



Kids Creating Peace
ילדים חיים בשלום
أطفال يصنعون السلام



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**Final Impact Report
December 2016**

Wings of Peace

Palestinian and Israeli Youth's Butterfly Effect on Conflict Mitigation in the ME



**Presented to the
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
West Bank and Gaza Office, CMM**

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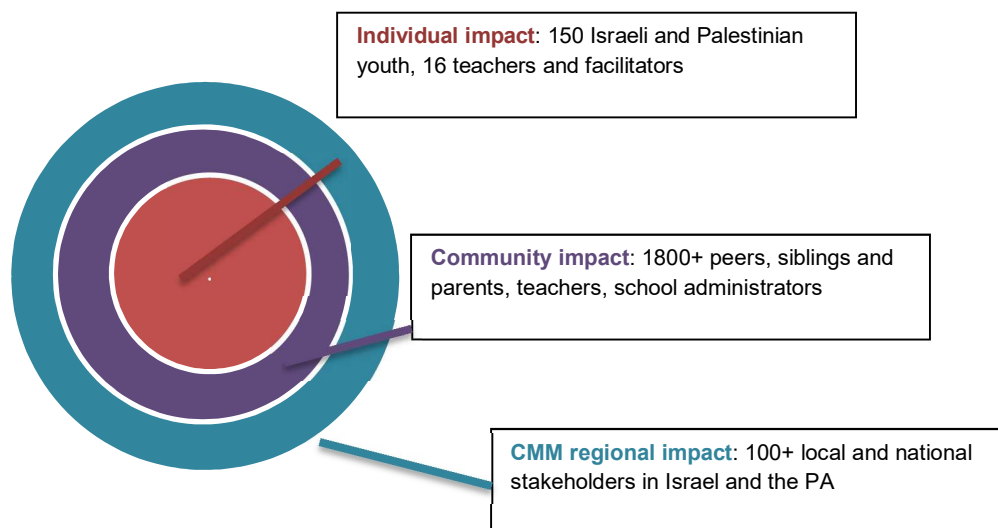


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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

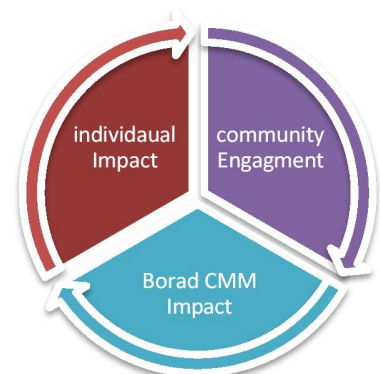
The Youth Creating Peace project is completing a journey of over two years during which we reached out to wider circles of influence than our most inner one, that is the 120 new Israeli and Palestinian youth and 30 YCP graduates. Wider circles include their parents and siblings, their peers in school, teachers, school administrators and principals, expanding to dozens of local educators and educators employed by the state education system, opinion leaders and policy makers in Israel and the PA.



I would like to thank USAID staff for their support and true partnership, who were on our side all along the way, from inception until we witnessed the significant transformation that our youth participants underwent.

The program faced real obstacles considering the sensitive nature of the work we do with youth from both peoples, often achieving the impossible – getting both Israeli and Palestinian youth participants to commit themselves to the program, in the aftermath of the challenging and devastating summer of Protective Edge operation in Gaza in 2014.

The **Wings of Peace** program had a profound impact on the way Israel and the PA manage and mitigate the conflict. The impact is documented and monitored through surveys, focus groups and personal testimonials. We are happy to see that the project, through its various circles of influence, has a ripple effect on diverse audiences, moving from the **individual** to the **community** to the **broader regional context**. This report aims to demonstrate the impact on these three levels.





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2. PROGRAM COMPONENT OBJECTIVES

Whilst we faced serious challenges, we find the evaluation results and continued commitment and work of our young Israeli and Palestinian leaders a testimonial to the important work and impact we aim to achieve in the region. The overall aim of our Israeli-Palestinian cross-border CMM program is to cultivate young peace leaders in the region that will engage their peers in peace education and new media outreach campaigns. Two years of work completed with the accomplishment of separate and joint Israeli-Palestinian meetings of all youth groups, training sessions for educational staff, two summer camps and two concluding major events for each year of the program, all in all amounting to **138 events** of peace and reconciliation. Our work completed with impressive results as all **112 young leaders** (52% girls and 46% Israelis) have reached out and engaged more than **1,000** of their peers through creative and impressive joint work that they carried out in their schools and community centers, thus serving as role models. This work led to the production of creative program outputs, in their schools and communities in Israel and in the PA, including **8 educational mini peace projects**, under the slogan ***"We Are the Change"***.

Activity Component 1: Set-Up

KCP staff identified and recruited for the **Wings of Peace** program, **13 Israeli and Palestinian teachers and group facilitators** who were in fitting with the content and requirement of the program. In addition, 32 leaders who graduated from a previous USAID-funded program by the name YCP, were selected and participated in team building, leadership development, group facilitation and public speaking seminars.

Activity Component 2: Teachers Training and Youth Recruitment

The educational staff completed an intensive six-day training course in December 2014 in preparation for the first year of the program. During this training, staff received the teachers' manual, an educational kit and training on CMM methods as well as the KCP approach and concepts. Throughout the program, all activities were monitored by KCP staff. Furthermore, 30 YCP leaders were instrumental in recruiting youth participants in schools and community centers in Israel and the PA, by delivering presentations they created within the "Traveling Peace Act" project, and telling their listeners about their own experience of participating in a cross-border program. They succeeded in recruiting 60 out of the total of 90 new youth participants for the Wings of Peace program.

Activity Component 3: Joint Peace Work

The 30 young leaders worked together with experts to develop creative methods and approaches to use new media in reaching out to diverse audiences. They closely worked together on developing a unique message to be passed on through a new media campaign by the name **"IAMHUMANITY"**, which relied on their personal experience in the program and the change of perception they underwent. In Year 1, 90 youth participants successfully completed all planned separate and joint meetings. A 4th group was recruited by the end of the first year, who joined the meetings of the second year. The meetings were designed to equip youth of both Israeli and Palestinian societies with the tools, knowledge and shared context to redefine what





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peace meant for them, and develop methods and tools for effective outreach to their peers. Towards the completion of the first year, staff engaged in intensive preparations for the summer camp, covering all its logistical, operational and content aspects.

Activity Component 4: Youth Camp and launch of the new Media Pass It On/Line

The first year of the program culminated with a four-day bi-national summer camp that took place in August 2015 and was attended by **130** of our youth participants, leaders and educational staff. During the camp, youth participants created the “**IAMHUMANITY**” campaign, which was launched at the end-of-year event. Following the camp, and in order to provide a structured closure for the first year, young leaders and educational staff participated in uni-national focus groups, giving their feedback and preparing for the second year. The first year ended with a meaningful festive event, held on September 21st, 2015, and attended by **400+** youth participants, their families and other stakeholders. The event aimed at celebrating the completion of the first year, mark the official launch of the new media peace campaign **#IAMHUMANITY** and allow youth participants to meet again and get a sense of pride for their joint hard work throughout the year and camp.

Activity Component 5: Pass it On

In preparation for the second year, KCP and PDC staff invested time and effort in setting up uni-national meetings with all 90 youth participants in order to kick off the second part of the program, while providing them with tools to regain trust from their schools and communities, their parents and from other stakeholders. The YCP leaders continued their substantial recruitment efforts by conducting presentations showcasing their own experience gained during the YCP program and while undertaking cross-border work. The newly recruited 4th group composed of **24** youth participants, completed their planned set of meetings and became full participants in the program. All participants with some of our committed YCP leaders completed 2 overnight seminars, in which they worked on developing their mini peace projects, including setting project goals and working on methods to reach out to hundreds of other peers. In parallel, facilitators completed an intensive 7- day training preparing them towards the 2nd year, and were equipped with a solid bi-lingual curriculum.

Activity Component 6: Joint Work in Schools, Community Centers and Youth Movements

One of the program highlights in the second year was the implementation of **8 educational mini peace projects** under the slogan “**We Are the Change**”, in schools and communities in Israel and in the PA, thus widening program’s circles of influence. After participants carried out their projects, each group held a presentation for its community members about the project, its goals and messages, engaging over 1,000 of their peers. Following that, the KCP and PDC staff initiated preparations for the second 5-day summer camp and the final annual event.

Activity Component 7: Impact and Beyond

KCP and PDC held a second five-day bi-national summer camp in August 2016, under the slogan “**We Are the Change**”. It was attended by youth participants who did not attend the summer camp of previous year, the members of the 4th group and selected youth leaders. This fruitful second year concluded with a final annual event on September 8th 2016, which was attended by **400** youth participants, their families and other stakeholders, all celebrating the completion of the Wings of Peace two-year program. During the event, mini-documentaries highlighting program activities were screened as well as showcasing some outstanding outputs that created over the course of the program.



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3. IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The project aspired to lead each youth participant to recognize their own strengths, build their capacity to act and influence, and encourage them to translate their values and principles into concrete action, through socially emotional intelligence and self-esteem. In order to assess the individual impact of the project, participants were asked to share their personal impressions and fill out a survey. Hereinafter, is a narrative of the main 3 indicators that were used to evaluate the impact of the project on the youth participants.

Giving Participants Tools to Resolve Conflicts

The program started in September 2014 with bi-weekly local meetings and workshops guided by our dedicated educational team. During these sessions, facilitators and participants worked on shifting perceptions, acquiring basic tools of conflict resolution and identifying common interests in preparation for the joint meetings and other program activities.

A positive change in attitude towards the “other”

90% of the youth participants reported a positive change in their attitude towards the “other”. Among the Israelis 100% reported positive change in attitude towards Palestinians, while only 84% of Palestinians reported positive change in attitude towards Israelis (Graph 1). Noya, a 15 years old Israeli youth, expressed her positive change of attitude towards her Palestinian friends, and said she now looks at them as human beings just like her, therefore she does not fear them. Aya Erekat, a 16-year old Palestinian participant, was initially very suspicious of Israeli youth, saying she can’t sleep with Israelis in the same room. Aya’s perceptions shifted throughout the process, especially after the overnight seminar; she became an active participant and developed very friendly terms with some of her Israeli counterparts, and even shared a room with Israeli girls during the summer camp in August 2016.

Turn indifference into action

One of program goals is to ensure that youth graduating from the program, remain active and dedicated to educational peace-related outreach work, as the long term program sustainability. By the end of the program, we see that 87% of participating youth testified that they are willing to work together on common objectives. 100% of the Israeli youth became adamant in their commitment to work on common issues with their peers, family and friends back home, contributing to peace efforts and community-based outreach, whereas, 79% of Palestinian participants reported similar willingness to work with Israelis (Chart 1).

An improvement in their understanding of the “other”

87% of participants reported that they had improved their understanding of the “other”. Among the Israelis 100% reported an improvement in their understanding of Palestinians, and among the Palestinians 79% reported improvement in their understanding of Israelis (Graph 1). Many participants noted this understanding when summarizing the summer camp: "In the dialogues we conducted I understood that each side has a different point of view, and the way we see things is not necessarily the way they see them...., I learnt to listen and respect....".

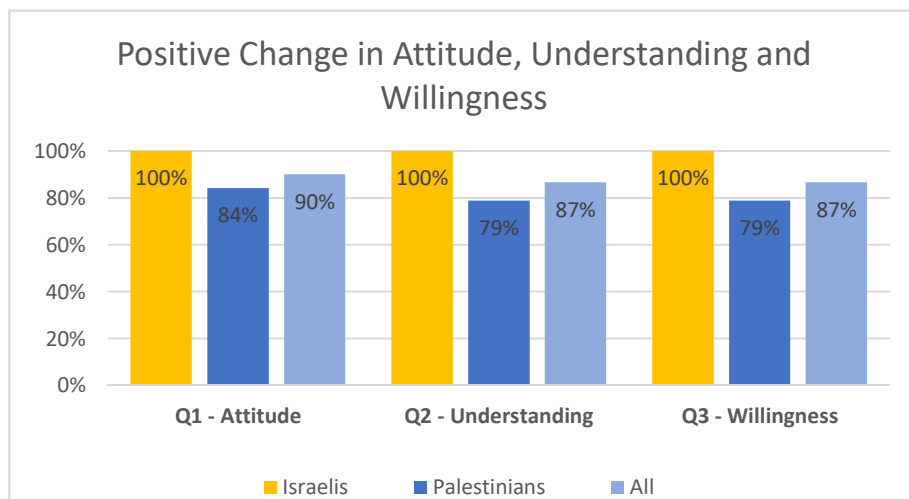




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Chart 1: Program impact on Perception Change



4. IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

Iman, School principal at Sawarbina High School "The Wings of Peace program gave the youth an opportunity to lead and make a real change. They designed their outreach approach in a creative way (the tolerance garden) and worked very hard making it happen. I'm proud of their work and they are the true leaders of change and hope with other kids in the school looking up to them."

The program multi-layer approach of the program has resulted in a great number of involved and influenced people. First and foremost, in view of the alienated public and media discourse, the young leaders have completed their proactive work targeting and engaging more than **1,000** of their peers with impressive joint work in their schools and community centers. The second year of the Wings of Peace program yielded impressive and creative outputs that were a product of the intensive teamwork and confidence building process they underwent. The program succeeded in obtaining multiplier effect by engaging dozens of school and community stakeholders, reaching out to more than 1,000 young Israeli and Palestinian peers, exposing additional students and peers on a daily basis. Shortly after we sowed the seed of young peace leadership, we now see the potential of the young leaders to affect many others.

Exposing more peers from both sides took place through the implementation of the **8 mini educational projects** that included designing a "Tolerance Garden", creating a "Listening Bench" and developing a "Dialogue Booklet". In addition, the youth presented their projects and shared their experiences of participating in the KCP Israeli-Palestinian project, in their schools and community centers. Each group of youth presented their projects to their



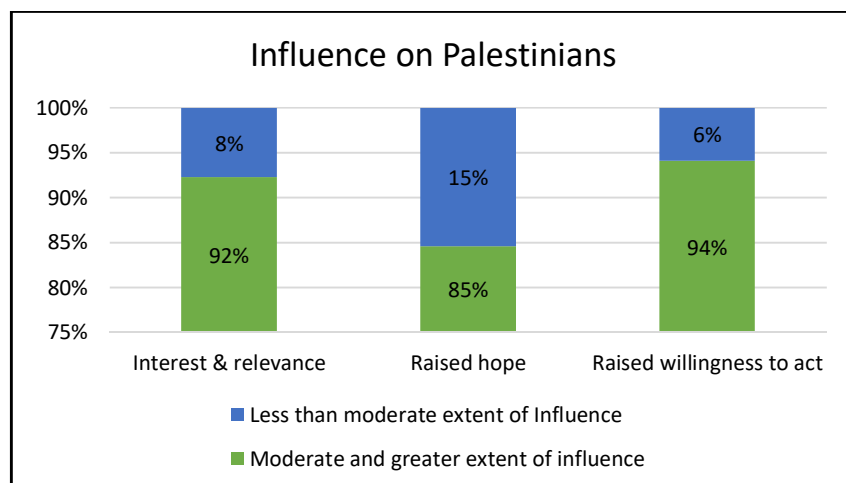
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friends, families, peers, schoolmates and stakeholders. The projects influenced other peers; for example, post the presentation in Star Community Center in Al-Ezarieh, a parent has expressed that such programs should expand more, it is impressive to see how confident those youths are. The self-confidence is the true prize.

As regard the Palestinian Community, three presentations were conducted in the West Bank. The audience consisted of Christians and Muslims of all ages. The atmosphere was very pleasant and positive and it looked like they were affected by the presentations. **92%** of the audience said that the presentations were **very interesting and relevant** to them; **85%** of the Palestinian audience said they **raised their hopes** in better relationships between the two people; and **94%** of them reported that the presentations **increased their willingness to participate actively** and contribute in improving the relationships between the two people (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Impact of presentations on Palestinians



Regarding the Israeli community, program participants presented their experiences and insights after encountering and interacting with Palestinian youth in 3 high schools in West Jerusalem. They were invigorated, hopeful and full of optimism, trying to convey messages of peace, reach out to their school mates and motivate them to join new groups; finally, they presented their joint project (i.e., the bench they made for the school yard and pointed to the carved writings/messages of peace and hope made by their Palestinian new friends). Unfortunately, the impact of the presentations on the Israeli students was to a lesser degree than that we saw in the with Palestinians, as only **37%** reported that the presentations were very **interesting and relevant** to them; **44%** said it **raised their hope** for better relationships between the two people; **42%** of them reported an increase in **their willingness to participate in activities** to improve the relationships between the two people (Chart 3).



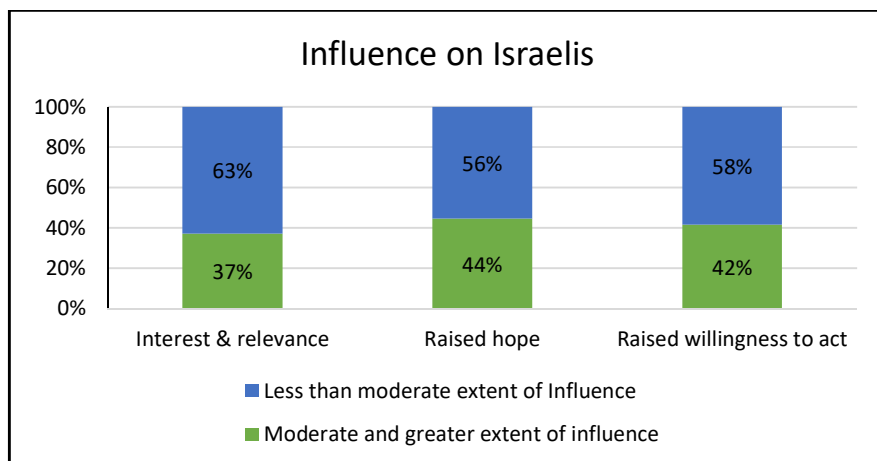
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Chart 3: Impact of presentations on Israelis



5. IMPACT ON THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Commitments of the Presidents of Israel and PA

KCP program managed to garner much interest and support among political leaders and key figures and within key administrators in the educational ministry in Jerusalem. KCP has focused on building strong and direct bridges with school principals and community leaders in order to gain their full buy-in and support to the program. In particular, Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, and Reuven Rivlin the president of Israel, have sent their blessings and support via letters and videos, to the KCP program and the Wings of Peace CMM approach.

Reaching out to people beyond the Program – 3rd circle effect

President Abbas said:

*Your activities are important for our future and the future of the whole region. I wish all the best to KCP that aim to unit Palestinian and Israeli youth **together in the path** of knowledge and dialogue."*

President Rivlin has added:

*"I know very well that those steps that you are taking might be the beginning of long path. But in order for our kids to live in future of vision and hope, we must start walking, **this path together.**"*



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The program impacted not only the youth and staff but also their wider circles of influence. However, it was very well observed that the program had affected also on people who were exposed to it for the first time such as in the case of Big Idea Summer camp staff and the dining hall staff who both hosted our 2nd summer camp 2016 for a whole week. They were touched by the unity and love that youth have demonstrated, their commitment to their message and their belief in their cause. Our youth left a mark of hope and peace in their mind and heart and this adds up to the attainment of program goals which were about expanding circles of influence and passing on a message of change in every possible way.

Marry, who was the kitchen manager of Yemin Ord where the summer camp was held, was so excited and happy to meet KCP youth as she thinks that this will promote peace between the two people. She saw acceptance and love, rather than the unpleasant sights on TV. Shani, who was the Director of the Big Idea Summer Camps expressed her opinion that the experience with KCP was totally different to anything else she had known. It was fascinating to see youth from different cultures who manage to communicate in spite of language barriers. She felt it has been a privilege to take part in the program.



6. SUSTAINABILITY AND CONTINUITY

KCP is committed to the continued work with the youth by leveraging their experience in Wings of Peace and developing their leadership and active role in conflict mitigation and management. In order to ensure the continuous communication between youth, YCP leaders developed an **online community platform** for program alumni. This platform is a closed Facebook group that allows youth participants to remain in contact and communicate and share their thoughts and views, upcoming events, pictures from their gatherings, invite inspiring people to talk in meetings and have and keep the good friendship and the spirit of KCP. This online group is available only to the program alumni and staff who wish to continue sharing online.

During year 1 & 2 of the program, our educational staff with the assist of external professional educational advisers, developed solid manuals and educational curriculum that assist teachers and facilitators in leading activities and sessions. These outputs were used and disseminated amongst the staff and other stakeholders. They proved to have great impact on participants.