and CBO's						
	Males		Females				
2	10		31				
Helping the Helpers							
Sessions	Purpose						
10	Team members received professional support and guidance throughout their work with children and caregivers.						

The main recommendations that resulted from implementing those activities came as follows:

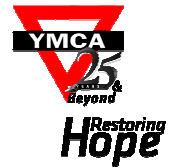
- To extend the current experiences to other districts especially the children initiatives and the advocacy campaigns implemented by the children themselves.

The East Jerusalem YMCA Rehabilitation Program



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- To train the school teachers and the caregivers in the affected areas on how to provide PFA to affected children. This will further support the quick response to emergency incidents especially in the problematic areas where the PSS teams cannot provide support or cannot reach them during the first 48 hours.
 - To build the capacities of the team members in writing success stories and case studies and taking good photos that can be used in advocacy campaigns, in reports and for documentation purposes.

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

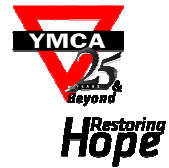
The project of “Social and Economic Inclusion of People with Disability in the Middle East” was launched in April 2012 and was carried out in partnership with Christian Aid/ UK and the Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union- LPHU and funded by the European Commission, until it ended in 2015. The project aimed 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 aimed 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.

This project was one of the significant projects implemented by the YMCA as it resulted in tangible progress in a number of areas, including greater commitment and practical improvements undertaken by a range of private sector organizations, including large companies and chambers of commerce and other sectorial groups. Similarly, specific cooperation agreements have been signed with a number of regional companies, which represent large workforces and economic actors in their own right across the region. There have also been changes at the official level; the YMCA in partnership with a number of stakeholders drafted a paper based on some of the joint report recommendations which listed all the indicators and issues that should be included in the new labor law. This draft is now adapted by the Ministry of Labor (the legal department), and it will be used if the efforts succeeded in changing the labor law. Through the project timeline, the YMCA has built a strong and strategic relationship with four main bodies which are the Palestinian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Palestinian Union of PWD, the Ministry of Labor, and the Palestinian Governorates. All the private sector workshops were arranged under the auspices of these bodies.

The YMCA has participated in a set of periodical meetings with the LPHU and Christian Aid to plan for the regional workshop in January 2015 entitled “Towards Decent Work for All – post 2015” which targeted the private sector. The regional workshop proved to be a very effective meeting to galvanize support from the private sector, to bring together regional disability rights organizations and equally importantly an opportunity to share learning with representatives from national, international, private sector and government bodies.

The project underwent an independent evaluation which highlighted the positive impact it made, and the fact that nearly all activities were completed and most planned results achieved. The evaluation also reported that the project’s approach in supporting persons with disabilities to gain skills and support in order to enter the labor market, as well as effective partnerships with private sector companies established was successful. All project partners, Christian Aid, LPHU and the YMCA are seeking to sustain the impact of the project and have therefore reviewed the recommendations and will prioritize these in discussions as partners in the project.

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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, 4 workshops were carried out during the reporting period of 2015 in the districts of Tulkarem, Jenin, Bethlehem, and Hebron, which 72 companies have attended. Additionally, 65 visits were done to the private sector companies in the West Bank in 2015 to follow up the outcomes of the workshops that were previously held in the same context.

Amongst the outcomes of these visits, it is worth mentioning the following:

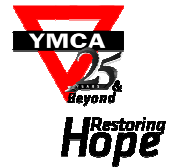
- A remarkable alteration took place in terms of the language used by the participants in the workshops, thereby indicating a change on other levels in the future.
- Many companies and organizations expressed their willingness to develop their cadres at the approach level, as well as to adapt their environment to employ persons with disability.
- Signing 16 MOU's between the YMCA and the private sector companies in Nablus and Ramallah. These MOU's 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 12 persons with disability in the private sector companies, municipalities and schools.
- Continuing 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 YMCA has published a manual on 'How to become an Inclusive company'.

Besides the above mentioned achievements which were reached on the level of the public and private sectors, the regional civil society and persons with disability, the following further benefited from the project activities in 2015:

- 130 participants received psychosocial counseling.
- 24 participants were vocationally assessed.
- 69 participants received vocational counseling.
- 45 participants were referred to vocational training.

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4. Post-trauma Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Ex-detainee Children in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

In 2015, the YMCA continued to provide psycho-social rehabilitation support to ex-detainee children through the counselling sessions conducted either individually or within groups. Participants also received educational and vocational counselling 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 Rehabilitation Department to receive vocational assessment which means examining their physical and mental abilities and their inclinations and accordingly received vocational training. In addition, participants 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 YMCA also provided psychosocial support to families of ex-detainee and detainee children through the counselling 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.

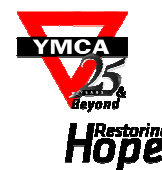
During the first months of 2015, the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)'s support came to an end. Fortunately the YMCA was able to continue till the end of the year supported by several funds raised mainly through its strategic partner Save the Children oPt.

Towards March 2015, the YMCA called for establishing the Child Detention Working Group – CDWG- in the West Bank with its main partners being: Save the Children International – Country Office, Defence for Children International – Palestine Section, the Commission of the Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affair, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and UNICEF. The CDWG was established by a group of capable and relevant stakeholders to come up with a better plan to approach child detention and make sure that all stakeholders are fulfilling their obligations, and being faithful to their mandate in child protection. During 2015, the group met four times while the fifth meeting was postponed due to restrictions in mobility imposed by the Israeli military.

The reporting period witnessed liaising with the Ministry of Labor in order to initiate a cooperation agreement to refer participants in need for vocational training to the existing training programs run by the Ministry's centers in order to reduce vocational training costs for the program. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on December 21st 2015.



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During 2015, a total of 291 ex-detainee children, of whom 289 were males and 2 were females, and 250 parents of detainee/ex-detainee children, of whom 235 were females and 15 were males, were assessed and evaluated. Psychosocial rehabilitation services were as follows:

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

Area	Ex-detainee Children				Families of Detainee and Ex-Detainee Children			
	Individual psychosocial counselling		Group psychosocial counselling		Family intervention counselling		Group support counselling	
	participants	sessions	participants	sessions	participants	sessions	participants	sessions
Jerusalem/Bethlehem	33	356	55	39	22	105	42	24
Ramallah	58	398	37	32	17	50	18	15
Tulkarem/Qalqiliya	21	161	0	0	17	96	13	11
Jenin/Tubas	24	241	0	0	17	61	0	0
Nablus/Salfit	34	231	8	6	21	87	7	6
Hebron	83	637	80	78	37	203	47	48
Jericho	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	253	2024	180	155	131	602	127	104

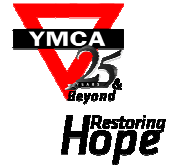
Table 2: On the level of academic and vocational rehabilitation, the reporting period witnessed providing the following services:

Services	Ex-detainee Children
Academic and Vocational counseling	139
Vocational Assessment	76
Facilitating vocational training	64
Facilitating remedial education	110

Table 3: Ventilation Weekends for participants:

Number of participants	
Ex-detainee Children	Families of Detainee and Ex-Detainee Children
124	128
252	

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Assessing the impact of the Program:

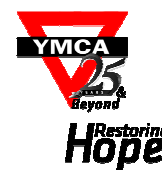
To assess the effectiveness of the Program, a list of indicators is set to measure the results achieved. The indicators were examined for a random sample of the targeted participants who were assessed and finalized the intervention during the period of (January 1st – December 31st 2015). Results of the main indicators came as follows:

- 92% of the targeted child ex-detainees have a higher self esteem.
- 91% of child ex-detainee report using more positive coping mechanisms.
- 99% of child ex-detainees show an increase in their ability to articulate and express plans for the future.
- 65% of the child ex-detainees are referred to educational or/and vocational training.
- 97% of family members are positively interacting and communicating with their children following detention.
- 97% of the targeted family members are more aware and understand the psycho-social needs of their children.
- 91% of the targeted families are being more supportive to their children and advocate for their rights.

The future of the Program:

In 2016, a new project will be initiated in partnership with Save the Children International - oPt Country Office and Defence for Children International – Palestine Section, and funded through Save the Children - Italy. The project will run for 30 months and will cover the same geographical areas of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. It is based on a sustainable plan that engages the main stakeholders, specifically, the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, Labor and Social Affairs and the Commission of Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs to support the implementation of this 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 and enable them to successfully reintegrate into their communities and families.

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Fact Sheet: Our Work in Numbers



Direct participants receiving rehabilitation support	796
Counseling sessions	8053
Participants receiving vocational assessment	235
Participants receiving career counseling	347
Participants receiving vocational training	136
Facilitation of employment of persons with disability	12
Self-employment projects	20
Participants receiving academic rehabilitation	229
Adaptations of residences, schools, clinics, and public buildings for the use of persons with disability	88
Participants receiving medical urgent assistive aids	133
Trainees from other organizations who received training	687
Trainees from our staff	62
University students trainees	67
International trainees	50
Activities implemented in partnership with other organizations	193
Coordination meetings and field visits held on the local level	121
Awareness raising workshops / lectures / meetings, etc.	138
Activities organized with schools and universities within the different districts of the West Bank	71
Celebratory and public events	27
Targeted groups by the advocacy and awareness activities	33,540
Through our projects	
Emergency interventions	1930
Children and adults reached through emergency interventions	31,187
Signed MoU's to facilitate the access of persons with disability to the right of decent work	16
Private sector companies attending workshops to promote diversity and PWD's rights	72
Ex-detainee children evaluated	291
Psychosocial counseling sessions conducted for ex-detainee children	2179
Families of detainee and ex-detainee children evaluated	250
Psychosocial counseling sessions conducted for families of detainee and ex-detainee children	706