Getting Youth Back on Track

Ruwwad is actively working to engage unemployed youth and students struggling in school. The Al Mawrid Teacher Development Center, one of Ruwwad’s subgrantees, launched its initial phase of trainings for the Learn and Serve Palestine project. In the first workshop, 31 unemployed graduates from the Hebron area were trained in service learning skills and working with students who have learning and social difficulties.

Excitement was so high that Al Mawrid will go over its enrollment limit for the rest of the trainings, which will take place in December. The following workshops will focus on remedial education (through creative and interactive teaching methods), psychosocial counseling, and leadership. At this point, the youth will be ready to be leaders themselves.

In this next stage, the participants will create and implement their own educational programs at Hebron area youth clubs. In groups of five, they will identify and recruit teenagers, ages 14-18, who have dropped out of school (for financial or social reasons) or are struggling in the classroom. The leaders will provide remedial education courses to these youth (over 100 in all), using the skills and techniques they learned in the earlier trainings.

They will offer classes in mathematics, science, and Arabic language. Community involvement will also be a central component to the program. In their preparation, the leaders will investigate different community issues that affect the targeted youth. These issues will be integrated into the trainings to help encourage community awareness and increase the youth’s ability to contribute to their communities.

By the end of the program, this subgrant will have brought change on multiple levels. First, the initial trainees will have the opportunity to develop important skills and use this knowledge to implement their own service learning project. Second, students struggling with their studies will learn academic and social skills, building self-confidence and knowledge to help them become more engaged in the classroom or return to school, had they dropped out.
Ruwwad's programs are inspiring youth to be agents of change by developing the skills necessary for them to help others in their community.

Nour Abu Serise, from Nablus, recently took part in the Young Pillars Career and Psychosocial Counseling project. This program, implemented by subgrantee Ta'awon Youth Forum, initially trained 39 young adults in issues of youth unemployment and conflict trauma. Abu Serise explains that at these sessions "I gained a lot of experience and developed many skills that were essential for me to help other people."

After completing the workshops, Abu Serise...
Cooperation and teamwork are two of the most important skills in being an effective leader and working for change. At Ruwwad’s 27th Leadership and Community Participation Training, which began on November 3, 2010, 22 youth from across the West Bank shared previous leadership experiences, took part in activities focusing on group dynamics, conflict resolution, and mediation (all topics covered in the original training).

Abu Serise then decided she wanted to go even farther and extend the project’s sphere of influence beyond Ruwwad. In addition to her involvement at the YDRC, she is a board member of the Milad youth club in the Askar refugee camp (in Nablus), which is not affiliated with Ruwwad. At Milad, she organized and held another series of workshops for 16 youth about employment skills and conflict trauma.

Following these sessions, Abu Serise reflected on her experience: “It was very useful. They kept asking for more trainings like this. At the end, they said they want to go on and lead their own workshops for other students.”

With passionate participants like Abu Serise, the 39 original trainees have taught 403 youth throughout the West Bank. This number will only grow. Abu Serise concluded: “I advice all youth to visit the psychosocial unit at the YDRC, because it offers many skills, important advice, and valuable support. Now, I want to provide this experience to as many people as possible.”

Collaborating for Change

Cooperation and teamwork are two of the most important skills in being an effective leader and working for change. At Ruwwad’s 27th Leadership and Community Participation Training, which began on November 3, 2010, 22 youth from across the West Bank shared previous leadership experiences, took part in activities focusing on group dynamics, and played games which strengthened team building and collaboration. Through these exercises, participants saw tangible ways in which the skills they developed would help their work in the real world.

Sari Hamouri, an aspiring filmmaker, explained that filming is “all about teamwork, compromise, and working with people.” The leadership session gave him the valuable opportunity to develop these skills. Hamouri continued: “Everyone here has a different background and a different point of view and I never thought I could create something together with people so different. Now I see how I can learn a lot from other peoples’ experience and we can put all our experiences together to come up with creative ideas.”

William Abdu, from the village of Jifna, also saw important connections between leadership and his work with media. During the training, he had the opportunity to “develop my public personality and show myself that I can speak in public. This is very important in my work.”

On the final day of the training, the participants were split into groups to apply the teamwork skills they had developed. They were tasked with creating initiatives which use media as a form of social change. The winning initiative, called Thirst for Change, will use social networks and media outlets, such as plays and films, to raise awareness about people living with disabilities in Palestine. The goal of the project is to encourage job creation for people with disabilities, specifically in the public sector.

Youth take part in a teambuilding exercise during the 27th Leadership and Community Participation Training.
Ruwwad is a Palestinian Youth Empowerment project implemented by the Education Development Center, Inc (EDC) and funded by USAID. From the Arabic word for “pioneers”, Ruwwad carries the vision of providing Palestinian youth between the ages of 14 and 30, including those in marginalized areas, with opportunities to explore their potential and contribute to social and community development in the West Bank and Gaza. It is Ruwwad’s belief that Palestinian youth are already empowered, carrying within themselves creative capacities for change; therefore, the program’s role is to provide platforms for youth to incubate their ideas and dreams and launch them into reality in their communities.

No matter who you are, an interested youth, community member, government official or organization, don’t hesitate to contact us!

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November 2010 Blurbs

Ruwwad has launched its new website! Make sure to visit and see new pictures, read about recent Ruwwad events, and learn about upcoming activities and programs.

http://www.Ruwwad.org

Ruwwad subgrantee Ta’awon held job fairs in Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron, giving youth the opportunity to connect with local companies and NGOs looking to hire recent graduates. In all, over 1,000 recent graduates attended the job fairs.

Twenty-nine candidates took the Institutional Testing Program exam as part of Ruwwad’s YDRC English Language Training Program, a subgrant project with AMIDEAST. The most promising youth will be selected to attend a training on Teaching English as a Foreign Language. Following the training, these new teachers will lead English courses at the three YDRCs.

A recent graduate meets with representatives of a local company at the Nablus job fair, organized by Ta’awon.