Layali Ramadania/Storytelling Festival 2016

Storytelling and Music for children and their parents From 11-16/6/2016 in three villages, two refugee camps and Jordan Valley.



Introduction

The project of Layali Ramadania/ Storytelling Festival has been supported by the Gymnasium Finkenwerder “Colour Run for Storyteller”[1], and had been developed between the Goethe-Institut and Tellers without borders in cooperation with Seraj Libraries. The goal of the project was to refresh the storytelling - Hakawati culture that has been missing in the Palestinian community. Children with their parents were invited to hear and share stories under the stars to unleash their imagination. This is the first event specializing in storytelling during Ramadan in Palestine.

How did the fund come?

[1] In July 2015 the Clour Run for Storyteller took place with students from the Gymnasium Finkenwerder in Germany.

For every round they ran money was collected for the chosen project. They were in total 15 rounds.The school council selected the initiative “Storytellers without borders” as addressee of the donation. The organization founded by Micaela Sauber is a network of storytellers from different countries. They also launch projects in crisis zones and refugee camps in order to delight children and youth by fairytales and stories as well as to give them hope and consolation. These professional “storytellers” are also working in Palestine, both in the west bank and in gaza strip.

The Layali Ramadania festival that was financed throughout.This collected money included storytelling for children and families in the Palestinian Territories in six different villages and refugee camps, the festival was organized in a cooperation between the Goethe-Institut and the Siraj Library Network. Additionally Seraj Library donated for each library 100 $ for hospitality in Ramadan, The event took place during the “Nights of Ramadan” (11.June-16.June 2016) . The project was coordinated by the Storyteller Fidaa Ataya.

This is the first event specializing in storytelling during Ramadan in Palestine with the following schedule

- Sat.11. June, Al Mazra'a Al Sharqiya - Ramallah, 10 pm-12 am
- Sun.12. June, Aida Refugee Camp – Bethlehem, 9 am-12 am
- Mon.13. June, Burham - Ramallah, 8:30 pm- 12 am
- Tues.14. June, Deir Ammar Refugee Camp, 8:30 pm- 11 pm
- Wed.15. June, Kafr Ni'ma - Ramallah,10 pm- 12 am
- Thu.16. June, Al Jiftlik - Jordan Valley, 10 pm- 12 am

Before the beginning of the project, we had a meeting with all the partners at the different areas. Together, we decided the places for the performances and the times; we informed them that the audience should be maximum 80 people (children and parents).

More details

Sat. 11 June, Al Mazra'a Al Sharqiya - Ramallah, 10 pm -12 am.

- **The partners**: Seraj Library at Al Mazra'a Al Sharqyia Club, and the school of the village.
- **The place**: outdoors (planned), but it was windy, so we did it in the Library.
- **The Audience**: 100 children, 40 women, 37 men, 32 young adults (in total 209 people) with Guests from Dora Al Qare' (a village next to Al Mazra'a Al Sharqyia)
- **The event included:**-

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)

2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)
3. Storytelling by Jasmine and Jamila (The Camels)
4. A Poem with traditional song by Sa'ed Hameda, added to that (Zajal and playing the Shababa instrument)
5. Children sang a song (8 females, 8-9 years old)

the photos link on Facebook

Sun. 12. June, Aida Refugee Camp – Bethlehem, 9 am -12 pm.

- The partners: Seraj library at Al Rowwad center.
- The place: inside Al Rowwad Center
- The Audience: 75 children, 15 women, 11 men, (in total 101 people)
- The event included:-

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)
2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)
3. Storytelling by Taghreed (Al deek Al Hader)
4. Dabka dancing by Children (10-11 years old).
5. Comedy play (for 6 minutes by 6 young adults).

the photos link on Facebook

Mon. 13. June, Burham - Ramallah, 8:30 pm - 12 am.

- The partners: Seraj Library, Burham association and the school of the village.

- The place: outdoors.
- The Audience: 54 children, 26 women, 32 young adults and men. (in total 112 people).
- The event included:-

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)
2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)
3. Storytelling by Shadia and Rinad (Al Atal and Al Jelal story, Nos Nseis story)
4. Dabka dancing combined with playing the Shababa Instrument by a man and 13 young adults.
5. Fazazeer (Ramadani Competition) for children and Adults prepared by the Volunteers.

the photos link on Facebook

Tues. 14. June, Deir Ammar Refugee Camp, 8:30 pm - 11 pm.

- The partners: Seraj Library in Hayat Association.
- The place: (indoors) at Hayat Association next to the library, there is no place outside in the camp.
- The Audience: 65 children, 9 women, 11 men. (in total 85 people)
- The event included:-

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)
2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)
3. Storytelling by Zaher and Isra' (Namola and my long hair)

the photos link on Facebook

Wed. 15. June, Kafr Ni'ma - Ramallah,10 pm - 12 pm.

- The partners: Seraj Library in Kafr Ni'ma village council they are partners with the Children Club.
- The place: Kafr Ni'ma public Garden (Outdoors).
- The Audience: 250 children, 150 women, 100 men (in total 500 people).
- The event included:-

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)
2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)
3. Dabka dancing from Children club group (19 girls, 6-14 years old).
4. Poem read by Nadia Hamad.
5. Storytelling by Marwa (Al Khonfisa).

the photos link on Facebook

Thu. 16. June, Al Jiftlik - Jordan Valley, 10 pm - 12 pm.

- The partners: Jordan Valley Solidarity Campaign and Seraj Library in Al Sanabel Association.
- The place: Outdoors next to Al Sanabel Association.
- The Audience: 55 children, 20 women, 11 men, (in total 86 people).
- The event included: -

1. Storytelling by Fidaa (The story of Ramadan)
2. Music by Osama (Songs and playing the Oud Instrument)

3. Storytelling by Sireen (Jebaneh)

4. Children from the audience also participated (Songs and dabka dancing).

5. Women handcraft exhibition (created by women from Jordan Valley made from natural resources).

the photos link on Facebook

Layali Ramadania/ Storytelling Festival was successful due to

- Our main partner was Seraj Library Network, which organizes so many events in many places over the west bank.Their goal is to encourage palestinians to believe in the role of the library and spread happiness, Education and Culture to Children.

- We reached many different places in the west bank areas A, B and C, which have less services and Education. 60% of the west bank is recognized as area C, which means land for Palestinians under Israeli control. We went to Al-Jiftlik (area C) and we also covered two refugee camps.In Deir Ammar refugee camp for example children there have no place to play.The storytelling event was a need for such places.

- Our Audience was a mixture of children, parents, youth and women, which strengthen family relations and the Guests from the Villages around. Their participating encouraged the national tourism.

- We decided with the partners to have 80 people maximum as an audience per event (this means that our audience should be maximum 480 person for all the festival), but surprisingly there was more than 80 people every night and our Audience was 1093[1] people for all nights, due to the fact that the children's school vacation and they were allowed to stay up all night in

[1] this information came from the partners after they wrote us a small report inclouding the numbers, also we counted the Audiences for each event.

Ramadan. They also need such activities during Ramadan, we were ready to for this amount of people also we were lucky to have good microphones.

- The set up: our background for the performances was so good and it reflected on the audience the feeling of Ramadan , also the special Fanos light, which is very essential in Ramadan.
- Seraj Library invited the Ministry of Culture, they couldn't come, but they have a big interest in the storytelling festival / Layali Ramadania, maybe in the future they will be our partners too.
- Additionally we published the information about the event in the Goethe-Institut Intranet Goethe-Institut Intranet

· **Advertisement:** we printed 600 flyers and 10 posters, we distributed the flyers and posters to our partners and we put some at Goethe-Institut. We created an event on Facebook and we put the festival schedule at the monthly program of the Goethe-Institut. Our partners shared the event on their Facebook pages and groups and they distributed the Flyers.

- We had a photographer during Layali Ramadania/ Storytelling Festival. He took photos every day. We uploaded them on the facebook page day by day.
- We had two volunteers with us every night, they were helping us in the set up and the closing.
- We had Goethe bus driven by Rami, which made the tour comfortable and easy.
- I had a live interview for 24 FM radio and I gave information about the event.
- The energy that came from the young storytellers was powerful, it was their first time performing in front of their elders, which helped break the wall between them as performers and their families as their audience.

Recommended for next time:

- To always organize the event in Ramadan and at the school vacation.
- To make a film about the festival to show some of the activities and the settings unfortunately, our budget was not enough to make such a film.
- To give more time for organizing before and after the Festival.
- To keep performing the events outdoors.
- To keep the background and development.
- To have a big lighting for the places, which have poor electricity.
- To have\link storytellers from Germany and other countries with the Palestinian storytellers.
- To always combine music with the storytelling event.
- To keep having two volunteers in each event.
- To have a meeting with the young storytellers before the festival starts, in order to check the story, if it suits our goals or not, and the activities in the best way.
- To have meetings with the partners before the beginning of the event in order to put the best strategy and schedule for the event
- To keep having storytellers from the Palestinian Communities.

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Written by Fidaa Ataya