



גדור
שורשים
ROOTS

SHORASHIM/JUDUR
ANNUAL REPORT 2019



To support Roots, please visit our website: www.friendsofroots.net/donate
Or contact us at: development@friendsofroots.net

جدور שורשים ROOTS

A LOCAL PALESTINIAN-
ISRAELI INITIATIVE
for UNDERSTANDING,
NON-VIOLENCE and
TRANSFORMATION

www.friendsofroots.net

Friends of Roots
c/o Dave Paller, Treasurer
4901 Libbit Ave
Encino, CA 91436



Photo credit: Kobi Wolff

Our first and last word to all of our supporters is thank you. The incredible moments and initiatives that we witness on the ground here — from the children speaking each other's language, to the solidarity shown between neighbors across enemy lines — are all deeply indebted to the supportive partnerships we've developed. From the journalists who are astounded to see what's happening here in the heart of the conflict, to the local residents who discover a place to implement their values of education and humanity, Roots' work is challenging the despair, the enmity and the apathy around our Holy Land. Thank you for believing in us, and we pray that this next year will bring the positive changes that all of us are yearning for.

With profound gratitude,

Khaled Abu Awad and Shaul Judelman
Roots co-directors



100

Youth engaged in ongoing programs (in at least three meetings)

45

local Israeli-Palestinian volunteers and staff



3,250

Total youth engaged



3,000

Local adults

5,000

Israelis from across the country participated in Roots discourse through lectures, conferences and workshops in over 150 events!

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18,000

Internationals, including politicians, journalists and religious leaders, heard us during site visits to our center or on our speaking tours abroad

700

Local Email/Whatsapp members. (General list adds another 450 Israelis)



Received over

240

Israeli and international groups at our center



As told by Raz Kones, director of our Young Adults Program:

This story happened just recently: one of the young women in our program called us in tears and pain. An attack near her home killed the father of a friend. The attacker was a 16 year-old from the town of Yatta. The incident struck deeply into her community, and again I found myself trying to help her deal with the pain in our reality, and especially with the pressure from her family and friends to end her connection with Roots.

We were amazed by the courage and maturity that she showed a few weeks later when she shared with us that the reason she kept attending meetings was specifically because the attack was by young Palestinian from nearby. She told us that Roots taught her that each one of us is responsible for showing up and challenging ourselves, and those around us, to engage in dialogue with one another in order to change. Violence is not the answer. She felt that had that attacker participated in Roots programs, he would have chosen a different direction. She finished with a quote from the Jewish Mishna: "This is why Adam was created alone in the world: to teach us that whoever kills even one person, he/she is charged with losing an entire world; and whoever saves one life, it is as if he/she has saved an entire world."

Since our work began in 2014, Roots has become a center for grassroots work and partnerships, and a platform for innovation and new discourse in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As we conclude our sixth year of activity, we're proud to share with our circle of supporters a summary of our accomplishments to date and a glimpse of our aspirations for 2020.

THE ROOTS NETWORK

includes representatives from 32 Israeli-Palestinian towns in the Hebron/Bethlehem/Gush Etzion Region and an additional 12 towns in other areas of the West Bank/Judea Samaria.

Bethlehem: Joht-el Shams, Doha, Hader, Husan, Wadi Fuchin, Nahalin, Zakaria, Wadi Nis, Marah Rabat, Toqua, Abadia, Jabba, Tzurif

Hebron: Idna, Turquemia, Yatta, Haloul, Bet Omar, Tzafa

Gush Etzion: Elazar, Neve Daniel, Sde Boaz, Tekoa, Nokdim, Kfar Eldad, Sde Bar, Efrat, Alon Shvut, Kfar Etzion, Rosh Tzurim, G'vaot, Kiryat Arba

Five towns in the Jordan Valley

Northern West Bank/Judea Samaria: Shomron, Kedumim, Ofra, Shilo, Bet El, Alei Zehav, Ariel



2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Shorashim/Judur experienced substantial growth during 2019, both in terms of attracting new participants to group activities at the Karama Centre, our home base, and also in terms of expanding the reach of our programming to other areas of Israel-Palestine. Nearly 12,000 people visited the Karama Center and heard Roots activists speak, including IDF officers, pre-military academies, newly released Palestinian prisoners, foreign dignitaries, interfaith delegations, Jewish community leadership and laypeople, academics, journalists and many more.

Of particular note is the fact that Israeli and Palestinian residents from across the West Bank/Judea Samaria turned to Shorashim/Judur leaders for help in replicating our work in their areas. This is the clearest indication that people throughout Israel-Palestine are unwilling to accept the status quo, and that Roots' model for reconciliation-transformation has gained recognition and sparked serious interest.

PROGRAMMING



“GROWING ROOTS” AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

30% increase. Hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian children aged 5 to 10 participated in creative afternoon activities, such as yoga, judo, art classes, music and more. And most impressive is the volunteer staff who began to organize the activities and turn them into a bi-weekly program – alumni of our Young Adults program!

YOUNG ADULTS PROGRAM

20% increase. Our third cohort saw 35 Israeli and Palestinian teenagers committed to bi-weekly meetings throughout the school year, weekend seminars and trips together. We are thrilled with these new voices of young leaders rising in Roots’ ranks who are now poised to embark as ambassadors to our communities. Through the work of Raz Kones and Khaled Abu Awad, we’ve brought together a talented staff who build and facilitate the program in a real model of partnership and commitment.



The 55 applicants for the 2019-20 program, which began in October and will run throughout the academic year, were recruited almost exclusively by our alums!

We have begun the development of the Alumni Program for those who have finished the Young Adults program, in partnership with a new Alumni Forum for co-existence programs.

PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS



Under the facilitation of Saskia Keeley and Bruce Shaffer, we ran our 13th cohort of youth photography and our fourth year of womens photography workshops! These programs have brought new members and communities into our fold, and created a place for 10-14 year olds to participate before they become eligible for the Young Adults program. Living in separate communities, with even a common language being a rare luxury, we find that the cameras afford a barrier that allows objectivity in approaching each other, but also a lens through which to intimately see and share each other’s stories.

SOLIDARITY ACTIVITY



As Roots’ network has grown — today engaging close to 50 Israeli and Palestinian communities across the West Bank/Judea Samaria and the Jordan Valley — we regularly encounter the pain and suffering of this conflict and are called to step up. Again and again we have witnessed the solidarity created by visiting a bereaved family or an assaulted farmer. From the individual incidents, to the more systemic issues, Roots has been building capacity and connections to start engaging issues like access to farmland or water. This work, much of it very behind the scenes is a key focus for our leadership in 2020.

Activities have included visits to families of terror victims, visits to victims of “price tag” attacks, and escorting Palestinian farmers to olive orchards.

DAY CAMP

25% increase. Our week-long camp brought 80 children between the ages of 5 to 10 together at our Center this last summer. The camp gave the children a colorful, fun-filled experience with each other, and our afterschool program, “Growing Roots,” is continuing to nurture these relationships throughout the year. The eight staff members involved were a model in creating a safe environment for the encounter, and drums, sports, arts and many more activities made sure that the kids were proud to keep wearing their camp hats through the school year!



[Click here to see the video.](#)

OVERNIGHT CAMP

For one week this summer in the Jerusalem hills, an incredible community was created by our 40 Israeli and Palestinian teens bringing together religious and secular campers and staff, comprised of Muslims, Christians and Jews. The camp's pedagogy, developed with our partners from "Alternative", put focus on empowering the leader living within each camper, understanding each other's lives, and created a powerful bond that many parents later complimented. We are committed to expanding this experience in the coming year and beyond.



WOMEN'S GROUPS

When Roots began in 2014, one of the first groups to come together was our women's group.

Activities include study of religious texts, collective arts projects, joint prayers and religious celebrations, and solidarity visits.

The Roots Women's Group is based on awareness and honor of each other's individuality and humanity, as we engage in the process of recognizing parallel lives and narratives. Participants feel great pride in the work they engage in together, and are empowered to become greater influencers in their home communities.

Muhamad, from Bet Omar, was 16 years old when he first came to Roots. He felt scared and wanted to run away. That feeling definitely didn't improve with the death of one of his classmates shortly after the start of the program: Khaled Bachar was killed by Israeli army fire near his home, and despite his family's pleading, his body was withheld from burial. Muhamad decided to return to the next meeting, where the staff decided to abandon the planned program in order to discuss the powerful emotions that arose after this tragedy. Not only did Muhamad receive empathy and wide support from the youth in the group, but the entire Roots organization decided to organize and put pressure to release Khaled's body to his family for burial. Through broadcast protests and signed petitions, the pressure was sufficient to persuade the Defense Ministry to finally return the body and allow the family to bury their son. Muhamad continued to attend our meetings and became one of the alumni leaders of the program. He is leading this year's new cohort, and he is responsible for speaking with visiting groups about non-violence and social activism within his local Palestinian society in Bet Omar. Muhamad recently returned from shoulder surgery in Jordan, which was largely funded through donations gathered by his Jewish friends, alumni of our Young Adults program.



OUTREACH

As in previous years, outreach to Israeli and Palestinian communities and individuals continues to be a central focus for Roots activists. Roots members held parlor meetings in ten communities, including Modi'in, Ariel, Efrat, Bet Shemesh, Kibutz Sa'ad, Sderot, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, addressing hundreds of individuals.

Roots activities were covered in Israeli and international media including The Jerusalem Report, Times of Israel, US News & World Report, Yedioth Aharonoth (Hebrew) and a variety of local Israeli newspapers. News coverage in Palestinian society continues to present a challenge.



In addition, 30 pre-military academies with hundreds of students visited the Karama Center to hear about Roots' activities and activists' personal stories – 10% increase.



The first ever data-based academic study exploring Roots' impact was presented at a conference in Dublin Ireland.



Roots won the Intercultural Achievement Award from the Republic of Austria.



Roots activists spoke at the gala event of B8 of Hope, Switzerland.

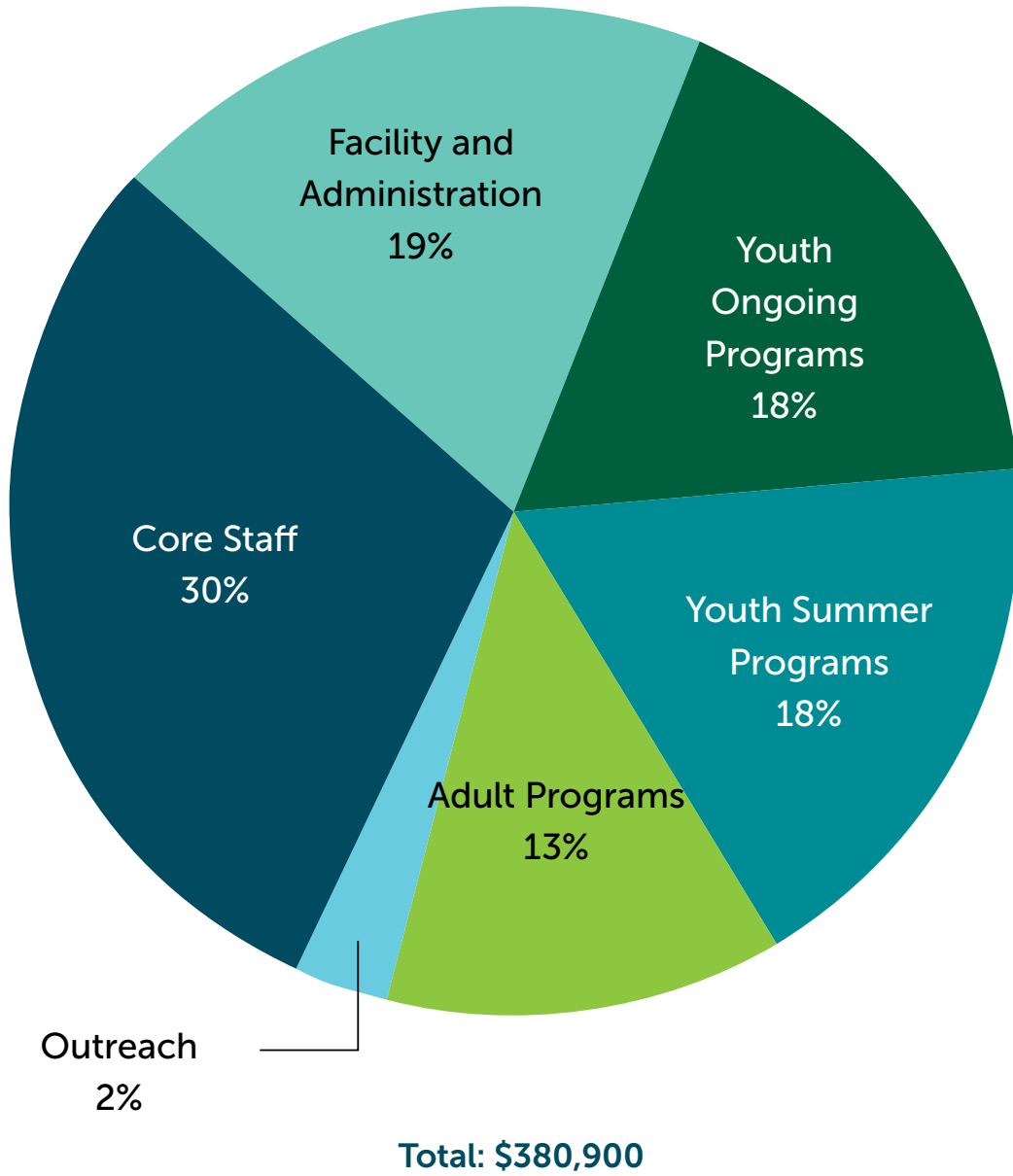
[Click here to see the video.](#)



Roots activists spoke in venues in the US, including synagogues, churches, private homes, universities, Islamic Centers, summer camps, and more.

BUDGET

Roots Expenses 2019



Past total yearly budgets:

2016: \$260,000

2017: \$307,000

2018: \$325,670





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development@friendsofroots.net

