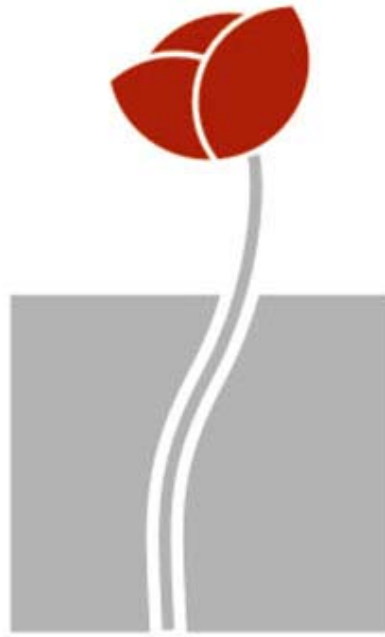


Tamer Institute
For Community Education



مؤسسة تامر للتعليم المجتمعي
Tamer Institute for Community Education

Annual Report 2007

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A Word from the Director

Recent years have witnessed continuous closures, roadblocks and raids in the West Bank and Gaza, the continued construction of the Separation Wall in the West Bank and the use of checkpoints to separate West Bank towns from each other and from Jerusalem. These factors create an increasingly difficult daily reality that affects all aspects of Palestinian life, including education, work, safety, family life and basic interaction between Palestinians from different areas. 2007 has also witnessed a political split among Palestinians, with events escalating as of June 2007 and resulting in increased turmoil and isolation for Palestinians living in Gaza.

These circumstances continue to cause a deterioration of the quality of life in Palestine, denying children and young people their basic rights to education; identity; freedom of expression; access to information; rest, leisure and play; and protection. Local NGOs working in the education sector have begun to address these challenges using new and creative initiatives that enable youth learn and develop, becoming active and productive members in their communities.

Responding to these needs, Tamer Institute continues to grow, developing our project portfolio to address the urgent needs of an increasingly desperate population. This year, our staff has increased to a total of 40 employees and our budget has increased to 1,128,884 USD in the 2007 fiscal year. Our projects continue to increase community learning and development, focusing on reading, writing, storytelling, drama, music and other forms of creative self-expression; increasing access to and quality of children's literature through libraries, book fairs, and our publishing unit; and youth-based advocacy and campaigning to raise awareness of children's rights and democratic processes including non-violent conflict resolution.

Some examples of our success over this past year include thirteen new publications from our Publishing Unit, all children's books either written by local writers or translated from existing children's literature, with 80% of the 56,000 copies donated to public and UNRWA schools and libraries; training for over 40 librarians on animation skills to improve children's library attendance; reaching over 32,000 children and young people only in this year's National Reading Campaign; opening 20 child and adolescent-friendly nuclear libraries in local communities; 140 submissions by children for My First Book Competition; 7,400 books collected by 750 youth volunteers under this year's I Donated a Book campaign; and over 13,000 books in our Children's Resource Center.

We are proud of our accomplishments and of our growing role in improving quality education for children and young people across Palestine, including increasing reading and writing among all ages and levels in the community, promoting library attendance and use, raising awareness and training school teachers, parents and the wider community on child protection, creating spaces for children and young people to learn, interact, and be productive, and an ever-expanding list of activities promoting values of learning, sharing, productivity, democracy, and respect for human rights and the environment.

Renad Qubbaj, General Director

Introduction

Tamer Institute for Community Education is an educational non-governmental non-profit organization established in 1989 as a natural and necessary response to urgent needs in the Palestinian community during the first intifada (uprising). The most important of these is the need to acquire means to help people learn and become productive.

Focusing principally on the rights to education, identity, freedom of expression and access to information, Tamer works across the West Bank and Gaza Strip, primarily targeting children and young people, and developing alternatives and supplements to formal education. Our programs promote reading and writing on national and regional levels, development of children's literature, and creative self-expression and youth empowerment through advocacy and community development initiatives.

Since 1989, Tamer has successfully formed solid partnerships with international non-governmental organizations and institutions, regional organizations and local grassroots organizations across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. With the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1993, we have also worked closely with governmental institutions including the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education. In addition, we are member to a number of local, regional and international coalitions, and host local branches of several networks. Tamer regards such partnerships and coalitions as an asset that benefits the institute in implementing its programs and helps us reach a larger number of beneficiaries.

Our Mission

To help Palestinian children and young people acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence to play a productive role in developing a democratic Palestinian community that respects human rights and values of equality and justice.

Our Vision

Our vision is of a Palestine where children and young people have a reason to hope and dream, where they can attain their dreams by developing their skills and confidence in a supportive environment that understands and respects human rights and democracy. Our vision includes access to quality education for all, access to information and freedom of expression, where children and young people are listened to and feel valued and safe. Our vision is of a Palestine where children and young people can learn together, play together and develop together, sharing experiences and ideas and expressing themselves creatively through writing, dialogue and art.

Our Approach

Our approach focuses on creating alternative forms of learning outside the formal education system. We target children and young people in order to build up local capacity within the community that carries into the long term. We believe that learning is the creation of a connection between language, interaction, and constructive knowledge, and our programs help stimulate this connection in the children and young people we work with. Respect for the human

being and nature are an integral part of our initiatives, and are a necessary dynamic in creating a productive Palestinian society that respects human rights.

Core Values

Our work is governed by four core values:

1. The importance of investment in available resources in order to meet basic needs.

Tamer Institute believes that the Palestinian people are the society's most valuable resource. Through our community education projects, we assist in the investment of this resource, helping young people develop skills and confidence to lead the growth and development of their community, and meet the basic need of the Palestinian people to learn and to be productive.

2. Knowledge and education are the most important factors in society's development.

To support community education and learning, Tamer Institute creates and provides community learning environments in various locations across the West Bank and Gaza by encouraging reading, expression of personal experience and opinion, creativity, achievement and the transformation of experience into cultural products.

3. Youth are the most important sector in the society building process, particularly in relation to community growth and development.

Tamer works primarily with and for children and young people, providing them with safe and friendly learning environments and materials, and encouraging their creative expression through writing, story-telling, drama, drawing and music.

4. The importance of small groups formed through individual initiatives at the community level.

The Institute facilitates these groups by providing communication networks and spaces where children and young people can learn, share ideas and build confidence, while working to develop skills that will complement their education and equip them to hold leading roles in their community.

Our Structure

Our main office in Ramallah and branch office in Gaza enable us to implement projects in both the West Bank and Gaza with minimal expenses, by hiring a large base of coordinators who are spread throughout each directorate in Palestine. The coordinators are able to use office facilities of partner organizations thus cutting down on the overhead costs of opening branch offices in the different locations.

10 permanent staff are based in our main office in Ramallah, while 18 field coordinators operate across the West Bank and 13 operate in the Gaza Strip.

Ramallah office permanent staff:

General Director: Renad Qubbaj

Program staff: Abed Al Salam

Nakhleh, Niveen Shaheen, Amani

M'adi, Ruba Totah, Na'la Handoosh

Finance staff: Maisa Al Natsheh,

Shadi Al A'iseh, Ahlam Abed

Logistics: Nisreen Khalil

Office assistance: Fadi Al Atari

Librarian: Nawal Abu Hadeed

Yara'at Coordinator: Hiba Milhem

West Bank field coordinators:

Zakieh Massoud, Dima Al Hirbawi, Kamel Suliman, Ra'ed Omar, Lena Ishtieh, Ahmed Hamarneh, Diala Hilaqieh, Nadia Ayoub, Khada Ahmed, Ra'fat Bdeer, Rimah Abu Zeid, Nabeel Ghenayem, Lisa Kraje, Muna Shiredeh, Sundus Khalaf, Harb Tobassi, Omar Al Wawi, Asma Hudrus

Gaza staff:

Office manager: Mohammed Balooshe

Field Coordinators: Nabila Hassan, Eyad Al Bala'wi, Yousef Al Ghalban, Mohammed Al Bowbali, Wisam Joodeh, May Shaheen, Samah Qessab, Fairouz Hameed, Mohammed Shamieh, Yousef Abu Jarbou', Nour Hamdan, Nawal Abu Hadeed.

General Assembly members:

Arham Al-Damen, Kamal Shamshum, Abla Nasser, Dinees Assad, Janet Micha'el, Ghassan Faramand, Violet Fasheh, Morris Baqleh, Sameh Abbooshi, Sammar Odeh, Eyad Marsooji, Bassem Khoury, Fayha' Abed Al Hadi, Faraj Ghenem, Muneer Qazaaz, Mary Fasheh, Ma'an Samara, Dima Sihweel, Laila Atshan, Mahmoud Shqair.

Board of Directors (elected by the General Assembly every two years):

Arham Al-Daman (President), Abla Nasser (Vice President), Janet Micha'el (Treasurer), Kamal Shamshoom, Morris Baqley, Eyad Marsooji, Violet Fasheh, Muneer Qazaaz

Program Overview

Reading Promotion for Community Development

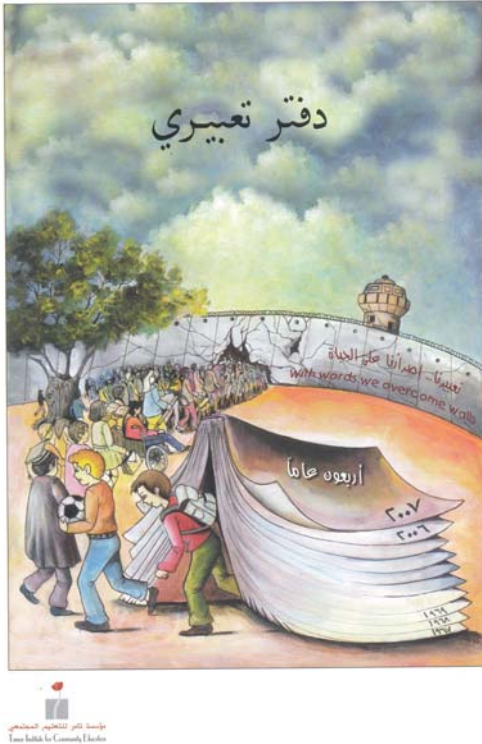
National Reading Campaign

Location: All districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Beneficiaries: A total of 32,000 children and young people, men and women

The National Reading Campaign was initiated fifteen years ago as a response to the needs of the community at large whose children and youth had been negatively affected by schools closure due to the Intifada. The campaign activities encourage leisure reading to improve literacy, critical thinking and writing skills, and motivate people of all ages to gain knowledge while enriching their imagination and raising awareness of different cultures and perspectives. This process contributes to the enhancement and development of children's knowledge, language and sense of their own culture in Palestine.

Like our entire Reading Promotion program, the campaign does not only focus on reading, but uses reading as a principal tool of learning, along with creative writing, drawing, painting, drama, music, etc. Reading symbolizes learning, and so the NRC tries to encourage reading, writing, dialogue and self-expression for a society that actively seeks knowledge through reading and sharing of ideas and experiences.



The 2007 theme for the National Reading Campaign was “With Words We Overcome Walls”, where words symbolize both the learning that comes from reading and the power of words in self-expression, as a tool to overcome barriers. This year, the National Reading Campaign focused on activities that promoted reading and self-expression, including reading promotion workshops and creative writing, painting, expressive arts, theatre and illustration workshops.

In addition, participants assisted in the design of a poster for the 2007 campaign to reflect this year’s theme and the design of an armband bearing this year’s slogan. Other promotional material produced this year included an expression notebook for My First Book competition, to encourage the children to submit their writing to the competition, with additional space to reflect on the books they are reading, and daily newspaper advertisements to promote the various NRC activities to the general public and increase participation from local communities.

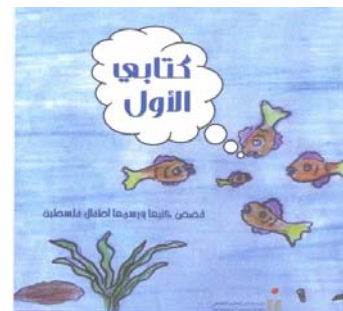
This year’s main activities included:

National Reading Week

After much discussion, “With Words We Overcome Walls” was chosen as this year’s theme, to promote the importance of learning and self-expression in overcoming obstacles. This focus was chosen as this year’s campaign coincided with the 40 year anniversary of Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, since the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967.

My First Book Competition

This year witnessed continued high levels of interest in the competition, with many children submitting their writings as soon as the competition was publically launched in the West Bank and Gaza, with a total of 140 stories submitted! The stories were revised by the literature committee at Tamer, and winning entries were selected, representing a geographical diversity of applicants: Jenin refugee camp, Gaza, Hebron and Beit Leqia in Ramallah.



Summer Days 2007

This year's Summer Days aimed at integrating our accumulated experience as an organization with our current projects and their beneficiaries. Summer Days 2007 lasted four days, and brought together about 60 youth participating in our projects across the West Bank, with a different theme for each day.

Day 1: "Self-Awareness"



Day one focused on building human beings' relationship with our physical surroundings in order to raise awareness and encourage contemplation of the self as making up part of our surroundings, and looking at the effects human beings have on our surroundings.

Day 2: "The Self and the Other"

On day two, everyone presented a definition of his or herself through an object borrowed from his/her surroundings. Having chosen an object, each participant explained to the group why and how this object represented him/her. Each participant also expressed how he/she feels others perceive him/her and how he/she wants to be perceived by others.

Day 3: "Cultural difference and Intellectual exchange"

After a morning yoga session, the youth divided themselves into three groups who met with three experts: Dr. Sonya Nimer, Mahmud Shuqair and the artist Khalid Hurani.

In these meetings, participants held open discussions and exchanged ideas and experiences, including their achievements, fears and goals. Sharing experiences and ideas through dialogue, the young people improved their listening and self-expression skills as well as built up their confidence and sense identity. At night, the groups from Qalquilia and Toubas each performed presentations on the social, cultural and historical aspects of their cities.



Day 4: "Reality and Relationships"

In the morning, participants set out for a walk in the hills and among the trees to enjoy the beauty of their surroundings. They were split into two groups: the first went into the village to document their surroundings through photography, and the second group set out to Bil'in, a village next to Ramallah, where they visited the local youth club and were introduced to Bil'in's peaceful methods of fighting against the Apartheid Wall, which plans to confiscate the village land from its population.

Feedback: In their evaluation of Summer Days 2007, youth participants reported that it added to their personality and helped in developing their skills and self of identity.

Cultural Nights

To counter the increase in evening TV-watching among youth during Ramadan, Tamer organized Cultural Nights to take place during this month, to promote interaction and learning among youth in the community. A total of 28 evenings were organized in the various districts of the West Bank and Gaza.



Topics discussed in the evenings revolved around cultural readings and storytelling, folk dancing, music, puppet making and puppet shows, literature events, theatre and poetry reading.

I Donated a Book Campaign

Launched in 2001, the I Donated a Book Campaign aims at collecting books from the community and distributing them to newly established libraries for marginalized children. This year's campaign comprised of an in-depth view of Palestinian society that not only focused on activities for children and youth, but also included librarians, parents and almost all categories of society.

More than 750 youth volunteered to collect books from houses, which were then donated to needy or newly-established libraries. Activities took place on November 15, to coincide with Palestinian National Independence Day. Our youth chose that date to launch the campaign in order to build unity among Palestinians towards creating one Palestinian nation. Launching the campaign on this day promotes a peaceful method of defending Palestine through reading, writing and self-expression. This year's collected books include novels, periodicals, encyclopedias and many religious and political books. The total number of collected books was 7,400! This included a number of books that youth volunteers donated from their own homes, and some books that continued to be donated by individuals even after the campaign was officially over, showing support and enthusiasm for the campaign and its goals.

District	No. of volunteers	No. of collected books	Donated to
Hebron	60	350	Alshyoukh club
		142	Cultural society
		213	Esad Altofola
Jenin	118	380	Ya'bad cultural center
		300	Toubas club
		360	Women center
Jerusalem	20	120	African community
Qalquilia	40	420	Kofor Zeibad and Habla
Bethlehem	180	900	Alkhader Center
			Nahaleen Library
			Aldoha club library
Ramallah	40	300	Children's Literature Resource Center
Nablus	100	1500	Hamdi Manko library
			Alkhaldia school
			Broqein library
Toulkarem	25	214	Toulkarem club library
Gaza Strip	167	2300	Libraries and centers in Gaza
Total	750 volunteers	7400 books	



Open days in the West Bank and Gaza: Thematic Clubs

In cooperation with UNICEF and within the framework of Tamer's scope of work in meeting urgent educational needs of the Palestinian society and encouraging the learning process through non-formal settings and a rights-based approach, the institute has felt the utmost importance in motivating children to read critically, write creatively, debate appropriately and express effectively.

Extensive activities in a 10-days camp were set in Jerusalem, Salfit, Hebron, Qalquilia, Bethlehem, Jenin, Ramallah and Gaza. This year, over 1000 children aged 8-13 years participated in the activities!

Children were divided into two groups: children aged 8-10 years participated in storytelling and creativity in discussion, while the older group (11-13 years old) participated in creative and analytical writing.

In the closing activity, children were given the chance to present their final products to their parents and the wider community. This helped give children a sense of ownership and pride in their work and ensured communication and sharing of ideas among different generations.

Summer Reading Challenges Project

Implemented in cooperation with the British Council, the project took place during a period of chaos in Gaza, manifested by the internal Palestinian conflict between Fatah and Hamas members. The unstable political and security situation experienced in Gaza affected the project's implementation. Instead of starting on the June 9th as scheduled, the project began on June 12th, and was so disrupted by the internal fighting it had to be suspended until July. While the unforeseen suspension affected project beneficiaries, discussions with the British Council and the Alsarria Center resulted in resuming the project activities after the situation in Gaza stabilized.

The project aimed at encouraging a reading habit (in English) of 80 children between the ages of 8-15 at Jabalia refugee camp. The participating children were split into 2 groups: 8-11 and 12-15 years old. A facilitator worked on 60 books with the younger group, and an English teacher worked on 58 books with the older group. The division into sub-groups of 5 members was one of the most important success factors of the project as it helped in developing the participants' English language and improved their reading skills.

The activities were implemented according to the action plan, but with minor modifications to ensure the quality and efficiency of work. All planned meetings with the target group took place, in addition to meetings with their parents, which made the project more comprehensive by integrating different levels society. The final day included performance designed and produced by the children.

Nibal Alhabil is from Gaza City. When she first heard about the Summer Reading Challenge, she came right away from Gaza City to Khan Younis, where the Challenge was to take place. She had organized to stay with her Grandmother for the duration of the Challenge.

Nibal was an active participant whose high levels of motivation and energy reflected positively on her experience at the Challenge at that of her peers. She even encouraged her parents to get involved, and as a result her mother came to the parent's meeting and both her mother and father came to the closing ceremony.

Ghada Amro started the Challenge with an already advanced level of English. She began sharing her knowledge with her peers, working with the Challenge facilitators in explaining the stories, and even acting as a facilitator herself during the closing ceremony, where she also presented her work along with the other participants.

Enhancing Literacy in Libraries

Tamer Institute contributes to building Palestinian society through creating learning environments amongst youth, children, parents, and teachers by focusing on the invisible aspects of human growth (social, cultural, and spiritual) and cultural production while encouraging children and youth.

Implemented in cooperation with MPDL and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, the project will enhance reading and community education in the libraries by bringing children into the library to seek knowledge and fun. The project fits into the national strategies by increasing or maintaining the literacy level of Palestinian children and youth, and encouraging literacy on all levels and ages in the communities. By also teaching librarians new skills, ways to obtain information and develop their libraries, thus enhancing the libraries, the project will be sustained through the expected results (developed libraries, developed librarians' skills, and encouraging public library attendance by children and adults) even after the project ends. Tamer Institute also provided the ten libraries with a number of books, with the financial support of the SDC (\$3000 USD). These were in addition to the 100 books provided by International Book Aid.

This year, a total 8400 children and mothers participated in the different project activities.

Enhancing literacy in Hebron: Ten libraries at southern Hebron were activated during the year, with three activities in each library, two for children and one for mothers. Since the beginning of the project, 20 librarians have been trained in different animation skills that attract children to the libraries. After their training, the librarians implemented a series of activities for children inside the libraries to entertain them and encourage them to read. The success of the activities was demonstrated by the large number of children who participated.

Youth Empowerment and Community Awareness

A Protective Sphere for Palestinian Children

Palestinian children are growing up in an environment rooted in conflict and distrust. Many have lost parents, relatives, friends or homes because Israeli military practices. Children are exposed to violence on a regular basis, including shelling, curfews, closures and military checkpoints. The political violence and daily stress associated with life under military occupation has led to increased levels of anger and frustration among the Palestinian community. This in turn has led to rising levels of violence in schools and homes.

Palestinian children have the right to be protected and to be allowed to play, learn and live in a safe and nurturing environment. In an effort to help create such an environment, Save the Children, in partnership with the Tamer Institute for Community Education and the Palestinian Ministry of Education, has designed a project entitled 'A Protective Sphere for Palestinian Children: reducing violence and increasing protection within children's schools and communities'. The project aims to provide Palestinian children living under military occupation with the protective sphere necessary to ensure their physical and emotional well-being.



The project was designed based on the results of a research study conducted in 2004 by Save the Children in Palestinian schools, in which children identified four major gaps in protection: corporal punishment (beating, humiliation, and collective punishment); child-to-child violence; discrimination among children in school, and dangerous school environments.

The project focuses on developing alternatives to corporal punishment and child-child violence, improving the physical/ protective environments of schools, and enhancing the participatory and decision-making skills of children who are often

prevented from participating in decisions that affect them at the school level. The project also advocates for different stakeholders (schools, communities, families, Palestinian Authority, and the international community) to take responsibility for the protection needs of children.

Creating Adolescent Friendly Spaces

Children and young people constitute more than 60 percent of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, one of the highest percentages of children and young people in the world. The political turmoil that has persisted as a result of Israeli occupation and persistent aggression on civilians has denied children and young people the necessary environment in which to gain the skills and confidence needed to pursue their life dreams. As a result, many youth have been left to deal with their pain, disappointment, abuse and neglect on their own, without support. The psycho-social impact of this has led some of these youth to drop behind academically. Some drop-out of school completely while others move from one grade to the next, while in reality their academic gain in literature or mathematics is falling below the required level for the grade they are in. This constitutes a form of unrevealed illiteracy, which needs to be addressed promptly.

Through Creating Adolescent Friendly Spaces, Tamer is targeting children and young people who are being denied a quality education in the West Bank and Gaza, both those falling behind in their literacy and numeracy levels, and those who have already dropped out of school. Supported by UNICEF, the project aims to:

1. Improve the quality of learning through spreading the use of creative learning/teaching methods across marginalized areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
2. Reduce the violence and stress among adolescents through engaging them in recreational activities: sports teams, music bands, scouts, Dabkeh (traditional dance) and theatrical sketches;
3. Improve the knowledge of adolescents on HIV and AIDS prevention through related modules of life skills based education; and

4. Promote peaceful reconciliation among adolescents through life skills based education.

This year, a total of 25000 adolescents participated in the project activities.

Youth for tomorrow

Through “*Youth for tomorrow*”, Tamer aims to promote Palestinian youth’s participation in their community and the mobilization of their energy in advocacy campaigns to influence national issues, decision makers and to lobby for good governance, a democratic political system and community development. It anticipated in the following results:

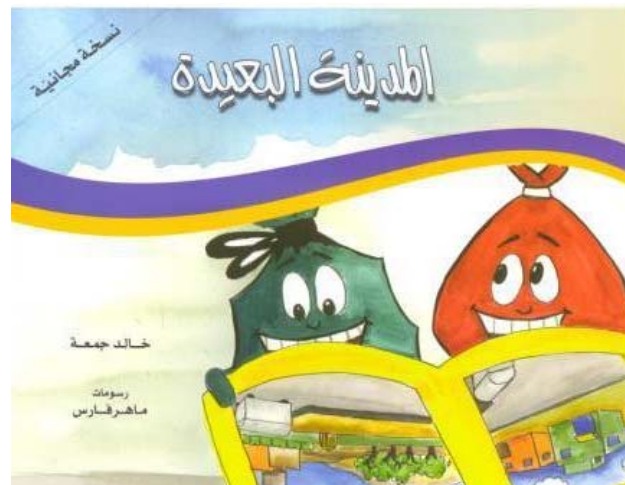
- a) *Voices Electronic Newsletter*: During the year 2007, three English newsletters were published and made available online at Tamer’s website. This year, participating youth received training to improve their writing skills and other relevant topics needed to work on the newsletter. Each of this year’s newsletters focused on a certain topic, with field visits and training geared to the specific topic to give it more depth. Effort was given to strengthening the team attracting new members to join.
- b) *Yara’at Youth Magazine*: Six supplements were published by Al Ayaam Newspaper during the year 2007. Participating youth received training to improve writing skills, editing and other topics needed to work on the supplement. New members were attracted to strengthen the team and supply it with new fresh ideas.
- c) *Community Development Initiative* is carried out as a hands-on experience for the youth participating in and helping out with our projects. There is one initiative in the West Bank and one in Gaza.
- d) *Youth Skills workshops* were conducted in five areas – two in the West Bank & three in Gaza Strip with 20 training hours per workshop.
- e) *Youth Community Educators* were selected and received further training so as to become community mobilizers. Training was conducted in four out of the five areas and 50 advanced training hours were conducted in each area.

Environmental Awareness Campaign, Water and Solid Waste Management

This project addresses the need to change the attitudes and practices of local communities in relation to their environment and public health, and encourage people to preserve and protect the environment. In cooperation with various water and environment related organizations and in partnership with GTZ/ DED, Tamer Institute initiated a wide awareness-raising campaign aimed at children and young people, an active sector of the community and key to changing local attitudes and practices in relation to the preservation of the environment. Tamer proposed targeting children and teenagers through organizing one school-based and one community outreach activity in their communities as well as one general activity for the whole district, combining different schools involved in the project.

In cooperation with GTZ, Tamer implemented a number of creative writing and illustration workshops in its library with the aim of producing material that served as the basis of four books on the environment for children, raising their awareness of pollution and solid waste management issues. In addition to publishing the four books, Tamer Institute supported by GTZ also developed educational games and organized a wide-spread awareness-raising campaign, targeting 8 schools in Ramallah District and 8 schools in Gaza to raise The campaign was carried out by newly-formed “Environmental Clubs” in each of the schools, who successfully raised environmental awareness at

their schools by using the internal school sound system in the morning, and the school magazine. Tamer worked with these children in forming the clubs, with a total of 40 children per school. A second component of the project involved holding 14 summer camps in each of the schools in both West Bank and Gaza, and introduced the participating children to practical environmental practices such as paper recycling, planting, composting, etc. This project is closely tied to the goals of the reading campaign, as it contains a component of reading and writing: the children read the four resulting environmental books, and received at least 10 hours of creative writing training to help in building their capacity to produce the school magazine.



Water Rights and Environmental Awareness

Globally, water plays a central role in sustainable development work including poverty reduction for developing countries. Competition over water has increased over the past ten years, with serious social, economic and political consequences to inequalities in access to water, water shortages, and decline in the quality of water.

These inequalities are particularly acute in Palestine where Israel controls around 89% of the total water resources in the Occupied Territories and where water access and quality are directly related to political and military power and not just issues of water supply. The average Palestinian consumes only 65% of the World Health Organization recommended 10 liters a day.

In Palestine, the UNDP has given priority not only to practical solutions to immediate problems relating to the quality and supply of water, but also to initiatives that increase community environmental awareness global and regional water crises.

In order to create awareness within the Palestinian community and encourage the youth to preserve water, Tamer Institute for Community Education in partnership with Heinrich Boll Foundation launched a project called "Water Rights and Environmental Awareness".

The main aim of the project is to train a group of 140 young community leaders (youth over 16-23) from Tamer Institute's Youth Teams to strengthen their leadership and advocacy skills to play an active role in advocating human rights with a particular focus on water as a key aspect in Palestine. The project targets Tubas, Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Jerusalem in the West Bank, and Central, North and South Gaza. These locations were selected based on the high levels of water deprivation, caused mainly by the Segregation Wall and other Israeli practices, and pollution.

To mark the project's end this year, the youth participants were given the opportunity to finish off the project with the inauguration of JREDS in Aqaba, Jordan. Accompanying them were the field

coordinator and the Tubas project coordinator (Gaza was unable to participate due to the closure of Rafah crossing). Tamer's youth presented their experience and work through the presentations prepared by the seven groups about water issues. The photos, articles, publications made by the groups were presented. The visit ended over dinner, where all the youth groups met to further exchange ideas and experiences from their countries.

Enhancing Children's Literature

Developing Children's Literature project

In an effort to develop children's literature in Palestine, Tamer launched this project with the support of the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures. The project aims at strengthening the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and emotional development of children through developing children's literature. Tamer is implementing the Palestinian branch of the project, which covers Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine.

This year's main activities:

- **Identifying a national core group** (NCG) in each country from all the sectors of children's literature, with special attention to teachers and librarians.
- **A basic assessment** of the situation of children's literature in the five countries to reflect the situation of children's books and reading in each country.
- **A large seminar** open to all stakeholders to discuss the finding of the assessment and maintain a participative approach throughout the whole process.
- **A book exhibition:** 100 Arab books will be exhibited in different cities and regions of each of the five countries along with accompanying activities including a presentation of the assessment tools and methodology, presentation of the books, etc.
- **Workshops on children's literature in each country:** The workshops aim at developing a core group sharing the same visions towards reading promotion, literature and books, and the production, marketing and distribution of books. In each country, the workshops will produce two documents to be shared with other countries: a concept paper expressing the vision of the group and criteria for the evaluation of children's literature books. The 100 books from the exhibition will be evaluated after the workshops.
- **A planning workshop** for the National Core Groups, to elaborate a national plan for developing children's literature in each country. The workshop will bring together the various activities, improve coordination of the different institutions' project work and formulate clear objectives for the development of children's literature.
- **A conference** will be organized in each country to discuss and adopt the plan. This conference will allow other institutions or individuals related to children's literature that did not actively participate in the planning process to contribute to the final national plan.
- **Implement a regional planning workshop** to discuss common problems and solutions.

- **Establish a website** that will have regional relevance and will deal with all related sectors of children's literature in the region.

Read Write Now

The Project's location showed regional and international diversity. It was implemented in Alexandria-Egypt, West Bank- Palestine, Cairo- Egypt, and Toledo- Spain.

Read Write Now is an international initiative that aims to promote reading and writing for Arab young adults and to develop healthy civil societies in the Arab world by addressing the lack of quality Arabic books for young adults. Implemented in Alexandria and Cairo in Egypt, Toledo in Spain and the West Bank in Palestine, the project activities stimulate interest in reading (via literature festivals) and support the development of new literature (via authors' workshops and grants for books). The project is founded on the principle that books provide access to information and ideas, which are vital for engaging young people in dialogue, and enabling them to actively participate in the societies they live in. In recent years, a number of projects targeting Arab children have emerged, but empirical and qualitative research has pointed to the virtual absence of age-appropriate quality literature for young readers.

Addressing this need, Read Write Now aims to include increasing interest in reading among children and young people, increasing understanding of their needs (via reading and literature) and incorporating key themes from children and young peoples' lives into the new generation of books. Other objectives include promoting young people's writing, increasing women's role in producing quality literature, publishing up to 5 new books, catalyzing the emergence of a new type of literature and culture of reading among children and young people and increasing participation of publishers, NGOs and governmental bodies on this issue.

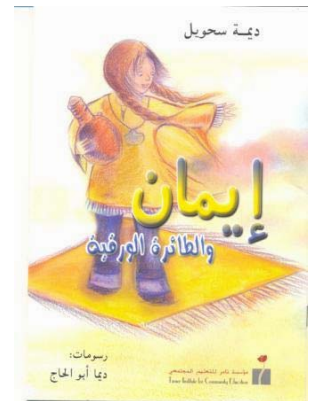
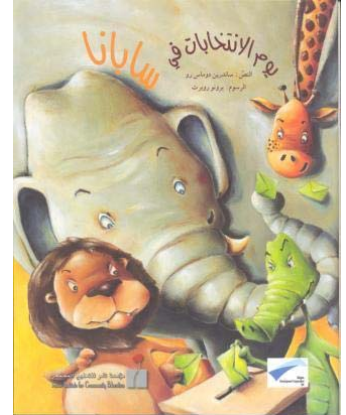
Tamer Institute for Community Education is the leading organization in implementing this project. This year, with support from the Anna Lindh Foundation and in cooperation with Next Page Foundation, Tamer held a 3-day literature festival, bringing together over 50 youth to discuss the importance of reading, the lack of quality literature for children and young people, and to discuss their needs. A similar festival took place in Alexandria, Egypt and was held by Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The resulting needs were communicated to authors, writers and publishers in the area in a writing workshop held by Al-Mawrid in Egypt for writers and publishers. Certain texts resulting from this workshop will be published.

This year, four authors won the competition that was organized by Al-Mawred in Cairo: two from Palestine, one from Lebanon and one from Egypt. Agreements were signed with them and also with publishers in order to follow the publishing process. Two editors and one production consultant also signed agreements for the final works to be published by December 2008.

The four winners were Ma'an Samarah from Palestine for his book *Pictures*; Basima Takrouri from Palestine for her book *Tales*; Mona Merhi from Lebanon for her book *You will never read it*; and Ashraf Naser from Egypt for his book *Horiya Dot Com*.

The Publishing Unit: 2007

- The collection of winning entries from the 2007 “My First Book” competition has been published. It includes five interesting stories from both the West Bank and Gaza.
- Luciana Savagat’s book *Rescue Mission in Baghdad* has been translated, the rights to use the illustrations were obtained and the work has been published with funding from General Consulate of Belgium.
- The rights for a French children’s book *Elections in Savanna* was obtained, and the book was translated and published in Arabic as part of the Belgium project. The book is about electing the king of the forest in Africa; the animals get fascinated by the crocodile’s propaganda but are deceived after he gains power.
- My First Book on the Environment: initial publications of children who participated in the “Environmental Awareness Campaign, Water and Solid Waste Management” project.
- *Three Palestinian Cities Telling Their History*: a product of a UNESCO funded project last year. The book covers the heritage and customs of Nablus, Hebron and Gaza. The materials were collected and written by Tamer’s youth in the three areas and the final book was edited historically and grammatically by professionals.
- *The First Flower on Earth* by Zakaria Mohammad: a poetry book, published within the Belgium project.
- *My Sister, the Queen* by Mahmoud Shqeir, another book published with Belgian funding.
- *Children’s Literature Bibliography* by Mary Fasheh is a bibliography covering children’s literature writers, illustrators, librarians, etc. The bibliography is Ms. Fasheh’s newest, covering the last four years.
- *Iman and the Kite* by Dima Sehwal.
- *Endlessly traveling* by Salman Natour.
- *Little Piece of Ground* by Elizabeth Laird and Sonia Nimer. Translated into Arabic by Samar Qutob.



The Publishing Unit targets a large number of beneficiaries, especially through our project implemented with the Belgium Kingdom of Consulate General:

- 20 local children books authors; 10 in the West Bank and 10 in Gaza.
- 120 librarians and volunteer assistants; 30 librarians in addition to 30 volunteer assistants in the West Bank, plus 30 librarians and 30 volunteer assistants in Gaza.
- Through the distribution of the intended publications of two local books, and two translated titles, to the public libraries in the West Bank and Gaza, and as part of home learning packets for children, it is estimated that the total number of ben children will be around 638,400 as detailed below:

Direct beneficiaries:

11,000 copies of 4 titles will be printed (total of 44,000 copies) and distributed as indicated below:

- 1,200 copies of each book will be distributed as part of home learning packets for children in households within the most deprived areas in Palestine. These 4,800 books will be read by at least 3 children in each of the households yielding to 14,400 beneficiaries.
- 7,800 copies of each book will be distributed as follows :
 - 1,000 copies will be distributed to 290 UNRWA school libraries
 - 6,000 copies of each book will be distributed to the 900 libraries in public schools
 - 800 copies will be distributed to 250 private school libraries and 250 institutions and organizations implementing children's programs.

Each of the 7,800 copies distributed to libraries are estimated to be read by a minimum of 20 children yielding 156,000 beneficiary per book * 4 books = 624,000 direct beneficiaries.

2,000 copies will be retained by Tamer Institute for its program activities during 2006-2007.

Indirect beneficiaries:

- Parents, local community organizations in towns, villages and camps with whom the librarians and their volunteers will work.
- Other local authors who gain from the knowledge and skills of the trained authors.

Children's Literature: Additional Related Activities

The Canadian writer **Ann Carter** visited the institute in September 2007 and conducted a one day workshop with a number of Palestinian young and adult writers. The meeting discussed and evaluated the book *Iman and the Kite* by Dima Suhwaeil. Carter has also highlighted some tips on writing on that she uses herself, and drew on many books as examples.

In October 2007, the French Editor **Marie Lallouet** from Boleard publishing house visited the Palestinian branch of the International Board on Books for Young People (PBBY), hosted by Tamer Institute. In her visit, the editor shared guidelines on the publishing and editing processes of children's literature in France. During a five day training session, writers and individuals from the publishing and media sectors were introduced to the process of editing books by reviewing the works of local writers, and discussed possibilities for publishing them. The visit was organized and supported by members of PBBY.

Norwegian writer **Mariet Kaldhol** visited Tamer in November 2007. A talented and professional children's writer, with several books translated into Arabic, Mariet came to Tamer Institute to give a training workshop. Many of our young and adult writers were invited, including Yara'at members. The writer demonstrated the history of children's literature in Norway and also provided tips on her methodology of writing. She also facilitated several writing exercises that were well-received by the participants, who later confirmed the benefits of the exercises.

Networking, International Participation and the Book Fair

- Tamer continues networking with the different Palestinian organizations, in particular through the National Reading Campaign (NRC). Such networking with ministries, community based organizations and others, is essential to Tamer Institute's work in community education.
- PNGO: Tamer is a member of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations' Network.
- Tamer has also been a member of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA) since 2001 where it coordinates the Palestinian branch of Education for All, focusing on children affected by poverty and armed conflict.
- Multiple meetings were set with a group of donors to follow up funding opportunities, such as Swedish donors, Canadian donors, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, Welfare Association, Save the Children UK and many others. These were largely successful with many opportunities solidifying. Others retain strong potential to build on for future collaboration.
- **Frankfurt Book Fair** in October 2007. The past four years have witnessed a Palestinian introduction to the world book market through the Frankfurt Book Fair, which also served to raise international awareness of Palestinian publications, in particular the work of authors who address children and young people. As the first institution to publish children's literature in Palestine, Tamer has participated in the fair four times, most recently through its new general director Ms. Renad Qubbaj. At the fair, Tamer had a stand where it displayed and sold its publications.

- Networking: The fair also provided the opportunity for networking with many parties in the field of children's literature, for example "Ward" publishing house in Syria, and the organizers of the Bahrain book fair.
- Publications: One of our books has been selected for translation to the Spanish language; the book is "Al –Futur". Another book, "Holako", was selected for inclusion at the youth library of Munich. "My First book" was also requested by the International Library of Children's Literature to be exhibited in the Arab Book exhibition at the London Book Fair. This networking promotes many Arabic books as they are translated to be read in Spain, Germany, London and across the world.
- **Sharjah Book Fair:** Tamer attended the Sharjah Book Fair, where we exhibited our books. Tamer also participated in the **Arab Publishing workshop** at Sharjah in partnership with the British Council and London Book Fair.
- **Cairo Book fair:** Abu Ghoush distribution agency exhibited Tamer's publications in the Cairo Book Fair, which is essentially the largest book fair in the Arab world.

Nominations and Awards

- ❖ Two books of Tamer's publications were included to the IBBY honor list for 2008. ***Al-Khiraf La Ta'kul al Qetat*** by Khaled jouma for the best writing and illustration and ***Alumluk wa al Kunkun*** for the best translation. These books shall be present as permanent deposits at the International Youth library of Munich and with other research collections in Belgium, Russia, Japan, Slovakia, Switzerland and the USA.
- ❖ Tamer has been nominated for the Astrid Lingren memorial award for the past four years, and is currently preparing for the jury members' visit in January 2008.

Administrative Issues

Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors met 9 times in 2007. Meetings covered:

- Endorsement of new Tamer by-laws
- Strategies and locations for selling publications
- Copyrights for materials and books published by Tamer Institute
- Staff evaluations
- Developments in programs and projects
- Framework for implementation of office renovation
- Recruiting new members to the General Assembly

-Preparation for the General Assembly meeting

The Board of Directors also attended various activities organized by Tamer or its youth volunteer teams throughout the year.

General Assembly:

The General Assembly met on 16 June 2007. The meeting covered:

- Approving narrative and financial reports from Tamer Institute
- Selecting an audit company
- Endorsing the organizational action plan and 2008 budget.

Donors and Partners

Tamer Institute would like to extend its appreciation to the following partners, donors and supporters of the Institute, without whom our work would only be ideas:

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| * Diakonia – Sweden | * IBBY |
| * Anna Lindh Foundation | * Welfare Association |
| * Consulate General of Belgium-Jerusalem | * Arab Fund of Arts and Culture |
| * Belgian Technical Cooperation-Jerusalem | * Ministry of Culture |
| * Book Aid International UK | * Ministry of Education & Higher Education |
| * British Council | * Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA) |
| * CC NGO/EFA | * PNGO |
| * Frankfurt Book Fair | * Save the Children UK |
| * French Consulate | * SIDA |
| * French Cultural Center | * UNESCO |
| * Goethe Institute | * UNICEF |
| * Heinrich Böll Foundation | * GTZ |