



Joint Christian Committee
for Social Service in Lebanon

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Annual Report 2014

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Message from the Chairman



As long as the Palestinian calamity goes on so will our mission to serve the victims and provide tools to encourage the Palestinian community in Lebanon.

Our hopes for a peaceful and just solution for Palestine and Palestinians have been raised and dashed over the course of many years.

Just as we believe we are approaching the horizon of justice, once again a peace process fails and the world stands by, uninterested in truly committing the dedication required to bring about justice to Palestine. As we continue to prioritize the Palestinian community in our work, this year we have expanded to work with Syrian refugees of Palestinian origin. We have suddenly and unexpectedly found ourselves confronted with a new calamity – the Syrian crisis and the influx of people and families to Lebanon. More than 1,200,000 elderly, women, girls and boys are migrants to what has become a stretched and stressed Lebanon. They

are in need of shelter, food and education.

This year's challenges have encouraged us to look for creative new ways to address the needs. We are proud to continue JCC's legacy of education to hundreds of Syrian students in southern Lebanon whose studies would otherwise be put on hold indefinitely. Through the passion of our staff, these students are not only continuing their studies but have even been able to take the qualifying entrance exams for higher education. We are immensely proud of the dedication of these students – their determination inspires us to continue the mission of JCC.

We thank our partners for their support in these times of difficulty – it is this cooperation which gives us bread for the journey and allows us to join hands in hopes of accomplishing the work which will ensure a bright future for all of God's people.

May God alleviate the miseries of our region.

Edward Asmar
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Edward Asmar', written in a cursive style.

Acknowledgements

The JCC with its board, staff and beneficiaries extends its gratitude to those who support our work and make it possible. Some of our partners have been with us for many years faithfully supporting our work and encouraging our efforts. Others have joined recently and have become new partners whose help and support we greatly need and appreciate. We remain committed to helping the Palestinian refugees as they are well into their 6th decade of living and suffering as refugees. We also serve the poor of the local community and have since two years added the Syrian refugees to the list of those we work hard to help. All this cannot be done without support. Thus our gratitude to our old partners and to the new and may we all be able to do what our mission and values dictate upon us.

We also appreciate the visits of partners and members of churches and organizations and the media who ask to visit the camps. It is our chance to show them the suffering and misery of life within the camps as they walk in the narrow, damp and dark alleys with the dingy connecting homes. This is home to thousands of people for the last 67 years. We are happy to show them our programs, share with them our successes, express our frustrations and listen to their ideas and suggestions as we together try to offer what we can.

- Embrace the Middle East
- Global Ministries – United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ
- Christian World Service – New Zealand
- Bread for the World
- Church of Scotland
- General Board of Global Ministries –The United Methodist Church – USA
- United Churches of Canada

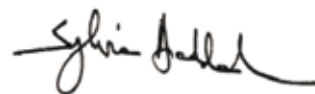
- Church of Sweden
- Protestant Church in Netherlands– Kerk in Actie and Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)
- Action of Churches Together ACT
- World Vision
- Welfare Organization
- Pontifical Mission
- German Evangelical Church of Beirut
- Le Comité Catholique Contre La Faim CCFD

We appreciate the Cooperation we have with local NGOs and extend our thanks and gratitude for their help.

- EPEP- The Ecumenical Popular Education Program
- Al Jana- The Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts
- Najdeh Association
- Beit Atfal Assumoud
- Palestinian Women's Union
- Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARAD)
- Harriri Foundation – Health Department
- The Right to Play.
- Palestinian Association for Children's Encouragement of Sports. (PACES)
- START- Encouragement of Education Through Art
- ASSABIL- Friends of Public Libraries Association
- Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP)

Warm wishes are sent to all and we hope that we will continue to work together for a better future.

Sylvia Haddad



Introduction

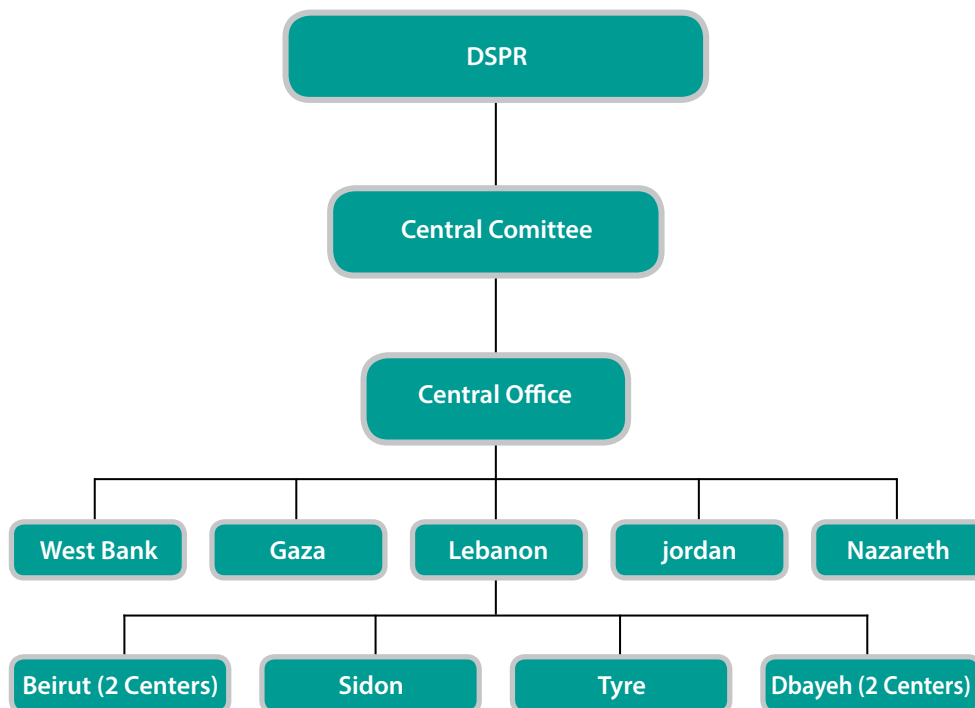
The Joint Christian Committee (JCC) was established in 1950 in the aftermath of the Palestinian people's forced exodus from their country in 1948. It was established as one of the five regions of the Department of Service for Palestinian refugees (DSPR) which in turn became part of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in 1974. The initial goal of DSPR at the time was to aid the refugees in their areas of refuge to cope with the new hard life they faced. Each DSPR region undertook an area of service which they deemed best suited to the refugee needs in their region and was within the expertise and interest of the implementers. They were connected through a Central Office under the direction of a Central Committee made up of members from the various committees in addition to consultative members from the different churches. The relationship between the area committees, their Central Office and the Central Committee was and remains strong and unified in spite of the diversity of programs in the different regions. They all share common purposes and ideals of service based on promoting the spiritual, moral and material welfare of the refugees and displaced.

The JCC began with relief but as the refuge duration extended beyond the few expected months or even the few expected years, empowerment for facing the years ahead was the path they had to follow. Education and vocational training was chosen as the JCC mission which began with the establishment of schools and

vocational training centers. The Palestinians and the needy of the local communities were provided with a good education and excellent vocational trainings which allowed them the ability to work as they awaited their return to their homes. Yet the expected and coveted return to Palestine did not happen while new catastrophes hit other countries and help was diverted elsewhere. Gradually funds to JCC decreased forcing schools, centers and programs to close. A civil war in Lebanon resulted in the closing of even more centers and programs. Yet JCC held on.

Today the JCC operates through its four centers in four different areas of the country. It implements programs best suited to the refugee community still believing in the importance of education, vocational training and community development. The Syrian crises sent a new wave of refugees with a big number of them being of Palestinian origin experiencing once again the bitterness of losing their homes. Most of these refugees were housed in the 12 existing camps seeking assistance of the UNRWA. But these additional numbers added to the already congested and miserable situation in the camps and added a burden on the NGOs serving in these camps. The JCC offered the services it could beginning with relief and repeating what our founding fathers had done: offering young people education and teaching vocations and skills to the older ones. The young generation must not be lost.

Department of Service to the Palestinian Refugees Organizational Chart



Mission

Empowering Palestinians, regardless of age or gender, with knowledge and skills that lead to self-reliance and equipping him /her to be a provider for the family and community while at the same time preserving the Palestinian identity, heritage and culture.

Vision

- Youth equipped with academic and vocational education.
- Youth participating in their community.
- Men and women carrying out sustainable community development programs.
- A community leading a dignified life while preserving the Palestinian identity, heritage and culture, and upholding the all important "Right of Return".
- Palestinian and Lebanese communities working on restoring harmonious relations between them.
- The Palestinian struggle as central to Christian church movements in the Middle East and Worldwide.

JCC Centers

Beirut - Sabra Center:

The Sabra Center is in the southern part of Beirut and serves the heavily populated area of Sabra- Shatilla camp and its surroundings. It occupies the first two floors of a building with a small playground. A nursery, a kindergarten and a beauty program occupy the first floor. Offered on the second floor are the programs of electronics, computers, tutoring, literacy, lectures, workshops, children and youth activities and a program for the elderly.

Sidon Center

To the south of Beirut, JCC has a spacious center in the city of Sidon which is accessible to the highest populated refugee camp in Lebanon. It is also accessible to a smaller camp and to the refugees residing in the old section of the city. Programs in beauty skills, secretarial training, student tutoring and a variety of workshops have been offered for many years. At present the center goes on with the secretarial training but has expanded its services to academic classes for Syrian refugee students.

Tyre Farm

Accessible to three camps in the south of Lebanon stands the JCC farm. Since most of the first generation refugees worked in the agricultural field when they arrived, the JCC – in an effort to pass on this skill -runs short courses in agriculture open to both genders and to all ages. School children, scouts, photography students and other groups are regularly welcomed at the Farm to explore what the land and nature can offer. In addition, the farm also periodically offers courses in flower arranging, soap making and bee keeping. The farm also hosts many groups and families who are stifled in the overcrowded camps and come for a recreational break. Academic classes for Syrian students have lately been added.



Dbayeh Center

In the Dbayeh camp to the north of Beirut, the JCC has a center which serves as a library, community and a tutoring center. Most of the children and the youth of the camp gather in this center during their free time to read, borrow books and participate in playing games, reading stories, singing, dancing and acting. Lectures and workshops are offered the community in general and are mostly well attended. Dealing with learning problems of children is a major program offered in addition to literacy and English classes for adults. A sports program, musical training and moral guidance have been added. A group of young men and women have been well trained through a series of workshops and have become leaders in their camp. They work as a team to defend and advocate for their camp in all situations. New programs for Syrian refugee children have been added this year.

The strategic plan of JCC is based on four goals serving as guide lines to achieve the JCC mission.

Goal one: To improve living conditions of Palestinian refugees as a basic human right. We believe that education, in all its aspects, is the best way to improve living conditions. This goes a long way in improving personal, family and community life.

Education at all levels is the life line for the refugee communities that transforms the life of the struggling poor societies and provides hope for their future.

Nursery and Kindergarten



In the heart of the heavily populated Sabra- Shatilla camp and its crowded surroundings lies the very busy JCC Center for pre-school education. Everybody in that area and beyond knows the JCC Nursery and Kindergarten. Situated in their midst, it has served them for more than six decades. Those who were once preschoolers are now the parents and grandparents of the current preschoolers attending the Kindergarten.

The Kindergarten is made up of three rooms colorfully decorated on the ground floor of a residential building and three additional rooms newly added and decorated on the first floor. There is an ever increasing demand to join. Led by five teachers and two assistants, children aged three to six get a head start on literacy by learning their alphabet letters and numbers. A variety of activities including music, art and story reading expands their knowledge



and increases their vocabulary. Parents are involved and have opportunities to watch and take part in classroom activities. A playground - a great luxury in this congested area- is used for play and also for all kinds of performances and occasions which the children, their parents and the community in general love to attend.

Activities of the Kindergarten

A variety of activities are carried throughout the year nurturing the children's growth:

- Celebrating the children's birthdays, special occasions – Christmas, Adha, Mother's day, Teacher's day, Independence Day etc.
- Making cards and presents for Mothers' Day
- Learning colors through handling and cutting fruits and vegetables and learning their benefits for their health
- Learning about the benefits of dairy products
- Puppet shows with educational themes such as caring for the teeth
- Seeing films about animals and then visiting the zoo to learn more about them at close range
- Enjoying playing in public playgrounds
- Story reading to encourage love of books and instill reading habits
- Attending plays performed at different theaters
- Visiting supermarkets, vegetable markets and observing making dough at bakeries
- Attending a special children's program at "Unite Lebanon Youth's" outdoor facility at the outskirts of Beirut where the children get a chance to learn about nature and partake in various activities offered- handicrafts, drawing, singing, running in nature
- Visits of the upper Kindergarten class to Elementary Schools in preparation for their move the coming year



Tutorial Program

Unemployment amongst the refugee workforce is substantial. Those who are lucky enough to find work receive low wages without any benefits. As a result, many young people see no purpose in continuing their education and drop out of schools.

Another reason for dropping out of school is that the UNRWA schools have become severely overcrowded with many running a double shift program. The teachers are unable to cope with such a high number of students in each class.

At home, students endure difficult conditions with hardly a space to study. Homework assistance is not available as most parents cannot help their children neither can they afford private tutoring although many suffer from a variety of learning difficulties and are in need of specialized help.

In general, school records show that one out of three children aged 10 and above is leaving school at the elementary or intermediate level. The younger dropouts (11 years) are mostly boys while girls tend to drop out of school at a later stage. The dropout rates for boys increase at the age of 15 especially among those who fail in their intermediate exam.

Helping students with their homework and their learning difficulties has become a pressing need in all Palestinian camps and gatherings. It is of utmost importance to help them resist the ease of dropping out of schools by giving them the support and confidence to achieve and move forward. The positive report cards of the increasing number of participants are a clear indication of the success of this program in the two centers where this program is offered.



Sabra Center: A quiet room with colorful tables awaits its children every afternoon. Students aged 6 to 14 fill the room daily and spill into the second room. They are mostly from the surrounding UNRWA and local schools. Only few students seek the center's help in the beginning of the scholastic year hoping to do it on their own. But the coming months see a quick increase in numbers reaching 60-65 students from different class levels and of mixed ages and gender. One experienced teacher manages the program with the help of three or four other teachers. Volunteers are often asked to lend a hand, especially in English tutoring.



Once a year, the Rotary club offers these students and the poor of the community, a chance to celebrate a special occasion away from the dismal life of their camp. This year it was a trip to the mountainous northern village of Harissa where the children had the novel experience of riding cable cars to the top. Entertainment from a magician and good food awaited them. It was a memorable experience.



Issa Ammouy is 11 years old, an only child with a sick father and an uneducated mother. He joined the study station tutoring program when he was 7 years old. He was a very hyperactive child and found difficulty in abiding by rules. He was aggressive and violent in his play with his friends in school and followed the same behavior at the "study station". His grades in school were very low and we soon found out that he couldn't read or write properly and his pronunciation was unclear. He was in need of help in reading, writing and most importantly with his speech. He was immediately accepted by our speech therapist as a first step towards helping him in his other difficulties. It has now been three years since we started working with Issa and he is a changed boy. He is now in the 5th grade and his school grades have greatly improved as he gained confidence by his improved speech and his new reading and writing abilities. He is a member in the JCC library and he participates in all its activities. He has made good friends and is on good terms with everyone. His home life has greatly improved. Issa is now another person.

Dbayeh Center: The program began to help children with learning difficulties, such as slow learning, speech defects, hyper activity, difficulties in concentration and other psychological problems. These children live in a camp on a hill away from the main stream everyday activities of life. There is no school, or transportation facilities. Work opportunities are limited and most households face economic hardships. Learning difficulties of their children is not a priority. The establishment of the tutoring program in this camp has made a great difference in the lives of many children and their families.

The program, established in 2007, is known as the "Study Station". It has since benefitted a big number of students who otherwise may have dropped out of school. Five tutors, a speech therapist, a psychologist and a social worker provide help and guidance to the students with special learning needs.

Literacy program

"I was blind and now I can see", said 38 year old Talgeh Abdel-Razek as she stood on stage at the end of the year ceremony of Sabra Center. "A new world has opened in front of me - I can now read."

It is shocking to find so many illiterate people young and old in this age. Most people and especially the young do not admit their illiteracy. Thus, it has been very difficult to lure these people to come to literacy classes. With time and persuasion people of different ages slowly began shyly to show up in the Sabra center but not in Dbayeh .

Sabra Center: Fifteen women of various ages and four youngsters gather three times a week determined to learn the basics of literacy. It is a class they greatly look forward to as they slowly but surely start to make sense of the black letters on the pages in front of them. Two teachers have attended special trainings on the latest method of teaching literacy in an appealing and quick method and have become qualified to undertake this challenge. More effort must be exerted to overcome the shyness to attend this program.



Talgeh was born and raised in the Shatilla camp. Suffering from partial vision impairment discouraged her parents from sending her to school. This caused Talgeh a lot of agony while growing up as she always felt that she could learn. She yearned to read books and write to her friends . Yet no one helped her achieve her dream. "The day I joined the JCC literacy program was the best day in my life" she says. Her teacher is a patient and pleasant person who saw the problem and was not daunted by it. At the end of the year ceremony of the Sabra center, Talgeh was asked to read a speech that she had written. "I was blind but now I can see." Talgeh said, "I can read and I can write."



English program

English is increasingly becoming a universal language used in schools, in business, the social media and other aspects of life.

Sidon center - Courses for different levels are offered throughout the year including basic and advanced language skills in preparation for university entrance exams. Twenty students enrolled for the basic language classes while ten prepared for the pre-entry university requirement.

Sabra center Twelve women gather three times a week for a basic English course. Some come to increase their chances of finding a job while others need to help their children with their homework.

Dbayeh center A retired English teacher who resides far from the camp has dedicated three days a week to help the "study station" students improve their English.



Computer Program

Dbayeh Center: Fifty children were trained on the use of computers over a period of six months. Five of our teachers attended a special course to learn how to regulate children’s choice of computer programs. This provided control mechanisms for computer use for the children and the youth at the center.

Sidon Center: A six month condensed course teaches different computer skills and is presented as successive levels leading to a UNESCO standardized certificate. Seven women students studying the secretarial program added this course to their regular training.



The Library

Dbayeh Center: A vibrant place where all activities take place. Established in 2008 with a handful of books, it can now boast a good collection of around 1000 books, computers and different visual aids for lectures and workshop use. The membership has risen to over 100 members of different ages. They enjoy the concept of reading, borrowing and returning books. Story reading hours are carried out four times a week for children aged 5 to 13 divided into groups in accordance with their age and interests. Three readers emphasize new vocabulary, discuss new ideas and new concepts. Programs of art, music, educational games, lectures and workshops are carried out in this library turning it into a **community center** as well.

Sabra Center: In response to the requests made by the women and youth who recently learned to read, books were bought and shelves installed. A book distribution company offered to donate some of the books and gave us the freedom to choose from their stock. This encouraged us to widen this reading opportunity to the children in the tutorial classes and the young men in the Electronics Program. A library system was initiated and our students from different programs now borrow and read the books.

Educational programs	Centers	No. of beneficiaries	Duration
Nursery & Kindergarten	Sabra	140	9 months
Tutorial	Sabra and Dbayeh	65	9 months
Literacy	Sabra	19	9 months
Computer	Dbayeh and Sidon	57	6 months
English	Sidon , Sabra and Dbayeh	42	6 months
Library	Dbayeh	130	Ongoing

Goal two: Enable refugee women and youth and the needy of the community to develop their potential to advance their self realization, community involvement and income generation capacities.
 We believe that people should learn to help themselves as an essential step towards supporting themselves and their families.

Learning a skill no matter how simple or complicated is the way to finding jobs, attain employment or establish a business.

Electronics and Computers



Begun in the early 60s the program was a pioneer in the world of electronics training and its graduates were instrumental in the establishment of numerous television stations in Lebanon and in the Arab world. The weakness of basic education in the schools serving the Palestinian refugees, the deteriorating life in the camps and the limited civil rights of the Palestinians, have all affected the scholastic abilities of the youth.

We have gone to great length preparing a more simplified yet challenging curriculum which can be taught in a shorter period of time. This allows young people to work and help their families.

The teachers who run this program keep abreast of all electronic equipment new and old that need



installation, maintenance and repair. These include installing satellite cables, dishes and receivers and repairing mobile phones, in addition to repairing electronics and household equipment. The course begins with simple electricity installation as a basic requirement which will give students unable, to handle the more advanced course, enough knowledge and training to work and secure a living.

A computer course has been added as an important component in the electronics field. It begins with assembling and maintaining computers and moves on to programs connected to electronics equipment. The addition of this course has added to the attraction of the electronics program and has proved its importance to the job market.

Hair Dressing

Sabra Center: A very popular six-month course given twice a year with a capacity of 15 girls at a time. The course is designed to equip students with knowledge and skills needed in the areas of shampoo, conditioning, skin and scalp care, cutting, coloring, curling, straightening and lifting the hair. It also teaches the latest fashion of styling with natural hair or with extensions.

Beauty and Cosmetology

Sabra Center: A four-month course offered three times a year with an average of 6 – 8 young women per cycle. They study skin care, body treatments, good nutrition, latest in the application of makeup, eyebrow tattoo, lash extension, manicure, pedicure and henna designs.



Practical work:

An agreement with a nearby old people's home has been of great value to our trainees. After five months of training, the girls need to practice. The old women are in need of having their hair fixed and their nails cut. They also crave for young company. This agreement benefits both parties. Learning to deal with clients is an art in itself. Thus the center receives ladies from the community who are willing to have students fix their hair and work on their face for a minimal charge.

Sidon Center: The Hairdressing course given for more than 15 years was stopped this year to give space for an academic program for the Syrian refugees.

Huda Obeid is a Palestinian refugee whose family had taken refuge in Syria. Two generations later, she has been forced from Dara'a in Syria



to Beirut due to the Syrian civil war. She became friends with a young woman, a graduate of JCC's hairdressing program, who recommended it to Huda. She eagerly enrolled in JCC's program and immediately found her talent. As she gained the skills and new techniques needed for this profession, she began a small business in her home. Soon enough, she built a good clientele, but her husband was skeptical. In a society which encourages the husband to be the main bread winner, his wife's success challenged the preconceived ideas of gender roles. Yet once Huda's income grew, he saw how useful her marketable skill was in facing the heavy expenses of a family with growing children. Eventually, Huda's business grew too big for her home. So she rented a space near her home and established a salon for women. She now welcomes JCC trainees to practice under her guidance as she feels it is the least she can do to repay the organization that helped her.

Barber skills

Sabra center: As the morning hairdressing course for girls ends, the boys move in to begin their training in barbering techniques. They learn scalp care, cutting, styling, coloring, moisturizing, highlighting and shaving. We realize that some of the boys applying for this program are too young and should be in school. But when our efforts to return them to school with tutoring promises at our center fail, we have no choice except to keep them in the barbering class.



Sidon Center: With the special academic program this year, for the Syrian refugees in this center, space became limited and we could only accept eight students. The same teacher who teaches in the Sabra center travels to this center to give the course.

Practical work:

An agreement with a boys' orphanage gives our students the opportunity to practice their skill at the end of the four-month training period. This has proved of great benefit for both parties as our students get the needed practice and the boys get the grooming they love and the company of boys from outside the orphanage.



When Hassan failed in the 9th grade he decided to drop out of school. But he was aware of the poverty of his family and wondered how he could contribute to their finances. He heard about JCC's center in Sabra and enrolled in the Electronics and Computer course, eager to learn skills that could serve him immediately. But no sooner had Hassan started the Electronics and Computer course than JCC's other program caught his eye: barbering. Hassan's father, himself a barber, encouraged Hassan to follow in his footsteps. Hassan decided to study both programs as one was in the morning and the other was in the afternoon. At the end of the academic year, Hassan proudly collected both his certificates and started working with his father in his barber shop. Years of working long hours had left Hassan's father exhausted. Seeing the expertise which Hassan brought to his vocation, Hassan's father turned the barbershop over to his son. Hassan is optimistic about the growth of his business and credits the JCC as his stepping stone to a steady future.

Secretarial Studies

Sidon Center: The program was first introduced in 1994 when typewriters were still the norm. This program continues except that computers have replaced typewriters. Learning to type in English and Arabic and keep accounts has become much easier and quicker, but much more has been added to these core skills. They now learn the use of e-mail,

internet and telephone protocols. They help prepare correspondence and reports and keep a sorting and filing system. They book meetings, welcome visitors and communicate effectively with others and are trained to manage the office resources efficiently. It is a nine-month course with the last month used as practical supervised work at nearby establishments and stores according to pre-negotiated agreements.

Tying of Scarves

Sabra center: Covering the hair is becoming increasingly popular among many women. During special occasions women want to look their best with a special look. This initiated a four-week course teaching the different ways a scarf can be tied attractively. This skill generates an income for women - especially during special occasions.

Agriculture

In the south of Lebanon, near the city of Tyre, the JCC offers short courses in the basics of agriculture on a land it has well prepared. The soil has been well tilled and fertilized with four plastic houses set up. A water well and an irrigation system have been installed and two old structures were fixed as classrooms, a reception area and offices. A third structure was turned into a green house where seedlings are planted and nurtured to be planted outdoors when ready.

The land is accessible to three refugee camps and a number of informal gatherings. The courses are open to all ages and both genders. Most of the older residents of the camps were once farmers in their own homeland and had upon arrival helped the land owners in their host country improve their cultivation. It is of great benefit that the young people should be encouraged to learn something about agriculture and encouraged to take it up as a vocation in a country where the Palestinians are barred from working in many professions but not in agriculture. The course was given twice this year.

On a side hedge of the farm where there are trees and wild flowers, there is a beehive for bees.. It is a small beehive, but the honey produced was good and marketable. As many beekeepers around the area expressed the need to exchange experiences and explore the possibilities of keeping bees as income generating, four- half day sessions at different intervals were conducted by an experienced and well known beehive keeper for 24 men from the different camps.



Mohammad Albashire, a 47-year old Palestinian refugee farmer had always been fascinated with the industrious life of bees. He had watched their activities and the lead role the queen bee exerted over her workers. He had often thought of the possibility of setting up a honey making business as his small farm is surrounded with trees, flowers and shrubs. So when he heard of the beekeeping course the JCC was running on its farm, he was the first to join. At the end of the course, Mohammad had already bought fourteen hive boxes and had installed them in the shrubs and trees surrounding his farm. He now anxiously watches his bees anticipating a wonderful and healthy product that will allow him a much needed extra income.

Vocational training	Centers	No. of Beneficiaries	Duration
Hairdressing	Sabra	30	6 months
Beauty skills	Sabra	24	4 months
Barber	Sabra and Sidon	33	4 months
Secretarial Studies	Sidon	12	9 months
Electronics and Computers	Sabra	12	9 months
Agriculture	Tyre	29	4 months

Health Awareness



Dbayeh Center: Guided and supported by the Pontifical Mission, the JCC carried out a program based on a variety of health issues through home visits to the residents of the camp. Lectures, discussions, workshops and trainings spread over the year. Women were first targeted and their interest and enthusiasm encouraged other women to come as well. Gaining the interest of the youth was not hard as all matters discussed were what they were yearning to learn. The men rarely included in programs, came reluctantly at first, but their attitude quickly changed as they felt the benefit of what they were learning. Most residents of the camp attended various lectures with the attendance average of 80 attendants per lecture. Women were the highest attendants but also men and youth came with the ratio varying in every lecture according to the subject.

Some of the subjects were: Developing good eating habits; the food pyramid; nutrition for

children and youth and for those with special problems. Special emphasis was placed on the effects of smoking, drugs and alcohol. The program also included sex education, hygiene, dental care, breaking bad habits, overcoming failure and emotional problems, taking decisions, leadership and working for success.



Rita Moussa, a housewife and mother, never attended any of the many JCC programs. Feeling the need to improve herself, participate in her community, create bonds with other women, and spend time outside her home, she sought the help of JCC and was encouraged to join the Health Awareness Program which addresses physical and mental health issues. "Learning about mental issues has transformed my self-awareness and self-esteem", says Rita. "I now have the tools to deal with my own emotional concerns and am more aware of the feelings of the members of my family. I now know how to engage and communicate with my children and husband so as to increase the harmony amongst them and this allows me to be supportive of their

motivations and decisions. I have also learned to understand the changes that come with puberty as a key factor to understanding and caring for my growing boys. As to physical care, the nutrition sessions have helped me a great deal. I have learned to offer balanced and healthy meals and have improved my cooking methods to preserve the nutrients. But the most effective session was the topic of cigarettes as my husband, was shocked to learn how terrible his smoking was for him and for his children and has decided to quit this bad habit. Due to JCC's sessions, I have learned how to embrace my roles as a wife, a mother, and a friend. Most importantly, I feel proud of the progress I have made and am looking forward to the knowledge that is to come."

Sabra Center: Cooperation with other organizations provides the Sabra center with speakers and trainers addressing the different programs in this center. Some subjects dealt with health issues such as preventive care, cleanliness, drugs and family planning. Other

topics were family and child abuse, rights of women and of children, importance of play for children and training teachers and parents to play with their children, and answering children's questions on sex.

Moral Education

Dbayeh Center: With the loosening moral values affecting people through the internet and social media, it is deemed necessary to instill the basics of morality and values in the young generation of the camp to give them the backbone religious guidance provides. Stories, parables and lessons from the Bible are taught to young people aged 5-18.



Helping others: The concept of helping others is an important part of the religious guidance offered. An opportunity arose when our youth were asked to help care and entertain a group of young people with special needs who were spending some time at a mountain resort. Eighteen of our young people volunteered to help care for them and entertain them for two weeks. This was an invaluable learning experience for our youth and a joyful time for both groups.

Summer Camp

Dbayeh Center: Play and Learn was the theme of this year's summer camp for 137 children aged eight and upward. Fourteen young people from the JCC youth club under the guidance of experts led numerous activities to explain the different aspects of the environment and how to contribute to its preservation and especially the preservation of water. Games, songs, stories, films, plays, drawings, handicrafts and trips were some of the fun activities carried out. Songs and short plays marked the end of the activity with big boxes placed in all the camp emphasizing recycling- one of the concepts they had learned. A number of organizations contributed to the success of this program.

Sabra Center: Forty-seven children gathered every morning for six weeks for fun and games during the hot summer. Playing in small water pools were the favorite in addition to ball games and arts and crafts. But the focus of the program were memory games where the children learned to listen, observe and relay what they retained.



Art and Music

Dbayeh Center: Art and music are important in the life of children. A weekly art class usually has forty to fifty children participating and producing a variety

of handicrafts. Music and dancing are offered when trainers are available. A Brazilian dancing instructor trained 15 young people to dance to the Brazilian beat while a music teacher initiated a choir.

Sports



Dbayeh: Sports is an essential activity for the young and old. Its benefits are innumerable. An old playground of a closed school was prepared as a space for playing foot ball and basket ball. Teams for both sports meet twice a week with their trainers who are from the camp. They compete against each other and against teams from other camps.

A gymnasium was opened this year. No one believed that one day the camp will have its own gym facility. Repairing a couple of rooms of the abandoned school at the outskirts of the camp gave the coveted space needed for such an activity. Exercise machines of all sizes were purchased and installed. Inaugurated in October, the membership list grows as the young and old want to use this new facility.

Program for Seniors



Sabra: It is with pleasure that the older women of the camp and its surroundings, gather in the center every Wednesday morning throughout the year. They await the day anxiously and arrive early so as to enjoy what has become their special morning. The day carries

a variety of activities including lectures on topics of their choice, the lives of famous people, stories from the past, drawing, handicrafts and occasional trips for picnics.

General Programs	Centers	No. of beneficiaries	Duration
Workshops	Dbayeh and Sabra	Communities of two camps	Ongoing
Bee Keeping	Tyre	24	1 week
Summer Camps	Dbayeh and Sabra	198	2 months
Moral Education	Dbayeh	96	Ongoing
Art and Music	Dbayeh	50	Ongoing
Sports	Dbayeh	40	Ongoing
Program for Seniors	Sabra	65	9 months

Goal three: Gain world support for the plight of the Palestinians, advocate for their rights and support their right of return

"It is one thing to hear news reports about conditions in Palestinian refugee camps, but it is quite another to actually be there in person. There is no way to fully describe the situation, but I am sure that what I saw will remain in my memory for a long-time to come."

Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, United Church of Christ

The JCC has been telling the story for a long time. The story of a lost country, of refugees living in the misery of camps, of keys to houses that will never be opened, of an old generation's suffering and a new generations' despair.

Part of the JCC advocacy mission is to gain world support by providing information on behalf of the Palestinian refugees, to create awareness to their plight and the injustice committed against them 67 years ago.

Some of this work is carried out through our partners' visits that support our work in their churches and organizations. We are also visited by independent church groups of various affiliations and from people of the media, researchers, students and others. These visits are greatly welcomed.

Visitors



From the Church of Scotland came Rev. Ian Alexander, Rev. Andrew McLellan and Kenny Roger . They visited Dbayeh camp as supporters of some of the center's programs. They also visited the Sabra- Shatilla center and camp.



Claire Leeson and Jamie Eyr from "Embrace the Middle East" came on separate visits. Both visited the Dbayeh camp talked to people and saw the progress of the programs they were supporting.



Maggie Tookey accompanied once by Colin Cooper and the next by Denis Rutovitz from "Edinburgh Direct" visited the Sabra- Shatilla center and camp.



Rev. Jonas Lange, pastor of the German Speaking Church in Beirut and his wife, Chris, are frequent visitors to JCC office and centers. They encourage and support JCC work and often bring visitors. They accompanied a group of 17 persons, who were on a study visit of intercultural theology, to the Sabra-Shatilla camp. The group included Prof. Dr. Dieter Becker and Prof. Dr. Johannes Triebel from Bavaria and the Reverend Hans-Martin Gloël from Nürnberg.



They also accompanied twenty two members of the Board for Ecumenical Relations in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Bavaria made up of pastors, professors and experts on ecumenical issues. Representing the group was Sister Anna-Maria von der Wiesche. They believe that the situation of Palestinians in Lebanon is an issue that the Christians in the East and West have to be aware of.

Pastors, Erich Ackermann and Rebekka Herminhaus from Germany who were taking a special course at the NEST visited the Sabra- Shatilla center and camp. They played with the Kindergarten children and conversed with the students of the Electronics program.



Anthea Ayash from the "Gulf News" explored the Shatilla camp and wrote about life within and the services JCC is carrying for the camp and its surroundings. Her article appeared under the title "Saving Shatilla"



Journalist Marjon Vandalen, and photographer, Jaco Klamer commissioned by the Churches of the Netherlands asked to visit a Palestinian camp and to meet Syrian refugees who took refuge in these camps. They were taken to the Sabra- Shatilla camp where they interviewed many residents including a once affluent Syrian business man, who described his miserable life in the camp as a refugee.



Dick Loendersloot and Gerard Strien from ICCO-Holland representing ACT Alliance wanted to see JCC work with Syrian refugees. They visited Sabra-Shatilla center where Syrian children are part of the programs. They continued to Sidon center where they spent time speaking to the Syrian students studying the Syrian curriculum.



Trish Murray from the Christian World Service of New Zealand has always been interested in JCC work. This time she took a special interest in the Electronics Vocational Program and spent time talking to the students and their teachers. She also found time to visit the Dbayeh camp and its Library/Community Center.



A group led by Amgad Beblawi came from the "Presbyterian Churches of the USA". They visited the Dbayeh camp where they saw JCC work. They also visited a Syrian refugee family, one of many who are now living in this camp.



Peter Makari from the Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) came with a leadership delegation including executive persons, staff and board members with the intention of getting a sense of the current issues.



Philipp Ohlmann from the program "Churches Helping Churches" of the "Bread for the World" visited the Sabra-Shatilla center and camp.



From the Church of Sweden came Erik Apelgardh, Joanna Litja, and Jingjing Huang Staaf. They were taken to visit the Sabra-Shatilla camp and meet some of its residents.

Vidya Kauri commissioned by the "United Church Observer Magazine" of Canada was mainly interested in JCC work with the Syrians refugees. She visited Sidon Center where she interviewed the Syrian students in our educational program.

Having heard about the JCC educational programs for the Syrian refugee students and their success in the Syrian government Baccalaureate and Brevet exams, a re-known journalist, Nicholas Blanford, visited the Sidon Center. His article based on his interviews with the students and teachers was published in the "Christian Science Monitor".

Volunteers

The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope." Barack Obama

Mona Bahnan who has been volunteering with JCC for many years believes in the value of passing on her knowledge and experience to others. Faithfully, she continues to volunteer in the English program and Tutorial program in Dbayeh camp.

Joseph Atama, a young Cambridge graduate, was anxious to help others before he moved on to higher studies. He came to Lebanon and soon found himself teaching English to the young men in the JCC Electronics and Computer program.

Suzanne Mohlner, who had previously volunteered with JCC asked to come back for a short period. She was warmly welcomed and spent her time writing about the work of JCC trying to show the impact of JCC programs.



The New Refugees in the Palestinian camps and their surroundings



In 2011, life began to change in neighboring Syria. A country, once priding itself on being mostly self-sufficient planting its food and manufacturing its needs, began to experience internal unrest. As violence erupted, the people began to flee in masses to the neighboring countries. Lebanon, fearing the repetition of the Palestinian refugee camp situation, refused to erect special spaces for the fleeing Syrians. The refugees had to fend for themselves including finding places to stay. The Syrians of Palestinian origin headed mostly for the already established 12 Palestinian camps and their surroundings. Some stayed with relatives while others rented rooms when found, or stayed in tents set up for them within the camp grounds. Life was hard on them. They had once again lost their homes and all they owned. The UNRWA and other NGOs were trying their utmost to help these refugees but still the needs were great and the capacities were limited.

JCC Contribution

The JCC was able to collect and distribute a reasonable amount of mattresses, blankets, clothing, food, milk for children and a variety of hygiene and sanitary needs. In the Sabra center 18 children joined (space confines) the Nursery and Kindergarten classes while in the Electronics program, three young men qualified for the course. In the Dbayeh camp, 30-40 women from the new refugee arrivals attended the lectures, workshops and activities carried out on a variety of subjects and especially on family relations. Most of their children joined the choir and enjoyed performing in the church during Christmas in spite of their being non-Christian. The tutoring programs in both Dbayeh and Sabra were



open to the Syrian refugee children of all ages who were trying to cope with the Lebanese educational system.

In summer a special program to help ease the trauma the refugee children living in the Sabra-Shatilla camp and its surroundings had experienced, a program of handicrafts, games, song and dance was carried out in the Sabra center. For six weeks, fifty eight children attended daily with three teachers working hard to help ease the fear and pain most had experienced.

A major problem was clear to the JCC whose mission has always been education. The children have experienced considerable interruption to their education whether in Syria or since they came to Lebanon. The UNRWA

schools have accommodated a good number of children yet the UNRWA itself faces the problem of an overcrowded situation. Besides, the Syrian refugee students were unable to cope neither with the lessons in the UNRWA or with the Lebanese schools causing them a lot of frustration. The reason is that the Syrian school curriculum uses the Arabic language for all its major subjects while the Lebanese curriculum uses the English and French languages. Thousands of students were wasting the most formative years of their lives.

A New Educational Program Begins:

In Sidon center, a pilot project was started with 65 students for the higher classes at the end of 2013 and continued all through 2014 using the Syrian program. Syrian teachers desperate to find jobs were recruited. The JCC wanted to prepare its students to sit for the official exams offered by the Syrian Ministry of Education. This had been made possible by the Syrian authorities for their students in exile. The obstacles of securing books, as most of the printing presses in Syria were burnt, was solved by copying old books that some had brought with them and downloading newer information from the internet. The news of these classes spread very fast and soon the number of students rose to 220 within the first two months. Although the center is equipped as a vocational center for secretarial training, hair dressing and workshop meetings, the students were willing to put up with anything as long as their schooling went

on. All were happy to be there.

ACT Alliance Support

JCC had applied for support from the ACT Alliance within their Syrian appeal program and were very happy to receive the support needed as part of the DSPR Jordan programs. This helped the JCC to continue with this worthwhile project and allowed it to send the students of the 9th and 12th grades to Damascus for three weeks to sit for the official exams known as the Brevet for the 9th and the Baccaalaureate for the 12th grades. Applications to take these exams had been secured from the Ministry of Education of Damascus and travelling documents were all put in order. As the travelling day in the midst of June approached, some

were scared to go fearing that they will be recruited into the army or not allowed re-entry into Lebanon.

On the days assigned 180 students of the two levels went to Damascus and took the official exams. Seventy students displeased with their grades were escorted once more for a remedial exam. The total result was 138 successful students who received certificates for which they had worked so hard for.

The UNRWA in Damascus had provided lodging for both groups of students for the three weeks each group needed to be there. The Palestinian Embassy in Beirut had assisted in the travelling arrangements. .

The program, although small, was a success and earned the JCC special credit amongst the Syrian/Palestinian community and the other NGOs.

The Challenge Goes On

Encouraged by our successful trial and bombarded by popular demand, the program continued in Sidon providing the instruction needed to prepare yet another group of Palestinian/Syrian students for the Syrian official exams. To accommodate the increasing number of students, classes extended to Ein-El-Hilweh



camp at the outskirts of Sidon. It is the biggest and most congested Palestinian camp with 37,000 persons living in an area of 290 square meters congested further with an additional Syrian refugee population of ten to twelve thousand.

In response to urgent requests from Syrian families living further south for educational help for their children, classes began on the JCC Tyre farm. Six experienced Syrian teachers were recruited to instruct and follow the program already established in the centers of Sidon.



Syrian teachers who were part of those who had taken refuge in the Ba'alback area of the Bika' valley contacted us and asked for guidance to replicate our program for a group of students in that area who were not succeeding in the local schools. The curriculum and books were supplied and the classes began. Students qualifying for the official exams in Damascus joined our own students as they travelled to Syria to sit for the exams.



Education for Syrians	No. of Students	No. of Teachers
Sidon	242	16
Ein El Hilweh	90	9
Tyre	133	6
Ba'albeck	55	6
Dbayeh	67	9
Sabra	21	Regular Classes
Total	688	

Two other programs undertaken by the JCC to help the Syrian refugees are subsidizing rents of shelters and distributing vouchers for food and sanitary needs.

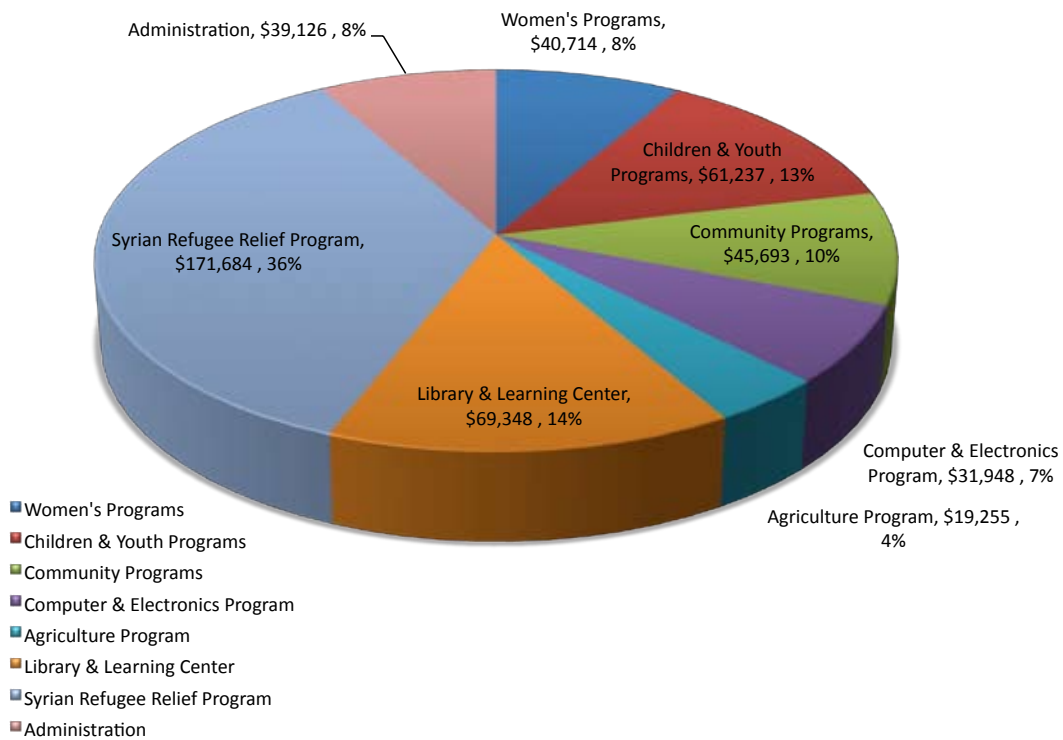
Goal four: Enhance the DSPR organizational operation and financial sustainability

All the regions of the DSPR are continuously working to insure their sustainability as regions and as an efficient and unified organization that has served the Palestinian refugees for the last 65 years. A recent consolidated strategic plan is in place, a financial reporting system is already unified and functional, a central office plays the important role of leadership and coordination while a Central Committee representing the four Church families is the guiding force of the DSPR.



Central Committee Members

Distribution of Funds in (USD)





Shatila Museum



Park Lane Bldg, 4th floor, Abla Street (Sadat), Beirut - Lebanon
Tel-Fax: +961 1 741 735 - E-mail: jcc@dspir-me.org -

a member of
actalliance

www.dspir-me.org/jcc.html