



יוזמות קרן אברהם (נ"ר)

مبادرات صندوق إبراهيم

The Abraham Fund Initiatives



Annual Report

Building an
Equal and
Shared Society
in Israel

The Abraham Fund Initiatives

2015



From the Co-Executive Directors



Friends and Supporters,

When we reflect back on the achievements of The Abraham Fund Initiatives over the past year, we are overwhelmed by what we have accomplished

and the context under which those achievements came about.

As many of you know, 2015 was seemingly one of the most challenging periods in Jewish-Arab relations in Israel in 15 years. The 2014 Gaza

offensive brought increased tension between our communities and exacerbated existing challenges in minority-majority relations. The 2015 national elections were marred with anti-Arab sentiment and arguably grew incitement and division. But this polarizing climate in Israel also brought new opportunities. Such extreme rhetoric and their companion national policy outcomes actually rejuvenated Arab civic engagement, and we saw new collaborations between Arab parties at both local and national levels for the first time.

Navigating this complex political and social landscape, we found that The Abraham Fund

Initiatives was positioned to make an even greater impact—and we did. We introduced new programs, such as our pre-army leadership academy and minority mainstreaming in the media projects, to address new challenges on the ground. We also expanded existing projects, such as Spoken Hebrew and Jewish-Arab student encounters programs, and engaged new strategic partners.

Our core strategy Advocacy through Action, which couples grassroots efforts with targeted national advocacy, bolstered our vision of a shared society in Israel.

We cannot thank our partners, supporters and friends enough for ensuring our work continues in the face of such adversity. The Abraham Fund Initiatives continues to be a leader in supporting Israel to move towards a more inclusive and equality society – a future that both Arab and Jewish citizens are building together.

Amnon Be'eri Sulitzeanu and Dr. Thabet Abu Rass,
Co-Executive Directors, The Abraham Fund Initiatives

Our Impact Our Initiatives



Children from the elementary school in Qalansawe, welcome their Jewish peers from Kfar Saba, as part of their Encounters session.

Founded in 1989, the vision of **The Abraham Fund Initiatives (TAFI)** is to build an equal and inclusive society in Israel, creating tangible hope for a shared future between all of its citizens Jewish and Arab.

The Abraham Fund Initiatives carries out large-scale programs in the fields of education, economic development, equal services and political participation, modeling pragmatic solutions and advocating for their adoption at the highest level of policy making. These programs connect the overwhelmingly separated Jewish and Arab populations in Israel, and directly challenge the growing trend of discrimination in order to create a more equal and inclusive society.

Education for a Shared Society

Ivrit B'Salam – Spoken Hebrew implements an experiential, Spoken Hebrew curriculum, taught by a native Jewish Hebrew teacher, in Arab elementary schools. Without proficient Hebrew, Israel's Arab citizens are unable to integrate into society; access core services, higher education, employment sector; and are at a disadvantage when interacting with Israel's Jewish majority.

Jewish-Arab Student Encounters twins neighboring Jewish and Arab elementary schools and runs joint activities throughout the year. These unique sessions break down barriers, instil tolerance and understanding, and build relationships across divided communities.

Ya Salam– Spoken Arabic and Culture implements an experiential, Spoken Arabic and Culture curriculum, taught by an Arab teacher, in Jewish elementary schools. This gives Israel's youngest generation spoken Arabic skills, and a significant personal and positive interaction with an Arab teacher.

Education for a Shared Society: Beyond the school framework

Pre-army Leadership Academy Program teaches the academies' Jewish post-high school students about Arab society, issues relating to Arab-Jewish relations, and challenges of shared living. The students hear expert lecturers, visit Arab communities and have intergroup dialogue encounters with Arabs from their peer group.

Academia as a Shared Space provides a model for Israeli higher education campuses to become a platform for a shared Jewish-Arab society. The program includes Jewish-Arab student dialogue groups and cultural-sensitivity training for staff at some of Israel's leading universities and colleges.

Equality, Access and Opportunity

Minority Mainstreaming in the Media aims to legitimize and create demand for Arab voices across Israeli media channels. The program includes teaching Spoken Arabic to Jewish, Hebrew-speaking journalists, taking them on day tours of Arab towns where they can meet and interact with constituents in daily life, and providing Hebrew summaries of top Arabic media and news items in Israel.

Our Impact Our Initiatives



The Abraham Fund Initiatives' co-Executive Director, Dr. Thabet Abu Rass, gives a lecture on Arab society in Israel, to a Women's Leadership group.



Community Volunteering for Arab Youth provides a gap year community volunteering program for Arab high school graduates, as a substitute to national service. The participants volunteer throughout their year in community placements and develop their skills for future community involvement, higher education and career prospects.

The Invisible Age Young Arab Empowerment and Employment course provides the tools, skills and professional mentoring to help recent Arab high school graduates successfully enter the workforce and retain employment, plus develops the participants' civic engagement, leadership skills and social responsibility. The course includes computer skills, resume writing preparation, job interview simulations, and personal mentoring.

Public and Political Leadership

Arab Women and Youth Leadership courses respond to the lack of Arab participation in Israel's public and political arena. They give the participants the skills, knowledge, confidence, and supportive peer network, to reach and succeed in decision-making positions at a local or national level.

Policing in a Divided Society

Improving Relations between the Israel Police Force and Arab Society focuses on the tense relationship between the Israel Police Force and Arab society by creating dialogue and partnership, and by equipping the police's senior leadership with the knowledge, skills and awareness to serve a diverse society and Arab minority.

Working Across the Initiatives Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education

The Abraham Fund Initiatives views our Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education work as the key, foundational tool for carrying out our mission to advance a shared and inclusive Israel. It is a core function within the organization which cuts across, and supports our full array of program and activities, in the fields of education, equality and access, leadership, and policing. In essence, it brings the programs and activities in the field, to Israel's decision makers and the policy-making arena.

Using a range of research and public education tools, the Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education Department continues to expand its efforts to reform public policy and

institutional practice by working with government officials, Knesset members, municipal and civil society leaders to advance policies capable of transforming the lives of Israel's Arab citizens, while contributing to a shared society and a more inclusive, tolerant and democratic Israel.

In 2015, The Abraham Initiative's key approach was based on two main strategies:

■ **Advocacy through Action:** This method uses the 'on the ground' programs to demonstrate need, feasibility and impact. The department was able to influence policy-makers, and advance policies that promote shared society, in an evidence-based, effective manner.

■ **Minority Mainstreaming:** This method aims to advance and represent the needs and issues of the Arab minority in; the policy arena, decision-making circles, and across the public and media discourse, on a daily basis.

Our Top Ten in 2015



Teacher Mai Arou, from the Arab town of Tayibeh, leads an Arabic lesson for Jewish, Hebrew-speaking journalists.

7

Our Yom Kippur – Eid al-Adha video campaign, which promoted a peaceful, shared day, reached over a million people via Israeli television, social media and printed press.

8

Through direct **advocacy efforts**, Haaretz, Israel Radio, Israel Today, and other media outlets published daily Ramadan fasting times for the first time ever.

9

The Abraham Fund Initiatives launched an educational program for **pre-army leadership academies**. The program works with pre-army Jewish youth, providing them with meaningful interactions with Arab society, their peers and the Arabic language.

10

The graduates of The Abraham Fund Initiatives' **young Arab leadership courses** ran a successful, non-partisan campaign encouraging first-time voters in Arab society to participate in the **2015 national elections**.

1

Following a successful pilot year, The Ministry of Education moved to expand our Spoken Hebrew project nationally. The program will incrementally expand to all Arab elementary schools in Israel, integrating Jewish teachers, and a newly designed syllabus.

2

We tailored a new model for post high-school **community volunteering** in Arab society, operating in four municipalities, and began advocating for its adoption by the Ministry of Welfare. The Council of Arab Mayors voiced their support for this model and applied to run groups in their towns.

3

College campus is the first point of meaningful interaction between Arabs and Jews in Israel. Our **Academia as a Shared Space Initiative** fosters shared seminars and interactions for students and staff at three colleges in Israel, including the **Hebrew University of Jerusalem**.

4

With a worrying 40% unemployment rate among young Arabs in Israel, The Abraham Fund Initiatives piloted an intervention in two Arab towns and mentored **80%** of the participants to find meaningful work or enroll in Higher Education.

5

Breaking down the barriers of the segregated school system, The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Arab-Jewish **educational programs** reached over 30,000 school children in Israel.

6

Graduates from our **Arab women's leadership** group founded the first female-only political party in Arab society in Israel, and were elected to the city council of Tayibeh.



Jewish students at the Jerusalem pre-army academy tour Umm al-Fahm, an Arab town in the Triangle region, as part of our new program.

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Our Impact: Our Initiatives

Ivrit B'Salam: Spoken Hebrew

The Ivrit B'Salam-Spoken Hebrew program responds to the deterioration of Spoken Hebrew proficiency in the Arab community, despite the mandatory study of Hebrew. While Arabic is an official language of the State of Israel, Hebrew is by far the dominant language in the country. Without proficiency in Hebrew, Israel's Arab citizens have limited opportunities to integrate effectively into Israeli society, access core government services, higher education, gainful employment, and are at a disadvantage when interacting with Israel's Jewish majority.

In the 2014-2015 school year, The Abraham Fund Initiatives piloted a new, experiential Spoken Hebrew curriculum, taught by native Jewish Hebrew speakers in nine Arab elementary schools. The program focused on spoken skills, included

Jewish cultural activities, and provided meaningful interactions between the Arab students and their Jewish teacher. The innovative curriculum was developed alongside the Center for Educational Technology (CET), an organization that leads the field in educational programming.

Following the pilot's success, the Ministry of Education decided to partner with The Abraham Fund Initiatives to expand the program nationally and broaden the age range of the target students.

This joint initiative will be implemented incrementally, with the first increase marked at the start of the 2015-16 academic year, that will expand the participating schools from nine to 43. In parallel, the design of a new 6th grade syllabus began, which will be piloted later in the school year.

Building confidence in Hebrew: Spoken Hebrew lesson for Arab children in an elementary school in Kfar Bara.



Before the program started, I have to admit I was concerned about traveling to an Arab school inside an Arab town, not to mention being the only Jewish teacher. However, my fears were unwarranted. I was welcomed with open arms by the school staff and the students, who were so excited to enhance their command of Hebrew and interact with a native speaker.”

Alon, Jewish Hebrew teacher

42

schools in cities and towns across Israel joined the cohort of participating schools in the 2015-16 academic year.

9

Arab elementary schools took part in the program pilot in 2014-15.



Jewish–Arab Student Encounters

Learning to share space: Jewish–Arab Student Encounters between an Arab elementary school in Qalansawe and a Jewish school in Kfar Saba.

“

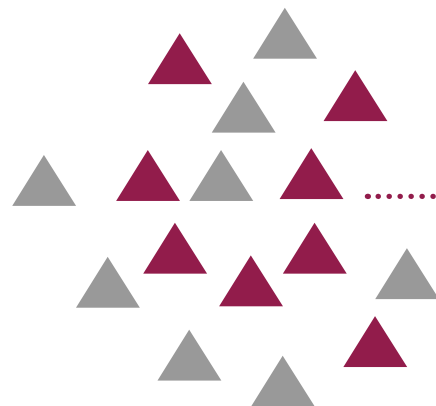
At first I was scared but now I understand more about my new friends and their culture, and I can see that they are just like me.”

Noa, Jewish–Israeli, 5th grade

The Jewish–Arab Student Encounters Program provides fifth and sixth grade Jewish and Arab children from neighboring schools the opportunity to interact in a positive setting – often for the very first time. The program pairs schools and runs joint activities throughout the year, as well as provides cultural enrichment activities about the other group’s traditions. These sessions break down barriers, instill a sense of understanding, tolerance and appreciation, and build relationships across divided communities.

In 2014 to 2015, the program geographically expanded to include the central and southern districts, most notably to incorporate schools in the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev desert. A recent analysis of our three–year survey

of 1,540 students who took part in the program provided a justification for the importance of this program in raising knowledge and breaking stereotypes.



16 Arab and Jewish schools were matched



71%

of participating Jewish and Arab children agreed, to an overwhelming or great extent, that through the Encounters sessions they learned about each other’s language, society and culture.



We support the continued implementation of the Ya Salam initiative because we recognize the key role both language and culture have in promoting coexistence, dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect.”

Dr. Orna Simhon, Director of the Northern Region, Ministry of Education

Ya Salam: Spoken Arabic and Culture

Language as a cultural bridge: an Arab teacher teaching Spoken Arabic to Jewish students.

In 2015, the Ya Salam: Spoken Arabic and Culture program was implemented in 750 classes impacting about 24,000 Jewish children. This program, the largest of its size in Israel, integrates Arab teachers into Jewish schools who teach The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Ya Salam curriculum – bringing useful spoken Arabic skills to Israel's youngest generation.

This year marked some important developments in the Knesset: The Ministerial Committee for Legislation passed a bill proposing the mandatory teaching of Arabic and Hebrew in all official educational institutions, beginning in first grade. In response, The Abraham Fund Initiatives, in partnership with the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, formed an Arabic Language Policy Task Team to develop policy recommendations based on our experience and knowledge of bringing

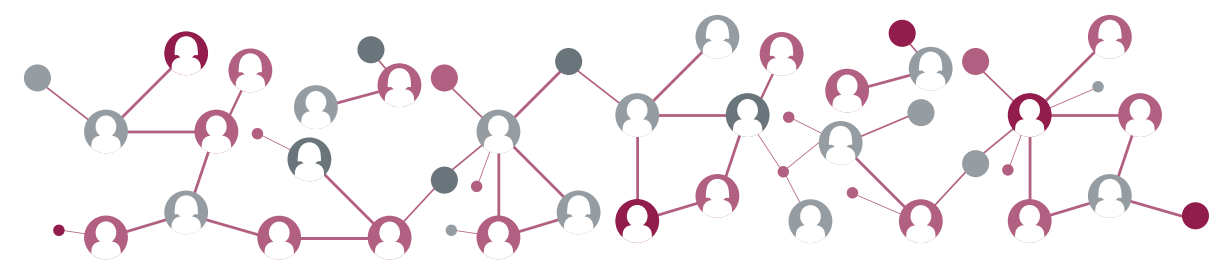
- implementation.
- The Abraham Fund Initiatives recommended the following core components based on its experience implementing these programs, including:
- The language should be taught by native speakers;
 - It should be taught in its spoken/colloquial form;
 - The study of social and cultural aspects pertaining to each linguistic group should be incorporated into the curriculum.
 - Furthermore, it was recommended that the government require Arabic studies throughout all 12 years of schooling, and include a compulsory matriculation exam to mirror the Hebrew language test, which is currently obligatory in the Arab education system.

750

classes instituted the Ya Salam program for about 24,000 Jewish students.

85

Arab teachers are teachers/cultural ambassadors in 200 Jewish schools throughout Israel.





Pre-Army Leadership Academies

Jewish students from the Yitzhak Rabin pre-army leadership academy tour the Arab town of Umm Al-Fahm.

“

Between high school and army service is the best time to influence our future leaders, and guide them in the right direction. It is vital that they understand the Arab community first hand, and not just through the military or media lens. Through this program our students can better prepare themselves for the challenging realities of Arab-Jewish relations in Israel.”

Shimko El-Ami,
Director of Telem Pre-Army Academy, Jaffa

The Abraham Fund Initiatives identified the period between high school and mandatory army service as a critical time to explore the tenets of shared living with young Jewish-Israelis. Recent longitudinal attitude surveys established that Jewish high school students in Israel exhibit increasing radical positions and racism toward Arabs that worsens as they move through army conscription.

High school graduates who attend pre-army academies are a key target audience, since they have voluntarily chosen to dedicate an additional year to learning, personal development, volunteering, and to gaining a deeper understanding of Israeli society with all of its challenges.

At the start of the academic year, The Abraham Fund Initiatives piloted a new program in collaboration with the Joint Council of Mechinot (Pre-Army Leadership Academies). This program teaches the students at the academies about Arab society, issues relating to Jewish-Arab relations and challenges of shared living.

The program includes: an Arabic language course; three to four guest lectures on Arab society in Israel and improving Jewish-Arab relations; two field trips to Arab communities across Israel; and facilitated intergroup dialogue encounters between the Jewish participants and their Arab peers.

Over **20** pre-army leadership academies from across Israel expressed their interest to participate in this new program.

Over **30** hours of Arabic language instruction was provided at each academy.

150 pre-army academy students participated in the program.

3

academies piloted the program: Rabin, Jerusalem and Telem.



Academia as a Shared Space

Students from the Jezreel Valley College – a partner in our Academia as a Shared Space program – on a field trip to Acre to learn more about Mixed Cities and Arab society.



I think it is possible to advance coexistence on campus as a result of what the Jezreel Valley College has done with this program.”

President of the Jezreel Valley College,
Yoram Raz



I would like to see all colleges in Israel integrate shared society seminars, as modeled by this program”

Yaakov Margi MK (Shas),
Chair of Knesset Education Committee

College and university campuses often provide the first meaningful opportunity for Arab-Jewish interaction in Israel. However, the generally accepted norm in Israel’s field of higher education remains: Jewish and Arab students attend the same college, yet rarely engage in significant dialogue or shared experiences. Unfortunately, the multicultural reality on Israel’s campuses is not translated into their accessibility, inclusivity, inter-cultural awareness, and social cohesion.

The Abraham Fund Initiatives believes it is vital that higher education academic institutions leverage the diversity of their student/teaching body, and become a model for an equal and shared society in Israel.

This program offers a model for Israeli campuses to become the platform for a shared Jewish-

Arab society. Programmatic components include research seminars on the subject of Shared Society, Jewish-Arab student dialogue groups and, cultural-sensitivity training for staff. During 2014 to 2015, The Abraham Fund Initiatives piloted this program at the Jezreel Valley College in the Lower Galilee.

At the start of the 2015 to 2016 academic year The Abraham Fund Initiatives expanded the program to other institutions, most notably to The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As Israel’s premier university with international academic standing, Hebrew University is positioned to build the credibility of our program and become the example for other Israeli institutions to follow.



3

higher education college/
university campuses are taking part in our program: Hebrew University, Jezreel Valley and Achva College.

40

Jewish and Arab students participated in shared society research seminars and student dialogue groups



Jewish, Hebrew-speaking journalists participate in our Spoken Arabic course for media professionals.



Recently, we've received a number of requests from journalists who participated in the Arabic course, requesting an advanced course to continue their studies. They referenced the course's importance and its contribution to their daily work...it's so important that Israeli, Jewish journalists learn Arabic."

Yair Trachichsky,
Chairman of the Journalist's Union

Minority Mainstreaming in the Media

The Abraham Fund Initiative's minority mainstreaming program aims to legitimize and create demand for Arab voices across every aspect of Israeli media.

Recent studies found that only 2% of all stories in the Hebrew media deal with Arab society. Within this 2%, over 70% related to security issues or crime and violence. 58% of Arabs say that the Hebrew media does not represent them, and many prefer satellite broadcasts from other Arab countries to local news and political programming.

The minority mainstreaming program includes:

- Increasing Jewish political awareness of Arab public opinion and Arabic media via weekly summaries of Arabic newspapers sent to Knesset members.
- Increasing access to Arab media for Hebrew-speaking journalists via Spoken Arabic lessons and field trips to Arab towns and cities, for reporters, editors and producers; connections to Arab commentators and thought leaders; and joint events for Arab and Jewish reporters.

110

journalists, editors, and anchors from leading Hebrew language media outlets attended our weekly Arabic language and culture courses.





Community Volunteering for Arab Youth

A participant volunteering in an after-school program in the Arab town of Qalansawe.

“

This program really helped me develop my skills; it especially compensated for the weaknesses in our education system. Now I am more ready than ever to begin university.”

Nawis, Rahat, participant in the Community Volunteering program.

“

Without this program I wouldn't be where I am today – working and earning a living, in a respectable constructive way.”

Ahmad, aged 20, course graduate, Arara.

In 2015, The Abraham Fund Initiatives launched a community volunteering project in partnership with AJECC-NISPED. This gap year is based on AJECC's successful program "The Tent", and has been expanded to other Arab communities in Israel, and tailored for adoption by the Ministry of Welfare. The project provides a gap year volunteering program for Arab high school graduates, as a substitute to national service.

The participants undergo intensive training to understand volunteering, civic responsibility, and what each of them has to offer. Various organizations within the Arab community offered participants voluntary positions after their training.

In December 2015, The Abraham Fund Initiatives gave evidence at the Knesset's Labor, Welfare and Health committee and presented a series of recommendations on how to create a formal, post-high school year of volunteering for the Arab community in Israel. These included:

- Recommendations must be reached through dialogue and agreement with the leadership of Arab society.
- Programs should focus on volunteering within Arab society, at least for the first years, to build trust and allay fears.
- There must be no connection between the program and defense establishment; it should be solely civic volunteering.

The Abraham Fund Initiatives also presented the model to the Council for Arab Mayors and received overwhelming support for the initiative and invitations from many mayors to host the project in their towns.



2500

beneficiaries at schools, local community and welfare project, from the volunteering hours of 62 young Arab community volunteers.

Arab youth between 18 and 24 have a 40% unemployment rate.



The Invisible Age Young Arab Empowerment and Employment Course



In Qalansawe there is a significant gap between the percentage of youth employed and the rest of the community. We do not have an adequate framework to tackle this challenge. For this reason, I am especially supportive of this course.”

Mayor of Qalansawe, Abdl Basat Salame, at the opening ceremony of the course

This Invisible Age program responded to the 40% unemployment rate among Arab youth between the ages of 18-24. This project aimed to provide the tools, skill set, and professional mentoring needed to help recent high school graduates successfully enter the workforce.

The pilot included two groups of chronically underemployed Arab youth, and was tailored to the unique challenges of this population, who the Bank of Israel have named “the lost generation” due to their lack of economic integration.

The 40-hour training courses included ‘Hebrew for the workplace’; computer skills; resume writing; job searching; employment databases; self and group empowerment; job interview simulations;

workplace laws and etiquette; building self confidence; setting goals and more.

Throughout the program the coordinators and mentors met with participants and provided personal consultations on career choices. Together they created a personal development strategy, which included practical steps toward securing employment.

The mentors also contacted potential employers and facilitated concrete opportunities for entering the workforce. An additional element of the program was “civic engagement”, which developed leadership skills and a value of social responsibility, and included a visit to the Knesset and a 20 hour community service requirement.

All participants completed the

40

hour course in computer skills and professional Hebrew language for the workplace.

Over **150** Arab youth attended our career fair and met with 18 companies offering employment opportunities.

80%

of participants found gainful employment or enrolled in higher education.



Female participants from our Arab women's leadership course in the Lower Galilee.



What this [program] is doing is an important piece of the puzzle. It will encourage women and prove to them the importance of political engagement.”

MK Aida Tuma-Suleiman,
The Chair, Knesset Committee on Gender Equality



I had never even been to a conference, and now I organized one, and on such an important issue – the impact of gender on education!”

Sahar AtIha, participant in the women's leadership course, Yarka

Public and Political Leadership

Arab Youth and Women's Leadership

Arab Youth Leadership

2015 was the third year The Abraham Fund Initiatives coordinated and ran political leadership seminars for Arab youth leaders and activists across Israel. These seminars are a direct response to the disproportionate lack of Arab participation in Israel's public and political arena.

The Arab voter turnout for the Knesset elections in 2015 indicated a rejuvenation in Arab civic discourse – the formation of the Joint List, a coalition of Arab political parties, and increased involvement by Arab citizens in the democratic process. At the same time, these positive developments were significantly challenged by widespread anti-Arab rhetoric from the highest echelons of Jewish-Israeli political leaders. These

two conflicting trends emphasize the importance of The Abraham Fund Initiatives' leadership courses that preparing emerging Arab leaders for decision-making positions.

Arab Women's Leadership

Often viewed as the weakest sector of Israeli society, Arab-Israeli women face multiple layers of discrimination as both women and Arabs. Leadership roles within Israeli and Arab society are rarely occupied by Arab women. Currently in Israel, Arab women make up only 2% of Arab municipality leaders, and only one woman has ever served as the head of a local municipality. Today there are over 70 Arab municipalities with no female representation among their elected officials.

In 2015, The Abraham Fund Initiatives ran the fourth Arab Women's Leadership Program, with women from the upper-western Galilee. The course was heavily oversubscribed, illustrating the need for such projects and The Abraham Fund Initiatives' ability to engage at a grassroots level.

20 young Arab activists joined our fifth **Young Arab Political Leadership Program** in Tamra



14 lectures, seminars, discussions and study tours were held per group

3

Graduates of the program set up the first female-only political party in Arab society, and 1 was elected to the local municipality of Tayibeh

Police training for Arab youth who will volunteer as traffic safety wardens in their communities.



Policing in a Divided Society

On the heels of last summer's Israel-Gaza war, tensions between Jewish and Arab citizens within Israel escalated significantly. In such a context of deep divisions, the extent to which police internalize fair and effective policing—and that citizens see that as a reality—are crucial factors in preventing a downward spiral of violence. The Abraham Fund Initiatives' long-running program fostering practical solutions in the field of Police-Arab relations continues to be of central importance.

In 2015 we continued our work bridging ties between Arab Mayors and the Police officers who serve their communities. This took the form of initiating and facilitating roundtables where both sides voiced their concerns and interests, in the aim of creating a mutual policing agenda. In

addition to the more public face of the program, there were a series of behind-the-scenes consultations around specific events and periods of heightened tension. Due to the organizational experience and deep connections with local Arab leadership, the Abraham Fund Initiatives is viewed as a trusted channel for bridging communication gaps, and relaying messages. This work contributed to the reduction of tensions around such instances as the riots in the Bedouin town of Rahat in January 2015.

Due to the nature of Policing policy and budgeting it is vital to also communicate clearly with the political establishment, and advocate for greater emphasis on overlooked areas of needs. An example of this, is the problem of traffic accidents in Arab society which has spiralled

into an epidemic of worrying proportions. The Abraham Fund Initiatives identified this area as one of urgent need and hosted a major conference in the Knesset in partnership with the Israeli traffic Police. This conference, attended by dozens of Members of Knesset and senior Ministers, shone a light on the issue, and presented an opportunity for healthy Police-Arab cooperation around a mutual goal.

“

I believe that these meetings build the communication which is vital for our work to succeed; and I am full of hope that the cooperation between the Police and Arab leadership will lead to a better reality for the average citizen”

Commander Jamal Hachrush, Acting Commander of the Coastal Region, speaking at The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Police-Arab Leadership roundtable, May 2015

“

We need to relate to the Police as an actor which helps our community and not as a hostile entity”.

Dr. Sohel Diab, Mayor of Tamra

Working Across the Initiatives... Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education



The Abraham Fund Initiatives' co-Executive Director Amnon Be'eri Sultitzeanu participates in a session of the Knesset Legislation committee.

Working Across the Initiatives

The Abraham Fund Initiatives views our Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education work as the key, foundational tool for carrying out our mission to advance a shared, inclusive, to advance a shared and inclusive Israel. It is a core function within the organization which cuts across, and supports our full array of program and activities, in the fields of education, equality and access, leadership, and policing. In essence, it brings the programs and activities in the field, to Israel's decision makers and the policy-making arena.

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- **Minority Mainstreaming:** This methods aims to advance and represent the needs and issues of the Arab minority in; the policy arena, decision-making circles, and across the public and media discourse, on a daily basis.

Some top achievements...

National Election Participation

In the lead up to the March 2015 national elections, The Abraham Fund Initiatives sought to increase voter turnout among Israel's Arab citizens, and encourage the major parties to include integration and equality in their party platforms, while increasing awareness in both Arab and Jewish communities about the importance of Arab voter participation. **Highlights included:**

- Following The Abraham Fund Initiatives' appeal, the Central Election Committee announced it would develop an Arabic version of the 2015 elections application.
- The Abraham Fund Initiatives conducted the first ever elections simulation in an Arab school.
- During the election campaign period The Abraham Fund Initiatives met with key leaders to encourage them to address the concerns and needs of Arab citizens in their rhetoric and platforms.
- 20 graduates from The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Young Leadership Courses organized a non-partisan "Participate in Democracy!" campaign.

- Following election day, The Abraham Fund Initiatives issued statements and press releases responding to Prime Minister Netanyahu's statements on election day, which used racism, fear and hatred as a platform for electoral success.

Ramadan Cultural Awareness

The Abraham Fund Initiatives reached out to major media outlets in Israel, requesting that they publicize the start and end times of each day of fasting, just as is done for Shabbat and Jewish Festival times. Referencing these times is important on a practical level for the Muslim-Arab public, and on a positive symbolic level, of including Ramadan as an issue of national importance. Likewise, this also has the benefit of raising awareness among Israel's Jewish public of the existence of the month of Ramadan. Through The Abraham Fund Initiatives' advocacy efforts, the Ha'aretz newspaper (and others, such as Kol Yisrael) published the times in its print version every day of the month of Ramadan.

In addition, the Abraham Fund Initiatives called on the Israeli Ministry of Education to not schedule matriculation exams for Arab students in Israel during the Month of Ramadan. The vast majority of Muslim High-Schoolers fast during the month

of Ramadan, and they would struggle to be examined at the height of the fast, and especially in the heat of summer.

Third annual Slifka Forum for Shared Society

The Abraham Fund Initiatives' 3rd Annual Slifka Forum for Shared Society between Arabs and Jews, opened with a meeting with MK Ayman Odeh, the leader of the Joint List, the third largest party in the Knesset.

This two-day conference brought together Arab and Jewish thought leaders from across Israeli society including representatives from Ethiopian-Israeli; Russian-Israeli and Orthodox communities.

Yom Kippur and Eid al-Adha: Shared Day

On 23 September 2015, Yom Kippur and Eid al-Adha coincided – Judaism and Islam's holiest days. Since these two holy days are observed in almost opposite ways, and there is a disturbingly low level of public awareness vis-a-vis the others' traditions. The Abraham Fund Initiatives was concerned that the different manifestations on these days may be a cause for unnecessary provocation. Therefore, The Abraham Fund Initiatives aimed to use this shared, but potentially fractious, day to promote the voice of peace, awareness, tolerance and respect among all Israel's citizens. **Highlights included:**

- The Abraham Fund Initiatives produced a PSA (video) to be screened on Israeli TV channels and published on social media, framing this coincidence as a positive Israeli event. It was developed with artist Hanoch Piven and narrated by Arab and Jewish Israeli celebrities, Mira Awad and Alon Neuman. It was widely viewed and seen by millions when it aired on television. Educational institutions, municipalities and museums in Israel used the video to promote tolerance.
- The Abraham Fund Initiatives produced an action plan used by municipalities in mixed cities to reduce the likelihood of provocation or violence on this important day. The city of Acre held a conference using this plan.
- The Abraham Fund Initiatives advertised the coincidence of the holidays in national newspapers, and published the print advert in more than 12 local newspapers. Thankfully, the day passed peacefully.

2016 and Beyond



New programs on the horizon....



One of The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Community Volunteering participants helps at a local, elementary school in Qalansawe every morning.



Israeli society puts up barriers, Arab society puts up barriers, and even more barriers are put up in front of me as a woman with a head covering. That's why this program is so important."

Baya, Arab civil servant

Shared Learning

Based on the Northern Irish model of Shared Education, in 2016 The Abraham Fund Initiatives will pilot a new model of Arab-Jewish school encounters. The aim is to break the inherent separation between Jews and Arabs in the Israeli school system, while creating enhanced educational opportunities for everyone involved.

The Shared Learning program "twins" an Arab and Jewish classroom through a mutually chosen curricular topic – such as English or science. The Abraham Fund Initiatives' educational consultants mentor the teachers and principals through this process, leading to a series of shared classes, taught by both the Arab and Jewish teachers, and alternating in location between the two schools.

There will typically be 15 shared classes per school year. In between lessons the students will connect and complete tasks via an online digital platform. It will enable educational interactions and joint projects between the students.

In 2016...

- **8 schools** are piloting the shared learning program: 4 Jewish-Arab school pairs.
- **Over 150 students** will be directly involved in the project.
- The students will have **15 in-person** shared classes throughout the year

Bolstering Arab representation in Israel's public service

The Abraham Fund Initiatives is launching a new program set to bolster Arab integration into Israel's public service by supporting Arab students through the candidacy process.

Over the past decade, a number of government resolutions have tried to address the lack of Arab citizens in public service. Despite these measures, only 9% of civil servants come from the Arab sector, which makes up 20% of Israel's citizens. The Public Service Commission has tried to mitigate the problem by offering benefits and altering entrance requirements to better recruit Arabs to public service. However, these measures have proved to have been largely unsuccessful.

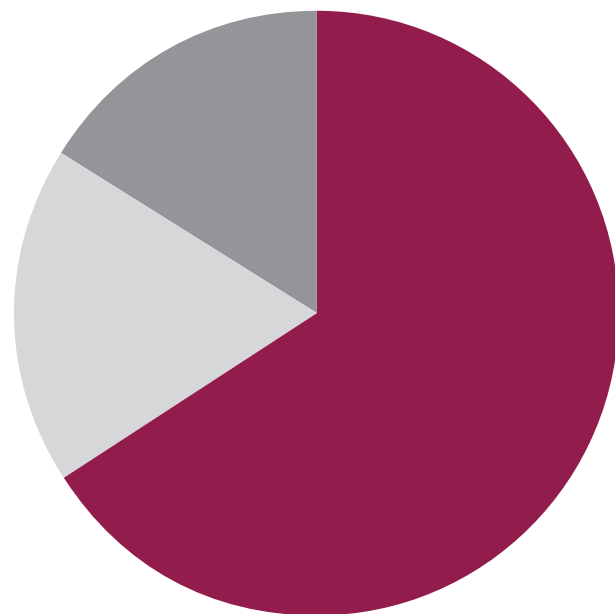
The Abraham Fund Initiatives' new program will approach Arab students directly during the second and third years of their undergraduate degree. Students will be presented with the possibility of employment in public service and given meaningful, private support through the application and screening process. Orientation meetings and explanations of the benefits offered to public servants will take place on campuses, along with advice from experienced Arab civil servants. The program will also help recruit Arab students to the Public Service Internship Program, organized by the Public Service Commission.

Financials



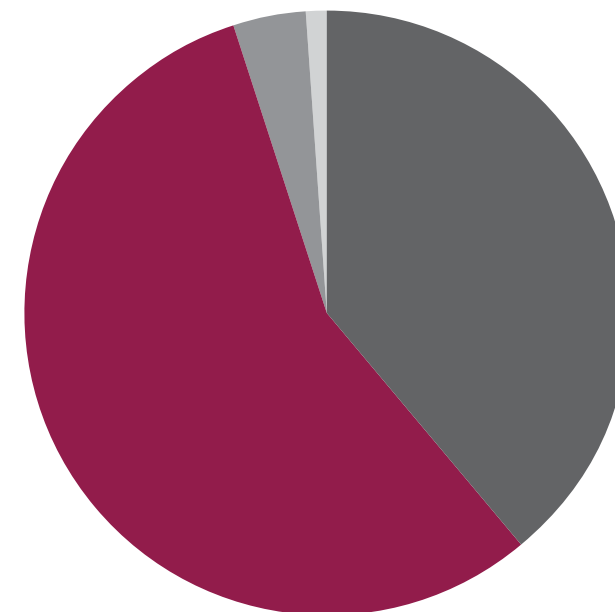
Expenses by Programs and Initiatives: 2015

- Education for a Shared Society (30%)
- Equal and Accessible Services; including Academia as Shared Spaces (22%)
- Youth and Women Leadership; including Community Volunteering (24%)
- Advocacy and Public Policy (24%)



Expenses by Category: 2015

- Programs and Initiatives (66%)
- Administration (16%)
- Global Development and Outreach (18%)



Revenue by Source: 2015

- Foundations and Federations (56%)
- Individual Donors (39%)
- Government Allocations (4%)
- Other Revenue (1%)

2015 Major Donors and Supporters



While space only allows us to list our 2015 major supporters, we deeply appreciate each and every one of our donors, whose gifts – large or small – make our work possible.



Ola Najami, The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Director of Political and Public Leadership, facilitates a group of Arab women leaders.

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- Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society (Jewish Federations of North America)
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- UPS Israel
- Ron and Marilyn Walter

Our Team



Working Together:
the Abraham Fund
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For more information and to support The Abraham Fund Initiatives' work, please contact one of our offices below. Thank you for helping transform the landscape of Jewish-Arab relations, and creating a shared society of inclusion and equality amongst Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens.



Aya Ben-Amos, The Abraham Fund Initiatives' Director of Advocacy, Government Relations and Public Education, with Tamar Lazarus, Development Associate.

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