

Exchange Program Between Women Centers **Comprehensive Report**

First Exchange: 16th December. Women Center Dura
Second Exchange: 17th December. Women Center Auja
Third Exchange: 18th December. Women Center Burqin

Submitted to: The Palestinian Center for Rapprochement
Between People



December 30th ,2020

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Palestinian Traditional Dish- Al Rshoof made by Al Auja Women Center

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The Women Center activities is implemented in the framework of two projects:

- My heritage! My identity! : EU funded project started in January 2018. Until June 2020, the project will be jointly implemented by 4 partners: - AFRAT Center - France (www.afrat.com) - BU, Institute for Community Partnership - Palestine (www.bethlehem.edu) - Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between People - Palestine (www.pcr.ps) - Tétraktys - France (www.tetraktys-association.org). “My Heritage! My Identity!” project aims to contribute in preserving and promoting heritage located along the Masar Ibrahim, community-based walking trail in Palestine, to enhance Palestinian citizenship and identity.

- AFD funded project “Masar Ibrahim, a sustainable and relevant tool for local development in Palestine”. This program is the pursuit of the project to develop a hiking path in Palestine initiated in 2013 by Masar Ibrahim Al Khalil www.masaribrahim.ps , AFRAT and Tétraktys.

This program aims at promoting Palestinian heritage, supporting economic development in marginalized territories, strengthening the capacities of local stakeholders, encouraging links and social cohesion between communities and deconstructing prejudices about Palestine.

1.2 About Specific Activity “Women’s Centers Exchange” Activities

In Palestine, women play a significant role in many traditions, as well as the maintenance, vitality and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. They are the keepers of the ancestral knowledge and immaterial heritage such as handicrafts, textile production, pottery, food production and culinary techniques, as well as dance and songs. They often are in charge of the traditions and safeguard knowledge in the more intimate family realm, but as well often in more creative, religious, public or official domains. Therefore, Palestinian women are often best-suited to increase awareness and appreciation of traditions in their environments through the revival of oral histories and culinary techniques in everyday life.

Within the framework of “My Heritage! My Identity!” project is planned workshops that aim to empower women and encourage them to promote and protect Palestinian heritage. The project planned to involve around 180 women related to women centers located along Masar Ibrahim Al-Khalil trail in these activities. During the trainings, women from different communities of *Masar Ibrahim* trail gathered together in order to work on topics such as cultural or heritage storytelling, promoting cultural heritage sites in the community, gastronomy, local food productions and handicrafts.

As most of the “My Heritage! My Identity!” project’s activities, these workshops served to enhance the social cohesion between the participants, which were chosen according to their social backgrounds and geographic areas, to create a diverse group of women representing various views and traditions. The 3 exchange programs were implemented in three host women centers (Dura , Al-Auja and Burqin). The exchange program was the same for each place but adapted to each village local context. The training was coordinated by PCR and MIAK and was facilitated by a Palestinian Facilitator.



Dura Women Center Field Visit December 16th,2019



Al-Auja Women Center Field Visit December 17th,2019



Burqin Women Center Field Visit December 18th,2019

2. Overview

Three women exchange visits were conducted in three different active women centers along Masar Ibrahim. The first women exchange took place in Dura-Hebron in Dura Cooperative Association for Food Production targeting women from the southern part of the West Bank. This exchange aim is to discover Masar Ibrahim and its Heritage sites, promote the Palestinian cultural heritage and to exchange visits between the women centers along Masar Ibrahim, in each activity the women will present their local heritage and promote the local culture by using the Awareness tools designed by the project which includes six main topics agreed upon by the Palestinian and French academics universities researches conducted for “My Heritage! My Identity!” project as follows:

1. “Folklore tales and other oral expressions in Palestine” by Huda Odeh and Peter Laban.
2. “Architecture and ways of living: traditional and modern Palestinian villages and cities” by Romeo Carabelli.
3. “Junction 60/437: a study of landscape rupture in the West Bank” by Ahmad Al Aqra.
4. “Introducing olive culture in Palestine” by Maissoun Sharkawi.
5. “The Maqamat as a place of popular practices: evolution and diversity.” by Marion Lecoquierre.
6. "Necessity of water and problems: source of life, claim for heritage?", by Marwan Ghanem

These awareness tools were summarized during the events as follows:

1. Olive tree
2. Maqamat
3. Terraces/Sanasel in Arabic
4. Gastronomy
5. Tales/Hikayat
6. Visual representation/Jidariyat in Arabic



2.1 Dura Women Center Exchange Program:

Accordingly, the first event was conducted on 16th December 2019 at Dura's Women Center. The participants are EU Project Team and MIAK ,Program facilitator ,Dura Mayor and 63 women attendees from the following villages :Dura, Battir , Burqin , Abaidiyah , Tqoua, Rabood and Beit Sahour (See Attendance sheet Appendix 1).The majority of women were in their mid forties and fifties from the following women centers: Bido Women Center, Rabood Women's Center, Canaan Sons Association for Heritage Preservation, Reef Women Center, Women Work Unit at Ministry of Religious Affairs Dura, Abu Ziad Cultural Center, Dura Association for Agricultural Production, Women Club- Beit Sahour, Burqin Women Center, Abediya Female Youth Center, Tqoua Women Center.

2.2 Activity Approach:

The activity approach was based on the principle of sharing the knowledge of the local heritage by Dura women with cooperation of Dura Municipality.

Step One: To emphasize the importance of tradition in hospitality; the local women of Dura welcomed the attendees from other areas by a traditional welcoming greeting which has been part of the Palestinian tradition for many years before. The tradition includes presenting a local dessert

with coffee during which the host welcomed the visitors in their town. During this step the facilitator divided the attendees into six groups of ten each.

Step Two: An ice breaking exercise was conducted in which the facilitator used a technique where each of the attendees shared her name and her place of origin with the rest of the attendees. The facilitator used this opportunity to get the women share information about their understanding of the awareness tools and how they define heritage and personal identity. The exercise was designed to assess women level of understanding on the issue of heritage preservation including their perception of the tools which were introduced during that exercise.

Step Three: The attendees visited the tomb/Maqam of the prophet Noah as part of the awareness tool of local tangible and intangible heritage. Also, they visited Alrazy school, the adjacent school which is an elegant and attractive building, dating back to before the British mandate as part of the local tangible heritage in Dura. The tour guide provided the attendees with the brief on history behind the two heritage sites.

Step Four: Storytelling/Hikaya tool was implemented by having one of the local women share the story of a Ābu Zayd al-Hilālī which was an 11th-century Arab leader and hero of the 'Amirid tribe of Banu Hilal. On the orders of the Ismaili Fatimid caliph, Abu Zayd moved his tribe to Tunisia via Egypt to punish the Zirids for adopting Sunniism. The Banu Hilali weakened largely the Zirid state and sacked Kairouan. The event was fictionalized in the epic Taghribat Bani Hilal. In the epic it is said that he was murdered by his rival Dhieb bin Ghanim. The importance of this story lays in the correlation it has with the suffering of women in patriarchic society in which women pay an unfair price. The story also carries the resemblance to the Palestinian struggle against occupation in which a legend is always needed to fight for the rights of the suppressed.

Step Five: The local women shared some of their locally made art crafts which included different embroidery work, mud and wool.

Step Six: The tool of traditional dish was used focusing on Dura gastronomy in which local cuisine was shared over lunch with the attendees. The main dish was the traditional maftool served in different recipes.



Dura Ice breaking Exercise

2.3 Discussions:

The facilitator conducted an open discussion between all different attendees on the issue of the awareness tools and its importance:

1. In preserving and promoting heritage
2. Women's significant role in preserving heritage
3. Overcoming prejudices and tolerance and acceptance of the other
4. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically

5. Sustainable development using women networks.

The facilitator observed the nature of the discussion to test the above listed items so as to evaluate and analyze their responses. Another tool was used in which simple questions mainly closed ended questions were conducted to measure the base line and common denominator between of the participant's level of awareness on the listed issues above. Upon observation the facilitator concluded that with the start of the workshop women participants level of awareness could be measured as being fair. Nevertheless, it appeared that there was a common denominator between the women participants on the following issues:

- Need for self-expression:
- There was keenness on the importance of traditional songs
- There was keenness as well on social engagement
- The keywords shared by the participants included but not limited to the following: Holiness, land, struggle, occupation, resilience, empowerment, strength, Palestinian identity, ancestors.

2.4 Analysis and conclusions:

It appeared that awareness of the importance of olive oil tree and Terrace /Sanasel in preserving Palestinian heritage is highly recognized by most of attendees .Since olive oil was correlated to the struggle against occupation and as a simple of resilience both from religious and social point of view .Sanasal on the other hand was recognized as a tool of preserving Palestinian identity of the landscape since it was commonly believed between participants both expressed in discussions as well as their answers of the questionnaires that was conducted before and after the workshop. The food is also strong item which brought women together as another important awareness tool on heritage. It was noticed that each village representatives were keen on singing the traditional songs from their region and that was received as a form of competitive nature which could be focused on in future activities. It was noticed that the shrines/Maqamat were not seen as a core issue for heritage preservation and popular practices. A brief history of the region can lead us to understand that some religious sects in Palestine see the Maqams as forbidden places of worship since it idealizes that individual and that contradicts some core issues within their ideologies.

In Conclusion

1. The importance of awareness tools in Preserving and Promoting heritage appears to be in line with the local community consensus which believes that by preserving the olive tree they preserve their identity as Palestinian people. Terrace/Sanasal in Arabic is also seen as another tool and there is consensus on its importance. The traditional songs and storytelling

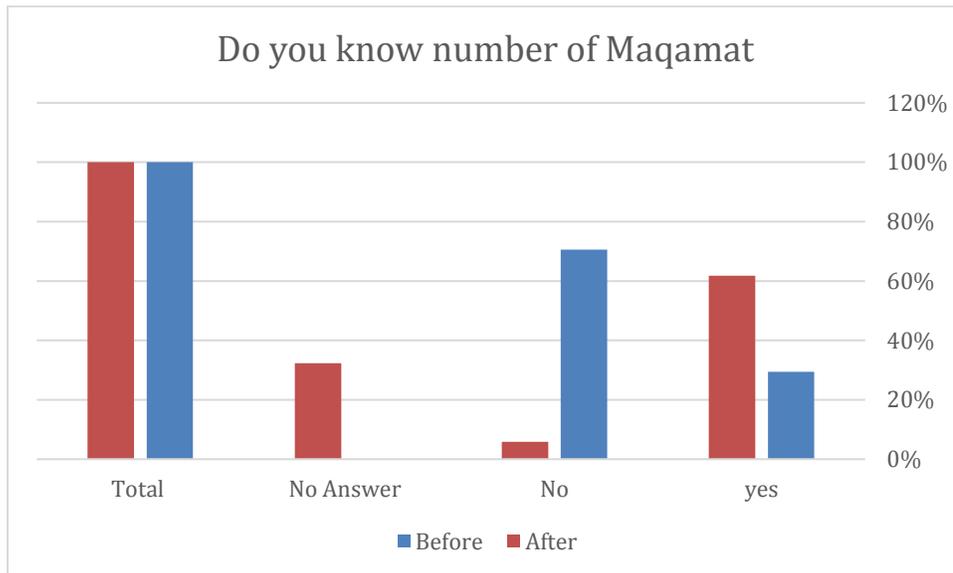
appear to be more of a private thing to each group and seen as a way of self-expression. Gastronomy is accepted as part of the common Palestinian tangible and intangible heritage and its common to all participants. The Jidaryat /art and Maqamat don't appear to be taking a sizeable share in the heritage preservation since most of women did not appear to be keen on this tool in specific.

2. The importance of awareness tools for Women's significant role in preserving heritage :It appears that these women could lead an initiative with the objective of preserving Palestinian local heritage (The initiative could be based on the awareness tools) .As mentioned by UNESCO SYNTHESIS REPORT ACTIVITIES IN THE DOMAIN OF WOMEN AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE (2001) Women are central to the maintenance and vitality of cultural heritage and diversity worldwide.
3. Overcoming prejudices and tolerance and acceptance of the other: It appears that more focus on the acceptance of the other should be integrated in the program upcoming activities in order to have better social cohesion. The fact that there was problem in communication mainly listening to the other, in which every attendee was trying hard to express herself than listen to what other says. This is a clear indicator that there was relatively weak social cohesion and tolerance.
4. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically: Currently the empowerment appears to be superficial empowerment since many of these women spoke of continuous state of suffering and lack of clear vision in terms of future development. An example of economic empowerment is using the heritage for local economic development such as marketing food products as done by women in Dura and their success story in relation to producing Maftool and selling their products as part of economic empowerment for women working in the center.
5. Sustainable development using women networks: It appears that future sustainability depends completely on the level of sophistication of a potential women network.



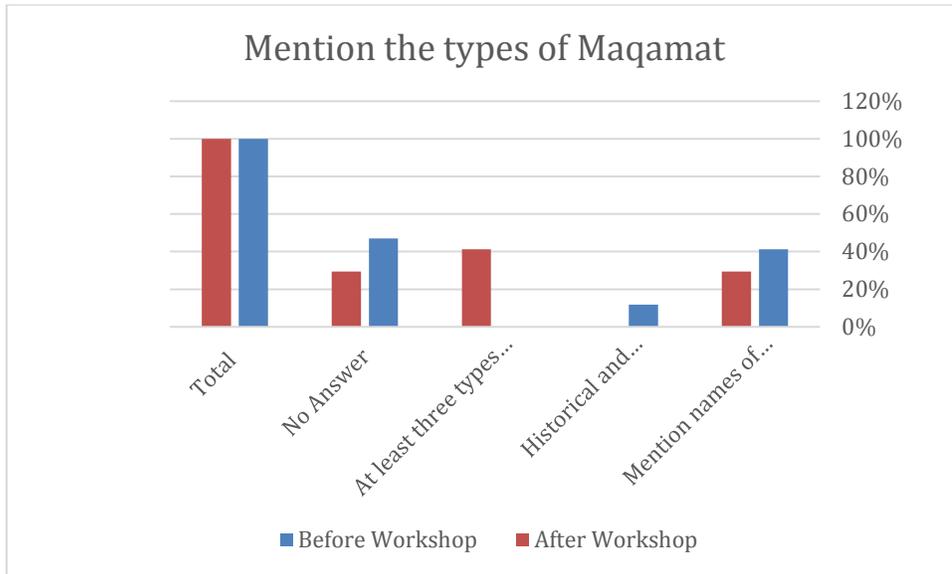
Discussing Awareness tool related to olive tree

2.5 Dura Sample /Pre and Post Questionnaire Analysis:

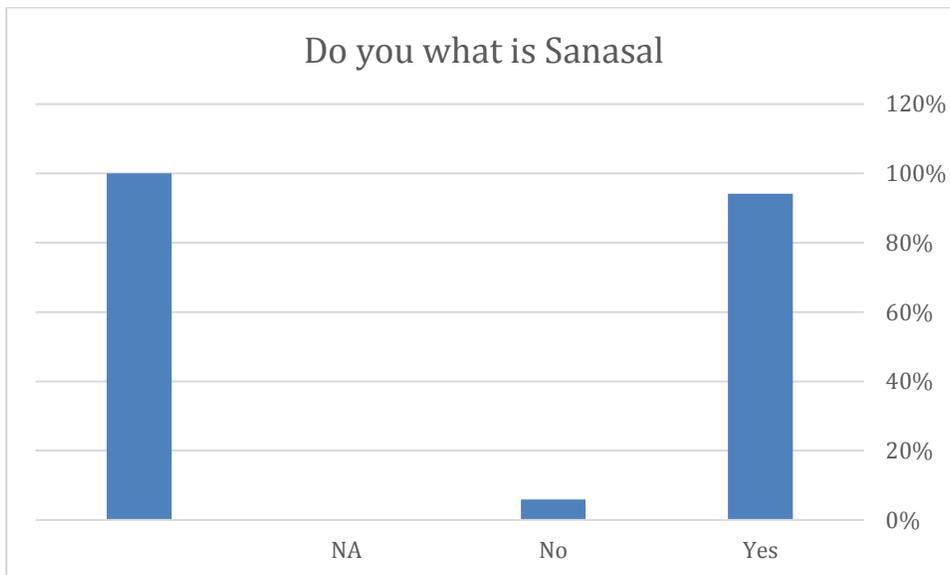


One of the questions was to answer with yes or no if they know the number of Shrines/Maqamat in Palestine and to specify the number ?As its clear in the chart , almost all women were not able to specify the number of maqamat in Palestine before the workshop .After the workshop 62% of attendees were able to specify that the number of maqamat is 2000 .

Another example related to Maqamat,at the end of the workshop around 41 % of the attendees answered the types of maqamat right by mentioning at least three types of Maqamat. Mainly Maqamat related to number 40, women's maqamat and maqamat for prophets and saints. Before the workshop 41% of attendees mixed the names of some maqamat with types and around 12% said that the types of maqamat are religious and cultural maqamat.

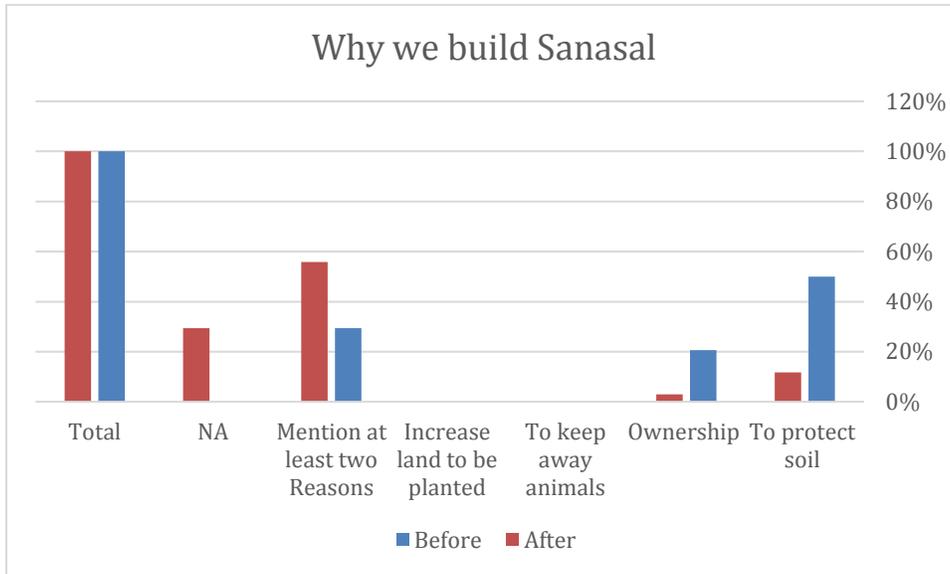


94% of the women knew what is meant by Terrace/ Sanasel and mentioned at least one benefit of the Sansel.

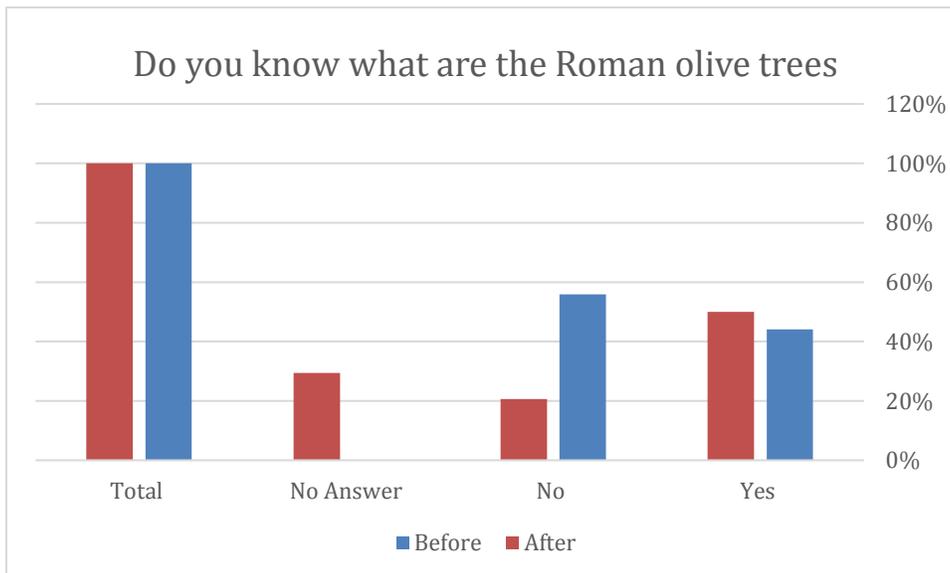


At the end of the workshop at least 56% of attendees were able to mention all reasons behind building the Sanasel. Women already were aware of the sanasel and reasons behind building sanasel since 50 % mentioned that the reason is to protect soil and 21% mentioned ownership

and 29% mentioned both reasons .



A good number of women knew a lot about the olive trees. As seen in the chart 44% of attendees were aware of the Roman Olive trees before the workshop. At the end 50% answered that these trees refer to old trees in Palestine.



When measuring the Arts/Jidaryat it was clear that 100% of the answers were ambiguous and confused before and after the workshop. We could deduce based on the conversations and sessions conducted that many of these women are not aware of the specific objectives behind the project.

When women were asked about main dishes and food in the Palestinian traditional kitchen all of them were able to mention at least three items and more before and after workshop.

The question related to the well-known traditional story (The bird says) no one answered the question except for one woman who mentioned that this is part of Palestinian traditional cultural series of stories. This is because most of the Hikayat were ignored over the past thirty plus years due to many circumstances which surrounded the Palestinian community. These circumstances kept the Palestinian community more focused on self-preservation than heritage preservation.

Note: Based on the Post questionnaires about the workshop evaluation most of the attendees had positive impression about the event and asked for more such activities and workshops .They liked the ice breaking exercise (troughing a ball and answering questions written on the ball) since it gave every women the opportunity to say her opinion and share data with others. Most of the attendees indicated their interest in having continuous data about the project .

3.Overview

3.1 Al-Auja Exchange Program:

The second exchange event was conducted on 17th December 2019 at Auja Women Association Center in the presence of EU Project Team and MIAK (4 members) ,Program facilitator , 56 women attendees from the following villages :Dura, Thahriya , Alsika , Abaidiyah , Dar Salah ,Alshawawrah Jericho, Beit Sahour and Al-Auja (See Attendance sheet Appendix 1).The Majority of women were in their middle forties and fifties.

3.2 Activity Approach:

The activity approach was based on the principle of sharing the knowledge of the local heritage by Al-Auja women with cooperation of Al Auja Municipality.

Step One: To emphasize the importance of tradition in hospitality the local women of Al-Auja welcomed the attendees from other areas following a traditional welcoming greeting which has been part of the Palestinian tradition for many years before .The tradition includes presenting a local sweet with a cup of coffee during which the host welcomed the visitors in their town .During this step, the facilitator divided the attendees into six groups of approximately ten each. Each group of ten sit on chairs in a circle shape.

Step Two: An ice breaking exercise was conducted in which the facilitator used a technique were each of the attendees shared her name and her place of origin with the rest of the attendees. The facilitator used this opportunity to get the attendees share information about their understanding of the awareness tools and how they define heritage and personal identity.

Step Three: Facilitator requested women to listen carefully to keywords used during describing heritage ,identity and awareness tools during ice breaking exercise .Another exercise followed aimed to have discussion groups and come up with an illustration for Heritage and present it to all attendees .Interesting answers came as follows:

- A group draw an olive tree representing heritage with its different roots and leaves.
- A group draw a Palestinian dress with embroidery stiches representing heritage as if a traditional dress with its different stiches represent Heritage.
- A group explained that heritage is peace and security.

Sep Four: The local women from Al-Auja did a demonstration on how they use banana dry leaves to do masterpieces. Then went through the steps of using dry leaves, first by separating each strip of banana leaves, then soaking into water and finally producing baskets with different shapes and sizes depending on leaves and model requested. Hosted women participated in the work and did some of the steps and shared their experience based on their local culture

Step four: This step aimed to focus on Al-Auja gastronomy in which local cuisine was shared over early lunch with the attendees. The main dish was the traditional Rshoof and Qidra cooked based on Al-Auja traditional recipes.

Step Five: The attendees visited Al-Auja spring and walked for around 15 minutes to reach the spring. The tour guide provided the attendees with the brief history about this spring, area and name. During walking women shared different stories and ideas about the place and memory of the spring before it was dried partially. The hiking included using the Storytelling/Hikaya tool by sharing stories and hikayat and remembering. It appears that the stories are distorted and reflect a fragmented recollection of memory which again fails in line with the fact that Palestinians for the past thirty plus years were busy focusing on self-preservation more than on heritage. This gap in the memory has resulted in different versions of the story told.



Al-Auja Awareness tools group discussion

3.3 Discussions:

The facilitator conducted an open discussion between all different attendees on the issue of the awareness tools and its importance:

1. In preserving and promoting heritage
2. Women's significant role in preserving heritage
3. Overcoming prejudices and tolerance and acceptance of the other

4. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically
5. Sustainable development using women networks.

The facilitator observed the nature of the discussion to test the above listed items so as to evaluate and analyze their responses. Another tool was used in which simple questions mainly closed ended questions were conducted to measure the base line and common denominator between the participants level of awareness on the listed issues above. Upon observation the facilitator concluded that with the start of the workshop women participants level of awareness could be measured as being fair. Nevertheless, it appeared that there was a common denominator between the women participants on the following issues:

- Need for self-expression:
- Higher tendency between the group to listen than to share.
- Keen for information and knowledge
- Need for business opportunity
- There was keenness as well on social engagement
- The keywords shared by the participants included but not limited to the following: Inheritance, Peace, security, Palestinian dress, traditions, development, Holiness, land, struggle, occupation, resilience, empowerment, strength, Palestinian identity, ancestors, beauty, hand crafts, business opportunity.

3.4 Analysis and conclusions:

As the previous session, it appeared that awareness of the importance of olive oil tree and Terrace/Sanasal in preserving Palestinian heritage is highly recognized by most of attendees. The food is also strong item which brought women together as another important awareness tool on heritage. On the other hand, the Maqamat /shrines, traditional songs, stories and visual representation art (Jidaryat in Arabic) were not seen as a core issue for heritage preservation and popular practices.

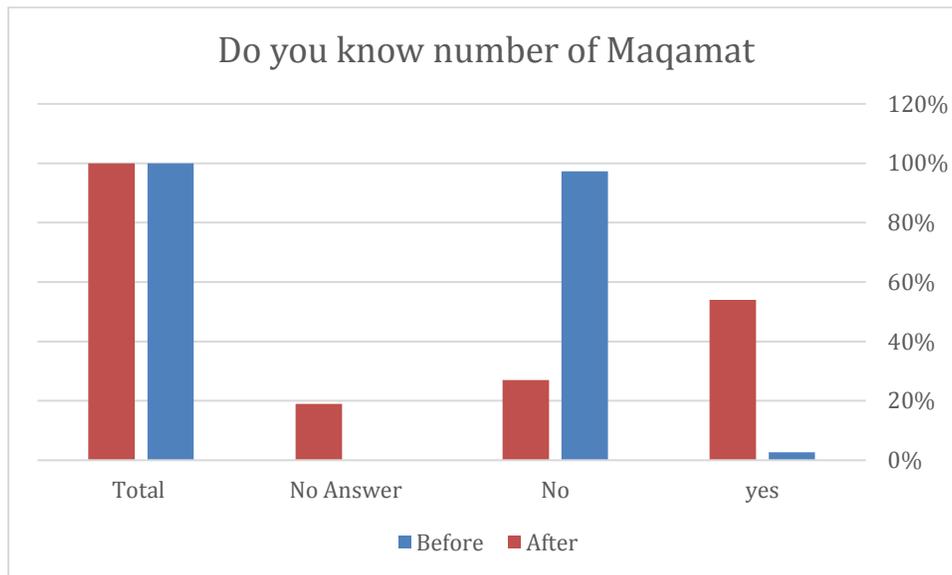
In Conclusion

1. The importance of awareness tools in Preserving and Promoting heritage appears to be in line with the local community consensus which believes that by preserving the olive tree they preserve their identity as Palestinian people. Terrace/Sanasal in Arabic is also seen as another tool and there is consensus on its importance. Gastronomy is accepted as part of the common Palestinian tangible and intangible heritage and its common to all participants.

The art and Maqamat don't appear to be taking a sizeable share in the heritage preservation since most of women did not appear to be keen on this tool in specific.

2. The importance of awareness tools Women's significant role in preserving heritage: It appears that these women too could lead an initiative with the objective of preserving Palestinian local heritage.
3. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically: Currently the empowerment appears to be superficial empowerment since many of these women spoke of continuous state of suffering and lack of clear vision in terms future development.
5. Sustainable development using women networks: It appears that future sustainability depends completely on the level of sophistication of a potential women network.

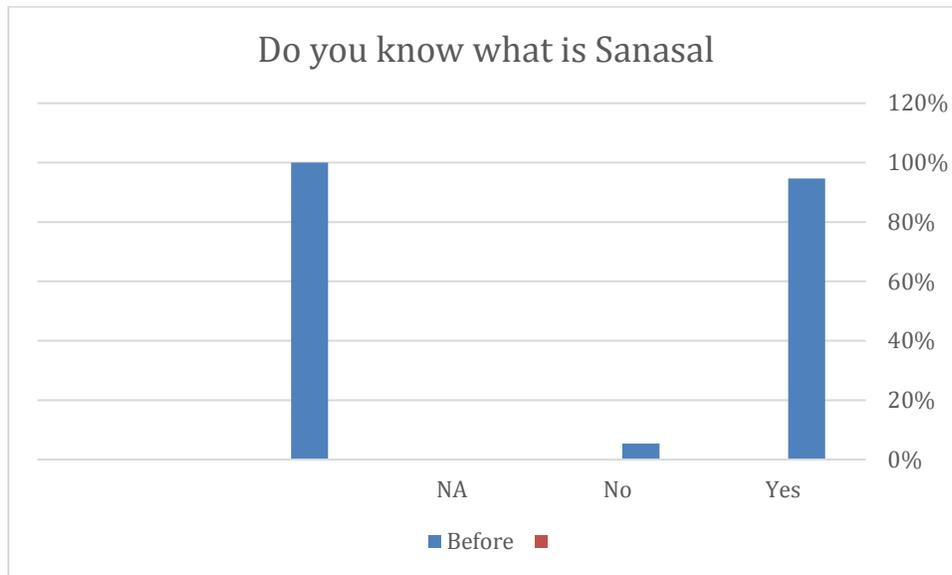
3.5 Al-Auja sample /Pre and Post Questionnaire Analysis:



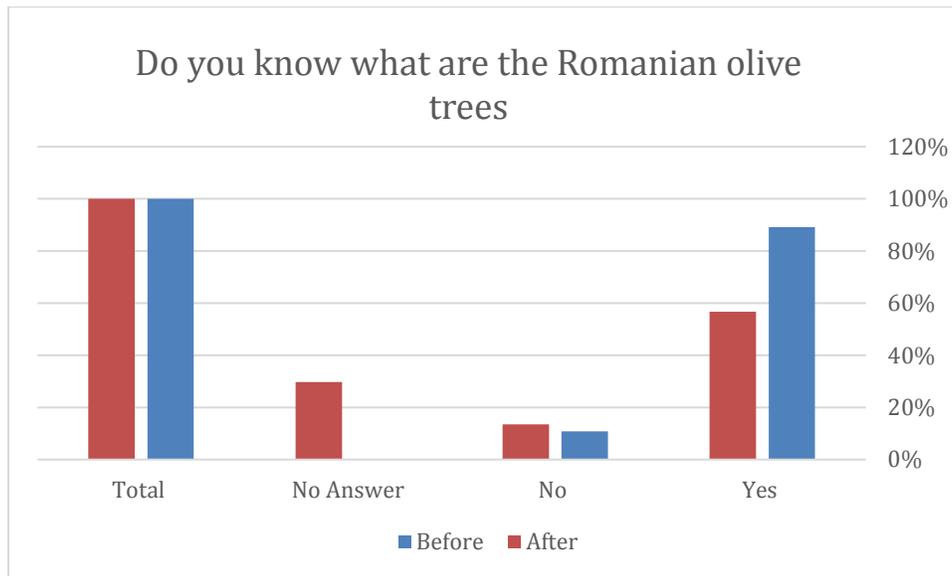
One of the questions was to answer with yes or no if they know the number of Maqamat in Palestine and to specify the number ?As its clear in the chart , almost all did not know the number of maqamat in Palestine before the workshop .After the workshop 54% of attendees who answered the surveys knew that the number of maqamat is 2000 where they mentioned the right answer in their answers.

Women answers related to Maqamat question show that they were able to identify at least three names of the maqamat in Palestine (Most answers included Nabi Musa and Ibrahim).

95% of the women knew what is meant by Terrace/Sanasal and mentioned at least one benefit of the Sansal which is related to the fact that women come from agricultural environment.



89% of women knew a lot about olive trees .As seen in the chart attendees were aware of the Ramanaina Olive trees before the workshop. At the end 57% answered what is meant exactly by Romanian trees.



When measuring the visual representation /Jidaryat we find that most of the answers were ambiguous and confused but obviously they were able to relate it to drawings after the workshop and not to Apartheid wall due to resemble in words in Arabic language (Jidaryat similar to Jidar which means wall).When women were asked about main dishes and food in the Palestinian traditional kitchen all of them were able to mention at least three items and more before and after workshop.

The question related to the well-known traditional story (The bird says) women in this workshop were more aware about Palestinian traditional stories.

Note: Based on the Post questionnaires about the workshop evaluation most of the attendees had positive impression about the event and asked for more such activities and workshops .They liked the participatory approach in gaining knowledge and appreciated the group discussions .Most of the attendees indicated their interest in having continuous data about the project .They mentioned their interest to have more capacity building workshops .

4. Overview

4.1 Burqin Exchange Program:

The third exchange event was conducted on 18th December 2019 at Burqin ladies Society. The participants are EU Project Team and MIAK (3 members) ,Program facilitator , 62 women attendees form the following villages :Burqin, Jerusalem, Beit Sahour ,Biddo ,Beit Soreek,Alazerria. (See Attendance sheet Annex 3).The Majority of women were in their middle forties and fifties.s



Burqin Two groups exercise conduct a debate about Heritage preservation

4.2 Activity Approach:

The activity approach was based on the principle of sharing the knowledge of the local heritage by Burqin women with other participants.

Step One: To emphasize the importance of tradition in hospitality the local women of Burqin received the attendees from other areas following a traditional welcoming greeting which has been part of the local tradition for many years before similar to their grandparents. The tradition includes presenting a local sweet with a cup of coffee during which the host welcomed the visitors in their town. During this step the facilitator divided the attendees into six groups of ten each. Each group of ten sit on a table.

Step Two: An ice breaking exercise was conducted in which the facilitator divided the attendees into two groups to conduct a debate in the aim of Increasing Women' confidence, poise, and self-esteem. Providing an engaging, active, women-centered activity and improving rigorous higher order and critical thinking skills. The debate was that one group is with preserving heritage as is with zero change or preserving heritage by developing and tailoring as appropriate. One woman representing the group spoke about their reasons and evidences.

Step Three: The facilitator explained the awareness tools and linked it with the previous exercise and ideas. The main explanation was related to using these tools in development plans.

Step Four: The field visit was conducted after discussion to two major sites in Burqin which are Burqin church and Maqam sheikh Saba. The first site and most important site is Burqin Church or Church of St George is a Greek Orthodox church established during the Byzantine period and located in the Palestinian West Bank town of Burqin. It is considered to be the fourth holiest Christian holy place and the third-oldest church in the world. This is related to the miracle happened at that place with the 10 lepers who were cured by Jesus. Another site is the Saba' shrine at the hill which was newly renovated by the municipality. No common story appears to be shared by local community on the history of the location therefore no common tradition appears to be present.

Step Five This step aimed to focus on Burqin gastronomy in which local cuisine was shared over early lunch with the attendees. The main dish was the traditional Msakhan and eggplant dish cooked based on Burqin traditional recipes.

Step Six: Women saw the handcrafts and products demonstrated by Burqin women in an exhibition room. Some women learned about their products and other even bought some of the food products and accessories made with the Palestinian embroidery.

4.3 Discussions:

The facilitator conducted an open discussion between all different attendees on the issue of the awareness tools and its importance:

1. In preserving and promoting heritage
2. Women's significant role in preserving heritage
3. Overcoming prejudices and tolerance and acceptance of the other
4. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically
5. Sustainable development using women networks.

The facilitator observed the nature of the discussion and concluded that on the issue of intangible heritage some were in support of the need for heritage to be dynamic in nature and others believe it must be static so as to preserve it. Their level of awareness on either side of the discussion appears to be superficial and not based on scientific understanding of the differences. The purpose of the awareness tool and how it should be utilized require a higher level of engagement to reach a point of common understanding between women. Also, it appeared that there was a common denominator between the women participants on the following issues:

- Need for self-expression:
- Fair listening skills
- Keen for information and knowledge
- Need for business opportunity
- Keen to understand women role in relation to heritage and development.
- The keywords shared by the participants included but not limited to the following: Peace, security, Palestinian dress, embroidery, traditions, development, Holiness, land, struggle, occupation, resilience, empowerment, strength, Palestinian identity, ancestors, beauty, hand crafts, business opportunity.



Burqin Success Story

4.4 Analysis and conclusions:

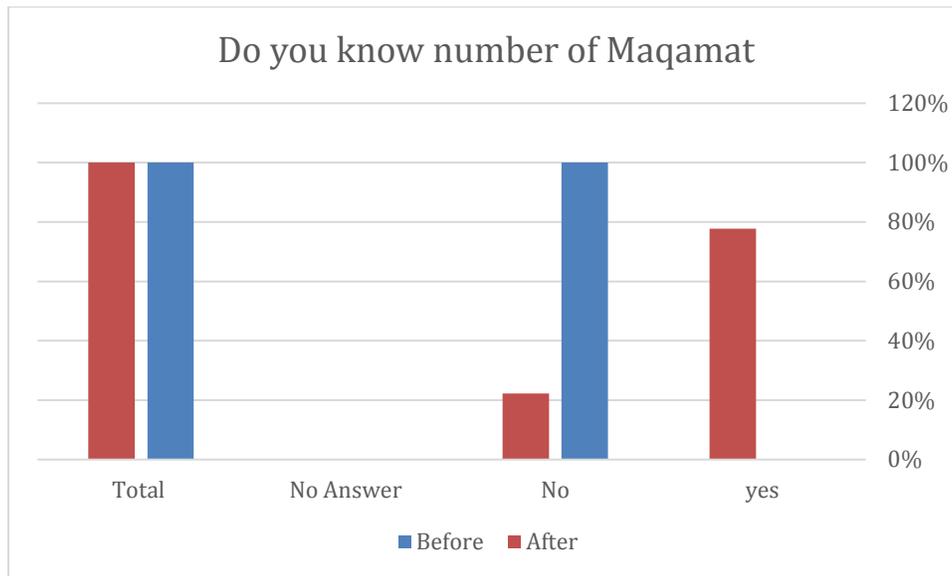
Awareness of the importance of olive oil tree, Sanasal and gastronomy in preserving Palestinian heritage is highly recognized by most of attendees. It was noticed that the shrines/Maqamat ,stories and arts were not seen as a core issue for heritage preservation and popular practices.

In Conclusion

1. The importance of awareness tools in Preserving and Promoting heritage appears to be in line with the local community consensus which believes that by preserving the olive tree they preserve their identity as Palestinian people.

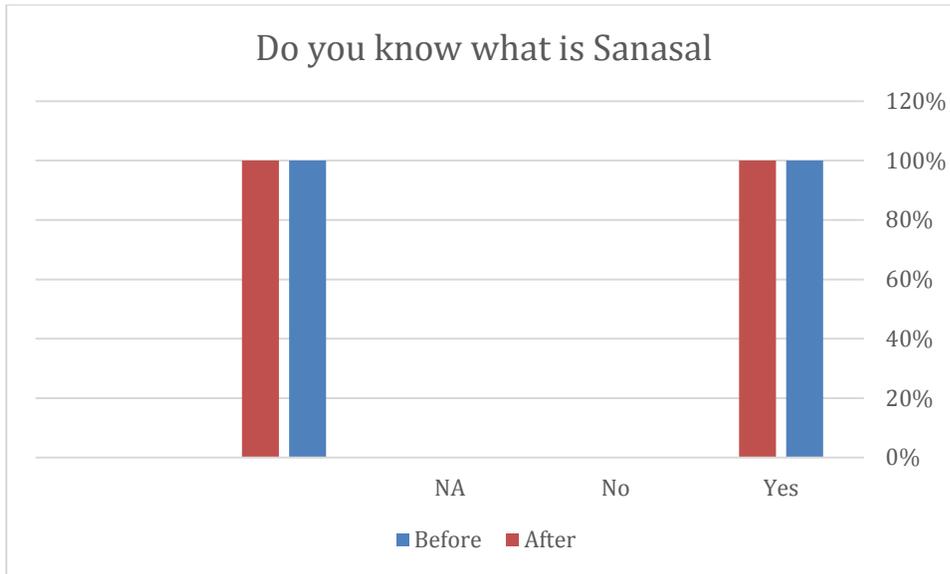
2. The importance of awareness tools Women's significant role in preserving heritage :It appears that these women could lead an initiative with the objective of preserving Palestinian local heritage .
3. Overcoming prejudices and tolerance and acceptance of the other: It appears that more focus on the acceptance of the other should be integrated in the program upcoming activities in order to have better social cohesion.
4. Women empowerment with all dimensions social, economically politically and psychologically: Currently the empowerment appears to be superficial empowerment since many of these women spoke of continuous state of suffering and lack of clear vision in terms future development.
5. Sustainable development using women networks: It appears that future sustainability depends completely on the level of sophistication of a potential women network.

4.5 Burqin sample /Pre and Post Questionnaire Analysis:

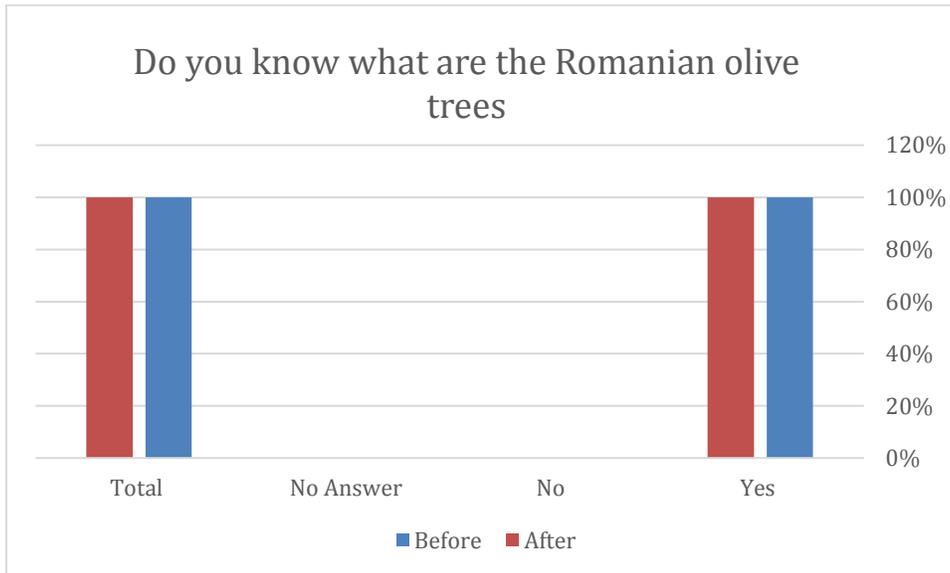


One of the questions was to answer with yes or no if they know the number of Maqamat in Palestine and to specify the number ?As its clear in the chart , almost all did not know the number of maqamat in Palestine before the workshop and after the workshop 78% of attendees who answered the surveys knew that the number of maqamat is 2000 and were able to mention the right answer. Women answers related to Maqamat question shows that they were able to identify at least three names of the maqamat in Palestine (Most answers included Nabi Musa and Shiek Saba Maqam that was visited on that day).

100% of the women knew what is Terrace/ Sanasal and mentioned at least one benefit of the Sansal which is related to the fact that women come from agricultural environment.



100% of women knew a lot about the olive trees. As seen in the chart attendees were aware of the Ramanaina Olive trees before and after the workshop.



When measuring the visual representation /Jidaryat we find that this group had better understanding of the arts and Jidaryat but answered in a generic manner. They said that these are found at schools and apartheid wall. Still there were some ambiguous answers and

confusion with the Apartheid wall due to resemble in words in Arabic language (Jidaryat similar to Jidar which means wall) .

When women were asked about main dishes and food in the Palestinian traditional kitchen all of them were able to mention at least three items and even more before and after the workshop.

The question related to the well-known traditional story (The bird says) women in this event had better understanding on Palestinian traditional stories.

Note: Based on the Post questionnaires about the workshop evaluation most of the attendees had positive impression about the event and asked for more workshops tackling Heritage. This group asked for more workshops and interventions to transfer heritage to new generations.

Overall conclusions and Recommendations

The UNESCO Intangible Heritage Section focused on the subject of Women, Intangible Heritage and Development to understanding intangible cultural heritage and to promote women's **priorities, perspectives and contributions to rethinking of development.** These recommendations will focus on 'Women, Intangible Heritage and Development 'in preparation for potential future projects on this subject.

A study conducted by UNESCO on, Women, Intangible Heritage and Development (2001) proved the importance of Palestinian women 's role in heritage. This study was conducted due to the fact that Women are central to the maintenance and vitality of cultural heritage and diversity worldwide. Their roles in relation to intangible heritage are of particular significance in relation to cultural heritage and cultural identity. This could include language, codes of ethics, behavioral patterns, value systems and religious beliefs. The fact that in Palestine women play the principle role in raising children, through which the intergenerational transmission and renewal of many forms of intangible heritage occurs. In maintaining and passing on intangible culture to future generations, women also recreate and transform culture. In this respect, women's intangible heritage should be granted special recognition and support in activities as emphasized by the UNESCO.

Two major issues to be given immediate attention in activities to support women's intangible heritage are the:

1. lack of systematic research undertaken in this field to date
2. Inadequate recognition of the importance of women's roles and contributions, both within local communities and wider contexts.

The UNESCO Intangible Heritage Section proposes the development of a project concerned with safeguarding, revitalizing and raising awareness of women's roles in relation to intangible heritage and development which would fulfil the following objectives:

1. Promoting culturally sensitive approaches to development and community-based perspectives;
2. Documenting women's intangible cultural heritage across regions with a view to informing and improving development projects targeting women;
3. Sensitizing decision makers in government, non-governmental and corporate sectors to the importance of creating positive synergies between global markets and local know-how, including know-how specific to women.

That being said, Bottom-up approaches to development that are informed by the know-how of local communities should be followed in relation to intangible cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development in different spheres of human activity.

That being said, it appears that the tools designed for heritage awareness are good tools. Nevertheless, it is highly important that such tools be used as the bases for development strategy in which tangible and intangible heritage is focused on.

Studies shows that heritage is dynamic in nature and not static, therefore, the strategy of local communities' development who are part of Masar Ibrahim must be based on a common story which would be used to develop specific program activities throughout the targeted location. With that being said, the three towns which were targeted by the workshop should be targeted with the following activities:

Strategic Actions:

1. The Women Centers or Community Based Organizations CBOS should receive staff organizational capacity development in line with gender integration and women empowerment.
2. The Women Centers or Community Based Organizations CBOS need to be financially empowered to employ a qualified group of women with minimum experience in tourism and product development
3. Strengthening the dialogue between the relevant stakeholder of Masar Ibrahim. The design of future project related to Women Network in heritage and tourism, should focus on these activities.

4. Advocate for the need of the three CBOs to review and evaluate the work and plans of the local government units to ensure that such plans encourage women role in heritage and tourism.
5. Set the agenda for public private partnership dialogue between stakeholder in the targeted location on the Masar Ibrahim.

Immediate interventions:

Immediate interventions required as a pre requisite for above activities is related to capacity building as follows:

1. Soft skills workshops: The main objective on soft skills / life skills workshops, which include social skills, interpersonal skills, and a positive attitude, is to get the women learn the essential skills to be able to move to the next part of capacity building and training sessions. Empowerment socially, emotionally and economically requires women to know the basic life skills and soft skills. These skills are prerequisites for women to look for positive change and achieve real empowerment rather than superficial empowerment through heritage and tourism. The participants need to understand what is critical thinking and creative thinking and focus on these skills to solve problems and set goals. Also, essential business skills related to time management and dealing with procrastination, problem solving, communication strategy, networking, team work, leadership, management and planning is required.

Workshop Contents: The following core concepts need to be covered in the training sessions:

- Critical thinking
- Creative and innovation thinking
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Self-confidence and assertiveness
- Time management and delegation/dealing with procrastination
- Communication skills
- Team building /working within a team
- Setting goals

- Public speaking and promoting yourself
- 2. Technical Skills: Tourism and heritage as products
- 3. Introduction to network and group work workshops
- 4. Dialogue skills
- 5. Negotiations skills
- 6. Planning skills
- 7. An awareness course on Intangible and tangible heritage workshop.
- 8. Entrepreneurship and small business development marketing and promotion.

The common denominator between these women should be revolved around the story/Hikaya . The UNESCO (UNESCO ,2008) defined the Palestinian Hikaye as " a narrative expression practiced by women". This intangible heritage exclusively practiced by women proves that women are the ones who preserved the Palestinian Heritage. Over the centuries, women developed fabricated tales to deal with current concerns of Middle Eastern Arab society and family issues. Normally, the Hikaye offers a critique of society from the women's perspective and describes the social structure that directly relates to the lives of women. Many tales describe women torn between duty and desire. The Hikaye, is our intangible heritage, it is usually narrated at home during winter evenings and attended by small groups of women and children

Women's role as story tellers was revolved around the idea of gathering, talking and listening. These are the main things that build community, preserve culture, and make space for human connection (UNESCO,2008). Palestinian storytelling tradition, a tradition where the Hikaya or storyteller, were women. The role of storytelling done by women is an important role and considered a crucial intangible heritage for the Palestinian existence and survivor. This is the heritage that we should currently focus in order to use it as a defense mechanism against pressure. As said by Sue Monk Kidd in the "Secret Life of Bees":

“STORIES HAVE TO BE TOLD OR THEY DIE, AND WHEN THEY DIE, WE CAN'T REMEMBER WHO WE ARE OR WHY WE'RE HERE.”

Recommendations on steps to establish a Network:

Start the process by targeting a current issue of interest to all women .This could be related to and not limited to exchange of know-how related to embroidery, cooking, handcrafts and olive packaging .Once such workshops are conducted the next step would to get them agree on a shared brand .Thirdly, how to market their product by organizing themselves accordingly. This initiative

could get them to get started on their priorities and later if successful they would organize themselves on other issues as they come.

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Appendix:

- Attendance sheets'
- Field visits reports for Dura
- Field Visit report for Al-Auja
- Field Visit report for Burqin
- Dura Program
- Al-Auja program
- Burqin Program
- Photos
- Filled Pre-Questionnaire
- Filled Post Questionnaires