



Sadaka Reut

Arab-Jewish Youth Partnership

Annual Report 2009-2010



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Introduction

Dear Friends, Partners and Supporters,



On behalf of our staff, I am proud to present to you Sadaka Reut's - Arab-Jewish Youth Partnership, 2009-2010 annual report. This year has been an interesting and challenging one following both social-political processes in Israel, and changes that took place within our organization.

This past year we witnessed an on-going process of racist trends that have gained legitimacy in the general public opinion. Racist community and legislative initiatives were carried out to denounce the Palestinian citizens in Israel and deprive them of their civil rights and citizenship. Along with that, there has been an orchestrated attack on civil society organizations that do not comply with the Zionist mainstream discourse. In response, these trends have sparked counter actions that are promising and inspiring. More and more individuals and groups are choosing to actively oppose and speak out their voice against oppression. During the past year we have seen a growing number of local initiatives by citizens that take responsibility and work together to build a better society. These initiatives empower us and the youth we work with.

This has been an interesting and challenging year also on the organization's level. Many changes have occurred side by side, bringing fresh new energies and enthusiasm.

We have expanded our activities and reached new and diverse communities, thus reaching more youth than ever. We opened a new group in Musmus, a Palestinian village in Wadi Ara area, a crowded area of many small conservative Palestinian villages that we have not reached before. In Jiser Al-Zarka, where we worked in schools during the past few years, only this year that we succeeded in opening a new after school group. In the neglected Jewish neighborhood of Kfar Shalem, located on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, a neighborhood that symbolizes the conflict in many ways, we have managed to establish a photography group. In the city of Netanya we formed a group in one of the most unprivileged neighborhoods, comprised of Mizrahi and Ethiopian Jews. Our continuing work in Lud has proven significant and challenging due to the many cases of civil and domestic violence that have

destabilized the city without a proper treatment of the authorities.

This year, the young leaders in the Community in Action project came from many different backgrounds forming a diverse group including Ashkenazi, Russian and Mizrahi Jews with Muslim and Christian Palestinians from the Galilee, east Jerusalem, and the triangle area. Hence, each individual brought different experiences and perspectives into intense activity year. This unique group of young excited leaders played a major role in the organization, initiating many campaigns, some of which you will read about in this report, while many more can be found on our YouTube channel.

The Markaz and Building a Culture of Peace participants have done many projects that have gained visibility within their communities for a growing numbers of people. During the year they learned about causes and issues in society that motivate them to instigate change. They researched individually chosen and group topics and translated this new knowledge into creative campaigns. Hundreds of people were exposed to these campaigns in community based events. All these projects were presented in an exhibition in a community gallery in the city of Bat-Yam. This exhibition will soon be made available in an online digital catalog.

It was also a significant year for us due to changes in the staff of the organization. Two of Sadaka Reut's leading figures of the past decade, Fadi Shbeita and Adi Maoz, left their positions. This completed a process of change within Sadaka Reut, in which the organization was "handed over" to a new team. This report will introduce to you the new and vibrant staff members - a wonderful and interesting group of devoted people.

It is my opinion that this is our time to spearhead sustainable change. With established foundations, a good reputation, knowledge and experience we are ready to implement new ideas and to take the work of the organization to new heights.

I am confident that the work of Sadaka Reut holds great promise for the future and I am proud to lead in my position as the general director.

Hana Amoury

Building a Culture of Peace



Rawan Bisharat is our newest staff member. She also works for the advancement of the hearing impaired community in Israel. Her open-mindedness contributes greatly to our work with youth, and her experiences enrich youths' attitudes towards tolerance. She therefore co-coordinates the Building a Culture of peace program, proudly.

"When I work with youth I try to explore with them how we as a society and as individuals treat people with disabilities, physical impairments, or any other marginalized group in society. Acceptance of the other is about understanding the others' culture. Learning about the other is a process where seemingly obvious assumptions are proved to be wrong. It is important to deepen one's understanding of the others' culture if he/she intends to build a future with them. However, in the current reality, people live side by side and still do not know anything about their neighbor. As a professional debate instructor, I incorporate many elements used in debate in facilitation. Youth have a difficult time expressing their true feelings and thoughts. They tend to give simple answers to questions, like yes, no, good, or bad. I push them to research their claims, provide evidence and example, like we do in debate. This is why my vision for the youth is for them to be the driving force for change, as I believe they are the ones that can initiate it on their own, if they are given the tools. In my experience, youth have exceptional power in society and this is why I chose to work with them."

The Building a Culture of Peace program report was written by the coordinators of the project, Miriam Abed El-Dayyem and Hagit Keysar. This report is based on monthly one-on-one meetings with the group facilitators, monthly staff meetings, observations of the workshops, regional activities and nationwide seminars, as well as analysis of monthly activity reports composed by the facilitators.



Social and Political Changes that Effect Project Implementation

Several political events in our region have continued to cause destabilization. These events have had a negative effect on our activities. This caused the youth to lose their faith in the possibility for change, while also schools have distanced themselves from Arab-Jewish cooperation, and few parents prevented their children from taking part in Sadaka Reut's activities. In spite of these events, we have continued with our work and encouraged schools, families and youth to get involved.

While organizations that share our vision work to spread the word of an alternative narrative and promote models of Jewish-Arab cooperation and trust building, few of these organizations promote such activities among youth. We have embraced the philosophy that social change starts with youth as they have the enthusiasm and positive thinking to make change happen. At Sadaka Reut we aim to encourage youth to be active citizens and take part in the movement for social change. Youth are able to raise their voices, to question and to think, while maintaining an open and friendly environment. The Building a Culture for Peace project was founded to give youth the tools and the platform to speak out. The project deals with the negative effects that the conflict has on youth, and works to strengthen their resolve to act and change their reality. The project offers Arab and Jewish youth a chance to learn together about their past and the present, to acquire the tools to make social change and motivates them to act in their immediate environments.

Changes in the Program

Last year we reevaluated our work strategy with Jewish youth. This year, instead of using the "tweezers model" for recruiting Jewish youth, we have decided to base our work in environments that have more of a need for our activities. In general, we choose to work with underprivileged communities where youth feel marginalized and looks for a chance to speak out and change reality. This year we are continuing our process of reevaluation in hope that it will help the organization to clarify our objectives and vision and improve our work process within the Jewish Community in Israel.



Description of Activities

Throughout the years our expert facilitators have been one of our strongest assets, as they are Sadaka Reut's direct connection with the youth. Their input on the educational process is invaluable, therefore we have asked them to present the activity year. This is a synthesis of their written monthly feedback and impressions on the past year.

From January to August 2009, all facilitators, both new and experienced, went through extensive training workshops. The purpose was to prepare us and help to acquire skills necessary in the facilitation of youth in conflict environments. Some of the facilitators are originally from the same region they will be facilitating in while others will need to adapt to their new surroundings. During the month of September 2009 we began more practical planning, arranging which facilitator will work with which group and we began the process of marketing our program in schools, community centers, local NGO's and within municipalities. While school started in the month of September, we were not able to start our programming until the middle of October due to the holy month of Ramadan, Eid Il Fitir, and the Jewish holidays of Tishrey. In the middle of October, in addition to starting our programming for youth we also attended an intensive weekend facilitators training seminar in Beit Jala. This experience allowed us to integrate on a deeper level with the staff working at the Sadaka Reut's office in Jaffa and to connect and become a part of the special and unique bi-national organizational atmosphere that has been created at Sadaka Reut.

With the evaluation process of 2008-9 that was presented to us by the two coordinators from the Building a Culture of Peace program we realized that this year's participation of Jewish youth should be brought in through more informal methods such as word of mouth, personal acquaintances of former youth graduates of the program and ties established with local educators. We found that this method was highly successful especially in the case of Netanya.

In Palestinian communities, there was more demand for the youth groups. Three new groups were formed, in Musmus, in Qalanswe and in Jisr az-Zarqa. In each place we contacted a local organization to work in cooperation with them. This included such organizations as Ram Association in Musmus and Tishreen Association for Palestinian culture revival in Taybe.

From the beginning of November, the program's seven youth groups began their activities, through uni-national and local meetings focusing on group building, acquaintance and issues of identity, power relations and community involvement. In parallel, the groups began to prepare for the bi-national meetings, which took place in the two over night youth seminars and the nation-wide or regional activities.

From last year, two Palestinian youth groups continued their work with Sadaka Reut both from the city of Taybe. While not all participants of these two groups remained in the program, many new youth joined. This year we additionally opened a bi-national group for youth who do not have a local youth group based in their city. It was difficult to establish regular meetings for this group, as youth live far apart, resources for organized transportation are scarce and parents expressed reluctance in letting their kids take public transportation. In spite of this, one meeting was held, and youth also worked together in the two bi-national two day seminars.

"It gave them a sense of belonging to the new community they were building and empowered them in their own national-cultural identity"

The first bi-national seminar was held in Neve Shalom. It was a two day seminar in which 88 youth attended. The seminar was titled 'my place' and it dealt with each teenager's personal connection to influential places in their lives. The first day focused on 'getting to know you' activities that were given a creative spin. Each teenager was asked to choose 'a place', whether physical or emotional, to present to the group and explain their role within this place and the impact it has on their lives. After the first day, the youth defined their own individual place. This understanding served as a basis for the second day. The youth were divided into small working groups of mixed backgrounds. This process exposed youth to others' unique and diverse origins and places, and it helped to create an atmosphere of unity in diversity. Additionally, it gave them a sense of belonging to the new community they were building and empowered them in their own national-cultural identity.

From year to year, this program is given continuity through the involvement of previous years' youth participants. During the overnight seminar, selected graduates from previous years presented the

community projects that they undertook in order to both develop their sense of ownership over their own work and to inspire new participants at the beginning of their journey.

The second two days seminar was held in April 2010 and was titled: 'The Story of My People'. 70 youth participated and the objective of this seminar was to expose youth to the collective story that does not omit or obfuscate the narrative of the other side. The method used in order to achieve the seminar goal was carried out in many activities, all based on critical thinking techniques.

"The aim of the exhibition was to empower the voices of marginalized Arab and Jewish youth in the public sphere"

Following the second seminar, each group matured and individuals were able to find their role within the larger group. The groups found their own unique team spirit. At this point in the educational and empowering process, the groups began to think about their community project, plan what they want to present and how they are planning to impact their local communities. After their exposure to subjects, such as gender, the role of youth in society, belonging to a place, identity, narratives, and the Palestinian Jewish Conflict, the groups then chose the theme they would like to address and the way in which they are going to take action within the community and beyond. For example, one of the groups working in Taybe chose to make a documentary on the Nakba in Taybe and how it affected local residents at the time, through gathering witness testimonials. During the filming process the participants learned about what happened in the Nakba, they began to research and deal with the past and current reality of their city and contributed to their community by making a unique film whose story had never been heard.

All groups' projects that were produced by the Building a Culture of Peace program were presented in Sadaka Reut's final activity of the year. The exhibition titled 'My Point of View'. The aim of the exhibition was to empower the voices of marginalized Arab and Jewish youth in the public sphere. We have established the exhibition so that the youth can also exchange their community projects with one another. 150 youth came to the opening night, along with 100 parents. A concert

by System Ali closed the event, which had special significance to Sadaka Reut, as the band members grew up and participated in our programs. The band plays in Arabic, Hebrew and Russian and they rap about social and political awareness. This event was an amazing closure for the activity year. It was not only moving, but gave the youth a sense of ownership over their work and the facilitators saw all their hard efforts realized.

After the closure of the year, facilitators attended an international training on how to combat social exclusion. This took place in the Netherlands. We explored the method of 'Theater of the Oppressed' together with our partnership organizations SINTEM from the Russian Federation Chechnya Republic, Critical Mass from the Netherlands and UM4P from Belgium.

For more information about this training please refer to Facilitators Training Program on page 27.

The Effects Achieved by the project

The Building a Culture of Peace program aims to motivate and provide youth with the tools to take an active role in social and political issues concerning their communities, country and world. We achieve this by raising social and political topics in workshops, bi-national meetings and seminars, as well as through the organization of enrichment days and tours for the youth. The facilitators work on demonstrating the relevance of these issues to the youth's daily lives, as members of communities and as active citizens, while raising their confidence and their ability to take an active part to change the current reality.

The active encounter of Palestinian and Jewish youth also seeks to create a change of attitudes, reducing

feelings of alienation, fear, prejudice and racism both communities feel towards one another. This is done step by step, from intimate and personal bi-national meetings in the first seminar, to the challenging bi-national discussions of the second seminar. With each step, more and more stereotypes are challenged and the willingness for dialogue and interaction with the other side increases.

As part of this crucial dialogue and as a leading element in the program, we aim at raising the subject of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict. We discuss it in an open and respectful atmosphere, while honestly dealing with the roots of the conflict, the core historical narratives linked to it and the present reality.

"The youth themselves were also encouraged to critically explore knowledge related to the conflict, share information and use critical reading and thinking while processing information"

This process unfolds first in uni-national groups and after some time through bi-national workshops. Through this method, the subjects and challenges are raised gradually, in order to allow space and time to deal with the conflicted issues in a constructive manner. The youth themselves were also encouraged to critically explore knowledge related to the conflict, share information and use critical reading and thinking while processing information.

Another goal of the program is to encourage youth to act responsibly within their communities, creating an essential link between education and activism. Therefore, during and following the educational process, youth are given practical tools in order to initiate and implement projects and community based programs.



Conclusions

For 2009-2010, we set the goal of opening 10 groups, however we only managed to open 9, as the youth in Kfar Saba did not sign up for our activities. Our groups for this year began relatively late, due to both the Muslim and Jewish holiday seasons. Therefore, the program was prolonged into the summer months. The end of the year exhibition was on the last day of June, which was a problem as facilitators did not have time to do adequate summary and evaluation activities with the youth. Moreover, this created a stressful and busy end of the year for all involved. Therefore, we recommend that for the next activity year groups will start in October and finish in April.

Our recommendations for the next activity year are as follows:

- We aim to concentrate efforts on finding new and creative ways to find youth participants and to integrate them in the activity, with an emphasis on the difficulties of the recruitment of Jewish youth.
- We aim to reexamine the current format of bi-national groups in seminars. Currently, we match one Jewish group with one Arab group which creates uneven numbers of participants.
- We aim to expand training for our facilitators in order to further prepare them to deal with youth in conflict.
- We aim to finish our groups' community projects before the end of the scholastic year so as to avoid end of the year stress.
- We aim to arrange more bi-national meetings, and to integrate the principle of partnership more in our work with youth.

The Markaz





Natalie Levy is a native of Jaffa. She is an expert in group facilitation and has been one of Sadaka Reut's leading facilitators for the last five years. She puts her mind and soul for the enhancement of the Jaffa

Community and therefore joined as a full staff member this September. Natalie is currently the co-coordinator of the Markaz program.

"Our vision of joint action and bi-national approach is quite unique since almost everything in this country is based on separation from the other, even in mixed cities like Jaffa. In the Markaz program we focus on youth in mixed cities where Palestinians and Jews live and work together and attend the same schools. With the use of art such as video, photography and theater, we help young people to express their views. I believe that these are very direct and powerful tools which can help them to visualize a different reality. In general, I think that we as facilitators must work from the perspective of the youth. We should start with their personal views and experiences before we expand into the global conflict. In my opinion, it is very easy not to care about people you don't know, or to feel a lot of hate when you grew up in an environment where it's all about prejudices, fear and racism. You must find a way to let the youth deal with it, to show them the responsibility they have towards other people, but without giving up their own identity and role in society."

The Markaz program report was compiled in cooperation with the following educational coordinators: Adi Maoz, Hagit Keysar and Mariam Abed El-Dayyem. The report is based on data gathered from written and oral facilitator reports, observations that the educational coordinators had during activities and the evaluation process conducted by the educational team. This report takes into account written and oral testimonies of youth participating in activities.



Social and Political Changes that Effect Project Effect

This year we have had to deal with major challenges that directly affected our activities with youth. While these challenges are expected to continue, they have proven the significance of our programming, as our work is a needed social alternative to the segregated and disenfranchised reality our youth deal with on a day to day basis. The 2008-2009 events in Acre (Akko) and the War in Gaza have led to escalation of tensions and polarization between Arabs and Jews and also have deepened racism and oppression towards the Arab citizens within Israel. In this last year, we have witnessed the rise of a far-right, ultra-orthodox government that has initiated legislation of racist laws in the Knesset. This occurred alongside the continuing tightening of Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories and of the siege on the Gaza Strip. All these events and the atmosphere they create taint the relationships between the two communities and increase the distrust, which is already present.

The influence of the situation described above distinctly affects the youth and the educational frameworks we work with. With this, we understand that today, more than ever, it is vital to strengthen bi-national partnerships that offer an alternative to the discourse of guns and violence. The program aims to facilitate understanding, empathy and cooperation that challenge the frameworks and discourse that perpetuate inequality, racism and injustice.

The 'Markaz', which means in Hebrew and Arabic 'the center', offers meeting places for Arab and Jewish youth from the middle of Israel from cities such as Jaffa, Lud, Ramle, Tel-Aviv and Bat Yam. These bi-national activities embrace art and media platforms. They are conducted in acknowledgment that the lives of these Arab and Jewish communities are bound together, as they are geographically inseparable. Most of the youth that come from these communities are in the social periphery and mostly come from a low socio-economic class.

Description of Activities

With the start of the scholastic year, we began our search for formal and informal educational frameworks to cooperate with on our projects. This year, the process started by actively marketing the

Markaz activities to youth and by holding consultation meetings with educational municipality directors. We encouraged youth to participate in our programming by bringing facilitators directly into their classrooms to conduct workshops. For example, in Bat Yam we had an information day held by our facilitators for teachers and other educational staff in order to deepen our cooperation and to serve as a basis for dialogue between the teachers and our professional facilitators. Here, they can discuss the different learning platforms they work in with the same youth. Overall, we worked in two schools and one youth center in Jaffa, one school and a youth movement called 'Ajial' in Lud, one high school in Ramle, one high school and one community center in Tel Aviv and six high schools in Bat Yam. Additionally, because of our successful cooperation with the Deputy Mayor, we conducted many extracurricular activities in Bat Yam, such as projects with the Museum of the Arts and empowerment activities for the Young Women's Festival.

"After conducting workshops in formal educational frameworks, youth are less reluctant to join our after school activities"

The implementation phase of this program involves the facilitation of workshops that aim to increase critical thinking towards inequality and social oppression among broader Arab and Jewish youth audiences. The goal is to raise issues that deal with the Arab-Jewish Conflict within classrooms and the formal educational system. Additionally, we encourage curiosity that leads to sincere interests in meeting youth from 'the other side'. This program creates lasting broader effects, as it reaches out to families and teachers that the youth come in daily contact with when they share their experiences. In this activity year, we implemented 197 workshops in Arab and Jewish high schools across the center of Israel and 613 youth participated in the program.

After conducting workshops in formal educational frameworks, youth are less reluctant to join our after school activities. Therefore, we create local groups that work with our educational program on local issues within their communities, and also have the opportunity to meet Arab or Jewish youth from the other side. This year we had two Palestinian groups, one in Jaffa and the other one in Lud, and three Jewish groups, one in Kfar Shalem and two Bat Yam.

Each group met 25 times and 55 teenagers attended our after school program. Additionally, each group had four enrichment activities that aimed to supplement the workshops they attend. For example, the group in Jaffa went to visit the 'First Boulevard exhibition' that portrays Jaffa before 1948 and the role the Jerusalem Blvd. had back then in comparison with today.

While most of the local groups are held within a uni-national setting, a vital part of this process is the bi-national meetings that are held once youth are more knowledgeable about power relations, identity, oppression, gender and their manifestations within Arab and Jewish communities in Israel. The most important forum for bi-national meeting is our twice a year weekend youth seminars. This year, the seminars dealt with the topic of how local communities are divided geographically, geopolitically, socially and historically. These seminars embraced 'urban mapping' techniques and explored together with the youth how their own communities are viewed. On the first day of the seminar, only half of the youth participating in the Markaz project arrived. The reason that some did not attend in the beginning is because they come from traditional Muslim families and as teenage girls are not allowed to sleep outside of their homes. On the second day of the seminar, we catered to the needs of our religious participants and participation increased.

After the bi-national experience, youth feel empowered to take responsibility over their environment and community. We help them establish a supportive network that encourages them to be active, productive and to speak out in influencing their current reality and build tools to create new realities for the local community. Each group produced two outreach projects. For example, our theater group in Bat Yam that is mainly composed of religious Jewish girls wrote monologues that were developed into a play that discussed issues bothering teenage girls, such as body image. This play was presented in front of their families and friends, which amounted to 56 people.

In order to illustrate the educational cycle that our programs go through we have picked the following success story to share.

Kfar Shalem Youth Group

Facilitator: Lihee Avidan

Project Coordinator: Hagit Keysar

The youth group in Kfar Shalem began meeting during February 2010, in the neighborhood's community center 'Beit Barbur'. Our aim in creating this group was to promote the use of photography among the local youth in order to develop media skills that would allow them to investigate the complex histories of Kfar Shalem. Furthermore, we wanted to promote the documentation of the local environment, the 'old' village's (Kfar Shalem's) people and buildings which are radically changing and disappearing by process of urban development and gentrification.

Our work with the group during 2010 was spread over a period of 6 months, in which we held weekly meetings facilitated by Lihee Avidan, a professional photographer and a social activist. It took a while to stabilize the youth's participation but after 2-3 months it included 8 participants ages 16-17 years old who were very much motivated and well organized among themselves as a group. As we got to know the group, it was clear that their idea of the local environment was a newly constructed one and did not include any knowledge and consciousness to its recent and earlier histories. None of them actually identified their neighborhood as 'Kfar Shalem', rather they called it 'Neve Barbur' or some other newly born names, which were given to the area after it suffered from evacuations. It was important for us to expose the group to the different contemporary narratives characterizing the area, as well as develop their awareness to the earlier Palestinian history of the 1948 village of Salameh.

The facilitator taught them basic skills in using digital cameras and very soon they started to document the neighborhood, learning about it through reflecting upon their own explorations and photographs. In cooperation with central figures from the neighborhood, we conducted special tours for the group and meetings that helped them better understand the place in which they live. We met with Aharon Maduel, a member of the city council representing 'Ir Lekulanu' (a political

movement that is not affiliated with any one party but rather serves as an umbrella organization that compile a list of representatives to be voted upon for municipal election that is composed of people from all spectrums of society). He had an important role in the people's struggle against evacuations in Kfar Shalem. We also met with Jerardo Leibner, a resident of the neighborhood and a historian at Tel Aviv University, who is also active in the local struggle. As a result of these encounters, along with cooperation with other people of the 'Beit Barbur' Community Centre, the group started engaging in a local documentation process of Kfar Shalem, which will be continued this upcoming year 2010-2011.

The group participated in the general Sadaka Reut bi-national activities, the participants developed interest in the new and challenging encounter with Sadaka Reut's Palestinian youth groups. They took part, along with other Sadaka Reut's Arab and Jewish youth, in a tour organized by 'Zochrot' to the ruins of the Palestinian village Hirbat el-Luz. The tour helped them better understand the catastrophe of 1948 and also to connect this history to their personal life and close environment in Kfar Shalem which lies on the ruins of the Arab village Salameh.

"The participants developed interest in the new and challenging encounter with Sadaka's Palestinian youth groups."

By the end of the year the group presented a colorful and fascinating photography installation. This work captured a panoramic view of Kfar Shalem, which mostly focused on the many different ways of life in this neighborhood. Through this project the youth discovered how the neighborhood had developed. Youth realized that it remained an underdeveloped enclave characterized by patches of 'wild life' and abandoned ruins, which remain from the original Palestinian village. These experiences the youth encountered and the final work they have produced facilitated a new understanding of their surroundings and how they can create a constructive dialogue to improve the urban fabric that they live in. Furthermore, the realization of their own oppressions contributed to increased tolerance for others who also suffer from oppression, such as their Palestinian peers.

The Effects Achieved by the Project

The overarching vision of the Markaz activities is to establish a strong infrastructure for Arab Jewish youth partnerships. This vision is expressed within the concepts, practices and aims directing our work. Art and media tools are central components in our methodologies and practices. Through these tools we are looking to communicate and visualize a different reality, one of a joint Arab Jewish partnership, even in places where such a realm is far from being established. Creativity allows us to move from activities based on the conflict to initiatives based on joint action. The educational team in Sadaka Reut decided to focus on outreach and capacity building in cities and neighborhoods that are marginalized, underprivileged and are unlikely to come across with the organization's ideas and aims. Thus, in order to establish firm cooperation with these communities, we work closely with schools and community centers trying to find a bridge between our over-arching aims and the personal perspectives of youth. Art and media tools proved to be powerful instruments for engaging youth in our activities. This allows capacity building and empowerment through the learning of new skills for self expression and creative thinking. Art and media practices such as theatre, video and photography are also very direct and powerful in visualizing a different reality, and in evoking the imagination of its possible realization. Through the work in Sadaka Reut, the participants go through a strong experience of creativity, in which they discover new abilities within them. We work closely with them in creating videos, performances and photography work based on their personal and local issues. During the year, youth get to know our overarching activities within Arab Jewish platforms and gain an interest in partnership practices.

"Art and media tools proved to be powerful instruments for engaging youth in our activities. This allows capacity building and empowerment through the learning of new skills for self expression and creative thinking"

During the past year, all of the youth creative projects together with campaigns by participants from our Building a Culture of Peace program were presented in a photography and video exhibition, which was held at the end of June 2010. The exhibition included documentations of discussion, group activities as well as creative works by groups who completed art and media projects.



Additional Important Effects

In Kfar Shalem and Bat Yam we managed to complete two revealing photography projects by youth participants. They dealt with the everyday experiences in their local environments. In Bat Yam, the success of the project was based on good community ties we established with the local municipality and the Museum of Art who gave us a space for work. It was also based on a long term connection between the participants of the Jaffa group and the Bat Yam group, together they created a joint map of their neighboring cities, which was presented in the final exhibition. Local support of our work is crucial, such as in the case of the Bat Yam theatre group as we had a hard time with a very conservative religious school. The group participants were only girls who were very enthusiastic about continuing their work with us but the institutional backlash to our aims prevented the girls from participating in our general activities. Despite this, the girls accomplished and presented a theatre performance and later, a sensitive piece of video work which dealt with their personal questions about their experiences as young women, their sexuality and their relationships with their families. Our work in Kfar Shalem was based on collaboration with Beit Barbur, the local community center, which helped us to expose the group's participants to the people and stories of the neighborhood. Lud's discussion group presented a visual representation of their work by the end of the year, in the exhibition. The presentation included four portraits and texts by inspiring women in Lud with whom they met and

conducted interviews with. We intend to continue work with all these institutions and people in the upcoming activity year of 2010-2011 and further develop the youth's intervention and engagement within their local communities.

Conclusion

The joint activities of Arab and Jewish youth within Sadaka Reut and the results of individual and group work allow for a larger impact within the communities we work with. By participating in our joint activities, youth have an opportunity to take part in Arab Jewish partnership activities, which they are not usually offered anywhere else. Through these experiences the youth grow to appreciate and gain ownership over the tools they developed with Sadaka Reut. They expose their work to a crowd of mixed youth and are excited to find shared points of interest. Even when a direct dialogue is not possible, shared ideas between groups can be conveyed in indirect ways. For example, the girls group from Bat Yam and the girls group from Lud were intended to meet during the year. This intention was not realized due to deep worries and concerns expressed by the parents of Jewish group who were reluctant to meet. In the final exhibition space, their work was presented next to each other. This side-by-side display created a visual dialogue between the two groups of girls that were both dealing with life as young women in conservative environments. Thus, our joint activities and the final exhibition allowed us to expand the limits of a possible dialogue between Arab and Jewish groups and facilitated a long term learning process.

"Even when a direct dialogue is not possible, shared ideas between groups can be conveyed in indirect ways."



Community in Action



Raz Wiener is a graduate of the 2003-4 Community in Action program. Since then he has been a facilitator at Sadaka Reut and as of June 2010 he is co-coordinating the Community in Action program. Raz is a professional actor, his creativity energizes the work of Sadaka Reut and inspires staff and youth alike.

"There is no bi-national partnership initiative in this country that is as intensive and profound as the Community in Action program of Sadaka Reut. I was part of the program myself in 2003-4 and I can say that Sadaka Reut became my social and political home. Becoming the coordinator of the program completed a circle for me; last year's group was the fruit of hard labor. The diversity of this group was probably the most amazing part of my experience, as there were Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews, Russian immigrants and Palestinians from many different backgrounds. The group's diversity allowed for many barriers to be broken and the group matured quickly. No one was the majority and the group formed a strong mutual understanding of where the other comes from. At the end of the year this group perceived itself as true leaders for social change and this was the goal I had; to have the participants become social activists, engaged in promoting justice and equality in any framework or place they live or work in."

The Community in Action program, like our other programs, is managed by two coordinators, one is Palestinian, and the other one is Jewish. Together they train professionally and coach the participants of the project. The coordinators also document and collect relevant information and testimonials. Together with the participants' input, the coordinators analyze and evaluate how the program is evolving. This report on the Community in Action program of 2009-10 is written by coordinators: Hana Amoury, Adi Maoz and are followed by two new coordinators of the program, Ibtisam Amoury and Raz Wiener. The report is based on evaluation and personal assessments of the participants.

Social and Political Changes that Effect Project Implementation

This year, as direct result of the events that happened in 2008-9 in Israel, the field of social activism is

currently going through significant changes. This program has been strengthened with the different social and technological changes that have developed in the last few years. The platform of the Internet has enabled marginalized social activism to reach many different kinds of people and networks. In turn, this catapults these stories onto more established streams of media. These initiatives of activism then become part of the public debate and sometimes even serve to influence public decision making. In addition, through the internet, activists are able to share their stories and experience. Thus the field of activism becomes more connected internationally and as a result there is a growing number of activists in Israel today. However, the constant increase in radical right wing trends overshadows the accomplishments of the social activism field. According to the Mossawa Center's report in 2010, the number of public addresses by Knesset members that have contained expressions with racist bias have increased. Also the number of proposed legislation with a racist agenda has grown. At the same time, there is a growing feeling of McCarthyism and general fear among left wing activists and their respective organizations. The investigation and arrest of people who work for social change organizations has increased. For example, the organization New Profile had its office supplies confiscated by the police. We have also witnessed escalating hostility from the media and the general public, for example the campaign by 'Im Tirtzu' against the New Israel Fund and its president Prof. Naomi Chazan. All of these actions delegitimize the hard work we do to make a difference in our society. Attempts to oppress civil society create fear, but also give us the motivation to work to change the injustices we witness. Despite all these difficulties, there is the sense that this is not the time to sit quiet; any protest that is suppressed will cause an even louder response.

Description of Activities

As the program is one intensive year, the description of activities will be presented by month, in order to grasp the trajectory of the program.

September: During the month of September the participants attended an orientation seminar that acquainted them with Sadaka Reut and each other. They also outlined their expectations for the program as they got to know the life in Jaffa. Additionally, participants were placed in different NGOs to volunteer for the year.

For example, Jawad chose to volunteer at Physicians for Human Rights at their Jaffa clinic, which provides medical care to people who do not have access for health insurance in Israel. Yael chose to volunteer at ASAF, a humanitarian aid organization for refugees in Tel Aviv. Sophie chose to volunteer at Coalition of Women for Peace and at Arus el-Bahar, a community based organization that empowers impoverished Palestinian women in Jaffa. Furthermore, while group campaigns are planned to begin in the third month of the program, this group unexpectedly demanded to start campaigning immediately in response to an event that occurred at the Diezengoff Shopping Center in central Tel Aviv. A few days earlier, two teenage Muslim girls wearing hijabs (veils) were forbidden to enter the Mall. When the manager was asked about the event he expressed himself in a racist manner. The participants of the program decided to distribute informative pamphlets at the entrance to the shopping mall, warning the shoppers about the discriminatory agenda of the management. The group's campaign was a successful start to a new program year.



October: During October, the group participated in a four day training session, which was facilitated by Social TV, on the topic of creating alternative media. They learned basic techniques to prepare a video report, photography editing, how to hold an interview and they tested these skills while preparing reports on subjects that they found interesting. They also participated in an enrichment activity about the October 2000 events and toured Acre (Akko) a year after the riots affected the city.

November: The group continued their enrichment activities by touring unrecognized villages in the Negev and Jaffa, where they explored Jaffa's delicate social fabric, discovering the institutionalized discrimination of Jaffa's Arab residents, and the gentrification processes plaguing Jaffa. During this month, on the International Day of Tolerance, the participants planned and

implemented their campaign against racist graffiti in the public sphere. They contacted the municipality of Tel Aviv-Jaffa and worked in cooperation to erase this graffiti in Tel Aviv.



December: December was a very important month, as it marked the one year anniversary of the War on Gaza. Enrichment activities were held on the topic of the siege on Gaza, the international campaign against the siege on Gaza in Jaffa and at the Erez Crossing. In this month the participants also enriched their understanding on other conflicts around the world such as Rwanda, Northern Ireland and Chechnya.

January: During the month of January, participants continued their work in contribution to the protests against the siege on Gaza. They produced five different post cards, which 5000 copies were distributed. The post cards featured on one side popular mainstream Israeli slogans that legitimize the siege on Gaza and on the back explained why these slogans and their repercussions were destructive and in fact have caused a humanitarian crisis right next door. Participants also attended training about facilitation of groups in conflict, learned about group dynamics, observed workshops that were facilitated by professional facilitators and analyzed this experience. They were even able to gain practical experience by first shadowing and then becoming assistants to professional facilitators within Sadaka Reut's Markaz and Building a Culture of Peace programs.

February: This month featured a workshop on the Palestinian Nakba and participants chose their individual research topics, defined a research question and started gathering sources and information. Also, participants designed and implemented workshops during the

Sadaka Reut's youth seminar. On the community work level, the participants started weekly personal tutoring of teenage girls and boys, helping them with homework and social skills.

The participants' interest in Gaza and commitment to struggle against the siege hasn't stopped. They were taking training on activism through the internet and decided to use this platform in order to raise awareness of Israeli public to the siege on Gaza. They created 3 short movies that attempt to demonstrate the life of people under the siege in a way that Jewish Israeli mainstream audience (and especially young adults) can feel empathy towards the Gazans. The participants hopped this feeling will stimulate Israelis to inquire more information on the siege and to ponder on their responsibility to take an active role in demanding the end of the siege. The movies were distributed widely through the internet achieving more than 3000 viewings on the group's Youtube channel "SadakaReutCommune".

March: This month was dedicated to learning about the Nakba and the history of the conflict. A series of workshops were devised by 'Zochrot' and were facilitated by the coordinators. Equipped with the new knowledge and research tools the participants continued their researches which they started last month. For example: Jawad chose to investigate the resistance of his hometown, Tarshiha in the western Galilee, during the Nakba. He interviewed his grandparents and others from their generation, collecting first hand testimonies. Raz decided to visit the Kibbutz of her father's family, looking for the remains of the Palestinian villages which neighbored it before 1948. She also observed the attitudes of different Kibbutz members towards the memory and the events of those years. Yael, on the other hand, focused on the unknown heritage of her mother's family which belonged to the Nashdidan, a small unique Jewish community in the Caucasus region. She wanted to know why the language and culture of Nashdidan was ignored and suppressed after the family immigrated to Israel after 1948. Lena, who was born in Russia and immigrated to Israel in her early childhood, researched the waves of Jewish immigration to Israel during the early 1950s, exploring the political motivations and interests that set them in motion.

April: The 2nd Sadaka Reut youth seminar took place in the middle of the month and the project members were

actively involved in its preparation. The coordinators conducted facilitation training sessions, expanding the knowledge and understanding of the project members in the educational and social processes of the work at Sadaka Reut. This learning was implemented in the seminar where each of the members observed a full two day workshop of one of the bi-national groups and later analyzed their experience and insights with the coordinators. During this month the group participated in the annual March of Return in the destroyed Palestinian village of Miske, near the town of Tira and met the Palestinian artist Hanna Farah in his exhibition of political art.



May: After six months of living and working in Jaffa the group went on a profound historical tour in Jaffa, focusing on Jaffa's Nakba and its traumatic shift from a central Palestinian city into an impoverished neighborhood of Tel Aviv. They also visited an exhibition of Palestinian art, which took place in Jaffa, presenting the work of more than 20 Palestinian artists. In the middle of the month, the group went on an excursion to the Jordan Valley with Dafna Banai, a board member in Sadaka Reut and an activist of the Machsom-Watch NGO. The participants witnessed the reality of checkpoints, land confiscations and miserable life of Palestinian opposing to the expanding prosperous settlements in this area. In the tour they met with representatives of the popular committees of villages in the region.

June: Several residents of the neighborhoods of Shem-Hagdolim and Kedem in Jaffa, which are amongst the most unprivileged areas in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, turned to Sadaka Reut in request for help with solutions for activity for children during the schools' summer break. The group decided to take up the call and launched a project of movie screenings. They



wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to raise awareness of Palestinian culture through cinema amongst children and youth in Jaffa. About 30 to 50 kids and parents attended each of the weekly screenings during the months of **June and July**.

July: Towards the end of the year members culminated their personal research projects and chose their special way of sharing the findings and conclusions with the rest of the group and Sadaka Reut. Raz screened the short movie she filmed on the Kibbutz, which showed maps and analyzed the complex attitudes of Kibbutz members about the events of 1948. Jawad organized a full day trip to his northern town in which he included his findings, discussions with key figures and overview of the area. This trip revealed the racist reality of land confiscation and discrimination against Arab towns and villages in the Galilee.

The participant's involvement in the Markaz and the Building a Culture of Peace programs finished

successfully at the end of the scholastic year. The group then turned their energy to their final and most demanding project – the annual summer camp. In the design stage of the summer camp programming the staff was concerned about the capacity of the organization to execute a project on such a large scale due to the staff changes. It was the participants of the Community in Action program who did not take no for an answer and took on the challenge of leading summer camp by themselves. Their significant role in the making and preparation of this program was an indication of the skills, knowledge and techniques these young adults gained during the course of the year. They decided that since the Markaz and Building a Culture of Peace programs focused on complicated and serious topics during the year, the summer camp should be the time to have fun and celebrate Arab Jewish partnerships. After observing several options, it was decided that the overnight camp would take place in upper-Galilee nature reserve, by the Hatzbani stream of the Jordan River. The group researched the political and social history of the place, discovering information about pre-1948 Palestinian villages and geopolitical changes in topography while touring the area of the nature reserve. Finally, they devised an interactive activity that led the participants from one site of narrative importance to another, while acting out in a play form historical characters emerging unexpectedly. Additionally, they planned and organized youth participation, food, logistics and more.

August: The overnight camp that took place in the first week of August turned out to be a huge success and a perfect finale for the year. The 2009-10 participants were exceptionally active and creative. What was both remarkable and reassuring was witnessing the strong influence this group of young leaders had on the youth participants and on the exciting atmosphere of the summer camp. They were valuable role models who became empowering figures that embraced Arab Jewish partnership throughout their day to day routine. For more information about the Summer Camp please refer to page 28.

The second event that they held was the ten year reunion of the project, involving graduates of the program. The evening included social mingling, catch up as well as lively debate. As many graduates

expressed interest in continuing and expanding their involvement in Sadaka Reut. This reunion promoted an initiative to establish a graduates group, which we will strive to open in the coming year. For more information about the reunion please refer to page 31.

During the rest of the month the coordinators facilitated workshops aimed to help the project members take their first steps in the real world. The workshops focused on topics ranging from social security payments, academic options and preparations for student life, as well as fields and frameworks of activism to join in the course of the next year. A thorough feedback and evaluation process was carried out, resulting in meaningful insights and improvements for the next year of the project. These conclusions were already implemented with the entrance of the new program participants of 2010-11.



The Effects Achieved by the Project

The project affects the participants in almost every aspect of their lives. They live in a bi-national politically aware environment which challenges them every day to examine how the difficult reality outside reflects itself inside the group and what they need to do in order to maintain and reassess their partnership. In addition, this lifestyle encourages the participants to think and act as members of a group representing a rare point of view.

“Many of them see the office as a home for the community they chose to live in and nurture. For instance, Sophie, Yael and Lena offered to continue volunteering in the organization and help the new participants adjust to their new living environment.”

The most immediate effect of the project on the participants is their sense of belonging to a mixed Arab

Jewish community in a highly segregated society. One example is the choice of Ibrahim, Hasan and Michael to continue living together in an apartment in Tel Aviv after the end of the program. This was a step that had a significant effect on their families, who now accept the idea of their sons initiating their grown-up lives together. Another example, is the participants' frequent visits after the program had ended to Sadaka Reut's office and the good relationship they maintain with the staff. Many of them see the office as a home for the community they chose to live in and nurture. For instance, Sophie, Yael and Lena offered to continue volunteering in the organization and help the new participants adjust to their new living environment. Indeed, they have been very successful in supporting the new program participants, and they have volunteered for different tasks in the organization.

All the participants are now active in organizations and/or movements promoting social change, some on their University campuses, some within the organizations they have gotten acquainted with during the program, and some found new frameworks in which they can contribute from their knowledge and skills and lead social change.

Additional Important Effects

During the summary seminar held in the last week of the project, the participants discussed the project on three levels: social, political and professional. At the end of the seminar, they were asked to fill out evaluation forms in small groups. For each category of activities, they wrote their conclusions and recommendations. Below is a synthesis and compilation of their comments.

The Enrichment Program: The participants expressed great content with the tours, lectures and trainings, in which they learned a lot about the current social and political problems and the many ways in which activists try to overcome them. They also acquired practical tools, such as internet activism and campaign production, which they applied in their group projects. They encouraged the staff to continue with this programming as is, and are quoted as commenting that “the information we've learnt, and the understandings we've reached through this program were so comprehensive, that we feel we've lived here for a hundred years.”

Training and Experiencing Facilitation in Conflict Groups: The participants enjoyed working with youth as facilitators and also as observers, and were especially pleased with building the educational workshops for their own groups. However, they recommended a more intense professional training, which also covers sociological theories behind group development and youth development in conflict areas.

The Group Campaigns: The mutual campaigns seem to have had an enormous effect on the participants. The fact that each campaign was built from the bottom up was very important in order to develop healthy team work and to facilitate strong group decision making. This method of team work created a feeling that although the participants had different levels of involvement and responsibility in each project, they felt that they “can stand behind each one of the projects, support its goals and take pride in it”. In addition, they felt that the movie screening activity in the poor neighborhoods of Shem-Hagdolim and Kedem, was not complete as it was lacking empowering content, but it succeeded in establishing a good connection with the local residents. The participants recommended that next year's program will take off from where they stopped early in the year because they thought that “the relationship with the local community has a great potential for developing a local active social agenda, but the new participants need to get well acquainted with the community in order to establish mutual trust and sincere solidarity”.

“The information we've learnt, and the understandings we've reached through this program were so comprehensive, that we feel we've lived here for a hundred years”

Conclusion

The Community in Action program in its current model has operated within Sadaka Reut for seven consecutive years. Currently, the organization runs a thorough analysis on the outcomes of the program and its impacts. It should be mentioned that each year we implement the conclusions of the previous year into our annual work plan. The vast experience that we have collected contributes to the great success and uniqueness of this project within Israel. The resources invested are relatively high when taking into consideration the number of direct beneficiaries. However, Sadaka Reut decided that the investment of

these resources contributes to a widespread impact, as each participant influences a large group of indirect beneficiaries. The mere existence of this type of program proves that youth have the potential to become active leaders for social change and work together in synergy to build a brighter future. The participants of the program become social agents, engaged to promote justice and equality in any framework or place they live or work in. During this experience activism becomes a central part of their lives. The main indicator of Sadaka Reut's success according to the goals we set for this project is the continued work and involvement of graduates in the social activism field, either in their own communities or other frameworks.



Spotlight on

Facilitators Training Program

Summer Camp

10 Year Reunion Community in Action

Dealing with Gender in our Activities

Facilitators Training Program



Hagit Keysar became a permanent member of staff in 2009. Since then she has been the co-coordinator of the Building a Culture of Peace program. Hagit is an expert in the field of Arts and Anthropology. Her vast experience as a curator helped us with our successful 2010 My Point of View exhibition.

“The most important thing we would like our facilitators to initiate as a part of Sadaka Reut is critical thinking among youth. We want them to be able to raise their voices, to question, to think and to empower them to be more active in their own communities and to take part in the field of social activism. This isn’t always easy, especially not in the workshops and activities we do during formal school hours. There is an inherent difficulty which we face in combining educational and social-political work. It happens that our work can be confused, as social and political fields are always interlinked. Of course, we do have an agenda for an equal and just society, but we’re not a political party. Our mission is to develop methods and tools for youth to encourage critical thinking and by this to create alternatives.”

In-depth training of our facilitators and the creation of a supportive and enriching educational team are crucial elements in the success of all of our programs and the sustainability of this organization. Our 20 facilitators work during the year in our educational programs, which consist of local youth groups who meet on a weekly basis throughout the scholastic year. They also facilitate our two bi-national weekend seminars, regional workshops and our summer youth activity. Our training sessions aim to provide the facilitators with the tools and the knowledge to adequately and creatively implement our educational program. Our experience has shown that facilitators are more confident and effective when we incorporate structural capacity building work throughout the year.

This year the program was exceptionally unique compared to previous years. In the past, the project coordinators constructed the training, rather than the facilitators. The trainings were based on the project coordinators’ understanding of the needs

of the facilitators and were based on the issues our organization chose to focus on. This year, we explored a different format. Four of our best and most experienced facilitators constructed the training program according to the experience they had gained through their work with the youth within our programs. The facilitators that designed the new training program had experienced the evolution of each educational program and understood more intimately how each program worked on the ground. Furthermore, these facilitators based the new program on their personal and professional experience in education, group facilitation and conflict transformation. Their experience as Palestinian and Jewish activists working to change the reality in this region was highly valuable.

Our facilitators are a diverse and experienced bi-national group of men and women in their 20s and 30s. Some have backgrounds in the arts, some are social and political activists by trade and some have backgrounds in both formal and informal education. When choosing facilitators, we look for people who share our agenda, believe in the alternative reality we work for and recognize the importance of educational work with youth. Sadaka Reut’s role is to provide facilitators with the tools and the theoretical and organizational framework to be positive and motivational professionals in our youth programming.

During the programming year, facilitators are supported by educational coordinators to assist them in planning, adjusting and executing their work plans with the youth. In addition, the facilitators need a more intimate framework where they can share the challenges and issues that come up in their work. Through this they broaden their perspectives and brainstorm with other facilitators on how to be more effective and supportive ‘educators’. Exploring and coping with the difficulties of our reality, especially as facilitators find themselves at the center of some of the hardest questions relating to the conflict and our future, are needs we attend to. The fact that the group of facilitators is bi-national comes with its own dynamics, power relations and conflicts that need to be discussed, processed and worked through together. Their regular group meetings are necessary in order to sharpen facilitator’s dedicational goals and vision, as they are expected to provoke a change of consciousness in the youth. They also provide tools to make change, and thus facilitators must have a

framework to examine their own consciousness and the change they are educating for.

This is made possible through facilitator's meetings during the activity year. These meetings consist of enrichment activities where the training team and the educational coordinators teach new techniques, theories and tools. Facilitator's seminars are held to brainstorm on challenges, principal dilemmas stemming from the work and how to work through obstacles and political discussions.

In addition to the regular meetings that are held throughout the year, there was both an international enrichment seminar and four intensive training days, two of which were overnight trips. Within these four local training sessions facilitators were introduced to the basics of working and facilitating youth groups. This included topics such as analysis of the youth we work with, theories and approaches on facilitating conflict groups, group dynamics and the role of the facilitator. Critical pedagogy and the educational approach of Sadaka Reut were at the center of the program.



We focus on how to create a safe space for the youth within the group. This incorporates the tools needed in order for the youth group to be open to the 'other', and how the group can encourage its participants to open up, express themselves freely and coherently and listen actively.

This year our facilitators went to the Netherlands for their international seminar. This training was in cooperation with UM4Peace in Belgium, Critical Mass from the Netherlands and SINTEM from Chechnya. The title of the seminar was Combating Social Exclusion through Theatre of the Oppressed. The objective was to give facilitators the tools to train youth with the

method of Theatre of the Oppressed. This method enables participants to address social exclusion based on issues such as gender, identity, nationality or ethnicity. Facilitators learned how to develop a forum theatre, as method within the discipline of Theater of the Oppressed. In this training they shared their diverse stories and experiences of conflict and social exclusion in their home countries. In this process, they developed tolerance and understanding as well as tools to help each other to overcome their context-specific problems. Through this personal process, participants were then able to develop plans for the implementation of the method in their local work.

Summer Camp



Mariam Abed El-Dayyem is one of our most outstanding and senior staff members. She has been co-coordinating the Building a Culture of Peace program for two years and currently co-coordinates the Markaz program. Mariam is known for her social skills, and lucky for us she has made her own roof a comfortable spot for our bi-national parties and social gatherings.

"I always try to encourage youth to ask questions about what they hear, see and experience during an activity. Throughout the years I learned not to take things just the way they are. In my work with Palestinian and Jewish youth I try to give them tools to become more critical and active people. Through our critical educational approach we try to liberate both groups, the Palestinian youth from their oppressed way of thinking and with Jewish youth we work to deepen their understanding of the complex situation. We work with the groups on how to take responsibility and we give them the tools they need to change their communities. It is rare in this country to work with bi-national groups, but in my opinion it is very important. You have to be exposed, to see and to experience the other way of thinking before you can really understand what the other person is feeling and is going through."

Sadaka Reut held a summer camp for youth on the 3-4 August 2010, in which 59 youth aged 14-18 camped and enjoyed the heat of the summer on the Dan River where it meets the Hatzbani River Nature Reserve. The Community in Action participants



led this event and helped design the activities. This summer camp served as the culminating project for Community in Action leaders, as they organized the event, including logistics. The leaders grew immensely throughout the year. Putting together such an innovative and successful activity truly showed how much they had transformed. The staff was peripherally involved, as they played a supportive role in planning processes. The participants in this event were both youth that had participated in Sadaka Reut's youth groups throughout the year and 15 new youth participants. Opening the camp to new participants was an important choice for us, as it increased curiosity of new participants and many chose to enroll in the next year's activities.



In order to illuminate this new and innovative summer activity one of the Community in Action leaders and one of the participants chose to write about their experiences:

Sofy Shanir, a Palestinian youth leader explained that the camp was designed to bring all of the participants of the youth groups to a two-day camp in nature. We were the entrepreneurs of this event and organized it together with the staff. The budget was very tight, but we managed to receive many in-kind donations, which showed us that local support to our endeavors is indeed possible! This camp was different than previous summer activities, as it was not based around lectures, workshops or discussions. We decided that more creative methods of transmitting the complicated topics we deal with were needed. The first day we chose to do getting-to-know-you and ice-breaking games. We also divided the work that needed to be done, including building the camp and cooking, and we took a long stroll on the Dan River. In the evening, we

organized a political and cultural trivia game for the youth that was a lot of fun.

On the second day, participants went on an alternative excursion that tracked the history of the Dan River area and the Upper Galilee, which is in my opinion the most scenic region in Israel. However, most of the tourist monuments in this region are on top of destroyed Palestinian villages where the local residents were deported during the Nakba. The excursion used a creative technique, in which we made a play for the youth that was based on historical figures explaining the history of each monument. The youth participants got clues at each site that led them to the next and we performed as the youth approached a new site. Each clue and mini-play helped the youth not only get to the next site, but also filled in the picture of this region's multi-layered history. It always has been that the summer camp has been the highlight of Sadaka Reut's activities, but this camp was a very different experience. This was the first time that our youth had a true encounter with nature, which positively contributed to group dynamics and created a fun atmosphere that facilitated a deeper bond between participants.

"We decided that more creative methods of transmitting the difficult topics we deal with was needed"

Ela Weisel, a Jewish youth participant from the Kfar Shalem group, wrote about her experience. This was published in the municipality portal for youth, called HaCenter.

She wrote: "This past February I joined a photography workshop at the Beit Barbour Community Center. At the end of this amazing experience we culminated the year with a two day Summer Camp. I found myself with kids my age, many of them Arabs, some Muslims and some Christians. Each of them held a very unique story... The camp was at the Dag al HaDan camp site. Surrounded by beautiful scenery and nature we participated together in activities. We built a camp together, listened to each others' stories, and we were exposed to a culture and language different than our own. It was not easy to keep an open mind, but still, slowly, slowly, we managed to set aside our pre-established opinions that we grew up on. We let ourselves step into the shoes of other incredible youth that live completely different than us, but at the same time exactly like us. After a night without

sleep in the north of Israel sitting around the bonfire, words in Arabic circled at dawn and frozen water of the Jordan River tricked lightly in the distance. It was here and then I realized that my own personal objectives are now to listen, develop awareness and to encourage others to answer the question: 'What pre-established opinions are we brought up on and are they really and genuinely our own opinions?'"

10 year reunion for the Community in Action



Ibtisam Amoury is a graduate of the 2004-5 Community in Action program. Since then she has been a facilitator of the Jaffa group and as of June 2010 she is co-coordinating the Community in Action program. Ibtisam's remarkable knowledge of languages contributes to the deepening of a true Arab-Jewish partnership.

"Every person that joined the Community in Action program in the last 10 years became a different and more critical person. They don't accept any form of injustice against others. Their experience in the program always influences their individual choices now: whether they chose to go to law school and major in human rights violations or attend art school where they focused on social and political commentary. All of us developed ourselves in different directions, but we all believe in the same path. My year in the program and my experience as a facilitator at Sadaka Reut was a driving factor in my acceptance to a prestigious program that is comprised of mostly upper class Jews at the University of Tel Aviv. I'm the second Palestinian that was ever accepted. In my academic research I focus on political topics and diversity in society because I'm convinced of the importance of bi-national projects and activities. It's all about understanding the other."



The ten year reunion of the Community in Action program was held in August of 2010. This is the first time we hosted a reunion for graduates. The idea came from our current participants and they organized the event. One of the 2009-2010 Community in Action participants, Sofy Shanir, a Palestinian resident of Jaffa, wrote about this wonderful get-together:

"As a graduate of the program, I know how much this one year helped me. During this intensive year, I have matured and learned to understand the reality that surrounds me. The intensity of activist life that I now am part of helped me realize that this one year program was invaluable and I could not have found this changing experience anywhere else. My cohort of 2009-2010 and I felt the need to meet previous cohorts of Community in Action graduates, as these people have also had similar experiences of living and working through such a unique process. We wanted to hear about their personal experiences and share with them our own. We thus decided to hold a reunion feast for all the cohorts since 2000 until today. A lot of former graduates showed up, at least one from each year. Witnessing all the generations of the program coming together was very moving and we felt as if we were a big family of friends. Each person presented themselves and stories from their year; there were a lot of funny anecdotes! Later that night, I organized a surprise. We ended with a video chat with Adi Maoz, who was the educational coordinator of the program since 2002. At this event I felt empowered. This feeling came from the atmosphere that Sadaka Reut promotes, which encourages us to strive and work towards change. What I saw before my eyes was a community of people who are interested in living together and understanding each other; a community of friends. It has only been 10 years and we are already more than 50 people. I hope that in the next 10 years more and more friends will join us and we will be closer to 500; this is how you build a society."

Witnessing all the generations of the program coming together was very moving and we felt as if we were a big family of friends.

Dealing with Gender in our Activities



Sihrab Abu Lissan is a native of Jaffa for generations. She works as Sadaka Reut's administrative assistant. As a teenager she participated in Sadaka Reut's activities and today it's her son that participates in our programs. Her personal vision and history give continuity to our work.

"I grew up in a very warm home. My mother was independent and liberal and my father was supportive of her decisions. I guess because of my childhood experiences and role models I could choose for myself a very busy and exciting life. I am also a graphic designer by profession and sing in an Arab Jewish choir. It is very difficult for me to see restrictions on young women and on their abilities. Each of us need to choose our own role, whether we are men or women. I think gender is a most pressing issue. To leave this issue in 'a closed box' will not help our societies to advance. If we don't talk about it and raise the topic, then oppression of women will continue. I wish for my ten year old daughter to take part in Sadaka Reut's activities and live freely so that she will be able to choose for herself a bright path."

Sadaka Reut's overall objective is to educate and train young people to be active agents for social and political change in an Arab Jewish partnership framework. Therefore, the main focus of our educational work is focused around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Arab and Jewish relationships. These two groups are seen as two collectives or nations with complex histories and narratives that collide and grow parallel to each other over the years. The main change we try to initiate is in the reality that the conflict dictates. We believe that in order to transform youth into active citizens, we have to help them develop critical views of reality and question why power relations favor one community over the other. From our experience, the moment youth are able to detect and understand power relations in one field; they will sense it in other fields. Moreover, gender and power relations between women and men become an important subject that youth struggle with and are affected by. Power relations between men and women play a large role in the lives of young adults. They grow up in many different realities that give them varied pictures of how these relations should look like. This influences how they see gender relations.

"Gender and power relations between women and men become an important subject that youth struggle with and are affected by"

Furthermore, this image of relations shapes their goals, their current life experience, who they are and what they think they can achieve in the future. The issue of gender is raised constantly in our educational work with Jewish and Palestinian youth. Due to the diversity of communities we work with, ranging from secular to religious in both Jewish and Arab societies, gender relations in each community are treated and dealt with differently. As we deal with this issue, we hope to influence changes within the youth:

- That the youth will comprehend the meaning of the term 'gender' and will be able to detect gender relations that are present in and characteristic of their communities.
- That they will start to understand their personal behavior and conceptions and how they are based upon those of their respective communities.
- That they will challenge the existing conceptions of youth about their assumed future roles in society as men and women.
- That they will be empowered to choose differently and oppose the oppression experienced in the pre-defined roles society expects from them.
- That they will be able to recognize gender and power relations within society and therefore will be also able to detect other power relations existing within different groups in society, such as minority disenfranchised populations.

The issue of gender is universal, and thus we can detect similar characteristics of gender relations within different communities. We at Sadaka Reut, deal with gender mainly on a uni-national basis, meaning within local and inner-social forums. We believe that dealing with this issue and challenging common perceptions needs to be done between men/boys and women/girls, firstly within their own communities. This is because it is usually the local community that defines and builds one's perceptions and gender consciousnesses. It is therefore important to analyze the local community and use this knowledge to help youth reach personal conclusions that can provide them with indicators for what can be done within their communities.



Thank You

We wish to thank all of our amazing staff, volunteers, facilitators and our dedicated board of directors. Our work only happens with the great love and support of these visionary individuals. Our thanks also go to all the educators, teachers and youth workers that believe in our activities and open doors for us to reach youth and to our local partners in the different communities and places that together with us for a network of devoted organization for social change. In addition, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our friends around the world that financially support us. We hope that in 2010-2011 we will be able to expand our valuable circle of donors and raise awareness of our vital work.

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3. For our American partners: for a US tax deduction, **make out a check** to the “New Israel Fund”, write on the memo line or attach that the check is for Sadaka Reut: Arab-Jewish Youth Partnership- 5805 (our ID number at the NIF). They accept a minimum of 100\$.

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New Israel Fund
P.O.Box 91588
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20090-1588
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26 Enford Street
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For further inquiries please contact our resource development staff at: sadaka@netvision.net.il

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