

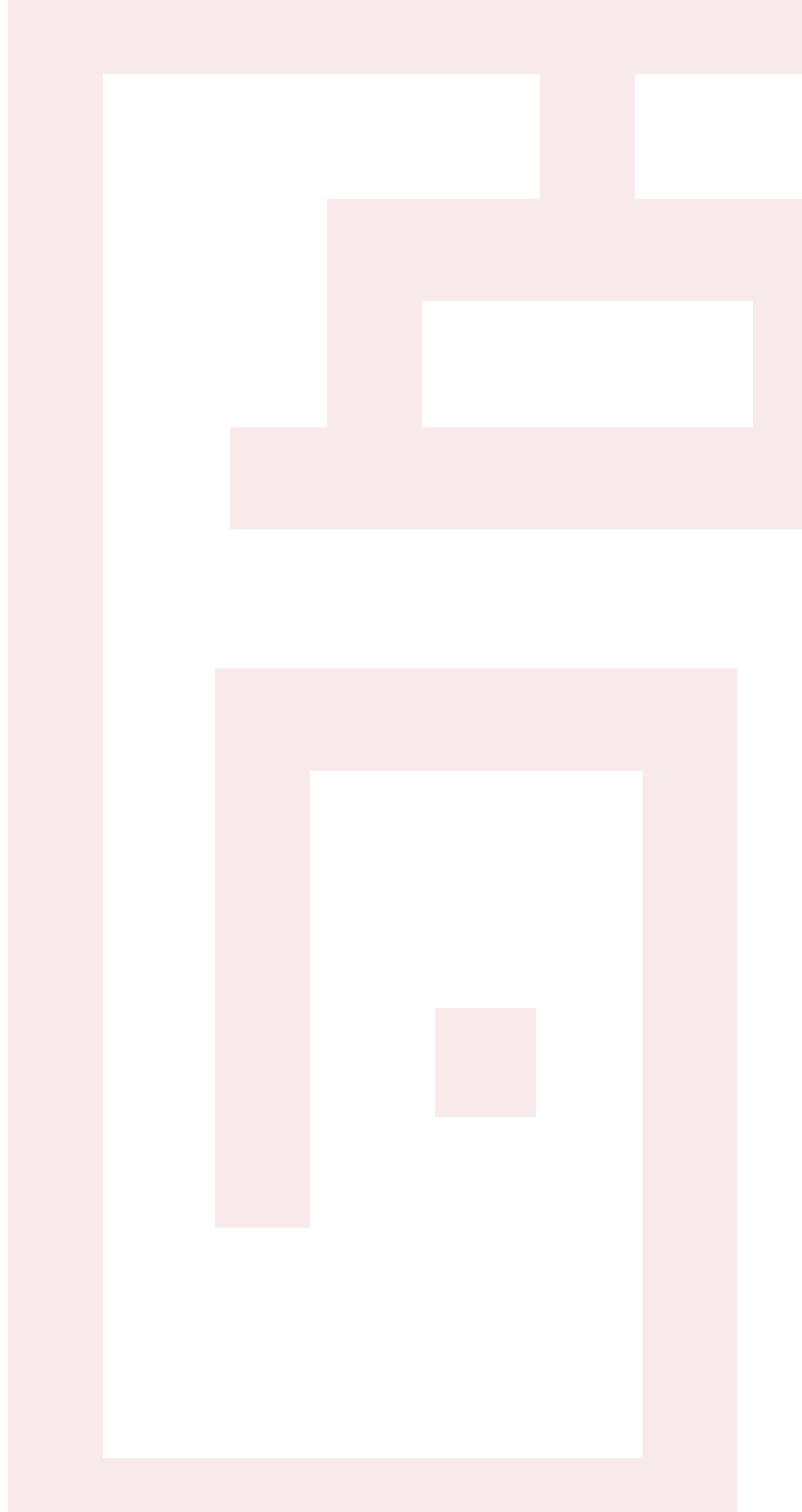
**TAAWON
LEBANON**

ANNUAL
REPORT
2017



*"Together we make
a difference in their lives"*







LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In the field of humanitarian work, we feel success when we leave a positive impact on people's lives. At the same time, in the face of ever-increasing challenges to preserve human dignity and maintain basic living standards, our work carries ever-growing responsibilities.

Ever since its establishment, Taawon Lebanon has faced a wide variety of challenges. These challenges serve to motivate us to work harder and establish more programmes and interventions. They urge us to exert greater efforts, especially when it relates to helping our own people and strengthening our own voice.

Looking back at 2017, we remember the achievements and milestones that undoubtedly had a positive impact on the lives of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In early 2017, we opened a Kidney Dialysis Unit (KDU) in Beddawi refugee camp in the north of Lebanon: this represented a very important step forward in the lives of patients who suffer from kidney failure and who rely entirely on the free treatment provided by the unit, as previously they had to make a long trip to the KDU at Hamshari Hospital in Saida.

In 2017, we also opened a new public library in Al Jaleel camp in Baalbek, funded by the Abu Ghazaleh family and named after the late Ahmad Abu Ghazaleh. Taawon Lebanon now oversees the activities of eight public libraries located in eight Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. We hope to help with a new library in Dbayeh camp in 2018.

As part of our Early Childhood Education Development Programme, implemented in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), we were able to achieve significant improvements in the activities of the kindergartens in terms of physical rehabilitation and renovation of premises, as well as providing tools, resources and capacity-building of teachers and supervisors. The most prominent achievement was the document on the "Minimum Standards for Kindergartens" that aims to be a reference tool to improve the quality of education in kindergartens in the Palestinian camps.

Looking to the future and to sustain our work, in 2017, we were able to attract a group of young and dynamic members to our General Assembly. We are certain these younger members will bring fresh ideas and modern approaches to Taawon's work. As much as they will be serving Taawon, we hope Taawon will serve them back by being their gateway to volunteering and community work. While 2018 marks the 35th anniversary of Taawon's establishment, our enthusiasm and determination to make a difference is undiminished. We will continue to focus on education, community development, health, culture, and youth empowerment. We will keep responding to our people's needs. In all regards, we recognise that the impact of our work is only possible thanks to our understanding of the reality and requirements of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the continued support of Taawon headquarters in Palestine as well as the many institutions and individuals who support our various programmes and projects, and the cooperation and commitment of our partners. We continue to work for all of you, and our actions only have meaning and value thanks to you.

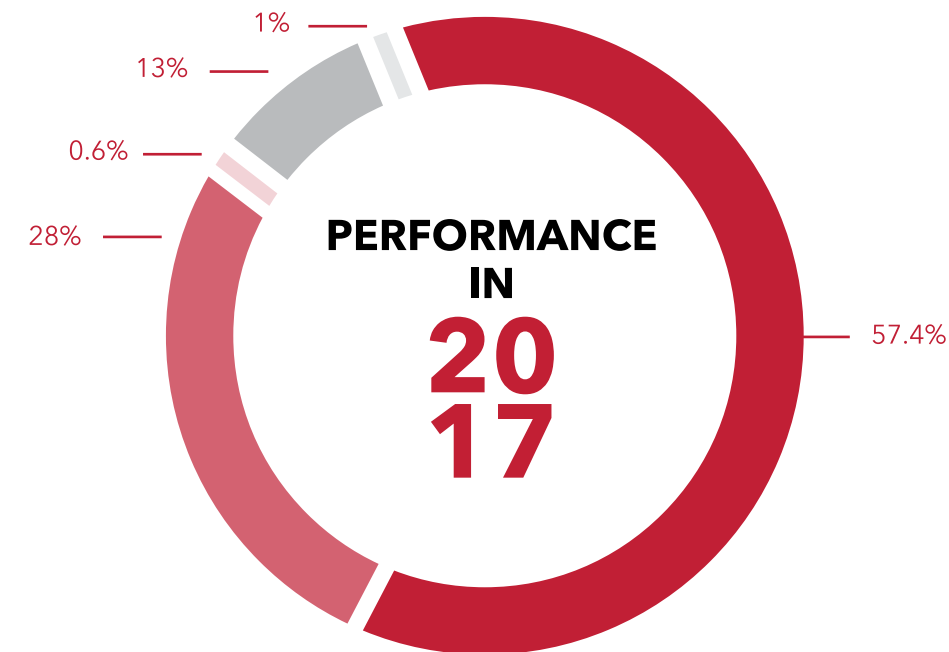
Fouad Bawarshi

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017

Developing the “Minimum Standards for Kindergartens” – the first document of its kind in the Palestinian community – to serve as a reference for improving the quality of education in kindergartens and ensuring they provide a decent learning environment that complies with approved international standards. It was one of the main deliverables of the UNICEF-supported “Early Childhood Development Programme”.

Opening the eighth public library in Taawon’s network of public libraries in Al Jaleel camp, Baalbek in northeast Lebanon. This library – the first library in Al Jaleel camp – was named the “Ahmad Abu Ghazaleh Library”.

Providing life-saving treatment to five patients who were in urgent need of surgical intervention thanks to a joint Ramadan Appeal held in cooperation with UNRWA. The total cost of this medical intervention amounted to USD \$116,000 and the patients gained the chance of a better life!



DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME



HANANE IS REBORN



It all started a few years ago when Hanane's mother noticed that her 14 year old daughter had a curve in her back when she was standing up. The medical diagnosis revealed severe scoliosis of over 60 degrees that required careful and expensive surgical intervention.



Hanane's mother said:

The sprain became more and more severe, and Hanane was going to become paralysed and had to stop going to school. The cost of surgery was way beyond our means. Parents feel absolutely helpless at such times, which is such a hard feeling! When we were told that UNRWA and Taawon-Lebanon were going to launch a campaign during Ramadan to provide the treatment cost for Hanane and for other patients, we were full of hope. When I saw her walking again, I realised that she was reborn! There are no words to describe my deepest gratitude and thanks to all those who helped my daughter!



OUR PROGRAMMES

Education

Youth Empowerment

Community Development

Emergency Relief and

Humanitarian Aid

Culture

EDUCATION

Education is their right and a priority... and our responsibility. This slogan underlined our work in 2017. It indicated the objectives of the programme and reflected Taawon's overall direction.

What is special about the Education Programme is that it addresses basic educational needs that are not supported by UNRWA, from essential interventions for children at the preschool stage through to support for youth looking for a trusted university education.

It includes:



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

More than **11,500** boys and girls received a preschool education following the best educational methods, including **446** children with special needs, in **28** kindergartens across all the Palestinian camps.

17 kindergartens were restored, rehabilitated and equipped to become attractive learning environments in line with international standards, providing better learning opportunities for over **1,300** children, and improved integration of children with special needs.

67 teachers, supervisors and assistant supervisors developed their skills and teaching methods after participating in a one-year training programme in cooperation with Saint Joseph University, supported by on-the-job coaching for **37** teachers to ensure the training was put into practice.

More than **6,500** children explored new places and took part in various "active learning" activities such as excursions, interactive activities, plays and puppet shows. Parents and other local organisations participated in some of these activities in order to strengthen coordination and networking between kindergartens, the local community and the children's parents.

More than **381** children participated in extra-curricular activities to stimulate their learning through the "HAPPY" programme. Activities such as playing, drawing and singing all help develop children's behavioural, social and cognitive skills.

164 teachers and supervisors benefited from salary support for one year as part of the kindergartens' programme, thus ensuring continued education and supporting stable livelihoods.

In their
words

“



Immediate Application and Radical Transformation

Our training within the Early Childhood Education Programme has dramatically changed our approach to teaching kindergarten classes. We adopted active teaching methods and principles and completely avoided conventional methods and books in our teaching. We quickly saw results as the children interacted wonderfully with the teachers and the kindergarten as a whole, and the teachers started to show a greater capability for innovative education. We are aware that change needs time but we have made good progress and developed a new competency policy based on the training sessions. Our teachers have gained more knowledge about active education. What was important in this process was that we implemented change and determined our strengths and weaknesses during the training session while putting our new knowledge into practice immediately.

Sarah Amin Faour - Supervisor at Essaad Toufoula Kindergarten - Fraternity - Burj El Barajneh Camp

TAKING AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO EDUCATION, ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

In 2017, our team finished working on a leading innovative programme, “Adopt A School”, in partnership with UNRWA and the American University of Beirut. In its first phase, the programme will involve UNRWA’s Haifa School in Beirut, which is attended by approximately **580** children from Shatila and Burj El Barajneh Camps.

What does the programme offer exactly?

1. Rehabilitation and equipment;
2. Strengthening of the administration and leadership capacities;
3. Support and guidance for teachers on modern and active teaching methods;
4. Educational and social support and guidance;
5. Development of life skills and protection for students from hazardous practices;
6. Enhanced communication between parents and the school, and between the school and its surroundings;
7. Quality nutrition inside the school.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

This programme aims to improve Palestinian students' opportunities to gain a quality university education in light of the elevated cost of higher education in Lebanon and the limited access to Lebanon's only public university. This support helps students access job opportunities and escape the cycle of poverty.

175 university students received loans or scholarships (**132** loans and **43** scholarships) at the American University of Beirut, the Lebanese American University and Beirut Arab University, within eight disciplines.

High school students also benefited from practical SAT training in addition to orientation and guidance sessions to choose their academic specialties while still at school.



In their words

My life has changed through perseverance and determination

I am a girl who doesn't stop dreaming, and I am confident of my ability to achieve my dreams through perseverance. When I got my high school diploma, I realised that there was a greater challenge ahead of me to enter university, so I changed my major from pharmacy, because it is so expensive, and decided to study nursing instead. Despite that, my modest family was still not able to cover the tuition costs, so I obtained a college loan to complete my studies. Today, after obtaining my nursing degree, I feel that I am empowered and I am determined more than ever to help my brothers and sisters to complete their studies, and to repay the loan. This will undoubtedly help other students who are in desperate need of it.

Naghm Aida - Graduated nurse from Beirut Arab University - Burj El Barajneh Camp



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

The Youth Empowerment Services Programme was launched with a new concept in 2017 under the name **"For the Livelihood of Youth" (FLY)**, maintaining its objectives of developing the abilities and skills of Palestinian youth in order to improve their employment opportunities. **26** young men and women participated.

This important programme offers:

- **90 hours of intensive English language training**, after which participants receive a specialist certificate from AMIDEAST (TOIEC).
- **34 hours of targeted workplace skills training** covering job interviews, CV preparation, work ethics, effective communication, time management and more.
- **Internship opportunities** in various Lebanese commercial establishments for three months, which helped some trainees obtain permanent employment opportunities whether inside the establishments that provided the internship or in other establishments.

“ *In their words*

A Real Start for my Career

I needed someone to stand by me and help me acquire the required skills to enter the labour market, and the FLY programme was the first support me and my colleagues received. I benefited greatly from the English courses and from the practical training provided by the programme in my specialty field. I am sure that this will be the starting point for my career and from now on I will be responsible for my work progress.

Ossama Hussein - Nurse participating in FLY Programme - Beirut



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Our intervention is based on direct field knowledge of the basic needs of local communities. It addresses the urgent needs of individuals in various fields, including:

Health Support

15,910 free-of-charge dialysis sessions saved the lives of **101** kidney failure patients who received treatment at the Kidney Dialysis Units at Hamshari Hospital in Saida and in Beddawi Camp in north Lebanon.

101 kidney failure patients were able to avoid anaemia and blood transfusion complications thanks to receiving the essential blood-based Epoetin drug for free. This drug is expensive and not covered by UNRWA or any other agency.

206 patients benefited from partial coverage of hospitalisation costs, enabling them to obtain necessary treatment or surgical intervention.

32 patients suffering from sickle cell anaemia and thalassemia were able to receive their necessary treatment and hospitalisation in cooperation with the American University Hospital in Beirut.

Reproductive Health

More than **35** awareness sessions for girls and mothers on reproductive health, neonatal health, maternal care and disease prevention in Nahr El Bared and Beddawi Camps in north Lebanon enabled women to become more knowledgeable about maintaining their health and the health of their children and understanding the risks of early marriage.

Community-Based Rehabilitation for People with Special Needs

This programme is focused on mainstreaming and strengthening community-based rehabilitation in all the Palestinian camps and communities, and on providing the necessary resources to improve integration opportunities for people with special needs.

406 children with special needs benefited from early intervention services, occupational therapy, oral-motor therapy and support services.





Restoration and Rehabilitation of Community Rehabilitation Centres

Since the work of community centres starts with individuals and extends to communities as a whole, we are keen to ensure that they continue providing the best service. We rehabilitated the building of the Abu Jihad Al-Wazir Foundation for Community Rehabilitation in Rashidieh Camp in Tyre, which supports people from the camp and surroundings who have vision impairments and special needs. We also rehabilitated the Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation's school in Mar Elias Camp in Beirut for children with special needs, which changes the lives of dozens of children with special needs every year. We also built and equipped a sports centre for youth in Rashidieh Camp, as sport helps to maintain physical and mental health and develops skills and capacities.

Environmental Safety

Taawon Lebanon continues to support environmental safety in eight Palestinian communities near Tyre - South of Lebanon, including the collection of solid waste twice a week, sprinkling around **6,000** sq. m of insecticides annually, and monitoring the quality of drinking water and maintaining its safety through periodic inspection and sterilisation if needed.

Capacity-Building of Women and Social Workers

Taawon Lebanon provided more than **20** social workers with specialist professional support in order to enhance their performance level and the services provided to beneficiaries.

30 women also gained and used new skills to support their families and to provide additional income, through sewing classes held for Palestinian women displaced from Syria in Shatila Camp.

Hope is Stronger

In their words ”

My daughter Haya suffered a lack of oxygen during delivery, causing damage to her brain. After we left Yarmouk refugee camp in Syria for Lebanon and conducted medical tests, the physician said that her situation was critical and that she may never walk. It was the end of the world for me and I could not stop crying! She underwent physiotherapy at the Community Rehabilitation Centre in Beddawi Camp as well as receiving weekly home visits and follow-ups by specialists and was able to walk at 18 months. Today, Haya goes to kindergarten; she is a bit slow but she has managed to adapt to her surroundings and to play with children her age. I will do all I can to make sure she goes to school.

Amani Hourani Allawa - Beddawi Camp

EMERGENCY RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN AID

The lives of **24** families have been changed completely after restoring and rehabilitating **12** houses in Burj El Barajneh Camp in Beirut and **12** houses in Al Jaleel Camp in Baalbek. These houses lacked basic amenities, especially in terms of sanitation and electricity, and suffered from cracked ceilings and humidity.

More than **770** families were able to enjoy warmth and were relieved of the burden of buying diesel when fuel coupons were distributed for heating in Al Jaleel Camp in Baalbek. The coupons were distributed to all Palestinian families displaced from Syria living in Al Jaleel Camp (**3,450** people, half of whom were children), and to some Palestinian families already living in the camp.

The joy of Eid El Adha was doubled when meat was distributed to more than **1,682** Palestinian families displaced from Syria. This provided more than one decent meal for most of the Palestinian families living below the poverty line.

“ *In their words*

It hurts to be cold!

When the temperature falls below zero, winter nights become very hard. My three children, Ahmad, Mohammad and Jamil, gather around the fireplace seeking warmth but we are often forced not to use it because we cannot afford diesel, as we are reliant on the assistance offered by NGOs. We need at least 4 litres of diesel every night and 5 litres a day. This is a lot and the winter is long... I worry about how to keep my family warm and I wish I could keep them warm in my arms.

Souad Loubani - Al Jaleel Camp





CULTURE

This programme aims to spread culture inside the camps, preserve Palestinian cultural heritage, support cultural creativity and projects, and motivate young people to engage in creative activities that help them express themselves positively.

Taawon Public Libraries Network

The public libraries fulfil an urgent need in the camps, which lack equipped cultural centres that cater to various age groups and provide educational and learning resources, as well as development and training programmes totally free of charge. One of the most significant achievements of **2017** was the opening of a public library in Al Jaleel Camp in Baalbeck, which was named after the late Ahmad Abu Ghazaleh and became the eighth library in the Taawon Public Libraries Network.

Over the year, the public libraries network directly benefited more than **72,000** visitors and more than **189,000** indirectly. Each of the libraries received **400** new books. They also organised various activities, such as storytelling, awareness workshops for women, exploratory tours of archaeological sites in Lebanon, workshops on expressive writing, computing, drawing, and more.

⁽¹⁾ This represents the number of visits to the libraries. The same person may have visited the library and benefited from its activities more than once during the year.

In line with the general direction of the programme, five training manuals were prepared to guide the libraries' work, tackling several subjects including the management of public libraries, tales and memory (folk tales are a learning tool), and lifelong learning (part 2 of the life skills guide).



Supporting Various Cultural Projects:

Music sessions for therapy and for developing talent were attended by **136** children and young people within the music programme conducted in cooperation with Beit Atfal Assumoud and Al Kamandjati. This programme provided as well music therapy for **26** children aged 4-14 years in 2017, in addition to training opportunity for **20** mental health specialists on how to use music in psychotherapy.

Because history is part of our identity, we launched five initiatives to mark the **100th** anniversary of the ominous Balfour Declaration in order to highlight the consequences of this declaration on the Palestinian people and the region, through more than **20** diverse artistic, cultural and literary works.

In order to preserve the Palestinian oral memory, as part of the project "Good Stories to Tell", **15** storytellers were trained and **30** storytelling shows held in libraries and cultural centres (Lebanese and Palestinian) in the Bekaa, Tripoli and the South, attended by around **1,180** participants.

With the aim of spreading a culture of cinema and showcasing Palestinian filmmakers, we introduced cinema to the camps (whose residents rarely watch films) through the project "Cinema in the Camp".

As a way of expression and communication, theatre and dance can reflect a cultural image of camp youth, and open up new horizons. The Ajial Centre was supported in its contemporary dance training, which produced the show, "Steps, Rhythm and Camp". The show toured inside and outside the Palestinian camps to more than **400** spectators.

22 librarians and community activists inside the Palestinian camps were given the opportunity to write and act in theatre shows in cooperation with the Arab Puppet Theatre Foundation.



In 2017, the Taawon public libraries network started implementing "Koha", which is an open-source, automated library management system. The system updated and developed the libraries' processes for managing the book collections, facilitating research, linking libraries to each other, recording and tracking borrowed items, and providing statistics on the movement of books, visitors and their interests.



In their words

Gateway to Expression

The theatre was a real gateway to life outside the camp, where I could express myself as a refugee and as a human being. My colleagues and I were able to unleash our emotions through our theatre performances, demonstrate our artistic abilities to the public, and reflect a good image of the camp's youth.

Abir Abed - Steps, Rhythm and Camp Project- Ein El-Hilweh Camp

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HELP US GROW**

1. Al Kamandjati Association
2. Arab Puppet Theater Foundation
3. Assabil
4. Association for the Development of Palestinian Camps INAASH
5. Association Najdeh - Lebanon
6. Association Al Jaleel Al Tanmawia
7. Centre for Refugee Rights - Aidoun
8. Community-Based Rehabilitation Association
9. Fraternity Association for Social and Cultural Work
10. General Union of Palestinian Women
11. Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation
12. Health Care Society
13. Just Childhood
14. Mousawat Organization
15. National Association for Vocational Training and Social Services
16. Palestinian Arab Women League
17. Palestinian Students' Fund
18. Palestinian Red Crescent Society
19. Palestinian Humanitarian Organization
20. Saint Joseph University of Beirut
21. Social Communication Centre - Ajjal
22. The Arab Palestinian Centre
23. The Arab Resource Centre for Popular Arts
24. The National Institution of Social Care and Vocational Training - Beit Atfal Assumoud
25. The Popular Aid for Relief and Development
26. Unite Lebanon Youth Project
27. Zico House

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In addition to several individuals who prefer to stay anonymous. We are very grateful to their support.



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