



Annual Report - 2015



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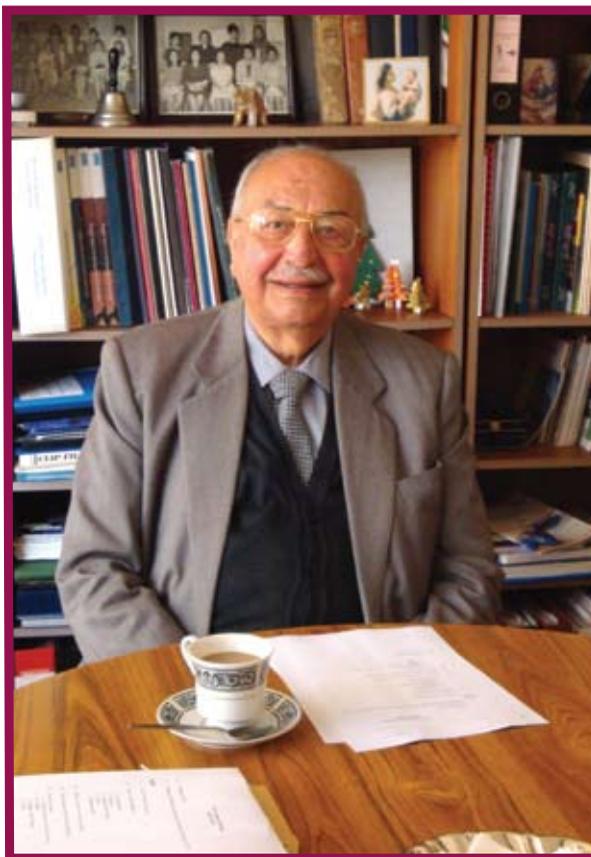
Message from the Chairman

The world is constantly changing and has taken great strides forward with technology. Yet what has not changed is the Palestinian catastrophe of a lost country whose rightful owners, forcefully uprooted, and are spending their lives suffering as refugees for 68 years. The impact of losing a country was very hard on the old generation but is proving much harder on the younger generation.

Justice must be pursued and must never die. Ever since creation, the quest for justice has been central to all struggles. For the Palestinians their struggle to overcome the great injustice which befell them, is of great importance as this injustice is not only the root of their own misery but is also the reason for all the turmoil that this region is suffering from.

Faced with the big number of refugees in 1948, the local and international churches had rallied to offer whatever help and support they could gather for those who suddenly found themselves thrown out of their homes and country. A situation that all thought was temporary extended into years making it of great importance to arouse world opinion to the great injustice that had befallen the Palestinians and to ask for international support and especially from the churches.

Churches cannot cure the pain Palestinians feel or remove its source but they are able, through their faith and beliefs, to serve and defend the weak and oppressed, to witness the suffering of victims and attract the attention to the prevailing unjust situation. It is our duty as Christians to remind the world of this ongoing tragedy. The



church community should work earnestly to seek justice based on human rights that will contribute to peace in the world but mostly to the Middle East.

The recent events in Syria has added a new wave of refugees to the existing Palestinian refugees. Of the one million and a half refugees who came to Lebanon, more than fifty thousand are of Palestinian origin and are experiencing the loss of home and country once again. The JCC is doing whatever it can to help them through its various programs and has introduced new programs where possible.

The JCC has been serving the refugees in the name of the churches for more than six decades. We have provided education and vocational training to thousands of refugee youth. They, in turn, have been able to provide for themselves and for their families to be self-sufficient and live in dignity and help alleviate their communities. Although the support received today has greatly decreased with the increasing demands of other catastrophes in the world, yet the JCC continues its work with the support of some of its faithful old partners and some new ones as well.

We greatly appreciate the support and faith our partners have in us as we strive to serve those who need us. May God bless us all in our endeavor to continue to serve in His name.

Edward Asmar
Chairman

Acknowledgments

The JCC board, staff and beneficiaries extend their gratitude to those who believe and support our work and make it possible. Some of our partners have been with us for many years faithfully encouraging our efforts through their support and visits. Others have recently joined as partners offering 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. The poor of the local community are included in our work.

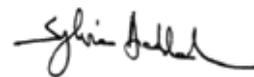
The sad and unfortunate strife in Syria has added the Syrian refugees to the list of those we work hard to help. All this cannot be done without your help and support. We send our gratitude to our old partners and extend our appreciation to the new partners. May we all be able to work together upholding our values and beliefs to help and serve those who need us.

Our appreciation goes to partners, members of churches, organizations and media members who ask to visit the camps. It is their chance to witness the suffering and misery of life within the camps-home to thousands of people for the last 68 years. We are happy to show them our programs, share our successes, express our frustrations and listen to ideas and suggestions.

- Action of Churches Together ACT
- Embrace the Middle East -Britain
- Global Ministries – United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ-USA
- Christian World Service – New Zealand
- Bread for the World-Germany
- Church of Scotland
- General Board of Global Ministries –The United Methodist Church – USA
- United Churches of Canada
- The Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Church of Sweden

- Inter Organization for Development Cooperation(ICCO)- Holland
- Pontifical Mission
- German speaking Evangelical Church of Beirut
- Le Comité Catholique Contre La Faim CCFD
- We appreciate the cooperation we have with local NGOs and extend to them our thanks and gratitude.
- The Ecumenical Popular Education Program (EPEP)
- The Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (Al Jana)
- Najdeh Association
- Beit Atfal Assumoud
- Palestinian Women’s Union
- Friends of Public Libraries Association (ASSABIL)
- Save the children
- Harriri Foundation – Health Department
- The Right to Play.
- Palestinian Association for Children’s Encouragement of Sports.(PACES)
- Encouragement of Education Through Art (START)
- Unite Lebanon Youth Project(ULYP)
- Doctors without borders

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



Sylvia Haddad
JCC Director

Introduction

The Joint Christian Committee for social service in Lebanon (JCC) is one of the five regions of the Department of service for Palestinian refugees (DSPR). It was established in 1950 in the aftermath of the 1948 forced exodus of the Palestinians from their country. DSPR began as an informal and spontaneous effort of local churches in response to this catastrophe. As the needs became too complicated for the local efforts, appeals for outside assistance were launched. A conference held in Beirut in 1951 resulted in the coordination of efforts and the establishment of a formal organizational structure. The first constitution was prepared in 1952 through which a confederation of area committees were established for the regions of Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza, Nazareth and the West Bank. These committees continue their service to this day.

Every region of DSPR worked hard to aid the refugees in their areas to cope with the new hard life they were leading. Each region developed its own identity and its own rules to face the challenges ahead. Each committee 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. All regions were connected for all administrative work and guidance through a Central Office which kept them unified, well informed and motivated. All directions and policies were taken in the meetings of a Central Committee made up of members from the five regional committees in addition to appointed 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 few expected months of refuge began to extend into years, empowerment for facing the years ahead was the

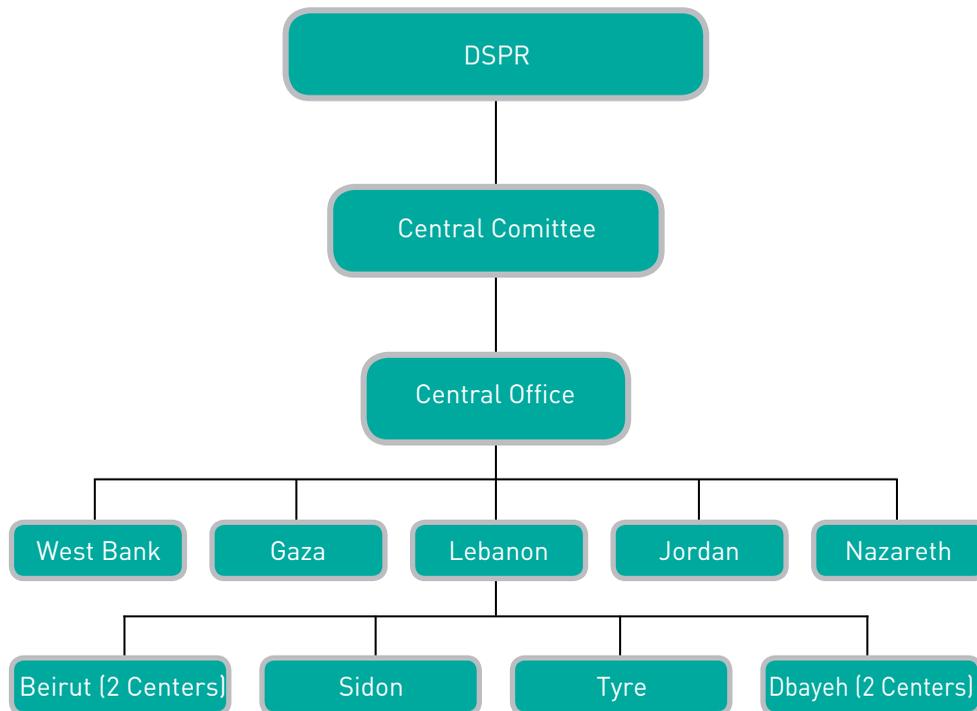
path JCC had to follow. It chose education and vocational training as its mission and as means of empowerment which resulted in the establishment of schools and vocational training centers. Fashion design, sewing, embroidery, carpentry, metal work, shoe making and repair and electronics were some of the skills offered. Hundreds of families owed and still owe their livelihood to what they learned at JCC. 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.

Sadly, the expected and coveted return to Palestine did not happen while new catastrophes hit other countries and funds were diverted elsewhere. Gradually monetary support to JCC decreased, forcing schools, centers and programs to close. A civil war in Lebanon in 1975 resulted in the closing of even more centers and programs. Yet the JCC continues working within its capabilities until this day.

Today, 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 took refuge in the 12 existing camps and their surroundings seeking assistance of the UNRWA. 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. But following the example of our founding fathers, we are offering young people education and equipping the older ones with vocations and skills. We believe that the important days of youth must not be wasted.

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.

Strategic Plan of JCC is based on four goals serving as guidelines to achieve the JCC mission

• Goal 1:

Empower marginalized Palestinian women and youth to improve their own economic conditions through access to basic education as a human right.

Education is the life line for people but especially for the refugee communities. It transforms their lives of poverty and struggle to a life of hope for a better and brighter future.

• Goal 2:

Enabling refugee women, youth and the needy of the community to develop their potential to advance their self realization and income generation capacities.

Vocational programs promote learning skills no matter how simple or complicated as the way to finding jobs, attaining employment or establishing businesses.

• Goal 3:

Gain world support for the plight of the Palestinians, advocate for their rights and support their right of return.

Create awareness of the Palestinian refugee history and advocate for their civil and human rights.

• Goal 4:

Enhance the DSPR organizational operation and financial sustainability.

Sustain the consolidated strategic plan and unified financial reporting system already in place.

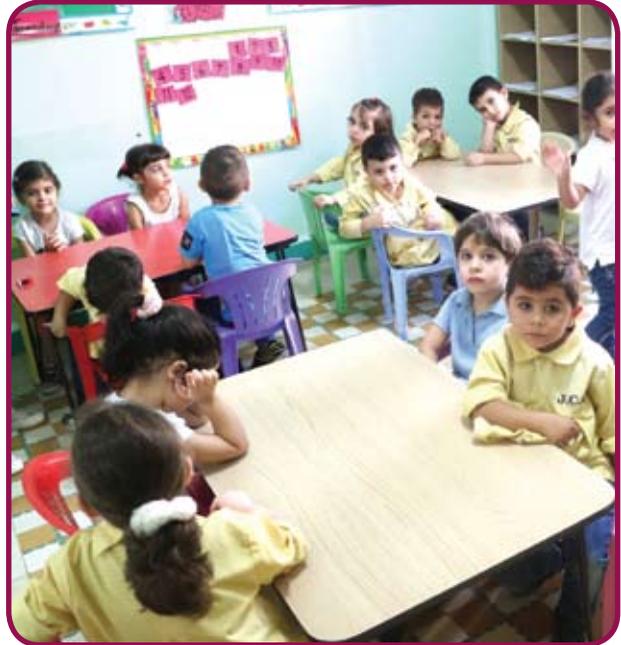
JCC Implements its different programs through its four Centers in different areas of Lebanon within or accessible to the Palestinian refugee camps



Sabra Center

Sabra Center is in the southern part of Beirut and serves the heavily populated area of Sabra-Shatilla camp and its surroundings. JCC has been operating in this busy area for over 66 years where many Palestinian families reside as refugees. Streets are congested with shops and street vendors selling all kinds of merchandise which make the area cluttered, noisy and very busy.

The Sabra Center occupies two spacious floors of a building with a small playground. A nursery and kindergarten occupy most of the first floor and a few rooms on the second floor. An electronics and computer program share the second floor with tutorial classes, literacy classes, a program for the elderly in addition to a space prepared for workshops, trainings and lectures.



Nursery and Kindergarten

JCC Nursery and Kindergarten is well known by the Sabra-Shatilla camp community and its surroundings. It has served the refugee community for more than sixty years. Nearly every family in that area has had one or more of their children pass through this kindergarten. Our current preschoolers are the children and grand children of those who were once preschoolers themselves in this kindergarten. One third of the children for the last four years are Syrian refugees who had sought safety from the fighting in Syria.

Brightly painted walls decorated with pictures, posters and instructional materials provide 140 children with the first three levels of the educational ladder. The children

receive instruction in both English and Arabic. They learn in a creative environment through educational games, sports activities and songs. A highlight of each year is the graduation ceremony, where all the classes have the chance to perform in front of their parents and friends, the songs and dances they have worked on throughout the year. 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 for all kinds of occasions.



Activities at the Kindergarten

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

- Learning colors, drawing and mixing paints.
- Cutting fruits and vegetables into shapes as a means of learning alphabets and letters and emphasizing colors.
- Drawing dairy products, eating some of these products and learning about their benefits.
- Making cards and handicrafts for mothers' day and celebrating it outdoors with song and dance where all mothers, grandmothers and many of the community attend.
- Celebrating the children's birthdays and the special occasions of Christmas, Adha, Teachers' day, Independence Day and others.
- Watching films about animals and then visiting the zoo to learn more about them at close range.
- Attending puppet shows with health and bodily care themes such as caring for the teeth.
- Acting short plays with themes of cleanliness and care of self.
- Visiting and playing on swings and slides in public playgrounds.
- Visiting a school for handicapped to learn of their challenges and how to help.
- Nakba day is remembered with history of Palestine and stories of its people.
- Enjoying story reading sessions which teach concentration, love of books and instills reading habits for the future.
- Visiting supermarkets, vegetable markets and observing making dough at bakeries
- Partake in "Unite Lebanon Youth's" children's program at their outdoor facility where the children run and play in nature, in addition to various handicrafts.
- Visits of the upper Kindergarten class to Elementary Schools in preparation for their move the coming year.



Summer Programs

Children gathered every morning for six weeks for fun and games during the hot summer. Playing in small water pools is the favorite game in addition to ball games and arts and crafts. But the focus of the program was memory games where the children learned to listen, observe and relay what they retained.

Two teachers participated for one week in the annual teacher training program offered by "The Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts" (ARCPA) and held in a mountain resort during the summer. Trainers come from different parts of the world to offer a variety of trainings in music, drama and other art related subjects.

Tutoring Programs

Helping students do their homework has become an increasingly needed service. Even before the advent of the Syrian refugees, schools were overcrowded with classrooms filled to capacity. Teachers could hardly cope and giving individual care and guidance was an impossibility. Many students suffer from slow learning abilities, behavioral and speech problems, poverty, bad living conditions and lack of guidance at home. This causes them frustration and drives them to leave school. Dropping out of schools has become a trend at the intermediate level if not before. With the thousands of Syrian/Palestinian refugees now in the camps and their surroundings needing an education, more pressure was added to the educational capabilities of these schools and their staff. Most parents cannot help their children neither can they afford private tutoring. To

prevent their children from dropping out of schools, a tutoring program was started in this center more than twelve years ago working to help students with their homework, giving them the knowledge, confidence and motivation they need to move forward. Students from different schools, aged 12-16 gather around the tables every afternoon. All have homework and they need help. The students are encouraged to study on their own with a teacher and a number of helpers who go around explaining to each student what they did not understand. Improved grades and the increasing number of applicants for these classes are a clear indication of the success of this program. The classes are ongoing all day with an average of 40 students. We often have volunteers from abroad helping mostly with the English homework.



Activities

The Rotary club offered our students and others of the community, a chance to leave the camp to celebrate the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. The destination was the mountainous northern village of Harissa where the children had the novel experience of riding cable cars to the top. Eating good food in a restaurant and being entertained by a magician is a memorable experience for these children.



Literacy Program

It is difficult for most to admit their illiteracy and few are ready to commit the time to learn and to allow others to know what they are doing. Yet in our Sabra center two children aged 12 and sixteen other women whose age ranges between 20 to 80, convene daily to take lessons in literacy. Following the newest method of teaching adults has proved very successful. They are all very proud of their achievements and are happy to demonstrate their new skill of reading and writing. Simple mathematics is also part of the

course. Their new skill has opened a new world before them. From their inability to read, they can now read books, advertisements and follow written directions, write their shopping lists, and participate in their children's homework. It is like being given the chance to see after a long time of being blind said 38 year old Talgeh Abdel Razek. It was great that a volunteer from the USA Ariel Royer who took an interest in this class and dedicated many hours per week to teach them English and also Yoga.



Itaf Salahat, known as ImmYousef, was 67 when she sought our help ten years ago. She was our first student and remains our inspiration to keep this program growing. Her enthusiasm, diligence, perseverance and success convinced us and convinced many of the older illiterate generation that learning to read and write is possible at any age. Her achievement was recognized with a special celebration.

Program of the Elderly

Once a week, a program for the elderly is offered at the center. The reason is to provide these women with some activities that will interest and encourage them to socialize, give them information related to their health and well being, keep their minds alive, entertain them but mostly, to get them out of their homes.

During this day, they socialize together, express their feelings, reminisce about old days and enjoy the variety of activities offered to them each time they come. They are taken on day trips, to places where they can enjoy nature away from the dismal life in their camp. They enjoy eating and laughing together. Coming to the center is an activity they love as it stimulates their minds and provides an outlet from their drab life. The program began with 25 women but now it counts an average of 60 to 70 women. It is their day and their program and they love it.



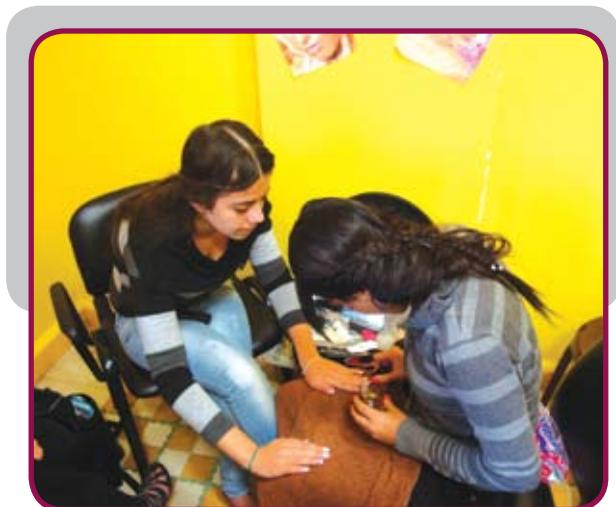
Activities: Two annual picnics to a family type restaurant by a river where they are allowed to barbecue and prepare their own dishes to enjoy together. During one of these picnics, a young girl about to be married accompanied the older ladies. They decided to carry out a traditional Palestinian pre-wedding ceremony for her. The ceremony of painting henna on the face, hands and feet was carried out followed by singing and dancing. It was a day to remember.

Vocational Programs

a. Hairdressing

Sewing and embroidery which once made this center famous are no longer in demand. The beauty industry with its products and skills has become an important and desirable part of modern society everywhere. A very popular course is a six-month course, given twice a year to 15 women every time. The course includes skin and scalp care, the newest techniques of cutting, coloring, straightening, curling, lifting and styling of hair. It also teaches the latest fashion of styling with natural hair or with extensions.





b. Beauty Class

This is a four-month course offered three times a year. The students learn the essentials of skin care followed by the latest methods and fashions in make-up applications. The course also includes care of fingernails and toe nails with the latest fashion in clipping, polishing and adding designs. Outlining designs on the legs and hands with henna is a popular part of the course.

c. Barber Skills

The newest hair styles and techniques of haircutting are taught to young men along with scalp care, coloring, moisturizing, highlighting and shaving as part of a four month course. This is an increasingly popular skill which young men seem to like. Many boys are too young and should be in school yet they are anxious to work. When efforts of getting them back into school fail, they are accepted into this course. As the basics of this skill are learned and mastered, the students practice their new found knowledge and techniques on each other before they are exposed to the public



d. Tying of Scarves

A four-week course to train in different ways of tying a scarf attractively is given three times a year. This skill is not only used for personal use but is used to generate an income during the many special occasions women want to look their best.

e. Practical Work

As the students of the three programs begin to gain confidence, practice on their fellow trainees is not enough. For the students of the hairdressing and beauty course, an agreement with a nearby home for the elderly allows them access into the home where they can practice and improve their skills on the women residents under the supervision of their teachers. This not only provides our students with the practice they need but also, and very importantly, it provides the elderly women with their essential grooming needs in addition to the company and affection they crave for.

To keep abreast of all new hairstyles, makeup

techniques and products, leading beauty establishments are visited where films are shown and experts demonstrate. Occasionally, hairdressers are invited to demonstrate the latest techniques and styles.

All through the courses there is emphasis on employability requirements, which are gained through mastering the skill of their choice, and proper behavior and attitudes in the work place. To demonstrate these requirements, the community surrounding the center is invited to get their grooming needs at a very low charge. This provides our students with the experience they need in dealing with the public.

f. Workshops and Lectures

Cooperation with other organizations provides the Sabra center with speakers and trainers addressing the different issues of interest and value to the staff, parents and the community.

Health, family, and human rights issues were all discussed.

Understanding your children and handling their problems; Learning difficulties and speech problems in children and how to handle them; Violence at home and its effect on children; Alerting children to understanding and reporting sexual harassment; Teaching cleanliness

and hygiene to children; Importance of following rules and regulations; Learning to play with your children .Family planning; The rights of women and children.



g. Workshops attended by the staff

Topics handled dealt with: Teacher trainings; Building children's capacities against physical abuse; Learning difficulties in children; Importance of play for children; Behavioral problems in class.

Electronics and Computer Center

Topics handled dealt with: Teacher trainings; Building children's capacities against physical abuse; Learning difficulties in children; Importance of play for children; Behavioral problems in class.

The Electronic Program

The electronics program began in 1964 at a time when few others were aware of this profession. To join the program, a certificate of completion of the intermediate school level, good grades and mathematical abilities were required. A five year program followed after which employment was readily available. Some of the graduates were instrumental in the establishment of the first television station in Lebanon. Many found employment in the Gulf countries and were able to send money to support their families. The program was later reduced to three years with a good basic education required for joining.

The deteriorating standards of basic education in schools serving the Palestinians and the restrictions placed on the employment of refugees had their adverse effect on this program. The three years were reduced to two years with the second year being optional. A simplified yet challenging curriculum which can be taught in a shorter period of time is now being followed.

To keep up with all the new inventions, new



electronic equipment and gadgets appearing on the market are monitored. Thus putting up dishes on the roofs and fixing cellular phones have become part of the training in addition to repairing electronics and house hold equipment. The students take a mixture of theoretical and practical classes and at the end of the course they are ready to work.



Some of the students have been able to open their own businesses within the camp, while others find employment in stores and companies.

The Computer Program

Assembling and maintaining computers followed by a number of window operating systems is part of the electronics course. It has become an important component of the electronics field. It begins with assembling and maintaining computers and moves on to programs connected to electronics equipment.

At the center, it could be pursued as part of the electronics program or pursued separately with a special curriculum. The addition of this course has added to the attraction of the electronics program and has proved its importance to the job market.

Activities

The students were lucky this year to get two young volunteers to teach them English. Joseph Ataman came from Britain and Domenik Ackermann came from Germany who also gave them sports. Students were encouraged to spend some of their free time

in the nearby football field. They attended a series of lectures facilitated by "Save the Children" on how to be successful after which they attended workshops on the same subject in the center.

Library

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 for 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 borrow and read the books.



Programs of Sabra Center	No. of Beneficiaries	Duration
Nursery, Kindergarten	139	9 months
Tutorial	55	9 months
Literacy	19	9 months
Library	All programs	Ongoing
Elderly	60	9 months
Workshops & Lectures	250-300	Ongoing
Summer activities	64	8 weeks
Electronics & Computer	57	9 months
Hair Dressing	24	6 months
Beauty Skills	20	6 months
Barbering	17	4 months
Tying head scarves	16	1 month

Sidon Center

To the south of Beirut lies the city of Sidon where JCC has a spacious center accessible to the highest populated refugee camp in Lebanon Ein-El- Hilweh. It is also accessible to another smaller camp and to the old part of the city where a good number of Palestinian refugee families live. The

center was once known for teaching sewing and embroidery, but changed to secretarial training and hairdressing in the late 1990s. It is currently being used as an academic educational program for the Syrian refugees.

The Syrian/Palestinian refugees

JCC has launched the Syrian Refugee Education Program as a way to give access to secondary education to hundreds of Syrian refugee children who live in the areas in Lebanon already served by JCC. This program addresses the immediate

needs of the refugee population while also ensuring that the Syrian society will have a new generation of civil servants to rebuild the country after the war.

Academic Classes

As government, United Nations agencies and the numerous local and international NGOs rallied to help the Syrian refugees with food, clothes and shelter, the JCC helped as well but became more concerned with the young people who were unable to cope with the educational system of Lebanon. Education in Syria uses Arabic as the language of instruction while in Lebanon English and French are the languages of instruction. As a result, many frustrated with their inability to understand were dropping out of schools at the most formative and precious days of their lives. Most did not know what to do and were becoming prey to different fanatic groups or political movements.

With a big number of such young people in the camps and their surroundings, the JCC began a program for students aged 14-18. The plan was to use the Syrian system of education to carry out the highest classes of the intermediate level and the

highest classes leading to the high school diploma. To get these official documents, the students have to go to Damascus to sit for the Ministry of



Education exams. At the beginning, we had a small number of students in the new program. But the number of applicants was overwhelming and a program planned for 65 students ended with 580 students in the first year alone.

Encouraged by the success and appreciation encountered, the program has continued and improved as books have been acquired with the resumed work of some of the destroyed printing presses in Syria. As the time approaches for the students to go to Syria, some get scared of getting recruited into the army or of being prevented from coming back. The majority though, do go looking forward to seeing their country again.

It is a big job to prepare all the required papers needed for the trip to Damascus to sit for the exams. The first step is to obtain and fill in the applications for the exams from the Syrian Ministry of Education. The second is to apply to the Lebanese security offices for the travel papers that will insure safe passage at the borders and insures re-entry into Lebanon. The third step is to ensure safe lodging for the students for three weeks.

Cooperation with others

In a camp near the city of Baalbeck in the Beqaa valley, a group of Syrian teachers are running classes for the Syrian students similar to our program. Ideas are shared but more importantly, their students who need to sit for their official exams in Damascus are taken and cared for with our own students.

The Yarmouk Palestinian camp in Damascus has been badly destroyed since the beginning of the civil strife in Syria. Most of its inhabitants have left after having gone through traumatic experiences of fighting,

killing and torture. Yet there are those who remained trying to carry on with a normal life. The remaining students are attending an UNRWA school that takes them to the 9th grade only. A group of teachers have taken it upon themselves to provide the last three years needed for the requirements of the high school where they can sit for the official degree of the Baccalaureate. The JCC helps them with books and the students of these informal classes who need official coverage to sit for the exams, are presented as part of our own group.

Tutoring program

For the Palestinian refugees attending UNRWA and other local schools, homework is difficult for many as few can get support at home. This is even more difficult for those who joined the UNRWA schools which decided to follow the

French system of education and use the French language of instruction. Help for students with homework is essential for success which will prevent the alarming rate of students from dropping out of schools.

English Classes

Classes in English for different levels are offered throughout the year. These include advanced language skills in preparation for university entrance exams and basic English language skills.

Ein -El- Hilweh Center

Looking to accommodate the increasing number of Syrian refugee students following the Syrian system, a premise in the heavily populated camp of Ein- El-Hilweh in Sidon was rented. Classes carried out in this center are similar to those in the Sidon center with the students joining those travelling to Damascus for the exams.



Special remedial classes of English and math are given for those wanting to join the local schools where languages are needed.

A psychosocial program is also ongoing for children aged 8-13 who have undergone traumatic experiences before their arrival.

Programs of Sidon & Ein El-Hilweh	No. of Beneficiaries	Duration
Academic classes for Syrian refugees	430	9 months
Official Exams taken in Damascus	211	3 weeks each round
Tutoring	80	Ongoing
English	32	Ongoing
Remedial classes	45	Ongoing
Psychosocial	70	Ongoing

Tyre Farm

The south of Lebanon is where the Palestinian refugees first arrived in 1948. At present there are three camps and a number of informal gatherings. These gatherings are home to Palestinian refugees with no identity cards and who endure a very hard life. Accessible to these, is the JCC farm where short courses in agriculture is open to both genders and to all ages. The land has been well prepared with a water well and an irrigation system installed. Four plastic houses have been set up and are planted around the year. An old structure was turned into a green

house where a variety of vegetables and house plants are grown from seeds before moving them into soil.

An introductory basic course of agriculture is offered twice a year. It gives basic training in agriculture which includes theory and practical work in the field, in the plastic houses and in the greenhouse. Many find employment in the surrounding fields or in agriculture related establishments while some have rented small pieces of land to plant and generate an income.



In a country where Palestinians are barred from working in many professions, agriculture is not included. This should encourage people and especially the young to study this field which has a lot of related fields that can be pursued and taken up as vocations.

On the side of the farm where there are trees and wild flowers, a beehive for bee keeping has been set up. Excellent honey is produced. This year, an intensive beekeeping course was offered to all who wanted to improve their skills as beekeepers in the area.



School children, scouts, photography students and other groups are regularly welcomed at the Farm to explore what nature offers. Many groups and families who are stifled in the overcrowded camps often come for a recreational break.

The organization “Action Against Hunger” gave skill reinforcement training to vulnerable women from the Syrian refugee and the local community. Sewing, hair dressing and cooking were part of the course.

A new activity was added to the regular program this spring when the farm began sending organic fruits, vegetables, and plants to be sold in Beirut. The German Church allowed the use of their grounds once a week for this purpose.



Programs on the Farm	No. of Beneficiaries	Duration
Agriculture classes	37	4 months
Be Keeping	24	4 weeks
Academic Classes fpr Syrians	110	9 months
Program for vulnerable women	35	6 weeks
Sale of organic products in Beirut	The community	Ongoing

Dbayeh Camp

On a slope, 25 km to the North of Beirut lies the Dbayeh camp. The camp is home to around 500 refugee families to which around 90 Syrian refugee families have recently been added. The camp is small with very small houses crowded together along four main narrow streets. One long street leads into the camp with a church

standing in the middle. The JCC runs its programs in a two floor premise. The upper floor houses the Library/ Community center while the lower houses the special studies program. An adjoining premise to the lower floor was bought this year to expand the special academic classes for Syrian refugee children.

The Library/Community Center

A library established in 2008 has proved very successful as people and especially children and youth have learned to use a library. It is equipped with computers and a good collection of educational games which attract the young people. They enjoy browsing and researching through books for subjects they need for school. They have learned the concept of library membership which allows them to borrow and return books. A story reading hour finds children

aged 5 to 15 gathering in groups four times a week to enjoy listening to stories read to them. As programs of art, music, dance, drama. Lectures and workshops were introduced, more people of different ages came to spend time in this library which had become a Community Center as well community members of both genders and all ages gather to participate in programs offered and to plan for new programs.



Tutoring Program

The program, established in 2007, is known as the "Study Station". It is a program to help children with learning difficulties, such as slow learning, speech defects, hyper activity, difficulties in concentration and other psychological problems. 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 these students. The establishment of the tutoring program in this camp has made a great difference in the lives of many children and their families. Most parents are unable to help their children with their homework and cannot afford to pay for help. A retired qualified and experienced English teacher residing out of the camp volunteers many hours a week to help the "study station" students improve their English.



Schooling for the Syrian Refugees

Education is a vital need for the children of the 120 Syrian refugee families living in the camp and its surroundings. In spite of the government schools' acceptance of the refugee children, many could not cope with the local system. Also many parents prefer that their children follow the Syrian system of education and its curriculum in readiness for their return home. The Syrian curriculum was prepared for the elementary classes, books were bought from Syria and Syrian teachers were recruited from the camps. The scholastic year began with 67 children aged 6- 12.



New premise is added

A family living in adjoining rooms to the lower premise of the JCC center decided to move elsewhere. Needing the extra space for the Syrian refugee educational program, the rooms

were immediately bought and added to the original premise. Its run down condition was renovated and the premise is now in full use.

Moral Education

Every society is concerned about instilling moral values in their children and youth to bring up honest and responsible adults. There is often controversy on the importance of these values and how to instill them in the young. But with the loosening moral character affecting people through the internet and social media, it is imperative to instill values starting from the very young. Religious guidance gives them the backbone they need to cultivate the character they need. The Bible with its teachings, stories, parables and lessons are the best way to instill in young people the values they need to be a good and upright part of society and of their community. Young people aged 5-18 attend these classes.



Helping Others

Helping others is an important part of the religious guidance offered. For the third consecutive year, our youth get the opportunity to help care and entertain a group of people of different ages suffering from mental problems. These people are taken to a mountain resort to provide them with some change in their lives. Eighteen of our young people volunteered to help care

for them and entertain them for two weeks. This is an invaluable learning experience for our youth as they learn to care and give joy to others as they enjoy themselves as well. A fund established a few years ago to financially assist bereaved families, continues to be supplied by the monthly community contributions and has proved to be of great help at times of need.

A Thrift Shop



A small shop was opened where used clothing, toys and household items are sold. The increasing need to cope with the high cost of medicines and medical care necessitated finding some source of income to help in relief and emergencies. The woman who had allowed us the use of a room in her house had to terminate our agreement due to family reasons. The thrift shop had to relocate and we continue recycling what some people discard. The income has helped in many medical tests and lots of medicines have been bought.

Art and Music

It is said that art and music expand peoples' mind and soul and are of special importance in the development of children's personalities. Art classes with a variety of handicrafts are

carried out weekly for forty to fifty young people. Music and dancing are offered with special emphasis on singing in the hopes of forming a choir one day.

Sports

Sports whether team based or individual is essential for the young and old. It is not only of physical benefit but also helps build self-esteem, confidence, and goal setting and instills the importance of practice. An empty land next to a closed school was prepared as a space for football and basketball. A foot ball boys team and a basket ball team with both girls and boys meet regularly twice a week with their trainers who are from the camp. They compete against each other and against teams from other camps.



A Gymnasium

A gymnasium facility was inaugurated last year. 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 installed. The Dbayeh community was very happy and the list of membership grows with the young and old. No one believed that one day the camp will have its own gym facility.



Summer Program

For the second year the theme of the summer program was Play and Learn where 140 children aged four to fourteen gathered daily for two months. The theme was "Civilizations of the Arab World". General information about every country with their main cities, historical and religious monuments, their customs, culture, and leading historical figures were explained. They learned to do

the different handicrafts of those countries and displayed them. Songs and dance from the different countries were learned and demonstrated at the end of the program in front of a big audience from the camp and different NGOs.



Lectures, Workshops and Trainings

Lectures, discussions, workshops and trainings for women, men and young people took place over the year. These programs began by targeting women whose interest and enthusiasm for what they were learning brought others. But it was soon realized that the men needed to get involved as well. The men having rarely been included in programs, came reluctantly at first, but their attitude quickly changed as they felt the benefit of what they were learning. Some of the topics handled included: importance of family; marital relations; reasons for family discord; relationships with their children; sex problems; reasons for divorce; preserving the family and its values.

As for the young people, the subjects handled were of interest to their age

such as self development, being assertive; handling feelings and emotions; team building; dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs; being truthful and forgiving; first aid; the rights and responsibilities of refugees .



General Activities

For the youth, an acting class was introduced and a cooking competition was carried out with prizes for the best cook. The teachers attended trainings on dealing better with

learning problems of children and the sports teachers trained on improving their interaction with children.

Dbayeh Center Programs	No. of Beneficiaries	Duration
Library Community Center	All the community	4 months
Study station	40	4 weeks
Story reading	45	9 months
Academic classes for Syrian Refugees	67	6 weeks
Moral Education	45	Ongoing
Art and Music	35	
Sports	30	
Gymnasium	45	
Summer Program	110	
Lectures. workshops, trainings	women, men & 145 youth	
Thrift Shop	Camp & neighborhood	

Advocacy

The JCC continues to advocate for change by working for the rights of the Palestinian refugees locally and internationally as well as to raise awareness to their plight and the injustice committed against them 68 years ago. 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 must be told. The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have very few civil rights and they suffer discrimination socially and politically. This injustice has caused them to suffer from poverty, misery, fear and hopelessness.

With the influx of the Syrian refugees into Lebanon, the Palestinian issue seems to be more in the background. Yet the JCC continues to provide information and create

awareness to the situation of the Palestinian refugees. Some of this awareness is carried 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.

We also appreciate the visits of partners, members of churches, organizations and the media who ask to visit the camps. It is their chance to see the suffering and misery of life within the camps which have been home to thousands of people for the last 68 years. We are happy to show them our programs, share with them our successes, express our frustrations and listen to their ideas and suggestions.

Visitors



- From the Church of Scotland came Kenny Rogers who visited the programs his Church support in the Dbayeh Center.



- From the Syria-Lebanon Partnership Network of the Presbyterian Churches of the USA (PCUSA) came Susan Schroeder and Heather Sigler who visited the Sabra Center and were taken to walk in the Shatilla camp and see the hard life within.



- March saw a meeting of "Action of Churches Together" (ACT) in Beirut. At the end of the meeting, Wendy Gichuru from the "United Church of Canada", Ilonka Boltze from "Bread for the World" and Gordon Simango from ACT visited the Syrian refugee education programs in Sidon and in Ein-El-Hilweh camp



- From "Embrace the Middle East" came Jamie Eyre accompanied by Lydia Nash and Neil who were coming to Lebanon for the first time. They visited the Dbayeh camp and the programs supported by Embrace. At a later date, Jamie and Lydia returned to conduct a workshop for organizations they work with in Lebanon.

- David Weaver, a long time friend of JCC, visited the Sabra Center and conducted interviews with Syrian refugees working in the Center
- Peter Makari came in April and October with groups from the United Church of Christ and Christian Church in the USA. Both groups visited JCC Sabra Center and walked through the Shatilla camp



- Johann Weusmann and Werner Joecket from the Evangelical Church of Rheinland, Germany accompanied by a television interviewer and photographer from SAT 7 television station, visited the Sidon Center and talked with the young people studying in the higher classes and preparing for their exams in Damascus. Many cried as they relayed their stories of escape from the Yarmouk camp in Syria. They also visited Shatilla camp and conducted interviews and filmed some of the people they met.

- From "Christian Aid" of Britain came Zarah Mesbah, Jennifer Benson, Mairead Collins and Stephanie Gaspais who visited the JCC farm in Tyre to see its' agriculture programs and the education program for Syrian refugee children.



- Trish Murry from New Zealand Christian World Service visited the Sabra Center with a special interest in the Electronics and Computer program. She also visited the Sidon and the Syrian program.

- David Wildman from United Methodist Church in the USA who was here for a filming project did not forget to call on JCC and its programs
- Hendrien Matt and Dik Verboom from the Dutch organization "Educans " for empowerment by education and teacher training, visited our programs and found room for collaboration with JCC to seek improvement of the educational programs



- Elizabeth Funnel and Mary Lucas from the organization Caffod visited JCC to learn more about the organization and its work.



- From the German Organization Misereor came Astrid Mayer who wanted to know more about the Syrian refugees. She was taken to visit our educational program in Sidon where she had the chance to observe the students in their classrooms and discuss their situation.

- The United Church of Canada wanting to give JCC more of a profile in Canada sent Kaitlin Bardwish to learn about JCC. She visited all JCC centers talked , interviewed, recorded, photographed and filmed those she met and what she saw. Some pictures in this report are from Kaitlin.



- Jens Halve from Bread for the World with his colleagues Mirjam Roller and Anne Dreyer from the Diakonia Emergency Aid (Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe) visited JCC Sabra Center, saw the programs and met the staff. They also visited the Shatilla camp and witnessed life within.

- To explore and understand more about the refugees new and old, we received and took to the camps two journalists: Manon Stravens from the Dutch magazine Vice Versa, Jacob Russel and Teresa and Laure Perrot from Diakonia and Paul Jeffrey a photographer working for ACT. They visited our centers and interviewed our students and especially the Syrian refugees.

Volunteers

Volunteers enrich the work of an organization while enriching their own lives. Many volunteers have offered their help and time over the years and it is certainly appreciated.

Ariel Royer

is from the “United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ” in the USA. She spent more than nine months with us helping in the office with her writing abilities and in the Sabra center teaching English. She took a special interest in the literacy class teaching them English and Yoga exercises.



Domenik Ackermann

is a German theology student who had joined the Near East School of Theology for a special program for foreign students . He volunteered at the Sabra center to work with the Electronics students teaching them English and sports.

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.



The Syrian Refugees

In 2011 violence erupted in neighboring Syria and people began to flee to neighboring countries. Lebanon, fearing the repetition of the Palestinian refugee camp situation, refused to erect special spaces for the fleeing Syrians. As a result, the refugees had to fend for themselves and find places to stay. The Syrians of Palestinian origin who had once again lost their homes and all they owned headed mostly to the already established 12 Palestinian camps and their surroundings.

Some stayed with relatives, others rented rooms and still others stayed in tents set up for them within the camp grounds. The UNRWA and other NGOs were trying their utmost to help these refugees but still the needs were great and the capacities were limited. A country, once priding itself on being mostly self-sufficient planting its food and manufacturing its needs was being destroyed.

JCC offers assistance

Initially, the JCC provided relief of mattresses, blankets, clothing, food, milk for children, hygiene and sanitary needs. Children in Sabra camp joined the Nursery and Kindergarten classes of Sabra Center. All programs of the different Centers welcomed the new refugees in their programs. Special programs to help ease the trauma the refugee children had experienced were carried out in all centers. But a major problem was clear to the JCC whose mission has always been education. The children had experienced a major

interruption to their education which will have its effect on their future. The UNRWA and the public schools had tried to accommodate as many students as they could but as the Syrian school curriculum uses the Arabic language for all its major subjects while the Lebanese curriculum uses the English and French languages, many were unable to cope and left school. This resulted in thousands of students wasting the most formative years of their lives.



A new program begins

At the end of 2013, a project was started in Sidon center offering students of the higher classes lessons following the Syrian curriculum given by Syrian teachers. The JCC wanted to prepare its students to take 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.



ACT Alliance Support

The JCC, needing support with this important program, had applied to the Syrian Appeal Program of the ACT Alliance in unison with DSPR Jordan. The help received allowed JCC to continue with this 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 to be secured from the Ministry of Education in Damascus and travelling documents had to be obtained before travel to ensure re-entry into Lebanon. The UNRWA in Damascus provided lodging for both groups of students for the three weeks each group needed to be there. The Palestinian Embassy in Beirut assisted in the travelling arrangements.

This was the beginning of the program which is now providing education and an opportunity to gain the certificates needed for further studies.

Encouraged by our successful trial and bombarded by popular demand, the program

continued in Sidon providing the instruction needed to prepare other groups of Palestinian/Syrian students for the Syrian official exams. To accommodate the increasing number of students, classes extended to the biggest and most congested Palestinian camp- Ein-El-Hilweh at the outskirts of Sidon where a premise was rented for the purpose.

Hearing about this program and the success achieved, the Syrian families living further south around the city of Tyre asked for a similar program for their children. Convinced of the need for this program, the JCC began classes on the Tyre farm where space was available.

In the Ba'alback area of the Bika' valley, Syrian teachers living there asked for guidance to replicate our program for a group of refugee students in that area who had dropped out of the local schools. The curriculum and books were supplied and classes began. Students qualifying for the official exams in Damascus joined our students to sit for the exams in Syria.



Other items of assistance

Within the program of ACT Alliance, food and hygiene vouchers for the most vulnerable of Syrian refugee families living in and around the Palestinian camps were distributed

periodically. Subsidies for shelter were given and are of utmost importance, especially for people who have lost the head of the family or have suffered physical disabilities.

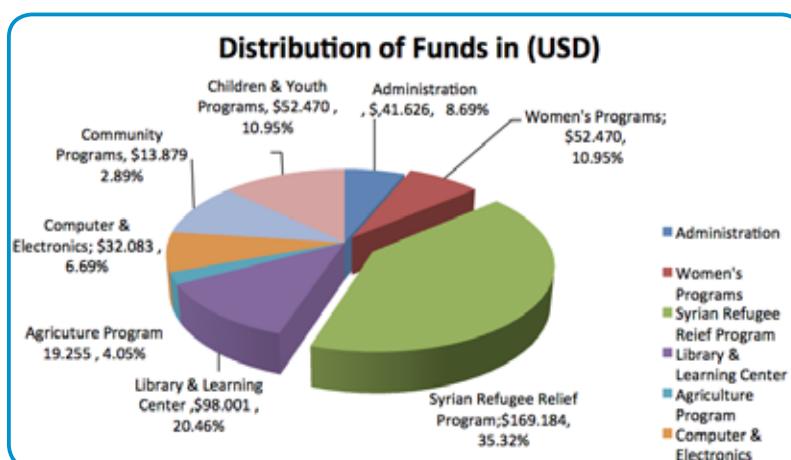


Project Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries of the on-going programs totaled 2,372

Indirect beneficiaries: Hundreds participated in the different workshops and activities.

Programs	No. of Beneficiaries
Community Development Programs	610
Children and Youth Programs	507
Women's Programs	250
Syrian Refugee Program	708
Library & Learning Center	201
Agriculture Program	60
Computer and Electronics	36
Total Beneficiaries	2,372





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