



SAVING THE TATAS:
JORDAN'S BREAST
CANCER PROGRAM
MAKING STRIDES AGAINST
BREAST CANCER

Every woman is unique, whether she's old or young, rich or poor, single or a mother of five. There is one issue that can affect all women. Breast Cancer. Around 700 Jordanian females are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Breast cancer is not a disease you should be afraid of, but a disease you should be aware of. Don't let the fear cripple you. It's important to know the facts.

The topic of breast cancer is associated with enormous fear; fear of having the disease and actually knowing about it, fear of pain, social taboos, getting divorced, or even losing a precious organ. Breast cancer is also associated with negligence, as health in general falls in the category of things we don't make time for. Jordan's Breast Cancer Program (JBCP) assumed the responsibility of making a difference in the lives of females across Jordan throughout a dedicated initiative - to raise breast cancer awareness and influence the attitudes and

behaviors of the target population to seek early detection services, throughout calculated approaches of communication channels. In simple terms, the program seeks to communicate facts about breast cancer, its risks, symptoms, signs, methods and benefits of early detection and screening to targeted females. But the "what" is not as important as the "how", because changing behavior as you might imagine is incredibly hard to achieve. The program recognized the importance of sharing the

knowledge through participatory learning, encouraging dialogue while making the idea itself attractive, with the audience participating in deciding what is needed. This would entail taking into account the fact that people select what they see or hear and interpret selectively what they see or hear, choose what they want to remember and what they want to forget; and as such, changing behavior necessitates that knowledge, then persuasion to make the decision, is followed by implementation and confirmation of the desired behavior.

Interpersonal and mass communication play different, but complimentary roles in the provision of awareness. In identifying this, JBCP has committed to devoting its energy and resources to both. In the mass communication aspect, the program launches two massive campaigns during the year; one in March, building on the hype of Mother's Day and the International Women's Day, and the other in October, which is the International Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

As for the interpersonal communication channel, JBCP

has developed a comprehensive plan in which numerous female educators are trained to be copiously proficient and competent to give educational lectures. These lectures are designed to cover all the administrative regions in the pilot areas of Amman and Balqa. Each lecture will be followed by free clinical breast examinations performed by certified doctors, nurses or midwives. The first "Train the Educators" workshop was held towards the end of April at the King Hussein



A trainee presenting the lecture proficiently.

Cancer Center over a period of two days, during which 35 educators from the Ministry of Health and King Hussein Cancer Center's breast cancer survivor group SANAD, were trained on the required communication skills to present and control a lecture, in addition to a standardized breast cancer education presentation reflecting needed information.

To date, and for the past two months, 50 lectures were held in cooperation with many associations, NGOs and the Ministry of Social Development.

It is always important to remind our readers that breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in women, but it can be successfully treated; **the key is early detection.** Tumors that are detected at the earliest possible time are nearly 100% treatable. The most effective program for early detection includes Self Breast Examination, Clinical Breast Examination and Mammography Screening on a regular basis and in accordance with the national guidelines. These tests take a couple of minutes, but they just might be the best investment of your lifetime! **■**