

Palestinian MEPI Alumni Success Stories



Amal Masri is a successful entrepreneur who is also a leader and role model for young women in Palestine and beyond. Her achievements demonstrate not only her success as a businesswoman but someone who is passionately committed to empowering youth, particularly young women. Along with other Palestinian business women, Ms. Masri started the first Palestinian Business Women Forum (BWF), with a grant from MEPI. BWF aims “to strengthen the role of businesswomen as leaders in the Palestinian economy through advocacy, networking, and the provision of business services”.

Ms. Masri, a mother of three, is the founder and general manager of Ougarit Marketing, Communications, and Media. Prior to establishing Ougarit, she occupied several positions that enriched her professional experience and broadened her perspective. Ms. Masri taught at the French Cultural Center in the West Bank; served as a lecturer at Al-Najah National University and Al-Quds Open University; worked as International Relations Officer at the Palestinian Ministry of Culture; and was Manager of Marketing and Foreign Relations at Abu Shoushah Commercial Company. She also worked in the commercial section at the French Consulate in Jerusalem.

In addition to serving as the CEO of the Business Women’s Forum, Ms. Masri has contributed to establishing the Middle East Business Women’s Network, representing Palestine in various regional and international conferences. Recently, Ms. Masri was named a model of successful Business Women and was interviewed by several local and international TV channels.



Yehia Idrees is a MEPI alumnus who has a rich professional background. Mr. Idrees received his Bachelor’s degree in Arabic and Oriental Literature from the University of Arts in Alexandria, Egypt. In addition to his BA, Mr. Idrees holds a special diploma in Education and Educational Administration from Al Aqsa University and the Islamic University in Gaza. Recently, Mr. Idrees attended a three-year training program entitled Responding to Conflict Organization (RTC) in the UK. The course focused on Conflict Transformation and applying Conflict Transformation learning within organizational programming and situations of conflict.



Mr. Idrees is currently working as the Project Manager at Basma Cultural Society in Gaza. Basma Society for Culture and Arts is a non-profit community based organization, established in 1994, with the aim of activating Palestinian culture, enabling people to access cultural and artistic activities. They provide theatrical performances, video presentations, drama workshops, Puppets Theater for children, performance training courses and workshops, and cultural workshops and evenings.

He currently is on the steering committee for the Palestinian MEPI Alumni Network elected by his peers who are also alumni of various MEPI programs. Mr. Idrees will lead alumni in a workshop about conflict transformation



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Anas Sarabta is an ambitious young MEPI alumnus who participated in the Student Leaders program in 2009. Anas developed an innovative web portal for youth called “Yallah Shabab”, which aims to provide all youth around the world with information resources and opportunities in different fields such as education, training, events, news, grants and youth empowerment.

Since 2005, Mr. Sarabta has been working on a number of youth development projects across Palestine focused on education, economic development, and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education.

Anas was also an active volunteer at the British Council and the American Friends’ Service Committee through a program called Public Achievement. This program helped him realize the meaning of “community of practice”, and the leading role that one must play to ensure everyone in the community is committed to sorting through and solving problems.



Anas graduated from Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron with a degree in computer systems engineering. He is currently working at the Youth Development Resource Center (YDRC) in Hebron as the Intel Clubhouse Coordinator for the USAID-funded, EDC-administered Ruwwad youth empowerment program.

Lubna Taha, a MEPI alumna who participated in the Student Leaders program in 2009, has successfully received a grant from the Institute of Global Studies at Delaware University to implement a community service project. The project, which is entitled “Flying through Writing” (FTW), aims to harness writing as a channel to express self identity and foster democratic communities. Forty women from four refugee camps will be benefiting from training in creative writing, focusing on nonfiction, fiction, and poetry.



Designs by Lubna



Lubna has also been volunteering her time in the Palestine Writing Workshop (PWW) since 2009. PWW fosters a community of emerging writers that aims to inspire young artists across Palestine to tell their stories. She is the illustrator of the recycled notebooks, which are sold by Palestine Writing Workshop.

Ms. Taha received her Bachelor’s degree from Birziet University with a major in English Language and a minor in Translation. She is currently working for Al-Mawrid Teacher Development Center.

