



**Annual
Report** **2019**



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Note from the Educational Association Chair



Assuming the role of chairperson of our educational association was a natural and not-to-difficult step for me as I've been a member of the Association Board for the last 2 years. I have always felt involved and committed to the development of the educational systems in the village, thanks to my previous work and experience as an Arabic and Hebrew teacher in the Primary School.

Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom is a very unique village with its ideological base and day-to-day experience as a place of equal coexistence between Palestinians and Jews. I would love to see more places like WASNS, not just in Israel but around the world - not only for political reasons but in order to provide a real benefit to societies everywhere.

We meet people from different cultures and backgrounds every day and need to learn from each other: not just their languages but also about their cultural and religious backgrounds. The world has become one big village and deserves to develop more as an open society.

People come to WASNS from different backgrounds and with their own personal stories. They are seeking a stable and sustainable solution for themselves and their children. Together we try to consider our vision for the ongoing development of our village. I think it is important to include the younger generation, who have grown up in the village, in the work of our educational institutions.

The special quality of our educational institutions is that they bring together Jews and Palestinians from a very young age. Growing up and learning together, they develop a different attitude towards the political situation, new thinking, and a special and very unique perspective, which we should start to integrate into our work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fatin', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Fatin Abdulhalim

Chair of the Educational Association

Note from the Municipal Chair



On behalf of the Municipal Council of Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom I want to thank all of our friends and supporters of the village around the world for the support that has allowed our educational institutions to develop and continue to grow. This educational peace work could not exist without the solid base of a community of people living the dream of a shared society. It is my honor, as the municipal chair, to lead this community as it struggles to expand, accept new members and accommodate our rising generation who want to go on living in the village.

At the same time, it is our educational peace work, conducted so skillfully by our expert educational institutions that gives the community a voice and the ability to export our ideas to the larger society.

The country as a whole is mired in a stalled political process from which it will never emerge until the underlying problems of the ongoing occupation together with the disenfranchisement and oppression of a large section of its population are properly addressed. Because Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom as a village addresses these very same problems head on, it is able to succeed, to flourish and to provide a positive example that the entire country would do well to emulate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards.

Anwar Dawood

Chair of the Municipal Society

Important numbers:

Total operating budget:

\$ 2,291,799

A globe is held by several hands, symbolizing global support and care. The background is a teal color with a subtle bokeh effect.

**Grants from
International
Friends
Associations:**

\$ 1,213,382

Independent grants:

\$ 476,478

**Parents' participation
and other income:**

\$ 684,606



Children's Education System

Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary School

Founded in 1984, our pioneering educational system provides bi-lingual and multicultural schooling to children from WASNS and the surrounding area

Letter from Carmella and Reem



The Primary School is a place where two national groups meet and children grow up together, learning about Palestinian and Jewish culture, about their traditions, religions, holidays and languages; a place where the children feel it is normal to be together on a daily basis. The education system plays a central role in the process of the everyday life encounter between the two national groups and this takes place with the staff, students, parents and families. Knowing about the various cultures and hearing different points of views and stories is part of accepting the other. Parents send their children to our school because they don't want them to fear of Jews or Arabs.

We always reflect on how we work and try to improve our teaching approach. As we grow as a school we also have to evolve and adapt to the new challenges that come along.

Welcoming the first graders was special this year because we started school on the 2nd of September and every other school started on the first of September. We started one day later because it was the Islamic New Year and a holiday for the Muslim students; everyone understood that it is important to recognize everyone's holidays.

We would like to thank our dedicated staff and friends of the Primary School for their continuing support and hard work.

A simple, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Carmella'.

Carmella Ferber
School principal

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Reem Nashef'.

Reem Nashef
vice-principal

The Educational System in Numbers

22

permanent teachers
at the school



303
children

from
nursery
through
primary
school



Children from
20
separate communities

100%

growth over past five years

\$ 1,227,000

total budget

(nursery through primary school)

Curriculum:

As part of our special curriculum every two months we have a special event concluding a chapter of our studies. In November and December - a period in which national elections were taking place - we learned about democracy, politics and various laws. With the older children we held an open discussion, learned about the election process and the way that various reforms led to the current law. In a unit called “light and enlightenment”, the fourth graders presented to their parents and the other classes the meaning of the winter holidays, how they bring light into the darker months of the year, and how holidays are celebrated in different cultures.

Recipient:
**fondazione
sanzeno**



Teacher Training

One of the challenges for our teachers has always been the lack of a formal program in Israel’s teacher training colleges for teachers intending to work in bilingual education. This year, we worked with the El Kasami Teacher Training College and the Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts, to develop a course of training for teachers working in bilingual schools.



Special Programs:

This year the 5th and 6th graders were able to choose among various special year long electives: the Honey Path project (beekeeping), sports, music and arts. In the “active culture project”, the 3rd and 4th graders learn to become WASNS ambassadors. They visit the important places in the village to understand its key ideas, history, development, and the functions of the various educational institutions. The goal of the program is to give the students an understanding of the unique aspects of the village and enable them to explain these to guests and visitors.

Plans for the Future:

In the coming years we hope to continue increasing the school enrollment and growth. Eventually we would like to see the school growing into a middle school and high school.

Recent Successes

- Finalist as outstanding school in the Jerusalem District.
- National Education Award Candidate.
- Decision by the head of the Mateh Yehuda Regional Council to approve the opening of a high school.
- Agreement by the Regional Council to transport children from within its own district.
- Ongoing work to establish academic bilingual training for teachers with Hand in Hand schools and the Hagar school.



Medium to Long Range Plans

- The society, culture and tradition curricula: Scientific editing and digitalization of educational units in cooperation with the Center of Educational Technology; offering the program to the Ministry of Education.
- Teacher training: Continue working collaboratively, utilizing the professional knowledge of the school staff.
- Developing language teaching expertise, especially in the second language.
- Appropriate preparation for high school program.
- Continue as a leader in bilingual schooling, especially in cultural and bilingual studies.





The School for Peace

Established in 1979, the SFP assimilates the principles upon which WASNS was founded in conducting courses and seminars for Arab and Jewish youth and adults in Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Dear Friends,

This was a successful year for the School for Peace (SFP) with many continuing and new activities. Thanks to our dedicated Jewish – Arab staff we carried out successful programs, courses and workshops, arranged conferences and launched publications. All our activities promote the ending of the occupation and the attainment of peace and equality between Palestinians and Israelis through dialogue and activism.



The past year we finished two major programs; one funded by the European Union for up-and-coming politician from Israel and the Palestinian Authority to advance peace and justice through their work. The second, for mental health professionals, began with funding from USAID, though that funding stopped when the U.S. Government cut all funding for projects between Israelis and residents of the Palestinian Authority. The program addressed issues of violence, racism and hatred. We were able to continue and finish it thanks to the support of WASNS' Friends Associations and the Schustermann Foundation.

Our priority for the coming year is to continue to build a strong, engaged, and energized SFP graduate community. We began to establish a network of change agent program graduates in three professional fields: mental health professionals; leaders of mixed cities; and architects, engineers and urban planners.

The SFP thanks all friends and supporters for their partnership, without which we would not be able to carry out such intensive and important work. We look forward to your continued support and encouragement as we move forward into the current year.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Nava Sonnenschein".

Dr. Nava Sonnenschein
Director, The School for Peace

Highlights of 2019:

7 **Seven change agent programs** with over 280 Palestinian and Israeli participants. The USAID funded two groups in a program for mental health professionals building peace & resilience and trained them to become facilitators of groups in conflict.

A 3-year program for up and coming politicians, supported by the EU, in cooperation with the Palestinian NGO, Inmaa.



One program for leaders in Israel's mixed cities.



One program for Jewish and Arab architects, engineers and urban planners.



One program for human rights lawyers.



One program for facilitator training.

4

Four academic courses, in Tel Aviv University, Haifa University, Ruppin College and Ben Gurion University with 20 students in each course.



International Conference on "Constitutionalism, Constitution-Making and Sovereignty – A Theoretical and Comparative Perspective" together with the Center for Advanced Studies of Hebrew University and with Walter Libach Center of Tel Aviv University.



A youth encounter workshop for 60 youth from the Jewish Ohel Shem High School in Ramat Gan and the Arab Hagalil High School in Nazareth. During the workshop 20 participants from 2 facilitators courses observed the program as part of their training.



A workshop about Brexit for a group visiting from UK, utilizing the SFP's method of working with groups in conflict.



Consultancy for and training of staff Peace NGOs.



Graduate Game Changers

In 2019 we started to work on a pilot project to establish a network of change agent program graduates in three professional fields: mental health professionals, leaders of mixed cities and architectures, engineers and urban planners. We decided to conduct three gatherings for each professional group in December. The planners had a meeting in Nazareth, the mental health professionals and the leaders of mixed towns had their meeting in Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom.





Future Plans

The main focus will be on developing our network of SFP graduates.

In 2020 the SFP plans to continue its ongoing change agent programs for Palestinians and Jewish citizens of Israel and also expand the programs for archeologists, environmentalists and journalists.

The SFP also plans to renew its program for literature teachers.



The Pluralistic Spiritual Community Centre

“Doumia-Sakinah”, The Pluralistic Spiritual Centre, provides a framework for various cultural, spiritual and artistic activities on issues that underlie the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The center also makes its halls available to other groups and organizations for compatible activities.



Highlights of 2019:

The PSCC continued its cultural programs including book launches and community events.

One of our main achievements in 2019 was to establish the Cinema Club with a monthly screening of Israeli or Palestinian films with their directors. The films are mostly documentaries. Others are fictional. All address a controversial or sensitive topic concerning the Israeli Palestinian conflict. The audience for the screenings includes people from the village and also many from the surrounding region. During the past year the PSCC organized special community gatherings for Ramadan, Christmas, and Hanukkah. During Ramadan we enjoyed three Iftar evening meals. For Hanukkah and Christmas we held an event with an Israeli-Palestinian women choir from Jaffa, followed by a group discussion.



Hezzi Schuster
 Director, PSCC



Plans for 2020

- Continuing with a 2nd season of the Cinema Club in 2020.
- A program for young religious leaders in the area. The goal is to get leaders from different religions involved in peace activities and bring it to their communities.
- A bilingual Hebrew-Arabic reading club with bi-monthly discussions.
- Continuing to host and organize Israeli and Palestinian cultural events with people from the area.
- Discussions on political and cultural issues.
- Bringing more artists and authors to share their work.







OASIS Art Gallery

Dyana Shaloufi Rizek continued to curate and direct the art gallery and associated activities, making many new important contacts with Palestinian and Jewish artists, creating wonderful exhibitions and arranging fruitful seminars under the title “Artists Hosting Artists”.

Exhibitions and Activities During 2019



- **Violence Against Women**
two exhibitions in one.
- **Shabab**, encouraging young artists who are still studying.
- **Fragrance of the South**
the 1st solo exhibition in support of Bedouins.
- **Artists Hosting Artists Workshop in Nazareth**

Curator and Founder: **Dyana Shaloufi Rizek**



Plans for 2020

- Three joint exhibitions and one solo exhibition.
- Six different artists' projects.
- Five-day marathon artists' workshop to develop sculptures and more.
- Art workshops for various groups.
- Establishing a team of facilitators to work with art workshops or diverse activities.





Youth Club



The “Nadi” (which means “club” in Arabic) is the name we chose for our Youth Center, which provides the important place where young people of the village can gather for social, recreational and enrichment activities.

There are two groups: one for fourth through eighth grades, another for eighth through twelfth grades.

Lihl Levian Joffe
Coordinator





Activities in 2019



Weekly meetings with a variety of activities.

For the teenage group, these include safe-space discussions on key issues they face, on issues like racism, identity, gender, social justice, and socio-economic disparities.



Activities for special occasions:

a costume parade for Purim; visits to women in the community to show gratitude on Mothers Day; distributing holiday fare to hospitalized Palestinian children on Eid al-Fitr; family picnics and visits to the parks on school breaks.

2020 Goals:



Recruit a
Palestinian
coordinator



Expand the Nadi
and include children
from outside the
village, like Primary
School graduates, who want
to stay connected with us.





Communications and Development

The office is responsible for resource development, liaison with friends associations around the world, spreading the village's message of peacemaking based on equality, exposing the village to visitors, and assisting in the development of new programs.

Note from the Director of Communications and Development



2019 was an important year in moving forward and being able to focus on expanding the work of our educational institutions in the village and also our community of friends and supporters all over the world. For the C&D Office the Annual General Meeting (AGM) was one of the most important events of the year. We gathered with our Friends Associations and partners who continue to support us emotionally, ideologically and financially.

In Israel we met with ambassadors, diplomats, new foundations, and shared society organizations communicating our work and efforts for peace. We also participated in conferences outside the village on topics such as leadership, education, womens' rights, peace and educational activism. We joined a coalition with seven other bilingual and binational schools to lobby the Knesset to support integrated Jewish-Arab schools and fight for recognition and funding.

In 2019 we celebrated 35 years of the Primary School and we are in our third year of implementing a 5-year plan. From 2016 we have managed to double the number of the students in the Primary School. The educational system now has 303 students. We hope to be able to grow into a secondary school and to develop an international high school program.

My wish for the coming year is to see an abundance of new collaborations and partnerships, with new and familiar friends. We cannot change the world all by ourselves.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Salaimé', written in a cursive style.

Samah Salaimé
Director of Communications and Development



Delegations

We sent delegations in order to expand our community of supporters and to promote the work of the village around the world.

Among the places visited:



Switzerland

Where the School for Peace attended the general meeting and promoted their book “The Power of Dialogue”



7 US states

A fundraising tour



Germany

Members of our second generation talked to groups about NSWAS





Visitors Center

Note from the Director of the Visitors Center



The Visitors Center is usually the first contact people have with the village. It exposes the community to the outside world by hosting groups, individuals, donors, journalists, official delegations and others. It spreads our philosophy of peace, social justice and equality to both foreign and local groups.

It has been a successful year for the Visitors Center. We have reached out to new target groups, and especially young people. A large proportion of visiting groups this year came from universities and high schools, mainly from Israel but also from abroad. Many of these institutions will continue to bring groups of students. It is important that young and educated people come to the village in order to share the vision and philosophy of WASNS with others where they study. They are interested in our work and how we express our ideas in practical life. They like to discuss shared society and our vision of living in peace and equality.

The Visitors Center plans to create a new range of alternative tours, to expand its outreach and to add additional presenters to the staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'R' and 'B' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Rita Boulos
Director of the Visitors Center



- **Israel** 38.8%
- **Germany** 13.6%
- **US** 13.1%
- **international** 10.9%
- **France** 6.6%
- **Italy** 5.5%
- **UK** 3.1%
- **Netherlands** 2.1%
- **Sweden** 1.5%
- **Switzerland** 1.5%
- **Spain** 0.8%
- **Canada** 0.8%
- **China** 0.8%
- **Austria** 0.6%
- **Denmark** 0.2%
- **Norway** 0.1%





Highlights of 2019:

The visitor center hosted

3,700

visitors from Israel/Palestine and around the world, offering a range of programs emphasizing life in the village, our vision of shared society, and the different narratives of the conflict.



Hosted an increasing number of young

Israeli groups from high schools and universities, together with their educators.



Gave dedicated tours to influential people from the Swiss, French, Swedish and British Friends Associations.



Hosted a growing number of university students from different countries in the world; USA, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden. Some of them stayed at our guesthouse for a two-day program.



Hosted a group of Muslims (from North African Countries) and Christians from Belgium and they informed us that this program will be conducted annually.

Future Plans

- Designate and develop a purpose-oriented space in the village in which to receive groups.
- Train second generation village members to present.
- Organize tours for Friends Associations and for countries without Friends Associations in order to encourage the creation of new ones.
- Continue to develop local participation in our programs, working with both private and public institutions.
- Encourage specific target groups and populations to visit, such as scouts guides, young people preparing for military service, business people, other organizations working with Jewish and Arab young people, university students, women peacemakers, teacher trainees, senior citizens.
- Develop tailored programs for various target groups.
- Develop virtual tours of the village.
- Enlarge the range and frequency of alternative tours.
- Develop a new professional film to present to guests.





Contact and Support

The activities and ongoing development of Wahat al-Salam ~ Neve Shalom depend on the moral and financial support of all who believe in our mission. Please contact us or our Friends Associations about possibilities for tax-free donations.

Contact us:

Email: info@wasns.info

Web: <https://wasns.org>

Facebook: oasisofpeace

Twitter: oasis_of_peace

Bank Information:

Association of Friends of Educational Institutions

Acct No. 12-690-454444

IBAN: IL 92-0126-9000-0000-0454-444

Swift code: POALILIT

Online donations:

<https://www.wasns.org/donate>

Friends of Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom

Austria: <https://wasns.at>

France and Belgium: <https://wasns.org/-france->

Germany: <https://wasns.org/-de->

Italy: <http://www.oasidipace.org/>

Netherlands: <http://nswas.nl>

Norway: <http://wasns.no>

Sweden: <https://wasns.org/-fredens-oas->

Switzerland: <http://nswas.ch>

UK: <https://oasisofpeace.org.uk/>

US: <https://oasisofpeace.org>

