



Humans without Borders: Annual Report – 2022

Transportation

In 2022, the Covid-19 pandemic was a condition we had learned to live with. To the best of our knowledge neither volunteers nor family members contracted the disease during HWB activities.

In 2022, several volunteers returned to active driving and some 20 new members have joined our ranks.

Nevertheless, the steady increase in the number of families we assist, means that there are never enough volunteers to meet demand, forcing us to make substantial use of taxis. The costs of such trips have shot up due to the huge increase in the cost of gasoline resulting from the global response to the war in the Ukraine.

In 2022, 115 volunteers and taxi drivers made about 5,800 unique trips, involving about 110 children. Several of these children are in treatment six days a week (twelve separate trips) many receive treatment three days a week (six trips). There are children who come several times a month and some once every few months.

About 29% of these trips were handled by taxi drivers. Almost all the trips were to hospitals in the Jerusalem area with a few dozen to hospitals such as Ichilov Medical Center in Tel Aviv and the Sheba Medical Center in Tel HaShomer.

All of this would not have been possible without the sterling efforts of our four coordinators who ensure that all requests are properly handles, including emergencies, sometimes in the middle of the night.

Fun Day

On 24 June 2022 volunteers from Humans without Borders and a huge number of the families that we assist (more than 225 people in all) met for a fun day at the Murad Resort in Beit Sahur. It is difficult to put into words the sheer joy and happiness that the day produced.

When a child is seriously ill, the whole family is affected, the child, the parents, and the siblings. The family operates within a state of constant stress and anxiety. Often their livelihood is affected, because the father is unable to work or because the Palestinian Authority refuses to cover all expenses forcing the family to pay for medications and other medical needs.



Humans without Borders provides a good deal of practical assistance along with a dose of pure joy.

Mothers' Workshop

In early 2022, a small group of volunteers from Humans without Borders decided to reactivate workshops for Palestinian mothers held while the children undergo daily dialysis at Augusta Victoria Hospital.

Nimala, a wellness coach from East Jerusalem worked with the mothers during the long hours of waiting.



During the group sessions she created the space in which they could share their feelings and draw strength, hope and comfort from one another. This is important not only for self-care but also to enable these women to take care of other family members – spouses and children.

Unfortunately, after a few sessions the hospital crippled the effort by placing impossible demands on the organizers. We have not given up and are still trying to reinstitute the concept.

Volunteers Evening

On 27 October 2022, about 75 volunteers of Humans without Borders gathered in the Courtyard Theater in Nataf for an evening of entertainment and mingling, enjoying the hospitality of the Jacobs family. Hadassah is a dedicated volunteer. Mainly we chatted about the kids we help – the happy stories and the sad ones.

Prior to the entertainment, several of our volunteers spoke about their experiences as coordinators, drivers, fun day organizers, special events, and more.

The evening was very successful, bringing together a group of like-minded people who seldom have the opportunity to get together, along with new potential volunteers who had the occasion to, first-hand, learn about the splendid work done by the volunteers of Humans without Borders.



Minat Allah

Minat Allah is a 6-month-old baby from Tulkarm born with liver and kidney problems. She has been under treatment at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center since she was born.

The Nephrology Department, together with a pharmaceutical company, are using a new experimental drug that allows the liver to develop and also improves kidney performance. For this purpose, the mother brings the baby from Tulkarm six days a week. This includes a 3 to 4 hour drive each way, every day – an impossible situation.

In cooperation with the hospital, Humans without Borders arranged for week-long stays in a hotel in east Jerusalem and the hospital arranged for the use of an apartment for a week. This certainly provided some needed relief for the mother and the child.

We drive the mother and child to the hospital and back every day and we also cover the cost of food and other necessities for them when they are housed in Jerusalem.

Medical Issues

Since mid-2020, the Ministry of Health of the Palestinian Authority has failed to meet its commitments to the general population. As a result, Humans without Borders has expanded its activities in the medical domain, paying directly to hospitals for life-saving medical procedures, and purchasing medications and equipment.

Our medical committee, composed of a physician, two nurses and several other volunteers, reviews each case and consults with relevant professionals before making a definitive decision about providing assistance.

The following are the most outstanding cases that we dealt with in 2022.

Jana

Jana, an 11-year-old girl from Hebron, received dialysis on a daily basis in Augusta Victoria Hospital for several years. Fortunately, her mother was approved as a kidney donor and surgery was successfully performed in Jordan Hospital in Amman.

Although the family received a commitment from the Palestinian Authority to fully cover the medical expenses, they were required to pay for all tests and examinations performed before and after the surgery, as well as medications. The expenditure involved more than 8,000 Jordanian dinars (about US\$11,300). The family could not have possibly covered the costs involved.

Humans without Borders raised the funds thereby making the transplant possible and giving a new and full life to a wonderful child.

Upon their return to Palestine, the family encountered a shortage of the medication needed to prevent transplanted organ rejection. Due to supply chain problems resulting from the war in Ukraine, the drug was unavailable both in Palestine and Israel. We managed to obtain the medication in Europe and thus prevent a possible tragedy.

Madj

Madj is a five-years-old boy from Nablus who was successfully treated at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem for a malignant neoplasm of the eye orbit (rhabdomyosarcoma alveolar). The child is in complete cancer remission.

Madj required a prosthesis which included reconstruction of the upper part of the cheek

bone using silicon. The child had a gaping eye hole and a drooping cheek. He would not have been able to develop as a normal youngster if the situation was not rectified.

The Palestinian Authority defined the issue as cosmetic in nature and refused to cover the costs of the procedure.

One of our regular supporters took upon herself to pay for the bone reconstruction and the prosthesis. The young fellow now looks like any normal child.

Maria

Maria suffers from a congenital vascular malformation of the face that is painful and aesthetically unpalatable.

The treatment of this type of pathology is not simple. She underwent surgery several years ago at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem and recently Humans without Borders financed an injection treatment that proved to be very helpful.

The doctors are planning invasive radiology treatment, but this will require financial support that is not presently available.

Shams

Shamas is a 9-year-old girl who suffered a chondroblastic osteosarcoma (a possibly fatal bone malignancy) in her right upper jaw. Following chemotherapy, she required surgical resection of the tumor with reconstruction of the right side of her face with a prosthesis.

When we became aware of the situation, we took her for a medical consultation and were advised that if surgery was not performed within a week, the child was in danger of losing an eye due to the continued growth of the tumor.

The Padeh Medical Center in Poriya, near Tiberias, is one of the few hospitals in Israel specializing in maxillofacial surgery. Virtually overnight, Humans without Borders was able to recruit a donation to cover the entire cost

of the surgery and arranged for to be carried out.

Shahed

Shahed is a lovely 17-year-old teenager who, due to complications during pregnancy, was born with non-functioning kidneys and a neuropathic bladder (does not empty or store urine properly). Her left arm is also deformed.

Over the years, surgeons have inserted hemodialysis shunts (that provide vascular access for dialysis) into so many veins that, after the most recent line collapsed, surgeons at the al-Mukasad Hospital in east Jerusalem were unable to insert a new one and dialysis could not be performed.

If a solution were not found, the child would die in a very short period of time.

Humans without Borders immediately approached the Angiogram Department in the Shaare Zedek Medical Center and arranged for a bypass with a permanent shunt to be inserted into her arm.

This surgery was made possible through a donation from a British friend of our organization that covered half the costs. We are still searching for additional funds.

Ichia's Education

Ichia is 15 years old and was born with chronic renal failure. We have been driving him for so long that he is probably our best-known client – a real character.

Ichia received a kidney transplant in the United States about 7 years ago and, after a few years, the organ failed. He was back on dialysis and remains so today.

In fact, Ichia has spent the better part of his life at the Juvenile Nephology department of the Shaare Zedek Medical Center undergoing dialysis. In spite of the daily instruction provided to the children, he never mastered the core subjects such as mathematics and Arabic. Although he is a very bright young

fellow, He was illiterate until a few months ago.

Ichia contacted us and expressed a desire to learn to read and write and study math. We located a private school in Beit Jala that provides reinforcement classes for high school students. Under the sponsorship of members of Humans without Borders, Ichia studies Arabic and math three days a week. Within five months he has become competent in reading Arabic and performing basic arithmetic functions.

This is a small success – taking into consideration difficulties such families encounter – but a very heart-warming one.

Helping Brothers and Sisters

One of the real added benefits of volunteering in Humans without Borders is the amazing friendships that develop between our members and the families we assist.

Recently, during exchanges at the volunteers' evening, we overheard people talking about assisting brothers and sisters of "our" children. Several young people are studying at Palestinian colleges only because they have received support to pay tuition by our members. Volunteers have also provided laptops to the students which are required for classes.

Very few people are aware of these acts of friendship and that is the way it should be.

Our on-going activities in 2022 would not have been possible without the generous assistance of BSST (British Shalom-Salaam Trust), the DEAR Foundation (Zurich), James Parry (London), Jim and Debby Stein Sharpe (Canton, MA), Project Rozana (international), Schocken Foundation (Philadelphia), Two Roses (Tel Aviv), and many Israeli contributors. We humbly thank them for their support.