



# 1for3 News

\* Water \* Health \* Education \*

\* الماء \* الصحة \* التعليم \*

December 2018



## Environmental Education Program A Success in Al-Walajah Village

Water usage and freedom of movement are significantly limited by Israeli settlements and military forces in the West Bank. No more so than for the residents of Al-Walajah village located on the Green Line between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. 1for3 executive director Nidal Al-Azraq met with community leaders and partnered with the Palestine Foundation to offer support to local residents enduring their ongoing crisis.



The first phase of this program, focused on the environment, recently ended successfully. Led by the Environment Unit of Lajee Center, 30 youth between the ages of 13 and 17 trained in water testing, recycling of organic and non-organic materials, and comparative environmental studies. Youth received education in and about in-demand services. This project represents a small part of 1for3's duty to support this important community as its members face the Israeli demolition of houses and farms and the construction of the Wall on their land.

## Patient-Forward Healthcare Piloted in Two Camps

All fall, Lajee Center's community health workers have been visiting 60 people with limited mobility in Aida and Azzeh refugee camps. The visits are pilot efforts of a new 1for3-organized initiative, [Health for Palestine](#), to monitor common chronic health issues such as hypertension and diabetes. The health workers conducting the visits are participants in a multi-part health accompaniment training program that develops local health professionals. They receive instruction in psycho-social support and preventative health issues by clinicians from the US, Palestine, and Germany. Through home visits, the health workers get to know the patients, monitor their progress, and advise on wellness planning. The health workers have also reached out to support children seeking treatment in local cancer and pediatric wards, visited an elder home, and organized a 'Health Day' of educational trips for international volunteers to local medical institutions.



Im Nasir, or Mazyuna, 83, lives with her daughter in Aida. Her son has been imprisoned for decades. Amidst the lemon trees in her snug courtyard, she tends small greenhouse planters that are a new part of 1for3's rooftop garden program. In November, the boxes housed parsley, cabbage, radishes, and tomato vines. They are planted in rich soil and irrigated through a vertical piping system that takes moisture down below the root level, minimizing loss from evaporation. The produce provides a generous supplement to what can be purchased – and the activity of gardening is gentle therapy and a source of pride for someone who has lived through suffering and oppression.

**Voices of I for3: Shatha Al-Azza**  
Director of the Environment Unit at Lajee Center

**How long have you been working with Lajee and I for3?**  
I have been working with our team since 2012.

**What was your most exciting professional event of the last year?**



Last year we launched the 'green space' project on the roof of Lajee Center. Here, almost on top of Aida Camp, we find new uses for non-organic materials such as bullets, tires, and plastic bottles. Not only do youth

participate in making something new out of materials that would otherwise be regarded as trash, we are literally creating space! The roof will be converted from an empty space to a green park for children, visitors, and employees. The project is still in progress, but we will be finished soon.

**What keeps you coming to work every day?**

I feel a deep sense of responsibility and ownership over the Environment Unit, which I have led since its establishment. It makes me happy and fulfilled to keep developing projects that are very much needed by my community. The work that I produce defines who I am, and I am proud of that.



**What is the biggest challenge of your work?**

Sustainability of the projects is a big challenge, especially since we are located under intense military occupation. The occupation and the political situation occasionally affects the funding that we are able to get as well as our ability to execute and maintain the projects.

**What is your greatest hope for the next year related to your work?**

My greatest hope for the next year is for the Environment Unit to be independent, with more employees in the team to execute and achieve greater goals and objectives.

Your tax-deductible donation is needed now. You can learn more about our work at [Ifor3.org](http://Ifor3.org) and donate online or send your contribution to:

Ifor3.org, 58 N. Border Rd., Winchester, MA 08190.

**Voices of I for3: Nidal Al-Azraq**  
Executive Director

One of many things that is unique about the work we do is that we are not just providing services to the communities with whom we work. We are partnering with them and training them with the best models and equipment so they can build and thrive. After more than 70 years of dispossession and more than 50 years of occupation, this approach recognizes Palestinians' dignity.



Please visit Mondoweiss for a report by Dr. David Scales about our health project, entitled "[Doctor's Dispatch: House Calls in Aida Refugee Camp](#)" (12/3/2018). This fall, we were also delighted that two of our US team members were able to visit our lead partner in Palestine, Lajee Center. Here are a few words from them.

"What I found so impressive about visiting the Lajee Center is that beyond the specific purpose of the programs such as community health, roof gardens, recycling and music, these activities contribute to a culture of resistance, of cooperative organization prevailing against the multiple oppressions of occupation. What is also remarkable, at least to an outsider, is the way in which these programs based in the Lajee Center embrace the whole community, young and old, the frail and the strong. It is a great model for a new and liberated society."

– Hubert Murray, Board Member

"What is remarkable about the Lajee Center is not just the range of its programs promoting creativity and resilience, but the way it reaches the hearts of visitors who arrive wholly unaware of the political situation. I sat with a Christian group from Arizona who were touring religious sites in Bethlehem and came to the Center for a delicious lunch prepared by Shatha's mother. After they had eaten their fill, and heard from Mousa about life in the camp under occupation, some had tears in their eyes and many asked, 'What can we do?'"



– Nancy Murray, Advisory Board Member