Success Story
PALESTINE 2016

Asserting the Right to Education of Disabled People

The Palestinian Coalition for Education for all launches a Campaign to Raise the Budget for Education in General and for People with Disabilities in Particular

Since its establishment in 2007 as an initiative of the Teacher Creativity Center, the Palestinian Education Coalition succeeded in weaving ample and strong relationships with various key players in the field of education. The coalition maintains positive and productive relations with decision makers and members of the Legislative Council, as well as with the Ministry of Education and the media, and is considered to be a reference point concerning education issues.

The coalition is considered to be an important player in the educational arena, and is invited to all conferences and activities organized by the Ministry of Education. Similarly, the Ministry of Education at all levels, including teachers, schools and students, is invited and represented in all activities and actions organized by the coalition, including the Global Action Week, which has attained the participation of 1 million student every year since started to be implemented by the coalition.
Moreover the coalition was able to involve community organizations, as parents associations and school community committees, which expanded the public reach of the coalition. All these factors have opened the space for the coalition to act as a leading body in various education issues at the policies level, as for example:

- As a result of the coalition’s active role, the Ministry of Education established the National Team for Education for All, in which the coalition is a prominent member.
- Palestinian educational coalition's efforts have contributed to the launch of inclusive education policy in Palestine, where the coalition concentrates its efforts on the rights of persons with disabilities to education.
- Palestinian educational coalition is currently leading the institutions of civil society in the preparation and writing of shadow reports concerning the agreements signed by the State of Palestine, as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- Putting the issue of education budgeting at the top priority of the Palestinian society.

But above all, the coalition’s efforts have been directed to put the issue of education budgeting at the top priority of the Palestinian society, and has been a pivotal issue in the last years.

From year 2000 to 2010 the increase in the budget for education was around 1-1.4% of the general budget of the Palestinian government.

Since 2010 up to now, the coalition carried out several activities and multiple efforts demanding a higher budget for education, and these efforts have achieved a substantial
increase in the education budget attaining an increase of 4% during the period 2010-2016. In 2010 the budget for education was 15% of the general budget, while in 2016 it become 19%.

As previously mentioned, the coalition is interested in raising the budget to secure the rights of persons with disabilities to education, and within this context, several workshops were organized to discuss the Ministry of Education’s budgeting processes and allocations from the perspective of right to education of disabled people, the status of public schools in terms of their accessibility to children with disabilities, adequacy of sanitary facilities, qualified teachers and ensuring equal access to education for girls.

Along with organizations like UNRWA, Red Crescent Society, and several other organizations, the coalition prepared a policy paper on this issue and requested the Ministry of Education to attend an accountability session to discuss the issue. It was performed with the attendance of representatives of the Ministry of Education including the deputy minister Dr. Basri Saleh on the 7th of November 2016.

At the end of this session Dr. Saleh decided to form a committee composed of the Ministry and the Coalition, in charge of reviewing the policies related to the early childhood program which as the policy paper presented shows, lacks any specific reference on how the inclusion of children with disabilities will be achieved, and to present recommendations for the modification of the program so that it integrates children with disabilities in the education process.