




The Jewish Federations
OF NORTH AMERICA

מחקר ויעוץ
أبحاث والاستشارة
Research & Consulting



Shared Society Building between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel



Conceptual and
Practical Mapping

Submitted to the
Jewish Federations of
North American (JFNA)

By:

[NAS - ناس Research and Consulting Ltd.](#)

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The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), together with a professional Working Group convened by JFNA, commissioned a research process and mapping from [NAS Research and Consulting Ltd.](#) in November 2021, following Operation Guardian of the Walls and, specifically, the clashes within Israel in May 2021. The research aims to:

First, provide updated information and a mapping of the field of shared society between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel for Jewish Federation.

Second, create an educational tool for Jewish Federations, which will offer a roadmap for their and other funders' interest, education, and potential engagement in this important field.

The NAS - ناس research team selected and interviewed 31 organizations and 25 Jewish Federations, donors, and foundations; summarized published materials on shared society; distributed a questionnaire to federations about their approaches to shared society; and collected and analyzed information from field organizations.

What is Shared Society?

Shared society between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel rests on two pillars: equality and equal opportunity, and partnership and joint work. There are **various prisms** through which to understand these two pillars:

- Material or economic equality vs. "collective equality."
- Transitioning from an increasingly mixed society to a shared society.
- Long-term change efforts vs. responses to crises and urgent needs.
- Building shared society by strengthening Arab society and Arab civil society.
- Shared society as Jewish–Arab relations or multiculturalism.



The report highlights several **key historical developments** to contextualize shared society today:

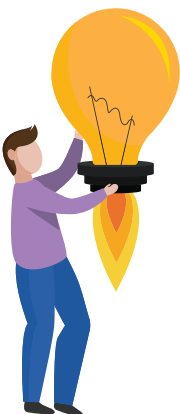
- The evolution of pre-October 2000 coexistence efforts into shared society work.
- The heightened polarization of Jewish–Arab relations due to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.
- Growing government investment in closing economic gaps but not in promoting shared society.
- Positive and negative shifts in discourse on Arab political participation and Jewish–Arab political partnership.

The Shared Society Landscape

Jewish–Arab shared society is not the norm in Israel. Against a backdrop of separation, inequality, and a negative discourse between Jews and Arabs, shared society is a work-in-progress—a vision for social change rather than a reality that has already been achieved.

Major spheres within which shared society building takes place include the health and education systems, increasingly integrated spaces like academic campuses, the labor market, schools, and mixed Jewish–Arab cities; in decision-making circles and in political partnerships; in increased Arab presence in public discourse, and work within Arab society to promote equal opportunities.

Certain **positive trends have gained momentum in recent years** including: enhanced governmental investments in closing socio-economic gaps, enhanced learning of Hebrew for Arabs and Arabic for Jews; a growing focus on turning mixed and integrated cities and spaces into shared ones; a new approach to programming encounters; more efforts to expose the Jewish public to realities of Arab society; community organizing that positions Jews and Arabs as partners; growing recognition that the needs of Arab citizens must be distinctly considered in national development initiatives; and spontaneous grassroots initiatives.



Mapping the Field: Civil Society Organizations

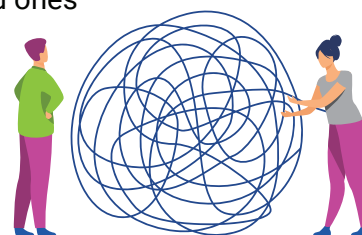
The heart of this research is an in-depth mapping of civil society organizations working on shared society building and the Federations and foundations that support them. The mapping shows that despite significant challenges, the field of shared society has seen noteworthy growth and accomplishments, and distills major goals, challenges and insights.

The **goals defined by the civil society organizations** include:

- Influencing public discourse
- Increasing awareness of the other's history, narrative, and lived experiences
- Building shared social and political movements and promoting political cooperation
- Influencing national and local policy and decision makers
- Influencing the next generation through the education system
- Improving higher education and workforce integration as well as cultural competency among academia and employers
- Pioneering models of shared society and shared life
- Transforming mixed and integrated spaces into inclusive and shared ones

The **main challenges** facing the organizations include:

- The inherent separation between Jews and Arabs in Israel and significant, built-in inequalities
- The adverse effects of the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict
- Increasingly inflammable public discourse and a backlash against shared society work
- Recognition of the limits of advancing economic equality while neglecting to promote collective equality
- The underrepresentation of Arabs in positions of power
- The complexity of effectively managing mixed spaces
- The dilemma of advancing Jewish–Arab relations as separate from or part of greater social cohesion
- Organizational and methodological complications, including limited funds and professionalization processes



Organizations **stressed the following points regarding philanthropy**: Philanthropy is results-oriented, always learning, with more to learn, but struggles to support work perceived as political or unconventional. Funders favor Jewish-led and jointly-led organizations as opposed to Arab-led ones. Despite existing investments, funding is insufficient, often follows changing fashions and is largely unaligned. Philanthropy should continue to support encounter and dialogue programs, but with a critical eye.

Mapping the Field: Federations and Foundations

Philanthropy—specifically Jewish philanthropy—plays a crucial role in providing funding and supportive networks for shared society organizations, and shared society is a far less controversial topic today among Federations' communities. The **main motivations for investing in shared society building** include: tikkun olam and social justice, engaging the younger generation in home communities, alignment with the Israeli government's agenda, support for Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, the fight against BDS and antisemitism, and the presence of Arab citizens in Partnership2Gether (P2G) regions.¹



¹ See the [Partnership2Gether website](#).

The Events of May 2021

In May 2021, violent clashes took place in Israel between Jewish and Arab citizens, specifically in mixed cities, such as Lod, Ramle, and Akko, where Arab and Jews live side by side. Shared society organizations reported that the events shocked them and were a harsh reminder of civil society's limited ability to enable large-scale change. But they also prompted the organizations to use their knowledge, networks, political, and social credit to mobilize their audiences and calm tensions.

The shared society field was not significantly damaged by the May events, and despite ongoing fear and suspicion, activities recovered and have, in some cases, even expanded. Funders and—in the case of Federations—the communities they represent, were also shaken by these events, and many held strategic discussions and implemented emergency thinking. Funding does not seem to have been diminished in the aftermath of the events and may even be growing.

Recommendations

This report recognizes that shared society investment is a process, and that each federation has a unique relationship to it. The purpose of the report's recommendations is to help Jewish Federations, funders, and other players decide what they want to do in the field and why.

1

Approach the field with curiosity: This is a heterogeneous, complex, multifaceted, and counterintuitive field. The more Federations learn—and the more this learning is based on first-hand experiences with Jewish and Arab activists—the greater their understanding and comfort level with these issues.

2

Include more Arab voices in the process of learning about and developing shared society strategies: Federations may further deepen their learning and partnership processes by including more Arab consultants in their strategy building and decision-making.

3

Assess funding strategy and process: Federations should ensure their funding strategies and processes advance sustainability, innovation, and capacity building in the field, including among smaller, younger, and/or Arab-led organizations.

4

Address the needs of mixed and integrated spaces and cities: Federations are encouraged to support turning mixed spaces into shared ones. Specifically, to look at supporting equal opportunities for Arab residents in mixed cities and to enhance cooperation between residents and local government and between neighboring Arab and Jewish communities.

5

Create the conditions for grappling with questions of identity: The research highlighted the importance of Federations discussing how they can address questions of identity in shared society work.

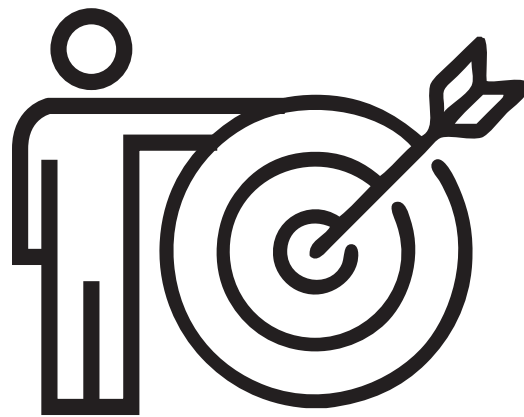
6

Engage unusual suspects in shared society building: It is important to increase investment in weaker groups, among both Jewish and Arab populations, that have traditionally been left behind in shared society building.

7

Explore investment in Arab society as a cornerstone of shared society building: Federations should consider whether avenues for investment in Arab civil society would fit their strategy for investment in Israel.

It is the hope and intent of this report that, as Jewish Federations, Jewish funders, and other players explore the above recommendations and questions, they emerge with greater clarity and direction regarding the best way to support shared society building between Jews and Arabs in Israel. This may include support for specific organizations and programs as well as an exploration of how to strengthen the field as a whole.



Background and Framing²

- A** Overview, Methodology and Research Goals
- B** What is Shared Society?
- C** The Landscape of Shared Society Building

² For a more comprehensive explanation and examination of the background and framing of this report see: Annex A: Methodology and Research Overview; Annex B: What is Shared Society?; and Annex C: The Shared Society Landscape.



Overview, Methodology and Research Goals

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) commissioned [NAS Research and Consulting Ltd.](#) to map, both conceptually and practically, the sphere of Jewish–Arab shared society in Israel, including its trends, organizations, spheres, and main funders. The mapping aims to offer insights voiced from the field on the current situation and possible directions for the future involvement of Jewish Federations and foundations more generally in building shared society in Israel.

The clashes that took place inside Israel in May 2021, mostly within mixed and integrated cities and areas, were the initial impetus for commissioning this report. However, its goals were broadened to enable a wider understanding of what efforts exist to build shared society and shared life between Jews and Arabs in Israel, what the potential looks like on the ground, and how the engagement of Jewish Federations and philanthropy can enhance the work’s positive impact on Israeli society more broadly.

Disclaimer: In the writing of this research, every attempt was made to avoid political statement or commentary. Our intention was to create a platform through which the voices from the field are more accessible and understandable. All quotes included in this report are the personal responses and insights of interviewees and are not necessarily adopted or endorsed by the writers or JFNA.

Note on terminology: Terminology is often controversial and loaded, but Arab/Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel self-identify in many ways and are described in various terms in the literature and discourse: “Arab citizens,” “Arab-Palestinians,” “Arab-Israelis,” “Palestinian citizens of Israel,” etc. Furthermore, Arab society is far from monolithic, nor does this report aim to portray it as such. However, for the sake of simplicity, where this report refers to “Arab society,” “Arab community,” or “Arab citizens,” these are shorthand terms that include all Arab/Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, including Arabic-speaking citizens who are Muslim (including Bedouin), Christian, and Druze. This research does not cover the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, who are not Israeli citizens.

The research is composed of the following chapters: **Chapter 1** explains the report’s main goals, methodology, and mapping boundaries; examines the conceptual framework of shared society building; and surveys the shared society “landscape,” examining spheres and major trends. **Chapters 2 and 3** summarize the in-depth field mapping process with Chapter 2 analyzing civil society organizations that promote shared society work and Chapter 3 focusing on Federations and foundations that support their work. **Chapter 4** assesses the field’s understanding and insights from the events of May 2021. **Chapter 5** offers major insights and recommendations.

1. Methodology

This research was performed between December 2021 and April 2022. Actions included the collection and summary of previous papers and research, the selection of a sample of 31 field organizations, and in-depth interviews with 25 representatives of North American Jewish Federations, donors, and philanthropies.³ In addition, ongoing consultation took place with the Working Group established by JFNA.⁴ The research focused on the following questions:

- ? What do activists, professionals, and experts in the field mean today when they talk about shared society between Jews and Arabs in Israel?
- ? What are some characteristics of shared society work in mixed cities and areas?
- ? What happened to shared society work in May 2021 and since?
- ? How can Jewish philanthropic investment to date be best understood?
- ? What practical recommendations can be extracted?

2. Mapping Boundaries

This research includes:

- » A bird's eye view of trends, challenges, opportunities, and insights of civil society organizations working on shared society building.
- » Civil society work on strictly shared society: work on Jewish–Arab partnerships or simultaneous work with both communities and work to promote equality, awareness, integration and inclusion, solidarity, partnership, and tolerance.
- » Shared society building in mixed and integrated cities and spaces.
- » The funding landscape for shared society work.

The decision to examine civil society work by focusing on shared society led to the report's exclusion of:

- » Unilateral work, which constitutes a significant portion of Arab civil society.⁵
- » Service provision organizations.
- » Institutional players such as community centers, youth movements, and academic institutions.
- » Government investments and the work of formal bodies (e.g., the President's Office or local authorities).
- » Non-American/non-Jewish philanthropy (except for British foundations).
- » The report does not include a mapping of government investments by international actors, but it is worth mentioning that there is significant funding from the EU, the US government, and individual European countries.

³ The full list of interviewees can be found in Annex D.

⁴ The Working Group was composed of representatives of JFNA and the following Federations: UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Federation of Greater Metrowest NJ, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, and Combined Jewish Philanthropies – Greater Boston Federation.

⁵ The report does, however, discuss the need expressed by NGOs and funders alike for greater investment in Arab society, including Arab civil society.

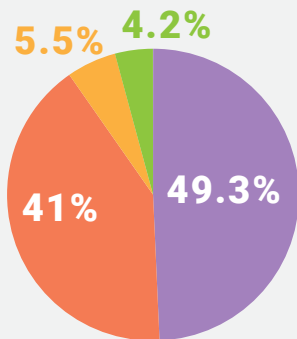
B What is Shared Society?

Demographic Data



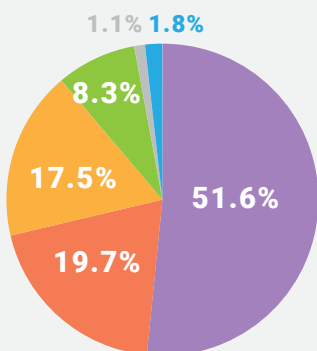
In 2020 the population of Israel was 9,289,760 of this total, 1,957,270 (21.1%) were Arabs 17.2% of whom were Arab citizens of Israel and 4% were East Jerusalem residents.

Arab society in Israel – Place of residence (end of 2020)



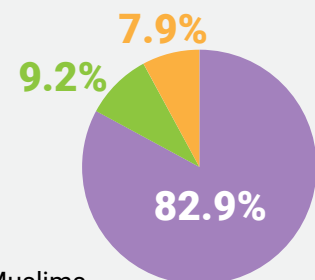
- Local councils**
The majority of Arabs live in 69 Arab local councils and some live in Jewish local councils.
- Cities**
Most live in 12 Arab cities and some in 7 mixed cities.
- Smaller rural localities**
47 Arab localities that are part of regional councils.
- Localities without municipal status**
Known as “unrecognized villages,” mostly in the Negev.

Arab society in Israel – geographic distribution (end of 2020, excluding East Jerusalem)



- Arab Localities - North of Israel
- Arab Localities - Triangle
- Arab Localities - Negev
- Mixed cities
- Jerusalem Corridor (including West Jerusalem)
- Jewish-majority localities around the country

Arab society in Israel – religious affiliation



- Muslims
- Druze
- Christians

Source: Israel Democracy Institute, Annual Statistical Report on Arab Society in Israel, March 2022.

Definition and Prisms of Shared Society

Shared society between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel is often understood as a concept that rests on two pillars: equality and equal opportunity, and partnership and joint work. But each of these pillars contains numerous meanings, and the research shows that more than 30 years of experience paint an abstract, complex, and often overlapping tapestry in which most organizations do not have a single, articulated definition of shared society. Below is a menu of prisms through which to think about shared society and create a more uniform language for discussion.



1 Material or Economic Equality vs. Collective Equality

Much of shared society work in recent years has focused on closing socioeconomic gaps between Arabs and Jews. However, professionals describe a growing realization of the need to broaden shared society work to promote “collective equality,”⁶ namely, the creation of a physical and metaphorical space for Arab citizens to advance as a collective and ensure ownership of their collective identity, narrative, and symbols and to receive legitimacy as part of the Israeli public space.

2 From Increasingly Mixed to Shared Society

The presence of Arab citizens in previously Jewish-only or overwhelmingly Jewish-majority public spaces is growing due to economic trends that strengthen Arab society alongside the unavailability of housing and quality services in Arab localities (a process referred to here as “mixing”) and intentional government and civil society interventions (a process referred to as “integration”). But field organizations acknowledge the need for integrated spaces to evolve into inclusive spaces in which the majority acts intentionally to make room for the minority.

3 Long-Term Change Efforts or Responses to Urgent Needs?

Shared society building is a form of social change which, by definition, requires long-term investment. But growing polarization, a frequently hostile public discourse, and intermittent violent outbursts related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict require the field to respond to crises, prevent a breakdown of relations, and safeguard minority rights.

4 Building Shared Society by Strengthening Arab (Civil) Society

Many professionals in the field identify the need to complement joint work by strengthening Arab society and Arab-led civil society in particular.

⁶ There is not one single term that organizations and funders in the field use to describe the conditions referred to here as “collective equality,” and our mapping indicated that the term “collective” can heighten sensitivities and raise controversies. However, the field conclusively indicated that questions relating to intangible, collective aspects of Arab society’s place in general Israeli society cannot be ignored. We thus chose the term “collective equality” for the sake of simplicity.

5 The Scope of Shared Society

This mapping focuses on efforts to address societal rifts between Jews and Arabs; some players, however, believe that, in order to build shared society in Israel, all societal rifts must be addressed.

Key Historical and Recent Developments⁷

1 ▶ Coexistence Evolves into Shared Society.

The concept of “coexistence” rose to prominence in Israel during the 1980s and 1990s. But the events of October 2000⁸ devastated the field, shook the legitimacy of coexistence work, and led to shifts in focus, structure, and attitudes.⁹ By the second decade of the 2000s, the concept of “shared society” had entered the discourse and has since become the dominant way to describe work to improve Jewish–Arab relations in Israel.

2 ▶ Increasing Effect of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

Relations between Jews and Arabs within Israel have always been intertwined with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict¹⁰ In the past decade eruptions of violence in the conflict have increasingly polarized Jewish–Arab relations, forcing the field to address this connection on the conceptual level, within their organizations, and vis-à-vis their beneficiaries.

3 ▶ Government Investment

Over the past 15 years, the field has been influenced by growing governmental investment in closing socioeconomic gaps between the Jewish majority and Arab minority. The most prominent investments to date have been Government Resolution (GR) 922, the 5-year economic development plan implemented between 2016 and 2021, and GR-550, the follow up 5-year plan for 2022-2026.¹¹ Importantly, no significant government investments directly support shared society work.

4 ▶ Discourse on Arab Political Participation and Jewish–Arab Political Partnership

Shifts in Israel’s domestic politics present challenges and opportunities for the field. Recent years have seen some of the most explicit efforts to delegitimize Arab citizens and their vote; on the other hand, developments paved the way for the first Arab political party’s participation in a ruling coalition.¹² Reactions among shared society actors are mixed: some consider the legitimacy granted by Ra’am’s participation as a significant step toward shared society, while others see Ra’am’s participation as a counter-productive and even dangerous compromise on the values of collective equality.

⁷ A more detailed account of the field’s historical development can be found in the IATF’s [2014 Report: Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#).

⁸ The October 2000 events were a series of protests in Arab villages in northern Israel at the beginning of the Second Intifada that turned violent and escalated into rioting by both Arab and Jewish citizens and clashes with the Israel Police. These ended in the deaths of 13 Arab demonstrators at the hands of the police, and one Jewish citizen killed in the violent demonstrations. The events prompted a National Commission of Inquiry and [have been recognized annually by the Arab community ever since](#).

⁹ Smooha, *The Lost Decade*, 2010.

¹⁰ Article 9, [Or Commission Report](#), 2003 (Hebrew), and [English summary](#).

¹¹ After a one-year extension to GR-922, in November 2021 the government adopted Resolution 550, which will operate between 2022 and 2026, and Resolution 549, a parallel plan to combat organized crime and violence in Arab society.

¹² The government coalition collapsed in June 2022.



The Landscape of Shared Society Building

Shared society is not the norm in Israel: education systems, housing, communal life, language, media, and, to some extent, the economy, continue to be separate for Jewish and Arab citizens.¹³ Partially resulting from these separate realities and partially independent of them, inequalities between Jewish and Arab citizens are still glaring in numerous fields. Discourse on Jewish–Arab relations is characterized more by discord and suspicion than by dialogue and solidarity. Shared society is therefore understood to be a work-in-progress and this chapter examines the landscape within which **shared society building** takes place.

Today's Shared Society Landscape: Major Spheres

Shared society building happens in many spheres of life in Israel including: the health and education systems, academic campuses, the workforce, and schools;¹⁴ mixed cities; the growing presence of Arab citizens in public discourse and Arab participation in decision-making circles; political partnership between Jews and Arabs, both nationally and locally; in civil solidarity work at the grassroots level; and through unilateral work in Arab society.

Today's Shared Society Landscape: Major Trends

1 Language

Language proficiency is seen as a central component of shared society building and a tool for more equal partnership. Among Arabs, the lack of Hebrew is recognized as maybe the single most significant barrier to integration and social mobility. Among Jews, Arabic study and proficiency is very limited and is a major contributor to ignorance about Arab culture and Arab citizens' daily realities. There is a greater emphasis in shared society building on the need for Jews and Arabs to learn each other's language, and language-based initiatives have grown in recent years.

2 Mixed and Shared Spaces

Unprecedented rates of mixing and integration are taking place on academic campuses, in the workplace, and in mixed cities, both new and old, with integration efforts also being implemented by academic institutions and some employers. Players in the field focus on overcoming institutional barriers in order to move from mixed and integrated to inclusive and shared spaces. Mixed cities, where material and collective inequalities are particularly visible,¹⁵ pose a unique set of challenges for shared society building, as became poignantly obvious during the May 2021 events.

3 Evolved Encounters

Encounters aim to challenge the reality of separation, according to which Jewish and Arab children and adults almost never meet or have opportunities for meaningful dialogue. They bring Jews and Arabs together for dialogue, cultural exchange, and education for shared life to discuss identity, history, and narrative and to address issues of common interest. Organizations believe that intentionally and professionally planning and mediating encounters remain vital.

¹³ This is also sometimes the case with the ultra-orthodox population, albeit for different reasons.

¹⁴ This refers to schools within the Hebrew-language education system that are becoming more naturally mixed due to the enrollment of Arab students and the growing number of intentionally mixed bilingual schools.

¹⁵ Haddad Haj-Yahya, Ron, and Fergeon, "Arab Residents of Mixed Cities," 2022.

- 4 **Increasing Exposure to Arab Society**
There are growing initiatives that aim to reach the Jewish majority either by physically bringing them to Arab localities or by bringing Arab narratives and voices to them (e.g., via the representation of Arabs in Israeli mainstream media).¹⁶
- 5 **Solidarity for Social Change and Political Partnership**
The research found growing calls for social solidarity and political partnership and new initiatives focused on joint action for social change that purposefully positions Jews and Arabs as partners.
- 6 **Reimagining “Israeli” Issues as Shared**
Another notable trend is the new conceptualization of issues of national relevance and import, perceived and addressed as “all-Israeli,” (Klal Israeli) by acknowledging that, to truly address them nationally, the needs of Arab society must be distinctly considered (e.g., national initiatives such as [a million Israelis in high-tech](#),¹⁷ [Smoke Free Israel](#), and [Top15](#)).
- 7 **Grassroots Work in Neighboring Communities**
There is a growing trend of Jewish and Arab individuals and groups across the country who feel compelled to organize grassroots initiatives of all shapes and sizes. These are sporadic, unmanaged, and motivated by individuals. They are often voluntary or require very little funding, and no organized knowledge was found regarding their impact, reach, or sustainability.

Today’s Shared Society Landscape: Driving Forces

Many forces drive and influence the shared society landscape in Israel today. This report offers an in-depth mapping of two: civil society organizations (Chapter 2) and the funders supporting their work (Chapter 3). Following are two additional forces that impact this work.



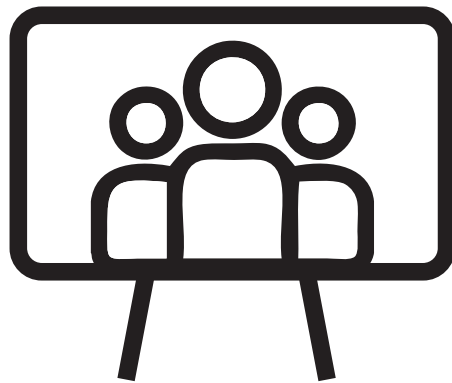
- 1 **Growing Government Investment and Involvement**
While disparities between Jews and Arabs remain high, growing government investments in economic development have significantly impacted shared society building. They have strengthened Arab integration into higher education and the labor market, enhanced the work of civil society, increased the number of funders of economic development, and pushed others to focus on unaddressed spheres such as shared life education and identity. There has, however, been little to no government investment in specific shared society work.
- 2 **Internal Processes in Arab Society**
Economic pulls and pushes have created a more mixed reality in Israel than ever before. The growth of an Arab middle class¹⁸ has pulled more Arab citizens into historically Jewish spaces like academia and new areas of the labor market. In parallel, a severe lack of housing and employment opportunities and poor municipal services in Arab localities have pushed more Arab families to move to Jewish cities. The alarmingly high prevalence of crime and violence in Arab community is an additional trend that, arguably, pushes shared society building lower down on the agenda of some in Arab society.

¹⁶ Examples include by Sikkuy-Aufiq’s and the 7th Eye’s [Representation Index](#), and the Abraham Initiatives’ [Media as a Shared Space](#).

¹⁷ The [number of Arab engineering students in Israel doubled between 2012 and 2018](#), providing an opportunity for greater integration into the Israeli high-tech industry.

¹⁸ Haider, *The Growth and Formation*, 2019.

2



In-Depth Mapping: Field Organizations' Work

- A** Shared Society Organizations' Goals and Achievements
- B** Challenges of Shared Society Organizations
- C** Shared Society Organizations' Insights on Working with Philanthropy
- D** Infographics: Field Organizations' Methodologies, Geographic Focuses, Target Audiences

The current chapter constitutes the heart of the research, summarizing the in-depth mapping conducted to show a snapshot of the work of civil society organizations today. The subsequent chapter goes on to map the Federations and foundations that support them.

As mentioned earlier, this snapshot does not purport to cover every organization working in the field, nor does it include detailed activities of each organization mapped. However, since the in-depth mapping includes all the largest players in the field and a substantial selection of medium-size and smaller organizations, this mapping offers a comprehensive and thematically (if not quantitatively) representative view of the field today. It thus serves as a useful tool for learning about and engaging with the field.

This chapter begins with the themes that emerged from the mapping, which are structured according to the questions asked in the interviews (see Annex E for the questionnaire). We include examples from specific organizations in order to illustrate these themes but do not aim to represent a list of all the organizations that work in a particular theme or topic. The latter part of the chapter presents data on civil society players' main methodologies, geographic focus, and target audiences (see Annex G for full list of organizations).

Methodological Note: Some of the organizations mapped for this report also work in a variety of areas outside of shared society. In such cases, the interviews focused only on work directly relevant to shared society.

"When we look through the widest lens possible, we see that relations between Jews and Arabs are trending toward change; toward more integration and more influence of Arab citizens on Israel's economy. We need to understand that this change is threatening to certain people, who have gotten used to seeing a homogenous world around them....Whoever thinks we can allow these big changes toward integration to take place without dealing with those fears doesn't understand that this will lead to repeating and worsening crises. We have to be more prepared for this next crisis, to know that change is not a linear process but will be laden with crises, and to get ready so we are not surprised over and over."

Prof. Eran Halperin, aChord Center



Shared Society Organizations' Goals and Achievements

The mapping shows that, despite limited financial and human resources and going against the mainstream, the field of shared society has seen significant accomplishments. The first issue examined is the field's current objectives and how progress is evaluated: representatives of the organization were asked how they define their own goals and what indicators and examples demonstrate their attainment. Following are the goals and achievements that emerged from the interviews (not listed in order of importance).

1. Reach the mainstream and influence public discourse

Nearly all shared society organizations interviewed work to create social change while challenging mainstream assumptions and practices. Many acknowledged this as a challenge, reporting that, to create the large-scale change they aim for, they must influence public discourse and reach the mainstream—in terms of issues and communities—within both Jewish and Arab societies. Field organizations work toward this goal by growing the scope of their programs in terms of both numbers of participants and outreach to new target audiences and by bringing shared society into mainstream spaces, such as media and the public sector. Organizations reach the mainstream also by making strategic decisions about the nature and structure of their programs to expose their content to broader audiences. For example, several organizations interviewed look to increase representation of Arabs and Arabic language and culture in the Israeli media as a tool for influencing public discourse and touching the Jewish mainstream; others work with decision-makers on the local and national level to encourage policies that will enhance the presence of Arabic language and Arab culture in shared spaces, such as academic campuses and public transportation.

“Shared society tends to draw the already convinced, people who hold liberal-progressive world views. This creates an environment that sometimes struggles to include people with different outlooks. [People who may think differently] also want to take part in building a shared society here but don’t see a place for themselves within many existing programs.”

NGO director

Examples

- **Beit Hagefen** chose a multiculturalism approach to engage broader audiences in its Third Space art and culture program that focuses on Jewish–Arab content, which has expanded to host students, teachers, and youth and run trainings for public sector employees.
- **The Abraham Initiatives** has been running its Ya Salaam program since 2010, bringing Arabic instruction by native Arabic speakers to 100,000 Jewish students.
- **Sikkuy-Aufoq** works to boost the presence of Arab voices in mainstream Hebrew media, which has led to a rise in the number of Arab journalists and Arab professionals in these spaces.

2. Increase awareness of the other’s existence, perspectives, history, narrative, and lived experiences

Many of the organizations described work to deepen Jews’ and Arabs’ familiarity with the perspectives and lived experiences of the other. They also look to broaden each side’s understanding of the other’s narrative and, in doing so, create space for the two narratives to exist side by side without threatening one another. Interviewees expressed the belief that this leads, over time, to changed perceptions and attitudes. This broad goal touches on one of the foundational aims of shared society, namely, knowing and accepting the other.

Organizations employ a broad range of methodologies toward achieving this aim including mentorship and training, language instruction, dialogue and encounters, community building and organizing, leadership development, media and campaigning, policy change, and research and curriculum development.¹⁹ Given that many

“The core of our activity is socially conscious tourism. The goal is to expose a Jewish audience to the narrative, identity, and culture of Arabs. Among other things, this humanizes the other side—a critical step that enables shared society.”

NGO director

¹⁹ There are many examples of shared society organizations achieving this aim. Due to lack of space, not all of these could be described. Organizations that explicitly described their work as aligning with these goals include: Givat Haviva, AJECC, Hand in Hand, Standing Together, Sadaka-Reut, Shared Paths, aChord, CET, Hartman, Merhavim, Sikkuy-Aufoq, Neve Shalom, A New Way, the Rossing Center, Co-Impact, Living Together, and Madrasa.

shared society organizations operate with limited budgets and staff, progress is measured by participants' experiences and quantitative growth, which is often possible only when state authorities support or adopt these programs.

Examples

- **Madrasa's** Arabic courses, initiated in 2015, attract 100,000 Jewish students per year; an additional 500,000 people are exposed to its content.
- **Shared Paths'** tours in Arab localities have grown and expanded over the past 15 years of activity. Today they constitute the first point of contact for companies, local authorities, schools, tourists, and other groups who want to familiarize themselves with the Arab community; even local authorities and government ministries have joined the trend of organizing Ramadan tours.
- **AJEEC's** Jewish–Arab gap-year program in the Negev, the only one of its kind, gives young people the opportunity to meet and know each other's experiences in a long-term, substantive setting. The program, in cooperation with the Scouts movement, has expanded to Lod and Jaffa.
- **A New Way's** programs impact high school students who, in a survey conducted after the May 2021 events, reported less anger toward the other and more willingness to collaborate in multicultural encounters.²⁰

3. Build shared social and political movements and promote political cooperation

Some shared society organizations work to position the vision of greater equality and partnership between Jews and Arabs as a shared interest among all in Israeli society. In an attempt to achieve this goal, they run campaigns, establish community groups, and work with the media. They also organize public responses in support of shared society in times of crisis and when values of equality and partnership are called into question. Several of these organizations responded, publicly and within their programs, to the passage of the Nation-State Law in 2018 and the May 2021 events.

Other shared society organizations are involved with building shared political movements and investing in the next generation of political leadership that will support a shared society vision. In the words of the co-director of a jointly-led NGO, "Success [for us] is for our participants to become change agents who favor politics that promote Jewish–Arab partnership."

"We want to build a new majority in the state that is loyal to the values of shared society. It is important to us that what we fight for isn't relevant only to some in our society."

Co-director of a jointly-led NGO

Examples

- **Standing Together**, established in 2015, has 11 local chapters (four of which are in higher education institutions), 3,200 Jewish and Arab members, and a newsletter which reaches 70,000 people.
- **The Alliance** is building a cross-sector network of people in current and future positions of influence who support Jewish–Arab civil and political partnership and equipping them with tools to promote that goal.
- **Mahapach-Taghir** is developing community-led movements by creating a platform for people, mainly women, to define their shared interests and pursue them together.

²⁰ A New Way works in 70 schools reaching 5,000 students, parents, teachers, and community members each year.

4. Influence policy and decision-makers nationally and locally

A number of shared society organizations aim through various arenas to influence the way governing bodies shape and implement policies affecting Arab citizens and Arab society at large at the national, regional, and local level. As mentioned earlier, shared society building is a work in progress that promotes social change, often in the face of the structural challenges of separation and inequality and ingrained prejudice, ignorance, and mutual suspicions. Still, a number of organizations interviewed said they have succeeded in securing government bodies' trust and gaining legitimacy or, as one NGO director described it, becoming "easier to swallow."

For example, many interviewees stressed that the government's increasing investment in closing socioeconomic gaps is largely the result of civil society advocacy and research in the previous years. Field organizations take credit for the present-day baseline assumptions that there are socioeconomic gaps between Jewish and Arab society, which are detrimental to the Israeli economy, and which the government is responsible for minimizing and, ultimately, closing. While gaps do remain large and investment is perceived as insufficient, government investments have undoubtedly increased manifold, and NGOs claim that discourse on these issues is more collaborative; governmental ministries are more open to receiving knowledge and recommendations and even adopt models initiated by field organizations.

Field organizations face much greater difficulty in their attempts to influence policy and secure budgets relating to shared society. A few relevant models were adopted by government, for example, integrating Arab teachers and the teaching of spoken Arabic into Jewish schools, but these are viewed as the exceptions and not the norm. Nonetheless, following the May 2021 events, the Ministry of Education initiated a major consultation process with civil society organizations regarding shared life education models—a step welcomed and encouraged by many organizations.²¹

"Policy change means influencing factors out of your control. In this case, success does not mean that the Ministry of Education fully adopts and operates your shared life programming. But it might mean that you've influenced [discourse within] a certain committee."

Jewish and Arab co-directors of a policy-focused NGO

Examples

- **AJEEC** partners with local authorities in the Negev to provide shared life educational programming in schools.
- **Itach Ma'aki** advocates for the government to better safeguard the rights of Jewish and Arab women, for example, through its City for All project to improve gender equality in municipal services.
- **Sikkuy-Aufoq** leads advocacy efforts for the integration of Arabic-language services in public transportation.
- **The Abraham Initiatives** works to advance policies that promote Arab political representation in elections.

5. Influence the next generation through the education system

Many organizations view the centralized state education system—with its separate streams for Jewish and Arab students and a curriculum which includes minimal content on shared society, tolerance, and mutual acquaintance—as a powerful and necessary platform for influencing the next generation's values. They thus work to engage students, principals, and teachers, develop shared life tools and curricula, bring students together, teach spoken Hebrew and Arabic, and influence Ministry

²¹ As discussed above, a similar process took place in 2008–2009, but recommendations were neither budgeted for nor implemented.

of Education policies and budgets in formal and informal educational settings.²² These organizations shared many success stories about developing and implementing programming for the education system, including programs that have been deemed impactful by external evaluators.

Nonetheless, the organizations explained that even the best program will have limited influence unless it is scaled up to influence the broader populace. Field organizations all reported that only a tiny percent of students in Israel are exposed to any kind of shared society programming. They asserted the need for significantly greater government or philanthropic investment to truly revolutionize education for shared life in the Israeli education system.

Examples

- **Hand in Hand** pioneered joint Jewish–Arab schools, which today total seven schools, a university student community, 15 preschools (under Hand in Hand guidance), and community programming in eight communities, reaching more than 4,000 people each year.
- **Merchavim** works on various projects that promote shared life education. The success of its art matriculation program in Arab high schools led to the Ministry of Education adopting a culturally appropriate music curriculum and matriculation exam.
- **CET** develops curricula for shared society education and trains teachers to deliver it. As one of the main curriculum developers in Israel, CET works closely with the Ministry of Education and is seen as a credible player. Together with the Abraham Initiatives, CET promotes the Shared Learning Model that brings numerous Jewish and Arab classrooms together.
- **Givat Haviva** uses a regional approach to offer educational programming and content for both students and staff, including encounters, environmental content, and joint learning about citizenship and geography.

6. Enhance workforce integration and cultural competency among employers

Since quality employment is a main driver of social mobility, one of shared society’s goals is promoting the integration of Arab citizens in the Israeli workforce, especially in high-paying jobs and sectors where they have previously been underrepresented (e.g., high-tech industry, managerial positions, civil service). Organizations also view a diverse workplace as an important platform for Jews and Arabs to become acquainted on equal footing. They therefore work with policymakers, employers, and Arab job candidates to increase the number of Arabs employed in all sectors of the economy, with a dual focus on enhancing the readiness and capacities of candidates and the cultural capabilities and inclusive policies of employers in the business and public sectors.

Examples

- **itworks** places approximately 230 Arab engineers each year in the high-tech industry through its personnel placement services and training programs for candidates and collaboration with more than 150 employers.

“We work with the business sector because it mirrors Israeli society. It constitutes a lever for promoting shared society in the sense of living and working together, not just meeting one another at random. We engage senior leaders, and their stamp of approval is an important statement that influences public perceptions. Finally, the Arab community has a right to realize its potential in the workforce, the business sector benefits from the diversity, and all of this is an economic lever that benefits Israeli society and Arab society specifically.”

NGO director

²² Relevant organizations include Givat Haviva, CET, Beit Hagefen, the Hartman Institute, Living Together, aChord, A New Way, the Rossing Center, Merchavim, Madrasa, AJEEC, Hagar, and Hand in Hand.

- **Tsofen** places hundreds of Arab professionals in the high-tech industry and, together with other NGOs and governing bodies, played a critical part in growing the high-tech industry in Nazareth, Israel's largest Arab city, where 40 high-tech companies now operate, including multinational firms.
- **Kav Mashve** works in partnership with Tel Aviv University to increase the number of Arab professionals in managerial positions in top companies.
- **Co-Impact** works with dozens of major employers in the private sector to increase their number of Arab employees by helping them to adopt diverse recruitment and onboarding processes and create inclusive organizational culture.

7. Pioneer models of shared society and shared life

Shared society organizations are in a unique position to develop and test new models of shared living between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Some organizations reported that models that at first seem cutting-edge or even subversive are then, after proof of concept, adopted by government and scaled up. A few define such scaling processes as their major goals and achievements, while others caution that the government's adoption of shared society models tends to be partial or peter out over time in contrast to shared society organizations' long-term commitment. A number of organizations have pioneered models for shared life in the education system and the workplace, among young people, and so forth.

Examples

- **The Shalom Hartman Institute**, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Association of Community Centers, trains educators of all faiths to be agents of change through a model of studying religious texts together.
- **Givat Haviva** developed the Roadmap for Shared Society and advocates for its implementation within various government ministries.
- **Living Together** trains students at teachers' colleges and change agents throughout Israel's academic institutions.

Some organizations view their role as conveners and capacity builders in the field at large. For example, over the past few years, Shatil has convened a Shared Society Organizations Forum that provides a platform for conversation, joint thinking, and strategizing between shared society NGO leaders. On the political front, Shatil, aChord, and the Alliance promote Jewish–Arab political partnership, conducting research, cultivating leaders, and crafting messages that will galvanize public support.

“We have developed excellent models that are worth expanding. Unfortunately, our impact is limited because we can't reach many students. Our hope was that the Ministry of Education...would replicate our models within the entire education system, but that hasn't happened yet.”

NGO director

8. Transform mixed and integrated spaces into inclusive and shared ones

A final major theme that emerged from interviews with field organizations is their goal to manage and upgrade capacities in mixed and integrated spaces, including academic campuses and the labor market or mixed living spaces in mixed cities. While some work on mixed and integrated spaces overlaps with shared society work in mixed cities, the latter also raise unique issues, challenges, and needs. All

“[Mixed] cities are our future, and they demand dedicated thought and investment so that they develop and thrive as spaces that are shared, inclusive, and equitable, and meet the needs of all citizens who live within them.”

The Abraham Initiatives website

the organizations stressed that shared society work in mixed cities includes an emphasis on strengthening Arab society, since material and collective inequality between Arabs and Jews is felt there in distinct ways.

A number of shared society organizations have developed expertise and are leading work in mixed and integrated spaces, with some becoming content experts that other players turn to for advice on how to work effectively in these multicultural settings.

Examples of work in mixed and integrated spaces

- **aChord** conducts research and offers evidence-based consulting to a broad range of players on how to manage shared spaces. It has published practical guides on issues such as managing mixed and integrated workplaces and campuses in times of security tension and on national holidays.
- **Mabat** runs a program called *Nekudot Mifgash* (Meeting Points) which brings together Jewish and Arab university students in Haifa for one-on-one meetings.
- **Tsofen** works to develop the high-tech sector in Arab cities. Beyond economic development, this also means that Jews increasingly work in Arab cities in a substantive way.
- **Co-Impact** supports companies in both recruiting and effectively integrating Arab employees.

Examples of work in mixed cities

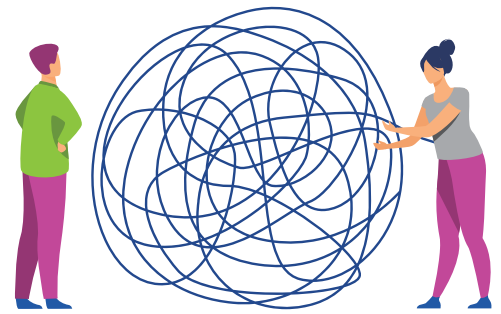
- **Shatil**, one of the first NGOs to conduct a study on mixed cities and, specifically, Haifa,²³ convenes a CEO Forum in Haifa in which 15–20 CEOs participate in cross-sector work.
- **The Abraham Initiatives** runs a major project on shared cities, which holds annual conferences, gathers and publicizes data on the relationship between Jews and Arabs in mixed cities, and works with local leaderships and schools to advance shared society.
- **A New Way**, in cooperation with the US Embassy, operated a pilot shared volunteering program for 280 Jewish and Arab 10th graders in mixed cities.
- **Neve Shalom**, an intentionally mixed and shared community, has been operating a leadership program in mixed cities for the past six years, aimed at bridging differences and alleviating tensions between the two populations living together-but-separately in the same city.

²³ Rosen, Haifa: Between Reality and a Vision, 2012.



Challenges of Shared Society Organizations

Shared society organizations face numerous challenges that affect their current and future work. This section highlights some of these central challenges which funders and others engaging with shared society work are advised to keep in mind. Organizations were interviewed about the main challenges they face in their specific work as well as how they would define the main challenges facing the field as a whole (detailed below, not listed in order of importance).



1. An inherent and rarely challenged reality of separation between Jews and Arabs in Israel

Their diversity notwithstanding, the civil society organizations mapped all share a vision of equality, inclusion, tolerance, and partnership. Many of the interviewees said that one of their biggest challenges is the fact that most Jewish and Arab citizens go through life with little to no meaningful interaction with members of the other group and have no awareness of separation as a problem that needs challenging. Some reported this lack of familiarity as sometimes blinding even activists in the field from seeing their colleagues' lived experiences clearly.

By challenging this reality, shared society organizations represent a force within Israeli society that stands in opposition to the inequality and separation which, to a large extent, characterize mainstream discourse. Some organizations view their work as acting within these parameters; others feel it is their role to challenge and change them. Even within shared society organizations, Arabs and Jews sometimes differ in their understanding of why the work is necessary; according to one NGO leader, "for Arabs, the starting point is talking about equality, while Jews want to start by talking about relations."

"The gap between the reality of Arab and Jewish participants is incomprehensible to our Jewish participants and is hard to explain. Bridging that gap is one of our central challenges."
Jewish director of a jointly-led NGO

As mentioned above, state authorities have come to recognize and, increasingly, act to mitigate economic inequality. In recent years, these efforts have partially challenged the reality of separation: for example, improved access to higher education for Arab students or better Arabic language services in the public sphere.

"[Shared society and equality] are important because, despite the separation we all suffer from, at the end of the day we live in one shared place."

NGO director

Nevertheless, the reality of separation continues to cause many practical difficulties; the very act of bringing people together requires intentional action (such as arranging transportation and translation and accounting for cultural sensitivity), huge funds, and labor. Organizations also discussed the critical need to overcome racism, prejudice, ignorance, and fear that stem from and are exacerbated by the reality of separation.

Reducing the structural separation between Jews and Arabs, which is seen by many organizations as a prerequisite for building shared society, remains a massive challenge.

2. Built-in inequalities as a challenge

As mentioned earlier, there are significant socioeconomic gaps between Jews and Arabs in almost all quality-of-life indexes, ranging from employment through the education system and municipal services to levels of poverty. These inequalities often pose significant challenges to shared society building, since organizations must address the fact that seemingly obvious services or conditions on the Jewish side do not exist on the Arab side. For example, most Arab schools do not have the same level of infrastructure as many Jewish schools, which creates challenges for shared life education programs. Likewise, the lack of public facilities, sports facilities, and cultural institutions in many Arab localities affects the ability to hold encounters equally in both communities. The epidemic of crime and violence in Arab society is an additional challenge for organizations working to enhance business development in Arab localities, bring Jewish participants there, and sensitize Jewish participants to these daily realities of Arab participants.

3. Adverse effects of the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict

The majority of interviewees stated that “the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the Occupation disrupt efforts to build a shared society.” They claimed that stagnation in reaching a resolution and repeated eruptions of violence “cast an ever-present shadow of conflict and fear” over Jewish–Arab relations in Israel, “create a sense of despair” and highlight the lack of political will to change this reality. Since Operation Protective Edge in Gaza in 2014, they have watched the conflict trickling into Israeli society, forcing shared society organizations to address its impact on their work, both internally and with their target audiences and stakeholders. Interviewees said the impact of shared society building efforts would be limited as long as the conflict remained unsolved: “We cannot expect Arabs to be fully integrated in our economy without addressing the conflict and the state’s oppression [of the Palestinian people],” said one Jewish NGO director.

Interviewees also said that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict manifests differently for Jews and Arabs, which is a challenge for the field. From their experience, for Jewish citizens, the conflict often feels distant, less urgent, and almost theoretical. For Arab citizens, it is much more immediate and personal—many have family members in the West Bank and Gaza who experience the difficulties of the conflict daily, especially during military operations. This difference can lead to varying reactions among the organizations’ staff members to events and escalations, both because each side reacts to the violence from its respective position and because each side is exposed to very different information, media, images, and stories, of which the other side tends to be ignorant.

Likewise, the conflict challenges the organizations’ work with their target audiences and external stakeholders: for example, when Jewish and Arab participants in the same project react very differently to escalations in violence, this causes tensions and can even bring activities to a halt.

4. An increasingly inflammatory public discourse and backlash against shared society work

Internal social conflict within Israel, while connected in many ways to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, also poses its own set of challenges. Two specific challenges that were voiced by interviewees included increasingly inflammatory public discourse and the backlash against shared society work.

Organizations described a political atmosphere—on both governmental and public levels—that has, in recent years, moved away from tones of equality, partnership, and inclusivity toward tribalism,

extremism, and fearmongering. Several organizations described feeling that the public is not on board with their agenda. A number of interviewees referred to the 2018 Nation-State Law—which specified Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people and demoted Arabic from its status as an official language—as discriminatory and adding to the problematic political atmosphere.

Some interviewees said this negative trend is the result of a backlash. The stronger Arab society becomes and the more visible and public shared society activities are, the greater the backlash among non-supportive elements of the public. Several organizations mentioned a related dilemma that emerges when they attempt to

“The government today understands that civic equality is of interest to all. How do we get them to see [collective] equality the same way? This will happen the moment an Arab employee is not fired after joining a strike protesting violence in the Arab community. Or when [Jewish] parents are unable to fire an Arab teacher at their child’s school because she refused to stand during the siren on Yom Hazikaron [Memorial Day].”

Jewish director of a jointly-led NGO

“We have a dilemma. If our work is adopted by the Ministry of Education that would strengthen our model. On the other hand, it would awaken the extremists and weaken us.”

NGO director

scale their work through partnerships with government and decision-makers: on the one hand, they are able to achieve more and prevent a backlash if their work remains under the radar; on the other hand, how will they affect or change public opinion if they keep quiet about their work?

5. The limits of advancing material and economic equality but neglecting the promotion of collective equality

Many organizations interviewed shared the insight that while material improvements are critical, they are not enough to fundamentally change Jewish–Arab relations. They increasingly recognize the importance of allowing all participants, especially minority members, to explore, strengthen, and confidently express their collective identities. This creates a challenge since material equality is an easier goal for the public, decision-makers, and many funders to support and promote. Field organizations suggest that government, philanthropy, and civil society invest more in creating tangible and symbolic spaces for Arab citizens’ collective identity, beyond the economic sphere. One aspect of collective equality that interviewees said was a prerequisite for building shared society is “making space for the development and expression of an Arab-Palestinian identity.” They nonetheless recognized the challenge in doing so.²⁴

“Connecting the issue of identity to the change in power relations that shared society organizations are working toward is critical but not obvious to many.”

NGO professional

Jewish and Arab representatives stated that this challenge also relates to Jews relinquishing enough power to allow that identity to develop and be expressed. They explained that Jews in Israel have countless opportunities to grapple with, develop, and express their identity: schools and youth movements, cultural events, national days of celebration and mourning, and many other spaces. As a result, for many Jewish citizens, their Jewish narrative is clearly articulated and strong.

“Discrimination, pushing Arab-Palestinians to the sidelines, encounters that preserve existing power imbalances—they are like giving a sick person pain medicine. You create the illusion of acting, only to be shocked when the medicine wears off. It also prevents us from touching the core of the problem: identity. We don’t really see progress, and eventually it all explodes in our face, as we saw in May 2021.”

NGO professional

NAS

However, the process of developing and understanding collective identity is almost nonexistent in Arab society; it is not taught in schools and is often delegitimized in public discourse. And in its absence, there is a vacuum of Arab narratives which, according to these professionals, is detrimental for both Arab society and shared society building.

Interviewees said that the dilemma of addressing collective identity manifests itself in several ways. First, it challenges funders involved in supporting shared society work, and almost precludes governmental support for such activities. Second, some feel that Arab participants and Arab professionals working within shared society organizations, are often expected to accept and respect Jewish narratives; Jews, however, are not usually asked to do the same.

6. Underrepresentation of Arabs in positions of power and decision-making

Organizations interviewed noted the challenge of increasing the representation of Arab professionals in positions of power and decision-making processes across all parts of Israeli society. The underrepresentation of Arabs in political decision-making on the national level and within government ministries weakens their influence on processes such as budget allocations and enables the passage of discriminatory legislation.

The field of shared society itself is not immune to the lack of Arab representation in positions of power; indeed, Arabs are underrepresented among the leadership and senior staff of shared society organizations. Moreover, the philanthropic bodies that fund shared society work are almost exclusively comprised of Jewish decision-makers.

7. Effective management of mixed and integrated spaces

While individual organizations have had some success with specific programs in mixed and integrated spaces and cities (see the Goals and Achievements section above) and recognition of the importance of these spaces has grown in recent years, particularly after May 2021, they still pose a major challenge for the field. Indeed, the mapping shows that activities to manage mixed and integrated spaces remain mostly limited, local, and nascent, with organizations speaking of a shortage in tools, mechanisms, and infrastructure. A key challenge mentioned was advancing long-term changes in the perceptions of decision-makers in mixed and integrated spaces while simultaneously building solutions that can take immediate effect. The urgency of this task was most visible in May 2021. One Arab co-director of a jointly-led NGO cautioned that some players working to manage mixed and integrated spaces see it is an easy thing to do when it is, in fact, a complex process; this belief leads, he claimed, to shallow and limited solutions that fail to build a strong foundation for shared society.

The mapping also highlights some built-in differences between mixed and integrated spaces and the realities and needs of mixed cities. Both require efforts to move from mixed to shared, by advancing relationship building, structural inclusion, and cultural competency and managing decision-making structures and power sharing. However, mixed cities are also characterized by weakened communities, both Jewish and Arab, significant socioeconomic gaps, mistrust between the Arab

“Mixed cities offer 10,000 points of contact [between Jewish and Arab residents]. This can be an amazing platform for promoting shared society, but, if neglected, it could also lead to what we term ‘the Kosovo nightmare.’”
Jewish director of a jointly-led NGO

communities and the local government, and many daily points of friction between neighbors. Mixed cities are also in an unusual position since they do not belong to either Arab or Jewish society and thus, according to the organizations, they often fall through the cracks of government policies (e.g., GR-922).

8. Jewish–Arab relations and social cohesion

Some interviewees expressed the view that the term “shared society” should address relations between a broader set of marginalized groups or groups in conflict with one another within Israeli society and not only be viewed through the Jewish–Arab lens. In their eyes, “limiting” shared society work to the Jewish–Arab lens underscores only one aspect of people’s identities, highlighting differences and restricting the groups partaking in the work to those who hold generally similar political leanings and ideologies. Some players therefore believe that integrating Jewish–Arab work into a wider framework of shared society or “multiculturalism” within Israel is more effective. In a similar vein, several organizations and funders expressed the belief that shared society should be viewed as an effort to create greater social solidarity among all marginalized groups in Israel. The way to reach that goal is not through solely Jewish–Arab encounters but through a shared struggle for social, economic, and civil rights.

Nonetheless, most shared society NGOs interviewed believe that the rift between Jews and Arabs in Israel rests on a different plane altogether, constituting the “tectonic plates” of Israeli society and thus requiring unique and dedicated solutions. They view the “multicultural” approach as counterproductive, as it “dilutes” the real infrastructural conflict in Israel—namely, between the Jewish majority and Arab minority—by “blending” it with additional rifts.

9. Organizational and methodological challenges

As in any sphere, civil society NGOs working to build shared society struggle with various organizational and methodological challenges. The central challenges described by the organizations include the following.

► Limited funding

This was raised as a major challenge by nearly all the organizations interviewed. The lack of funds constrains their reach and prevents scaling-up activities (i.e., the attempt to reach more people over a longer period) and encourages competition between organizations rather than partnership. It also limits their ability to employ the equal number of Jewish and Arab staff members needed to both ensure co-leadership on the structural front and promote long-term policies on the operational front.

► Professionalization of the field

Several organizations said the field is oversaturated with organizations, yet few are experts in one domain. Some asserted that while there is room for a variety of approaches, it also creates a lack of coordination that can hinder advancement, described by one NGO director as a “waste of energy.” An additional difficulty relates to the evaluation of programs both in terms of defining what “success” means and in terms of available capacities and funds to execute such evaluation. Some experts also lamented the lack of accumulated knowledge in the field which, in their eyes, limits the level of professionalism organizations can reach and the extent of their impact.

“Everyone does everything: education for shared life, identity discourse, work with young people. This is partly due to funding, but it is also a criticism of our, the organizations’, ability to organize.”
Jewish director of a jointly-led NGO

▶ **Developing an accessible language and story**

Shared society organizations have yet to successfully develop a shared language that is easily comprehensible to mainstream Jewish and Arab publics. According to several organizations, this is particularly notable in discussions on identity and power dynamics, with Jews still using language that describes themselves as a minority and the vulnerable party and Arabs sometimes using language that exacerbates Jewish fears.

▶ **Resisting a dichotomous outlook**

Several interviewees spoke about a tendency among activists, professionals, and funders to view the field dichotomously: everything is good and there are better relationships and positive developments or, alternatively, everything is bad, and relations are based on inequality and conflict. However, interviewees reported that the reality is far more nuanced, and organizations sometimes struggle to recognize their successes alongside their setbacks. One NGO staff member said this outlook can be challenging when relaying the organization's work to decision-makers and funders and there is a need to verbalize and publicize successes to ensure buy-in, productive energies, and funds. There is a growing understanding in the field that among participants there can be positive relations, cooperation, and even interdependency alongside undercurrents of frustration, prejudice, and fear.

▶ **Challenges vis-à-vis philanthropy**

(Discussed below.)



Shared Society Organizations' Insights on Working with Philanthropy

Philanthropy is the primary funding source for shared society work in Israel, with most grants coming from the United States and some from Europe and elsewhere.²⁵ Therefore, funding strategy and the ways in which funders interact with field organizations have a large impact on the field and vice versa. Organizations were asked about their relationships with funders, focusing specifically on Jewish Federations and Jewish foundations. They were asked what works well in their relationships, what needs improvement, and what new strategies or areas of investment they would recommend philanthropies exploring. Following are the insights gleaned from these questions.

1. Philanthropy is results-oriented, always learning, and always with more to learn

Organizations interviewed cite several characteristics of North American Jewish philanthropy that strengthen and support the field. First, they reported that funders are always learning and evolving; some funders and Federations whose shared society grant making was previously limited now understand the need to invest in Jewish–Arab relations, something which, “many Israeli Jews have yet to internalize.” Field organizations also praised North American Jewish philanthropy for being results-oriented and for pushing their potential grantees to create long-term systemic change. The interviewees further stated that funders with long-term experience in the field of shared society have become strategic investors and real partners, sharing their own professional know-how and taking a long-term approach that was missing in the past.

Organizations nonetheless pointed to some funders' non-strategic and even superficial understanding of the field—an ignorance of its complex realities and nuances. This lack of understanding sometimes results in an inefficient use of resources, for example, funding activities that “photograph well” but fail to create long-term change and may even do harm. Philanthropy, some said, typically operates in one or two-year cycles and tends to seek exciting and innovative initiatives over slow and steady progress; systemic change, on the other hand, requires long-term work and patience, with results that are not visible in the short-term. In the same vein, some of the foundations' policies require them to change grantee organizations every couple of years, resulting in relatively short-term investments and superficial acquaintance with each grantee's work and added value. This inconsistency between the long-term, gradual, and non-linear nature of social change and the modus operandi of many philanthropies is seen by some organizations to weaken the field and prevent it from professionalizing and maximizing its impact.

“[Good] management requires consistency, while funders want to push us in shiny new directions.”
NGO director

Interviewees also said that they find themselves investing significant energy in fundraising and proposal writing, sometimes for relatively small donations, which detracts from their ability to invest in fieldwork.

2. Philanthropy struggles to support work perceived as political or unconventional

Some organizations voiced frustration at what they described as funders' need to categorize grantees into clearly defined boxes with a preference for certain categories over others that may be of equal

²⁵ The US government, non-Jewish foundations, the European Union, various European countries, and Israeli foundations also fund shared society to varying degrees.

importance; when an organization does not fit one of these boxes, they said, it becomes less “digestible” for philanthropy, which makes fundraising more challenging. This is especially true with political work. “North American Jewish philanthropy does not or cannot fund political work, while the reality we live in is ultra-political and almost everything concerning relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel is political,” said the co-director of a joint Jewish–Arab NGO. The field organizations see that encounters and dialogue, projects serving children, youth, and women, and projects with tangible, well-defined shorter-term outputs best fit the preferences and goals of funders; however, this tendency sometimes conflicts with the field’s own understanding of the need to address the more difficult issues.

“The types of projects [North American Jewish funders tend to support] rely on existing power imbalances and feature Jewish Israeli groups ‘helping’ Palestinians...projects that address the structural barriers to promote the foundation of equality and justice necessary for a shared society are more difficult to raise money for.”

NGO professional

3. Funders favor Jewish-led and jointly-led organizations

Several interviewees pointed to a problematic gap between the amount of funding granted to Jewish-led or jointly-led organizations and Arab-led organizations. This tendency, according to some interviewees, creates a dual problem. First, it creates a sense that Arab society’s needs and voices must “filter” through Jewish or joint channels to be heard and funded which, in turn, leads to frustration and some delegitimization of American Jewish support. Second, it further weakens Arab-led civil society organizations, including those working on shared society issues.

In addition to these discrepancies, field organizations said that because shared society NGOs and those working to strengthen Arab society compete for the same funds, shared society organizations—which are often stronger and larger to begin with—tend to secure funding at the expense of their counterparts.

“[American Jewish philanthropy] needs to understand that justice for the Arab minority in Israel is a Jewish interest....Lots of the [philanthropic] funding is conservative and only invests in economic development, and that will not deliver the social change we seek.”

NGO director

Some organizations believe that American Jewish funders are not yet ready to invest in these issues, since dealing with collective identity and collective equality is controversial within their home communities and board members. This is because addressing these issues means touching some of the deepest sensitivities around majority–minority relations in Israel and might challenge basic assumptions regarding Israel’s identity. One Jewish NGO

As has been discussed throughout this report, much of the investment in shared society in recent years has focused on narrowing socioeconomic gaps between Jews and Arabs and on encounters that bring people together. However, many interviewees asserted that the field needs to also focus on collective equality between Jews and Arabs, which involves allowing Arabs to explore and grapple with their identity and to take up more space as Arab-Palestinians within Israeli society.

“Philanthropies likes to talk about innovation, but, ultimately, they don’t take real risks. If they really want to build a shared society, we encourage them to broach the difficult subjects of identity and deep learning of narratives, all the “dangerous” questions. [Federations] are afraid to look in the mirror, to really know the other people who live here. They are willing to dabble, but only as long as they control the narrative, and that is complicated.”

NGO director

co-director said that philanthropy “tries to craft our language for us in a way that will be easier to ‘sell’ to their home communities. That is unpleasant and ineffective.” Similarly, another organization director criticized philanthropy for “dividing between shared society in Israel and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. This division is unrealistic and harmful.” But a third director noted that making that division may be necessary for funders, in particular, Federations, to meet the American Jewish public’s understanding of Israel and Jewish–Arab relations. This director added that broaching the conversation about Arab–Palestinian identity requires American Jewish communities to do “a lot of soul searching.”

4. Funding is insufficient and insufficiently coordinated

The vast majority of organizations interviewed said that funding for shared society work is too small in scale; for systemic change, they stated, systemic investment is needed. Additionally, while funders have become more strategic in their individual giving strategy, investment strategies are often driven by trends (for example, women’s empowerment was fashionable for several years, followed by integration in high-tech) rather than on accurate needs assessments.

“There are many small investments in the field. The problem is with big money.”

NGO director

Within these parameters, certain types of organizations, such as organizations promoting collective equality (as discussed above), Arab culture, or human rights, are rarely if ever fashionable and struggle to secure funding. Furthermore, while funders say that partnerships between field organizations are important to them, they are not seen to provide the necessary support to enable or encourage such partnerships. This results in many islands of separate funding. Finally, the need to reapply for funding every funding cycle (usually annually) limits the organizations’ abilities to plan strategically.

5. Encounter and dialogue programs should continue to be funded but with a critical eye

A range of voices emerged from interviews about the merit of encounter and dialogue programs, which dominated shared society work in the 1990s. Such programs remain common in the field but with updated contents and structures (see Chapter 3 for details).

Some organizations criticized philanthropy for overly supporting encounter programs. They say encounters are easy for funders to back, but their buoyant image can obscure their limited impact on participants. They said the question is not whether to support encounters but what type of encounters to support, warning against one-time or short-term encounter activities, which “can cause serious harm,” encounters that are not based on common interests, or encounters that fail to address core

“What we need is ‘old innovation’: In the ‘80s Jews would still enter Arab villages to fix their cars. That is a pathetic encounter, but even that doesn’t happen today. The innovation we need today is a return to the source, to people-to-people. But the encounter must be real, planned, structured. It should deepen our knowledge of the other but also heal our wounds.”

NGO director

issues between Jews and Arabs. “We understood more and more that Jewish–Arab partnership cannot exist without content,” said the co-director of a joint Jewish–Arab NGO. According to the current mapping, most organizations seem to have internalized these insights and have moved on from the 1990s’ models to more substantial, long-term, and interest-based encounters.

Many organizations agreed that unilateral work within Jewish and Arab communities is an important prerequisite for effective dialogue. One director reported that, after the May 2021 events, “our understanding grew that we must continue unilateral work while simultaneously strengthening encounters between the two sides rooted in genuine, open, facilitated dialogue.” Some emphasized the need for unilateral work within sub-communities in Jewish and Arab societies respectively; one Arab co-director of a jointly-led NGO underscored that these should be “deep, thorough processes.”



Infographics – Field Organizations’ Methodologies, Geographic Focuses, Target Audiences, and Evaluation

Table 1 summarizes the data collected from the 31 organizations mapped. It includes the main methodologies used,²⁶ target audiences, geographic focuses,²⁷ and the type of program evaluation conducted (if any). As described in Chapter 1, the 31 organizations were carefully selected to reflect, as comprehensively as possible, the full spectrum of the field of shared society building in Israel.

26 In a field rich with methodologies, there are dozens of different names for sometimes similar or overlapping methodologies and target audiences. While there is much value in the nuances each organization uses, we refined and grouped this information for the purpose of organizing and visualizing the data.

27 Geographic focuses include a “statewide” focus, indicating that the organization’s work physically takes place across the state, and a “meta” focus, indicating that the organization’s work is not necessarily on the ground but has national impact (e.g., policy change and capacity building).

Table 1: Overview of mapped civil society organizations in shared society building

Summary Table - Organizations Mapped

Organization	Main Methodologies	Target Audience	Geographic Focuses	Evaluation
Abraham Initiatives				
aChord				
AJEEC				
Another Way				
Beit Hagefen				
CET				
Co-Impact				
Givat Haviva				
Hagar				
Hand in Hand				
Hartman Institute				
itworks				
Itach-Ma'aki				
Kav Mashve				
Living Together				

Main Methodologies

- Policy and advocacy work** (including consulting organizations, developing shared spaces, work on human rights)
- Use of art, culture, and sports**
- Campaigns and work with media**
- Dialogue and encounters** (including in formal and informal education, tourism, higher education)
- Research, development of materials** (curriculum, think tanks)
- Employment integration** (including microgrants)
- Training and capacity building** (mentoring, language instruction, professional development)
- Community building and coalition building** (including conferences)
- Leadership development** (including in local authorities, with government professionals, in gap years)

Target Audience

- Professionals and communities leaders
- Education system (teachers, principals)
- General public (including parents and community)
- Youth and students
- Women

Geographic Focuses

- Meta work on policies, advocacy, research
- Jewish localities
- Arab localities
- Mixed cities
- Statewide
- South
- North
- Center

Evaluation

- IN** Internal
- EX** External
- B** Both
- N** None

Mabat				
Madrasa				
Mahapach-Taghir				
Merchavim				
Neve Shalom				
PeacePlayers				
Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue				
Sadaka Reut				
Shared Paths				
Shatil				
Sikkuy-Aufoq				
Standing Together				
The Alliance				
The Arab Hebrew Theater of Jaffa				
The Umm el Fahem Art Gallery				
Tsofen				
Van Leer Institute				

Main Methodologies

- Policy and advocacy work** (including consulting organizations, developing shared spaces, work on human rights)
- Use of art, culture, and sports**
- Campaigns and work with media**
- Dialogue and encounters** (including in formal and informal education, tourism, higher education)
- Research, development of materials** (curriculum, think tanks)
- Employment integration** (including microgrants)
- Training and capacity building** (mentoring, language instruction, professional development)
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Target Audience

- Professionals and communities leaders
- Education system (teachers, principals)
- General public (including parents and community)
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Geographic Focuses

- Meta work on policies, advocacy, research
- Jewish localities
- Arab localities
- Mixed cities
- Statewide
- South
- North
- Center

Evaluation

- IN** Internal
- EX** External
- B** Both
- N** None

The following illustrations quantitatively demonstrate the organizations' main methodologies, geographic focuses, target audiences, and evaluation methods. An organization may be represented more than once, based on the information provided.

Illustration 1: Main Methodologies



Illustration 2: Geographic Focuses

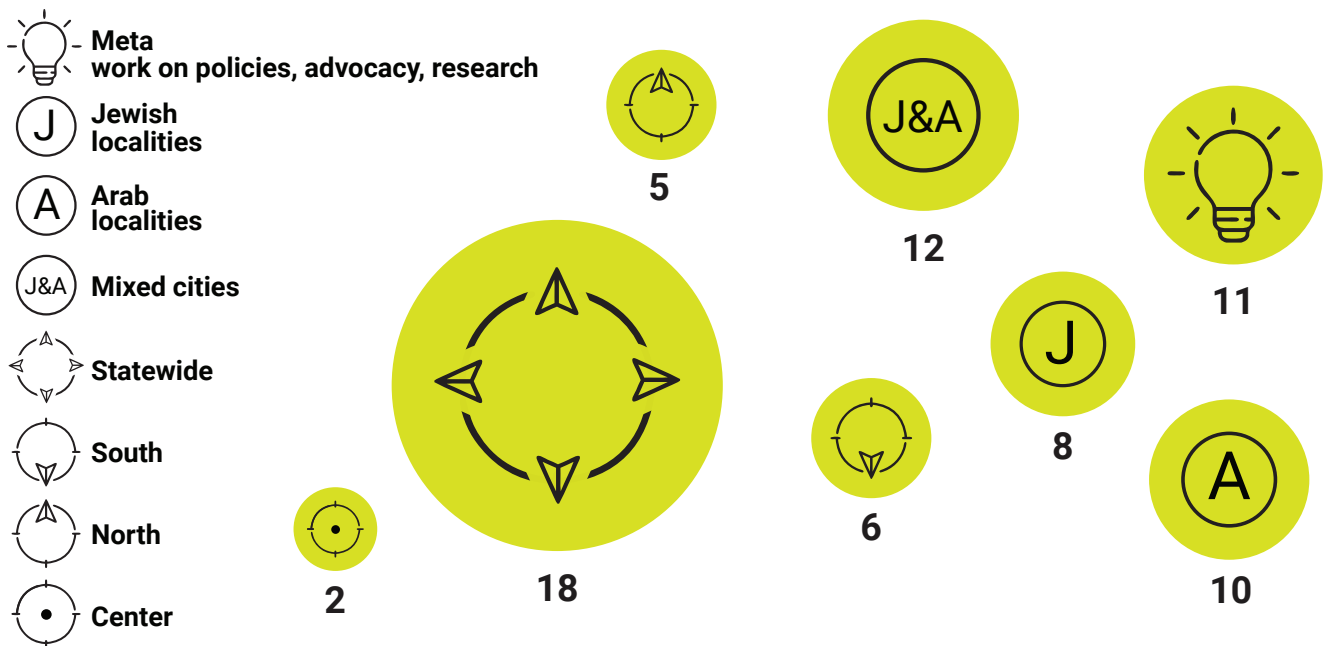
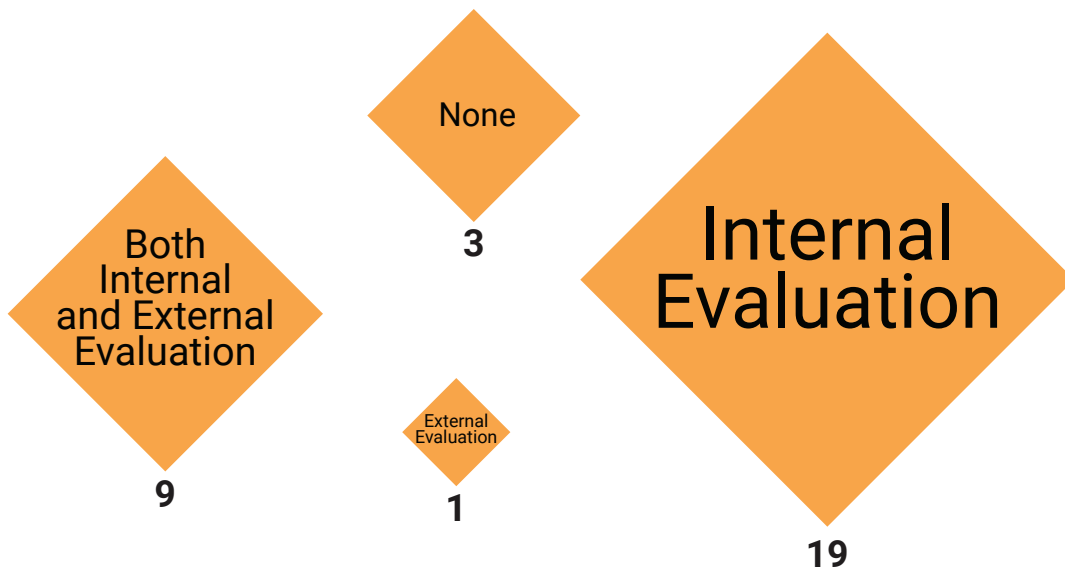


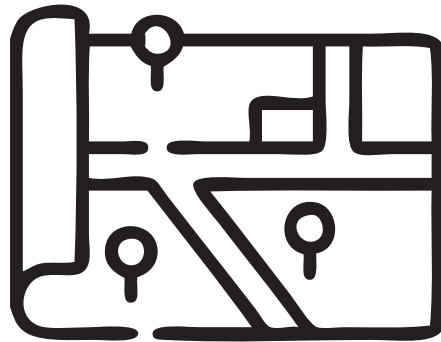
Illustration 3: Target Audience



Illustration 4: Evaluation



3



In-Depth Mapping: Federations and Foundations

- A** Rationale
- B** Motivations for Involvement in Shared Society Building
- C** How Has the Field Evolved?
- D** Funders' Main Challenges
- E** Opportunities for Future Investment



Rationale

As previously mentioned, civil society organizations in Israel depend largely on philanthropic support. Philanthropy, specifically, Jewish philanthropy, has played a crucial role not only as the major source of funding but also as a supportive network of professionals, institutions, and, at times, close partners to the NGOs involved. Many funders view themselves as active participants in shared society building and have accumulated significant knowledge, insights, and experience over their years of support. A comprehensive mapping of the field must, therefore, include its funders.

Interviews covered investment strategies in shared society and how they have changed over time, concerns and thoughts following the May 2021 events, areas of special interest, and areas of controversy. Notably, this research includes both philanthropic foundations that mostly determine their funding strategy independently and Jewish Federations, communal organizations that represent and are accountable to their home communities. The makeup and interests of those communities and the major funders within them inform the Federations' work in Israel. In fact, the interplay between the Federations' investments in shared society work and the engagement of their home communities emerged as a central theme in the interviews.

Given funders' dual role as both objects of the mapping and its target audience, interviewees were asked what they view as the purpose of this report and in what ways it may be useful to foundations and Federations. Some of their responses are shared here to help shape the mapping's findings.

"Our top priority is to ensure that staff, lay leaders, and donors are knowledgeable about shared society, what it is, how we support it, and why we support it. We therefore use research from institutes and work with partners and speakers to understand current and future priorities in Israel."

Federation representative

We need to answer the question: Why should Americans care about this? I believe there are three reasons. First, it relates to issues in the US, [namely,] Israel is a tool for engagement on domestic issues. Second, young Jewish Americans are struggling with issues of minority/majority, and they're not connected to Israel in the same way their parents were. Third, there is still a lot we need to understand, for example, Arab identity and collective ownership."

Foundation representative

"The problems of the field are highly complex and cannot be boiled down to simple solutions. We need partnership to affect change. I don't think the field can see itself; it's too fragmented... This mapping is an important step in that direction, to see itself, to see all of the work and activities, and where the gaps are."

Foundation representative

"The main product of our shared society work [and of this report] has always been educating our own community. Shared society is the means not the end. For our community this is important for tikkun olam, our own moral standing, fighting the BDS arguments."

Federation representative

Methodological Notes:

(1) Interviews were held with funders representing the non-governmental landscape of the Jewish Federations of North America and foundations that support shared society work, as outlined in Chapter 1. Many of the funders mapped for this report invest in a variety of areas outside of shared society. In such cases, interviews focused only on the work directly relevant to shared society.

(2) This mapping excludes government investment by international actors, which should, nonetheless, be mentioned. There is significant funding from the European Union, the US government, and individual European countries. Of import now is the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA), administered by USAID, which will initially inject \$15 million into internal and cross-border civil society initiatives in Israel and the Palestinian Territories over the next five years.



Motivations for Involvement in Shared Society Building

Beneath questions of what type of work to support or how to educate home communities about the complexities of shared society building lies another one: why should Jewish donors—and Federations in particular—invest in shared society building in Israel given the multitude of competing global and domestic needs? In 2008, Prof. Oded Haklai explored why North American philanthropies support Arab society in Israel.²⁸ While funding for shared society work has evolved significantly since 2008, Haklai's findings capture many of the motivations expressed by funders for supporting shared society work:

Donors do not view the interests of the Jewish state and the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel (PAI) in zero-sum terms. Having internalized liberal values of minority rights and pluralism in their countries of residence (mainly the United States), donating foundations believe that the development of the PAI is both normatively desirable and strengthens Israel as a whole, because it facilitates the minority's integration into Israel's society and bolsters its civic culture, and therefore, it also contributes to the country's security.²⁹

By far the main motivation that emerged from Federations is that shared society building is, for them, **more an engagement tool than an end in and of itself**. Many said they see shared society work as a powerful Israel-related issue around which to engage the younger generation within their communities, particularly when it is framed as promoting equity. Since Israel engagement of the younger generation is one of the highest priorities for Jewish communities today, some Federations see shared society as critical to their internal agenda, particularly in more progressive communities. Interviewees spoke about internal discussions and thinking about how best to use their shared society work toward this end. As one federation representative detailed:

This work is critical because Jewish American leadership is at a loss about what to do with the younger generation's alienation and their identity crisis. This is the main agenda and discourse within Jewish American society and was further strengthened after the Black Lives Matter movement. The younger generation can't understand why things are being looked at so differently whenever Israel is concerned. It also connects to the internal discourse about representation of the heterogeneous nature of Jewish communities in their leading institutions. This diversity, for example, Black Jews, is very present in the community but not represented in the institutions, which creates further alienation.

Other federation representatives said that Federations should exercise caution in their approach to shared society work. With many diverse opinions within their communities, some federation members may view shared society as a controversial subject. However, these members may decide to support shared society work if it is presented through the lens of guaranteeing prosperity, continued stability, and security for all Israelis.

²⁸ While Haklai did not focus specifically on shared society, his findings touch on several of the themes that emerged from the mapping.

²⁹ Haklai, *Helping the Enemy*, 2008.

Overall, it appeared from the interviews that today shared society is far less controversial among Federations' home communities than in the past. One representative described that, in the past, Federation staff had to explain to the community "why shared society was a Jewish issue" but that now there is widespread acceptance, even pride, in the federation's investments:

[Shared society building] is seen as something that strong, resilient Jewish communities should be able to address without worrying that it comes at the expense of Jewish peoplehood or addressing antisemitism.

While some of the following motivations can also be perceived as tools for internal engagement, they were also named as a driver of the foundations' and Federations' shared society work:

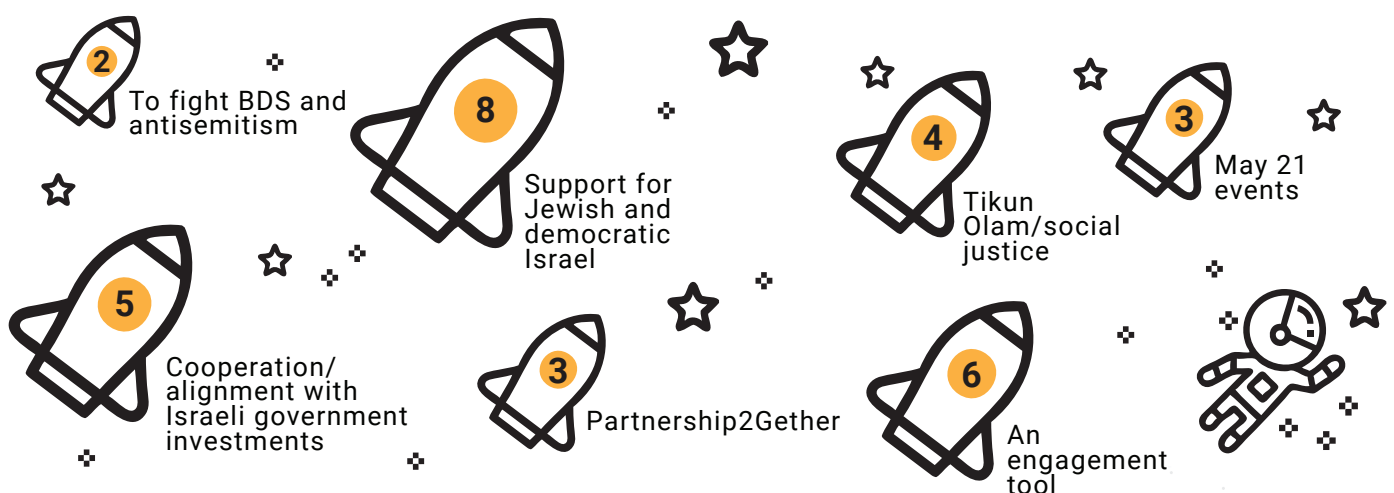
- **Support for Israel as a Jewish and democratic state**, including ensuring its security, social cohesion, and solidarity as important building blocks for a secure Jewish democracy.
- **The Jewish value of Tikkun Olam** and promoting values of social justice and human rights.
- **Arab citizens reside in the Federation's Partnership2Gether (P2G) Region³⁰** and therefore should be part of their work in that area.
- **Cooperation and alignment with the Israeli government's investments:** several funders said that matching state funding or connecting with national development agendas by identifying and filling funding gaps is an important driver of their investment.

"Today, there are lay leaders who feel strongly about advancing the equality of Arabs in Israel and therefore support shared society work; other lay leaders feel strongly about shared society as a national priority on which the country's ability to fulfill its full potential hinges."

Federation representative

Several interviewees noted American Jewish funders' awareness that they "cannot change everything" nor is it their role to dictate what happens to Israeli society. In answer to the question of what roles philanthropy can therefore play in shared society building, some said that philanthropy's role is to build the field by generating and testing new ideas. Several spoke of becoming bolder in their grantmaking by funding novel and innovative initiatives with potential for systemic change. Below is an illustration of the major motivations voiced by the funders interviewed (a funder may appear more than once depending on the information provided).

Illustration 5: Funders' Motivations for Involvement in Shared Society Building



³⁰ See [the Partnership2Gether website](https://www.partnership2gether.org/).



How Has the Field Evolved?

Funders were asked how they see the evolution of the field of shared society over time, and the following themes emerged.

1. Maturing and mainstreaming of support for shared society

Representatives of foundations and Federations agreed that the field has matured and professionalized in terms of reach, sophistication, cooperation, and dialogue between organizations, and, as a result, impact. They are aware that the field has also grown, comprising more organizations and funders, and spanning more spheres of life in Israel, including the first Jewish–Arab coalition in the Knesset. “What was a marginal issue is now in the center. In 1989 the idea of working with the Arab community was shocking [to American Jewish funders], and today it is a natural idea,” explained a representative of an American Jewish foundation. Early research conducted by the IATF that addressed the question of Jewish donors’ attitudes toward supporting the Arab Community found that:

[Jewish donors’] loyalties are primarily toward Israel as a Jewish state, which creates some tension over direct support for Israeli Arab communities, stemming from a concern that supporting Israeli Arabs will undercut the needs or interest of Jews in Israel. Moreover, in a country characterized by many inequalities...some donors wonder if Israeli Arabs, a group about whom some are uninformed and whose loyalty to Israel is sometimes questioned, are the best place for investment.³¹

Philanthropy, in turn, has become more strategic in its approach to Arab society and shared society funding. Foundation and federation representatives reported having learned about the complexity of the field over the years and developing greater ease with it. Consequently, they have started supporting more diverse spheres and, at times, longer-term programs and processes and have come to view their grantees as long-term partners.

2. Exercising caution and modesty

Several foundations and Federations noted that funders must approach shared society work with caution and modesty. They recognized the importance of understanding the extent and the limitations of what civil society and philanthropy can do within a complex reality of national conflict, structural separation, and discrimination. Interviewees had insights such as: “as a funder, I can affect small pieces but not much more” and “shared society done wrong can do more than simply not succeed—it might cause harm.” A foundation representative spoke of the need to keep in mind the inherent limitations of working on education for shared society within separate education systems. Under these delicate conditions, funders showed awareness of the need to keep a close eye on their investments, to continue learning and understanding, and to identify the best places for philanthropic investment to ensure positive impact and prevent negative consequences.

Funders were asked for data regarding several aspects of their work which were quantified to illustrate certain characteristics of the field. The following illustrations show the spheres of shared society investment and the duration of investment in the field. (A funder may be represented more than once.)

31 IATF, *Expanding Philanthropy*, 2007.

Illustration 6: Spheres of Shared Society Investment

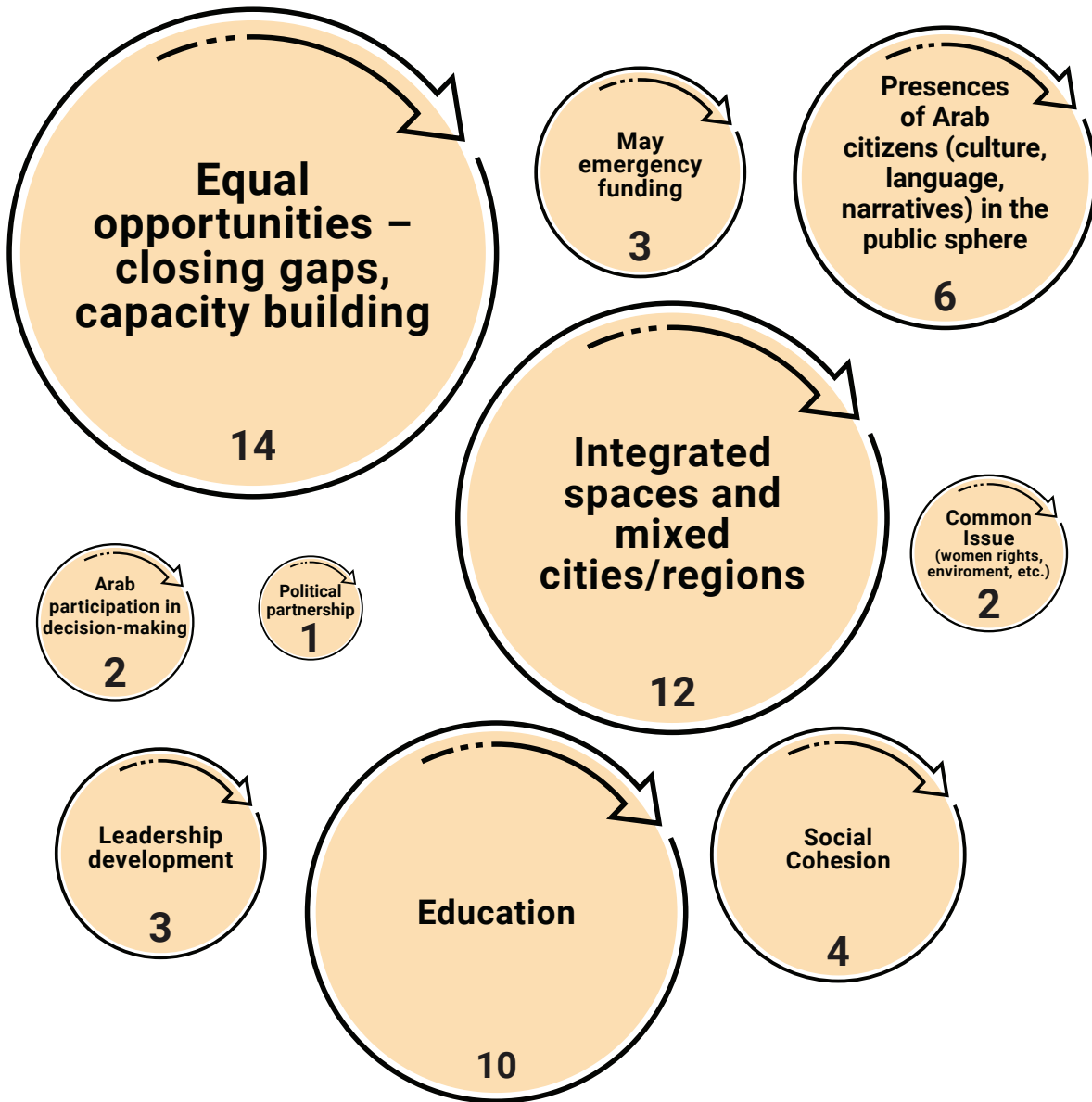


Illustration 7: Duration of Investment in Shared Society (based on answers provided)

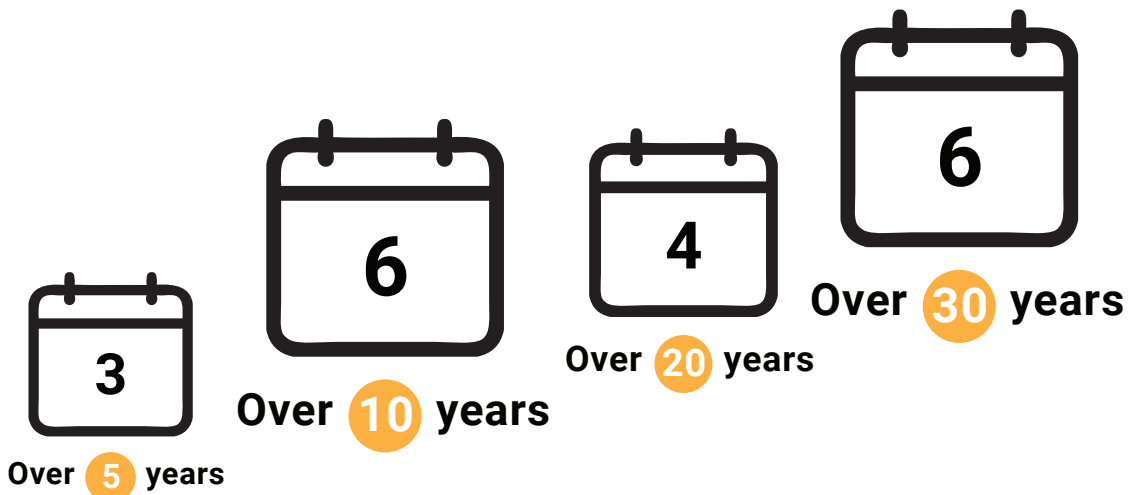
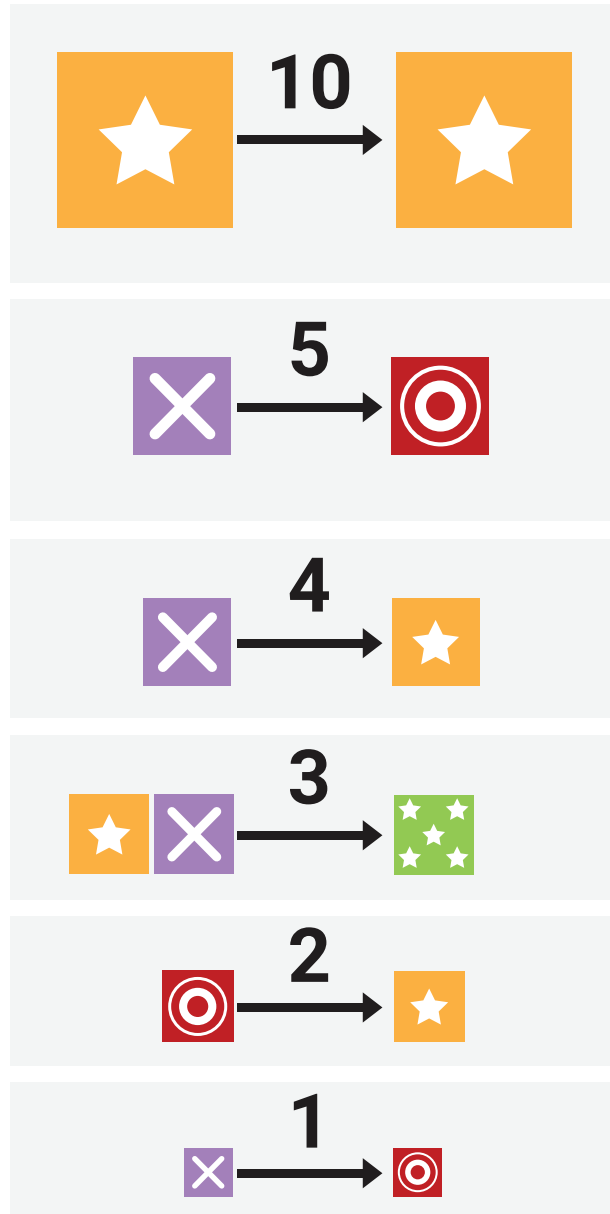


Illustration 8: Development of Shared Society Investment

The following illustration depicts how shared society investment has **developed over time** according to the funders' understanding of their investments. Each of the 25 funders interviewed was asked to what extent their investment in shared society building was or is: incidental, namely, **sporadic** or part of other agendas; **intentional**, namely, aimed to advance shared society within various other funding areas; **priority**, namely, clearly placed on the foundation's or the federation's agenda; or **enhanced priority**, namely, moved up from being one of numerous priorities to one of several top priorities.





Funders' Main Challenges

The mapping sought to learn how funders describe the main challenges concerning their investment in shared society building in terms of their relations with both the field and their home communities. They were also asked about the major insights gained from their investment in shared society in terms of both impact on the ground and relationships with grantees and their own community's engagement, internal agendas, and education. The following themes emerged from the interviews (not listed in order of importance).

Challenges Concerning the Field

1. Engaging directly with Arab civil society

One challenge raised was the difficulty for some American Jewish philanthropists to fund Arab-led organizations. While Jewish foundations and Federations have been funding shared society work through Jewish-led or jointly-led organizations and this remains the norm, the mapping showed that more funding has been directed to Arab-led NGOs in recent years. However, this is still relatively rare, and funders agreed that there is still much work to be done to bring Arab-led organizations to the table.

Some claimed that this was because Arab civil society organizations are usually smaller, weaker, and more local, lack managerial, language, and organizational capacities, and require more hands-on support. This creates managerial challenges for the foundations supporting them, as not all funders can closely follow and manage grantees' activities. Only a few funders see it as their role to fund capacity building in Arab-led NGOs with the stated purpose of making them stronger players in the field. Others acknowledged that their own constituencies feel more comfortable working with well-known partners with institutional repute.³²

2. Holding the center and engaging unusual suspects

For Jewish Federations specifically, shared society support is often implemented through their P2G regions³³—whether in Jewish localities or regions with neighboring Arab communities or in mixed cities or regional councils. In this context, interviewees mentioned challenges relating to widening the scope of their partnership activities to include Arab participants and communities without alienating the Jewish communities they have been working with for, sometimes, decades. Other interviewees spoke about the dilemma of widening the scope of existing interventions and services they fund (for example, in informal education or early childhood services) to include Arab participants.

Funders mentioned the challenge of engaging unusual suspects, namely, less liberal, more marginal communities within Jewish and Arab societies, in shared society building. One federation representative noted that there is much ignorance of Arab society within Jewish society and that American Jews can, as outsiders, play a unique role in persuading Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel “that they are more similar than they think.” On the other hand, another representative cautioned the field to “hold the center; don't go too much to the left or to the right,” while another stated “we have become more selective in who we work with” in an attempt to ensure that the vision of potential grantees is sufficiently aligned with the federation's vision and to avoid promoting players and ideologies with whom the home community does not identify.

³² It should be noted that a number of strong Arab-led civil society organizations (Adalah, the Galilee Society, the Arab Center for Alternative Planning), do not focus on shared society building.

³³ See footnote 30.

3. Defining effectiveness and measuring impact

Funders are placing stronger emphasis on measuring the effectiveness and impact of the work they support while struggling with uncertainties about how best to measure impact given that shared society building involves long and complex processes. For example, one representative of a federation that supports projects benefiting young children shared that lay leaders question the long-term impact of programs which only continue up to sixth grade and in which grantees do not measure or report the long-term outcomes.

Some funders, like field organizations, mentioned the importance of measuring the effectiveness of encounters and echoed the sentiment about the importance of substantive meetings. As one foundation representative said:

A meeting around a particular theme is the most significant aspect of encounters....Eating together or traveling together does not move us forward. The group must cooperate around a shared interest.

One federation representative explained the dilemma of evaluating encounters:

We are trying to define success, but how? Is it that everyone leaves the encounter happy? We know that we need people to leave with some level of frustration, but what is the right level?

Several representatives expressed the belief that the only way to create real impact is to fund organizations long term; one representative even specified that a unique ability of philanthropy is to “focus on a problem until it is solved.” This appears to be a relatively new trend for philanthropy based on insights gained over the years on the limitations of short-term support.

“[Shared society work] demands many years of activity before it bears fruit. We believe in our organizations and provide core support for long periods of time.”
Foundation representative

4. As shared society building work bears fruit, new challenges arise

Some funders noted new challenges that have emerged as a result of developments in shared society building including those influenced by external forces, such as government investment. For example, while in the past philanthropy supported access to higher education, today there is substantial governmental support for this and there are significantly more Arab students at Israeli universities and colleges. Some funders are now focusing on questions related to the next steps in this process. One representative explained how their foundation views the new challenge:

Today there are more Arab students on campus but not enough Arab faculty. Arab students lack role models. There are no Arabs in the [university] administration, not enough Arab faculty, no signage in Arabic. Arab students sense that they are attending someone else’s institution—the Jewish students’— and feel estranged and like they don’t belong.

Internal Challenges: Educating and Engaging the Home Community and Donors

Some interviewees stressed that the American Jewish communities they represent struggle to understand the nuances of Israeli reality and how Israeli majority–minority relations and other social issues differ from the American context. One foundation representative explained that this sometimes leads philanthropy to quickly assume a position without taking the time to learn the specific complexities. This insufficient understanding may, according to one federation representative, cause some federation leaders to have unrealistic expectations of the impact of their grantmaking and leave them disappointed and disillusioned.

The mapping shows that educating the home community and leadership is an important step for Federations in funding shared society work: “as long as the home community is not highly engaged with Israel work, there is less incentive for the federation to fund it.” Most of the Federations interviewed agreed that educational initiatives for their donors have generated funding for shared society. They also stressed the importance of strong relationships on the ground and the importance of their relationships with partner NGOs and P2G communities and experts.³⁴

“Relationships on the ground have always been crucial—especially boots on the ground to help to identify needs and priorities within the space and maintain engagement.”

Federation representative

We are concerned with the different way [the identity issue] is interpreted in the US and in Israel. For example, the term “collective identity” sounds [here in the US] like something to aspire to, but we have to understand what this means to Israeli ears, because we support the notion of a Jewish and democratic Israel. We have to explain to our leadership [in the US] why making direct parallels between the US and Israel is a grave mistake.

Funders agreed that there is more to be done. Some suggested creating theoretical frameworks for shared society that will help American Jews understand the situation on the ground, the needs, and possible solutions. Others suggested creating an “interest group” or “network” of like-minded Federations interested in promoting shared society, which could then act as a resource to Federations that are new to the field.

³⁴ Specific initiatives and resources cited by interviewees as effective in connecting home communities to the field and educating them include the Israeli Forum of Foundation’s Shared Society Interest Committee and the IATF.



Opportunities for Future Investment

Finally, funders were asked what opportunities they see for the field as a whole, for their internal agendas and community engagement, and for particular areas of investment. The following themes emerged from the interviews (not listed in order of importance).

1. View challenging issues, including identity, as an engagement opportunity

Some interviewees believe that rather than looking at the most challenging issues of shared society, such as collective equality and Arab-Palestinian identity, as too complex to touch, Federations can use them as an opportunity for internal communal work, engaging the next generation, and addressing elephants in the room: “the more we ignore these issues, the more we become part of the problem.” One federation representative explained how the federation’s strategy is being shaped in light of insights on the roots of the May 2021 events:

From the Jewish side [May 2021] was a counter-reaction to the changing rules of the game because Jews don’t understand or accept Arab identity as part of “their Israel”; from the Arab side, [it was] a backlash by those who have been left behind...who are trying to move ahead and are running into a brick wall. We believe the solution is to bring the Israeli–Palestinian conflict closer to the Israeli discourse, to mobilize American Jewish money to work on the [discourse] within the Jewish side in Israel, and to create a different Jewish discourse about Arabs.

2. Bring more Arabs to the table and build capacity of Arab civil society

Several funders spoke of their growing understanding of the importance of integrating Arab colleagues and professionals in their decision-making processes. A representative of a foundation said: “We understood that we also need to have Arab voices around our table.” An additional insight discussed was the need to invest in capacity building in the whole field of shared society and within Arab-led civil society with the purpose of strengthening the Arab community.

“As far as we are concerned, empowering Arab society and promoting its equality is a precondition for shared society.”
Foundation representative

3. Expand shared life education and link it with education for democracy

Several representatives stressed the need to build educational programs for the entire formal education system. Others expressed the belief that education for a more equal society should happen in shared spaces and under shared leadership and should address both the individual and collective needs of students and communities. Finally, several foundation representatives warned that shared

society education, while important, should not replace education for democracy: “[Considering] recent blows to democracy in Israel and the US, investing in education for democracy might prove to be the best way to ensure a shared society.”

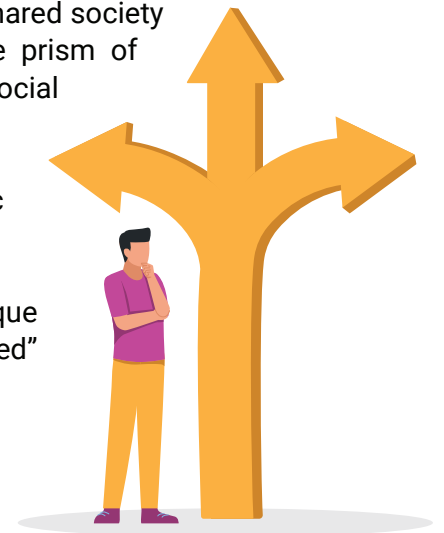
“I’ve come to understand that without systematic work in the education system, things won’t change. We need to raise a new generation educated on democratic values. Destructive processes have taken place within the education system over the last 20 years, which is why we need to strengthen civic education, find partners, and establish institutions to take responsibility for developing the field. Education for shared life—a positive trend that has emerged in recent years—is good, but we can’t let it replace education for democracy.”

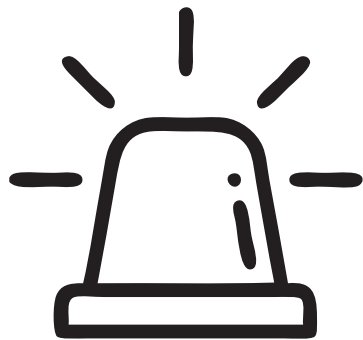
Foundation representative

4. Consider different frameworks: social cohesion, multiculturalism, shared citizenship

Some funders echoed a number of field organizations who believe that shared society building between Jews and Arabs should be approached through the prism of promoting multiculturalism, social cohesion, and shared citizenship. Social cohesion was described by interviewees as a vision for a shared future for all of Israel’s citizens, encompassing a democratic culture that safeguards minority rights, trust between communities, and a shared civic vision based on fairness and mutual belonging.

Other funders disagreed, stressing the importance of maintaining a unique sphere of Jewish–Arab shared society building which should “not be diluted” by additional rifts in Israeli society.





The Impact of the May 2021 Events on Shared Society Work

- A** Overview of Events
- B** The Field's Understanding of the May 2021 Events
- C** Immediate Reactions
- D** Observations and Insights
- E** Funders' Responses
- F** Funders' Observations and Insights

This chapter aims to highlight civil society’s understanding of and response to the violent clashes that took place in Israel, specifically in several mixed cities and areas, between Jewish and Arab citizens in May 2021. Most organizations and funders interviewed agree that these events presented the field with significant challenges and forced a certain degree of reckoning. They also generated concern and discussions among American Jewish funders and, as mentioned above, were the impetus for this report. This chapter spotlights the field’s immediate reactions and longer-term insights on the implications and ramifications of the May events for the future of shared society work.

Overview of Events

To provide some context, below is a short description of the events that took place between May 9 and 18, 2021, leading up to and during Israel’s conflict with Hamas in Gaza.³⁵

The May Events were a series of violent altercations, acts of vandalism, and clashes between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel and between them and police forces that took place mostly in Israel’s mixed cities within the context of Israeli-Palestinian security tensions. Clashes in Jerusalem between Palestinian residents and the Israeli police that had grown over previous weeks led to dramatic escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Operation “Guardian of the Walls”) and, in parallel, widespread violent riots by Arab and Jewish citizens in mixed cities and neighborhoods, which spiraled into some of the worst inter-ethnic violence between Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel’s history. By the morning of Thursday, May 13, three Jewish citizens and two Arab citizens were killed, and scores injured in both communities, and IDF battalions and border police had been sent to Lod, Ramle, Jisr A Zarka, Umm el Fahem, and Akko.

The Field’s Understanding of the May Events

Shared society players agree that to understand the May events, there is a need to consider structural and societal causes that have led experts to state “a perfect storm has long been brewing.”³⁶ Longer-term causes include, for example, the lack of suitable infrastructure and mismanagement in mixed cities, the weakness of Arab communities, unequal allocation of resources, and:

two kinds of “imported populations”: The first are families of “collaborators,” Palestinians originally from the West Bank, who have collaborated with Israeli intelligence... resettled within Israel proper and shunned by the Arab minority. The second are “Garinim Toranim” – Jewish, ideologically based groups who seek to strengthen the local Jewish community.³⁷

Interviewees also referred to the adverse effect of the Garinim Toranim in mixed cities and neighborhoods and the support they seem to receive from national and local government, which is anathema to Arab residents.³⁸ Additional deep-rooted causes identified include the political impasse, socioeconomic gaps that push young Arab men, in particular, to the margins,³⁹ the close interplay between the larger Israeli–Palestinian conflict and Jewish–Arab relations inside Israel, and inflammatory political discourse against the Arab population (all discussed in Chapters 2 and 3).

³⁵ Based on: IATF, Arab Communities and Arab-Jewish Relations, 2021.

³⁶ Haddad Haj-Yahya, Why Are Israel’s Mixed Cities, 2021.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ See, for example, IATF, Arab Communities and Arab-Jewish Relations, 2021; Michael, The Garin Torani Threat, 2021; Boxerman, In Lod Unrest, 2021.

³⁹ Haddad Haj-Hayha and Shaviv, NEET Young Adults, 2021.

Given these conditions, many organizations and funders said that despite their initial shock at the events (some used words like “shell shock,” “heartbreak,” “deep sadness” and expressed a sense that, “our efforts went down the drain”), they were not entirely surprised. Most people interviewed said that these events were the very scenarios they have warned of for years and that preempting such events is exactly why they work to build a more equal, partnership-based society between Jews and Arabs in Israel and in mixed cities in particular. In fact, several interviewees stated that the bigger question was why this had not happened sooner or more often.

“One of the differences [between May 2021 and previous tensions] has been the deep involvement of the Gari’nim Toranim in mixed cities and neighborhoods. Their involvement is one of the things that led to the severe outburst this time around.”

Arab NGO co-director

Immediate Reactions

The May 2021 events prompted immediate reactions among shared society organizations, both internally among staff and program beneficiaries and externally in terms of public and programmatic responses.

1. Internal responses

Most organizations interviewed described immediate responses of shock, anger, mistrust, and tension between Jewish and Arab staff members and program participants. “It created a big rupture between our Jewish and Arab staff,” said an NGO director. Many reported that the initial shock subsided within a couple of days and turned into a dedicated and concerted whirlwind of action. Organizations realized how severe the situation was and how critically they needed to use the tools at their disposal—knowledge, networks, and political and social credit—to mobilize their audiences and calm tensions. Internal discussions were held for staff to process the events, with a number of organizations noting that the events strengthened the bonds within their Jewish–Arab team.

2. Programmatic responses

Even while they were processing the events internally, many organizations felt the need to take immediate programmatic action to impact both discourse and reality. Examples of responses by some of the organizations interviewed for this report include the following.



Development of materials and tools for the field

Several organizations immediately moved to develop services and tools for the field intended to address the rupture described above and avoid the long-term damage they had seen in October 2000. These tools were offered to stakeholders in mixed cities, local authorities, the Ministry of Education, academic campuses, employers, and more.

Examples

- **A New Way** provided consultation to the Bat Yam municipality.
- **Living Together** created a manual for managing and overcoming crisis in diverse organizations and offered consultation services.
- **Itach Ma’aki** provided legal consultation to vulnerable women whose rights were violated in the context of the rioting and wrote a letter to the UN signed by 200 Israeli and Palestinian women from Israel and beyond the Green Line, urging action toward a negotiated resolution to the conflict.

- **CET** and the Abraham Initiatives developed materials for schools on crisis management.
- **Merchavim** developed an emergency workshop for teachers' lounges.
- **aChord** and the Abraham Initiatives developed guides for crisis management on campus, in the workplace, and in mixed cities.⁴⁰



Organization and participation in demonstrations and public gatherings

Several organizations interviewed joined or organized public demonstrations and gatherings in support of shared life.

Examples

- **Hagar** and **AJEEC** organized a conference for their activists in the Negev.
- **The Arab-Hebrew Theater of Jaffa** held an open discussion for its actors and community members.
- **Standing Together** called publicly for an end to the war with Gaza and a stop to violence between Jews and Arabs within Israel and mobilized its constituencies to hold local demonstrations across the country. Approximately 15,000 Jewish and Arab citizens heeded this call and participated in demonstrations.⁴¹
- **Hand in Hand** mobilized their network of bilingual schools and communities and held a moderated mass Zoom call "to calm spirits."
- In addition, thousands of unaffiliated Jewish and Arab citizens took it upon themselves to join and even organize protests: on May 22, thousands of Jews and Arabs marched in Tel Aviv demanding coexistence and Israeli–Palestinian peace; and on May 23, Jewish and Arab citizens "interested in peaceful shared living, with equality and security here in our home" began walking together from Akko, reaching various mixed cities and areas over several days.⁴²



Public campaigns

Several organizations used traditional and social media to counter the violence and promote messages of partnership.

Examples

- **The Abraham Initiatives** launched a campaign called "Only Together," showing images of Jews and Arabs working together, shopping together, fighting COVID-19 together, etc.⁴³
- Major employers in the business sector also launched a campaign broadcasted on multiple platforms called "Living Together, Making a Living Together," showing Jewish and Arab employees in these companies and calling to "end the violence."⁴⁴
- A rap video called "Let's Talk Dugri" (Arabic for "directly" or "to your face"), in which a Jewish and an Arab rapper tell each other about all existing prejudice while accepting "we have one country to share," went viral, creating online discussion forums.⁴⁵
- Health institutions published pictures of their mixed Jewish and Arab staff holding placards calling for partnership and condemning violence.
- Mainstream media channels also made conscious efforts to highlight these initiatives, with *Ha'aretz*, *Calcalist*, *Ynet*, and *TimeOut* (among others) dedicating special sections to grassroots shared life initiatives.⁴⁶



Mediation

Some organizations took on the role of mediators between Jewish and Arab constituents.

Examples

- **Co-Impact** wrote a letter to all the companies they work with regarding the High Follow-Up Committee's announcement of a general strike in the Arab community. The letter explained to employers why their Arab workers were striking in an attempt to prevent them from disciplining workers who chose to participate.

⁴⁰ For example, aChord, *How do you Say Escalation*, 2021; aChord, *Recommendations to Organizations*, 2021; The Abraham Initiatives, *Continuing Together*, 2021.

⁴¹ N12, *Refuse to be Enemies*, 2021.

⁴² Ynet, *The Silent Majority*, 2021.

⁴³ Watch the campaign video in [English](#) and in [Hebrew/Arabic](#).

⁴⁴ Walla! Finance, *Major Employers*, 2021.

⁴⁵ Watch the video with [English subtitles](#) and see the [accompanying Facebook group](#).

⁴⁶ Examples in Hebrew as reported in [Ha'aretz](#), [Calcalist](#), [TimeOut](#), and [Ynet](#).

- **Sikkuy-Aufoq** and **AJEEC** urged their network of contacts among local government and decision-makers to publicly call for partnership and decry violence.⁴⁷
- **Sadaka-Reut** organized learning tours for youth who had participated in its programs and were involved in the violence.



Temporary cessation of activities

Some organizations felt that the appropriate immediate response was to temporarily pause their activities.

Examples

- **Living Together** and **Sadaka-Reut** both operate Jewish–Arab student groups, and they halted meetings in response to requests from students and group leaders.



Dialogue with donors

A number of organizations interviewed reported that, even while violence was raging, they made an effort to convey the realities to their donors, recognizing how difficult it was to understand the situation from the outside.

Examples

- **Maoz** organized a webinar for its donors on the events in Lod, featuring two of its activist alumni, a Jewish and an Arab woman, who spoke about their partnership and the difficulties.⁴⁸
- A number of donors also mentioned the importance of real-time dialogue with their grantees, as discussed below.

3. Local authorities and business sector responses

The May events also led to an unprecedented scope and number of shared society initiatives in neighboring communities and by major players in the business sector. Shared society players saw this avalanche of civic activity as the direct result of years of efforts aimed at building infrastructure that could withstand crises. Some said these initiatives, many of which took place without the direct involvement of civil society, are proof that investment in shared society building pays off. Following are some examples of these initiatives.



Mayors of local authorities in shared regions issued statements calling for peace, non-violence, and shared society

The mayors of Rosh Ha'ayin and Oranit and Kafr Qassim, Jaljulia, and Kafr Bara (neighboring Jewish and Arab localities respectively) met and called on residents of their communities to avoid any form of physical or verbal violence or incitement. Likewise, Jewish and Arab mayors from the Wadi Ara area issued a joint request to stop the vicious cycle of violence. Thirteen mayors of Jewish and Arab towns in the Sharon Region wrote a letter to their residents titled: "An Emergency Call to Safeguard the Fabric of Shared Life":

In these turbulent times it is importance for us to send a clear message to you, our Jewish and Arab residents, to avoid any act of violence... It is important to maintain the freedom of protest and speech, and it is natural that in times of national conflict harsh things will be said. But it is also important to maintain boundaries and avoid hurting others.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Jabareen, Falah, Shibli, Rashed, and Masoudin, *In the Shadow*, 2021.

⁴⁸ [Watch the webinar](#) (Password: maoz2021).

⁴⁹ Ynet, *The Silent Majority*, 2021.



Public statements from the business sector

Major employers and associations, such as Bank Leumi, the Strauss Group, and the Israel Football Association, published statements against violence and in favor of shared living. Harel, one of Israel’s largest insurance companies, published billboards with the title: “The best insurance against violence is coexistence.” Several dozen companies signed a public call to political leaders and the public: “Halas, Dai [“enough” in Arabic and Hebrew]! We can mend the broken pieces and rebuild—this is our mission.”



Observations and Insights

Almost a year has passed between the May 2021 events and the interviews conducted in the framework of this research, thus giving the organizations interviewed time to consider whether and how the events should shape their long-term activities and strategies. Following are the themes, observations, and insights that emerged.

1. Strengthened resolve and rapid responses to violence

Nearly all of the organizations interviewed said that they were impacted in some way by the May 2021 events; for most of them, this was strengthened resolve and affirmation of the importance and need for their work. Veteran organizations in the field distinguished between the fallout from May 2021 and October 2000, asserting that because shared society infrastructure was stronger in 2021, the organizations themselves and the wider society could lean on lessons learned and networks built. This is certainly true regarding the organizations’ networks, the scope of activities, and partnerships with additional players; all of these were very rapidly and forcefully activated. According to interviewees, the fact that high-level players from local authorities, the health sector, the business sector, and the education system quickly organized and spoke out against violence and in support of shared living, “gives great credit to the field.” As a result, shared society responses were more immediate, widespread, and effective, and the negative fallout less dramatic. Some organizations cautiously said that the May events “may have done the field some good” as both a wake-up call and a catalyst for concerted action, new thinking, and renewed energies. Indeed, a number of organizations used the tools and experiences from the rapid responses to the May events to address the wave of terror attacks in March and April of 2022.⁵⁰

2. Internal changes

Several field organizations recognized that they must reexamine their activities, messages, and organizational structure. This process has brought about substantial changes for some such as: enabling Arab staff members to play a more significant role in decision-making, ensuring full Jewish–Arab numerical equality among the staff and the board of directors, reevaluating their shared society building strategies, and weaving shared society work throughout all of their programming.

⁵⁰ See New Israel Fund, *Deescalating Violence*, 2022, for examples of activities by the Abraham Initiatives, aChord, Sikkuy-Aufoq, Standing Together, Shatil, The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), Givat Haviva, and others.

3. Influencing public discourse

Some organizations learned from the events that their knowledge on shared society building must be expanded to include residents of mixed cities and neighborhoods and audiences outside of their traditional circles. They spoke of the need to create a critical mass that will shape public opinion supportive of a shared society. This includes, for example, reaching out to additional stakeholders (e.g., decision-makers, companies), enhancing placement of Arab professionals in the labor market, including more schools in dialogue activities, and widening shared society work to new focus areas. Organizations reported greater demand for their services in response to the negative realities and discourse of the May events.

“We [in the field] sometimes speak in jargon. If I were to bring the discourse we use to the cellphone repair shop under our office, they wouldn’t know what we’re talking about. It is our obligation as civil society to create a language that people on the street will understand.”

NGO director

4. Governmental receptivity and more requests for interventions

Some organizations reported that the May events led to the opening of new doors to shared society work at the national and local government levels as well as within the education system, which were all shaken by the violence. Interviewees have been seeing greater recognition by officials and decision-makers of the urgency—one NGO representative called it “desperation”—to identify solutions and prevent the next round of violence.⁵¹ Organizations mentioned more receptivity to shared society work by local government. At the national government level, in the past year, the Ministry for Development of the Negev and the Galilee received an additional NIS 50 million for developing mixed cities, the Ministry of Welfare held a number of events on this issue, and, as mentioned above, the Ministry of Education launched an initiative to promote shared life education.⁵²

“We sense a change among bureaucrats in local government in mixed cities. The feeling is that they understand more and are allocating resources for building shared society between all groups in their city.”

NGO director

“The May events strengthened our understanding that the future of the entire area between the [Jordan] river and the [Mediterranean] sea is one interlinked future. It is really one reality for which we should address and fund a resolution. This may involve creating a new paradigm.”

Jewish program director

5. Tackling difficult issues, deepening dialogue

For numerous interviewees, a major insight was the importance of deepening dialogue to tackle the difficult issues of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, Palestinian identity, and collective equality. Furthermore, they concluded that ownership of the agenda and content in those encounters should be shared equally between Jewish and Arab participants.

“The government’s attempt to push Arab-Palestinian identity into a corner and to condition Arab integration on the renunciation of their identity came back to us like a boomerang, and May’s events are only one example.”

Jewish program director

Organizations reported it becoming clearer that the field should focus on collective equality and identity alongside issues of individual rights. May 2021 solidified for many organizations an

⁵¹ As one NGO leader said: “After the May violence, a huge number of Jewish schools asked for our shared programs,” Bandler, *We Should Invest*, 2021.

⁵² Srugim, *In Response to Guardian of the Walls*, 2021.

an understanding they had come to even before the clashes: the field cannot ignore these issues even if they are more difficult to address or agree on. A related realization was the need to acknowledge more consciously the link between Jewish–Arab relations and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

“Arab-Palestinians [inside and outside of Israel] are one people and attempts to separate them based on religion, geographic location, or citizenship status do not work. Jews’ lack of recognition of the Palestinian narrative creates deep frustration.”
Jewish NGO representative

“We didn’t need May 2021 to happen to understand what we’re fighting for, but it accelerated the process. The events proved that budgets are important but not enough.”
Jointly-led Jewish–Arab NGO director

6. Further focus on and expanded activity in mixed and integrated spaces

While organizations already focused on shared society building in mixed and integrated spaces, May’s events highlighted this issue. Several organizations have either expanded their work to mixed cities or are developing new programs for delivery in mixed schools and other community-based settings in order “to accelerate their transformation into shared spaces.” Others spoke of a need to rethink the field’s approach to mixed and integrated spaces: they should not only draw an audience “because they are shared but because they can be developed to offer high-quality services that would be attractive to both Jews and Arabs.”⁵³

7. Negative and positive trends

The overall assessment of the organizations interviewed is that the May events had both positive and negative effects on the field. Negative trends include the breakdown in trust and relations between communities, among project participants, between Arab minority and state authorities that has not been fully mended or restored. Some organizations claimed that discourse is becoming more militaristic and confrontational and that the events were a harsh reminder of civil society’s limited ability to enable large-scale change.

Positive trends include heightened demand from local government, education institutions and central government bodies, to promote shared society solutions. Alongside satisfaction from the scope and volume of shared society responses to the crisis, several organizations noted a renewed understanding of their own limitations and the absence of large-scale government and philanthropic investment. Those organizations called for greater philanthropic support and hopes for greater government support.

⁵³ The Open University together with the Israel Democracy Institute and the Abraham Initiatives recently issued a call for researchers to deliver lectures on new processes, trends, and possibilities to improve the social fabric in mixed cities. In a recent webinar, the aChord Center presented research findings demonstrating that relations between Jews and Arabs in mixed cities have not “bounced back” after the May events but must be tended to and actively mended. See [webinar recording](#) (in Hebrew).

Funders' Responses

Funders and, in the case of Federations, the communities they represent, were also shaken by the May 2021 events. Following are the actions and responses that emerged.

1. Further learning

Most of those interviewed, as well as the Forum of Foundations in Israel and the IATF, held strategic discussions and emergency thinking. Funders created educational opportunities for members, representatives, and donors, while others held study meetings with grantees, research centers, and representatives from mixed cities. For example, the Social Venture Fund for Jewish Arab-Equality and Shared Society (SVF) released a real-time statement on the situation in support of its partners on the ground and, together with the IATF, held a webinar with Jewish and Arab activists.⁵⁴ Later on, in December, the Forum of Foundations in Israel held a study tour of Ramle and Lod. The IATF ran additional webinars on this issue,⁵⁵ and a number of other American Jewish organizations held various briefings.⁵⁶

2. Heightened shared society priority and targeted calls for proposals

A few funders and Federations reported that the May events made them realize the need to prioritize shared society work even more. The NIF and the UJA-Federation of New York (UJA-NY) issued calls for proposals to fund new initiatives established in response to the May events or existing initiatives in mixed cities. The NIF call promised to distribute 1 million NIS to winning projects; they received 600 applications and awarded funding to 20 projects, each allocated between 30,000 and 70,000 NIS.

Examples

- *A bilingual course for staff at three medical institutions that aims to reduce cross-cultural tensions and burnout.*
- *"Breaking the Barriers": A program sponsored by the Bat Yam Municipality that provides educational staff in Bat Yam and Jaffa with tools to cope with how the complex realities of their cities are expressed in the classroom.*
- *A Jewish–Arab Center for Social Justice in Ramle. A new center to be established by the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement's alumni program to address pressing issues in Arab society.*

UJA-NY issued a call for proposals for programs focusing on civic partnerships and committed to distributing \$400,000 to seven or eight projects. They received 191 proposals, and successful grantees were recently informed. The Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago also awarded \$40,000 in first-time grants to shared society building projects.

3. No change

Some funders decided not to change their grantmaking strategy.

The overall picture painted is that funding for shared society work did not diminish following the May events; if anything it seems to be growing.

⁵⁴ ["SVF Statement on the Current Violence in Israel"](#), May 16, 2021.

⁵⁵ See the IATF webinars on the [socioeconomic underpinnings of the escalations and inter-communal violence](#).

⁵⁶ See, for example, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh's [webinars](#).



Funders' Observations and Insights

Funders interviewed offered the following observations and insights about the May events.

1. Difference between October 2000 and May 2021

Several foundation representatives noted that the field recovered faster after May 2021 than after October 2000, echoing what field organizations also observed. They noted that the events were very different and that responses from NGOs, the business sector, and local government demonstrate how much the field has evolved over the past two decades.

2. Increased interest in shared society funding

"May's events proved that shared society organizations have a real impact. The organizations themselves became role models of how to keep going despite tensions, disagreement, and even the delegitimization of their work. They proved that they know how to set an example for themselves, their communities, and the whole society."

Foundation representative

"I feel that reality has changed for the better. Today there is a shared society infrastructure that allowed for quick organizing after May's events. We saw many actions from civil society...and people came with pain and eagerness. Civil society can pat itself on the back for that accomplishment. That infrastructure was built through painstaking shared society work. Now there is a need to scale, for the state to get involved."

Israel-based foundation representative

For some funders, May 2021 strengthened their understanding that shared society should be higher on their priority list. One foundation representative noted the expectation that it would lead to a growth in shared society funding, while a number of Federations and foundations stated that they had already decided to increase their investment. Meanwhile, several that already support shared society realized they should pivot to supporting smaller, locally-led initiatives. One federation updated its funding strategy to include Jews and Arabs who would otherwise not have the opportunity to meet. Another decided to increase its focus on supporting Arab society and developing young Arab leadership. Interviewees mentioned the May events underscored a sense of urgency for their work in the field.

"In May 2021, there was an outbreak of violence in our P2G region against Jews. This was heartbreaking for committee members, and they questioned whether our investments in shared society were impactful. We had long discussions about this issue and, ultimately, reached the conclusion that the situation might perhaps have been worse but for our investment in shared society. We did, however, decide that we need to place more of an emphasis on the long-term impact of programs."

Federation representative

3. Focus on underfunded areas that contributed to the May 2021 violence

Several representatives interviewed observed that some of the rioters in May, both Jews and Arabs, came from economically marginalized communities and populations that have not received sufficient philanthropic investment. They asserted the need for an increased focus on Arab young men.

“We have worked a lot on economic integration [for the Arab middle class] and that is great, but it only touches the tip of the iceberg. We have not worked enough on Arab youths’ connection to this place and sense of belonging. The average Arab young man feels foreign in his own land, that he is not included and not helped. People who feel foreign in their own public spaces take to the street.”

Foundation representative

4. Concern about the merits of shared society investment

To federation representatives and their home communities, the May events led to concern that shared society investments are not worthwhile because they do not change reality. These funders also expressed the desire to assess their investments in Arab society more critically and to ensure that funds reach the groups promoting non-violence and shared society.



Insights and Recommendations⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Because this report was commissioned by JFNA, this chapter lists recommendations for Federations. That said, any Jewish foundations or funders in general who support shared society building can benefit from it.

The purpose of this mapping, as agreed by the working group, was twofold:

- ▶ **First**, to respond to concerns and informational needs raised by the JFNA following the clashes within Israel in May 2021 by providing updated information and an accessible, practical mapping of the field.
- ▶ **Second**, to create an educational tool and a roadmap for Jewish Federations' interest, education, and potential engagement in this important field.

Shared society investment is a process with which each federation has a unique relationship in terms of time, scope, and priorities. For understanding the concept of shared society, some Federations probably connect more readily with certain frameworks than others which might seem inaccessible for their home communities and donors. The same is true for many of the insights presented by the field in this report. It is thus clear that not every recommendation fits every federation.

Each federation is therefore invited to ask: Where do we fall on the shared society investment spectrum? Where does support for Jewish–Arab shared society building fit within our overall work, community, priorities, and Israel engagement? Which steps have we already taken to learn and determine our strategy, and which have we yet to take?

The report's recommendations comprise the following.

1 Approach the field with curiosity

Any federation that currently invests in shared society or is considering doing so is first recommended to approach the process with an interest in ongoing learning. We encourage using this report as a starting point—an overview of the vast and complex field of shared society building. Each federation can explore different prisms through which to discuss shared society, study more deeply the barriers defined by the field and how they might be overcome, and examine specific organizations that may be of interest. Federations with experience in funding shared society work might ask themselves how they can move to becoming active partners in shaping its future by developing long-term partnerships with field organizations, sharing knowledge, and advancing the field as a whole.

The field of shared society has grown impressively in recent years. It is heterogeneous, complex, multifaceted, and, at times, counterintuitive and controversial. The more that Federations learn about the field and its complexities through first-hand experiences with the field, the greater their understanding and their comfort level with these issues. The recommendations here also include suggested methodologies to guide such learning processes.

2 Include more Arab voices in learning about and developing shared society strategies

Dialogue, cooperation, and partnership between field organizations, Federations, and funders evolved in the past decade. At the same time, the report highlights the ongoing challenges that Federations face in further deepening these processes, by, among other things, including more Arab voices in their strategy building and decision-making. If, in the past, American Jewish philanthropy struggled to familiarize itself with the basic facts and realities of Arab citizens and shared society, a significant road has now been traveled and the next challenge seems to be bringing more and new Arab voices into circles of learning, decision-making,

- ? How can we include Arab colleagues as consultants in our strategy development and deepen dialogue with Arab civil society, activists, academics, elected officials,⁵⁸ and funders?⁵⁹
- ? How can we widen our learning and dialogue beyond colleagues we already know and feel comfortable to include new or smaller organizations?

3 Assess funding strategy and process

Federations are encouraged to review their shared society funding through the lens offered by this report, considering each grant or potential grantee as well as the impact their support can have on the broader field. Organizations mapped spoke about challenges stemming from scarce resources, particularly long-term funding. Likewise, the field expressed that while investing in programs with tangible results in the short term may be gratifying, it is not enough to create the systemic change needed for shared society building. Organizations noted that funders often focus on project-based funding instead of core support, impeding sustainability, innovation, and capacity building. They also voiced the sense that there is sometimes a lack of alignment between the field's actual priorities and the arena that funders are interested in supporting.

Considering these challenges, we recommended contemplating how federation funding may strengthen grantees—and the field at large—by removing funding barriers. Federations are encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- ? Does our funding process overly burden NGOs?
- ? Do our priorities align with the field? To what extent do developments in the field inform our strategy?
- ? Does our funding allow our grantees a significant level of sustainability beyond supporting individual programs and measurable short-term outcomes?

4 Address the needs of increasingly mixed and integrated cities and spaces

Both field organizations and funders spoke of the growing need to manage mixed and integrated spaces (e.g., academia, workforce, and localities). This understanding stems from the positive potential of turning mixed and integrated spaces into shared ones. The movement from unintentional mixing and integration to intentional, well-structured inclusion and sharing can be leveraged by civil society organizations and can exemplify what shared society looks like, the benefits it brings for all involved, and its wider functioning throughout Israel.

The growing need identified by the field also stems from the danger that unmanaged—or mismanaged—mixed and integrated spaces can pose for social cohesion, communal relations, and stability, as seen during May 2021. The mapping shows a recognition of both the potential and the dangers but a relative dearth of in-depth activities on the ground. This important sphere therefore awaits growth and investment.

Federations are encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- ? How does our work in the field relate to mixed and integrated cities and spaces? Can we help field organizations scale up and adapt models working elsewhere to cater to these spaces?

⁵⁸ For example, the National Committee of the Heads of Arab Localities

⁵⁹ For example, [Qudra – Arab Philanthropists Network](#).

- ❓ How can we use the lens of “mixed,” “integrated,” and “shared” to look at the realities within mixed spaces? For example, how are decisions made about academic and service-related issues on campus? How are resources allocated (e.g., scholarships or dormitories)? Is relationship building addressed intentionally on campus among both students and staff?
- ❓ How can we support equal opportunities for Arab residents in mixed cities and enhance cooperation between residents and local government, neighboring Arab and Jewish communities, and others?
- ❓ How can we look beyond the topics considered in this report? For example, do we want to support grassroots initiatives in mixed cities and between neighboring communities that have never been evaluated or mapped? Do we want to support Arab-only civil society organizations operating in these mixed and integrated spaces?

5

Create the conditions for grappling with questions of identity

The research reveals the clear need for Federations to deal with and invest in the growing focus on Arab-Palestinian identity as part of shared society building. A major finding is the growing realization that creating the conditions to develop a rooted and strong individual and group identity is inextricable from how groups relate to one another and from shared society building.

While partaking in the conversation around Arab-Palestinian identity in Israel might feel threatening for some Federations, others view this conversation as an opportunity to engage younger, more progressive communities in a way that aligns authentically with their worldview and interests, since many of them are involved in parallel (albeit contextually and culturally very different) struggles in the United States. Different American Jewish communities relate to this topic in vastly different ways, and Federations are therefore encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- ❓ What is the right prism through which our community can connect to work on identity—if at all?
- ❓ What materials, experts, and educational opportunities can we use to bring this issue into our organizational and communal discussions?
- ❓ What type of work taking place in the field today on this issue seems most relevant to our internal processes and agendas?

“If we want to build shared society, [Jews] can’t continue to hold all political and economic privileges while also having spaces to grapple with our identity when the other group cannot. Funders need to stop fearing and cringing from [these] issues...which are at the core of shared society.”

NGO representative

6

Engage unusual suspects in shared society building

Shared society work and related philanthropic investments tend to focus on stronger subgroups within both societies (e.g., university graduates and students or employees and potential employees in the high-tech industry). There has not been sufficient investment in weaker groups within both Jewish and Arab societies that have been traditionally excluded, marginalized, or left behind by the development processes (e.g.,

uneducated, or unemployed Arab young men). This neglect is conflated with other socioeconomic hardships experienced by members of these groups, leading them to view relations between Jews and Arabs in zero-sum terms and creating the conditions for violent eruptions.

Federations are encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- ? What are the characteristics and needs of the most marginalized groups within the communities or geographic regions we support, and how might we play a role in improving their conditions and engaging them in shared society work?
- ? How should our shared society investment or programming be adapted to fit the unique needs of marginalized populations?
- ? How can we use our expertise to support field organizations in effectively engaging groups that feel left behind?

7

Explore investment in Arab society as a cornerstone of shared society building

American Jewish philanthropic investment to date mostly focused on shared society work, with funds directed mostly through Jewish-led or jointly-led organizations. However, what has emerged from the field is that, in order to create a shared society, internal challenges facing Arab society must be addressed and all parts of Arab society strengthened. Arab civil society must therefore be given the tools and resources to develop its capacity to lead unilateral change in its own communities. The field views this as an inseparable part of shared society building.

This gives Federations an opportunity to approach shared society investments through an alternative and complementary angle. It might also present a challenge, since Jewish communities have traditionally been drawn to support Jewish-led organizations. Federations are thus encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- ? Is direct engagement with Arab civil society appropriate for our community?
- ? What avenues for investment in Arab society and civil society fit with our overall strategy?

It is the hope and intent of this report that, as Jewish Federations, Jewish funders, and other players explore the above recommendations and questions, they emerge with greater clarity and direction regarding the best way to support shared society building between Jews and Arabs in Israel. This may include support for specific organizations and programs as well as an exploration of how to strengthen the field as a whole.

Introduction and Methodology

A. Overview

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) commissioned [NAS Research and Consulting](#) to map, both conceptually and practically, the sphere of Jewish–Arab shared society in Israel including current trends, realities, organizations, projects, and main funders. This report aims to offer insights from the field on the current situation and possible directions for future involvement of Jewish Federations and foundations in building Jewish–Arab shared society in Israel.

A shared society between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel has long been an interest of American Jewish organizations: Federations, foundations, service providers, religious groups, and advocacy organizations. This is exemplified by two major organizations. First, the [Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues \(IATF\)](#), founded in 2006 by a coalition of American Jewish organizations to enhance the Jewish community’s access to information on Arab society and majority–minority relations in Israel. Second, the [Social Venture Fund for Jewish–Arab Equality and Shared Society \(SVF\)](#), established in 2008 under JFNA as a funding collaborative of Jewish individuals, foundations, and Federations. In July 2016, SVF became part of [Jewish Funders Network \(JFN\)](#).

Several mapping papers and opinion pieces have been written on issues related to Jewish–Arab shared society, trends in the field, and the possible impact of Jewish philanthropy. (See Annex F for list of cited resources and recommendations for further reading.) The current report aims to join this body of work and serve Jewish Federations, funders, and interested parties in promoting this important sphere.

Disclaimer: In the writing of this research, every attempt has been made to avoid political statement or commentary. Our intention was to make the voices in the field more accessible and understandable. All the quotes used are the personal responses and insights of interviewees and are not necessarily endorsed by the writers or JFNA.

Note on terminology: Arab/Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel self-identify in many ways and are variously described in literature and discourse: e.g., Arab citizens, Arab-Palestinians, Israeli-Arabs, Palestinian citizens of Israel, etc. The terminology is often controversial and loaded. Arab society is far from monolithic, and this report does not aim to portray it as such. However, for the sake of brevity, it uses “Arab society,” “Arab community,” and “Arab citizens” as shorthand terms that include all Arab/Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, including Arabic-speaking citizens who are Muslim (including Bedouin), Christian, and Druze. This report does not cover the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, who are not Israeli citizens.

B. Mapping Goals

The clashes that took place inside Israel in May 2021, mostly within mixed and integrated cities and spaces, enhanced awareness of the importance of Jewish–Arab shared society work and were the

initial impetus for commissioning this report. The reports' goals were then broadened to enable a wider understanding of the ongoing efforts to build shared society and shared life in Israel, the reality of both the gaps and the potential, and the capacity of Jewish Federations and philanthropy to enhance the work's positive impact on Israeli society more broadly. The purpose of the report was therefore defined as twofold:

First, to respond to concerns and informational needs raised by Jewish Federation professionals following the May 2021 clashes and to provide updated information and an accessible, practical mapping of the field.

Second, to create an educational tool offering Jewish Federations and other funders a roadmap for their interest, education, and potential engagement in this important field.

C. Research Team

The research, mapping, and writing of this report was conducted by a team of professionals with vast experience in the field of shared society building, including:

- **Avivit Hai**, team manager: Co-founder of NAS Research and Consulting. Former Israeli representative of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues.
- **Rawnak Natour**, researcher and writer: Independent consultant. Former co-director of Sikkuy-Aufoq.
- **Lilli Stern**, researcher and writer: Senior researcher at NAS Research and Consulting, managing director of the Schocken Foundation.
- **Ruthie Wyshogrod**, chief writer: Independent writer and resource development consultant and former grant writer for several NGOs in the field of shared society, including Tsofen and Siraj.
- **Ibrahim Taha**, researcher: Independent researcher, coordinator, and group mediator at Women Against Violence. Former co-executive director of Sadaka-Reut Arab-Jewish Youth Partnership.

D. Methodology

The research was conducted December 2021–April 2022 and included:

- 1- Collection and summary of previous papers, research, and mapping.** These included papers published by the IATF, field organizations, academic institutions, funders and Federations, and other articles published in recent years on shared society (See Annex F for full list of resources.)
- 2- Selection and in-depth interviews.** The mapping included:
 - *Field organizations involved in different aspects of shared society work in Israel.* After a rigorous selection process (see Annex G for full list of over 140 field organizations), 31 field organizations were selected to reflect the full spectrum of shared society building in Israel: some were chosen as the largest, oldest, broadest organizations in the field; others were chosen to ensure broad representation and included Arab-led, Jewish-led, and jointly-led organizations, organizations working in mixed and integrated cities and spaces, organizations of different age and size, and organizations that use various methodologies. (See Annex D for full list of interviewees.)

Given the report's focus, there was a need to carefully select this representative sample of field organizations while maintaining a manageable workload. Many excellent organizations were,

therefore, not included. Even among the selected organizations, the team focused on their main spheres of activities and insights and was thus unable to describe all their work in detail. One of the report's goals, however, is to provide a tool that will enable readers to delve deeper into the field beyond what is written here.

- *Leading American Jewish Federations, donors, and philanthropic foundations.* Interviews were conducted with 25 representatives of major foundations that support shared society work. The interviews covered previous investment strategies in the field and their changes over time, concerns and thoughts following the May 2021 events, areas of special interest or controversy, and others. (See Annex D for a full list of interviewees.)

As Jewish Federations are the report's main target audience, a questionnaire was sent to a select group of Federations and representatives of the Federations in the working group were also interviewed in person. Additional interviewees from the philanthropic community included mainly American Jewish funders with just a few Israeli and British ones.

- 3- Collection and analysis of written information from field organizations, Federations, and foundations,** including responses to a questionnaire received from 10 Federations.
- 4- Ongoing consultation with the working group established by JFNA.**¹ Three meetings were held to discuss findings and gather relevant recommendations and insights, and working group members were invited to add their comments and suggestions to drafts of the report.

E. In-Depth Mapping Questions

The core of this report is an in-depth mapping of the conceptual frameworks, main achievements, methodologies, challenges, and insights of 31 civil society organizations active in the field of shared society building in Israel. The mapping also explores the relationship between the organizations and their funders and includes interviews with over 20 funders. The mapping sheds light on the following questions:

- 1- What do activists, professionals, and experts in the field mean today when they talk about shared society between Jews and Arabs in Israel? How do they assess their own work?**
- 2- How can the field be understood and analyzed?** What are the main geographical and conceptual areas of activity and of investment, and who are the target audiences?
- 3- What happened to shared society work in and following May 2021?**
- 4- What are the characteristics of shared society work in mixed cities and areas?** How are these areas characterized? Who works there, what do they promote, and why?
- 5- How can Jewish philanthropic investment to date be best understood?** What have been the main investment strategies in recent years? What are the key insights, concerns, and potential they have identified?
- 6- What practical recommendations can be offered?** What insights can be gained regarding the existing gaps and opportunities for Jewish Federations, donors, and foundations who are interested in learning and understanding more about the field?

¹ The working group comprised representatives from JFNA and the following Federations: UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, and Combined Jewish Philanthropies – Greater Boston Federation.

F. Mapping Boundaries

The field of shared society is vast, complicated, and multifaceted. Many of the organizations and funders mapped for this report work and invest in areas beyond the scope of shared society; in such cases, the interviews focused only on work directly relevant to shared society. An additional limitation of this report is that, having mapped field organizations, it does not provide a parallel mapping of public opinions and trends related to shared society building.

Given this report's dual aim to both inform Jewish Federation professionals about the current state of the field and create an educational tool to assist their future work, it was decided to highlight the most significant trends, challenges, opportunities, and insights of civil society field organizations working on shared society building. It therefore includes:

- Work on “strictly” shared society, namely, Jewish–Arab partnerships or work with both communities, and work promoting equality, awareness, integration and inclusion, solidarity, partnership, and tolerance.
- An emphasis on the issue of shared society building in mixed and integrated cities and spaces against the background of the May 2021 events.
- The funding landscape for the “planet” of shared society work among Jewish Federations.
- The funding landscape for shared society work among American Jewish and Israeli foundations as well as two British foundations.
- The decision to examine civil society work focusing on shared society led to the report's exclusion of: Unilateral work, which constitutes a significant portion of Arab civil society.²
- Service provision organizations.
- Institutional players such as community centers, youth movements, and academic institutions.
- Government investments and the work of formal bodies (e.g., the President's Office or local authorities).
- Non-American/non-Jewish philanthropy (except for the two British foundations mentioned above).
- The report does not include a mapping of government investments by international actors, and these are worth mentioning. There is significant funding from the EU, the US government, and individual European countries. Most relevant at present is the [Middle East Partnership for Peace Act \(MEPPA\)](#), administered by USAID, which will inject, initially, \$15 million into internal and cross-border civil society initiatives in Israel and the Palestinian Territories to be increased over the next five years. It is too early to assess how this planned investment will impact the field, but given its scale, it merits future close attention.

² The report does, however, discuss the need expressed by NGOs and funders alike for greater investment in Arab society, including Arab civil society.

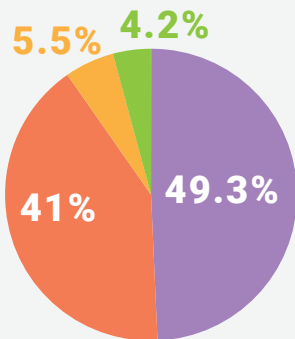
What is Shared Society?

A. Demographic Data



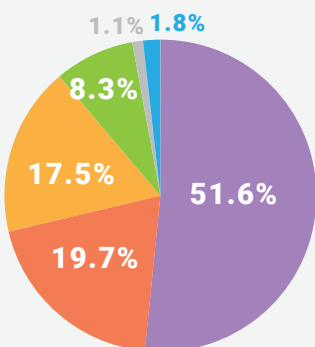
In 2020 the population of Israel was 9,289,760 of this total, 1,957,270 (21.1%) were Arabs 17.2% of whom were Arab citizens of Israel and 4% were East Jerusalem residents.

Arab society in Israel – Place of residence (end of 2020)



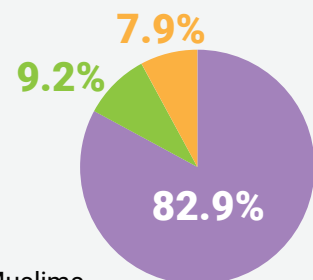
- Local councils**
The majority of Arabs live in 69 Arab local councils and some live in Jewish local councils.
- Cities**
Most live in 12 Arab cities and some in 7 mixed cities.
- Smaller rural localities**
47 Arab localities that are part of regional councils.
- Localities without municipal status**
Known as “unrecognized villages,” mostly in the Negev.

Arab society in Israel – geographic distribution (end of 2020, excluding East Jerusalem)



- Arab Localities - North of Israel
- Arab Localities - Triangle
- Arab Localities - Negev
- Mixed cities
- Jerusalem Corridor (including West Jerusalem)
- Jewish-majority localities around the country

Arab society in Israel – religious affiliation



- Muslims
- Druze
- Christians

Source: Israel Democracy Institute, Annual Statistical Report on Arab Society in Israel, March 2022.

B. Definitions and Prisms of Shared Society

In its attempt to categorize the work known as “shared society” or “shared life” building in Israel, this report considers methodologies and theories of change, target audiences, the spheres in which the work takes place, and others. However, in order to ensure the practicality of this research, there is first a need to understand what the term “shared society” actually means.

Shared society between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel is often understood as a concept that rests on two pillars: one, equality and equal opportunity and the other, partnership and joint work. While most of our interviewees accept this broad definition, each of the pillars contains a multitude of meanings. Dozens of interviews and a review of the literature revealed that, within these two pillars, there is no single definition of what constitutes shared society work. Over 30 years of experience on the ground weave an abstract, complex, and often overlapping tapestry of initiatives and organizations whose work takes place in vastly different settings and employs a wide range of methodologies. In fact, opinions differ on the very function of shared society: is shared Jewish–Arab work the ultimate goal or is it, rather, a means to reach a broader vision of relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel? Is the goal of a shared society to create better realities within existing parameters or is it, rather, to challenge and change them?

Any attempt to evaluate all shared society work according to one definition would provide an overly simplistic and non-representative picture of reality. Therefore, before exploring where shared society work takes place, who performs it, who it benefits, who funds it, and what its influence is on Israeli society, it is essential to describe the most salient conceptual frameworks and to detail various prisms through which to understand the two pillars of equality and partnership.

The aim of these frameworks is not to categorize different organizations strictly; indeed, most of the organizations interviewed do not have a single, articulated definition of shared society that guides their work and is accepted by all their employees. Rather, their activities cross more than one framework, and different members of an organization can have different understandings of shared society while implementing the same projects.

Following is a menu of prisms through which to think about and discuss shared society.

1- Material or economic equality vs. collective equality

Much of the shared society work that has received significant philanthropic and government funding in recent years has focused on improving the material reality of Arab citizens in Israel and closing socioeconomic gaps between Jews and Arabs. This work includes, for example, greater access to higher education, workforce integration, infrastructure improvement, and economic development in Arab localities. However, the current report shows that, after years of investment and work on economic equality, many players believe that material improvements are critical but not enough to fundamentally change Jewish–Arab relations. The executive director of a Jewish–Arab NGO said: “Over the last decade, the illusion that economic inclusion will solve our problems took over the field. May’s events remind us of the limitations of ‘economic peace.’”

Thus, alongside promoting material equality that advances tangible living conditions, many professionals are aware of the need to broaden shared society work and thus also promote what some in the field refer to as “collective equality.”³ This signifies creating physical and metaphorical space for Arab citizens to advance as a collective in intangible ways beyond the economic sphere. It

³ Organizations and funders in the field use various terms to describe the conditions referred to here as “collective equality.” The mapping indicated that the term “collective” is sensitive and can provoke controversy. However, the mapping also indicated conclusively that the issues relating to intangible collective aspects of the place of Arab society within general Israeli society cannot be ignored. The term “collective equality” was therefore chosen to capture the various definitions and terminologies that emerged from the interviews and research.

involves ensuring that Arab citizens can own their collective identities, narratives, and symbols, express them openly and safely in the public sphere, and gain legitimacy for their existence as part of the Israeli public space, just as the Jewish collective does. Work on collective equality ranges from promoting the presence of Arabic in the public sphere and the provision of services in Arabic to integrating Muslim, Druze, and Christian calendars in public life and addressing the role of the Israeli flag and national anthem. But some organizations stress that collective equality means not only creating space for these symbols but also enabling Arab citizens to partake in shaping the policies and priorities of Israeli society.

Discourse in the field of shared society today asks the following questions: What are the issues included in the prism of collective equality and how should this prism complement the still necessary work on material equality? What is the role of identity in promoting collective equality? How can collective equality be promoted within the organizations? What are some of the best ways to overcome resistance to collective equality?

2- From an increasingly mixed to a shared society

The presence and participation of Arab citizens in public spaces that were previously only Jewish or overwhelmingly Jewish is growing. This is a result of economic trends that strengthen Arab society and the unavailability of housing, education, and employment opportunities in Arab localities – realities that push Arab citizens towards higher education, high-end employment, and residence in henceforth Jewish cities (a process referred to hereafter as “mixing”). It is also the result of intentional government and civil society interventions that lead to similar effects (a process referred to hereafter as “integration”).

But the field organizations interviewed voiced a realization that the increased presence of Arabs in spaces where they were previously absent does not equate to a shared society. Rather, they stressed the need for mixed and integrated spaces to evolve into inclusive spaces where the majority acts intentionally to make space for the minority: in other words, spaces where power and decision-making are shared so that Arab citizens do not only “exist” or “participate” but also shape new realities.

Discourse in the field of shared society today asks the following questions, among others. To what extent are mixed and integrated spaces evolving into inclusive and shared spaces? To what extent do these spaces challenge the systemic separation between Jews and Arabs in Israel? Could heightened mixing spark a backlash? Could mixed and integrated spaces, left unattended and unmanaged, increase the risk of confrontation instead of supporting shared society building?

3- Long-term change efforts or responses to urgent needs?

It is generally agreed that shared society building is a form of social change which, by definition, requires long-term investment in efforts such as educating for shared life and narrowing socioeconomic gaps.⁴ Nonetheless, growing polarization and extremism in Israel (bolstered by parallel processes in the United States and Europe), a hostile public discourse, and intermittent violent outbursts related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict require the field to respond to crises, prevent the breakdown of relations and escalation of violence, and safeguard minority rights. Part of this work involves developing the capacity for crisis management among decision-makers, in institutions, and within the community, managing the ways Jews and Arabs interact in mixed and integrated spaces, handling tensions within shared society organizations themselves, and mobilizing the field’s networks of participants and stakeholders in times of crisis.

The violence and rioting that took place in Lod, Ramle, Jaffa, and other mixed cities in May 2021 was both a reflection of these issues and an illustration of the need for a crisis response. While considering

⁴ According to the work of the Club de Madrid’s Shared Societies Project.

what shared society work means and how it should look, players in the field are asking how they can find the balance between investing in short-term mechanisms and responses to prevent the breakdown of relations and long-term processes to create greater equality and partnership.

4- Building shared society by strengthening Arab (civil) society

Although, as mentioned above, shared society rests on the pillars of equality and partnership between Jews and Arabs, many professionals in the field identify the need to strengthen Arab society in general and Arab-led civil society in particular. Arab civil society in Israel, which often fills gaps in government support for the Arab community's needs, is less developed organizationally than Jewish civil society and civil society in countries with parallel socioeconomic metrics.⁵ Arab-led NGOs tend to be younger, smaller, and local and to receive less funding than their Jewish-led counterparts. Even among organizations with a Jewish–Arab focus, those that are jointly-led tend to be larger in size and scope and receive more funding and recognition. One Arab representative of a veteran shared society organization said:

Because there is no separation between shared society and strengthening Arab civil society, it is unclear where to direct limited resources. Shared society NGOs compete with Arab organizations, creating resentment and tension.

Investing in capacity building within Arab civil society and in community development and identity discourse within Arab society are therefore seen by the players interviewed as a precondition for promoting a sustainable shared society.⁶ One foundation representative noted: “It is impossible to build shared society when one side is strong, and the other is weak.”

5- The scope of shared society

One way to look at shared society is to focus on efforts to address societal rifts between Jews and Arabs, which is the prism this report uses. However, some NGOs and funders consider Jewish–Arab work to be just one issue among the many rifts within Israel's multicultural society, all of which must be addressed in order to build a shared society in Israel.

C. Key Historical and Recent Developments

The history shaping relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel began centuries ago, and Israeli civil society has been actively working on these issues for several decades. This report does not detail the history of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel, or historical efforts to influence those relations.⁷ Still, while this report aims to provide a snapshot of the present, the present cannot be severed from past events. To contextualize how the field understands shared society today, the following section briefly explains the evolution from “coexistence” work, characteristic of the 1980s and 1990s, to the concepts and practices of “shared society” that have been developing since the mid-2000s.

1- From coexistence to shared society

The concept of coexistence rose to prominence in Israel during the 1980s and 1990s, with activities relying on three main approaches: Contact Theory or the Contact Hypothesis, which claims that prejudice tends to weaken when members of two groups meet on equal footing and work together

⁵ Jamal, Almog-Bar, Koukvine, and Eseed, Arab-Palestinian Civil Society, 2019.

⁶ Most Arab-led organizations work solely within Arab society and therefore did not meet the criteria for inclusion in this mapping which required the work to be of a Jewish–Arab nature.

⁷ A more detailed account of the field's historical development can be found in the IATF's [2014 Report: Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#).

toward a common goal; Inter-Group Conflict Theory, which explores identity and how it is reflected in encounters between groups; and the Narrative Approach, which combines the two in order to examine identity by gaining an understanding of the other's narrative.⁸

However, the October 2000 events⁹ devastated the field, leaving both Jews and Arabs feeling betrayed and shaking the legitimacy of coexistence work. Many initiatives in the field ceased their activities, while others began to shift their focus, structure, and attitudes.¹⁰ The main critique was that coexistence activities were too neutral, focusing on joint encounters empty of substance (earning the nickname "hummus encounters") and failing to address any of the structural inequalities between Jews and Arabs outside the dialogue room (earning the negative analogy of "coexistence between the horse and its rider"¹¹). Participants may have left the meetings feeling good but with no change in their perception of reality or tools to even question it. In the best case, they remained ill-equipped to address the unchallenged and unchanged reality that awaited them outside; in the worst case, they were left even more disillusioned and helpless in the face of protracted separation and inequality, especially when confronted with violence, prejudice, and incitement. On describing lessons learned throughout years of work, many funders and organizations agreed that, done wrong, coexistence work can cause harm.

The ensuing years saw such a reduction in dialogue-based work that they were coined "the lost decade in Arab–Jewish relations" by Prof. Sammy Smooha.¹² Indeed, a report published by IATF in 2014 described trends in the field at the time:

Within Arab society there was a strong trend of unilateralism, while within Jewish society there was a deep disappointment in and even fear of the Arab community. Many practitioners spanning Arab, Jewish and joint Jewish–Arab organizations chose to focus on "existence before coexistence," or economic development, capacity-building, identity-strengthening, empowerment, and human rights activities within Arab society rather than across Jewish–Arab communities or with Jewish partners.¹³

By the second decade of the 2000s, the concept of "shared society" entered civil society discourse and has since become the dominant way to describe work to improve Jewish–Arab relations in Israel.¹⁴ Shared society, at least in theory, is a holistic approach which recognizes the inherent inequalities and aims to construct interventions that address them through integration and partnership. For the past decade, most NGOs and funders have described their work as promoting shared society or shared life. The field of shared society has, over time, withstood major crises, experienced positive developments, and become more strategic and professional. Several major events and developments in the past decade have shaped—and continue to shape—the field.

⁸ Friedberg, *Here and Now*, 2009.

⁹ The October 2000 events were a series of protests in Arab villages in northern Israel which took place in October 2000, at the beginning of the Second Intifada. The protests turned violent and escalated into rioting by both Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel and clashes with the Israel Police, ending in the deaths of 13 Arab demonstrators at the hands of the police and one Jewish citizen, who was killed in the violent demonstrations. The events led to a National Commission of Inquiry called [the Or Commission](#). The October 2000 events arguably [shaped the Arab community's relations with the police and the state](#) for years to come and [have been recognized annually by the Arab community ever since](#).

¹⁰ The Or Commission reported that the "October events had reduced the chances of attaining the goal of living together with mutual respect. The clashes and their aftermath led to reduced contact between the two societies and increased distrust and hostility," Jewish Virtual Library, [The Official Summation of the Or Commission Report](#), September 2, 2003.

¹¹ This analogy has been attributed to Member of Knesset Ahmad Tibi and has also [been used by](#) Mohammad Darawshe, director of Planning, Equality, and Shared Society at Givat Haviva and by [leaders of the Abraham Initiatives](#).

¹² Smooha, *The Lost Decade*, 2010.

¹³ Hai and Shoham, *Shared Society*, 2014.

¹⁴ Based on the work of Club de Madrid's [Shared Societies Project](#).

2- Increased impact of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict

Relations between the Jewish majority and Arab minority have always been deeply affected by the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.¹⁵ In the past decade, security crises have increasingly impacted shared society work in Israel. The 2014 Operation Protective Edge in Gaza was mentioned by many interviewees as a watershed moment that challenged their work in building a sustainable shared society; it was not, however, the last. Violent outbursts in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict have increasingly polarized Jewish–Arab relations within Israel, forcing players to address the connection between the conflict and Jewish–Arab relations within the state on the conceptual level, within their organizations, and among their beneficiaries. Major crises, such as Operation Protective Edge, the so-called “Lone Wolf Intifada” of 2015, and events proceeding and surrounding Operation Guardian of Walls in May 2021, shook the field, stalling or suspending activities, straining relations between communities and within organizations, and creating new challenges for shared society building.

While events like these do severely affect organizations whose core activity involves Jewish–Arab encounters, interviewees asserted that they have not posed an existential threat to shared society efforts in the way that the October 2000 events did to coexistence work. However, the ongoing presence of such events compels the field to reevaluate the purpose and sustainability of its work. How, indeed, do shared society organizations create partnerships that can withstand future security crises, reach new constituencies, or activate networks in times of crisis to ensure that tolerant Jewish and Arab voices are heard?

3- Government investment

Over the past 15 years, the field has been influenced by a growing governmental focus on closing socioeconomic gaps between the Jewish majority and Arab minority. The most prominent investment, which influenced field organizations as well as philanthropy, was Government Resolution (GR) 922, the five-year economic development plan implemented between 2016 and 2021, (which has recently been followed by GR-550, a new five-year plan approved in November 2021 to be implemented between 2022 and 2026).¹⁶ Shared society NGOs focusing on socioeconomic and policy issues were involved in lobbying efforts that produced GR-922. They helped shape the resulting work plans and played a part in ensuring its effective implementation (by, for example, assisting Arab local authorities to maximize budget allocations). Several organizations won tenders to operate programs through GR-922. In parallel, GR-922 drove a concentration of philanthropic funds toward economic development and workforce integration in an attempt to leverage government funding, while other funders saw the state’s greater involvement as an opportunity to turn their attention toward issues where government funding lagged.

The government reported that over 75% of funds were allocated and significant budgets and investments were implemented on the ground,¹⁷ but the overall economic impact of GR-922 has not yet been fully studied. Importantly, though, no government investments—neither those with measurable impact nor those yet to be evaluated—were directed at enhancing shared society work. While investment in economic development led to the strengthening of the Arab middle class and enhanced integration on academic campuses and in the workplace, these were not implemented

¹⁵ As encapsulated by the iconic statement of the late Abed El-Aziz El Zoabi, a member of Knesset and deputy health minister in the 1970s: “My country is at war with my people.” Article 9, [Or Commission Report](#), 2003 (Hebrew), and [English summary](#).

¹⁶ The Israeli government decided on [a one-year extension of the plan for 2021](#). GR-922 was the first instance of government budgets being amended with the specific aim of ensuring equal or representative budgeting for Arab localities. Funds were allocated through, mostly, Arab localities, which proved to be a barrier to effective implementation, given the capacity and governance challenges of Arab localities and incongruences between allocation of funds from the national government and necessary consideration of reality of the ground. Several shared society organizations were involved in mitigating and trying to overcome these implementation challenges. This experience led some shared society NGOs to participate more actively in shaping subsequent, recently approved five-year plans: GR-550, which will operate between 2022 and 2026, and GR-549, the parallel plan to combat organized crime and violence in Arab society. For more on GR-922, see the [IATF resource center](#).

¹⁷ For example, dozens of new bus lines were opened, thousands participated in training in the Riyan Employment Centers, access to higher education was improved, community centers and sports facilities were constructed, and informal education programs were implemented.

through a shared society lens nor were they supplemented by further investment to shape relations between Jews and Arabs in those spaces.

4- Shifts in discourse on Arab political participation and Jewish–Arab political partnership

Finally, shifts in Israel's domestic politics have presented both challenges and opportunities for the field. Recent years have seen some of the most explicit efforts to delegitimize Arab citizens and their vote. Significant events include the passage of the Nation-State Law in 2018 (which some have regarded as a possible backlash to the socioeconomic strengthening of Arab society¹⁸) and the four turbulent rounds of elections between April 2019 and March 2021, in which the political participation of Arab voters and politicians played a central role. Events surrounding these elections ultimately paved the way for the political transformation that took place in June 2021 causing mixed reactions among shared society players: namely, Ra'am, a party representing the southern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel, became the first Arab party to participate in a governing coalition in Israel's history.¹⁹ This influenced the discourse within the field of shared society,²⁰ with some in the field considering Ra'am's participation in the government a significant step toward shared society. Accordingly, an internal report commissioned by Shatil and the New Israel Fund (NIF) claimed:

The unprecedented, renewed interest in political partnerships shines out from the national parliamentary national level to other arenas and spheres across the state, including civil society...it presents an opportunity to diligently and effectively promote and build the foundation for Jewish-Arab partnership [beyond politics].²¹

Others criticized Ra'am's participation as a counterproductive and even dangerous compromise on the values of collective equality in exchange for incremental improvements in civic or material equality which negatively impacts shared society efforts. One Arab director of a jointly-led NGO explained: "It is a pragmatic partnership that promotes equality and rights while demanding compromise on values and identity." The makeup of the government also worried some shared society players since it amplified incitement against Arab citizens by an angry right wing.²²

¹⁸ Gerlitz, "The Backlash," 2014 and Gerlitz, "As Israeli Arabs Get Stronger," 2015. Some in the field believe that Arab citizens would be delegitimized by the right regardless of their socioeconomic strength or weakness.

¹⁹ In June 2022 the government coalition collapsed.

²⁰ The first [Conference on Jewish–Arab Political Partnership](#) took place in March 2021.

²¹ Dichter and Fakhoury, *Arabs and Jews*, 2019. See also, Abu Much, "[Participation in Israeli Coalition Government Opens New Chapter for Arab Parties](#)," June 14, 2021.

²² For example, Likud MK Shlomo Karhi's [accusation that Bennett's government had formed an alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood](#) (Azoulai, Lokesh, and Cohen, "Karhi against Bennett," 2021), an accusation which was echoed [on Benjamin Netanyahu's Twitter account](#) (December 22, 2021 [Hebrew]).

The Landscape of Shared Society Building

Regardless of the framework employed to understand the meaning of shared society, it is important to remember that shared society is not the norm in Israel. Education systems, housing, communal life, language, media and, to some extent, the economy, continue to be separate for Jewish and Arab citizens (as, to some extent, with the ultra-Orthodox population). In parallel, there are still profound inequalities between Jewish and Arab citizens in numerous fields and discourse on Jewish–Arab relations in the public sphere is often characterized more by discord and suspicion than by dialogue and solidarity. For example, the education system was historically constructed with separate Jewish and Arab streams, and when asked, most citizens say they want their children to learn in their mother tongue and according to their own culture. However, these separate streams and the inherent gaps in budgeting, quality of schools, and educational results lead to separation and mutual ignorance and challenge equal opportunities.

Against the backdrop of these significant challenges, activists and funders interviewed **conceptualize shared society as a work in progress, namely, a vision for social change rather than a reality that has already been achieved**. This chapter therefore examines the landscape within which shared society building takes place on two interlinked levels: the major spheres where this work happens and the trends and forces that influence it.

A. Today's Shared Society Landscape: Major Spheres

Shared society building happens in many spheres of life in Israel and is influenced by multiple players and external forces. This report spotlights civil society, but NGOs are only one, albeit significant, player. To better understand the universe of shared society building in Israel, it is important to gain a bird's eye view of the spheres within which this work takes place. These spheres include physical spaces, such as cities and schools, and abstract arenas.

- **Education**, including settings and programs where Jewish and Arab students meet and learn together, both formally and informally, as well as the integration of Arab staff in Jewish schools and vice versa.
- **Integrated spaces**, such as academic campuses, the workforce, and schools²³ as well as mixed and integrated cities and regions.
- **Arab participation in decision-making circles**, such as the Knesset and government agencies.
- **Political partnerships** between Jews and Arabs at the political level (nationally and locally) and civil solidarity at the grassroots level.
- **Public discourse** and the inclusion of Arab citizens' daily lives, the Arab community, and the Arabic language, influencing stories and narratives in traditional and social media.
- **Unilateral work in Arab society**, led by both Jewish–Arab and Arab-only civil society to promote a variety of issues including closing gaps, language, capacity building, and equal opportunity.

B. Today's Shared Society Landscape: Major Trends

Within this complex web of spheres and arenas, certain trends have gained focus in recent years: some develop within a single sphere, while others traverse several. Following are the main trends that emerged from the current research.

²³ This refers to schools within the Hebrew education system that are becoming more “naturally” mixed due to the enrollment of Arab students, as opposed to intentionally mixed bilingual schools.

1- Language

Language proficiency is seen by numerous players as a central component of shared society building and a tool for more equal partnership. Among Arabs, the lack of Hebrew is recognized as perhaps the most significant barrier to integration and social mobility. Arab children study Hebrew from a young age, but their proficiency remains low due to problematic pedagogy and a lack of opportunities to practice speaking. Among Jews, the study of Arabic is very limited.²⁴ Only around 8% of Jews speak the language²⁵ which is seen as a major contributor to ignorance about Arab culture and Arab citizens' daily realities. Some in the field stress that Arabic proficiency is a problem even for many Arab citizens due to poor teaching²⁶ and the influence of Hebrew, which has created a dialect of what some call "Aravrit" (a mix between Aravit [Arabic] and Ivrit [Hebrew]).

Shared society building organizations are emphasizing the need for Jews and Arabs to learn each other's language via a growing number of language-based initiatives in recent years. Those working on integration and economic development of Arab society (e.g., improving access to higher education and the labor market) have developed new programs, methods, and pedagogy to enhance Hebrew language proficiency.²⁷ Others are working to enhance Jewish citizens' knowledge of spoken Arabic, either by adding it to the formal education curriculum (in place of the literary Arabic taught today in Jewish schools²⁸) or by teaching spoken Arabic to Jewish adults.²⁹ Learning spoken Arabic has, in fact, become fashionable among Jews due, perhaps, to influences such as the popular television series *Fauda*³⁰ or as a counter-reaction to the demotion of Arabic in the Nation-State Law,³¹ and thousands of adult Jewish citizens are learning spoken Arabic today. Arabic is also more present in the public sphere, largely due to civil society organizations' efforts to enhance Arabic-language services and normalize the presence of Arabic in public transportation, signage, at the airport, and elsewhere.

2- Focus on mixed and shared spaces

Mixing and integration is happening within the health system, on academic campuses, in the workplace, in newly mixed cities (such as Nof HaGalil [formerly Nazareth Illit], Nahariya, Bat Yam, Be'er Sheva, and Karmiel), and in veteran mixed cities (Jaffa, Akko, Lod, Ramle) at unprecedented rates. Mixing is the result of both the intentional and unintentional processes described in the previous annex, as illustrated in the words of one NGO leader: "Aroma [a chain of coffee shops] and the university math department were not formed to be shared spaces. They've become that way." But, without intentional shared society building work, mixing does not lead to equality or necessarily, inclusivity and shared realities. Although academic institutions and several major employers are taking steps to better serve the needs of Arab students and employees,³² players in the field still point to institutional barriers and power structures that hinder the transformation from mixed and integrated, to inclusive and shared. For example, academic campuses and workplaces operate only in Hebrew and typically observe only Jewish holidays and cultural milestones, while Arab professionals remain underrepresented in the management of academic institutions and major corporations.

²⁴ Michal, Re'i & Mazor, *The Study of Arabic in Jewish Schools*, 2018.

²⁵ Knesset Research and Information Center, *Arabic Teaching in Hebrew Schools*, 2022. See also Kraft, *Why is Arabic Flowering*, 2018

²⁶ See, for example, Sa'ab, Elz, and Abu-Zarqa, *The Methods Are Conservative*, 2022.

²⁷ Examples include Givat Haviva, Merchavim, and Abraham Initiatives.

²⁸ Kadri-Ovadia, *Ministry of Education Admits*, 2022.

²⁹ Examples include Madrasa, Amal, and Abraham Initiatives. In addition to NGOs, there has been a recent influx for-profit organizations teaching Arabic, including initiatives such as [Safa1](#), [Finjan](#), and [Al Masdar Academy](#). Some of these initiatives combine teaching Arabic with tours and home hospitality in Arab localities.

³⁰ For example, Bosidon, *A New Trend*, 2016; Steinberg, *The Fauda Effect*, 2019.

³¹ See [Abraham Initiatives' statement on the Nation State Law](#) and Yanko, *Hundreds in 'Largest Arabic Lesson'*, 2018.

³² Academic institutions are undertaking such work in part through the Council for Higher Education's multi-year plans to improve Arab students' access to higher education and in part as individually-led initiatives. Employers are doing so thanks to the work of numerous organizations, both governmental (e.g., the Equal Opportunities in Employment Commission) and non-governmental (e.g., Co-Impact, Kav Mashve, Tsofen, itworks, the Diversity in Employment Forum, and others).

Mixed cities—both new and old—pose a unique set of challenges for shared society building. Material and collective inequalities are particularly visible in such cities:³³ the infrastructure in Arab neighborhoods is typically neglected, there is a shortage of high-quality Arabic-speaking schools, informal education institutions, and other public services, and municipal events are often not culturally or linguistically adapted for Arab residents.

The May 2021 events brought acute awareness that mixed and integrated spaces can become platforms for shared society or, alternatively, have disastrous and violent consequences. But even earlier, many were already recognizing the potential for shared society building in these spaces where mixing does occur and asking how to manage the growing number of mixed and integrated spaces. Players across sectors are constantly working to build capacities that would enable mixed spaces to become shared ones. GR-550 includes NIS 300 million for mixed cities in order to promote shared society and narrow gaps between Jewish and Arab residents.³⁴ In addition, the Ministry of Welfare recently held a conference on welfare services in mixed cities and, together with the Abraham Initiatives, is promoting the use of mediation centers to “settle local conflicts between Jews and Arabs and contribute to calming spirits.”³⁵

Research institutes, academics, and artists have also started focusing on this issue. For example, the Israel Democracy Institute recently published an in-depth study titled “Arab Residents in Mixed Cities”³⁶ that maps and spotlights this community for the first time. Together with the Open University and the Abraham Initiatives, IDI also published a call for lectures titled One Year after the May Events. Likewise, Prof. Hani Zubeideh recently created a five-part television series on Israel’s mixed cities titled, “One City, Two Peoples.”³⁷

Despite these many efforts, work to transform mixed and integrated cities and spaces into inclusive and shared ones is in its infancy; most of the potential remains untapped, and the field is still learning which approaches to take.

3- Evolved encounters

Encounters aim to challenge the reality of separation that allows Jewish and Arab children to pass through the entire education system without ever meeting, leading to what players in the field describe as ignorance, fear, and prejudice in their adulthood. Encounters bring Jews and Arabs together for dialogue, cultural exchange, education for shared life, and work related to identity, history, narrative, culture, language and to address specific issues, such as the environment and women’s empowerment. Though dialogue meetings may seem a relic of the past, numerous organizations believe that planning and mediating encounters remains vital in the face of an almost total absence of spontaneous meetings; however, their structure, facilitation, and content are all critical.

As a result of lessons learned from previous experiences, encounters are now using the language of shared society, offering deeper, more professional content to a more intentionally selected audiences. For example, programs within the education system that previously gathered only students for one-off or short-term encounters now work long-term with school principals, teachers, staff, parents, and local authorities’ officials; this comes from the realization that, to be effective, student encounters must be enveloped by a supportive community of adults and professionals.³⁸ Encounters between students and between adults also often engage participants around possible common interests beyond just the dialogue: for example, environmental or sports activities, art projects, volunteerism, and more.

³³ Haddad Haj-Yahya, Ron, and Fergeon, “Arab Residents of Mixed Cities,” 2022.

³⁴ Although this portion of the GR-550 still awaits actual allocation.

³⁵ For information about the conference, see

<https://www.gov.il/he/departments/news/molsa-news-promoting-common-life-15032022> (Hebrew). For information about the meditation centers, see <https://www.zman.co.il/294484/popup/> (Hebrew).

³⁶ Haddad Haj-Yahya, Ron, and Fergeon, “Arab Residents of Mixed Cities,” 2022.

³⁷ Hebrew language episodes about [Jaffa](#), [Haifa](#), [Akko](#), [Ramle](#), and [Lod](#).

³⁸ Examples include Givat Haviva, Hand in Hand, Hagar, A New Way, AJECC, Merhavim, and the Rossing Center.

4- Efforts to increase exposure to Arab society

Across different shared society building spheres there are initiatives that aim to reach the wider Jewish public by either taking them to Arab localities or bringing Arab narratives and voices to them. Such initiatives are growing and have reached a significant number of people in recent years. For example, tourism initiatives started in the mid-2000s as small projects bringing Jewish audiences to Arab localities, mostly around iftar meals during Ramadan. Today, thousands of Jews each year visit Arab localities on guided tours run by NGOs specializing in this work³⁹ and in government-supported festivals and events.⁴⁰

The Jewish public is also more exposed to Arab life due to the growing and more normalized representation of Arabs in mainstream media, specifically network news, thanks to numerous efforts by a variety of civil society organizations.⁴¹

5- Solidarity for social change and political partnerships

The increasing presence of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in shared society spaces, ties between Arab citizens and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, domestic political shifts, and socioeconomic gaps between different groups in Israeli society contribute to growing calls for social solidarity and political partnership. New initiatives focus on joint action for social change that purposefully positions Jews and Arabs as partners. These initiatives utilize grassroots organizing and mobilization methods in order to leverage shared interests for a future that benefits all who are marginalized in Israeli society.⁴² They look to address social issues that have a negative impact on both Jews and Arabs, such as housing shortages, minimum wage, and workers’ rights, while acknowledging that each group feels the impact differently.

Similarly, some organizations are stressing the existence of many complex, marginalized identities, including but not limited to Arab citizens, and are working to advance social cohesion more broadly by creating a multicultural discussion that looks beyond the Jewish–Arab rift.⁴³

Political shifts in Israel in recent years—from the delegitimization of Arab voters to the inclusion of the first Arab party in government—are gradually affecting shared society discourse. While considering how to respond to this discourse, NGOs in the field have also shaped it by promoting Arab political leadership and strengthening Jewish–Arab political partnerships.⁴⁴

6- Reimagining “Israeli” issues as shared

Another notable trend found is a new conceptualization of issues of national relevance and import as “all Israeli” (klal Yisraeli) and an understanding that to truly address these issues the needs of Arab society must be distinctly considered. This new trend aims to unpack the messaging around such “Israeli” issues, which are often structured without recognizing the needs of Arab society. There is a growing realization in government, the business sector, and civil society that “Israeli” can no longer exclude Arabs and that inclusion must be intentional and active.

For example, the government’s recent announcement of its goal to have one million Israelis employed in the technology sector includes funding to integrate more Arab citizens, acknowledging the need for their participation.⁴⁵ The business sector is also involved in these efforts, with support from civil

³⁹ For example Shared Paths, which offers guided, Hebrew-language tours by local community leaders of Arab localities. It was launched 15 years ago within the NGO Sikkuy-Aufoq but is now an independent organization. Other organizations not mapped here but doing similar work include [Sindiyanan](#) of Galilee and [Otzrot Hagalil](#) (Treasures of the Galilee).

⁴⁰ Examples include [Kesem Hamidbar](#) (Desert Magic) which engages Jewish citizens with Bedouin life and culture in the Negev and a festival that brings visitors to the Galilee and Golan during the [olive harvest](#).

⁴¹ Examples include the [Representation Index](#) work by Sikkuy-Aufoq, The Seventh Eye magazine, and the [Media as a Shared Space](#) work by the Abraham Initiatives.

⁴² One example of such grassroots organizations is Standing Together.

⁴³ Examples include [Shaharit](#) and [Darkenu](#) (not included in the mapping), and the Living Together initiative.

⁴⁴ Examples include The Alliance, Have You Seen the Horizon Lately?, and aChord.

⁴⁵ Abu Much, Arab-Israelis, ultra-Orthodox, 2022.

society organizations.⁴⁶ The Ministry of Interior's Regional Cluster system recognizes the need to address the different challenges of Jewish and Arab local authorities in order to strengthen local authorities and build new capacities for regional development.⁴⁷ Major NGOs providing services and promoting policies on the national level are developing so-called Arab society departments and looking to address the specific manifestations of the issues they promote in Arab society, understanding that this is a critical precondition for social change. For example, the Israeli Internet Association is looking to close the digital gap between Jewish and Arab communities;⁴⁸ Smoke Free Israel, which has set the goal of a single digit percentage of smokers in Israel by 2030, has recently launched an initiative in Arab communities, where there is a high rate of smoking;⁴⁹ and the TOP15 Initiative, which promotes STEM education, focuses on Arab students.⁵⁰

7- Grassroots work in neighboring communities

Finally, there seems to be a growing trend of Jews and Arabs across the country who feel compelled to organize grassroots initiatives of all shapes and sizes without waiting for the government, civil society, or any other external factor. These initiatives are sporadic and unmanaged and often the result of individual impulses, and little is known about their impact, reach, or sustainability. They are often voluntary or require very little funding and might include encounters between neighboring schools or parents' groups, joint environmental initiatives, or musical and sports events.⁵¹ Several took shape during the Covid-19 pandemic⁵² and following the May 2021 events.⁵³

There has been no mapping or evaluation of these grassroots initiatives, and therefore no data is available regarding their number, breadth, quality, or impact. Furthermore, they do not necessarily align with the agendas of civil society organizations, some of whom warn against unstructured encounters. Nonetheless, it is evident that these initiatives form a notable trend in today's shared society building.

C. Today's Shared Society Landscape: Driving Forces

This report offers an in-depth mapping of two forces shaping shared society today: civil society organizations, and the funders supporting their work. Before discussing these, however, it is important to consider two additional forces that propel the work and influence the relevant spheres: government investment and internal processes in Arab society.

1- Government investment

The last decade has seen unprecedented and growing government investment in economic development in Arab society, specifically improving integration in higher education⁵⁴ and the workforce, stemming from recognition of their importance for the Israeli economy. While disparities between Jews and Arabs remain high, these government investments have narrowed socioeconomic gaps somewhat and enhanced the mixing of Jews and Arabs in spheres that were previously almost exclusively Jewish. These investments have significantly impacted shared society building by enhancing economic integration work of civil society and various funders and prompting others to focus on unaddressed spheres such as shared society and identity, especially because there has been little to no significant government investment in shared society work.⁵⁵

⁴⁶ Examples include Co-Impact, itworks, Kav Mashve, and Tsofen.

⁴⁷ For more on the Regional Cluster system, see https://www.thejoint.org.il/elka-en/success-stories/regional_clusters

⁴⁸ Israel Internet Association, Internet in Arab Society, 2019 (Hebrew with English executive summary).

⁴⁹ <https://smokefree.org.il/main-english/>

⁵⁰ <https://sheatufim.org.il/en/subject/collective-impact/5x2-expanding-circle-excellence/>

⁵¹ For example, parent's groups in the [Hof HaCarmel region](#), [initiatives in neighboring communities in the Jezreel Valley and Tivon areas](#) and [a hackathon on urban agriculture held in cooperation between Kafr Qasem and Rosh Ha'ayin](#), and [joint horseback riding](#). (All links here are in Hebrew)

⁵² Merkaz Ha'inyanim, The Beautiful Side of COVID, 2020.

⁵³ <https://twitter.com/akivanovick/status/1393211983869235200?lang=he> (Hebrew).

⁵⁴ For example, investments in higher education have led to the doubling of Arab students attending Israeli colleges and universities in less than a decade. For more, see [Council of Higher Education](#).

⁵⁵ With the exception of the Shared Life Education Headquarters at the Ministry of Education that invests approximately NIS 2 million annually in this sphere.

A telling example of this lack of investment is the education system. In August 2008, Prof. Yuli Tamir, then minister of education, appointed a public committee to define policy in the field of shared life education for Jews and Arabs. In January 2009, the committee submitted its report, which emphasized the need to foster “partnership” between the two communities and provided a detailed work plan for “shared life education from kindergarten to 12th grade”⁵⁶ with an estimated annual budget of NIS 10 million. The government accepted the recommendations, but implementation stalled following leadership changes in 2009.⁵⁷

Recently, over a decade later and in the wake of the May 2021 events, the Ministry of Education established a new committee for shared life education. Though yet to act, the committee’s establishment is one of the few examples of the government working on shared society issues outside the economic sphere in recent years.⁵⁸

2- Internal processes in Arab society

Economic pulls and pushes have created a more mixed reality in Israel than ever before. Government investment and, to a lesser extent, philanthropic investment has led to the growth of an Arab middle class,⁵⁹ pulling more Arab citizens into historically Jewish spaces like academia and the labor market (e.g., the public, media, and technology sectors). In parallel, a severe lack of housing and employment opportunities and poor municipal services in Arab cities have pushed Arab families, especially the middle classes, to move to Jewish cities.⁶⁰ These two forces have resulted in increasingly mixed and integrated spaces. One NGO director said that mixed and integrated spaces could “serve as a platform for shared life,” but if unattended might become “a battlefield,” with May 2021 constituting a cautionary case study.

Another force mentioned by interviewees as affecting shared society building, is the alarmingly high prevalence of crime and violence in the Arab community.⁶¹ This is so threatening to the personal safety of Arab citizens within their immediate surroundings that it can be said to push shared society building further down on the agenda. Jewish society, on the other hand, is less exposed to this harsh reality, which leads to gaps in perceptions. Furthermore, Arab society feels betrayed by government authorities, such as the Israel Police, and left to cope with the phenomenon on its own, which, in turn, exacerbates frustration and mistrust. It can be assumed that all of this hurts shared society efforts, but this issue is yet to be properly examined.

⁵⁶ The plan included: the integration of shared life education within civics, history, geography, and literature; the integration of Arabic language and culture education in Jewish schools; long-term Jewish–Arab student encounters designed by professionals; and the development of methodological and pedagogic materials including training for teachers, principals, and inspectors.

⁵⁷ State Comptroller, Education for Shared Life, 2016.

⁵⁸ Ultimately, the Ministry of Education’s investment in shared life education is meager and reaches only a tiny percentage of all students in Israel – only 1.4% of all middle and high school students “participated in shared learning between different education streams” in the 2019/20 school year, and less than 0.5% of all schools had participated in the Israeli Hope Initiative as of the 2018/19 school year. State Comptroller. Education for Shared Life, 2021.

⁵⁹ Haider, *The Growth and Formation*, 2019.

⁶⁰ Abu Much, *The New Mixed Cities*, 2020; Baker Diab, Shdema, and Schnell, *Arab Integration, 2021*; Saadeh, *A Growing Arab Middle Class*, 2015.

⁶¹ Nohad and Lewin-Chen, *Violence, Crime and Policing*, 2019.

List of Interviewees

Field Organizations' Representatives and Experts

*Organized alphabetically by organization name

Organization	Interviewees	Title	About (Excerpts from the organizations' websites)	Website
The Abraham Initiatives	Amnon Be'eri Sulitzeanu	Co-Director	The Abraham Initiatives strives to fulfill the promise of full and equal citizenship and complete equality of social and political rights for Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens, as embodied in Israel's Declaration of Independence.	https://abrahaminitiatives.org/
	Dr. Thabet Abu Rass	Co-Director		
AJEEC-NISPED	Ariel Dloomi	Co-Director	AJEEC-NISPED is a non-profit organization dedicated to social change and Arab-Jewish partnership. The organization's areas of engagement include community volunteerism, quality early childhood education, socioeconomic development, health promotion and Arab-Jewish partnership.	https://ajeec-nisped.org.il/?page_id=17021&lang=en
	Sliman Alamour	Co-Director		
aChord	Ron Gerlitz	Executive Director	aChord Center is a unique capacity building organization that strives to improve the efficacy of activity for shared society in Israel. aChord Center was established in response to the field's need for practical knowledge and innovative tools to best deal with psychological barriers in intergroup relations.	https://en.achord.huji.ac.il/
A New Way	Erez Bar	Executive Director	Founded in 1998, "A New Way" is committed to building a shared society in Israel. Its work focuses on the need to generate long-term multicultural processes that will allow Jews and Arabs to have highly meaningful interaction in the formal educational system and their local communities.	https://en.anewway.org.il/
Beit Hagefen	Assaf Ron	CEO	Beit Ha'Gefen, an Arab-Jewish center founded in 1963 as a pioneer in the field of intercultural dialogue, is a nonprofit organization that strives to establish equalitarian and shared spaces that contain the diversity of identities and cultures in Israel and worldwide.	https://www.beit-hagefen.com/index.aspx?lang=2
CET - The Center for Educational Technology	Noa Shapira	Head of Shared Society Team	CET is a non-profit organization promoting innovative learning by introducing solutions that integrate pedagogical innovation, relevant content and advanced technologies.	https://home.cet.ac.il/?lang=en
Co-Impact	Nawa Jahshan Batshon	CEO	Co-Impact is a partnership initiative integrating Arab society in employment, the economy and society in Israel.	https://co-impact.org.il/?lang=en
Givat Haviva	Michal Sella	CEO	Givat Haviva is a civil society organization for social change associated with the Havatzelet Group that strives to create a model society in Israel, emphasizing the importance of a Jewish and Arab shared society.	https://www.givathaviva.org/
	Imran Kinana	Director of the Jewish-Arab Center for Peace		
	Mohammad Darawshe	Director of Strategy		
Hagar: Jewish-Arab Education for Equality	Sam Shube	Executive Director	Hagar is dedicated to creating a shared space for Jewish and Arab residents of the Negev - a space based on the foundations of multiculturalism, bilingualism and equality.	https://www.hajar.org.il/en/home/
Hand in Hand	Dani Elazer	CEO	Hand in Hand is building inclusion and equality between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel through a growing network of bilingual, integrated schools and communities.	https://www.handinhandk12.org/
	Mohamad Marzook	Director of the Community Department		

Organization	Interviewees	Title	About (Excerpts from the organizations' websites)	Website
Itach-Ma'aki–Women Lawyers for Social Justice	Ela Alon	Executive Director	Itach-Ma'aki was established in 2001 to give voice to women subject to social, geographic, national, ethnic and economic discrimination in Israeli society.	http://www.itach.org.il/?lang=en
itworks	Ifat Baron	Founder and CEO	itworks works to narrow employment gaps and promote diversity in Israel's booming high-tech industry.	https://itworks.org.il/
Kav Mashve	Sami Asaad	CEO	Kav Mashve promotes the successful integration of Arab professionals in the Israeli business sector, in positions that are commensurate with their skills and education.	http://kavmashve.org.il/en/kav-mashve/
	Jiska Cohen	Director of Resource Development		
Living Together	Gali Sambira	Professional Director	The Living Together Center is an initiative working systematically to help create a new social partnership. The project embraces the whole range of communities and sectors in Israeli society, appreciating the inherent richness of that diversity.	http://livingtogether.org.il/en/
	Orit Ylzari	Director		
Mabat	Lior Shorer	CEO	Based on leading multicultural education models, Mabat was founded in 2008 to address challenges with diversity at Israeli college campuses.	https://mabat.org/english/
Madrasa	Daniel Dotan	Founder and CEO	A social, technological, community-oriented initiative for learning Colloquial Arabic and promoting better communication between the different parts of Israeli society.	https://www.madrasafree.com/about-en
	Gilad Sevitt	Founder and R&D Director		
Mahapach-Taghir	Lital Ayalon	Co-Director	Mahapach-Taghir is a feminist, educational, communal organization that operates in a Jewish – Palestinian partnership among and within communities on the social and geographical periphery. The organization operates through local activism to promote social justice, solidarity, and community resilience, with the aim of building an equal and democratic society.	https://mahapach-taghir.org/en/home/
	Mona Arok	Co-Director		
Merchavim	Michal Pinchuk	CEO	Merchavim is a non-profit which has been working since 1998 to advance diversity, equality and inclusion in Israel, in the school system and private and public organizations.	https://www.machon-merchavim.org.il/en/
Neve Shalom/Wahat El Salam	Roi Silberberg	CEO	The School for Peace (SFP) at Neve Shalom – Wahat al-Salam (NSWAS) works with Jewish and Palestinian professional groups, women and youth through workshops, training programs and special projects, aimed to develop participants' awareness of the conflict and their role in it, enabling them to take responsibility to change the present relations between Jews and Palestinians.	https://sfpeace.org/
Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue	Sarah Bernstein	Executive Director	The Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue is an interreligious organization based in Jerusalem which promotes an inclusive society for all religious, ethnic and national groups.	https://rossingcenter.org/
	Vivian Rabia	Open House Program Director		
Sadaka-Reut	Dina Gardashkin	Co-Director	Sadaka-Reut is an Arab–Jewish Youth Partnership that brings together Palestinian and Jewish activists who work together to build bi-national partnership. This partnership will be achieved by recognizing and taking responsibility for the inherent injustice in the current reality and by correcting this injustice as the foundation for a shared future for both peoples, together with other minorities that live in Israel.	https://www.reutsadaka.org/about-us-2/
	Ibrahim Taha	Co-Director		

Organization	Interviewees	Title	About (Excerpts from the organizations' websites)	Website
Shalom Hartman Institute	Donniel Hartman	President	The Shalom Hartman Institute is a leading center of Jewish thought and education, serving Israel and North America. Its mission is to strengthen Jewish peoplehood, identity, and pluralism; to enhance the Jewish and democratic character of Israel; and to ensure that Judaism is a compelling force for good in the 21st century.	https://www.hartman.org.il/
	Itay Yavin	Director, Min HaBe'erot		
	Ronit Heyd	Vice President, Director of the Center for Israeli and Jewish Identity		
Shared Paths	Gili Rei	Co-Chair	Shared Path is Jewish Arab organization promoting shared society through social and educational tourism in Arab towns in Israel.	https://www.sharedpaths.org.il/
	Khalil Marei	Co-Chair		
Shatil	Esther Sivan	Director	Shatil has a central role in building and empowering Israeli civil society. Shatil support organizations and activists working to strengthen democratic society, offering cutting-edge capacity building, training, and guidance.	https://english.shatil.org.il/
	Ella Yedaya	Head of Democracy and Civil Rights		
	Fidaa Nara Abu Dbai	Head of the Haifa Branch and Shared Society		
Sikkuy-Aufoq	Amjad Shbita	Co-Director	Sikkuy-Aufoq is a shared Jewish and Arab nonprofit organization that works to advance equality and partnership between the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the country's Jewish citizens. Since its founding in 1991, Sikkuy-Aufoq has sought to bring an end to the longstanding discrimination and ongoing inequality between these two groups and lay the foundation for a truly shared society.	https://www.sikkuy-aufoq.org.il/en/
	Ofer Dagan	Co-Director		
Standing Together	Alon-Lee Green	National Co-Director	Standing Together is a grassroots movement mobilizing Jews and Palestinians from all over Israel in pursuit of peace, equality, social and climate justice.	https://www.standing-together.org/en
	Rula Daoud	National Co-Director		
The Alliance	Michael Manekin	Director	The Alliance Fellowship is an action-based elite network for up-and-coming progressive political leaders who are focused on promoting civic equality.	https://thealliance.org.il/
	Nasreen Haddad Hajyahya	Board Co-Chair		
The Arab-Hebrew Theater of Jaffa	Igal Ezrati	CEO	The theatre, situated in Jaffa, creates a unique theatrical language making use of the challenging space with the rich human fabric that exists in Jaffa.	http://www.arab-hebrew-theatre.org.il/en/index.php
Tsofen	Revital Duek	Co-CEO	Tsofen is a non-profit organization, founded in 2008 by Jewish and Arab hi-tech professionals and economists who aspired to develop the hi-tech sector in the Arab community as an economic lever and catalyst for shared society in Israel.	https://www.tsofen.org/
	Sami Saadi	Former Co-CEO		
Umm El Fahem Art Gallery	Said Abu Shakra	CEO	The Umm al Fahm Gallery promotes Palestinian art and artists and dialogue between all sectors of the Israeli society.	https://www.ummelfahemgallery.com/
Van Leer Institute	Assaf David	Director of the Israel in the Middle East Cluster	The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute cultivates innovative interdisciplinary research into publicly significant questions, reflecting a commitment to a just, open society, well-integrated in the region.	https://www.vanleer.org.il/en/
	Ameer Fakhoury	Expert		
	Dr. Arik Rudnitzky	Expert		
	Shuli Dichter	Expert		

Federations' Representatives and Funders

FEDERATIONS – COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE

Greater Miami Jewish Federation		
Jewish Federation of Greater Houston		
Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City		
Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh		
Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County		
The Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago		

FEDERATIONS – INTERVIEWED	Interviewee	Title
Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston - Boston-Haifa Partnership	Hila Perlman	Director, Haifa-Boston Partnership
Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco	Barak Loozon	Israel Office Director
Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ	Amir Shaham	Associate Executive VP, Global Connections
UJA-Federation of New York	Rebecca Katz-White	Planning Director
	Ruthie Saragosti	Director of Strategic Planning
	Yael Israel-Cohen	Senior Planning Executive

FOUNDATIONS	Interviewee	Title
Anonymous Family Foundation	Batya Kallus	Philanthropic Advisor
Arnou Family Fund	Joshua Arnou	Board Member
Edmond de Rothschild Foundation	Elli Booch	Director of Philanthropy
	Ahmad Mwassi	Program Officer - Arab Community
Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation	Brenda Bodenheimer Zlatin	Senior Program Officer
Klarman Foundation	Lauren Fogel	Senior Advisor
Naomi and Nehemia Cohen Foundation	Stuart Brown	Board Director, Treasurer
New Israel Fund	Mickey Gitzin	Director
Sam and Bella Sebba Charitable Foundation	Dorit Karlin	Israel Grant Consultant
Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society	Josh Arnou	Co-Chair
	Alan Divack	Co-Chair
	Batya Kallus	Israel Director
Schocken Foundation	Lilli Stern	Managing Director
Slifka Foundation	Sarah Silver	Executive Director
	Michal Strisover	Consultant, Program Officer, Israel
Ted Arison Family Foundation	Mike Preshkar	Senior Advisor for Strategic Partnerships
The Dov Lautman Foundation	Yael Neeman	Executive Director
The Pears Foundation	Dina Gidron	Representative in Israel
The Rayne Foundation	Nurit Gordon	Grants Manager, Israel

Questionnaires for Field Organizations and Federations/Funders

Questionnaire for Field Organizations

To advance data collection, we would like to ask you the following questions:

1. Does your organization, or do you as a director, have a definition for shared society between Jews and Arabs in Israel? Do you have an organizational vision for shared society?
2. How long has your organization been active in the field of shared society, and why is promoting it important to you?
3. Describe your organization's activities and projects related to shared society:
 - Rationale and project objectives (why did you chose these topics and populations);
 - Areas of activity;
 - Regions and target audiences – how many participants are there in the project, and where? How long is their participation? How do you define a participant? What are their age ranges? How many participants complete all relevant programs each year? Do you aim to reach the largest possible number of participants, or do you focus on small groups?
 - What methodologies do you use to reach the program objectives?
 - What are your achievements? How do you define success (what indicators do you use)?
 - Do you evaluate your activities? If yes, internally or externally?
 - What are the main challenges in your work?
4. Are these significant landmarks (in the external reality/in Jewish–Arab relations) that led you to change your activities in the field? What were they, and what change did they create?
5. From your perspective, what are the current central challenges facing shared society building between Jews and Arabs in Israel? Have those challenges changed in recent years?
6. Did the events of May 2021 influence your activity or organization in the field? If yes, how? Did you initiate new projects? Did you stop certain activities? Did you initiate or stop any internal activity?
7. What are your main insights from working with philanthropy in the field of shared society? What works well? What is more difficult? Do you have experience working specifically with Jewish Federations, and if yes, what is it?
8. In which arenas/communities/foci would you recommend civil society and philanthropy to enter, expand, or deepen its involvement? In other words – what is missing today in the field of shared society building between Jews and Arabs, in your opinion?
9. Do you have written materials that describe shared society in Israel and your work in the field that we could review and use for the mapping?

Questionnaire for Federations and Foundations

To advance data collection, we are specifically looking for the following information regarding your Federation's/foundation's investments, work, and conceptual thinking on this sphere, including:

1. How long has the Federation/foundation supported shared society/shared life work between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel? How did this issue become a focus of your work in Israel?
2. Do you have your own definition of this sphere – i.e. what constitutes “shared society”, what specific aspects of this sphere you are interested in supporting, and why?
3. What have your main foci been over the years? Has this changed? If so, why?
4. Can you provide a ballpark estimate of the annual amount invested in these issues over the years? Has this changed significantly? If so, why?
5. What have been some of your major insights from this investment over the years
 - (a) in terms of your own community/foundation's engagement, internal agendas, education, community support, etc.
 - (b) in terms of impact on the ground, relationships with grantee organizations, etc.
6. Have you done any specific thinking or conducted any discussion after the May 2021 clashes? Please elaborate.
7. What would you say are the main questions that you would like to see answered in the scope of this research? How could this research serve your Federation's/foundation's need specifically?
8. Are there any written materials you can share with us from discussions or evaluation work conducted by the Federation/foundation on this sphere? Anything else you can share with us to help with insights and data collection?

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Full List of Organizations Reviewed

* Hebrew website only

** Found within an external database

*** No active website found

No.	ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED	WEBSITE
1.	A New Way	https://www.anewway.org.il/en
2.	Abraham Initiatives	https://abrahaminitiatives.org/
3.	aChord	https://en.achord.huji.ac.il/
4.	Ajeec Nisped	https://ajeec-nisped.org.il/?page_id=17021&lang=en
5.	Beit Hagefen	https://www.beit-hagefen.com/?lang=2#secondPage
6.	CET - The Center for Educational Technology	https://home.cet.ac.il/?lang=en
7.	Co-Impact	https://co-impact.org.il/about/?lang=en
8.	Dov Lautman Forum for Education *	https://lautmaneduforum.org.il/
9.	Givat Haviva	https://www.givathaviva.org/
10.	Hagar: Jewish Arab Education for Equality	https://www.hajar.org.il/en/home/
11.	Hand in Hand	https://www.handinhandk12.org/
12.	Itach-Ma'aki	http://www.itach.org.il/?lang=en
13.	itworks	https://itworks.org.il/
14.	Jaffa Theatre	https://www.arab-hebrew-theatre.org.il/en/
15.	Kav Mashve	https://kavmashve.org.il/en/
16.	Living Together	http://livingtogether.org.il/en/living-together/
17.	Mabat	https://mabat.org/english/
18.	Madrasa	https://madrasafree.com/about-en
19.	Mahapach-Taghir	https://mahapach-taghir.org/en/home/
20.	Merchavim	https://www.machon-merchavim.org.il/en/
21.	PeacePlayers	https://peaceplayers.org/middle-east/
22.	Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue	https://www.rossingcenter.org/
23.	Sadaka-Reut Arab Jewish Youth Partnership	https://www.reutsadaka.org/
24.	Shalom Hartman Institute	https://www.hartman.org.il/
25.	Shared Paths *	https://www.sharedpaths.org.il/
26.	Shatil - The New Israel Fund	https://english.shatil.org.il/
27.	Sikkuy-Aufoq	https://www.sikkuy-aufoq.org.il/en/
28.	Standing Together	https://www.standing-together.org/en
29.	The Alliance	https://thealliance.org.il/
30.	The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute	https://www.vanleer.org.il/en/projects/maktoob-and-the-translators-forum/
31.	Tsofen	https://www.tsofen.org/
32.	Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery	https://www.ummelfahemgallery.com/
33.	Wahat al-Salam Neve Shalom	https://www.wasns.org/

No.	Additional Organizations Reviewed	WEBSITE
34.	A Land for All	https://www.alandforall.org/english/?d=ltr
35.	A New Dawn in the Negev	http://anewdawninthenegev.org/
36.	Abu Jameel Farm * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/abujameelranch/
37.	Adalah	https://www.adalah.org/en
38.	AlManarah Association	https://almanarah.org/?lang=en
39.	Al-Tufula	https://www.altufula.org/en
40.	Amal Multidisciplinary Group -Educational Network	http://www.amalnet.k12.il/about-amal-new/
41.	Amanina *	https://www.amanina.net/copy-of-alreysyh
42.	Andalus ***	---
43.	ANU	https://www.anu.org.il/english
44.	Ayna: Arab-Jewish Artists	https://www.facebook.com/ayna.arabjewishart/
45.	Beresheet Lashalom	https://www.beresheetlashalom.org/?lang=en
46.	Besod Siach * (**)	http://lautmaneduforum.org.il/organizations/%D7%A2%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%AA-%D7%91%D7%A1%D7%95%D7%93-%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%97/
47.	Beyond Words *	http://www.beyondwords.org.il/
48.	Bimkom	https://bimkom.org/eng/home-mobile/
49.	Budo For Peace	https://www.facebook.com/budoforpeace/
50.	Catchball Friendship League	https://www.catchball-friendshipleague.com/
51.	Citizens Build a Community **	https://www.iataskforce.org/entities/view/103#:~:text=%22Citizens%20Build%20a%20Community%22%20works,employment%20and%20building%20successful%20careers.
52.	Common Language * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/%D7%A9%D7%A4%D7%94-%D7%9E%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%A4%D7%AA-1411414942436726/
53.	Desert Stars	https://www.desertstars.org.il/homepage-english
54.	Dolphins Club	https://www.facebook.com/akkodolphins/
55.	Education 2 Democracy **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/education-2-democracy/
56.	Ein Bustan (Maayan Babustan) * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/EinBustan/
57.	Elmina *	https://www.elminajaffa.com/
58.	Galilee for All **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/galile-for-all/
59.	Games For Peace	https://www.gamesforpeace.org/
60.	Green Tapestry Wadi-Ara	http://wadiara.org.il/
61.	HaGal Sheli	https://hagalsheli.co.il/en/english-home/
62.	Haredim Laketzev *	http://www.strongers.org.il/

No.	Additional Organizations Reviewed	WEBSITE
63.	Have You Seen the Horizon Lately * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/haveyouseenthehorizon/
64.	High Follow Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel **	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Follow-Up_Committee_for_Arab_Citizens_of_Israel
65.	I'lam	https://www.ilam-center.org/en/default.aspx
66.	In One place	https://in-oneplace.net/
67.	In Sun **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/%d7%90%d7%99%d7%a0%d7%a1%d7%90%d7%9f-in-sun/
68.	Injaz	https://inzaj.org.il/en/1172-2/
69.	Israel Sci-Tech (Ort Israel)	https://en.ort.org.il/
70.	Israeli Hope * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/israelihope/
71.	Israeli Hope in Academia *	https://rothschildcp.com/%d7%aa%d7%a7%d7%95%d7%95%d7%94-%d7%99%d7%a9%d7%a8%d7%90%d7%9c%d7%99%d7%aa-%d7%91%d7%90%d7%a7%d7%93%d7%9e%d7%99%d7%94/
72.	Israeli Salad	https://www.israelisalad.org/
73.	Jasmine	https://en.jasmine.org.il/
74.	Jindas	https://jindas.org.il/en/
75.	Kaleidoscope	https://kaleidoscope.org.il/
76.	Kayan-Feminist Organizations	https://www.kayanfeminist.org/home-page
77.	Keren BeKavod *	https://www.kerenbekavod.org/copy-of-1
78.	Kfar Galim	https://kfarGalim.co.il/english/
79.	Kick Racism out of Israeli Football * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/kickitout.IL/
80.	Konrad Adenauer Program for Jewish–Arab Cooperation – Tel Aviv University	https://dayan.org/content/konrad-adenauer-program-Jewish-Arab-cooperation
81.	Krembo Wings	https://www.krembo.org.il/en/
82.	Ma'ase *	https://maase.org.il/
83.	Maayan Bamidbar *	https://maayanbamidbar.com/
84.	Magaleem-Halakot **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/maagalim-halakot/
85.	Marching Together *	https://www.marching-together.com/
86.	Midreshet Dror *	https://www.midreshet-dror.com/
87.	Ministry of Education – National Civic Education and Shared Living Unit *	https://pop.education.gov.il/headquarters-civil-education-co-existence/
88.	Mofet Institute	https://mofet-web.macam.ac.il/international/
89.	National Council of Arab Mayors ***	---
90.	Near - Bringing People Closer in a Multicultural Society	https://www.near.org.il/
91.	Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality	https://www.dukium.org/

No.	Additional Organizations Reviewed	WEBSITE
92.	Neighbors at Peace * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/groups/1515378448692261/
93.	Olim Al Hagal * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/olimAlHagal/
94.	Oranim College of Education	http://en.oranim.ac.il/
95.	Orchard "Shared Landscape" **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/orchard-share-d-landscape/
96.	PARDES – A Center of Education for Values	https://pardesnet.org/%d7%a8%d7%90%d7%a9%d7%99/english/
97.	Pathways Experience Israel	https://pathwaysisrael.com/
98.	Polyphony	https://www.polyphony-education.com/
99.	Psifas * (**)	https://www.facebook.com/psiphas1/
100.	Rana Arab- Jewish Women's Choir	https://ranachoir.com/en/home-page-english/
101.	Sha'ar la'Adam - Bab l'ilInsan	http://www.adam-insan.org.il/
102.	Shaharit	https://www.shaharit.org.il/?lang=en
103.	Sheatufim Home for Collective Impact	https://sheatufim.org.il/en/home-page/
104.	Sidreh-Lakiya	https://www.sidreh.org/
105.	Sindyanna of Galilee	https://www.sindyanna.com/
106.	Sipur Hikaya	https://www.sipur-hikaya.org/en
107.	Siraj – Advancing Hi-Tech in the Bedouin Community	https://www.siraj-ngo.org/
108.	Social Workers for Peace and Social Welfare **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/ossim-shalom-social-workers-for-peace-and-welfare/
109.	Special Olympics Israel	http://specialolympicsisrael.org/special-olympics-israel/
110.	Tag Meir United Against Racism	https://www.tag-meir.org.il/en/
111.	Tamar Center Negev	http://mtamar.org.il/en/
112.	Tarbut Movement	https://tarbutmovement.org/en/
113.	TEC Center Technology, Education and Cultural Diversity	https://mofet-web.macam.ac.il/tec/en/center/
114.	Tennis for All -a Freddie Krivine Initiative	https://fkf-tennis.org/about-us/
115.	The Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace	http://www.adaminstitute.org.il/language/en/home_en/
116.	The Arab Center for Alternative Planning	https://www.ac-ap.org/en/
117.	The Association for Civil Rights in Israel	https://www.english.acri.org.il/
118.	The Center for the Advancement of Shared Society – Beit Berl College	https://www.beitberl.ac.il/english/research/pages/advancement.aspx
119.	The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism & Diversity – Hebrew University	https://csmd.huji.ac.il/
120.	The Citizens' Accord Forum	https://www.caf.org.il/
121.	The Edmond de Rothschild Partnerships	https://rothschildcp.com/english/
122.	The Equalizer Group	https://en.the-equalizer.org/
123.	The Forum for Regional Thinking	https://www.regthink.org/en/

No.	Additional Organizations Reviewed	WEBSITE
124.	The Galilee Multicultural Theatre - Zikit	https://www.thegalilee.org/
125.	The Israel Democracy Institute	https://en.idi.org.il/
126.	The Jewish Arab Center - Haifa University	http://jac.haifa.ac.il/index.php/en/
127.	The Mezach Network – Sapir College	https://www.sapir.ac.il/en/node/901
128.	The Orchard of Abraham's Children **	https://dialogtogether.com/en/organisations/the-orchard-of-abrahams-children/
129.	The Peres Center for Peace and Innovation	https://www.peres-center.org/en
130.	The voice of Youth Ensemble	https://en.kolhanoar.com/
131.	This is not an Ulpan	https://www.thisisnotanulpan.com/
132.	Together - Vouch For Each Other	https://en.b-azz.org/
133.	Topaz - Leading Social Innovations	https://www.topaz.org.il/en/
134.	Uriel Center – Training Center for Council Facilitators	https://www.urielcenter.co.il/uriel-council/
135.	Value Sports	https://valuesports.org/en/home/
136.	Women Against Violence	https://www.wavo.org/en
137.	Zazim	https://www.zazim.org.il/en/home
138.	Zimbalista Music Factory -Composing Through Culture	https://zimbalistamf.com/
139.	Zumu - Museum on the Move	https://en.zumu.org.il/home/