

## Promoting Middle East Peace and Justice

### *Opportunities for Progressive American Jewish Funders*

#### ***Folio Introduction:***

In the midst of the worst Israeli-Palestinian violence in recent years, this folio enables donors – both progressive Jews and other interested funders – to respond constructively to the current violence and to help lay the foundations for a lasting peace. The folio is managed by The Shefa Fund, a national Jewish foundation which believes that, as a Jewish organization, it is our role to focus first on the Israeli side of the conflict, through grants to progressive Israeli peace groups. By making contributions to these organizations, donors will bolster activists working on the ground to build public support for peace, to block the expansion of provocative Israeli settlements, to research and expose human rights violations by the Israeli government and Palestinian Authority, and to promote community economic development for Palestinian citizens of Israel. In addition, contributions to the organizations in the folio will help to support crucial strategic thinking about the future of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the dissemination of new ideas and solutions. Over the last two years, The Shefa Fund has granted more than \$3.3 million to these and other Israeli peace organizations.

#### ***Folio Manager:***

The Folio Manager is Sue Hoffman, Associate Director of The Shefa Fund, a national Jewish foundation dedicated to social/economic justice and Middle East peace. Since its founding in 1988, Shefa has partnered with progressive Jewish funders to move more than \$14 million to organizations working for social change in the United States and Israel. Ms. Hoffman and other Shefa staff have extensive experience in researching and evaluating organizations focused on human rights, community economic development, and grassroots peace activism in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. Ms. Hoffman also relies on the expertise of an advisory board that includes Gail Pressberg, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Civil Society; Mark Seal, a Founding Member of Americans for Peace Now; and Oriella Ben-Zvi, an Israeli consultant to The Shefa Fund. In addition, Ms. Hoffman has consulted with colleagues at other allied organizations, including the New Israel Fund and the American Jewish World Service in the development of this folio.

#### ***Method & Strategy:***

As an American Jewish organization, The Shefa Fund believes that, while there is responsibility on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is our role as a Jewish foundation to focus on the Israeli side. Israeli responsibility for the conflict can be addressed in two major areas: decreasing violence by Israeli soldiers and settlers; and readying Israel for peacemaking by improving conditions for Israel's Arab minority, preparing for negotiations, and restraining settlement growth, among other steps. To achieve these goals, the Middle East Peace Folio

makes grants to organizations working in four fields: human rights monitoring, grassroots peace organizing, community economic development, and research/strategy development. Decisions on which organizations to include are made by the folio manager, Sue Hoffman, in consultation with the folio advisory board. The Shefa Fund has granted previously to most of the organizations included in the folio, and has knowledge of their work over a period of many years.

***Summary Rationale:***

For more than a year, Israelis and Palestinians have waged “mini-war” in the West Bank and Gaza. But the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only be solved through peaceful negotiations and the creation of a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel. For progressive donors interested in advancing a final settlement, it is difficult to track the complex, ever-shifting web of military and diplomatic events. The Middle East Peace Folio offers donors a strategic analysis of the conflict, as well as a multi-dimensional, proactive response. Based on the recommendations of experts with years of experience in the Middle East peace movement, the folio grants to the most innovative and effective organizations working to reduce tensions and lay the foundations for a permanent peace.

***In-Depth Rationale/Context of Problem:***

The only lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a negotiated settlement leading to the establishment of a viable and demilitarized Palestinian state alongside a pluralistic, democratic Israel. Violent tactics by both sides have consistently proved ineffectual, plunging the region into periods of intense fighting that disrupt negotiations. Unilateral solutions are also flawed in that they will not lead to mutually acceptable borders, security cooperation, or other key elements necessary for an effective agreement.

A negotiated compromise can only be achieved by political leaders from both sides, with active and ongoing assistance from the United States and support from other international partners (in particular the European Union and Arab states). At the same time, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also have a vital role to play in bringing Israeli-Palestinian violence to a halt and setting the stage for meaningful peace talks. This folio focuses on four areas of action that we believe are particularly important:

*Grassroots Peace Organizing:* The Oslo accord happened in part because majorities of people on both sides came to believe that peace was the best solution to their conflict. In the midst of the current violence, support for a peace solution that takes into account the needs of both peoples has waned, and the Israeli peace camp has become both marginalized and ineffective. A revitalized Israeli peace movement is crucial to restoring public support for the peace process, and in turn, to bringing Israeli leaders back to the negotiating table.

*Research/Strategy Development:* The efforts of grassroots peace groups require the backing of think tanks and research organizations that bring together leading Israeli and Palestinian thinkers to discuss innovative political solutions and craft alternative strategies for the peace movement.

*Human Rights Monitoring:* Israel’s 34-year occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is replete with human rights violations, from home demolitions and roadblocks to torture and killing. Since gaining power, the Palestinian Authority also has been accused of jailing opponents and other violations. In the latest round of violence, hundreds of Palestinians and Israelis have been killed, and thousands more injured, many of them completely innocent

civilians on both sides of the conflict. To bring international pressure on both parties to halt the violence, NGOs must monitor, document, and publicize the human rights abuses and killings taking place daily.

*Community Economic Development:* Due to inequitable government policies and other structural barriers, Israeli Arabs are mired in deep poverty, with a per capita income approximately half that of their Jewish fellow citizens. These discriminatory practices destabilize Israeli society, and also have a negative impact on the peace process, as Arab Israelis are closely allied with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Promoting development in Israeli Arab villages and towns is a key to improving Israeli-Palestinian relations. This folio builds on Shefa's experience researching and funding Israeli organizations working in each of these areas. With our own staff experience, the assistance of an expert advisory board, advice from an Israeli consultant, and the counsel of colleagues, we will continually monitor the situation "on the ground," evaluating the performance of the folio's grantees and updating our strategy as needed.

***Requirements for Grantees:***

The organizations that receive grants from the Middle East Peace Folio should be based in Israel and/or the West Bank and Gaza (they may also have U.S. offices/affiliates for fundraising, outreach, or U.S.-based peace organizing). They must be dedicated to achieving a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that preserves the State of Israel while creating a viable Palestinian state, and they must formally disavow violence. The organizations must have well-defined goals, and employ carefully formulated strategies and tactics. They should be "grassroots" organizations, practicing democratic decision-making wherever possible. Women must be represented in the organizations both at the grassroots level and in leadership positions. The organizations must establish non-profit equivalency by U.S. standards, and cannot be affiliated with any political party. There are no specific budgetary size limits for organizations in the folio.

**Organization Name:** Ahali Center for Community Development

**Annual Budget:** \$610,000

### ***Program Summary***

Ahali Center for Community Development is an Arab Israeli organization dedicated to creating a more equitable Israeli society, in which Jewish and Arab residents of the state are able to share in the full economic and social benefits of citizenship. To achieve this goal, Ahali trains Arab Israeli activists in grassroots community development, brings together Arab Israelis for civic forums that afford an opportunity to share experiences and debate communal action, and helps Arab Israelis to organize for economic gains. While Ahali works with Arab Israelis rather than Palestinians, its efforts are crucial to the peace process. Arab Israelis constitute 20% of Israel's population, and they feel closely bound to Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. By empowering Arab Israelis and making Israeli society more just, Ahali is helping to build the infrastructure for future Israeli-Palestinian peace and economic cooperation.

### ***Background***

Ahali Center for Community Development was established in 1999, with the basic mission of strengthening grassroots activism among Palestinian citizens to work toward full citizenship and a more equitable distribution of national resources. Within the context of this original, largely unchanged, mission, Ahali has gradually added and developed additional programs. The Arab Farmers Project, for example, was only formally established over the last two years. Ahali has garnered financial and technical support from major international funders, including the Ford Foundation, the European Union, and the New Israel Fund.

### ***Programs***

Ahali Center for Community Development has three primary programs designed to empower Israeli Arabs to improve their socio-economic status, something that has come to be seen as vital to any lasting peace. The Civic Forums project creates the opportunity for public discussion of key issues facing Arab Israelis by various segments (professional groups, for example) of the community. These forums help community members to deliberate on contentious subjects and build consensus for group action. The Train the Trainers Project was developed in conjunction with the Goree Institute of Senegal and Yenza Learning Systems in South Africa to create a cadre of young Arab Israeli leaders skilled in grassroots community organizing and program planning. The goal is that participants in the program receive training over a six-month period, and then use their skills to plan projects and train other activists in their local communities. Ahali successfully implemented the Train the Trainers Project last year, with eight organizers completing the program and launching local initiatives. One of the program graduates is now leading the Train the Trainers Project through its second round of training. The Arab Farmers Project is a new effort to address the rampant poverty in Arab Israeli agricultural communities (due in large part to inequitable government land policies) by helping Arab farmers to organize themselves to defend their economic rights and interests. Ahali's goal is to create a national organization of Arab farmers in Israel that would be capable of campaigning on a national level. As the first step toward this goal, Ahali has created 30 local municipal agricultural committees, which will form the backbone of the national organization.

### ***Client Population***

Ahali works exclusively with Arab Israelis, who constitute 20% of Israel's population. Though in law they are citizens of Israel, in practice, Arab Israelis are second-class citizens of the state. They have a per capita income that is half that of their Israeli counterparts; they have unequal

access to land; and they are not permitted to serve in the army, making them ineligible for housing, education and other veterans benefits. Ahali works with residents of urban areas, smaller town and villages, and rural parts of the country. For example, the Arab Farmers Project obviously focuses on a rural segment of the population, but the Train the Trainers Project includes trainees from a variety of geographic backgrounds.

### ***Management***

The staff and board of Ahali Center for Community Development consist entirely of Arab citizens of Israel. Dr. Jamal Zahalka, a co-founder of Ahali, serves as General Director of the organization. Dr. Zahalka is a medical chemist by training, but has been an activist and organizer for many years. Sami Hawary, a journalist and political organizer, coordinates the Training of Trainers Project, and Mustafa Natour, a former officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, is the national coordinator of the Arab Farmers Project. Ahali's board of directors includes human rights lawyers, municipal planners, environmental/civil engineers, and architects.

### ***Story***

At the beginning of the current Intifada, Arab Israelis across the country took to the streets to protest Ariel Sharon's controversial visit to the Temple Mount, a sacred spot for both Muslims and Jews. In one demonstration, Israeli police opened fire with live bullets on a crowd of protestors, killing 13 Arab Israelis, and helping to spark a rapid escalation in violence. After the shooting of the demonstrators, it was Ahali, and not the Arab political parties or public officials, which was able to act as an umbrella for Arab Israeli community organizing. Ahali convened a meeting of Arab Israeli NGOs, which called for an official committee of inquiry to investigate the deaths, and subsequently led a campaign to keep the incident in the public consciousness. These efforts paid off in the Fall of 2001, when a committee of inquiry, under the leadership of an Israeli Supreme Court judge, began to call high-level witnesses, including former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, to testify about the shooting deaths. Determining accountability for the shooting is crucial to restoring the faith of Arab Israelis in the national government, which will stabilize the country and make peace easier to achieve.

**Organization Name:** Americans for Peace Now / Peace Now

**Annual Budget:** \$2,300,000

### ***Program Summary***

Peace Now (Hebrew: *Shalom Achshav*) is the leading Israeli peace organization, coordinating the efforts of other allied organizations to push for a comprehensive Middle East peace. Peace Now's activities include public education, policy advocacy, the organization of mass public demonstrations, and research on various aspects of the peace process. Americans for Peace Now (APN) is Peace Now's U.S.-based partner organization. APN's role is to complement the efforts of Peace Now by educating the American public about events in the Middle East, rallying American Jewish communal support for peace, and educating the U.S. Congress and administration about the need for peace. In addition, APN does extensive fundraising work on behalf of Peace Now in Israel.

### ***Background***

Peace Now was founded in 1978 by 350 senior Israeli army officers with the goal of putting peace on the Israeli national agenda. At that time, peace was not considered a reasonable possibility by a significant proportion of the Israeli population. Due in part to the grassroots efforts of early Peace Now activists, a negotiated peace has come to be seen as the only realistic solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Americans for Peace Now has helped to foment a similar change here in the United States. In the 1970s and 1980s, no official American Jewish communal organization would think of calling for an end to Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, for example. Today, a majority of American Jews support the peace process, and APN is a member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

### ***Programs***

Peace Now continues to focus much of its energy and resources on the organization of public events and demonstrations to call for the renewal of peace negotiations. In addition to this central mission, Peace Now operates three issue-specific programs:

Settlement Watch (see more detailed description under "Story") carefully monitors Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank and Gaza, distributing information to the public on the expansion of these divisive outposts. Ir Shalem ("Whole City") helps to ensure that development projects in Jerusalem take into account the needs of all the city's residents -- both Jewish and Arab. Ir Shalem provides legal defense for city residents of any ethnic or religious group whose rights may have been violated, disseminates reliable data to counter official government reports, and develops policy alternatives regarding housing and development. Peace Now also organizes dialogues between Israeli and Palestinian leaders on the national and local levels, and between Israeli and Palestinian youth, designed to create the interpersonal understanding necessary for lasting peace.

Americans for Peace Now conducts a variety of education and outreach programs to keep the American public and political leadership informed about the peace process. APN's Public Outreach department sends expert speakers to promote the cause of peace in communities across the country, distributes a weekly email/fax briefing analyzing events in the Middle East, and arranges regular telephone briefings by Israeli experts on the peace process. Through its Action Network, APN informs interested people across the country about key political developments and offers opportunities to respond to public officials in the U.S. and Middle East. The APN Government Relations department builds relationships with members of Congress and with administration officials to educate them about events in the Middle East and about the broad

public support for peace among the American Jewish community. Finally, APN conducts extensive media outreach through interviews, press releases, editorials, and analysis pieces.

### ***Client Population***

While some of Peace Now's and APN's programs do serve clients -- Ir Shalem's legal and advocacy work on behalf of Arab residents of Jerusalem, for example -- the majority of their work is intended to rally particular constituencies in support of Middle East peace. Both Peace Now and APN focus a great deal of their energies on activating their respective publics in Israel and the United States in support of peace. APN works in particular to mobilize American Jewish communal support for peace. Both organizations also work with political leaders and policy makers to educate them about the Middle East conflict and to convince them of the need for peace negotiations. Finally, Peace Now and APN aim much of their outreach at the media, in an effort to expose the realities of impediments to peace -- like Israeli settlements -- and to generate positive coverage about the struggle for Middle East peace.

### ***Management***

In keeping with their efforts to effectively reach the American and Israeli Jewish communities, both APN and Peace Now are guided by boards made up primarily of members of the Jewish community. In this way, they are able to maintain their legitimate credibility as organizations dedicated to Israel's security and to a negotiated Middle East peace. Women constitute approximately one third of the APN Board of Directors, but women also hold several of the organization's top leadership positions. The President and Chief Executive Officer is Debra DeLee, the Board Chair is Patricia Barr, and the Board Secretary is Jo-Ann Mort.

### ***Story***

Throughout the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel has pursued a policy of settlement building in an effort to create immovable "facts on the ground" that would make a handover of land more difficult. For many years, this settlement building occurred below the radar of the international community and mainstream media. Peace Now's Settlement Watch program has helped to change this situation dramatically. The Settlement Watch staff made the first concerted effort to monitor Israel's building program and related government policies, to estimate budget allocations for settlement construction, to track the construction of illegal outposts by Israeli settlers, and to expose violent or provocative activity by settlers. By maintaining a credible database on settlement activity and making that information available to the media, Settlement Watch has helped to focus international attention on Israeli settlement building. Today, for example, official American policy, as recently articulated by Secretary of State Colin Powell, calls for Israel to halt settlement expansion, as well as to halt its occupation.

**Organization Name:** B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center on Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Territories

**Annual Budget:** \$1,190,000

### ***Program Summary***

B'Tselem is the leading Israeli source for information on human rights violations in the West Bank and Gaza. B'Tselem staff receive frequent complaints of violations by Israeli military personnel and settlers. The staff then carefully validate and publicly document these violations, which include torture, fatal shootings, restrictions on movement, expropriation of land and home demolitions, administrative detention, and settler violence. B'Tselem publishes regular reports enumerating human rights violations, which it disseminates to the public, the media, and to Israeli authorities.

### ***Background***

B'Tselem was established in 1989 by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Israeli Knesset (parliament) members. Since its founding, B'Tselem has developed a local and international reputation as the most reliable source on human rights violations in the West Bank and Gaza, providing information to the media, to policy makers, and to other human rights and peace organizations. This reputation has led to support from major international funders, including the European Union and the Ford Foundation. In December 1989, B'Tselem received the Carter-Menil Award for Human Rights for its innovative and effective work in the Occupied Territories. One major shift in B'Tselem's work is that as the Palestinian Authority has gained control of more territory, B'Tselem has taken on the responsibility of monitoring human rights violations perpetrated by Palestinian security forces, as well as by the Israeli government.

### ***Programs***

B'Tselem has made a strategic decision to focus exclusively on the effort to document and publicize human rights violations in the West Bank and Gaza, rather than branching out to do peace organizing or other related work. B'Tselem staffers typically receive reports of human rights violations from victims or their family members. Then, B'Tselem checks the reliability of the reports by conducting its own fieldwork, examining official documents, speaking with government officials, and cooperating with other human rights organizations. B'Tselem also initiates its own research, gathering broad-based statistics on violations in the Occupied Territories. B'Tselem issues regular reports -- some comprehensive and some dealing with specific types of violations (torture, home demolitions, for example). The staff then disseminates the reports through press conferences, collaboration with members of the Israeli Knesset, and public information stands.

### ***Client Population***

While B'Tselem serves the entire Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza through its efforts to document and report violations of their rights, its real focus -- like most of the organizations in the Middle East Peace Folio -- is on reaching particular constituencies outside the Occupied Territories. B'Tselem's programs are designed to assist other peace organizations in their efforts to promote peace, to help the Israeli public become better informed about the reality of day-to-day life in the West Bank and Gaza, to help sympathetic Israeli policy makers in their efforts to change Israel's approach to life in the Territories, and to give the international media accurate information for their reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### ***Management***

B'Tselem's Board of Directors includes both Jewish and Arab Israelis. The Board members are human rights lawyers, academics, journalists, and leaders from other allied human rights and peace organizations. The staff, which is led by Executive Director Jessica Montell, also includes a mix of Arab and Jewish representatives. This mix is not only in keeping with B'Tselem's mission to ensure human rights, but it enables the organization to maintain the trust of both Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who bring complaints of human rights violations and the Israeli citizens and leaders who read B'Tselem's reports.

### ***Story***

B'Tselem's work has never been more important than over the last year, as Israeli-Palestinian violence raged across the West Bank and Gaza. In the midst of the low-scale war, it has been almost impossible for Israelis and the international community to get an accurate picture of events in the Occupied Territories. B'Tselem has served as one of the key sources on the actions of the Israel Defense Forces. Tracking the events of the last year is ultimately crucial to finding a solution to the current violence. The Mitchell Commission, for example, whose recommendations continue to form the core of U.S. policy on ending the violence, received data from B'Tselem on the early days of the fighting. As long as the "Al Aqsa Intifada" continues, B'Tselem will remain at the center of efforts to slow the violence and restart the peace process.

**Organization Name:** Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development  
**Annual Budget:** \$950,000

### ***Program Summary***

The Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development (CJAED) is an Israeli organization that promotes economic development for Israel's marginalized Arab citizens and stimulates economic cooperation between Israeli Jews, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians. CJAED helps Arab villages and towns to increase economic growth by designing and implementing local economic development plans and by bringing Arab municipal leaders together for information sharing sessions. Wherever possible, CJAED also brings together Jewish and Arab businesspeople for networking and even the planning of cooperative business ventures. CJAED offers entrepreneurial training to Arab women, and is creating a loan program to help them start up small businesses. In the midst of the current violence, CJAED is organizing meetings of Israeli and Palestinian businesspeople to talk about ways to promote peace, and is focusing new resources on policy changes to make Israeli society more equitable, a fundamental requirement for lasting regional peace.

### ***Background***

The Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development was founded thirteen years ago with the participation of Arab and Jewish businesspeople anxious to foster greater interethnic economic cooperation. As the Oslo process brought periods of greater calm to the region and raised the possibility of a comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian peace, CJAED expanded its program to include greater emphasis on cooperative ventures in the West Bank and Gaza. With the return of violence, CJAED's focus is once again on development and equality for Israel's Arab sector. In keeping with this effort, CJAED, originally led by a Jewish executive director, has added an Arab Israeli co-director. In addition, CJAED is partnering with a variety of organizations in its latest efforts, most notably the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, the nation's largest human rights group.

### ***Programs***

Although CJAED is a relatively small organization, over the course of its thirteen-year existence, it has developed a wide range of programs, several of which are of particular interest at the present time.

Recently, many Israelis have come to recognize that making Israeli society more equitable for its Arab citizens is key to a peaceful future for the region. CJAED has already been working toward this goal on many fronts. For example, over a period of several years, CJAED has worked closely with the Bedouin population in the Negev Desert to create workable development plans for unofficial villages and to obtain government recognition of these traditional population centers. In addition, CJAED regularly organizes seminars for Arab municipal leaders to discuss development issues, and has formed an independent Arab Business Club, which enables businesspeople to network and share strategies.

CJAED is now planning new policy-related efforts to improve the lives of Israeli Arabs. CJAED will use its ties with human rights organizations and its contacts and expertise in government regulation and administration to begin eliminating the many legal forms of economic discrimination – intentional and otherwise – against Arab citizens of Israel, which include inequitable land distribution policies and unequal access to government benefits.

CJAED also focuses a great deal of energy on the plight of Arab Israeli women, who are often excluded from participation in the economy. Over the last thirteen years, CJAED has trained 900 Arab women as entrepreneurs, 200 of whom have gone on to launch businesses of their own.

CJAED will soon start a loan program to help Arab women entrepreneurs obtain the start-up capital needed for business ventures.

Another major facet of CJAED's work is promoting joint Jewish-Arab economic cooperation. Currently, CJAED is launching a cooperative high-tech business incubator in Nazareth, with an initial capitalization of \$1 million each from the Arab and Jewish business communities.

CJAED is also trying – despite the inherent difficulties – to bring together Israeli and Palestinian business leaders to simply discuss the current violence and possible ways to restore calm and cooperation across borders.

### ***Client Population***

At the present time, the Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development is focused primarily on the Israeli Arab sector. Israeli Arabs are citizens of Israel, but despite this legal status, they are subject to various forms of legal and de facto discrimination, and do not share equitably in the economic benefits of citizenship. Arab Israelis, for example, have a per capita income only half that of their Jewish counterparts. By promoting smart development in predominately Arab towns and villages, CJAED hopes to lift the socio-economic status of Arab Israelis. CJAED also offers entrepreneurial training to Arab Israeli women, who are even less well off than Arab Israeli men, and, when conditions make it possible, organizes joint Israeli-Palestinian ventures focused on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, who live in terrible economic conditions.

### ***Management***

The Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development, reflecting its mission to promote interethnic cooperation, is led by Jewish and Arab co-directors. Sarah Kreimer, the Jewish co-director and a founder of the organization, has directed the organization from its inception, and has an extensive background in community organizing and development. Helmi Kittani, the Arab co-director, began his career as a bank executive. The rest of the 12-person staff also includes both Israeli Jews and Arabs and is divided evenly between men and women. The Board of Directors draws on Jewish and Arab businesspeople, planners, and civic leaders, but consists mostly of men, who dominate leadership roles in the region.

### ***Story***

Much of Israel's Bedouin population – which constitutes 10% of the Arab Israeli minority – lives on traditional tribal lands in the Negev Desert. Many traditional Bedouin villages are not officially recognized by the government, and therefore have no access to electricity, running water, or other basic infrastructure. For several years, CJAED has used its connections in the Arab Israeli community, its expertise in urban planning, and its knowledge of government rules and administration, to help these unofficial Bedouin villages. Partnering with local Bedouin groups, particularly the Regional Council for Unrecognized Villages of the Negev, CJAED has helped several individual Bedouin communities to formulate municipal development plans. Then, working with the legal experts of Israel's largest human rights organization, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, CJAED brought a precedent-setting legal case, which forced the government to recognize the largest of these communities and to formally evaluate the CJAED-developed urban plans. These successes help to ensure that the Bedouin, who identify strongly with the Palestinian cause, can begin to feel a full part of Israeli society. That will ultimately stabilize Israel and lay the groundwork for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

**Organization Name:** Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc)

**Annual Budget:** \$140,500

### ***Program Summary***

A volunteer-run coalition of peace activists, Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc in Hebrew) is at the leading edge of the Israeli peace movement, prepared to take nonviolent direct action that other groups are unwilling to pursue. The central goal of Gush is to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, ensure the removal of all Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories, and guarantee the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Gush seeks to achieve this through public education, the dissemination of provocative policy papers, and public demonstrations. Gush also engages in more confrontational direct actions including efforts to block home demolitions, prevent the establishment of road blocks, and halt settlement expansions.

### ***Background***

Gush Shalom was established in 1993 by a group of peace activists who initially gathered to protest the Israeli government's decision to expel 415 Palestinian activists from Israel. Dissatisfied by the lack of response from existing Israeli peace groups, the activists decided to form Gush. The organization has always been run on a volunteer basis. Currently, a core membership of approximately 100 activists devote a large amount of time to organizing Gush actions and education campaigns, a larger group of about 600 activists take part in Gush demonstrations and activities, and several thousand Israelis identify with Gush and participate in some of its larger actions. Gush has achieved greater notoriety in recent years, culminating in its receipt of the "Alternative Nobel Peace Prize" this year.

### ***Programs***

The centerpiece of Gush Shalom's work is its public education campaign, which it conducts in a variety of ways. Gush regularly produces and distributes controversial statements and manifestos laying out its positions for public debate. Recently, for example, Gush created a draft final Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement to spark public discussion of the terms that such a pact might include. Gush publishes a weekly statement in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, laying out the focus of its agenda. Finally, Gush produces stickers and flyers for public dissemination and display.

Gush has come to focus more and more of its efforts in recent years on confrontational direct actions. Since 1997, for example, Gush has coordinated a boycott of products from Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. Gush regularly joins with Palestinian activists to rebuild houses demolished by the Israeli government, to demonstrate against the establishment of settler outposts on Palestinian land, to provide food for besieged Palestinian towns, and to protest Israeli road blocks in the West Bank and Gaza.

### ***Client Population***

As with many of the organizations in the Middle East Peace Folio, Gush Shalom does not serve clients, but rather strives to reach various constituencies with its radical political message. Gush's public programs and publications are aimed at the Israeli public, and also at the rest of the Israeli peace camp. Gush is not at the center of the peace movement, but by pushing at the left edge of the movement, it helps to move the rest of the peace camp in its direction.

### ***Management***

As explained in the Background section of the Middle East Peace Folio, Gush Shalom is an all-volunteer organization, and does not have a traditional management structure. The head of Gush is Uri Avnery, a long-time Israeli peace activist, and the first Israeli to meet with Yasser Arafat in the late 1970s. Approximately 100 activists, many of them associated with other peace organizations as well, help to set Gush's agenda and plan its activities. Another 600 activists are regular participants in Gush actions and demonstrations, and several thousand other people are casual participants in Gush, attending larger demonstrations and helping to spread the word of its efforts.

### ***Story***

After Yasser Arafat rejected what most Israelis saw as a very generous offer from Ehud Barak at Camp David and the current violence began, the mainstream Israeli peace camp became deeply disheartened. Many peace activists became convinced that there was no longer a real partner with which Israel could reach a peace agreement. At the moment when a strong and vital peace movement was most needed, the peace camp was terribly weakened. In response, Gush Shalom released a document entitled "80 Theses for a New Peace Camp," which attempted to blend the divergent Palestinian and Israeli narratives of the last 100 years into a vision of a new peace movement. Along with two other documents "Barak's Generous Offers," which questioned the generosity of the Israeli offers at Camp David, and the draft peace agreement, "80 Theses" has sparked a real debate among Israeli peace activists and helped to reenergize an activist element of the Israeli peace camp.

**Organization Name:** Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)  
**Annual Budget:** \$949,000

### ***Program Summary***

The Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) is the only joint Israeli-Palestinian public policy think tank. IPCRI's goal is to develop practical solutions to the seemingly intractable Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Scholars at IPCRI explore issues like the nature of a possible final status agreement, including borders, the fate of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and the division of Jerusalem; how to help create a viable economy in the Palestinian territories; how to deal with the water shortage in the Middle East; and how to promote coexistence on a grassroots level. IPCRI also develops hands-on solutions to some of these issues, operating a peace education project in Israeli and Palestinian schools and promoting cooperative joint resolution of environmental conflicts.

### ***Background***

IPCRI was created by Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals with the onset of the first Palestinian Intifada in 1988. At that desperate time, advocates of peace felt an urgent need to cooperate on efforts to develop concrete solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since its founding, IPCRI has served as an important testing ground for official Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, who often test their ideas through IPCRI experts. At times, IPCRI has in fact sparked progress at the negotiating table by first holding unofficial negotiations under its auspices. IPCRI is respected around the world, and receives support from the U.S. and European governments, the World Bank, and many top private foundations.

### ***Programs***

IPCRI's primary function is to serve as a safe forum for the development of innovative solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To achieve this, IPCRI has launched several departments, each of which produces reports on a particular set of topics related to the conflict. The Strategic Analysis Department deals with final status issues like the future of Israeli settlements, security, borders, Jerusalem, and refugees. The Law and Development Department focuses on issues of civil society, economic relations between the sides, and commercial law reform. The Environment and Water Department examines issues like land and water pollution, transportation policy, and the allocation of water. Within these departments, Israeli and Palestinian experts collaborate in a variety of forums. IPCRI departments organize regular roundtables that bring together small groups of Israeli and Palestinian experts for informal discussions, and hold occasional larger conferences throughout the Middle East. IPCRI has also launched two more practical initiatives. The Education for Peace Project teaches conflict resolution to students in 32 Israeli and Palestinian schools and brings participants together for person-to-person encounters. The Joint Environmental Mediation Project, developed in conjunction with the Consensus Building Institute, is designed to introduce the techniques of environmental conflict resolution to community leaders in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.

### ***Client Population***

IPCRI's central program is not intended to serve clients, but rather to generate practical ideas and solutions that will lead to real progress at the negotiating table. In a sense, then, IPCRI's work is geared toward a constituency of policy makers and political leaders. Some of IPCRI's more peripheral programs are aimed at specific constituencies. Most notably, the IPCRI peace

education program is designed to give Israeli and Palestinian youth the tools to make peace at the person-to-person level.

### ***Management***

IPCRI's management is divided evenly between Israelis and Palestinians, as a conscious effort to live up to the values espoused in IPCRI's mission. The co-directors of the organization are Dr. Gershon Baskin, an Israeli, and Dr. Zakaria al-Qaq, a Palestinian. Each project also has Palestinian and Israeli co-directors, and the IPCRI Board includes representatives from both sides.

### ***Story***

While the Oslo peace process is today perceived as a failure, it does constitute the longest sustained period of Israeli-Palestinian negotiation and cooperation on economic and security issues. IPCRI, while not always well known to the public, played a vital role in fostering the informal exchange of ideas needed before official negotiations could proceed. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, security specialists convening under IPCRI's auspices helped to launch the Oslo channel. Since then, IPCRI discussions have led to the liberalization of Israel's economic policies in the West Bank and Gaza and to greater freedom of movement for Palestinian workers and merchants. IPCRI conducted the first joint training course for Palestinian and Israeli police officers, a step vital to security cooperation. In the midst of the current violence, these achievements are likely to be dismissed, but they may ultimately lay the groundwork for more successful future agreements.

**Organization Name:** Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR)

**Annual Budget:** \$190,000

### ***Program Summary***

Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR) is the only Israeli rabbinic organization with representatives from all of the major Jewish denominations. Building on their base of religious authority and ancient Jewish values about human rights, the rabbis of RHR publicly highlight particularly severe human rights violations in every segment of Israeli society, and often work with other Israeli human rights groups to put an end to them. Recently, RHR has also expanded its efforts to include direct action to prevent or ameliorate human rights violations. RHR's recent projects include organizing and legal work to prevent the eviction of Bedouin cave dwellers, direct action to block home demolitions and the expansion of Israeli settlements, the removal of road blocks in the West Bank, assistance for Palestinian farmers prevented from harvesting their olive crops, and an international campaign to replant Palestinian olive trees destroyed by the Israeli army.

### ***Background***

Rabbis for Human Rights was founded in 1988 during the first Palestinian Intifada, as a response to human rights abuses by the Israeli military in its attempts to suppress the uprising. The early RHR organizers sought to remind their fellow citizens of Judaism's long tradition of social and moral responsibility for one's fellow human beings. Over the years, RHR has focused on a broad range of issues, including the rights of foreign workers, the Israeli health care system, the status of women, and the treatment of Ethiopian Jews, in addition to the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. For its tireless work, RHR has received a human rights commendation from the Speaker of the Knesset, as well as the Jewish Peace Fellowship's Abraham Joshua Heschel Award.

### ***Programs***

RHR works in coalition with other Israeli peace and human rights organizations on a wide variety of issues. Throughout the recent Israeli-Palestinian violence, RHR has attempted to keep the Israeli public informed about the reality of events in the West Bank and Gaza, and has focused attention on the case of Issa Tzuf, a Palestinian peace activist who was shot while trying to get children out of the way of Israeli army gunfire. Currently, RHR is focused on the plight of Palestinian olive farmers, many of whom have seen their groves destroyed by the Israeli army (ostensibly to prevent their use as hiding places for snipers) or have been prevented from harvesting their olives. With the help of an international fundraising campaign, RHR staff and volunteers have joined with Palestinian villagers to pick olives, and will be helping them to replant lost olive trees. RHR has also been involved with direct action on three other fronts: joining Palestinians and other Israeli activists to remove Israeli military road blocks in the West Bank, to prevent home demolitions and rebuild demolished Palestinian homes, and to stop the construction of illegal settlement outposts. After last year helping Bedouin cave dwellers to win a major court case defending their right to maintain their traditional homes, RHR activists recently returned to help them fight off renewed government attempts to evict them.

### ***Client Population***

The beneficiaries of Rabbis for Human Rights' advocacy include nearly every marginalized or underrepresented segment of Israeli society, from Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza to Arab citizens of Israel, from women to Ethiopian Jews. Particularly in recent years, RHR has engaged in direct service to particular groups, helping Palestinian olive farmers to pick their crops and replant trees, assisting cave dwellers in the effort to maintain their homes, and working with the victims of the recent violence. At the same time, RHR is essentially a public advocacy

organization, using its religious authority to reach out to the general public and to policy makers, and assisting other human rights organizations.

### ***Management***

Rabbis for Human Rights is led by Executive Director Rabbis Arik Ascherman, who emigrated from the United States to Israel. He coordinates the work of three other staff people, and volunteers from Israel, the U.S., and Europe. RHR has a steering committee, as well as a cabinet of North American rabbis who are closely involved with the organization.

### ***Story***

During the current Israeli-Palestinian violence, the Israeli army made a decision to bulldoze numerous Palestinian olive trees, a few of which had been used as cover for Palestinian rock throwers or snipers. RHR leaders were particular affronted by the immorality of the army's collective punishment policy and by the wholesale destruction of trees, which seemed to violate the explicit Biblical prohibition of such wartime acts. In response, the RHR activists arranged to join Palestinian families in replanting some of the trees at the time of *Tu B'Shvat*, the Jewish "New Year of the Trees." RHR's action inspired American Jewish peace activists who launched the Olive Trees for Peace campaign in April 2001. The Campaign has raised more than \$100,000 to help replant trees and provide humanitarian aid for Palestinian families devastated by the loss of their income-producing crops. At the same time, the Campaign has helped to raise awareness among American Jews of the plight faced by Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, and may serve as a small form of grassroots Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

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