



## Helen Keller Centre, Jerusalem

**T**he Helen Keller Centre for the Visually Impaired provides a specialised education for 65 children, aged between 3-13 years. Fifteen of the children, who cannot make the daily journey to the school, are boarders. In addition to the usual curriculum the centre teaches a range of skills including mobility training, Arabic Braille, computer skills, gymnastics and athletics.

In January 2008 BibleLands had an appeal for the Helen Keller Centre and we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters. The money was used to continue supporting the centre's mission – of giving the children in their care the best possible start in life, encouraging and supporting them and their families through the years of specialised education, and on into adult life.

However, the 'working together' extends beyond this – the Helen Keller Centre also works closely with the Princess Basma Centre and St John Eye Hospital, two more of BibleLands' Partners.

When the children leave the Helen Keller Centre to move on to secondary school, the staff continue to support

them in their new (often mainstream) school, helping their new teachers to integrate them into the class. Some go to the Princess Basma Centre, who educate children with different types and levels of disability. Following on from this partnership they also take on students with visual impairments, from other units as well, and rely on support and help from the Helen Keller Centre staff to integrate these visually-impaired students fully.

The Helen Keller Centre also works in partnership with St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. Employees from the Helen Keller Centre accompany the St John team on weekly visits to a clinic in Hebron to assess those with visual impairment, while the St John team treat those patients coming to the clinic. The Helen Keller Centre staff examine and evaluate children who need early intervention, and help their families implement the recommendations at home, by liaising with and visiting the local schools.

At BibleLands we are always pleased to hear stories of Partners working together, sharing knowledge and skills, to benefit local communities. We are glad of the part that we can play, through the generosity of our supporters.