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Report 1/2018

Project visit to Lebanon on behalf of Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility (FAFS) and Finnish-Arab Friendship Society (FAFS) 13 -24 February 2018. Report compiled on 3 October 2018 in Helsinki, Finland by Sirkkü Kivistö

The main purpose of the visit was to compile the reports of the previous year and to plan the follow-up projects. It was, again, a fruitful project visit. Thank you all in Beit Atfal Assumoud!

The main outputs

Preparation of the project reports for 2017 of FiPSR and FAFS to the Ministry with coordinators Liliane Younes, Fatima Khaizaran and administration officer Diab Kassem. The reports were delivered to the Ministry in April 2018 (FiPSR already received information about their acceptance on 24 September 2018). We decided to switch from biannual financial reporting to reporting every three months to be able to monitor the costs more carefully and to get approval for potential budget changes, which is obligatory if the changes are bigger than 15% from the accepted budget item. During our meetings, we saw the drafts of MSN and Family Happiness progress report reviews 2017.

Evaluation of the project period 2017-2018: could we do it in cooperation with NORWAC? Usually evaluation is based on feedback from parents and FGC staff. Now we wish to carry out a new trial. Would it be possible collect children's own feedback? At least one sample in some FGC in a limited time period?

Preparation of FiPSR and FAFS follow-up project plans for 2019-2022. We decided on the long-term and immediate objectives of the projects, signed with Director Kassem Aina the preliminary partnership agreement and got cost estimates for the project plan from the financial department. The applications were delivered to the Ministry on 13 May 2018 under the title "Mental health for vulnerable groups: A complex multidisciplinary model containing client centered and community approaches". FAFS support €212,500 to the northern FGCs and FiPSR support €255,000 to the southern FGCs. The Ministry will inform about its decision in December 2018. The self-financing share (15% of the total project budget) consists of sponsorship money collection and financial value of the voluntary work. The projects, if accepted, will enable mental health services. Also, strong emphasis is placed on the development of a revised strategic plan after more than 20 years' of practice of the mental health program.

Interview of FGC social workers Dalal Shahrour and Hala El Sayed, published in FAFS newspaper 1/2018, 3 May 2018

We checked the list of sponsored children, KG children and elderly (FAFS) and the list of children with multiple special needs (FiPSR) with coordinators Fatima Khaizaran (FAFS sponsorships), and Liliane Younes (FiPSR MSN sponsorships). During the visit, I met one sponsored child, one sponsored elderly (Family Happiness), and eight sponsored children with multiple special needs and reported their news to the sponsors in Finland.

Agreement on a group visit in September, combining the program partly to the Sabra & Shatila commemoration week. Implementation: 12 persons in Lebanon 15-22 September 2018

Mental health program strategic plan, discussions with director Kassem Aina and FGC Beirut team. Planning is on the agenda and progressing slowly. It is also linked to the Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020. BAS prepares a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health MOPH. The vision is for all people living in Lebanon to have the opportunity to enjoy the best possible mental health and wellbeing.

Following the efforts of the mental health program through several meetings: participation in steering committee for the 12th mental health conference. Participation in the conference 'Mental health and social security: Between clinical and civil activism' by ABAAD and Taybeen. Participation in team meeting of FGC Nahr el-Bared. Meeting with Dr Jihane Rohayem and Ibtissam Khalil in FGC Saida.

Some delightful information and observations

* "We have a better structure than before for awareness sessions", social worker Dalal Shahrour, FGC Beddawi

* The Mental Health and Social Security conference created discussions in the FGCs about more actively sharing with other NGOs specialized in some problem area, e.g. Union Pour la Protection de l'Enfant (UPEL), Himaya, Abaad etc. E.g. assisting schools to prevent violence at schools needs joint efforts in Nahr el-Bared (FGC team in Nahr el-Bared)

* Mr Raghid Al Adass was asked how he monitors the corruption issue and cleanliness of the NGOs as part of the audit process. The description confirmed the trust in that BAS is clean, even though it operates in a country with a severe corruption problem (Lebanon 2017 ranking 143/180 by score 28/100 by Transparency International)

* Dr Madeleine Badaro Taha has prepared an information sheet for the financial department in which she notes down all interventions and accepted costs of each MSN child. This makes it possible to follow the costs of tuition fees, medical assistance and in some cases, support for transportation.

* Monitoring the living conditions of the sponsored families and elderly people, included in the social work, was performed by visiting the home of one elderly person in Bourj el-Barajneh. The couple is suffering from asthma and living in severely humidity damaged apartment. The social worker will make a proposal to UNRWA's shelter rehabilitation program (made, information during September 2018 visit).

* Based on 20 years' experience, the administration of BAS is reflecting on what kind of skills the leadership of the mental health program and/of the Family Guidance Centers will need for a successful future development.

Date	Time	Program day by day
Tue 13 Feb		Departure from Helsinki at 12.25, arrival in Beirut at 22:15 by TK8168
Wed 14 Feb	8.30	Main office, planning the visit program with Director Kassem Aina, Discussion with Dr Päivi Miettunen and Ms Melisa Yasav from the Finnish Institute in Middle East (FIME) Visit to Shatila with Dr Miettunen and Ms Yasav. Visited Family Jerbi.
Thu 15 Feb	8:30 12:00 12:00	FGC Beirut, meeting with Liliane Younes and social workers Hala El Sayed and Dalal Shahrour (FGC Nahr el-Bared and FGC Beddawi). We reviewed together the statistical and narrative reports for 2017 of the Northern FGCs. Interview with Dalal and Hala for the article in the newspaper of Finnish-Arab Friendship Society. FGC Beirut, meeting with Liliane Younes & Dr Madeleine Badaro Taha about the project monitoring.
Fri 16 Feb	9:00 12:00 14:30	Main office, meeting with Diab Kassem about the financial reports 2017 FGC Beirut, meeting with Liliane Younes and Dr Madeleine Badaro Taha about the activity and budget management for FiPSR and FAFS project budgets 2018 Meeting with auditor, Mr Rahgid al Adass, reviewed the financial reports for 2017. Agreed that the financial and audit reporting will be every three months in 2018.
Sat 17 Feb	8:30- 11 12-14	Shatila center, meeting with university student Farah Bhar. Joining for a while in the literacy group for women, led by social worker Ashawak al Shaabi. Meeting with Fatima Khaizaran. Discussed the financial report and audit of sponsorship program 2017 and updated sponsorship lists. Got letters to sponsors. Discussed the criteria for the output/outcome of sponsorship program.
Sun 18 Feb	9	Preparing comments to the draft of Annual report of Mental health program 2017, comments delivered to coordinator Liliane Younes. Updating the visit program.
Mon 19 Feb		Meeting at FGC Saida with Ibtissam Khalil and Dr Jihane Rohayem , social workers and psychomotor therapist. Meeting the two new MSN children, Rayan Taha 664 and Omar Kambaz 324, reported the news to the sponsors in Finland.
Tue 20 Feb	8:30 9:30- 12 -	Preliminary partnership agreement for the follow-up projects signed with Dr Kassem Aina Steering Committee meeting for the 2018 conference in FGC Beirut Afternoon Financial department, information for the budget 2018 and for the follow-up project with Veera Nieminen, assistant coordinator Shatila center, visit some sponsored children.
Wed 21 Feb	9:30- 11:30 12- 2:30	FGC Beirut, meeting Liliane Younes. Participation in the FGC team meeting, their agenda included the evaluation of 2017 progress, and case problems. Visit to Bourj el-Barajneh and to the new sponsored elderly, Mr Imad Abu Haiby

Thu 22 Feb	9- 16.30	Participation in the conference "Mental Health and Social Security: Between clinical and Civil Activism" by ABAAD and Taybeen. Mövenpick, Raouche Exhibition "Haneen" (Syrian Children) in Beit Beirut.
Fri 23 Feb	10-12 16	Visit to Nahr el-Bared center and FGC. Meeting sponsored girl Aya Ghoneim 0202-526 (Family happiness) Meeting Ms Soraya Nasser El-Edine in the Finnish Embassy.
Sat 24 Feb		Departure from Beirut 02:55, arrival in Helsinki 11:30
Thu 1 March	17-20	Information session about the visit for Finnish audience and sponsors in the city library Kirjasto 10, Helsinki.