

# PNGO IV: Mid-Term Review



From the 17th to the 29th of March a joint AFD and World Bank delegation carried out a detailed mid-term review of the Palestinian NGO IV Project managed by NDC (funded by AFD/World Bank). The review focused on assessing the progress of the project so far, and considering improvements to the delivery of PNGO IV. It was an occasion for self-analysis within partner NGOs, NDC and the donors. Consequently, the process provides an opportunity to strengthen systems of social accountability within the PNGO IV project. A number of important meetings were also held with a range of PA ministries. PNGO IV has proved very successful and cooperation with the PA remains essential if the duplication of services is to be avoided. NDC was delighted to discuss the potential for partnership with those line ministries who would

benefit most from the mechanism's experience. NDC Director, Ghassan Kasabreh, is pleased that so much ground was covered during the mission: "the recent mid-term review has given the donors, NDC, partner NGOs and the beneficiaries the chance to take an active role in improving the PNGO IV project. It was heartening to see how committed each stakeholder is to this development initiative, and the wonderful achievements of our inspiring NGO partners. I am confident that the strategic questions posed during the mission will only advance the effectiveness of PNGO IV and the NDC mechanism". NDC looks forward to the remainder of the PNGO IV project motivated by the direct involvement of partners and beneficiaries, and the knowledge and insight of AFD and the World Bank. The PNGO IV project continues the legacy of supporting NGOs that provide vital services to the most marginalized.



Children from the Saraya Center (Old City of Jerusalem) singing their hearts out during a visit from the mission.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 08.03



On March 8th International Women's Day was held to mark the contribution of women to society and galvanize the movement for gender equality throughout every country and continent. Palestine and 27 other countries observe International Women's Day as an official holiday and NDC is

proud to have consistently supported the cause of women's rights through the Human Rights and Good Governance Secretariat. Among many Secretariat partners, *Badil* held a number of hugely successful events throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In Bethlehem, *Badil* and the Lajee Center (Aida Camp) organized a

women's trip to Jericho on March 9th. In Gaza, they held a popular festival in cooperation with the Women's Action Center (Al Shati/ Beach Camp) on March 11th. Both events focused on building a vision for future cooperation so as to advance the cause of gender equality. <http://www.badil.org>

### Inside this issue:

Success Story: Sharek Youth Forum	2
The Empowerment of Youth	2
Photo Features	3
HR/GG Secretariat - 7 Core Funding Agreement Signed	4
Partner Post: Edward Said National Conservatory of Music	4
Photo Features II	5
Beit Ula Cultural Center: UPDATE 2012	6

### Child Services Special!

- Success story from **Sharek Youth Forum**.
- Partner Post from **Edward Said National Conservatory of Music**.
- Update from **Beit Ula Cultural Center**.

## Success Story: Sharek Youth Forum - Bridges Enrichment Centers

<http://www.sharek.ps/>

**B**ridges Enrichment Centers offer after-school activities that aim to enrich the lives of children, extend their learning opportunities and strengthen communities. A range of creative and physical fitness activities - as well as fun, interactive, educational classes - are offered to children (aged 6-12) in a small group setting. These activities are bolstered by a daily homework-help drop-in center where children can seek academic assistance to reinforce their classroom learning. The centers also hold special cultural and community events and excursions that involve children, youth, families and the community - fundamentally the Bridges project encourages family participation, volunteerism and social unity. Despite the disabilities, disadvantages or difficulties they may face, all children are made to feel that they are integral members of society and that they are special. What makes Bridges particularly special is that it is largely staffed by well-trained, dedicated youth volunteers who serve as positive role models to children. Bridges is implemented in six locations across Palestine

(Nablus, Arrabeh, Kufr Nehmeh, Halhoul, Hebron and Jerusalem). Our Jerusalem Bridges center was launched at the end of 2011 and has been quickly embraced by the children and parents of the community. Calling the old city home, the center is housed by the African Community Society based in the old city in the shadows of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Project Coordinator, Bashar Mashni, believes that to build a better life and future for children it is necessary to provide programs to serve them and contribute to their holistic development. Bridges is doing just that, offering children a variety of activities that will allow them to leave their problems at the door and have fun. The center acts as a haven, keeping children off the streets and involving them in productive activities in a safe environment. Volunteers act as mentors, helping children not only with their homework and in activities, but also assist them in dealing with their emotions and troubles as required. The Bridges project is responding to a severe economic situation in East Jerusalem - more than half of all families live below the

poverty line. All activities and events are free for participants. Bridges fan Yara Alami, 10 years old, expresses the extent to which Sharek's activities transform the lives of young children: "Bridges made my life more colorful and cheerful, more than ever before". From the wide smile on the children's faces to the encouraging feedback from parents, Sharek and its Bridges program have started to make a change in the lives of young people in Jerusalem. They are dedicated to spreading joy and happiness in an extremely difficult economic, social and political environment.



## The Empowerment of Youth

Ghassan Kasabreh (NDC Director)



**A** very warm welcome to issue #9 of NDC's newsletter. Twelve years since the United Nations signed the Millennium Declaration and established the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*, it is perhaps worth reminding ourselves of how much work is still required to provide our young people with equal access to education and the opportunity for creative expression; but also the fantastic impact of existing projects throughout Palestine. At NDC we are passionate about child and youth rights. *MDGs 1 and 2* are particularly salient to NDC's work in Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank. To *Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger* and *Achieve Universal Primary Education* are indeed grand aims. We do not suggest that NDC shoulders the burden of these global concerns; nonetheless, providing spaces to develop skills, creatively enrich education and improve literacy are all relevant to the myriad NGOs NDC partners with. The *MDGs*, therefore, provide a global context for our very specific and unique struggles in Palestine. In this *Child Services*

*Special* edition of NDC e-news, we highlight three of our partners responding to the isolation and marginalization of our youth. Each organization uses the vibrant creativity of young people to drive the educational strategy of their project. Furthermore, each partner recognizes the broader benefit of empowering our youth. The

**"Youth empowerment is contributing to social cohesion and freeing the latent talent of tomorrow's community leaders"**

experience and expertise of Sharek Youth Forum, the *Edward Said National Conservatory of Music* and *Beit Ula Cultural Center* is contributing a great deal more to society than a range of after-school services. These three

organizations, along with all NDC's partners, are contributing to social cohesion and freeing the latent talent of tomorrow's community leaders. This work is, in its essence, the fundamental core of social development. We are immensely proud to work with such inspiring NGOs. The recent mid-term review of the PNGO IV project provided an opportunity for AFD and the World Bank to visit our partners and see their achievements. Both PNGO IV and phase II of the HR/GG Secretariat ensure that dozens of NGOs will continue to benefit from project funding and sector development initiatives in 2012. I hope you enjoy this insight into the NGO Development Center and a selection of our partners.



# PHOTO FEATURES



Educational classes at Sharek Youth Forum's Enrichment Center in Jerusalem's Old City.



Beautiful agricultural produce of the Beit Duqqa Development Society.



BADIL mark International Women's Day in the West Bank and Gaza.



PNGO IV mid-term review team talk to Beit Duqqa's beneficiaries.



This most recent round of signings will provide core funding for seven NGOs in Palestine. Three NGOs in Gaza (Al Dameer Association for Human Rights, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights and Palestinian Centre for Human Rights-PCHR), three Jerusalem-based organizations (Women's Studies Centre, Jerusalem Center for Women and Bimkom-'Planners for Planning Rights') and Miftah-'The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy' in Ramallah can look forward to the development of their activities throughout the oPt in 2012. The Human Rights and Good Governance Secretariat and NDC are particularly proud of the diversity of organizations, in terms of geographic location and thematic focus, benefiting from this round of Core Funding grants. Continued support of the fundamental infrastructure of human rights and good governance NGOs provides a level of stability essential if the sector is to affectively protect and promote human rights in the oPt. This signing brings the total number of grant agreements for Phase II of the Secretariat to 60. 27 individual organizations have received Core Funding Grants and 19 have been successful in applying for the Small Grants Facility.

As part of the Sector Development component of the Secretariat, a wide-ranging capacity building program for all Secretariat partners is underway. This program ensures that interaction between beneficiary NGOs and the Secretariat is not limited to the transfer of project funds. The HR/GG Secretariat is committed to integrating capacity building throughout the grant giving process.



Capacity building and technical assistance remain a key feature of NDC's development strategy. Without such complimentary organizational development, grants and funding streams are limited in their long term impact. The provision of training in financial management, transparent management practices and monitoring and evaluation ensure that social accountability takes root throughout the sector. In conjunction with the capacity building program, the core funding stream disseminated by the Secretariat contributes to the immediate cause of human rights **and** the ability of such inspirational NGOs to continue advocating for equality and justice into the future. <http://www.humanrights.ps/>

***"Core Funding support is absolutely crucial for human rights and good governance NGOs in Palestine. It provides a level of stability that allows for longer term planning and enhanced project impact in a challenging environment. NDC is proud to continue to offer this support." (Jamileh Sahlieh - Grants Program Manager)***

## Partner Post: Edward Said National Conservatory of Music

<http://ncm.birzeit.edu/>



In 1990, 5 Palestinian musicians and music teachers conducted a study on the status of music in Palestine - they were convinced of the urgent need to establish a music school to fill the huge gap in music education within Palestinian society and offer children in marginalized areas the chance to learn exciting new skills. The ESNCM was established to respond to this deficiency. Under a 5 year plan, the NGO has a range of exciting goals for the future. Whilst continuing to

develop the academic programs of ESNCM branches (Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nablus), outreach programs will be supported in Tubas and Salfit. ESNCM also aims to open new branches in Jericho, Hebron and Gaza. Through the expansion of education, from the launching of an Arab Music BA at Birzeit University to the holding of annual summer camps and workshops, ESNCM is committed to providing musical access to more young Palestinians. The biennial national

music competition, annual Arabic Music and Spring Music Festivals and tours by the ESNCM orchestras and other ensembles continue to expose the population to the expressive freedom music provides. ESNCM offers a unique approach to social development. By teaching and promoting music to Palestinians, no matter their location, ESNCM is passionate about giving young people the chance to utilize their latent talent and strengthen cultural identity.

# PHOTO FEATURES



Two young musicians from the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music.



Dabke classes at Beit Ula Cultural Center.



(Above left/Left) The PNGO IV review team with the Arab Women Union Society.

(Above) Children admire their paintings at Beit Ula Cultural Center.



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NDC - For Palestinians By Palestinians

### NDC's WEB NETWORK

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*The NGO Development Center (NDC) is the largest Palestinian organization of its kind working hand-in-hand with Palestinian NGOs and community development organizations to improve the delivery of services to the disaffected and build a more capable and responsive Palestinian NGO sector.*



## Beit Ula Cultural Center: UPDATE 2012

<http://www.bucc.ps>



The Beit Ula Cultural Center was established in 1996 with the aim of developing services for children and young people through cultural, artistic and literary activities. Currently implementing an 18 month Empowerment Grant from NDC, the Beit Ula Cultural Center offers unique opportunities for local children and youth. 2012 is already proving to be a very productive and exciting year for the center and the young people who avail of its services. The founding of a choral group has proved hugely successful with the children and, along with Dabke classes, is one of the most popular cultural activities on offer. The Beit Ula Cultural Center also holds art workshops, library activities and psychosocial awareness sessions so as to provide the young participants with an outlet for their creativity, academic ability and personal thoughts. By supporting practical expression and the personal and psychological development of local children, the center is implementing a truly holistic project. The addition of a youth press group in early 2012 is a fantastic example of how effective the youth can be in analyzing and challenging the society they

live within. The summer months promise to be busier than ever with a number of summer camps, fun excursions (e.g. zoo and swimming trips), art exhibitions and new 'discovery' activities planned. Furthermore, a series of computer training sessions will continue to build the skills of local children. The center places particular importance on developing activities that show specific benefit



to participants. In recognition of the commitment of Beit Ula's youth population, a ceremony in late summer will reward the achievements of the children. The center is responding to a need to utilize the wasted talent of the local young population. Indeed, the benefits of the center's activities go beyond the individual child. The habits, values and ethics that many of the center's members acquire are duplicated in the children's home lives and directly influence their families. The center focuses on skills such as respect for others, time management and personal/public hygiene. Since the child and family are fundamental parts of this society, this example of social development has the potential to positively benefit society at large. As one Beit Ula Cultural Center member notes, the children are now reenergized: "the club helped us with our self-development, and made us like studying, reading, playing, and helping in several tasks within the club". Whilst the center is ostensibly concerned with education and learning through fun activities, its impact on local society is greater still. By empowering the young population, the center is investing in the future of Beit Ula.