

B8 OF HOPE

SECOND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER 2026



Photo: Cfp

A NOTE FROM GENEVA

Despite devastation and hardship on the ground, the work of B8 of Hope's grantees continues. It is fundamentally about humanization and people-to-people connection. Dialogue plays a significant role—but dialogue alone is not enough, and the work of our grantees goes well beyond it.

In recent months, settler and military violence against Palestinian communities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem has come increasingly into public view. This violence is not new. For years, Palestinian families and communities have faced intimidation, displacement, land loss, demolitions, restrictions on movement, and attacks on their ability to remain safely in their homes and on their land. But the escalation is alarming—and the attention it is now receiving, from media outlets, diplomats, civil society, and communities on the ground, reflects the urgency of the moment.

For that reason, this newsletter focuses on how B8 of Hope's grantees are responding to this particular form of violence.





Photo: Cfp

What emerges is not a story of dialogue alone, but of action. Across the West Bank and East Jerusalem, violence often seeks to isolate: to make Palestinian communities feel abandoned, to make peacebuilders feel powerless, and to convince people that nothing can be done. Our grantees respond by refusing that isolation.

They show up.

Sometimes that means protective presence: visible, on-site accompaniment in threatened communities, where volunteers help deter violence through their physical presence, documentation, de-escalation, and follow-up.

Sometimes it means co-resistance: joint Israeli-Palestinian action against violence, displacement, occupation, racism, and dehumanization—through harvest support, rebuilding, advocacy, education, aid, protest, and public witness.

And sometimes it means solidarity in its most direct form: standing with people under threat, at their request and on their terms, not as charity or symbolism, but as shared responsibility.

The organizations featured below do not all respond in the same way. Some accompany families in the fields. Some install cameras. Some organize across enemy lines. Some stand in the streets. Some bear witness out of grief. But together, they reveal a side of peace activism that is too often overlooked: peace is not only what people believe. It is what they are willing to do when others are in danger.

THE JORDAN VALLEY ACTIVISTS: WHO THEY ARE & WHY IT MATTERS

The Jordan Valley Activists are a group of Israeli volunteers working to protect Palestinian shepherd communities in the Jordan Valley, in Area C, under Israeli civil and security responsibility per the Oslo Accords. Around ten communities—comprising several thousand people—live in this area under harsh conditions, relying on herding sheep and cattle, with no connection to water or electricity, apart from solar panels in recent years.



Photo: Jordan Valley Activists

Over the past decade, approximately ten illegal outposts have been established in the area with the declared goal of expelling the shepherds from their land. In the last three years, the situation has escalated sharply. Settler activity—carried out with the support of the Jordan Valley Regional Council and the indirect complicity of the army and police—now includes blocking access to water sources, preventing access to grazing land, daily harassment of shepherds and activists alike, destruction of property, theft and killing of sheep, and arbitrary confiscation of cattle. Several communities have already been forcibly evicted or driven out by unbearable pressure.

The communities' needs are immediate and concrete. Reduced access to grazing land has led to higher sheep mortality, lower milk production, and disease spreading through overcrowded herds. Security cameras are frequently broken or destroyed. When communities try to defend themselves, it is often their own men who end up arrested by the army.

The Jordan Valley Activists respond to these needs through protective presence: residential and grazing escorts, always at the communities' own request and without the use of violence. They accompany where accompaniment is asked for, document where documentation is needed, and support communities in the ways the communities themselves identify as most urgent. Their presence alone, combined with careful documentation, can significantly reduce harassment.



Photo: Jordan Valley Activists



The communities they accompany have so far managed to maintain their way of life.

The work of the Jordan Valley Activists is as rare as it is vital. In a landscape where fear, mistrust, and violence have become the norm, these Israeli volunteers choose a different path—showing up, day after day, in the fields and communities of Palestinian shepherds who have been left deeply vulnerable. Their presence is not symbolic. It is practical, protective, and at times the only thing standing between a community and forced displacement.

But it is important to name the relationship carefully. The Palestinian communities are not passive recipients of help; they are leading their own struggle to remain on their land. The activists come when asked, on the communities' terms, placing whatever protection their presence may offer at the service of those communities' own needs and decisions.

Beyond the protective function, what is being built is something harder to measure and perhaps even more important: trust, relationship, and a shared refusal to accept violence as inevitable. In choosing to stand alongside Palestinian communities—at their request, on their terms—the activists are practicing a form of solidarity rooted in responsibility rather than charity. These are Israeli citizens refusing to be passive in the face of injustice carried out in their name, while recognizing that the struggle to remain on the land belongs first and foremost to the Palestinian communities themselves. In that gesture—repeated quietly, week after week, in the heat and dust of the Jordan Valley—lies something no political process can manufacture: genuine solidarity, chosen freely.





COMET-ME: WHEN INFRASTRUCTURE BECOMES PROTECTION

From the Jordan Valley, the story moves from physical accompaniment to another form of protection: the infrastructure that allows communities to remain, document, and be believed.

Comet-ME is an Israeli-Palestinian organization with a long-standing commitment to some of the most marginalized off-grid communities in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territories. Over the years, they have built a remarkable infrastructure of support: today they provide renewable energy services to 140 communities and over 2,400 households, clean water to more than 500 households, and broadband internet to 30 previously unconnected communities.

In a context where access to basic services is routinely denied or disrupted, this work is not simply technical. It is existential. Electricity, water, and internet help make it possible for communities to remain in places where displacement is often pursued not only through direct violence, but through deprivation.

Since October 2023, as attacks on Palestinian communities in Area C have intensified, Comet-ME has responded with a new and urgent initiative: the installation of security cameras in vulnerable communities. To date, they have installed more than 800 cameras across 30 villages.



These cameras serve a different purpose from electricity, water, or internet, but they are part of the same broader commitment: helping communities stay in place under conditions designed to push them out. Where solar panels sustain daily life, cameras help protect the truth of what happens when that life is attacked.



Photo: COMET-ME

The reasoning is clear and sobering. Under occupation, justice is deeply skewed: settlers often act with impunity, while Palestinians are frequently detained on false charges. Handheld phone footage can be dismissed in court. Comet-ME's HD, time-stamped camera footage meets the evidentiary threshold to hold up in legal proceedings—making it a tool not just of documentation, but of accountability.

The impact is already visible. On January 27, 2026, back-to-back attacks on the villages of Fakhit and Halawa in Masafer Yatta involved the violent assault of a resident, arson, and the theft of a herd of livestock. Comet-ME's camera footage directly contradicted the army's account of events—and the evidence was picked up by Haaretz, bringing the story into the mainstream media.

This, too, is a form of protection. Not the protection of standing physically between a family and an attacker, but the protection of making denial harder. Of ensuring that when violence happens, there is a record. Of helping communities insist: this happened, we are here, and the world cannot say it did not know.



Photo: COMET-ME

ROOTS: PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI GRASSROOTS IN THE HEART OF THE WEST BANK

After the Jordan Valley Activists and Comet-ME, we turn to another part of the same ecosystem: not only direct protection and documentation, but locally rooted co-resistance from within the West Bank itself.

Roots is one of B8 of Hope's most complex grantees to explain. Based in the Gush Etzion and Beit Ummar area of the West Bank, Roots brings together Palestinians and Israeli settlers. Its staff and volunteers are Jewish Israeli and Palestinian, drawn from the communities they serve. These are minorities within their own societies, often criticized from both sides.

For the Palestinians involved in Roots, the premise is difficult but clear: you do not change the reality of the West Bank by speaking only with those who oppose occupation. You have to engage the people living in settlements—the very people whose choices shape Palestinian day-to-day realities. For Israeli settlers involved in Roots, the work carries a different responsibility: to challenge violence, fear, and extremism from within their own communities.

This is what gives Roots its unusual position. It works inside the very reality at the heart of Palestinian dispossession, but it is not a settler initiative alone, nor is it simply an encounter program. It is a binational, community-led network in which Palestinian and Jewish Israeli team members use their respective access, credibility, and relationships to respond to local needs. That dual rootedness allows Roots to listen within Palestinian communities, engage within settler communities, and build channels between them that can be activated when tensions rise.

Roots operates in one of the most volatile areas of the West Bank, where escalating settler violence has become a daily reality. Its Palestinian and Jewish leadership spend much of their time mediating between communities, lodging police reports, connecting Palestinian farmers and shepherds to legal counsel, and coordinating behind-the-scenes taskforces



of Israeli settlers working to prevent and respond to attacks by violent settlers. Roots has also launched first-aid workshops in the Palestinian communities most at risk—equipping people with basic life-saving skills that Israeli authorities have repeatedly failed to provide.

The violence is not abstract for the Roots community. A Roots member from the Jordan Valley lost 200 sheep in an organized theft by extremists from illegal outposts. The killing of a Palestinian land-owner in the Gush Etzion-Bethlehem region prompted Roots to bring a delegation of Israeli and Palestinian activists to sit with local Palestinian leadership—in solidarity, and to think together about concrete protective measures.



Photo: Roots

This is where Roots sits in the broader field of co-resistance. Its work is not primarily the daily accompaniment model of the Jordan Valley Activists, nor the technological protection of Comet-ME. It is a community-based violence-mitigation model rooted in binational local access: Palestinian and Jewish staff identifying needs, mobilizing partners, engaging authorities, educating against extremism, and creating channels that can be activated in moments of danger. Roots' current strategy focuses on practical cooperation, solidarity actions, protective-presence efforts, and sustained engagement with local authorities to address immediate fears and critical needs.

Within this overwhelming reality, Roots also acts as a liaison to Israeli authorities on work permits and access to agricultural land, partners with settlement schools on education against violence and religious extremism, and works to build a groundswell of opposition to extremists from within the settler community itself. Here again, the binational structure matters: Palestinian partners help identify what is most urgent and what is most needed, while Jewish partners can sometimes reach institutions, schools, rabbis, and community leaders that would otherwise remain closed to Palestinian appeals. This effort has begun to bear fruit—with a notable rise in voices from within the broader religious community in Israel publicly speaking out against violence.

Roots' work is difficult, imperfect, and often misunderstood. But its importance lies precisely in its structure: Palestinians and Jewish Israelis working together from within the communities most entangled in the reality of the West Bank. In a place where violence is often enabled by fear, separation, and silence, Roots is trying to create mechanisms of intervention from within—reducing harm, countering extremism, and insisting that safety cannot be built by one community over another, but only through shared responsibility.



STANDING TOGETHER: WHEN SOLIDARITY TAKES TO THE STREETS

Some forms of protective presence happen far from cameras, in rural communities and grazing lands. Others unfold in the middle of a city, in full public view.

Standing Together, a grassroots movement of Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, has built much of its work around a simple but powerful refusal: refusal to let fear divide Jewish and Palestinian citizens, refusal to allow extremists to dominate public space, and refusal to leave targeted communities alone when threats emerge.

Their model of solidarity is often rapid, visible, and collective. During the war, Standing Together created solidarity networks across the country, including patrols that accompanied people afraid to leave their homes and served as a public reminder that Jewish-Arab partnership was still possible. They also organized a Humanitarian Guard to protect Gaza-bound aid trucks from attacks by far-right Israeli settlers and activists. Thousands reportedly registered as volunteers, and activists showed up near the Tarqumiyah checkpoint to help prevent attacks on truck drivers and cargo.



This is the broader context for what happened on Jerusalem Day.

Jerusalem Day is an Israeli national holiday commemorating the reunification of East Jerusalem with West Jerusalem following the Six-Day War of 1967, when Israel occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Its most visible celebration is the so-called Dance of Flags, or Flag March—a parade that, in recent years, has become a flashpoint for extremist violence and racist chanting.

This year, 300 Standing Together activists—Israeli Jews and Palestinian citizens side by side—deployed throughout the Old City of Jerusalem to provide protective presence and stand in solidarity with Palestinian residents.

They accompanied Palestinian families through the streets. They stood outside shops and homes. They documented violence. They helped people walk home safely. And when marchers sought to isolate and intimidate, they placed themselves—physically—in between.



Photo: Standing Together

The marchers wanted Palestinians to feel alone and afraid. Instead, they encountered organized Jewish-Palestinian solidarity standing in their way.

What Standing Together offers in these moments is not only protest. It is protection, witness, and moral clarity in public space. It is the insistence that the streets do not belong only to those who shout the loudest, threaten the most, or arrive in the greatest numbers. They also belong to those willing to stand together against fear, injustice, intimidation, and violence.



Photo: Standing Together



COMBATANTS FOR PEACE & PARENTS CIRCLE–FAMILIES FORUM: REFUSING THE LOGIC OF REVENGE

There is another kind of solidarity that begins in the deepest wounds of the conflict.

Combatants for Peace is a joint Israeli-Palestinian movement founded by former Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters who, having participated in the cycle of violence, chose to lay down their arms and work together for a just peace. The Parents Circle–Families Forum brings together bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost loved ones to the conflict and who have chosen reconciliation and dialogue over hatred and revenge.

What makes their work so powerful is not only the pain their members carry, but the fact that they carry it together. Israelis and Palestinians who might have been expected to turn away from one another—or to see one another only through fear, blame, or loss—instead choose to act together. Their joint presence is itself a refusal of the logic that violence tries to impose: that each side must grieve alone, fear alone, and fight alone.

But their work does not end with testimony or commemoration. In recent years, and especially in this current moment, both organizations have translated moral witness into solidarity on the ground.

For Combatants for Peace, this includes protective presence in Area C, where former combatants and activists accompany Palestinian communities, help document abuses, and stand with people facing settler and military violence. For the Parents Circle–Families Forum, it includes solidarity visits and practical support in communities under pressure—from harvest participation and



olive-tree planting to aid distribution, schoolbags for children, and support for community projects such as a playground in Bardala. In 2025, the Parents Circle carried out 40 solidarity actions supporting communities most affected by the conflict.

One moment captures the meaning of this work. During a solidarity visit to Auja, a Palestinian father told members of the Parents Circle: “You are the only ones who came here this year.”



Photo: CFP



Photo: CFP

That sentence should stop us in our tracks. It is not about symbolism. It is about abandonment—and the refusal of abandonment. For communities under pressure, solidarity can mean being seen, remembered, and accompanied when almost everyone else has stayed away.

In the wider ecosystem described in this newsletter, Combatants for Peace and the Parents Circle–Families Forum show how Israeli-Palestinian partnership can emerge from the very places where violence has left its deepest marks. Their work does not deny grief, anger, or fear. It begins there—and then insists that those emotions need not become revenge or separation.

At a time when trauma is so often used to harden division, these Israelis and Palestinians are turning personal loss into shared responsibility, and moral pain into practical solidarity. They remind us that peace work is not the work of the untouched. Sometimes it is carried by those who know exactly what violence destroys, and choose, together, to stand against it.

CLOSING REFLECTION

There is a side of peace activism that many people never see.

This work does not pretend that courage alone can undo occupation, dispossession, or fear. But it does refuse the logic that says nothing can be done.

It tells Palestinian communities under threat: you are not alone.

It tells Israelis: there are practical ways to step into your responsibility.

And it tells all of us: peace is not passivity. Peace is not naivety. Peace is the decision to act when dignity, safety, and humanity are at stake.

B8 of Hope's grantees are showing us that solidarity is not simply a nice idea. It is a practice—and a commitment—to keep building, even now, the conditions for a different and better future.



Photo: Cfp

STAYING CONNECTED

Between newsletters, we invite you to follow B8 of Hope on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) to stay connected with updates and stories from the field.

If you feel inspired by our work—or rather by the work of our grantees and the extraordinary peacebuilders leading it—please help us spread the word. Let's make their voices more visible and central in our conversations than the voices of polarization and violence.