EVALUATION OF THE PALESTINIAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (RUWWAD)

May 2011

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Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

Appendices

Acronym List

AC   Affiliated Club

EDC   Education Development Center

EDO   Education Development Office

MoYS   Ministry of Youth and Sports

NYC   National Youth Corps

PMEP   Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

SCP   School Connectivity Program

UPP   U.S. Palestinian Partnership

USAID   United States Agency for International Development

YDRC   Youth Development Resource Center

YED   Youth Entrepreneurship Development

YSP   Youth Serving Palestine

Executive Summary

In March 2011, the Aguirre Division of JBS International, Inc., under the GEM II Blanket Purchase Agreement, was contracted by USAID West Bank/Gaza Mission's Education Development Office (EDO) to conduct an Evaluation of the Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program (Ruwwad). The purpose of the evaluation was to conduct a rapid assessment of impact (e.g., effectiveness) of the Ruwwad program in order to develop conclusions and recommendations for follow-on support for activities that are a cost-effective investment for USAID. This evaluation focuses on programmatic outcomes since the 2008 reorganization, while simultaneously taking into consideration the context that has affected Ruwwad's implementation since the program was launched in 2005.

Since its inception, Ruwwad has provided resources to address the unique needs of Palestinian youth – though the specific activities have varied over time. Palestinian youth have greater access to education and enjoy higher levels of educational attainment than generally found elsewhere in the region. However, in the adult-centered traditional culture, educated Palestinian youth not only lack practical skills but face social and cultural challenges in securing employment in a difficult economy. Additionally, opportunities for constructive and civically responsible engagement for youth in their local communities are limited. Youth, when feeling marginalized within their society, have difficulty determining how to positively impact local concerns and, as a result, are at risk of developing civic apathy or more disruptive ways of expressing themselves. Thus, Ruwwad was structured to provide youth not only practical skills necessary for successful entry into current workforce positions but also leadership and civic engagement skills essential for developing the next generation of community leaders and engaged citizens making positive contributions to their society.

Current Ruwwad activities fall into four categories: (1) management capacity to youth clubs; (2) youth development, leadership and community engagement training; (3) YDRC Media Centers; and (4) youth program development through sub-grants.

Component One – Providing Management Capacity Support to the YDRCs and ACs

The cornerstone of Ruwwad are the Youth Development Resource Centers (YDRCs) housed within three youth serving organizations in distinct geographic locations of the West Bank. The YDRC model was conceived as a way to fill the gap in programming for youth by creating a "one stop shop" of indispensible and varied resources, including service learning activities, internships to promote their employability, and trainings in leadership and technical skills such as ICT and media production. Ruwwad support has focused on the YDRCs and a network of 30 Affiliated Clubs (ACs) serving more remote

and geographically dispersed areas within each region. Ruwwad capacity building support includes both construction/renovation of each club's physical space as well as management systems development and training. Participating clubs are expected to leverage their improved infrastructure to expand their youth programming (in many cases beyond sports for males) to include a diverse range of activities on site that are appropriate for both males and females.

Ruwwad has been successful in upgrading the facilities available for youth programming throughout the West Bank. The enhanced facilities not only allow for the provision of more diverse offerings appealing to a broader spectrum of Palestinian youth (including females), but offer participating organizations potential opportunities for future income generation and sustainability of their club. Clubs' leadership was grateful for the opportunity provided by USAID through the improved facilities to better serve the needs of local youth. However, due to construction and equipment delays that affected numerous clubs, there is uneven progress to date in utilizing the new/renovated space to expand programming to the extent planned.

The intensive management capacity building training, though high quality, was offered only six months before the end of Ruwwad. Follow-up and institutionalization of the new management ideas and systems will be challenging, especially for selected ACs. At ACs, the burden of implementation falls largely on the elected volunteer board of each club (staff are a rare luxury). Tailored technical assistance for participating ACs from youth program/organization development specialists to help maximize the investment already made in preparing clubs for expanded youth services is recommended.

YDRCs, on the other hand, have staff paid by Ruwwad. Therefore, the institutionalization of the new management systems at their level is much more likely. However, until stronger progress has been made to develop income generation activities and new partnerships with local and other donors, YDRCs may not be sustainable when there are no longer resources to pay staff after Ruwwad ends. The slower than expected progress in upgrading the physical infrastructures and management systems of the YDRCs has narrowed the time for YDRC leadership to focus on sustainability to very close to the end of the project. Additional assistance to YDRCs to finalize and implement their joint and individual sustainability plans would be recommended to continue the positive progress made under Ruwwad and maximize the longer-term return on investment.

Component Two – Youth Development, Leadership and Community Participation Training

Ruwwad's youth development programming includes three primary program areas: (1) youth empowerment (leadership and community engagement training and youth-led community service initiatives); (2) internships; and (3) computer (ICT) training.

Ruwwad's youth empowerment programming consists of two main activities: the Leadership and Community Engagement Training and youth-led community service initiatives. Alumni youth expressed enthusiasm about the benefits of participation. For them, it was their first time to do an intensive multi-day experiential training focused on leadership, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills development. A strength of the leadership training was that it brought together youth from all areas of the West Bank – allowing them to get to know each other and bridge regional differences. In addition, youth learned new skills for designing service projects to benefit their local communities. More than 25 youth-led service initiatives were implemented by participating youth.

The internship sub-component offers youth hands on opportunities to further develop their employability skills. Interns are placed both within the structure of the Ruwwad organization (including the YDRCs, ACs and the Ruwwad program office), as well as at public- and private-sector organizations throughout Palestine. In most cases, the internships are paid and three months in duration. The internship component is deemed very successful and a beneficial activity. While most of the internships to date focused on building business- and administrative-related skills, perhaps future internships could be expanded to include professional development for vocational occupations, as well. Internships facilitated through Ruwwad have filled an unmet need of Palestinian youth – though in the future, perhaps are in closer alignment with the new USAID-funded Youth Enterprise Development project goals.

Ruwwad's ICT youth programming is made possible through partnerships with several multinational IT companies (Cisco, Intel and Microsoft). These programs are implemented in the computer labs at the YDRCs and ACs and are run by the YDRC ICT Coordinators and trained ICT interns. Ruwwad offers four main ICT trainings through Intel, Microsoft and Cisco, targeting different age groups of youth, as well as community members. These multinational sponsorships have been beneficial for USAID, because they attract participants to the programs through name recognition and brand credibility. While Intel reported that they were limiting their corporate philanthropy for the coming cycle, Cisco reported interest in continuing their relationship with USAID. The representatives from Cisco reported that they are working on the next generation of MyTecC, which plans to renew the social networking component with less-structured approaches to facilitating dialogue between youth participants and more support for

their ongoing conversations. ICT training has been a great way to increase participation at the YDRCs and ACs among diverse youth, including females, and should be continued.

Component Three – YDRC Media Centers

Each YDRC has a Media Center provided through Ruwwad with computer workstations (both Apple- and Windows-based systems), as well as a variety of audio and video production equipment necessary to produce a wide range of media products. The Media Centers offer a hands-on opportunity for youth who have completed media-focused undergraduate degrees to further their skills development and preparation for careers in the media industry. Participants complete intensive training at a YDRC followed by a three-month internship program completed either at the YDRC Media Center or with external media groups. The media spots and advertisements produced by the media center interns were very impressive, professional-quality productions. There is potential for the Media Centers to build upon their success in developing paid-spots for such groups as AMIDEAST and Save the Children to become an even greater revenue-generating source for the YDRCs.

Component Four – Sub-grants to Support YDRC Programming

The Ruwwad sub-grants component aims to build the programming capacity of the YDRCs and ACs through providing sub-grants to local and international organizations with different specialties. The intention is that programs and partnerships are created that can continue past the end of the Ruwwad funding from USAID. The sub-grants have successfully generated a diverse range of innovative youth programming. Current sub-grants provide programs in service learning, environmental education, creative arts, business incubation, and English language training. Previous sub-grants included programs on psychosocial and career counseling, media, technology and science, and sports.

The portfolio of newly developed programming is now ready for more widespread replication throughout the network. It is recommended that a core set of programs be offered at the YDRCs, as well as the ACs to allow the greatest number of youth to participate as possible. In addition, efforts to expand youth programming beyond Ruwwad-funded offerings should continue to be emphasized as it offers potential to further meet other specific needs of youth in various communities.

Key Recommendations

There are five key recommendations to continue the progress of Ruwwad in creating a strong foundation for youth programming on the West Bank moving forward.

1. Develop an even more strategic approach to youth programming – identifying a participation progression with systematic follow-up and ongoing engagement opportunities for program alumni.

2. Continue to strengthen local buy-in and active support for the YDRCs and ACs and insure development of locally relevant programming as well as programs that encourage female participation.

3. Tailor capacity building support to specific club contexts over an extended period of time, perhaps focusing on a smaller number of clubs initially – use international youth club network experts to provide the needed training and technical assistance for both management systems and program development.

4. Focus on sustainability - create actionable plans that include income generation ideas and volunteer recruitment and management. Also, provide assistance for plan implementation.

5. Create partnerships with other USAID projects, local organizations, businesses, and international donors to provide additional youth programming at the YDRCs and ACs.

Conclusions

The vision for the Ruwwad project - networks of local youth clubs aligned with a centralized resource center as a means of offering a diverse range of positive youth development activities within a given geographic region was both innovative and timely. Ruwwad's efforts to create stronger linkages between existing youth serving organizations while simultaneously creating new infrastructure and programming have resulted in an expansion of opportunities for Palestinian youth to participate in activities that address their current needs. This model shows promise for follow-on support as well as replication by USAID and other donors beyond the West Bank.

As Ruwwad has only been operating under the current structure since 2008, a great deal has been accomplished in developing the capacity of the YDRCs and ACs, as well as a network of partners and sub-grantees to support youth development. Although baseline data were not available from which to make a comparison between where the YDRCs started at the beginning of the project to where they are now, it is clear based on data gathered during the evaluation that the infrastructure of the centers and clubs, and the capacity of many of the YDRC staff, have benefitted from the Ruwwad activities. Youth from distinct regions of the West Bank have had opportunities to not only develop their leadership and employability skills but also develop greater cross-regional understanding and connections. However, Ruwwad's accomplishment of its goal of mobilizing an active cohort of youth

leaders committed to serving their communities through service and volunteerism after their Ruwwad participation ends, is less clear.

Due to a variety of political, contractual, and management factors, the full potential of Ruwwad is not yet realized in spite of the significant strides that have been made. More time is needed to fully implement planned activities systematically across the network while drawing on the lessons learned of the "pilot" organizations. More robust step-by-step strategies for expanding AC and YDRC capacity to not only deliver quality youth programming, but also to create new approaches to income generation and sustainability that are less international donor-centric, are critical. Technical assistance geared to each organization's individual circumstances is essential to ensure that new management skills and systems are fully implemented.

As many of the objectives undertaken by Ruwwad are complementary to the activities being developed under the new Youth Entrepreneurship Development (YED) program, it could be a logical progression to continue selected gains made under Ruwwad through the new activity. Activities which specifically relate to youth employability including professional skill building and microenterprise development would seem well suited to potentially be picked up by YED.

For other youth development activities such as leadership and service learning, USAID may wish to focus their follow-on efforts on centers and clubs that have made greater gains under the current project. In many cases, the evaluation team felt that success of these activities was largely dependent upon the commitment and initiative of the center or club management. In cases where the Executive Director (or Board Chair) was naturally more dynamic, took the initiative to seek out other donors, and encouraged a wider variety of activities without USAID funding or guidance, the organization had clearly benefitted from such leadership. The most successful clubs visited during the evaluation had already found ways to offer a wider variety of services, such as women's health programs, activities for younger children, and additional youth activities (even including sports activities) that were not part of the Ruwwad model.

In cases where management of the center or club was content to continue with "business as usual," allowing USAID support through Ruwwad implemented programs, but making little effort to complement or supplement these activities, the vision of building an indispensible community resource had not been achieved. Therefore, focusing resources on the more-dynamic centers and clubs, helping them to build their institutional and management capacity while simultaneously giving them the tools they need to promote their own sustainability, will leverage USAID's investment and increase the chances for success in the future.

Introduction

In March, 2011, the Aguirre Division of JBS International, Inc., under the GEM II Blanket Purchase Agreement, was contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) West Bank/Gaza Mission's Education Development Office (EDO) to conduct an Evaluation of the Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program (Ruwwad). The purpose of the evaluation was to conduct a rapid assessment of impact (e.g., effectiveness) of the Ruwwad program in order to develop conclusions and recommendations for follow-on support for activities that are a cost-effective investment for USAID. This assessment included the following activities:

- Measuring the impact of Ruwwad's various program components with regard to their respective activities and stated objectives;

- Examining the youth programming and capacity building activities for the YDRCs to determine whether the programs provided meet priority needs; and

- Establishing the efficacy of Ruwwad's program components in achieving institutional capacity development of the Youth Development Resource Centers (YDRCs), and its impact on Palestinian youth ages 14-30.

Background on the Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program

Since 2005, Ruwwad has supported youth and community development through a variety of leadership training and service learning activities. The original design of Ruwwad was organized around four components: formal and complementary education; livelihood development; civic engagement; and sustainability. However, with the 2006 election of Hamas, the U.S. Government suspended foreign assistance to Palestine. At that time, the program objectives shifted towards the development of a Ruwwad Youth Corps. This Youth Corps delivered humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations throughout the West Bank, such as food, clothing, water and medicine and implemented service learning activities through the Youth Corps that engaged participants in youth-led community initiatives.

In 2007, the President of the United States, the U.S. Department of State and U.S.-based business leaders launched the U.S. Palestinian Partnership (UPP). This initiative promotes economic opportunities and youth leadership development for the Palestinian people. In response to the renewed emphasis on youth leadership development initiated by the partnership, the Ruwwad program re-

emphasized youth leadership development and began working in collaboration with the Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) to launch the Youth Development and Resource Centers (YDRCs).

The concept of the YDRCs intended to create an indispensible resource for youth development by providing a wide variety of programs and services to youth, including service learning activities, internships to promote their employability, and trainings in leadership and technical skills such as ICT and media production. The centers chosen to house the YDRCs and ACs were previously established youth clubs that were selected to participate in the Ruwwad program through a process of nomination that was conducted in conjunction with the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Ruwwad then worked with the clubs to develop their infrastructure, management capacity and programmatic offerings in order to "turbo-charge" their utility to the community. This effort focused primarily on the three YDRCs but also included a network of 30 Affiliated Clubs (ACs).

Each of the three YDRCs was chosen to serve a geographic region of the West Bank: the Al Bireh Youth Foundation located in Ramallah/Al Bireh serves the Ramallah metro area, as well as the Affiliated Clubs in the middle part of the country, including Jerusalem and Jericho; the Jabal an-Nar Center in Nablus serves the northern part of the country, working with the ACs in the towns and villages in the north; the Beit al Tifel Center in Hebron works with the ACs in towns and villages in the south.

The programmatic activities within Ruwwad are organized into four components: (1) Management and Capacity Support for the YDRCs; (2) Youth Development, Leadership, and Community Participation Training; (3) Strengthening the YDRC Media Centers; and (4) Sub-grants to Local NGOs to Support YDRC Programs. Each of these components is described below, and discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Component One: Providing Management and Capacity Support to the YDRCs

This component develops management capacity and sustainability in three YDRCs and thirty Affiliated Youth Clubs. Specific capacity building programs include: capacity-building workshops for YDRC staff and board members and AC board members and volunteers and offering internships for youth participants to assist in program delivery.

Component Two: Youth Development, Leadership, and Community Participation Training

This component encompasses a variety of activities focused on developing youth leadership capacity and employability skills, especially among marginalized, underserved and rural populations. These include the following activities:

- Youth Corps Initiatives such as leadership and community engagement (30/30) trainings, and youth-led community service initiatives;

- Internships in external organizations such as PA government ministries, local NGOs, and media companies as well as within Ruwwad headquarters, YDRCs and ACs;

- ICT Youth Programming such as IntelLearn, Microsoft UP, MyTecC, and Intel Clubhouses; and

- Youth Portal offering access to digital libraries, training materials, social networking for employment opportunities and livelihood skills development.

Component Three: Strengthening the YDRC Media Centers

This component seeks to build the capacity of the YDRC Media Centers, which provide youth an opportunity to develop technical media skills through participating in media development projects. These projects seek to support youth advocacy and community mobilization endeavors and to build young people's debate and critical analysis skills.

Component Four: Sub-grants to Local NGOs to Support YDRC Programs

This component provides sub-grants to local organizations that are strategically positioned to support the capacity development of the YDRCs. These include three thematic sub-grants, the four youth development sub-grants, and the English-language sub-grant to AMIDEAST.

Evaluation Methodology

Given the various modifications that have been made to the Ruwwad program over its lifecycle, this evaluation has focused its attention on programmatic outcomes since the 2008 reorganization, while simultaneously taking into consideration how the political situation under which USAID operates in Palestine has affected Ruwwad's implementation since the program was launched in 2005.

The original methodology proposed for this evaluation intended to adopt a mixed-methods approach to data collection, utilizing existing quantitative data gathered by the implementing partner organization, EDC, and supplemented by qualitative data gathered during field-based research in the form of interviews, focus groups, site visits and observations. This information was to be complemented by data on financial investments made for each component activity, in order to develop a fuller understanding of the cost-effectiveness of each activity in relation to its achieved outcomes.

Background Review

During the first week of the evaluation activity, the research team conducted a careful review of background literature on the Ruwwad project, including documents provided by USAID as well as additional documentation gathered by the research team through desktop research. These documents included: the 2005 and 2010 sector assessments, the 2008 evaluation of Ruwwad's service learning model, quarterly reports produced by Ruwwad/EDC as the implementing partner organization since the 2008 restructuring, Ruwwad project materials such as project briefers, and current data on the status of youth in West Bank and Gaza, among others. The results of the literature review provided a solid basis for the second phase of the evaluation, which consisted of field-based qualitative data collection, analysis and reporting.

Quantitative Data Collection

The Ruwwad program has established a comprehensive Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) and a set of pre- and post-test instruments designed to gather data on the various indicators identified in the PMEP. During the design of this evaluation, the research team anticipated having access to this information and felt that it would present a more robust data set than the research team could gather in the two-week data collection phase of the evaluation. However, due to a variety of circumstances, these data were not available for analysis during the timeframe under which the evaluation was conducted. The research team was provided with the most recent evaluation reports that were developed from the PMEP data; these results are included in the final project analysis.

In addition, the proposed methodology for this study included a cost-effectiveness analysis of the various Ruwwad components. However, a detailed financial breakdown of USAID's investment in the various Ruwwad components was unavailable. Thus, the planned analysis of the financial investment made by USAID into the Ruwwad program and its relationship to programmatic outcomes was not possible. In addition, without comprehensive PMEP data, this analysis will be superficial at best, as a true measure of each component's impact cannot be fully understood without a strong understanding of the program's performance. The following table represents the financial information that was obtained by the research team.

Line Item	Approved Budget	Actual Spending to Date
Labor	$ 4,777,505	$ 4,268,763
Fringe Benefits	$ 982,779	$ 834,428
Allowances	$ 91,060	$ 89,864
Consultants	$ 319,624	$ 283,553
Travel	$ 294,473	$ 289,789
Other Direct Costs	$ 2,156,079	$ 1,592,310
Modified Total Direct Costs	**$ 8,621,520**	**$ 7,367,707**
Sub-grants	$ 3,469,478	$ 1,752,707
Indirect Costs	$ 3,025,782	$ 2,498,134
Participant Costs and Equipment	$ 2,058,220	$ 1,601,528
Total Costs	**$17,175,000**	**$13,220,027**

It is worth noting that, while the PMEP data do capture outputs from the various project indicators identified in the PMEP, the data collected include limited outcome measures that are essential for a true impact evaluation. With USAID's increasing emphasis on evaluation as a project development tool, future youth programs could expand their data collection to include more outcome-based measurement, such as how many of the interns were hired as permanent staff, or how many of the Ruwwad participants were employed within six months or a year after participating in the program.

Qualitative Data Collection

Due to the challenges described above, the findings of this evaluation rely primarily on the qualitative data collected during the two-week field visit. These qualitative data include semi-structured interviews with a variety of key stakeholders who have been involved with the Ruwwad program, focusing specifically on activities that have taken place since the 2008 restructuring. The primary stakeholder groups interviewed during the qualitative data collection process included the following six general categories: (1) EDC/Ruwwad staff; (2) Ministry of Youth and Sports staff; (3) YDRC board

members and staff; (3) Affiliated Club board members and volunteers; (4) sub-grantees; (5) current and potential public and private sector partners; and (6) youth beneficiaries.

While the research team would have preferred to complement the qualitative data with a quantitative measure of impact, other approaches were adopted to test the conclusions developed during the qualitative data analysis. The research team talked extensively with organizations such as the Mazaya group, which have invested a good deal of effort into conducting their own analysis of the YDRCs' capacity and potential for sustaining the gains made by Ruwwad since 2008 in preparation for developing a training manual and capacity building trainings for the YDRC and AC board members, staff and volunteers. In addition, insights from YDRC staff and board members, AC boards and volunteers, the MoYS, and other respondents gathered during semi-structured interviews also reinforced observations made by the research team during site visits and observations. These conversations reinforced the research team's conclusions and triangulated the team's findings in most cases, though there are always conflicting viewpoints that must be considered within the context of all other available data.

The following sections break down the evaluation findings by program component, and identify recommendations on two levels: those that can be implemented in the final six months of the current project in order to strengthen the YDRCs and ACs and promote the sustainability of the network; and recommendations for any follow-on work after Ruwwad ends in September 2011.

Component One – Providing Management Capacity Support to the YDRCs and ACs

One of Ruwwad's four main components is the development and capacity building of the Youth Development Resource Centers and networks of Affiliated Clubs in geographic proximity to each YDRC. The intent was that the YDRCs and ACs would create connections and service delivery networks throughout the West Bank to provide sustainable resources for youth in marginalized communities, rural areas, and city centers. YDRCs are to serve as the "hubs" of the network and "one stop shops" for youth programming and other services. Under the current generation of Ruwwad's implementation, it is planned that each YDRC has a network of 10 ACs located in surrounding areas. ACs offer a venue for delivering additional programming to youth in underserved areas and serve as a feeder sending youth to participate in programs delivered both at the YDRC itself and centrally by the Ruwwad Project.

Youth Development Resource Centers (YDRCs)

YDRCs were established at three pre-existing youth clubs strategically selected to provide geographic coverage of the West Bank. The clubs currently operating YDRCs are: Jabal An-Nar Club in Nablus (northern West Bank), Al Bireh Youth Foundation in Al Bireh (central West Bank), and Beit Al Tifel Club in Hebron (southern West Bank). The evaluation team visited all three YDRCs and conducted interviews with Executive Directors, selected staff, and one to three board members per YDRC.

As part of the establishment of its YDRC, the physical infrastructure of the hosting club was enhanced - either through renovation of its existing facilities to add space including computer lab(s) to allow for a range of diverse programmatic offerings and a general facelift to improve the physical appearance of the club (Al Bireh Youth Foundation and Jabal An-Nar) or construction of a totally new facility in the case of Beit Al Tifel.

The work of each YDRC is overseen by a volunteer 9-13 member board of the sponsoring organization as elected by its General Assembly. Each YDRC has a paid staff that oversees the day-to-day operations of the center consisting of an Executive Director, a youth coordinator, a program coordinator, a media center coordinator, an ICT coordinator, an accountant, and an Intel Club coordinator. Each YDRC also has roughly 10 college graduates serving at any given time in 3-month

internships within the organization who add to staff capacity. All staff and interns are paid through Ruwwad/EDC project funds.

> *I love Ruwwad and I love working with them. It was a good opportunity for me as a fresh graduate and most other Ruwwad employees to get work opportunities that are not usually available. Ruwwad's support gave us this opportunity – most of our employees are fresh graduates.*
>
> -- YDRC Executive Director in Al Bireh

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The Physical Structures

- At the time of the evaluation, the new Beit Al Tifel YDRC facility was not yet open though it was in the final construction stage. Therefore, the YDRC was still operating out of two older locations. The new facility is very spacious and will allow for diverse programming for youth to happen simultaneously. While the bulk of future programming will happen at the new facility, the Intel Computer Lab will remain at the old central location, as it was recently renovated. However, the new facility is not as centrally located (due to the in kind land available for the center). Therefore, it may be more difficult for youth (even those living within Hebron) to get there. While it is a lovely new facility, the operating and maintenance expenses of the YDRC will likely be dramatically higher making sustainability and income generation an even more important focus for the staff and board. However, the dramatically improved, larger facility should offer multiple ways to generate income by renting out the auditorium and meeting/classroom space to other organizations, the youth hostels, and the restaurant.

- Jabal An-Nar has a warm inviting space for youth with artwork on the walls, multicolored tile floors, and several rooms for various activities. The Executive Director feels they have already outgrown their space as they actively use of all renovated areas of their building and would need another floor to be able to provide the full range of Ruwwad sponsored and alternative programming that they would like. The costs of electricity and phone for this YDRC has been an issue for (and between) the board and staff due to limited resources and Ruwwad not covering those ongoing expenses.

- The renovated Al Bireh Youth Foundation YDRC building is large with a small outdoor park complete with tables and chairs for socializing. However, neither space appears to be fully utilized at this point in time. The space is stark comparatively and could be better kept up. The look and feel of the center currently could be more welcoming to youth.

Boards of Directors

- All five board members interviewed, regardless of YDRC affiliation, expressed gratitude for the USAID support that has upgraded their facilities and allowed them to offer more programming for youth. Without USAID support, such enhancements would not have been possible.

- As is the case with nonprofit boards anywhere, the level of individual board member engagement with their YDRC varies widely. Of the three YDRCs, Beit Al Tifel appears to enjoy the strongest and most active support from their board. On the other end of the continuum, the Al Bireh board is the least engaged with its YDRC activities. One Executive Director mentioned having difficulty getting board members engaged, even to read reports so they can understand what the YDRC offers.

- Board members from all three sponsoring organizations expressed frustration at the lack of clarity about their role with the YDRC. They felt they had not been adequately consulted or asked for input into the design of the YDRC or its youth programming.

- Board members expressed the desire to be called upon to share their community knowledge and connections – both for day to day operations, identifying areas for future programming, and for resource mobilization. In addition, board members wanted a more clear way to give their input not only to YDRC staff but also to Ruwwad.

- The skills of individual board members vary. No board-specific training has taken place and there is no standard orientation procedure for newly elected board members to ensure they understand the Ruwwad Project and its goals for YDRCs and ACs, as well as the range of youth programming offered. Board members are invited to participate in the Mazaya trainings with YDRC staff. Board members have been especially encouraged to attend four courses: strategic management, management skills, fundraising, and leadership. However, the level of attendance necessary for effective implementation among board members is difficult as they are volunteers and the training courses are multi-day and offered at times often conflicting with their work responsibilities.

- Beit Al Tifel has two female youth board members. Jabal An Nar also has youth board members.

Staffing

- As all staff are currently paid by Ruwwad/EDC, there is a strong concern that the three YDRC sponsoring organizations will have difficulty picking up those expenses after the end of the project – even for just the Executive Director.

- Because staff salaries are paid by Ruwwad/EDC, board members expressed that sometimes there is confusion about chain of command within their organization as well as concern about who the Executive Director actually works for and reports to -- the sponsoring organization or Ruwwad/EDC?

- The Executive Directors are all very enthusiastic and want to further Palestinian youth development. However, their professional capacity to undertake and manage the range of activities required by the YDRC is mixed, as is that of their staff. While some capacity building training was provided throughout the project by Ruwwad staff and through a sub-grant with Massar, the current intensive capacity building training is being implemented four months before the end of the Project. Therefore, time to implement the newly acquired skills and systems that should improve YDRC operations is limited.

Miscellaneous

- The level of community support for the YDRC varies by location.

- Centralized programming limits participation of some marginalized youth due to transportation challenges.

- A general principle within the project is that all programs for youth should be managed and run only by youth (i.e., people 30 and under.) While this approach offers excellent leadership opportunities for youth and helps ensure programming is relevant to current youth needs and not "controlled" by domineering adults, it also at times limits effective cross-age collaboration. There are adults that do buy into the vision of strengthening the next generation of leaders but it appears difficult at times for them to find a way in to share their skills and experiences to help achieve that vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Consider how to ensure a welcoming environment – look and feel – of the YDRCs. For example, at a minimum, YDRCs could make flipchart paper posters - perhaps with ICT course agendas or leadership tips. Perhaps the YDRC's Media Center could design posters and include with photos from YDRC events or other graphics, as Jabal An-Nar has done very nicely.

- Install bulletin boards in a central and easily accessible location at the YDRC with information on upcoming trainings, how to sign up, community events sponsored by the YDRC and other local organizations, hours of operation, and volunteer schedules and opportunities.

- Host community open house events to expose local families to the offerings of the YDRC to increase understanding and participation. Also, these events could also be used to recruit additional community volunteers to support future youth programs either by sharing their unique skills or more general ways to help out.

- Focus on strategies to build membership and expand offerings to youth that will bring them to the center by leveraging existing resources. For example, open the computer labs for "open use" hours, in which youth and other community members can use the computers for unstructured activities.

- Project successes are community successes: In order to build a sense of community around the YDRCs, the program should develop Arabic language versions of the Ruwwad newsletters and materials that are distributed hard-copy at the YDRCs.

- Sports and scouts are points of entry for youth to the club and should not be overlooked because they do not complement the Ruwwad component activities.

- Based on AC requests, perhaps YDRCs could consider how to package existing programs into a summer camp format that could be implemented by the ACs and YDRCs.

Follow On:

- Continue to expand the range of programs for youth available at the YDRC through partnerships with local organizations specializing in desired content areas that complement Ruwwad goals.

- Develop programming and activities that (in addition to being offered at the YDRC itself) can also be offered at the club level to allow for greater participation by youth and community members from underserved areas.

- Training on how to more effectively engage in cross-age activities, joint service projects, and developing private sector partnerships would be useful in building further broad-based community support.

Affiliated Clubs (ACs)

An essential part of the Ruwwad model is the extension of the YDRC youth development programming out into underserved, rural areas of the West Bank through a network of Affiliated Clubs (ACs). Initially, 80 clubs were identified through the Ministry of Youth and Sport to participate in the Ruwwad Project. However, in the current generation of Ruwwad, 30 local youth clubs were approved through the USAID vetting process to participate (mainly due to budget resources) - ten in each of the three networks associated with a YDRC. The evaluation team visited one-third, or ten, of the ACs currently operating using specific criteria to select a diverse range of clubs in each of the three networks, and conducted interviews with board members, community volunteers, and youth.

The ACs are community-based youth organizations largely operated by a board of directors elected by their membership with the support of community volunteers. Very few clubs have paid staff; those that do have staff generally use them as sport team coaches. Club membership costs, on average, 20 NIS/year (or just under $6). Many of the clubs were originally formed to provide boys an opportunity to play sports. Others were created to provide opportunities for both sport and cultural activities (such as "scouts" or drum and bugle corps, traditional dancing, art and drama). Many of the ACs are located some 30-45 minutes by car from the YDRC hub which requires youth, board members, and/or volunteers to secure transportation in order to participate in meetings or programs offered at the YDRC.

As part of their participation in Ruwwad activities, each AC receives a computer lab and assistance in either renovating/expanding their existing facility or construction of a new building. They also receive a Ruwwad intern to provide computer training on site for 66 workdays/cycle. Participating clubs are expected to expand their youth programming beyond sports to include activities on site that are appropriate for both males and females. ACs board members, volunteers, and local youth are eligible to attend Ruwwad-sponsored trainings either at the YDRC, centrally in Ramallah, or in some cases at their own location.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- While the YDRCs are associated with the ACs in their geographic area, the current relationship is a loose association. The AC volunteer staff and youth program participants from outlying areas are invited to their regional YDRC to participate in youth development programming and capacity building training.

- At this time, due to changes in board membership and the USAID vetting process, Beit Al Tifel only has eight ACs in its network instead of ten.

- AC board members do not view themselves or their club as true partners in the local YDRC network – instead they have a beneficiary mindset. Many board members, while grateful for the assistance with their facilities and the additional opportunities available through Ruwwad, did not feel they had had a voice in identifying local needs and programming relevant to their specific community's youth.

- All club board members interviewed mentioned transportation issues including the distance, cost, and availability of public transport at certain days/times as limiting the number of board members, volunteers, and youth that could participate in trainings at the YDRC.

- Some clubs expressed concern about sending their youth to the YDRCs to participate in trainings and events for safety reasons due to the need to travel past checkpoints and settlements en route.

- In many cases, AC renovations and/or new construction have only recently been completed, are still underway or have not yet begun. Therefore, in many cases, ACs have not yet the opportunity to implement expanded youth programming such as computer training due to facility limitations.

- While AC board members are generally very committed to supporting youth development in whatever ways possible, there are some inherent limitations built into their ability to upgrade the capacity of their clubs. The capacity of board members to operate their respective club varies based on training, professional experiences, and available time. Nearly all board members have full-time jobs elsewhere so the management of the club, including hours of operation, depends on the availability of their free time.

- Board member availability also limits their consistent participation in YDRC programs, Mazaya capacity building training, network meetings, or meeting with fellow board members and

volunteers locally to do planning and implementation. It can also be difficult for YDRC (or Ruwwad) staff to contact club representatives by phone to talk about opportunities or get updates, as well.

- All of the site visits to ACs were conducted at times when youth could be present. None of the computer labs were open to allow for youth or community to practice skills they had learned in ICT trainings or to do job-related searches or CV development.

- Membership in the most clubs remains male dominant. Although programming for females has been expanding, the activities are still limited. ICT training is one area where girls were regularly included at the clubs. A few clubs were proud of their offering for girls such a soccer team, lower arranging training, or traditional dance classes. Others expressed the desire to offer more activities for girls but had not yet been able to design and implement such programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Install bulletin boards in a central and easily accessible location at the ACs with information on upcoming trainings, how to sign up, other community events, hours of operation, etc... Posting a schedule of volunteer coverage and volunteer opportunities would also be useful.

- Encourage more communication and joint activities between clubs within a network, in addition to continuing efforts to create stronger relationships between the YDRC and its ACs.

- Conduct a special board member only meeting with representation from all clubs and the YDRC to brainstorm/share best practices/discuss future youth programming options and sustainability/income generation plans.

Follow On:

- Provide individualized technical assistance to each participating AC to help them design an expanded schedule of youth program offerings (including programming for girls) including more optimal utilization of their renovated space, conduct more effective community outreach and engagement, generate, manage and recognize community volunteers, develop income generation and sustainability plans, and implement enhanced administrative and financial systems based on the Mazaya protocols and training.

- Consider a phased AC implementation strategy, focusing first on strengthening the capacity of a smaller number of clubs at any given time. Once they have the necessary systems and programs in place and have demonstrated they can sustain the enhancements, gradually expand the network to include more clubs, perhaps using board members and volunteers as best practice examples for the next generation of clubs – both to inspire the new clubs and recognize the efforts of the successful clubs, as well.

Capacity Building Training

In addition to the development of improved physical structures for youth programming, Ruwwad has had two subcontracts with local consulting firms (Massar and Mazaya) to provide training and technical assistance to develop strong organizational systems and procedures. The earlier contract with Massar reportedly experienced implementation issues. However, this evaluation only considered the Mazaya training due to its primarily focus being on work undertaken since 2008.

Currently, Ruwwad has a sub-grant with Mazaya, a local Palestinian business management and consulting firm, to assist with systems development and institutionalization. The five specific capacity building components of Mazaya's work are:

(1) Assessment of YDRC and AC capacity;

(2) Development of institutional systems manuals for the YDRCs;

(3) Provision of financial software and training to the YDRCs and ACs;

(4) Facilitation of strategic planning and sustainable business model development; and

(5) Provision of training to the YDRCs and ACs on such topics as administration, finance, human resources, monitoring & evaluation, and strategic planning.

The five components of the current capacity building sub-grant with Mazaya are meant to support Ruwwad's overall efforts in building the capacity and the sustainability of the network and its youth program components and projects. The Ruwwad capacity building component is designed to ensure that the newly enhanced youth services continue as part of the YDRCs' and ACs' offerings past the end of the project.

After completing the needs assessment of YDRC and AC capacity, Mazaya has designed a comprehensive training program designed to provide needed skills and systems. In April and May 2011,

Mazaya is offering 18 capacity building training programs in each of the three YDRC regions focused on Management and Financial Management, IT, and Youth Development Programming. Each 15-30 hour course is comprised of 3-5 sessions. In total, 360 hours of training is being offered per region over 9 weeks. Some course sessions run concurrently. The courses are free but attendees must pay their own transportation costs.

The courses are open to all YDRC and AC board members and staff, youth and community volunteers, and other interested community members. YDRCs and ACs can send anyone to the trainings who is interested in participating. While there is a suggested constellation of topics that are most suitable for people in certain roles, there is no requirement that any given participant type have certain courses or competencies as prerequisites for other courses.

Mazaya has designed each course to be highly interactive using a mixture of "lecturettes" and hands-on exercises. The design is intended to allow for relationship building among YDRC and AC representatives who may never have met each other before as a strategic way to strengthen the overall network. This training approach is also a means to minimize variations in participants' existing skills and level of experience during the course.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- The capacity building training courses offered by Mazaya cover key topics necessary to develop sustainable operating systems as well as effective youth programming... The course curricula appear comprehensive and of high quality.

- Given the two-month window, the training schedule is very ambitious. Originally the Mazaya training was to have happened over a six-month period but due to contracting delays, this was not possible.

- While the training topics seem very appropriate and necessary to build organizational capacity, the fact they are only now being systematically provided is unfortunate. After the trainings are completed in May, there will only be roughly three months of implementation time which makes it difficult for post-training technical assistance (especially for ACs) to help each organization apply the new knowledge and skills gained by different people to their context and institutionalize the new systems. Additionally, follow-up TA is not part of Mazaya's current subcontract so even if there was more time, it was unclear how the needed support for implementation would occur.

- The capacity building training does not offer a specialized course in volunteer recruitment, training, management, and recognition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Consider how every remaining Mazaya training course, regardless of topic, can allow participants to leave with actionable written implementation plans tailored to their organization.

- Ruwwad or Mazaya staff offer at least some minimal individualized technical assistance on how to best implement the training content given the AC's or YDRC's specific needs/context.

- Prepare guidelines or suggestions for how people from a given YDRC or AC can share their learning with others in the organization who did not get to attend the same training.

- Provision of tips on how to develop implementation teams comprised of people who attended different trainings to piece together what they learned to develop a systematic strategy for implementation would be useful for the ACs and YDRCs.

Follow On:

- Ensure people in key roles attend the capacity building topics most relevant to their position.

- Provide follow-up individualized technical assistance to help ACs and YDRCs implement their key learning from capacity building training to ensure that effective organizational systems are developed and utilized by each participating organization. Utilize the services of a firm with specialized experience in both youth club network and youth program/curriculum development.

- Sequence training topics and follow-up TA to provide a logical progression for implementation and continuous improvement. Also, break trainings down into smaller chunks spread over a slightly longer time period to help ensure greater comprehension and application of the content.

- Add capacity building training on volunteer management including planning of volunteer assignments and job descriptions, recruitment, training, volunteer supervision skills, and recognition. The Mazaya courses in Management Skills or Human Resource Management may already include a volunteer-specific component. However, as the ACs are largely run by the elected volunteer board members and other community volunteers, this is such a critical topic for effective club operations it warrants offering specialized training and technical assistance.

- In order to strengthen the networks of YDRCs and their clubs, specialized training and technical assistance on organizational network development would be very beneficial including defining new ways to engage, sharing resources, conducting joint service projects, etc.

- It would be beneficial to broaden the discussion of "sustainability" for the YDRCs and ACs beyond "fundraising" to include not only international donor grants and income generation activities, but also the solicitation and "care and feeding" of private sector and other NGO partnerships, volunteer recruitment and utilization, and community outreach. Sustainability of the YDRCs and ACs will require intentional, linked efforts in all of these areas in addition to developing a greater sense of ownership for youth development programming among the participating organizations.

- USAID may wish to focus their follow-on efforts on centers and clubs that have made greater gains under the current project. In many cases, the evaluation team felt that success of these activities was largely dependent upon the commitment and initiative of the center or club management. In cases where the Executive Director or Board Chair was naturally more dynamic, and took the initiative to seek out other donors and encourage a wider variety of activities without USAID funding or guidance, the organization had clearly benefitted from such leadership. The most successful clubs visited during the evaluation had already found ways to offer a wider variety of services, such as women's health programs, activities for younger children, and additional youth activities (even including sports activities) that were not part of the Ruwwad model.

> *I see Ruwwad, in cooperation with the Clubs, the MoYS and USAID, as four sides of a square. Inside the square are the activities we offer, and outside the square are the people that they don't want us to work with [non-youth beneficiaries and members interested in non-Ruwwad activities]. But we are all dependent yet equal in our responsibilities to develop the clubs and choose its activities. We need to take all perspectives into account.*
>
> -- Member of the Al Bireh YDRC Board of Directors

Component Two – Youth Development, Leadership and Community Participation Training

Ruwwad's youth development programming includes three primary programs:

1. **Youth empowerment** (Leadership and Community Engagement Training and youth-led community service initiatives);
2. **Internship programs**; and
3. **ICT training** (Intel Clubhouses, MyTecC, Microsoft Unlimited Potential, Intel Learn Programs – Technology and Community and Technology and Work) and the Palestinian Youth Portal.

Additional youth development programming is provided through a series of sub-grants which will be discussed in more detail in the section on Component Four.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Ruwwad's youth empowerment programming consists of two main activities: the Leadership and Community Engagement Training and youth-led community service initiatives. The Leadership and Community Engagement Training (formerly called 30/30) was initially created to seeks to enhance youth leadership skills and civic engagement through workshops followed by planning and implementing service projects to benefit local communities. The original concept was 30 youth (roughly 10 from each of the three areas of the West Bank) would participating in the intensive training program offered centrally by Ruwwad staff and youth trainers at a hotel in Ramallah followed by roughly 26 days of community service project development and implementation.

Each YDRC submits CVs from youth engaged at the center and its network of ACs for consideration. Field coordinators also recruit potential participants from local universities, cafes, and other youth "hangouts." The criteria for selection include being Palestinian age 18 to 28, having a passion to do something, and volunteer history. Applicants are rated and the top ones selected. Recent trainings have included between 21-25 youth participants per cycle. The program has a waiting list of 30-40 youth.

Currently, the training, which has been extended from four to five days, includes the following sessions:

- Leadership and Team Building   (2.5 hours)

- Community Mobilization/Advocacy   (2.5 hours)
- ICT for Community Development   (1.5 hours)
- Service Learning   (2 hours 20 minutes)
- Budget Creation   (40 minutes)
- Employability Skills   (1 hour 50 minutes)
- Internship Program Orientation   (30 minutes)
- Media and Communications   (2.75 hours)
- Community Service Initiative Planning   (11.5 hours)

Participants take a pre- and post-test to determine the effect of the training on their leadership skills and to gauge their response to the trainers and workshop content.

Woven into the training is time for youth to create plans for community service initiatives that address pressing community issues. A panel of judges then chooses one initiative for further development and implementation, led by the youth themselves with the support of Ruwwad and YDRC staff. The selected initiative receives approximately $5,000-10,000 in kind support. The youth engaged in the initiative are expected to raise any additional needed resources to implement the program themselves. As of Year Six Quarter One, 27 youth-led community service initiatives have been completed by trainees.

During the project, a total of 865 youth were enrolled in the civic leadership training (433 males and 432 females.) 88 percent (761 youth) completed the training. Though enrollment in the training was equally distributed by gender, completion was not. 94 percent of males that enrolled in the training completed the training. However, only 82 percent of females completed it.

For the last two five-day trainings – the 29th (January 12-16, 2010) and 30th (February 9-13, 2011) – 24 participants were enrolled in each cycle: eleven males and 13 females.

In the 29th training, the participant characteristics were roughly similar. More participants were enrolled from the Beit Al-Tifel (11) and Jabal An-Nar (8) YDRCs than Al Bireh (4). Again, the majority, ninety-two percent (22), had Bachelor's degrees; two had Diplomas. The age distribution for this cycle was somewhat different with only two younger youth age 17-20. Twelve were 21-23 years of age and nine were 24 or older.

In the 30th training (which was the last given under the Ruwwad Project), of the 24 participants, eight were from the Beit Al-Tifel YDRC, 12 from the Jabal An Nar YDRC, 2 from the Al Bireh YDRC,

and two were unaffiliated. Eighty-eight percent (21) had Bachelor's degrees. Three had Diplomas. Nine of the participants were between 17 and 20 years old, ten were 21-23 and five were 24 or older.

The Year Five Fourth Quarter Report stated that 19 youth in the July 2010 training reported a 12% improvement rate in their leadership skills and, in August 2010, 22 youth reported a 26 percent improvement. Specifics on what leadership skills improved and by how much were not provided.

Current community service initiatives still underway are as follows.

•   **Bara'em**: The youth leaders will establish an interactive website for informal education and sharing among school children between the ages of 6 and 17.

•   **Health First**: This initiative consists of 12 village health days to promote health awareness in communities with little or no local access to medical care. The youth leaders, most of whom are medical students, set up roving clinics to offer basic medical exams and diet advice to community members in collaboration with local medical professionals and volunteers.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

•   Youth that the evaluation team interviewed who had participated in the leadership training, expressed their enthusiasm for having had the opportunity to participate. For them, it was their first time to do an intensive multiday training focused on leadership, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills development.

> *The Leadership training was a great experience. As a former trainer, you can see the influence it has on youth's attitudes and behaviors. This is one of the biggest achievements of Ruwwad.*
>
> -- YDRC Executive Director in Bireh

•   A strength of the leadership training was that it brought together youth from all areas of the West Bank – allowing them to get to know each other and bridge regional differences.

•   Another strength of leadership training was the use of youth trainers for the intensive, activity-oriented program.

•   Youth learned new skills in how to develop community service projects to benefit their local communities.

•   A number of "graduates" were found volunteering at either an YDRC or AC during the evaluation site visits and interviews.   However, Ruwwad does not routinely follow-up with the

youth "graduates" of the leadership program to assess the longer term impact of their participation or to offer additional opportunities to stay involved in their youth development programming.

- An Emerging Leaders program was planned to provide advanced leadership training for youth who had completed the basic course. However, it was cancelled in Year Five, Quarter 3. "EDC cancelled the EL program due to a need to narrow Ruwwad's focus and successfully implement other aspects of the program." One result of cancelling this offering is that currently, once youth complete the basic leadership training and/or participate in a community service initiative, there is no clear pathway for further involvement with the YDRC or AC designed to deepen their sense of civic engagement and/or volunteerism.

- Youth do not need to be vetted to participate in the leadership training. However, the youth-led initiatives (which generally last about three months each) currently must undergo the vetting process. It was reported that due to delays in securing the required approvals, many youth lost interest in participating so did not stay involved.

- In addition, it is important to note that those who are rejected during the vetting process generally take away a negative view of the experience. While Ruwwad staff indicated that out of about 20,000 vetted, only about 2-3% did not receive approval.

- The resources allocated for in kind resource "prizes" for youth-led initiatives appear not to have increased the number of small scale service projects undertaken by participating youth to address local needs. The trend was to fund larger scale initiatives that would be hard to implement without USAID funding. Youth did not seem empowered to transfer their learning and project ideas into action, if they did not receive the in kind support. Instead of creatively generating ways to secure the needed resources from the community, many of the service project ideas were dropped. Unfortunately, unless the youth were already active in their communities, the training on service project development appears to have made little impact on getting youth more engaged to solve community problems on an ongoing basis using the spirit of volunteerism and civic engagement.

- Youth Serving Palestine does not appear to have been institutionalized as a program. At times it appears to be used as an umbrella title for the empowerment activities. However, it is unclear what its goals are at this point in the project. It was not mentioned in any of the YDRC or AC interviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- None as funding has been fully expended.

Follow On:

- Continue the youth empowerment/leadership training. However, it would be useful to offer the basic training at the YDRC level to cut costs and make it more accessible to a broader spectrum of youth instead of having it be centrally provided in Ramallah by Ruwwad trainers.

- Offer advanced youth empowerment/leadership training – to reinforce skills learned during the basics course, provide additional skills development and opportunities for hands on application. Perhaps such advanced training could be done centrally to allow for cross-regional interaction and understanding.

- Add more emphasis on how to develop smaller scale service projects that require fewer resources to implement but which would still benefit neighborhoods and local communities. This could help develop an even greater sense among youth that they are part of the solution to local social issues.

- Develop a systematic plan for follow-up with youth who have participated in the leadership basics course to encourage their ongoing participation in other offered YDRC or AC activities or to serve as youth leaders.

- USAID may wish to identify strategies for engaging youth of all ages in selected activities that do not require vetting, to eliminate the potential for negative feelings about the U.S. and the YDRC or AC.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

The internship activity within the youth development component has two distinct modes of implementation.   First, Ruwwad provides internship opportunities within the structure of the Ruwwad organization, either in the YDRCs or the Ruwwad home office in Ramallah. Second, the Ruwwad project facilitates the placement of interns at public and private sector organizations throughout Palestine.   In most cases, the internships are three months in duration, although in some cases they have been as short as one month long. While interns have been placed with a range of external

organizations, the majority of the internships took place within the organizational structure of Ruwwad. The following section discusses both types of internship opportunities in more detail.

Ruwwad/YDRC Interns

Internships at the YDRCs (not including the Media Center internships, which are discussed below) are offered for ICT and logistics/support positions. While exact numbers of beneficiaries are not yet available, a review of the Quarterly Reports submitted by Ruwwad since 2008 reveals at least 65 youth have participated in internships through the YDRCs.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Demographic characteristics of the YDRC interns gathered from the PMEP were not available, but observations of the individuals working in the computer labs during the site visits suggested a mix of young men and women in their early twenties. Interviews with YDRC staff supported these observations: a Youth Coordinator described the interns as recent university graduates who have difficulty finding jobs, often from marginalized communities in surrounding villages.

- Interviews with Center staff and interns revealed that interns hired through the Ruwwad program generally have majored in a field relevant to their internship, but lack the necessary experience and professional skills to transition successfully into the workforce.

- All of the interns interviewed for this study reported that these skills had grown much stronger as a result of their internship experience and YDRC staff and other stakeholders reported that many of the interns had found permanent jobs as a result of this enhanced capacity. The YDRC computer labs enable young computer specialists to gain hands-on ICT experience, the psycho-social unit hones the developing skills of budding counselors, and the training activities and tutoring offer aspiring teachers an opportunity practice their skills in a classroom.

- However, during some of the site visits, interns appeared to be less engaged in their tasks, and center resources such as computer labs and counseling centers were closed at the time of the visit. As expected, success of the internship experience in building youth capacity appears heavily dependent upon the attitude and motivation of the individual intern to make the most of their experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Establish open hours at the computer labs and counseling centers to be staffed by the existing intern corps, during which youth can freely take advantage of a vast array of services available at the centers. This is already taking place within the Nablus YDRC had as been very successful, according to center staff, in building the capacity of the interns who have academic training within areas such as ICT and psycho-social counseling, but have not had an opportunity to apply those skills in the real world. This strategy will not only build the centers' reputation within the local community, it will also encourage more comprehensive engagement of the interns and build their capacity by providing more activities available for youth at the centers. It could also leverage existing infrastructure and computer resources if these facilities are made available to members of the wider community.

Follow On:

- The YDRC management staff did not feel that the Ruwwad internships will be sustainable after the life of the project, as centers do not have independent funds to support the salaries currently paid by EDC/USAID. While this was not a direct goal of the Ruwwad program, the centers' capacity to provide a variety of high-quality youth programs will likely be diminished if their intern-level staffing corps is diminished. While some of the interns are sufficiently engaged and committed to the centers to continue working with them on a volunteer basis, the majority of the interns will likely seek alternative employment if they are not paid for their time.

- Given this situation, the internship sub-component would either have to be continued under any follow-on activities, or the staffing structure of the YDRCs will have to be restructured. The absence of this level of staffing will represent a management challenge for the ICT labs, and media and counseling centers. This may also affect centers' ability to continue to provide the wide range of activities necessary to realize the YDRC vision. Alternative funding sources from community-based investors to offer some small salary to interns may leverage USAID's investment and enable a smaller number of interns to be employed.

- USAID may wish to explore how unpaid YDRC internships would be received by the community. Based on the comments detailed above, which were made by a variety of respondents during the data collection period, this may pose a great challenge for follow-on

work, as the perception of the community is that USAID-funded activities enjoy a relatively-endless source of financial support.

- If YDRC-based internships are continued as part of any follow-on activities, such as the new YED program, a longitudinal tracking system should be implemented in order to enable better understanding and reporting of long-term employability outcomes for internship participants.

Public and Private Sector Interns

In addition to the internships offered within Ruwwad, a number of individuals were placed with external public- and private-sector organizations in the local community.   These have included the Ministries of Interior, Information, and Youth and Sports, other USAID-sponsored projects such as the PA Capacity Building project (PACE) and the Palestinian Health Sector Reform and Development/Flagship project, as well as private organizations such as the European Palestinian Chamber of Commerce, the Palestinian Investment Conference (PIC) and ICAN. Overall, the external internship sub-component focuses on promoting Palestinian youth's employability skills, including technical skills and soft skills such as communication, presentation and time management. As one internship provider observed: "One of the major problems youth in the region face is that they don't know how to present themselves, their ideas and message. This is not learned from a textbook in a classroom … that is why I focused on hiring fresh graduates, to help them start developing their skills."

> *The most successful Ruwwad component has been the internships. It has achieved so much in helping youth to find real jobs, to improve their skills, gain experience and apply what they learned in the university.*
> -- YDRC Youth Coordinator in Nablus

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Based on conversations with internship providers and participants, the external internship experience was successful in building participants' work-readiness skills and facilitating their transition from university students to productive members of the Palestinian labor force.

- External internship providers found the process of establishing a relationship with Ruwwad and selecting the intern to be smooth and efficient. There were no reported issues with the selection process and no reported delays in beginning to work with the interns beyond a reasonable organization timeframe.

- The external internship providers reported the quality of the interns was very good. Although the young men and women who participated in the internships were in need of professional development at the start of the activity, this was expected and in fact, is why these internships are so needed. The providers reported they had invested significant level of effort into developing these skills and felt the participants had made remarkable progress during the internship experience.

- Internship providers reported that they had hired a few of the participants as permanent staff after the internship was completed. However, they also reported that many of the other interns who were not hired at the internship provider had found full-time jobs with other organizations as a result of the skills and knowledge they had developed through the internship experience.

- The internships also expanded the capacity of the provider organizations: in some cases, the providers lacked the capital to employ full-time staff and the internship program enabled them to expand their reach. In other cases, such as with USAID-funded activities, interns provided the human resources needed to implement activities without going through official approval channels to access more permanent staffing resources.

- All of the internship providers interviewed reported that they would be willing and eager to work with Ruwwad and USAID interns again in the future.

> *A good percentage of Ruwwad interns are hired by the organization they intern with – this is the legacy of Ruwwad because this experience has really changed lives. I personally know tens of people who this happened for. Ruwwad should follow up individually and track these people to tell their story of how the program has impacted them two years later.*
>
> -- Internship provider and former Ruwwad intern

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The private-sector internship sub-component has ended for the current Ruwwad project cycle. However, given the positive feedback that was gathered during this evaluation, the internship component was a very successful and beneficial activity. Therefore, the research team recommends that internships facilitated through USAID be continued. As the new YED program includes an internship component, this would be a natural fit for continuing

relationships with internship providers that were previously established through Ruwwad, as well as establishing relationships with a broader array of public- and private-sector partners.

- Most of the Ruwwad external internships have focused on building business- and administrative-related skills, such as marketing, business development, presentation and management skills. Future internships could focus on promoting professional development for vocational occupations, which are badly needed in the Palestinian labor market and poorly developed in most existing vocational training programs in Palestine.

- As with the YDRC internships, a longitudinal tracking system should be implemented in order to enable better understanding and reporting of long-term employability outcomes for internship participants.

ICT TRAINING

Ruwwad's ICT youth programming is made possible through partnerships with several multinational IT companies (Cisco, Intel and Microsoft). These programs are implemented in the computer labs at the YDRCs and ACs and are run by the YDRC ICT Coordinators and trained ICT interns. Ruwwad offers four main ICT trainings targeting different age groups of youth, as well as community members: MyTecC, Microsoft's Unlimited Potential, Intel Learn Technology and Community, and Intel Learn Technology and Work. Ruwwad ICT interns receive TOT training in the offered programs and then are assigned to the labs at a YDRC or AC to conduct the ICT trainings. Participating youth must be vetted before they can participate. "These programs not only teach basic computer skills but also critical thinking and teamwork," said one former ICT Coordinator.

Current ICT programs include the following elements:

MyTecC, the Mediterranean Youth Technology Club, is a project provided through a partnership between UNDP's Information and Communication Technology for Development in Arab Region (ICTDAR), Teachers Without Borders, and Cisco designed to bridge the digital divide and promote learning about other regions in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Through MyTecC, youth share their everyday life and experiences through the internet with youth from other regions and then develop presentations for their local peers about what they learned. According to the Quarterly Report, MyTecC was launched at the YDRCs in Year Four Quarter One. Ruwwad provided ITC data indicates that through March 2011, five MyTecC classes (Beit Al-Tifel YDRC, Jabal Nar YDRC, Al Bireh YDRC, Tarqumia AC and Tel AC) were held with a total of 82 youth participants.

Microsoft Unlimited Potential is a program that combines basic computer literacy, ICT knowledge, and personalized business development skills. These classes are geared toward teenagers and have also been offered to housewives/stay-at-home mothers. Through March 2011, 18 Microsoft UP classes have been offered at 15 different ACs to a total of 195 students. Five cycles or a total of 14 classes have been offered at the three YDRCs to 148 total students.

Intel Learn is an after-school program designed to teach technological literacy, problem solving, and collaboration skills needed for today's knowledge economy. Ruwwad is currently implementing both the Technology and Community course (for 9-12 year olds) and the Technology at Work course (for 9-14 year olds). Technology and Community is a 30 hour course that covers such topics as Computer fundamentals, desktop properties, software overviews of Paint, draw, word processing, PowerPoint, and Excel as well as how to create projects such as flyers, personal cards and business cards, calendars, articles, and opinion polls. Technology and Work is a second 30-hour course that covers such software programs as Microsoft Word and Excel and how to create projects such as certificate design, newsletter design, opinion polls, header graphics, interactive charts, public service announcements, logos, financial plans, and brochures. To date, the three YDRCs have offered 36 classes of Technology and Community to 632 total students and 8 classes of Technology and Work to 146 students. Seventeen ACs have provided 48 classes in Technology and Community to 807 students and eleven ACs have provided 18 classes in Technology and Work to 313 students.

In addition, **Intel Clubhouses** (recently completed at the Al Bireh and Beit Al Tifel YDRCs) employ new technologies to engage youth in interactive ways of learning and explore the connections between youth and their peers/communities. Targeting youth between the ages of 10 and 18, Clubhouse activities have begun at both YDRCs.   Numbers of participating youth were not provided.

In addition to these programs, Ruwwad is also developing an online **Palestinian Youth Portal** (www.shababgate.ps). The Portal will provide access to digital libraries, online communities, training materials including English language training, and other digital resources. It includes personal pages for young people where they can create blogs, communicate with other members, and exchange and access information on employment opportunities and livelihood skills.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Full-scale implementation of ICT training, especially in AC labs, and Intel Clubhouses housed at YDRCs was delayed to procurement waiver issues which have now been rectified.

- Provision of computer labs and ICT training are viewed as a strong motivator for AC engagement in the Ruwwad Project. AC board members

- Computer labs are only in use during course times. No AC visited had "open lab" time for youth to practice and further develop their computer skills.

- Many computer labs were recently completed and hardware installed – covers were still on keyboards and monitors in many cases.

- Computer training has been a way for females to get engaged at clubs that in the past were primarily geared to male sport activities.

- For example, the Women's Committee in Sabastia opens their ICT classes up to males and females of all ages and has helped strengthen their reputation in the community.

- The partnership between Ruwwad and well-known corporate brands (Cisco, Intel, Microsoft) has also raised the perceived value of the ICT training provided.

- The Intel courses offer broad exposure to a range of useful software tools and their application in every day and work life. However, some time allocations to various tools make it difficult for the student to really start to become proficient without additional practice. For example, in the Intel courses only 30 minutes total is dedicated to learning Microsoft Word.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Offer supervised open lab time so that youth can use the computers to practice what they have learned in ICT trainings and/or have the opportunity to apply career counseling received by developing resumes, business cards, etc. for their job searches.
- Provide multinational corporate sponsors regular updates on how their support has assisted the program in reaching its goals (including specific numbers of youth served, etc.) to express appreciation, help them understand the importance of their support, and encourage deeper, long lasting partnerships. Perhaps, have youth write thank you letters describing what they have learned and how it will benefit them to send along, as well.

> *Parents and community members want to come to the Center to learn computers. They are asking us for more of these trainings and not just for the benefit of youth.*
>
> -- Member of the Al Bireh YDRC Board of Directors

INVOLVING YOUNG WOMEN

While all of the YDRCs and ACs visited during the field visits reported that they had made a concerted effort to include young women in their programs. In some locations, this effort was simply ensuring an equal gender balance among program participants, but in other places, innovative approaches to include young women or specific activities had been developed for female participants. Two ACs reported that they had girls' soccer games or teams. Jabl an-Nar had a program that promoted dialogue between girls and their mothers about issues of sexual and reproductive health. Otherwise, most of the clubs offered more "traditional" activities for young women such as *debke*, English language training,

Overall, most of the centers and clubs expressed a need for young women in rural areas to have recreational facilities – especially in the south. Women in rural areas lack facilities and resources for recreational, exercise and personal development activities.

There are other local women's clubs that could also be engaged as partners and/or program providers. The Sabastia Women's Committee had a series of activities to promote women's economic development. The club worked with the women to build their capacity in areas that could generate income for them within the existing environment. The women produce handicrafts to sell to tourists, products such as soap that can be used in the guest house located at the club, and make food to feed the guests and passing visitors.

These types of programs could be expanded to other areas, and adapted to the local context as appropriate. In addition, there are other local women's clubs that could be engaged as partners and/or program providers, such as the Zaan Center for Women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Offer a wider variety of programs for women, children – if it is to be an indispensible resource for the community, it needs to reach a wider audience.

> *Before we built the Center, it was a small club and we didn't see girls visiting or the genders mixing and working together. It was male-dominated. But now this change is happening … Ten years ago, girls couldn't play football. Now they play here and they boys can watch and cheer them on.*
>
> -- Member of the Al Bireh YDRC Board of Directors

- Seek out a wider array of partners who can cater to female audiences, either through established women's centers, or through clubs that are interested in expanding their offerings to young women in their communities.

Component Three – YDRC Media Centers

The YDRC Media Centers offer a hands-on opportunity for young people who have completed media-focused undergraduate degrees to further their skills development and preparation for careers in the media industry. Young women and men who participate in Ruwwad's media center component complete a four-day training, which is hosted at the YDRCs, followed by a three-month internship program completed either at the YDRC Media Center or with external media groups. These have included local television stations such as Wattan TV, Nablus TV and Gama TV, as well as radio stations such as Radio Amwaj and Raya FM Radio, and newspaper outlets like Maan News Agency and Al Ayam newspaper.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- During the course of this evaluation, the research team visited the Media Centers in each of the three YDRCs in order to gain a fuller appreciation for the types of facilities offered. Each Media Center provided computer workstations (both Apple- and Windows-based systems), as well as a variety of audio and video production equipment necessary to produce a wide range of media products. At the Nablus YDRC, they allow the Arab-American University students to use their facilities for media and IT trainings.

- The media spots and advertisements produced by the media center interns were very impressive, professional-quality productions. These included posters and print advertising for activities housed at the YDRCs, such as community service initiatives and English-language trainings, as well as revenue-generating video spots and advertisements for organizations such as AMIDEAST and Save the Children.

- In YDRCs where the Media Centers had developed posters featuring in-house activities, the products enlivened the Center's atmosphere and provided visually-engaging announcements that had great potential to draw in additional participants. This strategy could be expanded, as it represents an effective strategy for engaging youth who may visit the Center for sports- and scout-related activities but who might be drawn into Ruwwad activities through these advertisements.

- The Ruwwad program employed a majority of the media interns through the YDRC Media Centers. Based on information reported in the Ruwwad Quarterly Reports, the research team estimates that more than 150 young women and men have been trained in media-related skills through the YDRCs. This level of engagement represents not only a significant opportunity for the media center interns to work within their field; it also supplies the YDRCs with a steady source of affordably-priced human resources through which to develop media-focused activities.

- A smaller number of interns were placed at external media organizations within the YDRCs (specific numbers were not available, the research team estimates that around 20 interns have been placed at external media outlets). The research team was not able to identify these individuals for one-on-one interviews; thus, we are unable at this time to offer specific insights into the quality of the external media internships as opposed to those undertaken at the YDRCs.

- The youth beneficiaries who were interviewed as a part of this field research were all current media center interns at the YDRCs. All of these respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the training they had received. Respondents clearly appreciated the depth of the training they received on a variety of skills related to media production, and reported that their Ruwwad training had enabled them to build skills they had not learned in the university but which they felt would be very useful in expanding their employability skills.

- The skill that the respondents found most valuable from the training was the production and editing of video "spots," which the university media programs reportedly do not offer. They also appreciated trainings on specific equipment such as cameras and video cameras. The respondents also requested graphic design skills, specifically training on Photoshop, and in radio production.

- All of the media center participants we interviewed expressed views that were variations on the quote included below. The respondents were unanimous in their assessment of the media training, reporting that the 4-day training taught them new skills very quickly, and the subsequent internship opportunity complemented this experience by providing a hands-on opportunity to apply their new skills.

- "Graduates" of YDRC media training were eligible to apply for advanced media training through Tawasul. Further details on the Tawasul training are included in Component Four – Sub-grants.

- While Media Center training was well received by participants, it is unclear how many "graduates" have actually gone on to secure careers in the media as a result of their training. Several great success stories were shared during interviews but these seem to represent a relatively small percentage of those trained.

> *I learned more information about media fields in the 4-day [Ruwwad] training than I did in the whole four years of my Bachelor's degree in the local university.*
>
> -- Various Media Center trainees and interns

In addition to collecting qualitative data from Media Center stakeholders during the data collection phase of this evaluation, the research team also reviewed the Evaluation Reports produced by Ruwwad as a result of the data they had collected pre- and post-training. These included summaries for the two most recent cycles of the training and internships, which cover a period from June, 2010 – January, 2011. While these data provide only a snapshot of the types of beneficiaries being reached by the Media Center component and a brief analysis of how effective the internships have been, they indicate that young men and young women are participating in the Media Center component in roughly equal numbers (23 males and 21 females completed the two most-recent training cycles; 22 males and 25 females completed media-center internships during this same period). Participants in both the trainings and the internships were split evenly between the three YDRCs, about two-thirds of whom had Bachelor's degrees and one-third held Diplomas, and most of whom were between the ages of 21 – 23 years.

The PMEP data for the internships component was collected from both interns and internship providers at three phases during the internship: after one month, after two months, and at the end of the three-month internship. Both types of stakeholders were asked to assess the interns' development on twelve different work-related skills, including: quality of work, quantity of work, ability to take initiative, knowledge of work, problem solving/decision making, judgment, time management, planning and organizational skills, communication, personal skills, responsibility, and work skills. According to the summary reports, these measures indicate overall development of interns' technical and work-readiness skills, though the summary approach did not enable the research team to identify which specific skills were most often enhanced through the internship experience.

Despite the overall trend towards development, the summary reports suggest that the Beit Al Tifel Media Center has not had as much success in developing participants' skills as the other two YDRCs have had. For Cycle 10, both the interns and the internship providers reported that participants' skills

had decreased in eight of the twelve categories. While the Cycle 10 report concludes that this outcome must be an outlier, the Cycle 9 report also indicates that outcomes for the Beit Al Tifel MC, "when converted to percentage of knowledge," were 60 – 80 percent, whereas the other two YDRCs' percentages were mostly within the 80 – 90 percent range. This trend may also be addressed by the Beit Al Tifel's forthcoming move to their new center, and there was no apparent variation in reported satisfaction levels among the MC intern respondents between the three centers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Encourage the YDRCs to explore further revenue-generating activities that could be undertaken by the Media Centers in the few months remaining on the current project lifecycle.

- Include revenue-generating media spots in forthcoming sustainability plans and explore their potential expansion under any follow-on activities by contacting other potential consumers within USAID's partner network and assessing their interest levels.

- Utilize the capacity of the media center to produce Arabic-language tools that foster a sense of ownership and pride in the centers, such as newsletters, posters of past activities and initiatives, as well as schedules of upcoming activities. This will simultaneously build the capacity of the media center interns to develop these materials, show sensitivity to the local culture and promote participation among YDRC members who are not already participating in Ruwwad activities.

Follow On:

- Continue offering MC internships, if possible, under any follow-on activities. This is a win-win scenario for USAID, as the interns build their capacity and experience, and the YDRCs can utilize this capacity to generate needed revenue and enhance the appearance of the centers with products the media centers produce.

Component Four – Sub-grants to Support YDRC Programming

The Ruwwad sub-grants component aims to build the programming capacity of the YDRCs and ACs through providing sub-grants to local and international organizations with different specialties. The intention is that programs and partnerships are created that can continue past the end of the Ruwwad project. Sub-grants for capacity building have been discussed as part of Component One.

Ruwwad has been issuing sub-grants centered on different themes since 2006, though no information was provided to the evaluation team about the earlier grants. Current sub-grants provide programming in service learning, environmental education, creative arts, business incubation, and English language training. Previous sub-grants include programs on psychosocial and career counseling, media, technology and science, and sports. Also planned for the final year of the Ruwwad project is limited youth programming through capacity-building training in Gaza and the creation of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to foster more effective and timely communication between the local networks of YDRCs and ACs.

Current Sub-grants

Current sub-grantees and their programs include the following.

The English Language Training Program, implemented by AMIDEAST, aims to build the capacity of the YDRCs and ACs in delivering English language training to strengthen youth's language skills for entering the job market. AMIDEAST provided recent English language graduates with Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) training. These graduates will continue on to teach two cycles of 15-week courses at the YDRCs for an estimated 900 participants, specifically targeting high school and university students, students about to enter the workforce, as well as working youth. English-language classes are offered at a variety of levels, from beginners to the advanced-level "Get Ready for Business" course. The courses are offered free of charge, but participants must purchase the course materials, which cost about NIS 100 - 200, or $25 - 50 USD.

According to key stakeholders, including the AMIDEAST staff, YDRC staff, and course participants, the English language training sub-grant has been very successful overall. The training-of-trainers model has built the capacity of those who deliver the course materials, and those who participated in the course reported that their English had improved greatly over the 15-week training. There was some

concern over the requirement that students purchase their own books – some respondents felt that this financial burden prohibited some potential students from participating. However, other stakeholders maintained that offering this course entirely free of charge would promote a sense that USAID projects pay for everything, and that requiring students to contribute some financial investment into the valuable training course helped to promote a sense of responsibility among the participants. In addition, according to the AMIDEAST staff, they worked with the YDRCs to facilitate a relationship between the YDRCs and the textbook provider, MacMillan that built the Centers' capacity to distribute textbooks. The AMIDEAST representative felt that this experience built the Centers' capacity to negotiate these arrangements, which could generate future revenue for the YDRCs.

The AMIDEAST sub-grant has also started to operate a program in Gaza, though this has only been implemented since February 2011. Due to the extremely short timeframe remaining on the project before it ends in September, AMIDEAST is not doing English-language training in Gaza, as the English language course participants must be vetted in order to participate in a 15-week course and there is not sufficient time to complete this process. Therefore, the Gaza activities will include: 3-day leadership and community engagement trainings, a 2-day project management training, and ICT trainings. As these activities are only just beginning, their impact could not be examined during the timeframe of this evaluation.

The Learn and Serve Palestine Project, implemented by Al Mawrid Teacher Development Center, targets the southern Hebron region with the goal of creating service learning units at six area clubs. Al Mawrid has been training teachers since 1992 and has had a special focus on education for Palestinian youth through service learning. Initially, Al Mawrid did not see any connection between Ruwwad and their work but after attending an outreach workshop, they decided to submit a proposal for a sub-grant. Al Mawrid trained 34 unemployed recent graduates or university seniors (18-25 years old) who wanted to have careers in education in service learning theory and techniques, how to use service learning in remedial education, and life and leadership skills using experiential education. The six trained youth teams were each assigned to work with roughly 20 students in need to remedial assistance to develop community projects to be carried out on Saturdays using a service learning approach. Projects have included developing a community garden and creating a town map of Tarqumia, "The children love to participate – they wake up early to prepare themselves so they can arrive early. The mothers are also very happy and told me they feel and see changes in their daughters and children. The volunteers are all very committed to service learning."

Based on findings, project has been win-win-win-win. The service learning trained youth leaders have learned new skills in education, service project development and management, and leadership. The participating students have learned math, writing, and other educational skills needed to be successful in school. Communities have benefited from the projects undertaken by the teams. Al Mawrid as an organization has also benefited from working with Ruwwad on this sub-grant. "It was our first time working with new graduates and unemployed youth as opposed to teachers and it was very successful. For them, it was the first time they understood how to apply their theoretical coursework. In addition, our reputation for our training approaches has been enhanced and we have been approached by a head teacher that now wants to offer such training in their school."

The primary concern of Al Mawrid is that although the projects are working well, they have no direct contact with the clubs. They had expected when going to a participating club that there would be staff "to care about the project". "Clubs have been absent from the picture." "Not only are they not connected, no one was interested or asked how do we get benefit from this?" Al Mawrid staff reported that they had provided this feedback to Ruwwad one month into the sub-grant in order to help strengthen the program. Specifically, they suggest that in the future, clubs need to develop proposals to Ruwwad to be selected to participate in this service learning program. "Clubs need to feel it is their work to help the community." "The problem is in the clubs themselves."

The LEGO Robotics Laboratories Project, implemented by the Jubilee Center for Excellence in Education/King Hussein Foundation, aims to develop youth's interest and skills in the fields of science and technology. In order to reach this aim, LEGO robotics laboratories have recently been established at the YDRCs, each with the capacity to train 30 youth participants at a time by establishing a training-of-trainers model where volunteer trainers are selected in cooperation with Ruwwad.

The LEGO Robotics sub-grant is being implemented through ten activities, which include: (1) signing the agreement and selecting the employees; (2) selecting the coaches; (3) furnishing the Robotics labs in the YDRCs; (4) conducting the first training-of-trainers sessions and selecting the youth participants; (5) carrying out the first advanced training-of-trainers session; (6) conducting the first youth training; (7) providing the second advanced training-of-trainers session; (8) selecting and training the youth participants in preparation for the local FLN competition; (9) organizing the local FLN competition in Palestine; and (10) potentially continuing to compete in the international FLN competition. These FLN competitions allow students to compete against other youth locally, regionally and internationally. At the time of this evaluation, the sub-grantee had completed four of the ten activities, and planned to complete the entire process by the end of the Ruwwad project in September, 2011.

By the end of the sub-grant, the Jubilee Center plans to have established three well-equipped robotics labs including training packets and materials to continue the activity, trained six robotics volunteer teachers and 90 students, and prepared nine league teams for competition. The Jubilee Center representative felt that this would be sufficient investment for the YDRCs to continue the LEGO Robotics trainings and competitions under their own initiative.

PREVIOUS SUB-GRANTS

The sub-grants that have been completed under Ruwwad include the following projects:

The Youth Access Media Project, implemented by Tawasul, focused on strengthening youth participation in public debate using the platform of television. Tawasul contracted with Al-Quds Educational TV to produce a 16 episode television program to be broadcasted throughout the West Bank and via phone to Gaza on current topics relevant to youth. As part of their contract, Al Quds TV also provided 10 internships and advanced media training for Ruwwad participants. Interns were selected from the pool of youth that had successfully completed a Ruwwad Media Center internship.

Each weekly episode was designed using a debate format on a youth-identified theme and included two guest experts who are decision-makers in the theme area as well as an audience of an additional 15-20 YDRC-identified youth who could make comments and ask questions. Youth were to be selected by each YDRC based on their interest in the specific theme of the week.

In order to identify topics of concern to youth, focus groups were conducted in each of the three regions. However, during initial episode development, many of the issues of greatest concern to youth could not be addressed due to Ruwwad and USAID policies including topics related to politics, religion, and unemployment. In addition, the debate was controlled and references made to the occupation or other controversial topics were deleted during editing.

Tawasul worked with all three YDRCs. "Success in this program depends on the youth. Hebron and Nablus had very engaged youth. In Hebron, we asked for 15 youth for a focus group and got 30. Until the end, we had no trainees from Al Bireh and often had no one come to be part of the audience either."

Staff at Tawasul also have experience working on direct grants from USAID. Comparatively, they found Ruwwad required a greater level of control and more reporting and approval of their day to day work than they had been used to. Also, Ruwwad staff were very involved in topic selection and production decisions including what color to make DVD labels.

The Young Pillars Career and Psychosocial Counseling Program, implemented by Ta'awon Youth Forum, focuses on addressing issues of youth unemployment and conflict trauma. Using a youth-to-youth approach, Ta'awon trained youth leaders to provide career and psychosocial counseling to youth through the YDRCs and various ACs. Ta'awon established career and psychosocial support units at each YDRC and held job fairs to help connect youth with other organizations and potential employers.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- From interviews and quarterly reports, the various sub-grants appear to produced a range of youth programming, much of which was innovative and exposed youth to new activities and skill building opportunities. However, what is unclear is how well these activities will be sustained by the YDRCs and ACs (where appropriate) after the end of any given sub-grant without ongoing support (financial, technical, and logistical) from Ruwwad/EDC.

- As many of the sub-grants have only recently been approved, the launch of much of the specialized and supplemental youth programming was significantly delayed. As much of the sub-grantee work is still underway, data was not available at this time to document the effectiveness and/or impact of most of the sub-grant programs.

- In the push to get the individual sub-grant activities implemented before the end of the Ruwwad project no cost extension, the clear sense of how each of these sub-grants help build the overall programming capacity of YDRCs has been blurred.

- Some sub-grant activities, such as the service learning project, are only happening in through one YDRC, almost like a pilot. While certain sub-grants include a training of trainers component, it is also unclear how lessons learned and any curricula developed will be replicated at the other YDRCs.

- Other sub-grants based on their design and planned activities appear not to be sustainable at this point. For example, the Tawasul media project was dependent on Ruwwad resources to contract the Al Quds TV station to implement the youth TV show, provide internships, and advanced media training. The language used by Ruwwad implies a "partnership" with the TV station. However, the reality is they were hired to provide their expertise. Without additional financial resources to continue to buy their services, it is highly unlikely these activities can be repeated.

- The programming areas provided through the sub-grants are very diverse, almost to the level of being scattered. Certain activities appear to only loosely fit under the umbrella of youth empowerment and perhaps dilute Ruwwad's impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate:

- Create an intentional strategy for replication and sustainability of current sub-grant programming. Where possible, ensure that sub-grantees develop curricula and "how to" manuals for program replication, if they are not already. Also, ensure that lessons learned and success tips are captured so they can be shared with other YDRCs and ACs that are interested in developing similar programming.

- Begin/continue a dialogue with existing local youth service providers with various expertise about how best to more systematically collaborate. Working together more closely moving forward could help each organization better achieve its mission. YDRCs and ACs now have excellent space and are building their reputation as community resource hubs – offering programs developed and run by other organizations could add value without significant additional expense while attracting new participants into the network.

Follow On:

- State explicitly the desired outcomes of youth empowerment programming and how each project-supported youth program contributes to the overall goals of the Ruwwad project.

- Revisit what youth programming is desired at the YDRC and AC levels. Only engage in sub-grants that build sustainable youth programming models.

- Focus on a smaller number of programs/activities to ensure they can be easily replicated at a high quality throughout the network. Instead of offering a wide variety of programs once, YDRCs and ACs should be focused on developing a core portfolio of ongoing, institutionalized programs at their location

- Without consistent management to oversee the programming at the ACs, it will be difficult for ACs to institutionalize new youth programs that appeal to a broader spectrum of their local communities. Perhaps, in the absence of club staff, in addition to internships for ICT at the AC

level, there could also be general management internships to assist with such tasks as program scheduling, logistics, volunteer management, and program implementation.

Potential Partners

While the short timeline of the evaluation did not allow a comprehensive survey of potential partners for youth offerings, the 2010 Youth Sector Assessment identified a variety of partners that could be utilized to expand center offerings. In addition, the new YED program has already established a network of locally-based partners to assist in the implementation of that program. The research team supports this networking approach to program implementation and believes it will alleviate some of the perceived transparency issues that have affected Ruwwad's implementation.

The research team did have an opportunity to speak with the multi-national partners Cisco and Intel. They, along with Microsoft, have made significant contributions of in-kind donations to expand the capacity of the YDRCs and ACs. Intel, with a USAID match, contributed more than 300 workstations distributed throughout the centers and clubs in the West Bank, including a computer, desk, chair, and connection to the Internet and printing capabilities. The actual installation was done by PICTI. They also contributed licenses to use the Intel Clubhouse name, and Intel curricula, including IntelLearn, which teaches the participants how to use the equipment.   Cisco established the MyTecC program, which teaches participants how to use technology and develop 21st century skills. It also encourages networking with other young leaders in countries both in the region and across the globe. This program is implemented through a training-of-trainers approach, which has developed some 25-30 Ruwwad interns as Cisco-certified instructors. They also worked with USAID to establish the virtual private network between the YDRCs and ACs.

Going forward, these types of public-private partnership models should be and are replicated with other USAID-funded youth programs, including the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program. These types of multi-national sponsorships not only strengthen the capacity of the YDRCs and ACs; they also raise the profile of the project and attract participants to the programs. Respondents reported that the name recognition of Intel and Microsoft attracts youth to the programs because they offer brand recognition and a reputation for quality.

> *Ruwwad is working with global institutions that are not offered by anyone else … Companies like Intel, Cisco and Microsoft are known brand names. They attract people's attention because they are associated with quality and a credible reputation.*
> -- YDRC Executive Director

While Intel reported that they were limiting their corporate philanthropy for the coming cycle, Cisco reported interest in continuing their relationship with USAID. The representatives from Cisco reported that they are working on the next generation of MyTecC, which will reflect the "new Arab reality" that has emerged with the popular revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries in the region. This updated version of MyTecC plans to renew the social networking component with less-structured approaches to facilitating dialogue between youth participants and more support for their ongoing conversations.

The Cisco team is also working in Palestine on the School Connectivity Program and saw some synergies between the connectivity issues they are addressing within SCP and the types of connectivity activities they are undertaking with the YDRCs and ACs. However, they also felt that the organizational structure of their activities within SCP offered more flexibility to work with various internet providers, whereas the structure of the Ruwwad program did not allow them as much room to negotiate and the internet provider with which they are working had different ideas about how the connectivity component should be run. This issue was compounded by what they saw as a controlling environment within the Ruwwad management structure and they felt the entire process had been "difficult to keep clear and transparent." They felt that there could be a "more streamlined mechanism through which USAID has more control to dictate" the structure of these partnerships and clarify roles and responsibilities of the various partnership members.

The Cisco team also raised an issue that was alluded to by other partner organizations and is an important concern for USAID to bear in mind when designing and implementing programs: They felt that the Ruwwad activities in which they had been involved were approached from the "Washington perspective." This approach attempts to import programs developed elsewhere into the Palestinian context, without making necessary adaptations that would reflect an understanding about how to work within the local industry environment in Palestine.

In addition to external public-private partnerships, there are other sectors within the USAID/West Bank Gaza Mission that have activities that cater to youth beneficiaries, which could be leveraged by EDO to expand the capacity of the YDRCs and expand their programmatic offerings. This could help to achieve the overarching goal of establishing these centers as indispensible resources to the community.

Within the health sector, USAID/WBG Health & Humanitarian Assistance (HHA) program has already worked with Ruwwad to provide health-related content for the Youth Portal and expressed a

willingness to provide additional materials in the future, such as information on smoking cessation, reproductive health and other educational materials. The HHA representative also felt that the YDRCs represented a potential forum for other health-related content that HHA could provide, such as joint health and job fairs that could attract youth to the Center by creating a warm and welcoming environment through which youth might be encouraged to view the center as a one-stop-shop for other development needs. In addition, HHA felt that there was potential to organize internships for Ruwwad participants within the health sector or provide job-shadowing activities within the health sector.

Other sectors also offer programs that have synergies with Ruwwad: the Local Democratic Reform project within the Democracy and Governance program offers training in leadership and governance to youth, including advanced media training courses that could be offered to Media Center participants, and their Peace and Reconciliation project offers a youth empowerment activity "Youth Voices for Community Action" which builds youth capacity for conflict resolution and a "Windows" activity that uses media to encourage dialogue between youth in Palestine and Israel. The Water Resources and Infrastructure program also has an Emergency Jobs activity to engage youth interns to assist in project implementation. Other activities, such as the PCAP and EWAS II programs, provide infrastructure support for youth center development that could potentially be leveraged for infrastructure development of the YDRCs and ACs. These types of synergies could be further enhanced through any follow-on activity to increase offerings to youth.

Monitoring & Evaluation Systems and Measuring Impact

While the research team has not had an opportunity to examine the PMEP data firsthand, our understanding of Ruwwad's system is that they capture the pre- and post-test data from the various in individual Excel spreadsheets for each component's program cycle. This strategy limits Ruwwad's ability to aggregate data longitudinally or programmatically. In addition, the evaluation team found little evidence that Ruwwad or the centers had developed a database of program participants, although one respondent who was a former intern in the Ruwwad office suggested that such a database exists.

There are two primary drawbacks of the existing Ruwwad reporting system: First, it makes it very difficult to determine outcomes for the program as a whole; second, it inhibits Ruwwad's ability to determine how many youth participate in more than one Ruwwad activity, or to measure a multiplier effect for participants of multiple components. Individuals who have benefitted from more than one Ruwwad intervention, such as leadership training followed by an internship, would presumably have more impact than a single participation. However, as the research team understands it, the current system does not enable the tracking of such individuals, or provide additional measures to capture their experience and compare it to individuals who have only participated in one activity.

As Ruwwad has developed over time, some of the components have changed names. But even among components, some of the terminology has changed – the 30/30 training became the National Youth Corps, became Youth Serving Palestine and is now Youth Leadership and Community Initiative training. This provides an additional layer of challenges in determining outcomes.   This posed a challenge for the research team in negotiating the different terminology used, and matching up like programs that have been called different names over the project lifecycle. In addition, there are still terms that are unclear to the research team. For example, recent quarterly reports reference beneficiaries of "orientation sessions," which are never defined and were not referenced by Ruwwad staff, partners or beneficiaries. Consistent use of terminology would improve the project's ability to define and measure its outcomes.

Finally, the issue of naming has affected the Ruwwad legacy and name recognition factor, with issues of naming the centers. Most of the respondents expressed the belief that the YDRCs had not established an identity outside of the existing youth center identity prior to USAID's involvement. If the YDRCs are to be an indispensible resource to the communities they serve, they must offer services and

resources that other clubs do not. In addition, Ruwwad reported that issues of naming the YDRCs were a point of debate between program staff and Boards of Directors, as the boards felt that USAID was coming in and changing their identities and structures. While this issue was eventually overcome, it did cause some friction in the beginning of the relationship and may have colored the boards' initial attitudes towards Ruwwad involvement in the management of the centers.

> *I am not sure if the community understands the identity of the YDRC – they know it as Al Bireh Youth Club. Why should I use them instead of another youth center, such as the ones in Birzeit or Ramallah?*
>
> -- Director of Partner Organization

Ruwwad Staffing

From Quarterly Reports submitted by Ruwwad over the last nine quarters, the Ruwwad Project has experienced significant turnover among its own staff and that of the YDRCs. Some 53 new staff members were hired during this period and 26 existing staff left their positions. In addition to the regular three-month cycles of interns working in the main office, Ruwwad itself had at least 25 new staff to recruit, train, and get up to speed. Six of the new hires left within 3-6 months and two others left 12-18 months after starting their position.

Ruwwad Staffing Changes		
	New Staff	Departing Staff
Year 4		
Q1	7	1
Q2	6	1
Q3	8	3
Q4	3	1
SUBTOTAL	24	6
Year 5		
Q1	8	2
Q2	6	6
Q3	9	6
Q4	4	4
SUBTOTAL	27	18
Year 6		
Q1	2	2
SUBTOTAL	2	2
TOTAL	**53**	**26**

Based on the above data compiled from Quarterly Reports, project staffing could be an area for further investigation with an eye toward continuous improvement for any follow-on activities. The

evaluation team requested organizational charts and/or staffing lists to more accurately determine Ruwwad structure, but these were not made available.

Ruwwad staff was asked about the staff turnover and the following is the information provided in response.

- Year 4 (2008-2009)—More staff came into Ruwwad than leaving because of the startup of the YDRCs that year, which involved recruiting new staff for the three YDRCs.

- Year 5 (2009-2010)—EDC brought new leadership to Ruwwad by the end of 2009. The new leadership brought a new vision as to how the project should be implemented, which also included restructuring the project components. The new project structure involves phasing out some staff—also Ruwwad at the time was felt to be overstaffed according to the new Chief of Party.

- Year 6 (2010)--Since the project is coming to end—a year to be closed down (before the extension), employees in such situations look for long term employment opportunities (usually 3-5 years in a project environment. In a project based environment, people keep moving from one project to another trying to secure longer term job opportunities or sometimes they go for better salary packages as many new USAID funded projects were starting at the time Ruwwad was in the stage of phasing out. Ruwwad also could not offer the same competitive salary packages that other projects offered (example Chemonics, CHF and others) and one can do nothing about this since the salary scale of Ruwwad was felt to limit their ability to keep some staff they wanted to keep.

The evaluation team heard during interviews that Ruwwad staff turnover had caused confusion among the various partners about who was their point of contact for management issues. This issue has negatively affected some sub-grantees, as the person overseeing their work had changed sometimes several times during project start up and implementation. "We have had three or four managers in the past six months." In addition, some of the AC volunteers expressed a desire to have more interaction with Ruwwad, but they "do not really understand who is in charge or who to go to."

Working with USAID

The qualitative data collection instruments developed for each of the key stakeholder groups included a series of questions exploring their attitudes towards working with USAID – both at the outset of the relationship and their current perspective – as well as their perspective on the attitudes of community members towards the USAID-sponsored YDRCs when they were first established and now.

Many of the respondents reported that members of the community had initial reservations about the centers working with a USAID-funded activity because they were worried that the program would have a hidden political agenda and would try to co-opt their youth, or they associated USAID's support with U.S. foreign policy support for Israel and were thus opposed to USAID's presence in their community. In addition, one board member reported that some other board members had initial reservations about partnering with USAID because they were opposed to signing the ATC, but that this

> *The aim of schools is to prepare students for life but they can't do everything. We need institutions in our society to help schools prepare students for life. This is how we view this project and most people support it. A few members of the community originally saw [Ruwwad] as part of the occupation but they forgot this when they saw the Center and what types of programs we were offering.*
>
> -- Member of the Al Bireh YDRC Board of Directors

issue was eventually resolved.

All of the respondents said that the communities' reservations were alleviated when they saw how the Ruwwad program was working to develop the centers and the variety of programs offered to develop youth capacity. Everyone with whom the research team spoke reported that the benefits of participation outweighed any of the political considerations described above that might have discouraged their cooperation initially. This was true for YDRC board members and staff, AC boards and volunteers, as well as partner organizations, participants, and community members.

Board members mentioned that while they had some ongoing concerns about certain U.S. Government policies, USAID programs, being "a gift from the American people," were not in question for them. Also, that USAID was also funding road improvement projects was a strong positive that carried over to enhance the reputation of Ruwwad-sponsored activities. It is unclear whether some

respondents truly understood that USAID is actually an arm of the U.S. Government. The sentiment was that they had no disagreement with the American people and were glad to accept the support.

> *"We don't always agree with U.S. Government policy but the Center is a gift from the American people…we like the American people and appreciate their support."*
>
> - Member of the Jabal An Nar Board of Directors

In addition, YDRC and AC management felt that the activities offered under the Ruwwad program were helping to push social boundaries, especially for young women, by offering mixed-gender activities or including young women in activities that were not traditionally considered appropriate for young women, such as sports and cultural activities. Respondents felt this was a huge benefit to working with USAID and that their community was progressing in response to these new approaches to providing youth-focused activities.

One drawback of being a USAID-funded program that was mentioned by a number of respondents is the perception that all Ruwwad program activities would be offered free of charge. A number of YDRC and AC staff said that asking participants to pay some portion of a training activity, such as the NIS 20 for the ICT training, the NIS 100 for Microsoft UP, or purchasing textbooks for the AMIDEAST English language training was met with resistance from some members of the community. In addition, board members reported that they had more difficulty raising funds for the Centers through their existing community networks, as funders questioned the need for community support to supplement a USAID-funded activity. Working through local partners may help to alleviate this issue for any potential follow-on work with the YDRCs.

> *After six months, the Ruwwad support will end and we will have to start charging for activities but we have set the expectation that everything is free. I do not thing people will then be willing to pay. I think we should start charging for activities now, not when Ruwwad ends.*
>
> -- YDRC Executive Director

The other major issue mentioned by a large majority of respondents was the issue of vetting of participants and partners, and the length of this process. Requiring participants to be vetted, and rejecting those who are not approved, caused a great deal of embarrassment among the YDRC and AC staff. In addition, youth who were interested in participating in Ruwwad activities and those who

proposed youth initiatives under the Leadership component often lost interest or pursued other sources of funding for their initiatives while waiting to be approved.

While this issue is well known to USAID, it is the major source of any discontent reported by respondents and should be taken into consideration when planning activities and implementation timelines. In addition, some creative strategies have been employed in order to circumvent this requirement, including limiting the length of the training activities to less than five days, or waiving the vetting process for leadership training participants who are registered as members of the National Youth Corps.

In addition, sub-grantees and partner organizations should be better informed about the length of time it takes to be approved, as some sub-grantees reported they had hired staff to work on activities some eight months before they received the waiver to begin work and then had to support their salaries while they waited to get approval. This was a hardship for the sub-grantee organizations, which resulted in some reported reluctance to undertake another USAID-sponsored activity as a result of the experience. Since these approval processes are known to be slow, potential partners should understand this process so that they might better plan for activities on a realistic timeframe.

Conclusions

The vision for the Ruwwad project - networks of local youth clubs aligned with a centralized resource center as a means of offering a diverse range of positive youth development activities within a given geographic region was both innovative and timely. Ruwwad's efforts to create stronger linkages between existing youth serving organizations while simultaneously creating new infrastructure and programming have resulted in an expansion of opportunities for Palestinian youth to participate in activities that address their current needs.

As Ruwwad has only been operating under the current structure since 2008, a great deal has been accomplished in developing the capacity of the YDRCs, youth's employability skills through the various internship components, and in establishing a network of partners and sub-grantees to support youth development. Although baseline data were not available from which to make a comparison between where the YDRCs started at the beginning of the project to where they are now, it is clear based on data gathered during the evaluation that the infrastructure of the centers and clubs, and the capacity of many of the YDRC staff, has benefitted from the Ruwwad activities. Youth from distinct regions of the West Bank have had opportunities to not only develop their leadership and employability skills but also develop greater cross-regional understanding and connections. However, Ruwwad's accomplishment of mobilizing an active cohort of youth leaders committed to serving their communities through service and volunteerism after their Ruwwad participation ends, is less clear.

Due to a variety of political, contractual, and management factors, the full potential of Ruwwad is not yet realized in spite of the significant strides that have been made. More time is needed to fully implement planned activities systematically across the network while drawing on the lessons learned of the "pilot" organizations. More robust step-by-step strategies for expanding AC and YDRC capacity to not only deliver quality youth programming, but also to create new approaches to income generation and sustainability that are less donor-centric, are critical. Technical assistance geared to each organization's individual circumstances is essential to ensure that new management skills and systems are fully implemented.

As many of the objectives undertaken by Ruwwad are complementary to the activities being developed under the new Youth Entrepreneurship Development (YED) program, it would be a logical progression to continue selected gains made under Ruwwad through the new activity. Activities which

specifically relate to youth employability including professional skill building and microenterprise development would seem well suited to be picked up by YED.

For other youth development activities such as leadership and service learning, USAID may wish to focus their follow-on efforts on centers and clubs that have made greater gains under the current project. In many cases, the evaluation team felt that success of these activities was largely dependent upon the commitment and initiative of the center or club management. In cases where the Executive Director or Board Chair was naturally more dynamic, and took the initiative to seek out other donors and encourage a wider variety of activities without USAID funding or guidance, the organization had clearly benefitted from such leadership. The most successful clubs visited during the evaluation had already found ways to offer a wider variety of services, such as women's health programs, activities for younger children, and additional youth activities (even including sports activities) that were not part of the Ruwwad model.

In cases where management of the center or club was content to continue with "business as usual," allowing USAID support through Ruwwad implemented programs, but making little effort to complement or supplement these activities, the vision of building an indispensible community resource had not been achieved. Therefore, focusing resources on the more-dynamic centers and clubs, helping them to build their institutional and management capacity while simultaneously giving them the tools they need to promote their own sustainability, will leverage USAID's investment and increase the chances for success in the future.

Appendix A. Contact List

Type of Organization	Organizational Affiliation	Position (if known or applicable)
Program Managers and Youth Experts	USAID EGAT/ED Office	Youth and Workforce Development Expert
	Ruwwad	Former COP
		Current COP
		Deputy COP
		M&E Manager
		Sub-grants Manager
	Ministry of Youth and Sports	Director of Youth Development
		VP for Youth Affairs
		Youth Institutions Specialist
	IYF	COP of YED Project
YDRCs	Beit Al Tifel	Executive Director
		Board Member
		Communications Coordinator
	Al Bireh	Executive Director
		2 Board Members
	Jabal an-Nar	Executive Director
		3 Board Members
		Youth Coordinator
ACs	Women's Committee	Director of the Board
	Bedia Club	15 Board members and volunteers
	Jericho Youth Club A'in Alsultan	Chairman of the Board, 2 Board members, and 1 volunteer
	Silwad Club	Board Chair
	Qarawat Bani Zeid	Board Chair and Volunteer
	Al Quds Club	Board Chair
	Qadoura Club	Chairman of the Board, 1 Board member and 1 volunteer
	Tarqumia Club	Chairman of the Board
	Al Fawwar Center	Volunteer
	Alta-amrah Club	Chairman of the Board
Sub-grantees	Al Mawrid Teacher Development Center	Executive Director
	AMIDEAST	Project Manager
	Mazaya	Project Director
	Tawasul	Project Coordinator
	Youth Entrepreneurs Palestine	Project Manager
	Jubilee Center for Excellence in Education/King Hussein Foundation	Project Coordinator
Current and Potential Partners	USAID Health Office	
	Sharek	
	Intel	
	Cisco	
Internship Providers	PACE/Chemonics	
	European-Palestinian Chamber of Commerce	
	ICAN	President

	Club Affiliation	Type of Respondents
Youth Beneficiaries	Al Bireh YDRC	1 intern
	Al Quds Club	5 participants
	A'in Alsultan	2 participants
	Qadoura Club	3 volunteers
	Beit Al Tifel YDRC	9 participants
	Alta-amrah Club	2 participants
	Jabal an-Nar YDRC	6 interns, 2 volunteers

Appendix B. Instruments

YDRC Executive Director Interview

YDRC Board Member Interview

Affiliated Club Staff and Board Member Interview

Sub-grantees and Partners Interview

Private Sector Internship Partnerships

YDRC or Club Participants

Media Center Training and Internship Participants

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Youth Development Resource Center Executive Director

Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the USAID Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. We are currently evaluating the impact of the program, as well as identifying activities that might be continued after the current program ends. We would appreciate your cooperation in this effort. Only aggregated statistical information will be reported. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

1. Please tell us about your YDRC. How long has your center been actively working with youth? How long has the center been working with Ruwwad? What are the major activities you offer the community? When are you open? When do youth tend use your club most? What is the rough mix of males and females?

2. What have been the major benefits for (Organization name) from participating in the Ruwwad program? Has your capacity to serve local youth been improved through Ruwwad? How?

3. How do you work with your board on an ongoing basis? What is their role? Have you as a staff person had special training on how to work with boards?

4. How does your board feel about your involvement with Ruwwad and USAID? Now? At first?

5. What is/are the major strength(s) of the Ruwwad program, in your opinion?

6. Are there specific components or activities that you think were especially successful? (For example, ICT, leadership training, media centers, internships, etc.)

7. What aspects of the current Ruwwad program do you see as being particularly innovative approaches to addressing:

    a. Youth issues?
    b. Youth involvement in civic engagement?
    c. Employability?

7. How would you characterize Ruwwad's overall impact on Palestinian youth?

8. What is the relationship between your YDRC and the affiliated clubs? Have the affiliated clubs extended your reach into local communities? How?

9. What activities/programs do clubs in your network offer? In what ways have you collaborated and shared resources with the Affiliated Clubs in your area?

8. How do you see the future of YDRC involvement with the existing clubs with (or without) Ruwwad support? Other local clubs?

9. Did you experience any major challenges in implementing Ruwwad? Were specific components especially challenging? If so, which ones? What has been done to address the challenges?

10. Any lessons learned for the future?

11. Do you have specific recommendations on how the youth activities your YDRC offers could be improved?

12. Do you have specific recommendations on how Ruwwad activities could be sustained after USAID support ends?

13. What other support would you need to operate even more effectively?

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Youth Development Resource Center Board Members

Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the USAID Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. We are currently evaluating the impact of the program, as well as identifying activities that might be continued after the current program ends. We would appreciate your cooperation in this effort. Only aggregated statistical information will be reported. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

1. Please tell us about your YDRC. What activities do you offer?

2. How long have you been on the board? Why did you first get involved with this club? The board?

3. How many board members do you have? How do you get this position? What are your responsibilities as board members?

4. How does board work compare to staff work at this YDRC? Who does what? How clear is the difference?

5. Have you had any special training on how staff and boards can work most effectively together? If yes, what training did you receive? If not, would some training have been helpful?

6. What have been the major benefits for (Organization name) from participating in the Ruwwad program? Has your capacity to serve local youth been improved through Ruwwad? How?

7. How does your board feel about your involvement with Ruwwad and USAID? Now? At first?

8. What is/are the major strength(s) of the Ruwwad program, in your opinion?

9. Are there specific components or activities that you think were especially successful? (For example, ICT, leadership training, media centers, internships, etc.)

10. How would you characterize Ruwwad's overall impact on Palestinian youth?

11. How do you see the future of your YDRC and youth activities with (or without) Ruwwad support?

12. Any lessons learned for the future?

13. Do you have specific recommendations on how the youth activities your YDRC offers could be improved?

14. Do you have specific recommendations on how youth activities could be sustained after USAID support ends?

15. What other support would you need to operate even more effectively?

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Affiliated Club Staff or Board Members

Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the USAID Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. We are currently evaluating the impact of the program, as well as identifying activities that might be continued after the current program ends. We would appreciate your cooperation in this effort. Only aggregated statistical information will be reported. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

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1. Please tell us about your Club. What activities do you offer for youth? For who - Boys? Girls? How many?

2. How long have you been involved with the club? Why did you first get involved with this club? The board?

3. How many board members do you have? How do you get this position? What are your responsibilities as board members?

4. How does board work compare to staff work at this club? Who does what? How clear is the difference?

5. Have you had any special training on how staff and boards can work most effectively together? If yes, what training did you receive? If not, would some training have been helpful?

6. How do you work with the YDRC? How does it benefit your club?

7. What have been the major benefits for (Organization name) from participating in the Ruwwad program? Has your capacity to serve local youth been improved through Ruwwad? How?

8. How does your board feel about your involvement with Ruwwad and USAID? Now? At first?

9. What is/are the major strength(s) of the Ruwwad program, in your opinion?

10. Are there specific components or activities that you think were especially successful? (For example, ICT, leadership training, media centers, internships, etc.)

11. How would you characterize Ruwwad's overall impact on Palestinian youth?

12. How do you see the future of your club's youth activities with (or without) Ruwwad support?

13. Any lessons learned for the future?

14. Do you have specific recommendations on how the youth activities your YDRC or club offers could be improved?

15. Do you have specific recommendations on how youth activities could be sustained after USAID support ends?

16. What other support would you need to operate even more effectively?

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Sub-grantees and Partners Interview

Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the USAID Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. We are currently evaluating the impact of the program, as well as identifying activities that might be continued after the current program ends. We would appreciate your cooperation in this effort. Only aggregated statistical information will be reported. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

1. What was the process you went through to receive the Ruwwad sub-grant?

2. How has the Ruwwad sub-grant allowed your organization to contribute to the development of the YDRCs? To the development of Palestinian youth?

3. How engaged are you with the YDRCs? Do you feel that this has this been an effective relationship? Are there ways it could be enhanced to promote sustainability of the YDRCs?

4. Has the sub-grant been beneficial to the development of your organization? If so, in what way?

5. Do you feel that the sub-grant mechanism has been effective? Why or why not?

6. Are there other approaches to providing in-kind assistance that would be more effective?

7. Are there ways in which your organization could take a more proactive role in sustaining the efforts of the YDRCs or promoting youth development?

8. In the absence of USAID funding, how could you continue this type of youth development work?

9. If given an opportunity, would you undertake another sub-grant to support youth development in Palestine?

10. What has been your experience working with Ruwwad? What worked well? What was challenging?

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Private Sector Internship Participants

The Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. The Ruwwad program supports youth and community development activities through a variety of leadership and service learning activities. I understand that you participated in an internship with _____ through this activity.

In order to gain a better understanding of how this internship program works, we would like to ask you a series of questions about your experience in this activity. This information will also be used to help improve future USAID youth programs. We appreciate your cooperation in this effort and your identity will be kept strictly anonymous. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

1. How did you hear about the Ruwwad program?

2. What was the application process?

3. Did you complete an internship with _____?

4. [If yes] How long was the internship? How many hours a week do you work on average?

5. [If yes] What types of activities do you do on a regular day? Was your position defined before you started?

6. [If yes] Are there aspects of the internship that were especially helpful to you?

7. [If yes] Are there aspects of the internship that you would change?

8. [If yes] On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the internship experience overall? [show scale]

9. Did you receive any additional training from Ruwwad before the internship began?

10. [If yes] How long was the training?

11. [If yes] Are there aspects of the training that were especially helpful to you?

12. [If yes] Are there aspects of the training that you would change?

13. [If yes] On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the training overall? [show scale]

14. Were you paid for your work in the internship? [If yes] by whom?

15. What was your program of study in university?

16. Have you had opportunities to work in the _____ field since you completed this program?

17. What new skills did you gain from the internship that you did not already have?

18. Did the internship help you to find a job in your field?

       [If yes] how did it help? [If no] why not?

19. Would you recommend this internship program to a friend or a family member?

20. How did you feel about being part of a USAID-funded program?

21. What was the most important thing you gained from participating in this program?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP WITH THIS ACTIVITY!

Very Satisfied (4)	Somewhat Satisfied (3)	Not Very Satisfied (2)	Not at all Satisfied (1)
☐	☐	☐	☐

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
YDRC or Club Participants

The Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. The Ruwwad program supports youth and community development activities through a variety of leadership and service learning activities. I understand that you participated training or other activities at this _____ center (or club).

In order to gain a better understanding of how Ruwwad works, we would like to ask you a series of questions about your experience in this activity. This information will also be used to help improve future USAID youth programs. We appreciate your cooperation in this effort and your identity will be kept strictly anonymous. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

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1. How did you first hear about the youth activities at this center/club? How did you first hear about the Ruwwad program? What interested you to get involved?

2. What activities have you done here? (ICT, psychosocial, leadership-30/30, sports, internships, other?

3. Did you complete the leadership (old name = 30/30) training course at the _____ youth center?

4. [If yes] Are there aspects of the leadership training course that were especially helpful to you?

5. [If yes] Are there aspects of the leadership training course that you would change?

6. On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the leadership training course overall? [show scale]

7. Did you participate in a youth-led initiative/community service project following the training program?

8. [If yes] What did you learn from doing the community service project?

9. [If yes] How did the project benefit the community?

10. On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the youth-led initiative/community service project overall? [show scale]

11. What new skills did you gain from participating in this program that you did not already have?

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12. Have you had opportunities to do other community service activities since you completed this program?

13. Has your experience in the leadership training program helped you to find a job?

    i.   [If yes] how did it help? [If no] why not?

14. Has your experience in the leadership training program helped you in your everyday life?

    i.   [If yes] how did it help? [If no] why not?

15. Would you recommend this leadership training program to a friend or a family member?

16. Did you feel that the trainers were knowledgeable about their content area? Why or why not?

17. Did you feel that the _____ center staff were responsive to your needs? Why or why not?

18. How did you feel about being part of a USAID-funded program?

19. What was the most important thing you gained from participating in this program?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP WITH THIS ACTIVITY!

Very Satisfied (4)	Somewhat Satisfied (3)	Not Very Satisfied (2)	Not at all Satisfied (1)
☐	☐	☐	☐

Ruwwad Program Evaluation
Media Center Training and Internship Participants

The Aguirre Division of JBS International, under contract to USAID, is currently collecting information about the results of the Palestinian Youth Empowerment project, also known as Ruwwad. The Ruwwad program supports youth and community development activities through a variety of leadership and service learning activities. I understand that you participated in a media center training through this activity that culminated in a three-month internship at this _____ center.

In order to gain a better understanding of how this media center program works, we would like to ask you a series of questions about your experience in this activity. This information will also be used to help improve future USAID youth programs. We appreciate your cooperation in this effort and your identity will be kept strictly anonymous. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Thank you.

1. How did you hear about the Ruwwad program?

2. What was the application process?

3. Did you complete a 4-day training course at the _____ youth center?

4. [If yes] Are there aspects of the 4-day training course that were especially helpful to you?

5. [If yes] Are there aspects of the 4-day training course that you would change?

6. On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the 4-day training course overall? [show scale]

7. Did you participate in a media center internship following the training program?

8. [If yes] Are there aspects of the media center internship that were especially helpful to you?

9. [If yes] Are there aspects of the media center internship that you would change?

10. On a scale of 1 – 4, how satisfied were you with the media internship overall? [show scale]

11. How long was the internship? How many hours each week on average?

12. What type of activities do you do on a regular day in this media internship?

13. Was your position defined before you started?

14. Were you paid for the internship? [If yes] by whom?

15. Did you study media in university?

16. What new media skills did you gain from participating in this program that you did not already have?

17. Have you had opportunities to do other media-focused activities since you completed this program?

18. Has your experience in the media training program helped you to find a job in the media field?

      i.   [If yes] how did it help? [If no] why not?

19. Would you recommend this media training program to a friend or a family member?

20. Did you feel that the trainers were knowledgeable about their content area? Why or why not?

21. Did you feel that the _____ center staff were responsive to your needs? Why or why not?

22. How did you feel about being part of a USAID-funded program?

23. What was the most important thing you gained from participating in this program?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP WITH THIS ACTIVITY!

Very Satisfied (4)	Somewhat Satisfied (3)	Not Very Satisfied (2)	Not at all Satisfied (1)
☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix C. Success Criteria

Youth Programming:

- Program Diversity
- Receptivity to Developing non-Ruwwad Activities
- Current M:F Ratio
- Youth Participant Diversity
- Perceived Program Applicability to Local Needs
- Effectiveness of Community Outreach
- Membership Expansion

Board:

- Definition/Clarity of Role
- Commitment to Youth
- Level of Engagement
- Openness to Expanding Youth Programming into New Areas
- Desire for Positive Change
- Administrative/Financial Management Oversight Capacity
- Relationship to ED/Staff
- Inclusion in Decision-Making
- Ability to Leverage Community Connection for Additional Resources

Staff:

- Number Appropriate
- Definition/Clarity of Role
- Experience
- Communication with Board
- Administrative/Financial Management Capacity
- Inclusion in Decision-Making

Physical Infrastructure:

- Utilization of Existing Space
- Look and Feel
- Co-location with Other Community Organizations

Community:

- Urban/Rural
- Level of Marginalization
- Traditional Values
- Distance to YDRC
- Degree of Community Acceptance
- Level of Community Support
- Active Engagement through Volunteering
- Reputation in Community

Sustainability Potential:

- Feasibility of Income Generation Ideas
- Resource Sharing with Other Community Organizations
- Other Existing Donor/Partner Support
- Potential for Other Donor/Partner Support