



Newsletter

April 2024

Dear Friends and supporters,

Since the beginning of the year, B8 of Hope has been very active in Switzerland. We hosted many of our grantees and peace activists in Geneva:

- [Zimam](#) and [Pathways](#) in January,
- [New Story Leadership](#) in February,
- [Ali Abu Awwad](#) in March.

In addition, B8 of Hope was invited to talk at the Graduate Institute in Geneva and the International School of Geneva. Last but not least, our Executive Director, Mehra Rimer has been in the spotlight in Heidi.news. [Please click here](#) to read all about the above mentioned our activities!



News from the Ground

To provide some context: in the aftermath of October 7th and the ensuing war, the prevailing trend among the various Palestinian and Israeli initiatives supported by B8 of Hope was for staff and active members to initially gather internally, both within their own nations and across borders, to address their shock and emotions. Subsequently, they reached out to alumni and other affiliated circles (participants, volunteers, donors) of their programs to provide support.

Some programs and activities were either canceled or temporarily suspended. While some organizations experienced demotivation of some members, others gained new ones. Gradually, activities began to resume, with many now taking place either online or in person. Remarkably, certain programs have even succeeded in attracting new donors and volunteers. The alumni of many programs have been also active and gathering in dialogue sessions.

Additionally, some movements united in advocating for a ceasefire to safeguard the lives of innocent individuals in Gaza and ensure the safe return of Israeli hostages.

Below is a small selection of our grantee's activities since January 2024.

♦ Standing Together

One of the most active B8 of Hope grantee has been [Standing Together](#), a grassroots people's movement in Israel which mobilizes Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, locally and nationally, around campaigns for peace, equality, and social justice, to build, power and transform Israeli society.

To mention some of the many activities of Standing Together, they have been rallying and pushing for an urgent ceasefire and hostage release deal, to save the lives of innocent people in Gaza and bring back the Israeli hostages alive. They also led an emergency aid convoy to provide much-needed food for starving people in Gaza.

This movement's vision for the year ahead is to revive conversations in Israeli society around Israeli-Palestinian peace and mobilize Jews and Palestinians towards a new political horizon - one that can guarantee freedom, equality, and security for everyone in Israel/Palestine.

Link to Roula Daoud's speech [here](#) (Hebrew speaking, subtitled in French, Arabic and Hebrew)



♦ A Land for All (ALFA)

[A Land for All](#) is a shared movement of Israelis and Palestinians who believe that the way towards peace, security, and stability for all passes through two independent states, Israel, and Palestine, within a joint framework allowing both peoples to live together and apart. Israeli-Jews and Arab-Palestinians are heavily intertwined on both side of the Green Line and therefore building walls between them is neither realistic nor desirable. Recognizing that both Jews and Palestinians are part of the same shared homeland, and respecting their equal individual and national rights, A Land for All provides pragmatic and viable solutions to the obstacles that have stymied prior negotiations, moving Israelis and Palestinians from a paradigm of separation towards a future based on power sharing and shared interests.

In March, the Palestinian and Israeli co-directors of ALFA, **Rula Hardel** and **May Pundak**, journeyed to Brussels as part of their collaborative efforts with the European Union. ALFA has been recognized as a significant partner in shaping and implementing strategies toward achieving a two-state solution in the present day.



During their visit, Rula and May had the opportunity to address the Parliament and engage with the Human Rights and Middle East Committee members. They held meetings with high-ranking European Union officials who share ALFA's commitment to exploring how it can help translate Europe's achievements into tangible solutions for the future of Palestine and Israel. ALFA's relationship with the European Union is crucial in fostering a shared vision for the region's future and in advocating for actions to halt the war on Gaza, facilitate the safe return of hostages, and transition from military tactics to diplomatic initiatives as swiftly as possible.

On another note, Rula and May met with [Thomas Friedman](#), New York Times Opinion columnist and Pulitzer Prize winning author. He expressed his support for A Land for All in a NYT article and called Joe Biden to adopt ALFA's vision.

To read the article click [here](#).



♦ Road to Recovery

[Road to Recovery](#) a network of Israeli volunteer drivers who transport Palestinian patients from check points to hospital, continue bringing patients from the West Bank to Israeli hospitals. Some of the Road to Recovery drivers were from the Kibbutzim near Gaza and victims of the horrific attacks of October 7th. The work of Road to Recovery with Gazan patients has sadly stopped as the border is closed, but the organization has doubled efforts with the West Bank. Just since the start of January, 725 Israeli Volunteers have accomplished 2026 trips. Road to Recovery is also providing medicines for Palestinians as an emergency measure.

"It's a way of holding on to hope, when we help Palestinians heal, we also heal ourselves. While our leaders are waging war, we are waging peace, while the general belief on both sides that Israelis and Palestinians will never be able to meet, we prove otherwise. Every ride is the creation of a small peace. And let me tell you what happens in the ride. The ride in itself, is humanitarian and lifesaving and the conversation in the car is magical" - Yuval Roth, founder of Road to Recovery.

We would also like to share with you a testimonial written by one of the Israeli volunteer drivers:

"Muhammad. He is from Jenin. Worked for years in Israel and is fluent in Hebrew. About two years ago he got cancer. Stopped working. I recently drove him to Sheba for treatment, we joked that Sheba

is better than Shifa... When he entered in the car, he immediately saw the pictures of the abductees decorating my car. He told me they should be returned home. He talked and talked, and I drove and listened. He counted all the wars in the last decade and remembered the exact years, more than me. His conclusion is that it is important to sit at the table. The negotiation table. There is no other way, and he repeated it over and over again. And when we parted in Sheba with wishes of health, I remembered my dear and late mother who spoke to me as a child with exactly the same words. There is no point in war. We must talk, even if right now it seems absurd. And I remembered that as a child we burned effigies of Nasser and later when I became an adult, I guided dozens of trips to Egypt. So, health to Muhammad, and to all of us. And this post is of course dedicated to my late mother and Adi Dagan who was murdered on October 7th. She was a volunteer of the Road to Recovery.”

♦ Women Wage Peace & Women of the Sun

Women Wage Peace is a broad-based Israeli grassroots movement, with women from the Right, Center and Left of the political spectrum, whether Jewish, Muslim, or Christian, religious or secular demanding an end to the cycle of violence and a return to diplomatic ways.

Women of the Sun is a Palestinian women's organization that are Women Wage Peace's partners, based in the West Bank and devoted to a peaceful resolution in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

This winter, Time Magazine held a gala event announcing the 12 most influential women in the world, 2024. We are so proud that the list includes **Dr. Yael Admi**, the representative of the Israeli movement Women Wage Peace and **Reem Hajajra**, the representative of the Palestinian movement Women of the Sun. They have also been nominated for 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. Women of the Sun has been providing food parcels all over the West Bank where families are left without resources since the start of the war and the loss of jobs.

Link to the related interview and article [here](#).



♦ Zimam

Zimam is a Palestinian youth movement based in Ramallah and focused on a domestic approach to conflict resolution. Zimam works with the leaders of tomorrow to build a more democratic, actively engaged, and pluralistic society in the Palestinian Authority Territories in the West Bank and in Gaza.

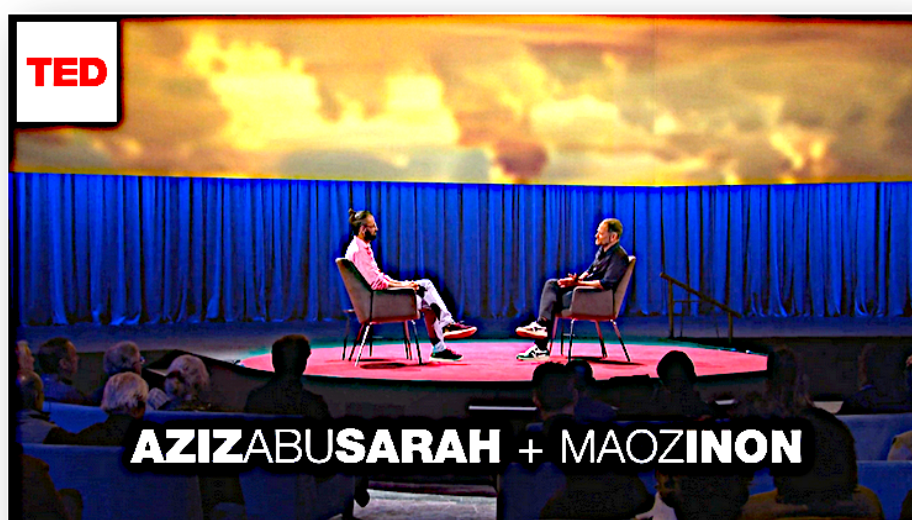
Zimam has been raising funds to support basic needs in Gaza and has been managing to provide food (through community kitchens and food parcels), hygiene kits and tents in Gaza.



TED Conference

Two amazing Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilders, business entrepreneurs and partners, whom we work with, Maoz Inon and Aziz Abu Sarah, were part of an unprecedented opening of TED through a live conversation.

Both of them have lost their loved ones in the conflict. Listen to what they say [here](#).



Upcoming online events

We would like to draw your attention to two important and inspiring online joint Israeli and Palestinian events involving our two grantees [Parents Circle Families Forum](#) and [Combatants for Peace](#) and we encourage you to take part.

♦ May 12th: The Joint Israeli and Palestinian Memorial Day Ceremony.

“The Joint Memorial Day Ceremony is a memorial event which recognizes the price that all of us have paid – bereaved families and society as a whole. In the Ceremony we acknowledge the pain and grief; but refuse to allow this bereavement to be an excuse for further violence and war. We choose to build a different reality together, so that we will have no further bereavement. The joint Ceremony calls on each side to recognize the other's pain and the price of war – in order to prevent further violence. In mourning together, we seek not to equate narratives, but rather transform despair and suffering into hope and build bridges of compassion.” - Parents Circle Families Forum.



To register please click [here](#)

♦ May 15th: The Joint Nakba Remembrance Ceremony organized by Combatants for Peace.

“It is a unique opportunity to commemorate the pain and tragedy of the Nakba (“catastrophe” in Arabic), when in 1948 more than 700,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes, became refugees, and had their villages and cities destroyed. The ceremony started as the sister event to the annual Israeli-Palestinian Joint Memorial Ceremony. This mass displacement brings back terrible memories of the events of 1948 for many Palestinians.”

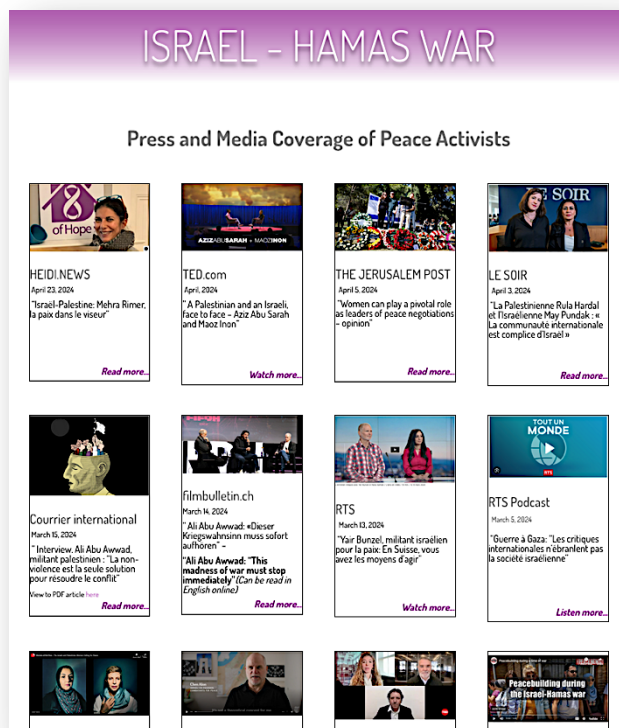


For Combatants for Peace, peacebuilding and paving a path for a better future is also about listening with empathy to each other's stories and acknowledging injustice.

To register please click [here](#)

Finally, since October 7th, many of the organizations we support have been in the news. We continue to curate our '**Peace Activism in Times of War – Press and Media Coverage**' section, striving to showcase the articles featuring our peace activists.

To explore the media coverage and read the articles click [here](#).



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**B8fully Yours,
The B8 of Hope Team**

