

Family Life Development Project

Final Report

Distance Learning Program

September/2003

Introduction

In 1999, the Development Studies Programme (DSP) at Birzeit University, in partnership with Friends of Birzeit University (FoBZU) and with the support of the Community Fund/ United Kingdom, has implemented two developmental programs in Palestine.

Both programs are to empower women to become more aware of their rights, and decrease the isolation of rural women, by providing opportunities for learning, civic education and functional literacy.

The Family Life Development project (FLDP) and Distance Learning Program “Ya..Noon” are very important programs in the area of empowering women, adults, families and civil society.

These Programs successfully built on the experiences of women and adults with civic education, life skills and functional literacy.

Acknowledgement

DSP would like to acknowledge and appreciate the following:

- Advisory Committee, which included a group of specialists in distance learning and adult learning:
Ms. Ayesha Bakeer, Dr. Cairo Arafat, Ms. Hiyam Abu Gazalah, Dr. Nader Said, Ms. Nibal Thawabteh and Mr. Ramzi Rihan
- Authors of (My First Reading) book “Qera’ati Al Ula”:
Ms. Amal Hammad and Ms. Hiyam Abu Gazalah, and the supervisor of the book, Dr. Elham abu Gazalah
- Actors, actresses and production cast
- Smart Frame Company
- Script writers
- The People of Bitunia and Ein Areek, they made the production of this program possible.
- Facilitators of the program in the experimental period
- The participants of Ramallah villages, who participated in evaluating the episodes

Acknowledgement and special appreciation to the Community Fund and FoBZU, for their financial and technical support.

Work Team

Name	Position
Dr. Nader Said	Overall Director
Ms. Nooran Nasif	Administrative and Financial Manager
MS. Shahnaz Jubran	Overall Coordinator of Ya..Noon and FLDP
Mr. Jibril Hijah	Media Coordinator
Mr. Mohammad Nassar	Media Coordinator
Ms. Maisa Barghouthi	Administrative assistant

* We would like to thank Ms. Nibal Thawabteh and Mr. Sa'ed El Zein and Ms. Jameeleh Abed, for their important role in bringing this project to a successful end.

Family Life Development Project (FLDP)

This training project was implemented to promote the opportunities of marginalized women and improve their ability to influence issues that concern women and families.

The aims of this project were to raise awareness of rural women to their health and their families' health, to give them the opportunity to improve their skills, to introduce them to local institutions, and to familiarize them with gender issues.

Rural women in Palestine were the target group in this project, especially those from marginalized rural areas and those marginalized women who have no access to higher education and work opportunities.

Expected outcomes

- Training for informal local health workers to improve their skills so as to provide services to local women, children and families.
- Improving local access to basic primary health care and health-related advice for women in isolated areas, in the absence of a doctor and/or a clinic.
- Empowering women, through enabling them to improve their skills, and knowledge and raising gender awareness.
- Decreasing isolation and marginalization of rural women.

The project was implemented in its first year (2000) in the Nablus region, and in the Hebron region in its second year (2001).

Period of the project

This project was implemented in its first year in Nablus region, from November 1999 to December 2000, with a total of 194 training hours covering thirty-nine topics, and attended by twenty-three women trainees. And it was implemented in its second year in Hebron region, from January to December/2001, with a total of 183 training hours, covering forty-one topics, and attended by twenty-three women.

Preparatory Meetings

We had conducted two preparatory workshops in Nablus, and three preparatory workshops in Hebron with potential participants to introduce them to the course. The topics of the training were discussed and the training program was based on the needs of the participants as viewed by them.

In addition, we had carried out a needs assessment workshop of forty- three women with the assistance of the Women's Center for Legal and Social Counseling/Hebron.

Advertisement of the project

We had advertised the program through local community organizations that work in rural areas in both the Nablus region and the Hebron region, and worked closely with development and gender NGOs, which provided us with lists of potential participants.

These NGOs advertised the project through contacting other local institutions, women's centers, and women they worked with, to provide potential participants for the project.

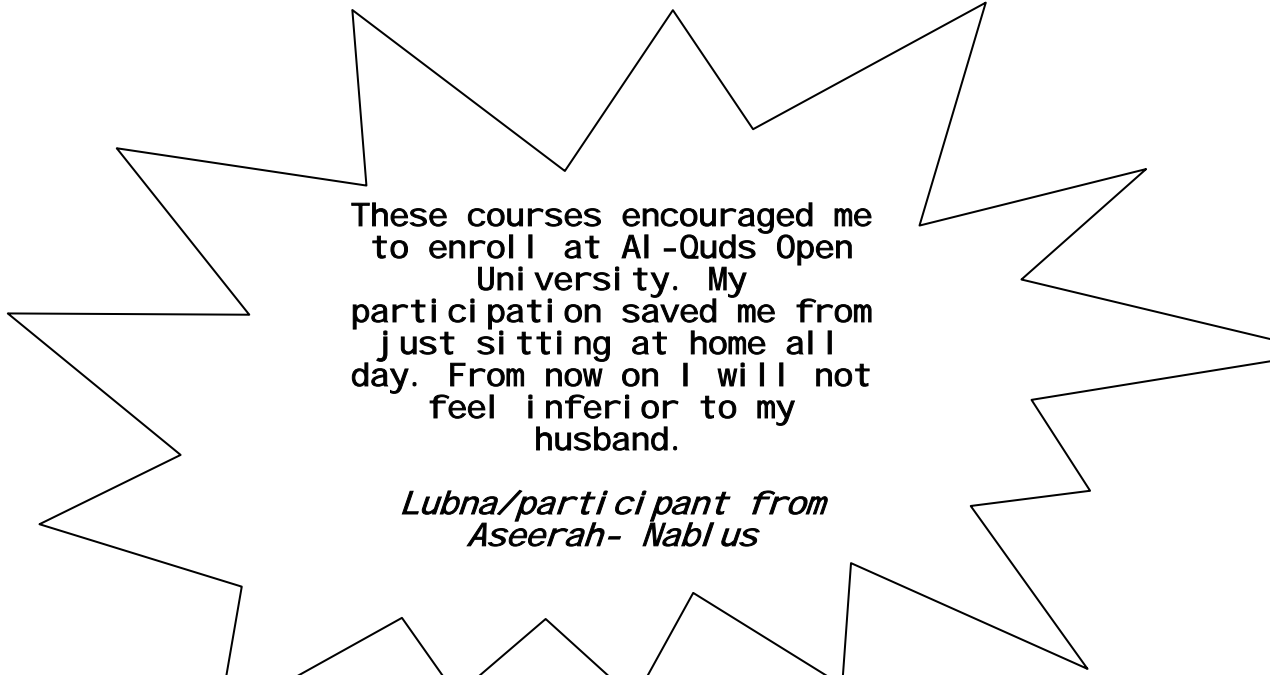
Eight advertisements were placed for four days in national newspapers (Al Ayyam and Al Quds) in order to encourage women to apply for the course.

Participants

Forty- Six rural women from Nablus and Hebron villages participated in this project. The criteria used in selecting the women were: their ability to read and write well, not being employed or attending any higher education institution and their commitment to serve their own communities. We also took in consideration the degree of villages' marginalization and the geographical distribution of the villages.

Marginalized villages

The participants of the Nablus region were from eight villages: Beit Foureek, Aseerah, Farkah, Jama'een, Qabalan, Emateen, Kufur Qalleel, Burqah. The Participants of the Hebron region were from eleven villages: Beit Ummar, Dora, Kharas, Soureef, Beit Ula, Sa'eer, Ethna, Yatta, Nooba, Beit Awwa, and Al Sheoukh.



These courses encouraged me
to enroll at Al-Quds Open
University. My
participation saved me from
just sitting at home all
day. From now on I will not
feel inferior to my
husband.

*Lubna/participant from
Aseerah- Nablus*

Training topics

After extensive consultations with potential participants, and with the assistance of some local and national institutions and NGOs, the course program was prepared.

The topics were:

- An introduction to basic communication skills
- Measuring Blood pressure and body temperature
- Mother and child health
- Pregnancy, Delivery and Breast feeding
- General health related topics and chronic diseases
- Primary health care and first aid
- Psychological challenges at adolescence, middle age, and old age
- Psychology of women
- Legislation and women
- Housekeeping and managing household economy
- Gender equality
- Violence against women
- Early marriage
- Marriage among relatives
- The right to education
- The right to work
- Sexual health
- Environmental issues
- Working with the community
- Planning for workshops, methods of education and counseling

According to the needs assessment with the participants of the Hebron region, the evaluation submitted by UK consultants Ms. Sarah Rankin and Ms. Rosemary Ward, the evaluation workshop which was conducted with some trainers in the Nablus program, a number of organizations interested in women's affairs and families and health issues, and the assistance of some local and regional institutions, the training course program for the Hebron region was amended, to fit the needs of the participants.

The training hours of some topics were decreased like (the first aids). Some topics were added like (dealing with children during crisis, nutrition and sexual education).

In addition, practical field training was integrated into this program. Participants were assigned to various local and regional institutions to gain practical experience.

Trainers

The trainers came from community outreach institutions, women's organizations, health work institutions and youth organizations.

Place of training

DSP has conducted the training sessions in local institutions in both of Nablus and Hebron cities, in order to support these institutions and to advertise the project among them. The selection of the training venue was based on consultation with the participants.

The course has changed my life. I feel that I can do many more things now than before. I can use what I have learned for the advantage of my family and neighbors.

Intisar/Participant from Farkah-Nablus

Institutions

Many local and regional and national Institutions participated in succeeding FLDP in many aspects; in the project planning, participants and the villages' selection, trainers selection, training topics, providing the place of training, receiving the participants for the practical training, project evaluation and in the graduation ceremony. These institutions were:

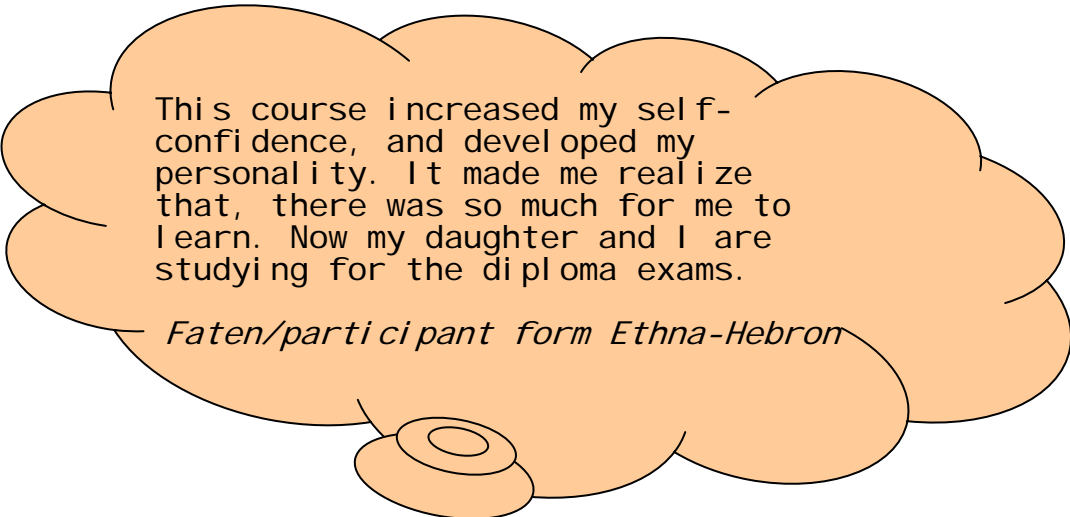
- Ministry of Education
- UNICEF
- Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC)
- YMCA
- Palestinian Counseling Center
- Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC)
- Palestinian Working Women Society for Development (PWWSD)
- Health Work Committees
- Al Quds University/Public Health Department
- Union of Women's Work Committees
- Qouseen Cultural Center
- Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC)
- Ministry of Labor/Women Affairs Department
- Palestinian Medical Relief Committees
- Center for Continuing Education/BZU
- Palestinian Coalition for Woman's Health

- General Federation of Trade Unions in Palestine
- Palestinian Legislative Council
- Governorate of Nablus
- Union of Health Care Committees
- Beit Ula Cultural Club
- Charitable Islamic Society
- Children's Land Society
- The Red Crescent
- Children's Art Center
- Defense for Children International
- The House of Elderly/Jerusalem
- Union of Women's Committees for Social Work
- Hebron University

Evaluation/monitoring

Verbal and written evaluations were conducted after every training session, both in Nablus and in Hebron, besides of an all over evaluation by the trainers and the trainees for the training sessions.

In addition, an overall evaluation workshop was conducted in December 2000 to evaluate the program of Nablus area. Some trainers in the Nablus program were invited to participate, in addition to a number of organizations interested in women's affairs and family health issues.



This course increased my self-confidence, and developed my personality. It made me realize that, there was so much for me to learn. Now my daughter and I are studying for the diploma exams.

Faten/participant form Ethna-Hebron

Graduation

A graduation ceremony was organized on 21 April 2001 at the General Federation of Trade Unions in Palestine headquarters. In Nablus, the Deputy

Governor, a representative of the General Federation of Trade Unions in Palestine and a representative of Dalal Salameh/Legislative Council member, attended the ceremony.

The graduation ceremony in Hebron was organized on 8 November, 2001 at the Hebron Regency/Mizan Hotel. Heads of Hebron villages' municipalities, Dr. Sameer Abu Znied/Hebron University's Dean of Business Administration, a number of trainers in the program, representatives of the Ministry of Education, and some women's institutions attended the ceremony.

Obstacles in implementing FLDP:

Political problems:

- The difficulty for the people in the villages of Hebron to get the local newspapers, where the program was advertised, due to the Israeli curfews.
- The closure discouraged rural women from applying and restricted the ability of the program coordinator to select participants.
- Problems resulting from difficulties in travel for the participants because of the continuation of the Israeli imposed closures.

Logistical problems, such as:

1. Difficulties in finding a suitable location for the training.
2. Delay by the local institutions in providing us with the names of candidates, because of the closures, which reduced the ability of local institutions to move to the villages to contact potential participants.

Measures to overcome the obstacles

- We contacted local organizations and unions to provide us with suggested names of participants from the villages.
- In coordination with Women's Center for Legal and Social Counseling, we conducted needs assessment with forty-three women in the Hebron area.
- Based on the agreement of the participants, we conducted the training session at a location accessible to all.