



Year End Impact Report

Education that Matters

The Primary School



You can learn to read and write, but by itself this doesn't build competent or compassionate communicators. You can learn a sequence of conflict-resolution steps, but by itself it will not build a community of committed problem-solvers. The mission of all education at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, from nursery school to graduate study, is to build knowledgeable, engaged citizens prepared to live and serve in a democratic society, and prepared to be agents of transformation in places that lack sufficient knowledge, skills, resources or understanding.

The Primary School (PS) uses its unique pedagogy and binational environment to integrate children from different cultural and religious backgrounds, and to teach mutual respect and knowledge of one another's culture, traditions and language, modeling the principles of equality and peace. This first year of the plan to welcome two first grade classes each year for the next six years has been successful. Applications for two first grade classes for 2016-2017 are already coming in.

Research on the **Bilingual Language** acquisition program being done by Professors Fragman and Mor-Sommerfeld is moving into publication. While we may need to wait for the English translation to make it fully accessible, the PS bilingual educational model which has included the **Writers Matter** project, and the school/family/community-centered **olive harvest**, is building excellence in communication and understanding - first steps in building relationships.

The Primary School is moving forward with its expanded and redesigned **school library**, inviting friends associations and organizations to raise funds for new books in Hebrew and Arabic, multimedia tools, tables, chairs and cushions.



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Impact:

Here’s how the Primary School builds citizens for the future:

*Primary School student elections are held, modeled on the Israeli national election process including platforms and campaign regulations;

*The school’s creative environmental art project utilizes found objects and recycling materials as the raw materials for two and three dimensional art projects, some of which are available as public art;

*The school’s greenhouse program has students rescuing native plants that would otherwise be lost to a current construction project and restoring other habitats with those plants;

*The Primary School, always the **pioneer in bilingual and bicultural education**, is in its thirty -second year of a continuous feedback process of research, application, evaluation, reflection and research. Serving as a model and inspiration for the newly-developed ‘Hand – in –Hand’ schools and the Hagar School in BeerSheva, the Primary School is aware of its impact on today’s educators.



*The Primary School’s impact on future educators will be more measurable beginning in Fall 2016 when the school serves as the laboratory for graduate professionals studying for their M.A at the World Peace College (see below).



The World Peace College



Formal approval, granted recently by the Israeli Council on Higher Education for the Neve Shalom/ Wahat al-Salam World Peace College, is the fruit of nearly ten years of preparatory work. The mission-driven curriculum, facilities and faculty, all in partnership with University of Massachusetts –Boston and its Graduate Program in Conflict Resolution, will welcome Israeli Palestinians and Jews and international students for the two-year program leading to a Masters Degree in Conflict Resolution from UMass/Boston. They will study in the village of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, giving students the unique opportunity to understand what it means to engage in conflict management.

This newest institution at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam - the World Peace College - is at the cutting edge of both the conflict and the research emerging from the village’s ‘living’ laboratories.

School for Peace



Many of Israel's younger citizen-change-makers began their careers in the first 120-hour School for Peace **facilitator training course**, offered each year. In their SFP Change Agents course; **Changing the Urban Landscape: a Program for Arab and Jewish Urban Planners, Civil Engineers and Architects**; participants met with students in the course for **Building Leadership in Mixed Cities**. This is an ongoing program that includes 30 citizen change-makers, Jews and Arabs from seven mixed cities in Israel: Ramla, Lod, Beersheba, Haifa, Acre, Jaffa and Nazareth.

The School for Peace **Facilitators Course for Groups in Conflict** continues to attract Jewish and Palestinian participants. Many will become active in the School for Peace Alumni Forum, sharing ideas on projects that resist racism and promote shared community. The Jewish and Palestinian literature teachers who have begun a two-year course **Teachers Bringing Change - Two Peoples Write from Right to Left**, learn to address conflict issues raised in classrooms, while the more than twenty years of university-sponsored SFP courses now includes the second year of the **encounter course for Palestinian and Jewish students** of Azrieli College of Engineering.

Sixty-one teenagers are now taking part in a SFP High school **youth encounter** and engaging in dialogue at the School for Peace. Alongside the youth encounter, the third session of the SFP's annual **facilitator training course** is taking place, with trainees able to observe youth encounter sessions unobtrusively through a one-way mirror, analyzing the dynamics and the interventions of the facilitators.

At the end of October 2015, the School for Peace began its two-year Change Agents course for **Palestinian and Jewish environmentalists** where students will develop dialogue-into-action links between environmental work and human rights.



Impacts:

- *Jewish and Arab planners and community leaders from Lod are working together on the city's master plan to better take into account the needs of the Arab residents.
- *Arab and Jewish planners prepared a master plan for the unrecognized Bedouin village of Al-Awaan.
- *Jewish and Arab planners, reviewing the difficulties faced by Jisr al-Zarqa, a town contained on all sides by the sea, fishponds and the Tel Aviv-Haifa highway, consulted with the city engineer and developed actionable planning alternatives.
- *An educational kit to be used in mixed cities;
- *a WhatsApp group to support dialogue;
- *strategies for accommodating Jewish, Christian and Muslim religious holidays falling on the same days.
- *Completion of a research study on the impact of the School for Peace on participants' lives.

The School for Peace is a major **catalyst** putting dialogue into action for participants of all ages, nationalities, and professions.

Pluralistic Spiritual Community Center and Peace Museum



The Spiritual Center is the home for encounter activities, study and reflection, based on values of equality, justice and reconciliation. Its activities draw inspiration from the resources and spiritual traditions of the Middle East and the world at large. Programs focus on open, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue, and the advancement of peace. Connecting the practical, action-oriented world with the contemplative world lets the Spiritual Center create programs of **Massa/Massar (Journey)** for dozens of young adults in partnership with the mixed city of Ramle

(via Open House), a panel discussion at the launch of the Arabic edition of Prof. (and NSWAS member) Yair Auron's book, *The Shoah, the Rebirth and the Nakba*, welcomed the Earth Caravan, a Buddhist group from Japan, and their program, on the **70th anniversary of the Hiroshima** atomic bomb, and fulfilled the creation of a long-held dream: The Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (**Oasis of Peace**) **Museum and Archive**.

Housed within the Fred Segal World Peace and Friendship Library, the Peace Museum held a special evening in the Pluralistic Spiritual Center remembering the righteous and sharing stories of heroism. The third in the Peace Museum's series, "**Remembering the Righteous**" focused on Palestinians who saved Jews during the events of 1929, particularly in Hebron. Special guest speaker Avraham Burg, former speaker of the Israeli Parliament and former head of the Jewish Agency, told the story of his mother and family who were saved by a Palestinian family during the Hebron massacre.

Spontaneously, two residents of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam – Yuval Admoni and Boaz Kitain- spoke of how their parents were also saved during the Hebron massacre. Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam member Prof. Yair Auron moderated the evening, and spoke of the relevance and importance of sharing these stories in the shadow of the hatred and fear of today.

Yuval Admoni, together with his wife and fellow musician Tammy Kanazawa, opened and closed the evening with piano duets.



The Museum and Spiritual Center hosted a panel discussion at the launch of the Arabic edition of Prof. Yair Auron's book, *The Shoah, the Rebirth and the Nakba*. The panel included Dr. Hillel Cohen, from the Hebrew University; Avraham Burg, former Member and Chair of the Knesset; and Palestinian-Israeli scholar Antoine Shalhat, who directs the translation unit of Madar, the Palestinian Forum for Israeli Studies, which published the book. The discussion was interspersed with songs by guest musician Ronit Shefi.

Auron, a long-time resident of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is a specialist in genocide studies. Rather than equating the Holocaust with the Nakba, his new book looks at the links between the two historical events with an emphasis on trauma and the need for healing.