

Human Supporters Association
Western Entrance of the Old-City
Nablus, Palestinian Occupied Territories

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Project : The new HSA Ressources Center



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Motivation

Ever since Human Supporters Association received official recognition as a non-governmental organization on the 14th of June 2006, the organization has continued to grow and adapt new projects with alternative methodologies according to the needs of the young society of Nablus. While establishing different kind of projects - like the Voice of Kids Magazine, the Human Rights Theatre, as well as the project “Promoting children, youth, women education and psychological wellbeing in Nablus, Old City” funded by the European Union – HSA noticed that the current location does not afford anymore the sufficient space for arranging all of this projects. HSA therefore sees it as essential to find the required space to conduct work to its full potential.

Furthermore, Human Supporters Association would like to improve and enlarge their current projects to the real needs of the children and their evolutions, as well as adapt them with new methodologies and approaches to become experts in the field of psycho – educational work. Regular participation in professional training and workshops in the new centre would also enable our team to develop their competences and skills. It would give Human Supporters Association the possibility to increase the capacity for the amount of children receiving therapy by widening the range of tools and approaches with the aim of giving the children the necessary space to express themselves.

Also, HSA’s building is recently surrounded by workshops and small industrial businesses. HSA is therefore situated in a rather child unfriendly environment and is not overly welcoming to the children nor their parents. By moving location, HSA would be able to create a child friendly environment that welcomed the beneficiaries with a more calm and inviting atmosphere. This is very important as the beneficiaries and their guardians need to feel comfortable in the environment where the children are educated and catered for.

Furthermore, HSA currently rents their office at a rather high rate. Given HSA has now established itself as a relatively large NGO within Nablus’ community, HSA are now looking at the long-term. By buying the building for one large one-off cost, this means that the large

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monthly instalments of rent will no longer apply and therefore save HSA money in the long-term. This therefore means that the money formerly spent on rent can be used for other and more meaningful things going directly towards the beneficiaries of the charity.

Therefore, over the past few years Human Supporters Association has been continuously looking for a bigger centre which fulfils the necessary conditions. HSA has found the exact required solution in the following building:

The resources centre

The centre will consist of three floors and one garden. Overall the building has 11 rooms including a kitchen, toilets and a terrace which will become a playground and where we will conduct different kind of activities. The first and second floor were build in 1936, the third floor in 1965. The area of each floor is between 125m² and 135m² and the garden is 30m².

The building is located at the Western entrance of the Old City of Nablus in the district of Herat el Gharb. The centre is 100 feet from the main street that connects the Al-Najah University and the city centre. In addition, it is not far from the evangelical church where HSA organises its yearly summer camp, “Living together”.

The necessary work equipment and furniture (desks, chairs, cupboards...) are already available for the new resources centre. In addition the duty of renovation will be assumed by Human Supporters Association. Therefore the project relates only to the purchase of the building.

The Old City of Nablus

The new resources centre of Human Supporters Association will be located in the Old City of Nablus. This quarter is of precious heritage to Nablus because it reflects the grandeur of the past and struggles that have shaped the identity of this city. The district of Herat el Gharb in the Old City, where we would like to open our new centre, is additionally known for its diversity as Christians and Muslims live together side-by-side. Therefore, it will aim to maintain and perpetuate under the youth of Nablus the idea of living together and improve communication despite the occupation playing on the division of the community. Promoting respect and tolerance by fostering diversity in terms of religion is one of the main values of Human

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Supporters Association because HSA believes that one can only achieve true unity through diversity.

The added space would also benefit the community as a whole, because it would be the first resources centre located in the Old City of Nablus. Given during the second intifada, from 2000-2009, the people who were living during this time in the Old City of Nablus suffered the most and experienced a high number of deaths and injuries. Therefore the emergency situation has taken a tremendous toll on the wellbeing of the children and youth, who suffer from many obstacles. Today 39.74 % of those living in the Old City are children under 14 years old and 67,19 % are under 30 years old.¹ Most of them are seriously affected by psychological and social distresses that result from exposure to violence and which has a direct impact on children, the protection of women, psychological wellbeing and education. Furthermore many buildings have been demolished or destroyed during the Al Aqsa Intifada. Many of the buildings in the old city have traditionally provided recreational and educational services to the Nablusi youth and due to being damaged, the old city is yet to have fully recovered from the second intifada. By establishing HSA's new building in the old city, the centre would go a long way towards reviving the services the old city used to provide for Nablus's children and youth.

Furthermore, the idea of creating Human Supporters Association was born during the second Intifada in the Old City of Nablus when in May 2002 a group of young paramedics from Nablus had the initiative of reaching out to children and teenagers who go or have gone through traumatic events on a daily basis. Even though the projects of Humans Supporters Association has multiplied during the last years and the groups of beneficiaries diversified, HSA's values have its roots in the heart of the Old City.

The added space will also provide more learning space for the children and allow larger and more activities to take place. This enables HSA to expand their projects and give the children more room for creativity and learning. In addition the new centre will also allow the teachers and staff to be more creative and conduct activities with an ample amount of room. Given HSA

¹ Research of Human Supporters Association (2011) : Children and youth wellbeing through educational and psychosocial response in Nablus – Old city, oPt

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currently uses rooms for several activities and the office space is less than sufficient, the space will also provide a more professional workspace through giving different rooms for meetings, lessons, offices, recreational rooms for art and music, and a consultation room for the psychologists.

The new location of the building provides in addition an element of accessibility for the children. The building is within close proximity of the school, Madrese Fatimie (of which HSA cooperates with), and would not require any of the children to cross the main road to get to the centre. Facilitated by the Ministry of Education, Madrese Fatimie needs HSA to provide their pupils with the much-needed facilities HSA offer.

Budget: The price of the building is €70,000. Human Supporters Association needs to find the full amount by getting financial support from partner organization/donors. Currently, HSA has €10,000 and therefore needs a further €60,000 in order to purchase the building.

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A few pictures of the new resources centre

