

## ROUND SQUARE DISCOVERY FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP ABS JORDAN – 27 & 28 APRIL, 2018

*REFLECTIVE REPORT by Biswajit De, Round Square School Representative,  
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During the 2018 Round Square (RS) Discovery Framework Workshop (RSDF) in Jordan, organized by Round Square and Amman Bacculaureate School, Jordan, 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2018, delegates from 6 countries had given their inputs into the development of a “further reading and structuring and resource breaking down of the 12 Discoveries mapped to each of the six **RS IDEALS – (Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service)**.”

The participating team from Maria's Public School (MPS), Guwahati, Assam, India, comprised of **Mrs. Nellie Ahmed Tanweer, Honourable Founder & Managing Trustee, MPS and Mr. Biswajit De, Creative Director & RS School Representative, MPS.** MPS had the first exposure to the RSDF, being a RS Candidate School.

Developed collaboratively by an international writing group of Heads, Teachers and Curriculum Directors from Round Square schools all over the World, the **Round Square Discovery Framework** captures and describes the spirit of a Round Square 'learner' who develops and exhibits competencies and attitudes in relation to each of the six – **RS IDEALS (Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service)**. The framework connects the spirit of the **RS IDEALS** with twelve *Discoveries* that students make on their learning journey (inquisitiveness, tenacity, courage, compassion, inventiveness, ability to solve problems, self-awareness, sense of responsibility, appreciation for diversity, commitment to sustainability, communication and team-working skills). The framework is designed to support the integration of these Discoveries into curriculum programming, and signpost to ways in which they can be given tangible value in an academic context... It's essentially a friendly 'Trojan Horse'.

**"Using the Round Square Discovery Framework, a growing number of schools are finding new ways to embed character education into the curriculum, focusing on values rather than activities; the 'being' rather than the 'doing' "**, said Round Square Chairman, Mr. Rod Fraser, who attended the Workshop and addressed the participants during interactive sessions. Present at the workshop was RS CEO, Ms Rachel Westgarth who explained the Discovery Framework Roadmap to the participants. She added to what Mr. Fraser had expressed, by saying - **"A simple example would be service learning. Traditionally cast as an extra-curricular activity, a school's community service programme might include volunteering, civic engagement, charity fundraising, perhaps an overseas service project. All are valuable learning experiences, but once you draw out the spirit of those activities, and look for inventiveness, empathy, compassion, the ability to solve problems, appreciation for diversity... it's easier than to see how you might build the development of those qualities into your curriculum programming."** Co-Host of the Workshop, The Amman Bacculaureate School in Jordan is piloting the new Discovery Framework Strategies and will be the first school world-wide to host a synchronized visit with the IB for this protocol. As shared by the representatives of the school, work has already begun to integrate the RS Discovery Framework fully into all that ABS does at the school and, in particular, map it against their **"Al Tarbiyeh"** acronym, which represents their Guiding Statements for the Discovery Framework, the IB Learner Profile and the requirements of the new protocol.

***“It’s an interesting experiment for us, and whilst it’s still early days, we are finding the Round Square Discovery Framework to be really useful in helping us to consider how we combine the variety of approaches required”*** said Stuart Bryan, Principal of ABS Jordan. ***“It’s important to us as a school that we have a clearly defined, unified, sequential and transparent approach to teaching and learning, and the Framework is a great support and guide to us creating that”***, he added.

Round Square Representatives and officials from 6 countries participated in the 2018 Round Square (RS) Discovery Framework Workshop in Jordan. It was indeed an enterprising and a great learning experience for the MPS team to meet and interact with the delegates from countries like ***Pakistan, Oman, Australia, Vietnam and Turkey***. Each participant from the RS Schools was given an opportunity to present their ideas for the Discovery Framework, keeping in mind the scopes of implementation in their respective schools. Mr. De from MPS had expressed his ideas based on the *recognition of diversity in the classrooms* and how *adhering to the RS Ideal – Environmentalism* is actually a responsibility of all students and faculties of MPS being a school which is located in one of the most prominent *Bio-Geographical Hotspots of India*. Across the Round Square network the Discovery Framework is being used in conjunction with a wide variety of curricula, including in-country national, National Boards, the IB, and curricula applied internationally from leading education jurisdictions such as England and Wales, Australia and the USA. In many cases the Round Square Discovery Framework is being used to create an overarching structure that links and makes sense of previously contrasting learner profiles, providing a structure within which a single teaching and learning approach can fulfill the needs of a variety of different curricula. It was indeed amazing to absorb the means and ways in which we can distill the true essence of the Framework, in the context of the curriculum which is followed at Maria’s Public School, Guwahati, Assam, India, and give the current system an opportunity to ‘stretch beyond our limits’ and implement new ideas.

***“The outcomes of being a Round Square school extend beyond memorable experiences and into the creation of a deeper awareness and a way of being”*** – added Rachel Westgarth.

More learning happened when each of the RS School Participants shared their own success stories during the brief plenary sessions. Case Study presentations were made by – Vivek High School, Chandigarh, Renaissance International School, Saigon and ABS, Jordan. Jennifer Longmuir from ***Renaissance International School*** in Saigon, explained, ***“The Round Square Discovery Framework has had a very positive impact in the teaching and learning of our Primary School pupils. It has first and foremost given us all a common language to talk about character education across all Key Stages and the opportunity to find real life situations in which to explore and build the Discoveries within our pupils.”*** Slowly implementing the RSDF has been a collaborative and exciting experience for everyone at the RS Member Schools and they look forward to continuing their journey to embed them in the teaching and learning. Students and Teachers from the RS International Schools also see the benefits, with students commenting, ***“The Round Square Discoveries have made our school a better place. They allow us to explore ourselves, to learn valuable life lessons and to help us to be the best we can be.”***

The Workshop started off at the ABS Auditorium where the RS Representatives were introduced formally and were welcomed by the students of ABS, Jordan. Traditional Music and Jordanian Dance performances had teleported the delegates into the ancient ‘*Sands of Time*’. The workshop gave an opportunity for networking and discussions among the participants and had paved new avenues of information sharing, exchange of ideas, and creation of RSDF implementation roadmaps for each of the RS Participant Schools. Mrs. Nellie Ahmed Tanweer gave the vote of thanks on behalf of all the participants by saying – ***‘In embracing the RS Discovery Framework, a growing number of Round Square schools are discovering their own innovative and creative ways to blend character education with academic achievement, whether through embedding “soft skills” into the harder lines of curriculum planning or drawing out the learning from extra-curricular endeavors and bringing it into the classroom. At Maria’s we would like to imbibe the principles of the RSDF to a small group of teachers and students first, before we take forward the roadmaps and get ideas implemented on a larger scale. Plan, Implement and Recognize would be the Modus Operandi on which we will be concentrating on, as soon as we get back’.***

The Round Square (RS) Discovery Framework Workshop (RSDF) in Jordan concluded with a dinner at the Kan Zaman, Amman Jordan, where the participants were treated with more than 30 Jordanian Cuisines and an ambience which would be etched in their minds forever. Personal visits to the Dead Sea and tourism opportunities in the old city of Amman gave opportunities of shopping and observing the traditional Culture and Tradition of the country.

#### ***Al Tarbiyah!***

*‘Al Tarbiyah’ is an Arabic word that means development, increase, growth, and loftiness.*

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