

Gaza Digital: No Borders, No Limits!

As Gaza remains under blockade, unemployment rates continue to rise. In 2014, the unemployment rate in Gaza spiked to 40.8%, marking the highest rate since 2009. Trade restrictions and frequent border closures have weakened Gaza's economy and left thousands of people and graduates without jobs. Most international aid agencies provide a fish rather than a rod; as such, youth become more dependent on aid and absorbed in frustration due to lack of job opportunities. The unemployment rate among youth in 2014 was 58.2% and 52.4% among women, so supporting them into employment is a priority.

CATEGORY

[Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment](#)

LOCATION

[Palestinian Territories](#)

WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE OR NEED YOUR PROJECT WILL ADDRESS AND WHAT INNOVATIVE METHODS WILL YOU EMPLOY?

Describe the specific need or challenge that your team will address with this project

As Gaza remains under blockade, unemployment rates continue to rise. In 2014, the unemployment rate in Gaza spiked to 40.8%, marking the highest rate since 2009. Trade restrictions and frequent border closures have weakened Gaza's economy and left thousands of people and graduates without jobs. Most international aid agencies provide a fish rather than a rod; as such, youth become more dependent on aid and absorbed in frustration due to lack of job opportunities. The unemployment rate among youth in 2014 was 58.2% and 52.4% among women, so supporting them into employment is a priority.

Briefly describe the specific solution or approach to address the need or challenge and explain why it is innovative

Export restrictions and border closure issues can be tackled by turning to a borderless zone to look for work; namely, the Internet. Entrepreneurship hubs in Gaza, like Gaza Sky Geeks, often focus on individuals with business ideas to train or financially support them. And while many IT graduates in Gaza try to look for freelance work online, their efforts are limited and unguided. This project aims at creating a database of graduates and professionals who can provide different online services, and helping them by training them and by connecting them with the global market in Europe and US.

How will the project impact your community? What changes (in people, institutions, attitudes, practices) do you think you will see?

1. The project addresses the issue of high unemployment rates among youth in the Gaza Strip, both male and female, and aims to create a large database and community of graduates and professionals who can offer their online services to international employers. This will encourage hundreds, if not thousands, of youth, not just entrepreneurs, to join this online community, learn from the project's recorded webinars and training videos, and market their skills.
2. The project will reach out to international employers in Europe and the US to market Palestinian talents.
3. The project will inspire hope and out-of-the-box thinking, and will boost and encourage the phenomenon of searching for online freelance work within the Palestinian community and among youth, particularly among female graduates, many of whom find working outside their homes very difficult regardless of whether work is available or not.

WEBSITES

<http://GazaDigital.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/GazaDigital>

<https://twitter.com/gazadigital>

MEET THE TEAM

Project owner

[Jihan Alfarra](#)
[Palestinian Territories](#)
[YES \(Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study\) Program](#)

Project members

Manage members
[Mahmoud Suliman](#)
[Israel](#)
[Fulbright Student Program](#)
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[Abdalaziz AbuZayed](#)
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[YES \(Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study\) Program](#)
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[Ibrahim Aljabour](#)
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[Professional Fellows](#)
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[Rozan Alfarra](#)
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[Shaymaa Ziara](#)
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[Youth Leadership Program](#)
[Abraham Lincoln Program](#)
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[Laila Abudahi](#)
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[Professional Fellows](#)
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[Said Alhouseini](#)
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[YES \(Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study\) Program](#)
[\[remove from project\]](#)

[Asmaa AbuMezied](#)
[Palestinian Territories](#)
[Professional Fellows](#)
[Professional Fellows: Empower](#)

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?

Beneficiaries: who are your target groups (or communities) and how many people will directly benefit from your project?

The project directly targets 100 young males and females (18-35 years old), 50 of each gender, who come from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines and who have different skill sets that enable them to provide the following services:

1. IT services, such as web development, software development, and mobile application development.
2. Graphic Design, including logo design, photo touching, animation, illustration, videoscribe design, and 3D modelling.
3. English-Arabic and Arabic-English Translation.
4. Marketing and web content management.
5. Multimedia services, such as video editing and montage.

On the whole, the project targets university graduates in particular, and youth in general, and enables them to join the online database of freelancers and reach employers. The training directly provided for the 100 beneficiaries will also be available online for all to access.

Local partners

1. Diwan Ghazza, a Palestinian youth forum in Gaza that I, the project leader, have co-founded many years ago. Diwan Ghazza could potentially facilitate access to hundreds of young graduates and youth in general who have joined the forum's various clubs and activities. This could assist in informing youth about the project, its aims, and its activities and encourage them to join. It could also help in talent pooling.

2. Gaza Talks Radio show of the Gaza-based Radio Alwan station, a youth radio show that targets youth and tries to connect them with the outside world. We have a good relationship with Gaza Talks presenters and supervisor and we believe they can be a valuable partner and can help us in spreading the word about the project and reaching out to Gaza's youth.

3. Gaza Sky Geeks, an entrepreneurship hub and accelerator that supports start-ups and entrepreneurs in Gaza. Several members of the team are involved with Gaza Sky Geeks, and we are hopeful that GSG can provide us with their expertise in certain parts of the training.

4. Recruit Pal, a UK-based outsourcing business who is committed to helping the project by sourcing employers and marketing the skills of youth who have joined the project's training or online database.

5. Stay Linked, a Palestinian online recruitment initiative based in the West Bank that we hope to approach upon successful build-up of the youth database. They can potentially be helpful in identifying future employers as well.

6. Local volunteers will help with the recording of integral parts of the training, which are to be uploaded on the online platform in order to increase accessibility to the training provided as part of the project.

Alumni team

1. Project Management and Website Management (Technical Support) Officer, for overall planning and management of the project and the website. Jihan Alfarra holds an MSc Computing degree from Oxford Brookes University and is the director of an online outsourcing start-up.

2. Media Outreach and Promotion Officer, for communication, promotion, and outreach both locally and globally. Team members who are taking up outreach and promotion roles are based in Gaza as well as Europe & the US.

3. Activities Coordinator and Implementer, for carrying out the project on the ground.

4. Finance and Accounting Officer.

5. Advisor.

*Other responsibilities include selection processes and training assistance.

*External members include technical and media advisors, as well as volunteers at promotional events.

The fact that some members of the Alumni have had both academic and professional

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[Haytham ABUSHABAN](#)

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[International Visitor Leadership](#)

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[Abeer Al Yazji](#)

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[Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program](#)

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experiences in the field of online outsourcing and entrepreneurship makes them well equipped to carry out the project

Proposed Project Dates: July 01, 2015 - March 01, 2016

HOW AND WHEN WILL YOU IMPLEMENT YOUR PROJECT?

Implementing Plan and Timeline

Phase 1: Call for Applications and Selection (1 month)

Members will coordinate with local partners and hold a promotional event for local outreach, and a Google form application will be used via the website and social media pages to reach the largest number possible of young males and females to consider for training. Applications will open and trainees will be selected.

Phase 2: Training and Workshops (4 months)

Trainees will be divided into 4 groups (25 each), and each 2 groups (50 participants) will receive a 2-month training at a time. During the training period, which will be videotaped, media outreach and promotion officers will be active on the project's social media pages, promoting the project and its activities. Training subjects will include:

1. How to Enhance Your Employability:

English business writing, online open-source education awareness, and CV & portfolio.

2. How to Promote Your Skills Online:

Online skill marketing techniques (social media, LinkedIn, etc) & online business networking trends.

3. How to Find Jobs Online:

Existing online job resources (Elance, Freelancer, People Per Hour,...)

4. How to Develop and Set Up Your Own Business:

Entrepreneurship Business Trends.

A graduation ceremony will be held after each intake of 50 trainees.

Phase 3: Local & Global Outreach (2 months)

Local Outreach:

All training material/videos from the training and workshops will be integrated into the online platform, along with other useful webinars and videos relevant to the project's objectives. The aim is to make this material accessible by the rest of Palestinian youth, and youth in general, in order to enhance their online employability and help them find work globally. Youth will also be encouraged to join the project's database for future training to be given by trainees themselves.

Global Outreach:

Trainees will be supported to practice what they have learnt and look for work online. They will also be connected with employers sourced by the team members.

Phase 4: Follow Up and Platform Management (1 month)

Team members will document success stories and promote them on the platform and via social media pages.

A conclusive open day promotional event will be held to promote the project.

Communication Plan

Communication procedures:

1. Social media pages will be used to attract the attention of youth to the project's online platform, and to promote the project and its objectives to the general public.
2. A promo video will be created to promote the idea, and it will feature on the website's main page and will be shared on the social media web pages.
3. Local partners' networks will be utilised in reaching a wider group of participants.
4. Posters and flyers that promote the project.
5. Emails will be sent to networks in order to raise the profile of the project and expand its outreach.

6. Reaching out to newspapers and local radio stations, such as Alwan, and TV channels, such as Al-Kitab, for coverage of the project and its objectives.

And the communication and outreach will be focused into two strands: local, and global. Local communication and promotion will focus on increasing the number of participants in the project online and growing the online database of youth and skilled graduates who are interested in working online. The aim is to engage them with the platform and inspire hope in them so they would look for work online.

Global communication will aim at marketing Palestinian talents and skilled youth by connecting with global employers and linking the youth on the database with them.

Evaluation

A number of evaluation metrics and procedures may be used in order to evaluate the project:

- 1. Google analytics, website stats, and number of social media fans and followers will be used to measure level of exposure.
- 2. Number of participants in the database, speed of database growth, comments and online engagement, and number of views of training video material will be used to measure level of participation.
- 3. Video interviews with trainees during the third stage (outreach) and the number of success stories will measure the success and swiftness of outreach.
- 4. Surveys will be disseminated at the end of each training in order for the trainees to assess them.

Sustainability

- 1. The project’s online platform (website) will contain all relevant training material and resources for all youth to access at any point in time. Therefore, the training and concepts provided throughout the duration of the project itself will be sustained and promoted via the project’s social media pages.
- 2. The project will look to establish stronger and more long-term relationships with local partners upon the completion and success of the project. The aim is for them to provide venues in order to carry out new cycles of training given by previous trainees (project alumni) to new participants from the project’s database. This way, there can be more sustained and continued hands-on training and workshops carried out for new groups.

TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED

\$25,000.00

PROPOSAL DOCUMENT:

[Download budget](#)

