



Just.Childhood  
NGO Registration

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just.childhood  
جست تشايلدهود



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# Bait al-Shams Annual Report 2015

We color our lives with education



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# Bait al-Shams Annual Report 2015

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1   WHO WE ARE	PAGE 4
SECTION 2   BOARD AND THE TEAM	PAGE 6
SECTION 3   BACKGROUND	PAGE 8
SECTION 4   METHODOLOGY	PAGE 10
SECTION 5   SUMMARY OF 2015	PAGE 12
SECTION 6   SPECIAL EVENTS	PAGE 14
SECTION 7   OUTLOOK 2016	PAGE 16
SECTION 8   CONCLUSION	PAGE 17
SECTION 9   DONORS	PAGE 17
SECTION 10   BUDGET	PAGE 18

# WHO WE ARE?

## ABOUT US

### BAIT AL-SHAMS KINDERGARTEN

With Bait al-Shams, just.childhood is offering the children of Shatila Refugee Camp a safe space for learning and simply being a child on a continuous, reliable basis and prepare them for school. We are aiming at introducing an alternative, reformatory educational approach based on internationally developed Child Protection regulations.

For us It is important to teach children from an early age that they don't need to limit themselves.

The kindergarten aims at providing a vital creative outlet which often cannot be provided by parents, and is traditionally abandoned in favor of more academic subjects by chronically underfunded schools.

In our understanding of a humanistic approach to pedagogy, learning is interdisciplinary, integrating practical, artistic and conceptual elements. Bait al-Sham's approach is based on Waldorf Early Education and emphasizes the role of imagination in learning, developing thinking that includes a creative as well as an analytic component. We would like to provide the children the basis on which to develop into free, morally responsible and integrated individuals, and to help every child fulfill his or her unique destiny



## INFO ON THE ORGANISATION

just.childhood consists of two NGOs, a German and a Lebanese. As the German association is mainly existent to collect funds in Germany and to give donation receipts to European supporters, but also to serve as an approving authority, the Lebanese NGO is responsible for running and administering the kindergarten Bait al-Shams itself. Both NGOs are actively involved in enhancing continuous teacher training on Waldorf Early Childhood Education both in Germany and Lebanon.

“THE TEACHER WHO IS INDEED WISE DOES NOT BID YOU TO ENTER HE HOUSE OF HIS WISDOM BUT RATHER LEADS YOU TO THE

Khalil Jebran

# BOARD AND THE TEAM



## THE BOARD LEBANON

### Wiebke Eden-Fleig

Political Scientist and initiator and founder of just.childhood. Has been working for the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Lebanon as a Program Manager and as a journalist for the German weekly die ZEIT, as well as for the Middle East Quarterly Magazine zenith.

### Samir Farah

Sociologist and Journalist who worked for the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Lebanon for 40 years, 28 of those as their country representative in Beirut. He was rewarded the German Federal Cross of Merit in 2003 and the National Order of Cedars in 1988 in honor of his great social and political earnings.

### Badia Baydoun

Holds a BA in Communications Arts and Sciences and a MA in Political Science. She worked as a news editor, news anchorwoman and field reporter at Tele Liban. Also she had her own radio program at Radio Libanon and worked as a news editor and news presenter for the National News Agency and for Radio Liban. Worked in all three jobs for more than 20 years. Badia Baydoun started to work as Program Manager at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Beirut in 2001.

### Hassan Dakroub

Is Joint General Manager at Sarnia Marine Brokerage based in Cyprus. But now, after more than 35 years in shipping and marine insurance, his interest is focused on fundraising and assisting several NGOs in several countries.

### Elie Karam

IT expert and manager in a multinational company. He is holding a degree in Finance.

## THE TEAM BAIT AL-SHAMS

### Wiebke Eden-Fleig

Founder and Director

### Rabieh Ali El Tayeh

Program Manager

### Mariam Wali

Kindergarten/Education Coordinator

### Samah Rmieh

Kindergarten Educator

### Khadijeh Taha

Kindergarten Educator

### Nivine Saber

Kindergarten Educator

### Layal al Hajj Ali

Kindergarten Educator

### Inas Alajouz

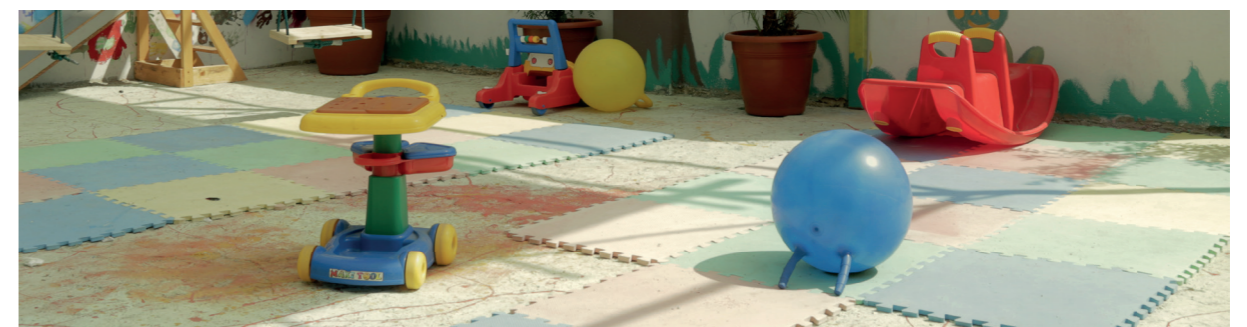
Kindergarten Educator

### Fadia Mohammad

Kindergarten Educator

### Maher Shehadeh

Communications consultant





November 2015. Felting activity done by children and supervised by our educator

# BACK- GROUND

## BACKGROUND JUST.CHILDHOOD

Already the fourth generation of Palestinian refugee's lives in a hostile environment, is denied basic human rights, and has no effective means of representation or education. Worldwide the number of protracted refugee groups is increasing; nevertheless responses to refugee situations are still driven by the assumption that they are short-term.

Originally hosting hundreds of refugees, Shatila has grown since 1949 to more than 12,000 registered Palestinian refugees. With the influx of Syrian refugees into Palestinian camps there are currently more than 22,000 people living in Shatila. It is one of the 12 official long-term camps for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, situated in a poor area of Beirut that was badly damaged during the civil war. It is probably best known of all the Palestinian camps because of the 1982 massacre in which thousands of people were killed.

The entire camp comprises one square kilometer and thus has an exceptionally high population density. After 60 years thousands of Palestinian refugees still live in temporary shelters in overcrowded, unsanitary camps where unemployment and poverty levels are high. The Lebanese restrictions on land for Palestinians have led to severe overcrowding in the camps. There is a lack of privacy and natural light. It is not surprising that all these factors lead to violence in many aspects of life (even in the schools), drug abuse, as well as severe psychological problems.

Education is one of the most important pillars of development. But Palestinian children are only under certain circumstances allowed to visit Lebanese public schools and most families cannot afford private education. The schools run by the UN require the visit of a kindergarten, without offering any in Shatila. This again leads to very early school dropouts, because children are not able to follow the UN curriculum.

A qualitative study of the American University of Beirut in 2011 has analysed the UNRWA school dropouts in Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon. By looking toward developing an intervention plan to address the rate of early school dropout in Palestinian refugee camps, the study concluded that dropping out can be prevented through a focused action plan. Among other measures the study recommends to provide a high quality, universal preschool and full-day kindergarten.

# METHODOLOGY

Our Kindergarten Bait al-Shams is open to all children living in Shatila, giving them a safe space for learning and simply being a child on a continuous, reliable basis, and a future of possibility and hope. The appropriate and culturally sensitive humanitarian assistance is providing a foundation for sustainable development by actively involving the target group in the planning, implementation and management process.

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strongly rely on the help of the parents. Such a collaboration includes parent-teacher conferences, courses and lectures. The kindergarten will not only be open to all children living in Beirut's Shatila Camp, but also children with special needs are, if possible, welcome in our kindergarten. Currently we have three age-mixed groups with 12 children each lead by two qualified educators.

To achieve the biggest benefit for the children, the kindergarten educators will

With our work we aim at actively protecting childhood, by respecting age-appropriate life- and development conditions and making this the base of the pedagogic daily routine. In this daily routine of the group, "good habits" are initiated and cultivated according to the need of the children for rhythm and repetition of similar actions and experiences.

The competencies in language (Bait al-Shams is a bilingual kindergarten using Arabic as well as English), movement, playing, learning, and social skills that need to be achieved by entering school are supported on a permanent basis through the composition of every day life. In the year before entering school special projects are being offered for the future schoolchildren. If possible we seek a cooperation with the schools to ensure a smooth entry for the children. It should be mentioned though, that this kindergarten does not aim to be a school, but a place where children are allowed to gain their first experiences outside their families in a secure environment.

In our educational approach, which follows the Waldorf Early Education, teaching is by example rather than by direct instruction and is integrated rather than subject based. In recognition of its vital role in early education, children are given time to play. Emphasis is given to regular patterns of activities both within the day and over each week. The child presents a particular set of physical, emotional and intellectual characteristics which require a particular (empathetic) educational response in return. In Bait al-Shams we consider the first seven years as the period of greatest physical growth and development. At this time the young child's primary mode of learning is through doing and experiencing – he or she "thinks" with the entire physical being.

The nature of this learning should be self-motivated, allowing the child to come to know the world in the way most appropriate to his or her age – through active feeling, touching, exploring and imitating, in other words, through doing. Children are encouraged to master physical skills before abstract intellectual ones.





October 2015. The rooftop of Bait al-Shams Kindergarten, Shatila camp Beirut  
Opening event

# SUMMARY OF 2015

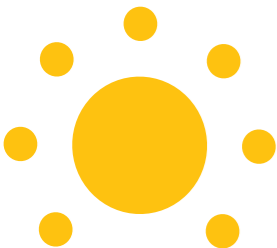


As we only opened our kindergarten in the beginning of October 2015, this section intends to give an insight into what we have done and achieved throughout the year 2015 until the opening and after.

After a couple of months of searching for a suitable home to our kindergarten, we finally found a building in the heart of Shatila camp. We rented one floor in the beginning of January 2015 and started constructing another one. The existing floor needed to be refurbished to be suitable for a kindergarten. The construction of the new floor was done based on the same plan as the one below it. During the construction and refurbishing works, the existing team consisting of the kindergarten program manager Rabieh el Tayeh, the educational coordinator Mariam Wali and the founder and director Wiebke Eden-Fleig have started recruiting a team of educators who could meet the kindergarten's needs. We have chosen six educators out of 50 applicants. The openings were announced officially through our organization and social

media.

In accordance with the other kindergartens in the camps, we called for registration for children who wish to join us at the beginning of April. Selection was based on first-come-first serve criteria and the willingness of the parents to accept a new curriculum, which differs from the ones prevalent in the camps. In June started a series of intensive workshops on a monthly basis to introduce our educational approach, concept and methodology to the educators. We have chosen a practical rather than a theoretical approach as we needed to create a base to work with the children and experience showed that content is absorbed more easily. As the success of work is depending to a great part on the cooperation of the parents and the overall community, we started a series of meetings with the parents to inform them about our work and needs. The meetings were also to set the rules for a fruitful cooperation.



# SPECIAL EVENTS

## 2015 SPECIAL EVENTS BAIT AL-SHAMS KINDERGARTEN

### Opening Ceremony

On October 2nd, 2015 we finally opened the doors to our kindergarten. The opening ceremony was attended by about 90 guests, including children and parents. The children started their academic year on October 5th, in accordance with UNRWA schools and the other kindergartens in the camp.

### Film

In an attempt to raise awareness about the education system in the camp and for donors to understand our approach to the latter, we have produced our first film “We Color Our Lives With Education”. The film was being done in a workshop-style with some of the older siblings of our kindergarten children and was introducing photography and filming basics to the participants. This aimed at starting to involve the community into our work.

### Training

The daily work in the kindergarten was supported by monthly training workshops conducted by a network of five trainers, who observed the work in the three groups as well as advanced the educators’ skills and methods.



# OUTLOOK 2016

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- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 01 // | Moving forward with expected program put down by team and trainers  |
| 02 // | Advancing the children case studies started in 2015 including developing a system fitting our needs   |
| 03 // | Advancing community work and developing an action plan  |
| 04 // | Developing relationships with parents, building a parent's committee  |
| 05 // | Developing a system of milestones to be achieved concerning the development of the children   |
| 06 // | Developing evaluation standards   |
| 07 // | Developing our own child protection policy  |
| 08 // | Developing the best-practice approach by developing strategies for opening more kindergarten branches in the other Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon |
| 09 // | Continuing intensive training   |
| 10 // | Continuing with the development of the outdoor learning environment   |
| 11 // | Introducing summer activities for older children in Shatila camp  |
| 12 // | Strengthening the fundraising plan towards gaining more independence from political circumstances   |

# CONCLUSION:

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## CHILDREN BECAME MORE PEACEFUL

Just.childhood succeeded in refurbishing and equipping the building as well as recruiting a team of educators and trainers, who comfortably work together. The work with the children later on started off very well, we could recognize positive changes especially regarding social and behavioral matters within a relatively short period of time. In general, children became more peaceful and at ease and started to develop trust towards their educators and the kindergarten itself. Challenges however are being faced with the parents at times. To meet these challenges we need to develop a close follow-up and awareness-raising strategy.

# DONORS

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UNICEF

INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
STEINER/WALDORF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION  
(IASWECE)

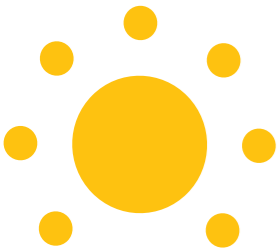
FREUNDE DER  
ERZIEHUNGSKUNST  
RUDOLF STEINERS  
E.V.

PCRF - PALESTINIAN  
CHILDREN RELIEF  
FUND

BILD HILFT E.V.  
"EIN HERZ FÜR  
KINDER"

NORDDEUTSCHE  
STIFTUNG FÜR  
UMWELT UND  
ENTWICKLUNG (NUE)

KIEZHELDEN FC ST.  
PAULI E.V.



# BUDGET

# ANNUAL BUDGET

Descriptions	Total
STAFF COSTS	57,900
BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT	23,957
RENOVATION AND RENT	54,249
INSURANCE	6,055
GRAND TOTAL / ANNUAL BUDGET 2015	142,161

**CONTACT**

**All figuers are in USD and include tax**

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WWW.JUSTCHILDHOOD.ORG

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**JUST.CHILDHOOD**

**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT**

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#### **GET INVOLVED**

Direct Link : <http://www.justchildhood/get-involved>

