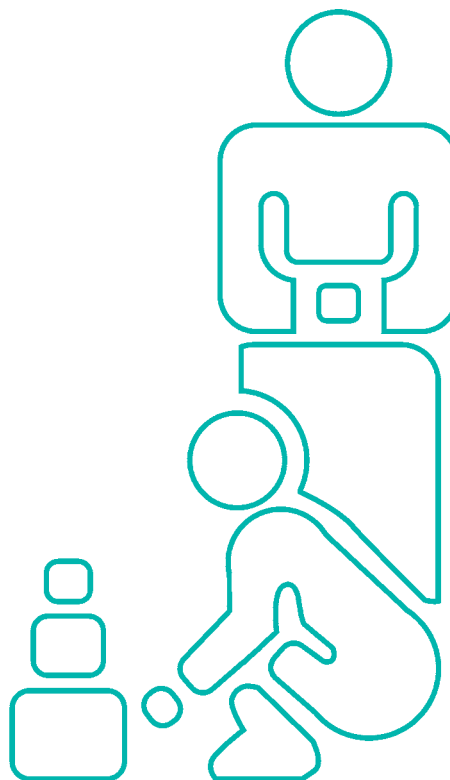


The Trust of Programs for Early Childhood
Family and Community Education

ANNUAL REPORT 2009–2010

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Family and Community Education**

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Contents

- 04 Foreword
- 08 About the Trust
- 11 The Mother-to-Mother
- 14 Young women empowerment program
- 17 Preschool Teachers' on-the-job Training
- 20 The Learn-by-Play Program
- 23 Combating Domestic Violence
- 29 A letter written by: Ghada Mansour - Paraprofessional

Foreword

Dear friends and supporters,

I am pleased to submit to you our annual report for 2009-2010, which presents an overview of the programs' achievements over the year. The report provides overall review and a complete picture of our activities. Despite the fact that the programs we present have various titles and variety of tasks, but they are all integrated into one theme and one drive to meet in a comprehensive way the needs of the beneficiary individuals and families. Our major targeted unit is the family with a focus on its most vulnerable members: women and children.

Being partner in our challenges, as well as our successes you certainly know the complicated situation at this part of the water, both on the political and the social levels and therefore there is no need to justify our choice to support our specific target population or to stress on our shared values of a fair-society. Furthermore, we believe that you share with us the value of providing the people in need with access to resources and help us provide the services that make them rise to an "eye level" for a better tomorrow.

I would like to share with you some of our major achievements of last year that were acknowledged in the evaluation of "Combating Family Violence Program" which took place in April 2010. This intensive evaluation was carried on by two external evaluators: Dorsi Germann, from the University of Flensburg, Germany, and Dr. Elias Zidan, from the University of Haifa, Israel.

I can still hear the echo of your voices, when six years ago, many of you warned me about the dangers of dealing with family violence. I took your worries seriously



in relation to the planning and execution of the program. The evaluators agree with you on that, since the first sentence they uttered at the evaluation was: “It takes a lot of courage to deal with sensitive and threatening issues like domestic violence”. However, they added that “positive and cooperative approach of involvement with the community gate keepers, families, women and children” has made, as mentioned in this report, a dramatic change in the life of many women and children, particularly regarding their behaviors and their perspective to the future.

The other programs led by the Trust have been as important with strong additive value as the rest of the programs. We have lately started implementing our programs in one of the most challenging neighborhoods of Jerusalem: Shu’fat Refugee Camp. It is one of the most crowded Palestinian camps, where 40,000 people live

under difficult conditions within their homes and community; with high rate of domestic violence, poverty, inadequate care, drug abuse, poor nutrition, illness, discrimination, inadequate standards of living, and family stress. Knowing the high risk of running holistic community education programs in the Camp with very limited and limiting resources, we are relying on our experience with other communities such as the mixed cities inside the green line, the villages of North West Jerusalem, the Negev, and the poor neighborhoods of Jerusalem. We believe that in two years-time, we will be able to report to you that we brought a change in the quality of many people's lives in the Camp.

Another point that I would like to share with you is the issue of sustainability. Sustainability is crucial to us, and we have been struggling to find a way to deal with it. We believe that investment in people has a long-lasting effect which is a success by itself that we plan to keep on our initiatives and pilot programs in socio-political environments.

We are in the process of establishing a resource and development centre (RDC) which is initiated in order to share with other organizations our accumulated knowledge and experience, but also in order to extend our efforts of searching for income for our programs. We intend to activate the centre in cooperation with other partners, academic institutions in particular. The centre will be focusing on the following areas of research and development: feasibility study for community based programs, planning for community based programs, evaluation of programs – formative and summative, training paraprofessionals, training professional staff to train the above



mentioned paraprofessionals and guide them in the field, training young women who are socially marginalized for leadership and community participation, and training pre-school unskilled teachers for better and skilled performance.

We promise you that the committed staff of the Trust will continue our efforts to help the needy people and to contribute to a better and peaceful future, where families and individuals who lost hope will see a light in their life tunnel. Together, with your support, we will continue the process of a family and community empowerment towards a better world to live in.

Farid Abu Gosh
President

About the Trust

The Trust is an indigenous developmental agency established in 1984 in Jerusalem and registered as a non-profit NGO to empower members of the Palestinian community through education and leadership developmental programs targeting Palestinians every where.

The Trust has built up a range of effective programs involving and benefiting children, young women and mothers living in marginalized situations aiming at transforming the sense of hopelessness and dependency into individual and collective feeling of hope and capabilities.

Our Mission

- Contribute to the maintenance and development of the Palestinian cultural identity.
- Improve the quality of life of the marginalised groups mainly women and children.
- Strengthen social responsibility through community empowerment

Our goals are to:

- Support the development of community coherence and integrity ;
- Enhance and facilitate empowerment of women, children and families;
- Provide a development basis for children and women;
- Create networks among organizations that share our values
- Promote and provide training for women leadership.

Our work is known to be holistic, integrative and inclusive constantly developing to meet the local needs of our target groups; ranging from service delivery to behavioral change and community empowerment towards social change. Being inclusive we make sure that the local target groups are involved in the planning through the evaluation, which ensure long lasting effect. Although our main office is situated in Jerusalem, we have been able to reach and serve the marginalized groups inside the Green-line and in the West Bank mainly in the villages North West Jerusalem and in the Shufat Refugee Camp.

The Trust leads different and diversified programs:

- The Mother-to-Mother Program. This program is carried out by Para-professional mothers who guide other mothers of children aged 0 to 3 years old.
- The Young Women’s Program This activity seeks to raise the self-awareness of young, socially marginalized women to become involved in community based programs. The Prevention of school drop out and of Early Marriage Program that seeks to halt this practice through empowering families at risk.
- The preschool Teachers’ on-the-job Training Program : This program focuses on developing proper skills of kindergarten teachers who have insufficient formal qualifications and training.
- The Learn-by-Play Program: This program seeks to prevent school drop out through supporting elementary students. College students and young adults are engaged as volunteers.

- Combating Domestic Violence: Contribute to constructive family relationships, raising awareness and practices of fair, just and nonviolent relations among families in the community.
- Networking also takes a big part in the Trust's strategy where we organize regular seminars, study days and workshops for the target population and for local organizations; this encourages mutual learning and increases the outreach capacity.



The Mother-to-Mother Program

Paraprofessional mothers are the front-line implementers of this program, they give counseling to other mothers from their neighborhood and report the needs and difficulties in the field to their local site-coordinator, taking a major part in the program planning, implementation and evaluation.

The main goal of the project is to help the families acquire new communication skills and to develop the inter-relations within family members. The program continued to develop the mothers skills to become paraprofessionals and take an active role in their community and in their families. The program components had a great impact towards establishing constructive interaction among the family members starting from awareness raising and counseling, to building on local potentials and involving the fathers in the process of reaching the program goals.

We faced many challenges through implementing the program mainly when we had to cease the program in the Northern areas due to financial constrains, and take a vertical rather than horizontal approach deepening the program in the areas of Jerusalem's Old City, Shufat Refugee Camp, Ramla and Lod with all its components in the beginning of 2010.

From these areas we have been able to reach and touch the lives of 441 families, who reported improvement in their communication skills; 60 mothers have passed the training and qualification course of the paraprofessionals; 190 families participated in the individual home visits, 73 mothers participated in the group counseling,

22 couples participated, newsletters were distributed to 50 families, 13 teenagers participated in the teenage group, and forty paraprofessional mothers are working in the field. We also worked with 22 couples and produced 50 newsletters, and we worked with 13 teenagers, and there are 40 paraprofessional mothers that work.

A new component was added to the program “The mothers’ Forum” which consists of senior paraprofessional mothers from the old groups at both Jerusalem and Ramle. They attended regular meetings to develop their awareness and capacities towards encouraging their initiative and leadership skills. The forum has given us a good feedback of the status of these women years after they left our program, they proved that the program has a long-term additive value as many of them have either continued their education or found a job, the most significant was that one of these paraprofessional is now one of the Trust’s board members.

Quote: “The program has helped me gradually, I knew that I had it in me, the hope and the will to develop my abilities and become a successful person in this community, I joined the program six years ago, I received the training and became a paraprofessional mother, then I decided that I still want more, so now I joined the university and I’m in the 2nd year in the Social Work department.”

Another remarkable component is the “together” group in Lod and Ramla (joined Arab, and Jewish mothers) , which is mainly a joint cultural activity group for mothers and their children bridging the relations among the mothers and providing quality time with their children in a professionally structured stimulation. Although it was difficult at first to form the groups and get the mothers to interact together but in the end they showed progress in accepting one another and started to enjoy the different activities and workshops.



The Young Women's Program

The young women empowerment program is part of our comprehensive and integrative programs that work together to address the needs in the community, raising the awareness of young women and women at large, on the social and personal level, giving them tools to improve their situation and to no longer being denied their rights in their community.

The program has proved to be not only successful but effective by reaching approximately 290 young women and teen-age girls as a preventive and



developmental program from the different areas of Jerusalem, Ramla, the Negev and in the villages neighboring Ramallah.

The program motivated the young women to continue their education and increased their self-esteem and confidence. It also offered them the chance to become involved in the community through the “Learn-by-Play” program, the children’s special group, and volunteering at the hospital or at other organizations after they gained useful skills on the personal and educational level.

We also worked with the mothers of the teen-age group who became more understanding of the needs of their daughters, which resulted in better communication and consideration.

Quote by mother: “the group enabled me to reach out to my daughter in this critical stage of her life as an adolescent, to my surprise she was scared of all the changes that she had no clue that they are normal, the program has changed the way she looks at herself and adolescence is not the monster we thought it was as our community described it.”

The leadership training program in Ramla will resume with the young women who finished the theoretical course and will be starting practical training we have about 65 young women from the three areas. The program has given the young women a new meaning to their role in the community and opened their eyes to the options in life.

Quote by one of the young women: “my life now has a meaning, I didn’t have anything to do in life but you gave us the chance to volunteer and get some pocket money”

In the villages North West Jerusalem we focused on raising the teenagers’ awareness regarding family violence based on gender discrimination providing them with means to fight against it and change common misconceptions that justify violence in the community, so that the teenagers would no longer consider it acceptable to be beaten and abused.





Preschool Teachers' on-the-job Training Program

This program has also proved to be one of the Trust's remarkable programs, it works with preschool teachers on both the theoretical and practical level, involving parents in the process and constantly developing the training to meet the rising needs in child education such as crisis intervention and post-traumatic symptoms which has distinguished the program over the years.

In the Shufat Refugee Camp in Jerusalem 20 teachers from nine kindergartens graduated from the basic training course. In the villages 15 kindergarten teachers graduated the advanced training course. In Ramla 18 pre-school teachers and assistants benefited from the program their skills and raise their level of performance.

In the Negev, we established a resource center for teachers in cooperation with several local partners, serving today 150 teachers from the different schools who meet regularly for both theoretical education, workshops and activities.

The teachers were committed to implementing what they learn, and during the follow-up our coordinators noticed the teachers' development in establishing a safe educational environment for the children, rearranging their classroom, focusing on educational activities and games, improving the classroom's educational aids and decorations, they also contributed in enlisting the parents in the different activities and taking part in the parents' meetings in shifts.

Quote by the kindergarten's principal: "The teachers are now planning and preparing the activities beforehand, and excited to try them with the children, I didn't know I had such talented teachers but I think the training brought the best out of them."



A teachers' forum was established in Jerusalem area following the demands of teachers who have finished the full training program; yet, were interested in maintaining a relationship with the Trust for enrichment and follow-up. 15 kindergarten teachers and principals initiated and established the forum with our program coordinator.

Networking took a part in the program's components in conducting workshops for the parents and study days for the teachers in addition to fun-days for the

children all in cooperation with local civil society organizations working in the same area. The most significant networking occurring this year was between The Trust of programs, with its teachers' forum in Shu'fat Refugee Camp and with several organizations who carried out all together a recreation-day on the 13th of May 2010 for five hundred children from five kindergartens in the camp. The recreation-day took place in cooperation with SOS, Al-Qattan foundation, YMCA, Shu'fat Refuge Camp School, and the Women's Centre in Shu'fat Refuge Camp. The recreation-day involved many educational activities along with a clown who entertained the children who enjoyed themselves away from their stressful daily-life, especially after the invasion of the Camp which took place in March and had a dramatic influence on children. In addition, such recreation-days allow to strengthen the relationship between the kindergartens in the camp and the parents of the children as well.



The Learn-by-Play Program



Believing that the children's behavior can be altered and steered with more attention and love added into their every day life which is spent at school rather than at home; therefore, we started to work through the schools in a special group for children who have shown symptoms of neglect or abuse that are effecting both their behavior and their school achievement.

We identified a group of marginalized children with the help of the schools and the screening tests beginning with 2nd grade pupils so that we can continue with them through the 3rd and 4th grade in a three year plan. These children were subject to the same background of abuse, fear, depression, low self-esteem, disregarded by their school or family and showed aggressive behavior.

This year we reached 341 children/ pupils from ten schools from the five villages of: Beit Soreek, Al-Jeeb, Beit Duqqa, Biddo, and Beit Anan working with groups of children in the afternoon hours, our role was mainly to enhance their inborn potentials that were long overlooked by their schools or their families.

The tutors used several activities of relaxation, music and sport games, drawing, paste, handy crafts, meaningful story and working papers that deals with life issues: personal-family social relations, school, things I like-hate, reaction on times of anger and solving problems

A noticeable improvement was seen on the children's personality self-expressing, sharing, participating in the activities and a gradual but remarkable increase in their grades.

The regular Learn-by-Play groups continued in the villages North West Jerusalem, in Shufat refugee camp, in Ramla and in the Negev reaching all together through regular small groups meetings helping the pupils with their school achievement in the three main subjects at school with previously prepared work-papers and didactical games given by the tutors within a friendly environment.

school to reach a total of 63 groups of learn-by-play pupils. The pupils were chosen following consultation with school principal and mainly by newly developed screening test that allowed us to enroll the most disadvantaged pupils with the lowest school achievement

Quote by one pupil: "I can't wait until I get together with my friends at the group, I love my tutor, she is the only one who plays with us and listens to us."

Our educators reported that the children started responding and became more motivated to study, with the ability to build peaceful social relationships at home, in the street and in the school.

Quote by children: "We learned to play together and to share things".
"my grades got better and my class mates like me, I don't need to hit them anymore."



Combating Domestic Violence

This year the program will finish its second phase in the villages northwest of Jerusalem. The main goal of this program was based in its earliest stages on reducing the phenomenon of family violence against women and children through raising awareness then gradually moved to introduce other methods of intervention such as group dynamic and individual counseling. The dynamic of our program's operational goals and tasks was interacting with the community needs and corresponding to Caritas Germany and the BMZ as the main donor of the project.

The program continued this year with all its components such as the open groups and the closed groups with the women who had previously revealed that they were victims to violence during the home-visits. We consolidated our work at the counseling center to receive families offering them a listening ear and emotional support. The home visits also continued by reaching 400 families from three villages in addition to distributing the work-papers.

The year 2010 opened with a distinguished evaluation of the program by our internal evaluation team, and was later followed by the professional evaluation of external evaluators (local and foreign) in April 2010. The evaluation recommended that for the next phase the program will continue to bring about constructive family relations based on mutual respect and free or aware of violent behavior using the success with the families and consolidating the achievements with the families targeted in phase II of the project and to use it as a model of success in other Palestinian communities.



A quote by a woman who was involved in the program and its evaluation: “I was locked inside my house for twenty-four years; raising the awareness and counseling provided by the Trust strengthened me and helped me to improve my relationship with my husband through dialogue. With the help of my counselor, I convinced my husband that I can get out of my house and participate in different programs; I now feel like I am born all over again”.

Following our six years of implementing the program we have reached a stage where the issue of Family violence is no longer a taboo in the villages, the families have become aware of the phenomenon and are not afraid to talk about it including with our facilitators openly. We will continue with the open and closed group to reach more women in the villages, We will also extend family counseling to include husbands as well as other relevant family members for further elaboration through pamphlets that focus on leading peaceful relations and constructive communication between them.

The counseling centre was highly commended by the evaluation. Evidently, it seems that this centre and its tasks are new experience in the Palestinian villages around the country. However, some women were not able or allowed to leave their villages





in order to come to the counseling centre. Therefore we will expand this service in Phase III through bringing this service into the homes of needy families by newly trained staff selected from the program staff and who will go through intensive training. Following the necessary training, the center's director will continue to follow-up and supervise the field staff and receive cases at the centre's main office in Biddo.

The accumulated knowledge and experience of the staff in combating family violence can be seen clearly in our work with groups, individuals and community stakeholders. Being a grassroots oriented organization building on local strengths and potentials is manifested in the project implementation, we will follow the



recommendations of the evaluation and continue to enhance the local staff and stakeholders capacities which is the major component for sustainability,

It will be important in the program's new phase to strengthen and expand our network. The Trust leads a wide network of cooperation with organizations from both, the public and the civil society, such as the Ministry of education, UNRWA and its schools, and local councils of which the cooperation is strategic and continuous. In addition we will maintain cooperation with other less strategic organizations and include our experience in combating into all our existing programs at the different target sites as part of sustaining the program.



A quote by a woman who was involved in the program and its evaluation:
“The Trust of programs is my second-home. The Trust allowed me and taught me how to express my feelings freely, along with my friends from the different villages of North West Jerusalem; The Trust enabled me to become independent and to be able to take decisions, demand my rights, and maintain the solidity of my families. At the end of the program, the results were positive; I enhanced my self-esteem and became capable of taking decisions. This makes me feel proud of myself.”

A letter written by:

Ghada Mansour - Paraprofessional

When I started writing this letter, I did not think of anyone in particular to show it to; I wrote it to myself as a special reminder of my marvelous experience I had at the Trust of Programs.

The Trust of programs gave me the chance of being born all over again, with hope, strength, and belief. The Trust has made me an independent giving woman who became able to contribute something for the society.

The Trust of programs is my second-home. The Trust allowed me and taught me how to express my feelings freely, along with my friends from the different villages of North West Jerusalem; we had our own moments of laughter and sadness. The other paraprofessional mothers and I carried a valuable message that we wanted to spread in the field: peace and stability in the family, and empowerment on the community level. We traveled from one house to another carrying this message; although we were faced by many difficulties that could have hindered our work, but we did not surrender, due to our faith in what we do.

The paraprofessionals and I were stuck by the fact that many women still suffer from oppression and cruelty, and that many women are not familiar yet with their rights. The misfortunes of women, which we witnessed in the field, became our own concern and cause. We have encountered numerous women whose rights have been stolen from them by their husbands. The effects of cruelty do not stop here, in many cases they reach the children who grow up in broken families. I have to admit that an orphan is not a child whose parents are dead, but is a child whose mother is oppressed and



whose father is always busy and does not have time for his child.

Working with oppressed women was challenging. It is not easy for me to watch the women cry of their sufferings; we had to be strong to back-up these women but in our heart we shed tears.

We have worked hard to help the women in order to ease their pain. Our mission is to enable the marginalized women to become independent and to be able to take decisions, demand their rights, and maintain the solidity of their families. At the end of the program, the results were positive; many women enhanced their self-esteem and became capable of taking decisions. This made us feel proud of our work, since it is not easy to enter people's homes and to make changes inside of them. In addition, it was not easy building trust in the broken families, and I have to admit that no person can ever be qualified enough for this mission.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Trust of programs, thanking all the facilitators of the program. Unfortunately, it's time for me to leave the Trust and move on with my life. Although separation may lead one to forget his beloved ones, but this is not the case with me; the Trust has its special place in my heart, that will remain a wonderful memory as long as I shall live.