



## Newsletter

### December 2021

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2021 comes to an end! We wish you a Happy Holiday Season and hope to see you in 2022!

The last quarter of 2021 was intense and active! Here is a summary for your review.

#### A few interesting trips ✈️

In September, two of our co-founders David and Mehra Rimer travelled to **London** where they met and exchanged with 2 inspiring peace builders, Obada Shtaya – from [Zimam](#) – and Uri Rosenberg – from [Tech2Peace](#).



Both activists navigate their work between the UK and the Holy Land, in pursuit of peace. Obada gave David and Mehra the latest update on his organization's activities (see link to clip [here](#)) whilst Uri gave them a flavor on the impact that Tech2Peace webinars had on their summer (see link to clip [here](#)).

Later in the month our chairwoman Mehra Rimer made a delightful stop over in **Paris**, where she reconnected with key people in order to re engage talks for future events in Paris. Sadly B8 of Hope's Paris events have stopped since 2018, but there now is a new glimmer of hope in that tunnel. Highlight of the Paris trip was a meeting with John Lyndon, Executive Director of [Alliance for Middle East Peace](#) (ALLMEP). At B8 of Hope, we encourage synergies and collaborations among members of our pool of grantees. This recommendation is something we apply to ourselves as we regularly work with ALLMEP comparing notes and even partnering on actual projects and initiatives. To our great honor and joy, Most of B8 of Hope's grantees are also ALLMEP members! [Click here](#) to see ALLMEP's introduction video.

Later on in November, Mehra also met with the US Director of ALLMEP, Kari Reid, in **Washington DC**. Over a decade of advocacy in America, ALLMEP's work led to the passage into law of the Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA). This new fund will deliver \$250 million over at least five years to projects that support peacebuilding and Palestinian economic development and partnerships. It represents the largest investment ever in the region's peacebuilders. The legislation grew out of ALLMEP's 12-year campaign to establish an [International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace](#), which continues to gain momentum among other governments interested in leveraging this game-changing U.S. investment.

During this same trip to North America, Mehra got to meet associates of [Capital Group Companies](#) - a firm where she used to work and which is very supportive of B8 of Hope. CG's Chaverim, Salam and Christian Life faith associations organized a webinar for B8 of Hope in the fall in order to give more visibility to our work and encourage donations.

We are very grateful for this fantastic opportunity to spread our message and raise funds.



## B8 of Hope events 🎉

This fall we had several events. We are very lucky that some of them could be in person.



At the beginning of September, we've hosted a **hybrid party** at our B8 of Hope work space! A group of students whom we've worked with (in the last quarter of 2020) on a former project to raise funds for the [Jerusalem Youth Chorus](#) came to our office to watch the JYC online Gala party. What fun we've had, joining the post Corona hybrid event hype!

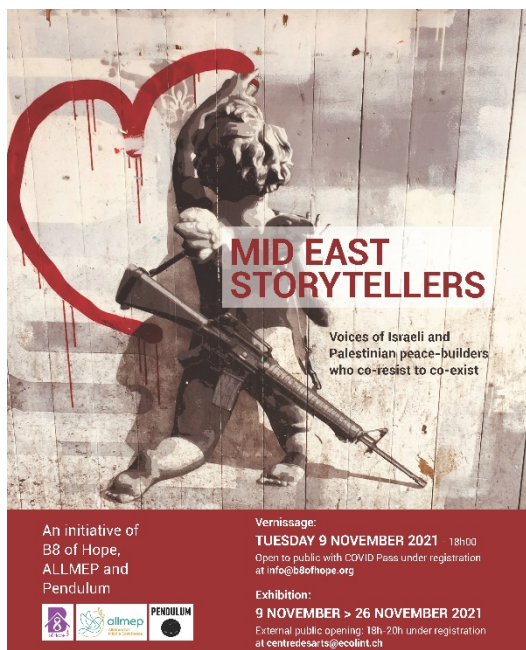
As a reminder; from Oct to Dec 2020, B8 of Hope collaborated with the Geneva-based initiative [Philanthropic Adventures](#). Together we facilitated a workshop "Peace Philanthropy" for a small group of high-schoolers at B8 of Hope workspace in

Geneva. The purpose of the workshop was exploring the journey of peace building through the lenses of B8 of Hope whilst learning the skills of philanthropy via the knowledge of Paola Genovese, facilitator at Philanthropic Adventures. Philanthropic Adventures is an educational platform for young people to find information, inspiration and support to take action for social and environmental issues they care about. Philanthropic Adventures aims to democratise the concept of philanthropy and help young people define their engagement and bring change. *"Because giving back and giving well is an adventure full of discovery and emotions."*

September ended on a very powerful note and evening at the prestigious Geneva book club [Société de Lecture](#) which we thank sincerely for hosting B8 of Hope and partnering with us. The **hybrid conference** was about Colum McCann's masterpiece: *Apeirogon*, a unique kind of novel based on the true stories of two bereaved Palestinian and Israeli fathers Bassam Aramin and Rami Elhanan. Colum, Bassam and Rami joined us from New York, Jericho and Haifa, virtually, on the big screen of Société de Lecture's beautiful room. A large international and Genevois audience was physically present. The panel was brilliantly moderated by Philippe Mottaz, prominent Swiss journalist and founder of The Geneva Observer. What an honour to be in that room that night! An opportunity for B8 of Hope to keep giving visibility to the amazing people-to-people initiatives we support such as Rami and Bassam's NGO: [Parents Circle Families Forum](#).



Without doubt, one can say that the highlight of the fall was our Mid East Storytellers **exhibition** at the Art Center of Geneva's International School.



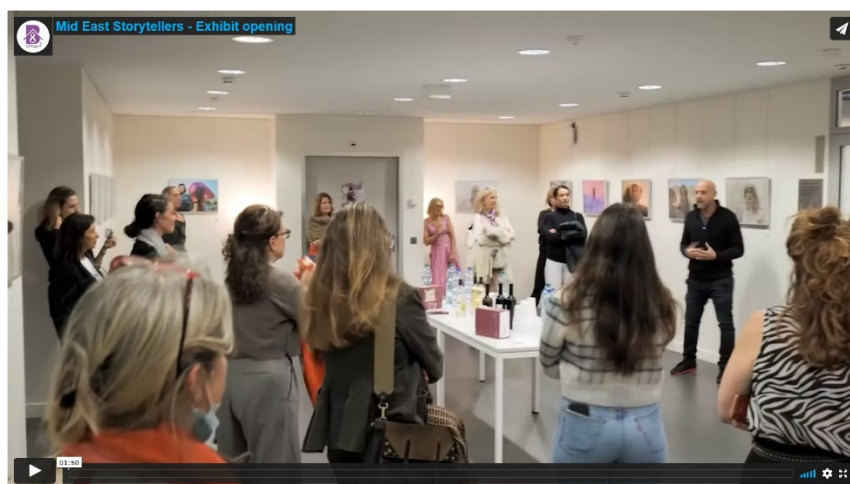
The concept - launched in November 2020 in partnership with the [Alliance for Middle East Peace \(ALLMEP\)](#) and with [Pendulum - Creative Changency](#) gave birth to a storytelling platform for Israeli and Palestinian to tell their unique stories. Through a facilitated workshop, opportunity to skill up storytelling (via photography) was given to B8 of Hope grantees and ALLMEP members.

Telling one's story is a powerful tool in conflict zones. It teaches about the other's narratives; and doing so creatively is all the way more touching and influential. Through photography we discover the "other" 's face and through words we hear the "other" 's story. This exchange of narrative allows for ignorance about the other to at last vanish – a much needed step towards peace!

The exhibited stories were inspiring. They reflected the voice of Israeli and Palestinian peace builders, active members of grassroots and civil society initiatives. Through sharing their stories, a path was paved for a respectful coexistence based on equal rights, dignity and security for all.

B8 of Hope in partnership with ALLMEP and Pendulum turned the collection of stories into an exhibition which lasted throughout November and was open to the Geneva public as well as to all students of the International school.

[Click here to see the pictures](#) of our opening night and watch the short video below!



Several teachers took their high-school students to and explored the stories.

If you missed the exhibition you can [have a virtual visit here](#).



In November, B8 of hope also had the pure pleasure of hosting [Tech2Peace](#) and [Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow \(MEET\)](#), two NGOs focused on peace-building through learning entrepreneurship in the framework of high-tech. Tech2Peace is aimed at students and young professionals aged 20-30 and MEET 's target audience is high-schoolers aged 14-17.

A dozen Israelis and Palestinians, alumni and leaders of Tech2Peace came to Switzerland to attend a unique [seminar](#) organized by [Stiftung Urgestein](#) and partly funded by the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs in partnership with B8 of Hope. The participants spent half the day in cultural exchange sessions (including with several Swiss participants) and half the day working together to learn high tech skills (App development and video).



Upon the arrival of part of the cohort, B8 of Hope hosted a dinner. We had Tomer co-founder of Tech2Peace, Jake, Juman and Uthman, both facilitators and alumni. We also invited two members of MEET, Aga and Anas who happened to be in the region on that evening. It was a delight to witness a beautiful synergy taking place between our two grantee organizations Tech2Peace and MEET.

The B8 of Hope co-founders in Geneva and a few supporters of our work were present at the dinner and got their shot of Vitamin Hope by listening to the young fellows of both organizations. Rather than being stuck in the past and in their respective narratives, these young people look forward, and their common ground is entrepreneurship. It is important for them to be in a dialogue and understand each other. They work on a future reality based on equality, dignity and safety for all. The best way to achieve this reality is by trying to be part of the solution.

## B8 of Hope Next Gen

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, our B8 of Hope Next Gen Youth Group resumed its activities. The group composed of international students in European, Canadian and the US universities as well as young professionals aged 18 to 28 are all 'ex' B8 of Hope volunteers / interns / events attendees. Managed by a small committee of its members, the group runs monthly activities as to stay in touch and promote the community's involvement and continuous learning in peace-building.

This [first meeting of the « school year »](#) was about :

- ➡ A short introduction: Next Gen plan & goals for 21-22
- ➡ Get to know [Narrative 4](#) - a global organization that uses a story exchange methodology to increase empathy in the world 🌍
- ➡ Let's get to know each other better! 😊 Participate in Storytelling Exchange Workshop led by Narrative 4

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, Next Gen Youth Group hosted a **Creative Negotiation Skills workshop** led by [Pathways Institute for Negotiation Education](#).

Thanks to B8 of Hope, 16 students & young professionals from all over the world participated. As part of the workshop, the participants not only sharpened their own negotiations and problem-solving skills but also learned more about Pathways' bridge-building approach and their pedagogical philosophy.



Finally, the Canadian chapter of the B8 of Hope Next Gen had a surprise visit of our Mehra Rimer who took advantage of a personal trip to Montreal to meet with them.

### Pilot Umbrella Crowdfunding and partnership with Amal-Tikva :

B8 of Hope has developed stronger bonds with [Amal-Tikva](#), a new organization that engages NGO leaders, philanthropists and field experts to build capacity for sustainable and scalable peacebuilding between Israelis and Palestinians.

B8 of Hope is very keen on partnerships and synergy building. We believe that collaborations among the Israeli - Palestinian peace building community will scale up the impact of the work on the ground.

In the spirits of synergy-building, Amal-Tikva and B8 of Hope are piloting an unprecedented **umbrella crowdfunding**. A dozen NGOs and movements (mainly from B8 of Hope's pool of grantees). These participating institutions are lighthouses of progress. They understand how to create measurable, scalable impact between divided cultures. And they will not stop until everyone has equal rights, dignity, and security.

Never have organizations united to bring about a more just future quite like this. Never have they shared knowledge, strategy, and resources. Never have they shown the world a united front that will persevere... no matter the obstacle.

These NGOs recognize that they are greater together than the sum of their parts. We wish them a great and successful crowdfunding. Our role as capacity-builders for our beneficiaries is also about helping them finding ways of funding their activities and scaling them up !

We are very proud to share with you [this very recent article](#) about Amal-Tikva and B8 of Hope joint synergy building effort around the umbrella crowdfunding initiative.



## Birthday Celebration !

November was also one of our generous donors' birthday 🎂 . She decided to ask her family and friends to support B8 of Hope in lieu of giving her gifts. A heartfelt thank you to her! Her very generous friends spoiled us!!!!

If you want to do the same on the occasion of your birthday or if you would like to honor someone's memory, please refer to [this page of our website](#) for more information.

## News from the ground

Throughout the fall, the Israeli and Palestinian change-makers and peace-builders supported by B8 of Hope continued their tireless efforts, despite the challenges of Covid and the complexities of the political situation.

All the activities that B8 of Hope funded and supported on the ground will be reported in our upcoming 2021 Annual report which will be published and distributed in the new year.

Happy Holidays and Best wishes for a healthier and more peaceful year !

B8fully Yours,  
The B8 of Hope Team



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