

واحة السلام
נווה שלום



Wahat al-Salam
Neve Shalom

Impact Report Winter 2019

Each of you reading this has, through your support, made it possible for NSWAS to sustain and grow our work of promoting equality and peace. Throughout the years, you have enabled NSWAS's work with communities, professionals, and schools local and international. From the national conference stage to the smallest teacher-student lesson, this work is a multifaceted approach to a singular focus, challenging and deeply rewarding. NSWAS thanks you for everything they are able to do— from conferences to connections made, from art exhibits to adopt-a-class— through your generous and vital support. Thank you.



First Graders meet with older Student Ambassadors.

Primary School Celebrates Largest and Most Diverse Year

The Primary School now educates 314 students. Students come from 24 villages throughout the region to attend school where peace is a lived reality. The growth is due to the Primary School's reputation for innovative curriculum, excellent academics and a steadily increasing regional and national interest in bilingual and multicultural education.



First graders raise their hands at their first school assembly.

AFNSWAS's own writer got to ask some of the new first graders what their favorite things were about going to school in Israel's first bilingual and multicultural primary school. One girl mentioned that her favorite subject was mathematics, very proud to have pronounced such a long English word in what was her third language. Another child asked the student "ambassador" (each classroom has students designated weekly as translators for visitors) to relay that his favorite thing about school was the library, a response that set off a lively exchange of agreements and discussions about favorite books.

These children represent a future in which the things we share matter infinitely more than the differences that could divide us. Help us support them, their classmates, and the world that they can make together.

Multilingual Curriculum Launched

The Primary School has developed a new and comprehensive bilingual curriculum over the past three years. The new multicultural curriculum, translated into Arabic and Hebrew, was put to work with the help of their partners at Israel's Center for Educational Technology. As teachers use the curriculum, they correct their misconceptions



Students help each other with writing.

about culture, deepen their understanding about history, and prepare their students for a shared future. As funds become available, there is a planned, wide curricular outreach to teachers in multilingual schools and schools in mixed cities.

The Nadi Expands Its Theatre Program



Members of the Nadi Theatre Troup practice taking a bow!

The Nadi, the village's youth club, has become a vibrant and busy outlet for young people in NSWAS.

This winter the Nadi began its search for a Palestinian counterpart to join Lihi Joffe, the Nadi's director, and Yasmin Ben Shalom Agmon, the program's current theatre director and acting coach.

The Nadi will hire this new team member early in 2020. One of their

first roles will be to facilitate the opening of a new branch of the Nadi outside the village to work with children, many of them Primary School graduates, who want to connect through art and culture to the NSWAS principles that transform relationships and build shared futures!

This development is the result of a highly successful pilot year for the theatre group as well as Lihi Joffe's recent journey to the United States, which she credits with giving her the push to begin the hiring process. "I'm very excited about being able to write to my friends and colleagues and say I am looking for a partner who can come work with me. This idea that was only in my notes is now a reality!"



Lihi Joffe (second from the right) and Nadi members having fun in costume



Friends Associates and NSWAS members got to know each other and their respective work during the conference.

The International Friends Association AGM

Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam from around the world met in the village this November for the International Friends Association Annual General Meeting (AGM).

AGM attendees met with program leaders, directors, and members of the village over the five-day conference. Panel topics included the new construction happening in the village, the School for Peace's growing partnerships with institutes of higher education, and the Primary School's five-year academic plan.

In between meetings, Friends toured the village— from the Primary School, School for Peace, the Spiritual Center and Doumia-Sakinah to the Oasis Art Gallery, Nadi/ Youth Club and Peace Library— to support initiatives, develop connections, and share resources.

NSWAS could not exist as it does today, nor continue its evolution, without the efforts of its members, international and local friends and supporters— those who attended the AGM and those reading this report.

The Spiritual Center Creates Community Through Cinema

The Spiritual Center's Community Cinema project has brought together a new community bound by their love of meaningful films.

Dozens of film buffs from Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and beyond have traveled to the village this year— many of them for the first time— to watch groundbreaking works like *Born in Deir Yassin* and *Locked Down*,



Participants listened intently as panelists discussed their stories.

a documentary about three women's experiences in prison.

Most recently, Doumia-Sakinah the Spiritual Center hosted an event in honor of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. A viewing of the TV series, "You Can't Ask That" examines gendered violence by giving family members a chance to speak out. After the screening, a discussion was held with the director and two of the family members of the deceased women. The Center, having garnered the attention of, and entered into a partnership with, the Regional Council and the Israeli Academy of Film and Television, is continuing the Community Cinema project into 2020 and beyond. The Community Cinema project is a reminder that the arts create relationships between strangers and give people the tools they need to confront challenging topics in their own lives and in the world around them.

The School for Peace Spreads Outwards



SFP students meet at the Arab Center for Alternative Planning (ACAP)

The School for Peace in its fifth year of partnership with the Arab Center for Alternative Planning provided "Shared Cities", a course for Architects, Civil Engineers, and City Planners. The program's meeting in late December for all Shared Cities graduates is building a network focused on changing the face of urban planning throughout the country.

The SFP has collaborated with four universities to deliver graduate-level courses designed to foster dispute resolution skills and deepen participants' understanding of conflict. Tel Aviv University, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Haifa University, and Ruppin College all hold these classes during the academic year as part of existing degree programs. They will be joined in early 2020 by Bar Ilan.

As an increasing number of people participate in SFP courses, SFP graduates make their mark more widely in the nation. Peace Now director Shaqued Morag, who

graduated from the 2016 Up-and-Coming Politicians Course, spoke recently at a conference of Israeli peace organizations in Ramallah. The speech was attended by over three hundred activists, many of whom have engaged with the SFP either through taking a course or through partnership with their own organizations. The School for Peace's impact and influence continue to grow. As more graduates use the skills they have learned through the School for Peace, it is crucial that we provide the SFP the necessary our support to do its work.

The School for Peace works with doctors and architects, politicians and city planners, teaching professionals the skills they need to transform the causes of conflicts. Hundreds of participants spend 15 to 18 months learning how to solve serious problems as partners, not enemies. In Nava Sonnenschein's new book, 'The Power of Dialogue', she interviews several School for Peace graduates about their experiences during their programs and how that experience has shaped their lives in the years since.

“I recommend that everyone, in any society, undergo a process like the one that the SFP course offers. It’s not about being Israeli or Palestinian. It brings you into a social discourse.”
Slieman Halabi, SFP graduate

'The Power of Dialogue' is now available in [the AFNSWAS online shop.](#)

