

Seraj Library Project  
Advisory Council Survey Data  
Summary - March 2019

In March of 2019 we surveyed the Advisory Council and Board, to determine their perceptions and views of Seraj Library Project. Sixteen persons responded to our survey. In this document we summarize and report key findings.

**1. What do you find most exciting or satisfying about the work that Seraj is doing?**

- funding and creating libraries is a life-affirming and positive thing for children and the Palestinians. It is something concrete we can do to support their communities.
- Helping Palestinian families & creating a success for their communities.
- The ongoing and endless enthusiasm for continuing this project and making it grow.
- Working with people who care about justice for Palestinians.
- I am impressed with the local iterations of the Seraj projects and how their development is guided by the local people. "Palestinians acting on behalf of Palestinians."
- Choosing to focus on a hopeful approach to assure a brighter future
- Engagement and education of the youth, which in turn provides hope.
- That it carries on Cotton's and Estaphan's vision of local development and community building.
- I love seeing Laurie's reports on the libraries' activities.

**2. What are your thoughts on Seraj's commitment to create a Palestine National Storytelling Center?**

- It is both a way to honor Cotton's memory and help the Palestinian's keep their culture alive through their stories.
- Very exciting. a global enthusiasm, but doubly important for Palestine... Supporting their ancient culture & history.
- It's a nice idea but I don't find it as compelling as Seraj's work on the library project.
- All people need stories to help bring them together as a people... I believe in the power of storytelling.

- This is a project I'm seeing in several places right now.
- Great but let's keep building new libraries too.
- I like being in touch with one's heritage and grappling with the aspects that contribute to a better present - being able to articulate clearly the possibilities.
- I think it is wonderful. To be able to tell stories is the way we share our lives with others.
- The story of the Palestinian people is a story that needs to be told. I believe that Seraj is the ideal organization to tell the story.
- I think it will be wonderful and am looking forward to funding for the center reaching its goal of \$100,000. Would like more information on how the money is raised and how it will be spent.
- Great idea. As a storyteller, I'd love to participate somehow.
- At a time when Israel is happily rewriting history (and writing Palestine out of it), I think it's a great idea. And it fits with the work that the libraries have been doing by encouraging the children to talk with their elders and hear their remembrances of the way Palestine used to be.

**3. What questions or topics would you like to discuss at this summer's meeting of the advisory council?**

- I guess I'd like to get more concrete about what is planned and the specific ways the center would/might be used
- View respondent's answers
- Strategies to get main stream media provide coverage of the occupation.
- Efforts to create more links between the libraries in Palestine and libraries or community centers in the US
- Raising more money from new people who have the potential to give major gifts.
- I don't know how or when to ask those with means to contribute large amounts. Yet others keep saying we could be raising much more money. How do you do that?
- I would mainly be interested in being updated on what has happened this year.
- How one can speak truth to power. How to live with the tensions and at the same time seek out what opportunities are present and pursue them
- How can we be more helpful to the libraries?
- Engagement and reach in the US and Canada to raise awareness and support funding goals.
- specifics for the advisory council on their role and responsibility to Seraj

- Now that Seraj is becoming a larger and more sophisticated operation, I guess I would like to hear what Laurie and Estephan have in the works for a structure that will make it all sustainable. I'd like to hear, too, what luck they've had in finding support within Palestine for the libraries and their work. Has their newly formed advisory board been of any help?

**4. Would you like to see advisory council members more active in the life of Seraj? If so, how?**

- Yes. Maybe we get them to help support or host local presentations on the work of Seraj in various venues like churches, libraries, research libraries and the like.
- Political situation
- The Advisory Council can increase our network in their various places. Invite new members, share the news, donate.
- Set up educational seminars on Palestine in their Churches or other community gatherings.
- Perhaps there are some who would like to lead a major donor program that went after 5-digit gifts.
- I need to hear this from the advisory council members. As a Board member, I'm listening!
- I'm not sure that my schedule allows me to become more active. However, I would like to have more frequent on the ground reports.
- Yes. The past year has been limiting for me, but I now can be better used as a bridge between the US and the West Bank.
- Bring a friend who is new to Seraj. Seek opportunities to support Seraj through education about Seraj, contributions to the silent auction (they might be willing to contribute tickets to concerts, theater and sporting events as well as restaurant gift certificates,
- That's up to the board and Estephan. What do you/they need that some of us may help with?
- Personally, I am happy to donate and watch. :-)