

SEED NATIONAL

Quick Impact Skills Development for Adolescents and Youth affected by the Syrian Refugee Crisis II

‘There are many problems, but I think there is a solution to all these problems; it's just one, and it's education.’

Malala Yousafzai

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KEY DETAILS

Project Title: Quick Impact Skills Development for Adolescents and Youth affected by the Syrian Refugee Crisis II

Project Department: Youth


Implementing Organization: SEED (Socio-Economic Enhancement and Development)

Name and Designation of Key Contact Person: Nazih Fino, Founder and Director

Country of Project Implementation: Lebanon

Geographic Location of Implementation: Nejmeh, Tripoli

Duration: 3 Month



Introduction and Context

SEED is a NGO based in Tripoli, Lebanon. Its aim is to help people in financial difficulties to develop themselves. It started in 2014 as a self-funded NGO working only with volunteers from Lebanon and other countries from all over the world. It is now a NGO that helps close to 400 children and teenagers through two community centers run by 25 employees.

The work of SEED takes its place in a difficult economic and social context. The city of Tripoli has suffered a lot from the conflict between the two neighborhoods Jebel Mohsen and Tebbene these past few years. The tensions decreased only around 2014 and therefore the whole economy has been weakened : the tourist sector is almost nonexistent and the labor market offers very few opportunities, regardless the level of education.

There is a constant tension between certain areas that sometimes result in quarrels between individuals and everyone fears a return of the 2007-2008 situation. The arrival of an important number of Syrian refugees fleeing the war also strained resources that were already limited. In this context, it seemed important to propose the essential of education at the lowest cost possible.

That is why SEED implemented a project focused on education and vocational training. This program is divided in two main parts : the education one, with basic knowledge classes (named BLN Youth), and the vocational one, itself divided in two parts : one hotel management training and one sales/marketing training. The idea is to link the education with vocational trainings in order to propose the most complete preparation possible to youth who have been kept away from the labor market.

In this report, each element that constitutes the project will be developed separately, since all of them had their own difficulties and challenges. The NGO ANERA funds this triple project.

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This report was written by Antonin Python, Project Coordinator &Teacher

Project Description and Goals

The idea behind this project is to offer opportunities to youth of poor areas by proposing them classes combined with vocational trainings.

BLN YOUTH

This project aims to provide basic knowledge in 5 main topics (Arabic, English, Mathematics, Health and Sport/life skills). The most important is to transmit a maximum of knowledge in a most pleasant way for the student. Given that they dropped school, SEED has to propose something entirely different than school keeping in mind that the beneficiaries have to acquire as much knowledge, if not more, than in a standard school program. It is done by proposing them to learn through different ways than in school. Games, discussions, movies, everyday life situations, etc.

The ultimate goal is to observe a progression of their level in each topic between the beginning and the end of the each cycle. SEED also has the objective of giving kids who, for some of them, left school very early, the essential of education and knowledge in order to be able to do an internship and, later on, to make it easier to find a work position.

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Project Description and Goals

HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The hotel management training consists in giving intensive training in hotel management skills. In the class, theory and practice are combined in order to transmit the most complete information about every aspect of the hotel management field. The idea is to provide the participants with the essential knowledge in service, security and hygiene rules, food management and administration.

SALES/MARKETING TRAINING

The aim of the sales/marketing training is to give the participants essential knowledge about business administration, finances management, accounting and accounting records. At the end of the program, the participants should be able to be independent if they want to run their own business and, also, to be less exposed to potential frauds or scams.

Implementation phase

BLN YOUTH

The implementation is done through classes of a limited number of students (20 students) in order to permit the teacher to operate a closer follow-up of each student's progression. The classes take place everyday, in the morning on a 4-hours a day basis. The regular schedule and the unity of place helps give landmarks to youth who can sometimes experience instability at home or in their social environment. The flexibility of the content and of the teachers is important since the teachers have to deal with very different and rich personalities that are going through adolescence, a difficult period in which youth are still in the process of building themselves.

In total, 98 hours of class are given, distributed on 5 weeks. The first cycle of this project started end of April until end of May. After a break due to the month of Ramadan, the second cycle started mid-July. This project is composed of three cycles, each of them is 98 hours long.

HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

80 hours in total are given, with a 3-4 hours a day rhythm (3 days a week). Two trainers are hired for the 60 first hours and a third one is hired for the rest of the course. The first part is dedicated to the competencies related to hotel management itself and the second part is dedicated to life skills useful for the labor market in general (CV writing, communication skills, job interview advices, etc.) and to visit of enterprises, hotels and restaurants, meeting with sector workers, etc.

At the end of the 80 hours, the students are put in contact with restaurants and hotels for potential internships. The teachers help the students in their researches for an internship in the domain.

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Implementation phase

SALES/MARKETING TRAINING

This course is planned on 64 hours, with the same pace than the hotel management one. One trainer is in charge of providing the theory about marketing. The last hours of the training are also dedicated to multi-purpose life skills essential to any kind of professional activities. At the end of the class, participants look for an internship in the domain of marketing.

Difficulties, challenges and remarks

BLN YOUTH

One of the main challenges is to build a trust relation with the students. Since there is no obligation of attendance (unlike in school) but that attendance is very important for the success of the program, the teachers have to make the students understand the importance of attending the class regularly. It is done by many ways like proposing a interesting and innovative content, exchanging a lot with them, listening to them if they have topics they would like to talk about that are not related to the class and providing them help in that sense.

In one class, all the students have very different levels depending on the subjects. One of the challenges – and for which the teachers had to make proof of flexibility and creativity – is to make a personal follow-up of each student's situation in order to give the most adapted education and obtain the most results possible.

The projects of SEED are always based on a detailed knowledge of the situation that the beneficiaries experience in their every day's lives. Therefore, another challenge is that, sometimes, the teachers would face directly the social issues the students would face as well as their consequences. For example some students stopped coming to class because they had to go back at work, being the only source of income of their family.

HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

One of the challenges of this program is to compose with the different personal experiences of each participant. Some have already worked in this field and can make the whole class take advantage of their knowledge. The difficulty is to make each class interesting for every participant and that every one of them feels included and acquires knowledge no matter the difference of experience.

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Implementation phase

SALES/MARKETING TRAINING

The main challenge of this course is to transmit lightly knowledge that can sometimes be very heavy to get onto and to understand. Luckily, as in the case of the hotel management training, the trainer benefits from the fact that some of the participants already have some experience in selling (by helping their parents at the family business or simply by working on their own) but without the extensive theory background.

Evaluation

BLN YOUTH

A placement test and an exit test are conducted at the beginning and at the end of each cycle in order to see the progression of the students. The evaluation of the cycle is not only based on this numeric raw result but also through discussions with the teachers, an observation of the attitude of the student in class and with the other students and a discussion with the parents. The combination of all these elements determine if the cycle has had an effect on the beneficiary or not and what are the evolutions and changes it is possible to make.

HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The evaluation of the course is made at the end of the training through a discussion between the participants, the trainers and the project manager. The impact of the training is evaluated with the success of the participant in finding an internship and the course of the internship itself.

SALES/MARKETING TRAINING

As for the hotel management training, the success of this program is evaluated looking at the success of the potential internship at the end of the course. Discussions between the trainer and the participants, exchanges with the potential internship responsible as well as an appraisal written with the project manager are also the tools that help determine the effect of the program.

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Next step

BLN YOUTH

After the end of each cycle, an evaluation of the impact of the program is made and adaptations are made in order to correct the mistakes. At the end of the third cycle, an evaluation of the whole program is made and the idea is to expand this program on a bigger scale. Indeed, more cycles – or longer cycles – will allow the teachers and the students to work in better conditions, to focus on the difficulties of everyone and to improve the way education is provided.

HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The next step is the follow-up of every participant in their internship through various calls and messages and through two meetings during and at the end of the internship. If the evaluation resulted satisfying, the program will be extended in time and means in order to provide this kind of knowledge to more beneficiaries.

SALES/MARKETING TRAINING

At the end of the program, discussions will take place between the trainer and the program manager and, as it is for the hotel management training, if the evaluation resulted satisfying, the program will be extended in time and means in order to provide this kind of knowledge to more beneficiaries.