

UNRWA Summer Games 2010: Evaluation Report Theatre Day Productions
Service Contract no. GFO/SC/RSSP/61/2010

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a) Design

- General Summary:

Theatre Day Productions focused in 2010 Summer Games on Theatre performances and interactive audience workshops: “Express yourself” rather than the Drama program as in previous years. The total number of children who have seen a play between June 12-August 4, 2010 reached 156,300 as follows: 76,030 were girls and 80,271 were boys out of a grand total number of 170,454 which includes UNRWA animators and location managers as well as UNRWA animators, parents, and visitors. (*see annex # 1*)

Four plays (The Red Play, The White Play, The Blue Play and The Black Play) were performed during the Summer Games by eight acting teams, twice a day, on a rotational basis per location (a total of 16 performances per day). The plays were inspired by the general theme of “school and family life” focused on positive and supportive behavior in Gaza rather than negative, and pointed out that good and happy is found even in the middle of destruction, chaos, and illness. The plays were followed by a post performance workshop where children freely expressed their opinions about the play, reminisces of events in the play to their life, characters they relate to and stated if they have seen a play before (*see annex # 2*).

Synopsis of comments on the Plays by children and animators: (*See annex # 3*)

- Relevance of project. Did it address real needs?

The Summer Games definitely address real and immediate needs. Countless findings and problems are as previous years but wrapped in different shapes and colors. Children are getting used to Summer Games: they enjoy themselves. In the morning they are usually waiting for TDP staff to enter the school and immediately are set to help with the installation of the set-up. Some dream of becoming actors and expressed their interest to join TDP to learn; children can't wait for the show to begin. All in all it is a relief and fun but that doesn't mean that they are in good shape. On the contrary! From the feed-back received from our animators and supervisors, we again witness cases of stressed and repressed (blocked) children who are caught up in a bad routine, bored to death, with no outlets (not at home and not in school) nothing to look forward to and who, like the adults, are physically and spiritually beleaguered in Gaza. Animators noticed that physical fights and conflicts erupted easily between the boys as well as the girls. TDP's supervisors commented that children turn to fighting in order to 'find distraction, do something new'. They break routine and boredom violently, while lacking any entertainment or skills to initiate positive activities. The situation of stress and confinement in Gaza causes isolation and separation. Although in essence a collective society, individuals in Gaza, also children, are more and more alone. Little real communication exists between children and their parents. Many children told us about their wish to bring their parents to the show, so that they could see a family on stage that talks together and supports each other in times of problems. They would like to have discussions after the show between children and parents. For them, there was a healing effect in the performance they saw. For many other children, performances woke up memories they started talking about in the drama workshop. Many stories were

about painful moments they couldn't or wouldn't talk about before. Now they felt the safe and stimulating environment to express themselves. For example the father in the Red play who almost hit his child: it was a moment that captured the attention of children and many wished that their father would be like the one in the play, refraining from violence in an act of self-criticism. Some children discovered for the first time that there is something called 'acting.' They were mesmerized by seeing an actor on the stage and expressed their wish to do this themselves. They also thought that their parents would never let them be actors. On the other hand, some parents expressed their content with the positive change observed in their kids in the aftermath of the post performance workshop and by the fact that the children themselves initiated a positive change; many children talked about the performances and shared stories with their parents. Some children started to identify problems in their surroundings. Our animators and supervisors reported that many children (as well as adults) feel oppressed, feel sadness, but don't know exactly why. For many, the stories and scenes in the plays gave words and images to their feelings: children started to understand some of the problems they have and were able to express them in the drama workshops after the shows. Apparently, the plays had an awareness raising effect. And once problems are clearly identified, they can easier be solved. It seems very likely to us that this awareness will help avoiding irrational and violent behavior of children and, hopefully, also of their parents (*see stories of children in annex # 3*). Another observation was that war remains a major topic; children's lives keep revolving around war and destruction. Approximately 8.7% out of 3995 children that were questioned after the play reported that events in the White, Red, and Black plays triggered war and death memories. They were happy to find a willing ear and a safe place to share these memories. Some children spoke openly in presence of other children in the workshops, others looked for a private moment to talk to one of our actors/animators after the work.

For the first time during the Summer Games, TDP reached children who live in isolated areas near the borders. The theatre plays and drama workshop were tools in breaking their isolation.

A huge problem that children talked about was their lack of space in and around their houses and classes. In the Summer Games, these children were given the space to dance, run and have fun without limitations or restrictions to their movement. The games we gave them brought physical pleasure and creativity in space.

The plays and post performance workshops are an excellent time frame for us with regards to impact concerning relief, increased belief in self, increased creative skills, and strengthened coping mechanisms of the participating children.

- Human resources, materials, and funds allocated to this project: were these adequate?

Human Resources –Based on auditions we selected actors as well as experienced animators from last year's Summer Games. In total we had 43 animators as follows: Black & Blue Play - 10 animators, White Play 12 animators and Red Play 11 animators. We believe TDP's actor/animators were well trained to do their job. The time used for acting, training, and production of the plays was needed and proved to be proper

investment. The teams worked two shifts per day under extreme hot weather conditions, lack of canopy in many schools and had to assist in moving sets to a new location every day. TDP animators were completely tired by the end of the Summer Games and voiced complaints about working two shifts. We had a few cases of exhaustion and fainting during work. We **recommend** that, at a next occasion, more human resources are provided for technical help in daily moving of theatre sets. If the performances in 2 daily shifts cannot be avoided, a work schedule should be designed in which working hours for the actors/animators are limited. Socially speaking it was problematic that TDP animators working side by side with UNRWA animators were working twice as long every day.

Regarding materials, we had good equipment for theatre sound and seating of children. The approved budget provided sufficiently for all necessary needs concerning theatre sets, decorations, and technical equipment and installations. From children comments we know that some scenes in almost every play were difficult to see. In the locations where a podium for performing was present, much better sight lines were available. We **recommend** that sight lines for children are improved at a next occasion, for instance by providing movable stages. At location sites, we faced a recurrent constant problem: lack of canopy. We were promised that on each location there will be a 20x20 meters of canopy. However, in many places, existing canopy was shredded or small, not covering children and actors. Sometimes, the fabric coverings were put in places that caused performance problems, like working in sand. The UNRWA engineers who visited all locations with TDP's technical teams before the start of the Games, decided later to make shadow in other places than agreed upon. Thus TDP actors sometimes had to perform in small spaces to avoid direct sun heat, or at inappropriate and sandy places. (*see annex # 5*).

Children sitting in the back often did not hear all texts performed by actors. Wireless microphones are needed to improve the sound in future outdoors performances.

Human Resources: separation of men and women. The doggedness to separate boys from girls undermined some of our good spirit. It is difficult for TDP to create an equal number of male and female acting teams. We are quite proud that we were able to mobilize three acting teams of women this year. The number of male teams was five. Every cycle of two weeks, we scheduled one day of rest for one of our teams. This was possible within the agreed upon program. But only the male teams had the benefit of this day off. The women had to keep working without a break. They needed to keep working in girls' schools since our men were not allowed to go there. We feel that this is not necessary and we **recommend** to reconsider this step at forthcoming occasions. In practice there were always many men present in girls locations. The times we worked 'mixed', the work went pleasant and without any problem. Schools with girls in morning shifts and boys in the afternoon (or vice versa) were always confronted with one 'wrong' acting cast when visited by TDP. We experienced additional value when our actors were performing for girls and when our actresses were performing for boys. Male actors bring new images and portrayals of men to girls, widening the horizon of fixed societal roles. Actresses do the same to boys. An additional emotional layer was playing during the performances, an important one, we feel. And anyway, the theatre and drama work of this year was extremely public. In public places people are not separated according to gender.

- **Were the activities appropriate to achieve the objectives/produce the planned output(s)?**

TDP thrived to provide Gaza school children with a provoking thought and creative means to spend their spare time during the summer holidays as well as to promote the love of drama and theatre in youth as a means of entertainment and personal expression and growth. The overwhelming majority of children expressed their content of theatre program: out of 3995 kids who were polled only 31 expressed their dislike for the plays for the following reasons:

11 girls out of 1880 polled did not like the Red play because it is sad, ended with death, and reminded them of the days of war.

20 boys out of 2115 polled disliked the Red/Black/Blue plays for several reasons: they have seen the play more than once, it is sad and not funny. Some boys were offended by the use of some terse words (jerk, stupid), some viewed the role of the mother in the Red play as inappropriate, and one boy said the Red Play is against Islamic religion when talking about death. It should not go without mentioning that the number of polled children who never saw a play before the Summer Games 2010 is 2133 out of 3995, approximately 53%.

Performances were held at 86 locations in all 5 Gaza governorates. Eight theatre teams presented different theatrical variation, boys and girls equally participated, and men and women were represented in the acting teams. A total of 672 performances were completed between June 12 and August 4.

1) 156,300 children were able to watch a theatre performance combined with an interactive workshop merging play with exercise.

2) The training prepared the animators so well for the practice of acting and drama work that several have obtained additional project employment in drama activities; others were able to choose drama as their favorite professional perspective and will enroll in TDP's 3-year training curriculum for acting/drama-teaching.

3) The acceptance and support for drama activities among children and parents was substantially increased in the Gaza community at large.

4) TDP itself was able to benefit by again expanding its capacity to create large-scale theatre activities with performances for and with children. We also further increased our pool of available trained actors and drama animators. Children did not complain about having "to go to school" for the Summer Games. In previous years, kids said that they would "like to be somewhere else" in summer because the school building is connected to the routine of school life. No complaints this time! The classrooms and schoolyards were turned into something else, into magical places, and the kids loved it. At moments, in locations where children had seen the play in a previous cycle, the children were so excited and motivated that they would initiate improvisations and scenes and tell the actors to sit down, because they would "act the show themselves this time." This is what we wanted to achieve, the self-initiative of the children.

- **Any comments on the planning of activity locations, the allocation of children or any other technical/logistical issues?**

Locations – As described above, we had no problems with children and parents who preferred non-school locations for summer activities. The problem was solved by profound study and preparation. Proper and positive theatre themes were easy to relate to. The design of colorful sets and performing spaces, together with poetic but daily life texts, turned the schoolyard into a place of magic. Still, more can be done to transform schoolyards into magical spaces. More study and more creativity!!!

At locations, the problem of canopy is a recurring one. Some investment is needed here. Neighbors of some schools were annoyed by the noise as matriculation exams were in process and distorted their sons/daughters concentration for studying. Hamas officials came and ordered to reduce the volume (*see annex # 6*). Timing of the Summer Games during matriculation exams should be probed.

Drinking water was available in all schools. In previous years this was not the case. However, very often UNRWA personnel filled the tanks with water during our performances. Coordination and synchronization of time performance along with the time to fill the water tanks could be solved easily for future Summer Games.

The allocation of children – TDP registered the number of participating children on a daily basis and sent a daily and weekly statistic report to the UNRWA. A discrepancy between UNRWA numbers and TDP was reported!!! (*See annex # 4 & annex # 8*).

The division of gender is not practical: men and women need to cooperate among themselves in loading the equipments. Women are not able to carry heavy equipment and need assistance. The current division forced women to work more because men were not allowed to act in front of girls. The women ended without having a day of rest at the end of any cycle.

A general problem was the lack of knowledge of our full partnership in the Summer Games. Location managers, animators and school guards were not informed or properly instructed about the theatre program and, more important, about the special value of artistic interventions. TDP thinks this problem can be solved if we can discuss our program with location managers during the preparation meetings of the Summer Games.

In general the number of technicians were not enough to release our actors from carrying and transportation work.

TDP also concluded that technicians are needed at an earlier stage of preparation, before start of rehearsals. If properly executed, the work of a sound technician during a play, is like an actor on the stage. The sound must support the work on the stage. The technician must have feeling with the characters on stage. Here, his job has an artistic aspect. For good performance, our technicians need to be present at all rehearsals before the Summer Games.

TDP's technical team faced problems preparing all plays for all locations at the beginning of the Summer Games in one day. TDP really needs 2 days for preparation.

At the end of each cycle, teams had to move the sets and decoration from Rafah to Beit Hanoun. Although the schedule of location performances was communicated earlier to UNRWA, the schools were often closed and TDP staff had to wait until the guard was called to come from home and open the door for unloading equipments.

b) Implementation

- Were any major changes made during implementation and what were the reasons for the changes?

A change made by UNRWA was at the end of the Summer Games when the big final closing ceremony was yielded to TDP for directing. It was a task accepted immediately, as TDP considers it part of its scope of work. Maybe next time this task can be considered as part of the contract. TDP had planned and prepared a field performance with children representing the theatre and drama program.

After discussions with UNRWA, following remarks by some location managers, some words in the plays that were considered un-educational were changed. Please see under the chapter “Any other key aspects of implementation” for our position on these changes remarks.

The location of some performances changed due to prevailing weather conditions (wind and heavy rain were observed for two consecutive days at the beginning of the Summer Games), the absence of canopy caused also to move some performances into small rooms to avoid the heat and burning sun. (*see annex # 5*).

TDP slightly changed the performance of Plays in some locations to avoid repetition. Due to exhaustion and enormous number of participating kids some actors/animators were sick and tired, thus we were compelled to replace them for a short period of time, making use of stand-ins that were specially prepared for this cause.

- Assessment of performance of animators.

As stated, we selected the 43 most qualified animators from among the people we worked with in previous years. The 43 animators were intensely trained for 7 weeks, 6 days a week (March-April). The professional progress made by all was remarkable. In addition to the main acting training of this year, special training for drama teaching in open schoolyards was given by a European specialist. (See also ‘Long Term Impact’ for animators who secured jobs after this training.) The team of animators is again visibly stronger than previous years. Because the basics of drama were known, the 2010 training could focus on a new and very playful methodology demanding strong acting and playing skills from the animators. We can safely say that our training and preparation work was excellent this year and that animators performed well across the board. For many animators, the drama work became an important part of their lives, something to develop further beyond the time frame of Summer Games. An aspect of the work that should, and can, be further developed is the theoretical foundation of the work. Supervisors, as well as animators, can increase their reflective skills about their work and the effect on children. For this, theory of drama and literature study in general should get a priority in future training.

As mentioned earlier, TDP animators were exhausted because of work pressure and the prevailing hot weather conditions. TDP animators worked two shifts compared to UNRWA animators who worked one shift per day. One of the **recommendations** of TDP animators is to work 4 hours per day only and to schedule the performances and

workshops of the 2 shifts as one ongoing event. The buses would bring the children of the second shift before taking the children of the first shift home.

If possible, TDP would prefer to work only one shift a day and make a long drama program with this one shift of children. It would deepen the acting performance and the impact of the drama work.

Another suggestion is to select a group of children who would like to perform, to train throughout the Summer Game and stage a performance at the closing festival. The message will be straightforward: develop the skills of children, bring their parents, UNRWA location managers and animators, directors of the Ministry of Education, media and journalist to see tangible results: children playing their role!!!

- Assessment of helpfulness/responsiveness of UNRWA staff at the field level (school staff and others).

We thank the UNRWA staff for their commitment. Given that the Summer Games is a huge project, all UNRWA staff did their best for the success of the games. For a sustainable partnership, we would like to reiterate that the relation with location managers could be improved. Some location managers were not well informed about our program and remained susceptible. *see annex # 3 UNRWA animators comments.* One of the location manager distributed cookies and juice and ordered the kids to leave in the middle of the performance. *see annex # 7.* TDP's supervisors estimated that 30% of UNRWA location managers and animators were not cooperative; they did not want to work, simply wanted to rest. Sometimes it felt as if the location managers were far away from us. In those cases we had no partners to talk to for help and the headmasters were occupied with the overall activities on location. TDP recommends that for future programs we need to create and strengthen solidarity and sense of responsibility by being substantially involved in the preparations. We require to meet with location managers before the Summer Games to introduce the program, and build true partnership.

Having said this, we should not forget that a good 70% of location managers and animators were often very helpful. Many animators showed their admiration for the engaged teams and beautiful active program of TDP in the Summer Games. We witnessed UNRWA animators who assisted in drama work after the performance as if they were part of the acting team.

- Assessment of relations with Summer Games team.

The coordination team of Hussam Manna and Mohammed Alaydi was an example of cooperative strength and commitment. We thank them! Many problems were solved fast and efficiently. Contacts were always pleasant and effective. We hope to continue working with this team.

- Did external factors influence the project?

Ostensibly, the protracted siege on Gaza has its toll on the population: negative psychological effect on the population, adults as well as children. This caused the need

for a relief program like this year's massive theatre performance and drama program in the Summer Games. Paradoxically, it resulted again in a higher impact of the program. (With a smile we can say that additional "job-creation" happened with the porters at the Erez border as, weeks prior to the SG, TDP began bringing in many suitcases of stuff that was unavailable in Gaza.)

Weather prevailing conditions (too hot, rainy and windy) are unforeseen elements during the preparation and implementation periods. Matriculation exams posed a minor problem in some locations but this was immediately solved. Some neighbors near schools complained that they wanted to sleep and rest but later they were watching from their balconies, rooftops and windows. Many neighbors had a stimulating effect on the performance in the schoolyard; they were clapping and cheering in support of the play they saw from their balconies.

A factor that did not influence the project: The theatre program went well, it was a warm and friendly experience on each schoolyard. We were not interrupted by external critics of the Summer Games as some expected after 'hearing' candid criticism to these games and following several attempts to stop the Games even if it meant torching down sites.

- **Were there variations between the governorates in terms of successful implementation of activities? What were the reasons behind this variation?**

In general we had almost the same number of boys and girls participating in the Theatre performance program. Gender equality is observed in all governorates.

TDP noticed, for no particular reason, that governorates of Gaza, Khan Yunis and Rafah were better concerning the cooperation of location managers and animators as well as the concentration of the children in the program. Most of the problems were in the middle and north regions. This division also applies to problems we faced concerning the storage of our equipment and properties. Cooperation was mostly good but for what is mentioned above.

TDP **recommends** that a special place in the schools is allocated as our storage place so that we can guard and supervise in every participating school.

- **Any other key aspects (positive and/or negative) of implementation that you wish to highlight.**

-About the critical stance of many UNRWA animators and location managers

A recurring problem in TDP's participation in the Summer Games might well be a deeply rooted conflict about the aims of education, or the lack of understanding about the different approach of arts education. We think it is good to discuss this matter openly so that misunderstandings and misleading information can be avoided during future program implementation. Drama and educational theatre are interactive tools. They consider children to be full participants of society with great potential. *The Latin word Educare* means to bring out what is within. We can learn from children as much as we can teach them. They are not empty bottles that need to be filled. They are full of valuable matter that needs to be stimulated. Art teachers are facilitators. They are not hammers hitting on a nail. Many times we are confronted with remarks of location managers and school-animators who think for the children. Instead of saying how they themselves are touched or annoyed by the plays, they say that the children don't

understand, that the age group is not right, that the theme brought up in the play is not educational, that the vocabulary of the text is not educational even though it is the regular ('bad') vocabulary of children's daily life without which they will feel alienated from education and school altogether. These 'critical' opinions are demanding clear things in education. They demand that theatre explains everything, tells children what to think and what to feel. They want theatre that is easy digestible and doesn't need much thinking. It should bring solutions, not problems. If not, it is not good for children and they won't like it, they can't like it. They lie if they like it!

The reactions of children we have documented and witnessed couldn't be more opposite to these qualifications. They enjoyed themselves, they felt great, they liked it, they wanted more, they felt enriched. Children and youngsters like to be challenged. They like to be confronted with valuable questions rather than with obligatory answers. Children like to be stimulated to be creative, to make 'mistakes' maybe, but always to be challenged. This will make them creative, eager to initiate thoughts, ideas, plans, and projects. In TDP, we think that a major educational problem has to be addressed here. Education doesn't have to produce obedience, but rather critical thinking and innovative attitudes. The arts are by definition part of the critical thinking world, believing that children like to lay a complicated puzzle rather than copying the obvious.

We believe that this explains the negative rejection stance of almost 50% of UNRWA animators in our logbooks written during the shows, as well as the discrepancy in comprehension between UNRWA animators and children themselves.

We recommend to openly discuss these matters so that understanding can be created for the different approach of arts intervention. It is also a fundamental discussion that is long overdue. Of course, the Summer Games might not be the most logical place to start this discussion. The fact that basic attitudes and misunderstandings keep popping up over the years, makes it almost impossible to ignore this matter completely in preparations for a next Summer Games.

TDP has now gained scientific proof that its interactive method of working with drama in schools produces higher grades for other school curriculum subjects. It also increases positive social behavior, creativity, expressive skills, and entrepreneurship. Report of our participation in DICE international research will be available this autumn 2010.

c) Achievements

-The overall objective of Summer Games was to provide as many Gaza children and youth as possible with a sustained program of educational and entertaining activities during their summer holidays. Has this objective been met?

Obviously this year's Summer Games were an overwhelming success providing entertaining and educational activities to an enormous number of children. The theatre program was able to join that success by performing for an audience of more than 170,000! For the entertaining and educational content of the theatre program, please refer to the opening paragraph about relevance of the project (page 2).

The drama and theatre program can be sustained once it is implemented on a large scale level in all UNRWA school in Palestine (Gaza Strip and the West Bank), preferably also at other UNRWA schools in the Arab world (Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria).

The Summer Games program in Gaza has gained much sustainability this year, we think, being produced under the wings of local leadership in the Relief and Social Services Department.

- Objectives specific to implementing partner (as defined in the official project proposal attached to Service Contract). Do you think these have been achieved? Please list the key outputs demonstrating the achievement of these objectives.

-1. To provide Gaza school children with a provoking thought and creative means to spend their spare time during the summer holidays:

Children had fun, they played and showed creativity. But they also showed they were provoked to think deeply about personal and family matters; and they liked it! Children related the themes of the play to their reality; they clearly expressed what they would like to change within their families or school. Children voiced anxiety over domestic violence in their homes and respective schools. Girls voiced their concern that although they are still children, their mother forces them to do house work instead of playing - a normal thing for children to do. Children also voiced their fear of war and destruction and the fact that death remains a recurring element in their lives and remembered whether among family members or neighbors.

Children developed their analytical skills and pointed out problems in their lives that needs to be solved and means to resolve the problems: suggestion by children to bring their parents to watch the performance in order to share with their children the message of the play and how it applies to their personal lives.

-2. To promote the love of drama and theatre in youth as a means of entertainment and personal expression and growth:

Some children realized that there is something called acting and were overjoyed to being subjected to that field. Other children wished to become actors and expressed their interest in learning how to act. Some parents were completely unsupportive of their sons/daughter acting within TDP team, however, once they saw the performances and realized the talents and skills of their children they were encouraging and brought other family members to watch the performances.

The Summer Games, and the final festival turned out to be a PR campaign for understanding what entertainment, sports, and theatre are able to generate: strengthen children skills. The drama/theater work in the Summer Games is getting known!

d) Longer-term impact

- What are the longer-term results of the project so far or what can/should be done, in your view, to achieve longer-term impact?

True long-term impact can be achieved by integrating the Summer Games activities (especially activities like Drama/ Theatre with the power of personal transformation, healing, and raising self-efficacy) into an aspect of ongoing education in children's school life. A good system of after-school activities could provide this. A general introduction of drama/theatre in the curriculum would be best, whether through additional training of UNRWA teachers, or through the creation of drama animation teams in schools.

Long term effects that were realized this summer:

*Understanding of the positive value of drama/theatre, and of arts in education in general, was widened. We believe that we continued to make lasting positive impressions on parents and teachers and on hundreds of cultural workers and animators participating in the Summer Games, in spite of difficult and needed discussion about the role of arts in education. The misunderstanding about the possible negative character of drama and theatre is being solved gradually for a large part of the population (extensive TDP work in Gaza Strip for the past 15 years).

*Drama/theatre and other art forms are accepted as friendly activities for girls and boys. The existing fear of public exposure of girls in performing arts activities was broken. In all governorates, the participation of girls was equal to the participation of boys.

*The demand for continued drama/theatre activities was again so massive that we feel one can speak of a long-term effect: the taboo is broken, now people are curious and receptive to new activities in the future.

*The relief and personal change of behavior that many children experienced will be longer lived for some time. The long-term sustainability of relief and behavioral change, however, can only be established through continued exposure to drama or comparable activities. What will be remembered over a long time is the knowledge that drama/theatre activities like the one experienced this summer have the power to bring beauty, fun, and change. You can always choose to go back to them, to find more.

*Creation of a future audience for theatre and arts. We believe that children who were exposed to the program are receptive of future theatre programs.

* Many drama animators trained by TDP are university arts students. It is now part of TDP's strategic plan, to select good candidates for new training from this group and prepare them for emergency aid cultural projects.

*Many children lived experiences that will continue to be part of them.

e) Lessons learned

- What will you remember from your involvement in this project?

* For some years, TDP is witnessing a growing interest of drama and theatre in the society; children were anxious to participate, some who have seen the play more than once were repeating the text with the actors, other children performed the play in the streets. Children took the play back to their homes and shared the experience with their parents/siblings/relatives. We need to reflect on our work constantly because it was new and because we renewed ourselves, producing and performing plays in extremely public, outdoors locations. It is good to innovate, to find new approaches to theatre and drama; it makes us search for the best performance of ourselves. This is a good lesson learned and needs to be repeated!

* For children who are full of initiative and filled with ideas for making their own stories and scenes, it is good to give them a chance to do so. Where we can, we try to include children as leaders in the project. We wish to find more ways to include children in the design and production of the work in the future. The idea to create a children's theatre team, producing a play during the next Summer Games for presentation on the closing festival, is one way to fulfill that wish.

Other lessons learnt are repeated lessons from previous years:

*New confirmation of the fact that in 'miserable' Gaza a beautiful project for children can be realized in spite of many indicators pointing at fear-of-people and fear-for-public-activities in a time of mayhem and despair.

*An intensive and effective drama/theatre program can successfully be integrated in the Summer Games operation, merging education and empowerment with pleasure and entertainment.

*TDP has the capacity to train large groups of (selected) people to implement large-scale drama and arts projects. TDP's senior management was utterly surprised by the artistic capacity and teaching skills (TOT) of its Gaza team.

*The continued need to be prepared for surprises every second. Drama/theatre activities receive general support but also keep attracting suspicion of some people because of its relatively intimate, emotional, and physical character. It should not go without mentioning that the Summer Games of 2010 were severely criticized by the de-facto government for teaching children mainly girls "immoralities, swimming, and drama/theatre". The success of the activities in a previous year is no guarantee for an easier management and supervision of the same project one year later. We are quite sure that the protracted closure of Gaza is building up an ever-bigger psychological impact each year. It seems that the increased support for drama goes in tandem with increased suspicion by some.

*The intensive 7 week training program for our 43 animators was excellent. It has guaranteed motivation and professional skills in the teaching team. Expanding the training from basic drama teaching to include intensive acting work was a good choice.

*Working with a large organization like UNRWA means dealing with many time consuming formal procedures.

*The pleasure of working with the Relief and Social Services Department of UNRWA.

* There were unexpected results of the project. Part of the animators group has chosen to take drama as their professional perspective. They will enroll in TDP's 3-year curriculum

acting and drama-teaching training. Some of the animators have found work in other drama teaching projects. Their training in the UNRWA JCP actually provided them with an immediate new project job.

- **What would you do differently if you had to implement a similar project in the future?**

* Reiterated the request to be part of all preparing meetings of SG UNRWA and other partners from the very beginning to build friendly and supporting relationships with location managers. Request that the regional/district education officers are part of the coordination process for solving problems arising in the drama/theatre activities that need immediate UNRWA intervention (discussions with location managers, including a fundamental discussion about arts and education).

* Suggest to UNRWA to prepare one or more PR-campaigns that explain drama and arts activities. An operative example: give lessons about drama/theatre at schools.

*Include more technicians in the theatre project.

*Suggest to UNRWA that the acting work is limited to one shift per day. If this is not possible, design a 4 hour program for 2 shifts in the middle of the day, at the end of the morning shift and at the beginning of afternoon shift. Organize children's transport accordingly.

*Allow male acting groups to perform for girls. It is a fairy tale that on women locations no men would be around. This will create equal work for male and female actors. In 2010 the women had to work harder than the men in order to serve the girl schools.

*Create a special acting team of children who will perform at the closing ceremony.

* Expand our first efforts to work from a new strategy to include parents of children in the drama/theatre process of the children. Parents' energy and resources are completely depleted; work from the broad theme of family focusing on the positive elements in family where we see chances to develop good relationships. Focus on the positive talents. Look at the situation in Gaza like it is a family. Look at how this family should be. Play family in a good way in order to strengthen the creative capacity in the family.

* Bring children and parents together to TDP for 3 days of workshops and performance. They would be an example focus group, making exercises in how to be supportive members of a group solving a dramatic or strategic problem. The ideas are shown in a public presentation (an experimental idea).

*Suggest activities for a Summer Games 'Fringe', where new ideas about activities with children are presented and discussed. The above experiment with family members could be one of the 'fringe' activities. In this way a discussion platform would be created, related to Summer, Education, Entertainment, and Culture. The Summer Games have a festive character. It should have a place for discussion and exchange of ideas.

f) Recommendations and Follow-up

- **Summary of key recommendations for future Summer Games projects/suggested follow-up.**

*See all suggestions in the previous paragraph!! (..“what would we do differently to implement a similar project”)

* Make connections to parents, neighborhood, and community actors. (See also Family Approach in previous paragraph).

*We repeat our recommendation for strategic planning and TDP for all-year drama implementation in schools through use of existing programs in UNRWA or through creation of a Pilot Program for several schools.

*Organize brainstorming sessions with UNRWA partners and Relief and Social Services Department for the festive design of future Summer Games Program. Ritualize the program by fun ceremonies at beginning, middle, and end. Prepare a special Summer Games activity in which children reporters write and film daily events and publish them on a daily basis. See also above in previous chapter about a Summer Games ‘Fringe’.

*Organize a communication point for children in trouble - a place with psychological or medical specialists whom we can turn to when we hear worrisome stories from children that need follow up, ie girls who are faced with sexual/domestic violence.

* A introduction training for all SG animators (in all other activities) for the better understanding of the drama work and the possible use of drama work in other activities (yes, even swimming, sports, and kite-making).

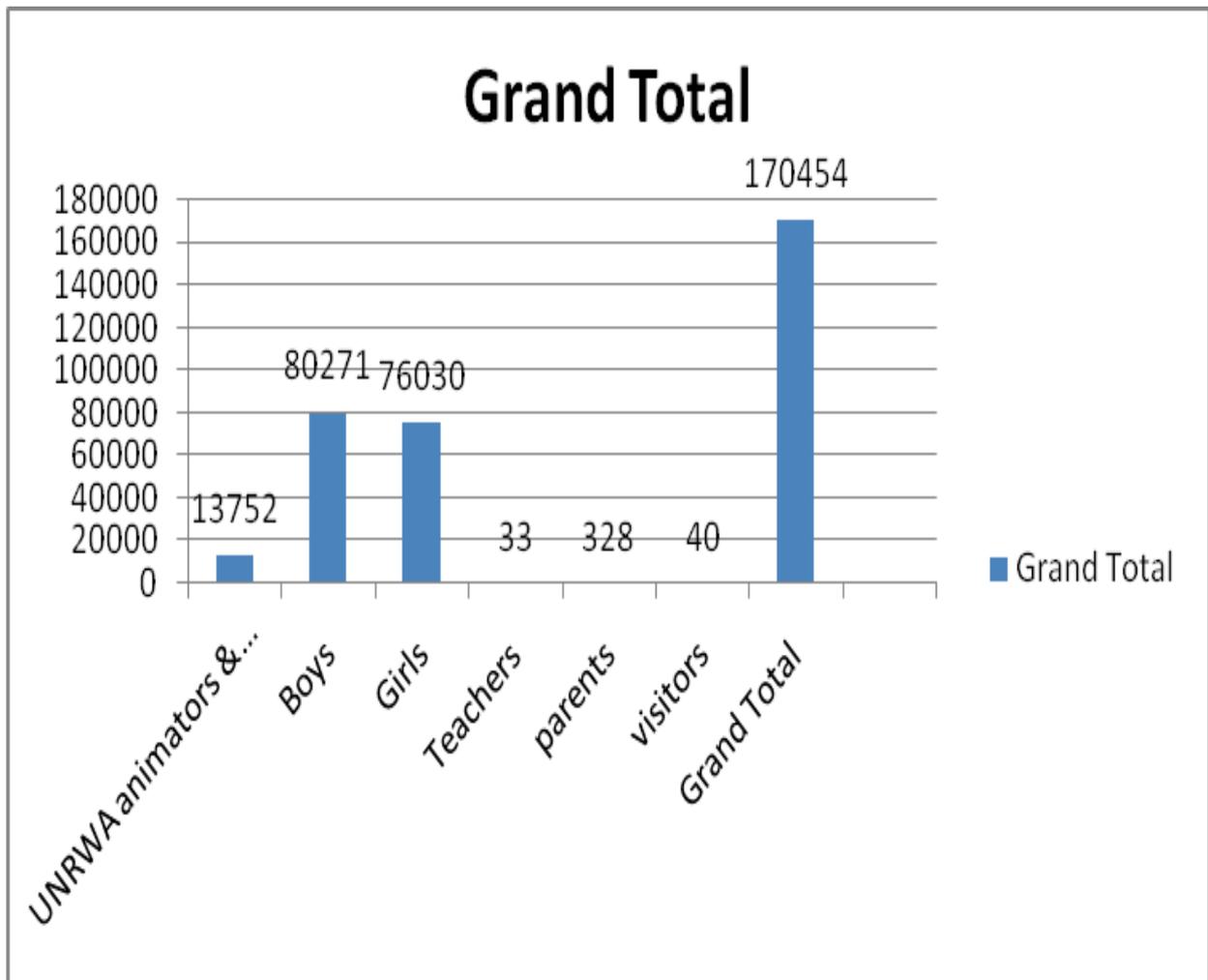
* TDP and Locations Managers should meet before the start of the SG.

*TDP Internal: Keep developing the new 1-year specialized drama-animation TOT-course for creating drama animation teams able to execute short-term emergency aid (mental health/relief) projects.

Jan Willems, Jackie Lubeck, Victoria Katan
Theater Day Productions
Gaza/Jerusalem, August 19, 2010

Annex # 1

Chart detailing the grand total of all participants according to category



Annex # 2

A sample of questionnaire distributed to children during the post performance workshops

استبانة للمسرحية أبيض "2" صباحي ومسائي "بنات"
التاريخ 13/6/2010

هل أنت ولد؟ كم عمرك

العمر	بنت
5 بنات "11" سنة "10" بنات 10 سنوات 5 بنات "12" سنة	20

هل سبق وشاهدت مسرحية من قبل؟ إذا كان الجواب نعم أي مسرحية إذا كنت لا تعرف اسم المسرحية أكتب أي شيء تتذكره عن المسرحية؟

نعم	اسم المسرحية	لا
"2" بنات	عن الحرب	"5" بنات
"1" بنت	الحيوانات الأربعة	
"1" بنت	عن الرحمة	
"1" بنت	حق المرأة في الميراث	
"1" بنت	عن عماد عقل	
"1" بنت	عن التعاون	
"5" بنات	تنس طاولة	
"1" بنت	عن النظافة	
"2" بنات	أرنوب واسود	

هل أعجبتك المسرحية؟ ولماذا؟

علمتنا نحب الحياة ونفضل صديقات متمسكات ببعض في كل حاجة	"20" بنت نعم
علمتني شو أعمل في الدار ونعمل واجبنا بالعرس قبل يومين ونساعد أمنا	
لأنها علمتنا معنى الصداقة ومهما حد عمل معي شي أسامحه	
علمتنا التعاون والمحبة والألفة بين الصديقات محاولة الانتباه للدروس	
علمتني كيف الحياة بتكون حلوة ومهما صار معي أشياء ما أزعل	
لأنه فيها عبر كثير مثل التعاون وعمل جهد أكبر للحصول على أعلى الدرجات	
حسنا على التعاون والصداقة والتصرفات الحسنة	

هل ذكرتك المسرحية بشيء ما حدث معك أو مع شخص قريب منك؟ إذا كان الجواب نعم أذكر القصة؟

ذكرتني بصديقتي كانت بصفي ورحلت من المدرسة كنا مع بعض بكل شيء	"19" بنت نعم
ذكرتني بفرح بنت عمي	
بمجهودي الذي أبدله للحصول على نتائج عالية بالامتحانات	
ذكرتني بحالي عندما انتشاجر مع إمي	
بحالي لمن تقاتلت مع صديقتي لازم نكون أصدقاء وما نتقاتل مع بعض	
ذكرتني بابن عمي لمن مات وكانت كل ملابس أخي دم	"1" بنت لا
لمن استشهد عمي مع أولاده الثلاثة ورفضوا ان اراه	
لمن كنا نلعب مع بنات جيرانا عرايس كنت أكون مبسوطه مع بعض	
لمن استشهدت ستي كنت أحبها كثير	

أي شخصية شعرت أنها قريبة منك؟ اشرح جوابك؟

حنين
شيرين العروسة لأنها علمتني معنى الصداقة
ندين لأنها تحرص على العلم وما بدها تضيع أي علامة

Annex # 3

Comments on the Plays collected from children during the post performance workshops, actors/animators' notebooks as well as UNRWA animators' writings in the Logbook

Preview

A total of 3995 kids out of 156,300 kids have filled the questionnaire

The total number of girls is 1880

The total number of boys is 2115

The total number of kids who did not see a play previously is 2133

The total number of kids who did not like the plays is 31 (11 girls and 20 boys)

The total number of questionnaire filled for the Red Play is 1000: a total of 11 girls did not like the play

The total number of questionnaire filled for the White Play is 1000: no one expressed his dislike

The total number of questionnaire filled for the Blue Play is 1000: a total of 18 boys did not like the play

The total number of questionnaire filled for the Black Play is 995: a total of 2 boys did not like the play.

THE RED PLAY

Children liked the play because it relates to real life issues such as life and death, family ties- cherish good memories and overcome sad ones-, compassion of father towards his daughter, talks about weddings, amusements, sickness, how to treat sick people, fibbing, sadness, unity is power, and encourage on praying. It also brings into light children rights, freedom of expression, paintings and drawings, right of children to get appropriate treatment, sacrifice, suffering of Palestinians due to siege and closure, music and singing, and the importance of cooperation. On the other hand, the color RED refers to the blood of martyrs (a theme always present in the mind of children). A recurring comment of children is not to let the sun see you crying, rather to cry during the night.

The play reminded kids of axiomatic amalgams:

War, death, illness, violence, and weddings. It also reminded some of their grandfather and caring of parents.

The animators comments were as follows: 45% pro and 22% against (33% did not comment) regarding the theme of the play or age group. Some animators thanked TDP for introducing the theme of theatre in the Summer Games, 19% stated that the age group of children does not match the context of the play. A cluster of animators commented that the context of the play is a combination of joy and sad, it is realistic and that life do not stop at a sad moment. Some animators recommended to have a happy ending for the play because in real life they have enough tragedy and sadness. A common problem in all plays is the sound system and not all audience were able to hear the narrative of the play.

Children stories:

A boy reported that he was beaten by his father before coming to watch the play; during the play he wished that his father will treat him like the one in the play.

A girl wished that her father will be like the one in the play; looking after his children and give them money. Some girls wanted to replace their mother with the one in the play because of the burden of house chords.

Another girl remembered when her father beat her and wished for that to stop. An obese girl did not want to come and watch the play (probably children were bullying her because of her weight) but an actor convinced her to come and she enjoyed her time.

THE BLACK PLAY

Children liked the play because it encouraged learning, stressed the importance of education, and respect of teachers. It probed the effects of cooperation, importance of time and being organized, rights of children to learn, friendship. In general the play was funny and it had music. On the other hand, 40% of animators considered the Play suitable for preparatory children and not the current elementary audience, accordingly the language and concept needs to be simplified, some terminology used was ambiguous (third/quarter), and viewed the play to be long and boring and preferred if actors verbalized in classical Arabic.

The play reminded children of school times, exams, importance of studying to achieve good results, cooperation, competition among students, dancing, helping others, collective cleaning of neighborhood/school, and the fact that during wartime there was no school. Some children enjoyed acting and expressed their desire to learn how to act.

Children stories: One of the boys commented on the fact that being no. 2 in the play was good however, in real life no. 1 is what counts and if he goes back home being no.2 his father will reprimand him.

A boy commented on the title of the play “BLACK” and asked why this color because the play was not gloomy!

THE BLUE PLAY

According to children the play had a clear educational message (including spelling), talked about cooperation, helping others, respecting differences, realistic, and entailed some fun elements like how to catch a rat. It should be noted that animators in general did not like reference to rats and preferred the use of birds however, children thought it was funny and learnt how to catch a rat. To some children the play contained an environmental message “keeping the environmental clean”, in addition to respect of human values, people with special needs. Overall the play talked about the daily life of Palestinian.

The play reminded children of illiterate grandparents/kids, importance to help siblings/friends, and the fact that cooperation is futile. It also referred to mute people and the need to treat them equally and with respect, referred to respect of teachers, and highlighted children playing with garbage. Some kids were sharp in their criticism to the extent that they blatantly commented on the fact that in real life people do not care about their children, others clearly hoped for “education without beat”.

The animators in general considered the play well balanced; it talked about domestic violence, importance of teaching illiterate students, strengthen social cohesion and solidarity, fight ignorance which is oneself enemy, and children labor. However, there was direct objection to terms used such as “jerk, shut up, whip” and preferred in overall to simplify the terms used since the age group of audience oscillated between 6-10 years old. **TDP note:** the terms subjected to criticism by the animators are in fact used on a daily basis by all segments of the society among families, in schools and in streets. For some animators the ending was abrupt and not clear. Animators mentioned technical problems related to sound system (not covering the whole area of performance) and the fact that the podium was not elevated enough thus not all kids had a free view of the play.

Children stories: A girl realized that there is something called acting; she wanted to join and learn how to act but realized that her parents will not allow her. She was completely disappointed.

A boy started crying in the middle of the play because he collects aluminum tin from garbage compounds, sell them and had to give the money to his father.

A 15 year illiterate boy started to spell after the play ended. The play encouraged him to concentrate on learning rather than bullying others and showing disrespect for his teachers.

THE WHITE PLAY

The play talked about wedding, happiness, cooperation among friends, forgiveness, friendship, sharing, loving, leaving behind sad memories and cherishing happy ones, how to treat others, and to enjoy life.

On the other hand it reminded children about death, war, getting bad marks at school, and the fact that marks is not an end in itself but rather the educational process is. It talks about success, the importance of studying, friends and family, decorating

classrooms/schools, and sharing is caring, It also reminded children of fathers' who are busy and uncaring, and mother beating daughters.

As for UNRWA animators; the White play was slightly criticized , the criticism focused on age group not proper with the theme.

Children Stories: A girl suggested that parents should watch the play as well in order to get the message (importance for father to pay attention to his children, house chores are not the main element in family life, etc...).

A girl lost her father, her mother got married, and her uncle's are frightening on who will take her. She stated that no one is listening to her and what she simply wants; to stay with her grandmother. (freedom of expression is not taken into account).

A girl forged her certificate but her father found out and severely beat her (the issue of marks as a general obsession in Palestine and the fact that the educational system counts for marks only, needs to be mulled).

Annex # 4

Number of participants per day

DATE	Adults	Boys	Girls	Teachers	visitors	Grand Total
12/06/2010	313	1550	1196			3059
13/06/2010	331	1827	1338			3496
14/06/2010	335	1799	1125			3259
15/06/2010	331	1579	1649	18		3577
16/06/2010	315	2152	1146	13		3626
17/06/2010	320	1396	1165			2881
19/06/2010	314	1629	1274			3217
20/06/2010	326	1034	1809	2		3171
21/06/2010	335	1403	1110			2858
22/06/2010	213	335	1109			1657
23/06/2010	170	260	1066			1499
24/06/2010	170	300	1615			2128
26/06/2010	305	2503	1719			4527
27/06/2010	332	2787	1589			4710
28/06/2010	336	2770	1544			4654
29/06/2010	330	2444	1981			4757
30/06/2010	320	2762	1632			4715
01/07/2010	339	2078	2235			4653
03/07/2010	334	1949	1951			4234
04/07/2010	320	1490	2575		3	4388
05/07/2010	329	2193	1744		4	4274
06/07/2010	232	1295	1403			2930
07/07/2010	131		1450		6	1587
08/07/2010	143	210	1254			1665
10/07/2010	335	1920	927			3184
11/07/2010	340	2280	1696			4316
12/07/2010	330	2301	1482			4115
13/07/2010	325	2240	1892		1	4460
14/07/2010	327	2503	1462			4292
15/07/2010	339	2088	2278		8	4716
17/07/2010	330	1949	1774			4053

18/07/2010	339	1597	2608		1	4545
19/07/2010	330	2172	1650			4156
20/07/2010	230	922	1399			2551
21/07/2010	177		1832			2071
22/07/2010	172	270	1074			1521
24/07/2010	344	2338	1248			3935
25/07/2010	327	2708	1693			4728
26/07/2010	326	2779	1500			4610
27/07/2010	318	2585	2587			5493
28/07/2010	321	2511	1486			4323
29/07/2010	295	2055	1581			3934
31/07/2010	323	1999	1968		2	4308
01/08/2010	315	1717	2816		1	4857
02/08/2010	301	2172	1669		4	4151
03/08/2010	263	1420	1406			3089
04/08/2010	121		1323		10	1524
Grand Total	13752	80271	76030	33	40	170454

Annex # 5

Summer Game Report submitted to UNRWA on a daily basis

June 22,2010

10th Day of SG

1109 girls

335 boys

1434 children (total)

213 adults

TOTAL AUDIENCE= 1657

- 1- **In general the weather was very hot, dusty, windy, and the tent in several location was torn.**
- 2- In Khan-Younis Elementary Co. School (B)/(A), and Khan-Younis Preparatory Girls School (A)/ Mustafa Hafez Elementary Co. School, TDP actors performed the shows at playgrounds.
- 3- In Amal Preparatory Girls School and In Rafah Elementray Co.School (D), TDP actors performed in a big classroom.
- 4- In Shawakah Preparatory Girls School/ New Shawkah Preparatory Boys School, TDP actors performed in the Library Hall.
- 5- In Rafah Preparatory Boys School (A)/(D), number of children participating was not more than 40, after consultation with UNRWA official the show was postponed till tomorrow. Whilst a mattress was reported missing at location.
- 6- TDP staff informed UNRWA officials that the staff whilst loading the equipment from Rafah to locations in the north will have a two-days break. Therefore, security at sites in the north is required (an email list with location sites was sent to UNRWA officials).

Accumulative

12,921 girls

14,704 boys

27,625 children (total)

3133 adults
33 teachers
10 parents
TOTAL AUDIENCE=30,801

Annex # 6

Summer Games Report submitted on a daily basis

June 21,2010
9th Day of SG
1110 girls
1403 boys
2513 children (total)
335 adults
teachers
10 parents
TOTAL AUDIENCE=2858

- 1- HAMAS police executive forces stopped the show at Khansa' Elementary Girls School/ Rafah Elementary Girls School during the morning shift because students at a nearby High School were sitting for Tawjihi exams and accordingly HAMAS did not want any disturbance. The show resumed once students finished the exam.**
- 2- In Maghazi Preparatory Girls School, TDP had to do show under the existing tent between classrooms although TDP staff informed UNRWA official on June 20, 2010 about the problem and UNRWA official reported that engineers will install a tent.

Accumulative

11,812 girls
14,369 boys
26,181 children (total)
2920 adults
33 teachers
10 parents
TOTAL AUDIENCE=29,144

Annex # 7

Summer Games Report submitted to UNRWA on a daily basis

25 July,2010
38 Day of SG

1693 girls
2708 boys
4401 children (total)
327 adults
TOTAL AUDIENCE= 4728

1. At Jabalia Elem. Boys School (D)/(B), the actors stopped the show twice in the course of the morning show as children were impish. During the subsequent workshop, the **location manager distributed biscuits and juice for the children; accordingly “children were bored” and told them to go home. TDP reported the incidents to UNRWA officials to ensue the matter.**
In the course of the afternoon show the tent partially tumbled; TDP actors continued the performance under the sun.

Accumulative

59,694 girls
63,033 boys
122,727 children (total)

11,169 adults
33 teachers
213 parents
23 visitors
TOTAL AUDIENCE= 134,165

Annex # 8

Summer Games report submitted to the UNRWA on a daily basis

June 15, 2010
Fourth Day of SG.

1649 girls
1579 boys
3228 children (total)
331 adults
18 teachers
TOTAL AUDIENCE = 3577

Accumulative
5308 girls
6755 boys
12.063 children (total)
1310 adults
18 teachers
TOTAL AUDIENCE=13.391

1. We sent email to UNRWA employees regarding the three schools that have insufficient Tent to encompass all children. We did not receive any reply by the end of the working day.
2. We conferred with UNRWA employee that the distribution of certificates on June 16 will not affect our work.
3. **We are still receiving conflicting numbers from location directors as to**

the number of participating children e.g number of location director for June 12 at Beit Hanoun Elemnetray Co. school is 160 and TDP number to the same location is 230.

=====

2010 SGs
Lessons Learned

No.	Activity	Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommendation
7	<i>Theatre Day Productions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TDP provided entertainment, cognitive stimulation and fun atmosphere to children. - Theatre Day productions budget was sufficient. - Most of children like theatre shows. - Quick participation of Theatre Day productions in the Final Event in spite of not agreed in the contract. - Change some statements (educational) in the location managers' notes and comments. - Some parents attended the shows and they liked it.. - Participation of TDP contributed in identifying the importance of the theatre and drama in promoting the citizenship. - Preparation and training the selected animators at acting and drama in very short time (7 days). - Cooperation of RSSP officers with TDP. - CRSSP and some of RSSP staff attended the show before their presentation to children for approval. - TDP adhered and committed to SGs rules and pre- set plan. - Acceptance of TDP from many SGs staff and parents. - Easy and quick communication with SGs management. - Voluntary participation in the final event, in spite of agreed in the contract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shortage of females' numbers affected the participation in females' locations. - Working in hot weather without shades to cover the theatre and the children sitting. - Working two shifts daily was exhausted. - Insufficient number of Female actresses led to exhaustion of the female team. - Difficulty in transferring and moving the theatre. - Unavailability of theatre places in some locations. - Children sitting place prevented some of them especially who sat in the back from listening and watching the show. - Not allowing males and females to participate together in acting led to difficulty in performing the shows. - Weak awareness of locations managers, animators and guards by the nature of TDP work. - Not providing stores for keeping Theatre equipments in school locations. - No cooperation of many location managers and animators with Theatre Day Team. - Some parents complained about the high voice and noise which 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TDP should be encouraged to participate in 2011 SGs and increase its shows and team. - Introduce drama and other products of TDP by the TDP staff to all SGs staff during training. - TDP and UNRWA should participate in one agreed evaluation of shows. - Plays should suit the different age group with more concentration of cognitive stimulation. - TDP shows should not interrupt other activities by increasing the coordination between the LM and TDP. - Plays should be revised and evaluated from SGs management team before implementation. - Children should be encouraged to participate in plays and imitate the actors. - Invite parents and families to attend the plays. - Plays should concentrate more in the promotion of human rights and citizenship among children and SGs staff. - Shades for the TDP team and children should be provided. - Theatre teams' number should be increased. - Mobile theatres stages and transportation means should be

		<p>between UNRWA and TDP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TDP covered SGs locations with variety of shows. - TDP evaluated their shows. 	<p>interrupted their children study for secondary (Tawjehi) exams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Male TDP staff was not allowed to enter female locations. - Unavailability of TDP in beach locations. - UNRWA did not participate directly with the TDP own evaluation. 	<p>provided for transferring theatres stages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stores in school locations should be provided for TDP. - Sound system should be controlled more to avoid annoying neighbors. - The entrance of TDP male staff to female SGs locations and vice should be reconsidered. - Children could be trained on acting to let them be able to act a play in the final festival. - Sessions and workshops should be held including SGs management team and other UNRWA departments on theater shows preparations for 2011 SGs. - TDP should be implemented in beach locations - Variety and objectivity in shows should be considered.
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