



# Newsletter

September 2023

*We are thrilled to share the short documentary featuring B8 of Hope's work and mission broadcasted on Sunday, August 27th on RTS, the Swiss National Television!*

*Click on the link below to watch:*  
**[B8 of Hope on RTS' "Mise au Point" program](#)**

Dear Friends and Supporters,

After a long summer break for B8 of Hope – the longest in 7 years of activities – it's "back to school" time! We have exciting news to share about several changes that we implemented this spring and (very) early summer.

A few weeks after our phenomenally successful gala event in March, B8 of Hope took some time to reflect upon and professionalize the original 2016 grassroots initiative that was launched by 8 co-founders. Throughout its 7 years of existence, B8 of Hope has grown organically and rapidly into a much bigger entity than expected. Time had come to adjust to our new realities.

This spring, we decided to implement several structural changes that improve governance and efficiency. We have gradually introduced the following changes in response to the "self-evaluation" exercise that took place in 2022. We chose to work with [Amal-Tikva](#), a Jerusalem-based organization that specializes in capacity-building. They produced a tailor-made program to guide us on best practices for scalability, impact and sustainability.

Below are the exciting changes that are being implemented:

## ➤ **Changes at the B8 of Hope Board Level**

We have streamlined our original board of eight co-founders by creating a smaller Executive Board. In addition, a separate Advisory Board has been established to guide us on strategy, education, and the complexity of the conflict.

Since the beginning, our Board of Directors consisted of [Co-Founders Ayman Hijjawi, Karim Anabtawi, Luc Fayon, Leila Hawa, Arun Chandrasekharan, Mehra Rimer, David Rimer and Jean-Marc Liling](#), our representative in Jerusalem. In May, the Board was reorganized in response to our current needs resulting in the establishment of a smaller yet more dynamic Executive Board which now focuses primarily on the governance of B8 of Hope.

These original founders and board members helped build B8 of Hope's history and narrative; with much recognition and respect. Their tireless efforts and pro-bono work as Co-Founders and hands-on Board Members have been much appreciated. We can't thank them enough for their dedication and commitment. It is impossible to calculate the worth of the countless hours they volunteered during these past 7 years. Luc and Leila have been notably indispensable to the growing and phenomenal



success of our fundraising galas. A special note of gratitude and a heartfelt salute to both of them for their remarkable contributions.

In the new chapter in the life of B8 of Hope Luc, Karim, Ayman and Jean-Marc stepped down as board members. They remain close to our hearts and part of our family of B8 of Hope. [Leila, Arun, David and Mehra](#) are now the only members of the new Executive Board and Mehra stays the Executive Director of B8 of Hope, on a pro- bono basis.

Jean-Marc is taking on a new role, which will be explained below.

Alongside B8 of Hope's Executive Board, we put an Advisory Board into place. The Advisory Board will contribute to the mission and vision of B8 of Hope. It will provide guidance and expertise to the Executive Director, while ensuring that B8 of Hope's efforts have an impact on Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding NGOs and movements. Composed of a diverse set of experts from academia and the peacebuilding sector, its members possess a wide range of relevant expertise which facilitates the transmission of valuable insights and recommendations on a variety of issues concerning peacebuilding and conflict resolution. The Advisory Board's guidance and expertise will ensure that B8 of Hope's vision and mission reflect the needs of the Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilding ecosystem in the field. We welcome this new board and its inspiring members:

[Ahmad Abu Akel](#), Neuroscientist at University of Haifa

[Fiuna Ongen-Seylan](#), Chair of Association Coexistences

[Hiba Qasas](#), Founder and Executive Director of Principles for Peace

[Jean-Marc Liling](#), Lawyer and Consultant

[John Lyndon](#), Executive Director of Alliance for Middle East Peace

[Meredith Rothbart](#), Founder and Executive Director of Amal-Tikva

### ➤ Changes in Our Grant Process and Capacity-Building Support

In tandem with these structural changes, we are deepening our partnership with [Amal-Tikva](#). Our grant making process, capacity-building and presence in the field will be transferred to their local team. Of course our Executive Director will remain in close touch with each grantee and their representatives to develop a "big picture" together while supporting them in their work. Since May, however, Ariel Markose and Ghadeer Sabat-Kort (Chief strategy officer and COO of Amal-Tikva) have been our grantees' direct contacts for grant requests and assistance with the B8 of Hope grant process.

We are thrilled to embark on this partnership with Amal-Tikva! It will help us make better decisions while offering more holistic support to grantees as they grow and scale. Moreover, we look forward to helping grantees access the support that Amal-Tikva provides, such as their Fieldbuilding360 program, Embodying Peace, and the Amal-Tikva Leadership Institute.

### ➤ Geneva Staff

After three and a half years of service, our first ever staff member, Chrystelle Thiébaud is advancing to her next adventure. She pushed B8 of Hope forward while helping us through a period of growth and expansion. We are grateful for the devotion, professionalism, and passion that she brought to B8 of Hope. We wish her the very best of success in her new endeavors! She will stay in touch, and we will welcome her in our audience or as a volunteer in the future.

We would like to introduce Arij Oreibi, B8 of Hope's newest staff member who will take charge of Administration, Coordination and Communications. Originally from Libya, Arij is a Swiss citizen based in Geneva. She comes from the business and private sector and brings with her decades of experience in account management, sales and marketing. She has found a new path at B8 of Hope and we are extremely lucky to have also found her! Welcome to B8 of Hope!



### ➤ Updates

For those who might have missed our social media posts, here is a recap of the activities that have taken place since our gala in March.

*In mid-April*, Mehra Rimer went to Israel and the Palestinian Authority Territories in the West Bank. The purpose of this trip was to attend two important events funded by B8 of Hope.

*On April 16th*, she attended a moving **Ramadan Iftar dinner** at the [Palestinian Non-Violence/Karama Center](#). Sponsored by B8 of Hope, the dinner was a [Judur/Shorashim/Roots](#) initiative. 80 Palestinian and Israeli guests broke bread together, and (even more importantly) applauded the guest of honour: a courageous young Palestinian man who has saved Israeli lives.



On April 24th, Mehra attended [the joint Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Ceremony](#) which was organised by [Combatants for Peace](#) in honour of the [Parents Circle Families Forum](#).

15,000 people gathered in Tel-Aviv's HaYarkon park (while 300,000 watched online) to honour bereaved Palestinians and Israelis who were mourning the loss of their loved ones together – sharing their pain – yet giving us hope.



This trip was also an opportunity to touch base with most of [B8 of Hope's grantees](#). We got specific updates from different organizations such as: [Women Wage Peace](#) and their Palestinian sisters from Women of the Sun, [A Land for All](#), and [Standing Together](#). We also heard about the progress of two Synergies Lab projects: "Aleph" by [Lissan](#), [Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow](#), [50-50 Start-Ups](#), and Palestinian Internship Program, as well as the "Coordination Project" by [Road To Recovery](#) and [Physicians for Human Rights](#).



Next-Gen member Moritz Haegi, who is currently completing his PhD at the University of Basel, joined Mehra for part of the trip. He shadowed her during meetings, and together, they took the opportunity to reconnect with Yara Amayra, co-director of A Land for All and one of the co-founders of B8 of Hope's Next Gen group. As for every trip to the field, Mehra met and compared notes with B8 of Hope's closest partners, Allmep and Amal Tikva.

**May** was the month to reflect upon our structural changes as well as the distribution of a large part of our grants to initiatives on the ground.

Near the end of May, B8 of Hope piloted a short dual-narrative trip to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Haifa, Nazareth and Tel-Aviv with a small group of friends. This pilot trip was a success, and we hope to be able to implement its first edition in 2024.

**In June**, 20 bereaved Israeli and Palestinian youth from our grantee organization Parents' Circle Families Forum Young Ambassadors for Peace participated to Coexistences program. Coexistences is a Lausanne based organization (one of our main partners in Switzerland), which brings cohorts of Israelis and Palestinians to Switzerland for a unique experience. Here away from the conflict zone, they deepen the dialogue started back home. They are placed by pairs of Israeli and Palestinians in Swiss host families of the Lausanne region.

While they deepen their engagement with each other, experience an intensive and meaningful collective experience, develop their leadership skills and their vision, they also learn about the Swiss model of coexistence and democracy. This group had the opportunity to go through the program and it helped them reflect and discuss on how to become the next the Parents Circle Families Forum generation of activists for peace. We are very proud to have covered the costs of their travel fees. Mehra Rimer could join one of the events in Lausanne and meet these young and brilliant change-makers.





*The month of June* was also a celebratory month. On the 14th, **Ali Abu Awwad won the Luxembourg Peace Prize**. B8 of Hope nominated him for the award, and we are delighted that he was chosen!



*Towards the end of month of June*, **Tuly Flint** the Israeli coordinator of [Combatants for Peace](#), and a psychotherapist who specialises in PTSD happened to be in Europe for a conference. We seized the opportunity to invite him to Geneva for an informal visit and get-together. Thanks to our partners from The Spot Podcast Factory, we produced a Podcast episode with Tuly.

**Click the following link to listen to the podcast:**

<https://linktr.ee/b8ofhope>



*On Monday 26th*, we hosted a cocktail dinner in his honour with 45 guests from the community of B8 of Hope in attendance. Tuly shared his story as a former Israeli IDF commander, and elaborated upon what eventually led him to peace-activism.



This same month we welcomed a new intern, Ella Vacic who is studying sociology at the University of Leeds in the UK. While learning about the complexities of peacebuilding in Israel and Palestine, Ella helped us with our website as well as several tasks related to the B8 of Hope [Nex Gen](#) youth group. She had the opportunity to meet Tuly Flint and attended the production of a podcast.

*In July*, B8 of Hope took a break to recharge our batteries after the intense first half of 2023.

*In August*, our new colleague Arij took up her role at B8 of Hope and we started to get ready to move forward with our fall activities!

*August* was also another opportunity for us to join Coexistences and meet with [the participants](#) of their seminar for dialogue facilitators. B8 of Hope is proud to have sponsored this “STRENGTHENING THE DYNAMIC BETWEEN FACILITATORS OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DIALOGUE” seminar. The first part took place in September 2022 and the second part was held from August 14th to 21nd. It was very inspiring to listen to the testimonials of the participants and learn about the impact of this seminar.



Between 2006 and 2009, Coexistences hosted in Lausanne 33 dialogue groups comprising of 15-20 facilitators each. These facilitators (of different peace-building activities in Israel and Palestine) do not necessarily know each other and have different approaches.

Via the Coexistences' seminar, facilitators receive a unique opportunity to share their field experience & toolbox; as well as pay attention to their soft spot, their lack of a specific training they might have etc. Throughout the seminar, a cross-fertilisation of diverse, rich and effective practices emerges, all the whilst each participant's psychological need is addressed on the micro level. Several of B8 of Hope's grantee facilitators took part of the seminar.

### ➤ Upcoming Activity !!!



*For Parents of Children Between the Ages of 15 and 18:*



### Lets Talk about Peace

Learn about Peace Building in the Middle East with B8ofHope and use your time, skills and creativity to lead a fundraising campaign to support a peace grassroots initiative.

### Sign-up for a 5-sessions Workshop!

**Step 1: Lets Talk about Peace (1 session)**  
Meet B8ofHope and get a better understanding of their mission and learn about Peace Building in the Middle East.

**Step 2: Explore (2 sessions)**  
Meet a peace grassroots initiative and learn how to evaluate projects.

**Step 3: Act (2 sessions)**  
Learn how to lead a fundraising campaign and organise a fundraising event to support Peace.



**Location**  
B8ofHope offices  
Rte de Chêne 63

**Dates**  
Tuesdays 5-7pm  
From 10.10 to 21.11 2023

**Ages**  
14-18

**Takeaways**  
Projects Evaluation  
Fundraising tools  
Social awareness

For info and registration:  
[hello@philanthropicadventures.com](mailto:hello@philanthropicadventures.com)





This is our third edition of B8 of Hope & [Philanthropic Adventures](https://philanthropicadventures.com) workshop since 2020 - an educational workshop about peace philanthropy. Philanthropic Adventures is a non-profit association 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. Philanthropic Adventures and B8 of Hope offer a free of charge in person workshop to a group of 8 to 12 Swiss high-schoolers (aged 15 to 18) from different schools in Geneva and region.





The workshop in the form of an after-school activity, takes place over a month and half. The participants learn about peace philanthropy and advocacy with different facilitators from B8 of Hope and Philanthropic Adventures. It is a journey towards peace-building through the lenses of B8 of Hope while learning the skills of philanthropy with Philanthropic Adventures.

\* \* \* \* \*

We take this opportunity to thank our donors, supporters, volunteers and all those who believe in our pro-peace message and mission.

B8fully Yours,  
The B8 of Hope Team

