



Empowering Women Promoting Equality



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Annual Report



2008



Table of Content

Foreword by the National General Secretary

1

(1) Highlights of 2008- from the National Council Office

2

(2) Women's Education and Health and Programs

6

(3) Women Economic Empowerment

11

(4) Social, Cultural and Sports Activities

13

(5) Children and Youth Programs

14

(6) Advocacy

18

(7) Networking and Partnerships

21

(8) Representation and Visitors

22

(9) Financial Highlights of 2008

25

(10) Challenges Faced in 2009

27

(11) Looking Ahead – Plans for 2009 and beyond

28

Listings:

A- Partners, Donors and Friends of the YWCA of Palestine

B- Members of the Boards

*:: Cover drawing by Raghad Abu Ktaish, a 10 year old girl from Jerusalem.
One of the winners in the drawing contest under the theme "I Dream".*

Foreword by the National General Secretary

The year 2008 started with lots of energy, and a vibrant process within the YWCA of Palestine, which pushed and challenged us to question and re-define our identity, values, constituency, membership and target groups. We had to rethink our governance structures, assess our achievements and failures, and rejuvenate and rejoice our history. All of this is shaping our future plans and direction. All of this also reminded us that we have to be always creative, relevant and responsive to the women and communities we work with who call on us to do more.

In this global economic crisis, we needed to anticipate its impact on the communities we work with and the resources that will stay available, and knowing very well that our resources might shrink when the community needs are increasing, it was inevitable not to have a hard look at our implementation strategies and cost-effectiveness, and try to explore how can we better work with our communities and membership to optimize these resources. As we worked, we needed to remind ourselves that we were not the only players or service providers, and that we need to seek new partners and forge new coalitions, we realized that the YWCA has yet to learn how to work in this direction, and invest more in identifying and forming partnerships. Many of these issues will continue to challenge us in the long term especially that we did not come to closure or final answers.

As General Secretary, I felt that despite our frustrations and challenges, the year 2008 offered us a wonderful learning opportunity, and new ways for exploring new program ideas. We have achieved a lot, and despite all the challenges, we were able to grow both in terms of programs, scope, diversity and funding. For this, we need to congratulate the whole team.

On the country level, the picture is quite gloomy. The internal division between the political parties and continuing existence of two governments, one in West Bank and another in Gaza continued to adversely affect the morale and inertia of the Palestinian people. Although the international community was becoming more aware of the fatal outcomes of occupation, yet the big political powers in the world continued to fail the Palestinian people's aspirations for Peace with Justice. The Year 2008 ended with one of the most vicious and destructive Israeli wars in Palestine. "The War on Gaza", which started in late December, right after Christmas , and which ended in late January leaving Gaza with long lasting irrecoverable effects, and which left us all devastated, discouraged and in shock. The war reminded us that no matter what we do, and no matter how hard we work, it is not enough. The occupation is a much greater destructive force, and we need to keep reminding the world of this longest occupation in modern history. The Year 2008 commemorated the 60th Year of Occupation, which we Palestinian call the Nakba, and the war on Gaza crowned that Nakba further. This urges us to continue to strengthen our advocacy and find new ways for awareness building amongst our partners, the international community and political decision-makers.

This catastrophe reminded us again how much we are part and parcel of the global movement. The support we got from many of our YWCA/YMCA partners, our APRODEV and other partners/donors, and from the World Office during the war reminded us that together we have the power to change, and that together we can work better for Peace and Justice. Without this support we could not have survived and continued to operate. I sincerely express my gratitude to all our supporters, friends, partners and networks who helped us survive, and who have positively responded to our calls for Action for Gaza.

Mira Rizek – National General Secretary



1 Highlights of 2008 - from the National Council Office

• The Strategic Planning and Reorganization Process

The Strategic Planning which started towards the end of 2007, continued throughout 2008. During 2008, seven workshops were conducted, some for one day and some for more. Most Board members, national council members and senior staff have attended, but the attendance level and constituency changed based on subject matter.

The focus of the process was very much on governance throughout 2008, since this has been, and continues to be the burning issue for the organization.

Strategic Planning Workshops during the Year 2008

Date	Issues	Number / Profile of People Who Attended.
18-20/1/2008	Vision, Mission, Organizational Structure and SWOT Analysis	19 Board members and staff
16/2/2008	Organizational Structure	16 Board members
17/3/2008	Membership, organizational values	22 Board members and staff
22/5/2008	Structure / Roles and Responsibilities	8 Executive Members of the National Council
23 +24/8/2008	Programs/ Projects, Objectives, Strategies, Structure.	20 Board members and staff
11 +12/10/2008	Programs Goals and Objectives and review of SWOT	10 Staff
25/11/2008	Organizational Structure and Relationships of staff and volunteers	12 Executive Members of the National Council

In 2004, the YWCA contracted Birzeit University Continuing Education to conduct a complete institutional review of the organization, and produce the new organizational structure as well as the Staff Rules and Regulations Manual, and all other policies and procedures manuals. In 2005, the National Council made the decision to register the national association. The task was completed at the end of 2006, and the previous National Council recommended to the new council the endorsement of the new structure and organizational manuals. This has not fully materialized for many reasons.

Already the YWCA in Jericho was registered with the Palestinian Authority as early as 2000, and thus the legal advisor at the time recommended the registration of the Ramallah YWCA, so that the local associations will form the national council, which then will be registered as a separate legal entity. The Jerusalem YWCA had to register under the Israeli law, which is different from the Palestinian NGO law.

The registration of each local association has practically endowed the legal liability and accountability of the organization with the local board. The structure that has already been prepared for the organization was thus debated during this past term of the Boards, since the thrust of the power and decision-making as per the proposed structure sits with the central council, which has no legal authority, as compared to the boards who by law are the authorized and accountable bodies. In short, the association was split between the need to decentralize and strengthen local capacities, versus the need to centralize its policies and procedures as well as its identity and image and compliance measures.

To resolve this issue, the Constitution Committee has been re-activated by the National Council in July 2008, and called upon to review the bylaws of all the local associations and try to consolidate them into one bylaw that will accommodate both NGO laws, allow a certain degree of regulated autonomy in the branches, yet secure the unity of the organization's vision, mission, strategic direction and policies. These bylaws will form the basis of the national council to be registered. The Constitution Committee's main task during 2008 was to prepare for the elections of the new Boards and National Council. The new bylaws for the national association will be prepared in 2009.

THE MAJOR CHANGES MADE SO FAR CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

- The General Assembly (GA) for the National Council has been proposed to be made up of 45 members, 15 from each association, made up of Board members and general assembly members. These members have already been elected in November 2008, and elected the new National President and two Vice Presidents
- The National President and Vice President responsibilities will be refined. More authority will be delegated to the National President. Also, instead of electing one Vice President, the new structure instituted two vice presidents, to reflect better and activate the geographic representation of the organization.
- Succession Planning: to ensure smooth hand-over and proper orientation of the new boards, the Constitution Committee is also drafting the policies and procedures for succession of boards, and proposing methods and procedures for training of the new boards to ensure effective and sustainable operation of the organization.
- Membership: three classifications of membership have been devised now, full members, affiliate members and program members. The full members will be Christian women over 18 years, who will be eligible to vote and nominate themselves for elections.
- Relationship of Executive Directors to Boards: according to the new proposed structure which has not yet been endorsed, the Boards now will hire, evaluate, monitor and supervise the Executive Directors, who in turn will report fully to them.
- Relationship of Executive Directors to the General Secretary: the Executive Directors will report on donor funded programs to the General Secretary (GS), who will be responsible to report to all donors. The GS will thus have an indirect relationship with these directors.
- Structure and Role of the National Council Office: the posts in the council office have been reduced from 6 to 5 posts towards the end of 2008, and re-defined as follows:
 - » The General Secretary's post content will be revised once the final structure is endorsed. The post has been strengthened in terms of networking, representation and advocacy, but continues to be unclear in terms of the operation and grant management.
 - » The National Program Coordinator post has been put under freeze and a new post titled Fundraising, Reporting and Communications Officer opened.
 - » The Senior Financial Officer has been upgraded to Financial Controller.
 - » The IT support will be decentralized and thus the central IT post has been closed.
 - » The Operations Coordinator post has also been phased out.
 - » The Administrative Assistant post stayed unchanged, with minor post refinements made only on the basis of seniority.
 - » The Media / Advocacy tasks have been conducted on part time consulting basis until this job is filled.



THE YEAR 2008 WAS THE LAST YEAR IN THE TERM OF THE BOARDS FOR 2006-2008, AND ELECTIONS WERE ORGANIZED TOWARDS THE END OF THE YEAR IN EACH LOCAL ASSOCIATION.

21/11/2008

was the elections day in Ramallah, where nine members were elected for the new Board, and Mrs. Maha Rantisi elected as the Board President for the YWCA of Ramallah.

27/11/2008

was the Jericho Board elections day, where nine members were elected and Ms. Erma Darwish elected as the Board President for the YWCA of Jericho.

28/11/2008

Jerusalem elected its seven members of the new Board, and Mrs. Mireille Ghuneim elected as the Board President of the YWCA of Jerusalem.

5/12/2008

was the National Council elections day. Mrs. Abla Nasir was elected for the Presidency of the National Council of the YWCA of Palestine following Mrs. Hanadi Soudah-Younan. Mrs. Haifa Baramki and Mrs. Vera Pano were both elected as Vice Presidents for the YWCA of Palestine.

Staffing Changes and Organizational Development

Few staffing changes happened in 2008 as a result of the re-organization:

At the National Council Office level:

- o Mr. Hanna Theodorie who was hired as a financial consultant finished his consultancy job in April 2008, and Mr. Fadi Stephan was hired as a Senior Finance Officer for the National Council Office
- o Mr. Ashraf Khatib also completed his consulting tasks at end of December, as Operations Coordinator
- o The IT consulting agreement with Mr. Majdi Husseini also ended at end of December 2008.

At the level of Jerusalem YWCA:

- o Mr. Nabil Mansour ended his employment as Administration Coordinator in April 2008.
- o Mr. Khamis Abu Said, who used to be the coordinator for LilacY Sports Center, ended his employment with the YWCA on 30/6/2008.
- o Mr. Samer Gedon who was hired as chef in 2007 for the Cafe' / Restaurant left in May 2008. The restaurant operation is still frozen until a final decision on type of management is decided (direct management by YWCA versus sub-contracting)

At the level of Ramallah YWCA:

- o Ms. Katy Dabbah who worked for 56 years as the Director of the Jalazone Refugee Camp Center retired in April 2008, after accepting to extend her stay on special assignment despite the fact that she acquired her pension, thus offering some time for the organization to find a replacement.
- o Mrs. Manal Qanzou'a was hired as a replacement for Ms. Katy Dabbah in August 2008, to oversee the Jalazone Refugee Camp operation.
- o Ms. Manal Abu Awwad was hired as a full-time accountant, based on the recommendations of the auditor's management letter of 2007.

Systems Development and Trainings:

- Ms. Heather Britt, who is a Monitoring, Evaluation and Capacity Building Specialist based in Cairo, was hired as a PME expert to review the PME system at the YWCA and advise on how to improve it. She also offered a three day training in log-frames for all program staff from 18-20 December 2008.
- The preparation of the procurement manual for the YWCA was also completed in December 2008, and will be put in application after the national council's endorsement.
- Two new salary scales were prepared by Mr. Theodorie and endorsed in January 2008 by the National Council, one for Jerusalem and one for West Bank.

2. Women Education and Health Programs

*As a women's movement, the YWCA of Palestine strives to
"Enhance the status of Palestinian women and address their needs at all levels"*

- The Vocational Training Centers:

A primary and historic program at the YWCA since the early 1950s has been the Vocational Training for young women. It provides alternative educational opportunities for marginalized women, who have no access to colleges and universities and cannot pursue higher education. The technical skills they acquire are tailored to market needs, creating better prospects for employment and income generation for those young graduates and their families.

All programs offer intensive theoretical and practical one-year trainings that are concluded by on-the-job training experience in local institutions and organizations in an attempt to integrate them in the local job market.

However, one has to keep in mind that with the current economic situation in Palestine, the unemployment rates stood at 25.8% in the West Bank and Gaza, as of June 2008.¹ The YWCA aspires to contribute to job employment for women, regardless of how humble this contribution will be, but more important is that we utilize a holistic approach for empowering those women, through leadership and life-skills training, to play a more prominent role in the building of the Palestinian civil society. Although the YWCA has been working hard in making this program more financially sustainable, it continues to depend heavily on external donors like Bread for the World (BFTW) and (EED) .

 **UCCESS STORY - MAYADAH TARAZI**



"My name is Mayadah Tarazi. I graduated from the Vocational Training Center in Jerusalem in 2001 in the Secretarial and Office Management program. I did my practical training at the YWCA and was immediately hired thereafter as the Secretary for the VTC. I continued to upgrade my skills up to this day, with different courses and trainings. I had the opportunity to go on an exchange program to Norway for ten months, and experienced first hand the work and life at the YWCA/YMCA of Norway. Currently I am the Administrative Assistant at the National Council Office of the YWCA of Palestine.

"I still have a long way to go with my education and skills training, as I am very ambitious, but I believe that the YWCA gave me an excellent base to start my career with, and I know it does the same to many other young women every year."

The Vocational Training Center (VTC) in Jerusalem:

Since its establishment in 1956, almost 7,000 skilled young women have graduated from this center over the years. Though initially students from all over the West Bank and even Gaza came to the YWCA in Jerusalem for training, now with the imposed closure on Jerusalem by the Israeli occupation, the center receives young women from Jerusalem and surrounding villages only.

In addition to the two main programs of Office Management/Secretary and Public Health, a new specialization was added in 2008 in "Medical Secretary" in response to the evaluation recommendations of the VTC that was carried out in 2007.

Main developments on the educational level during 2008 were:

- Adding a new specialization in "Medical Secretary"
- Renewing the accreditation of the Palestinian Ministry of Labor for both Secretarial courses in Jerusalem and Ramallah
- Establishment of a specialized Health Laboratory for health related specializations.
- A Teacher's Lounge was renovated and equipped with three computers, internet access and a printer. In addition, a Student Lounge was also created and equipped.
- Curricula for Computer and Word Procession Training, English Language, Life Skills, Nursing Skills and the Nutrition course were revised, updated and enriched.
- A Career Day was organized at the YWCA for the first time, and attracted employers from local institutions, who interviewed the students and listened to their presentations.
- A professional Counselor was hired on part time basis starting September 2008, who offers group and individual counseling for students in Jerusalem.
- A gender specialist was contracted on consulting basis, and gender policies and studies are incorporated in the various VTC programs.

In mid December of 2007, renovations started in the VTC floor at the YWCA building in Jerusalem. It incorporated creating a student lounge (cafeteria), teachers' lounge, two computer labs, a server room and bathrooms, including all the electrical, mechanical and infrastructure work needed for this. Moreover, the renovations complied with both the security/safety regulations, as well as catered for the needs of people with special needs. Thus smoke detectors and fire escape stairs were installed in that floor based on the safety regulations requirements, and special bathrooms for people with special needs are now available at the VTC floor. Those renovations were finalized in May of 2008, through Y-Global's core contribution to Jerusalem YWCA.

RENOVATION



The Vocational Training Center in Ramallah:

Established in 2002, this center caters for the needs of students in Ramallah and the surrounding area, who are no longer able to reach Jerusalem because of the Israeli imposed movement restrictions. It currently offers one program in "Office Management and Secretary" for both young women and young men.

The YWCA in Ramallah recieved a grant from the Arab Fund in Kuwait and is in the process of constructing a four-floor multipurpose building to expand its facilities in order to meet the increasing demand by the community for its educational training services. Moreover, this will enable it to diversify its activities to include new innovative vocational training programs for women in non-traditional areas, targeting young women from economically less advantaged areas, especially from surrounding villages and refugee camps, to enhance their skills and increase their chances of employment. If demand arises, there is potential for creating boarding facilities for students.

The tables below summarize the numbers of graduates and students in 2008:

Number of graduates (2007-2008)	Jerusalem	Ramallah
Office Management and Secretarial Program	36	45
Health program	35	
Assistant in Physiotherapy	20	
Total	91	45

Number of students enrolled (2008-2009)	Jerusalem	Ramallah
Office Management and Secretarial Program	49	27
Health program	21	
Assistant in Physiotherapy	11	
Medical Secretary (New Specialty)	20	
Total	101	27

VTC - RAMALLAH



Gender Unit:

An exciting development this year was the establishment of a Gender Unit in Jerusalem through a generous fund from DanChurchAid. The Unit's main goal is "To contribute to promoting gender equality and enhance civil society's role in building a strong, democratic and inclusive Palestinian state". The main project under this unit is the establishment of a resource center that focuses on gender and women related issues, and will provide trainings, scholarships, books, films, games and more. The designs for the space of the resource are ready and we have fund for its establishment from the UNDP.

Throughout the year 2008, different activities were organized under this project:

- Three gender trainings for the YWCA staff in the three branches.
- A Seminar on Gender in Palestine for all the YWCA staff and board members.
- The Vocational Training "Life Skills" course was reviewed by the gender specialist and a new course on gender and women rights was prepared and is ready to start in the second semester of this academic year.
- As an introduction to this course, three sessions on human rights and women were given to the VTC students by a gender trainer.
- A special calendar was issued with the theme of women and human rights and was distributed to our members, donors and friends.
- Few books and equipments were purchased for the resource center this year.

In order to raise the awareness of the YWCA members and friends on women issues we organized different events:

- Two joint activities with the Women Studies center of Beir Zeit University and Mada El Carmel Research Center: a lecture by Kathleen Barry Professor of the Pennsylvania State University on "Sexual Exploitation as Human Rights Violation"; and a symposium on "Palestinian women and economical obstacle's.
- Screening a documentary film on honor killing for the public and for the VTC students followed by discussions with the producer.

GENDER UNIT



- Community Health Training and Awareness Building:

To build health awareness amongst women in rural areas, especially in issues related to women's health, several workshops were organized in 2008 in villages and camps around Ramallah and Jericho. The YWCA in Ramallah arranged those meetings in Beit Reema/ Der Ghassaneh, Kufer Nima and Al Nabi Saleh villages in the Ramallah district, with over eighty women benefiting from this project. In Jericho, the workshops were organized in Ein Al Sultan, and Aqabet Jaber refugee camps and Nuweimeh village in the Jericho area, with over fifty women participating. Topics discussed during the sessions included HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Reproductive Health, Sexual Harassment, Smoking and Drugs and others. This program continues to be funed by EED.

The Hairdressing training program continued in 2008 in Jericho, with seven young women graduating in November, and 12 new participants enrolling in the new program in December of 2008. In addition, a new group of six female students enrolled in a comprehensive course in "International Computer Driver's License-ICDL" in computer applications like: Windows, Word, Excel, power point and Internet.

- Psychological Counseling Project :

Aiming to improve the psychological well-being of teachers and students at the YWCA VTC in Ramallah and assisting them in handling the daily stress of life under occupation, this program was initiated in 2006, in cooperation with Y-Global in Norway, funded by FOKUS - Forum for Women and Development in Norway.

During the year 2008, the third year of this project, three trainings in "Stress Management" were offered; one for the VTC teachers and other teachers from other schools in Ramallah, another for the preschool teachers in the Jalazone refugee camp, and a third was offered to three groups of VTC students in Ramallah throughout the year. In addition, three groups of VTC students were offered "Career Counseling" in 2008. Moreover, and as an integral part of this project, regular group counseling sessions were given to three groups of VTC students. Thirty two students needed individual counseling and were given support for their special cases.

GENDER WORKSHOP



3. Women's Economic Empowerment:

Women's economic empowerment continues to be one of the major strategic goals of the YWCA of Palestine.

Since its establishment and to this day, the YWCA strives to offer job training and placement opportunities for disadvantaged women, who are mainly heads of households, to learn new skills that will help them generate income or find employment in the job market and be able to provide for their families. The two main programs that the YWCA offered in this field are the "Food Production Project" in Jericho and the "Traditional Embroidery" at the Jalazone refugee camp center.

Supported by Oxfam Qubec, the YWCA of Palestine carried out an extensive evaluation and market and needs assessment of its Jalazone Refugee Camp Center in 2007/2008, as well as its Food Production Project in Jericho. Based on the results and recommendations of those evaluations, the YWCA set up development plans for those programs, and took the first steps in 2008.

Traditional embroideries in Jalazone (dolls and puppets):

In 2008, an intensive Marketing Research was carried out for this project; another one of the traditional and historic projects at the YWCA, that has carried its legacy for over fifty years. About fifteen young women from the camp are participating in this project, supervised by two trainers. Main products include dolls, puppets and a nativity set all in traditional costumes, in addition to book covers, purses, bags and quilts with a traditional touch. Recently added products include shoulder bags, key chains and Christmas tree decorations.

The Project is seeking to hire a designer to introduce new products, as well as a marketing expert to help explore new markets.

In 2008, our products were displayed in five different local exhibitions, two in Jerusalem, one in Bethlehem, one in Ramallah and another in Jaffa.

SUCCESS STORY - JAMALAT YOUSEF NAKHLEH



"My name is Jamalata Yousef Nakhleh, and this is my story with the YWCA –Jalazone Center. I have learned a lot of things at the center; mainly embroidery and sewing, so now I can make many beautiful things by myself. I also learned a lot of other things that benefit me.

"I used to have unbearable and intolerable free time that I didn't know how to fill. Joining the team at the YWCA Jalazone Center helped me make better use of my free time, and helped me improve my financial, moral and social status as well. I am now able to assist my husband in the household expenses; that makes me feel relevant and productive, and I can prove to myself and those around that I am capable to hold responsibility beyond that of my home and children.

"I advise every woman to work and to be productive. It really makes a lot of difference. Thank you so much YWCA!"

Food Production Project- Jericho:

For the eighth year since its launching, the Food Production Project in Jericho continues to be one of the major economic empowerment projects of the organization. It's a core program at the YWCA in Jericho that offers employment opportunities for women who are prime supporters of their families.

Through this project, the YWCA strives to increase job opportunities for low-income Palestinian women in the Jericho area, while at the same time promoting national, healthy and delicious products that provide an alternative to dependency on Israeli products.

In 2008, eleven women and two men were fully employed by this project; mainly in the production of seasonal food products.

An interesting development has been the signing of two agreements with two governmental secondary schools for girls in Jericho, where the YWCA will supply sandwiches and pastries for their canteens in the schools. This offers the opportunity for the YWCA in Jericho to offer the students a variety of its healthy and clean food and promote healthy diets amongst students.

Moreover, the food project became a good model that exemplifies a continuous developing environment for working women, where women's rights are taken into consideration. This is expressed frequently by the Palestinian Federation of Trade Unions, the National Committee for General Safety and others. As the YWCA of Palestine believes in a holistic approach to women empowerment, and constantly facilitates the participation of women in the Production Projects in trainings, meetings and activities aimed at building their capacity and keeping them involved in their communities. The two main training programs they participated in during 2008 were one on conflict management and another training on gender issues, which was organized for all staff at the YWCA.

In comparison to 2007, the sales of Jericho products have increased by 30 % in 2008.

SUCCESS STORY - HANAN MUSTAFA SANTARISI



"My name is Hanan and I am 38 years old. I am divorced with four children; one daughter who is 15 years old and three sons aged 14, 10 and 6. I have been employed by the YWCA in Jericho at the Food Production Project since four years now, and this has been my main source of income that enables me to secure a respectable living for my children. Their father has psychological problems and I wanted to raise them myself. If it wasn't for my current employment opportunity, I wouldn't have been able to care for them.

"I learned a lot of skills on the job, now I am able to make pastries, cookies, juices and many other food products.

"Besides securing the basic needs for my family, I have a good time at work; sharing my worries and hopes with other women, supporting them and getting their support. The project has been enhancing to many dimensions of my life."

Olive Oil Soap Production:

The olive oil soap production continued upon demand mainly in Jalazone in 2008. Those hand-made soaps which are placed in embroidered little bags continue to be one of the most popular items sold in our gift shop in Jerusalem for international visitors.

As usual, the YWCA products were displayed at several local and regional food exhibitions, and national events and festivals.

Publication – Palestinian Women in the Informal Economy:

In 2008, the YWCA of Palestine, and through its membership in the "Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine" Network, funded by the Presbyterian Church in the USA, carried out a research entitled "Palestinian Women in the Informal Economy of the West Bank: Successes and Challenges". One thousand copies were printed of the English version of the study, and 500 copies translated to Arabic through the generous support of HorYzon were circulated and shared with local and international partners and organizations.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



4. Social, Cultural and Sports Activities

In 2008, and for the second year, the YWCA in Jericho continued to offer women in Jericho area the space they needed to exercise and do aerobics training sessions, as well as get the advice of a nutritionist on healthy, balanced food. About 18 women are regularly benefiting from this project.

The health center LilacY in Jerusalem continued to offer classes and different activities for its members, from the ballet to aerobics, dabkeh, modern dancing, and others. New equipments were purchased in February, and membership cards are issued to regular members. We are still striving to develop this center to attract more members and to become financially sustainable. The center continues to pose a real financial challenge for the YWCA in Jerusalem.

Our Modern Dance group performed their musical dance show in March twice, once in Jerusalem and another in Nazareth, with an exceptional number of audiences.

YWCA members in all branches were active this year with special events and activities, especially on traditional occasions and holidays. The YWCA Global Breakfast was celebrated in all branches with members and friends of the association, and donations were gathered for the Global Campaign. Easter was celebrated mainly with children, through "egg hunting" and "egg coloring" events in both Jerusalem and Ramallah.

As usual, the Santa Barbara day was acknowledged and celebrated. In Jerusalem more than a hundred members attended the Christmas bazaar in addition to over 40 children, who enjoyed special shows; mainly a dance by our dabkeh group and a clown show for children. A similar party was organized in Ramallah for the members and their families who celebrated this joyful season together. Unfortunately, the party in Jericho that was planned on the 29th of December was canceled due to the erupting war in Gaza.

SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES



5. Children and Youth Programs:

Children and youth are our future and our hope. Those young girls are tomorrow's mothers, and the future members who will carry the torch of this movement forward.

Preschools in Refugee Camps:

The YWCA continues to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children to play, learn and grow at its preschools in the two refugee camps centers in Jalazone and Aqabet Jaber. Our existence in the refugee camps offers us a unique position and access to one of the most vulnerable communities in Palestine, mainly the women and girls in refugee camps.

One hundred and eight children (108) aged 3-5 are enrolled in the Jalazone Preschool for the scholastic year 2008-2009 and eighty five (85) in Aqabet Jaber refugee camp center.

Different activities and special events were arranged in both preschools throughout the year, with a special focus on joint mother-child activities, to strengthen the bond between the mother and her child and reach out to those mothers and address their needs. Moreover, teachers at the KGs participated in the gender training that was offered to all staff of the organization, as well as the whole day workshop in December that joined all associations together to discuss gender equality issues in Palestine.

SUCCESS STORY – USAMA AHMAD



My name is Usama Ahmad, and I am five years old. I have been coming to the YWCA kindergarten at the Jalazone Camp for two years now. They teach me how to write, and how to play different games, and how to sing for nature and for my country. I enjoy being at the YWCA kindergarten, and every morning when I wake up, I put on my clothes, and ask my mom to take me the YWCA Kindergarten, where I can meet my friends and teachers and enjoy my day.

Summer Camps

In summer of 2008, one summer camp was organized at the YWCA in Ramallah with twenty one girls and boys aged 6-13 participating. A professional preschool teacher was hired to supervise the program assisted by five youth volunteers.

Activities included arts activities such as traditional dance training, drama and singing, in addition to art therapy activities (tie-dye t-shirts, puppets, painting and hand crafts). Social activities included visits to local industrial factories such as the National Beverages Company, Sinokrot Food Company and The National Paper Product and Marketing Company, in addition to swimming and park trips.

An open day was organized at the end of the summer camp, where families got a chance to see different presentations and performances by their children of what they learned and accomplished during their time at the YWCA. The Palestinian Circus School participated in a fifteen minutes performance with the YWCA trainees at the Circus School.

Painting Competition for Children in Jerusalem

A painting competition was organized by the YWCA Jerusalem for children aged 6-10 from eight different schools in Jerusalem under the title "I have a dream". Hundreds of children participated. Towards the end of the competition, a children festival was organized with around 300 children, who participated in sports, art activities and story telling.

PAINTING COMPETITION IN JERUSALEM



Youth Activities

As a movement of the "Young", the YWCA strives to create and promote youth leaders that can lead the positive change and fully contribute to the development of the Palestinian society.

In Jerusalem, 60 active youth members carried on their commitment to the YWCA throughout 2008. Several activities were organized for and by the youth:

- A training program was organized in the first quarter of 2008 for a group of 20 youth members on leadership and life skills enhancement.
- More than 40 youth from our Dabkeh, Modern Dance and Leadership groups visited a group of youth leaders in Haifa and a Dabkeh group in Jaffa near Nazareth to exchange experiences and thoughts.
- The youth took another trip to Haifa and the Palestinian villages around it, to learn about their history.
- A play by Ashtar Theater on the issue of Youth and Drugs was performed twice for the youth and the VTC students.
- A new dabkeh group was formed in Jerusalem, with 35 young women and men participating in regular trainings of this traditional Palestinian dance.
- International Youth Day was celebrated by the youth at the YWCA in Jerusalem in August, with over a 100 youth attending the event that was planned, organized and implemented by the youth themselves.
- A group of youth worked together to produce a mural on Palestinian refugees.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN JERUSALEM



In Ramallah, several youth activities continued in 2008, with youth from Ramallah and surrounding villages and camps taking part. The highlights of those activities were:

- Creating a traditional dance group in the town of Birzeit.
- Carrying on with the Karate training for girls in Jalazone Refugee camp and participating in national championships. Currently we have 13 girls taking part.
- Creating a Drama group in cooperation with local schools and institution and implement a theatrical play focusing on gender equality issues.
- Training children on the art of clowns and circus in cooperation with Palestinian Circus School and Clowns without Borders.
- Implementing six workshops in Ramallah and the surrounding villages for youth focusing on communication skills, drugs awareness and building confidence and self esteem.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN RAMALLAH



SUCCESS STORY – YAZAN



"My name is Yazan and I am originally from a town near Tulkarm and moved to Ramallah 5 years ago. I am 14 years old and I participated in the drama club at the YWCA in Ramallah just because I thought it's a new kind of experience. I didn't expect much of it and I thought it's just an activity that won't get me anywhere.

After a couple of trainings, I found myself attached and committed to each training session for the excitement, the self esteem and the ability to express myself that I was learning.

I learned how to stand on stage in front of the audience with no fear, and without being shy. The drama training strengthened my personality; I turned to be less edgy, more enthusiastic and a better communicator.

I am more confident now and I can participate in positive dialogue with my parents and able to express my feelings with no fear. Even though that wasn't my expectation when I started the drama training, I believe now that I will make plans for my future career to be related to drama, cinema or directing. The training opened up new avenues for me"

6. Advocacy:

An essential and integral part of its mission, the YWCA of Palestine exerts all efforts to advocate for women's rights, human rights and Peace and Justice in Palestine.

With the constantly deteriorating situation, the National Council office continued to issue Action Alerts and appeals, encouraging the world movements to act actively in exerting pressure on decision makers and governments to end of the Israeli occupation, and to educate their members and constituencies on the root causes of the conflict.

The Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) remains the main advocacy project, run jointly by the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine.

The overall evaluation of the JAI that was carried out in 2007 led the JAI Steering committee to take a decision to launch a Strategic Planning process, planned to start in 2009. The YWCA General Secretary formulated the draft Terms of Reference for the evaluation with inputs from all parties. This was followed with a recruitment process, which ended with the hiring of IDARA Consulting Firm to manage this process. The agreement was signed in December 2008, and funding made available by DanChurchAid, one of the main donors of the JAI.

A full separate annual report is prepared for the JAI, but we here highlight the most important developments,

- Progress and activities carried out in 2008:

Out of the 15,417 olive tree sponsorships received in 2007, the Olive Tree Campaign managed to plant 13,199 trees in 157 fields located in four of the eight districts of the West Bank in 2008. The remaining 2,218 Olive trees were supposed to be planted in the Gaza Strip in order to highlight the ongoing crisis in that part of Palestine, ever since the Israeli military placed its forces on the borders, effectively sealing and controlling all means of life for the 1.2 million Palestinians living there.

The efforts to plant those olive trees in Gaza were interrupted by the war crimes committed by the Israeli forces during the planting season (late February 2008) resulted in the killing of 131 Palestinians between February 27th and March 7th, 2008. The Olive Tree Campaign will do its best to plant the remaining 2,218 sponsored olive trees in Gaza in the coming planting season, if the situation permits.

Throughout the year 2008, the JAI received 9000 sponsored olive trees and with this we reach our targeted goal of 50,000 olive trees which we had aimed at when the Olive Tree Campaign was launched.

- Advocacy Programs and trips:

During 2008, the JAI staff and volunteers participated in several events on the international level, some of which are:

- 1- The "Education for Peace" Seminar in Spain, organized by the YMCA of Spain.
- 2- The Youth Peace Network Camp in Vancouver Canada.
- 3- The YMCA Europe Festival in Prague, Czech Republic.
- 4- A three-day planning workshop for the World Council of Churches' International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel (ICAPPI).
- 5- One-week Trocaire partners planning workshop held in Mynooth, Ireland.

On the other hand the JAI received an enormous number of international individuals and delegations. These delegations came to Palestine through our advocacy and witness trips such as:

1- The First JAI Olive Planting Program - February 2008:

Twenty-six individuals responded to the call and attended this special program that was organized for the first time in the olive planting season. Thanks to The Presbyterians in the San Francisco Bay Area for the support they showed to the program in organizing a group to take part. The program took place between the 2nd and 10th of February, 2008. During the visit, the participants planted 780 olive trees in four different locations around Bethlehem.

2- The "Journey for Justice" Program that took place between the 23rd and 31st of July with over twenty five young leaders who came from the United Kingdom (Winchester), South Africa, The Netherlands, Switzerland (World YWCA), Norway, Denmark, and Argentina (Argentina YMCA and the Latin American and the Caribbean Confederation of YMCAs). Palestinian participants are local young YMCA and YWCA leaders and volunteers at the JAI.

3- "To Get There" Program

From the 15th to the 20th of July, a group of Dutch university students visited the JAI as part of a trip sponsored by the International Organizations for Development Cooperation (ICCO), and was facilitated by the "To Get There" program. The theme of the trip was "The Art of Life," and the students' aim was to gain a better understanding of the Palestinian people, their culture, their struggles, and the quality of life behind the Wall

4- Winchester program

Between the 26th of August and the 6th of September, five leaders from the Winchester YMCA joined a program designed especially for them as a part of the exchange program between Winchester YMCA and the East Jerusalem YMCA - Beit Sahour branch.

5- The Fifth Olive Picking Program - October 2008

This year more than seventy-five internationals, from various nationalities and countries all over the world, participated in this program. Because of the large number, the participants were divided into two buses as two groups, Group A and Group B, with two different schedules. This number was a happy surprise, and we see it as an achievement and a challenge for the JAI.

Through the GoCY exchange program, we have received two volunteers from Norway who will stay with us for about eight months. In addition, the JAI received two volunteers from the U.S.A and one from Germany to help at the JAI desk. Several visitors and representatives from international organizations visited the JAI during the year, to learn more about our work and explore future cooperation and partnerships.

- JAI Publications

- **The Olive Tree Calendar for 2009** was prepared and two thousand copies were printed in both languages English and Arabic. It included various Christian, Muslim, Palestinian and international holidays, memorials and events, as well as the JAI, the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine special annual events. The Calendar was distributed to partners, donors, and friends of the JAI both locally and internationally.
- The Olive Tree Campaign "Keep Hope Alive" brochure was updated and five thousand copies were printed to be distributed to different stakeholders.



- 1000 copies of the 2007 annual report were printed in June 2008 and were sent to local and international partners and friends. The report includes the JAI's developed objectives for phase II, its activities and accomplishments for the year 2007, in addition to challenges faced and lessons learned.
- Three thousand "Keep Hope Alive" posters and five thousand stickers were printed as promotional materials for the Olive Tree Campaign.
- The JAI chose "**Invest in Freedom**" as their 2008 magazine theme. We collected articles, perspectives, and resource materials from various writers and experts, and 1000 copies were printed, most of which were distributed to JAI, YMCA, YWCA main partners, international and local friends, networks' members, visiting groups, and delegations.

- Advocacy training:

As part of our training program for youth on issues of advocacy, the JAI conducted several workshops for young women in Dar Salah, a village east of Bethlehem, and young women and men from the Aida Refugee Camp, in Bethlehem. The JAI strives to reach out to youth in the rural areas of Palestine, especially in refugee camps, to offer them training in advocacy related issues, such as advocacy tools, and campaigns, to help them be better advocates for their national and human rights.

-Staffing Changes and Staff Capacity Building:

- Mr. Adnan Ateyah left his position as Acting project Manager in late April of 2008.
- After advertising the post more than once, and going through several rounds of interviews, Mr. Nidal Abu Zuluf was appointed on interim basis as the Project Manager, on lease from the YMCA Rehabilitation Program in Beit Sahour, and until the strategic direction and re-structuring is completed.

As part of building the JAI staff's capacity, and prior to leaving of the Acting JAI Project Manager, Mr. Adnan Ateyah conducted a workshop to transfer part of his experience and knowledge in advocacy work and strategies to the JAI staff. The workshop took place on the 16th of June, in Jericho, and contained lots of information sharing and discussion concerning advocacy goals and objectives, plans and strategies, and how to follow up with target groups. The training was particularly useful because the examples were related directly to the JAI work on the ground. After the workshop Adnan Ateyah joined the JAI team for a relaxation program and farewell dinner in his honor.

7. Networking and Partnerships:

Deeply believing that together we can make a difference, striving to cooperate rather than duplicate, the YWCA of Palestine prides itself in the networks it has been an active part of, working together, hand in hand for a better future.

- The Word YWCA

The YWCA of Palestine prides itself to be part of this global network of women leading social and economic change in 125 countries around the world. We continue to be inspired by our mother organization's vision and values and encouraged through our sister organizations all over the world, who are striving for a better world for women and girls.

- The National Coalition of Christian Organizations in Palestine (NCCOP)

The YWCA of Palestine is one of thirty seven Christian organizations from Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah areas that form this coalition. The main aim of this coalition is to create one Christian voice out of Palestine, with clear messages that can be heard around the world, so that we can all work together to bring about the Peace with Justice in Palestine that we all strive for.

- The Middle East Association for Training and Retreat Centers (MEATRC)

The YWCA continued to be an active member of this network that embraces 24 Christian organizations in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Palestine and Cyprus. Both Mira Rizek and Rana Qumsiyeh participated in the annual meeting and training that was held in Beirut - Lebanon.

The training this year continued under the same theme "Dialogue for Peaceful Change", Ms. Mira Rizek participated as a speaker and facilitator for a "Strategic Planning" training session, where the team worked together to learn how to formulate the future strategy for MEATRC. Based on this training, MEATRC decided to conduct its strategic planning in early 2009.

- Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine (JHJP)

The YWCA continues to be a member of this network that is part of the "Joining Hands Against Hunger" program of the Presbyterian Church in the USA. The network in Palestine brings together six organizations that work together to address the root causes of hunger in Palestine, which is the injustice of the Israeli occupation. In July 2008, Rana Qumsiyeh represented the network in the Joining Hands and Peacemaking conference in California and later had a speaking tour organized by our partner network, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.



8. Representation and Visitors:

Representations:

Cultural Exchange Program in Japan

Ms. Maha Shihadeh, who is currently President of the board in Ramallah, was invited by the Japanese Representative Office in Palestine to represent the YWCA at the Women's Cultural Exchange Program in Japan, during the month of February 2008.

YWCA of Palestine- Partner Meeting

The National Council Office of the YWCA of Palestine organized its partner/donor meeting at the YWCA in Jerusalem on May 23rd, 2008. Participants included our main international and local partners: EED, Bread for the World, Christian Aid, ICCO, Oxfam Quebec, DanChurchAid and PCUSA. The program included a presentation of the main programs and achievements in 2007, along with the challenges and future prospects in light of the changing political situation.

The Wergeland Conference- Norway

The Norwegian Children and Youth Council hosted an international youth conference from 3rd to 5th June in Oslo, Norway to celebrate the 200 years anniversary of the greatest author Henrik Wergeland, who was famous in Norway for his work that focused on public education, tolerance, freedom of religion and equality. Mayadah Tarazi, the Administrative Assistant at the National Council of the YWCA of Palestine was one of the 50 participants from 19 different countries from all over the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Europe who participated in this conference.

Joining Hands and Peacemaking conference – PCUSA

Rana Qumsiyeh, the National Program Coordinator at the YWCA of Palestine represented the “Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine” network at the Joining Hands and Peacemaking conference organized by the Presbyterian Church USA at Chapman University in Orange, California, from July 12th to 18th. Together with Zoughbi Zoughbi, the Director of Wi’am and other partners from the sister network in Greater Atlanta, they organized a workshop about the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, where they discussed the daily life of Palestinian and the work of the JAI and Wi’am.

From July 19th to 27th, Rana was on a speaking tour in Atlanta, Georgia, organized by the Greater Atlanta Presbytery. She visited churches and gave talks about her daily life as a Palestinian and the work of the YWCA and JAI. On July 26, a whole day conference was organized for the two Palestinian representatives with over 80 participants. They were also hosted on a radio show in Atlanta called “Just Peace” for one hour. Rana also visited the YWCA of Greater Atlanta, gave a presentation on the work of the YWCA of Palestine and the JAI and spent a whole day there.

Women’s Leadership for a change:

A group of four young women represented the YWCA of Palestine in this program that took place in Sweden from the 28th of August to the 5th of September, 2008. This program joins young women from the YWCAs of Sweden, Palestine, Lebanon and to discuss issues related to women leadership in their countries.

This year, the focus was on young women in gender equality in their societies.

ICCO Partner meetings

The General Secretary Ms. Mira Rizek and Rana Qumsiyeh the National Program Coordinator attended both partner meetings organized by ICCO in Bethlehem in March and October of 2008. Serious efforts are contributed to the formulation of the new ICCO strategy.

Christian Aid Regional Partner Meeting in Cairo- Egypt:

The General Secretary, Ms. Mira Rizek, and the Executive Director in Jericho, Mrs. Nazar Halteh represented the YWCA of Palestine in Christian Aid’s partner meeting held in late November of 2008 in Cairo. They also spent a few days visiting with the YWCA of Egypt and its different programs, sharing and exchanging experiences, which were valuable and inspiring for both.

Visitors during the Year 2008:

- Several groups visited the YWCA of Palestine in Jerusalem throughout the Year 2008; the Olive Planting Group, a delegation from the Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, and a group of Norwegian volunteers, Untied Church of Christ group, a delegation from the Global Ministries, in addition to the Mayor of Gimestra City in Italy. Visitors were given a briefing about the work of the YWCA of Palestine and most of them had lunch at our newly renovated restaurant. Some of the visitors who had enough time, visited the YWCA local associations in Ramallah and Jericho as well as Aqabet Jaber and Jalazone Refugee camp centers.
- On the 23rd of April, a group of 70 people from the Ramallah Federation visited the YWCA of Ramallah, they were welcomed by the board Vice President Ms. Maha Shehadeh’ who briefed them on the current and future plans and projects of the YWCA in Ramallah.

• Twenty representatives of Hadeel, a Fair Trade shop which aims to provide a sustainable source of income for craftspeople working in community based groups in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon, visited the YWCA Ramallah on the 11th of July 2008, to explore ideas of cooperation for marketing the YWCA Jalazone center production.

• On the 8th of October, 26 persons from Norway visited the YWCA in Jericho and had lunch from the products of the Food Production Project.

• On 18/10/2008, the Consul General of Italy accompanied by Dr. Saeb Erikat and the Governor of Jericho visited the YWCA preschool in Aqbet Jaber Refugee Camp to inaugurate the new playground and facilities donated by the Italian Consulate.

Donors visits during 2008:

- In April of 2008, Ms. Angela Elmiger and Mr. Werner Stahl from HorYzon/ Switzerland visited the YWCA of Palestine, to follow up on their projects; they had a visit the YWCA in Ramallah and Jericho as well as the two refugee camp centers in Jalazone and Aqabet Jaber.
- During the month of May, Mr. Oliver Burch from Christian Aid visited the YWCA of Palestine. He had a day in Ramallah and a day in Jericho to visit with the preschools in the camps and follow on their project.
- Ms. Lott Torngen from the YW/YM Sweden visited the YWCA of Palestine twice in 2008, once in April and another time in September to follow up on the project funded through the YWCA/YMCA of Sweden.
- A delegation from Y Global-Norway visited the YWCA of Palestine and the East Jerusalem YMCA from 8/5/2008 until 13/5/2008. The delegation included:
 - Mr. Kjetil Ostnor the International Director of Y Global
 - Ms. Hoda Ghalegolabi – Project consultant for Middle East Y Global
 - Mr. Per Ove Lokstad – the National General Secretary of the YWCA-YMCA Guides and Scouts of Norway.

They had a full program of visits and meetings; they visited the YWCA of Jerusalem, Ramallah and Jericho in addition to the National Council of the YWCA of Palestine. They had meetings with the National General Secretary and discussed the projects funded through Y-Global. The delegation also visited the East Jerusalem YMCA, and the Rehabilitation center and JAI office in Beit Sahour.

Ms. Hoda Ghalegolabi visited the YWCA of Palestine again during the month of September to follow up on projects.

- In November, a team from DanChurchAid took a field visit to our Jalazone refugee camp center, part of their tours to strengthen relationships with their partners and follow up on implementation of the different projects. The team was headed by Dr. Fadia Duaibes, the DCA Representative for West Bank and Gaza.
- Ms. Kathrine Blykvert from the Union of Education in Norway, together with Ms. Elisabeth Dahle, an Executive Board member, visited the YWCA of Palestine during the month of November to follow up on their project and finalize the signing of the partnership agreement for the years 2009-2011.

Other Trainings and Workshops:

MEATRC Leadership Training

Mayadah Tarazi and Reem Jahshan from the YWCA staff along with three youth members from the Jerusalem YWCA participated in the Leadership Training organized through MEATRC at the International Center of Bethlehem for two days; February 29th and March 1st of 2008.

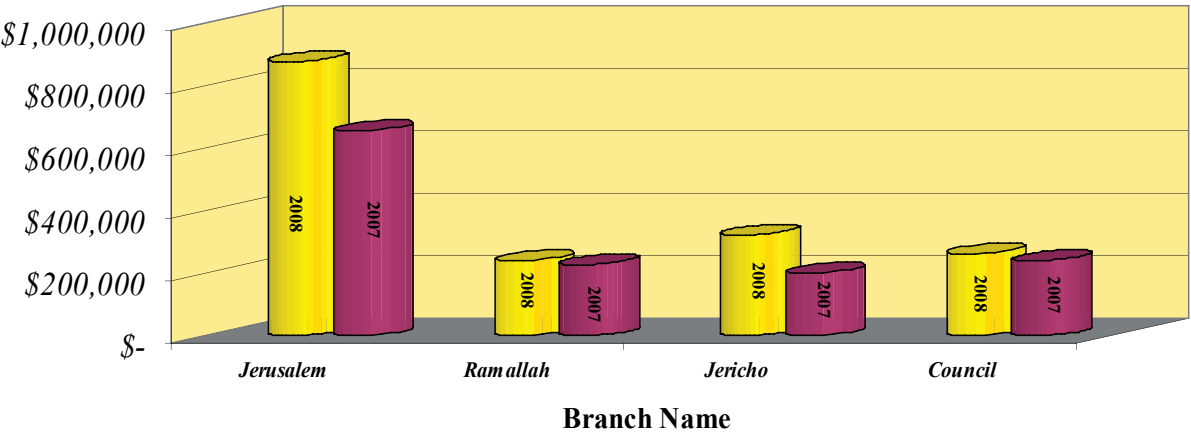
Gender Workshop

A whole day workshop for the YWCA of Palestine staff, boards and volunteers was organized on December 6th at the Grand Park hotel in Ramallah to discuss Gender in Palestine. Topics included Violence Against Women in Palestine, Women and Law, and Socail Effects. Speakers included Dr. Fadia Duaibes from DCA, Dr. Eileen Kuttat from Birzeit University, Sama Owiedah from Center of Women Studies in Jerusalem and the Lawyer Halimeh abu Sulb from Women Center For Legal and Social Counseling. This workshop was organized as part of the DanChurchAid Gender Project for the YWCA in Jerusalem, with eighty participants attending this workshop. Moreover, intensive Gender Training workshops were carried out for all the staff in their locations during the months of October, November.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Training

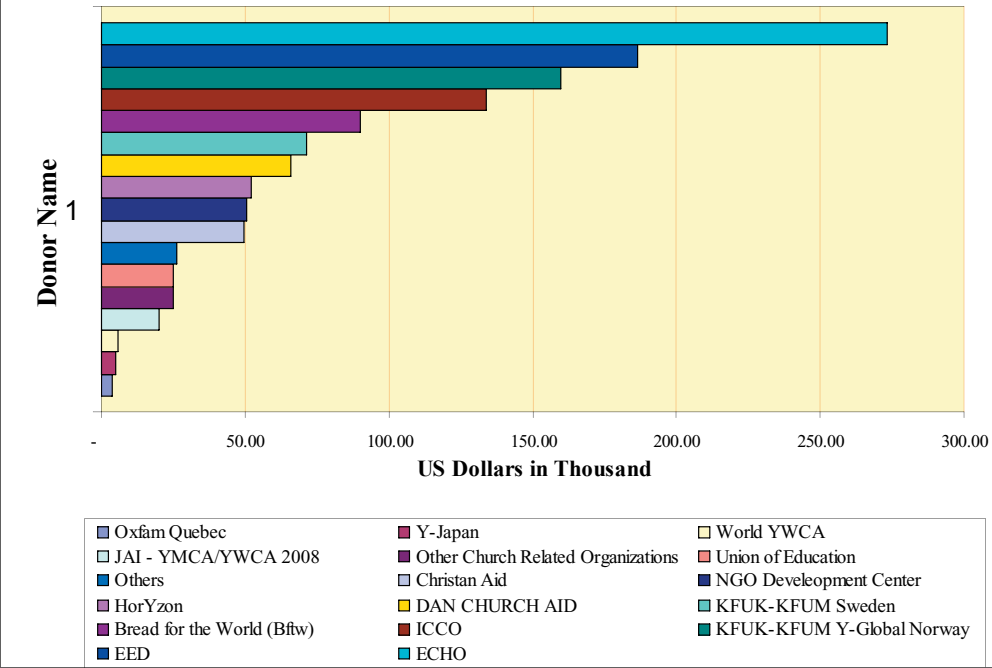
As part of the YWCA’s plan to develop a better PME system for its programs and projects, a three day workshop was given to program staff by the PME consultant Ms. Heather Britt, from the 16th to the 18th of December 2008. The training took place at the YWCA in Jericho, and the staff was trained on basic project design, monitoring and evaluation. The consultant also submitted a proposal to the YWCA of Palestine on how to improve and consolidate its PME systems.

Comparative Program Expenditures for YWCA Palestine (2007 & 2008)

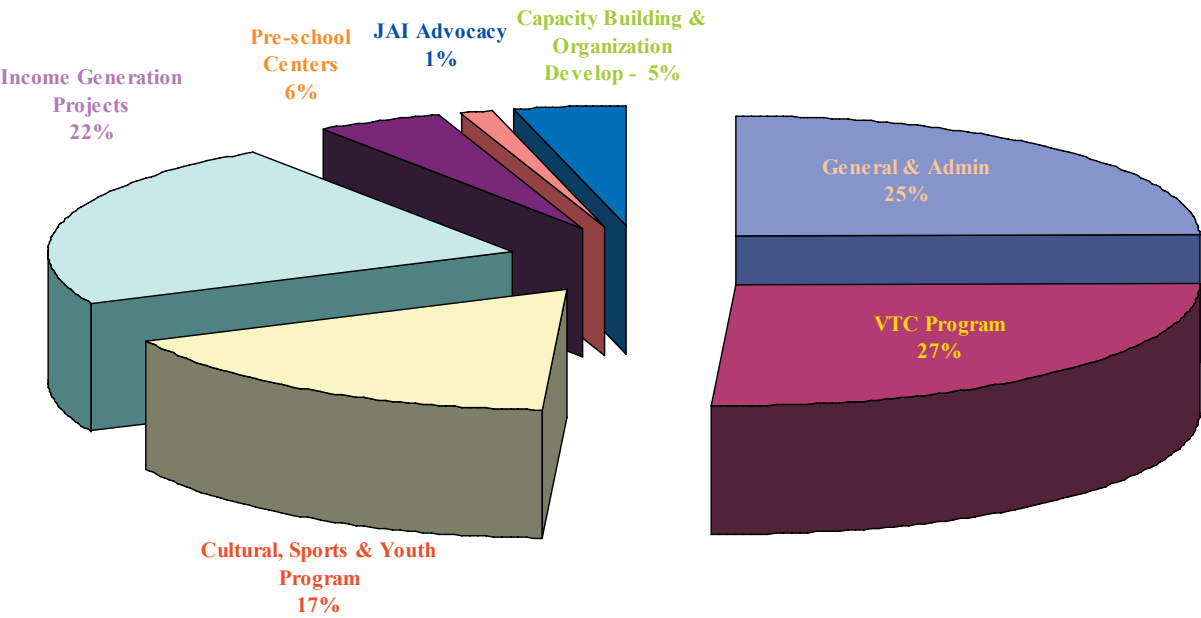


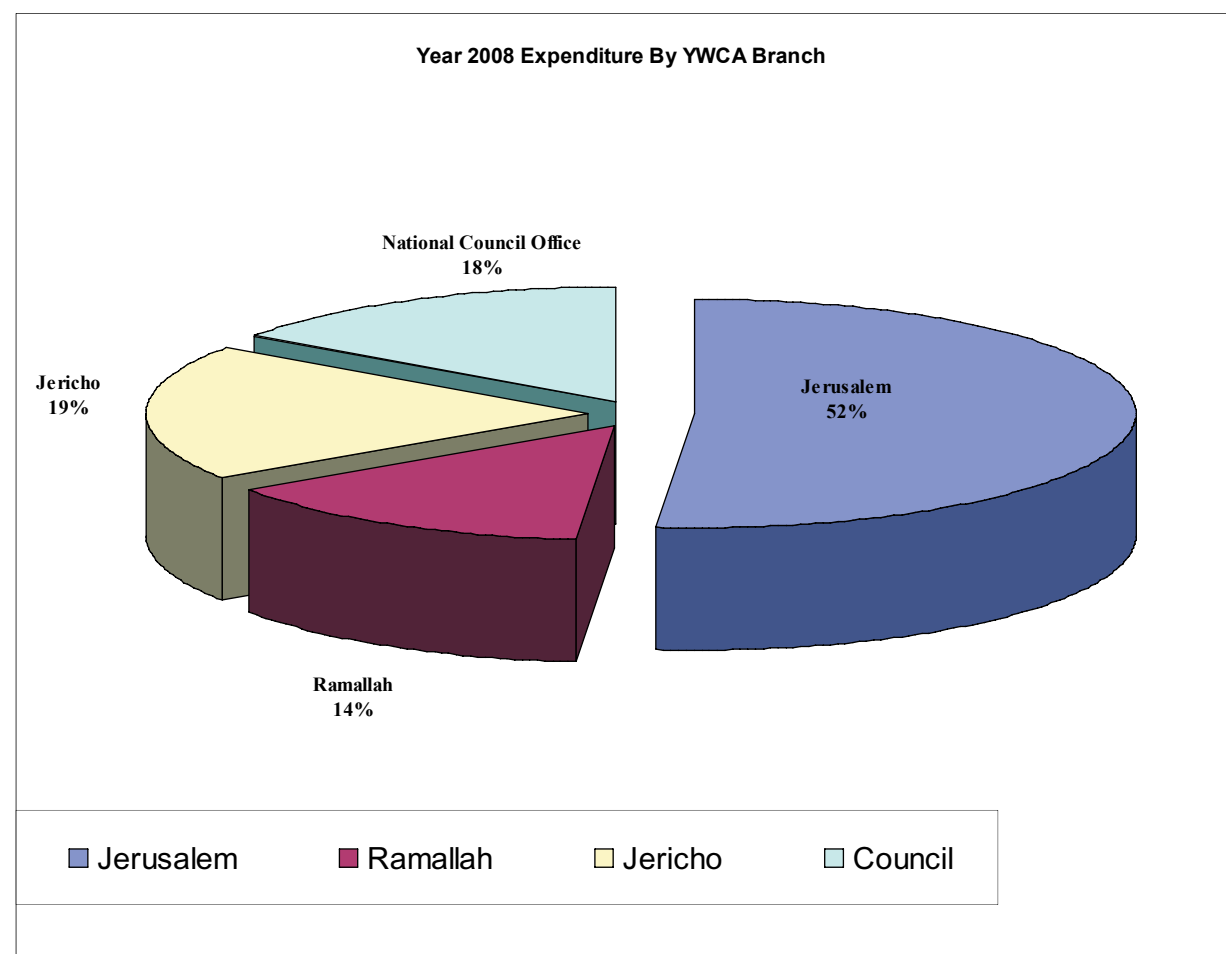
9. Financial Highlights of 2008:

Donor Fund Received during 2008



YWCA of Palestine 2008 Expenditures By Sector





10. Challenges Faced in 2008:

- 1- **The Israeli Occupation and its Constraints:** this continues to be the major obstacle in terms of the advancement of the YWCA and implementation of its mandate. Movement restrictions hinder us from communicating and connecting face to face as often as needed and thus limit the potential for creating a fast learning organization. The increased unemployment and poverty is also leading to the fact that many of our beneficiaries are not able to and actually are not paying the full dues for the services delivered, thus increasing the financial burden on the YWCA and the need for subsidizing the cost of services.
- 2- **The Organizational Structure** of the YWCA of Palestine continues to pose a real challenge. The relationship between the voluntary structure and the executive structure or staff continues to be a point of tension. The real question is whether the YWCA is intending to strengthen its voluntary base and expand its mandate, or build a strong executive structure that is authorized and enhanced, or both. Additionally, the YWCA is still struggling to find the point of equilibrium between centralization and de-centralization of its operations, and until this is settled, the working environment will continue to challenge us all.

Also, given the limited resources of the organization, the proposed structures is not yet fully implemented, which continues to pause extensive pressure on the existing staff to carry out all the necessary tasks, in addition to delivering their already demanding jobs.

- 3- **Sustaining the Operating Costs of the Organization:** as we try to build a more professional organization, the YWCA is obliged to recruit professional staff. Given the competitive job market, the cost of operation of the organization is increasing drastically. On the other hand, the investment level in programs is not picking up at the same rate, thus causing a serious distortion in terms of the percentage of administration costs in relation to the total budget. Moreover, the Jerusalem YWCA faces added challenges. It is moving towards building a salary scale that fully complies with tax regulations in Israel, and this has already increased the operating deficit of the Jerusalem branch. Other tax obligations are quite substantial, and will always challenge the organization. This needs that the organization builds its internal resources and creates income generating facilities to cover its costs.
- 4- **Government/NGO Relations:** in the West Bank, the Palestinian National Authority continues to be weak and de-funded, thus increasing the responsibility on the NGO sector in general. Yet, the NGO sector is not getting much support from the government in lieu of these services. Many donors are also not interested in continuing to finance the NGO sector to deliver basic services which are the main responsibility of the government. This social responsibility of the NGO sector is not coupled with the resources. The YWCA like all other NGOs continues to suffer when it comes to identifying new resources for supporting its programs.

11. Looking Ahead – Plans for 2009 and beyond

In the coming few years, we hope to accomplish the following:

- Finalize the Strategic Planning Process and issue the new strategic plan for the next 5 years. The new direction is very much focused on economic empowerment, women's rights, violence against women, human rights, and leadership training amongst youth and children.
- Create the Children Center and offer quality educational and recreational space and facilities for as many children in East Jerusalem as possible.
- Finish the construction of the first floor in the new building in Ramallah, to create more space for the Vocational Training Center and start new specialties based on market needs.
- Solicit funding for the construction in Jericho, to create more space for all our activities, especially the Food Production Project.
- Improve the whole economic empowerment sector at the YWCA, and improve the internal management capacity of the organization to manage such income generating activities and marketing of its products.
- Expand to different locations in the West Bank and inside Israel, reach out to more Christian communities.
- Reach out to more donors; create more friends and partners, network with more movements, especially in North America and Asia.

" A final word of "Thank You" to our partners, donors, staff and volunteers. Your support, dedication and contribution are the reason we are able to carry out our mission. We continue to strive to carry the torch of an over a century old ministry of serving women and children in Palestine"

YWCA Donors’ List for 2008

No.	Donor Organization	Programs funded through this donor
1	Bread for the World (BftW)	VTC – Secretarial Program
2	Canada Fund	Economic Empowerment – Jericho
3	Christian Aid	Preschools in refugee camps and JAI
4	Church of Scotland	General/VTC
5	Cordaid	JAI
6	Dan Church Aid (DCA)	Gender Program – Jerusalem
7	EED / Church Development Service	VTC- Health, & Women’s Health Program
8	FOKUS – Norway Forum for Women and Development	Psychological Counseling for women – Ramallah/ Capacity Building for YWCA
9	HorYzon – International Cooperation of Y Switzerland	Economic Empowerment and the JAI
10	ICCO - Interchurch Organization for Development	Organizational Development and JAI
11	Arab Fund for Social & Economic Development	Construction Project - Ramallah
12	Oxfam-Quebec	Economic Empowerment
13	Presbyterian Church – USA	Publication sponsorship
14	Union of Education – Norway	VTC Jerusalem and Catering Training
15	United Methodist Church – General Board of Global Ministries	Multifunctional centers in Refugee camps VTC Scholarship fund – Jerusalem
16	World YWCA	Capacity Building & refugee camps centers support
17	Y- Global (Norway)	Core fund - Jerusalem
18	YWCA of Japan	Olive Tree Campaign General support
19	YMCA/YWCA of Sweden	Youth & Children programs in Jerusalem & Ramallah
20	UNDP / Islamic Bank	Construction of the Women Resource Center in Jerusalem

The YWCA of Palestine
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Abla Nasir	National President
Haifa Baramki	National Vice President
Vera Pano	National Vice President
Carol Khoury	Minutes Secretary
Samira Abdallah	Treasurer
Rula Izz	Member
Laila Khoury	Member
Erma Darwish	Member
Vera Mustaklem	Member
Lillian Shaheen	Member
Wafa’ Khoury	Member
Sandrine Amer	Member

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