



The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)
Baabda – Lebanon

The Annual Report 2015

Prepared by Hussein Ismail, Ed.D.
Director



Mission Statement

The LCD is a non-profit Charitable Service Organization, non-secretarian, and non-governmental Association established to promote, facilitate, and empower Deaf men and women through education throughout Lebanon.



Motto of the LCD

“Do for others as you would like them to do for you”
Matthew 7:12 & Luke 6:31

The Annual Report 2015

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1. The Mission Statement of the LCD

Purpose and mission of the LCD

The purpose of the “Learning Center for the Deaf” (LCD), which is a non-profit, non-political, and non-sectarian association, located in Baabda, Lebanon, is to provide quality programs to respond to the urgent needs of deaf persons in Lebanon, with emphasis on education, in its broad meaning, as a tool for change and advancement of the deaf community.

The team (management and teachers) of the LCD fervently believes in the empowerment of the Deaf in general, including the family of the deaf persons, and reaches out to the world of the hearing with information that helps spread awareness about deafness and how to deal with the Deaf.

Therefore the LCD has initiated challenging services and programs which were not available in the country before, in order to complement the existing programs and provide better possibilities and opportunities for the deaf and their family members.

The LCD today presents many important services to the deaf community in relation to the Disabled Persons Law 220/2000 and advocacy, to the development of Lebanese Sign Language, and other services. These were added to the two major and unique programs which were consecutively initiated by the LCD in 2001 and 2003, being the family based Early Intervention Program and the High School Program. The High School aims at providing the deaf young people the choice of passing the official Baccalaureate (High School) exams and heading to University, like their hearing peers. The Early Intervention Program which is a rich comprehensive program prior to school-age, is a stepping stone that empowers the family and provides them the tools to surround the child with a rich environment supportive to his/her general development, with a greater emphasis on language. This stepping stone preeminently determines the quality of the future life of many Deaf children.

For the further details of the LCD’s programs and activities, please go to the website page:

www.lcd-lebanon.org

And for the continuous updated information, please visit to our Facebook page:



www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon



2. *The Programs Offered at the LCD*

To respond the needs of the Deaf, there are programs offered at the LCD, which are incorporating as follows:

1. *The Early Intervention Program (birth to six years)*, which assists families of deaf children from babyhood, to prevent delay in development and mainly language, and especially to restore the relationship between the child and parents, as well as to empower the family to provide the child a healthy, nurturing and loving environment.

Other components of the Early Intervention Program are incorporated as follows:

- a. the **Support Group** for parents of deaf children
- b. the **Course** related to deafness for parents of deaf children
- c. the **Integrated Nursery** for deaf and hearing children
- d. the **Resource Room** for parents, students, and professionals
- e. the **John Tracy Clinic sequential lessons** for parents of deaf children

2. *The High School Education for the Deaf*, which provides the only secondary program in Lebanon, and allows the deaf to have the same right to enter University of their choice, thus promoting the image of the Deaf.

3. *The Preschool Section (3 to six years)*, which is a regular school setting from KG 1 till KG 3, in preparation to enter the first grade level. This program that has been initiated beginning of October 2015 incorporate for deaf and hearing children.

4. *Educational Activities for the Deaf*, which designs to promote adult deaf people to learn and improve specific subject matters, such as English language and computer literacy, as well as socialization and a chance to empower the deaf. Also, Sign Language courses for all interested concerned are provided in this program.



5. *Awareness programs about deafness and deaf people*, which has as an objective to promote the image of deaf people incorporates activities through media, brochures, and books. Activities in regular nursery settings as well as activities in school and university settings (experiment, telling a story interacting with a deaf puppet and introducing a deaf adult teaching some signs) are provided.



6. *Consultation*, which provides consultations and advice for families of deaf children, as well as to deaf adults.



Sign language diplomas

3. The Basic data about the LCD

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Name | The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD) |
| Date established | January 2002 |
| Legal status | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charity Registration Number: AD 89, established 2002 with the Lebanese Government 2. Presidential Decree No.: 15798, established 2005 3. License # 2/294, 2015 (the Integrated Nursery) |
| Visiting address | Sacre Coeur Hospital Crossing, Presidential Palace Road, Near Evangelical Church, Brasilia – Baabda |
| Contact person | Hussein Ismail, Ed.D. Director |
| Telephone numbers | 00961-5-954584 / 00961-3-700584 |
| Fax number | 00961-5-954584 |
| E-mail address | lcd@lcd-lebanon.org |
| Website | www.lcd-lebanon.org |
| Facebook | www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon |
| Type of organization | The LCD is a non-profit Charitable Service Organization, non-secretarian, and non-governmental association established to promote, facilitate, and empower Deaf men and women through education throughout Lebanon |
| LCD's Motto | Based on the Lord Jesus's essential statement: <i>"Do for others what you would like them to do for you"</i> . Matthew 7:12 |
| Main areas of activity | Education, Rehabilitation, and Advocacy |

4. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf (2015)

| Board of Administration | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Chairman of the Board | Ms. Caroline Haykal (deaf) |
| Treasurer | Ms. Najah El Hamad (deaf) |
| Secretary | Dr. Hussein Ismail (deaf) |
| Accountant | Dr. Raed Mohsen |
| Members of the Board | Dr. Kim Abu Shacra Mr. Habib Fawaz (deaf) Mrs. Nadine Badreddine |

| Staff List | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Director / Instructor | Dr. Hussein Ismail (deaf) |
| 2. Head of the Early Intervention Program | Mrs. Nadine Badreddine |
| 3. Accountant / Auditing Office | Mr. Antoine Faddoul |
| 4. Office Manager / Secretary | Mrs. Arzeh Lteif |
| 5. Speech Therapist / Early Interventionist | Ms. Wafa Nawar |
| 6. Speech Therapist / Assistant EIP specialist | Ms. Rita Al Helou |
| 7. Speech Therapist / AVT | Ms. Beauty Hreij |
| 8. Social Worker | Mrs. Alaa Hamadeh |
| 9. Domestic Helper / House Father | Mr. Elias Bou Mansour (deaf) |
| 10. Nursery Teacher for Deaf Children | Mrs. Waddad Daher |
| 11. Nursery Teacher | Mrs. Garine Nakour |
| 12. Nursery Assistant-Teacher for Deaf Children | Mrs. Roula Jammous |
| 13. Preschool Teacher | Mrs. Karine Momdjian |
| 14. Preschool Assistant Teacher | Mrs. Bousayna Hannoun |
| 15. Preschool Assistant Teacher (deaf) | Mrs. Antoinette Ibrahim (deaf) |
| 16. Specialist/Teacher for the Deaf | Ms. Hanna Tahan |
| 17. Cook / Mother House | Mrs. Margo Khandjian |
| 18. Biology & Math Teacher | Mr. Mohammad Abboud |
| 19. Socials, Arabic Literature Teacher | Mrs. Miriam Bou Antoun |
| 20. History, Geography Teacher | Mrs. Rozana Zaklit |
| 21. English Teacher | Ms. Dana Harb |
| 22. Physics Teacher | Mr. Samer Salha |
| 23. Chemistry Teacher | Ms. Zeinab Al Zarief |
| 24. P.E. Teacher | Mr. E. Ghossein |

| Volunteers | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 24. LCD's legal advisor | Mt. Rayan Kouatly |
| 26. Psychologist – Family Counselor | Mrs. Charlotte Khalil |
| 27. Hearing-Aid Technician | Mr. Joseph Zeidan / Mr. H. Houry |
| 28. House-Mother | Arzeh Nakhle (deaf) |

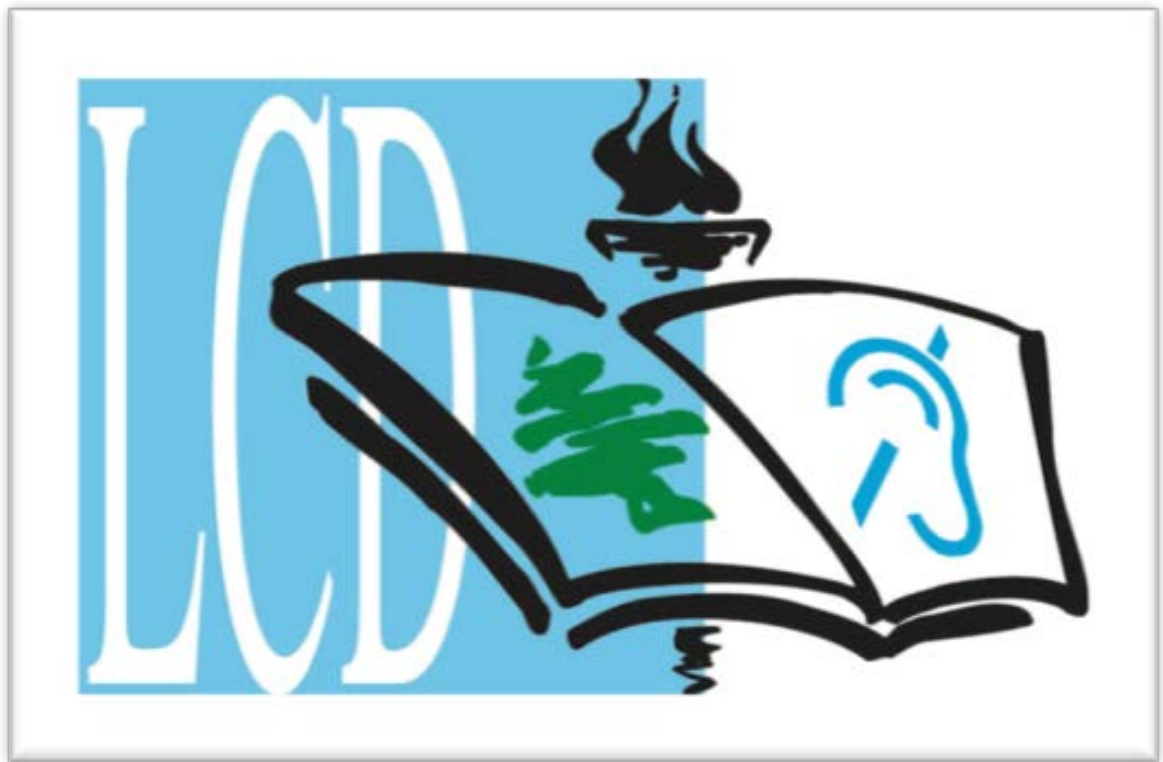
The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut - Lebanon

5. Statistical Data of the number of beneficiaries during 2015

| Programs offered at the LCD | Number of Beneficiaries |
|--|---|
| Early Intervention Program | |
| Rehabilitation for Deaf Children with their Parents | 27 (in house children) 95 approx. |
| The Support Group | 6 - 9 families |
| Integrated Nursery | 30 |
| The Preschool Section | 12 |
| The Outreach Program | Unspecified |
| The Resource Room | Unspecified; open for all professionals |
| John Tracy Clinic's Correspondence Books for families of deaf children | 9 families |
| Educational Activities for the Deaf | |
| Sign Language Class | 13 |
| Consultation | Over 90 families of deaf children as well as deaf adults |
| High School Education for the Deaf | |
| First Year (new class) | 10 students (2 boarders, 7 day school) |
| Second Year | 2 students (2 day school) |
| Third Year | 7 students (2 boarders and 5 day school) |
| Awareness Programs about Deafness | Unspecified; National level |

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut – Lebanon



News & Activities of the LCD during 2015

6. News of the Learning Center for the Deaf

Introduction

Greetings from the team, all the staff, and trustees of the LCD!!

We would like to start our Annual Report with thanks to God for His presence in our lives and at the LCD.

Patience is one of the World's most rewarding qualities.

Learning to be patient may not be an easy endeavor in itself, but once learned, it gives us inner richness that is worthwhile.



This inner growth is in itself the real gain; a gain which is much more precious than any external accomplishment which resulted from our patience.

This lesson helps us thank God everyday for what we have and despite of all the difficulties present in our work, we manage to enjoy the good things such as the presence of small beautiful children around us.

Further, despite the fact that not many of our staff succeed to stay long at the LCD due to the better financial opportunities given outside the LCD, we do have some people who stay, who have beautiful souls, and add to the beauty of the LCD.

Consequently, we manage to have Peace in the midst of a tornado of challenges that keeps hitting us quite regularly; and despite of our physical fatigue which may sometimes affect us emotionally. We have learned to stand up again, regain energy and move on forward with Faith.

This peace is sensed by all people who come to the LCD, whom we serve with love, humility and professionalism.

The start with the EIP team

The year 2015 started with great energy and hope for the Early Intervention Program. After having doubted about the sustainability of this program due to a number of

challenges, we were about to accept that we could only ensure quality therapy, and not Early Intervention in its wide, comprehensive and family based concept. However, many elements came together just in time and gave us new hope.

One of the elements was the support of the organization in UK, called Embrace the Middle East, which allowed us to raise the salary of one of our excellent therapists allowing her to remain with us in the program. Change in therapists puts the program at risk because it requires extensive training before the therapist is able to work with expertise in hearing loss and within the early intervention frame of work.

The second was in the good combination of the new team members.



The start with the program for the EIP team included rigorous meetings, feeding them with the spirit of belonging and team work. These meetings also helped to set the vision and the structure of the program together, which included a session specifically to introduce the history of the LCD, in addition to a motivational session in relation to communication with a

professional in the field, Mr. Milad Hadshiti, as well as sessions to design a form for the job description and responsibilities of the team members, clarifying interrelations among team members and with other staff at the LCD. There was also a session aiming at assigning a number of projects to the staff members for the development of the early intervention program, with a follow up system, etc. These weekly, one hour to one hour and a half, sessions have been very constructive so far to ensure the sustainability of the program with the emphasis on the most essential elements in the program as a common ground to the whole team. A great new element that added to the program was the fact that Alaa, a social worker has joined our EIP team, and has not only added qualities in the area of social assistance and follow-up at the home, but also in the organizational matters which seem to be one of her areas of strength which the program highly needed.

Early Intervention vs. Speech therapy

Having practiced and experienced both traditional speech therapy and early intervention, we can easily identify the differences between these two approaches.

The main difference is in the degree of family involvement.



In speech therapy session, we usually work with the child, while the parents remain in the waiting room. At the end of the session we give a brief feedback to parents about the session.

In early intervention, however, parents work as partners with the therapist. They actively participate in each therapy session and are taught and guided in using techniques and strategies that stimulate

the development of audition, speech, language, and cognition of their child. They are expected to implement the therapy program introduced in the “therapy sessions” at home in meaningful routines during the family’s daily life. They learn about audiograms, amplifications, phonemic production, language development and are updated with any needed information. They receive moral and psychological support. All key persons (siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nanny, etc.) are invited to participate in the intervention, not just the parents. When needed, home visits take place to support the family and help and guide the parents in applying and adjusting the targets according to their own environment.

For this reason, in addition to the fact that the session in itself is longer due to all the sharing with the family, an early intervention approach requires more significant time and energy for preparation than a traditional speech therapy approach. Not to forget the time devoted for reading, research, specific material creation, phone calls (professionals, family member, school, doctors...) etc.

We conclude with one of our best quotes which will recap the difference between the two mentioned approaches and will emphasize my conviction in the early intervention “path”: **“Tell me and I will forget; Show me and I may remember; Involve me and I will understand”**.

Consultation: The family of Nour

Many families of school age deaf children pursued consultation at the LCD, as well as deaf adults. Hence consultation naturally becomes a regular service at the LCD.

With time, we were led to provide consultation for families of children who have other disabilities than hearing loss; all due to the lack of such consultation service in the country.

What happens usually is that parents seek advice at either the Ministry of Social Affairs where they get a quick and general advice of possible schools, or they hear from neighbors, relatives, friends, or someone they see whose child has disability, about

possible schools to visit. Many of these parents visit schools which only tell them that it is not the right place for their child. Hence the family keeps searching in the wrong places; it may even take some years of search due to the fact that there is no proper governmental guidance service and that there are children with disability who have no schools.

Nour's mum called the LCD during October 2015 and asked if we could school her daughter who is five years and a half, and has hearing loss. She explained that no school has accepted her daughter, which was strange for us, and we sensed that something was missing. We asked if the child had another problem and the mother quickly mentioned a general development delay. In Lebanon, children start school at the age of three.

We recognized that the family needed our assistance to understand what were the obstacles denying this little girl her right to learn and therefore we agreed for an appointment.

Nour came with her mother and father. It was obvious from Nour's physical appearance and her behavior that there were other challenges. Most probably this was the reason schools were not cooperative. It is quite problematic when there is more than one major disability because specialized schools receive mainly children with one disability.

It was clear that her hearing was not the biggest challenge; our observation and hearing tests showed that she had good residual hearing that she can benefit from. However, we decided to follow Nour in therapy with two aims in mind. One is to get to know her areas of strength in order to help find the best schooling choice and protect her from being denied the right for education. Second one is to help her in therapy and help the family in their role at home until they find the best school for their child; if any. Then she may either follow therapy in school or with us, depending on the need and availability.

The family was relieved to understand from our explanation how the situation is in Lebanon and the importance to have realistic expectations, not based on what should be provided to their daughter but what may be available. They also appreciated our guiding approach which gave them the sense that they will be well supported until they know what the best available choice is for their daughter.

Soujoud

Soujoud, a six year old little girl has joined our Preschool.

Soujoud is Syrian; and lives with her three siblings, two of whom are babies, in a one tiny room home. She was in a school last year as the Lebanese government is trying to facilitate schooling for the Syrian children. However, a reasonable amount of money was required from the family which they could hardly afford. Then, a few months later, the amount requested increased, which forced the family to withdraw Soujoud from school.

It wasn't possible for us to receive Soujoud then as the number of children in the Preschool exceeded the number that the space could absorb, and because we often

receive not only children with hearing loss but others with other types of difficulties due to the fact that the Preschool is under an association.

This year, and despite the fact that the Preschool has no financial support from any source, we decided to have Soujoud join our Jip & Janneke Preschool. Being a neighbor of Nadine and Hussein she goes down in the morning with Nadine at 7:00. From the first day she woke her whole family up at 5:00 in the morning, so excited she was to go to school. This hasn't changed until today. She is delighted with her two loving teachers, one of whom is Syrian, and her classmates, despite the fact that many are foreigners and speak only English.

We discovered that Soujoud has many learning skills to compensate for, such as not being able to count, or recognizing the days of the week, etc.

The important issue is that Soujoud is very lucky to have teachers who are able to understand and cope with all the differences among the children in the Preschool, and these are many.

Therefore we have accepted Soujoud's sister who is one year younger and was dreaming to go to school with her sister. It was a crazy act while we already have four children who could not contribute towards school fees and one child who pays half fees among 8 children. We are trying to find financial support for these children, but despite of the lack, we decided to proceed, in a step of love and faith.

Participating in Advocacy



The LCD has participated in a demonstration in front of the Parliament in relation to the Rights of People with disability and the law 220/2000 which in its greatest part is not applied.

We invited Habib and Ribal to give a speech—Ribal in spoken language and Habib in Sign language, and Nadine did the interpretation from Sign Language to Lebanese and vice versa.



Habib who is a former student of the High School at the LCD and a present Board member, gave a speech which focused on the fact that though very little is applied of the law 220/2000, the Deaf have more Rights which should be taken into consideration which are better covered in United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Disabled, especially in regards to Sign Language, deaf culture and the deaf identity. Therefore, Habib demanded that the Convention be ratified by Lebanon.

Ribal, one of our Early Intervention Program children, now nine years old, gave a speech in both Arabic and English: (In Arabic) *"I am Ribal, I am nine years old, and I am a deaf person. ...I am now in a regular school and now have many friends."* (Swapped to English)... *"and my mum said: I am a very determined person who never gives up. I am very proud to be a deaf person and proud to speak my mother tongue language, the Sign Language. I want all of you to know that deaf persons can do anything except hear."*

I am teaching my friends Sign Language and showing them the book... the books. Thank you."

The Book on Inclusion

One of the accomplishments in the year 2015 is the publication of the guidebook in Arabic describing the criteria that allows a school to be considered inclusive.

In Lebanon, more and more schools are accepting children with disabilities. This may sound as a positive development. While this is considered to be a break-through for some, it is a chaos for many children who are included physically in regular classes, but with almost no support; allowing their difficulties to be accumulated for a long time before intervening, Often deaf children are referred then to a school for the Deaf after having failed in the regular school system. Helping them blend in among deaf children and compensate for the accumulated gaps in their education, is often problematic.

This guidebook will help spread awareness on the real meaning of inclusive education which should respond to the needs of every child. The LCD has made sure to include points that not only concern the academic part but the social-emotional part and the identity of Deaf persons.

Graduation Ceremony



The Graduation Ceremony for 7 students was held on October 13th at 10:00. Participants were members of various Governmental institutions, organizations, associations, and schools for the deaf, as well as previous graduated students, parents, and other concerned persons.

The program of the ceremony was as follows:

After playing the National Anthem, Nadine Ismail gave a word of welcome. Then Habib, a former graduate and who later obtained a BA in Web Design in 2010, gave a speech with respect to the Alumni and its purposes. The Director of the Handicapped Affairs of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Mrs. Marie Hajj, also gave a speech, in which she appreciated what the LCD has been doing for the deaf since its inception, especially Hussein and Nadine, that the opportunity was given to young deaf persons to attain their



educational objectives to university levels. Then, Martina performed an Indian Dance, which was unique.

Following this, Hussein gave a speech, and expressed his great joy to see these young persons graduated this day and to see that

their dreams have been fulfilled. He also encouraged the graduates to continue their education career towards university. He said that he is no longer exceptional, as many deaf persons can attain to the highest level of education, once a chance was given and once the belief in the capabilities of the deaf was attained. Hussein also indicated that the right of the deaf persons to choose, either to continue further academic education or vocational education, as hearing peers do, was the purpose of the initiation of the high school program.

At the end, Certificates were given to the graduates by Hussein and Mrs. Marie Hajj. Then, a Certificate of the “Outstanding Student” was given to the student, Zahraa Nasser.



High School Students – New Class

The high school program was opened on September 15th, for the students of the Second and Final years. It was great to see them back, after the summer break.

A new class of 8 deaf students has enrolled on Sept. 28th. What a wonderful joy seeing them



joining our program; these students have big dreams for their future. 2 weeks later, 2 more deaf students were also enrolled, making the total of 10 students in one, new class.

Mariam



Mariam was one of a child in our Early Intervention Program (EIP) for three years (2004 till 2006). During Fall of 2006, she went

to a deaf school, until she graduated in June 2015, with a 9th grade certificate (Brevet).

Guess what? Mariam returned to us again, but this time she enrolled in our high school program! What a great joy. She is such a sweet young lady, with a lovely smile on her face, and is very happy to be with us again. These feelings are also shared by us and her family members.

LCD's Building Facades Rehabilitation

We are very grateful that the renovation works of the roof, water proofing at the entire LCD's facades and the installation of the Shaft for AC compressors have successfully been completed during the end of the summer 2015, thanks to the kind support by the Dutch organizations, Wilde Ganzen and AMT-NL. We are indeed blessed by this.



The project works were started in the first week of July on the roof. The condition on the roof was really bad, resulted from old age, which created moisture under the roof on the top floor. At the same time, scaffolding of metal bars were installed around the



LCD's building, for the preparation of the water-proof works. The roof project works last for nearly 5 weeks, which was more than we anticipated, and which came into a successful outcome. Before installing new tiles on the roof, the contractors put waterproof substances as well as the insulation system (for preventing heat and cold temperatures) on the roof. A perfect result.

The Shaft for AC compressors was indeed a successful one. AC compressors were previously located in the closed glassed balconies, thus creating heat and noise these AC compressors have been removed and put into the newly installed shaft. The shaft was built annexed to the LCD building, made of metal and white aluminum structures and it looks like a big chimney—nicely done.

We are indeed blessed to see that these project works have been successfully implemented, thanks to the kind and generous support of the Wilde Ganzen and AMT-NL in Holland.

Alumni Club at the LCD

On September 18th, 2015, students who graduated from the high school program since 2006 participated to the Alumni Party at the LCD's garden. The Alumni Club was created, and a new committee of 6 deaf persons was elected (4 males and 2 females). They have created a new Facebook page, explaining about the objectives of the Alumni.

It was indeed good to see these graduated students again. Some of them have already graduated from universities, and some still continue for their higher education. Each of them has given a short testimony about their experiences at their universities; younger students benefited from their inputs.

Additional Activities and Services of the LCD during 2015

For more information about the activities and services of the LCD during 2015, please go to our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon> . Please scroll down to see these activities.



The Learning Center for the Deaf

Charity Registration Number: AD 89, Est. 2002

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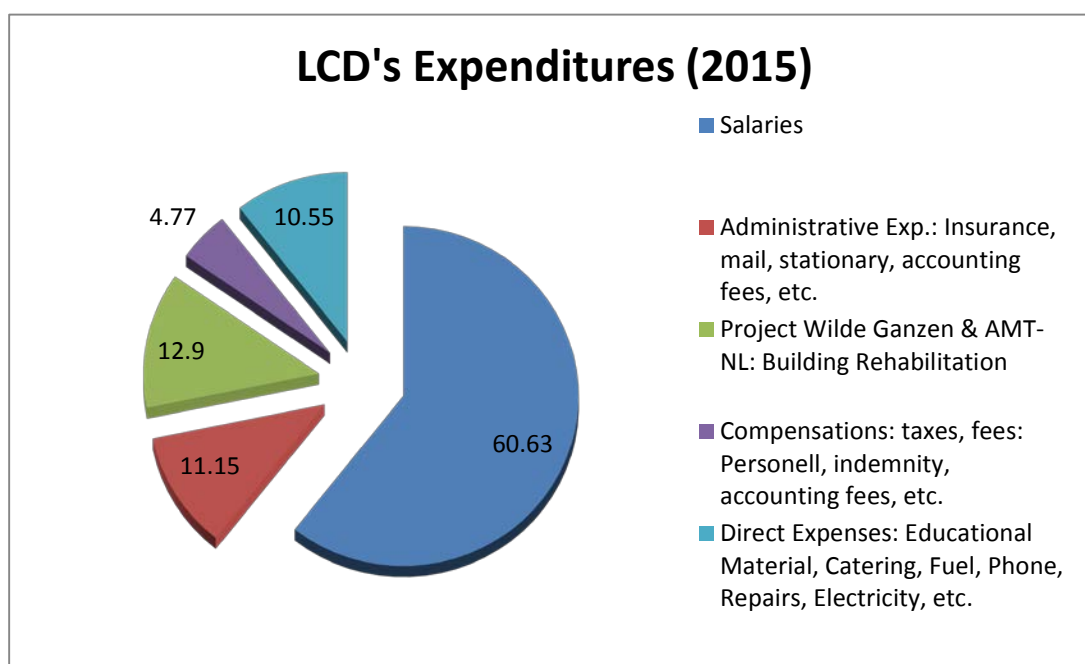
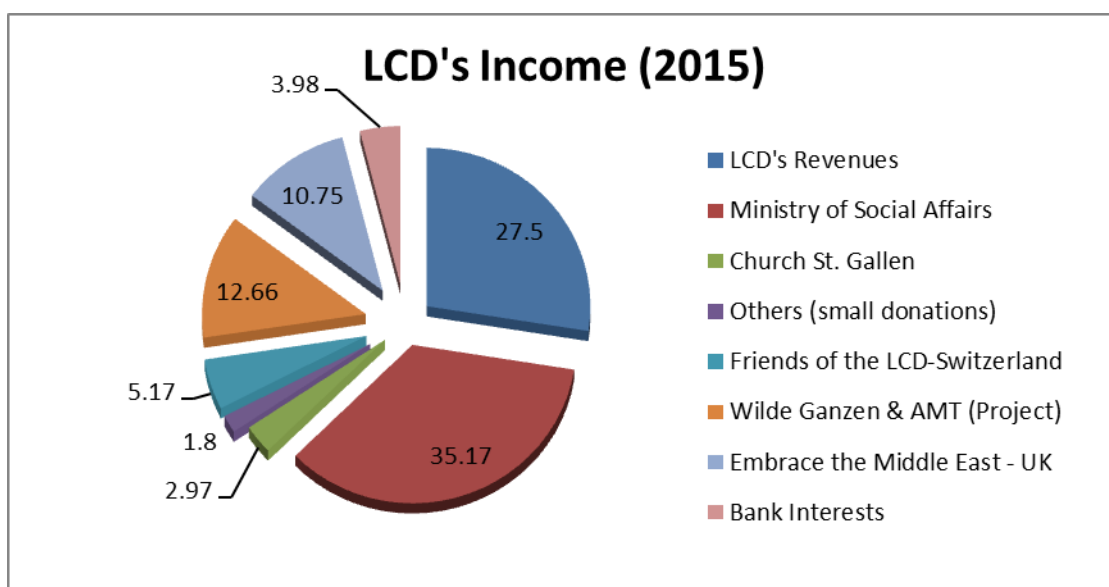
E-mail : lcd@lcd-lebanon.org Website : www.lcd-lebanon.org



Summary of the Financial Report 2015

| Description | US\$ |
|--------------------|---------|
| Total Income | 338,469 |
| Total Expenditures | 332,141 |
| Surplus | 6,328 |

The Tables below showing the percentages of the income and expenditures during 2015



The Learning Center for the Deaf

Baabda – Lebanon

Photos during 2015



EIP Intervention



Water activity in the Integrated Nursery



Fun during the summer time



Orientation at the university



Roof rehabilitation - completed



Home visit to a Syrian family

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Baabda – Lebanon

Photos during 2015



Lovely moments



Graduation Ceremony



Students sit for the Official Examination



Reading time



Dance lessons



Christmas party

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Baabda – Lebanon

Photos during 2015



Trip to the mountains



Audiology testing



Parachute fun



Heritage competition



At the plant shop



Montessori activities in the Preschool



Please visit us at the www.lcd-lebanon.org for detailed information about our services and activities.

Thank you for your continuous prayers and support !!

God bless you.