



## ANNUAL Summary REPORT 2016

**ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

Programs under this thematic area are intended to empower women, especially young women to demand their rights from duty bearers and help collectively promote pro-women and gender sensitized economic policies. At the same time the YWCA has been creating employment opportunities and providing business services for women enterprises and cooperatives in the West Bank through vocational training programs and entrepreneurship development so women, especially young women can live a dignified life.

**1) Vocational Training Programs in Jerusalem and Ramallah**

Vocational Training programs are funded mainly through Bread for the World in Germany.

In August of 2016, the YWCA Ramallah graduated 42 Office Management students. Another 35 students are enrolled in the Office Management Diploma and expected to graduate in August 2017 and 11 students are enrolled in the IT Diploma.

The YWCA Jerusalem graduated 49 students in the Office Management Diploma in 2016, and 39 are expected to graduate in 2017. In addition, 13 students are enrolled in the Multimedia Diploma and expected to graduate in 2017.



VTC Students in Jerusalem

The following table shows the statistics on VTC 2016:

	Specialization	Graduates in 2016	Males	Females
VTC Ramallah	Office Management	42	9	33
VTC Jerusalem	Office Management	49	3	46
	Multimedia	10	3	7

**2) Women's Economic Empowerment in Jericho:**

As the main focus of the YWCA of Jericho is the Economic Justice, this sector was further enforced during the year 2016 through three major projects:

YWCA Jericho Food Production Unit

The visibility of the YWCA Jericho Food project was enhanced in 2016; the YWCA Food Project increased



its marketing channels and the points of sale in several cities like Ramallah, Nablus and Hebron, as well as meeting the increasing in demand of the produced items from new customers and institutions at YWCA Jericho.

To keep up with the growing demand on products and the need to expand the Food Project Unit, a remarkable step was done by the Board members, relevant staff and consultants of revising the architectural plans of the proposed construction for the food project and finalizing this process of bidding for next practical steps of starting the construction to be taken on the ground.

#### Women Economic Empowerment in Jericho and the Jordan Valley Project:

The YWCA of Jericho is implementing the project of Women Economic Empowerment in Jericho and the Jordan Valleys Governorate. This project is funded by the Austrian Development Agency and Bread for the World. The project was launched on January, 2016 and will come to an end by the end of 2017. The project aims at development of food products for eight cooperatives/charitable societies in Jericho and the Jordan Valleys.

Eight cooperatives/charitable societies in Jericho and the Jordan Valleys area were selected to improve the quality of their products, their management systems and their marketing and sales skills. The YWCA has initially surveyed twelve cooperatives/charitable societies and selected eight based on a criteria including: good governance systems/practices, official registration, promising products, etc.

Members of the cooperatives/charitable societies; mostly women producers, received a series of trainings in sales and marketing skills, quality control and costing and book keeping.

A workshop was held in partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy and the Palestinian Standards Institution (PSI). The workshop aimed at linking the eight partner societies with the specialized official organizations in order to clarify the followed procedures in registering their products, the advantages of registration, the required fees and the terms and conditions. In addition, the PSI explained the procedures and required conditions to issue the ISO compliance certificate. They also presented the standards and specifications for some the existing products (Couscous, dates molasses, honey and Jameed). They also promised to work on the specifications for the rest of the products as a priority for 2017. The Ministry of National Economy promised to continue working with the eight cooperatives/societies to provide training in KAIZEN. This working method increases the efficiency of the production process.

Each of the eight cooperatives/societies received sub grants as equipment and other items that shall improve their production. They also received packages and labels to help them market their products.

The YWCA will continue to work with the partner cooperatives/societies on improving their products, provide constant support in financial management and daily operations. Once the products are ready, focus will be on marketing the products. The YWCA is planning to hold an exhibition and a promotional campaign for the products.

Another important component of the project is holding advocacy and campaigning trainings for the targeted women in their localities in order to plan a campaign to be held focusing on restrictions imposed on women access to market.

#### Short course vocational training in Hair dressing

One training course in hair dressing and beauty was started in 2016 for 24 young women from Jericho governorate. This course was supported within a partnership with Caritas Jerusalem.

### **3) Young Business Coaches Program (YBCs)**

The YWCA of Palestine conducted a study around constraints to women's entrepreneurship in 2013 funded by Christian Aid. This study showed that one of the major challenges for women entrepreneurs was the cost of business consultants, its irregularity and quality, as well as equitable access to the market. In order to support the Women-led Businesses in a more responsive and sustainable manner, the YWCA started this new program in 2016, where 30 young business graduate students have been trained to become Young Business Coaches and assist women-led businesses in rural areas in developing and improving their businesses. Currently a number of YBCs are assisting 30 Women's Enterprises in Jericho, Bethlehem and Ramallah areas. This program is funded by Oxfam Quebec.

#### **Hearing The Story from One of Our Graduates**

My name is Wesal Zahran, I am 26 years old female from Aboud, a village near Ramallah. I am currently a student in the Vocational Training Center at the YMCA- Ramallah in the Office Management Diploma.

I am a divorced young mother of two children, who are 5 and 3 and struggling to care for them.

At the vocational center I discovered a lot, not only did I learn about Office Management, I feel I am socially and economically empowered through the enriched counseling and awareness programs that the YWCA provides. For the first time, I had the opportunity to discuss my issues with a psychological counselor who helped me deal with unresolved issues from my divorce especially the feeling of anger. I also learned how to help her my children cope with the divorce.

I have already applied for a job at the Ministry of Finance and got accepted, and can't wait to start this new job and be able to support my little family.

### **YOUTH LEADERSHIP and CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

In partnership and support from Y Global in Norway, the YWCA of Palestine worked to empower young women from the areas of the local associations in Bethlehem, Jericho including Aqbet Jaber Camp, Jerusalem and Ramallah including Jalazoune Camp in their rights and UNSCR1325.

165 Women and Youth (53 youth from two areas in Bethlehem, 43 youth from two areas of Jericho, 42 youth from three areas of Jerusalem and 27 youth from three areas in Ramallah) were trained on UNSCR1325 and lobbying and campaigning. The total number of 165 has exceeded our the originally planned number of 150.

Following that, the YWCA trained youth members from each of the four local associations to design and launch their own campaign, which they called "My Right is My Decision". The campaign was launched in a press Conference held in Ramallah on December 14th headed by the Minister of Women's Affairs. A Press Release was issued and several TV and radio interviews were conducted with the youth members on this campaign, which will continue in schools throughout 2017. The aim of the campaign was to advocate for ending early marriage.



**A Young women with the "My Right My Decision Campaign" poster**

The targeted youth are now actively engaged in their communities, as well as CBOs and/or CSOs, and raising awareness in schools about early marriage. They are also provided with the opportunity to engage with relevant national forums through the YWCA of Palestine.



**Young women at the launching of the "My Right My Decision Campaign"**

## **Shumous Project: Integrating Economic and Social Empowerment through Community Partnerships**

The YWCA of Palestine has been implementing this project for the last three years (2014-2016) with support from the EU and SMC (Swedish Mission Commission) and in partnership with Y- Care International and YMCA/YWCA Sweden. This project was implemented by a special unit led and supervised by the National Office, to test a new model of building grass root and community partnerships through an integrated economic and social empowerment program.

**Economic Empowerment:** This project directly benefited 544 young men and women with new life and technical skills to access the job market, with 44 young people receiving sub-grants to start their individual or joint projects.

**Social Empowerment and Civic Engagement:** The project reached 388 young people with trainings in Human Rights, Gender and Advocacy. This was followed with formation of Advocacy Groups in each of the targeted communities, who started raising awareness on crucial issues and lobbying for change.

In addition to working with the youth, the project built the capacity of 23 Civil Society Organizations, 16 of which were offered grants to implement their strategic plans that were developed jointly with the youth. And the Local Village Councils were also supported with trainings in participatory local development planning and guided to develop and improve their strategic plans jointly with the youth and Civil Society Organizations representatives.

### **What Changed? -- the project in numbers**

**24,315** young people and community members reached

**96%** of young people have improved their confidence

**48%** of young people have been able to access employment or set up a business

**94%** of young people are now more engaged in their community

**80%** of young people have the skills to enter the job market

Satisfaction with local community organizations has risen by **24%**



**Sweets Production Training for young women**

## **ADVOCATING FOR A JUST PEACE: OUR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY**

The National YWCA of Palestine continues to be an active member in the three national coalitions namely: the VAW Muntada , the UNSCR 1325 Coalition and National Commission for UNSCR1325, advocating and lobbying for promoting peace and justice for Palestinians specifically Palestinian women. The YWCA of Palestine trains and empowers its youth members of the Peace and Justice Task Force in national and international laws and resolutions, to allow them to effectively campaign and be directly involved in these platforms as well as with other stakeholders and partners.

*MUNTADA Forum* is an NGO Forum for Combating Violence against Women (VAW), and aims at ending all forms of gender-based violence by mobilizing public opinion, lobbying to decision-makers and transforming Violence against Women as a 'public issue'. The forum is made up of 17 civil society groups and YWCA is notably an active member. The YWCA through the Muntada was able to influence policy change at the National level with the amendment of the Social Security Bill to include women rights and to highlight all the areas of the Social Security Bill that lacked representation of women rights before presenting the bill to the law makers.

In addition, the YWCA is yearly engaged in the National/International Women Campaigns to Combat Violence against Women in November/December as well as in March for the National/International Campaign for Women Day.

Also, the YWCA is one of four NGOs who are members of the UNSCR 1325 Higher Commission – Chaired by the Ministry of Women Affairs, which oversees the implementation of the UN Security Resolution 1325 and finalization and implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP).

This year and amid exhorted efforts the 1325 NAP for Palestine was launched making Palestine the first Arab State of the Region to launch. Currently the Commission group meets regularly to finalize the implementation plan. The YWCA of Palestine along with all Commission members are also expected to incorporate activities from the NAP and include these activities in their own organization's plan to ensure implementation, compliance and proper coordination amongst NGOs.

The National Coalition for the Implementation of UNSCR1325 is headed by the General Union of Palestinian Women. The YWCA of Palestine is a member of the Coalition Secretariat which comprises of 11 civil society organizations women NGOs. The key role of this group is to hold public institutions accountable in honouring the 1325 resolution and aligning the activities set forth in the UNSCR 1325 NAP. The YWCA has participated actively in the review/revision of the internal Bylaws, ways of work and drafting of a funding proposal which was submitted to the AIDA Gender Working Group.

Through joint cooperation and planning with the government agencies and women organizations in 2016 the stage was set towards a joint unified Palestinian delegation to represent at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 61 in 2017. The Palestinian delegation will organize a session in the main hall of the United Nations under the Priority theme for the CSW 61 "Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work."

The YWCA of Palestine had two delegates at the CSW 60 in March 2016 namely Ms. Suhair Ramadan, the Women, Gender and Security Officer and a youth member from the peace and justice Task

Force, Ms. Dima Hanania. Both participated and chaired several side events organized by other YWCA associations globally. The YWCA was supported by Oxfam Quebec to cover the delegates and produced a special newsletter capturing all the events and activities of then Youth Peace and Justice Task Force titled "Empowering and Supporting Youth as Advocates for Justice". The YWCA continues to use the CSW as a platform for learning and advocating, especially that the report on Palestine for 2016 highlighted that "Israeli Occupation remains the major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self reliance and integration in the development of their society, and stresses the importance of efforts to increase their role in decision making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and equal participation and maintenance and promotion of peace and security" Thus the National YWCA of Palestine sees its active role within the Coalitions as such. The YWCA has succeeded in booking a side event and offered partners within the UNSCR 1325 National Coalition to participate in the session and provide documentation and case studies which will "expose" Israeli violations against women and how these are disempowering women. This will take place on 17 March 2017. The session will build on the Priority theme of the CSW 61 as well as shed light on the Review theme "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls," and the Focus area theme "the empowerment of indigenous women."

Finally, the YWCA of Palestine in partnership with the World YWCA office in Geneva released a statement on International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People that was read by the World YWCA in Geneva calling on the International community to end the Israeli Occupation, recognize the right of return, end the settlement expansion and free the Palestinian detainees. Another statement was released by the YWCA of Palestine through the UNSCR1325 Coalition titled "Seeking Justice: Statement by the Palestinian Women Coalition of UNSCR 1325 on the visit of the delegation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor's Office on 9-10 October 2016 to Palestine"

This whole thematic area, is generously supported by Y-Global, and ICCO that have allowed the YWCA to create safe and sustainable spaces for young women to assert their positions on justice issues and get more involved in decisions that affect their lives under occupation.

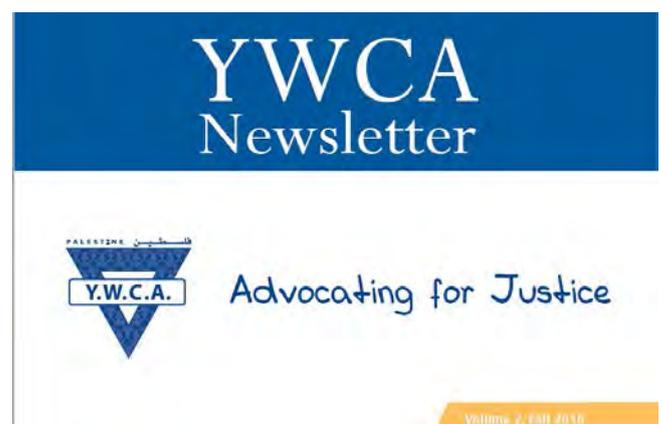
### **Advocating for Justice - Newsletter**

Towards the end of 2016, the YWCA of Palestine issued a new Newsletter under the title "Advocating for Justice".

"As a rights based organization, the role of the YWCA has never been restricted to service delivery;

the YWCA has always seen its role as advocating with and for the marginalized, displaced and poor." Says Mira Rizeq the National General Secretary.

The newsletter captures the history of the YWCA's strategic role in supporting women's and communities' resilience and advocating for their rights, and explains the current approaches and tools that are used to advocate for Just Peace in Palestine.



## ACTIVITIES AT OUR REFUGEE CAMPS CENTERS

### 1) Cognitive Learning at our KGs

The two YWCA Refugee camp centers in Jalazone and Aqabet Jaber have historically been well known for their pre-school programs, where we offer a space for creative learning, healthy growing and confidence building for children.

Through different interactive methods and games, the children gain knowledge and build skills, but also formulate their essential values that will stay with them through their adult life.

In 2016, the KG in Jalazone had three classes of different ages between three and five yearolds with a total of 86 children (31 Male, 55 Female) enrolled as part of (2016/2017) kindergarten school year, all come from the Jalazone Refugee Camp. The kindergarten is served by three full-time teachers.

The KG in Aqabet Jaber refugee camp, hosted 50 children from the camp aged 4 to 6 in three different classes, with two teachers and a KG supervisor and teacher caring for them at the center.

The YWCA strives to provide a peaceful and conducive environment for the children where they can enjoy their time without stress, and away from all the aggression and violence of occupation. We try to set the basics of how to live and interact in a peaceful community, which they really long for. Moreover, our teachers also visit with the children's mothers, in their home, to guide them on supporting their children psychologically and reduce the stress and fear resulting from the stressful political environment lived out in the refugee camp.

Several open days and activities are planned throughout the year for the children and their parents, mainly for Mother's Day with their mothers and also a Graduation Ceremony is organized every year in both KGs in May for children who are graduating and moving on to elementary school. The ceremony is attended by many representatives of the local community and parents of the children.



Children at the YWCA KG in Aqabet Jaber Center

## **2) Women's activities**

The YWCA of Palestine seeks to empower women, especially young women, in the most marginalized areas, and specifically in refugee camps where we have worked since decades.

Due the constant unfortunate events in the refugee camps; education and economic opportunities are limited, therefore, the YWCA offers livelihood trainings and some income generating opportunities that allow these women to contribute to their household income and feel more productive and empowered within their homes and their community.

In Jalazone, refugee women were able to get income from the handicrafts and embroidery production as part of our "Fabric of Our Lives Campaign" that promotes the rights of refugee women for a dignified livelihood. Through this campaign we also advocate for the right of return for refugees, especially that we work in refugee camps and have seen the cost and implications of displacement specifically on women. The refugee women produce the dolls with original dress designs from villages that they had to fled from when they were demolished during the 1948 war and after. We have produced a story book that documents their stories and history.



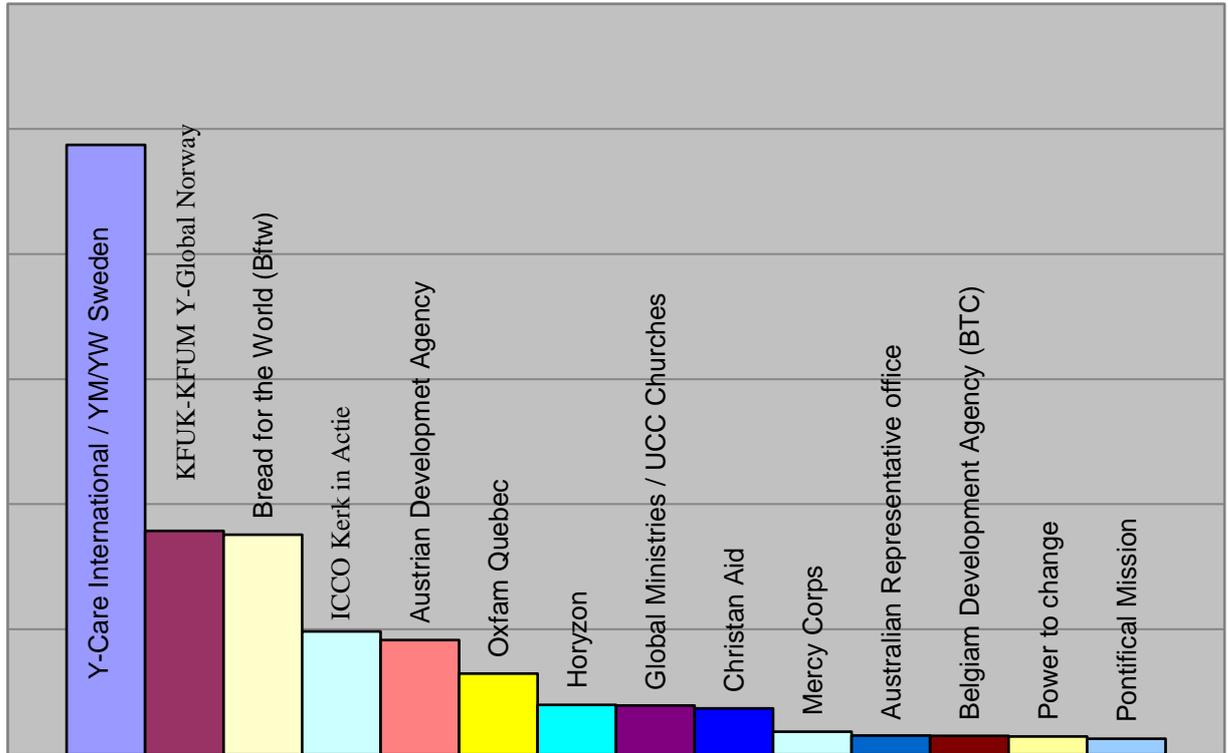
**Women enjoying embroidery a the Jalazone Camp center**

More importantly this is a way of engaging women in promoting peace by having them float peace messages, and realize that they can and have the right to express their views on their future.

Additionally, this outlet can't be seen on the economic aspect solely, but also an outlook to enhance the well-being of women. The psychosocial wellbeing can't be overlooked due to the constant stress and unstable environment. Thus, the YWCA focuses on providing these trainings as stress relief and untraditional outlet to express themselves and their point of views in a safe and supportive space within the YWCA centers.

The YWCA of Palestine continues to be grateful for its supporters and donors around the world, and particularly for the YWCA of Japan and the United Church of Christ in the USA who have been dedicated and real partners that have enabled us to continue and expand our crucial work in the refugee camps.

## Donor Funds Received During 2016



## Donors/Partners

