



مؤسسة الأراضي المقدسة للصم

The Holy Land Institute for the Deaf

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Summer 2013



“Tall or small; everybody is included,
so that all of us can be a blessing for each other!”

In this edition:

Neglected hands learn to
express themselves



“Blind” hands learn
to feel signs



Caring hands help
Syrian refugees



Deafinitely connected - God provides

Letter



"May the favor and the beauty of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us - yes, establish the work of our hands."

the Prayer of Moses, Psalm 90:17

Dear Friends,

Reading this News letter it is interesting to count the instances where you recognise **"CARE"**. Although it is not on the curriculum, surely taking responsibility and caring for each other is even more important than English or Arabic, Maths or Physics, carpentry or cooking? And what is so wonderful is that you don't have to be smart!

The oldest High school students are 23 years old while the youngest Kindergarten children are between three and four years; the deafblind children and youngsters are between two (a little girl who was so fragile that she didn't make it this year, went back to her Maker) or four till 14; **Mohammed** is 20 and **Hanady** (see News) is 48. Two of them are hearing but mute because of aphasia. Most are Deaf or hard of hearing but five deaf young people from 10 - 21 years also have physical disabilities; others have an intellectual impairment and four children are in the Slow-learners group; one 7 year old, one 17 year old and one 22 year old miss an eye; we have two children ages nine and 14 with cerebral palsy, and a whole bunch of them have Usher syndrome (tunnel vision and night blindness to various degrees - the more severe cases are legally blind...). One student who joined us recently is hearing but comes from a home where mother is deaf and disturbed while his father is deafblind. Teachers and staff are Deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing; three have a physical disability and two much appreciated staff have an intellectual impairment... A modern term that applies to the education of learners with special needs is: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, which indicates that all children, including children with disabilities, go to the same school. **More "inclusive" than our Institute for Deaf and Deafblind Children it is hard to conceive.** The only difference with regular inclusive schools would be the language - the language of the Deaf, the language of Signs, the language of the hands - of doing things, especially doing what you said you would do! It is exciting to observe that most everybody cares for everybody. Young and old assume responsibility and help to make sure that "the others" are well. Even caring for the cat or the garden counts! We are grateful that the deafblind and weaker children are giving us the opportunity to learn to care. **In a beautiful but special way they have become the teachers - without them it would be so much harder.**

*After a warm and dusty day and just before he celebrated the great Jewish Feast of Easter, mealtime came and **Jesus the Messiah** got up, took a towel and washed his students' feet. Having done so, he taught that we should serve one-another as he served us. Isn't that precisely what is happening when we serve, take responsibility, care for each other?*

The blessing which the children mostly use goes like this: "O Lord, bless our daddies and our mamas; bless the school and all the Deaf; bless the hearing, the blind, the physically disabled and children with cerebral palsy; bless those

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with intellectual impairments as well as the smart ones; those that are strong and those that are weak; the small ones and the tall ones; boys and girls; babies and oldies (that refers to us)." Then might follow a blessing for the children who are ill, guests, people who are traveling, and ... (that includes you). It ends with: "O Lord, please bless me also; Amen".

Everybody is included, so that all of us can be a blessing for each other! Isn't that what **Moses** meant to say?

Warm greetings on behalf of all, **Brother Andrew**

Snow fun

In January we had two days of snow in Salt. The children built snowmen and had merry snowball fights during their breaks and during that time a very special atmosphere pervaded the school. After having so much fun, they were not too sad to see the dazzling whiteness disappear shortly afterwards.



In good hands

Manal (19) and her brother **Issa** (10) (left picture) came to the school last year, together with their sister **Asaala** (12). All three suffer from deformed joints, especially in their hands and legs. The siblings are almost incapable of using their hands.

Furthermore,

walking is difficult for them and, as Deaf children, they used to be unable to express themselves. Because of that, all three were withdrawn and unhappy.

After nine months, however, one can meet smiling Manal on the playground, caring for little **Diahedeen**. When their oldest brother brought them back to the school after the Easter holidays, Asaala said in skillful signs: "You can leave now, we are fine here!"



Diahedeen in good hands

Funny friendships



***Obaida** is in 7th grade, and **Ahmed** is in kindergarten. As both are new and tend to be outsiders in their respective classes, they prefer to play together.*

*Tall, strong **Oday** cares like an older brother for young, petite **Doaa**.*



*Everybody thinks little **Mohammed** is very cute. **Mourad** too likes to play with him on the playground.*



School, children and students

***Maher** (l.) is a rascal and has been here for two years.*

***Diahedeen**, a second rascal, recently entered the school, and the two quickly became friends.*



***Salam** is in 12th grade, and **Hiba** is only in 3^d grade. Even so, during lunch time, Hiba usually sits next to her older friend Salam and enjoys simply being in her company.*

*Because both of them can still hear and speak a little, **Mohammed** and **Mohammed** are good friends. They often communicate without their hands.*



*In Arab culture, friendships between girls and boys are very rare. **Dia'** and **Ahmed** provide a beautiful example of such a friendship.*

Mending with grace



In the morning, Joshua comes to the chapel already in his work trousers. That way, just a few minutes after chapel, he can begin his work in the garage of the HLID, where he has repaired cars and trained Deaf young men for 35 long years. Joshua's eyes sparkle kindly and mildly, although the first thing that the students learn from him is discipline, which characterizes his conduct. In this discipline, his loving grace becomes visible.

On the way to the garage, **Joshua** explains what motivates him. At the same time, numerous people come to ask

“we have to give them an example of how to be disciples!”

him questions. Joshua: “In Cameroon, where I worked before, I got along very well with the Africans. I never had the desire to work anywhere else. However, God showed me: ‘Go!’ and I went. It is written: ‘make disciples of all nations.’ That does not mean that Muslims have to become Christians, but we can teach them to become Disciples of Christ.”

Some apprentices wait for Joshua's instructions, for which simple signs apparently suffice. Over and over again, he has to teach the students to obey. Joshua explains that the civil commotion in Arab countries, along with the seemingly endless acquiescence of Europeans, make the disciplinary education even more difficult. Joshua: “If there are no rules, and everyone goes his or her own way, then this ends in chaos. It is not just about the work in the garage: We give them love and discipline. That is difficult, and if I had not been looking to the Kingdom of God, I would have stopped a long time ago. But we have to give them an example of how to be disciples!” After those words, Joshua enters the garage, where another day of “mending with grace” begins.

A new face in the garage



Since November 2012 the Swiss **Joel** (29) works with **Joshua** in the garage. He does maintenance work and other projects, for which his experiences as an electrician and a bike mechanic come in handy, though the work of car mechanics is new for him. He is becoming a good friend to the older boys, and we are very grateful for his quiet positive presence at the Insitute.

A new family for Hanady

Hanady (48) has been living in our school since February 2013. As a child she was Deaf, and when she was 20 years old she suddenly became blind as well. When a few years ago her parents passed away, she went to live with her siblings. In 2012, Iman, Hanady's Deaf neighbor, began to work here as a teacher, and through her we found out about Hanady. Hanady now lives with the Deaf girls in the boarding house and spends her days in the Deafblind Unit, learning to work and move around independently.



Fatmeh, a Deaf student, communicating with Hanady in hands-on sign language



Hanady is learning Braille from her Deaf teacher and neighbour Iman

Even though it is sometimes difficult for her, as she meets new challenges constantly, she is very happy at the institute. Here she is able to learn so much and be in the company of other Deaf people. Because she has known Sign language since childhood, she is able to “talk” with the Deaf children by touching their hands and feeling their signs.



Hanady with deafblind Mohammed

Hanady is especially loved by the younger girls. In the evenings they enjoy sitting with her and she lovingly touches them and is simply there for them. This is how deafblind Hanady, who lost her sight and a part of her family, found a new family and how the children, whose parents are so far away, have a substitute mother who is near when they feel lonely.



In Aqaba Hanady gets to know a camel

Staff changes

Bookkeeper **Fareed** left the institute because he reached retirement age. We thank him for the many years of faithful service and wish him God's blessings.

In March, our team was enriched by **Sameer**. Originally he was hired as a substitute for an injured employee, but he will continue working here in the housekeeping.



*Colleagues: Bookkeeper **Fareed** and General Manager **Iyad** (right)*

There has been a change in the computer network department. **Wasel** has left us, and **Awny** arrived just at the right moment because there were numerous problems with virtual viruses, worms and trojans.

Short term volunteers and visitors



Brother Andrew's niece **Judith** and her husband **André** were here in the institute from February until April as short term volunteers. Judith was doing research for her Bachelor's thesis, while André helped out with different administrative jobs.

***André & Judith** with **Ria** and **Jameel**, **Hamzeh**, **Hiba** and **Rasha** (f.i.t.r.)*

Last spring **Brent and his parents** came for a vacation and spent a lot of time with the Deaf and deafblind children. Immediately afterwards **Fabian**, a former volunteer, came for three weeks to see the children again and to help work on a new website. We had visits from **Geoffrey** (England) and **Ria** (Holland). The two of them supported **Brother Andrew** and **Rafael** in the offices.



Fabian** (r.) with **Hamzeh

Swiss group

From April 22nd to May 2nd we were pleased to host a group from Switzerland.

The eleven people in the group spent several days at the institute, where they enjoyed seeing the children and helping in various ways. They took a 4-day sight-seeing tour around Jordan (Petra, Aqaba, Wadi Rum and Dead Sea).

In particular, **Tamara, Joel, Joshua and Dineke** enjoyed their stay because several relatives and friends were part of the group.



Part of the group: Tamara's aunt **Ruth** (middle) and uncle **Gerhard** (front 2nd from l.), Tamara's mother **Monika** (left of Ruth), Joel's mother **Magdalena** (middle l.) and Joshua's brother **Daniel** (front l.)

Meeting and moving to the new building



During spring several departments moved into the new building. The "Diwan" (salon) on the ground floor was used for the first time in April when a group of 110 Deaf guests from 13 Arab countries visited us within the scope of a congress in Amman.

On the second floor, we have arranged a little gym for the deafblind children. We are very grateful to **MCC (Mennonite Central Committee, USA)**, who financed the wonderful equipment, including a new and much-loved trampoline. Our children have to move, because their world is so small! **MCC** sends us great volunteers as well. We want to thank **USAID** for financing the new building. The furniture and the lift were a greatly appreciated donation from the **Royal Palace** and **His Majesty King Abdullah II**.

On June 8th **HRH Princess Muna al-Husein**, the mother of **HM King Abdullah II**, officially opened the new building and handed over the certificates to the students of classes 6, 10 and 12.



Training courses in Iraq

There are some schools for the Deaf in Iraq, but many of the teachers are not well trained in this form of education. We were very glad that **Sameer** was able to direct three training courses for teachers there. One basic course was held in Baghdad and another in the north (Kurdistan). In the follow-up course, Sameer visited all of the teachers who took a basic course last year in their schools. Sameer's observations and suggestions were discussed in a 3-day workshop in Baghdad. An awareness course for parents of Deaf children was held there as well. These parents were informed about deafness, education and hearing aids and were able to ask many questions. The journey was financed by CBM (Christoffel Blind Mission, Germany).



A teacher tries the new teaching methods right away with a student



Sameer teaches over 100 parents of Deaf children about deafness

Outreach

Integration with cosmetic contact lens

Ibrahim was very isolated and becoming more and more depressed in school; in addition to his hearing problems, he had a badly disfigured and ineffective eye. The outreach team realised that in addition to his hearing problems, Ibrahim was being left out because of this embarrassing disfigurement. Therefore, in addition to a hearing aid, he was provided with a brown coloured cosmetic contact lens. Through this low-cost help and active follow-up, he has achieved integration.



Ibrahim without and with contacts

Reaching out to the individual and to the many

Helping hands for Syrian refugees

After having worked in Syria and other neighbouring countries for many years, Sabri and his team are pleased that they are able to reach out to some of the many refugees, which Jordan has received in the north.

Za'atari camp is organised by the *United Nations High Commission for Refugees UNHCR* and is situated in the north of Jordan. It is now home to some 170,000 refugees, with 2000 more coming daily. That makes it the fifth biggest "city" in Jordan. Additionally there are innumerable Syrian refugees spread all over the country.



Few are able to leave because of the troubles back home. Families live in groups of ten tents, with a communal kitchen and two toilets. The need for better provisions is demonstrated when fires keep destroying tents.



*HLID audiologist **Ahmed** examines a young woman from Syria*

The Gulf states are assisting by providing caravans and two schools, one of which has separate facilities for boys and girls. HLID Outreach and the "NETWORK" of local specialised organizations cooperate with *UNHCR* and other agencies in the screening of new arrivals. The purpose is to find refugees with disabilities and provide for them what they need. There is a small centre with two caravans that are made suitable for testing.

One day, however, they found that the caravans had been used by people whose tents had been washed out in a severe snow and rainstorm; the current problem is dusty winds, but winter is quickly changing to summer when the thirsty refugee community will be glad of water.



So, as you pray for God's blessing on troubled nations, you may remember also those who are working to provide relief to the displaced.

School, children and students

Tawjihi-class

There are eight students in our graduating class this year. You met three of them - **Btoul, Rowan** and **Fadi** - in the last edition of the newsletter, in which they shared their expectations and hopes for the future.

In December/January, these three students, together with their colleagues **Nadia, Salam, Haya, Ahmed** and **Salah**, completed the first half of their final exams and performed well. The remaining exams will follow in June/July. You can look forward to the next newsletter, when you will hear how they are getting on.



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