



"ONLY TOGETHER WE WILL WIN" Credit photo: Standing Together

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



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A word from the co-founders and board members

In 2014, Mehra and David Rimer had the incredible opportunity to meet courageous Palestinian and Israeli peace-builders. They deeply inspired them.

In her modest way, Mehra decided to make those voices louder among her circles in Geneva and support their activities financially. Her private initiative turned into a collective project: B8 of Hope.



2021 marks the fifth year of B8 of Hope's creation. B8 of Hope has grown drastically in a relatively short time and our work is recognized by our Israeli, Palestinian, European and North American peers. It is also gratifying to have received a **letter of endorsement** by the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs.

Today, we support **19 Israeli and Palestinian grassroots and civil society peace-building initiatives** on the ground and have many others on our radar.

We are very grateful to have the backing of a network of very dedicated volunteers who help B8 of Hope with specific tasks. Throughout 2020-2021, we were also extremely lucky to have a hard-working and outstanding intern, Jessica Fayon, who is also co-managing our **Next Generation youth group**. Finally, Mehra's daily work in running B8 of Hope's operations could not be done without Chrystelle Thiébaud, B8 of Hope's only employee, who is in charge of the administration, the internship program and special projects.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the B8 of Hope family – because this is truly what we are first and foremost, a family!

This year was not an easy one: In addition to the challenges of the pandemic, we witnessed the outbreak of violence all over Israel, Gaza and the West Bank during the month of May, which deeply affected the region – and us.

In spite of these challenges, our Palestinian and Israeli peace-builders never lost faith in their work. The numerous rallies and marches organized to ease the tensions and call for an end to the violence showed how **thousands of Israelis and Palestinians refuse to be enemies. They “co-resist to co-exist”**. They showed us that Israelis and Palestinians can be partners for peace. And if they keep believing in peace and dignity for all, even in hard and polarizing moments, B8 of Hope will keep standing with them.

Our drive and our motivation come from the ground-up thanks to these extraordinary Israeli and Palestinian agents of change. They taught us that **peace activism is not a “neutral” and easy path**. Peace-building is about being out of your own comfort zone and seeing the reality of the other. It implies getting rid of your own fears and stereotypes. It also involves risks: losing friends, being threatened, and being attacked and treated like a traitor. However, it is all worth it. To quote Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian non-violence activist, you finally *“practice your humanity”*. You realize that human beings are capable of the very worst as well as the very best.

B8 of Hope’s work is tiny in comparison to the magnitude and complexity of the conflict. That said, we try our very best to scale up our impact by collaborating with sister organizations abroad and encouraging synergies between our grantees on the ground.

However, saving even only one life is good enough for us: we don’t want to ever regret not having tried.

So, we continue promoting and advocating for peace in the Middle East and **by PEACE, we mean a respectful coexistence based on equal rights, dignity and safety for all the people living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea**. We will keep supporting people-to-people connections because the bottom-up approach is the only solid base for a sustainable reconciliation in the long-run. Our focus on humanization and changing the hearts and minds of ordinary people is a pre-condition to a lasting political solution.

As for our donors and community of supporters, we are extremely thankful for their trust in us and for their willingness to invest in B8 of Hope’s curated pool of civil society and grassroots change-making initiatives. We appreciate the support and the belief in our approach - which is based on inclusivity as opposed to denunciation. We believe that every single person or initiative that generates a small step towards a better future counts and is worth considering. Finally, being pro-solution rather than pro-side is the only weapon against polarization and violence. It is our weapon.

B8fully Yours,



Arun



Ayman



David



Jean-Marc



Karim



Leila



Luc

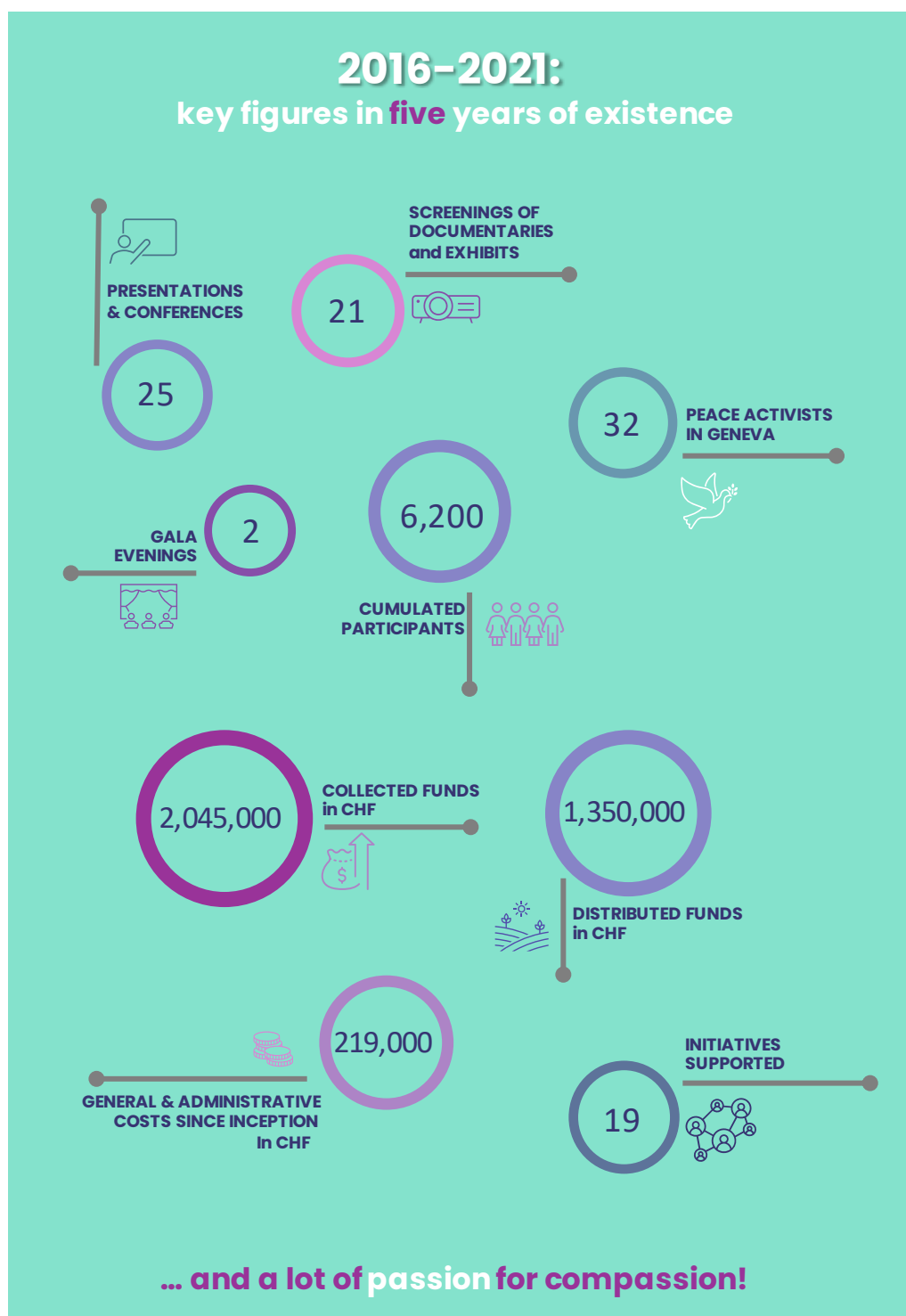


Mehra

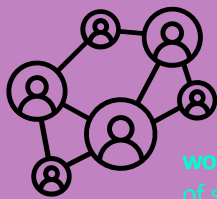
About B8 of Hope

Our Vision: a peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians based on equal rights, respect, dignity, inclusivity and security.

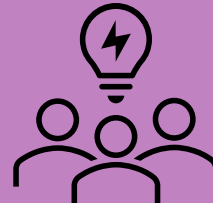
Our Mission: to support Israeli and Palestinian grassroots and civil society initiatives, bringing about dialogue, bridge-building, humanization, transformative interactions and any constructive action improving living conditions.



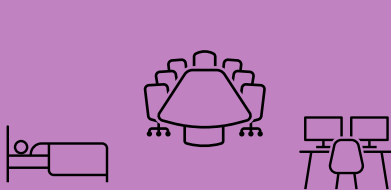
B8 of Hope's Resources & Tools: mostly powered by



worldwide youth group
of several
student ambassadors

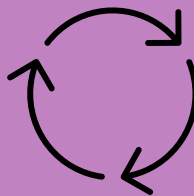


8 board members & sponsors
among which
1 full-time pro-bono director

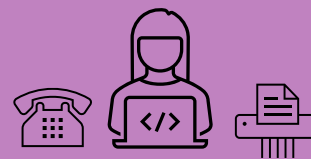


100% SPONSORED INFRASTRUCTURE:

- workspace for day-to-day activities
- meeting room for workshops
- accommodation for visiting activists
courtesy of the Rimer family



reliable network of
volunteers & partners
for events in Switzerland



part-time multi-purpose employee
augmented by qualified interns
& volunteer professionals



Our work in Geneva

Hosting interesting guests!

Throughout 2021, we had the pleasure of having several interesting visits which were very eye-opening and educational:

❖ Yael Treidel

The end of June and all of July were punctuated by pleasant surprises! Indeed, we were nicely surprised and much honored by a visit from Women Wage Peace activist, Yael Treidel. The stars aligned in our favor: by pure coincidence, our friend, the Parisian film director Hanna Assouline, came to Geneva the very same day as Yael! Hanna directed an inspiring documentary, which was partially funded by B8 of Hope: [Les Guerrières de la Paix](#), which features one of our grantee movements: **Women Wage Peace (WWP)**. The movement unites thousands of Israeli women from all walks of life. These women work hard to prevent hostility while promoting a non-violent, respectful, and mutually agreed upon solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



We took full advantage of this fortunate coincidence by organizing an impromptu casual gathering that allowed a group of women from our local community of donors and supporters to meet Yael and Hanna. Co-founders David and Mehra Rimer hosted the small event at their house. Yael elaborated upon WWP's activities during last spring's tensions and peaks of violence, while Hanna shared her experiences as a filmmaker back in 2017 when she shadowed WWP's courageous women as they went about their daily activism leading up to the huge march. Yael and Hanna were greeted and welcomed by a warm audience of women from our B8 of Hope Genevan community. What a pure moment of joy and compassion to start the summer!



❖ Saskia Keeley

Another surprise visit that warmed our hearts came from Saskia Keeley, a New York-based Swiss photo-activist with whom B8 of Hope regularly collaborates. In the US, as well as in Israel and Palestine, Saskia runs [photography workshops](#) that strive to bridge divides and foster healing. Saskia also sits on the board of the American Friends of the organization **Roots / Judur / Shorashim**, which is one of our grantees. Catching up and comparing notes with Saskia is very useful for understanding how our respective groups can more efficiently support Roots.

❖ Debate for Peace

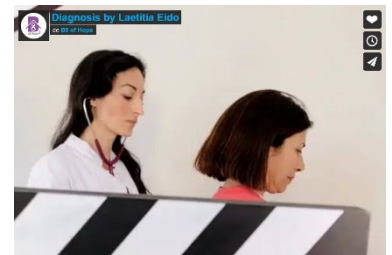
In July, we also received a delightful visit from a delegation of 12 high-school students and their teacher, Summar Farraj. Coming from Maghar, a town in the North of Israel, the group visited us at our B8 of Hope workspace. *"Maghar is an interesting place that encompasses elements of a Druze, Muslim, and Christian town within a Jewish majority country"*, explained Shmuel Aiello, who organized the trip and



is the founder of **Debate for Peace**. Debate for Peace brings together Arab and Jewish students from Palestinian cities and over 70 cities and towns in Israel. Once together, students participate in Model United Nations conferences where they debate, negotiate and attempt to resolve the most difficult and pressing challenges the international community faces. It was incredibly uplifting to welcome this delegation of young, dynamic teenagers from Maghar, and learn about their lives in this unique city. In return, they were given the opportunity to learn about B8 of Hope's work.

❖ Laetitia Eido

The most unexpected visit this summer came from French-Lebanese actress Laetitia Eido, also known as "Dr Shirin" from the Israeli TV series Fauda! For all of you Fauda fans, Dr Shirin is still alive and well! She examined our chairwoman Mehra Rimer at our B8 of Hope office: her diagnosis was devastating!!! [Click here](#) to watch. Shooting this clip was so much fun! Many thanks to Laetitia for her friendship and for playing along with this funny skit idea!



❖ Jean-Daniel Ruch



Later in the fall, we had the immense honor of hosting his Excellency Jean-Daniel Ruch, former ambassador of Switzerland to Israel for a dinner in Geneva. Ambassador Ruch has been incredibly supportive of B8 Of Hope throughout his time in Tel-Aviv. It was great seeing him after all this – Covid – time. His support of B8 of Hope has had a true impact and our pool of Israeli and Palestinian grantees in the region will sorely miss him – so will we!

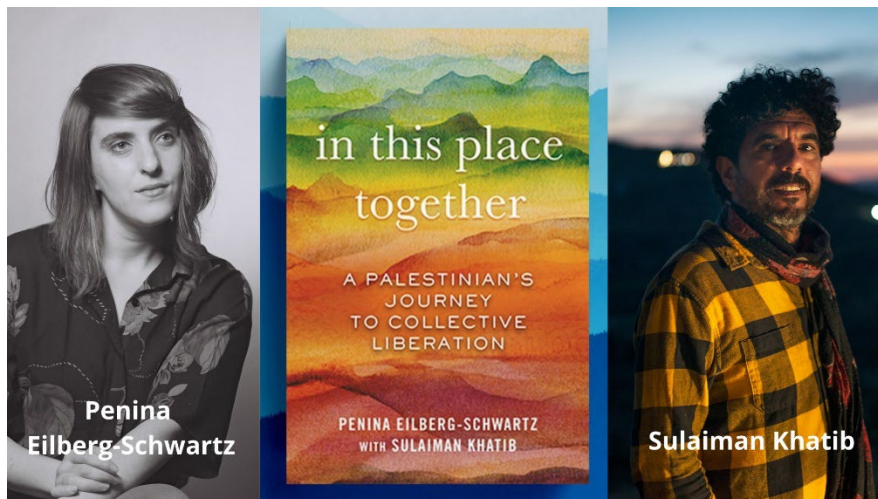
In this picture: B8 of Hope co-founders Arun Chandrasekharan, Luc Fayon, Leila Hawa, Mehra Rimer and ambassador Jean-Daniel Ruch.

We wished him all the best for his new post in Turkey!

Hybrid and in person events

Despite the ever-changing Covid restrictions, we were extremely lucky to be able to hold several hybrid and in-person events in Geneva:

❖ Co-Hosting of the online launch of “In This Place Together”



“Next time someone asks you if there’s still hope for justice and peace in Israel and Palestine, just hand them this book!” says journalist and political commentator Peter Beinart about this powerful book on Soulaيمان’s story. Sulaiman, also known as Souli, is one of the co-founders of our grantee movement **Combatants for Peace**.

B8 of Hope acted upon Peter Beinart’s suggestion. We got our stash of the book from ICAM – L’Olivier, our favorite bookstore in Geneva. We also co-hosted a “Meet the Authors” online event organized by the American Friends of Combatants for Peace on May 27th 2021.

❖ The Jerusalem Youth Chorus online Gala party

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

As a reminder: From October to December 2020, B8 of Hope collaborated with the Geneva-based initiative **Philanthropic Adventures**. Together we facilitated a



workshop about peace philanthropy for a small group of high schoolers at the B8 of Hope workspace in Geneva. The purpose of the workshop was to explore the journey of peace-building through the lens of B8 of Hope whilst learning the skills of philanthropy from 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 democratize 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.”* – Paola Genovese.

❖ B8 of Hope at the Société de Lecture

September ended on a very powerful note and evening at the prestigious Geneva book club: **Société de Lecture** - which we sincerely thank 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 virtually joined us from New York, Jericho and Haifa on the big screen of Société de Lecture's beautiful room. A large audience that was both international and



Genevois was physically present. The panel was brilliantly moderated by Philippe Mottaz, a prominent Swiss journalist and founder of The Geneva Observer. This was an amazing opportunity for B8 of Hope to keep giving visibility to incredible people-to people initiatives we support such as Rami and Bassam's NGO: **Parents Circle Families Forum (PCFF)**.

❖ The Mid East Storytellers exhibit

Without doubt, one can say that the highlight of the Fall was our Mid East Storytellers exhibition at the Art Center of the International School of Geneva in November.

Some background:

The concept of the Mid East Storytellers was launched in November 2020 by the **Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP)** and **Pendulum Creative Chagency** (a communication agency that focuses on change) in partnership with B8 of Hope. The idea was to create a storytelling platform for Israeli and Palestinian to tell their unique stories. Through a facilitated workshop, B8 of Hope grantees and ALLMEP member representatives were given the opportunity to up-skill their storytelling (via photography). Telling one's story is a powerful tool in conflict zones. It teaches people 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 narratives allows people to understand each other and their respective narratives – a much needed step towards peace!

At the end of 2020, B8 of Hope, ALLMEP and Pendulum implemented the project together and shared the costs of a pilot photo storytelling workshop for peacebuilders. The goal was to introduce participants to a different form of storytelling, to give them new skills, and ultimately to shed light on their endeavors. The two experts in photo storytelling, Noa Urbach and Rom Barnea from Pendulum Creative Chagency, enabled the 15 Israeli and Palestinian participants (all from B8 of Hope and/or ALLMEP pools of grantees/members) to tell their powerful stories with short texts and impactful pictures. On January 21st, a [dedicated website](#) was launched, and a ceremony was held to unveil the exhibit.

The exhibited stories were inspiring. They reflected the voices 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.

In July 2021, we launched the second cohort of the Mid East Storytellers, with ALLMEP and Pendulum. The workshop was improved and slightly different from the 2020 pilot edition. It was again coordinated and facilitated by Pendulum. The workshop explored how to create engaging, action-provoking content that helps peacebuilders inspire and mobilize others to become change-makers. This second cohort of Israeli and Palestinian participants, all members of NGOs and movements supported by ALLMEP and/or B8 of Hope, engaged in several intensive sessions throughout the month to learn how to create videos, photos and texts. In early August, participants teamed up with experienced mentors who helped them to master the creative processes. By the end of August, participants' photo stories were finalized and presented to a distinguished jury who selected the three winning projects.

B8 of Hope in partnership with ALLMEP and Pendulum turned the collection of stories into an exhibition at the **Art Center of Geneva's International School**. The exhibit lasted throughout November and was open to the Geneva public as well as all students of the International school. [Click here](#) to see the pictures of our opening night and watch the short video below!



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

The exhibit will continue in the streets of Geneva in June 2022 and hopefully elsewhere! Stay tuned!

❖ The Tech2Peace and Middle East Entrepreneurs dinner in Geneva

In November, B8 of hope also had the pleasure of hosting **Tech2Peace** and **Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (MEET)**. These two NGOs are focused on peace-building through 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, members of Tech2Peace, came to Switzerland to attend a unique seminar organized by Swiss foundation **Stiftung Urgestein**. The seminar was partly funded by the **Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs** in partnership with B8 of Hope (more details under the Tech2Peace section below). 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.



Right before the start of the seminar in Guggisberg (Canton of Bern), B8 of Hope hosted a dinner in honor of a few members of the cohort, including Tomer Cohen, one of Tech2Peace's co-founders. Two members of another B8 of Hope grantee organization called Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (see MEET section below) were incidentally in Switzerland and also joined the dinner. This was a great opportunity to work on some synergies between the two B8 of Hope grantees and meet B8 of Hope friends and supporters. Yachar Nafissi-Azar, Head of

the Middle-East and North Africa Peace section at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs was also present. Throughout the years, B8 of Hope has managed to build good relations with Swiss diplomacy.

Listening to the young fellows of both organizations was very refreshing for our guests that night. Rather than being stuck in the past and in their respective narratives, these young Israelis and Palestinians look forward, focusing on the future. Their common ground is entrepreneurship. It is important for them to be in 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.

Interaction with schools in Geneva

❖ Screening of Disturbing the Peace at Institut Florimont

In March, for the third consecutive year, the Parents Association of **Institut Florimont**, a prestigious private high school in Geneva, hosted B8 Of Hope for a screening of **Disturbing the Peace** – a multi-award-winning film about humanization. The film features impressive Israelis and Palestinians who are involved in **Combatants for Peace** (a movement supported by B8 of Hope). These inspiring individuals are agents of change who have paved a path towards a better future in the region.

Stephen Apkon and Marcina Hale, the director and co-producers of the film joined the Q/A session from the United States via Zoom. The quality of questions asked by the students was outstanding! As one student aptly observed: *"Disturbing the Peace is about disturbing one's own peace... about going out of your comfort zone and making change possible"*.

Marcina and Stephen were inspiring, as always. This event also offered an opportunity for the cofounder of B8 of Hope's **Next Generation** youth group and 2021 intern, Jessica Fayon to invite our young audience to learn more about our peace advocacy and our youth philanthropy activities.



❖ Parents Promoting Pedagogy at the International School of Geneva





PARENTS PROMOTING PEDAGOGY

Wednesday 14 April 2021

18:00 - 19:30

Online

<https://meet.google.com/swro-cvbs-bce>

As part of our reflection on what students should be learning in order to thrive in the 21st Century and be actors of change for the betterment of the planet and humanity, the parents of La Grande Boissière are invited to a think tank on education. **The event will be centred on the question of social impact.**

SPEAKERS



Mehra RIMER
Executive Director
of B8 of Hope

**Building peace:
implications for education**



Sach CHANDARIA
Investor and
entrepreneur

**Social Entrepreneurship
and educational values**



Marietta SENKATUKA MUWANGA
Chief Information Officer
& Director of IT at the
International Organisation
for Migration

**Migration in the
21st century and
educational challenges**

In April, B8 of Hope took part in the **Geneva International School (Ecolint)**'s Parents Promoting Pedagogy evening of the LGB campus, where we talked about peacebuilding and its implications for education.

Our chair and co-founder Mehra Rimer gave a talk about our educational role in Geneva and the range of activities we organize in different schools and universities.

❖ Workshop for a students group of the International School of Geneva at the B8 of Hope work-space

In May, in spite of the violence on the ground, our activities continued in Geneva. We hosted a group of students from the LGB campus of the **Geneva International School (Ecolint)** who were learning about the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the novel *Birds of a Kind* by Wajdi Mouawad which they read in their literature class.

Their teacher, Mrs Hortensia Cid thought that it would be a great opportunity to expose her students to our work.



Two of B8 of Hope's Co-founders, Karim and David, who are alumni of Ecolint - LGB campus made a presentation about our work. They also shared the story of their friendship - as a Canadian Jew and a Palestinian Muslim - growing up together in Geneva in the 1980s and how that had an impact on leading them to join forces and co-found B8 of Hope at a later stage in their lives.

❖ Webinar at the International School of Geneva

A poster for a webinar titled "REFLECTION ON PEACE" by Ecolint Alumni Karim and David, co-founders of B8 of Hope. The poster features a photo of the two men on stage. Text on the poster includes "A dialogue for and with students", "TUESDAY 25 MAY 2021", "09h45 - 10h30", and a video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ybu-cieo-sgs>. The B8 of Hope logo is in the top right corner.

In June, our co-founders Karim and David were invited to participate in a virtual gathering with the students of **Geneva International School (Ecolint)** - La Châtaigneraie campus. For our two co-founders, who are childhood friends and former students of Ecolint, it is very important to spread the message of B8 of Hope among the youth and encourage them not to fall prey to the trap of polarization that is promoted through the media.

The workshop impacted some of the students in a very deep way. Three of them decided to participate in a sponsored cycling competition around Lake Geneva, in order to raise funds for B8 of Hope. They also showed interest in joining our **Next Generation** youth group! A heartfelt thank you to Yaniv, Oliver and Luca for this fantastic initiative and their interest in B8 of Hope.

The launch of our B8 of Hope Next Generation youth group

Continuing on the theme of education and youth, Spring brought the launch of B8 of Hope's **Next Generation** youth group by Jessica Fayon, Ilona Métais, Noa Golan and Yara Amayra who form its steering committee.

B8 of Hope Next Generation is a dream come true! Since 2019, B8 of Hope has been in touch with young and brilliant students from Switzerland and from around the world. At some point they have all interacted with B8 of Hope, whether by volunteering, interning, or getting involved with our initiatives. They all want to stay in touch with us and we want to stay in touch with them: they are our ambassadors in their circles and campuses. The idea of B8 of Hope Next Generation was born out of this deep mutual relationship.

Jessica took the initiative of implementing the concept of the Next Generation with Ilona, our first ever intern who is now based in Canada. Noa and Yara, the Israeli and Palestinian protagonists of Hanna Assouline's documentary [Les Guerrières de la Paix](#) (Warriors for Peace) also got involved. Both Noa and Yara had come to Geneva as keynote speakers on the occasion of our screening of the film in 2018 and our Gala in 2019. B8 of Hope has developed special bonds with these two young peace activists. Our chairwoman, Mehra Rimer, visited them and met their respective families several times on the ground. Since Noa and Yara are the same age as the target audience of the youth group, and are both very inspiring and motivated, it made perfect sense for them to be included in the leadership of the Next Generation!



The amazing steering committee of Next Generation runs its own activities in an autonomous way – which you can learn more about below. Towards the end of 2021, A wonderful newcomer has also joined the team to give them a hand - taking this opportunity to welcome Noa Welling!

The B8 of Hope Next Generation network consists of 30+ brilliant and highly educated students and young professional graduates of universities in Europe and North America. Their common ground: they are all interested in peace-building and conflict resolution. B8 Next Generation's goal is to introduce this pool of outstanding young people to one another, create a network of like-minded young peace advocates, and assure them that they can be agents of change, even - and especially - at their young age. They ensure the continuity of B8 of Hope's work! [Click here](#) for more information.

Activities of the Next Generation from April 2021 until December 2021:

❖ April

Online Launch of Next Generation!



❖ May

Yara and Noa spoke to their fellow members and shared their feelings and thoughts during that month's tragic and violent conflict which erupted in the Holy Land. It was also an opportunity for the young members of B8 of Hope Next Generation to grasp the complexities of the situation and to watch Hanna Assouline's documentary [Les Guerrières de la Paix](#) (Warriors for Peace), in which Yara and Noa are the protagonists.

❖ September

After a short break during the summer, the steering committee welcomed back B8 of Hope Next Generation's members through an online session. A few newcomers joined too!

This kick-off session started by a short introduction of Next Generation's goals and plans for 2021-2022, followed by a Storytelling Exchange Workshop led by **Narrative 4**.

The goal of the workshop was to expand knowledge of Narrative 4 and experience the power of N4's core story exchange methodology - and of course, to get to know each other!

Narrative 4 is a global nonprofit that harnesses the power of story exchange to equip and embolden young adults, in order to improve their lives, communities, and the world. N4 is a leader in the fields of empathy and education, using their trademark story exchange to navigate and heal our divided world.

B8 of Hope's Next Generation were invited to tell a story about a meaningful moment when they were confronted with a piece of their identity. The session was very powerful and emotional – bringing the participants of the workshop closer together.

❖ October

B8 of Hope's Next Generation was invited to join a **Combatants for Peace (CFP)** webinar. The session was about CFP's mobilization to raise awareness on the issue of the lack of Palestinian access to water in the West Bank. For Palestinian villagers of Area C in the West Bank, access to water is submitted to complex restrictions, due to the status of this area. Combatants for Peace alongside other B8 of Hope grantees like **Standing Together** have been leading a humanitarian water campaign to counter what they consider an unfair situation. This session was an opportunity for our youth group to learn about the complexities on the ground.

❖ November

The B8 of Hope Next Generation members had the opportunity to attend an online Creative Negotiation Skills workshop led by **Pathways Institute for Negotiation Education**.

Thanks to a B8 of Hope sponsorship, 16 students & young professionals from the network signed up and sharpened their negotiation and problem-solving skills. They also learned more about Pathways' bridge-building approach and their pedagogical philosophy.



Pathways was launched in 2015 as an independent nonprofit organization in Israel and Belgium. Their mission is to help nurture problem-solving, cooperative, and shared societies in which people from different backgrounds and communities have the skills and sense of possibility needed to creatively and constructively negotiate challenging issues with one another. Its goal is to bring negotiation into educational systems and to build bridges between diverse communities. Their ongoing and expanding work is based on a 3-year pilot program developed by Dr. Shula Gilad (Harvard Law School) and Dr. Rachel Tal (Amal) based on methodology developed at the **Harvard Negotiation Project**.

❖ December



Finally, the Canadian chapter of the B8 of Hope Next Generation had a surprise visit from chairwoman Mehra Rimer who took advantage of a personal trip to Montreal to meet with them. A heartfelt Thank You to Alexandra for hosting the get together!

❖ Miscellaneous opportunities!

Being part of the Next Generation also exposes its members to different unique opportunities!

One of the members, Alexandra Merguerian, a Belgian MA student who is developing a research project relating to peace activism got to interview another member Noa Grandchamp about her experience in the West Bank while shadowing Mehra Rimer on the ground. Noa was a photography student back then and is now working as a photographer and photo-activist. [Click here](#) to watch her zoom interview.

Noa Grandchamp and Laura Wohlwend, young actress, playwright, and director got to serve as mentors in the **Mid East Storytellers project**.

Moritz Haegi, PhD Student at the University of Basel got to participate in **Tech2Peace's** seminar in Guggisberg (Canton of Bern).

Our Internship program

Since 2019 B8 of Hope has offered internship opportunities to university students. We've had 5 interns so far: Matthew Brooks Fleet (Graduate Institute Geneva (IHEID)), Ilona Métails (Mc Gill University), Parker Brian (Wesleyan University) and Destiny Spruill (Columbia University) and finally, Jessica Fayon (Regent's University). Jessica, our latest intern, learned about peacebuilding while becoming familiar with each of our grantees' activities and activists. She acquired first-hand information through direct online interactions with the Israeli – Palestinian peacebuilding ecosystem. Having a bachelor's degree in communications, Jessica improved our website and presence on social media. Jessica also co-founded and led our B8 of Hope **Next Generation** youth group.

A few interesting trips despite Covid

❖ Luxembourg and a peace prize in May

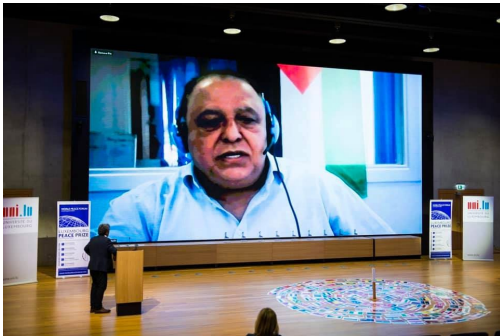
Even though we were still heavy hearted due to the tragic events that took place in Israel and Palestine earlier in the Spring, we received great news about one of our organizations. In May, one of our grantees, **A Land for All - Two States, One Homeland (ALFA)** won the **Luxembourg Peace Prize**!

Months ago, we had submitted the candidacy of ALFA to the prestigious Luxembourg Peace Prize. ALFA won the category of Outstanding Peace Support. The prize is sponsored by the **Schengen Peace Foundation** which is committed to contribute to "the construction of a more peaceful world by promoting peace, tolerance and understanding". The ceremony was held on Friday



28th of May. Chrystelle Thiébaud and Mehra Rimer went to the ceremony which took place at the University of Luxembourg. Meron Rapoport, the Israeli co-founder of ALFA managed to travel and collect the prize. He was joined by one of the Palestinian members of ALFA, Nasri Barghouti, who joined virtually.

Together they delivered a very powerful speech:



“A Land for All was founded by Israelis and Palestinians living between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea, and here is where change must take place. The last events only strengthen our belief that we are on the right path. They proved that the policy of “managing the conflict” has failed and that Palestinians and Israelis living all over this land cannot be separated and, therefore, the road to peace and reconciliation passes through real and tangible equality and partnership.

Following the tragic events in May, it is the time to build a new vision, and voices of those wishing for a just future based on mutual respect and dignity should be loud and clear.”

❖ London in September

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

Both activists navigate their work in pursuit of peace between the UK and the Holy Land. Obada gave the latest update on his organization’s activities (see link to clip [here](#)) whilst Uri filled us in on the impact that Tech2peace webinars had on their summer (see link to clip [here](#)).

We managed to organize a very last minute yet very successful dinner at our favorite Ottolenghi restaurant ROVI, where both peace-builders were invited to join a group of our London friends. The evening will undoubtedly turn our friends into future supporters as they listened to the two admirable change-makers who gave them plenty of food for thought.

❖ Paris and Washington DC in the fall

In the month of September, our chairwoman Mehra Rimer made a stop in Paris, where she reconnected with key people in order to revive the hope for future events in Paris. The highlight of the Paris trip was a meeting with John Lyndon, the Executive Director of the **Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP)**. At B8 of Hope, we encourage synergies and collaborations among members of our pool of grantees. This commitment is something we regularly work on with ALLMEP, comparing notes and even partnering on 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. After over a decade of advocacy in the United States, 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 five years to projects that support peacebuilding, Palestinian economic development and cross-border 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.



In Washington DC, Mehra also took the opportunity to connect with Kevin Rachlin, Vice President of Public Affairs at **J Street** – an important Jewish organization which works alongside the American political system, as well as, with the Jewish-American community. J Street advocates for diplomacy-first American leadership and policies that advance justice, equality, peace, and democracy in Israel, in the region and in the United States.

❖ Los Angeles in December



During her fall trip to North America, Mehra also went to Los Angeles where she got to meet associates of **Capital Group Companies (CGC)** – an asset management firm where she and her husband and co-founder of B8 of Hope, David, both used to work in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Some of Mehra and David's former CGC colleagues in Geneva were very supportive of B8 of Hope on a personal level. Upon their

recommendation, the CGC's faith associates' Jewish, Muslim and Christian faith communities - Chaverim, Salam and Christian Life - organized a webinar for David and Mehra, on the 21st of September, on the occasion of International Peace Day, so to hear more about B8 of Hope and the involvement of their two former colleagues David and Mehra in the Swiss peace-building non-profit. This webinar was a first-time collaboration between the three faith communities and gave a large group of CGC associates from all over the world insight into our work, as well as generating new donations matched by the company. We are very grateful for this fantastic opportunity to spread our message and raise funds. The meeting in Los Angeles with CGC associates and members of the three faith groups was an opportunity to deepen the relations and to network with friends, including the **Young President Association (YPO)** chapter in California.



Our podcast program with The Spot

In the summer of 2020, we launched B8 of Hope: The Podcast, produced by **The Spot Podcast Factory**. Our Podcast program is dedicated to the stories of Palestinian and Israeli members of the pool of initiatives we support.

The Spot Podcast Factory is a hybrid space dedicated to urban culture; half gallery (in Geneva), half podcast factory. A heartfelt thank you goes out to Omar and Thibault for the many hours dedicated, on a pro-bono basis, to recording, editing and producing our four episodes (two in 2020 and two in 2021).

In April 2021, the third episode of our B8 of Hope Podcast series was released! It focused on a wonderful friendship between two women, a Palestinian and an Israeli who united in their struggle against breast cancer. Their real enemy is cancer – not the “other”.

In November, our fourth episode was finalized. It is an interview of A Land For All/Two States One Homeland representatives Nasri Barghouti and Meron Rapoport, the laureates of the Luxembourg Peace Prize.

[Click here](#) to listen to the episodes on your preferred podcast platform.

Statements and interviews in harsh times

In mid-May our world turned upside down. We are used to regular frictions, tensions and cycles of violence breaking out every now and then on the ground. This time the magnitude of the violence was huge and deep – and it took us by surprise. The violence first broke out in Jerusalem – and sadly and gradually spread all over the region. The work of the civil society and grassroots Israeli and Palestinian peace-builders and change-makers supported by B8 of Hope was faced with a big challenge and yet proved to be more important and relevant than ever!

Although the situation invited anger, B8 of Hope was not discouraged. On the contrary, our message for dialogue and bridge-building, and our support to our pool of courageous grantee organizations and movements made even more sense!

Here is the message we sent out to the world:

“In these tragic and difficult times, we at B8 of Hope are heartbroken. We empathize with everyone who suffers from the escalation of violence in the Middle East. The war, violence, racism, hatred and fear in the streets all feel like a dagger in our hearts. We are also dismayed at the polarization on social media.

We present our deepest condolences to all those who have lost a loved one and send our wishes for a prompt recovery to those who have been wounded. We send our empathy to all those whose heart is bleeding.

At B8 of Hope, with all our strength, we reject what is happening in this moment and refuse to be instrumentalized by warmongers. Our long-term goal is peace and dignity.

At our modest and humble apolitical Swiss small NGO level, we will hence persevere on the path for peace and non-violence and double up our relentless support to the Israeli and Palestinian civil society change-makers and peace-seekers who refuse to be enemies and keep paving a path for an end to the war, and a just and non-violent coexistence of all people of the Holy Land based on equality, dignity and security for all.

The grassroots movements on the ground are not giving up and we will not either.

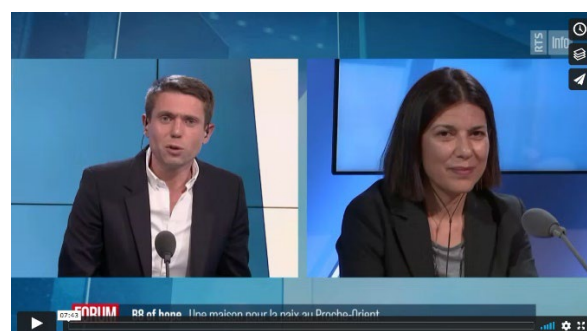
We stand in solidarity with all the courageous agents of change from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea and we urge our B8 of Hope community of friends and supporters to continue to engage in critical thinking as well as honest, respectful and constructive conversations.

If you care about the Holy Land, if you care about peace and the work we do and in which you invest: send us positive messages that we can share with our activists on the ground - people of the same land and same heart.”

The Israeli and Palestinian peace-building/change making community rallied to stand against the violence, dehumanization and instrumentalization by either side! We were proud to stand by them. Their work is never easy and is so important during these particularly difficult times.

Thankfully a cease-fire was finally announced. However, anger and sadness did not stop with the ceasefire, nor does the eternal status quo of the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. People’s mindsets will not change by the wave of a magic wand. After this traumatic May 2021 episode, trust and hope needs to be restored, more than ever, and there is a lot of work ahead. Standing together with “the other” does not mean you forget the pain. It only means that you are courageous enough to go out of your comfort zone and choose to find partners in building a future based on equal rights, dignity and security for all. Many peace-builders and ordinary people in the Holy Land chose the path of peace during the peak of violence that month! Sadly, it barely made the news. Please [click here](#) to see some heartwarming pictures to which we would like to give visibility.

Throughout these tensions B8 of Hope finally got attention from the media. Our Chair and co-founder Mehra Rimer was interviewed by France 24 in May during the peak of the violence in the region and later in June by the Swiss Radio and Television network about the situation.



Synergies efforts

2021 started and ended with Synergy building efforts!

In January, we welcomed the new year by reconnecting with all of our grantees. Our on-going contact and ability to stay in touch with the change-makers on the ground is what makes us unique as philanthropists and peace advocates. We are not a remote organization that simply transfers monetary funds: we care, we follow, and we advise. We keep abreast of all the on-going changes, challenges and good news on the ground. Synergy is a keyword in our B8 of Hope vocabulary. We work with peace-philanthropists outside of the Israel-Palestine region as well as our grantees. We suggest to our grantees to collaborate with each other by sharing their best practices. We encourage them to brainstorm shared challenges and offer mutual support when it makes sense. These small interactions often result in a huge difference! During our January virtual meeting, our grantee NGOs and movements were represented by one or several members. One purpose of this meeting was to examine conclusions drawn from the B8 of Hope evaluation survey. Launched in the summer of 2020, our “360 degree” survey evaluated the impact we have on our grantees and peers as well as our followers and supporters in Switzerland. We highlighted potential areas for improvement and proposed plans for development.

During this virtual gathering, we informed grantees of our fund-raising and fund-granting plans for 2021. Covid-19 restrictions forced the cancellation of this year’s fund-raising gala in Geneva, but we reassured everyone that we would do our best to find new ways to raise the funds necessary to maintain our support of their on-going projects. Continuity is crucial for keeping the same level of productivity (offered virtually and increasingly in person) and the same quality of workshops and activities.

To watch our video about our grantees, click on the picture below!



Throughout 2021, 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 and Amal-Tikva are 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 piloted an unprecedented umbrella crowdfunding in December. A dozen NGOs and movements (mainly from B8 of Hope's pool of grantees) participated. 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. Our role as capacity-builders is also about helping them finding ways of funding their activities and scaling them up by themselves. More than half a million USD were raised!



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

Creative ways of fund-raising

Despite the challenge of not being able to have our gala, one-on-one meetings with our donors allowed us to continue raising funds.

We were also nicely surprised by the initiative of one of our supporters who 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 your wedding, or if you would like to honor someone's memory, please refer to [this page of our website](#) for more information.

Building a Home (B8) of Hope

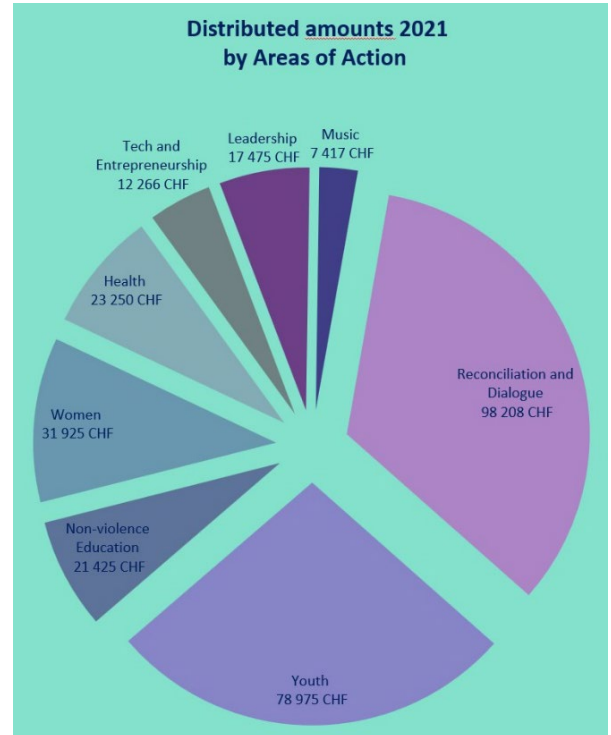
Our Grantees and Areas of Action on the Ground

Our funds come from private donors from the Arab and the Jewish diasporas in Geneva, as well as international expats and Swiss locals.

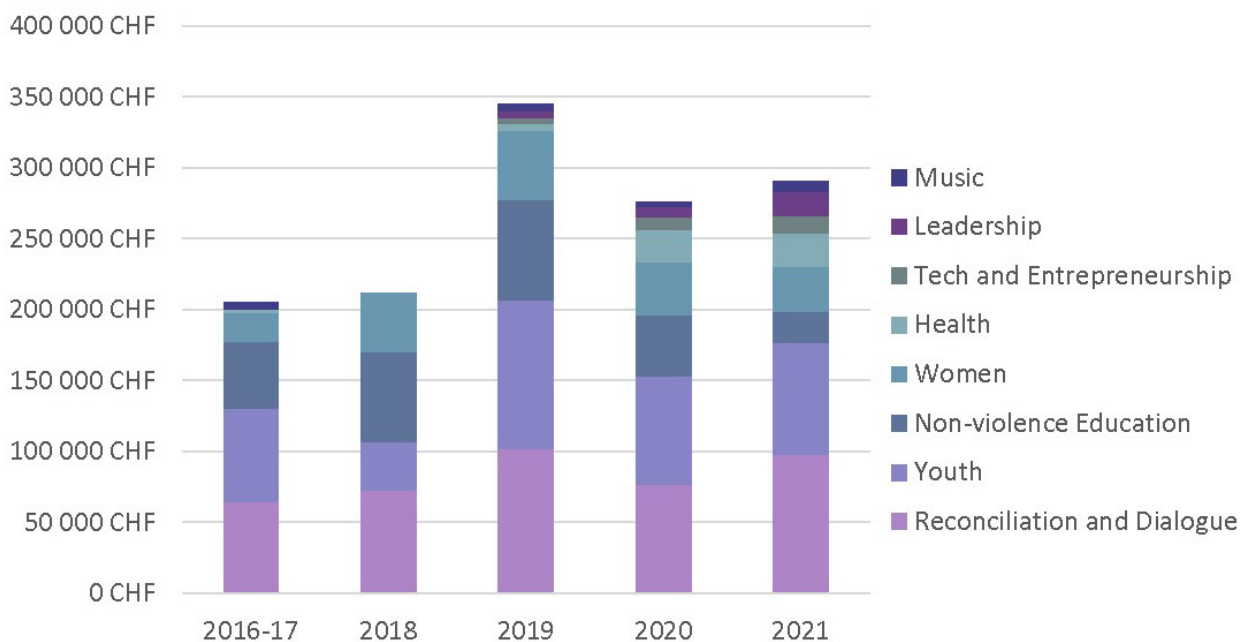
The funds serve the activities and projects of a pool of NGOs and movements, striving towards a better future for Israelis and Palestinians.

Each of our grantees has different approaches and angles. They all matter and complete one another.

The diversity of our pool of grantees shows the inspiring dynamics of the peace community and its importance.



Areas of Actions 2016-2021



Our support to our grantees on the ground

A Land for All - Two States, One Homeland

A Land For All - Two States, One Homeland was founded by a diverse group of Israelis and Palestinians, from ordinary citizens over lawyers to geographers and intellectuals. They sat together to think “out of the box” and move towards more just, up-to-date and realistic alternative to the traditional two-state solution: two sovereign states with an emphasis on freedom of movement between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean sea, as well as the establishment and the implementation of joint institutions within the framework of a confederation.

What appeals to us about this initiative is the fact that Israelis and Palestinians work together towards a common vision for the future - a vision for all people, paving a path towards peaceful and sustainable co-existence.

This year was not a time fit for celebrations. All those who believe that Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and equality together were extremely shocked by the violence we witnessed in May.

Yet in those harsh days B8 of Hope was proud that ALFA won the Luxembourg Peace Prize in the category of [Outstanding Peace Support](#). **We had nominated them to the prize in 2020, as part of our efforts to promote inspiring initiatives and give them more visibility internationally.** The prize is sponsored by the Schengen Peace Foundation which is committed to contribute to "the construction of a more peaceful world by promoting peace, tolerance and understanding."

This prize represents the growing recognition in the importance of the ideas and the activity of ALFA. [The Guardian published an op-ed](#) by Meron Rapoport, a co-founder of the movement, in support of a confederative solution to the conflict, based on equal personal and national rights for all those living in this land, Palestinians and Israelis. **Throughout 2021, B8 of Hope also supported ALFA financially so that that they could run their activities and have administrative support. Our funds were also partly dedicated to one crucial workshop in Beit Jala in the West Bank.**

2021 was a year of consolidation and renewal for A Land for All in Israel, Palestine and abroad. A Land for All made headways in the international arena not only by winning the Luxembourg Peace Prize, but also by participating in the opening session of the J-Street annual conference and taking part in many international virtual discussions. ALFA also partnered with the formation of Americans for Israel Palestine Confederation – an organization that promotes its ideas in the US among decision makers, think tanks and the press.

In Israel, ALFA was involved with the formation of a research group on Peace Through Sharing at the Van Leer institute in Jerusalem. It was also at the center of an intense discussion on the pros and cons of the confederation model in the Israeli press and held a live event with 70 participants among them MP members, leading journalists and prominent figures from the civil society.

In the Palestinian territories in the West Bank, ALFA has witnessed the consolidation of an active group which held several meetings with dozens of participants, elected a new board, recruited new members, many of them young and women, and built new partnership within the Palestinian civil society thanks to B8 of Hope's synergy building efforts among the pool of initiatives we support.

Combatants for peace

In 2006, Israeli ex-soldiers and former Palestinian combatants laid down their weapons and established **Combatants for Peace (CFP)** on the basis of non-violence principles. The movement – an egalitarian, bi-national, grassroots organization – was founded on the belief that the vicious cycle of violence can only be broken when Israelis and Palestinians join forces.

For over a decade, Combatants for Peace have embodied and served as a model for the humanistic values of freedom, democracy, security and dignity for all. Through joint nonviolence actions today, they lay the foundations for a nonviolent future.

Among the many activities of Combatants for Peace, this year, we supported their Joint Memorial Ceremony and their Water Campaign.

The Joint Memorial Ceremony

B8 of Hope is particularly inspired by the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Memorial Ceremony, which is held during Israeli Memorial Day. It is led by Combatants for Peace in collaboration with another B8 of Hope grantee: the **Parents Circle**

The movement has also greatly strengthened the cohesion between its Palestinian and Israeli members by holding a two-day seminar in Beit Jala (**sponsored by B8 of Hope**) with the participation of 40 activists who discussed how to reinforce ALFA as a joint organization and how to improve its impact on both societies.

Families Forum, which unites more than 600 bereaved families from both sides of the conflict who grieve together and build bridges through their sorrow to pave a path towards a better future for the next generations. The Joint Memorial Ceremony is about togetherness, reconciliation and hope. This year, despite the challenging pandemic, the ceremony was held partly in hybrid form (more about it under Parents Circle Families Forum section). It went VIRAL again this year with 250 000 viewers! Back in 2006, only 50 participants gathered for this event. Every year, the numbers increased. In 2019, the number of participants grew to 9'000 in the Yarkon Park in Tel Aviv, and in 2020 170'000 people joined online and broke the record with a huge increase in attendance! [Read the New York Times' article.](#)

B8 Of Hope co-sponsored the ceremony, contributing to the technical costs. While for many Israelis and Palestinians the concept of a joint ceremony is controversial and potentially painful, B8 of Hope considers this event a harbinger of a brighter future.

The Water Campaign

The Combatants for Peace water campaign is another activity we supported this year. One of our approaches to peace building is to address basic needs. When basic needs aren't met, it is impossible to expect people to engage in bridge-building and dialogue initiatives.

While the World Health Organization recommends 100 liters per day per person for personal and domestic use, Palestinian consumption per person in the West Bank is less than 90 liters per day per person, and in Area C it even drops to 20 liters per day.

Area C is an administrative division of the West bank determined by the Oslo Accords. It represents about 61 percent of the territory. It is home to approximately 300,000 Palestinians. It is also populated by Israeli settlement. The Jewish population in Area C is administered by the Israeli administration, whereas the Palestinian population is directly administered by the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories. The Palestinian Authority is responsible for medical and educational services to Palestinians in Area C, however infrastructure, construction and water distribution is under the responsibility and control of Israeli authorities. Some Palestinian communities have very limited access to water.

The situation is most dire in dozens of localities in the south Hebron Hills and in the Jordan Valley. These villages do not have access to running water, nor are they permitted to collect rainwater; therefore, they are forced to buy water from expensive water tanks year-round. Delivery costs to these localities are particularly high due to poor access.

Combatants for Peace is committed to putting an end to this situation by campaigning. Their

Water campaign made headline news throughout Israel and Palestine. CFP activists were even invited to testify in front of the Knesset. They also raised funds to purchase and convey water tanks for several families in the Southern Hebron Hills.

One of their water campaign activities – combining campaigning with water delivery took place on Saturday October 2nd. Israeli and Palestinian peace activists from CFP joined by many several other organizations, such as **Standing Together** (which is also part of the pool supported by B8 of Hope) mobilized hundreds of people and marched peacefully to raise awareness on the issue of Palestinians' access to water in Area C in the West Bank.



The convoy included a water tank for a particularly vulnerable family in the Southern Hebron hills. **B8 of Hope supported the costs of this water tank (and several others), busses and signs.** Peace-building is also about seeing the reality of the “other” and striving for change. The activists also started building five water catchment systems for shepherding families in the Jordan Valley.



Photos credit: Combatants for Peace

Green Land Society for Health Development

Green Land Society for Health Development (GLSHD) is a Palestinian non-governmental, non-profit organization established in Khalil / Hebron. Its aim is to improve health and environmental conditions, in addition to raising the level of preparedness for disaster response, through awareness campaigns, research, and the provision of health and environmental services in areas of need in the West Bank.

Improving living conditions, including access to medical services, is a pillar of B8 of Hope's approach to peace-building. **B8 of Hope usually focuses on one specific activity of this organization: the transportation of Palestinian patients (referred by the Palestinian Ministry of Health) to receive treatment in Israeli hospitals.** These patients are transported by means of a home-hospital-home service facilitated by a network of GLSHD volunteers, in cooperation with Israel-based volunteers. The costs of gas used by the volunteers is what we cover.

However, this year our focus at GLSHD has shifted. The organization had a wonderful donation by generous donors in the West Bank:

a piece of land that can be developed into a very useful and much needed facility. GLSHD is planning on erecting a building for rehabilitation specialists. This a joint educational activity; GLSHD gets the best Israeli instructors to teach 20 therapists a course in highly specialized rehabilitation.

The facility will also house an environmental educational center. The educational center is a joint project with the Ariel Sharon environmental educational center in Tel-Aviv. This educational center is made for pupils in schools to come and learn about joint environmental challenges – challenges that are local, regional, and international.

B8 of Hope is partly funding this project and our funds will help dismantle the classes and caravans (in the current rented location), transport them, rebuild them, make excavations, link electricity, water, and internet, and reframe the center.

The project will be finalized in 2022. Hopefully we will be able to share a picture with our logo in one of the rooms!

Jerusalem Youth Chorus

The **Jerusalem Youth Chorus (JYC)** is a choral and dialogue program for Palestinian and Israeli youth in Jerusalem. It provides a space for these young people from East and West Jerusalem to grow together in song and dialogue. Through the joint creation of music and the sharing of

stories, JYC empowers youth in Jerusalem to speak and sing their truths, as they become leaders in their communities and inspire singers and listeners around the world to work for peace, justice, inclusion, and equality.

The community built by the Jerusalem Youth Chorus is strong. Their singers take the lessons learnt in the JYC and share them widely, with friends, family, and classmates, inviting peers to see their rehearsals, parents to see their concerts, and sometimes even publicly challenging authority figures to see things from a different perspective.

As a performing ensemble, they seek to amplify their impact even further through local and international performances and media coverage. The Jerusalem Youth Chorus has been featured on the Late Show with Stephen Colbert, as well as in the New York Times, on the BBC, on PBS, in Haaretz, Alhurra, and more than 100 other news outlets. They have recorded with multiplatinum Israeli artist and peace activist David Broza in Jerusalem and with Duran Duran in London. [Their viral music video, “Home”](#), with YouTube superstar Sam Tsui, has amassed over 400,000 views. They have toured through Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, as well as Switzerland and have performed at venues as prestigious as the United Nations in Geneva and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. They were also a featured ensemble at the Yale International Choral Festival.

Most importantly, they regularly perform in Jerusalem, joining forces with other organizations working for peace, justice, and equality, and also reaching out to those who

have never even considered that something like this possible, let alone beautiful.

This year B8 of Hope sponsored their Global Gala Concert in September and we hosted a watch party for the event at our B8 of Hope workspace. The concert was a great success. For those who might have missed the Gala concert, [here is the link to watch it.](#)



In 2021, as part of their music and dialogue program, the Jerusalem Youth Chorus ran a collaborative song-writing workshop which included recording and creating music videos of original songs written collaboratively by the chorus members in each of the two dialogue groups.

Thanks to the funds raised through B8 of Hope in partnership with the Geneva based association [Philanthropic Adventures](#), the Jerusalem Youth Chorus released their first music video that closed the concert: [Kama Tudeen Tudan \(Karma\)](#).

Judur/Shorashim/Roots

[Judur/Shorashim/Roots](#) is a joint grassroots initiative in the West Bank led by Israelis from Gush Etzion and Palestinians from the area of Beit Umar. This year Roots expanded their activities to the Jordan Valley. Roots is about

fostering a grassroots movement of understanding, nonviolence, and transformation among Israelis and Palestinians.

It is based on the mutual recognition of each people's connection to the land and underpinned by understanding and solidarity in spite of their members ideological differences. Roots' diverse set of activities offers a space where people can take responsibility and challenge the assumptions their communities hold about each other, as well as, building trust and creating a new discourse around the conflict.

This year was a challenging one. During the violence and tensions of the month of May, a friend of the Palestinian youth from the Jordan Valley chapter was killed by live bullets at a protest. Roots worked on showing solidarity for the group.

The Israeli Roots activists took it upon themselves to follow up on the IDF's investigation of this tragedy. A memorial and vigil organized by members of Roots took place near the location where the group normally meets. All dressed in white, carrying names of children who had been killed in the fighting.



Photos credit: Judur/Shorashim/Roots

It was a very powerful ceremony, of prayer and people sharing their challenge in coming to a shared space.

The tremendous trauma that seized Israeli and Palestinian societies in May was real and palpable. To think that a week before the violence erupted, Roots members were sitting with over 120 Israelis and Palestinians breaking the fast - a Ramadan event also funded by B8 of Hope.

"The breaks and fissures and the questions that many are left with today are critical openings and contain keys to our future work. Roots plans to be there, on the ground trying to shine leverage light and perspective into these cracks." – Shaul Judelman, Israeli co-director of Roots

Among the many activities of Roots (dialogue, interreligious exchange, joint break-fast meals, incident response, prevention of violence escalation etc.), **B8 of Hope focuses on their youth and young adult activities.**

On a more cheerful note, this year, **B8 of Hope supported Roots' annual summer camps** which could resume after the 2020 canceled edition. A week-long experience of photography, crafts, cooking and traditional dances, set the scene for positive interaction between Israeli and Palestinian children.

The summer camp was meant for children aged 5-9 from July 25-29th. It took place in Gush Etzion/Beit Umar at the Karama Center (a true oasis of peace which belong to the Abu Awwad Family and hosts many activities of different peace-building organization).



Photo credit: Judur/Shorashim/Roots

A slew of excited kids and staff (joined by a number of alumni from the Roots Young Adults program) participated in the camp. In addition to the parents and children, there were over 12 providers of workshops (many of them volunteering) who were all touched by the opportunity to work with Israeli and Palestinian youth together.

This week-long day-camp for local Israeli-Palestinian children was a great source of recruitment of new families, maintaining connections with Roots supporters, and a powerful statement to Roots communities about the presence of parents seeking tolerance and peace for their children.



Photo credit: Judur/Shorashim/Roots

Pre-Army Academies

Every year, Roots meets with cohorts of 18-year-old Israelis (about to do their military service). These meetings expose these future soldiers to both the Palestinian and settler narratives. It allows them to build up their understanding of the people they will interact with during their service. For many of these young Israelis, these meetings are the first time they encounter Palestinians from the West Bank. Over 5000 students have met Roots members since 2016, which was the year we started supporting Roots.

In 2021, Roots hosted over thirty groups (2350 16–18-year-old Israelis) and this program is still a core of how Roots is reaching out and affecting thousands of young people. Whether it's the meeting with an Israeli and Palestinian activist together at the Karama Center, or if it's meeting representatives of Roots young adults' program, Roots get constant positive feedback from the participants and directors of these academies.



Photo credit: Judur/Shorashim/Root

Karama Center (Chazon Karama)

Karama is a Palestinian Non-violence center, built on a small piece of land, that belongs to the Abu Awwad family, a family of peace-builders. Ali and Khaled Abu Awwad, two of the brothers, have been involved in different peace-building initiatives for many years. Before setting up the Karama Center, both Ali and Khaled were active members of the Parents Circle Families Forum. Currently Ali is one of the co-leaders of **Taghyeer**, a Palestinian Non-Violence Movement and Khaled is the co-director of **Judur/Shorashim/Roots**.

Karama is located in an agricultural area close to the village of Beit Ummar, near Gush Etzion (in the West Bank Area C, under full Israeli control), a mere 20 minutes away from both Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Karama's location, near a central junction in Area C, allows both Israelis and Palestinians easy access and a safe place to meet. The center is a true oasis of peace hosting inspiring encounters and activities, including those of Judur/Shorashim/Roots.

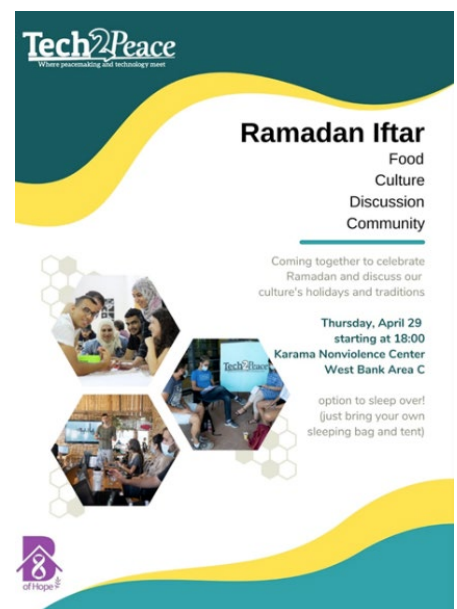
Since 2016, B8 of Hope has been helping to improve the infrastructures and buildings at Karama, by funding the minimal upkeep costs for the center during the episodic closures and dramatic drop in visits. B8 of Hope also funded the legal and administrative costs related to establishing Chazon Karama (Hebrew and Arabic for "Vision of Dignity"), an independent not-for-profit entity which supports and manages the complex administration of the center due to its geographic location. Jean-Marc Liling, our board member and representative on the ground, was closely involved in registering the center as a legal entity with a proper board, management and financial transparency.

In 2021, the activities resumed, and it was very heartwarming to receive news that Karama was up and running again.

What B8 of Hope sponsored at the center this year was two Iftar dinners. Every year Palestinian and Israeli members of Roots celebrate Ramadan together and share a meal. This year, it was sponsored by us. Israeli and Palestinian alumni of **Tech2Peace** also broke bread together on the occasion of an iftar, at the Karama Center!



Photo credit: Tech2Peace



Ali Abu Awwad was also present and welcomed Tech2Peace. Nothing makes us happier at B8 of Hope than seeing interactions between initiatives we support! Synergies will scale up the impact of the individual efforts of our grantees!

Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (MEET)

Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (MEET) is a newcomer in the pool of NGOs and movements supported by B8 of Hope.

MEET brings together promising Israeli and Palestinian high school students for a cutting-edge three-year program. Each cohort consists of equal numbers of young men and women, and Israelis and Palestinians are equally represented. Together, they learn computer science, social entrepreneurship, and leadership skills, in a curriculum crafted with MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), their long-term academic partner.

The goal of MEET is to create a generation of leaders who know how to work across political divides from a young age, to extend MIT's cutting-edge technological education to communities who could not previously access it; to promote STEM education and tech-sector leadership among women and minority groups in Palestine and Israel and finally to inspire their program alumni to create and shape a more just society.



Click on the image above to view it online.

The funds received from B8 of Hope covered the Graduation Ceremony of Year 3 MEET Israeli and Palestinian students.

The event happened on August 15th at the IASA campus in Jerusalem where 76 MEET students – half Palestinians and half Israelis – graduated from the MEET program. The event was attended by students' parents and other family members (siblings, grandparents) – a total of 126 family guests.

At B8 of Hope, we find these social events extremely important: throughout the 3-year MEET program, Israeli and Palestinian high-schoolers learn skills and in the process, they also get to overcome the barriers of stereotypes, fear and mistrust which they have grown up with since they were born.

The beauty of these social events is about including the parents and other family members who get to mingle (something they never do as Israelis and Palestinians in a nice social context). They are there together thanks to their children, celebrating their graduation and being simply parents. This people-to-people opportunity of connection has a truly transformational effect on the hearts and minds.

The families stay in contact and the graduates also remain connected through the Alumni network of MEET throughout their university studies.

Once they are at university or graduate from university and become young professionals, we encourage MEET alumni to join another wonderful program we support: [Tech2Peace](#).

New Story Leadership

New Story Leadership (NSL) New Story Leadership (NSL) is also a newcomer in the pool of NGOs and movements supported by B8 of Hope. This organization focuses on developing a community of leaders and influencers across Palestine and Israel through a 7-week summer program in Washington DC.

Palestinian and Israeli young adults who apply to this program are hosted by “pairs” by of American families and get work-placements in the offices of Representatives and Senators and in other high-level organizations. Through the NSL program, they learn to use the Narrative Method to craft their personal stories of struggle and hope. Delegates share their stories at speaking engagements on Capitol Hill and across DC.

NSL’s delegates participate in strategic meetings with organizations like the United States Institute of Peace, J Street, AIPAC, the United Nations Development Program, and the Swedish Embassy, as well as various US Congressmen and Senators. Each delegate arrives in Washington, DC with a proposed Project for Change (PFC). Working together in Palestinian-Israeli teams, they collaborate on joint social impact projects.

This year due to Covid, the NSL program was adjusted and readapted to the situation. We are extremely proud to have partly funded this program.

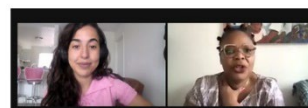
B8 of Hope’s chair Mehra Rimer got “hands on” and participated in one of the #Sheleads online program that took place on March 31st. The session was divided into five breakout rooms. Each breakout room had one NSL moderator, one diplomat, and five #SheLeaders. Mehra was

the NSL moderator, moderating with U.S. Diplomat Jill Hutchings. The discussions were mainly about the role of women.

Click on the image for the full report.



NEW STORY
LEADERSHIP &
B8 OF HOPE
ACTIVITIES REPORT
2021



"PEACE IS NOT SELECTIVE.
PEACE IS COLLECTIVE"
LEYMAH GBOWEE

As part of our “giving networking opportunities” mission, B8 of Hope also connected NSL to the Swiss women diplomats based in Ramallah and in Tel-Aviv, who are particularly interested in #sheleads.

As part of our “giving visibility” mission, B8 of Hope also connected NSL with the **International School of Geneva (Ecolint)**.

NSL’s program director Rawan Odeh and NSL’s alumnus Eran Nissan participated in a webinar organized by the International School of Geneva on September 22nd as keynote speakers, discussing their work on peace, storytelling and the intersection with what the International

School of Geneva calls I-DEA (Inclusion through Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism).

The idea was to have each speaker share their experience and how it has fostered connection across cultures and backgrounds. The goal was to inspire others at Ecolint to do similar work in their respective roles (staff, students, parents).

Our Generation Speaks

Our Generation Speaks (OGS) is about creating an entrepreneurial generation of leaders to shape a peaceful Israeli-Palestinian future built on trust. Founded in 2014, OGS is a fully funded, three-month summer fellowship program and incubator where emerging Israeli and Palestinian leaders create high-impact ventures. Every summer, OGS brings 30 of the region's best and brightest to Boston where they engage in tailored seminar and mentorship programs and are equipped with the tools to launch new ventures. OGS fellows develop and pitch their ideas throughout the summer and selected teams are granted seed funding for their ventures that will generate significant social and economic value in the region. OGS partners with the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

Once the fellows graduate from the program, they become OGS Alumni and members of their alumni leadership network, OGS NEXT, which engages our alumni in professional development workshops and works on the ground in the region to build an Israeli-Palestinian community of change agents.

The B8 of Hope donation to Our Generation Speaks in 2020 was originally dedicated to support OGS' summer program that year. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it was cancelled and OGS successfully transitioned

This webinar was organized in partnership with the Geneva PeaceTalks team who also presented at the webinar, along with some students and parents who have led Peace and Storytelling initiatives on the Geneva International School campuses.

these funds to support their Fellowship and Alumni Community activities in 2021.

Below is a summary of OGS' use of the B8 of Hope funds, with a focus on the Alumni Community in Israel & Palestine:

- Virtual Alumni Programming: Throughout 2021, when in-person connections were not possible, OGS led virtual Alumni sessions to maintain and continue developing the bonds among the Alumni Network
- Leadership Journey: In partnership with MIT, Tech2Peace & MEET, OGS Alumni participated in a series of lectures and group discussions on a variety of topics.
- The Region Tour & Impromptu Facilitation Sessions : The OGS Team & Prof. Krause, an expert on Palestine & Israel from Boston College & MIT, developed a four-part series that would enable OGS Fellows to dive deeper into the region from an academic perspective. In April/May 2021, OGS conducted two of these sessions before the violence in May interrupted the series. In place of the final seminars, Professor Krause led impromptu facilitation sessions, which were crucial

in building cross-border resilience in the Alumni Community. The facilitation sessions were heavily participated in and inspired more one-on-one conversations among Israeli and Palestinian Alumni.

- Alumni App: The OGS Team is developing a new interactive alumni zone and exclusive OGS Next App. This app will enable more fluid communication among Alumni and establish easier communication with the

OGS Team regarding Micro Grant opportunities (for self-selected seminars/conferences for personal and professional enrichment), upcoming OGS programming, and more. This App is in line with our vision to create the largest Israeli-Palestinian entrepreneurial network back home.

- In-Person Regional Programming: Once travel became easier within the region, OGS began organizing in-person gatherings and events for OGS Alumni.

Parents Circle Families Forum

The **Parents Circle - Family Forum (PCFF)** The Parents Circle – Families Forum (PCFF) is an association of 600 bereaved Israelis and Palestinians who have lost an immediate family member – a daughter, a son, a mother, a father, a sister or a brother as a result of the conflict. Instead of choosing revenge, PCFF's members are working hand in hand together, sharing sorrow, bringing hope by trying to stop acts of violence through reconciliation – a prerequisite to achieving a sustainable peace.

The organization uses all resources available in education, public meetings and the media to spread these ideas. Their motto is:

"If I who have lost a beloved one can walk the path of peace, then surely you can too."

In 2021, B8 of Hope, once again, supported their Joint Memorial Ceremony co-organized with **Combatants for Peace**. This powerful ceremony reminds everyone that war is not a predetermined fate, but a human choice. The

joint ceremony seeks to sow the seeds of hope among the two sides, and to bring to an end wars that have taken the lives of PCFF's members cherished loved ones.

The ceremony takes place every year on the eve of Israeli Memorial Day. The ceremony was initiated by Buma Inbar, whose son was killed in Lebanon in 1995, and other peace activists, together with the Combatants for Peace movement. For some years the PCFF has joined in organizing and producing the event, and it is now a full collaboration between the PCFF and the CFP movement.

Since the first ceremony, in 2006, the number of people who attend has gradually grown, and today counts thousands of people. The choice to hold the event on the same day as Israel's Memorial Day, aims to relay a message to both sides, calling them to recognize the joint pain and hope, and to try and prevent the next victims from this fate.

Throughout the years, participating guests included leading intellectuals, among them musician Yoni Rechter, Israel Prize winner Professor Yehuda (Judd) Ne'eman, singers Alon Oleartchik, Achinoam Nini and Mira Awad, Professor Eva Illouz, journalist Eliezer Yaari, Dr. Amal Abu Said, the author David Grossman, the author and Doctor Sami Shalom Shitrit, Richard Gere, Mubarak Awad and others. The event has grown in media exposure. In recent years, we have had to deal with demonstrations and attempts of right-wing politicians and people to quash the event.

The 16th Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Day Ceremony took place on April 13, 2021. While last year the restrictions of COVID-19 prevented PCFF and CFP from physically conducting the ceremony, this year they were able to host a hybrid ceremony with a limited audience of several hundred people, but with hundreds of thousands who watched online.

The ceremony took place simultaneously at two broadcast locations – In Beit Jala in Palestine, hosted by artist and actress Raida Adon, and in the legendary “Tzavta” theater in Tel Aviv, hosted by Yossi Zabari, the spoken word artist. The ceremony this year focused on helping people letting go of the fear of the other, while connecting through the mutual pain and hope that is instilled in all of us.

This hope and pain is what gives us the strength to carry on. During the ceremony, we heard the personal stories of Forum members Tamar Pikes, Layla Alsheikh, Gili Meisler and Muna Abu Sara who shared their losses and the path that

led them to forego the fear and instead work towards reconciliation and peace between the nations (view their speeches below). Other participants in the ceremony were actor and peace activist Richard Gere, who sent a recorded message, and Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian-American psychologist and political activist who promotes non-violent resistance.

The artistic part of the ceremony included Amal Murkus, David Broza and Mira Awad, Miriam Toukan, accompanied by the musical director of the ceremony Idan Toledano, Yuval Mendelson and the wonderful Rana Choir that ended the ceremony with the song “Chad Gadya” (One Little Goat).

The ceremony was watched by close to 250,000 people from Israel, Palestine and around the world. [Click here to watch the ceremony.](#)

This year again, the evening ended with special ZOOM encounters between Forum members, members of Combatants for Peace and the public at large. These encounters focused on memory, fear, the ceremony and the connection between them.

Group Exhibition: Illustrations in memory of the children of Israel and Gaza

In the fall of 2021, PCFF partnered with a group of illustrators for an exhibit in Tel-Aviv.

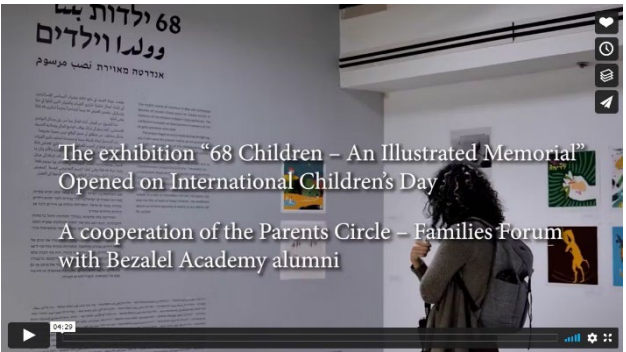
During the May 2021 military operation “Guardian of the Walls,” dozens of illustrators decided to create illustrations expressing solidarity and call for compassion and change.

The wonderful illustrations - some full of joy, some heartbreaking – were curated and exhibited during Illustration Week in Israel (October 18th to 27th) in memory of the 68 children who were killed during the fighting – in memory of each child’s life, dreams and unique personality. Some illustrators chose to create a portrait of the children while others reacted to the status-quo of the conflict or depicted hopes and dreams.

The exhibition consisted of 68 noticeable Israeli Illustrators, both junior, senior and internationally renowned. Among the artists were: Zev Engelmayer, Hanoch Piven, Judith Asher, naama benziman, Aviel Basil, Orit

Bergman, Alon Braier, Nomi Geiger, Noam Weiner, Amit Trainin, Izhar Cohen, Hila Noam, Roni Fahima, Gilad Seliktar, Shahar Kober, Itzik Rennert and Guy Saggee.

B8 of Hope funded this clip which will give you a glimpse of the exhibit:

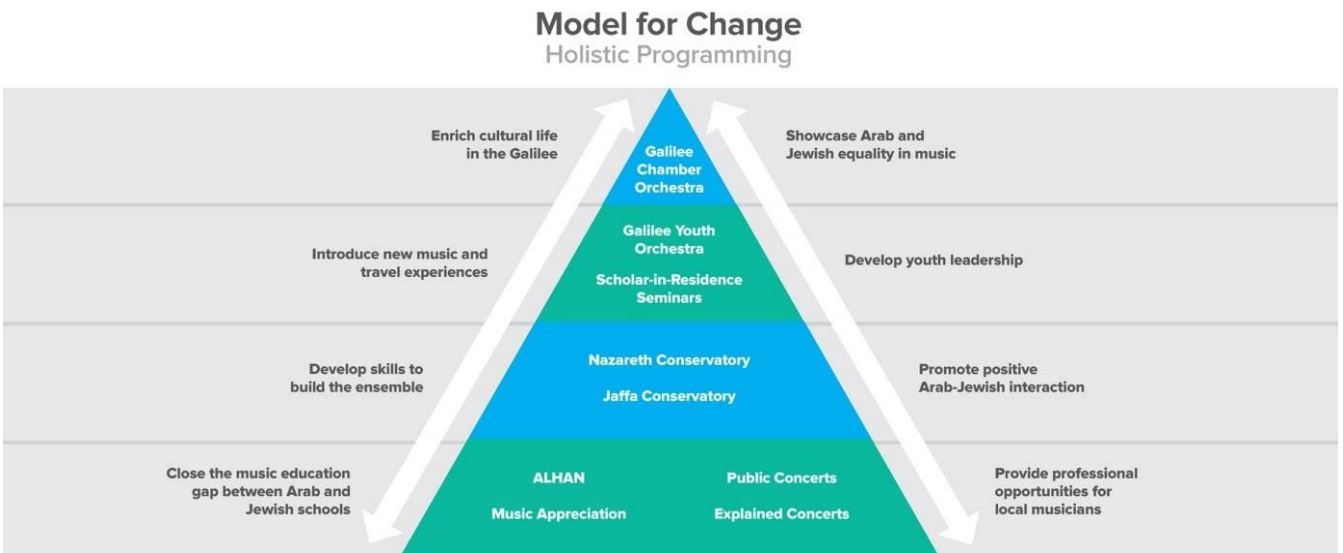


Polyphony Education

Polyphony Education is a prestigious music school based in Nazareth, and uses music in a holistic, multi-tiered approach through which Arab and Jewish musicians and music students come together to build an inclusive community.

Arabs and Jews in Israel interact infrequently. Neighborhoods are segregated. People speak different languages—Arabic and Hebrew.

Transformation begins when people have new experiences and are invited to perform together in new ways, building beyond the divides that separate them. With Polyphony’s holistic, multi-tiered approach, music becomes the medium through which Arab and Jewish children come together in Israel to build an inclusive community.



In 2021, B8 of Hope supported one of the many programs of Polyphony: The Music and Society Seminar (formerly called Scholars in Residence).

We have been supporting this program over consecutive years and now are doing so in its new format. This immersive two-year program is aimed at talented Arab and Jewish musicians aged 15 to 18.

The program is a partnership between the School for Cultural Studies and the Institute for Promoting Dialogue at Tel Aviv University, the Israeli Conservatory of Music-Tel Aviv, the Polyphony Conservatory of Nazareth and leading musicians from Germany and Israel.

It combines advanced chamber music study with an academic curriculum that develops participants into informed global citizens through intercultural dialogue and leadership training.

The seminar takes place over eight weekends per year, alternating between Nazareth and Tel Aviv, with home-hospitality and includes 10 Arab and 10 Jewish participants. Prior to the seminar, few if any, of the students had opportunities to develop such one-on-one and group relations with the “other.”

In 2020-2021, Polyphony completed the second year of the new format of the Seminar. The cohort of young musicians worked together continuously over a period of two years, got to know each other well and developed long-lasting bonds. The program balanced its emphasis between the academic curriculum, dialogue and leadership skills, as well as music making.

An example of their willingness to know “the other” better and deepen their bonds was when, in response to the events of May 2021 – military campaign in Gaza and violence in mixed Jewish-Arab cities, the Seminar’s students from Nazareth, Tel Aviv and their surroundings maintained contact and shared mutual concern for each other’s safety throughout the cycle of violence. In addition, they felt a strong need to speak up and sound the voice of co-existence, shared living, and mutual respect.

We are proud to share with you a [short video](#) that they produced to express these ideas and values on social media platforms. The students chose the song, one of them did the musical arrangement, and all decisions in the process were made together as a group.



Click on the image above to watch the music video

Road to Recovery

Road to Recovery (RtR) is an organization of thousands of Israelis (retired men and women) who volunteer to drive Palestinian patients from checkpoints to hospitals inside Israel. Road to Recovery is motivated by humanitarian values. Their compassion-driven work creates and deepens connections between Palestinians and Israelis.

Road to Recovery also provides medical equipment and organizes special recreational days for patients and their families.



B8 of Hope supports Road to Recovery in covering the gasoline costs incurred by the volunteer drivers during those trips. The total distance traveled this year amounted to around 1,200,000 km, entailing 9,000 trips for about 18,000 patients of which 2,785 were children. Road to Recovery took the patients to the

following hospitals: Rambam (Haifa) in the North; Ichilov, Sheba-Tel Hashomer, Meir, Beilinson, Wolfson and Assuta in the center; and to Hadassa, Shaare Zedek, Al Maqassid, Augusta Victoria and St John Hospital in Jerusalem.

On a heartwarming note, we keep having news from Mahmoud! In 2020 we funded this little boy's medical fees through Road to Recovery. Mahmoud is suffering from cerebral palsy affecting the lower limbs (severe contractures of the hips, knees and ankles).

He needed surgery as well as physiotherapy. B8 of Hope contributed to his medical costs and he is doing much better. Suzan, his mother, has been in direct contact with us throughout 2021 and sends us regular updates about Mahmoud's progress.



Saving Children at Peres Center for Peace and Innovation

The **Peres Center for Peace** is an Israeli non-profit NGO that develops and implements cutting-edge and impact-oriented programs serving hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries of all ages, religions, genders and cultural backgrounds.

The Peres Center's Medicine in the Service of Peace initiatives have been active since the organization's founding, advancing health education and services and providing crucial humanitarian medical aid.

To date, more than 12,500 Palestinian infants and children have been treated through the Peres Center's "Saving Children" program, and the Peres Center is one of the few organizations with the ability to assist children in the Gaza Strip. In addition to the medical outcomes of this program, "Saving Children" acts as a bridge of peace between people, building engagement and cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian public health authorities, medical teams, and between the patient, their families, and the doctors treating them.

Despite encountering challenges this year due to a COVID-19 border closure in effect from January to May which prevented all movement between the West Bank and Israel except for emergency humanitarian circumstances, the support of B8 of Hope enabled the Peres Center to sponsor lifesaving medical procedures for 15 Palestinian children – including cardiac surgeries, craniotomies and neurosurgeries, cochlear implants, and consultations at a specialized orthopedic clinic.

The following is a summary of a treatment enabled by B8 of Hope in 2021:

Y.K. is 4.5-year-old boy from the city of Jenin in the West Bank. He suffers from severe congenital thrombocytopenia. Y.K.'s case was

referred to the Peres Center's "Saving Children" program on July 12th, 2021. At that point, Y.K. had already been hospitalized for six months. The local hospital in Jenin had exhausted all of its resources to help the little boy. As Y.K.'s situation became increasingly dire, the referring hospital knew that the Peres Center's "Saving Children" program could be his last chance at life.

The Peres Center accepted Y.K.'s case and immediately began coordinating with the Israeli Ministry of Health and Palestinian doctors at the local hospital in Jenin to arrange for Y.K. to be brought to Israel's Sheba Medical Center for a bone marrow transplant. Intensive efforts by both the Peres Center and Sheba Medical Center to find a suitable donor for Y.K. were successful: in September 2021, he underwent a successful life-saving bone marrow transplant.

"The support provided by B8 of Hope to this project is invaluable to the children treated and their families, as well as to the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, its staff, and partners. We are grateful to have had this opportunity to work with you." - Peres Center Saving Children Program's team

Standing Together

Standing Together is a grassroots movement mobilizing people from all over Israel in pursuit of peace, equality, social and climate justice. They joined the pool of B8 of Hope grantees this year! We were so inspired by their action throughout the breakout of violence and war in May.

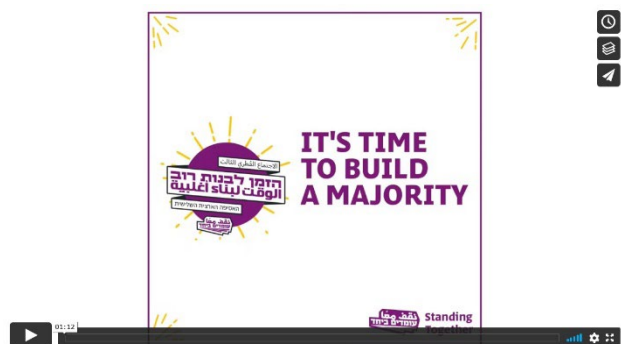
On May 22nd, amid the violence and polarization, Standing Together put peace back on the agenda. Thousands of Jewish and Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel marched through Tel Aviv and filled HaBima Square with hope. Despite the horrors of the previous two weeks, they stood together knowing that another way – peace – is possible, and that together they can

change their reality. They also showed that there's an Arab-Jewish majority in Israel that demands peace, equality and partnership. A majority that wants to see an end to war, an end to the occupation, an end to violence, an end to racism and an end to division.



Photo credit: Standing Together

According to Standing Together, while the minority who benefit from the current status quo of occupation and inequality seeks to keep divisions, the majority has far more in common than that which sets people apart. When they stand together, they are strong enough to fundamentally alter the existing socio-political reality. The future that they want to see — with peace and independence for Israelis and Palestinians, full equality for all citizens, and true social, economic and environmental justice — is possible. Because where there is struggle, there is hope.



Click on the image above to watch the video.

B8 of Hope's funding went to various expenses, supporting Standing Together's core activities. The 4 main activities were:

1) Two, three-day Leadership Development Seminars for Students

Standing Together's student chapters were especially active this past year and have been vital for the movement to recruit and absorb the influx of youth joining it. In addition to an increased public presence, many of Standing Together's student chapters have been elected to student unions and reached key positions in decision-making on campuses.

These 2-day seminars are meant to ensure Standing Together's work on campus transitions smoothly as Standing Together implements the new strategy, and to build communication channels amongst the various chapters for collaborations. The seminar has 20 participants, and 3 organizers who will facilitate the workshops.

2) Halisa FC Sponsorship

Halisa is the poorest neighborhood in Haifa. Its football club provides a second home for some 100 children and youth, and a framework in which they can learn to take responsibility and develop leadership and solidarity in their neighborhood. It is run entirely by volunteers, with the support of families from the neighborhood. This year, Standing Together has sponsored the team, and is currently covering costs for clothing.

Standing Together got to know this community last year, when they joined the movement's protests in Haifa in demand of solutions from the government for the health and economic crises.

3) Walajah tours and Transportation

During the month of December, Standing Together sent activists to a tour in Walajah on a weekly basis. The Palestinian village of Walajah is located south of Jerusalem. In 1967 some of it was annexed to the city and since then - the state refuses to approve a master plan for it and, as a result, the residents do not have the option to get building permits, and constantly live under the threat of house demolition. In attempt to raise awareness and support, Standing Together sent people to a tour in Walajah, in collaboration with the local organized group “Friends of Walajah”.

4) National Convention

On November 12th, Standing Together held the movement’s third National Convention, in the Palestinian town Tayibeh. Hundreds of members came together from all over the country — from Akko and Haifa, from Nazareth and Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Rahat and Be’er Sheva — to participate in the pinnacle of their democratic process as a movement. Standing Together elected a new national leadership and voted in a new strategy that will guide their activities over the coming years.

The funding from B8 of Hope helped with covering the costs of transportation from the 6 different locations that were offered.

Taghyeer (Change)

Taghyeer (Change) is a Palestinian organization that leads a National Nonviolence Movement of grassroots community organizations. It recruits and trains emerging leaders who are taught to practice nonviolence as a unifying identity for the Palestinian people. Taghyeer fosters social and political change by promoting responsibility for self-development from within Palestinian society. Its “Messengers of Change” are in charge of community-led social actions and focus on empowering women and youth through their cooperative actions.

Our financial support has been distributed between the running costs of the movement, as well as on two specific projects related to two communities that are part of the Taghyeer umbrella: the guest house for women of the village of Jubbet Adh Dib near Bethlehem and the Youth of Sumud cave home in the Southern Hebron Hills.

Jubbet Adh Dib

During the long Swiss winter of 2021 and the even longer semi-lockdown, the news that lifted our spirits was the completion of a guest house in Jubbet Adh Dib.

Jubbet Adh Dib is an isolated village near the Herodion in the Governorate of Bethlehem. The village has experienced many challenges in past years. At one point, a collective of women took matters into their own hands. Taghyeer introduced B8 of Hope to this courageous community of women. The Jubbet Adh Dib women community is significant because it showcases Palestinians who take control of their destiny and build the change they need. This empowering movement heals while it creates something positive for the community.

During one of Mehra Rimer's visit to Jubbet Adh Dib before the times of Covid, Noa Grandchamp, a young Swiss photo activist and B8 of Hope volunteer, took pictures of the villagers and listened to their stories. Noa, at that time a photography student, organized an exhibit upon her return to Geneva. She sold her pictures and donated the proceeds to Taghyeer, in support of Jubbet Adh Dib. Thanks to these funds, an abandoned venue in the village was transformed into a guest house for internationals who visit the region to volunteer their help in the village. The guest room is now up and running!



Youth of Sumud

The Youth of Sumud was formed in 2017 in the South Hebron Hills in response to ongoing settler aggression against Palestinian farmers, families and school children in the area. This courageous youth group is committed to peaceful resistance and to supporting farmers and families in their struggles to live and work their land. Sumud is an Arabic word which translates most closely as "steadfast." This group of teenagers and young adults has assumed responsibility for the safety of

schoolchildren from the village of Tuba as they walk between to and from school, past the nearby Israeli outpost. Harassment of Palestinian shepherds by Israeli settlers is common in the area, and members of the Youth of Sumud frequently accompany these shepherds from the nearby villages as they graze flocks. Throughout the fall, the Youth of Sumud accompanied farmers as they harvest their olives in the Jordan Valley and throughout the West Bank.

Members of the Youth of Sumud have also undertaken to revive the village of Saurora, located in the Southern end of the West Bank near the village of At-Tuwani. The village was abandoned in the 1990's because of settler violence from the nearby illegal outpost of Havat Ma'on and the ancient cave homes of the village were damaged or demolished. The Youth of Sumud rebuilt the caves and established a permanent presence in Saurora.

On June 17, 2021, settlers from Havat Ma'on completely destroyed the central cave home in Saurora, demolishing the kitchen, bathroom, water supply and tiled main space in a night invasion of the village. **B8 of Hope helped the Youth of Sumud rebuild the space again in the framework of Taghyeer's campaign of rehabilitating the Saurora caves.**



Photo credit: Taghyeer Movement

Finally, B8 of Hope also played a close advisory role to Taghyeer. B8 of Hope helped drive a very successful fundraising campaign in the United States in collaboration with the American Friends of Taghyeer.

B8 of Hope also recruited Emili Fadi as Communications and Fundraising Manager and she has been playing a crucial and highly successful role in Taghyeer.

Teachers' Lounge

In Jerusalem (and elsewhere in the region), teachers from different schools do not interact. The education system is segregated, and each community has their own curriculum (Jewish, Arab, secular, religious, etc.). Thanks to the **Teachers' Lounge** program, established in Jerusalem in 2014, educators from different communities in and around the city meet each other and create an open dialogue, thereby recognizing Jerusalem's strength through its vivid and varied cultures.

Teachers can create a real change in their students' lives by focusing on overcoming racism and prejudice. Increasing tolerance and changing the climate of shared life in Jerusalem is in the hands of educators.

Over the seven years since the program began, the Teachers' Lounge has created a space where conversations take place between teachers from around the city. The program is offered as a professional development program (30 hours annually) for teachers in Jerusalem. Every year, around 50-60 Jewish and Arab teachers from West and East Jerusalem, participate in Teachers' Lounge. The participating teachers are divided into four groups, with an equal number of Jewish and Arab teachers.

Overall, B8 of Hope remains very involved in the [Palestinian Non-Violence Charter](#) which is slowly but surely gathering more and more adherents and is expected to be very visibly launched in the fall of 2022.

Every group meets for ten sessions throughout the school year. The group sessions are moderated by two facilitators (a Jew and an Arab). During these sessions, teachers are asked to explore their personal, professional, and cultural identity, and then discuss mutual educational challenges. The experience of "meeting the other" takes place through an innovative narrative-experiential approach while using creative tools such as theater, plastic arts, writing, and photography. The sessions allow participants to meet one another in a direct manner and to share narratives that, above all, create a safe space and a feeling of a joint educational mission.

As a part of the program, a special 'tour the city' is included. This tour is designed and led by the teachers themselves. Together they visit participants' homes, schools, and significant places in Jerusalem while sharing personal stories. A professional photographer accompanies and documents the tours and the entire program.



Photo credit: Teachers' Lounge

In 2021, B8 of Hope contributed to the general operational costs of the school year programs (2020-2021 and 2021-2022) and an additional support towards Teachers Lounge's social media publications in English (Translations) as of the fall of 2021.

During this challenging 2020-2021 school year, the continuity of the program was questioned and certainly could not be taken for granted. However, the staff and teachers stepped up and were able to offer a positive and meaningful program. Juxtaposed with the previous year, Teachers' Lounge opened this year's program with virtual gatherings, which posed a difficulty in creating much needed intimacy and trust.

While the difficulty in bringing a group together was lingering, the intimacy that was created within screens was no less meaningful than before. Despite having to quarantine, the participants of the program were eventually able to meet outdoors as a group – a truly meaningful gathering that shaped a stronger sense of togetherness.

Dealing with the May 2021 events was another challenge. The violence and tensions reminded Teachers' Lounge participants that it is in their hands, as teachers and educators, to create a different reality in which humans recognize the suffering and difficulties of others. This understanding will lead to appreciating one's wish to live a life of dignity, security, and fulfillment.

Borne out of this notion, and for the sake of future students, Teachers' Lounge felt a great need to create a lasting bond between the participants. Therefore, it was decided that in lieu of a concluding event at the end of the program in June, the participants would meet with their facilitators in affinity groups—Jewish with the Jewish facilitator, and Arab with the

Arab facilitator. This difficult decision led to a bigger challenge of gathering. Yet with great wisdom, patience, and kindness, the facilitators mediated the separate gatherings followed by joint group gatherings. The main notion that arose from these meetings was that participants appreciated the opportunity to share their hard and painful feelings within their respective groups, without ignoring the tension within the program.

A few indicators of the program's success were:

1. The fact that it reached its recruitment goal for offering another year of activity: 62 teachers graduated the 2020-2021 program year, the largest number of graduates since the program was created in 2014.
2. Equal participation : One of the goals of Teachers' Lounge is to reach equal and balanced groups of Jews and Arabs. Out of the 62 total participants, 30 were Arab teachers and 32 were Jewish teachers. 50 teachers were women (30 Arab and 20 Jewish women) and 12 were men (two Arabs and 10 Jewish teachers).

The teachers who participated in the program arrived from 47 schools in Jerusalem (25 Israeli schools, 22 Arab schools). Teachers' Lounge aspire to increase the range of participating schools in order to reach greater numbers of teachers and their students. Since the program was created, teachers from 118 different schools in Jerusalem have participated !

Teachers' Lounge shared with us the results of their Evaluation questionnaire of which 42 teachers (15 Jewish and 27 Arab teachers) responded anonymously. We were very satisfied with the outcome of the survey. The program contributed to their understanding of other standpoints. The teachers confirmed that the program will contribute to the conversation

about the Arab-Israeli relations in their classroom. They also said they would recommend the program to colleagues.

The 2021-2022 cohort started in October with 64 participants and fully in person this time!

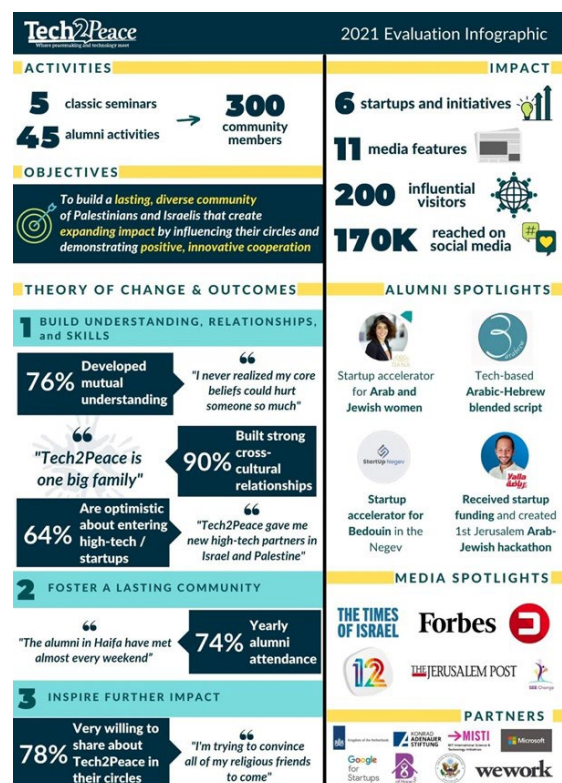
Tech2Peace

Tech2Peace is a joint Israeli-Palestinian initiative, created and operated by a young staff of students and volunteers. Their aim is to run high-tech and peace-building seminars, focused on creating a lasting positive relationship between young Israelis and Palestinians. They believe that these participants will not only leave as peace activists, but also as potential colleagues with a strong basis for future positive interaction in the tech-sector.

Their mission is to equip the Israeli and Palestinian youth with the skills necessary to ensure greater co-operation and co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians in the future. The seminars teach participants skills in three specializations: Web Building, 3D and Graphic Design, and Mobile App Development. Additionally, participants take part in experiential workshops focused on conflict resolution, thereby humanizing each other, which helps humanize the conflict as a whole from the grassroots level. Upon completing the seminar, Tech2Peace participants will not only become peacebuilding ambassadors, but will also have the skills required for the first steps in their newfound high-tech careers.

Since the fall, Teachers' Lounge has also been working intensively towards the opening of Teachers' Lounge West Galilee program launching on 22nd of March 2022 with 16-18 participants. The first cohort will include 1 group and will mark a major milestone of expansion from Jerusalem into additional regions in Israel.

B8 of Hope mainly supports their two-week-long intensive seminars and on a more modest level other activities summed up in the picture below.



We are particularly proud of their pilot seminar in Switzerland in Guggisberg (Canton of Bern). The Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) partnered with B8 of Hope to co-sponsor the seminar. Other partners were: The Swiss National Agency Movetia and Google for Startups. The seminar could not have happened without the tireless efforts of Oliver Schneitter Ashton, president of **Stiftung Urgestein**.

The cohort included 15 Israelis and Palestinians and several Swiss participants, ages 20-30. Some of the Israeli and Palestinian participants were alumni and leaders of Tech2Peace, while some were new to the Tech2Peace community. They spent half the day in cultural exchange sessions and half the day working together to learn high-tech skills (App Development and Video Editing). They also explored their own and each other's cultures, communities, and identities, as well as learned the tools and techniques to do so, including Non-Violent Communication.

The participants also attended lectures from Powercoders and Swisspeace. The lecture from Powercoders was about how they are training refugees in high-tech skills, and the lecture from SwissPeace was on effective methods of peacebuilding and what the industry has learned. These lectures were important in preparing us for our upcoming Google for Startups Hackathon, focused on tech and peacebuilding.

The Google for Startups Hackathon in Guggisberg was a great success! Participants worked in diverse teams, alongside mentors

from Google Switzerland, over 24 hours to build and pitch startup ideas! The winning idea was Habibi Nanny, a service matching bilingual nannies with families in order for the children to learn a new language from a young age and overcome intercultural barriers. The participants were very grateful to Irwin Boutboul and Dorin Heid from Google for Startups for their effort and leadership, as well as to the wonderful mentors from Google.

The Guggisberg seminar participants also spent a day working on an eco-farm! They worked together - Israelis, Palestinians, and Swiss - to support the farm's ecological mission, and enjoyed beautiful views in the sun.

Members of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs visited the participants during their seminar. B8 of Hope is deeply grateful to the FDFA for their financial help as well as commitment to get to know Tech2Peace better and get familiar with their work.

One additional activity which B8 of Hope also supported in 2021 was the Tech2Peace Iftar dinner at the [Karama Center](#) (more details under [Karama](#) section above).

Women Wage Peace

Women Wage Peace (WWP) is a grassroots movement with more than 44'000 members from different communities within Israeli society: right, center and left; religious and secular; Jews, Arabs, Druze and Bedouin; young women and older women; women from the urban hubs of the country and from the periphery.

Women Wage Peace was founded in the summer of 2014 in the aftermath of Operation Protective Edge, uniting women of all walks of life. What these women had in common was their willingness to put an end to the cycle of violence, bringing diplomacy and negotiations back on the political agenda.

Women Wage Peace's vision is resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by means of a mutually acceptable agreement, with the participation of women from diverse groups of Israeli society, in accordance with [UN Security Council Resolution 1325](#).

B8 of Hope usually supports Women Wage Peace's major marches and event, as well as their meetings with Palestinian women in the West Bank.

What appeals to B8 of Hope are WWP's big events and marches and also their meetings with their Palestinian allies in the West Bank. This is what we have been mainly funding since we started supporting them in 2017.

The two major events of WWP co-sponsored this year by B8 of Hope were:

1) [The Chain of Peace on May 19th](#)

One thousand members of WWP met at Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem. They were joined by other Peace organizations (including other members of our pool of grantees such as [Parents Circle – Families Forum](#) and [Road to Recovery](#) and other peace builders showing up on a personal level). Together these courageous peace seekers showed that every mother, Palestinian citizen of Israel or Israeli Jew, wants a safe future for her children and that this can only be achieved together. In those tense days of May, it took (even more) courage to be a peace warrior!



Photo credit: Women Wage Peace



Photo credit: Women Wage Peace

2) [International Day of Peace on Sept. 22](#)

WWP held another event in Jerusalem, marking the International Day of Peace. They marched in the streets, made a human peace chain near the walls of the Old City, and held a rally featuring Israeli and Palestinian speakers, calling leaders on both sides to begin negotiations and calling everyone to support their joint Israeli-Palestinian Mothers' Call.



Photo credit: Women Wage Peace

B8 of Hope also contributed as previous years to the running costs of two main WWP activities with Palestinian partners:

- “We Are All Partners for Peace”

This activity consists of meetings with Palestinian partners from the West Bank on a regular basis; some meetings were in person (in Israel or Area C) and some were on Zoom. The costs involve transportation, fees of the venue and services of professional interpreters (most of those meetings included professional simultaneous translation, so each participant can speak in her native language).

One of the most crucial outcomes of these meetings was the establishment of a Palestinian sister movement: Women of the Sun (Nissa Al-Shams). Further meetings were held with activists and coordinators from both movements, for further acquaintance and mutual support.

Thanks to B8 of Hope's help, WWP held a workshop with marketing and designing experts, in which they developed the concept of 4 Million Mothers - i.e., 4 million Israeli and Palestinian mothers in the region, who demand peace and know it is possible (more about this in 2022!).

WWP is also developing the Blueprints of Opportunities for Peace. Dozens of WWP activists are interviewing experts in various fields and disciplines, to highlight the strong

connections between peace and climate, medicine, education, religions, culture, and more, and to explore existing Israeli-Palestinian cooperation that can serve as opportunities for beginning peace negotiations. After the completion of this stage, WWP will hand their report to policymakers, urging them to take those opportunities and use them for promoting peace negotiations.

- Removing Barriers to Peace

Throughout most of 2021 the Barriers project team developed a model of smart interventions that can change perceptions among Israeli public and policymakers on the ability to achieve peace with the Palestinians. The team collected and analyzed a vast corpus of academic and practical knowledge on barriers to peace; talked to social psychology experts; and built the basis for the model. After completing this phase, the team held a series of workshops for activists who want to take part in further developing the model and conveying the knowledge and tools to WWP activists on the ground. Together with this group, the project's team planned and executed a 2-days seminar for WWP activists, in which the model was presented, and the activists had a chance to experience it. The seminar also featured 5 lectures on existing barriers to peace among Israeli public and decision makers, as well as ways to transforming those barriers and promoting peace.

Peace is possible and courageous women are fighting for it!

Zimam

Zimam (“reins” or “taking the initiative” in Arabic) is a pioneering grassroots youth movement that challenges the status quo. Taking a domestic approach to conflict resolution, they work with the Palestinian

leaders of tomorrow, in order to build a more democratic, active and pluralistic society, driven by values of tolerance, non-violence and responsibility.

Zimam works across nine governorates in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. Its programs empower young people and transform public thinking, fostering respect for others, building peace and instilling democratic attitudes. B8 of Hope supports two aspects of Zimam's work: The Leadership Incubator and the Transform Campaign.

In 2021, we focused on the Leadership Incubator, an 18-month training program focused on good governance and public policy education. It brought together 40 young activists from the West Bank and Gaza to gain skills, confidence and network they need to be effective leaders within their communities. This year, Zimam launched the program for the second time and conducted many training sessions, town hall meetings, Sisasah Cafés, field visits, and a number of meetings with officials.

Here is a summary of the activities:

- Extensive training sessions delivered by a number of local and international experts:
 - Atypical Leadership, in February
 - Public Speaking and the Cycles, in March
 - Negotiations and the Water issues in Palestine, in June
 - Campaign Management, in November
 - Development Economics, in May and December
- Field visits to places that helped the groups to understand the process of policy-making and problem-solving:
 - A visit to one of the biggest local factories, the Royal Group where the activists learned

about the challenges facing the Palestinian plastic industry – in Hebron.

- Visits to water treatment plants in the West Bank and Gaza where the participants learned about the environmental threats Palestine faces and how these plants help in reducing pollution – in Gaza and Jericho.
 - 8 Town Hall meeting across the West Bank and Gaza handling a variety of topics:
 - Social Media as a Tool for Public Mobilization and Political Participation
 - The Palestinian Question after 2021
 - Enhancing Political Participation through Local Elections
 - Meeting with officials and decision makers:
 - The Minister of Transportation and Transport in Ramallah
 - The Mayor of the Municipality of Gaza
 - The Municipality of Jenin
 - Advocacy campaign in public policy around Wali Al Nar alternative way, working to put policy solutions into implementation



Photo credit: Zimam



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