



DIMA
Diálogo Intercultural
de México Activo



**HABESHA
PROJECT**



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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ABOUT DIMA



Diálogo Intercultural de México Activo is a non-governmental organization founded in 2015 and based on the principle of social co-responsibility, with the aim of promoting supportive actions directed towards vulnerable groups affected by armed conflicts and humanitarian crises inside and outside of Mexico.

In a context of international diversity, DIMA encourages the promotion of intercultural dialogue and solidarity as a key element in the pursuit of a culture of peace.

ABOUT HABESHA PROJECT



Habesha Project is a neutral, non-profit, apolitical and humanitarian initiative lead by Mexico that seeks to send a message of solidarity to the Syrian people by making it possible for Syrian students, who had to interrupt their college education due to the armed conflict, to travel to Mexico in order to finish their studies in the best universities in the country.

To achieve this, Habesha Project has established a comprehensive program that includes the selection of students located in different countries in the Middle East, their transportation to Mexico, support through their visa process, an intensive Spanish course, the revalidation of documents and certificates, complete scholarships and a monthly stipend for their living expenses.

Furthermore, the program also includes school materials, psychosocial support and medical and dental care.

This initiative is part of an international movement that works to meet the educational demands of youth in high-risk situations, highlighting the relationship between higher education and the reconstruction of communities affected by armed conflict.

The Project is framed by the Mexican people's historical traditions of solidarity and promotion of peace among nations.



A MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR **FRANCISCO OLGUÍN**

PRESENTATION

Francisco Olguín Uribe
Ambassador



The Syrian civil war, which has wreaked havoc on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrians, has led to the largest refugee crisis since World War II. Motivated to improve the situation of these refugees, members of the Habesha project began to reflect and develop ideas for what an effective program might look like, a process that took roughly one year. On September 23, 2015, the first Syrian student under the care of Habesha Project arrived in Mexico. At the end of 2017, we had thirteen young people eager to fulfill their dream of obtaining a bachelor's or a master's degree in a wide variety of specialties through our initiative.

These years have represented a great challenge for those who have committed themselves to this initiative and we couldn't have carried it out without the determined support of different actors. Some of them are the relevant entities of the Mexican government that have shown the greatest willingness, always respecting the humanitarian and apolitical nature of this organization which works in the space of the liberties that Mexican legislation offers. Likewise, diverse higher education institutions have opened their doors to these young people. When it comes to their maintenance, we have counted on the support of personalities and the solidarity

of a multitude of university students that have organized events, held fundraising campaigns and contributed with small donations that have added up and allowed us to reach the current number of beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries have been quite successful both in learning Spanish and in their university studies. Their language training takes place in Aguascalientes, a dynamic city that has proved to be quite appropriate as the first point contact with our country. However, its most outstanding feature is the warmth and generosity of its people, which has allowed for quick integration of the Syrian students.



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Ambassador Francisco Olguín Uribe
President of the Directive Council of DIMA A.C.

OVERVIEW



2017

Undoubtedly, 2017 was a year of consolidation for Habesha Project's humanitarian initiative. During this year, a group of committed volunteers became full-time staff, taking over administration, fundraising and psychosocial follow-up for the students with the objective of establishing best practices for this emerging organization.

Along with the integration of an extremely committed team, we established an office which works as both an administrative center and student residence. This physical space became an indispensable component for us given the large amount of sensitive documents that the Project's activities generate, which requires proper storage and security. In addition, this space created the possibility of lodging students in an austere yet dignified fashion, hence considerably cutting the expenses of renting rooms for each arriving student.

These human resources and infrastructure were necessary in order to receive eight young Syrians who arrived after long waiting periods

and after overcoming a series of obstacles that have been a common denominator for all Syrian passport holders for more than seven years. The main objective of each student that arrives is to resume their plans for their future in an entirely unknown country (for most of them), a country that offers them its best educational institutions and, of course, the hospitality and solidarity of the Mexican people.

Making the arrival of each student possible is a new challenge for the team, one which requires year-round work and a considerable financial investment. The logistic challenge is a large one too: while some of our selected students have arrived directly from refugee camps, others come from areas devastated by conflict or countries where their migratory status was irregular; all of these conditions complicate the visa and traveling process. For this reason, the arrival of eight beneficiaries from five different places in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq brings great satisfaction and is proof of the capacity created by the Project in 2017.

With the arrival of an ethnically and religiously diverse group, the Project has faced the challenge of integrating them into a new community as well as teaching them a new language and assisting them in their return to academic life after interruption for years. To face these challenges, the Project responded with the creation of Habesha Academy, incorporating an original methodology of Spanish instruction, academic remediation and cultural integration created ad-hoc for our beneficiaries and implemented by a small army of efficiently coordinated volunteers. This original model has so far turned out to be a successful experiment which the Project seeks to develop and document.

(...)



OVERVIEW 2017

(...)

The work required for the reception and integration of the eight new students was added to the follow-up process of the five students that had previously arrived. The Project is pleased to report that all of those enrolled in a university program have shown satisfactory academic development that attests to the viability of our Project.

The successful development of the Project has attracted the attention of national and international journalists which have reported our activity in some of the most prestigious news outlets in the world, sharing the little-known solidary face of Mexican society which we have been able to hold up against the so widely known image of a violent Mexico. By the end of 2017, the Project had documented more than 600 articles on national and international media which covered our achievements. They represent audiences of millions of people in at least three continents.

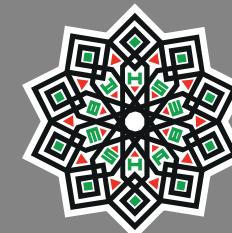


OVERVIEW 2017 **HABESHA PROJECT**

This work of communication was reinforced through a great number of academic and awareness raising activities in which the members of the Project participated during 2017 in at least five states of the country. Most notably, under the invitation of the UN, the Project actively participated in the Stockholders Meeting for a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to prepare the Global Pact for Migration.

This wide work of awareness raising attracted the interest and trust of some of the most prestigious higher education institutions in Mexico, which opened their doors for our beneficiaries by offering full scholarships. During 2017 we signed seven partnerships with different universities in four different states.

The year 2017 will be remembered by the Project as the year in which the foundation was formed for this Mexican humanitarian organization with an international vocation that seeks to create alternative solutions to conflict through education and intercultural dialogue, powered by the team's long-lasting commitment. Through this, we wish to contribute to the construction of a civil society in our country which goes from protest to proposal and then, from proposal to execution.



**HABESHA
PROJECT**

M. Sc Adrián Meléndez Lozano.
Habesha Project Founder and Director

RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS AT RISK



During 2015 and 2016, Habesha Project reached a milestone with the arrival of five Syrian students to the country, three of which were already enrolled in Mexican universities while two were taking Spanish courses.

In 2017, eight students were received, for a total 13 by December 2017. A group of five students arrived between February and March; another two by the end of September and one more at the beginning of December. In total, they were four men and four women hailing from Beirut in Lebanon, Aleppo and Damascus in Syria and the Domiz Refugee Camp in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

The **reception process** of the Syrian students is a long one. On average, it takes one year from the submission of the application to the arrival of the student in Mexico. Moreover, the arrival process has certain complexities related to the documentation and migration of people across international borders.

The candidate starts the postulation process with the submission of a cover letter and two letters of recommendation signed by a university professor in Syria or a recognized humanitarian agency in one of Habesha Project's eligible countries: Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan or Turkey.

Once the student's profile has been received by Habesha Project, the candidate is interviewed via Skype. Subsequently the results of the interview are put in a file, along with the recommendation letters, school certificates and identity documents.

Once the file is completed, the candidate's acceptance is confirmed and the student is put on a waiting list, where they stay until the necessary funds to cover the costs of their travel and expenses for (at least) their first year in Mexico are secured.

RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS AT RISK



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When necessary, **DIMA** accompanies the selected students in the processes of migratory regularization in the country where they are living at the time of their selection. This is because proof of approval to reside in the country is necessary for the **Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations** to grant their visa.

Each country treats the migratory status of Syrian residents within their territory differently. In some cases, Habesha Project has been unable to regularize their stay, therefore the decision was made to move the students to the city of Quito in Ecuador. This is because Ecuador has an open borders migration policy that allows Syrians to enter without a visa for three months, regularizing their migratory stay at the moment of their entry.

Once this requirement is met, the students can begin contact with a Mexican consular representative in the city of Quito, Ecuador to request a visa.



RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS AT RISK



Students selected who reside in **Iraq**, a country where Mexico doesn't have diplomatic representation, are moved to the city of **Tehran** in Iran. In this case (as in all cases,) Habesha Project is responsible for the flight and accommodation costs of the students in these countries.

Once the student is granted their Mexican visa, their journey to Mexico begins through routes that avoid airports in Europe and North America due to the requirement that Syrian nationals have a visa to fly through those countries.

The itinerary includes a journey from **Iran** or **Lebanon** to **Moscow**, from there to **Havana** to finally arrive in Mexico City. During this process, Habesha Project follows the journey closely at all times so it is ready to deal with any setbacks.

DIMA seeks to keep regular contact with diplomatic personnel at all times in order to ensure that the candidates fulfill the consular requirements for the visa. In addition, the project provides Mexican diplomats with updates on the progress of the students that have entered Mexico through Habesha Project.

2017



In 2017, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



1. The first student received by Habesha Project in 2017 was **Samah A.** She had regular status in **Lebanon**, therefore she was able to obtain her visa quickly.

Samah arrived in Mexico on February 2, 2017, becoming the first woman beneficiary of Habesha Project. Taking the cultural aspects of the Middle East societies into account, the arrival of Samah A. was considered a success due to the fact that she broke the cultural trust gap and allowed for other women to follow in her footsteps.

Samah, who was recommended by the Italian Humanitarian Agency **INTERSOS**, has a degree in fine arts from **Damascus University** and arrived in Mexico in order to enroll in a **Master's program in Gestalt therapy** at the **Instituto de Terapia Gestalt Región Occidente** in the city of Guadalajara. Through her education, Samah hopes to contribute to the mental welfare of the children affected by violence in her country.



2017

In 2017, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



- 2.** On February 28, 2017 **Abdulkader M.** and **Silva N.**, who were residents of the **Domiz** Refugee Camp managed by **UNHCR** in the Kurdish region of **Iraq**, arrived in Mexico.

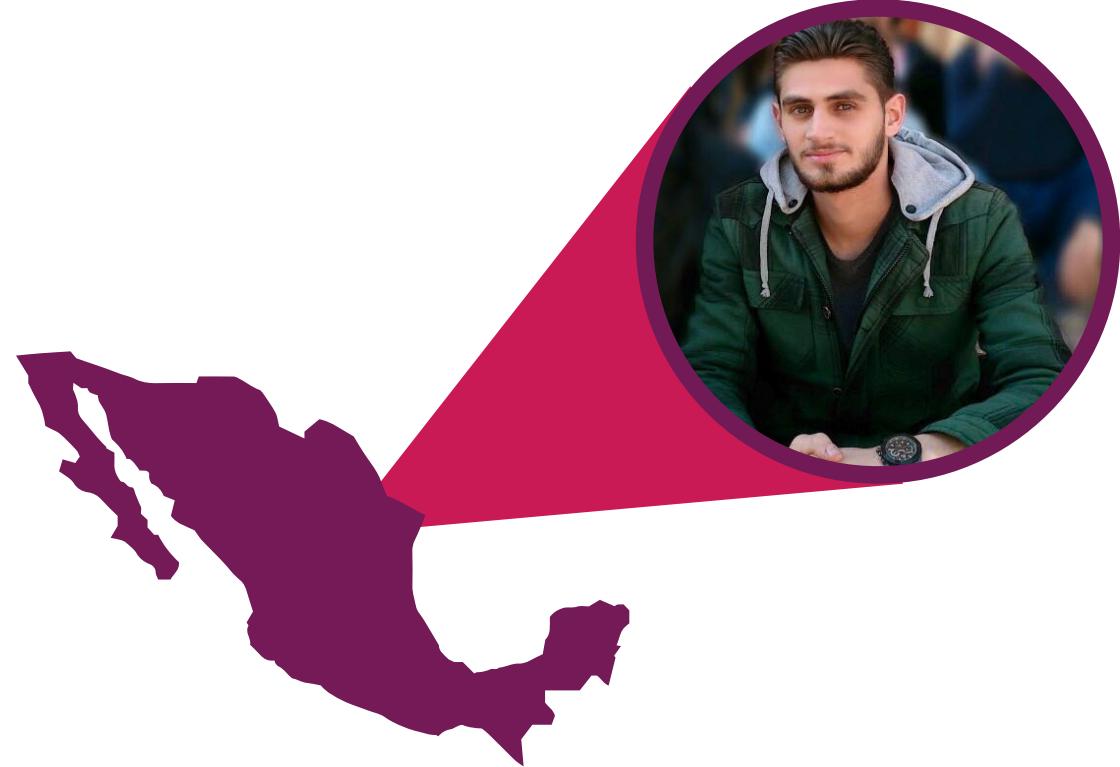
The arrival of Abdulkader M. and Silva N. was result of a collaboration with the **Global Platform for Syrian Students** (an international initiative lead by the former president of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio), which provided the funds necessary for their transportation and to support them during their first year in Mexico.

Both were transferred to the city of **Tehran** in Iran, where they got their Mexican visas. Both Abdulkader M. and Silva N. were recommended by the French humanitarian agency **ACTED**, which they worked for during their stay at the refugee camp.

Abdulkader M. and Silva N. arrived in Mexico to study business management at **Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM)** in the city of Monterrey and dentist at **Universidad Latina de América (UNLA)** in the city of Morelia, respectively.

2017 

In 2017, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



3. On the same day **Ahmad A.** arrived in Mexico. Under the care of Habesha Project, Ahmad moved from his hometown, **Aleppo**, to the city of **Beirut**, in order to get his Mexican visa.

Ahmad A. had never left Aleppo, not even during the most intense moments of the conflict that brought the destruction to half the city.

The student was received at the Havana airport by a member of Habesha Project, who traveled there to meet and accompany him in the final stage of his journey.

Ahmad A., who was recommended by Aleppo University, arrived in Mexico to pursue a Master's degree in Information Technologies at **Universidad Iberoamericana** in Mexico City.

IBERO

Universidad Iberoamericana

2017 

In **2017**, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



4. **Amer B.**, having resided previously in the city of **Damascus**, completed his journey to Mexico after a stay of four months in the city of **Quito**, Ecuador.

This case proved the effectiveness of the Project in securing young people at risk. Ahead of the imminent conscription of Amer to the Syrian National Army, he was promptly moved to Ecuador allowing time for the Project to prepare the necessary documents for his visa in the Mexican consulate.

His journey ended on March 3, 2017 with his arrival in Mexico.

Amer A. is an excellent student who graduated at the top of his class at **Damascus University**, the institution that recommended his candidacy.

Amer B. will be trained as a literary translator at The National School of Languages, Linguistics and Translation of the **Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)**.



Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

2017

In 2017, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS **AT RISK**



IBERO

Universidad Iberoamericana

5. Renas A. and Enjin A. were the next students to arrive, coming from the **Domiz Refugee Camp** and the city of **Erbil** in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, respectively.

The Project organized the journey of both students to the city of Tehran, where both stayed around one week in order to secure their Mexican visas.

The students traveled just two days before the **independence referendum** of the Iraqi Kurdistan took place. This event generated a climate of uncertainty and the establishment of special provisions for Syrian residents within the territory. This situation forced the Project to implement a contingency plan.

ITESO
Universidad Jesuita
de Guadalajara

Finally, Renas, recommended by the French humanitarian agency **ACTED**, and Enjin, recommended by the Swiss humanitarian agency **Terre des Hommes**, arrived in Mexico on September 27, 2017 to study towards a degree in international relations at **Universidad Iberoamericana**, Mexico City campus and a degree in architecture at **Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO)** in the city of Guadalajara, respectively.

2017



In **2017**, Habesha Project organized the following reception operations:



6. **Rasha S.**, was the last student to arrive in 2017. Rasha S., who was recommended by **Damascus University**, lived in the city of **Beirut** in Lebanon, where she worked with Syrian refugee children.

She got her Mexican visa without delay in that same city and arrived in the country on December 5, 2017. She will be studying to obtain a Master's degree in social sciences at **Colegio de Sonora** in the city of Hermosillo, Sonora.

As a part of the standardized process established by Habesha Project, all the students that arrived during 2017 were assisted in the process of attaining their residency card issued by the National Migration Institute.

Once their migratory status is settled, all students are transferred to the city of Aguascalientes, where personal dormitories have been set up for each of them.

In the first days after their arrival, they are guided in the process of opening a bank account, where the Project will deposit their stipend the first day of each month so the students can pay their living expenses.

Also, during this process in **Aguascalientes**, the Project translates certificates and identity documents from Arabic to Spanish to begin the revalidation process at the **Mexican Ministry of Education**.

During the second week after the arrival of the students in Aguascalientes, they start the integration into Mexican society which includes a Spanish learning program detailed in the next section.



RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS AT RISK

RECEPTION OF THE SYRIAN STUDENTS **AT RISK**



The arrival of **Renas**, who was at the **Domiz Refugee Camp** in the province of **Duhok** in the Iraqi Kurdistan, was particularly complicated. His departure occurred almost at the same time as the Kurdistan independence referendum on **September 25, 2017**. This event generated a climate of uncertainty since the airport was to be temporarily closed and special provisions for Syrian residents in their territory were announced by the Asayish (security service of the region).

Habesha Project was monitoring the trip and continuously making the necessary changes of plans until, in extremis, Renas obtained his departure document (required for Syrian residents to leave the country), thanks in part to Renas' project acceptance letter written in Arabic, English and Spanish. The student got permission to leave the country before the air traffic suspension took place.

Finally, he could board his flight to **Tehran**, where he would meet Enjin A., another student selected by the Project who arrived through a different route days earlier. Together, they visited the Mexican Embassy to request their visas. The Mexican ambassador in Iran, **Alfonso Zegbe**, received the students and gave them their visas personally.

Finally, Enjin and Renas arrived in Mexico on September 27, 2017, after a stopover in Moscow and another one in Havana.



HABESHA ACADEMY



Taking into account that most of the beneficiaries come from a situation of instability, having often been out of school for up to five years in most cases, one of the greatest challenges for them is their return to academic life.

Given the *sui generis* nature of the initiative and the lack of academic services that could meet the need for accelerated and culturally sensitive learning, the Project had to create its own program for teaching the students Spanish, as well as academic remediation and integration through an ad hoc system.

What started in **2016** as an improvised program of study, was consolidated as an original teaching method: one which led to the creation of the Habesha Academy in 2017.

The young Syrian newcomers start classes on the second week after their arrival in an academic program focused on ensuring they learn the Spanish language, personal development and basic cultural and historical knowledge of Mexico, all of which is taught in a personalized way and adapted to the level of the students upon their arrival.

This is possible thanks to the organization of an army of volunteers, interns, language teachers, linguists, pedagogues, writers, historians and math teachers, all of them coordinated by a pedagogic advisor in a program that covers these **three main areas:**





Habesha Academy is possible thanks to the organization of an army of volunteers, interns, language teachers, linguists, pedagogues, writers, historians and math teachers, all of them coordinated by a pedagogic advisor in a program that covers these **three main areas**:





1.

COMMUNICATION

This area is completely focused on teaching Spanish as a foreign language and has three components: communicative competence, linguistic competence and a reading and writing workshop.

Communicative Competence focuses on the development of basic communication skills in specific contexts such as basic commercial exchanges, formal requests, and other exchanges related to everyday life in Mexico.

Linguistic Competence focuses on Spanish grammar and students work with a professional teacher who is the only one who receives a salary from the Project.

Finally, the **Reading and Writing Workshop** aims to develop communicative competences that encompass reading skills development, and writing including spelling.

The program has the ambitious goal of aiding students to achieve a level of **B1** in a period of eight months.





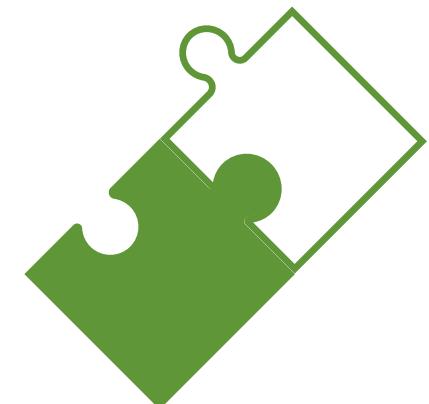
2. INTEGRAL FORMATION

This area seeks to give the students the personal tools to adapt to their new country harmoniously. It also aims for them to learn more about themselves and to find clarity about their career choices and life projects.

Vocational Guidance aims at helping the student to discover their interests and abilities and choose the most suitable academic option accordingly. This course takes an average of three months and includes dialogues with teachers and students, a review of study plans, exams, visits to classrooms, and field trips to real workplaces.

This subject is particularly relevant for Syrian students since in their home country's university system they don't get to pick their academic program. Instead, it is assigned to them according to their performance in secondary school. Therefore, the possibility of choosing any career tends to create confusion for the students.

Tutoring class is a space in which students talk with a tutor about their experience in Mexico, their concerns and interests. This allows the Project to address student's individual concerns and meet their needs appropriately.





3.

COMPLEMENTARY

This area includes remedial subjects that students must complete before their entry into university life as well as important information about Mexican society.

Math class seeks to develop basic knowledge of algebra and trigonometry, which help in analytically solving problems of all types, from everyday life situations to more complex ones. This program is adjusted to the level of each student. The Project has observed that this subject has the effect of boosting students' self confidence.

History class is focused the historical evolution of Mexican society through the study of the past and its effects on the present.

Finally, the subject of **Cultural Immersion** empowers students to confront everyday challenges and to coexist informally within Mexican society. This offers them a freedom to participate in Mexican society and to attend public events that the students might be interested in.

Habesha Project considers its **Academy** a great asset, in part because of the positive results it has helped students achieve, one that was built based on the real needs of the students identified through close conversations between students and Project staff. The model that emerged out of necessity has been proved an efficient one when it comes to the accelerated learning of a foreign language for people in a forced migration situation. For these reasons, the Project has set the objective of documenting this model and making the necessary efforts to consolidate it through the writing of well-defined study plans.



Enjin A.

Originally from Iraq, Enjin arrived in Mexico on **September 27, 2017**. She was welcomed by the **Habesha Project** team in an austere reception out of respect for the victims of the earthquake that had hit the country eight days earlier.

Enjin is not unfamiliar with tragedy, being originally from the city of **Aleppo** that was devastated by the armed conflict in her country. She came full of hope, eagerly expecting one of the most important events of her life: the beginning of her university studies, a dream that she thought was no longer within reach.

Two weeks after her arrival in Mexico, Enjin settled in her new home, met the members of the Project and learned of their responsibilities.

After a week of orientation, Enjin started classes at the **Habesha Academy** in linguistic competence, vocational guidance, history of Mexico, mathematics and cultural immersion.

After a couple of months, she declared that she knew more about Mexican history than about Syrian history and asked for more math classes. Enjin is the first of eight siblings to envision the possibility of completing their university studies, which in her case will be an architecture degree at **ITESO** in Guadalajara.



ACADEMIC INTEGRATION



Academic Integration we define as the moment when the beneficiaries are registered as regular students in the Mexican university system at any of the universities with which the **Habesha Project** has signed collaborative agreements.

Upon completion of the program in **Aguascalientes**, the Project assists the students as they decide which university is the best fit for them. Each of the student's profiles is taken into consideration. For example, if the student decides to study business, they would be sent to Monterrey, or if they want to study international relations, they would be sent to **Mexico City**.

During this new stage, in addition to transferring funds on the first day of each month for the student to pay for their living expenses, the Project has established an **Application System for Goods and Services** (SSBS) through which students can directly request payment for additional goods or services that are related to their academic activity and their professional or personal development.

By the beginning of **2017**, three students of the Project were already enrolled in university programs. Two of them were in master's programs, while the other was in a bachelor's degree program. The student, **Karam D.**, completed his third semester of the master's program in business administration at the **Universidad Iberoamericana** in Mexico City, while **Essa H.** completed his third semester of the master's program in communications at the same institution. Both students have achieved outstanding results even as compared with their Mexican peers.

In 2017 three more students were integrated, two were enrolled in bachelor's degree programs and one in a master's program. **Zain A.** entered his first semester of the bachelor's program in Architecture at **Universidad Anahuac**, Queretaro Campus, and **Hazem S.** began his degree in business administration at **Universidad de Monterrey**. Both concluded their first semester with satisfactory results.

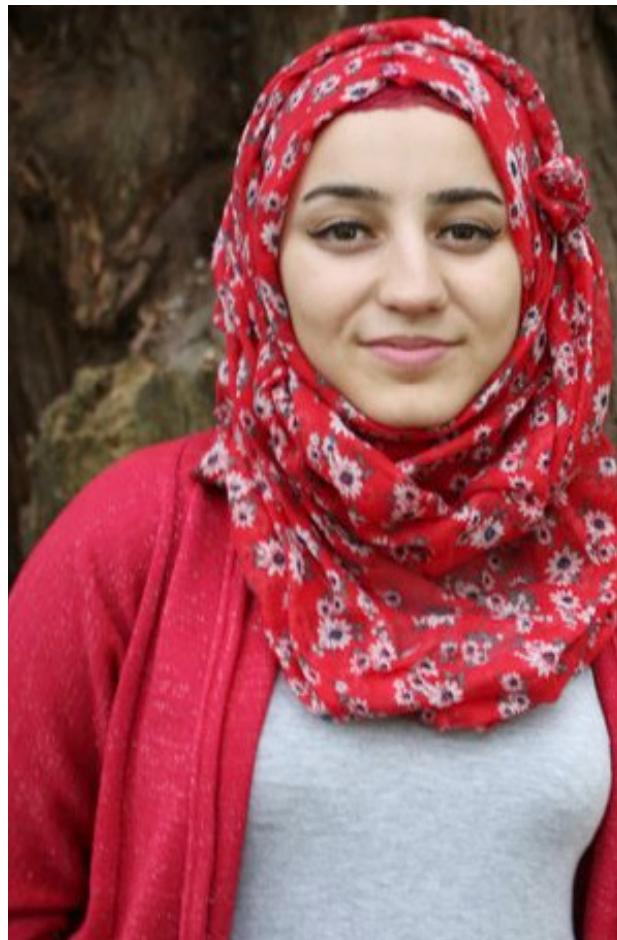
In 2017, another student, **Amer B.**, had a brief stay in the city of Aguascalientes because by the time of his arrival to Mexico he already had a **B2** level of Spanish. He entered a literary translators training course at the National School of Languages, Linguistics and Translation of the **UNAM** in Mexico City.

Tamer A. completed his second semester of a communications program at the **Universidad Iberoamericana** in Mexico City. However, he became our first student to leave the university because he was not able to attain the **GPA** required by the university in order to keep the scholarship. The student was reinstated in the city of Aguascalientes and integrated back into Habesha Academy in order to take remedial courses so that he could address the deficiencies identified as the cause of his academic failure and hence reenter a new program in **August 2018**.

ACADEMIC INTEGRATION



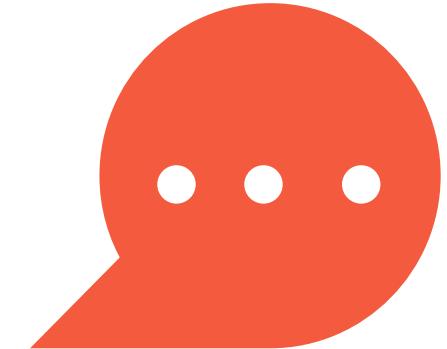
ACADEMIC INTEGRATION



Silva N.

Originally from the town of **Derik** in the province of **Hasaka** in the northwest of Syria, Silva arrived in early 2017 after spending more than four years in a refugee camp managed by **UNHCR**.

After spending time in the city of **Aguascalientes** and receiving intensive vocational guidance, Silva decided that she wanted to become a dentist. With an exceptional level of Spanish acquired in just nine months, Silva began her studies at the **UNLA** in **Morelia**. This university has a beautiful campus that extends over 20 hectares with springs that inspire the tranquility that Silva lost after the beginning of the conflict that caused all of her family to move from their home.



Silva's journey has not been easy, as the rest of her family continues to live in the refugee camp in Iraq. Her tenacity and passion for studying is perhaps due to the fact that she knows that she is the great pride of her father as she is the first woman in her family to attend college.

AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES



From the start, Habesha Project has hosted events and activities to raise awareness about the refugee crisis in the Middle East and the role that Mexican civil society can play. This outreach would become an essential component of the initiative.

As part of this component, the Project organized diverse activities such as media interviews, presentations in academic events and speeches through various panels and conferences. Throughout the year, Habesha Project participated in more than 20 events in five different states.

Notably, the **Project** took active part in the Stakeholders Meeting Towards a Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration, enshrined in the **New York Declaration for Migrants and Refugees**, signed on September 2016 at the **United Nations General Assembly**. In this declaration, the **UN** agreed on the need to create the Global Compact for Migration in harmony with objective **10.7** of the Sustainable Development Agenda.

AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES



Habesha Project was one of the thirty Mexican NGOs that received special access from The United Nations in order to participate in the negotiations and planning of the **Global Compact for Migration**. From December 4-6, Habesha Project participated in the Stakeholders Meeting, held in Puerto Vallarta's International Convention Center. Besides attending the plenary, Habesha Project presented specific recommendations to address higher education in emergencies as a critical issue often forgotten by the international community. The position paper is available on the Project's web page.

In addition Habesha Project was asked to present to the students of the Matías Romero Institute, Mexico's school for diplomats. This presentation was particularly important for the Project because, some of these students would go on to work in embassies in the Middle East. This has been effective in generating sensitivity and support for our cause, making the process of obtaining the visa smoother, since the diplomats know beforehand how the project works.



Last but not least, the invitation from **Aurelio Nuño**, Education Secretary, on **World Refugee Day** (June 20) to the celebration at the "Rafael Ramírez" primary school in Mexico City was very important. Two students of the Project participated, giving speeches to schoolchildren and members of the media present, while the Secretary underscored the solidary character of the people of Mexico.



HABESHA'S SOFT POWER



Haaem Sharif, de 24 años, frente al Monumento a la Revolución en Ciudad de México. Tiene planeado estudiar administración de empresas en Querétaro a partir de agosto. crédito: Rodrigo Cruz para The New York Times

Para seis jóvenes sirios, una nueva vida en México

Mientras el gobierno de Estados Unidos busca sostener un veto a refugiados y países predominantemente musulmanes, un programa en México da cobijo a jóvenes que huyeron de la guerra con el fin de que puedan retomar sus estudios.

Por Marina Franco 15 de febrero de 2017
nytimes.com | Feb. 15, 2017

the guardian

'It's like I've been born again': the young Syrians making a new life in Mexico

Some came to Mexico fearing they would find more violence. But instead they've found a new home and a second chance

Habesha Project spearheads the efforts of Mexican civil society to become a solidary, generous and responsible actor to face challenges both at home and abroad, to assume a peacebuilding role in places as far away as Syria, in addition to establishing a precedent of innovative humanitarian action.

Our work contrasts sharply with the negative image that Mexico has in the world, because of the violence that is often highlighted in international media, showing another face of the Mexican people. Through more than **600 articles** in print and television, the solidarity of the Mexican people has been featured in the most prestigious news organizations in the world thanks to Habesha Project.

哈珊申請到墨西哥的獎學金後，家人相當擔心，害怕這個陌生的國度會像電視劇裡一樣，充滿暴力與幫派份子。她說：「我父親總是夢想著要讓孩子讀書，成為了不起的人，但他很擔心我來墨西哥唸書，因為他認為這個國家充滿罪犯與大麻。」

目前，哈珊與她在難民營認識的丈夫穆罕默德（Jack Mohammed）住在阿瓜斯卡連特斯市一間重新裝修的公寓裡，儘管他們都不會說西班牙語，但哈珊說墨西哥的生活讓她有重生的感覺：「請想像你死過一次，接著有人給你神奇的藥物，那就是我來到墨西哥的感受，就像我重生了。」

哈珊婚後開始用頭巾包頭，對她來說，這是穆斯林女性不可或缺的一部分，儘管這讓她成為墨西哥人注目的對象，她也堅持下去：「在數百萬的墨西哥人裡，我是唯一包頭巾的女性，人們的確會一直看我，但是包頭巾對我的信

Correspondents from all over the world have covered Habesha's work and told our story to millions of people in different countries. We have been covered very favorably by news organizations like *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Al Jazeera*, *NBC*, *Reuters*, *CNN*, *Public Radio International*, *Bulgaria National Radio*, *Deutsche Welle*, *El País*, among others.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



The year **2017** was particularly important for the capacity building and development of **Habesha** as an institution. In **2015** the project was launched by volunteers working from cafes and public places in Mexico City; In **2016** the first office was established, thanks to a space lent to the Project by **Universidad Panamericana**. Finally, with the needs of the project growing, an old house in downtown **Aguascalientes** was rented, which became the headquarters of the organization. An additional benefit is that it has the capacity to host eight people in individual rooms. This space is economical and doubles as classroom space for our remedial program.

Various prestigious Mexican universities, noting the successful development and widespread coverage that the project has had, were inspired to offer complete scholarships through the signing of collaborative agreements.

In **2017** Habesha signed agreements with seven universities: Universidad de Monterrey, Universidad Latina de América, Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Occidente, Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Universidad Anáhuac Querétaro and Instituto de Terapia Gestalt Región Occidente.

In addition, the Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes and Habesha Project have signed community service agreements making internships possible. This has permitted the integration of more than 20 collaborators throughout the year, bringing necessary manpower to make Habesha Academy possible.

IBERO

UDEM

Universidad de Monterrey

DUNLA

Universidad Latina de América (UNLA)

ITESO

Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara

U UPAEP



**UNIVERSIDAD ANÁHUAC
QUERÉTARO**

TERAPIA GESTALT
INSTITUTO DE
INTEGRO
REGION OCCIDENTAL

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Possibly one of the most important new developments was the formal hiring of an Administration and Finance Coordinator, a Fundraising and Communications Coordinator and a General Coordinator to oversee the students and the project's activities. These positions were filled by young professionals that had just graduated from the university who had worked as volunteers for the organization. They became full-time workers for a modest stipend.

Meeting the needs of the group of students represented a challenge from the start, and for this reason, Habesha has endeavored to train its staff accordingly. With this end in mind, the members of the team participated in the following training courses:

1. Training on Psychology and Migration.
2. Certificate in Psychological First Aid for Migrants, Refugees and Displaced people by Instituto Mora.
3. Capacity Building and Fundraising Workshop by Miguel Agustín Pro Center for Human Rights.



Additionally, Habesha project formalized the relationship with Aeromexico to ensure their continued support in the form of donated airline tickets. Similarly, Habesha started collaborating with ManpowerGroup, company that provides computers and training for the students.



FINANCIAL REPORT



Legal Name: Diálogo Intercultural de México Activo A.C.

Project Title: Proyecto Habesha

Timeframe: Year 2017

Elaborated by: Lic. Álvaro Zúñiga Ayala

INCOME



Source	Amount
International donations (Institute for International Education and Global Platform for Syrian Students)	\$10,198
Individual donations from supporters	\$17,340
Crowdfunding campaigns	\$31,506
Small donations from online platforms (One-time and recurrent)	\$14,564
Other	\$2,709
Total raised	\$76,317

*1\$ USD=19\$ MXN

FINANCIAL REPORT



Legal Name: Diálogo Intercultural de México Activo A.C.

Project Title: Proyecto Habesha

Timeframe: Year 2017

Elaborated by: Lic. Álvaro Zúñiga Ayala

EXPENSES

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES



Source	Amount
Staff stipends	\$8,255
Banking fees	\$379
Services (Electricity, water, telephone and gas)	\$1,019
Rent (Office and student dormitories)	\$5,548
Service providers (Spanish classes and accounting services)	\$2,902
Travel expenses for staff and students	\$2,853
Viatic	\$1,757
Administrative expenses	\$9,556
Taxes	\$6,767
Other	\$2,606
Total administrative costs	\$41,641

*1\$ USD=19\$ MXN

FINANCIAL REPORT



Legal Name: Diálogo Intercultural de México Activo A.C.

Project Title: Proyecto Habesha

Timeframe: Year 2017

Elaborated by: Lic. Álvaro Zúñiga Ayala

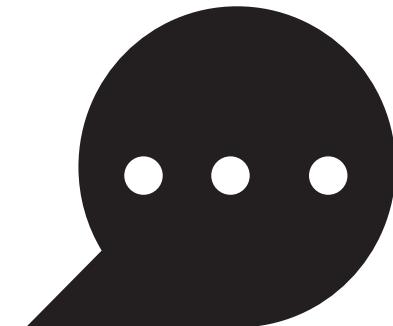
STUDENT EXPENSES

Source	Amount
Student Stipends	\$29,909
Materials and academic services (for the students)	\$5,461
International Travel for the Students (Middle East – Mexico)	\$6,379
Total Student Expenses	\$41,758
Total Expenses	\$83,399

*1\$ USD=19\$ MXN

- KILIAN KLEINSCHMIDT

KILIAN KLEINSCHMIDT



My message for the students who live and carry out their studies with enthusiasm is that they are doing something wonderful, and that through this project they are supporting each other, together to attract youth from another part of the world where they are not as fortunate as in Mexico! And remember, Mexico is much more fortunate than many places in the world. So believe in what you are doing; believe in this project; believe in youth; believe in the future and build it together not only for these 30 Syrian students who come, but also continue to contribute to the construction of a better world.

- Kilian Kleinschmidt



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