

בּוּדוּר  
BUDUR



# Budur Organization

## Spoken Hebrew Programs for the Arab Society in Israel

Executive Summary – Evaluation Research  
School Year 2024/2025

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## List of elementary schools that participated in the program 2024-2025

Town	School	Grades	Institution (Volunteer)	Principal
Segev Shalom	Miskabel	5, 5	Sde Boker	Abdullah Jargawi
Al-Nur	(4)	5, 6	Sde Boker	Talal Ma'mar
Qadasiya	—	5, 6	Sde Boker	Fazia
Afak	—	5, 6	Sde Boker	Sofi Al-Touhi
Ksar as-Sir / Hasin Hawashla	—	5, 6	Ein Yahav	Muhammad Hawashla
Al-Najah	—	5, 6	Ein Yahav	Hamid Hawashla
Bir Hadaj	Bar Hail	5, 6	Mashabei Sde	Eid Hazael
Al-Amal	—	5, 6	Mashabei Sde	Ibrahim
Al-Iman	—	5, 6	Mashabei Sde	Salem
Abu Qrenat	Abu Qrenat A	5, 6	Hatzeva	Nabil Qrenat
Al-Majd	—	5, 6	Hatzeva	Hassan Anami
Rahat	Ibn Khaldun	5, 6	Mishmar HaNegev	Bushra Al-Hozayel
Al-Hozayel D	—	5, 6	Mishmar HaNegev	Raad Al-Hozayel
Sheikh Hamis	—	5, 6	Dorot	Hamad Karnawi
Lakiya	Abd Raba	5, 6	Kramim	Youssef
Al-Amal	—	5, 6	Kramim	Muhammad Abu Saad
Abu Tulul	Al-Salam	5, 6, 4, 3	Holit	Jihan Abu Dahuba
Rahma	Rahma	5, 6, 4	Be'er	Sliman Frijat
Kaabiya	Kaabiya	5-6	Harduf	—

**Total: 19 schools**

**A list of Shnat Sherut programs and Mechinot that participated in the program during the academic year 2024-2025**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Volunteers</b>	<b>Volunteer Community</b>
Shinshinim Oded – Bnei HaMoshavim	Mashabei Sadeh	4	Bir Hadaj
Shinshinim North – TEN (The Jewish Agency)	Harduf	4	Ka'abiyye / Shefa-'Amr
Hatzeva Mechina	Hatzeva	7	Abu Krinat
Ein Yahav Mechina	Ein Yahav	8	Qasr a-Sir
Negev Mechina (Midreshet Sde Boker)	Sde Boker	16	Segev Shalom
Kramim Mechina	Kramim	4	Lakiya
Mishmar HaNegev Mechina	Mishmar HaNegev	8	Rahat
Holit Mechina	Revivim	4	Abu Talul
Dorot Mechina	Dorot	6	Rahat
Midreshet Be'er	Yeruham	4	Rahma
KKL (Jewish National Fund)	Be'er Sheva	1	Abu Krinat

**Total: 66 volunteers**

## A. Background, Objectives, and Methodology

The **Budur Organization** aims to promote the abilities of students in Arab society, particularly their **spoken Hebrew skills**, recognizing the importance of this skill for integration into Israeli society, higher education, and employment. As a result, the programs create **interpersonal encounters** between students from Arab society and volunteers from Jewish society, with the goal of fostering mutual familiarity and reducing feelings of alienation and social distance.

The program, which has been operating since **2023** in **5th–6th grade classes** in **Bedouin schools in southern Israel**, is based on **frontal instruction** delivered by volunteers participating in **pre-military preparatory programs (mechinot)** and **national service years**. The volunteers are supported through **professional pedagogical guidance** and **structured lesson plans**.

An **external evaluation** of the program has been conducted since **2025** in order to improve its implementation (**formative evaluation**) and to examine its contribution to the acquisition of **spoken Hebrew proficiency (summative evaluation)**.

### Methodology:

To provide a comprehensive picture of the program, the study combined **quantitative and qualitative research methods**. The quantitative component was based on a **longitudinal comparison** (tests and questionnaires administered at the beginning and end of the school year) among **5th–6th grade students** (a total of **240 students from 24 classes across 7 schools**), as well as **attitude questionnaires for volunteers** (75% response rate).

The qualitative component included **in-depth interviews** (with principals, Hebrew coordinators, and volunteers) and **classroom observations** conducted in **four schools**.

## B. Research Finding

**The program** both in improving their **spoken Hebrew proficiency** and in most of their **attitudes toward the Hebrew language**. The volunteers reported a **powerful and meaningful experience**, although it was not without **logistical and pedagogical challenges**. Regarding the school staff, support for the **Budur Organization's programs** and their various components was reported, reflecting the perceived importance of **advancing Hebrew language learning among students**.

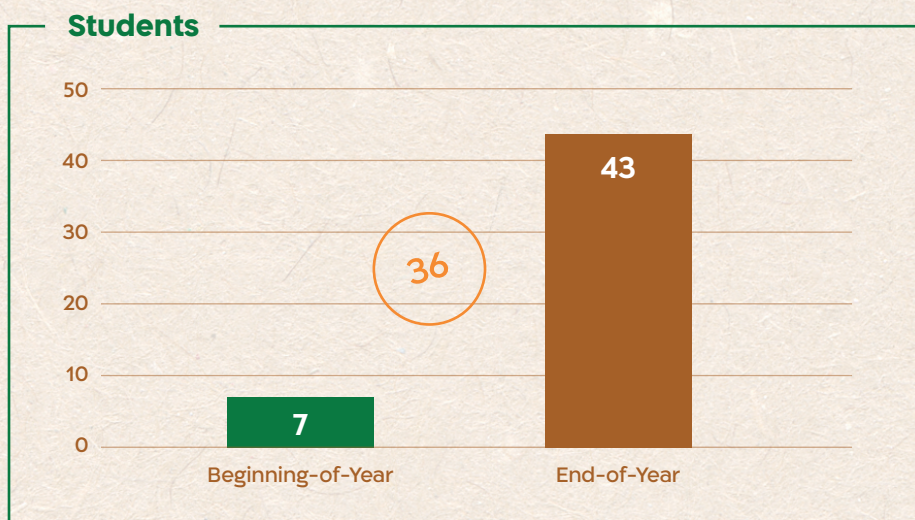
### 1. Hebrew Language Proficiency Test

As part of the study, students who studied with Budur volunteers participated in a **Hebrew language proficiency test**. The test was developed in accordance with the principles of the **CEFR framework** for spoken language and the **new Hebrew curriculum for Arabic speakers**.

The test included **six components of spoken language proficiency**: vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, grammar, clarity, and self-confidence.

The test was administered **twice**—at the **beginning of the school year** and at the **end of the 2024/25 school year**.

**Figure 1: Change in the Overall Score**



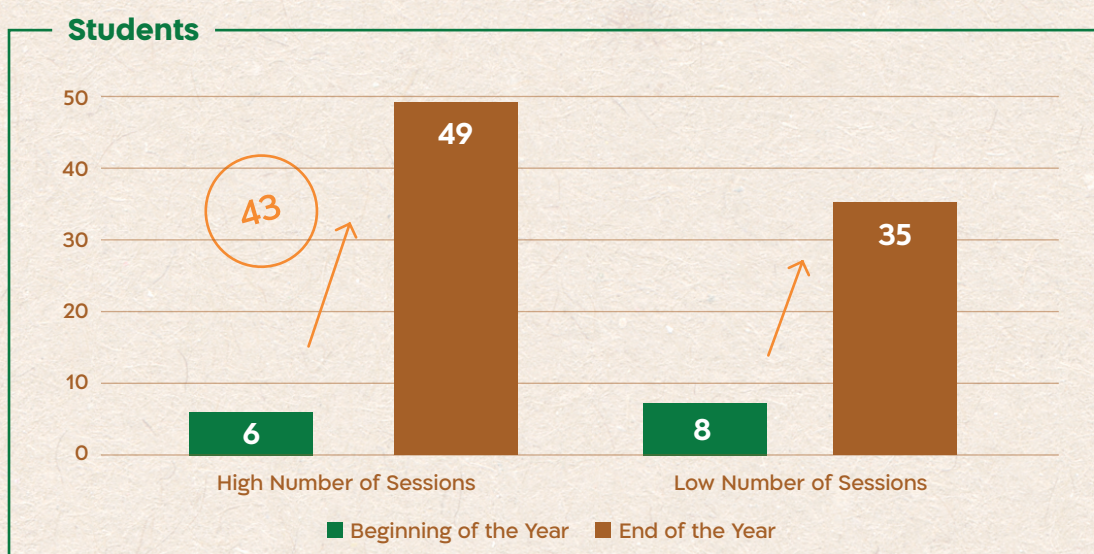
The findings indicate that the students had a **very low starting level in Hebrew**, with an **average score of 7 out of 100 points**. By the end of the year, the students improved their **spoken Hebrew proficiency by 36 points**.

It may be assumed that part of this substantial improvement is explained by the **very low initial level** of the students in the **baseline assessment at the beginning of the school year**.

Improvement was observed across **all six components of spoken language proficiency** that were examined, as well as in **both grade levels** that participated in the program (**5th-grade students improved by an average of 37 points**, while **6th-grade students improved by an average of 33 points**).

There was **variation among the schools** in the extent of improvement

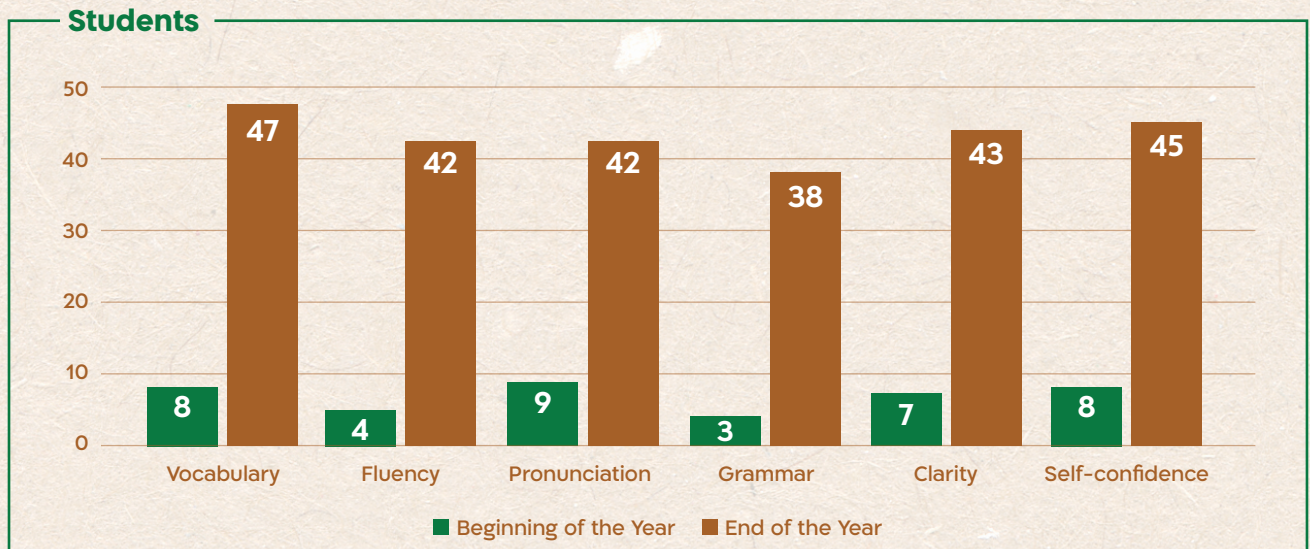
**Figure 2: Change in Total Score by Number of Sessions Held**



It was found that in schools where a **relatively high number of sessions (17–19 sessions)** with volunteers took place, students **improved their Hebrew more** than students in schools

with a **lower number of sessions (13–14 sessions)**. This highlights the importance of **regular and consistent meetings** to maximize student progress.

**Figure 3: Change in Score Components**

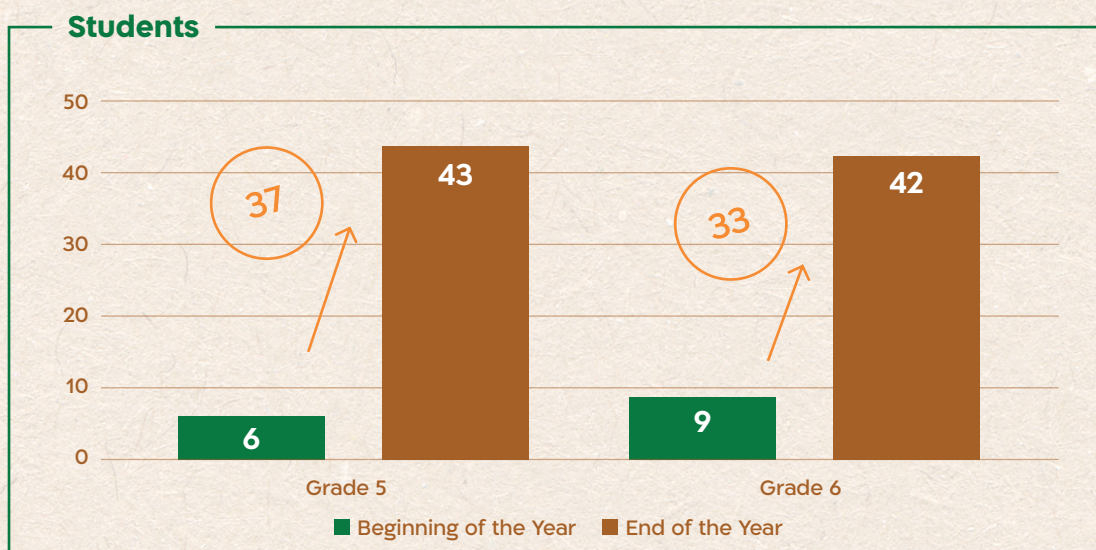


To examine the factors affecting improvement in achievements, additional analyses were conducted based on the schools' background data: age group, school, and the number of sessions held with volunteers.

In order to clarify the change in scores between the two time points examined, the change between the two time points ( $d$ ) was calculated for the overall score and for each score component, using the formula:  $d = p_{end} - p_{beginning}$ .

The following two charts and tables present the beginning- and end-of-year scores, alongside the changes in students' achievements between the two time points ( $d = p_{end} - p_{beginning}$ ).

**Figure 4: Change in Overall Score by Age Group**



**Table 5: Change in Scores by Number of Sessions Held**

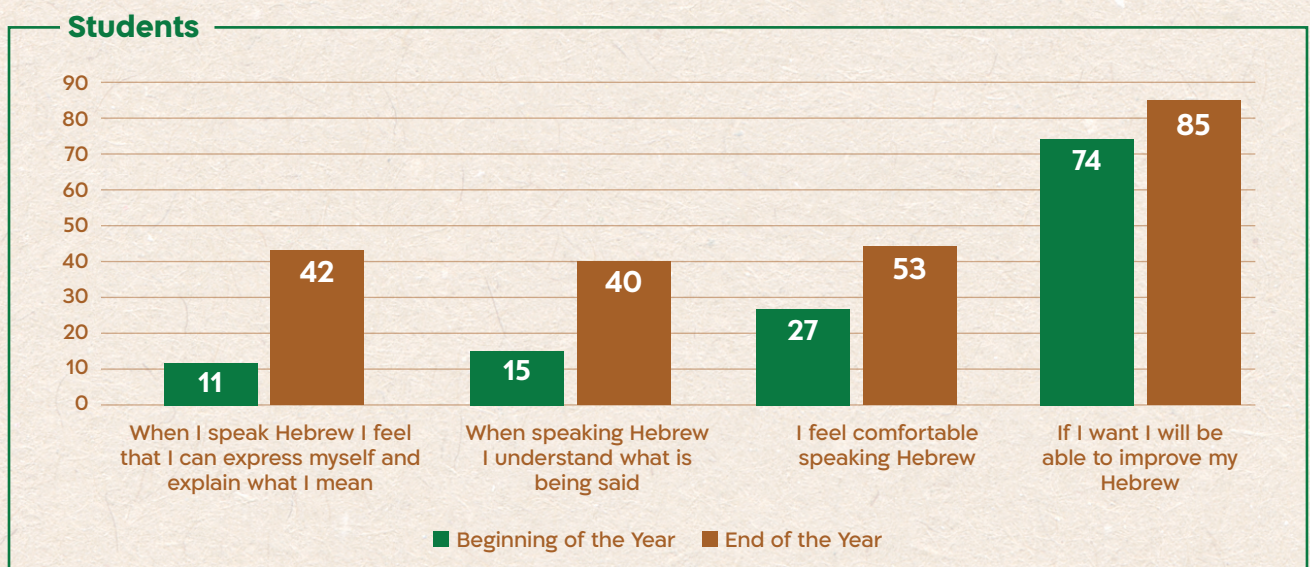
Low number of Sessions			High numbers of sessions			N
70			103			
Gap	End of Year	Beginning of Year	Gap	End of Year	Beginning of Year	
26%	35%	8%	43%	49%	6%	Overall Score
27%	37%	10%	47%	54%	7%	Vocabulary
28%	34%	6%	44%	47%	3%	Fluency
24%	34%	10%	40%	48%	8%	Pronunciation
26%	31%	5%	41%	42%	1%	Grammar
25%	34%	9%	43%	49%	7%	Clarity
28%	37%	9%	43%	51%	7%	Self- Confidence

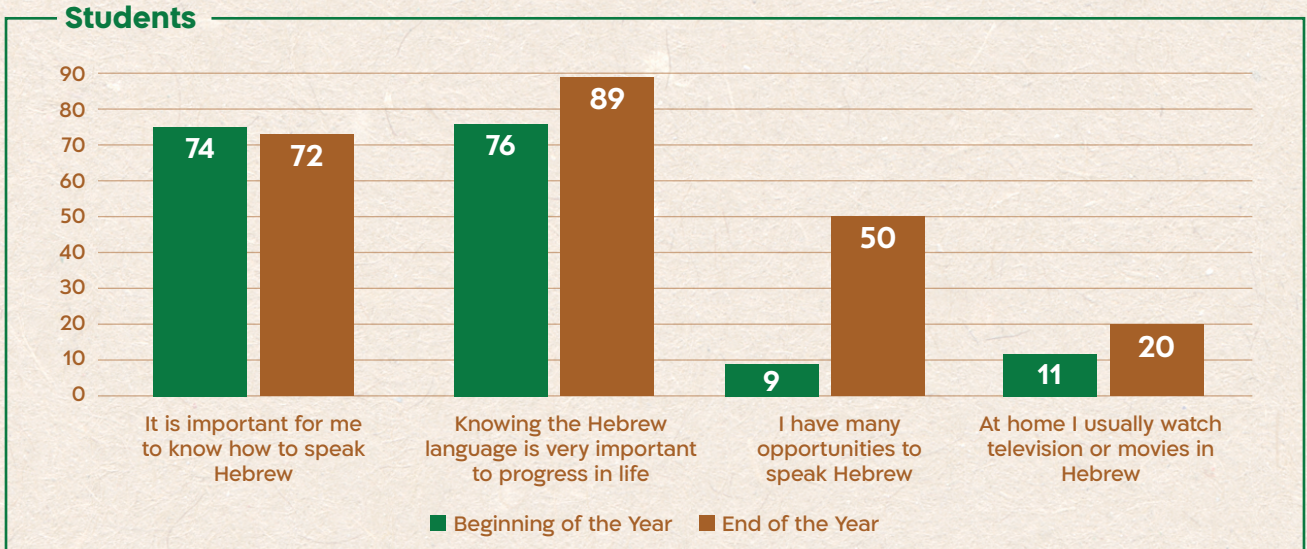
The findings indicate that a higher number of sessions has a positive impact on student outcomes. In schools where more sessions were held, improvement in Hebrew was greater compared to schools with fewer sessions.

## 2. Students' Attitudes Towards the Hebrew Language

Before administering the assessments (at the beginning and near the end of the year), students were asked questions regarding their attitudes toward the Hebrew language and its importance.

**Figure 6–7: Students' Attitudes Towards the Hebrew Language**



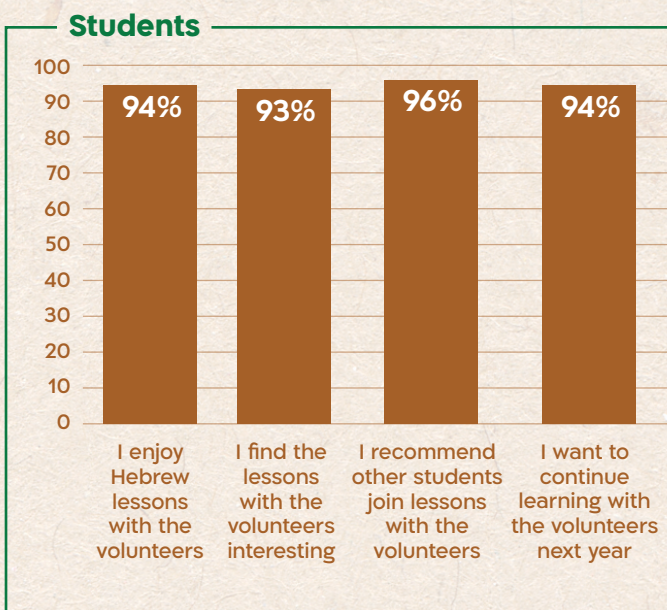


By the end of the school year, compared to the beginning, students reported an increase in their expressive and listening comprehension skills in Hebrew, as well as more opportunities to speak Hebrew, as expected following the series of sessions with the volunteers.

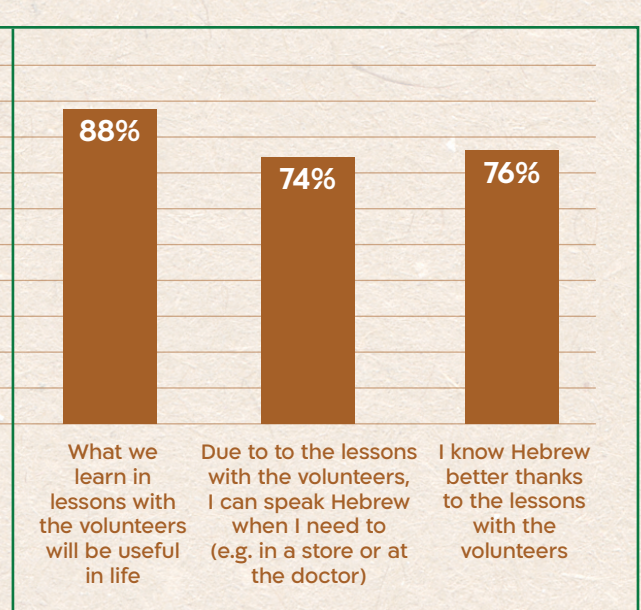
### 3. Students' Attitudes Towards the Program

Towards the end of the program, students were asked questions regarding their attitude toward the program.

**Figure 8: Satisfaction with Budur Lessons**



**Figure 9: Students' Perception of the Contribution of Budur Lessons**



The vast majority of students perceived the Budur lessons as interesting, beneficial, and useful, and felt that the volunteers made an effort to engage most students in the class.

About 60% believed that the level of instruction was appropriate—that is, neither too easy nor too difficult. Among the remaining students, approximately 30% felt that the level was too easy for them.

**Figure 10: Encouragement of Spoken Language.**



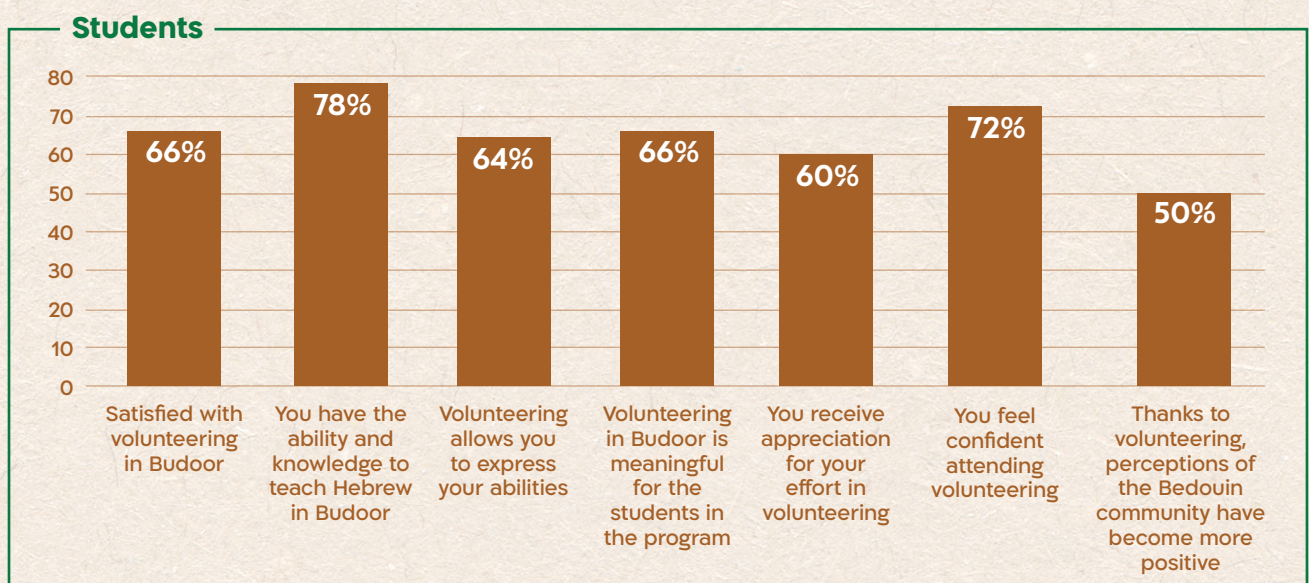
About two-thirds of the students reported that they feel comfortable speaking Hebrew in class and actively participated in the lessons.

When students were asked to report on their classmates' level of understanding and participation in class, about 74% stated that most or all students actively participate during the lessons.

#### 4. The Perspective of the Budur Volunteers

In the 2024/25 school year, 69 volunteers from 10 pre-military preparatory programs participated in Budur. Overall, about two-thirds of the volunteers expressed high satisfaction with their work in Budur. Most of them (78%) believed they were capable of teaching Hebrew within the framework of Budur, and two-thirds felt that the volunteering allowed them to showcase their abilities.

**Chart 11: Satisfaction, Perceived Teaching Ability in Budur, and Perceived Program Success**



Two-thirds of the volunteers felt that their work was meaningful for the students, and 60% felt appreciated for their efforts. Although there were incidents that affected the volunteers' sense of personal confidence, most still felt confident attending the volunteering sessions.

About 70% of the volunteers reported that they chose the Budur volunteering as a high-priority option.

These volunteers reported higher satisfaction with their work in Budur (80%) compared to those who chose it as a lower-priority option (53%). They also reported higher perceived teaching ability (80% versus 73%) and greater opportunity to showcase their skills (69% of high-priority volunteers versus 53% of low-priority volunteers). Additionally, volunteers who chose Budur as a high-priority option were more likely to report positive changes in their attitudes toward the Bedouin community during lessons (63% compared to 20% among low-priority volunteers).

The findings from the qualitative study help explain the trends observed regarding volunteering in Budur. Some volunteers described feeling satisfaction from their work:

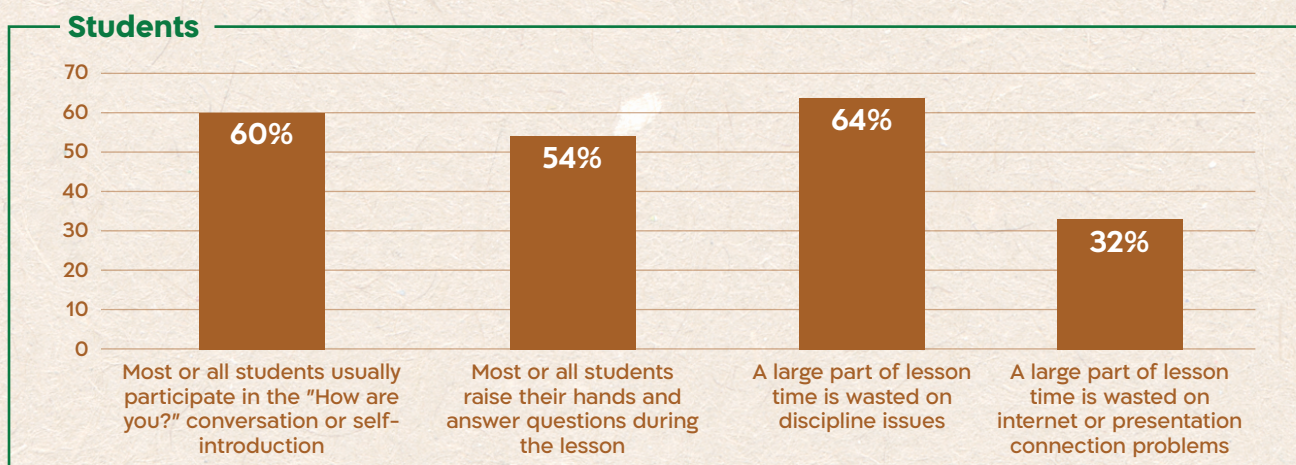
"Leaving the bubble of the preparatory program and home to enter another culture. It's fun to come. The kids are excited..."

"I didn't think about educating or guiding... they presented me with this opportunity. I chose the most extreme and unique option. I said I'll throw myself in, and wow, I feel comfortable with it."

Others reported disappointment stemming from expectations that they would have a greater impact on improving students' Hebrew; some volunteers expected to learn Arabic as part of the volunteering; and others faced logistical and technical difficulties during the program, as well as feelings of personal insecurity either on the way to volunteering or at the school itself.

Volunteer reports indicate that precise preparation for the volunteering experience is required (about two-thirds reported receiving sufficient preparation and explanations about what is expected of them), as well as a well-structured guidance format throughout the year (about half reported that the ongoing support helped solve difficulties and contributed to the success of the lessons).

**Chart 12: Perceptions of Lesson Implementation**



Regarding lesson implementation, only about half of the volunteers described lessons in which most students responded and participated. They reported, more strongly than the students did, numerous discipline and technical issues. These discipline problems may stem from operational difficulties, or possibly from lesson content and vocabulary that were not suited to the students' level—since only about half of the volunteers felt that the lesson plans, content, and vocabulary were appropriate for the students' abilities.

Most volunteers (86%) believed that volunteering in pairs contributes to the success of the lessons. In the qualitative study, they described the need for a supervising teacher to be present during lessons to assist with translation and maintain student discipline.

Regarding the preferred classroom arrangement—either teaching the whole class with a teacher present or splitting into two groups with a teacher rotating between them—no clear trend emerged, as about half of the volunteers supported each of the two options presented.

The qualitative study also highlighted physical challenges, such as splitting the class into two learning spaces equipped with projectors, and the logistical difficulty of assigning a supervising teacher from the school staff to the two groups.



## C. Forward-Looking Insights

The findings show a significant contribution to improving spoken Hebrew among students from the Bedouin community and promoting positive attitudes toward the language. However, precision and improvement are needed in pedagogical, logistical, and operational aspects.

### 1. Hebrew Lessons Conducted by Volunteers

**1.1** The program benefits from being based on pre-military preparatory year volunteers, who are close in age to the students and contribute through mutual exposure to Jewish and Bedouin cultures.

**1.2** Regular and consistent sessions directly impact student achievement. Therefore, it is recommended to coordinate Budur session schedules in advance with the preparatory programs and schools to minimize canceled sessions.

**1.3** The presentations accompanying the program serve as the anchor for lesson delivery and ease the teaching task for volunteers. However, variability in lesson implementation was observed depending on the volunteers' instructional and leadership skills. Accordingly, it is recommended to:

Assign volunteers so that in each pair, at least one has prior teaching experience or leadership ability.

Allocate more time for pre-service training, including lesson management strategies, simulations for handling technical difficulties and discipline issues, and providing a toolkit of games and methods for experiential lesson delivery.

Conduct field visits by content specialists to support and supervise the volunteering. These visits should include lesson observation and constructive feedback.

**1.4** Lessons that rely heavily on presentations create a traditional, frontal teaching format. It is recommended to reduce dependence on the presentation to encourage more active student learning, for example by adding experiential activities such as games, competitions, songs, or small-group discussions.

**1.5** Lack of knowledge of Arabic was noted as an obstacle to lesson success and was perceived as a cause of some discipline issues. Volunteers should be provided with a basic Arabic vocabulary set to facilitate communication with students.

**1.6** Teacher presence in the classroom is considered advantageous both for translation when needed and for maintaining discipline. Additionally, having a Hebrew teacher present allows exposure to the vocabulary taught in Budur, supporting continuity in classroom Hebrew lessons.

**1.7** Findings indicate that volunteers who chose Budur as a high-priority option exhibit higher motivation, perceived ability, and sense of program importance. Therefore, it is crucial to expose and present the program clearly to volunteers before they begin. It is recommended to clarify mutual expectations, including:

- Direct exposure to Bedouin culture through visits from all preparatory program students in the south.
- Explanation sessions outlining the expected contributions and commitments required from volunteers.
- Expected benefits for students, with special emphasis on fostering mutual understanding and enhancing students' motivation and confidence to communicate in Hebrew.
- Social value of volunteering and the benefit to the volunteer (including whether Arabic language learning is included).
- Volunteers' commitment to allocate time for preparation and debriefing before each session, and the preparatory program staff's commitment to schedule this time within the program timetable.

## 2. Organizational and Logistical Aspects

**2.1** Since the lessons rely on presentations, it is recommended to consider solutions for occasional technological issues, such as pre-installing all lesson materials on the school computers (so that an internet connection is not required during the lesson), in addition to providing a set of activities that volunteers can use when technological resources are unavailable.

**2.2** To gain an overview of Budur's overall impact, it is suggested to map all components provided to each school within Budur: volunteer sessions, the app, and professional development. This information should be shared with all Budur stakeholders—headquarters, schools, professional development facilitators, and volunteers—to assess the cumulative contribution of each component to the improvement of Hebrew language skills.

