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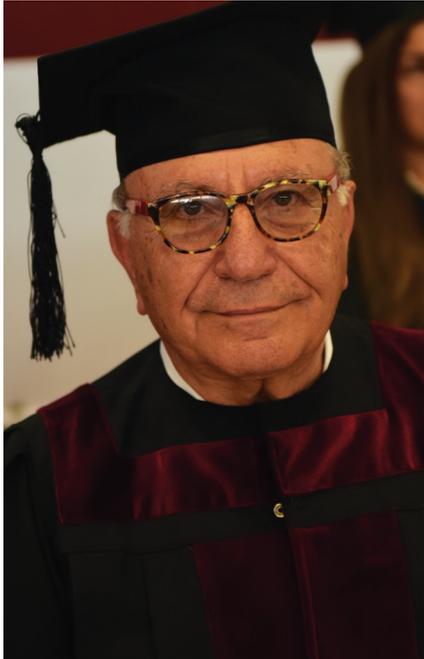
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# 1 FOREWORD OF THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends,

The story of Dar al-Kalima, if it had happened anywhere else in the world, would easily be labelled a story of success. For such a story to emerge from Palestine, despite seven wars over that period of time (1995-2020), is nothing short of a miracle. Who would ever have thought that a vision as small as a mustard seed would grow to become a magnificent tree, deeply rooted in Palestinian soil, engaging so many people, and with programs that have branches spread throughout the Middle East, Germany, Europe, and North America? This past year of 2020 was a most unusual one and a global event. It was on March 5<sup>th</sup> that the first cases of Covid-19 were discovered in Palestine, specifically in Bethlehem. This resulted in a double lockdown: a pandemic lockdown in addition to the permanent lockdown that exists by the Israeli military occupation. The collapse of the tourism industry and the months-long lockdown took their toll on DAK operations. The flow of tourists who used to tour our facility, stay at the guesthouse and dine at our restaurant, ground to a complete halt without any prior notice. For a region like Bethlehem

whose economy is 70% reliant on tourism, this has been a disaster and full recovery is not expected before 2023/4.

Dar Annadwa (ICB) that hosts public events, concerts, theater and conferences had to shut down. These factors led to a sharp decline in income which presented an unprecedented challenge. The months March to May were indeed very difficult and the Board had to act quickly to introduce tough measures. The decision to close Dar Annadwa was not an easy one but it was inevitable because no tourists were coming and no events were allowed. Laying off eight members of staff and paying 50% of the normal salary for the months of May to August were other painful decisions that we had to introduce.

As a Board we were glad to see DAK operations going digital within two weeks of the outbreak of the pandemic. This allowed teachers to give lectures and seminars online and enabled them to reach over 95% of the student body. The Board was concerned that the pandemic might affect the number of students registering at the college due to the difficult financial

situation. Yet, DAK experienced an increase in the number of programs offered as well as in the number of students registering, the majority of them from the greater Bethlehem region.

I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the DAK administration who managed to cut DAK costs by over 50%, raised extra funds to keep operations intact, and even raised some one million shekels for three construction projects implemented during the lockdown: a new piazza garden, a new art gallery, and a new atelier for students. These projects came at the right time as they not only gave DAK a major renovation but also secured over 3000 working days for daily workers in need of employment. Thanks to the dedication of the DAK administration, and contrary to all expectations, DAK was able to close 2020 with a financial surplus and no debts. As a Board we are committed to ensuring that DAK will continue to be a success story and a shining star on the hills of Bethlehem.

*Mr. Zahi Khouri  
Chair of the Board*



The year 2020 was supposed to be a very special year for us as we were preparing to celebrate the silver jubilee of the College. It was on September 28, 1995, that we inaugurated Dar Annadwa in the newly renovated crypt of the Christmas Lutheran Church as a place for international encounter. Today, as we look back, we cannot fail to acknowledge the growth experienced by this ministry over the years. The number of staff has grown from five in 1995 to over 100 employees in 2020. The number of direct beneficiaries has expanded from less than 1000 people in 1995 to over 60,000 per year. In twenty-five years, twenty-three international conferences have been conducted, in addition to hundreds of local conferences and thousands of workshops. Over forty books have been published in English and Arabic with thousands of copies sold. Geographically speaking, Diyar started its work in Bethlehem but has developed to become a national player active on regional and international levels. The

overall operational budget has grown from the initial \$88 thousand in 1995 to \$3.5 million in 2020. In addition, within twenty-five years, 26,000 square meters of new infrastructure have been constructed. In all the construction projects, Dar al-Kalima has emphasized aesthetics, cultural heritage, and eco-friendly green buildings.

Through Dar al-Kalima College, hundreds of young Palestinians have been educated; through the civic engagement program, over 1000 young potential future leaders have been trained; through Diyar Academy, the talents of thousands of children and youth have been discovered and honed; through the Health and Wellness Center, over 35,000 people have been served; and cultural events have enriched the lives of over 150,000 people. Also, within this period, we have developed to become the cultural hub of Bethlehem and regarded as “the most professional cultural entity in the southern part of the West Bank”. With the establishment of Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture, the college became the number one address for formal, non-formal, and vocational education in new fields such as film, jewelry, design, theater, music, and contemporary arts. This has enhanced the employability of young people and provided emerging industries with qualified personnel. This year, the short film *The Present* that won the BAFTA Award for Best Short Film and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film, had two of our film graduates in major roles: Noor Hodaly as Production

Manager and Saleh Tamimi as second Assistant Director; in addition to our colleague Angie Saba as an actor.

We had anticipated that 2020 would be the best year in our history of 25 years of growth and excellence. We had major plans for the celebrations of Bethlehem as 2020 Arab Cultural Capital. Although the Covid-19 pandemic ruptured our journey and brought hardships, 2020 ended with a deep sense of joy and accomplishment. It was in 2020 that Dar al-Kalima opened its Gaza Training Center, hiring three permanent staff members. DAK secured a suitable venue for our premises in Gaza that will allow greater flexibility in organizing our activities. Rented in August, the building required significant renovation to become a functional facility capable of hosting activities but was ready by October 2020. Our center in Gaza quickly became a major cultural hub. Despite the difficulties, six training courses were completed in 2020 for 80 young potential artists (40 male and 40 female), some of whom enrolled on multiple courses.

The pandemic did not deter us from finishing three construction projects: the “Rubash Garden” that provides an outside state of the art plaza for students to hang out; a professional gallery that houses DAK art collections, and a student atelier that provides much-needed space for students to work on their projects.

With all the lockdowns, the pandemic gave us something very precious: time; time to write and to finish the many writing projects that were waiting for just such an opportunity of quiet. Within the past year, we were able to (co)-edit seven books, publish eight scholarly articles, and author a major new book due September 1<sup>st</sup> with the title *The Politics of Persecution: Middle Eastern Christianity in the Age of Empire*, to be published by Baylor University Press (list attached).

A third important achievement in 2020 was to finalize our strategic plan for 2021-2025, and also to submit a 1200 page application to the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and Research for Dar al-Kalima College to be upgraded to a University. This will allow us to offer graduate studies and to expand the scope of our work. Our hope is to receive this accreditation in June 2021. With the new status, a major goal will be accomplished and Dar al-Kalima University will be able to achieve new heights. In the wake of the pandemic, the scale of the new heights that await us is clear. The climb will be difficult, the air lighter, but the view that awaits us is stunning and not to be missed. This success story would not have been possible without a strong Board, dedicated staff, faithful friends, and abundant blessings from above.

**Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb**  
**Founder and President**  
**May 2021**

## Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture

### *Introduction*

The year 2020 brought unprecedented circumstances with the COVID-19 Pandemic, a new way of conducting courses through electronic teaching, working on accrediting new BA programs, and putting together a study to turn DAK from a university college into a university.

On March 5, Bethlehem was the first Palestinian city to come under a severe lockdown due to the pandemic. This meant that the in-person instruction was completely stopped, and the need for options was imperative to continue the academic year

2019/2020 as best as possible. On March 17, DAK continued its teaching electronically. The theoretical courses were carried out successfully; however, all face-to-face needed for the practical courses as well as the field training courses had to be postponed until the summer when it became possible to hold in-person classes while adhering strictly to the health protocols.

To overcome the challenges posed to the Palestinian Tour Guides Program by the coronavirus pandemic, alternatives were introduced to substitute for the

practical experience originally planned for the summer term when students should join actual tours and accompany a tour guide in the field. The alternative module allowed each student to go to a site alone, film the site, and present it in a short video to a committee for evaluation. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research approved this creative method of field training and recommended it to other colleges and universities.

Despite all the challenges, 68 students finish their assignments successfully and obtained their diplomas and BAs, including eight BA graduates in Graphic Design, the first class to graduate from this program.

In the fall of 2020, DAK resumed teaching and new and old students enrolled. The term went on according to the directives of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, where we applied a hybrid teaching methodology. All theoretical classes were conducted online while all practical was done at campus, with precautions taken. One week before the term ended in December 2020, we had to

close due to the increase in COVID-19 infections in the country in general, but we were able to conclude all theoretical courses before Christmas 2020 and all the practical ones by January 2021.

Finally, the Library continued its mission to help students and faculty access resources through new and innovative ways that will have a lasting impact on the quality of teaching and learning at DAK. With the transformation to e-learning, the Library had to adapt and within a short period of time, was able to offer remote electronic services to students and faculty members. The Library is one of the first libraries in Palestine to provide services electronically and remotely for its users.

The following are the major highlights of each program.

## Cultural Heritage and Tourism Studies

### Culinary Arts Program

The new culinary art program entitled “Culinary Art and Management (CAM)” was offered in 2020 for the first time as an associate diploma. The demand on the program was very high. All the students have a Tawjihi degree except for ones who are studying as Continuous Education.

Activities carried out early 2020

- In January, the new CAM students participated in the opening of four new hotels in Bethlehem. They assisted in the preparation of the buffets for the openings.
- In February, the CAM program hosted three chefs from Italy who gave master classes in Italian pastries, pasta, and sweets. This activity came within the project ‘Specialty’ implemented by the Italian Cooperation. The objective of the project is to support and help in developing the tourism sector in Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour.

### Palestinian Tour Guides Program

Academic Matters

1. Field Trips: In the fall semester of 2020, the PTG program was able to organize field trips, notably to the Jordan Valley, Dead Sea and north of the West Bank. It is considered as a main achievement of the program along the year.
2. Graduation Projects: In 2020 the graduates were able to conduct and present graduation projects, which are the following:
  - Palestine Tourism – On YouTube Channel
  - Virtual Guiding of Palestine: Routes in the Holy Land, the West Bank including Jerusalem
  - Local Beer Tasting in the Coffee Shop
  - Historical Tour of Beit Sahour
  - Overnight in Al-Obaydia Village
  - Grandma Sofia’s Guest House
  - Conserving the Natural Resources: Tourism as a Model

- Al-Makhrou – Battir Cycling Route
- Clay Tourist Factory in Duheisha Refugee Camp
- Palestinian Cultural Village in Bethlehem
- Palestinian Traditional Village in Beit Jala



### Cultural and Sustainable Tourism Program

The BA in Cultural and Sustainable Tourism program was launched in the fall 2020 term with the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021.



## Visual Arts

### Film Production Program

#### Program Activities:

To deal with the challenges affecting the as a result of the pandemic, the Film Production program employed alternative means to carry out activities virtually and online. The main highlights of the year were the following:

#### Cinema Club

In 2020 the Cinema Club screened nine of DAK's student films online. After each screening discussions with the (student) filmmakers took place regarding the film making process and film language they employed in their films. Four Online Filmmaker Talks and Master Classes were also conducted by the Club.

#### Festivals and Awards

- Locarno Film Festival 2020: Bethlehem 2001, by Ibrahim Handel. The film opened collaboration

between DAK's Film Production Program and the Locarno Film Festival to start sharing films with the festival and work on possible collaborations in filmmaking.

- MED Film Festival in Italy: Bethlehem 2001, by Ibrahim Handel.
- Ajyal Film Festival in Qatar: Bethlehem 2001, by Ibrahim Handel.
- Clermont Ferrand Short Film Festival in France: Bethlehem 2001, by Ibrahim Handel.



### The Bethlehem Student Film Festival (BSFF) 2nd Edition

DAK's Bethlehem Student Film Festival (BSFF) received approximately 3000 entries for its second edition. One hundred (100) films were chosen to be screened in the festival. However, due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the BSFF was postponed until a later date.



### Exchanges and Partnerships

- Cinefabrique: Two agreements were signed between DAK's Film Production program and the Cinefabrique's school of cinema based in Lyon, France. Both agreements were in coordination with the French Consulate in Jerusalem.
- The first agreement entails the joining of 5 students from DAK to the Cine Nomad School where the students would be placed with filmmaking student teams and work on their films. This project was postponed to 2022.
- The second agreement entails the sharing of Cinefabrique's teaching curriculum with DAK's Film Production program and the production of films in Palestine after DAK's film students receive training from Cinefabrique's instructors who will travel to Palestine.

## Graphic Design, Contemporary Arts and Applied Arts Programs

A series of activities, workshops, and international exchange programs were planned for the benefit of the three programs in this cluster.

- The Jewelry diploma program had a big challenge due to Covid-19. The program was developed through the QIF project and was accredited as an integrated program in September 2019. Accordingly, students were supposed to be allocated at the private sector premises in mid-March 2020 to start their field training and continue their education. However, everything had to be stopped in March 2020. So, the program had to adjust the academic plan and offer a simulation environment of the private sector working conditions at DAK workshops.

## Grants and Cooperation Activities

- The Contemporary Art program received a grant from SIDA through A.M. Qattan Foundation/VAFF program. Through this grant, the following was achieved:
  - A study about the status of conservation and restoration of art works in Palestine and the region.
  - A specialized academic track in "Paintings Conservation and Restoration" under the BA program of Contemporary Art.
  - A network with professional experts who are teaching the track courses.



- Re-habilitation of DAK workshops, to accommodate restoration labs. The project continues through 2021.
- The Contemporary Art program at DAK was planning to host a group of 14 students from Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Lucerne, Switzerland during May 2020. They were to work with DAK students on joint art projects and an exhibition in Bethlehem and Lucerne. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, plans had to change. Virtual exchange replaced face-to-face exchange. Meetings between the students, and occasional guest speakers, were organized. The exchange produced artworks, which were exhibited virtually at St. Peter's Chapel in Lucerne. During 2021, DAK will host the virtual exhibition.
  - "Embrace your Community, Empower the Palestinian Village" Samia A. Halaby Foundation Initiatives Grant: During 2019, three projects received grants. Awad Hamad, one of the three project recipients in 2019, was able to

successfully complete his project by July 2020. The other two were extended until 2021.



In September 2020, Samia A. Halabi Foundation and DAK signed a second cycle MOU. A call for proposals was publicized during October and November and two projects were selected as follows:

- Hanadi Azmi: The Interactive Booklet of Creativity كراسة الابداع و الفن التفاعلي
- Balquees Othman: The Wheel of Freedom عجل الحرية

4. During 2019, DAK signed an MOU with CARE International and in September 2019 became partner in the Obader project. During 2020, together with CARE team, DAK developed:
  - A business plan for “Paltisana”, as an artisans hub that will serve DAK’s graduates as well as Palestinian artisans who are working with various handicrafts, by providing them with advanced training (especially during the product development cycle), information about the trends in the different markets, possibility to market and sell their products (including at the Cave Giftshop), and additional activities needed to assist the members of the hub to advance their products and upgrade them to reach international standards.
  - A website to promote and market the products of the artisans.
  - Lockers at the workshops for the artisans to keep their tools and materials, which creates a convenient working space.

- Capacity building for two DAK staff: Mrs. Nancy Salsa, the head of the Cave giftshop and Paltisana, and Mr. Issam Awwad, project coordinator who is also a staff member at the Jewelry program and supervises the field training courses.
- Actively participated in the development of 6 annexes to the “Quality Charter for Handicraft Industries”. The annexes are: Glass, Ceramic, Pottery, Silver, Accessories, and Embroidery.

### ***Design Program***

- The BA in Design program was launched in the fall 2020 term with the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021.
- Interior Design Program
- In 2020, and despite the pandemic, the Interior Design program saw an increase in first year student enrollment. By 2021, the first graduating class shall receive their BA certificates in the summer. Although there were challenges, there were several achievements given the flexibility

and search for new methods of teaching that was needed to continue the execution of the program. The focus of 2020 was to:

- Update the course syllabi to be compatible with the new conditions.
- Ensure that the graduates are fully capable to start their career.
- Enhance the learning process with field trips.
- Strengthen the relationship between the program and the local institutions.
- Set plans for the upcoming years.



### *Academic Matters*

1. Students
  - In 2020 we reached the goal of having about 100 students enrolled in the program, distributed over four years. In 2021, the program will have its first graduate class, who shall be DAK’s first ambassadors to be part of the design development process in Palestine.
  - To prepare our students for their career as well as to make sure their projects can make a difference in society, the graduation projects were developed in the fall of 2020, to be executed in the winter and summer of 2021, and all are based on the social needs and proposed on actual sites.
2. General Plan and Courses Outlines
  - The courses outlines were updated to meet the new circumstances, our instructors’ experiences, and the evaluation that DAK carries out each semester. The outlines were updated to ensure the compatibility between all courses, best learning outcomes, and harmony among them.

### 3. Recruiting New Instructors

- The Interior Design program followed DAK's policy of searching for and hiring the best and most experienced local faculty to be part of the ongoing academic progress and to ensure best learning practices.
- In 2020-2021 academic year new faculty members were hired in various fields, to ensure that all program fields are covered, and to ensure that the students will be exposed to several design methodologies. This shall shape their career and make them more community-oriented designers.

### 4. Community Involvement

- To enrich the student's learning experience, we are focusing on engaging them with outside professional community throughout several activities, including the following:
- The design studio courses are a gate used to expose our students to real life projects. Therefore, we adopt a policy that encourages teachers to propose real projects and real

community issues to be solved through design courses, more than virtual project, that will make our students more sensitive about their local community, more aware of life problems, and more capable of adopting needed problem-solving approach after graduation.

- In cooperation with Bethlehem Municipality, students are part of the ongoing workshop regarding designing a signage system for the city of Bethlehem. Through this project our students shall be trained to understand the design process and design 6 tourist signs in the old city of Bethlehem.

### 5. Educational Field Trips

- It is crucial for students to be aware of local project that affect the community and make a difference in people's lives. Therefore, we adopted a new policy to make field trips to be part of the majority of our courses, as they help students to accumulate knowledge and be more aware of similar projects that they are working on, especially for design studio courses.

### 6. MOUs with Local Institutions

- Interior Design program aimed in 2020 to strengthen the relationship with some local institutions:
  - \_ An agreement was signed with the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center in Bethlehem to support our students in the field of cultural heritage.
  - \_ We are also drafting an agreement with Bethlehem Municipality to form a long-term relationship to get our students involved in community projects and field training.

### 7. Future Projects

- It is the vision of the Interior Design program to be the center of the interior design profession and to celebrate the excellence of this respected career in Palestine. For that, the program worked on many levels including establishing a competition for excellence in interior design for students.

## Performing Arts

### Music Program

#### Performances

- Ismail Shamout Award: The Music program students performed during the Ismail Shamout Award that was held on October 27, 2020. Nearly all music students participated on that day, performing on different instruments. The Minister of Culture and the Director of Konrad Adenauer Institute attended the performance.



## ***Sports Management Sports Management Program***

The BA in Sports Management was launched in the fall 2020 term with the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021.



## ***Dar al-Kalima University College Library***

Below are some of the achievements of the Library during the year 2020:

1. Update the Library's computerized program, hence facilitating the transformation of all services to electronic services.
2. Subscribe to 6 magazines specialized in DAK's programs.
3. Acquisition of valuable books, both printed and electronic.
4. Films were made available electronically on the Library page.
5. Develop the reservation rack materials electronically and provide it to faculty and students around the clock, 24/7.
6. Loan movements amounted to 1057 books and articles.
7. Number of holdings reached (10357) items.

8. New subscriptions were added. The total number of subscribers reached (3627). These subscribers included students, faculty, and staff of Dar al-Kalima University College.



## 4 Adult Education

The DAK Strengthening Adult Education in Palestine project, in partnership with DVV International and the Palestinian Ministry of Education, conducted several online training courses to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The first main activity was a capacity building program with a team of DAK trainers and partners on training needs for digital learning, and training tools and platforms. This activity included the following aspects:



- Training on Curriculum globALE took place from July to December 2020 to train participants on adult education in the digital context. It was based on the initial training that started in 2019. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the training sessions were conducted online as face-to-face meetings were not possible. The training included six modules (0-5), including an introduction module (0). The group was introduced to digital training, the different platforms and tools used in online training and teaching, and how to apply them as trainers in adult education and lifelong learning.
- English language training aimed to instruct teachers on how to develop a unified curriculum for English courses at different levels. The teachers were also introduced to appropriate techniques and methods for teaching adult learners by classifying language proficiency into three standard levels: Level A (Beginner), Level B (Intermediate) and Level C (Advanced).
- DAK also offered Mujawarat, which is coaching and support to local partners in developing and implementing their courses. This activity

explored how to value traditional customs and beliefs such as reflecting on traditional Palestinian proverbs and how to write personal letters to develop communication. The Mujawarat took place from August 22 to November 22, 2020.

The second key activity of 2020 was an adult education course for middle-aged and senior women to provide coaching for the community, primarily the elderly, during the pandemic. The techniques and approach of the capacity building sessions were inspired by a DAK program called “Celebrate Recovery” that provides peer-to-peer support. A total of 14 women participated, mainly from the Bethlehem district, and aged between 55 and 80 years. The objectives of this activity were to guide and empower the elderly to protect themselves and others during the Covid-19 pandemic, and to learn how to support at least one other elderly person, address their fears and work through them, and raise awareness about safety and precautionary measures. The activity took place at DAK between August 25 and September 3, 2020, for a total of 22 contact hours.

The third and final activity of the year was DAK digital infrastructure expansion and support with new equipment, software, and training. DAK realized that during the Covid-19 pandemic, teaching and learning would have to adopt a digital and online approach. Two weeks into the first two-month lockdown in March, DAK launched digital teaching in all theoretical subjects offered during the semester. Crash courses for instructors were offered which enabled them to conduct their courses virtually and complete the semester by the end of June. From the outset, DAK was aware that the pandemic would last for a long period of time and that it was imperative to upgrade equipment, software, and infrastructure to better serve students and beneficiaries.



## 4 Diyar Academy for Children and Youth

The Covid-19 pandemic had a severe impact on the work of the Diyar Academy for Children and Youth as Bethlehem underwent a strict lockdown for many months from March 2020 onwards. It was challenging to offer regular programming since indoor gatherings, face-to-face training, and group events were not permitted.

Despite the difficulties in carrying out our yearly plan and serving the many children and youth who consider the Academy to be their second home, we were still able to organize some activities that made a big difference to the lives of our members. A short description of our highlights of 2020 is as follows:

### *The Theater and Dance School*

#### *Stage Therapy*

It was a challenging year for the Theater and Dance School since in-person sessions were reduced drastically due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We were able to reach out to 152 children and youth as part of the *Stage Therapy* project, while adhering strictly to recommended health measures. In-person sessions were held only when permitted and with a small number of participants to ensure physical distance between them during training. Many of the sessions were held outdoors and we also resorted

to digital platforms when lockdowns were imposed. The children and youth who participated were very enthusiastic about the program as a means to release the tensions, stress, fears and frustrations they experienced during lockdown.

#### *The Community Dance Project*

The *Community Dance* project was also affected by the pandemic. The project's goal is to engage the community through dance and performing arts, thereby allowing people to express themselves and engage in meaningful exchanges. The project began in 2020 with the intention of partnering with local and international mentors to coach and train six to eight local young people of different backgrounds to become leaders of community dance, and to conduct community dance projects in the Bethlehem governorate. The project was divided across two years: the first year to select the local trainees who would receive instruction from international mentors in performance and techniques. In the second year, a dance project was planned with participants

representing various sectors of the community, including the elderly and people with disabilities.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, activities were either halted, delayed, shifted or transformed to meet the challenges posed. The ban on travel prevented mentors from traveling to Bethlehem to work with the young trainees. The following activities were conducted:



- A campaign to raise awareness about the project and the importance of community dance in

unifying people through self-expression. This included the printing of 250 program booklets and social media awareness posters.

- Selection of 14 participants for the training of trainers program in community dance after undergoing a rigorous application and selection process.
- Creation of an online platform to connect with the selected participants and with the international trainers who were unable to attend in person due to the travel ban.
- A less intensive training of trainers program in community dance than previously planned with sessions held twice a week.
- The initial steps to develop the dance curriculum were undertaken.
- Ten online dance classes were held for different organizations and groups in the West Bank as an introduction to the power of dance.
- Delivery of a training program for six young people to become instructors in the traditional dance of *dabkeh*. The aim of this program is to

equip the next generation of trainers to lead the Theater and Dance School at the Academy.

### ***The Taq Taqyeh (Sam'an and Lam'an) Program***

The Taq Taqyeh (Sam'an and Lam'an) program is an educational program for children where they learn and have fun at the same time. The program, which



is presented on social media networks, is written and presented by Osama Awwad and Emil Mitri.

The program covers many topics over the course of 15 episodes, including respect for people with disabilities, sharing with others, an introduction to human rights, and Christmas-themed episodes.

The program was widely viewed, and received positive interaction and engagement from both children and adults. The number of views ranged from 10,000 to 30,000 per episode.

### ***Christmas Spots***

During the 2020 Christmas season, 14 spots focused on different topics that highlight Christmas in Bethlehem: Christmas decorations, the message of Christmas, and preparing traditional Palestinian sweets for Christmas. The spots were aired on the different digital platforms of Diyar and Dar al-Kalima University College.

### ***"My Story" (Qisati) Project***

The "My Story" project was launched during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on Bethlehem with 10 children. The project aimed to teach the children how to write a short story, and draw and sketch its events. During the first few months, most of the instruction was carried out via Zoom, before returning to the Academy and having individual sessions with strict adherence to health measures.

The stories focused on the pandemic, although some were fictional. There were two facilitators, Osama Awwad and Dalia Murra. Osama helped the children to develop the content and learn how to write short stories. Dalia worked with the children on how to transform their stories into drawings, using different techniques and mediums. A booklet with the stories has been printed.

## *Sports School*

The 2020 highlights for the sports school are the following:

- January 2020: The sports school organized a friendly one-day tournament to further empower female players in clubs in Palestine. In total, 20 female participants from different soccer teams joined this activity at Dar al Kalima Sports Hall.
- January 2020: Tala Abu Eid, a Diyar First Soccer Team player, represented our team at a course on “Promoting Gender Equality through Women’s Empowerment in Football in North Lebanon and the MENA Region” in Berlin, Germany. As well as participating in a panel discussion, Tala actively engaged with the different aspects of the course.
- February 2020: The Under-15 Youngsters Soccer Team, coached by Sarab Alshaer, is the top club in the southern region having won against other clubs in the area at the U15 Palestinian Soccer Competition organized by the Palestinian Football Federation. The team was to continue competing against other winning teams from central and northern districts for the top spot

of U15 Champion of Palestine, but games were halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- March 2020: The Diyar First Soccer Team participated in raising awareness of the importance of #STAYING HOME DURING COVID-19 campaign. A short video was produced and shared on Facebook with messages from players to the team’s fans and local community.
- September 2020: Four members of the Diyar First Soccer Team received a scholarship from Dar al-Kalima University College to join the newly accredited Sports Management Program. Enrolling in this program and receiving a BA degree will qualify trainers and players further, especially women, expand sports education in Palestine, and allow the introduction of new programs at the Sports School.
- October 2020: The Diyar First Soccer Team resumed their training with coach Farah Zakharia while adhering to all safety procedures.
- October 2020: The manager of the Diyar club, Jackline Jazrawi, participated in the Women’s

Voices in Dialogue-SPORTS event organized by the General Consulate of Spain in Jerusalem. She spoke about the development of women’s soccer in Palestine, focusing on the Diyar women’s sport club as a success story.

## *Arts School*

### *Photography Course*

A photography course was conducted at Diyar Academy from September 11 to December 4 to train children in using their phone cameras to take good photos. As part of the application and selection process, candidates had to send a picture taken with their phones. A total of 12 children aged between 10 to 15 years enrolled in the program.

The program consisted of weekly Zoom meetings, with some meetings at the Academy. Artist and photographer Nadja Shkirat, a German-Palestinian photographer, taught the young participants how



to use lighting and composition in photographs. The children also acquired new skills on how to communicate ideas and express their feelings through their photos.

A final exhibition took place with the theme “Life During Quarantine in the Covid-19 Pandemic”. A total of nine children participated in the final exhibition. The exhibition booklet included two pictures taken by each child, a portrait photo of each participant, and the title of their work and a brief description.

The year of 2020 was very challenging on a global scale due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Palestine was no exception as Palestinians even experienced double lockdowns because of the combination of the Israeli occupation and the pandemic. The elderly were some of the most vulnerable Palestinians to feel the impact. Access to already limited and dismal healthcare services for the elderly was severely curtailed as services were directed mainly for coronavirus patients.

The ban on movement confined the elderly to their homes and they experienced isolation and loneliness; a significant percentage live on their own because

their children emigrated abroad. Living alone and unable to go out also made it very difficult for these people to access essential goods, including nutritious food to keep them healthy with a strong immune system. Lack of accurate information on the pandemic, particularly at the beginning, caused concern and anxiety because people were warned that this disease targets mainly older adults.

In the midst of this crisis, the Ajyal Elderly Care Program acted swiftly to ease the harsh impact on the elderly. The program aimed to meet urgent needs through three main interventions: psychosocial support through regular one-to-one telephone

calls and social media groups/communities; online awareness-raising and educational guidance through tutorials, meditation exercises, and information-sharing videos; food provision through home-delivered nutritious meals.

The results were astonishing thanks to Ajyal staff and the volunteer committee made up of other seniors who worked tirelessly to help meet the needs of many elderly people. The highlights are as follows:

- More than 820 seniors served during the pandemic, mainly the provision of hot meals to an extremely vulnerable community made up mostly of elderly women.
- Outreach efforts to serve the elderly reached new communities. More than 59% of the targeted elderly were new beneficiaries and many expressed their desire to join the Ajyal Elderly Care Program once the situation improves.
- Getting the elderly online. We were successful in shifting our regular activities to online forums with the aim of minimizing the risks associated with the pandemic, while at the same time

ensuring that the elderly had not been forgotten. Although only 50% of the targeted group were regularly active on the online communities, this was a major achievement. Most of the elderly, however, still need to be digitally literate to be able to communicate with each other regularly. Networks were created with six reputable, ecumenical organizations who provide senior care and lead other elderly programs. We cooperated successfully with six organizations who serve some of the most vulnerable seniors in the area. Involving these organizations created unprecedented ecumenical cooperation in this sector.

- Eleven new audio-visuals were produced to enhance awareness of the pandemic and a healthy lifestyle. These audio-visuals provide valuable, updated information for the elderly in Arabic and are a unique tool for continuing education.
- New digital platforms were established for the elderly in Palestine including online Facebook communities and a YouTube channel. These

platforms serve as new spaces for the elderly to be integrated and communicate with each other, thus supporting psychosocial wellbeing and agility.

Other activities of the Intergenerational Program in 2020 include the following:

- A short online video produced by Ajyal members in which they shared their fears and daily challenges during the pandemic, but also their hopes for better times.
- A total of 14 Ajyal members participated in a three-day capacity building workshop. The training helped the participants to prepare for serving other members of the community during the pandemic by enhancing their awareness of coronavirus, health protocols when interacting with others, and how best to provide psychosocial support.
- A one-day workshop was organized with advisory committee members of the Program to discuss the program's five-year strategic plan 2021-2025, and obtain their input and feedback.

- Regular monthly Zoom meetings with a specialist in the field of Alzheimer's and dementia from North Carolina, USA, took place to plan for a webinar and five days of training for caregivers and specialists who work with patients suffering from these diseases.
- Three short videos were produced during Christmas on a variety of topics that concern the elderly, in cooperation with Diyar Theater.
- Christmas gifts were distributed to members of the Ajyal program with an online Christmas message that encouraged them to stay hopeful and healthy.
- Work started on an hour-long television episode titled "The Elderly during Corona Time" to be aired in 2021.



# 7 Empowering the Next Generation of Creative Leaders – Gaza

## Introduction

The Gaza program at Dar al-Kalima University College (DAK) is an initiative launched in late 2019 to explore opportunities of providing services in Gaza given the extreme deterioration in living conditions, and lack of opportunities for young artists and talented individuals in the Gaza Strip.

The program aims to:

- Enhance the skills of young artists and talented Gazan youth.

- Improve the exposure of artists by creating networks and opportunities for exhibiting and marketing their productions locally and internationally; establish job creating opportunities through the activation of the Young Artists Network created by DAK in 2020; and enhance the role of artists in community initiatives created and led by them.
- Recognize exceptional artists through local awards.

While the program was launched in July 2019, a lot of preparatory work had to be conducted during the first few months to coordinate and establish a presence in Gaza. This included identifying a venue for activities, carrying out introductions and coordination with local organizations, and identifying potential teachers, trainers and staff in Gaza. The actual implementation of program activities started in December 2020 and are ongoing.

In March 2020, the operational context became complicated due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A strict lockdown imposed on the West Bank and Gaza restricted entry to Gaza and all borders were closed, rendering Gaza under dual blockade. Entry into Gaza was only allowed to returning citizens through the Rafah crossing with Egypt and the authorities imposed a 21-day compulsory border quarantine at government supervised facilities before individuals could return to their homes in Gaza. This was to protect Gaza from a real humanitarian disaster if Covid-19 spread widely as the already fragile healthcare system could not handle additional burdens. However, in August 2020, the first community case

of Covid-19 was confirmed. The authorities imposed a strict lockdown in Gaza that extended throughout September, followed by weekend and night curfews, and additional restrictions on social gatherings and community activities.

Nevertheless, DAK managed to continue its endeavors in Gaza, found a venue to house its activities, and organized training and other events during this period. Some activities took place online and others had restricted in-person attendance to ensure the safety of the participants and prevent infection. This enabled the program to move forward with establishing a significant DAK presence in Gaza. Activities with children or involving international coordination for exhibits were not feasible given the circumstances.

This report covers all activities conducted between January and December 2020.

### Venue Rental and Rehabilitation

The initial stage of the project began in 2019 with the search for a location for the DAK presence in Gaza. An appropriate location was identified for rental during the first month and negotiations were established with the owners, but unfortunately these facilities were leased to another organization. The search for an alternative venue continued until we identified the French Cultural Institute in Gaza as a location to begin offering classes while we continued the search for an independent space. Property rental costs were higher than anticipated and the search for a location that could house a university college in Gaza was difficult. To avoid losing time, DAK negotiated an agreement to rent a room at the French Cultural Institute. In July 2020, an appropriate venue for our activities was found in Gaza City and we negotiated a rental agreement within our budget starting in August 2020. The house required considerable renovation work in addition to furnishing and equipment to host courses, events, and exhibitions in the future. The renovation work was concluded by October 2020 and the Gaza DAK venue was ready to host training

workshops starting November 2020. There are still opportunities to develop the facility but we worked within the available budget to ensure that the space could function adequately for the time being. Some young artists helped during the renovation and have already visited the venue to help the two staff members to set up and implement various events. Some artists gifted artwork for display on the walls of Gaza DAK and this gave them a feeling of belonging. Finding and establishing an independent location for DAK in Gaza was a significant achievement in 2020 and it has boosted our ability to host artists and network with other organizations independently. For young artists in particular, having a venue to meet and interact freely in is a valuable asset. The venue also helps DAK to host activities for small grassroots organizations in Gaza. We anticipate greater flexibility in implementing activities in 2021.

### Activities by Objective

#### Objective 1: Enhance the skills of young artists and talented Gazan youth

In 2020, six professional courses were conducted as highlighted in the table below. The courses were conducted in two rounds: the first beginning in Dec 2019 until March 2020, and the second beginning in October 2020 until December 2020. A total of 111 participants joined these courses with an equal distribution of males and females. The selection of the courses was based on a needs assessment conducted locally in Gaza.

Below are pictures of the students engaging in various sessions of the training courses.

Round 1: December 2019 – March 2020 Courses

			Duration	Total Number of participants	Male	Female
1	Round 1	Photography	Dec 2019 – Feb 2020	25	15	10
2		Principles of Design	Dec 2019 – Feb 2020	21	10	11
3		Video Art	Jan- Mar 2020	12	6	6
4	Round 2	Sculpturing with Cardboard	Oct- Dec 2020	15	2	13
5		Aesthetics	Oct- Dec 2020	18	10	8
6		Art Gallery Management -online	Oct- Dec 2020	20	12	8

Below are pictures of the students engaging in various sessions of the training courses.

*Round 1: December 2019 – March 2020 Courses*



*Round 2: October - December 2020 Courses*



*Note: Exhibitions for Round 2 Courses are planned in January 2021.*

**Objective 2: Improve the exposure of artists by creating networks and opportunities for exhibiting and marketing their productions locally and internationally**

One of the key objectives for DAK is to showcase artwork produced by young artists in Gaza. Therefore, following every training course or other organized events, DAK organizes local exhibitions to display the artwork produced. The following exhibitions were organized during 2020:

**1. “We Shall Have Life on This Land” Photography Exhibition – January 2020 – Gaza**

In January 2020, DAK organized a photography exhibition entitled “We Shall Have Life on This Land”. The exhibition included an award ceremony to honor the Gazan photographers who participated in the 2019 Karimeh Abbud Award and who made up about 65% of the participants. A total of 18 local photographers were recognized during the event. The exhibition was hosted by the French Cultural

Center in Gaza on January 13, 2020 and was attended by more than 120 people.



**2. “Eye on Gaza” Exhibition – March 2020 – Gaza**  
As part of their training, students in each training course were asked to work on a project as their

graduation project for display in an exhibition in Gaza. The name of the exhibition was “Eye on Gaza” and students participated with 66 photographs capturing daily life in Gaza, and 33 pieces of art by design course students. The exhibition was launched by the French Consul in Gaza at the French Cultural Institute and was attended by representatives from cultural and art centers in Gaza, in addition to trainers, students, their families, and their friends. The exhibition spanned three consecutive days starting March 3, 2020. For some students, this was their first exhibition and they were very excited to participate and show off their work.

**3. “Beautiful Palestine Exhibition” – October 2020 - Bethlehem**

The “Beautiful Palestine” Exhibition was launched in Bethlehem on October 12, 2020 and hosted 13 artists, five of whom were from Gaza. Their artwork was shipped from Gaza to Bethlehem to be displayed in this exhibition. For some of these young artists, it was the first time that their artwork had left the

borders of Gaza to be displayed in an exhibition. Two pieces of art by artists from Gaza were sold - the first



time that these artists had sold their artwork. These opportunities for young artists create new avenues that they had not previously thought of. *“Fawaz Saleh participated in the exhibition and said he had to work for a whole month to buy materials to produce his painting. When his painting was sold, he was thrilled. It was his first time participating in an exhibition outside Gaza and his first sale ever.”*

"Farida Ibrahim also participated in an exhibition outside Gaza for the first time with a collage of newspaper on wood featuring a Palestinian woman depicted in a photo by Khalil Raad, a famous Palestinian photographer. She was surprised that her artwork was acquired by someone from Bethlehem and wondered if this was an act of charity. It took her a while to believe that someone had actually bought her artwork."

While DAK seeks to expand exposure opportunities beyond Palestine, it was challenging this year to organize opportunities through networking with international organizations to host exhibitions for artists from Gaza. No international exhibitions were organized this year due to the pandemic and the closure of art organizations worldwide, as well as the closure of borders and restrictions on shipping. DAK will continue to seek international exposure for young artists from Palestine, including Gaza, during the coming years and plans to establish a website for exhibiting and selling art.

### **Objective 3: Recognition of Excelling Artists**

#### ***Ismail Shamout Fine Art Award 2020***

DAK launched a call for the 2020 Ismail Shamout Award in January and had received 87 submissions from artists throughout Palestine by March 2, 2020. The theme of the competition this year was "Beautiful Palestine". The exhibition and award ceremony were due to take place in April 2020, but both the assessment of entries and the exhibition were delayed due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in Palestine. The first jury completed its selection in July 2020 after choosing the top 13 artists to participate in the Prize Exhibit, which was launched in October 2020 after receiving the artwork from the artists, five of whom were from Gaza and two from Jordan.

The second jury was invited to attend the opening of the exhibition and to assess the final 13 artworks that had qualified for the final stage. The jury concluded its assessment and announced the top three winners during an award ceremony held on October 27,

2020 at DAK main premises in Bethlehem. The third prizewinner was from Gaza and to honor other participants from Gaza who made it to the final stage, a special event was also organized at our venue in Gaza.

#### ***Gaza-Coronagram 2020***

*(in collaboration with the French Cultural Institute in Gaza)*

In collaboration with the French Cultural Institute in Gaza, a photography award was launched in May 2020 under the name Gaza-Coronagram. This invited photographers to engage in the socioeconomic changes imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and to capture the impact of Covid-19 on Gazans. A total of 36 photographers participated and an online public vote was launched in August to determine the winners of the prizes.

A closed event was organized to distribute the prizes to winners at our premises in Gaza and the winners were invited to talk more about their work.

#### ***Karimeh Abbud Photography Award 2020***

The Karimeh Abbud Photography Award was launched in September with the theme "2020-New World Disorder" for photographers to reflect on the contradictions of life during 2020. The competition consisted of a photography project with three photos per participant. A total of 38 photographers participated and 12, all from Gaza, made it to the final stage. Therefore, DAK decided to hold the exhibition and the award ceremony in our new Gaza premises in early February 2021.

#### ***Oxygen Video Art Festival – March 2020 – Gaza***

The video art workshop produced twelve video art films that were screened on the first day of the Gaza International Video Art Festival launched on March 4, 2020. The first day also featured a video conference address by renowned artist Steve Sabella who encouraged the efforts invested in organizing

this initiative in Gaza. Sabella spoke about his video entitled “Great March of Return” and his new upcoming projects.

DAK honored the participating artists with three prizes for the best three films based on the evaluation of the technical committee. The three winning films were:

1. O2 by Mohamad Nayef (m)
2. Poker by Khaled Jarade (m)
3. Unknown by Jihad Jarbou’ (f)

The second day of the Festival featured films produced by several local and international artists.

### **Civic Engagement Training among Artists in Gaza**

In mid-May 2020, DAK established a partnership with the Dr. Haidar Abdel Shafi Center for Culture and Development in Gaza to deliver training in civic engagement to artists who had previously engaged in

art courses with the DAK Training Center in Gaza. The aim of the training was to promote the role of young artists as members of civil society, and to enhance their knowledge and skills in civic engagement and the formulation of community initiatives.



A total of 26 individuals (15 female and 11 male) from the fields of art and media participated in the 30-hour training program (over 10 sessions) that covered the following topics:

- Main concepts of civil society and civic engagement
- Democracy
- Equity and equality
- The role of youth
- Principles of advocacy
- Planning community initiatives and campaigns.

During the final four sessions of the training, participants were split into three groups and asked to design three initiatives to tackle a local problem within their community. The three groups worked on designing the following initiatives:

1. Promoting vocational training among young women in Gaza.
2. Preventing social stereotyping and related bullying in Gaza.
3. Promoting awareness of Palestinian heritage among children and youth in Gaza.

In the final session of feedback and evaluation, participants noted the following:

- They had learned many concepts and information that were new to them;
- The trainers were very knowledgeable in their fields;
- The commitment and engagement of participants during the training was very high and helped to achieve the goals of the training;
- The final few sessions were used to develop the initiatives and this was very beneficial in allowing participants to put into practice the information they had gained;
- The participants reiterated the importance of carrying these initiatives forward and implementing them on the ground;
- Multiple participants noted that more time is needed for such courses because the information shared was extensive.

### ***Establishing the Young Artist Network***

In June 2020 DAK formed an online platform using WhatsApp to communicate news and events to young artists in Gaza. To obtain more insight about our target audience, we asked them to fill in an online form about their artistic interests. To date, 132 artists have signed up online and we can communicate directly with them through the group.

In July 2020, 70 members of the group met for the first time to get acquainted and to find out more about the network. The session included brainstorming about the needs of young artists in Gaza and the challenges they face. They identified challenges of the availability of resources, the ability to buy materials, especially among unemployed young artists, lack of professional development opportunities, and limited exposure opportunities locally and internationally.

They identified the need for:

- Ongoing professional development workshops and events in various fields of fine arts and performing arts;

- Online talks and the exchange of experiences between local and international artists;
- Development opportunities on the optimal use of social media platforms to increase exposure of artists and training on the use of social media tools;
- Marketing and pricing artwork;
- Workshops on proposal development and concept development for artists;
- Developing CVs for artists and artist portfolios;
- English language for artists.

To respond to some of the needs identified, DAK asked George Al-Ama, a renowned Palestinian art collector, to talk about the tools he uses in assessing and pricing artwork.

As part of the artist network activities, DAK organized an online talk with artist Steve Sabella in September 2020. Sabella spoke to 40 participants about his 2020 productions and answered questions from the audience about his journey and philosophy as an artist.

DAK also seeks to share opportunities with young artists that are available through other organizations working in art. Through the online group, DAK shares notices by other organizations for exhibitions, internships and competitions.

DAK organized a workshop with Shababeek Gallery on how to apply for the art internships on offer and improve the chance of receiving an internship.

DAK will continue to organize online networking opportunities for young artists to engage with renowned Palestinian and international artists.

### ***Community Activities and Initiatives***

Young artists were also invited through the network to participate in group and community initiatives led by DAK. Interested artists register for the activities and join in planning and implementing multiple activities. During 2020, young artists have participated in the following group activities:

### ***Lighthouse Child Friendly School Environment***

This activity entailed painting the school wall prior to the beginning of the school year to welcome the children with a more child-friendly environment. A total of 10 artists participated in this activity.



### ***Covid-19 Anti-Bullying and Stereotyping Initiative***

This activity involved three activities: **1-** painting a mural highlighting the psychological distress caused by bullying and stereotyping; **2-** a group activity on Gaza beach distributing anti-bullying messages; **3-** a video art production highlighting the distress caused to individuals subjected to bullying. A total of nine young artists participated in the planning and implementation of this activity.



### ***Independence Day Activity for Artists***

This activity was a structured recreational activity for artists on Palestinian Independence Day on November 15, organized with the Gaza Municipality, to paint a mural in a new beach facility for the public. A total of 35 artists joined and participated in this activity.

### ***What's next?***

The objectives of the Gaza program will remain the same but the activities will expand. Now the venue is established, we can have greater flexibility in planning and organizing our activities. In 2021, DAK will continue to seek official registration and accreditation by the Ministry of Higher Education for the venue in Gaza to offer a full diploma program. The accreditation process may take time but DAK will continue to offer professional development opportunities for artists and training for young talented individuals who want to experiment with art.

Development of the venue will continue to enable us to accommodate the requirements of courses and in 2021, DAK will install solar panels to make electricity available for the college as Gaza has a poor electricity supply.

With this venue, DAK will also continue to expand the hosting of exhibitions for young and established artists.

Given improvements in the operational environment, DAK will also seek to initiate art activities for children in 2021 which were not possible during 2020. These activities will target children under 18 in coordination with local schools, clubs and other community-based organizations working with children. This is also intended to create short-term employment opportunities for young artists who will help lead these activities with children.

In 2021, DAK will start work on a website for exhibiting and marketing artwork from Palestinian artists, including those from Gaza. DAK will also encourage potential coordination with international organizations to host exhibits by Palestinian artists, if the Covid-19 situation allows for such activities to take place.

## 8 The Beirut Outreach

### *About Nabad*

Nabad <https://nabad.art/> is an innovative program that aims to empower artists, arts organizations and creative enterprises in Southwestern Asia and North Africa to implement their artistic and cultural ideas, and market their artwork. This cross-cultural program, based on a Palestinian-Lebanese partnership, emerged in response to the August 4, 2020 port explosions in Beirut, when Dar al-Kalima University decided to intervene in the field of arts and culture in Lebanon. This made sense in a context where many of Beirut's art galleries, museums, and ateliers had been damaged, and artists had been put out of work.

Nabad's first phase of projects (October 2020 - May 2021) was and is still targeting the Lebanese arts and cultural community by focusing on art intervention, outreach, empowerment, and content production. This hybrid program that encompasses short-term and long-term initiatives strives to become a beacon of support on a regional level in its subsequent phases, while pursuing its support activities in Lebanon.

### *Art Therapy*

Arts activities are important in educational and therapy programs for nursing and other healthcare professionals with growing evidence that arts have a positive impact on people's health and well-being. Therefore, Nabad is supporting Meadows NGO in organizing a series of art therapy workshops for more than 100 frontline nurses at Saint George Hospital University Medical Center Training, for social workers and for young activists in Beirut to help them heal the wounds inflicted by multiple crises and catastrophes in Lebanon (November 2020 to February 2021).



### *Empowering Artistic Talents*

"Nabad" means a heartbeat embedded within the larger beating heart of local and regional arts and cultural life, a vital impulse of hope amid war, destruction and instability, and a driving pulsation towards social and community transformation.

### *Goals*

- Empowering Emerging and Marginalized Artistic Voices.
- Supporting Local Art NGOs and Creative Enterprises.
- Fostering Art-related Job Opportunities.
- Creating Arts and Culture Content for Awareness.
- Building Arts and Culture Networks.

### **Arleb Platform Project**

Arleb (<https://arleb.org/>) online gallery was launched in February 2021 as a not-for-profit digital platform dedicated to artists and creative enterprises in Lebanon. It aims to empower local artists by offering them an opportunity to showcase and sell their artwork to new global audiences. It also seeks to raise awareness about resilience, and resistance arts and culture produced by emerging and marginalized artists.

The 61 emerging and established artists selected by Arleb out of more than 180 who submitted their portfolios -- with over 500 artworks curated out of a potential 1000 -- provide a critical lens that educates, provokes, and holds a mirror to Lebanese society. They reflect what attracts attention in the public sphere, address social, political and environmental issues through their artwork, and demonstrate their power to build inclusive societies. Platform developed and managed by Nabad's partner, sprkl.co

### **The Beirut Call Anthology Project**

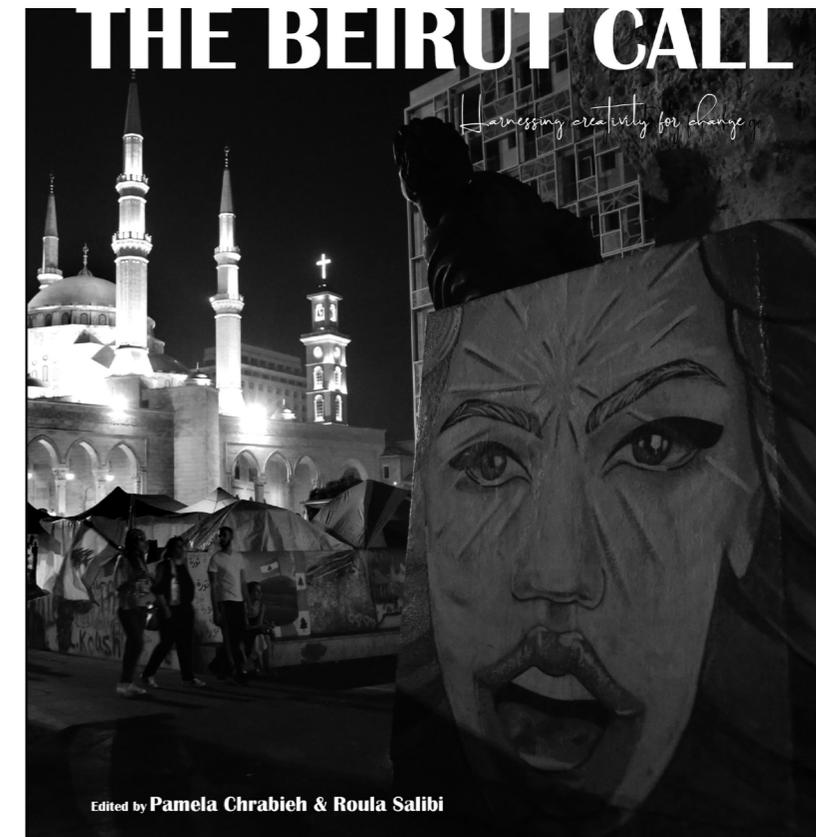
#### ***The Beirut Call: Harnessing Creativity For Change***

The Beirut Call is a project by Dar al Kalima University College of Arts and Culture; a book on resilience and a culture of resistance in Lebanon, featuring 20 artists, poets, authors, activists, and academic testimonials, analyses, narratives, and stories of initiatives for social change.

The Beirut Call brings together individuals who think, do and create to inspire and communicate diverse approaches in facing wars, crises, instability and despair; people who are turning to the arts and culture as a way to engage audiences through deep and emotional connections to bring about change, and who are imbuing their work with social and political messaging to advance the issues about which they feel most passionate.

The Beirut Call presents diverse perceptions and expressions that speak to Lebanese in their homeland and in diaspora, but it also transcends the borders of Lebanon as contributors address global (local-global) issues: war, peace, memory, history, identity, creativity, cultural resistance, resilience, artistic activism, human rights, feminism, social justice, and intercultural dialogue. These issues can be discussed in a range of settings such as in schools and universities, arts and culture workshops and learning programs, youth and community centers, women's groups, NGOs, and as alternative education programmes.

The book is edited by Pamela Chrabieh and Roula Salibi, published by Dar al Kalima University College of Arts and Culture, and printed and distributed by Elyssar Press, USA.



The overall goal of this program is to contribute to creating more peaceful and inclusive societies in the Middle East that ensure gender equality, human dignity, justice, and freedom. Despite the tremendous challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, there were significant achievements during the reporting period of January to December 2020 as follows:

1. Established CAFCAW interfaith youth chapters in Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt, with at least 15 members in each chapter, to empower the next generation of leaders as a collective regional power and to undertake the important issues that this program deems critical for the

future of the Middle East. In addition, we formed a regional steering committee made up of five young people distributed across the program countries as the coordinators and focal points of these chapters.

2. Organized four interfaith capacity building workshops in Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon. Despite the extremely difficult conditions due largely to the Covid-19 pandemic, these empowerment workshops were held in person while ensuring strict adherence to health safety measures. There were 86 young participants: 47 women and 39 men between the

ages of 19 to 35 years; therefore, women made up the majority with almost 55% participation. The number of participants was considerably higher than the original estimated target group of 60 participants. The higher number of participants is indicative of the program's successful strategy in establishing youth chapters and enlisting members, and also indicates the popularity and effectiveness of such forums, especially among young people.

The following is a short description of each workshop, presented in a chronological sequence:

- ***Palestine workshop entitled "Youth Leadership Training Workshop on Volunteerism for Societal Change"***: The workshop was held over a two-day period with an overnight stay from October 23 to October 24, 2020 in Bethlehem, Palestine. There were 25 participants (16 women and 9 men) from diverse localities in Palestine, of different faiths, and representing multiple professional and educational



backgrounds. The workshop focused on enhancing awareness of being a proactive citizen, and of the values of gender equality and justice, pluralism, inclusivity, and volunteerism. The overall goal was to help young people to conceive and establish community initiatives that serve all and promote social change. As part of the training, the participants met with four founders of existing and successful community initiatives to hear about their experiences, challenges, and the motivation and rewards of engaging in these undertakings.

- **Jordan workshop entitled "Cyber Bullying and Its Impact on Citizenship"**: The one-day workshop was held in Amman, Jordan, on October 29, 2020 with 20 young participants: 12 women and 8 men. Again, the participants represented different districts, professional specializations, academic backgrounds, and faiths. The workshop raised awareness of how to employ the values of citizenship and pluralism in countering and challenging hate speech and

bullying, especially in social media. The workshop session on the role of religion in reducing and preventing cyber bullying was an animated and vibrant discussion. The key outcomes of this workshop were the commitment made by participants to challenge cyber bullying through the values of citizenship and pluralism, and a preliminary design of online initiatives to fulfill their commitments.

- **Egypt workshop entitled "Inclusion and Pluralism in Egypt"**: The one-day workshop was held in Cairo, Egypt on November 20, 2020 with 17 young participants: 9 women and 8 men. The participants were from a variety of backgrounds and localities, and included professionals, recent graduates, students, and activists of both Muslim and Christian faiths. Several young people with disabilities also took part in the workshop. The workshop examined the Egyptian context and the challenges of religious, social, and political inclusion. It offered tools to address and challenge discrimination and exclusion, and to

promote pluralism. Several participants who are activists shared their initiatives with the other trainees to inspire similar undertakings and work together on joint efforts.

- **Lebanon workshop entitled "Beirut Explosion: A Story of Pain and Hope"**: Due to the extremely difficult political situation in Lebanon, aside from the pandemic, the workshop was delayed until December 5, 2020. It was a full-day activity with 24 participants: 10 females and 14 males. The participants represented various academic and professional backgrounds, including journalists, lawyers, writers,

artists, engineers, and some university students. The workshop concentrated on ways to deal with crisis while remaining engaged civically and moving forward with involvement in the community. Some of the means to turn pain and helplessness into hope and active involvement were shared in the different sessions, including art, non-violent communication, dialogue, search for common ground and understanding while celebrating differences, and crisis management. The workshop came to an emotional conclusion with



live testimony by the son of Ghassan Hasrouti, who was killed in the Beirut explosion on August 4, during which Elie Hasrouti spoke of the pain but also the hope he and his family experienced through this tragedy. The venue of the workshop was also extraordinary as it was selected purposely in one of the highest buildings in Beirut that overlooked the area where the massive August explosion occurred. It was hoped that the view could act as a tool for motivation and hope for participants as they confront the tragedy that has befallen Lebanon.

3. At least seven community initiatives have emerged so far from the training that took place in the different program countries. These initiatives revolve around key issues that include:
  - **Palestine:** two initiatives that support the growth of local green industries and farming. Also, the launch of a website where experts and specialists can offer their services and expertise on a volunteer basis.
  - **Jordan:** three initiatives that challenge bullying and harrasment of children, women and religious groups through different forums including cyberspace and social media.
  - **Lebanon:** one initiative to provide psychosocial support for victims of the August 2020 Beirut explosion through art activities.
  - **Egypt:** one initiative to re-publish the works of the Egyptian thinker Faraj Foudeh who wrote about citizenship and pluralism.

4. Held four CAFCAW steering committee meetings. The first took place in January 2020 in Cyprus, while the remaining three meetings were held on digital platforms.
5. Branding, visibility and communication activities to promote the program and CAFCAW's vision and work. These activities included:
  - Design of a new logo to express diversity and inclusiveness.
  - Production of a new CAFCAW brochure in both Arabic and English.
  - Launch of a new CAFCAW website ([www.cafkaw.org](http://www.cafkaw.org)) in both Arabic and English during the second half of the year.
  - Two social media pages on Facebook were launched or re-activated to target both Arab and international audiences. The first page in Arabic is (<https://www.facebook.com/CAFCAW.org>) while the second CAFCAW Facebook page in English is (<https://www.facebook.com/CAFCAW>).

The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions on in-person gatherings and travel forced us to postpone our international conference entitled "Higher Education Towards Inclusive Societies in the Middle East and North Africa" planned for the fall of 2020.

The project was designed to contribute to more inclusive theologies in the Middle East that ensure human dignity, active citizenship, and social coherence. As part of this project, we conducted research on 'Interreligious Dialogue Curriculum in Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan'. A curriculum is being finalized and will be presented in a pilot course during summer 2021.

The issue of interreligious dialogue is rarely considered in its didactic aspect in the Arab world, but it should be systematically included in the official curricula of schools of theology/religious studies/Islamic studies/

arts and sciences, and also in universities' broader missions and course offerings.

The way we see it, the development of dialogue between people through the creation and implementation of a culture of dialogue in public and private educational institutions, is a prerequisite for constructing inclusive mindsets within the young generations, and therefore an imperative for building inclusive societies.

With this perspective, the project aims to disseminate this culture by designing a course on interreligious

dialogue for implementation, as a first step, in a number of academic institutions in Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine, and later in other Arab countries.

The first phase of the project (February - December 2020) consisted of:

- Assessing the current needs for such a course, and identifying the main challenges and obstacles facing its implementation during phase II (2021) by conducting research in Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine;
- Designing a course outline based on the research findings and previous experience;
- Organizing a conference and workshop for target academics and administrators from these three countries to discuss the issue of education in interreligious dialogue and to work on improving the course outline;
- Finalizing the course outline after the conference, and identifying the next steps for course development and implementation.

This report presents the results of our research and the first course outline draft. It is divided into seven sections that include: an overview of the project's background, its goals and timeline; our research approach and needs assessment methodology; a detailed account of primary and secondary data collected in the three countries, followed by data analysis; the course outline draft; a few samples of online/blended and non-traditional teaching/learning methods; our recommendations for the next steps; and appendices.

The research took place from February to June 2020. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown measures, we collected primary and secondary data in targeted institutions in Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine, and used a qualitative method (content analysis) to analyze the data. Primary data were gathered through direct interaction with +45 key administrators and academics both through online questionnaires and in one-on-one meetings (physical/virtual).

Key individuals were interviewed based on their expertise in the fields of theology, religious studies, Islamic studies, and humanities/social sciences/cultural studies with a focus on education for interreligious dialogue. Individuals were also chosen according to their religious affiliation (Muslim, mainly Christian) and we aimed to include at least 20-30% of women administrators/academics where possible. The total number of completed questionnaires on June 19, 2020 was 49, which exceeded the number (40) we had aimed for at the beginning of our research.

The purpose was to gather information about the needs of target institutions, the perceptions of academics/administrators, how they identify the challenges facing the design and implementation of interreligious dialogue curricula, and so forth. Secondary data were collected mainly from desk research of materials and studies with existing data, including online databases (official academic institutions' websites, press articles, peer-reviewed articles, and reports), and

available administrative reports and curricula descriptions.

Our research results can be summarized in the following points:

- Target administrators presented both common and differing perceptions of interreligious dialogue. These perceptions include multiple definitions of dialogue principles, goals, forms, and levels. Some institutions already have extensive and successful programs in theology of dialogue and interreligious dialogue. Some offer traditional theoretical courses while others (in rare cases) offer training and/or field trips. The course outline we are proposing takes into consideration these two points.
- Several reasons lie behind the absence or lack of education about interreligious dialogue in a number of institutions, ranging from lack of interest, the existence of authoritarianism, opposition from religious community institutions, etc. However, more than 52% of these administrators stated that courses

on interreligious dialogue are needed in their institutions. Even where programs have been established, there is always room for improvement and 88% agreed that education on interreligious dialogue is vital in academia.

- According to almost 50% of the administrators, education on interreligious dialogue through the inclusion of a new course (or more) is possible. The others cited several obstacles to implementation such as the opposition of other academics, staff, religious institutions, state policies, insufficient interest from students, conservative approaches to the study of religion(s), financial challenges, shortage of expertise, etc.
- In order for such a course to be implemented, administrators identified the following criteria: it should be offered as either a mandatory (almost 39%) or elective course (45.5%) depending on the institution, or even as an extra-curricular activity (such a series of seminars or workshops). It should be taught by experts in the field or well-trained educators. It should include innovative content and teaching methodology.

It should be non-apologetic, non-polemic and non-preaching. It should focus on both awareness of interreligious dialogue and its practice. It should be co-developed by targeted institutions (preferably on a regional level). A few administrators referred to the importance of using online education, especially during the Covid-19 outbreak.



In addition, many administrators stated the importance of offering this course as a core subject for all higher education students, and for the course to be co-created by schools of religious studies with schools of arts and humanities.

A number of administrators addressed the issue of education on interreligious dialogue in schools, starting as early as elementary school. Education not only reflects society but also influences its development. As such, schools have a role to play in the development of an intercultural/interreligious society, and in facilitating the development of the child's intercultural and interreligious skills, attitudes, and values. An intercultural education is valuable to all children as it equips them to participate in an increasingly diverse society. Curriculum reform initiatives at this level are being undertaken in Jordan.



In that sense, we recommend the development of an undergraduate level course in Arabic on interreligious dialogue spearheaded by Dar al Kalima. The framework and content -- partly produced in cooperation with academics of other institutions -- could be found online and therefore taught remotely or via a blended method.

The course content could easily be updated, would be accessible to multiple student audiences, and could be adapted to different learning settings via several methods of teaching, including experiential activities. Institutions could conduct the course in full or include specific modules or activities in their existing curricula. We recommend that the course be taught entirely with local adaptations and synchronically between institutions for an optimal learning experience.

Based on our research, we believe this type of course could provide added value to different institutional profiles. We also recommend the course be mandatory whenever possible in the targeted schools of theology/religious studies/Islamic studies/arts and sciences, or be offered as one of the core or main electives in any undergraduate field of study, along with other humanities courses. Furthermore, we recommend the development of similar graduate courses on interreligious dialogue later on or simultaneously.



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## Celebrating Ten Years Anniversary

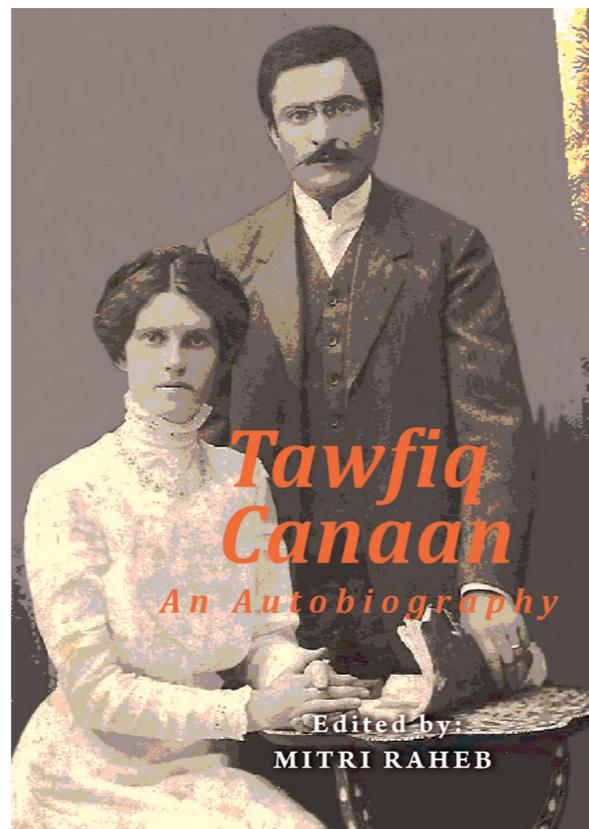
### *Towards Inclusive Societies: Middle Eastern Perspectives "2020"*

Inclusive societies based on equal citizenship rights and dignity remain unfulfilled following the so-called Arab Spring. After years of turmoil, people in the Middle East seem to have opted for "state security" versus "human security", while exclusive identities, be they ethnic, national, or religious such as the Sunni-Shiite divide, seem to push people into monocultural settings. The book contains eight contributions by: Najib Awad| Pamela Chrabieh| Frank Darwiche| Pieter Dronkers| Christo El Morr| David G Kibble| Marcin Rzepka| Nadia Wardeh| Uta Zeuge-Buberl.



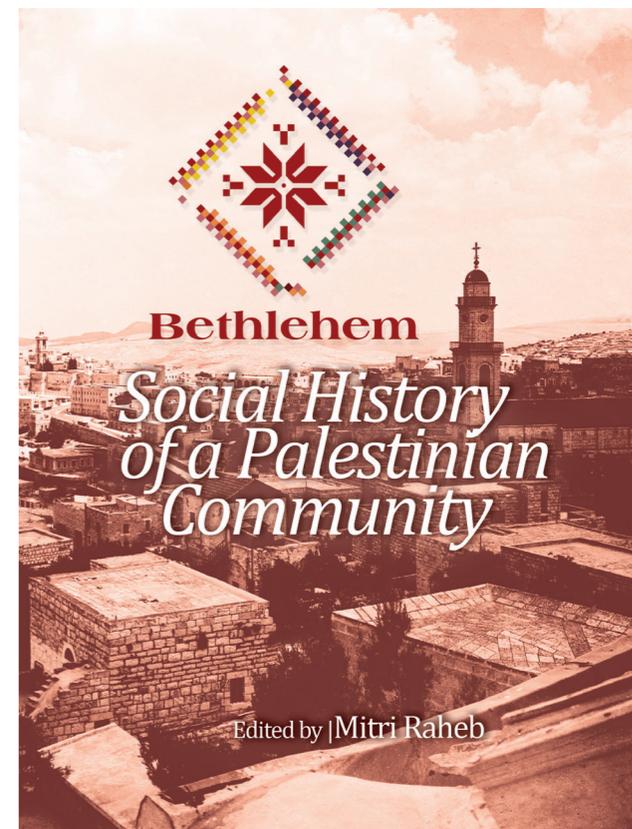
*Tawfiq Canaan: An Autobiography*  
"2020"

An Autobiography gives a unique eyewitness account of historical events, experienced by one. In his autobiography, Tawfiq Canaan recounts a very rich life. That of a medical doctor, public figure, intellectual, prolific writer and a leading Palestinian ethnographer in the first half of the twentieth century. Tawfiq Canaan tells of the socio-economic and political history of Palestine, through the unique prism of his access to different strata in the Palestinian society, which very few others could claim.



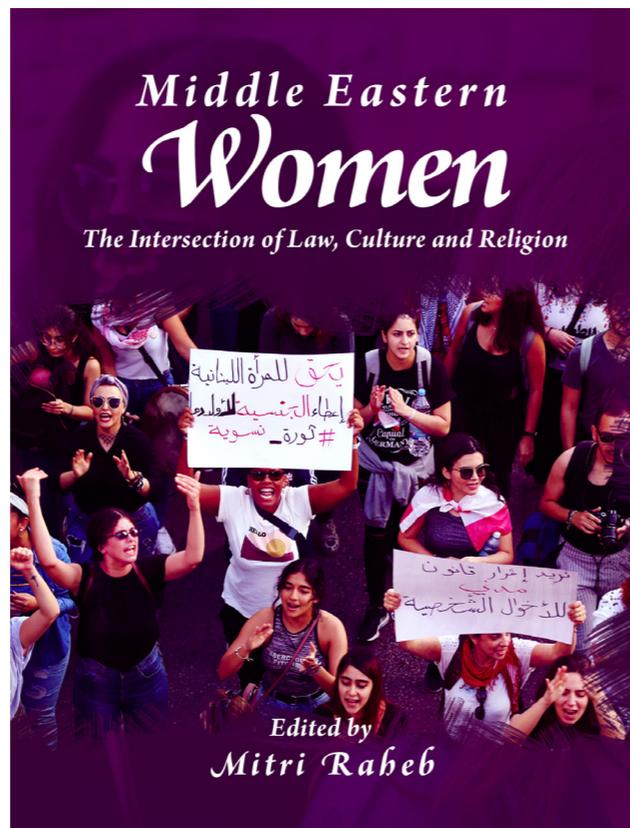
*Bethlehem:*  
*A Social History of a Palestinian Community*  
"2020"

Bethlehem has a unique setting spanning a fertile landscape to the west and desert to the east. Its diverse environment made it a center for Baal and Adonis on the one hand, and the perfect setting for desert monasteries on the other. Different aspects of this rich socio-cultural history are the focus of twelve essays by: Michele Bacci | Amanda Batarseh | Nicholas Blincoe | Glenn Bowman | Nuha Khoury | Lance Laird | Elizabeth Martejijn | Felistin Naili | Tom Selwyn | Sawsan Shomali | Dana Sobouh | Gislen Widen.



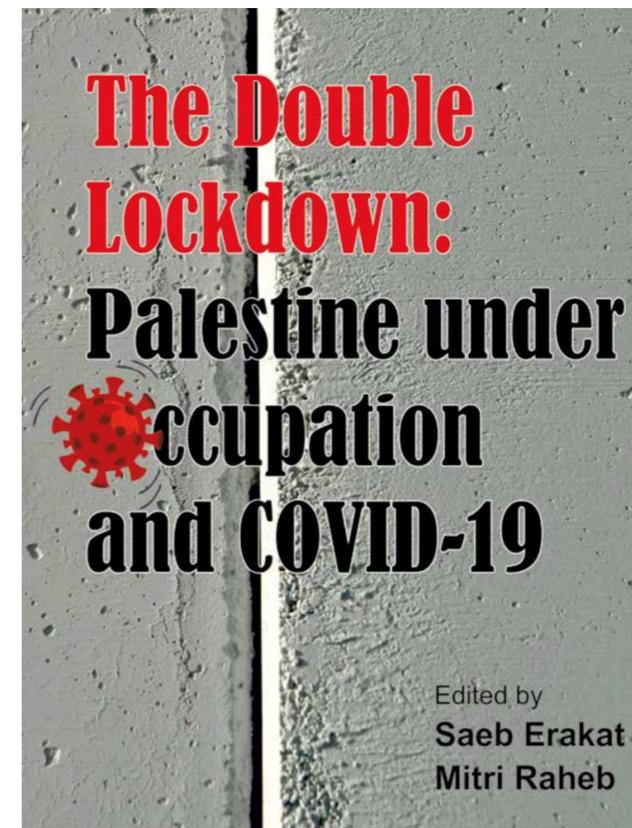
*Middle Eastern Women:  
The Intersections of Law, Culture,  
and Religion  
"2020"*

Women in the Arab world suffer from a lack of equality in most rights, duties and within all areas of society, including the criminal justice court, economy, healthcare, media, politics, religion, family law and civil status law. International reports document the systematic gender gap that is based on discrimination, the prevalence of male traditions and unequal treatment. This book investigates the role that intersectionality of law, culture and religion plays in hindering movement towards equal rights for women. The majority of the papers highlights the challenges faced by women in traditional patriarchal societies.



*The Double Lockdown:  
Palestine under Occupation and Covid\_19  
"2020"*

This Unique booklet on the impact of Covid\_19 on Palestine was prompted by the need to provide an overview of the effects of Covid\_19 in the realms of politics, economy, health, gender, and religion. We are delighted to present this booklet with eleven contributions by prominent public figures in Palestine: Bernard Sabella, Dalal Iriqat, Faisal Awartani, Hani Abu Dayyeh, Issa Kassisieh, Maher Deeb, Mitri Raheb, Randa Siniora, Saeb Erakat, Varsen Aghabekian, Xavier Abu Eid.



# 11 Construction Project

The pandemic did not deter us from finishing three important construction projects: The “Rubash Garden” that provides an outside state of the art plaza for students to hang out; a professional gallery that houses DAK art collections, and a student atelier that provides much-needed space for students to work on their projects.



## Special Thanks to...

*Our friends, supporters and donors who believe in what we do, and to those who contributed directly or indirectly to our ministries.*

- A. M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF)
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC)
- Betlehems Venner
- Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service
- Bright Stars of Bethlehem
- Care International
- Church of Sweden
- Dar al-Kalima Förderverein
- Danish Mission Council Development Department (DMCDD)
- DVV International
- Erasmus+ and Conservatorio Statale di Musica Alfredo Casella - L'aquila
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- GIZ - Ramallah
- Holy Land Christians Society
- KAICIID
- Kamynu Trust
- Kerk in Actie
- Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V.
- Olof Palme International Center
- Pilgrims of Ibillin
- Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) - MOHE
- Representative Office of Germany in Ramallah, Palestine
- The Evangelisches Missionwerk in Deutschland (EMW - Association of Protestant Churches in Germany)
- The Samia A. Halaby Foundation
- The Sternenstaub Foundation
- United Church of Christ/Disciples of Christ

