



YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION- PALESTINE

ANNUAL REPORT



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FORWARD

Starting end of 2004, the previous National Council initiated an institutional reform and structural re-organization process. Birzeit University Continuing Education consultants were hired to advice on and facilitate the process. As a result, new governance and executive structures, and working procedures were completed in draft form, to be handed in for implementation to the new Council at the end of 2005.

The 2006 annual report is a reflection of this challenging and difficult process at the YWCA of Palestine. This past year has witnessed major structural changes. In late 2005, new Boards were elected for the branches and the new National Council convened for its first business session in November 2005. This was recognized as the hand-over session between the old and the new Councils. During 2006, several Executive Committee meetings and one National Council meeting were convened, where many strategic decisions have been taken which have moved the process of re-structuring forward in a practical manner. Yet many issues and challenges remain unresolved.

Although the YWCA deliberately did not embark on new projects, preparations for program evaluations have been initiated in late 2006, which will be completed in 2007. These are meant to inform program needs and direction and shape up future strategic plans and program strategies. Again, this will need clear governance and decision-making structures, transparency, building strong community relationships and bridges of understanding.

The year 2006 also witnessed a major achievement for the YWCA of Jerusalem in terms of registration with the Israeli Authorities. But again, in this complex political environment, the registration has been both a blessing and a struggle. Registering under the Israeli Authority also means adherence to all Israeli laws and standards, which will eventually lead to a substantial increase in the cost of operation, and thus the need to re-think fundraising, resource mobilization and cost recovery

strategies. The registration of the YWCA branches under different jurisdictions is imposing a divergence in governance, ownership of decision-making and accountability. It will take a lot of dedication and commitment on part of governance to keep the organization together and united, and to implement the structure which was initially endorsed. This calls on all of us for openness, dialogue, recognition of strengths and weaknesses and determination to move forward.

Was it not for the support of our partners and donors and their understanding and acknowledgment of these challenges, this process could not have been realized. We will continue to rely on this partnership to be able to deliver services for the people and targets of population who most need us. We also look forward to strengthening concepts and principles of this partnership, so we can together shape a better future for women, youth and children who are our main target and partners.

Many thanks go to the staff who worked hard to realize these accomplishments. This report is also a certification of their dedication and efforts.



Hanadi-Soudah Younan
National President



Mira D. Rizek
National General Secretary

SECTION 1 *RESTRUCTURING AT THE YWCA OF PALESTINE*

Starting 2004, the National Council of the YWCA embarked on a re-structuring and institutional reform process. This process was initiated for many reasons:

The YWCA has been growing both in programs, number of staff, resources and budget for the last few years. The political situation has been changing drastically especially with the construction of the Separation Wall leaving Jerusalem completely segregated from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

For many years, extensive efforts and resources were centrally located in Jerusalem which acted as a National Council Office. The General Secretary was also filling in the post of Executive Director for Jerusalem, which became difficult with the growing needs and challenges in all the branches. Until 2004, all programs in the refugee camp multifunction centers of Aqbat Jaber and Jalazone were managed by the YWCA of Jerusalem.

Given the increased mobility restrictions, difficulty on fund transfers between Jerusalem and West Bank, expansion of funding and programs in the West Bank, increasing competition between NGOs and the need to upgrade its monitoring, reporting and administrative systems, the YWCA realized that centralizing these functions and continuing with its mode of work and strategy is both logistically and practically impossible. The number and diversity of donor funding necessitated that more professional planning, budgeting, management and reporting standards be applied and implemented. The YWCA realized that it has to grow into a professional

institution if it desires to grow and manage more donor funding, and thus move away from the charity way of work, to a professional NGO mode of work. Towards the end of 2004 a team of consultants from the Center of Continuing Education at Birzeit University were hired to manage the process of institutional re-structuring and strengthening. The team delivered its initial report proposing new structures, job responsibilities, financial policies and a draft personnel manual at the end of 2005 at the end of the term of the National Council who initiated and drove that process. All documents produced by Birzeit University consultants were thus considered as drafts to be reviewed, as well as tested and refined during implementation.

It was aspired that with the appointment of Executive Directors in the three branches, the delegation of authority for the General Secretary as the focal person within the senior management team, implementation monitoring and reporting will become more effective and efficient. In 2005, program oversight was delegated to the YWCA West Bank branches, yet financial resources and management of funds were still centralized at the YWCA of Jerusalem. In the same year, the World YWCA also formed a Governance Task Force and started to look at many governance and management issues within the national associations affiliated to the YWCA World Movement. This was another incentive and driving force behind the YWCA National Council's commitment to strengthen its governance and promote "best management standards" as an institution. In September/October 2005, elections of the three local boards and the national council were carried out, thus producing new leadership for the organization.

In 2006, the YWCA National Council Office was created to help implement restructuring, as well as build systems, documentation, information, administrative and financial systems, provide technical support and build the capacity of the branches in implementation, monitoring and reporting. The Council was entrusted with the representation for the YWCA of Palestine nationally and internationally, facilitating the 2007 consolidated planning processes and provision of technical support and assistance. The major role of the National Council Office was defined as follows:

- **Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation:** standardizing and facilitating the overall strategic program, financial planning, budgeting, strategic monitoring and reporting.

Resource Management: strengthening fundraising, management of fixed assets, bank accounts and other financial resources or investments.

- **Representation, Advocacy and Networking:** preparing delegations, information and media packages, representation both locally and internationally, overseeing the Joint Advocacy Initiative, (JAI) and facilitating networking and coordination with donors, NGOs, civil society and the Palestinian National Authority. The National Office encompasses the JAI desk, managing activities related to this joint project with the East Jerusalem YMCA.

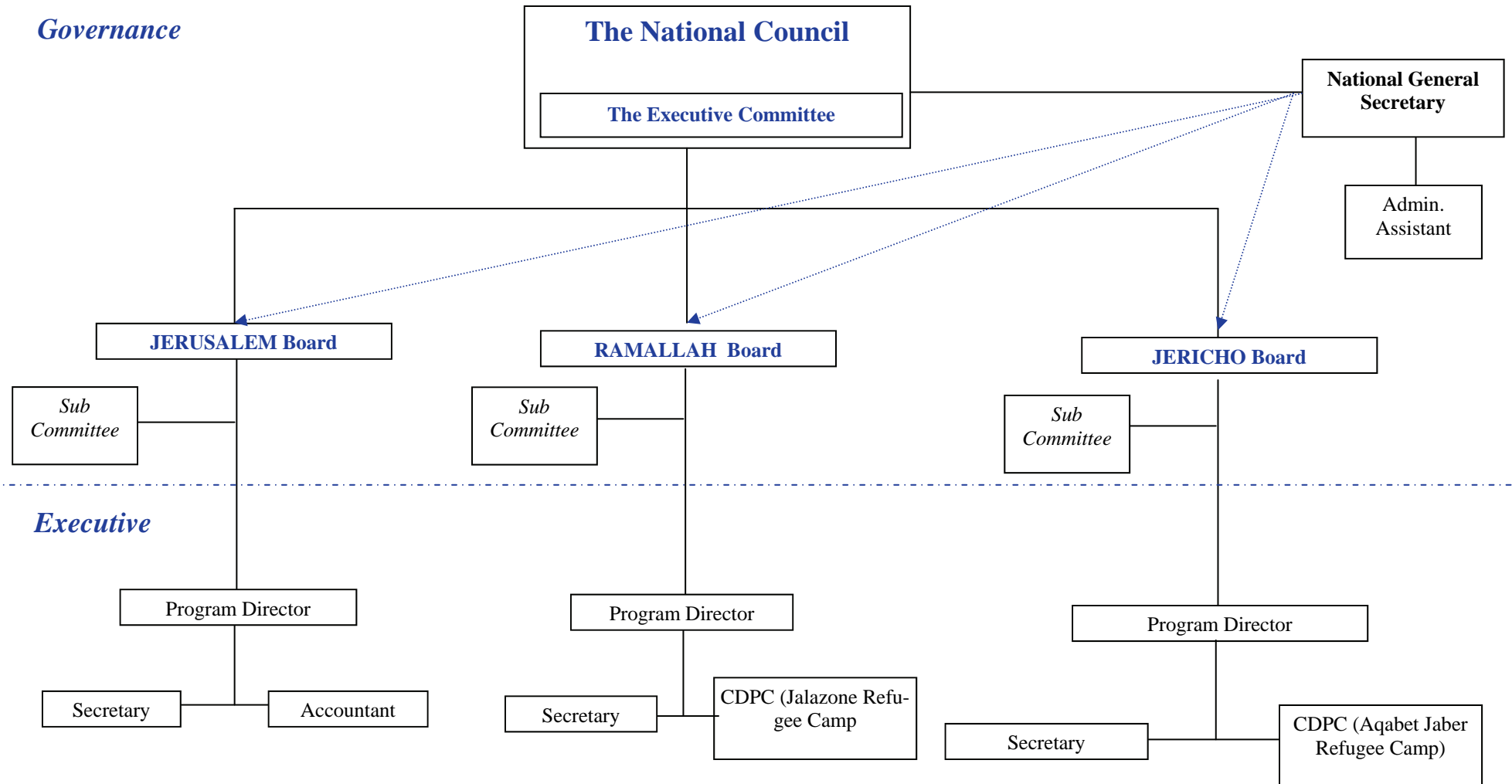
The National Council Office also helped design central program planning frameworks, facilitated the budgeting process for 2007 throughout the organization, and produced the consolidated program plan and budget for 2007. The National Council office also managed to fundraise during 2006 to bridge the gap in funding deficits. Despite the fact that the new structures proposed for the National Council office and within the branches are debated, yet the newly established National Council took a decision to staff the National Council Office after introducing some refinement on some jobs proposed, which will be headed by the National General Secretary.

The staffing changes in the Council office can be summarized as follows:

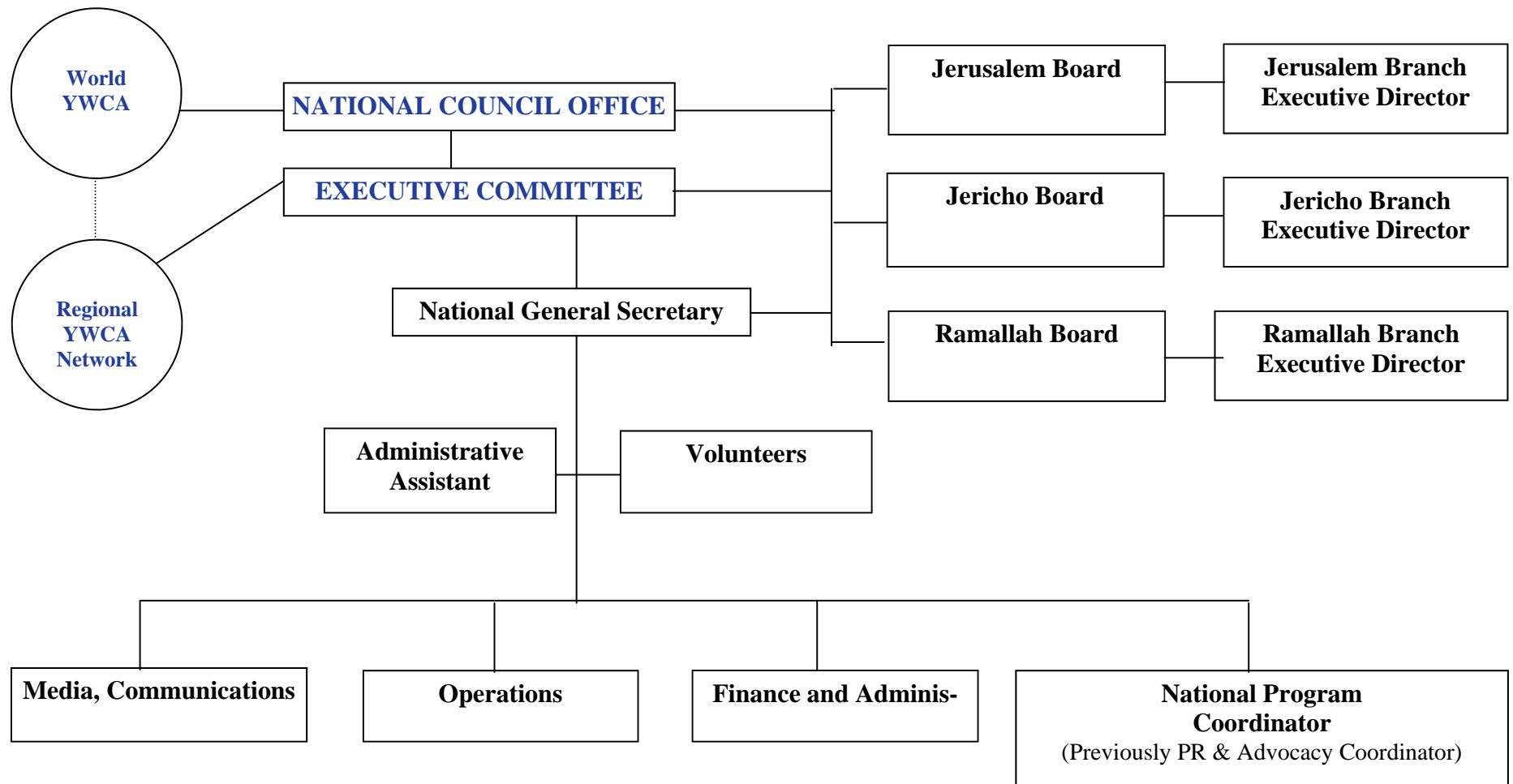
- *Ms. Abla Nasir resigned from her post as General Secretary end of March 2006 and a new National General Secretary was recruited starting 1 April 2006, namely Ms. Mira D. Rizek.*
- *Mr. Ashraf Khatib was recruited as operations consultant on 18/5/2006 to carry out a technical evaluation of the YWCA operating systems in Jerusalem and oversee construction projects. On 1/9/2006 Mr. Khatib was assigned as Operations Coordinator to the Council.*
- *Ms. Arda Batarseh Sahhar was recruited as Media, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator starting 1.10.2006.*
- *Ms. Rana Qumsiyeh ended her involvement with the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) project, and took on the job of National Program Coordinator for the YWCA starting 1/1/2007*
- *Ms. Mayadah Tarazi was assigned as administrative assistant to the National Council Office effective 1/1/2007*
- *Mr. Bader Rabadi, Finance and Administration Manager resigned on 1/11/2006*
- *Mr. Hanna Theodorie was recruited as Finance and Administration consultant starting 27/9/2006 to support in the process of reforming and upgrading the financial and administrative systems, policies and procedures, as well as preparation of financial and administrative manuals and training of relevant staff. Starting January 2007, Mr. Theodorie was appointed as the Acting Finance and Administration Manager in a consulting capacity for the National Council Office working directly under the supervision of the National General Secretary.*

YWCA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE PRE-2006

Governance



YWCA of Palestine Organizational Structure-2006



SECTION 2 YWCA NATIONAL COUNCIL PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

Upon assuming her responsibility as National General Secretary, Mira D. Rizek, prepared and presented a comprehensive assessment report to the YWCA Executive Committee for its meeting in June 2006, which included a suggested refined structure, recruitment plan, revised 2006 budget, and other operational recommendations to meet emerging challenges and spearhead fundraising. In cooperation with the Finance and Administration Manager, the General Secretary worked with the Ramallah, Jerusalem and Jericho branches to revise their 2006 budgets and continue fundraising to ensure completion of their plans during 2006 and beyond.

Despite all the efforts, the year 2006 faced serious operational deficits. Several administrative changes were also carried out to enhance the capacity of the organization and ensure transparency and effectiveness of the operation. It was agreed that these will be tested at the National Council Office, after which they will be introduced gradually to the branches during 2007. Initially, and since the General Secretary was acting Executive Director for Jerusalem as well, many of the functions carried out by the National Council Office were devoted for the Jerusalem branch.

The thrust of the National Council's initiatives and tasks in 2006 fall into



three major categories: (A) administrative/managerial, (B) advocacy/representation and (C) regional/council meetings.

(A) Accomplished Administrative/Managerial tasks:

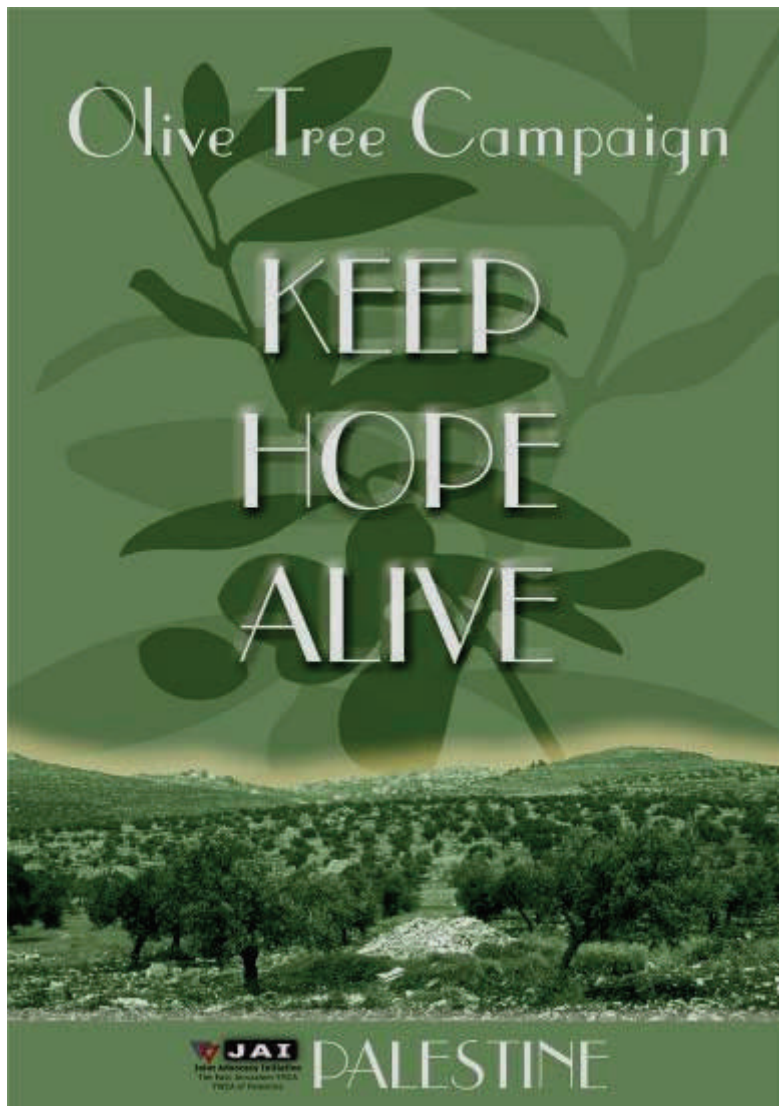
- The design and implementation of new program planning and budgeting systems for the whole organization, Oct. - Dec. 2006;
- Development of new central filing systems (*both manual and computerized*) for the National Council Office and Jerusalem branch;
- Upgrading of IT systems and software for the National Council Office;
- Introduction and application of new procurement systems, policies and procedures both at the National Council Office and the Jerusalem Branch;
- Implementation of new inventory tracking systems, personnel systems, time sheets, holiday/vacation reports, and updating of staff files;
- Assessment of operational systems for the LilacY sports center, production and reception operation in Jerusalem and the delivery of a report for the Jerusalem Board for action;
- Review and development of the organizational structure for the YWCA of Jerusalem and finalization of a new organizational structure to be implemented in 2007;

- The preparation of a physical Master-plan for the Jerusalem YWCA.

(B) ADVOCACY

As part of the YWCA of Palestine's mission to advocate for Peace and Justice in Palestine and its continuous efforts in advocating for women's empowerment, the National Council Office has increased its efforts programmatically and technically to integrate 'advocacy' in its national programs. The National Council Office has drafted a new project document which will benefit the Jerusalem, Jericho and Ramallah branches, which proposes to integrate 'advocacy' on women's issues in all their programs. The preparatory phase will be implemented in 2007, and has been approved for funding from "HorYzon International Cooperation of YMCA/ YWCA Switzerland."

The National Council Office has also prepared three action alerts in 2006 that were sent to the YWCA World Office in Geneva and YWCA associations in different parts of the world including partners and friends. The action alerts were on the deteriorating situation in Gaza, the war on Lebanon and the Beit Hanoun massacre.



THE JOINT ADVOCACY INITIATIVE - YWCA OF PALESTINE AND THE EAST JERUSALEM YWCA

The main advocacy program that the National Council Office is overseeing is the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) in partnership with the East Jerusalem YMCA. The year 2006 marks the end of the three year phase of the JAI. In August 2006, the JAI team called in an external facilitator to conduct an internal evaluation. In this workshop the team assessed strengths and weaknesses as well as possible future direction and organizational structure. Based on this, and starting in August 2006, the chairperson of the Steering Committee, namely Mira Rizek and the JAI team started working on the new funding proposal for 2007-2009. The proposal was sent to the 5 core donors of the JAI (*ICCO, Dan Church Aid, Christian Aid, HorYzon, Cordaid*), in addition to new YMCA/YWCA partners.

The new phase of the JAI incorporates almost the same program components, focuses on the Olive Tree Campaign, and integrated advocacy initiatives of both organizations within the JAI as well. Thus the design of Phase II looked at the new challenges, incorporated lessons and explored new approaches to make the project both more effective and efficient in advocating for Peace and Justice in Palestine and the Region.



The Olive Tree Campaign:

Building on the gained experience from previous seasons, over 50 olive tree fields were located across the West Bank with special emphasis on fields where olive trees were previously

uprooted, or ones that were threatened for confiscation. Over 8,000 young olive trees were planted in those locations in the fourth season. In 2006 olive trees were also planted in Gaza for the first time. Six fields were located in Gaza & Jenin and about 2,000 young olive trees were planted in an effort to compensate for the large number of uprooted olive trees during the past five years.

As an ongoing event, and through the Olive Tree Campaign, two international planting days took place in 2006. The first international planting day was carried out on the 30th of January, at a field close to an Israeli settlement in “Al Walajeh” town near Beit Jala where 330 olive trees were planted. The second planting day was part of the International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel and took place on 13/3/2006 whereby 220 young olive trees were planted in a field adjacent to the Apartheid Wall in Bir Aona near Beit Jala.

Olive Picking Program:

For the third consecutive year, the JAI partnered with the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) in organizing an Olive Picking Program in Palestine between the 26th of October and 4th of November, 2006. Thirty-eight internationals from the UK, Ireland, USA, Netherlands, Norway,

Germany, Belgium, Japan, France and Australia participated in this program, in addition to more than 40 Palestinian farmers and 100 local volunteers, including school students from the environment school committees. This agricultural event is of special significance to the Palestinian economy during which all energies and efforts are mobilized. Besides picking olives, the program featured introductory presentations about the organizing institutions, current situation in Palestine, impact of the Separation Wall, tours in the Old City of Jerusalem and the Nativity Church in Bethlehem, a tour in Hebron, cultural evenings and social gatherings.

Church Related Organizations (CROs)

The National Council Office is also active in coordinating the monthly CROs meetings. Both the National General Secretary and Rana Qumsiyyeh, as JAI Coordinator, chair the meetings and follow-up on decisions and ensure implementation. The Jerusalem CROs network continues to be active since the beginning of 2006. In August 2006, the CROs in Jerusalem issued a statement on the situation in Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The monthly VOX newsletter, published by the CROs, has been regularly issued during 2006 the fifth of each month, representing a unified Christian voice, with true stories on the humanitarian condition in the Holy Land. The network members assisted in preparations for the launching of a one-week event (March 12-19) of the “International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel”, an advocacy initiative convened by the World Council of Churches, and supported by the joint program organized by the JAI and Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center.

Journey for Justice-

In 2006 two Journey for Justice Programs were carried out, a regular one in the summer, and another one in the fall for participants from the YMCA/YWCA of Norway and Denmark. Both Journey for Justice Programs introduced participants to the YMCA and YWCA movements in Palestine and the JAI.



Advocacy Training Programs:

Two Advocacy Training Programs were organized for youth during 2006. The first one took place at the YWCA branch in Ramallah (July 20 – 27) with 15 participants. The second 5-day training took place at the Jericho branch in December, with twelve participants.

Dissemination of Information: JAI Publications & Promotional Material:

- **JAI Website:** www.jai-pal.org, continues to serve as the main source of information for partners, supporters and interested individuals around the world.
- **"Palestinian Christians in Struggle":** this research has been updated and 2000 copies were additionally printed in February '06
- **"Journey for Justice" documentary:** following the 2005 Journey for Justice day by day, this documentary was produced by the JAI. Two

versions were produced; a short promotional one, on a mini CD, and an hour long detailed one. Both promote the Journey for Justice Program and encourage more youth around the world to participate.

- ***"Towards Palestine: What you Need To Know" information Kit:*** one thousand copies of this information kit was produced in December '06. It includes helpful pieces of information for internationals interested to visit Palestine.
- ***The '07 Olive Tree Calendar and the JAI Magazine:*** issued and produced in '06
- ***JAI Newsletter:*** The JAI monthly newsletter continued to be released every month during '06, encompassing news related to the JAI, the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine.
- ***The Olive Tree Campaign quarterly newsletter:*** the newsletter was distributed in March, June, September, and December '06 to partners, friends and sponsors of the Olive Tree Campaign.
- ***Press Releases and calls for action:*** two press releases were distributed after each International Planting day.

(C) Regional/Council Meetings:

Preparations for the World Council Meeting in Nairobi—Kenya

The YWCA of Palestine started preparing for the World YWCA Council meeting in Nairobi that will take place during July 3-11, 2007. The World YWCA Council is held every four years to present and endorse the strategic plan, approve the 4-year report and audited financial statements, elect the officers of the World YWCA Executive Committee, Vice President and President, discuss and endorse resolutions and recommendations. This year's meeting is dedicated for HIV-AIDS.

Delegations will mainly participate in the Extraordinary World Council where they will vote on the proposed revised constitution for the World YWCA as well. Throughout the schedule in Nairobi, participants will be

able to attend and share experiences through practical training, education on global priority issues, workshops, and an opportunity to network and share best practices from every region of the world.

Seven delegates have been elected to represent YWCA of Palestine in Nairobi headed by the YWCA National President and the National General Secretary. The National Council Office has prepared a full package for all delegates and will be organizing 3-4 meetings and workshops to prepare the delegates for this meeting in early 2007. All member national associations and YWCA's working toward affiliation with the World YWCA will participate in the meeting including friends of the World YWCA and partner organizations, as observers.



In 2006, the Middle East Resolution was presented to the World YWCA whereby four Middle East Countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Palestine approved the resolution for endorsement in the World Council

Meeting in Nairobi in July 2006. The Middle East Resolution was prepared by the resolutions committee in the YWCA of Palestine, on behalf of the whole region, and reviewed and endorsed by all the YWCA's in the M.E. region. The first draft was submitted on the 31st of July. Other National YWCA's endorsed the resolution namely: India, Japan, Korea, Sweden, Great Britain, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, and Bangladesh. The Resolution calls for *Justice and Peace in the Region as well as the security of women and children in Conflict areas.*

SECTION 3

NEW INITIATIVES: THE YWCA OF JERUSALEM MULTIFUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER

In mid 2006, the General Secretary facilitated several brainstorming sessions with the Jerusalem Branch, Board and staff to define the future programs of the organization for 2007 and beyond. The Board approved to move towards the establishment of a vibrant **Multi-functional Center for women, youth and children** that will contribute to the realization of its mission: **empowering the mind, body and spirit**.

Through its services, the YWCA of Jerusalem aspires to enhance accessibility and quality of educational, cultural, and recreational services for youth, create and develop women's economic opportunities, raise women's awareness and advocate their individual and national rights at the community, national, and international levels, and create unique educational and recreational opportunities for children. To achieve this, the Board and senior management recognized the need to further develop the capacity of the organization so that it can effectively and efficiently

serve its target groups and communities in a sustainable manner.

To realize this vision, the YWCA of Jerusalem developed the program vision and physical master plan for the building. The master plan was

prepared and developed by the Center for Advanced Technology and Design (C.A.T.D.). It is estimated that there will be at least 500-600 direct beneficiaries (students, members, and staff of the YWCA), and at least 3,000 indirect beneficiaries (families and the community at large) who would mainly participate in the different activities of the organization. Parallel to this, the National Council Office contracted CATD to develop the detailed design for the kitchen renovation and floated the whole construction for bidding.

The multifunctional center will have five major service centers:

- Multi-functional women's center
- Children's Center
- Youth activity Center: sports, cultural, dance, etc.
- Vocational Training Center (VTC)
- Income-Generating facilities





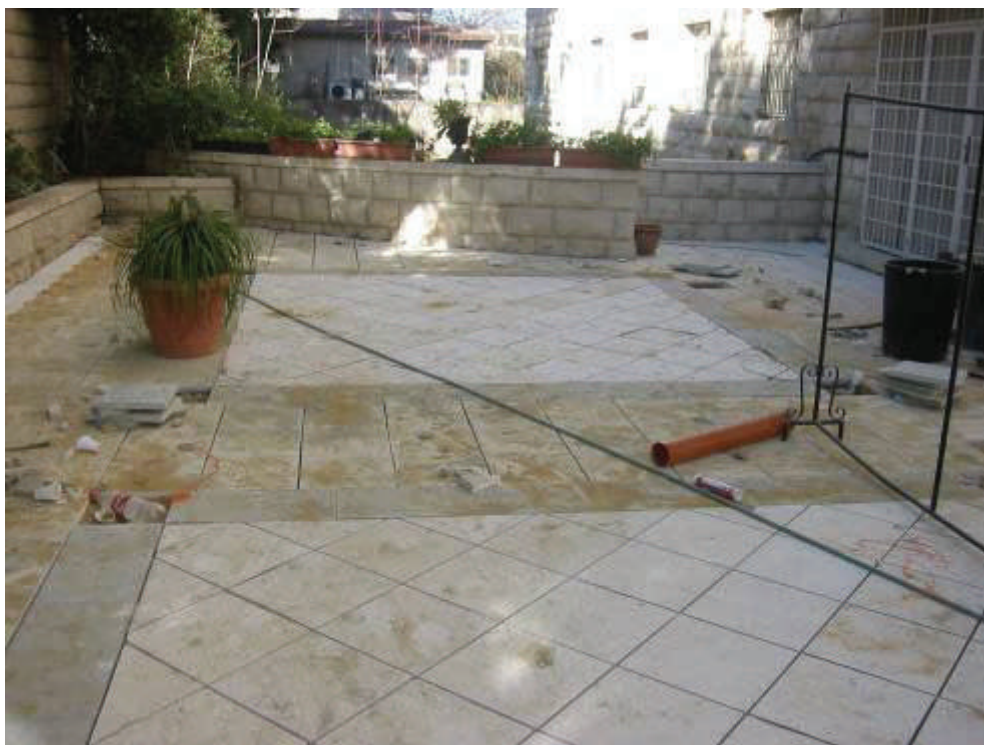
Income-Generating Facilities- Lobby Renovations:

Nasser for Maintenance and Contracting Company was selected through a competitive process to implement renovation works which started in September 2006. The construction included the kitchen, terrace, restrooms hall and gift shop on the lobby floor. It is expected that in mid 2007, the terrace café and restaurant will be operational.



Israeli Municipality in Jerusalem. It was licensed as an industrial kitchen, thus serving for the public. The kitchen will also accommodate a special corner for food production and related catering training and services. The license for operating the kitchen was obtained in June, 2006 from the Israeli Municipality, after submission and approval of the plans, but is contingent on final approval after construction and inspection.

The kitchen will serve as a significant income generating utility for the YWCA as well as an employment opportunity for young women in Jerusalem. Young women students at the Vocational Training Center



(VTC) at the YWCA of Jerusalem 'food production and catering unit' will have the opportunity to be trained and later employed at the kitchen to produce a variety of homemade Palestinian foods for sale to members and public at large. It is expected that in 2007, 8-10 new employees will be recruited as home-economics coordinator, chef/cooking staff, trainees and food production/catering staff. The staff will include at least 5-6 women for the catering training.

SECTION 4

ONGOING PROGRAMS & PROJECTS AT THE JERUSALEM, RAMALLAH & JERJCHO BRANCHES

The Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) at the YWCA of Jerusalem and Ramallah

The Vocational Training Programs at the YWCA of Jerusalem and Ramallah continue to meet one of the most important goals of the YWCA of Palestine which is **“Enhancing the accessibility to educational, cultural, and recreational activities”** for young Palestinian women. Both VTCs in Ramallah and Jerusalem offer theoretical and practical one-year vocational training programs and courses. At the end of each scholastic year, students attain on-the-job training experience in local institutions and organizations as part of the objective to integrate them in the job market. An average 80% of VTC students find jobs in the local market. Throughout the year the YWCA receives many requests from local institutions to recruit VTC students after they graduate. At the end of each year, the YWCA awards VTC student graduates of the Business Secretarial program with certificates accredited by the Palestinian Ministry of Labor. The rest of the programs are in the process of accreditation by the Ministry which will hopefully be achieved in 2007.

During the first half of 2006, the YWCA of Jerusalem witnessed some critical administrative changes that hindered the overall progress of activities. The resignation of the Jerusalem Director and the VTC’s director created supervision and monitoring gaps for a limited period of time. Despite the fact that it was not an easy period, the VTC teaching and administrative staff was extremely responsible, cooperative and able to continue implementing planned activities until the end of the academic

year in July 2006. The daily schedule and attendance of classes continued accordingly with extra intensive efforts exerted by all teachers in cooperation with the existing YWCA staff in providing both academic and behavioral education.



As part of its restructuring plans, the YWCA is also planning to change the profile, content and curricula of its VTC program to cater to the East Jerusalem and larger Israeli labor market. This opportunity will be used to upgrade the VTC academically as well as improve the learning and teaching environment. It is envisaged that in 2007 a comprehensive evaluation of the VTC programs both in Jerusalem and Ramallah, will be carried out.

The Vocational Training Center in Jerusalem:

The VTC in Jerusalem has been graduating skilled young women for over 50 years. Housed in the main branch of the YWCA, built in 1967, the VTC offers programs from which an average of 100 young women

graduate every year. Graduates of the scholastic year 2005-2006 reached 96 graduates and increased to 109 graduates for the scholastic year 2006-2007.

The following **three main programs and specialties** are offered at the VTC in the Jerusalem Branch:

1. Business Secretary Program: This program offers students with various courses namely Arabic, English and Hebrew language courses, computer, secretarial skills, management skills, reception skills and life skills.

2. Public Health Program: the program provides courses in primary health care, elderly health care and rehabilitation, nursing skills, women and child health, first aid, and rehabilitation of challenged individuals.

Students started their pilot training in institutions in the second semester of 2006. Another subject introduced to the curricula in 2006 is the Care for the Elderly taught by a specialized organization called “Atta: organization for the care of the elderly. All students receive special certificates at the end of the course. The public health program also offers sub specializations in assistance physiotherapy and nutrition:

2.1 Assistance in Physiotherapy: this specialized program offers students at the health unit with the opportunity of learning skills and experience to become assistants of physiotherapy. This program started in the scholastic year 2002/2003 and proved to be responsive to the market demand during the last few years. Graduates of this program receive requests for employment in the Jerusalem area especially in specialized health institutions, clinics and hospitals. Many of the students receive job offers during their practical training.

2.2 Nutrition: this program offers students with different courses that



provide them with skills and knowledge about the importance of nutrition and physical/fitness training. It also offers skills in food catering in institutions, hospitals, hotels and fitness centers including nutrition for the sick and mother- child health. However, in 2006, the food catering courses were stopped due to reasons explained below.

3. Food Production and Catering Services Program: in 2006 the YWCA solicited a grant from the Union of Education in Norway to provide catering training and upgrade the food production

unit. However, in June 2006, the Health department of the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem issued an order to close down the kitchen declaring that it did not comply with required health standards. Given this, it was not possible to continue with the production, and the training courses had to be cancelled. Instead, the funds were re-allocated to the kitchen renovation project, which started in September 2006 (*see section 3 for details*)

The Vocational Training Center in Ramallah:

The VTC in Ramallah Branch was established in 2002 to accommodate VTC students who were previously attending the VTC in Jerusalem, and presently unable to reach Jerusalem due to the construction of the separation wall and other movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli Occupation. The VTC started as a women's educational program, and in 2005, it was converted to a co-educational program both for female and male students.

The number of graduates for the academic year 2005-2006 was 50 students (44 females and 6 males). In September 2006, and for the



academic year 2006-2007, 72 students (49 females and 23 males) enrolled for the office management and secretarial program. Employed graduates from the office management and secretarial program in 2006 reached 76% by the end of 2006.

The number of faculty members for the year 2006-2007 was 7 part time teachers. A number of capacity building workshops were offered to teachers to improve their teaching skills and teaching methodology in cooperation with the Continuing Education Center at Birzeit University. Teachers from VTC Jerusalem also participated in these workshops.

The VTC in Ramallah will undergo an evaluation to its curriculum in 2007 with the aim of improving both the quality and standard of the VTC programs and courses offered to students. It also aims at increasing employment in the competitive market. In addition, the YWCA in Ramallah aims at expanding the VTC area especially the computer lab which requires major upgrading and renovation in networks, computers and space to accommodate the growing number of students wishing to enroll in the program.

The following tables summarize the numbers of students that graduated from the VTC in Jerusalem and Ramallah in October 2006, and the new students enrolled for the new scholastic year 2006/2007:

<i>Number of Graduates (2005-2006)</i>	<i>Jerusalem</i>	<i>Ramallah</i>
Business Secretary Program/Office Management secretarial program	55	50
Public Health program	36	-
Assistance in Physiotherapy	18	-
Food production and catering services program	0	-
Total	109	50

<i>Number of Students Enrolled (2006-2007)</i>	<i>Jerusalem</i>	<i>Ramallah</i>
Business Secretary Program/Office Management secretarial program	68	72
Public Health program	19	-
Assistance in Physiotherapy	33	-
Nutrition	17	-
Total	137	72

Short Courses & Workshops for Women

The YWCA of Ramallah:

A six-month short cooking course was carried out for 13 ex-detainees in coordination with the Ministry of Prisoners Affairs at the YWCA Branch in Ramallah with the aim of providing ex-prisoners the opportunity to re-integrate in their societies and provide them with new skills to enter into the labor market.

The Mental Health project, funded by the EED, was also implemented during the months of October and November 2006 targeting three women's groups (ages from 20-45) in the villages of Al Mazra'a Al Sharqiyyeh, Ras Karkar and Qalandya Refugee Camp in Ramallah District. The three groups participated in several workshops in relation to health awareness and reproductive health. Workshops covered subjects like early marriage, delivery, breast check-ups and menopause.

The YWCA of Jericho:

The Hairdressing training program in Jericho continued in 2006 during which ten young women completed their training successfully. Two computer and Arabic typing courses were offered to employees of courts in Jericho in cooperation with Galaxy association in Ramallah. In addition, the YWCA of Jericho attended different training workshops on marketing skills and pricing at the Palestinian Center for Social and Economic Development including an evaluation and follow-up workshop on marketing at the Jericho Municipality.

Given the increasing demand and success of these short course programs, the YWCA Branches in each of these areas plan to conduct 12 workshops, seminars, activities for women in rural areas, six in each of Ramallah and Jericho, with 20 participants each in 2007.

Income Generating Programs for Women

As part of its goal to empower Palestinian women the YWCA continues to offer women from low-income households, as well as women headed households the opportunity to learn new skills that would help them generate income and/or find new employment opportunities in the formal market. Both YWCA Multifunctional Community Centers at the Jalazone Refugee Camp in Ramallah and the Jericho Branches offer such employment opportunities for Palestinian women.

Traditional embroideries at the Jalazone Multifunctional Community Center in Ramallah:

Over the last fifty years, the Jalazone refugee camp multifunctional center has been producing dolls and puppets with traditional Palestinian embroidery. In 2006, fifteen young women from the camp participated in this project, supervised by two trainers. The products include dolls, puppets and nativity sets all in traditional costumes, in addition to book covers, embroidered purses, bags, and quilts. Seven other women



were trained on producing Christmas decorations with traditional Palestinian embroidery sold in different Christmas bazaars.

In preparation for its strategic plan 2008-2012, the YWCA of Palestine intends to evaluate the Multifunctional Center at the Jalazone Refugee Camp, exploring ways of improving production quality, marketability, demand, design, pricing, labeling and distribution in 2007 and beyond. Also, since many centers have been created the last 20 years, it is time to assess community needs and identify service gaps that the YWCA could provide. The assessment/evaluation will also conduct a participatory needs assessment. A proposal for funding has been prepared and submitted to Oxfam/Quebec for this purpose and the YWCA is awaiting the donor's response..

Mushroom Growing:

The mushroom growing project started in 2005 with the aim of creating new income-generating opportunities for women from the Jalazone refugee camp from poor families. In 2006, the training for mushroom growing was offered for 24 women with the objective of gaining experience and skills. However, it became evident that starting up a mushroom growing project would not be economically feasible, and will not generate income or employment in the camp. Thus the project idea which was supposed to be implemented in 2006 was dropped.

Olive Oil Soap Production:

In 2006, 24 women were trained in olive oil soap production in Jericho. This training program started out in 2004 as part of the "Good Earth Campaign" - part of the JAI activities. Marketing of the soap was tested through the Campaign, and since the marketing was not successful, the production was discontinued. The training though continues, with the objective of providing women with skills to produce soap for household use.

Jericho Food Production Project:

The food production project in Jericho has been running for the last six years with the continuous support from "HorYzon International Cooperation of Y M C A / Y W C A Switzerland." The YWCA of Jericho has been working very hard towards increasing job opportunities for low-income Palestinian women in the Jericho area. Throughout the last six years, YWCA of Jericho has also been trying to promote national products with the aim of decreasing dependency on Israeli products.

During 2006, the production hall at the Jericho YWCA was renovated, electricity upgraded, and new air-conditioning and other production equipment installed. Adjacent to the production hall, a new shop was inaugurated in September 2006 where all YWCA Jericho food products are now sold. All food products are made from organic seasonal fruits and vegetables from the Jericho area, thus ensuring that the products are unique in preserving quality and marketability. Also, farmers in the Jericho area are encouraged by





the YWCA of Jericho to sell their products for processing in addition to selling in the market for direct use.

Throughout 2006 eight women and three men were employed on full time basis in YWCA Jericho food production and marketing units. Four

other women from Aqabet Jaber refugee camp, were provided with a short-term employment opportunity at the YWCA food production unit during the months of Ramadan in August and September 2006. Several special dishes, food products and Palestinian sweets were produced. Total revenue during 2006 amounted to \$ 65,000 USDs.

Like previous years, the YWCA of Jericho participated in several exhibitions organized throughout the year in different locations in the West Bank, where they displayed and marketed different food products. The YWCA of Jericho also participated in the international food conference in Turino, Italy in October 2006.

Psychological Counseling for Palestinian Women

The year 2006 was the first year in the life of this 3-year project. Implementation started in March 2006, once the agreement was signed with Y-Global. The overall development goal of the project is: *"To improve the psychological well-being of teachers and students at the YWCA VTC in Ramallah. Enabling the women to handle the stress related to living in a conflict area."* A Youth Coordinator was assigned at the Ramallah Branch to coordinate the project.

This project is considered as the first step towards better physiological

health and well being of students and teachers/trainers. It is anticipated that the long term impact will be experienced by direct family members of participants as well as their colleagues/classmates. In fact some positive behavioural changes in the participants' attitudes have already been visible. At the beginning, students were hesitant to share their problems, but later on begun demanding more individual sessions and many were directed to formal psychological counselling.

Since this is a pilot project, it has been considered as a learning experience both for the YWCA as implementers and for the beneficiaries. Expanding the project to a new target groups of women, who are teachers at preschools and private schools in the Ramallah area, is also helping in expanding the YWCA's scope of work and outreach, contributing positively to the overall strategic objectives of the YWCA.

Experiences gained by beneficiaries can related to their individual needs and activities they have participated in. Teachers and mothers of preschool kids greatly benefited from the stress management training and debriefing. For the first time, students at the VTC experienced group counselling to learn how to deal with everyday pressures and stress of life under occupation and oppression.

Three **training programs** were carried out during 2006 and included *school counselling, crisis intervention and stress management*. The target group consisted mainly of pre-school teachers at Jalazone YWCA Multifunctional Centre and teachers from private schools in Ramallah. Due to the desperate need for stress management, the hours dedicated for this training were increased by nine, totalled 25 hours.

For **individual counselling**, six cases (3 females aged between 19-23 years old and 3males) expressed the need for regular counselling totalling 175 hours. All were facing domestic violence (family violence) and emotional problems. Six other students needed temporary individual counselling . Those suffered and experienced family violence, trauma, emotional problems and mainly requested counselling in dealing with their children.

Weekly **group counselling** sessions were carried out for 4 different groups consisting mainly of students of the VTC centre. Fifty two participants benefited from group counselling and were divided based on age groups tailored to their needs based on the assessment carried out for teachers prior to the training. Other groups consisted of young women participating in the "Women Training Program" at the YWCA centre in Jalazone refugee camp, and the other was for participants of the rehabilitation program of freed prisoners from Israeli detention prisons, who were taking specific VTC courses at the YWCA in Ramallah.

As for the new scholastic year 2006/2007, three new groups were formed from the new students for group counselling; consisting of 15 female students aged between 18-25 each. Five group preparatory counselling sessions took place from September-November 2006 mainly to create a safe and inviting atmosphere for the students, in which they can express themselves openly and request individual counselling if needed. Those sessions were also used to identify main needs of students and prepare the plan for counselling sessions in 2007.

YOUTH & CHILDREN PROGRAMS

Youth As Builders Project:

As part of its strategy to contribute to the building of a healthy and strong Palestinian civil society, the National Council Office signed a one-year agreement with Save the Children Regional office in Jordan from May 1, 2006 – April 30, 2007, to implement the "Youth as Builders Project". The project is part of a larger youth program initiated by Save the Children called "Naseej" that aims at enhancing youth involvement and opportunities in community development. The 'Youth as Builders Project' is implemented in Jericho, Ramallah and Jerusalem through the three YWCA branches. The project aims at achieving the following:

1. Increase awareness amongst youth (ages 14-17);
2. Establish drama and theatre groups to increase youth self expression, talent and solving social issues through theater;

3. Strengthen youth's cultural and national identity and increase their sense of belonging to their cities, villages and communities;
4. Increase youth's active participation within their communities;
5. Strengthen dialogue and communication skills between youth and their families;
6. Help youth in increasing their abilities and confidence to take important decisions related to their studies and future careers;
7. Provide parents and families with important information and awareness on different ways and tactics of dealing with their teen-age children.



Youth as Builders project proved to be one of the most successful youth projects implemented by the YWCA of Palestine. In the three districts, youth groups, parents, families and different civil society organizations both supported and participated in different project activities. The established youth networks have created very strong relationships with their local communities namely their families and respective civil society organizations. Thirteen youth groups were established in 2006 in the three areas thus gathering approximately 200 youth members. Three drama youth groups were also established in each of the three districts consisting of youth members from the other "Youth as Builders" youth groups as well as new members. Each of the thirteen youth groups has an average of 15 members.



Two youth coordinators were recruited in Jerusalem and Jericho Branches to implement the project in their respective areas. The existing youth coordinator in Ramallah took over the project responsibility. Youth groups were consequently selected in the different villages and locations in each area.

In Jerusalem, three youth groups were established with almost 45 members with the help and support of civil society organizations in the Old City of Jerusalem. In Ramallah, five youth groups with almost 90 youth members joined “Youth as Builders” in the villages of Aboud, Birzeit, Attayba, Ein Areik and Jalazon refugee camp. Partner organizations were also selected in these locations according to reliability and community trust to assist in the selection of the youth groups. In Jericho 3 youth groups totaling approximately 50 members were selected in the villages of Nuwe’meh, Dyouk and Jericho city.

Starting June 2006 the youth groups met and participated in different awareness raising sessions, activities and drama workshops. Three sessions were carried out on a monthly basis in each location. Awareness raising sessions covered different topics like team building, traditions and society, communication skills, early marriage, alcohol and drugs, relations with the family, gender, domestic violence, career counseling, and self-



knowledge. Despite difficulty for some youth to participate in sessions- *due to closures and lack of transportation from villages*- sessions were positively evaluated by the different youth groups in all districts.

Drama training workshops introduced youth to the theatre and drama and encouraged them to express themselves especially on topics discussed in awareness raising sessions. Drama workshops were carried out in Jerusalem and Ramallah. Drama workshops will start at the beginning of 2007 in Jericho. Several trips were organized to Jericho, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem with the aim of reinforcing sense of belonging and identity. Trips included visits to historic sites and to local organizations. Due to the closure and difficulty of movement it was not possible to gather all youth groups in joint trips.

Although problems and characteristics of youth groups varied according to the district and location (village/refugee camp), the common problems identified both by male and female youth were that they had almost never participated and became members in such types of youth groups and networks. Problems of youth in Palestine are many but are culminated by the fact that they lack opportunities for self-expression, integration and participation in recreational activities, like arts, music and dance.

Activities During 2006	Location	# of Hours	# of Beneficiaries
Awareness Workshops	Jerusalem	65	43
	Jericho	122	46
	Ramallah	136	90
TOTAL		323	179
Drama Workshops	Jerusalem	10	15 (8 new)
	Jericho	0	0
	Ramallah	18	12 (all new)
TOTAL		28	27 (20 new)
Total Number of Beneficiaries			199

In addition, youth in Palestine are rarely given the opportunity to learn life skills like communication skills, leadership skills, planning, decision-making and time-management to help them build their future and their careers.

During 2006, the project provided the opportunity for youth to learn new skills, open-up and express themselves especially about sensitive issues that are considered taboo and 'closed' subjects within their families and respective communities.

In 2007, the project will offer youth networks with the opportunity to learn more life skills to create a positive and lasting impact for youth. In addition, the YWCA will be exploring new opportunities to sustain these youth groups and integrate them and expand them if possible.

Project partners/beneficiaries include the following: Nidal Centre, Palestinian Counseling center, Jerusalem Studies Center, YWCA community center in Aqabet Jaber and Al Jalazone, Al Nuwe'me girls association, Dyuk Association, National Palestinian Theatre, Sayyidat al Pilar school, Dar Al Tifel Al Arabi, Latin Patriarchate in Al Taybeh, Latin Patriarchate in Aboud, Caritas and Birzeit Club.

Youth Programs in Rural Ramallah:

A two year youth development project was funded by YMCA-YWCA Sweden for the period April 2005 – March 2007, aimed at helping young Palestinians express themselves in a safe and inviting environment to better understand and explore their heritage and cultural identity. The project targeted 3 rural areas and the Jalazone Refugee Camp. The project targeted young males and females to participate in learning leadership skills, communication skills and to create stronger youth networks within their communities and surrounding villages. Youth from these villages contributed towards the development of the project and selected workshop topics. Workshops covered different topics like self-knowledge, psychodrama, conflict resolution, communication skills, team building, physical training for confidence building and leadership training.

From January to December 2006, the YWCA of Ramallah conducted 29 workshops targeting four different youth groups from Ramallah villages (Bir Zeit, Ein Areek and Aboud) including Al Jalazone Refugee Camp). The number of workshops conducted exceeded expectations due to high demand, motivation and participation of the village youth. In general, the program has responded to a real need for youth who found all workshops and activities interesting and fulfilling.

The Young Women's Leadership for Change Program

The Young Women's Leadership for Change training program is also part of the youth program funded by YMCA-YWCA Sweden. Its objective is to encourage exchange visits and international networking between YWCA members to share experiences in women empowerment in their respective countries.

The training is planned and implemented by volunteers from different YWCA organizations in Palestine, Lebanon, Belarus and Sweden and takes place in different countries during a three-year period. The first Women Leadership exchange program was hosted in Sweden in 2005



whereby 20 young women from Palestine, Lebanon, Belarus, and Sweden participated. Prior to that, 2 preparatory meetings were done, and a coordinating committee with representatives of the 4 countries was formed. The project was initiated with two planning meetings and one seminar on leadership issues.

In 2006, young women from Sweden, Palestine and Belarus participated in the educational week from August 23-27, 2006 in Belarus. Participants from Lebanon could not travel

due to the war and closure of the airport in Beirut. Five young women, all members of YWCA of Palestine participated in the meeting.

During the meeting the young women exchanged information about the YWCA's in their respective countries, participated in sessions on history of gender movements in the world and prenuptial relations of young people in different countries. Other sessions included presentations and discussions about marital relations: traditions and the status of men and women in society.

The Palestinian women presented photographic slide shows, a documentary film on the political, social and economic situation in Palestine. Statistics, domestic violence, traditional customs, music, cooking and Palestinian heritage were amongst other topics presented by the young Palestinian women in the international evenings organized by the different groups.

Sports and Cultural Programs:

LilacY sports center at the YWCA in Jerusalem continues to serve as one of the most important sports centers for women in East Jerusalem. In 2006 almost 200 women, youth and child members participated in different activities at the center. Forty to fifty women participated in different fitness classes and the gym facilities on a daily basis. Members of the sports center joined an array of fitness classes that include high impact, jazz and salsa aerobics, step dance, kick boxing, pilates, yoga and body conditioning. The

center also provides members with the choice of working out on fitness machines and a sauna for ages 18 and above.

LilacY also provides children and youth with a variety of dance lessons which include ballet dance with four levels ranging from beginners to advanced classes. Each group has up to 12 students. Modern dance for ages 8-18 years, Hip Hop dance classes for two groups ages 8-18 and the jazz dance for one group ages 8-12 years. The performance arts group presented a musical dance performance "Ihna Hon" or "We Are Here" at the beginning of 2006 which included traditional Palestinian dabkeh, ballet, modern dance and drama. The performance took place in different venues in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.





The performance arts group participated in several events in East Jerusalem like the Moroccan evening during Ramadan, drama play to support the Burj

like the folklore dance, handicrafts, and wall magazine writings.

Starting 2006, the management of both multifunctional community centres was delegated to the closest branches. Thus the Jalazone centre started being managed by

Ramallah branch and Aqabet Jaber centre by Jericho branch. The finances though remained under the supervision and management of the National Council Office due to the complexity of the financial reporting and need for sustaining some reporting mechanisms and standards already established at the National Council Office.

Several partnerships have been formulated and maintained with local government agencies as well, such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Labour and Education, through meetings, workshops and training programs. In addition, links and cooperation with local NGOs continued on issues of mutual interest, as well as the Popular Committees, Women's Centres and the UNRWA offices in both Camps.

Several activities were planned in 2006 for children in both preschools, including "Mother's Day" celebrations, which were attended by parents and the members of the elderly day care center (in Aqabet Jaber). In May 2006 field trips were organized as well as an open day in each center. A graduation event was organized for the children on their last day at the center, where they received certificates and enjoyed their last preschool day before their summer vacation.

In Aqabet Jaber Centre, 68 children were enrolled in the first half of 2006 and graduated at the end of May. In February '06, the teachers

Allaqlaq project in the Old City of Jerusalem, dance performance in cooperation with Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre at the Notre Dame in Jerusalem and at the Helen Keller center for the blind on the occasion of the International Women's Day on March 8, '06.

Children's Preschool Programs:

The two multifunctional community centres at Aqabet Jaber in Jericho and Jalazone in Ramallah offer a unique environment within the two refugee camps for children, youth and women to learn, grow, develop skills and improve their self confidence. Despite the fact that the continued deterioration of the situation, mainly after the formation of the Hamas government, has had a negative effect on the implementation of the program (due to the lack of funding and inability of some families to pay school fees), the impact on the target group is clearly demonstrated in the strong commitment and sense of belonging to these centres. Children start

attending the preschools and continue to be active participants in the child identity program and other activities and events. Behavioural changes are also evident in the activities and performances of the children and youth,





attended a meeting at Aqabet Jaber as part of a program on "Psychological Support for Children". During this meeting, participants identified the social and psychological problems faced by children and suggested plans to help the children deal with them.

In Jalazone Centre, 73 children were enrolled during the first half of 2006, and graduated in May 2006. A new outdoor children playground

was set up and equipped at the back yard of the Jalazone centre in May 2006 through a generous donation from friends in Canada. Some play equipment was also donated by youth members of the camp who graduated from the YWCA KG's many years ago. In response to the needs of the local community, and the continued deteriorating situation that everyone has to deal with three psychological counselling programs in the Jalazone centre were carried out; one for preschool teachers, a second for women in the training programs, and a third for mothers of the preschool children.



Child Identity Program

The Child Identity Program continued in 2006 with the same momentum and success as the previous years. Forty children aged (7-14) both boys and girls in Aqabet Jaber, and seventy-five girls aged (12-16) in Jalazone participated in this program. Children met on a weekly basis and engaged in several activities aimed at enhancing their self esteem and strengthening their sense of identity. Activities included

traditional Palestinian Dance (Dabkeh), learning about Palestinian culture and heritage, arts and crafts. This year, drama was added to the program, where children are encouraged to express themselves using drama and role-play.

SUMMER CAMPS

Jalazone Refugee Camp:

40 females aged 12-16 participated in the summer camp June 15th – July 15th 2006. Different activities were carried out like arts, embroidery, Palestinian Dabkeh dancing, home economics and field visits to different institutions and centers in Ramallah.

Ramallah Branch:

35 girls and boys aged 4-12 (40% males, 60% females) joined the one-month summer camp from 15 July to 17 August 2006. Main activities included:



dabkeh, billiards, arts, basket ball and volley ball. Participants also attended an awareness workshop on elections presented by the director of the legislative council in Jericho.

Jerusalem Branch:

Four summer camps were organized during 2006 by the Jerusalem YWCA, two of which were organized for disabled children.

- ♦ **Internal activities:** included dabkeh and dance, computer and video, educational games, aerobics, paper crafts, painting and drawing, drama and music.
- ♦ **External activities:** included swimming, picnics, visit to elderly homes and handicap children at Isaad Al Tufuleh center.

Internal and external activities were supervised by thirteen volunteers (males and females) from the city of Ramallah and Al Bireh. The YWCA paid the volunteers daily transportation and daily meals. At the end of the summer camp, a celebration was carried out which included music, drama and entertainment programs. Children, families, friends, and community members participated.

Jericho Branch:

The summer camp was carried out between 26/6/2006-20/7/2006 in the Youth Club in Jericho with 55 participants ages 5-17. 25 males and 30 females participated, divided into three groups. The summer camp was supervised by the Palestinian Ministry of Youth.

Different programs and activities were carried out like swimming, karate, activities with Right to Play and the Children's Village (SOS), Palestinian

Summer Camp for the Disabled Children: a summer camp was organized in August 2006 for a period of 8 days for children with physical, visual and hearing disabilities aged (7-15) in cooperation with Helen Keller in Beit Jala. Trainers from UK, Helen Keller staff and volunteers from the YWCA helped in setting up and implementation of the camp that offered participants with the opportunity to participate in trips and picnics to different tourist areas and sights. This summer camp was funded by the YMCA-YWCA Sweden.

Children's summer camp for children from 5-12 years of age was also organized at the YWCA of Jerusalem in June and July 2006 for a period of 5 weeks. 110 children enrolled in the activities that included picnics, swimming, dance, music, home economics and arts.

A second children's summer camp was organized in August for a period of 2 weeks for children from 5-10 years at the YWCA of Jerusalem whereby 60 children participated in similar programs and activities mentioned above.

SECTION 5

YWCA NETWORKING, REPRESENTATION & VISITORS

Workshop on Conflict Resolution: On January 3rd, a one day workshop on "Conflict Resolution" was organized in cooperation with the YWCA branch in Ramallah for youth from Ramallah, Birzeit and Jalazone refugee camp. Fifteen youth members participated in this workshop.

GoCY Partner meeting: Rana Qumsiyeh, the Advocacy Coordinator at the YWCA of Palestine attended the Y-Global partner meeting in Oslo-Norway from 18/2 to 26/2/2006. She gave a presentation about the JAI, and networked with other partners of Y-Global.

Volunteering/ Exchange Programs- At the end of April, Maria Lisoy, volunteer, returned to Norway after spending eight months as a volunteer with the YWCA and the JAI desk in Jerusalem, through the GoCY exchange program. In September 2006, Margit Onstein from YMCA/YWCA of Norway joined YWCA of Palestine as a volunteer through the GoCY exchange program providing assistance at the National Council Office with some administrative work and logistics for both the JAI and the National Council Office.

Peace Cycle: On September 16th, a reception was organized for the "Peace Cycle" group at the YWCA in Jerusalem. This event was arranged jointly with PARC. During this event, the documentary "The Iron Wall" was screened, and later discussed with participants who cycled from the UK to bring the message of Peace to Palestine.

Middle East Association of Training and Retreat Centers MEATRC- From November 27-31, 2006 Rana Qumsiyeh joined the annual regional meeting of MEATRC in Cairo, which was a continuation of the 2005 theme of "The Christian Presence and role in the Middle East Region." In 2006, the focus was on the issues of identity, citizenship and belonging. In addition, from 12-14 June 2006, Rana Qumsiyeh attended a workshop on "Dialogue for Peaceful Change-

Conflict Management" through MEATRC. The training was held at the International Center for Bethlehem with participants from different local organizations, members of the MEATRC network.

Christian Aid Partners Meeting—From December 9-12, 2006 Rana Qumsiyeh and Fadya Salfiti, Executive Director of the Jerusalem Branch represented the YWCA at Christian Aid's partner meeting in Cairo where Christian Aid's new development strategy and sectoral approaches were discussed. Ms. Qumsiyeh joined the workshop on Advocacy Israel/OPTs program, while Ms. Salfiti participated in the Economic Empowerment group.

World Council of Churches in Geneva: In December, the General Secretary Mira Rizek was invited by the World Council of Churches in Geneva to attend a workshop as part of a resource group to discuss the formation of an International Advocacy Forum for Palestine and Israel. She presented a position paper on the suggested forum, which was discussed in the plenary. The paper took into consideration the needs of Palestinian Christians, the existing networks and platforms, and recommended ways that the forum could help support the already existing advocacy initiatives in Palestine. Also Ms. Rizek met with from "HorYzon International Cooperation of YMCA/YWCA Switzerland" to discuss the 2007 project on "women's economic empowerment and advocacy". She also spent a day at the World YWCA and updated them on the situation and its implications on the work of the NGO sector in general and the YWCA in particular.

Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine (JHJP) : The JHJP network, formed through the Presbyterian Church in the USA has been reactivated in 2006, with six member organizations. Rana Qumsiyeh from the National Council Office has been attending the meetings of the network, representing both the YWCA and the JAI.

Partner/donor Meetings and Visits:

In April 2006 a Norwegian delegation visited the YWCA of Ramallah that presented their programs and activities, followed by a lunch.

On May 5th 2006 the Global Breakfast event was carried out at the YWCA of Jerusalem where three members of the YWCA of Japan and former General Secretary and President attended the event.

On 18th May 2006, a meeting was organized for 11 donors whereby a comprehensive presentation on the situation, needs, strategic direction and challenges facing the YWCA was carried out. Representatives from ICCO, Christian Aid, Bread for the World, EED, HorYzon, Y-Global, World Alliance of YMCAs, YMCA/YWCA of Sweden, Oxfam Quebec and the Italian Cooperation participated in this one day meeting. The meeting was vital to the YWCA to clarify its future strategy to donors based on sector and branch challenges and needs.

On May 16th, 2006 Angela Elmiger from **HorYzon** Switzerland visited the National Council Office and the three branches in Jerusalem, Ramallah and Jericho, especially the food production unit.

On October 12th, 2006 Amid East representatives visited the YWCA of Jericho Branch to discuss possible future coordination on English language training and other programs. Representatives also visited the Jericho Municipality and met with the Mayor

From **September 19 - 22**, Mr. Ian Bell, a member of MICOM, a Belfast based conflict resolution organization, and former Director of International Programs at Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) UK was a guest of the YWCA of Palestine and JAI. Mr. Bell is striving to be active in charity and development issues around the world, and is focusing on supporting the YWCA of Palestine and the JAI through the Olive Tree Campaign. During his visit, Mr. Bell had several meetings with the General Secretary of the YWCA, and the National President, to explore ways of supporting the YWCA in the U.K.

On December 7th, 2006, the American Consul General visited the Aqabet Jaber preschool on the occasion of the grant provided by the American Consulate to support the purchase of school uniforms for UNRWA students through YWCA Jericho. Dr. Saeb Erekat, Hassan Saleh, Mayor of Jericho,

Muhannad Beidas from UNRWA, Yusra Al Suweiti from the Jericho Governorate, Salah Ajjouri, Headmaster of the UNRWA school and Nazar Halteh, Jericho Executive Director were present.

On 15 of July Dr. Peter Makari, Executive for Global Ministries– Middle East and European Department visited the YWCA National Council Office and discussed potential and needs for future cooperation.

On 24 September, Kirsten Lund Larsen, General Secretary of the YMCA/ YMCA Denmark was hosted by the General Secretary during her visit to the OPT's with a delegation from Dan Church Aid.

Ms. Rana Qumsiyeh attended an Advocacy Training offered by Dan Church Aid in Ramallah from **4-8 September** for DCA partners.

On 16 September the General Secretary met with Mr. Hana Haaland from Christian Aid to discuss future cooperation

Between 4-7 October, Ms. Kjeste Lindoe and two partners from Y-Global visited Jerusalem & Ramallah YWCAS as part of regular monitoring visits.

On October 7 the General Secretary met with Mrs. Sieglinde Wenberner from EED and discussed the changes at the YWCA and future prospects.

On 1 November, the General Secretary met with the Swedish Group represented by Hanna Igelstrom, staff member of the YWCA of Sweden including youth representatives of different Swedish Organizations. The General Secretary gave them a briefing on the situation in the OPTs, the YWCA of Palestine and the JAI initiative.

On 6 November, the General Secretary attended the Sabeel Conference and facilitated one of the sessions.

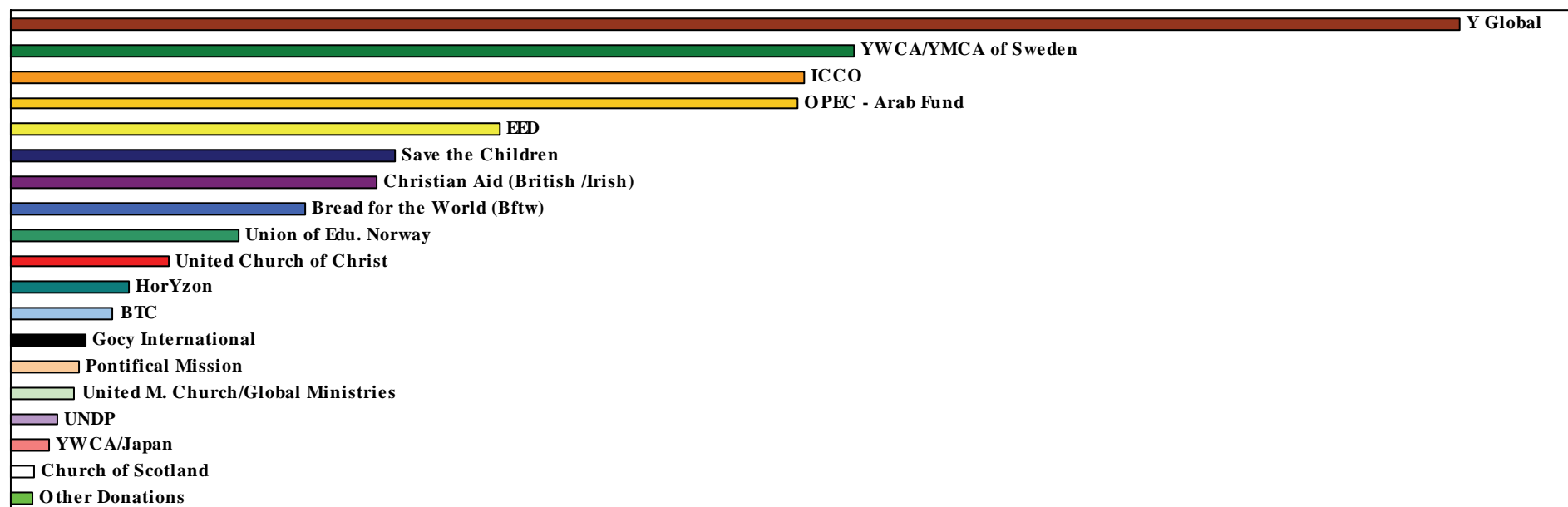
On 13 November, the General Secretary and Mr. Hanna Theodorie met with Ms. Mieke Zagt and Ms Hilde De Groot from ICCO to discuss the possibility of new funding for the YWCA.

On 19 December, the General Secretary met with Ms. Sawsan Baidoun from Bread for the World to resolve outstanding reporting issues and discuss the 2007. plans.

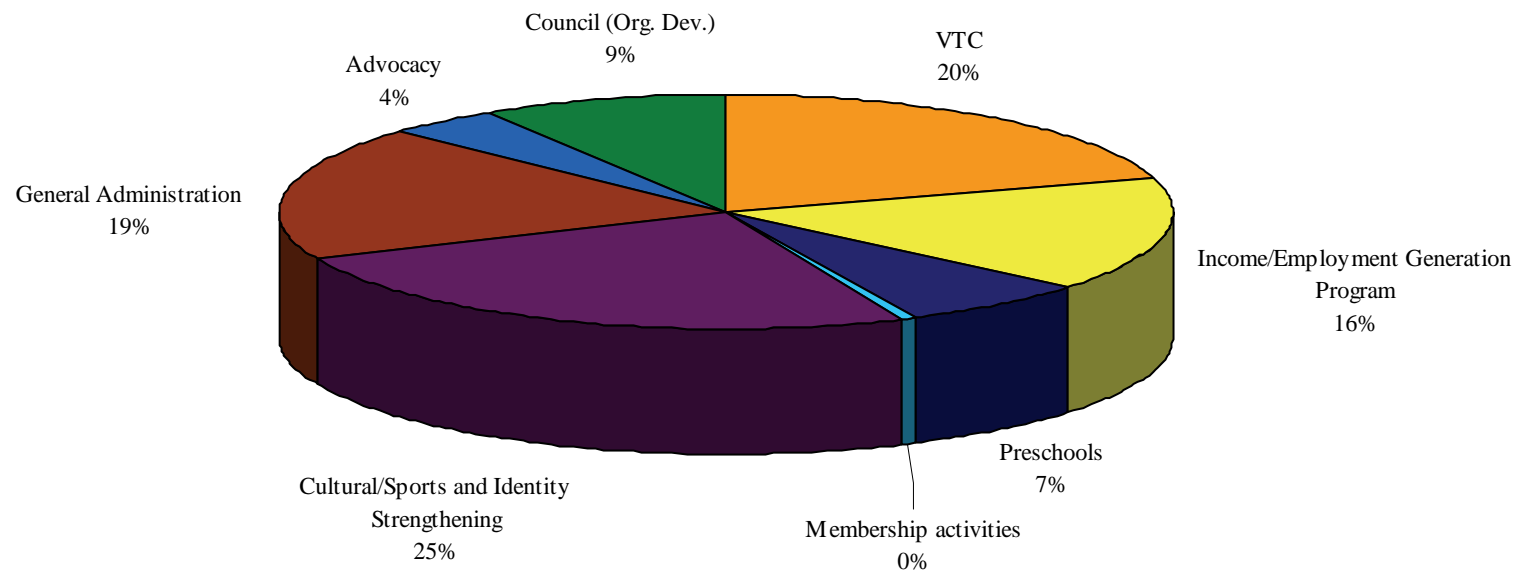
SECTION 6

2006 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Donor Funds Received in 2006

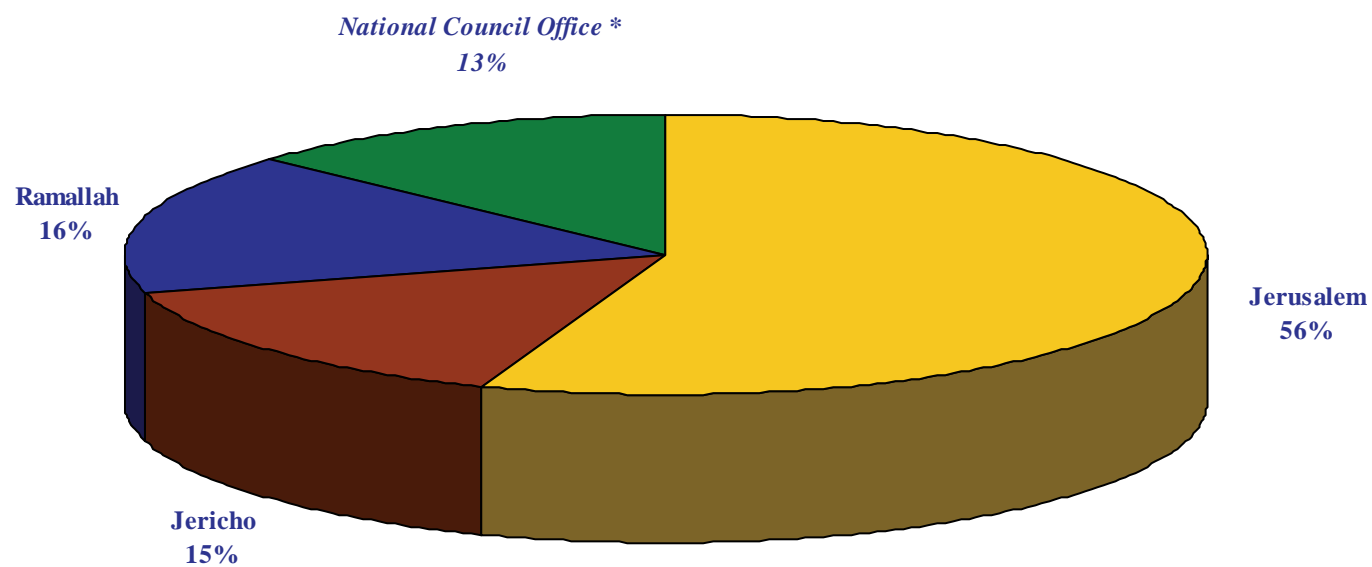


YWCA Of Palestine 2006 Expenditures



Vocational Training Programs	Income/Employment Generation Program	Preschools	Membership activities
Cultural/Sports and Identity Strengthening	General Administration	JAI/Advocacy	Council (Organizational Development)

2006 Expenditures by Branch/Council



** Overall management supervision and technical assistance*

*** \$1,386,222 USDs—Total Expenditures During 2006*

SECTION 7:

YWCA DONORS AND PARTNERS

<i>Donor/Partner</i>	<i>Sector</i>
Australian Embassy in Ramallah	VTC scholarship fund
Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC)	Kitchen Equipment
Bread for the World	VTC Ramallah and Jerusalem (Secretarial)
Christian Aid	Core Fund for Jerusalem and the JAI
Church of Scotland	VTC scholarship fund
Church of Sweden	Olive Tree Campaign
CORDAID	JAI
DAN CHURCH Aid	JAI
EED	VTC- Jerusalem, Ramallah, Jericho Health Program and the JAI
FOKUS- Forum for Women and Development	Psychosocial Counseling for Women- Ramallah
Fredskorpset (FK- Norway)- GOCY	Support to Volunteers
HorYzon	YWCA Jericho Production and the JAI
ICCO- Interchurch Organization for Development	Core Fund and JAI
OPEC	Core Fund- Jerusalem
Save the Children	Youth as Builders Youth Project
UNDP	Cultural Activities/Dabkeh Group
Union of Education-Norway	VTC Jerusalem and the Kitchen Renovations, Jerusalem
United Church of Christ/Global Ministries	Kitchen Renovations
United Methodist Church	Multifunctional centers in Refugee Camps and the VTC scholarship Fund- Jerusalem
Y-Global (YMCA-YWCA of Norway)	Multifunctional Centers in Refugee Camps
YWCA of Japan	Olive Tree Campaign, Women and Children Activities
YWCA-YMCA of Sweden	Children and Youth Programs in Jerusalem and Ramallah

SECTION 8

THE YWCA OF PALESTINE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD—2006

<i>Executive Committee of the National Council</i>	<i>Jerusalem Board Members</i>	<i>Ramallah Board Members</i>	<i>Jericho Board Members</i>
Hanadi Soudah Younan – National President	Suad Younan – President	Haifa Baramki – President	Vera Pano – President
Suad Sifri – National Vice President	Sana’ Sifri – Vice President	Maha Shehadeh – Vice Pre	Rita Jahshan – Vice President
Mira D. Rizek – National General Secretary	Hala Salem – Treasurer	Elen Ma’ay’a – Treasurer	Mai Toubeh – Treasurer
Ghada Ahwal : Minute Secretary	Sandrine Amer – Secretary (youth)	Rula Izz – Secretary	Norma Majrouh – Secretary
Wafa’ Khoury – Treasurer	Eileen Kuttah – Member	Jumana Tobassi – Member	Irma Darwish – Member
Suad Younan – Jerusalem	Rose Naber – Member	Jumana Hanania – Member (youth)	Vera Mustaklem – Member
Haifa Baramki – Ramallah	Wafa’ Khoury – Member	Ghada Ahwal – Member	Mary Mustalha – Member (youth)
Joumana Toubassi – Ramallah	Irene El Yousef – Member		
Vera Pano – Jericho	Belinda Shamma’ – Member		
Vera Mustaklem —Jericho			
Sandrine Amer — Jerusalem			

SECTION 9

MAJOR MEMBERSHIP & BOARD ACTIVITIES

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS AT THE YWCA OF JERICHO

- March 8 06 Celebration of International Women's Day at the YWCA of Jericho attended by PNA representatives, board members, general assembly, staff and a number of women from the Jericho District.
- March 24 06 Jericho YWCA participated in a bazaar organized by the YWCA of Ramallah on the occasion of international women's day and mother's day. Jericho board members and employees participated in the bazaar.
- May 15 06 Participation in the inauguration of an exhibition for national products at Bir Zeit University attended by board members and employees
- June 14 06 Workshop on Mushroom Growing in coordination with the Palestinian Center for Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Workshop was attended by Nazar Halteh, Executive Director of the YWCA of Jericho.
- Sept 26 06 Lecture by JICA on solid waste management attended by YWCA Jericho employees and board members
- Dec. 9 06 Workshop on storytelling presented by Majdi Shomali for a number for preschool teachers
- Dec. 14 06 Burbara and Christmas party for children

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS AT THE YWCA OF JERUSALEM

- March 8 06 Celebration of International Women's Day including farewell party to the former General Secretary, Ms. Abla Nasser at the Jerusalem YWCA
- May 5 06 Global Breakfast at the YWCA of Jerusalem supporting all YWCA national associations in the world which carry out global breakfasts in their respective organizations to increase support and raise funds.
- July 5 06 Joint activity with Sabeel attended by Dr. Ann Wafer Nicolas, head of the spiritual and social work association at the University of Arizona
- October 05 Ramadan Iftar for all YWCA of Jerusalem employees and board members at the YWCA of Jerusalem
- Nov. 16 06 On the occasion of the declaration of independence Ms. Juliette Tuma from OCHA gave a presentation on the humanitarian situation in the OPTs and the implications of the separation wall on the Palestinian people. A film 'the last supper, Abu Deis' directed by Issa Freij, winner of international award, was presented to participants.
- Dec 15 06 Burbara and Christmas party and bazaar exhibiting women's products and hand-made Christmas ornaments made by children attended by YWCA members, families and friends

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS AT THE YWCA OF RAMALLAH

<i>March 8 06</i>	Celebration of International Women's Day during which different speeches stressed on the participation of women in public life and the importance of her role in society
<i>March 21 06</i>	Celebration of Mother's day at an <i>Iftar</i> attended by members and friends followed by a Bazaar for YWCA products
<i>April 06</i>	Egg Hunting activity at the YWCA of Ramallah whereby more than 100 children participated
<i>May 06</i>	Participation in a celebration for the preparation of the largest 'Tabouleh' plate in coordination with several restaurants and local organizations (expected to enter into the Guinness book of records)
<i>July 06</i>	Luncheon for the support of the needy student fund
<i>September 06</i>	Meeting for the general assembly
<i>October 06</i>	Luncheon for the support of the needy student fund
<i>December 06</i>	Christmas party for children for the support of the student scholarship fund

SECTION 10

CHALLENGES

THE POLITICAL SITUATION: the political situation will continue to be the biggest threat in the OPTs. Jerusalem will be completely segregated from the rest of the West Bank, mobility is expected to continue to be difficult. The economy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is deteriorating and poverty is increasing. The PNA continues to be strangled and NGOs continue to be called on to fill in the gaps in services and create innovative models of development. Can NGOs continue to be responsive in this situation? Will donors and donor funding be flexible enough to allow for responsiveness and changes when needed? Donors policies in Palestine have been largely affected by the political situation and macro governance issues. In a situation where there is no breakthrough in the peace process, increasing frustration, and weakening Palestinian government, will donors continue to invest and fund development in Palestine? Will an organization like the YWCA, if possible at all, reduce its dependency on donors? What kind of financial systems, planning and management need to be put in place to remedy these risks? Are there new resources for NGOs which are not yet explored?

THE NEW GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: was developed and presented with the intention of decentralizing and strengthening management implementation and monitoring, defining roles of governance versus executive body, and centralizing financial management, reporting and auditing systems. Unless and until the new boards in the branches understand and accept the new structure, define the relationships of the boards with the executive structure, and make the right decisions in the direction of empowering the executive structure, it will be difficult to realize progress. The boards need to have the political will, public interest and professional judgment to decide the structure direction.

ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY: Now that each branch has its registration, by-laws, and adherence requirements, will it be possible to keep a unified vision, unified structure and a unified governance body that all branches respect and adhere to?

VOLUNTARISM: as the organization moves towards becoming a more professional and defined organization, will the spirit of voluntarism and voluntary work be sustained? Will the voluntary body accept the new organizational framework, work within it and not feel threatened? Will the space for voluntary work continue to be created and nurtured?

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP: the YWCA is struggling between keeping the image, profile and “ownership” of the organization, and moving towards building a broader based membership, community ownership and participatory management.

INCOME GENERATION, ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY: so far the YWCA has been largely dependent on grants and donors. In an economic situation which is deteriorating, and as poverty increases, and markets shrink due to closures, will the organization be able to charge fees for its services, Recover its costs and generate income especially from its business utilities?

KEEPING THE MOVEMENT “YOUNG”: so far, the YWCA has not succeeded substantially to attract youth members and incorporate them into its activities, structures and leadership. The YWCA needs to carry out a thorough assessment of its strategies, activities, constituency and culture to be able to address the needs and aspirations of the young, and provide space for their full participation. The older generation needs to exert special effort to ensure continuity and relevance of the organization in the long run.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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