



The story of Taj'aldeen and his 'Animate-it' experience

BEIRUT- Taj'aldeen is an energetic, creative 11-year-old boy. He plays the violin and taught himself to sing in Turkish and Hindi, as well as his native Arabic. He is a Palestinian, living in Beddawi refugee camp in north Lebanon with his parents and brother and sister.

Taj'aldeen participated in an 'Animate it' workshop with eleven other children, aged between seven and fourteen. The workshop was organised by Save the Children Sweden in collaboration with our partner Nabaa (Developmental Action without Borders) in Lebanon, as part of the Manara Network : A Civil Society for Child Rights in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.



'Animate it' is a powerful tool that can enable children to express themselves, voice their concerns, and talk about issues important to them. In Beddawi, Taj'aldeen and his friends were responsible for all parts of the film; they wrote the story, drew and coloured in the characters, and gave voices to the characters they had created. In this way, children like Taj'aldeen are able to tell stories that matter to them in an engaging, fun and empowering way.

Taj'aldeen and five others decided to make a film about violence and discrimination in schools. He only attends school in the afternoons because there is a shortage of teachers and classroom space.

Their film explored how teachers' favouritism affects the relationship between students, both in class and in the playground. Taj'aldeen says: "I am participating in activities [of Animate it] and I am happy". When asked about the hardest thing in the camp and what he wanted to change, he said "the rights at school, and the principal [who] kicks you and makes you take out the garbage".

'Animate it' is an advocacy tool and a key component of the Manara network, which is being implemented by the partners in nine countries. Training for animators has taken place in Iraq, Lebanon, oPt, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen. It is being expanded to include Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. In addition, training for children, such as the one in Beddawi, are being carried out throughout the region by our partners.

Manara is a network of Civil Society Organisations led by Save the Children Sweden (SCS) and implemented with the members of the network in nine countries in the MENA region. Manara Network is funded through a project by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).