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Visit to Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People (PCR)

By Sara avMaat

Early in November, 2010 (during my 3 month term in Tulkarem as an Ecumenical Accompanier for the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel--EAPPI) when I had a chance to spend some of my free days in Bethlehem, I arranged to meet with George Rishmawi at the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement (PCR) in Beit Sahour.

I was already familiar with their IMEMC news website. I have found it a good source of local news which seems fairly well balanced and not sensationalized. I had passed it on to some of my European colleagues in EAPPI who hadn't been familiar with it and who also found it useful. I passed this information on to George, who told me they do their best but do struggle with a lack of reporters able to cover events as they happen.

I was quite interested in hearing more about other programmes of the PCR about which I was not familiar. George told me they have after school tutoring programmes for youth which attempt to make learning a flexible and enjoyable process and also create familiarity with the centre and interest in leadership development programmes the centre also offers.

He gave me a tour of the facilities and equipment they use to create the news programmes.

We also visited SIRAJ Centre, PCR's neighbour in the office space. They are an organization which focuses on alternative tourism programmes.