

Humans without Borders: Annual Report – 2018

In 2018, the core activities of Humans without Borders – assisting Palestine families with children requiring medical attention in Israeli hospitals – increased significantly. The total number of trips was just under 4,200. This includes 320 trips to hospitals, outside the Jerusalem area. We can proudly state that we were able to meet 99% of requests for transportation.

We supported children requiring a wide variety of treatment, extending from dialysis, on a daily basis, to chemotherapy or radiation once or twice a month.

All our activities originate at the military checkpoints around Jerusalem, especially Qalandia and the Bethlehem crossing points, with trips to hospitals in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Petah Tikva, Tel Hashomer, Holon and Haifa.

In 2018, about 85 volunteers assisted Palestinian families without receiving any compensation for their time, gasoline, or vehicle use. Some of these people commit to one trip a month and others drive a family four times a week. Each member of our NGO fully understands the profound significance of her volunteerism.

The volunteers of Humans without Borders function in a complex reality. Sincere friendships develop between Palestinian families and the Israeli volunteers (and their families) and this makes the deaths of very sick children to be trying experiences. In 2018, we parted, with great sorrow, from several children who were cut down by devastating diseases. Meetings with the families were both traumatic and heart-warming with commitments to maintain established friendships.

The joy of a successful transplant – seeing a child literally come to life after surgery – is another facet of this reality. Muhammad was attached to a dialysis machine for more than 3 years, six days a week. When he reached the necessary weight of 10 kg, he and his family underwent, what seemed to be, a series of unending tests. Our volunteers drove the family from the Bethlehem checkpoint to Rambam Hospital in Haifa a half dozen times ensuring they would have no unnecessary worries during this very taxing period. Mohammad's father was selected as the kidney donor and, in late 2018, the two underwent surgery. Members of HWB visited them during their recovery and, of course, brought them home after their release. We see Muhammad once a week when he comes to the Shaare Zedek Medical Center Jerusalem for tests. He is on his way to living the normal life of a happy four-year-old.

In August 2018, HWB invited the extended families of the children we assist for a “fun day” at the Murad Resort in the town of Beit Sahur. It is a lovely location with several swimming pools, playgrounds and an excellent dining room and, most important, reachable from both the north and the south without having to enter Israel.

The day was a major success both for the children – who romped in the pools with family and volunteers – and the volunteers who invested substantial energy to ensure the success of the event. A huge supply of fresh strawberries was donated by kibbutz Ramat Rachel and home-baked cakes came from the ovens of our volunteers.

This was the fourth such event that was supported by **Children of Peace**.

Kaess, an infant from Gaza, was diagnosed with kidney malformation. At the beginning of July, at the age of 3 weeks, he was separated from his parents and hospitalized at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem. Five members of HWB rose to the challenge to assist both the baby and the accompanying family member. They mothered the baby, like any good grandmother would, and provided for all the needs of the accompanying family member.

In November, Kaess' mother received a permit to enter Israel. She was trained to perform home dialysis and all the necessary equipment was provided by the hospital and Humans without Borders, allowing them to return to their home in Gaza.

In March 2018, Humans without Borders, in an already established tradition, invited our volunteers and their families for a get-together and the screening of a topical movie.

This year we showed the documentary “Born in Deir Yassin”. This movie, produced by Neta Shoshani juxtaposes, in a most fascinating way, the story of the Etzel's subjugation of the Palestinian village Deir Yassin in April 1948 with the personal story of Dror, who was born in the mental hospital that was established on the premises of the village. After the screening the evening culminated in an invigorating discussion between Neta and the audience.

Our on-going activities would not have been possible without the generous assistance of the DEAR Foundation (Zurich). Jim and Debby Stein Sharpe (Canton, MA), the Rinat family (Rehovot), and many other donors. We humbly thank them for their support.