



Prologue:

The overriding challenge in the fragile and conflict-affected context that we are living under is restoring trust, hope and social cohesion. This is what Wi'am does, right in the heart of communities, by mobilizing community members to be agents of change and knowledge. We envision a world where everyone can live life in dignity and peace. A world in which people can break through barriers of poverty, injustices and exclusion, and influence decisions that affect them in which inclusivity, social justice, and equality is prevailing.

In our fragile and conflict-affected society, fundamental human rights are violated. Women are unsafe and exploited, children are traumatized and many leave school.

Domestic violence and societal violence have increased since covid-19 at an alarming rate. Food prices are too high, youth lack opportunities to build their own future, and families are in limbo as a result of this socio-political and economic situation. The complexities of the interconnected challenges above require context sensitive solutions, wise interventions and dynamic empowerment of communities to sustain a decent and dignified life. This encourages us to develop integrated programs, approaches and innovations that effectively respond to the challenges, and empowers us to increasingly work in partnership with others concerned.

In 2022, we committed ourselves to empower young people through social initiatives and capacity building training that helped them build a strong personality. We are working tirelessly to instill confidence in the hearts and minds of children, women/girls to help them engage actively in community change and give them the power to be active players at the political and social levels. At the same time, we are working conscientiously with children and school pupils providing them with dynamic life skills that give them much needed space to sharpen their motor skills and tools to deal with challenges that they encounter in their life using their critical thinking and non-violent methods for resolving conflicts.

In the following report, we will find a wealth of information, an overview of our results, challenges, success stories and efforts that aim to build a democratic civic society. We are grateful for the positive impact we made in close collaboration with community members and volunteers. We look to the year that lies ahead, turbulent as it undoubtedly will be, with a sense of renewed confidence and hope that things will be better.

Special thanks to our partners, supporters and donors who enhance our work, foster our presence and give our work more depth and meaning beside shower us with blessings and increase our hope/

Indeed, they are the only human beings in this world who reflect compassion, empathy, unselfish caring, patience, unconditional love and agape. We appreciate all of you.

Travel of the Staff Abroad:

In the last year, Zoughbi Zoughbi was able to travel abroad for four important conferences based on conflict transformation, non-violence, peace and justice issues as well as cross-cultural activities.

The first Zoughbi and Jackcilia from South Sudan ran a workshop entitled “Lessons from Movement: Peace Builders and Transformation to More Peaceful, Just and Sustainable Relationships Among All Peoples and With Creation.” Along with Aisha, the Executive Director of Kairos, and other affiliates of WCC it was a good opportunity to further our networking, sharing and learning among the WCC community. There were lots of workshops and opportunities at WCC where Wi,am was present in the World Council of Churches Assembly that was held in Karlsruhe, Germany under the theme “Christ’s Love Moved the World to Reconciliation and Unity.”



The second one was in Tunisia with the USIP, United States Institute of Peace, where we met with mediators, arbitrators, educators and facilitators from the Middle East and North Africa under the umbrella of USIP. We spent precious time together discussing the issues of peace, justice, violence, extremism and conflict transformation. Each one shared with others how to be a good facilitator, dealing with people from different cultures and various civilizations. As a member of the Regional Facilitators Forum in the Middle East and North Africa region, Zoughbi facilitated a session on “Creative Tools for Transforming Conflict” at the conference held from the 3rd to the 7th of November 2022, in Tunisia, Tunis.



Please note the news (Based on Catholic Nonviolence Initiative website)

The second was with Pax Christi, where we met with individuals from the continent of Europe, Africa, South and North America and talked about the message of His Holiness, Pope Francis on; Fratelli Tutti, in Rome, Italy. Pax Christi International, along with the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission of the Union of Superiors General, had invited approximately 75 people, including theologians,

church officials, and grassroots activists from around the world, to a conference entitled “Pope Francis, nonviolence, and the fullness of Pacem in Terris.” The gathering took place in Rome at Casa La Salle from 5 to 7 December.

“By his many messages for peace, by his own example and, explicitly in his 2017 World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis has advanced the spirit, teaching, and way of active nonviolence,” said Marie Dennis, program chair of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of Pax Christi International and the lead organizer of the meeting. “We have invited people who are grappling with nonviolence, those who are studying its many dimensions and how it applies to our Catholic faith and to our personal and collective actions, and those who are engaging with it on a daily basis in areas of conflict. We anticipate rich and challenging conversations, and a deeper understanding of how Pope Francis has been leading on this critical issue.”

Participants from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East explored how Pope Francis has called the Church and the world to understand and adopt the nonviolent life, which is central to the survival of life on earth and to the healing of our planet.

Zoughbi Zoughbi, the founder and director of Wiam and the president of IFOR commented by stressing the following, “We are in dire need for such teachings and practice to ensure a nonviolent future in the world based on justice, and sisterly and brotherly relationship.” Zoughbi encouraged the churches and all faith-based organizations to have a prophetic voice and action by ending the Israeli Occupation and have justice and peace in the Middle East based on the implementation of the UN resolutions and in respect to the International Law.”



“Pope Francis engages the catastrophic violence which plagues our world through a consistent practice that is absolutely nonviolent,” said Sr. Teresia Wamuyu Wachira, IBVM, co-president of Pax Christi International and a professor at St. Paul College in Nairobi (Kenya). “His words and actions are innovative, prophetic, and shaped by the Sermon on the Mount. Today’s tragic events, like the war in Ukraine, show us that we have an urgent need to shift our thinking and our priorities.”

The goal of this two-day encounter is to foster a deeper understanding across sectors of the Catholic Church of Pope Francis’ teachings on the contribution of active nonviolence in divesting global violence of its deadly power everywhere and in fostering the well-being of the whole Earth community. Examples will suggest a way forward for developing Catholic Social Teaching and an effective Catholic contribution to the Church and the world, referencing the importance of *Pacem in Terris* and building on what Pope Francis has envisioned in “*Laudato Si, Fratelli Tutti*” and more.



The third was in South Sudan, where we met with different persons. Activists and Academics from different occupied territories and had a summit on Africa.

Ahead of its quadrennial 2022 Council, which started on November 14th in Juba, South Sudan, and lasted for a week, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation organized an international event focusing on peace efforts in the African continent. From the four corners of the world, artisans of non-violence, reconciliation and peace meet in the African city of Juba, South Sudan. On Friday 11th and Saturday 12th November 2022, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) a spiritual based peace movement which represents 48 countries and 71 groups and affiliates around the world. The conference had many topics and subjects as well as the regular business and different issues of women, nonviolence, disarmament, interfaith and inter-religious, geopolitical situation of the various countries. The meeting also created different working groups, electing RCC, EXCOM and ICOM and electing the president of the movement.



IFOR, a spiritual based peace movement founded in 1914, hosted a public Conference at the All-Saints Cathedral Compound located in the heart of downtown Juba. The IFOR concluded with electing a new ICOM and Zoughbi as the president of the IFOR. The ICOM members are Christiane Lohse, Christian Renoux Blas Garcia, Jean Pierre Massamba, Christiane Lohse, Susan Smith, Ariel Gold and Ruhi Das.

Zoughbi attended both conferences and gave talks about the Palestinian issue which was open to the general public; women, men and young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures who reflected and shared on the theme: “Armed Conflict and Peaceful Transition in Africa: Lessons from South Sudan and around the world”. There were several thematic sessions: One of the thematic sessions was Peacebuilding and Reconciliation process where the following were presenters. Light Wilson (ONAD, South Sudan) Zoughbi Zoughbi (WIAM– Conflict Transformation Center, Palestine) Peace Community San José de Apartadó

(Colombia) Wi'am Staff and community members warmly congratulated Mr. Zoughbi al-Zoughbi for his election as the President of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) for the years 2022-2026.

His election came as a recognition of Zoughbi's vision, dedication and the positive track of Wi'am in promoting healing and reconciliation in the Palestinian land and the world in general. Zoughbi embraces a vision of a world where conflicts are resolved through nonviolent means, where structures that feed enmity and hatred should be dismantled, and where justice is sought as a basis for peace.

We warmly thank IFOR for their trust in the work of Zoughbi and Wi'am center that stem from a common human belief in non-violent action and the aspiration for a just peace based on JUSTICE.



Now COP 27 ended and it is time to assess the accomplishment with regard to the future of life on our planet.

Hana z Kirreh from Wiam partner of Kairos Canada attended and participated in COP 27 as a Party overflow of Kairos - Canada delegation at the blue zone. Hana followed and attended many side events in different pavilions and meeting rooms. It was a great experience for her to attend COP 27 and be one of the panelists on my delegation side. She spoke about climate change hazards and environmental risks

that Palestinians are facing in general and women in specific from the perspective of gender equality, peace, security and climate change. Media presence was very important to document events and update followers of COP 27.

The event was a high-level event in terms of quality of participants such as heads of states, leaders, ambassadors, ministers, diplomats, scientists, policy makers, members of civil society IGOs, activists and youth from all over the world who speak different languages but one climate change language that addresses climate change: challenges and problems facing our planet. In their speeches, contributors affirmed the urgent need to realize the international goal of limiting temperature rise to below 1.5 C.

Participants presented facts and numbers each of their own community and country. Policy makers engaged in long negotiations in order to conclude best practices to be implemented on the ground to help the most vulnerable and poor communities and countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change risks and hazards.

Hana had the chance to meet many people from all over the world and build connections and networking for future collaboration and exchange of experience.

We are all responsible in front of our communities and people, vulnerable women, children and youth, to provide them with a quality life where we all can breathe clean air, drink clean water, and address gender inequality.

Long negotiations beyond the official closures of #COP27 ended positively, with countries reaching a decision to establish and establish a loss and damage fund, specifically for the most vulnerable countries to the climate crisis.

Let us make this happen.



Our programs:

SULHA: Community-Based Mediation:

Mediation is about resolving relationship tensions and conflicts. In situations involving family and community members, mediation and transformation of conflicts are the most effective alternative conflict settlement mechanism. The objectives of this program are three-fold: first, to restore friendly relationships between community members, second, to improve access to justice by providing efficient and effective remedies for local disputes and third to transform peoples' lives and ways of relating to each. In addition to these more direct effects of successful mediation, the process can also have a broader impact on society in terms of promoting civic peace and dialogue of words. Seeking mutually agreed upon solutions can ease tensions caused by minor disputes, improve communication

within a community, and prevent conflict from escalating. During the year, Wi'am intervened in many different types of cases, and managed to mediate 490 cases of conflicts with a success rate of 85%. For example, we had high settlement rate for the following types of disputes: intergenerational disputes (85%), domestic violence (90%), husband-wife problems (82%), loan matters (80%), land disputes (85%), car accident (85%), cases of assault (82%), youth problems (90%). The challenges with these disputes were unwillingness to compromise, particularly in domestic violence and land disputes with insufficient knowledge regarding the law.



Impact of Mediation:

Community members were satisfied with the mediation services in which they unequivocally believe that mediation improves social harmony. The majority of the disputants surveyed think that mediation has a larger impact on the community beyond resolving individual disputes; mediation helps disputants understand the other side's point of view, reduces community tension and improves social harmony. From our experience SULHA is all about reaching a win-win formula that empowers the weak, restores broken relationships and brings the perpetrator to his/her senses away from retribution.



Case Study:

Siham N, 22 years old woman married with two children. Her family sustained a catastrophe when her husband and four other people from the same family died in an absorption hole in their village, South of Hebron. Her husband's family expelled the wife and her children from their house because the wife asked for her husband's rightful inheritance so that she can support her two daughters. S. was obliged to take refuge at her parent's home; but, even so, her parents did not accept the idea of taking care of the daughters, let alone raising them.

As the case reached us via the hotline, Wi'am's mediators contacted charitable organizations to secure a refuge for the woman in which they secured a small caravan for the family.

After that, the mediators contacted the husband's family and the father in particular to explore possibilities for accepting the widow and her children back. The father was adamant in which he reiterated his refusal to welcome the wife for the simple reason that she does not deserve the inheritance of her husband. The mediation team worked in very thin ice to manage the gender-biased mentality and deep tradition that favors males at the expense of females. After many long and arduous shuttle diplomacy visits to the family of the husband, that were full of setbacks, lingering pain and lip service, the father gradually showed leniency accepting that S. has a right to inheritance from her husband. The breaking point was when the mediators touched a chord in the father's consciousness by reminding him of his fatherly role and the teachings of religion that gives women a right to inheritance.

At the end, the father reconciled with the wife with an apology, promising to give her a sway of land to build a house and he recognized the inheritance rights of the mother and the two girls.

Book Launching

We are happy to announce the book Launch "GLORY TO GOD IN THE LOWEST" at Wiam by Rev. Dr. Don Wagner.

Zoughbi started the meeting with such words after welcoming wholeheartedly Rev. Dr. Don and Linda.

Rev. Don then responded to the questions posed by the audience.



"The book is a personal, political, and religious journey from Evangelical Christian faith and conservative politics to solidarity with the poor and advocacy for anti-war, anti-racism, and Palestinian rights.

After serving for five years as a pastor in a remarkable Black church, Donald Wagner comes to fully understand the original sin of racism. As his journey continues, he encounters another marginalized people—the Palestinians—and witnesses their struggle for justice and equality. Touched by their resilience and fight against injustice, he leaves the pastorate to assume full time work as an advocate for Palestinian political and human rights.

The memoir begins in mid-September 1982, with a gut-wrenching day interviewing survivors of the Sabra-Shatila massacre in Lebanon, as they wept and waited for the bodies of family members to be pulled from the rubble.



Glory to God in the Lowest is a metaphor for his counter intuitive journey with the victims of the “chosen people” in the “unholy land,” also called historic Palestine or Israel. The irony of the journey reminds us that God is everywhere especially with the disinherited, the victims of the powerful, including the victims of Israeli oppression.



The memoir touches on history and includes political analysis and theological reflection.

In it, Donald Wagner describes Israel's continued colonization and destruction of Palestinian lives and chronicles his involvement in a grassroots movement of resistance that demands justice based on full equality, an end to the Israeli military occupation and settler colonization project, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and full political rights for the Palestinian people.

Filled with stories—some humorous and some shocking—as well as encounters with people of every race, gender, and religious affiliation working below the radar, this book will inspire, challenge, and offer a narrative that envisions a transformed “unholy land,” where justice, liberation, and equality for all is the reality for every citizen."

Peer Mediation at Schools:

The goal of the peer mediation project is to reduce conflicts and provide children with problem-solving techniques. Trained peer mediators create a safe atmosphere, allowing children to tell their stories and assisting them in working out mutually-acceptable agreements. Peer mediation offers teachers and parents alike an alternative to traditional disciplinary practices and helps communities and schools become safe places.

Wi'am selected classes of grade 9 to work with around 100 students from three Bethlehem-area schools in order to build their capacities and competencies in peer mediation and problem solving. Wi'am implemented 4 training sessions per year with the target students on peer mediation/nonviolence, problem-solving, real-life case studies, simulations and basic knowledge. The trainings also contained a specific methodology that includes few hours of art therapy, drama and theater training.

Wi'am also organized tens of parent's workshops to encourage intergenerational dialogue, understand teenage conflict, develop their capability in counseling, conflict resolution, active listening, and the art of dialogue and communication skills.



Volunteers at Wiam:

We are grateful to volunteers' locals as well as internationals who come from different corners of the World who work with us whether through teaching, gardening, office work, painting and helping in what Wiam is mostly need.

Special gratitude to Fr. Tom, Bea, Lynne, Fr. Garret, Magie, Joanna, Amrigo, Anna, Danish Church members and ten others

A bouquet of flower filled with agape to every and each one of you.







II. Youth Program:

Activity I: Multiplication Trainings for 80 young people

In 2022, Wi'am worked to increase the capacities of young peacebuilders to have an impact on their communities and work for peace and justice. Our main activities to strengthen youth leaders consist of training modules, using methodology that Wi'am developed and case studies that we compiled through our fieldwork in mediation coupled with informal learning series. Through our work, we emphasized training young people in multiple positions, who can disseminate the training outcomes and knowledge to a wide range of audiences, schools and youth groups.

The training equipped young people (both males and females) from wide areas of the West Bank to improve their peacebuilding, conflict transformation, leadership, critical thinking, facilitation skills and how to use the media to influence social change and decision-making.



Results of the Trainings:

1. Improved capacities of young people (knowledge, skills) to transform, analyze and mediate conflicts.
2. Increased knowledge/experience in Sulha to mediate conflicts and reconcile differences.
3. Improved skills to implement social initiatives, work with peers and disseminate peaceful narratives.



Activity II: youth multipliers engaged in active mediation and multiplications training in schools and summer camps events:

Through the year, Wi'am supported young multipliers in finding ways to exercise their newly acquired capabilities to act as key peacebuilders and mediators and social innovators within their communities. In that respect, 20 young multipliers delivered 30 hours in small-scale training on conflict transformation and peer-mediation to 40

young people and 120 students in 3 schools as well as during summer camps in Bethlehem areas.

The impact of the multiplication training was two-fold: first, imparting conflict transformation and peer-mediation skill and knowledge to the beneficiaries; second; empowering young people to be active agents of peacebuilding and conflict mediation.

Activity III: Organize monthly meetings between key actors and young people discussing issues related to youth role and civic peace:

During the year, Wi'am organized 8 community meetings (hosting 110 people) between young people and key community actors (religious figures, mediators, community leaders, academic figures, activists). These meetings opened the door for young people to voice their opinion and concerns on key issues that affect their life and their communities and to make their demands heard. In this way, we empowered youth leaders to act as promoters of social innovative solution for peace and inclusive agents of change.

Most of the participants in the meeting agree that forging cooperation between young activists and key actors can be an important step in resolving and pre-empting destructive conflicts. In addition, for youth to intervene successfully in preventing conflicts from escalating, particularly youth conflicts, it is important to provide young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to settle disputes peacefully. Involving youth as real life mediators that can work side by side with senior mediators can help bring about a significant drop in youth conflicts at the national level.



The meeting reached the following recommendations:

1. Creating an early warning system of response involving senior mediators and trained youth that respond to problems before they escalate into wider violence.
2. Improved inclusion of youth in community engagement and non-violent conflict resolution.
3. Building the capacities of youth in areas of conflict transformation and mediation.

Activity IV: Youth mediate Community Conflicts:

Young mediators in close cooperation with Wi'am senior mediators managed to transform 20 cases of youth conflicts during the year that involved fighting, cyberbullying, domestic violence and inter-generational conflicts.

The Mediation process was a cooperative effort, senior mediators gave the space for young mediators to engage in real-life mediation using their learned skills while still under their supervision. Mediation gave young multipliers the chance to put forward potential solutions, and put forward their own suggestions and ideas for ways to overcome the hurt and harm produced in any situation of conflict, engendering ownership of agreements produced. Involving youth in the mediation, allows them to touch first hand youth problems and influence a change of hearts and minds.

Impact:

- Empowering youth as agents of peace building.
- Improved community relations with more people trusting the work of youth mediators.
- Enhanced culture of peace and non-violence.
- Improved level of youth engagement in promoting civic peace.

Activity V: Organize a Youth Conference on peacebuilding:

In August 2022, Wi'am organized a youth conference that hosted 35 young people from Bethlehem, Hebron, Dora areas at Wi'am premises. The conference was in the form of a panel discussion of three speakers Sheikh Maher Assaf, a mediator; Mrs. Ahlam al-Wahsh, a woman activist, and Albert Hani, a social worker. The three speakers spoke about the role of Sulha in reconciling community conflicts, speaking about ways of empowering youth involvement in mediation and peacebuilding and ways of involving women in mediation. They agree that the tension between young and traditional tribal leaders has been one of the key features of ostracizing young people from participating in mediation and peacebuilding. To tackle youth marginalization from mediation and peacebuilding work, the speakers called for a shift in the traditional thinking towards accepting youth as partners and not as followers.

Similarly, the speakers talked about different obstacles that curtail women from participation in peacebuilding: namely, the political division, traditional mentalities, cultural issues, and lack of resources. An idea surfaced in the conference rooted in the premise that women living in conflict should activate the UNSCR 1325 resolution that reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peace negotiations.



Recommendations by the participants for Moving forward:

-Develop equal partnerships with tribal elders, mediators, community leaders and youth organizations to support youth-led mediation and youth-owned peace initiatives. -Create safe online and face-to-face spaces for youth to work together, learn from each other, and receive support and training from peers and senior experts. This should include access to mental health support to help them deal with any trauma they may have.

-Facilitate youth's capacity building relevant to their individual and contextual needs to ensure they can design, initiate, and complete successful peace initiatives and confidently participate in peace-building processes.

-Create an ongoing educational process of learning to pass the traditional practices of SULHA to the next generations.

Summer Camp:

Wi'am center uses recreational and educational activities to promote holistic development of children and youth in the most disadvantaged areas. During the summer, Wi'am organized its yearly summer camp under the theme: "We deserve a peaceful place to learn, play and enjoy life". It hosted 90 marginalized children from both genders (6-14 years old) coming from Bethlehem governorate. The summer camp included activities that helped develop the physical, mental, psychological, and social aspects of children. Our aim was to improve both the immediate and future quality of life for those children through educational, recreational and cultural activities.

The summer camp took advantage of Wi'am's garden and the open landscape that helped provide children with a safe/healthy space to explore, providing them with an atmosphere to learn to listen to every creature, enjoy the wind that bristles through the leaves and breathe the fresh air.



Summer camp provided some hands on experiences in the following areas:

- Know-thy-heritage: Folk dancing, theatre and drama.
- Peer-mediation trainings,
- Theatre/drama.
- Art & Craft.
- Recreational activities: Sports/trips/cooking/swimming.
- Environmental activities.

Outcomes of the Camp Experience:

- Social Skills Development.
- Respect and Character Building.
- Responsibility.
- Resourcefulness.
- Resilience.

One of the greatest benefits of the summer camp for children is that they get to socialize and meet new people. During summer break, kids often find it difficult to form or maintain friendships with peers their own age. Not only do kids develop important life skills through socializing – such as sharing, setting boundaries, and problem solving – they also are learning how to develop strong, healthy relationships through interacting with their peers. A summer camp program provides a safe environment for children to develop social skills, decision-making skills, self-esteem and skills they need to be successful in school and in life. In fact, socialization during childhood accomplished more for growth and development. Overall, the more healthy, positive adult relationships that a child or youth has in their life, the more likely they are to thrive in all areas, long after summer camp has ended.

Our summer school students truly immersed themselves in the activities and they had an amazing summer camp. The students learned so much and they taught us adults much about laughter, hope and energy. They not only made memories while

having fun but they were able to face their fears, try new things, push their boundaries and realize self-sufficiency. Children were able to make new friends amidst lots of laughs & learnt team spirit. Summer camp provided children with an opportunity to experience and discover new and emerging interests and to focus on special skills and interests that may be set aside or even neglected during the academic year. The summer camp was meant for the children to develop essential life shaping skills to know their identity as a person “who I am”; taught them how to communicate, express their emotions, handle difficult emotions and handle their problems and conflicts.

Let us share with you a few words from our children:

“I enjoyed the camp, it built my personality, equipped me with skills to deal with problems and mediate peer-conflicts that I face in my school.” –Simon (12) from Bethlehem village.

“... It has been an enjoyable Summer Camp where we had the chance to interact with our peers and learn new knowledge, information and games that really nourish our mind. We learned about the importance of serving the community and family values as a way of developing a healthy society.” – Mays (14) from Beit Jala city.



Back-T-Schools Campaign:

“Every Child has a Right to Education”

Due to rising unemployment, more parents are unable to provide basic life requirements to their children or meet their school expenses such as getting necessary school bags and stationery items. Sensing that a large number of families need urgent help in supporting their children’s education and continuing their learning uninterrupted, we initiated in close cooperation with the Westminster Presbyterian Church, the “Backpack campaign” that included a variety of educational materials.

Objectives of the Campaign:

To provide school kits to poor deprived children as a way to encourage disadvantaged children to continue their education.

Criteria of the Selection of the Beneficiaries:

The criteria that we used to select the target group is the level of poverty and the economic situation of their families. The information collected about these children and their families came from records that we had from charitable groups and social workers reports working in different civic organizations and schools.

Distribution:

We distributed 220 school bags filled with grade-appropriate school supplies to children aged 6-16 years old from different schools and areas in Bethlehem (males and females). The educational material distributed include (notebooks, pencils, erasers, sharpener, rubber, pen sachets, crayons, rulers, glue sticks). The choice of the educational material corresponds with essential educational material that these children need to start a normal scholastic year and receive normal education.



Feedback:

Rawan, a 13-year-old girl, said, “I’m so happy to get the educational kit given by Wi’am... it made me so happy and more able to keep focus on my studies and future.”

Hani, an 8-year-old boy, “the school bag included many educational items I need most, it has many essential educational items... it will replace my old torn bag and surely will help me in my education with less burden on my unemployed father.”

Women Program:

The women empowerment program seeks to strengthen women’s knowledge, promote their freedom to work for their rights to security, and protection against Gender-Based violence (GBV) by active participation in civic society, working for gender/human rights, democracy and implementation of UNR1325. This was done through active prevention of GBV, support for advocacy work to advance gender rights aimed at men and women and increased knowledge to work for women's rights and lobby decision makers to amend discriminatory laws. The primary target group

is 450 women and girls coming from Bethlehem, Hebron and Jerusalem areas, mostly marginalized urban and rural areas.

The women program included three intertwined goals:

1. Actively prevent active domestic violence via mediation and counseling.
2. Strengthen support for women's rights by advocacy work aimed at both men and women.
3. Empowering project participants with greater knowledge, freedom and skill to work for women's rights to lobby decision-makers.

The Women project consist of the following activities:

- Psychosocial support / counseling.
- Mediation.
- Hotline.
- Educational workshops.
- Empowerment.
- Services.
- Advocacy.
- National conference on UNR1325.
- Training on women Rights, Political participation, Gender Role.
- Networking.

During the year 400 women and girls, victims of GBV accessed key **counseling support sessions, mediation and hotline services**. These life-saving services led to improved safety and security of women from GBV as they go about their daily life activities and reducing the negative psychological impacts experienced by survivors of GBV. Similarly, 80 women reached the hotline with 60 women receiving legal consultations (cases of GBV and inheritance) and mediation services that helped them in their court cases.



Case Study:

Farah H., a married woman with two children (aged 7 and 9 years old). Her life with her husband and family had been in a normal relationship. After 10 years of happy marriage, the husband all of a sudden started to be aggressive and impolite with his wife with no clear reasons. The relationship between the husband and the wife became very strained, deteriorating steadily with the husband starting to be aggressive and, in many cases, not sleeping in the house, but staying with his mother most of the time.

The wife could not stand the aggressive mood of the husband and the fact that he used to beat her in front of her children. As a result, the woman developed a traumatic experience full of fear and nervous breakdown from her husband.

After getting the number of Wi'am hotline, the hotline operator was quick enough to give her initial advice, guidance that centered on calming her down, taking note of her story, and giving her a safety-plan to deal with her husband. The hotline operator guided Farah to use a soothing language to calm the husband down when he starts to be physical. The hotline operator advised her not to talk about his mother whatsoever as she might be the one who was instigating against her in some way or another. Later on, the case was referred to the psychosocial support unit (followed by a mediation phase).

After 6 consecutive sessions with Farah, the counselor used effective listening as a key to the survivor-centered approach he used in order to explore her case. During the first session, it was important for the counselor to determine the extent of the danger F. was facing and evaluate whether she was at risk of immediate harm. It was important to get a better understanding of the violence the victim was experiencing, assess the risk without forcing her to talk. The counseling also focused on helping Farah cope with her problem, as she was overwhelmed with fear and worries. The counselor helped Farah consider her most urgent needs, and how to prioritize and address them. She was gravely worried about her children, her safety and her future. These needs were addressed quickly giving children counseling based on relieving their trauma. While, at the same time, dispatching the mediator to reach the husband to preempt any aggressive behavior against her and give a clear indication that she is not alone.



After coming here my life has changed. The psychological support sessions helped me to regain my confidence and heal from my traumatic experience. They helped me go back to normality and build my self-esteem again”

Three-day educational workshop for 20 service providers (social workers) accomplished in Bethlehem and Hebron areas during the year. It promoted the participants with understanding of domestic violence, as well as the role of the social worker in responding to DV effectively. They also gained knowledge on ways of facilitating the survivors’ access to referral services (legal, mental health, mediation, safe shelter, etc.).

Skill-building workshops were done within the Peace, Security program (70 hours in total) in Bethlehem, Hebron and Jerusalem areas for 90 women and girls (18-50 years old) focusing on women rights, domestic violence, reporting cases of abuse, initial response/reporting, UNR1325.

To raise the awareness in the community on GBV and women’s right, we organized **8 sessions with men** during the year targeting 85 women, girls and key actors (community leaders, religious figures, academics, women activists, women groups, lay people, elders) during the year, to make them supportive towards women’s rights and developing work strategies with men. The discussion groups provided participants, particularly women, with the space to challenge their isolation and discuss their personal experiences with people who listen to their concerns. Discussion groups are proving to be non-controversial and effective means of addressing domestic violence and changing the stereotypes that circulate in the community about the rights of women. The discussion meetings culminated in establishing a women-men alliance group that advocate women rights and work together to combat GBV.

We also facilitated young women's transformative leadership by creating safe spaces for them to learn and practice leadership. Through this, the young women exercise their right to voice their issues and meaningfully participate in finding solutions to those issues.

16 days activism: “Endorsement of the Family Protection Bill”

Wi’am launched a joint “Yes, for the endorsement of the Family Protection Bill” campaign with the Bethlehem Women Coalition, calling for better access to services for survivors of gender-based violence.

Wi’am used the yearly Marathon in Bethlehem, March 18th 2022, to organize an advocacy campaign calling for the endorsement of the “Family Protection Bill” against rising GBV. The event helped in putting more pressure on decision-makers to endorse the Family Protection Bill. The campaign contributed to the national and global voice that calls for an end to violence in general and GBV violence against women and girls through raising the awareness of the public, especially youth, women, and men on the implications of GBV on women's fundamental rights. The advocacy was an effective tool to advocate and lobby for Palestinian women’s rights at the national and international levels. Through advocacy campaigns, Wi’am works to influence policy change, including effective and responsive laws, policies that prevent violence against women and girls and support the survivors of such violence. Further to that, advocacy and awareness campaigns have had a positive impact on altering and sensitizing public perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality, and victims and survivors of violence.



Organize a National Conference on UNR1325:

Wi'am organized a national 2-day conference on "UNR1325 Second Generation" that hosted 60 participants coming from Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Hebron areas with a focus on marginalized villages and the project beneficiaries. The participants were composed of women leaders, activists, members of the Women Coalition, male activists and representatives from the police and health Ministry.



Impact:

1. Enhanced working strategies, knowledge and cooperation between women activists and Wi'am in their effort to combat GBV and disseminate UNR1325.
2. Enhanced awareness on the mechanism of Early Warning system on gender violence with improved way of documenting and reporting violations against women.
3. Inspiring women leaders to talk about their experiences in overcoming family challenges and participation.

In the last year, 60 counseling sessions were implemented with over 120 beneficiaries. The counseling sessions were designed in both individual and group settings to provide much needed psychosocial support to women victims and survivors of violence, especially domestic violence.

Throughout the course of this year, Wi'am was able to organize 40 trainings on the topic of international frameworks, specifically related to CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. These trainings brought together 420 women, and 70 men, with 4 trainings organized in different universities, and 30 trainings in ten communities. Pre and post surveys were given to the 10 communities where we did the training.

Social Initiatives:

Throughout years since Wiam's inception, we have enticed our community members to embark on initiatives.

Two communities in Hebron villages engaged in **two social initiatives** in Abu al-Urqa and Deir Shams villages: the first is "our rights to have a safe road" while the other "our rights to call for a better access to education, health and other services to our communities". The initiatives contributed towards bringing people together across the village to put pressure on the decision-makers in village council to keep the health services and access to the village running and not to shut the local clinic that serves the community and women in specific. More than 200 individuals attended the two events from both communities along with representatives of the local councils, human rights representatives and a representative from the health ministry in Hebron and the participation of Wi'am.

Hospitality for Individuals /Groups Passing By:

Wiam staff have been known for their hospitality for anyone visit the center, ask for directions or even want to use the facilities of Wiam. The following verse represents our motto and welcoming spirit though we don't consider anyone as a stranger.

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it". Please note our sign which invites everyone to have coffee or tea or drink with us and have a friendly chat.



Yes, we are global citizens and relate to each other. I believe we can change the world if we start talking to one another and conversing with each other. Together we can have approaches to social change locally regionally and globally. Let us listen all together to the wisdom of Margaret Wheatley." It is impossible to create a healthy culture if we refuse to meet, and if we refuse to listen. But if we meet, and when we listen, we reweave the world into wholeness. And holiness".

You are welcome anytime if you come to the Holy Land.

Citizen Diplomacy program: Alternative Tourism- “Come, See, Observe, Reflect and ACT”:

A true pilgrimage to Palestine is an invitation to “come, see, observe, reflect and act”: a journey to fathom new and deeper truths about the socio-political situation, get to know sacred sites, meet the living stones as an epitome of the human dimensions of the Land



Meeting with local people is an exploration of the meaning of humanity and solidarity with the People of the Holy Land. Hearing their stories triggers an act of self-reflection in which this hearing changes visitors to “unlearn” much of what we “know” about Palestine and the realities the Palestinians live under by taking sufficient time to listen, reflect, share their food and interact with them.



Zoughbi founded this program by simply saying that we love to encourage people not only visit the Sacred Places (**holy stones**) but also meet the (**living stones**) as well as to be introduced to the (**rolling stones**) that means the socio-economic and political conditions that we live in.

St. Jerome, who famously translated the Bible into Latin working from the same cave system in which Jesus was born, said: “Five gospels record the life of Jesus.” Four you will find in books and the one you will find in the land they call Holy. Read the fifth gospel and the world of the four will open to you.”

According to Zoughbi who is not a theologian and who ask for forgiveness rather than permission who simply told many groups who are visiting Wiam that they are representing the sixth Gospel since they help the believers of the Holy Land to understand the meaning and depth of pilgrimage which enhances their faith, give meaning to their spiritual journey and enhances the community hope.

During the past year, Wi'am welcomed 400 visitors in groups at least in addition to different individuals from different countries around the globe who not only were taken in a tour to the historical, religious, refugee camps, trails and traditional sites, but also were treated with a traditional homemade meal and freshly brewed Arabic Coffee



One of the unique features of our tours is our integrative “homestay” program. By staying the night with families, visitors had an opportunity to have their own open space to listen to local stories, talk about difficult questions that they might not otherwise ask in-group settings and develop friendships with the locals.

Visitors were able to meet politicians, clergy, and community leaders, as well as members of peace organizations and activists in this unique Holy Land experience.



Please note the reflections, inspiring and encouraging words of visitors which entice us to go in the less travelled roads of nonviolent struggle, justice and reconciliation.

Thanks a lot for hospitality, informatics and
peace building materials!
Good luck for the future, thank again

Alexandra

Without even giving you a warning, you welcomed 7 of us students
from your alma mater as you have welcomed countless others to join in
your mission of Palestinian solidarity and conflict resolution. We will
spread your stories, your redemption, and your faith to all we meet, so
that we may be advocates for change and healing. God bless you!

- Peter Danc Shubuto

love a lot from Japan
love you guys! Izumi

It has been a pleasure to visit your
centre. I have found it really
interesting and encouraging to find out
about the work you are doing
here. Thank you so much for your
hospitality. Wishing you all my best
with the work you do.

Best wishes & with peace.

Greg, Scotland. 6/8/22

Very inspiring to see all the work
you do supporting the community. It is
great to see and we wish you all the
best. Free Palestine! ♥♥
Robyn and Lara

Happy to visit you, hopefully is not the last time

God bless you and keep going

الله بياك فاسم

Sr. Lorena Sessally

എൻ്റെ പ്രാർത്ഥന നിങ്ങളുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്ക് അനേകം സഹായം നൽകട്ടെ!
- Sino.

Thank you for your time
and sharing of information.

God bless you and the People
of Palestine. Gini - Egypt/UK ♥

18/8/2022

Accompagner à travers l'écoute pour
rassurer et permettre à celui qui vient de
pouvoir reprendre le chemin de sa vie.

Laurence (France)