

# ASSOCIATION NAJDEH



Najdeh's Programs  
Vocational Training  
Mother and Child  
Social Affairs  
Popular Education & Tutorial

Domestic Violence  
Micro-Credit Project  
Embroidery Production  
Coordination and Networking



*Najdeh*

## Najdeh's Role and Objectives

Established in 1978, Najdeh is an independent, registered Lebanese non-governmental organization working in and around Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in the areas of development and education.

Najdeh's core aim is to empower women, a severely disadvantaged component of the Palestinian refugee community, with the tools necessary to have a more prominent role in their community. Women, by becoming more productive and self-reliant, contribute concretely to the development of the overall Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon.

Najdeh operates 26 centers in and around refugee camps. Its programs directly focus on women and include: Vocational Training, Popular Education and Tutorial Program, Mother and Child Program, Social Affairs, Domestic Violence Program, Micro-Credit Project, and Embroidery. Najdeh also advocates for the promotion of Palestinian rights through awareness-raising activities related to reproductive health, women's rights, and children's rights, which Najdeh offers in conjunction with other programs.

Najdeh's staff is primarily women and members of the Palestinian refugee community. Eighty percent of Najdeh's beneficiaries are women and Palestinians, while the remaining 20% are men and individuals of other nationalities.

Najdeh believes that its programs, reaching over 10,000 refugees, have a tangible impact on women and children.

### Vocational Training (VT) Program

Najdeh runs 11 vocational training centers in all regions of Lebanon, offering approximately 90 course sessions per year. The VT program affords women with skills that contribute to their long-term goal of securing employment and self-sufficiency.

Najdeh designed the VT courses to meet market opportunities, given the generally severe restrictions on Palestinian employment in Lebanon and the particular circumstances of Palestinian women. Courses include a large spectrum of trades, ranging from office management and accounting to photography and video editing.

Najdeh's VT Section annually targets approximately 550 trainees and secures job-placement for half of them.



### Popular Education and Tutorial Program

Najdeh's Popular Education and Tutorial program annually serves 600 students. Najdeh coordinates 15 literacy groups and 27 scholastic tutorial and English classes.

The Popular Education program covers three educational stages, each for one scholastic year. Each stage consists of four educational components: language, mathematics, social sciences, and natural sciences. Learners explore the

components through a collective process of dialogue, participation, and research. The Tutorial program seeks to empower learners.

### Mother and Child Program

To work or study, women need to be assured that their children are safe. The Mother & Child program fosters a creative learning and playing environment, which is lacking in the refugee camps.

Najdeh operates seven kindergartens in seven refugee camps. The Mother & Child Program provides pre-school education to 500 children (ages 3-5), as well as educational summer activities to an additional 600 children (ages 6-14).

Based on Convention for the Rights of the Child, the Mother & Child Program emphasizes the promotion of consciousness and creativity: interactive games, sports, theatre, reading, trips, awareness of cultural heritage, children's rights, health and environment. It also engages parents, especially mothers, in their children's education and community activities. The Program also tackles social, health, educational, and environmental issues with the mothers of kindergarten children.



### ■ Social Affairs Program

The magnitude of socio-economic difficulties facing the Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon renders them virtually unable to secure a minimum standard of living.

Najdeh's five Social Affairs regional centers target 200 social hardship families per year. The program provides the following assistance: sponsorship of children, partial educational grants (school & vocational training fees), as well as subsidizing medical treatment (medicine & surgery). The SA program carries out more than 50 educational workshops per year for 800 persons on topics including woman's reproductive health, women's rights, and domestic violence.

### ■ Domestic Violence Program

The objective of Najdeh's Domestic Violence Program, which was initiated in 2000, is to contribute to improving mental, physical, and social well-being of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The specific purpose of the project is to reduce domestic violence among Palestinian refugees by:

- 1) Increasing the community's knowledge about the effects of violence on the community.
- 2) Decreasing the community's acceptance of violence as an acceptable way of solving problems.
- 3) Increasing utilization of social and psychological counseling services – as recommended by professional counselors.
- 4) Increasing access to legal aid by documented domestic violence survivors among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.
- 5) Increasing capacities and skills of Palestinian refugee women and their organizations to address domestic violence through research, policy development, and programming.

### ■ Micro-credit Project

Najdeh's Micro-Credit program promotes Palestinian women entrepreneurial initiatives through a micro-credit system. Aiming at economic self-sufficiency, loan beneficiaries (65% of whom are women) are assisted in establishing/strengthening viable projects such as hairdressing salons, agricultural projects, grocery stores, sewing shops, spare auto parts, and clothing stores.

The Micro-Credit Project primary targets those benefiting from Najdeh's Social Affairs program. Najdeh runs loan projects in three camps and five gatherings in the Tyre region.

Najdeh is cooperating with HI and SIDI (French organizations) in implementing Tyre Loans (a micro-credit project) in the Tyre camps. The project offers group and individual loans and there are currently more than 400 clients involved in it.

### ■ Embroidery Production

Al Badia embroidery was Najdeh's first project in 1978. Its purpose is to promote Palestinian cultural heritage by providing women with economic sustenance.

Al Badia has two embroidery workshops in the camps of Ein El Helweh and Rashidiyeh. In addition, there are working groups of embroiders in other camps. This project engages 148 women in economic productivity.

Najdeh's Al Badia has two local marketing outlets (shops) in Beirut and an international outlet in Europe, the U.S., and Canada. Al Badia's e-mail: [albadia@cyberia.net.lb](mailto:albadia@cyberia.net.lb)

## Coordination & Networking

Najdeh actively coordinates with local NGOs on community activities. Najdeh is a member of several local, regional, and international networks, including: the Coordination Forum of NGOs Working among the Palestinian Community in Lebanon, the Arab Women Forum (AISHA), the Palestinian Women's Regional Research, Training, and Advocacy Program, Across Borders Project, ICCP (International Coordination Committees on the question of Palestine), READI (the Euro-Arab Network of NGOs for Development and Integration), Sifra (Micro-finance Networking Facilitators), Main (Micro-finance African Institutions Network), and Mediterranean Social Forum and World Social Forum.

Najdeh primarily relies on funds from European donor organizations and individuals. It also receives donations from partners in the US and Canada. In addition, Najdeh covers around 10% of its budget from its self-generated income (e.g. student fees from vocational training and the Mother & Child program).

Najdeh engages in lobbying and advocacy to further promote Palestinian rights, especially the Right of Return.

## Other Activities

Najdeh regularly organizes awareness raising activities for its beneficiaries that are open to all interested members of the community. These activities include seminars/workshops on issues relating to health, environment, social problems, and human rights. In addition, Najdeh's staff receives regular training to improve their skills/performance. Najdeh is collaborating with Enfants Réfugiés du Monde, and Gathering Unions of Palestinian Women to coordinate six Children & Youth Activities Centers in Beirut, the North, and the south of Lebanon.



## Advocacy and Women rights

Najdeh regularly organizes advocacy meetings and lobbying campaigns to promote Palestinian rights. These activities are also open to all interested members of the community.

Najdeh offers consciousness-raising activities on women's rights aiming at improving women's social participation.

Najdeh appreciates the support and solidarity of its donor partners and welcomes new contributors. Najdeh hopes that one day, justice will prevail for Palestinians.



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