

Report of the project " the culture of human rights and democracy for the students of the Islamic Law " Sharia " Colleges and the religious institutions in the West Bank "

Civil Education for Religious

Institution: The Center of Human Rights and democratic participation /SHAMS

Project's title: Civil education for religious

Grant #: 021WB05

colleges students in the West Bank

Project's period :May /1st /2006-Febrary/28th /2007

Reporting period: May/1st/2007-February /28th /2007

Location : West Bank (Universities :Hebron , Jerusalem , Najah , Qalwqlia relegious college , Quds Open University)

Background

This project is about commencing 35 workshops in the Palestinian universities distributed on 10 months, this project is aiming at opening a democratic dialogue with religious students to raise their awareness regarding issues concerning democracy, civil society and social development .

Beneficiaries

Religious college students in the Palestinian universities:
(Najah University, Quds University , religious college , Quds open university) for both genders and in all geographical areas.

Phases of the project

Administrative preparation phase: 5/1/2006-30/5/2006

Implementation phase: 6/1/2006-31/1/2006: during this phase We have implemented 35 workshop , 5 workshops per months

Evaluation, reporting g phase: 2/1/2007-28/2/2007. Additionally we have been following publishing the related book in this phase

Training methodology

Dialogue was the milestone for those workshops. The trainers gave a related presentation for thirty minutes, while in the remaining time the participants discussed the presentation and This methodology served this projects' aim of enriching the participants personalities through dialogue and exchanging thoughts.

Issues discussed

Many subjects were tackled in the project that mainly concerns democracy, human rights and civil society. The tackled issues were are the following:

Youth role in decision-making

Extremism,

Voluntary work ,

Women's image in folkloric proverbs ,

The role of female students in the students' counsel

Political diversity,

The social image for women

Youth role in political development, civil society, citizenship, youth problems

Internet and its effects on youth,

University education and labor market requirements,

Constrains on freedom of expression

Youth and change,

Youth welfare law

, the role of civil societies

Building the youth's capacities,

Youth and media,

Dialogue in students' movement,

The role of media,

The role of law and social education in preventing addiction on alcohol, cigarettes or drugs, leisure time and youth

Students' problems and concerns',

The role of youth in the development process

Youth literature in Palestine

Gender and social roles

Internal and external immigration

democratic dialogue and tolerance

Results

Implementing 35 workshops targeting religious colleges students in different governorates in the West Bank

Target 682 religious students in those workshops

Raising the awareness of the target group on issues concerning democracy , human rights , civil society and social development

Empowering some of the participants personalities that they are now more tolerant people who accept diversity

Draw the attention of the participants to crucial issues that were not discussed in their educational curriculums

Discuss many issues that were considered as a taboo or red lines

Building positive relations with the administrations of religious colleges

Building positive relations with Palestinian media that covered most of our activities

Draw the attention of the administrations of religious colleges on the importance of integrating civil education in their educational system

Disseminate the culture of dialogue and human rights and cultural freedom among the participants

Participants are aware of important concepts such as citizenship, civil society, decision making, discrimination, religious extremism, political diversity, positive dialogue, political developments, gender , tolerance and accepting the other

Empower the goals of the projects through vast networking with the Palestinian universities

Publish the book for the project

Project constrains

Hebron universities and Najah University were not cooperative

There was misunderstanding for the goals of the project among some people

Movement constrains imposed by the Israeli occupation

It was hard to commence workshops during Ramadan because the target group was committed to some religious rituals

There was misunderstanding to the subject of religious extremism among the participants that they refused to discuss this issue and they refused to admit in having such a problem

Presumption about the democratic system that some participants refused it and they proclaimed that it came for the western culture

The participants were clearly biased against non-Islamic movements that they considered other political parties are untrue and unaccepted

Some participants refused to register their names in the attendance sheets, even some participants refused to have photos for purpose of documentation

Female student didn't have active role in discussions for social constrains

Some participants join the workshops to question the validity of the projects goals, accusing the project in marketing for western thoughts and principles

Some participants limit the concept of citizenship to male Muslims only excluding Christians and females.

Some of the target groups were worried to participate in those workshops because they believed that they are always been targeted for their religious and political believes

Overcoming those constrains

Networking with civil society organizations in Nablus and Hebron so we find a substitute if religious colleges' administrations insisted on not hosting those workshops

Explaining the goals of this project to the target group to adjust any misconceptions they have regarding the project's concept

Activating women's participation we discussed female interested subejects such as gender to break the wall of their silence, additionally out trainers asked of the female participants by directly about their opinion

Networking with religious figures to facilitate the participation of religious students

There are always substitute trainers in case the original trainer couldn't reach the area for movement constrains

There were always field visits for the target group and the colleges' administrations to market the project's goals and objectives among them

Discussing controversial issues gradually so they would accept it and exchange ideas about it

Target group

682 participants 390 males and 292 females

Implemented Workshops

Youth role in the process of decision-making

Recommendations

Activate the role of youth in the process of decision making through adopting supportive policies to youth problems

Support youth organizations and unify youth efforts away from political lobbying

Build the youths capacities to have active participation in decision-making

Intensify programs that raise the youths' awareness regarding the importance of their participation in the decision making process

Organize campaigns advocating for youth concerning issues

Religious Discrimination

Recommendations

Commencing workshops advocating against religious discrimination

Commencing workshops to fill the gaps in point views regarding controversial issues

Encounter gender discrimination against women and disseminate the culture of tolerance in our society

Religious extremism Recommendations

Commence workshops to limit the phenomena of religious
Commence workshop between different social sectors to find point of agreements on controversial issues

Conduct media campaigns explaining the negative results for extremism

Advocate against discrimination in formal governmental organizations

Disseminate the culture of tolerance and accepting the other

Empower the concept of voluntarism among youth

Form new policies for voluntarism among youth reflecting their hopes and needs

Activate the role of different organizations in voluntary work

Integrate the concept of voluntarism in our educational system

Offer youth equal opportunities and empower their role in disseminating the culture of voluntarism

Women's image in folkloric proverbs Recommendations

We have to stop all discrimination against women

Study the proverbs and adjust them to fit in our cultural context

Use positive proverbs only

Advocate against using negative proverbs and explain their effect

Adjust the image of women in drama and media

Empower the culture of dialogue inside the one family to empower the role of females on the social level

The role of female students in students' movements Recommendations

Empower the capacities of female to let them, having more positive role in the students' movement

Enlighten the female students' regarding the importance of their role in students' movements

Unify efforts away from political lobbying to pressure on key personals for more female representation in decision making demand from students' movement parties for more female presentation

Commence more workshops in this field and including all students not only religious students

Political diversity

Recommendations

Conduct meetings between different parties to find point of agreements

Disseminate the culture of tolerance and human rights through workshops and conferences

The political discourse must be more peaceful based on mutual dialogue and understanding

Women's image in the society

Recommendations

The importance of women participation in the process of decision making

Prepare a national agenda activating women's role in all levels

Educate children about the importance of women's role

Integrate women's rights in our educational system

Organize many workshops to come up with come up with common working agenda

The youth role in political development

Recommendations

Open the opportunities for you for real participation in decision-making

Facilitate the role of female participation in the political development process and encourage them for more participation

Adjust the Palestinian election law to allow youth to be members in the legislative council therefore enable them to participate efficiently in the decision making

Make periodical election for Palestinian parties to enable youths' participation in decision making

Raise youth awareness regarding the importance of participation in political life

Discrimination and Racism

Recommendations

Disseminate the culture of tolerance and accepting the other in Palestinian society

conduct periodical meetings with decision makers

Encounter the phenomena of extremism among the young generation by workshops and raising awareness campaigns

Integrate the principles of tolerance and accepting the others in the Palestinian educational system

Emphasize the importance of cultural education to encounter extremism and conduct workshops for parents explaining the negative results of this phenomena

Civil society

Recommendations

Civil society's organizations must work to serve the society

The agenda of civil society organization must spring from the needs of the society

Stronger networking must take place between different NGOs

Youth reality

Recommendations

Emphasize the role of family in using raising methodologies considering youth freedom

Improve teaching methodologies and educational curriculum

Implement programs solving the problem of unemployment

Put the rights person in the right place

Support youth organization

Empower the youth role in different organizations

Citizenship is the milestone for civilized society

Recommendations

Conducting raising awareness campaign enlightening Palestinians about their rights

Implementing programs advocating for equality, freedom and law sovereignty

Offering equal opportunities for youth based on professional skills

Use youth input in determining national agendas

Youth and participation

Recommendations

The importance of youth participation in decision making process

Adjust the Palestinian election law to enable more youth participation in the Palestinian legislative council

Palestinian political parties must practice democracy on internal level

Civil society organizations must conduct periodical elections and they have to implement social programs

Disseminate the culture of tolerance and the importance of youth participation in the national and local council elections

Conduct media campaign encouraging youth for more active participation in the political domain and asking to fix the education system to start and democratic heritage

Internet and its effect on youth

Recommendations

The importance of positive use for internet

Raise youth awareness regarding the risks of abusing the net

The important of parent's observation to their teenager kids to prevent addition and social isolation

Generalize positive use for the internet and stop negative use

The gap between academic specialization and the needs of the labor markets

Recommendations

Maintain good quality of academic cadre to assure high educational standards

Raise the high school score as a prerequisite of university entrance and enlist low scores students in vocational colleges

Encourage youth to start their business through offering them loans

Starting a new Palestinian law to fit the new upcoming for instant we can reduce the retirement age to offer more working opportunities

Conducting a thorough study for academic specializations adjusting them to fulfill the needs of the labor market

Implement projects through the Palestinian university to invest in youth and improve their professional skills

Encourage vocational work among youth and improve its image to reduce number of students who seek academic learning.

Youth and change

Recommendations

Use new educational methodologies emphasizing the concepts of equality, democracy and law sovereignty

Upgrade educational curriculums empowering creativity and productivity

Put a national agenda to reduce the rate of unemployment

Put the right person in the right vacancy

Youth social development in the law of youth welfare

Recommendations

Judicial system must find a law based on youths' needs and there priorities

Improve the educational system to adopt talented youth and encourage scientific research

Put a law emphasizing youth needs and priorities

Support youth by reduce rates of unemployment

Support youth cultural and sport organizations

Provide health insurance for youth organizations

Support raising awareness programs interested in youth capacity building

Activate youth role in capacity building

The role of non-governmental organizations in youth capacity building and adopting talented youth

Recommendations

Offer the educational Palestinian cadre proper training

Providing educational organizations with the financial support enabling the implementation of special programs for gifted youth

Encourage scientific research

The implementation of programs fulfilling the needs of youth concerns and needs

Implement programs with realistic goals and measurable objectives

Provide gifted people with educational scholarships

Invest in youth leisure time in serving the community

Constrains on freedom of expression in the Palestinian universities

Recommendations

Implementing a an educational program empowering the freedom of educational inside the Palestinian universities

Integrate freedom of expression in our social educational since childhood

Youth and media

Recommendations

There must be more observation by ministry of medial on programs screened on television

The Palestinian media must be neutral in covering on going events

Palestinian television must screen program of interest to youth, their organizations, and there implemented programs

Palestinian media must pay more attention to youth problems and needs

Constructive dialogue between the Palestinian students' movements

Recommendations

Stop all violence taking place between Palestinian students movements and start a positive dialogue inside each movement without referring back to old agendas

Stop the negative effects of the conflicts between student's movements on the on going of the students' academic life

Integrate the principle of tolerances and dialogue since childhood prior entering the university

The university must provide special forum to students enabling them for self-expression

The role of media ,law and cultural education in stopping addiction on drugs, alcohol and smoking

Recommendations

Media must have more affection role in advocating against all shapes of addiction

Impose tough penalties on drugs dealers .

Support rehabilitation centers

Conduct studies assessing this problem in the Palestinian society

Offer training for police working in the anti drugs' department

Civil society development

Recommendations

NGO's must implement programs correspond to the needs of the society

Emphasize more on deprived areas and marginalized sectors

NGOs must work hand in had to implement complementary programs and do not double work

NGOs must coordinate with PNA in implementing activities

NGOs must emphasize on investing in human resource and employees' capacity building

Youth and media

Recommendations

Media must advocate for developmental programs implemented by NGOs

Youth must contribute more in media through writing articles and participating in visual media

Media must Pay more attention to youth problems

Provide training to youth journalists

Media must communicate truth to its audience without any bias or discrimination

Media must screen more youth related programs targeting

Conduct a survey envisaging youth opinion regarding media
Youth leisure time

Put a national agenda to invest in youth leisure time

Implement youth programs fulfilling youth needs and interests

Establish youth center in different area and provide with needed financial support

Pay more attention to disable youth

Raise the youth awareness regarding the importance of investing in leisure time by voluntary work

Students concerns

Recommendations

Solve the problem of books shortage

Provide students with regular transportation

Form a committee to follow up problems with ministry of religion

Youth role in the development process

Recommendations

Put a national agenda to improve the status of youth in the Palestinian society

Pay more interest to the youth organizations and its geographical distribution

Provide the youth sector with programs fulfilling the needs of the target group and participate in the process of supporting youth developmental initiative

Youth literature

Recommendations

Conduct literary forums gathering young and old novelists to exchange youth and experience

Encourage youth to publish their written product in local newspapers and media

Publish a special magazine concerning children's literature especially in universities and offer incentives for writers in this field

Reduce publishing cost to encourage youth publishing their writings

Encourage publishing using youth literature on the internet
Gender and social roles

Youth must be the tool for social, political and economical change

We must emphasize of the complimentary roles for both genders and don't emphasize on points of disagreement

Facilitate women role in the Palestinian society

NGOs and governmental organization must work hand in hand to improve women's status

The consequences Internal and external immigration Recommendations

Find working opportunities for youth in different economical sectors

Integrate employed youth in a welfare programs

Government must improve educational, health, and public services

Offering vocational training for youth

Lobby to advocate for youth concerns

Provide cheap apartments for youth

Provide youth with working opportunities

Adjust educational policies to fit in the needs of labor market

Democratic dialogue and accepting the other Recommendations

Integrate the culture of dialogue in our cultural creed and educational policies

Conduct media campaign advocating for tolerance and accepting other cultures

Religious figures must advocate for tolerance and accepting other cultures

Number of workshops

Najah University 8 workshops

Quds University: 6 workshops

Hebron University: 5 workshops

Religious college: 7 workshops

Al-quds open university: 9 workshops

Planned activities , did projects' activities were implemented according to its planned schedule

Implemented workshops were implemented on time without any delay

Success stories related to the target group

The local community had great interest in the implemented workshops titled as " the gap between academic specialization and the needs of the labor markets " . We have received many inquiries on this regard and we have been interviewed by Ajyal radio regarding this issue

There was a demand to conduct more workshops in Quds open university in toolkarem

Some of the participants who object the project in the beginning were eager for more workshops later that is an indicator that we had a change

Conducting a workshop in najah university despite there object at the beginning

Female students from Quds open university has contacted us to conduct workshop targeting female students who didn't attend the workshops

The social worker in quds open university has contacted our center emphasizing the importance of those workshops empower the students' social maturity

The officer of students affair department in the Teacher rehabilitation center has contacted the center to conduct workshops in the subject of gender

Quds educational TV expressed its interest to cover the activities of this project in all governorates.

Eimanan radio station in Gaza interviewed the project manager of this project to speak about the research contest

One of the famous novelists expressed his interest in the subject of literature and he volunteered for the center

Students' movement in Quds Open University /Bethlehem has contacted us continuously seeking more workshops

Female students from Tereh college met with us to coordinate for more workshops related to the subject of youth after their participation in workshop about out

Success stories related to our center

Reach the target group regardless constraints and obstacles we faced
Public a book which we consider an important outcome for this project
Administrative success we have made a human resources manual and apply its content which have been reflect positive on the project implementation
Through this project we have established a financial system which

Project's outcome

The above mentioned success stories reflects part of the project's outcomes . we have been contacted to conduct workshops and the administrations of the religious colleges had some inquired about the project . and we have active distinctively in Quds and Tereh college Standards
rate of youth participation

youth has the major participation in this project they have always been our priority and the discussed issues was of great interest for them. Evaluation took place after each workshop by the trainer and the team of the project

2-Through this project we have been seeking to offer youth by chances and provide them by financial and mental support which has contributed greatly to the success of our project .Additionally we have been trying to offer raising awareness service all of the Palestinian religious colleges in the West Bank

3- the team of the project was of highly professional youth who were qualified to work with this target group and their input and evaluation has always been considered

4-partnership with senior employees

we have greatly interested to benefit from the experience of employees who were working in this field by integrating them in our evaluation committee or through discussing with them the idea of the project . those senior employees were either teacher for our target group or administrative officers in targeted colleges or they were

positive RESULTS

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Secondary results

Publishing a book titled as (Youth issues) tackling some subjects discussed in the project. Additionally we advertised about the Research contest in the newspapers, local radio stations, 17 participants have applied for this contest, and three researchers have been chosen by qualified researchers. Those three researchers are the following :

Psychology of political participation among Palestinian youth

The role of Palestinian NGOs in building youths' personality and its role in the development process(1995-2004)

The role of Education and Media in youth NGOs

This book is aiming at

Finding solutions for the current youth crisis

Raise youth academic awareness

Provide youth professionals and decision makers with scientific and academic references

Establish a youth forum defend youth rights and advocate for those rights

Encourage high standard researchers and reaches

Notes

The subject of religious discrimination was sensitive

Some participants attended with already set presumptions regarding the goals of the project

Some participants throw the responsibility of corruption on the shoulders of non Islamic movements

Some people limit the concept of citizenship of Muslim males and exclude women and Christian from this concept

Feedback

Target all students not only religious colleges student

So a bigger chance of dialogue and exchanging thoughts

Make use of the experience gained in this project through intensify project implemented targeting those people in different geographical areas

Let the students prepare for the discussed subjects

Save the children role in directing the project

They were highly helpful and cooperative through regular meetings and they help us to overcome any obstacle by their constant follow up. Moreover we appreciate deeply their trust in our center, they were very considerate because we have been just starting and we have been lacking administrative and logistical facilities, they supported us to have part time accountant and provide us with a good audit system

Attachments (pictures and newspapers)