

Press Release

RTM-Volontari nel Mondo launched its new project *Partnership for a new Approach to Early Childhood Education (P.A.C.E.)*

In November 2018, 33 Palestinians from all over the country, participated in an international study group at the [Loris Malaguzzi International Centre in Reggio Emilia](#), Italy. The study visit lasted a week and gave the participants the possibility to deepen their knowledge about the [Reggio Emilia Approach](#): the educational philosophy behind [RTM -Volontari nel Mondo](#) interventions in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) sector in Palestine. The Palestinian delegation involved in the study group represented different educational realities, such as public, private, community based and academic institutions. This variety reflected RTM willingness to foster and promote dialogue and exchange in the ECE sector in Palestine.

One month after the study visit, on the 13th of December 2018, RTM was pleased to share and present the experience of the Palestinian delegation as the starting point of the new project *Partnership for a new Approach to early Childhood Education (P.A.C.E.)*. The launch event of P.A.C.E. took place at the [Mahmoud Darwish National Museum](#), in Ramallah. The conference was held in the presence of His Excellency the Minister of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Sabri Saidam, the General Director of the General Education Department of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), Mr. Yousef Odeh, the Communication Officer of the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS) in Jerusalem, Mr. Marco Giallonardi, and the General Secretary of the General Secretariat of the Christian Educational Institutions in Palestine, Father Iyad Twal.

P.A.C.E. is a 3-year-long project funded by AICS and implemented in cooperation with the following partners and entities:

- Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education;
- Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem;
- Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem;
- Greek-Catholic Patriarchate of Jerusalem;
- Ibda'a Cultural Center of Dheisheh Refugee Camp, Bethlehem;
- Municipality of Reggio Emilia – Institution for Preschools and Infant-Toddler Centres;
- Reggio Children Foundation – International Centre Loris Malaguzzi;
- Reggio Children S.r.l.;
- Al Quds University.

As explained by RTM Project Coordinator and Country Representative, Ms. Anna Toldo, P.A.C.E. aims at increasing the **quality, accessibility and sustainability** of the Palestinian ECE system by fostering public-private partnership. These objectives are respectively pursued through:

- increasing the professional competences of MOEHE staff in pedagogy and management of ECE services and of the staff of 60 public and private pre-school institutions in terms of lesson planning, learning environment and family participation;
- ensuring access to qualitative ECE services to children and families living in marginalised areas of the West Bank by opening 30 new public pre-school classes and expanding and/or reorganising 15 already existing private schools;
- starting-up a Pilot Center for Creative Reuse of waste materials with mixed management (public- private) in Bethlehem, to supply schools across the Governorate and promote creative reuse in West Bank.

Overall, the 3-year project will target 45 pre-school classes and schools in 11 Governorates and Directorates, involving different Palestinian actors and institutions which share the commitment to promote a fundamental children's right: the right to a qualitative early childhood education.

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