

Newsletter 1 - 2017



Contents:

- ◆ The Palestinian Performing Arts Network Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Danish House in Palestine
- ◆ 2017 Initiatives
- ◆ 2017 Annual General Assembly Meeting
- ◆ Board of Directors
- ◆ Staff
- ◆ Achievements
- ◆ Visits and Participations

The Palestinian Performing Arts Network Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Danish House in Palestine



The Palestinian Performing Arts Network signed a memorandum of understanding with the Danish House in Palestine on May 15, 2017 on a joint project titled “Enhancing Palestinian Journalistic Critique”. The project aims to strengthen and develop cultural reporting and criticism among Palestinian journalists with an interest in the Palestinian sector; and more specifically the performing arts field. In preparation for the project, a working group committee consisting of the current administration of the network and the coordinating team from the Danish House was formed to implement the project’s action plan. The terms of reference for procuring a trainer to implement the training was prepared and the joint working group committee conducted interviews with potential candidates.

During the next two months, registration for the training will be advertised in order to recruit interested candidates to participate in the trainings and activities that will last for one year. In terms of project sustainability, selected trainees will continue to cover the network and its member activities and incorporate their newly acquired skills in preparing various forms of cultural reporting.

2017 Initiatives

During the first quarter of 2017, PPAN launched a Call for Initiatives to support Palestinian artistic groups and institutions. This program aims to support artists and promote artistic production in performing arts throughout Palestine. The network received applications from various Palestinian artistic institutions, centers and grass-root groups focusing on youth and children initiatives. The applications were assessed and the PPAN Board of Director’s approved 14 initiatives for the 2017 program.

The 14 approved initiatives include:

1- Baladi Centre for Culture and Arts/ Beit Jala

The network will cover the costs of “Baladi Centres’ 4th Camp” that will be held for 5 days (4 – 8 August 2017) in Birzeit. This camp aims to enhance the capacities of 70 trainees in “Dabkeh” dancing.

2- “Buthour” for Culture and Arts/ Central Gaza

This institution implements drama workshops and theatre productions. The network will cover the costs of implementing one drama workshop, one animation workshop and a theatre production “K4K”.

3- Lama Brothers Cultural and Arts Theater/ Habla village, south of Qalqiliya

A theatre group presenting theatrical works. The play “Joud ou Abboud il Mafqoud” is one of Lama Brothers’ productions that targets children up to the age of 16. It aims to promote good behavior and noble morals. The network will cover the cost of the production, transportation, performances, decorations and costumes.

4- “Nabe’ al-Tourath al-Maqdisiyyeh” Traditional Dance Troupe/ Jerusalem

A traditional “Dabkeh” troupe. The network will cover the cost of its dancers’ costumes and accessories.

5- “Project Hope”/ Nablus

A cultural association working in cooperation with the municipality of Nablus on coordinating “Nablus’ Culture and Arts Festival”. The network will cover the festivals artist’s accommodation and sound system costs in 2017.

6- Gaza Circus Team/ Gaza

The network will cover the cost of a training course in circus arts and children performances. The network will also cover the cost of the Palestinian Children’s Day Carnival on April 9 2017.

7- Gaza Circus School/ Gaza

The network will cover the cost of a training workshop, costumes, hospitality and logistics (voice device and publications).

8- Handalah Cultural Centre/ Saffah village, Ramallah

A cultural centre that implements festivals and activities, it also provides training in traditional dabkeh dancing. It contains a traditional “Dabkeh” troupe and a “Dabkeh” school. The network will cover the cost of the “Dabkeh” troupe trainings, music production, and a part of the costs of publications and sound techniques for “Saffa’s 2017 Annual Festival”.

9- “Iskaka” Troupe for Dabkeh and Folklore/ Iskaka village, Salfit

“Iskaka” presents performances of Palestinian traditional Dabkeh, and the network will cover the costs of the troupe’s costumes.

10- “Naqsh” Popular Arts Troupe/Jenin

A “Dabkeh” school and dance troupe based in Jenin; the network will cover the cost of the troupe’s costumes and accessories.

11- Sons of Um Sa’d Forum/ Hebron

Sons of Un Sa’d Forum is registered as a charitable association with a focus on increasing networking and cooperation with other Palestinian cultural organizations, in order to increase accessibility to the arts in the Hebron governorate. The network will cover the cost of a series of performances (music, dance, theatre) in the Hebron governorate at the rate of one artistic performance each month for six months starting from June 2017.

12. Palestinian Laughter Liberation (PLL) Theatre Group/ Jenin

“PLL” is considered to be the first of its kind in Palestine; it works through mixing different schools of comedy (masks, stand up, dolls, emotional representation, storytelling, and clowns). The network will cover the cost of a theatre production and performances.

13. “Tijwal” Group/ Gaza

Tijwal is a theatre drama group that aims to empower and involve children and young people in Gaza schools and universities in theatrical works. The network will cover all costs associated with a training for trainers.

14. Al Sununu for Culture and Arts/Gaza

Al-Sununu Institute was established in Gaza in 2010. Al-Sununu Institute trains more than one hundred students, and has graduated around 50 students from Al-Sununu choir. The institute also provides training in visual arts “sculpture”, and choir for children of ages between 6-12 years old. The network will cover the cost of its coral group "Sununu Coral" within their annual "Sununu Summer Choirs". This musical project brings together Palestinian children within a unified music – educational program that highlights Palestinian musical heritage and Arabic music.

2017 Annual General Assembly Meeting

PPAN’s General Assembly members met on the 1st and 2nd of June 2017 in Bethlehem. On the first day, a workshop was held in which the members of the General Assembly approved PPAN’s strategic plan 2017-2021. The member also addressed the sustainability of the network, confirming that its continuity is linked with the continuity of its current member organizations, focusing on the need for further funding sources in the future. During the workshop, the members also discussed the subject of the

network's 1st conference which they agreed will be held in Ramallah during the first half of November 2017. Preparations for the conference will begin over the next few months.



On the second day - 2 June 2017 - the Extraordinary and Ordinary Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of the Network were held. During the Extraordinary meeting, amendments of PPAN's bylaws were discussed and approved by the members of the Assembly. During the Assembly's Ordinary meeting, the 2016 administrative, financial, and audited reports, and 2017 budget and work plan were reviewed and approved by the General Assembly members.

Deloitte was selected as the external auditor of the network for 2017. Finally, a new Board of Directors were elected for the period 2017-2019.

Board of Directors

PPAN's Board of Director members met on six separate occasions since January 2017. During these meetings, a number of issues were addressed including: 2017 initiatives, the revision and approval of the Network Strategic Plan 2017-2021, and amendments of some articles of PPAN's bylaws to be submitted to the General Assembly for approval. During the meetings, dates for the network's two main activities (General Assembly Meeting and the 1st Network Conference) were also addressed and identified. On the issue of fundraising, the Board of Directors agreed to submit a proposal to the British Council Cultural Protection Fund, and a specialized committee was created to follow up

this endeavor. The network Board also discussed the development of cooperation with The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI).

Staff

Ms. Nisreen Kharoufeh joined the network's staff on January 9th 2017 as the new Administrative Coordinator of the network after more than 3 years of experience as an Executive Assistant and Procurement Officer at the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH). Ms. Kharoufeh's experience includes coordination, procurement and administrative skills.

Achievements

→ On April 4th, 2017, a meeting was held in PPAN's office between Mr. Matia Poretti, Deputy Director and Ms. Raghida Andoni, National Program Officer of the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and PPAN's Board of Directors and General Coordinator. During the meeting, the network and SDC discussed ways of further developing cooperation and partnerships.

→ During the first half of 2017, the network procured various external consultants to prepare the following: PPAN's strategic plan 2017-2021, a developmental needs assessment study of cultural organizations, monitoring and evaluation system and a communication strategy.

PPAN's main achievements of the 1st quarter of 2017 include:

1- Final draft of PPAN's Strategic Plan 2017-2021

2- Working on the developmental needs assessment study of cultural organizations during the period of January to April 2017. The study aimed to identify the needs of cultural organizations in the field of capacity development, and the most important issues affecting the work of these organizations, and thus enabling the network to draw up a realistic plan to match their needs as part of PPAN's objective to contribute to the capacity development in the field of performing arts. The study began with a survey of the organizations that met the criteria based on the list of cultural organizations registered with the Palestinian Ministry of Culture, which included 219 cultural organizations. After the exclusion of organizations working in other cultural fields other than performing arts (determined by contacting them through phone calls), the invitation was sent to 118 cultural organizations to participate in the study. Finally, a total of 63 organizations took part in the research (53% of the contacted organizations). Then, in cooperation with some of PPAN's member organizations, two workshops were held:

The 1st was held at Al-Harah Theater office in Beit Jala and was attended by a number of cultural organizations from the southern area (Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Hebron). The 2nd workshop was held at The Freedom Theatre in Jenin and was attended by cultural organizations of the northern area (Tulkarem, Jenin, Nablus). Regarding the cultural organizations of the middle area (Ramallah, Jerusalem, Jericho), they were contacted through telephone and personal interviews. For Gaza Strip, the consultant contacted the cultural organizations in Gaza by holding a workshop through Skype with the organizations gathering at Sununu for Culture and Arts.



Southern Area Workshop



Northern Area Workshop

The workshops and interviews identified a number of issues that need to be developed and strengthened in order to increase their impact on the cultural and artistic field in the Palestinian society. The study's data has been analyzed and compiled; thus, enabling the network to implement a number of training programs for cultural organizations in the next few years.

3- Working on PPAN's M&E System: Two sessions were held with the attendance of PPAN member organizations; the 1st session discussed the methodology and the evaluation of the current status of the network and its member organizations M&E system. The 2nd session was held to discuss the logical framework matrix. A 3rd session will be held during the current year, where the M&E templates and questionnaires which will be used by the network and its member organizations will be discussed.

4- During the first half of 2017, two brainstorming workshops were implemented with the communication strategy consultant. The workshops were attended by PPAN member organizations to discuss the network messages, communication tools, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) of the cultural sector, more specifically the performing arts field.



1st communication strategy Workshop



2nd Communication Strategy Workshop

→ PPAN procured “Al-Wafa” company for its 2017 internal audit. The aim of the internal audit is to monitor and evaluate the internal management of the network for the purpose of adding value and improving the internal operations of the network. The internal audit will assist the network to achieve its objectives through a systematic, disciplined approach to assessing the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The Internal Audit Consultant will also be responsible for preparing recommendations on arrangements for risk management, control and governance; and identifying and reporting weaknesses.

→ Other Achievements during the 1st half of the year 2017:

1- Creating and developing an “Instagram” account for PPAN. This comes in addition to the daily follow-up on PPAN’s Facebook and Twitter pages.



2- Creating a “MailChimp” account for PPAN

3- A “Tracking System” for all PPAN member organizations activities has been completed. This tracking system allows PPAN members to obtain details of all 2017 activities of other partner organizations through the network's web site, thereby avoiding date and venue duplication.

4- A PPAN portal is currently in the process of development. The portal includes contact details for all cultural organizations, consultants specialized in different areas, government agencies, embassies, donors and other contacts that may be used by PPAN’s members. The portal also includes details of activities, workshops, and local and international conferences.

Visits and Participations

1- A joint event was held at The Freedom Theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp on the occasion of International Women’s Day on March 8th by The Palestinian Performing Arts Network in cooperation with Al-Kamandjati Association, the General Union of Palestinian Women, Naqsh Popular Art Troupe and The Freedom Theatre. The event was attended by a number of parties including, the Consul General of Sweden, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), representatives from the Swiss Representative Office in Ramallah, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the Canadian Representative in Ramallah, as well as other cultural organizations and the general public. The agenda included a theatrical performance by The Freedom Theatre, musical performance and lyrical production by Al-Kamandjati Association, “Dabkeh” performance by “Naqsh” and another “Dabkeh” performance by “Jadayel” Troupe. The event highlighted the achievements of Palestinian women and the challenges that lie ahead of them on the road to gender equality and Palestinian women’s full participation in all sectors of society. At the end of

the event, a panel discussion with the was held with young women from the abovementioned cultural organizations who shared their success stories and challenges in the culture and arts sector.



2- The staff of the network visited Al-Harah Theater office on March 15th, 2017. The visit coincided with the workshop of the developmental needs assessment study of the southern cultural organizations which was held there on the same day.



3- Ms. Christina Itzel, Director of the Development Department and Ms. Maria Ardaji, Program Officer from the Consulate General of Sweden in Jerusalem and Mr. Yousef Nazzal, PPAN, attended a theatre performance organized by Yes Theatre on May 16th, 2017 by Birein School students in Birein area in Bani Ineim, Hebron titled "Voices from

Birein". The play was written and directed by Mr. Ihab Zahida within the program titled "From Student to Student", which is implemented in three marginalized Bedouin areas (Bani Ineim, Yatta, Ramadin). The "From Student to Student" program focuses on the right of children to education.



At the end of the performance, the Consulate General of Sweden representatives met with Yes Theatre administrative and technical staff and the play's participating children and discussed daily challenges associated with life in marginalized areas within Area C, especially in the Bedouin communities.

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