

**Programme name: Mother-to-Mother Programme**  
**Implemented by: The Trust of Programmes for Early Childhood, Family and Community**



*"I was enrolled in the Mother-to-Mother programme with all its components for six years. The programme has turned my life around, after I lost hope. I am now a confident woman who knows her abilities, I am involved in my children's education and my husband sees me as a partner in decision-making and solving problems."*

*Hanan E. (paraprofessional mother)*

**Basic Facts:**

Country: Palestinian Territories

Starting year: 1984

Outreach: approximately 350 families per year, and a total of 10,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries over 3 years

Target Population: Families, mainly mothers and their children, teachers

Language of instruction: Arabic

Operating in: 14 sites in the Palestinian Territories and within the underserved Palestinian communities living in Israel; 1 site in Essen (Germany).

Facilitator/Beneficiary ratio: 40 paraprofessionals and 3 full-time facilitators

Main Funding: The Guttman Foundation (USA), Suisse Friends of Kiriath Yearim (Switzerland), Caritas Germany, Misereor (Germany)

Website: [www.trust-programs.org](http://www.trust-programs.org)

Contact: Mr Farid Abu-Ghosh - [trust@trust-programs.org](mailto:trust@trust-programs.org)

### **Brief Description**

The Mother-to-Mother Programme was originally launched as a health and nutrition education framework in East Jerusalem in which mothers with paraprofessional training assist their peers and provide support in parenting skills.

### **Rationale**

The Palestinian communities in general suffer from a lack of services in the field of pre-school education and a severe shortage of qualified personnel, but it is also the parents who lack important information regarding the upbringing of their children. The Mother-to-Mother Programme supports them in fulfilling their role adequately.

### **Objective**

Starting from the programme's vision that every child deserves to live in a healthy atmosphere and to be raised by a functional family, the programme enables mothers to act as social change agents in their families, hence giving them the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process of their child's education.

This programme enables mothers to become familiar with the essentials of early childhood development processes. After the training, the mothers pass on their newly acquired knowledge to other women in their neighbourhood with the guidance of the Trust's staff members. The programme also strengthens mothers within their social context and encourages them to commit themselves to community work.

### **Conceptual Model and Methodology**

Using active learning as a starting point, the methodology used is not based on frontal teaching but rather on basic training workshops and on-the-job training identifying the needs of the target population from the follow-up and the feedback given by the trained paraprofessionals. Working with children is mainly through the Learn-by-Play programme and the information brought to families through the group and individual meetings for counselling and supervision.

The programme is a lifelong process, therefore it is flexible enough to meet the specific needs of the local community. The families take part in the planning, implementation and evaluation.

### **Innovative features**

Holistic, integrative and modular in nature, the programme is implemented in full partnership with the community stakeholders, schools, children and families. The programme operates in rural areas and in poverty-stricken cities and neighbourhoods as well as in the Bedouin areas in various sites (Jerusalem, Ramallah, Ramleh and the Negev). Recently, the programme was successfully implemented in the German Arab community of Essen.

### **Learner's portrait**

Bassema Tahan is an ambitious mother who started at the Trust in 1990 as a paraprofessional mother and ever since has continued to surprise the organisation. She was recently commended, along with two other women at a Study Day on "Women's rights" for the development she has achieved on the personal and community level.

"I felt both scared and proud when they called my name and gave me the award. Over the years, my biggest challenge was to prove myself, to my family and to the community. In 2002 I got my ninth grade certificate, and in 2005 I got my high school degree both through the Trust, and now I am working on my diploma in health and physiotherapy at the Y.W.C.A."