



Quarterly Newsletter

October – December 2025

B8 of Hope Activities in Switzerland and Beyond

Our work in Geneva is a small contribution to our grantees' efforts—a way to amplify their voices, foster connection, and build understanding far beyond the region. If you'd like to see what's been keeping us busy on the ground, please visit our [Activities page](#).

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As 2025 comes to a close, we find ourselves—very hesitantly—on the threshold of what might become a lasting ceasefire. It is too soon to know whether this fragile moment will hold and open into a renewed peace process or falter under the pressures still present. But for the first time in two years, there is space to breathe. To pause. To take stock of what has been lost, and what—despite everything—has endured.

For the community of civil society organizations in Israel and Palestine, these have been years of devastation and disorientation. What does it mean to be a peacebuilder in times of war? To keep calling for humanity when the world around you is engulfed in rage and grief? To reach across a chasm when most people can barely look beyond their own suffering?

In those first days and months after October 2023, new lines were drawn everywhere—on maps, in hearts, within communities. Many found themselves pulled inward, seeking safety among their own, unable to hold the pain of others while carrying the unbearable weight of their own devastation and loss. The small, fragile space where Israelis and Palestinians once stood together for a shared future seemed to shrink almost to nothing.

And yet, some remained. They stood their ground in that narrow, painful in-between—refusing to let the idea of shared humanity die. They kept reaching out, kept tending to one another, even when it meant being branded traitors or naïve dreamers. Even when it meant standing almost alone.

These are the people and organizations B8 of Hope was created to support. Over the past two years, our grantees have continued their work in the most impossible conditions—not out of denial, but out of conviction that there is no other path forward. Their courage is not the absence of fear or grief, but the insistence that compassion and a shared future based on dignity, equality, and agency are still possible, even now.

As we pause to breathe at the end of this long and brutal chapter, we want to honor four of these partners who have kept standing in that shared space. We asked them to reflect—in their own words—on what the last two years have meant: the choices they faced, the strength that sustained them, and the vision that still guides their work.

These are their stories. We invite you to read them slowly, and to hold space for the hope that endures between the lines.

◆ *Road to Recovery*

Road to Recovery is an Israeli volunteer network that transports Palestinian patients—especially children—to life-saving medical care in Israel and provides additional support such as medical equipment and respite outings for families.

In those first days and weeks after October 2023—when everything shifted—what was that period like for your organization?

The first days after October 7 were unbearable. We moved through them in shock, trying to understand what had happened and what was still unfolding. As the scale of the loss became clearer, we traveled from funeral to funeral, standing beside volunteers who were grieving, frightened, and overwhelmed. At the same time, we were deeply conflicted about our connection to Gaza. Many of us felt anger and heartbreak all at once. And yet, we also worried about the patients and colleagues in Gaza we had been working with for years. We knew the border would close, and that we would not be able to reach them. The uncertainty and helplessness were devastating.



Still, the calls from West Bank patients did not stop. Continuing to drive them to hospitals became an anchor in a world turned upside down. It allowed us to keep our humanity intact when everything else was breaking.

What gave your organization the strength to stay standing—to keep working in such a fraught and divided space without compromising your values?



The greatest challenge was simply to continue getting up each morning and functioning. Our coordination team and volunteers were exhausted, frightened, and grieving. We chose to make space for every emotion: pain, anger, hesitation, without forcing anyone to continue before they were ready. Many volunteers stopped driving for Palestinian patients during that time, and we reassured them that every decision was valid. At the same time, as an organization, we did not close our doors. We answered every request that reached us. We expanded our assistance to anyone who needed help, including Israeli evacuees and families in crisis.

This gave volunteers who could not yet return to the road another way to contribute, and it allowed the organization to remain whole. What held us steady was the understanding that stopping would mean surrendering to fear. Continuing, even imperfectly, kept the possibility of compassion alive.

If you let yourself imagine—just for a moment—that your work has succeeded, that the world you've been working toward finally exists, what would it look like?

If our work succeeds, it will be a world in which our organization is no longer needed. Palestinian patients in Gaza and the West Bank will be able to receive adequate care close to home. And when someone does need treatment across the border, they will simply travel freely by private car, by bus, by an ordinary and respected system of coordination, because life and health will be recognized as shared human priorities. In that imagined future, the relationships built over years of rides, conversations, and shared moments will form the fabric of something larger: neighborliness, mutual safety, and trust. Children will grow up not fearing one another. Communities will live side by side without the constant threat of loss. The “road” between us will no longer be one of recovery, but of everyday life. That is the world we continue to drive toward, one ride at a time.

◆ *Combatants for Peace*

Combatants for Peace is a binational community of former Israeli and Palestinian combatants who have transformed their own histories of violence into a joint, nonviolent struggle to end occupation and build equality and freedom for all.

In those first days and weeks after October 2023—when everything shifted—what was that period like for your organization?



In the days and weeks after October 7, everything changed. There was shock, fear, and deep grief, and many in our movement attended too many funerals. Communication between Palestinians and Israelis became almost impossible—not only emotionally, but physically, as borders closed and movement was restricted. Yet even from a distance, we refused to lose contact. We spoke online, sent messages, and checked on one another. There were moments of silence and misunderstanding, but we kept showing up. We knew that abandoning the relationship would mean abandoning our

purpose. So we returned to our core principles—nonviolence, equality, and shared humanity—and let them guide us through uncertainty. Staying connected, even when it was painful and limited, became an act of resistance in itself—a statement that partnership must endure, especially when violence and fear try hardest to break it.

What gave your organization the strength to stay standing—to keep working in such a fraught and divided space without compromising your values?

Our strength came from our trust in one another and our shared belief in humanity. In those first chaotic months, we reminded ourselves that while we are important in times of quiet, we are essential in times of war. That conviction led us. Many around us were calling for revenge or silence, but we knew that our role—to stand for nonviolence—mattered more than ever. The relationships we had built over years of joint struggle gave us the desire to keep going. Even when it was hard to speak, we knew that we could still listen, still show up, and still act. Our work became not only about resisting occupation, but about protecting the possibility of partnership itself—proof that trust can survive even when the world seems determined to destroy it.



If you let yourself imagine—just for a moment—that your work has succeeded, that the world you've been working toward finally exists, what would it look like?



It would be a life of freedom—demilitarized, just, and equal. Palestinians and Israelis would live without fear or oppression, and everyone could exercise their rights and dignity fully. Communities would be defined by justice, equality, and shared responsibility, rather than division or conflict. Children would grow up learning cooperation and respect instead of mistrust or hate. Occupation would be fully dismantled, and all policies and systems that enforce inequality or control would be replaced with accountable, fair governance. We would want the world to see that this

future is possible, and that ending the occupation and building a society based on human rights and equality is achievable through committed action by people in all communities. Peace would not be an abstract idea, but the tangible result of justice, accountability, and equal rights for all.

◆ *Standing Together*

Standing Together is a Jewish–Arab grassroots movement in Israel organizing diverse communities to build shared power, end the occupation, and advance equality, peace, and social and climate justice through broad, interest-based solidarity.

In those first days and weeks after October 2023—when everything shifted—what was that period like for your organization?

We were all deeply shaken by Hamas’ massacre on October 7. We held a Zoom meeting with the leadership and team to share our pain, and people spoke about how they were personally affected by the events and how they felt anxious and fearful about Israel’s retaliation. A few days later we called for a hostage deal, becoming one of the first organizations to do so. And we acted quickly: We set up 12 solidarity networks across the country where over 5,000 Jewish and Palestinians activists participated in actions including cleaning bomb shelters and collecting food for people in need, assisting farmers on the Gaza border, removing violent graffiti, accompanying people who were scared to leave their homes, providing open conversations with trained psychologists, and establishing a hotline for Palestinians facing political persecution, including being fired from jobs or expelled from universities for speaking against the war.



We were reminded again of how important being an organized force on the ground really is. Because of this infrastructure, we were able to mobilize thousands of people to take action to de-escalate and support communities.

What gave your organization the strength to stay standing—to keep working in such a fraught and divided space without compromising your values?



In the weeks after October 7 not only were we recovering from the shock, we were also facing silencing attempts by the far right and watching with horror as thousands of people were killed in Gaza. Our work was complicated by right-wing activists who had made it impossible for us to access our office—we worked from home over several days due to threats. But what kept us standing was that we continued to organize and act.

As a movement of Palestinians and Jews, we know that there’s no other alternative to creating hope through action, to fighting for our shared future on this land. Not only did we not compromise our values, but our values were actually reinforced during this period. We saw clearly how war only brought more violence and pain, and that peace and partnership is the only way forward. This clarity strengthened us rather than weakened us.

While the scale and horror of Hamas’ attack and Israel’s war on Gaza were unprecedented, we had by then been fighting a reality of bloodshed and oppression for nearly a decade. Built into our strategy is the practice of setting tangible goals to achieve small victories that advance us toward our larger aims of peace, equality, and social justice—a structure that helped us keep moving forward even in the hardest moments.

If you let yourself imagine—just for a moment—that your work has succeeded, that the world you’ve been working toward finally exists, what would it look like?

We envision true and lasting peace. No wars, no occupation, and a society that serves all of us and treats every single person with dignity. A society where all of us can enjoy real security, adequate housing, quality education, good healthcare, a liveable climate, a decent salary, and the ability to age with dignity. The future we want is built on solidarity between diverse groups—Jews and Palestinians, secular and religious, rural and urban, and people of all genders and sexual orientations. We don’t erase our differences but believe in building partnerships based on shared interests. Our vision is a People's Left that invites political involvement from everyone and fights for democracy, equality, justice, and the establishment of a government that can actually look out for all of us who live here. What we are building is a politics of hope. It’s ambitious, but we know it’s possible.



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◆ **Roots**

Roots is a joint initiative of Palestinians and Israelis living in the West Bank working towards a social and political reality in Israel and Palestine built upon dignity, trust, and mutual recognition of both peoples' historic connection to the entire Land. Through grassroots initiatives, they foster understanding, nonviolence, and transformation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In those first days and weeks after October 2023—when everything shifted—what was that period like for your organization?

The days, weeks, and months following October 2023 were the beginning of a free-fall into an abyss, one that really hasn't relented since. The violence unleashed such raw emotions, fears, and anger that we knew we had to tread carefully if we were to maintain the trust of our target communities. Making decisions about short-term versus long term actions came up again and again.

Roots’ leadership recognized very quickly that in this coming period, dialogue would not be possible, with the risks far outweighing any benefits. In a crisis driven by factors beyond our control, we looked for an area where we could express our values and have some impact. We decided to try and prevent the violence from spreading to our communities and region, and to support those affected by the onslaught of impacts: from the lack of movement for Palestinian communities, to displaced Israelis who ended up in our area. We started designing programs within Palestinian and Israeli communities separately, that would still serve Roots’ values and goals.



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What gave your organization the strength to stay standing—to keep working in such a fraught and divided space without compromising your values?



Our strength came out of our past and our future. Roots has worked over the last 11 years in building relationships based on combatting hate, violence, and mistrust. Over that period, there developed a core of Roots activists and leaders who stood firm through thick and thin. That trust, even when we found ourselves stretched by the anger and frustrations because of Gaza and the situation in our home communities, wasn't for nothing. In a week-long staff workshop, where we addressed the challenges between us, there were tears, shouts, hugs, and anger—over and over again. But our core understanding and vision still stood. This understanding is rooted in the belief that, at the end of the day, Palestinians and Israelis belong to this Land. We knew that even this horrible chapter wasn't going to end that. The look of fear in each other's eyes—while we may not have agreed on the facts over what happened on the 7th of October and after—that look of fear in a partner's eyes was real.

Much of our adaptation in the last two years moved us into uni-national work. What kind of Israelis do we want to be? What does it mean to serve Palestinians? That steadiness, at a time when very violent answers to that question abounded, is a moral drive we felt in ourselves and for our people.

If you let yourself imagine—just for a moment—that your work has succeeded, that the world you've been working toward finally exists, what would it look like?



It would mean that the work of Roots is now not against the grain, but part of the dominant grain. It would mean that we are working on regional cooperation projects, initiatives within and between both Israeli and Palestinian schools. It would be a world where safety and curiosity give birth to connections and friendships in a place where today there is suspicion, fear, and delegitimization. There would be such an incredible deep breath happening, and a level of prosperity we can hardly imagine. Seeing each other as sources of security and affirmation would replace exactly the current opposite. And on a deeper level, it would mean that our reality would become the place for our dreams, instead of competing in exclusive fantasies.

In Closing

We hope these reflections have offered a closer, more honest look at what it means to keep working for a shared future in a time like this. They mark a space that could easily have vanished after October 2023—a space held open by people who refused to abandon it, even when grief, fear, division, and violence made it nearly impossible to stand there. The work you've just read about is not theoretical; it is lived, risked, and rebuilt day by day. As we close this year, we at B8 of Hope take our cues from all of our grantees. Their persistence shapes our own, and their clarity reminds us why this work matters so much. To all of you who stand with us—and with them—thank you. Your solidarity makes it possible for these voices and efforts not only to endure, but to keep shaping the future that must be built for all the people living between the river and the sea.

B8fully Yours,
The B8 of Hope Team