



Ibtikar for Empowerment & Social Entrepreneurship

Educate, Innovate, and Advocate

Organization Profile

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At Ibtikar, we work to empower and support teachers, students, young people and women to realize their potential as social innovators, change makers and entrepreneurs, giving them the skills needed to tackle the social issues they face in their communities. Ibtikar believes that young people and women must lead the way in making the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals a reality. Each of the Ibtikar's project is a powerful tool to accelerate progress towards these goals. Ibtikar's strategy is aligned with the U.N. transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Leave No-One Behind. Furthermore, the strategy envisions Ibtikar taking new programmatic roles as a catalyst, enabler, and facilitating change, aspiring to maximize impact and create social values. Our theory of change identified three critical paths for supporting Palestinian people to enable collective impact: Education, Empowerment, Civic Engagement, Social Innovation, Entrepreneurship And Advocacy for better inclusive educational and entrepreneurship ecosystems for all Palestinians.

The Vision of Change

Ibtikar works to empower the next generation to address society's needs and achieve better wellbeing for all.

The Mission of Ibtikar

Ibtikar connects and inspires teachers, trains and mentors change agents and innovators to become global problem solvers who can contribute to better Palestinian entrepreneurship and educational eco-systems guided by the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals.



Our Interventions

At Ibtikar, we work to empower and support teachers, students, young people and women to realize their potential as social innovators, change makers and entrepreneurs, giving them the skills needed to tackle the social issues they face in their communities. Ibtikar believes that young people and women must lead the way in making the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals a reality. Each of the Ibtikar's project is a powerful tool to accelerate progress towards these goals. Ibtikar's strategy is aligned with the U.N. transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Leave No-One Behind. Furthermore, the strategy envisions Ibtikar taking new programmatic roles as a catalyst, enabler, and facilitating change, aspiring to maximize impact and create social values. Ibtikar's theory of change identified three critical paths for supporting Palestinian people to enable collective impact:

- **Education, Empowerment, Civic Engagement**
- **SDGs, Social Innovation, Entrepreneurship**
- **And Advocacy for better inclusive educational and entrepreneurship ecosystems for all Palestinians.**

Education, Empowerment and Civic Engagement:

Ibtikar aspires to Improve quality standards for the educational system in Palestine taking into considerations the main pillars of creativity, social innovation, civic engagement and global citizenship education. All of this is based on Non- formal learning and education principles, including experiential and self-directed learning.





SDGs, Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Ibtikar develops new and creative educational approaches that strengthen the capacity, skills, and entrepreneurial mindsets of youth, women, and children from all backgrounds. Ibtikar takes old ideas out of the box and reconstructs them in a different shape encouraging its beneficiaries to rethink their practices, invent new ones, experiment, and find new solutions to old problems. What Ibtikar provides under this pillar complements the roles of the local and international incubators and accelerators in Palestine, in the sense of providing pre and post incubation services for the social entrepreneurs through enhancing their:

- **Personal and Life Skills Development.**
- **Self-actualization**
- **Peaceful and conflicts resolution skills**

Advocacy for better inclusive educational and entrepreneurship ecosystems for all Palestinians

Ibtikar believes that there is no sequence or priority between the paths. Accountability occurs in all directions and between actors, and none of the paths are designed as standalone approaches. In this way, our vision of change is achieved through an enabling environment and internal empowerment that can create positive, fair, and sustainable change. It is essential to realize that the empowerment of Palestinian teachers, children, youth, and women is the first step in supporting them while taking active roles in fulfilling their needs and rights constructively and creatively. This will lead to the betterment of their psychosocial well-being, social cohesion, and civic engagement.



Our Projects:



1. SHELEADS II Project

Objective:

SHELEADS II aims to support the socioeconomic transformation of refugee women in Bethlehem through vocational training, psychosocial support, and community-driven initiatives. The project seeks to empower these women by enhancing their resilience, vocational skills, and capacity to create sustainable livelihoods.

Key Activities:

- **Light Vocational Training:** The project delivered 20 vocational training sessions to 273 women, focusing on various vocational skills, such as handicrafts (e.g., ceramics, mosaic, accessories making). These skills are designed to help women create small businesses or improve their livelihoods.
- **Mentorship:** 22 women who attended the vocational training opened their own micro-projects. 16 of these women are receiving one-on-one mentoring from youth business coaches, who were specifically trained by Ibtikar to support them through this process.
- **Youth Trainers:** Ibtikar hired 10 youth trainers (8 women and 2 man), six of whom continue to conduct training and provide mentoring services to women participants. These trainers play a critical role in supporting women as they develop their projects.
- **Psychosocial Support:** In cooperation with UNRWA, Ibtikar delivered psychosocial support to 94 women, focusing on building resilience and emotional well-being. Women participated in vocational therapy through activities like ceramics and mosaic-making, which helped them regain a sense of purpose and stability amid ongoing challenges.

SHELEADS II Impact:

SHELEADS II has had a profound impact on the women involved, providing them with the tools, skills, and emotional support needed to rebuild their livelihoods and improve their economic conditions. The project also fosters a strong sense of community, where women feel supported by both their peers and mentors. Through the combined efforts of vocational training, mentorship, and psychosocial support, the initiative is creating sustainable opportunities for women to thrive economically and socially.





2. Palestinian Puppet Project

Objective:

To preserve Palestinian cultural heritage by integrating the art of traditional Palestinian embroidery into educational puppetry, while providing employment opportunities for women in marginalized areas. The project also seeks to create cultural dialogue and promote Palestinian identity both locally and internationally through storytelling.

Key Activities:

- **Handmade Puppets and Traditional Embroidery:** The project engages 45 refugee women who work from home, crafting puppets adorned with traditional Palestinian Thobs, each reflecting the embroidery styles of different villages and cities. The intricate designs highlight the rich cultural identity of Palestine.
- **Cultural Storytelling and Education:** These puppets are used in schools and community events, teaching children storytelling and creativity while emphasizing the importance of Palestinian heritage. By blending traditional crafts with educational programs, the project fosters cultural continuity.
- **Barcoded Storytelling:** Each puppet is equipped with a barcode that, when scanned, reveals the personal stories of five Palestinian women from different villages, detailing their experiences and the impact the project has had on their lives. This feature bridges traditional narratives with modern technology, enhancing global understanding of Palestinian culture.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Women involved in the project also market the puppets at local and community markets, gaining economic resilience while promoting Palestinian craftsmanship.

Impact:

This initiative not only preserves Palestinian heritage but also transforms the puppets into cultural ambassadors, connecting international audiences with the vibrant history and spirit of Palestine. The incorporation of personal stories through barcoded technology adds a unique dimension, fostering deeper global engagement with Palestinian identity. Additionally, the project provides sustainable income for women in marginalized areas, empowering them economically while celebrating cultural traditions.

3. Youth Business Coaches Project

Project Summary:

The Youth Business Coaches Project supports Palestinian youth in the South West Bank, specifically in Bethlehem, Hebron, and surrounding areas. This initiative focuses on building an inclusive economy and fostering social innovation by empowering youth to become business coaches and mentors to their peers.

Key Components:

The project includes training youth as business coaches, establishing a coaching department within Ibtikar, and providing advanced entrepreneurship and mentorship training. It fosters partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and universities, ensuring comprehensive support for emerging youth-led projects. The initiative also advocates for financial inclusion and supportive economic policies.

Impact:

Through these efforts, the project empowers Palestinian youth to develop sustainable livelihoods, foster innovation, and contribute to the economic and social development of their communities. By promoting skill development and creating opportunities for mentorship, it builds a network of empowered young entrepreneurs.



4. Creativity and Education:

With Creativity and Education, Ibtikar provides Palestinian children and teachers an opportunity to explore and understand:

- The role of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in teaching and learning.
- The importance of developing classroom and school environments that bring out the best teachers and students.
- Methods for making classrooms more engaging places.

The project is created specifically for those who simply see no other way but constantly learn new things about this world and sincerely practice lifelong self and peer-learning.

The initiative is a customized capacity building program for school students and teachers in Bethlehem district. The program reaches out to more than 100 school students (14-16 years old) and 45 schoolteachers. Students are divided into 4 groups. Each group receives 50 training hours for a total of 200 training hours for the four groups. The fundamental aim of the students' program is to prepare students for real world careers and challenges and equipping them with 21st century skills with a special focus on creative thinking and entrepreneurship. The core approach of the program is based on non-formal education where the students and teachers were provided with tools to broaden their knowledge in adopting different techniques and methods that will be reflected positively on their experience with their students.

The Overall Objective is to promote the education of creativity and social innovation in the Palestinian schools.



5. Supporting Women Entrepreneurs during COVID-19:

The project contributes to the development of women led economy in Bethlehem governorate and to creating the business-enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in the area.

Through the project's interventions such as building the capacity of the targeted women and the support on the management and technical level, the women entrepreneurs have a better access the market and therefore, grow their businesses, employ more people, and generate sustainable and better incomes for their employees, themselves, and their families.

With special focus on the needs of women entrepreneurs, the business-enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in Bethlehem and the West Bank is planned to be improved through assisting women entrepreneurs to improve their businesses and have better market access and through creating least 2 Outlet Shops for promoting and selling of women entrepreneur's products established and/or up-graded (if already existent prior to project), one real and one virtual outlets.

The project seeks to achieve this by adopting a gender transformative approach aimed at recognizing, formalizing, and amplifying women's existing roles in key value chains whilst promoting women's increased decision-making and control over income, assets, and productive recourses. The project focuses on value chains, where significant exists to empower women, including female youth, to move beyond their essential but largely unrecognized roles, ultimately contributing to their increased agency in both economic and social sphere.

This program contributes directly towards the achievement of the SDGs, especially SDG1: No poverty, SDG 5: Gender Equality SGD 8: Decent work and economic growth, and SD10: Reduces Inequalities.

Objectives and outcomes of the project

The project focuses on three inter-related intermediate outcomes:

- i) reduced barriers to market faced by women entrepreneurs;
- ii) enhanced opportunities for women entrepreneurs to successfully establish and/or grow sustainable businesses; and,
- iii) enhanced opportunities for female entrepreneurs, particularly female youth, to support the adoption of productive processing value chains.

To achieve these outcomes, the project addresses several key challenges impacting women's entrepreneurship in the West Bank areas with a special focus on Bethlehem areas.

6. Learning Loss recovery:

Through "Learning Loss Recovery", Ibtikar delivers an afterschool Individualized education program to support the recovery of the academic and wellbeing loss of students from Bethlehem Governorate and the suburbs, in particular the less served areas near the separation wall and area C.

These educational and wellbeing sessions are delivered by university students who receive training program that couple with their educational backgrounds to insure the delivery of a qualitative intervention with the mentioned elementary school students.

In return, Ibtikar establishes agreements with the engaged Palestinian universities to directly pay half the tuition fees for one semester for each of the targeted university students.

The Overall Objective of the project is to promote, encourage and implement the idea of recovering lost learning and wellbeing among the Palestinian students.

7. SHELEADS I

SHE-LEADS project aims at promoting social entrepreneurship, cooperative model and cooperative enterprise principals as effective approaches to overcome some of the social and economic challenges Palestinian refugees in Southern West Bank face on a daily basis, to support their socioeconomic conditions and to maximize their contributions to well-being and development for themselves and their communities.

The program aims to empower refugee women to sustainably take leading roles in their local communities through innovative and social entrepreneurship learning tools and skills advancing opportunities. Additionally, it will work on creating spaces and opportunities, by working with multiple key stakeholders, to support empowering women to contribute to sustainable change in their communities and to deepen their knowledge about the "cooperative movement" and the substitute solutions it provides and thus, maintaining the motivation for social change.

Capacity building Training program

Ibtikar implements training of Trainers (ToT) program in cooperation with Milton Foundation, YEU and Afflatoun International. The programs aim at capacitating the targeted youth on the principals of SDGs, non-formal education, entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and innovation to help them create their own job opportunities and assist them in assisting their communities and maybe become future qualitative trainers.

The program was focused on three main thematic:

- **Self care and enhancing the psychosocial wellbeing**
- **Design thinking and System Design Methodology**
- **Back-casting Approach**
- **Social and Financial education**
- **Climate change impact mitigation**
- **Gamification**
- **Local organizations improvement**

Participants enter the program from various levels of prior experience and bring along a portfolio of competences. The approach implemented in the program intends to allow these junior trainers to lead Ibtikar's upcoming programs toward achieving Ibtikar's vision to empower the next generation to address society's needs and achieve better wellbeing for all.



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