

Transfer of knowledge and change in culture



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BACKGROUND

Although oPt has a rich musical tradition, music education is not culturally accepted everywhere. Particularly in a conservative culture like Hebron, parents do not readily allow their children to practice music. Moreover, the conservative nature of the culture does not permit females to travel from one city to another. There is therefore a limited access to music education for all children in general, and a particularly decreased chance that females will have the opportunity to engage in a musical education.

The Edward Said Foundation provided technical and physical assistance to two institutions already working in Hebron: Dar Al-Tefel and France-Hebron Exchange. These institutions received institutional capacity building support on how to teach music, and also received musical instruments donations for their long-term use. When the implementation of the activities started, few participants were interested, and females were not allowed to participate. Further, most families did not accept the notion of mixed classes including both males and females in the same space.

PROCESS

In order to overcome these obstacles, all stakeholders, including partner institutions, children, and parents, were involved in designing and implementing the programme. Parents were invited to attend information sessions about the importance of musical education and were encouraged to allow their children to participate. The teachers who delivered the sessions came from Hebron, which helped promote the idea of the programme as an inclusive and locally-owned initiative.

Outcomes

The impact of the programme affected the community in several ways. Concretely, 92 students received musical training, which contributed to their skill set and education levels, and 2 institutional partners received capacity building and physical support. Several festivals took place in the region as a result of the programme, including the Al Yameen Festival, and a festival which showcased the Youth National Orchestra.

But a change in cultural beliefs was also accomplished. There is now a clear acceptance within the Hebron community of the importance of teaching music, and a general acceptance of mixed classes which include both males and females. Additionally, as part of the activities, females were invited to visit the Edward Said Foundation in Ramallah, making it the first time that these women travelled to the city.