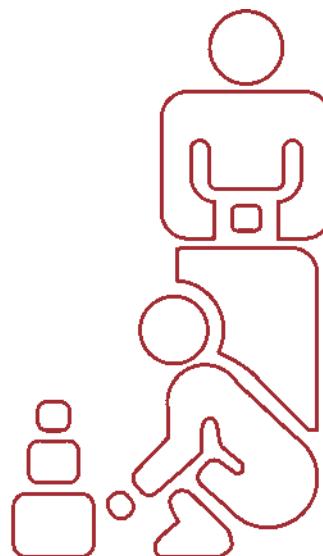


The Trust of Programs for Early Childhood  
Family and Community Education

# ANNUAL REPORT **2020**

Prepared and Edited by  
Flavia Kamar

Jerusalem





The Trust of Programs  
for Early Childhood, Family and Community Education  
P.O.Box 51303, Main Street, Shu'fat – Jerusalem  
tel: 972 2 6260836 fax: 972 2 6260837  
e.mail: [trust@trust-programs.org](mailto:trust@trust-programs.org)  
web: [trust-programs.org](http://trust-programs.org)

Design & Print  
Emerezian Est. Jerusalem, Tel: 02-2343420

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# FOREWORD

Dear Friends and Supporters,

*Once* again we share with you our challenges and achievements through the pages of this annual report.

There is no doubt that all societies of the world are currently suffering from the Coronavirus pandemic that has spread worldwide, in both advanced countries and otherwise. This pandemic has drastically changed the way of life in societies and has affected the instability of families. On one hand, at the personal level, every action the individual performs nowadays has to be done while taking extreme precautions, as he needs to put on a mask, avoid close contact with others, maintain social distancing and good personal hygiene, especially for his hands. On the other hand, at the administrative level, the official entities responsible for the organization and maintenance of the safety of the public had a very challenging task. The most notable was to convince people to adopt new behaviors that contradict their previous lifestyles. For example, wearing masks, which was exclusive to people working in specific professions such as doctors and especially surgeons, has become mandatory for everyone. As for social distancing, it used to be considered abnormal in many cultures, where physical contact is part of the subculture of the targeted marginalized groups and as a way of expressing respect and affection. Normalizing such new measures in the daily lives of all the hierarchies of society is not simple, and it took much effort from our



team to raise awareness of our target groups to the importance of adapting to these safety measures.

In these hard times institutes based on keeping contact with different classes of society had to find new means that allow them to perform their duties for which they were established. With God's help our institute was able to find ways for implementing its regular programs; the board members were open to suggestions from the staff and the operational management and encouraged the initiatives they took to improve our services and address the emerging need by thinking outside the box. These programs support and develop the community and the family as a whole unit. Those programs are:

1. Mother to mother
2. Young women empowerment
3. Community based preschool education
4. The Learn-by-Play program
5. Combating family violence
6. The emergency consultation line

There is no doubt that we are undergoing very tough times, but the support of the donors was one of our biggest motivations not to give in to these circumstances. In addition, the persistence of the staff, which grew more determined to implement the aforementioned programs, had a great impact. Let us pray that the situation will get better soon and that we can write to you again next year under better conditions.

**Dr. Awni Habash** | *Chairperson*



# INTRODUCTION

## What Difference Did Covid 19 Make In Our Programs?

*In* the previous years I used to share with you the success and challenges we face in the unstable circumstances at this part of the water due to the sociopolitical reality. However, this year Covid 19 pandemic has invaded the globe affecting everyone equally, the rich, poor, educated, illiterate, marginalized, mainstream and elite. Everyone in a status of worry, fear and confusion, dealing with it in three manners: fight, flight, and freeze.



I believe that any crisis, emergency or chronic emergency like the Covid 19 pandemic has a disruptive effect which overshadows our lives, however, it has also challenged us and brought out the element of opportunity for innovation and creativity.

“When a door closes another one opens” It was important to look for the open door in these critical times, the staff and board of the Trust have worked to overcome the negative effect, and were able to face the stress and continue functioning in a creative manner, which you can see in this narrative report of our programs.

I believe that what helped us to adapt to the new circumstances are two main factors: first, the trust given by our partners and friends who supported these adjustments and encouraged us to apply new methods.

Second, the fact that our organization is a learning grassroots organization, rooted in the communities we serve, they opened their doors to us on the family and community

levels by adapting and contributing to the new methods. The staff of the Trust showed commitment and innovation spirit in the planning and implementation of the new approach and made it possible to get out of the dark times of Covid 19.

### **Which methods were followed?**

The team was open to technology, friendly use of the different applications with the target groups such as the Zoom platform and WhatsApp for the training sessions and to support families with resources in education, interactive play, and emotional well-being.

Taking the staff's safety and well-being as a priority, the Trust offered the team all the support needed to work from home.

The team welcomed women and young women to approach them for advice and counseling by phone and WhatsApp, which was later expanded into an emergency consultation line to support families.

Forming an emergency committee which consisted of specialist social workers, psychologists and representatives of the local community, to support the families with resources in education, interactive play, and emotional well-being.

Establishing a computerized learning platform for the school children ages 7-10 years to help children improve their skills despite the lockdown.

We are thankful to all our partners and friends who made this possible and we look forward to a better and healthier year.

**Farid Abu Gosh** | *President*



# ABOUT US

*The* Trust is an indigenous developmental agency established in 1984 in Jerusalem and registered as a non-profit NGO to empower members of the Arab community through education and leadership developmental programs that are currently running in Jerusalem in the Shufat Refugee Camp, Ramla, Lod, the villages North West Jerusalem and Rahat.

We are a nonprofit, nonreligious and nonpolitical organization that believes in social justice, human rights conventions, equal access to resources, gender equality, human dignity, accepting others as they are, and not as they should be, regardless of their cultural, racial, or religious backgrounds. We believe in people's capacities which they can use to improve their lives towards social change.

The Trust has built up a range of effective and innovative programs that develop the capacities and improve the lives of children, young women, educators and mothers living in marginalized situations and aiming at transforming their sense of hopelessness and dependency into individual and collective feeling of hope and capabilities.

## **Vision**

A society where social justice and human dignity is achieved.

## **Mission**

To contribute in improving the quality of life of the individuals and families within the marginalized communities through the Trust's different and diversified programs that enhance social awareness and community involvement.

## **Monitoring**

All the projects are regularly monitored and evaluated by the programs coordinators through:

- Using pre-post evaluation forms that show the significant development on the personal, family, and community levels.
- Regular staff meetings once a month on program level and twice a year on organization staff level. These regular meetings involves the staff in the planning and evaluation of the progress and data collection from a variety of sources including weekly visits and observations of the progress, focus group discussions, periodical reports, attendance records, recommendations resulting of study-days and minutes of the meetings.
- Summative evaluation of each project every three to five years.

“

A society where social justice and human dignity is achieved.

”



# BACKGROUND



*For* many years we have described our programs to be holistic, integrative and inclusive, constantly developing to meet the local needs of the target groups; ranging from service delivery to raising awareness, psychosocial support and community empowerment.

This year was a proof that these lines are true when our programs and team were put under the challenge of Covid 19 which exacerbated the existing inequities impacting the most vulnerable groups of the community.

It has been a real challenge to adapt the program's activities to the new technique of online training workshops and counselling for both the Trust's team members and the target groups. In addition, with the increase of family violence during lockdown it was inevitable that the counselling in all our programs emphasise on coping with stress and giving debriefing techniques and self-care advice.

Similar to other organizations and to people in general around the world, we share the same worries and uncertain situation; therefore, we followed the safety regulations and had to work from home during lockdown. During that time the coordinators and team members embarked on collecting materials and developing pamphlets which they shared via WhatsApp and e. mails with each other and with the target groups on how to protect themselves from the virus and how to maintain a healthy life style on both the physical and psychosocial levels.

All the program's activities are currently implemented as a combination of both face to face and on-line workshops, by reaching the young women, educators, mothers and children via the different social media applications. The Zoom platform and WhatsApp have been a successful method so far, not everyone was familiar with it so the coordinators had to go step by step with most of the beneficiaries on how to use the app and the ethics of using it. Later on, it became a convenient technique to reach the target groups and have been welcomed by most of the women and families, and also for the educators and paraprofessionals training who found it as an opportunity to learn and expand their horizons from the safety of their own homes.

Following you can read Highlights of the programs: all the activities were suspended in March 2020 and later on switched to the emergency plan by reaching the target groups via the different applications fully or partially reliant on the safety regulations.



## The Mother-to-Mother Program



*The* Mother-to-Mother Program is a lifelong learning program that supports and strengthens the parenting skills of young mothers (and fathers) through building the capacities of mothers to become paraprofessionals and in turn support other mothers from their neighborhood.

Due to forced confinement which started in March 2020, there were delays in implementing the activities that required face to face interaction such as home-visits, study days and meetings with the Ministries. In that time the team focused on collecting materials and sharing it with the



mothers; on how to protect themselves from the virus, the importance of self-care, physical activities, managing their expenses, and coping with stress, also some interactive games that can be done with their children. The team also worked on updating the material of the program, mainly the evaluation forms

and informative pamphlets.

All the paraprofessionals received enrichment on “counseling skills during Covid 19 pandemic” and how to offer counseling and emotional support from a distant.

The basic training and prior to work training continued on Zoom, most of



## The Mother-to-Mother Program



the mothers were excited to resume the training and gain knowledge.

The home counseling continued via phone and WhatsApp as individual counseling reaching up to 180 mothers. The group counseling will resume both

face-to-face and virtual focusing on both the personal and family levels, considering the physical and emotional health of the mothers.

In April, the program coordinator conducted a lecture on “developing

## Programs Highlights

and enhancing the parental skills under the COVID 19". The lecture was given via ZOOM for 50 specialists who work directly with families. This subject was of importance due to difficult situation under the lockdown that have raised many challenges at home, with the children, who can be small or teenagers, and how to deal with this sudden change of lifestyle and the unstable health and financial situation.

Three campaigns were held by the Trust, one in Easter and the other two in Ramadan, to draw a smile on the faces of children and families. The days included a big car that roamed the streets of Ramla and Lod, with two entertainers on the back of the car who volunteered to sing and distribute symbolic gifts on the children.

The Mother-Child Centres were a successful experience in putting together all of the activities in one place,



and providing space and educational framework for the mothers and children to interact together and improve their skills. They are currently back to work following the safety regulations.

The Couples groups reached 18 husbands through regular workshops and more than 100 using the parenthood pamphlets. The subjects of coping with stress, and cyber bullying had special focus after the return from the lockdown.



# The Young Women Empowerment Program



*The* Young women empowerment program aims at improving the quality of life of young women and teen-age girls towards inclusion and community involvement. In addition to involving their parents towards building better relations within the family and preventing early marriages.

Despite the situation, our main goal is to continue to improve the quality of life of young women and teen-age girls. The coordinators stayed in contact with the young women and listen to them, they started by announcing that they are ready to offer educational and emotional support to the mothers/young

women, and that they are welcomed to approach the coordinators by phone or WhatsApp. About 60 mothers of young women and teen agers contacted the program coordinators for information about the virus and for advice with their daughters and also seeking support through the emergency consultation

line. And about 65 young women also called for ventilation and advice, this at least helped the young women express their feelings about the situation on the personal and social levels.

The group meetings reached 418 teen agers from all sites who gained life skills



## The Young Women Empowerment Program

and empowerment on the personal and community levels. The second group ages 18-25 years reached 71 young women through enrichment workshops.

Volunteering was suspended due to the lockdown and safety precautions but will continue next year. The groups continued via Zoom addressing their needs and feelings as a priority and how to spend their time effectively.

Both the mothers and the young women were concerned about being vulnerable or exposed while using the social media apps; they needed awareness on how to safely use the internet and to prevent cyberbullying. Three workshops were given both face-to-face and on Zoom on this subject, and another two workshops on self-care and how to spend time wisely.

The young women and the mothers gave positive feedback on the workshops

and requested from the coordinators to conduct additional days.



# Community Based Preschool Education Program



*The* Community based preschool education program addresses the preschool as the unit of intervention towards developing both a physical and educational friendly environment for the children. The program develops the educators' inborn potential to interact with the children following the Life-Oriented Approach.

The Trial group of ToT continued through this reporting period first: through the presence training sessions that took place at Al-Bireh Educational Center until the end of Feb., and starting from April resumed the training via Zoom which finished in end of May. The participants in the ToT course carried out practical training on the five steps of the LOA and



# Community Based Preschool Education Program

Conducive learning environment for 49 preschool educators.

A new training started on 22nd June 2020 for the second ToT training group from Ramallah region. The training was via Zoom app for 27 participants (15 preschool directors, 8 graduate students from Al-Tireh College, 3 supervisors from the Ministry of Education, one from the Trust team and one from the educational center). The participants from Al-Tireh College gave training to their preschool educators in cooperation

with the Trust, on LOA as part of their academic requirements.

The documentation of the four dimensions of ToT has resumed during the lockdown. The first component is Conducive Learning Environment as requirement for working with the Life Oriented Approach, Learning Theories, Counseling and Supervision, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Magazine "family minaret" was edited and published focusing on the difficult situation during corona, coping



techniques and news about the Trust's activities.

Networking continued with influential educational organizations and ministries that contribute in setting the priorities of the educational system and decisions concerning the educational theories and approaches adopted. Working with community based organizations that seek social change enhances the participatory approach in the project implementation and contributes in achieving non-violent positive education, and awareness raising of the target groups so that the children can grow in a safe and conducive environment.

The cooperation continues with national institutions to spread the LOA, by participating in meetings and presenting the program's experience in the technical childhood group.

The two community educational centers in Shufat refugee camp and Biddo were



equipped with educational games and have provided quality educational services to parents, educators and children. The Tireh College educational center has also been equipped with the necessary materials and educational games, and has been applying the LOA in its preschool.

For the dissemination of project achievements five radio/TV zoom sessions were conducted via Nisaa FM on the different dimensions of LOA and in cooperation with our partners from Al-Tireh College and the Ministry of Education.



## Establishing The Women Committees



*Five* committees were formed in the villages of Al-Jeeb, Biddo, Qatanna, Beit Surik, and Beit Anan. 52 active women finished their training in July and gained skills in lobbying and advocacy, the

importance of volunteering, and having an active role in their community. Despite the obstacles of the current situation the women showed a lot of enthusiasm and started planning and

*The committees introduce themselves as “we are women who believe in social change and constantly striving to improve and develop”.*

implementing activities as soon as they finished the training.

Each of the five committees prepared material to explain the objectives of the committees and advocate the needs of women in the community with the representatives of the local councils and the police who showed cooperation and support to the awareness raising campaigns. One of the police members “Captain Adnan Nasser” made a short video to raise awareness on the risks of the internet and social media. The video was shared on Facebook and had over 2000 views.

The successful initiatives taken by the women committees have proved the women’s capacities and hidden potential



in advocating women’s rights and addressing their needs. Five campaigns were conducted at the villages some of them are:

- Education as a tool to protect our children – No to electronic illiteracy” a computer course for a group of women to improve their computer skills and safe use of social media sites. More courses will take place to continue to raise the women’s awareness on how to protect themselves and their children from cyber bullying



## Establishing The Women Committees



- Planting trees – improve your country and make your children happy. This campaign is to make use of the landscape in the village and start a playground for children and families
- Security in the Streets – protect our children. This campaign encouraged the schools and the municipality to create safe spaces for children to keep them away from the streets and to enrol them in constructive activities such as a club for physical activities, Dabkeh, competitions and a library.
- Health campaign in October “the month of breast cancer awareness” in cooperation with Augusta Victoria Hospital by raising awareness of 45 women and conducting check-up “mammography” for 10 women.
- Another health campaign in November for “chronic diseases” check-ups for diabetes and blood pressure in cooperation with the Medical relief services.

# The Learn-by-Play Program



*The* Learn-by-Play program is based on the vision that every child has the right to education, it aims at reducing and limiting the factual and latent drop-out among the children, aims at limiting illiteracy and decreasing the dropout rate from schools. The program operates

on three levels: parents, teachers, pupils, while engaging youths in the program as tutors after they receive the necessary training and enrichment.

The program reached 320 pupils/ children, from 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade



## The Learn-by-Play Program



and involving 40 young women in the training and empowerment program. The support given to the pupils is on both academic and behavioural levels, using the active learning approach and encouraging the pupils to express themselves and improve their school

achievement and their self-esteem.

During Covid 19 pandemic, the program coordinators and tutors worked together to address the changing environment of learning in the children's lives. They shared on-line exercises and



materials via social media. The schools were closed for a long time, first for three months then during the summer vacation; the children were forced to learn from home, on-line, which has made it even more difficult for children with learning difficulties and has put a bigger burden on the parents who have to follow-up their children all day.

In addition, most of the children lost the basic skills during the confinement and lack of practice, which required a serious intervention by our tutors to help them revise the basic methods and get back on track.

This inspired us to follow a more systematic approach that can reach those children by developing a learning platform accessible on their phones. It is still in the first stages but will be ready for trial by the beginning of the new year.

The young tutors' have developed leadership and communication skills



## The Learn-by-Play Program



that facilitate their work with the pupils, most of their enrichment sessions focused on coping with stress, emotional well-being, and cyber bullying. They planned the activities according to the groups' needs and prepared the work-papers according to the subjects given. During the confinement the tutors revised the educational materials and developed educational tools for the children that are relevant to the situation. And as

soon as they came back they sanitized the center and the games, and started working with small groups of children following the safety instructions.

The pupils were excited to come to the center after the confinement was lifted, they expressed how they missed their tutors and wanted to play and learn with their friends. The tutors stressed on the importance of following the safety rules and hygiene. The parents have been very cooperative too and eager to see their children back to learning and interacting.

The parents were involved not only through the parent teacher meetings that follow-up the academic progress of their children, but also through additional workshops that aimed at improving their communication skills with their children and raising their awareness to: family violence, cyber bullying and internet abuse.

# Combating Family Violence



*Combating* Family Violence Program aims at limiting and preventing violence in families, it is integrated into the running programs of the Trust as part of the holistic and integrative approach. The subject of family violence was addressed in all our programs, and with

all our capacities especially with the deterioration of the socio-economical situation and the increase in the rate of family violence as reported by the Trust's coordinators and the news.

The forced confinement during Covid 19 pandemic has contributed vastly



# Combating Family Violence



in the spread of violence and cyber bullying, in addition to the numerous cases of depression and suicide that were reported on the news. This required the Trust to address the families' requirements and focus the subjects given on the arising needs.

The Trust initiated forming an emergency committee which consisted of specialist social workers, psychologists, and representatives of the local community. The social workers were volunteers, who used to be part of the Trust's programs, then left us to pursue their education and became social workers and educational psychologists. These

professionals have willingly volunteered to help in supporting the families with resources in education, interactive play, and emotional well-being. Four working groups were formed to address the local needs:

- Group for Education: given by volunteers who assisted the mothers on how to help their children with learning from home by online learning and with their homework
- Group for emotional support: given by the psychologists to address the stress and imbalance occurring in the families during the lockdown.
- Group for citizens' rights: mainly to fill the online forms for unemployment for Ramle and Lod.
- And a group for economic support: Distributing food packages and referring families to associations for support.

All the services were given according to the need of the family and the specialty of the volunteers.

## The Emergency Consultation Line

The Trust's intervention was required on the educational and emotional levels to respond to the needs of the families in a more systematic approach. Based on the numbers of mothers and young women who requested our support during the last months and their feedback that counseling from a distance was helpful for their emotional well-being, and after planning and assessment the Emergency

Consultation Line started functioning in mid-September.

Five specialists are available to take calls and offer counselling each in her field of specialty: education, family relations, domestic violence, early childhood... They are experienced specialists three from the Trust and two from outside who are available to take the calls and respond to the questions of women according to their specialties. For severe cases of violence the cases will be referred to other relevant organizations.



 **1800 200 388**

**+972 593975541** 



# SPECIAL THANKS

Special Thanks and appreciation to each of the Trust's supporters for their generosity and kindness that made it possible to carry out our community based programs as planned:

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