

Generations For Peace
Programmes in the West Bank:
**Monitoring and Evaluation
Capability and Programme
Impact
Intermediary Report**

Programme
Research

4



November 2013



2012 Research Findings and Resulting Actions

In July 2012, Generations For Peace Institute (GFPI) commenced a longitudinal research study in the West Bank. The purpose of the initial visit was to inquire into the following:

1. **Mandate:** Do the Pioneers, Delegates, and partners/stakeholders have a clear, shared, precise and focused articulation of the Generations For Peace (GFP) role and approach in Palestine?
2. **Monitoring:** Do the GFP Pioneers and Delegates in Palestine have an agreed upon means of data collection, assessing outcomes and impact, and measuring sustainability and cost-efficiency of programmes?
3. **Evaluation:** What are the current mechanisms for reflection and learning conducted by the Delegates, Pioneers and stakeholders?

“ In July 2012, Generations For Peace Institute (GFPI) commenced a longitudinal research study in the West Bank. The purpose of the initial visit was to inquire into the following: Mandate, Monitoring and Evaluation.”

Regarding the mandate, the researcher concluded that the GFP volunteers had relatively poor understanding of the GFP mandate and approach in Palestine. This meant that the chances of the target group and larger beneficiary community misunderstanding the GFP mandate and approach were higher than what was expected by GFP Headquarters. To add on this, GFP's sole partner¹ in the West Bank seemed to have the same level of understanding as GFP Palestinian volunteers, further heightening the chances of local implementers not being familiar with GFP's mandate or approach in the West Bank.

In regard to the familiarity of GFP volunteers with Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), the researcher uncovered mixed results. While they were better equipped in some areas (utilising observation and organising mechanisms of feedback) than others (identifying indicators and implementing feedback), in 2012 the GFP volunteers in Palestine definitely required M&E education. While the volunteers excelled at conflict assessment and had a vague understanding of impact, demonstrating some familiarity with monitoring as a concept, they were unfamiliar with the labels used in monitoring, as well as when and why monitoring should be conducted. As for evaluation, though the GFP volunteers were unsure how to utilise the feedback they collected, they had promising lessons learnt procedures in place.

In addition to assessing M&E capability of the Delegates and Pioneers in the West Bank, the external researcher monitored the programmes by way of interviews, questionnaires and ethnographic observation. The information collected during the research suggested a shortage of funding available to the Delegates and Pioneers for programmes; a demand from volunteers for a GFP office in the West Bank; and a desire by numerous Pioneers for more advanced-level GFP trainings.

¹ GFP's local partner in the West Bank in 2012 was OneVoice Palestine.

Since the publication of the 2012 report, GFP Headquarters (HQ) invested additional efforts to address several of the concerns the report has outlined. Specific GFP HQ-led training opportunities for Palestinian Delegates and Pioneers were created; a strengthened but decentralised mentoring approach was employed; and a programme planning process, including financial management, was simplified and streamlined.

Training Opportunities

- The Advanced Training, held from 9 to 13 October 2012 in Amman, had seen three first generation Pioneers representing the cities of Bethlehem, Jenin, and Nablus take part in this five day event. During the Training, the Palestinian Pioneers had an opportunity to improve their core peace-building skills, as well as be trained on the basics of M&E. As the Advanced Training gathered GFP Pioneers from 15 countries spread across three continents, it also enabled the Palestinian representatives to share their own experiences, discuss common challenges, and learn about the solutions other GFP volunteers applied in their own local contexts.
- Following the Advanced Training, a special workshop entitled “GFP Palestine Get Together” was organised from 13 to 15 December 2012. 25 Pioneers from Bethlehem (four); Jenin (four); Jericho (five); Nablus (nine); and Qalqiliya (three), travelled to Amman to spend a weekend with GFP HQ staff discussing the mandate and direction of future programmes in the West Bank. The very first steps in setting plans for those programmes were taken during this workshop, enabling the GFP HQ staff to further assess overall programmatic capacity of Palestinian volunteers. The Workshop was also an opportunity for animated debate amongst the volunteers about the perceived necessity (by some) for GFP to have an office in the West Bank; the same debate also covered the question of local partnerships, which, all participants agreed, needed to be strengthened and diversified.
- The third training opportunity for Palestinian volunteers came from 14 to 16 June 2013, when a special Refresher Workshop for Jordanian, Lebanese and Palestinian volunteers was organised. Mixed groups of Delegates and Pioneers were invited to Amman for training on a new GFP Programming Framework; updated tools for conflict analysis; theory of change as a leading methodology; and strong emphasis on M&E processes designed by GFP were all part of that training. Each country at the Refresher Workshop was represented by ten volunteers. In attendance from Palestine were two Pioneers from Bethlehem, one from Jenin, two from Jericho, two from Nablus, and three from Qalqiliya.

Mentoring

In addition to these training opportunities, the GFP HQ decided to decentralise the mentoring approach by strengthening the direct linkages with a selected group of two volunteers in each city (instead of direct mentoring being provided to the lead Pioneer from Nablus who was then expected to relay the information and cascade knowledge and skills to other volunteers across five cities in the West Bank). In total, ten GFP volunteers from five cities were included in, and actively mentored on, all aspects of programme design and planning. This decentralised mentoring approach was also expected to facilitate learning on all levels, and increase communication flows.

Programme Planning

To encourage the locally-trained Palestinian volunteers to get actively involved in their own programme planning/budgeting, the GFP HQ simplified the overall planning process, and streamlined the financial/budgetary requirements. In addition, a two-day capacity-building training for the local partner organisation's (OVP) financial officers was organised in Amman in an attempt to ease financial and accounting procedures, which in turn was to allow the volunteers themselves to directly submit budgetary request/information when designing and planning their programmes.

In order to assess whether these actions have had any impact on the GFP Delegates and Pioneers in the West Bank, a second field research visit was scheduled for November 2013. The research visit was intended to reassess M&E capabilities, and revisit the issues identified during the 2012 visit: including distorted understandings of the GFP mandate; financial gaps; and the various grievances of Palestinian Delegates and Pioneers.

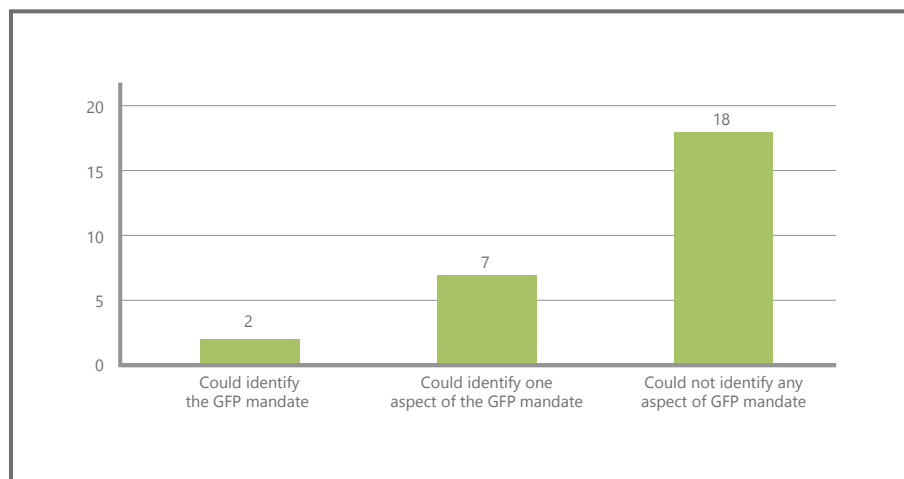


2013 Research Findings

After conducting 22 interviews with GFP Delegates and Pioneers in Bethlehem, Jenin, Jericho, Nablus and Qalqiliya, and administering 49 surveys to both existing (26) and newly recruited (23) local GFP volunteers, the information detailed in the following pages was collected.

Understanding of Generations For Peace

The Generations For Peace (GFP) mission, irrespective of where it works, is “to empower youth to lead and cascade sustainable change in communities experiencing conflict, through world class, free education in conflict transformation through sport, arts, advocacy, dialogue and empowerment.” This mandate, composed of three main aspects (local empowerment; sustainable change; the use of peace-building vehicles) is one that GFP Delegates and Pioneers should be familiar with – ideally, the programmes they implement should be focused on contributing to this mission. However, as the diagram below demonstrates, this familiarity is lacking:



Of the 26 volunteers asked to do so, two were able to articulate all aspects of the GFP mission, and seven were able to identify any one aspect; thus, only nine volunteers demonstrated familiarity with GFP’s mandate and approach in the West Bank. It is worth mentioning that of those interviewed 13 attended trainings at GFP HQ in Amman. Furthermore, of those who could not identify the GFP mandate, five believed the mission to be “ending the occupation and attaining a two-

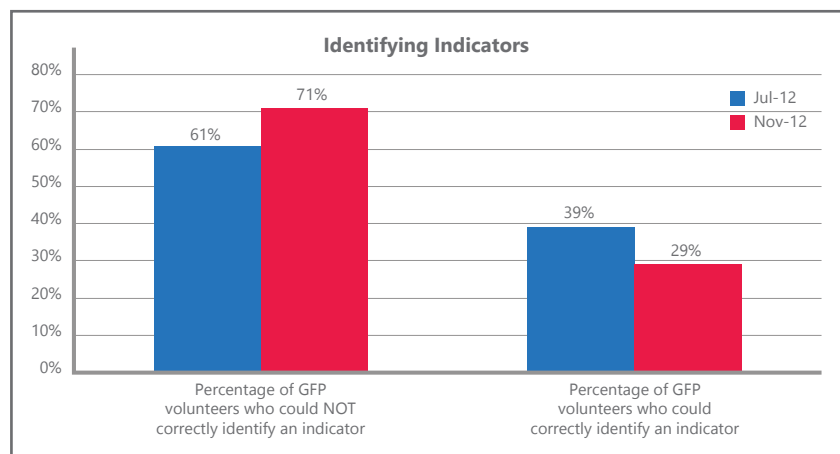
state solution.” While the reasons for why some Delegates and Pioneers understand the GFP mandate to be interchangeable with that of OVP cannot be assumed, the fact is that volunteers continue to hold a distorted understanding of the GFP mission².

In a more positive light, of the 26 who completed surveys, 25 said “yes” when asked if GFP has, or could make real change in their communities – albeit they could not articulate how. Another important finding is that during this visit, 23 new volunteers came forward looking to become involved with Generations For Peace; however, this is unlikely to reflect the popularity of GFP programming as few individuals actually understand GFP’s mandate enough to propagate it.

² It is worth noting that 14 of the 26 interviewees mentioned “peace” as an aspect of the GFP mission. However, as peace is a contested term in the West Bank – usually referring to peace with Israel – it has not been included in the discussed statistics.

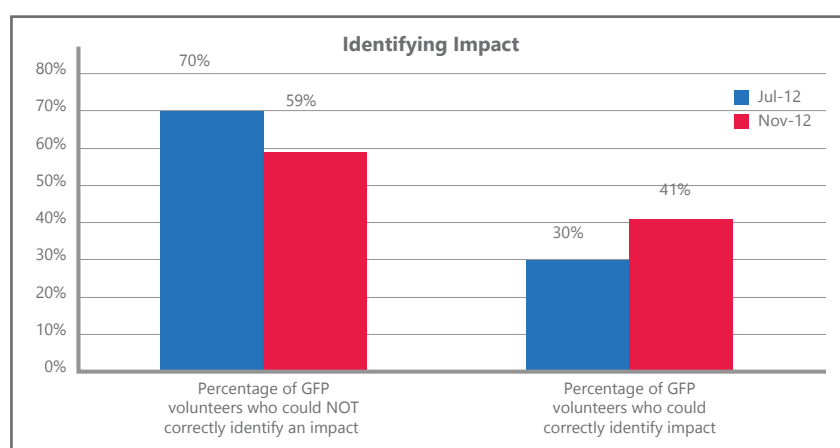
Programmes-Related

Last visit, 30 interviews were conducted and over 40 surveys were administered to GFP volunteers from Bethlehem, Jenin, Jericho, Nablus and Qalqiliya. The November 2013 visit permitted repeat interviewees with 15 Delegates and Pioneers. Interviewing these individuals a second time allowed insight into whether or not they have better understood M&E since July 2012. Overall, while 14 of the 22 interviewees were able to successfully define both monitoring and evaluation as concepts (ten of whom were repeat interviewees), their ability to recognise specific aspects of M&E was less promising.



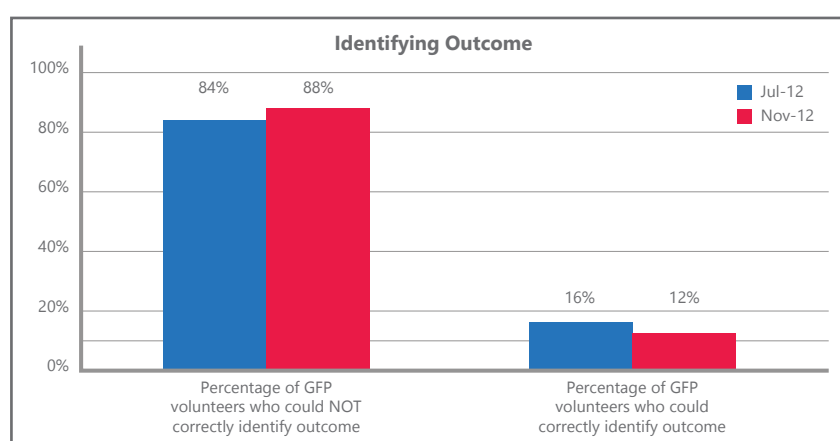
During the July 2012 visit, 39% of the Delegates and Pioneers interviewed were able to identify SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) indicators. This number has dropped, as during the November 2013 field research visit only 29% interviewees could identify SMART indicators. It must be noted that in 2012, volunteers were granted an explanation about indicators prior to being asked to provide their responses (as the term was just included

in GFP programming); whereas in 2013, taking into consideration that half of the interviewees had attended either the "Get Together" or Refresher Workshop in Amman, this definition was not provided.



Although the percentage of GFP volunteers who could correctly identify a SMART indicator decreased by 10% over the last 16 months, those able to identify the impact of GFP programming on their communities increased by 11%. Contributing to this may be the fact that in July 2012 ongoing activities had just commenced and thus Delegates and Pioneers may not yet have considered possible changes in the beneficiary community as a result of programming.

Of the 41% of volunteers who could correctly identify impact in November 2013, all had attended the Refresher Workshop in June 2013, where specific sessions focusing on aspects of M&E, including impact, were held.



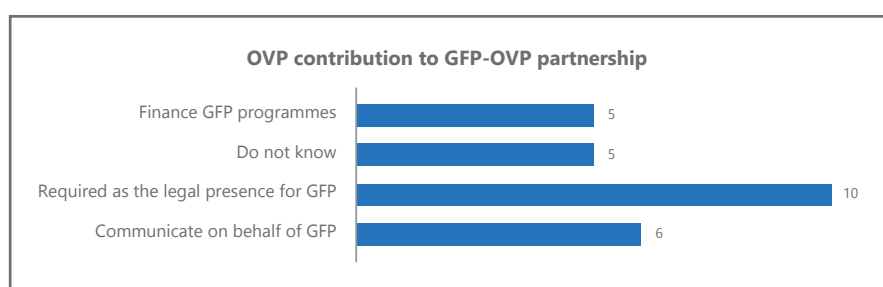
In November 2013, just over 10% of Delegates and Pioneers were able to correctly identify an outcome. This number is incredibly low, as was the case in 2012 when only 16% were familiar with the term "outcome"³. This is one of the more troubling M&E-related findings of 2013 as it suggests that despite two international workshops (which 50% of interviewees attended), Palestinian Delegates and Pioneers are still unable to identify how GFP programmes can affect the targeted audiences.

³ When asked in 2012, as there were no "programme cycles" per say, this question was asked about expected outcomes of ongoing activities. It also replaced the term "target group" with "participants in your activities".

When asked why they could not recall the indicators, impacts and outcomes (despite having had trainings emphasising these aspects of M&E), the majority of repeat interviewees claimed that a lack of continuous programming in the West Bank since the October 2012, December 2012 and June 2013 trainings caused them to forget⁴. Relatedly, when questioned as to why GFP programmes are not currently underway in the West Bank, 50% of Delegates and Pioneers said “I do not know.” The remaining 50% attributed the absence of continuous programmes to a shortage of finances.

Understanding of Partnership

Based on findings from November 2013, 19 of 22 interviewees were able to correctly identify OVP as GFP’s partner in the West Bank; of that 19, more than 70% were familiar with OVP’s mandate. Put into perspective, whereas less than 35% GFP volunteers demonstrated familiarity with GFP’s mandate, approximately 70% of those same volunteers could correctly identify OVP’s mandate⁵. This statistic, though interesting, would not be problematic in and of itself; however, the fact that three first generation GFP Pioneers echoed the following sentiment is concerning: “GFP works to strengthen communities and rebuild them so that OVP can deal with a united community to achieve political goals.” This merging of GFP’s mandate with OVP’s was noted in the July 2012 findings and, unfortunately, persists in the findings of November 2013.



In addition to not being able to differentiate between the mission of GFP and its partner, Delegates and Pioneers who completed the survey could not determine how GFP partnerships function in the West Bank. While 81% could identify one aspect of what OVP contributes to

GFP programming (see chart), 50% of those interviewed said, “I do not know” when asked “what does GFP contribute to the GFP-OVP partnership?” Of the other 50%, 30% understood GFP to be the provider of trainings and international opportunities to those who have performed well for OVP in Palestine.

Finance-Related

That GFP volunteers have to finance activities from their own pockets is surprising considering the substantial financial contribution GFP makes to programmes in the West Bank. For the 2012-2013 financial year, GFP provided approximately USD 50,000 to fund GFP programming in Bethlehem, Jenin, Jericho, Nablus and Qalqiliya. Thus, when GFP volunteers make the statements about insufficient funding, that is a reason for concern; and, the concern is heightened when similar statements are made by five separate interviewees. Interestingly, this sentiment was shared in 2012 when five of the 30 Delegates and Pioneers interviewed claimed insufficient funding to be their biggest barrier to successful GFP programming in the West Bank.

That most are unaware of the finances available to them for conducting programmes is demonstrated by the fact that, when asked how they think GFP programmes were funded, just under 50% were unaware that finances were available at all, let alone able to recognise who was funding.

The fact that GFP volunteers do not have the finances necessary for them to complete GFP programming successfully is dually problematic. Firstly, several cities continue to carry out programming despite a shortage of finances; while this shows commitment to GFP, volunteers should not have to use their own funds when money has been allocated for them. And secondly, having to stop programming midway (as has occurred in multiple cities) damages GFP’s credibility and, most importantly, hinders the GFP’s potential to make real and tangible change in the West Bank.

⁴ The fact that the GFP HQ, its Programmes Department particularly, focused on delivery of additional trainings for GFP Palestine volunteers and direct mentoring of larger group of Palestinian volunteers meant that lesser number of programmes was delivered in the period between the July 2012 and November 2013 reports.

⁵ The fact that OVP is an important contributor to GFP volunteer recruitment in the West Bank may contribute to this statistic.

Concluding Remarks

- Having analysed the findings from November 2013 alongside those of July 2012, it becomes apparent that the issues uncovered in 2012 have not been resolved over the last 16 months.
- Despite three trainings (two of which were on international level) and the introduction of a decentralised mentoring approach involving larger number of volunteers, Palestinian Delegates and Pioneers continue to lack a clear, shared, precise and focused articulation of the GFP role and approach in Palestine. Not only can volunteers not correctly identify GFP's mission, several Delegates and Pioneers continue to interchange the social and apolitical mandate of GFP with the political message of OVP.
- Equally problematic, the GFP volunteers in the West Bank are unable to recognise crucial elements of M&E – and by extension their ability to carry out effective programming is compromised. These findings are incredibly discouraging as three trainings – the costs of which were completely covered by GFP – were held to rectify these issues.
- As well, according to the November 2013 findings, the complaints presented by the GFP volunteers interviewed in July 2012 have not subsided. There continues to be a perceived shortage of funding available to the Delegates and Pioneers for their community programmes in spite of simplified programme/budget planning procedures and volunteers being able to provide direct input as to the finances needed for the programmes they are designing themselves.
- Although the Palestinian representatives took part in one held in October 2012, Advanced Trainings are still desired by the GFP volunteers.
- Finally as was the case in 2012, a GFP office in the West Bank continues to be a desire: of those requesting an office, 70% feel it is necessary to establish direct contact with GFP as, according to the Delegates and Pioneers interviewed, the communication between the West Bank and GFP Headquarters is still limited albeit some improvements were noticed in 2013.



About the Researcher

Nabila Hussein started as the Knowledge, Education and Outreach Officer for Generations For Peace in August 2013. Her particular areas of focus are research and development, knowledge and education and community outreach.

Nabila is from British Columbia, Canada and first joined Generations For Peace as an intern in 2012. She completed her undergraduate degree in Middle Eastern History and Humanities at Simon Fraser University in June of 2010 and by August 2010 enrolled at the Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS) in London to pursue the Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities (GPISH).

In 2013 she completed her MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies at the University of Oxford granting her a comprehensive knowledge of South Asia to add to her familiarity with the Middle East and North Africa.

About the Programme Research

The Programme Research series produced by Generations For Peace Institute focuses on impact of the Generations For Peace programmes. This research is conducted by the Institute's staff and/or external researchers engaged through the Institute's partnerships with leading universities, research centres, and individual academics or researchers. The Programme Research serves as a guide to assist in the crafting and maintaining of high quality, tailor-made Generations For Peace programmes; as a tool to gain support whether from donors, local stakeholders or academics; and as a knowledge-base to inform Generations For Peace curriculum and training materials.



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