

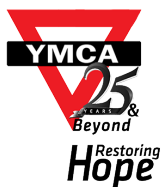


## Introduction

Another year has passed and the Palestinian people's right to live safely and in dignity remains a fantasy. The occupation remains dominant on Palestinian lands and affects all aspects of people's lives, explicitly seen in the escalation of violence witnessed in 2016 and the inherited disrespect to international law and accountability to violations by the occupier's dominating regime.

According to the UN statistics, since July 2016, a dramatic increase in the use of live fire against Palestinian civilian demonstrators, especially in refugee camps were witnessed. Figures collected showed that Palestinian civilian injuries across the West Bank went up from 328 cases (April-June) to 408 (July and August), the number of injured Palestinians in refugee camps increased from 34 (April - June) to 130 (July and August). Furthermore, among these 130 injuries, 70% were shot by live ammunition that is 20% higher than injuries from the period of 2013-2015 (UNRWA 2016). During 2016, the war on Gaza had stopped and casualty tolls have declined significantly, but human rights violations and widespread violence were obvious where the Israeli authorities demolished 1,089 Palestinian-owned structures throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing 1,593 Palestinians and affecting the livelihoods of another 7,101. These figures are the highest since 2009 (OCHA 2016). The escalation of violence in the West Bank including East Jerusalem has been seen in increased operations targeting children as well. Harsh prison sentences from 10 to 20 years for throwing stones depending on the case. According to the Prisoners' Club - Media Department, around 1332 children were arrested in 2016 where the highest numbers were found in East Jerusalem and Hebron.

The YMCA being the national premier emergency psychosocial response organization, continued to conduct emergency interventions in highly conflicted areas especially those within area C, near settlements, near the Segregation Wall, threatened by evacuation and demolition, etc. which reached 1556 in 2016 alone. In addition, the reporting period included conducting two focused interventions; one in Silwan within East Jerusalem, and another in H2 area in Hebron, where human rights violations are on the toll. To make sure that the interventions at the local communities level would have sustainable impact, local community leaders and volunteers received capacity building programs by YMCA staff in subjects of crisis intervention and psychological first aid, to make sure that the communities are able to respond to the repetitive emergencies they face whenever the YMCA teams are forbidden access to a certain area by the military. The YMCA has also made distinguished achievements at the level of psychosocial support as evident in the high number of individual and group counseling sessions which



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reached 8882 and number of direct beneficiaries which reached 819.

At the internal level, the YMCA staff conducted a “Needs Assessment of Persons with disabilities, ages 18-25 years old, in the West Bank”, that serves as a professional asset of knowledge for advocacy on the rights of persons with disability as well as a cornerstone for designing future interventions for PWDs that aim at attaining their human rights in the fields of education, health, and social affairs. In addition it conducted a thorough review of the scales and indicators used by the Vocational Rehabilitation and the Supervision & Counselling Departments which resulted in the adoption of new ones that are in line with the latest developments in psychosocial rehabilitation worldwide.

Being part of the region affected by the ‘Arab Spring’ and believing in the moral obligations towards the neighboring communities, and as being a member in ACT Alliance, the Director of the EJ-YMCA-RP responded to a call from Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to help in Mainstreaming Psychosocial Support into their appeal in North Iraq, and therefore conducted a training in Community Based Psychosocial Support (CBPS) to representatives of 5 institutions in Duhok, Kurdistan and helped in revising LWF appeal and mainstreaming psychosocial support in their appeal.

Upon looking back at the YMCA’s achievements in the last couple of years, it was evident that while we were clearly focused on supporting the targeted groups by all means available within the resources of the Program, and although we implemented a number of raising awareness and advocacy activities with the local communities, we did not dedicate equal efforts to advocacy on the national level. The YMCA realizes the importance of working on prevention as much as it is on provision of services, and therefore in 2016 it initiated the process of setting up an advocacy strategic plan for disability in partnership with representatives of persons with disabilities. And following that on the shorter term, we hope to start a discussion on building an advocacy plan for the traumatized survivors of political violence.

In addition, the violent chaos defining the last couple of years which resulted in unlawful killings on the streets, where civilians and in most cases children were the victims, had also impacted the YMCA staff. In many situations, like sudden road closures and military actions which included demolitions, shootings, etc. the YMCA’s field teams had to risk their own lives to be able to reach out to needy participants. Incidents that endangered the safety of the staff were redundant, mainly, in Hebron and East Jerusalem. Therefore, the YMCA has started brainstorming sessions about establishing a safety and security policy to lead its staff during situations that threaten their lives, but still serious work needs to be done in the near future

The coming pages will introduce thoroughly the YMCA’s work of 2016 to restore the coping mechanisms and psychosocial and physical wellbeing of its targeted groups. Approaching a century of conflict in Palestine and denying Palestinians of their basic human rights, the YMCA keeps hope high in an independent and democratic Palestine that is able to nurture its children and youth.

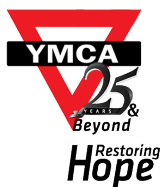
### Objective 1: To enhance the targeted individuals' and groups' access to psychosocial support and counseling services and promote the supportive role of the families and communities towards their affected members



Given the situation in which our targeted groups of persons with disabilities and survivors of political violence exist, a situation that is identified by poverty, conflict, neglect, stigma, discrimination, isolation, abuse, and lack of adult support and guidance, psychosocial support remains an indispensable scheme within the YMCA's work. Psychosocial support addresses emotional, social, and mental needs of the participants as essential elements to positive human development. Children and youth need psychosocial support for their psychological and emotional wellbeing especially when they have experienced trauma, adversity, or are not receiving adequate caregiver support. The YMCA works through a holistic approach through which it addresses participants' physical, economic, educational, health and social needs to maintain their psychosocial wellbeing as well as maintaining their resilience. The best partner in conducting these interventions and enhancing their impact is the families and communities to keep individuals in supportive and caring environments.

The YMCA, implements its interventions through eleven field teams working in all West Bank districts including East Jerusalem. Psychosocial support is extended to the targeted groups through counselling either on an individual basis or within groups depending on the initial assessment and evaluation. The impact of counseling is reflected in increased levels of self-esteem and coping mechanisms, ability to plan for the future, and many other traits that eventually lead to successful re-integration into their communities and enhancing their psychosocial wellness. It is worth noting that the community respect and trust we gained is attributed to the dedication of our staff towards their targeted participants, and offering our services in a way that ensures preserving their dignity as well as maintaining credibility and honesty. Therefore, the YMCA positioned itself as a reputable civil society as indicated by different bodies, whether public, local or international; this is well manifested by a participant's father statement: "No other organization makes me feel that my daughter is in safe hands."

Upon finalizing the development and experimental phase of new scales and indicators used to measure the impact of the interventions conducted, the second half of 2016 witnessed the fine tuning and adoption of those tools. The Counseling and Supervision Department depends on these tools to monitor the interventions conducted in the field to make sure they are up to the standard to affect a



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change in people's lives. The counselors are trained to use case management techniques to follow up on the rehabilitation process of the participant and make necessary referrals based on assessment.

During 2016, it was observed that wider systematic arrest operations targeting children were conducted by the Israeli military, and harsher sentencing guidelines and fines for children were established within Israeli courts. The year witnessed the detention of 1332 children and issuing administrative detention orders against 20 children. The children of East Jerusalem were the most targeted groups as evident in the high numbers of children being detained from this area which reached 757. The situation demanded huge efforts to be dedicated to support those children and their families. The case in East Jerusalem was very challenging as many children were sentenced to home arrest and required focused individual intervention. Generally speaking, the main challenge facing the YMCA teams during this period, was mobilizing the limited human and financial resources available to meet the unexpected numbers of survivors of political violence that the Program targets.

Moreover, our interventions with the women who lost their husbands during political conflict incidents have had significant impacts on this group and have changed their lives for the best, especially pertaining their relations with their children. Those widowed women became capable of overcoming their post-traumatic disorders and seeking the best ways to dealing with their children.

Another highlight of the same period, was working with young females with disabilities, ages 18-28 years old, with the aim to build their capacities through organizing a series of training workshops for them in different subjects. The workshops resulted in establishing youth leader groups of women with disabilities who work in their communities to advocate for their rights. The intervention with this group also included vocational rehabilitation which aimed at enhancing their economic self dependency and contributed to increasing their social networks.

Given the fact that our human resources are an important asset where staff should be constantly motivated and developed, and taking into consideration the deteriorating situation they are living in and the pressure resulting from the nature of work they do, which adds to their suffering, we always consider ensuring continuous care for our staff to avoid work "burnout". To that end, we have been always keen on conducting a sustainable process of stress release, using our modest resources available as well as each available opportunity. A stress release program has been therefore conducted with the participation of all staff. This process has also included conducting a series of meetings targeting small groups (bearing in mind providing equal opportunities for all) to learn, exercise and master activities that would help avoid pressure and release stress as it occurs.

In parallel with caring for our staff, we decided to introduce this aspect in our projects implemented with other organizations. In 2016 we piloted a stress management project, targeting 147 school teachers and counselors, from the old city of Hebron. Participants reported feelings of appreciation and satisfaction of the conducted activities, which helped them meet the continuous stressful situation they are living in the targeted old city of Hebron.

During 2016, 8882 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 819 direct participants that joined us during the reporting period, 33.5% were persons with disabilities, 64% were survivors of political violence, and 2.5% had both situations. The huge efforts dedicated to support the survivors of political violence reaching up to nearly two thirds of our targeted groups is reasonable given the chronic conflict Palestinians have been living through. The demographic analysis as well highlights the fact that 76% of our participants were youth, because they are on the crossroads of surviving their trauma or disability and being able to move a step forward in their lives. And therefore 408 participants not only received counselling sessions but also received academic and career counseling through 929 sessions

during the reporting period. Those sessions help younger participants to resume their academic path, and help those over 15 years old to set a vocational goal for their lives. The demographic analysis shows as well that 64% of our participants came from villages and remote areas where several locations cannot be reached by vehicles and where services are limited or non-existent.

District	Number		Age						Place of Residence			Total
	Male	Female	0-6	7-11	12-18	19-25	26-35	>36	City	Village	Camp	
Jerusalem & Bethlehem	116	17	2	2	111	8	4	6	25	96	12	133
Ramallah	71	17	0	2	59	18	8	1	15	48	24	88
Tulkarem & Qalqilya	46	30	0	4	32	34	4	2	7	65	4	76
Jenin & Tubas	29	31	0	1	19	23	11	6	8	49	3	60
Nablus & Salfeet	99	38	4	9	60	42	17	5	26	94	17	137
Hebron	228	89	6	32	167	41	28	43	128	174	15	317
Jericho	7	1	0	1	7	0	0	0	5	0	3	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>819</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Objective 2: To enhance the targeted groups and communities' physical and economic independency



### Vocational Rehabilitation

Youth being the main target group of the YMCA, it is essential to provide an alternative for those who cannot resume their academic life. And thus the YMCA has been operating a distinguished Vocational Rehabilitation Department that provides support to all youth, 15 years old and over, to enable them to set a vocational goal in their lives and further helps them in building their capacities to become competent enough to join the workforce. The aim of the Department is to enable PWDs as well as traumatized youth to overcome barriers to accessing, maintaining or returning to employment or other useful occupation. Following a thorough review done in late 2015 and beginning of 2016, new scales and indicators were adopted in 2016 to enhance the performance of the Department and enable it to better measure its effectiveness.

During the reporting period, vocational rehabilitation support was as follows:

Vocational rehabilitation	Number of Services
Vocational assessment	199 (135 were reached through the mobile unit)
Self-employment projects	16
Facilitation of employment of PWD's	5
Vocational training	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>

### Academic Rehabilitation

In chronic emergency and conflicted countries like Palestine, many children are excluded from leading a normal academic life. Both traumatized and disabled children are hindered from attending school mainly due to restricted access and mobility, lack of security, and social stigma. 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 and require expensive daily transportation. The YMCA's main concern during working with children is not only limited to enhancing their psychological health but also to enable those marginalized children to resume their academic lives and get back to school.

During the reporting period, academic rehabilitation services were as follows:

Academic rehabilitation	Number of Services
Remedial Education	187
Transportation (back & forth)	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>

In 2016, 9 Friendship Committees were formed within schools to advocate for the rights of PWDs. The Committees helped in raising awareness among school communities on issues related to disability as well as creating an accepting and incubating environment for students with disabilities.

## Accessibility

In general, PWDs are often isolated and excluded, cut off from health, education and social services, and with limited opportunities to participate in family and community life. This frequently impacts their future employment opportunities and participation in public life. Following the holistic approach adopted by the YMCA towards rehabilitation, in parallel to receiving psychological support to enable PWDs accept their disability and cope with it, the YMCA addresses accessibility and mobility issues based on its belief in the right of PWDs to enjoy mobility and reach out to available services. When PWDs are given opportunities to flourish as any other person, they have the potential to lead fulfilling lives and to contribute to the social, cultural and economic vitality of their communities.

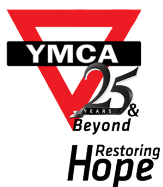
During the reporting period, the following was achieved:

Adaptations	Number of services
Houses	34
Schools	2
Kindergarten	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

## Medical urgent assistive aids

In order to minimize the obstacles to living in the community and accessing available services, the YMCA has been focusing on changing the physical conditions of PWDs as a basic element to introduce further rehabilitation and reintegration schemes. For any PWD, having a medical assistive aid promotes greater independence as one would be able to perform tasks that he/she was formerly unable to accomplish. In many PWDs cases, having an assistive aid meant the difference between enjoying their rights and being deprived of them.

During the reporting period, the following was achieved:



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Medical urgent assistive aids	Number of services
Technical aids	45
Physiotherapy	29
Transportation to receive medical aid	3
Medicine	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>

In addition to the above mentioned services, the YMCA was able to facilitate community involvement through the generous contribution of the Palestine Telecommunications Co. in Tulkarem which provided 11 electronic wheelchairs to PWDs.



### Objective 3: To upgrade the skills of the Palestinian social workers and counsellors

The YMCA's Training Unit has been dedicating huge efforts to build the capacities of professionals working in the spheres 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
Psychological First Aid - PFA	Psychosocial Emergency teams in East Jerusalem (members & volunteers)	23	3 days, 19th – 21st March
Rights of PWDs, advocacy, negotiations, and leadership	Young leader groups of PWDs in Ramallah	13	4 days, 22nd – 25th March
Disability Law	Women with disabilities in Hebron	12	1 day, 26th March
Advocacy	Women with disabilities in Hebron	15	1 day, 28th March
Psychological First Aid - PFA	Counselors in Jenin	31	2 days, 28th – 29th March
Advocacy and negotiation skills	Women with disabilities in Bethlehem	11	2 days, 30th – 31st March
Psychological First Aid – PFA	Volunteers within the Psychosocial Emergency Teams in Ramallah	22	2 days, 30th – 31st March
Palestinian Disability Law & Advocacy	Women with disabilities in Jenin	13	4 days, 30th – 31st March, 7th & 9th April
Negotiations, conflict resolution, and leadership	PWDs in Hebron	16	2 days, 4th & 11th April
Psychological First Aid – PFA	Volunteers and Social Work students in Hebron	26	2 days, 6th – 7th April
<b>Total</b>		<b>527</b>	

Training Subject	Participants	Number	Duration
Crisis Intervention	CBO's in Tulkarem (members & volunteers)	17	2 days, 6th – 7th April
Psychological First Aid – PFA	Counselors in Bethlehem	13	2 days, 6th – 7th April
Psychological First Aid – PFA	Social Work students in Nablus	40	2 days, 18th – 19th April
Crisis Intervention	Volunteers in Tulkarem	17	1 day, 11th April
Palestinian Disability Law & Advocacy	PWDs in Nablus	10	4 days, 16th & 20th & 24th & 28th April
Rights of PWDs	Women with disabilities in Bethlehem	15	1 day, 5th May
Rights of PWDs, advocacy, negotiations, and leadership	Women with disabilities in Tulkarem	12	4 days, 5th & 9th – 11th May
Psychological First Aid – PFA	Psychosocial Emergency teams in East Jerusalem	31	2 days, 4th – 5th June
Planning and designing of advocacy campaigns	Youth Leadership groups of PWDs from all West Bank districts	23	1 day, 13th July
Crisis Intervention	Counselors from Hebron	24	2 days, 25th & 27th August
Crisis Intervention	Teachers from Hebron	37	4 days, 25th & 27th August, 3rd & 10th September
How to act in times of danger	School teachers from the southern area of West Bank	63	6 days, 8th & 9th & 18th & 19th October, 22nd & 24th November
How to act in times of danger	School counselors from the southern area of West Bank	43	4 days, 26th & 27th October, 1st & 3rd November
<b>Total</b>		<b>527</b>	

## At the internal level

Training Subject	Participants	Number	Duration
Skills in advocacy – Inclusive development and mainstreaming of Disability	Counselors	10	3 days, 13th & 14th & 15th December
EMDR technique (upgrading)	Counselors and Supervisors	13	3 days, 29th & 30th November, 1st December
Advocacy for Persons with Disability – Approaches and techniques	Counselors	14	2 days, 20th & 21st July
Trauma Release Exercises – TRE (Organized by Beit Ashams)	Counselors	4	6 days, 15th & 16th & 17th & 28th & 29th & 30th September
Evaluation (Organized by BfdW)	Administrative Staff	2	26th & 27th September
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	

### 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	25	4 months

### At the international level

The following trainings were provided to YMCA staff:

Training subject	Organized by	Participants	Number	Duration
“Refugees with Disabilities in the Arab World”, building the capacity of organizations working with PWDs & designing and managing emergency and response programs	The Arab Regional Office of Disabled People’s International (DPI)	Rehabilitation Program (administrative staff)	1	5 days, 23rd – 27th May, 2016

The following training was provided by YMCA staff:

Training subject	Organized by	Participants	Duration
Community Based Psychosocial Support	Lutheran World Federation – Kurdistan, Iraq	18	3 days, 17th -19th April, 2016

### Research

The YMCA’s Research and Training Unit produced a research document entitled “Needs Assessment of Persons with disabilities, ages 18-25 years old, in the West Bank”. The research aimed at comparing the needs of young PWDs with the services already made available for them. The research revealed a huge gap between both ends and these findings will be used as an advocacy tool as well as a cornerstone for designing future interventions for PWDs that aim at attaining their human rights and accessing the services that cater for their needs.

### Objective 4: To promote community responsibility towards persons with disability and traumatized through networking within the rehabilitation and disability organizations

Our projects and programs are tailored towards contributing to the development of a sustainable culture of advocacy in favor of our targeted groups in terms of empowerment of community members and establishment of strong community relations for an enhanced participation in the integration process.



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

During the reporting period, 209 coordination meetings were held with the different organizations working in the spheres of psychosocial, rehabilitation, mental health, emergency interventions, and vocational rehabilitation on the local level that aimed at networking and coordinating efforts to implement activities, youth initiatives, field visits, referral of participants to specialized services, and planning for joint interventions. The main aim of the meetings was to put pressure on those organizations to affect change in their approaches, strategies and programs to be sensitive to the rights of PWDs and survivors of political violence.

The reporting period included several meetings to coordinate and assign duties among capable organizations to respond to emergency incidents especially in areas near settlements, while emphasizing the important role of Child Protection Networks. A series of meetings were held to assess the needs of the families and children of Khirbet Tana and Beit Furik, with different stakeholders including Save the Children International and the Child Protection Network, resulting in designing an intervention plan.

A series of meetings were also held among stakeholders working on disability to follow-up on referral of PWDs to the relevant organizations and the different services provided for them including psychosocial support, adaptations, vocational rehabilitation, etc. The meetings included representatives of the General Union for Disability, the Independent Commission for Human Rights, the different organizations working on disability, child protection and psychosocial support, in addition to other organizations like the chambers of commerce, municipalities, governorate offices, and coordination committees.

The meetings resulted in setting up of referral systems among partner organizations to serve both PWDs and survivors of political violence, in addition to planning and implementing a number of

advocacy activities within local communities and youth initiatives prepared by volunteers who receive training in crisis intervention. Two main outputs were highlighted during the reporting period; first, an agreement among governorate offices and municipalities in different districts that the Public Relations department in each of them would provide halls for implementing the activities of the team and that they would do a media coverage of these activities. Second, representatives of governmental and public sectors showed enhanced cooperation with the team and commitment to facilitate its work. Of those organizations were: the chambers of commerce and industry to lobby for the employment of PWDs and increase their salaries, the directorates of health to provide medicine and refer PWDs to suitable medical treatment, the Ministry of Labor to train the targeted groups in vocational streams in addition to creating a national movement of around ten organizations that aims at enhancing the legislation of increasing the employment of PWDs in suitable jobs, and the municipal councils to supervise the adaptations implemented in the homes of PWDs.

## Awareness raising activities

During the reporting period, 81 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 in general and females with disabilities in specific, in addition to raising the communities' awareness on child protection during incidents of emergency. The themes of the awareness workshops were chosen carefully after assessing the targeted groups' needs. It is important to note that through the conducted activities, a huge lack of general awareness was observed at the level of local families and PWDs themselves about Disability law. It is after reaching out to them, that they demanded that the General Union for Disability should take charge to teach PWDs on their rights as stipulated by the law.

A special workshop was conducted with the representatives of different media agencies about their role in calling for the rights of PWDs and the importance of their participation in the district committees that follow-up disability issues. An agreement was reached that the YMCA with its partners and the participating media agencies would elaborate on a media plan to approach disability and spread awareness.

A series of workshops were conducted with youth leader groups of females with disabilities which aimed at raising their awareness on disability and rights of PWDs, communication methods, enhancing social protection of PWDs, and policies related to PWDs rights.

A series of workshops were conducted with the local communities to raise their awareness on the rights of children especially those detained, the impact of detention, the recent dramatic increase in detention of children, modalities for documenting detention incidents, and setting up an advocacy plan for child detention in partnership with international and human rights agencies. As a result of one of the workshops conducted in Hebron, a petition was submitted to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to call for protection of children especially against detention and political violence.

The main highlight of the reporting period was the contribution to reviewing and commenting on the governmental reports for setting the agreements on Child Rights, Women, and Persons with Disabilities.

In general the workshops, meetings and lectures resulted in informing local communities about existing services and service providers in the spheres of psychosocial rehabilitation and relevant fields in addition to introducing them to the basic human rights of our targeted groups and how they can contribute to a positive change in their lives.

### Activities with educational institutions

During the reporting period, 23 activities were organized with either schools or universities within the different districts of the West Bank. Those activities aimed at raising awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities, their needs and the challenges they face in their lives. Educating the targeted groups on their responsibility in protecting children and the importance of their supportive role to persons with disability and the appropriate communication to be used with them were the main concerns highlighted in those activities. In addition 9 Friendship Committees were established inside schools. It is worth mentioning that one of the distinguished activities was asking students to do role playing of PWDs and investigating their emotions when they cannot reach a certain place and their feelings of tiredness and shyness, and being different from others.

During those activities, the YMCA teams were able to assess the level of integration of PWDs within the educational organizations and implement activities that support their integration and participation with their peers through extra-curricular activities. Students were taught to direct their feelings of anger and frustration to more positive schemes and therefore minimizing violence within the school structure. Ventilation exercises were part of those activities especially in schools that are located in highly conflicted areas, as many were implemented during the celebrations of the Palestinian Child Day. In many educational institutions, support groups were formed to lobby for the rights of their peers who live with disabilities. In one of the local universities a session with the students of Social Science and Social Work was conducted to discuss Disability at the community and organizational levels.

### Recreational / ventilation activities

The reporting period witnessed the organization of 129 recreational / ventilation activities in all West Bank districts including East Jerusalem, which targeted marginalized groups of survivors of political violence, PWDs, children especially ex-detainees, and their caregivers. These activities were implemented in schools, in community clusters that suffer from Israeli military attacks, at Bedouin clusters, etc. in coordination with and participation of different stakeholders including the Directorate of Education, the Directorate of Social Development, World Vision, Defence for Children International, UNRWA, the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, the Red Crescent, and many others. The activities included fun activities, artistic activities especially drawing, group activities, and physical activities like swimming.

Special activities were implemented for mothers and children during the celebrations of Mothers' Day and the International Women's Day. Moreover, other activities were implemented in Bethlehem during the Palestinian Child Day in partnership with the Directorate for Social Affairs, and SOS Children's Village. Those activities targeted the children of Jemima Foundation (houses children with intellectual and physical disabilities), SOS Children's Village (houses children who can no longer live with their families), and Bethlehem Children's Crèche (houses orphaned and abandoned children).

The main highlight of this period was the organization of structured ventilation programs targeting the teachers and counselors of the Directorate of Education in the old city of Hebron. 147 staff participated in the ventilation programs while 167 received training in managing stress and crisis intervention. These programs aim at building the capacities of the participants in dealing with their stress and in emergency incidents that they face almost daily.

### Youth initiatives

Following the trainings organized for volunteers from the local communities, a set of 9 youth initiatives were implemented in their own communities. Those initiatives also included ventilation exercises.

- Drawing murals on children rights and importance of living in a safe place at Al A'rqa Boys' School – Jenin that lays adjacent to the Segregation Wall and which has also lost two of its students during military attacks.
- Provision of a small sound system to facilitate the implementation of ventilation activities, and educational games that aim at developing the students' physical and mental abilities, to schools in Silwan – East Jerusalem.
- Rehabilitation and cleaning of the sports playground in the village of Faro'on – Tulkarem which is threatened by demolition. Trees were also planted all around the playground and banners calling for the rights of children to play in a safe place were erected. A set of sports' tools were also bought and given to the municipal council to encourage children and youth to use the playground.
- In the village of Bili'in, Abu Lemon Park was renovated to host the local children and enable them to play safely. Renovation works included fixing existing toys, planting trees, cleaning surfaces, painting the sides, etc.
- In the village of Al-Khader, in Bethlehem, the YMCA staff and volunteers in partnership with students of Al-Khdeira School renovated an agricultural land that belongs to the schools of the village, where each child was allowed to plant herbs and flowers that would hold his/her name.
- In East Jerusalem, a campaign for drawing murals in threatened schools was launched entitled 'my school is the most beautiful', where children would reflect their feelings towards having their schools demolished through those murals.
- In Salfit and Nablus, an initiative entitled 'think of others, I have the right to live safely and freely' was implemented where volunteers and children cleaned and planted the garden of the old ruin there (al Khirbeh). Counselors from UNRWA participated in this initiative.
- In the schools of Kufr Lakef and Fara'ta, highly conflicted areas that lay adjacent to the Segregation Wall in Nablus, initiatives to raise the awareness of the teachers on children rights were implemented and they were taught skills to deal with children with disability.
- In E'zbet Shufa – Tubas, an initiative entitled 'the right to live safely and freely' was implemented through drawing murals at the school to send messages on children rights. School staff and local institutions participated in this initiative as well.

### Celebratory and public events

During the reporting period, 24 celebratory events were implemented in marginalized areas in the West Bank and East Jerusalem with the participation of child participants, their families, and partner organizations. The activities aimed at enhancing the local communities' resiliency, giving them space to release their fears and worries, and emphasizing the right of the Palestinian children to protection, freedom and dignity as stipulated in the international conventions. Of those activities, it is worth mentioning the ones implemented in solidarity with the communities of Shufa and Fara'ta villages within Tulkarem and Qalqiliya Districts, Khirbet Ghuwein al Fauqa in Hebron, Duma and Qalandia Al-Balad villages in Ramallah, and Al-Walajeh and Hussan villages in Bethlehem District. All those spaces suffer from restrictions on access and mobility as they lay adjacent to settlements and gates of the

Segregation Wall.

Groups of children have participated as well in the Palestinian Child Day celebrations in April 2016 as part of the activities organized by the Child Protection Network and its members. These activities included marches headed towards the offices of the ICRC and other international organizations and submitting petitions calling for Palestinian children's rights in living safely and be protected from the Israeli continuous attacks against them, and attaining their rights to education, health, protection and living in dignity. In Jericho, a set of recreational and ventilation exercises were implemented with the assistance of volunteers from the different partner organizations who also made sure to distribute awareness raising publications. Similar publications were also distributed in Beit Sahour, in stores and schools and to passing cars on the main roads.

In Nablus, a marathon was organized in coordination with the district coordination committee that joined PWDs with persons without disabilities. The activities included special ventilation exercises with the mothers of PWDs. Another marathon was organized in Bethlehem for children and youth with disabilities of ages 7-14. The marathon included a festival, theatrical performances and ventilation exercises. A big event celebrating students with disabilities who passed the General Secondary Examinations was arranged in Hebron in partnership with the district coordination office during which a documentary about PWDs rights was showed. And finally a demonstration was organized in Nablus to demand for the adaptation of public buildings, civil society and governmental premises. A number of petitions were submitted to the United Nations demanding them to support PWDs rights in accessing services and attaining their rights, while they also submitted petitions to the local government demanding it to implement the Disability Law.

## Meetings with decision-makers

Several meetings with key governmental agencies were held during the reporting period, of which the following were the most important:

- Meeting with the Ministry of Labor to investigate opportunities for designing a joint program to address the vocational rehabilitation of PWDs and in partnership with an international organization.
- Meetings with the managers of the District Coordination Offices – DCOs in the different districts to coordinate exchange of information on detained children and referral of ex-detainee children to receive adequate support.
- Meetings with the Commission for Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs (CoDEDA) to coordinate efforts in addressing child detention, as well as meetings with the Palestinian Prisoners' Club to coordinate efforts on exchanging data on child detainees. The meetings resulted in better coordinated efforts in supporting the targeted groups and most importantly signing of two agreements; with CoDEDA on March 1st 2016, as well as with the Prisoners' Club, on September 6th 2016.
- Meetings of the Child Detention Working Group, which is led by the YMCA and its member being: Save the Children- oPt Country Office, Commission for the Affairs of Detainees and Ex-detainees - CoDEDA, Defence for Children International – Palestine Section, UNICEF, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- Ten meetings with representatives of the different governmental agencies in the different districts were held to join and coordinate efforts in addressing issues of PWDs, confirming their rights, evaluating current services available, activating the Higher Council for PWDs Affairs, increasing the employment of PWDs, enhancing their access to education, and adapting public transportation means to be used by PWDs. Important stakeholders joined those meetings like the Minister of Social



Development, the Minister of Education, and the Palestinian President. It is important to note that throughout the year, the YMCA focused its efforts to support the Palestinian General Union of PWDs as well as encouraging the different organizations to support PWDs and their rights. The YMCA was keen to encourage the participation of the Union’s members in the design and implementation of its advocacy activities.

### Media activities

During the reporting period, a program was prepared with the radio station in Tubas to cover the work of the psychosocial emergency team in the same area, the emergency interventions and response mechanisms, and the provision of psychosocial support to the local communities. A counselor and children participants as well joined this program. In addition, three radio stations in the West Bank participated in an advocacy campaign on disability that highlighted the need for conducting adaptations to homes and buildings, the right to decent work, and the right to reach services. Substantial work was also done to contribute to the design of series of television episodes with Ma’an News Agency’s ‘Momken’ Show. The episodes discussed Labor Law and employing PWDs in the private sector and their rights. The YMCA team in Tulkarem and Qalqiliya participated in the making of a documentary show on the adaptation of schools and public buildings. In general the radio and TV programs included the input from several stakeholders like the Ministries of Labor and Social Development, the General Union for PWDs, etc.

### 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	696	852	1548
Ex-detainees	0	473	473
Children and families	7344	6003	13347
Staff of educational institutions	693	664	1357
Staff of local institutions	404	548	952
Staff of international institutions	48	58	106
Students of schools and universities	1674	2618	4292
<b>Total</b>	<b>10859</b>	<b>11216</b>	<b>22075</b>

### Fact Sheet: Our Work in Numbers



Direct participants receiving rehabilitation support	819
Counseling sessions	8882
Participants receiving vocational assessment	199
Participants receiving educational and career counseling	408
Participants receiving vocational training	95
Self-employment projects	16
Facilitation of employment of PWDs	5
Academic rehabilitation support	206
Adaptations of residences, schools, clinics, and public buildings for the use of persons with disability	37
Medical urgent assistive aids	79
Trainees from other organizations who received training	527
Trainees from our staff	43
University students trainees	25
International training for our staff	1
International training to others	18
Coordination meetings and field visits held on the local level	209
Awareness raising workshops / lectures / meetings, etc.	81
Activities organized with schools and universities within the different districts of the West Bank	23
Youth initiatives	9
Celebratory and public events	24
Recreational / ventilation activities	129
Targeted groups by the advocacy and awareness activities	22075

<b><i>Through our projects</i></b>	
Emergency interventions	1556
Children and adults reached through emergency interventions	13,725
Signed MoU's	2
Ex-detainee children evaluated	377
Psychosocial counseling sessions conducted for ex-detainee children	3228
Families of detainee and ex-detainee children evaluated	223
Psychosocial counseling sessions conducted for families of detainee and ex-detainee children	618