



"صدقة-رעות" - شراكة شبابية عربية يهودية
"סדאקה רעות" - שותפות נוער ערבי יהודי
"Sadaka-Reut" - Arab Jewish Youth Partnership

Sadaka Reut

Arab Jewish Youth Partnership



Trimester Report
Segment II, January-April 2006

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Introduction

Now more than half way through the 2005-2006 activity year, we at Sadaka Reut still face many challenges in our work. However, we feel that we can look back with some pride at our accomplishments thus far, and to glance forward with high anticipation as to what the remaining months of the year will bring. This report will describe in detail the events, difficulties and achievements of the past four months as we continue working toward our goal of creating a more just civil society; one based on multiculturalism, equality, tolerance and peace.



Our **'Toward a Common Future'** in-school tolerance education program has continued to develop and expand both in size and in its educational contents. The **'Building a Culture of Peace'** Arab-Jewish youth dialogue and leadership groups' program is facing continuing and new challenges. Nevertheless, youth groups are meeting, dialoging and initiating joint actions –

showing an alternative to the segregated reality.

The members of the **'One Year of Life for Coexistence'** leadership training program are continuing their training and practical experience- working in various levels of social change-promoting programs for youth and the Jaffa community. Both as individuals and as a group, they have demonstrated tremendous maturity and growth as they have dealt with the challenges of the year and produced impressive work for the organization. Additionally, the **'Markaz'** - center for bi-national activism in Jaffa, initiated by graduates of the leadership program, continues to grow and develop; running innovative projects and events in the local mixed community.

We hope you will enjoy hearing about our projects and activities and that you can share our excitement and pride in the work we do. We appreciate your time and support as we continue our efforts to promote an alternative to the conflicted reality of this area, and a different future for our youth.

‘Toward a Common Future’- Tolerance education workshops

For many years, Sadaka Reut's work was focused in the realm of informal education. Our encounters with the formal Israeli educational system were largely limited to short conversations or one-time workshops for our 'Building a Culture of Peace' youth group recruitments. A relatively small percentage of the youth we met in schools joined our weekly informal groups and we had no further contact with the rest of the students. As an organization aiming to educate youth on values of peace and coexistence, we felt the need to reach a wider spectrum of Israeli youth, especially those who might not chose to participate in bi-national activities. With that goal in mind, in activity year 2003-2004 we initiated a pilot program of tolerance education to be implemented in classes within the formal educational system and this project has grown steadily over the past two years. During that time, we developed a complete educational program and trained many Arab and Jewish facilitators to implement workshops on identity, tolerance and antiracism in high schools around the country.

This is still a growing and developing program and we keep on learning and improving our educational work from our experience in each school and each group of youth. Following that, dilemmas and challenges that need our attention keep on arising. One example is the question of bi-national facilitation in Jewish schools, which was one of the basic methods of this program from its beginning, and which has been re-examined to see if it is effective in all types of Jewish communities, or if in some cases uni-national, Jewish facilitation would produce better results.

As of now, we have completed our 2005-6 work in several schools and are in the final stages of implementation in several more. We are now in the midst of work for laying the foundations for next year- meeting with schools, upgrading the educational materials and so forth.

Educational work in schools – Jan-April 2006

During the first trimester of this 2005-6 activity year, we finished the implementation of this program in three high schools, two Jewish and one Arab. Now, in the second trimester, we continued our work in the Orthodox School in Ramle with a second group of students, and additionally conducted workshops in a Jewish school, Katzenelson high school in Kfar Saba. In another Arab school in Jaffa - 'Ajial' - work has begun last month, and will be reported on in the following report.

The Orthodox School, Ramle (Arab School)

Background: The city of Ramle is more than a thousand years old and during the 16th century, it was one of the most important urban centers in the area. Today, Ramle has a population of 67,000 people, which is approximately 20% Arab. The Arab population of the city originates partly from old families of Ramle, and partly from refugees of the 1948 war and from more recent immigration. The Arab population lives mainly on the perimeters of the old city and is considered to be of a lower socioeconomic class. Additionally, many of the citizens of Ramle are affected by problems of housing and education. The Orthodox school was established in 1991 by an NGO as a private school for the Arab community, and teaches both Muslim and Christian students, including many students from the nearby mixed city of Lod and several students from the Arab-Jewish village of Neve Shalom/Wahat is-Salam. The school staff reports considerable tension between the Muslim and Christian students, but the issue is not dealt with directly by the school's educational staff and curriculum.

Our cooperation with this school developed over the last few years. This year, we worked with the 9th graders in the previous trimester as well as with older students in the 2004-5 activity year. We found that building on this established relationship has been very helpful in improving communications between Sadaka Reut and the school, as well as designing more relevant and engaging workshops.

Preliminary work: This trimester, we worked with two groups of 10th graders, offering each group a series of seven workshops. We met with the school's principal, who offered his advice and support for planning the workshops. Additionally, we used preliminary questionnaires filled out by the students and evaluations from the 9th grade to determine what topics were most relevant and interesting for these students. Although we used our experience from earlier this year working with the 9th grade classes, we also adapted the educational process for the 10th graders, who are in their first year of high school and show a greater aptitude for deeper discussion.

The educational process: The program included two series of workshops implemented simultaneously with two groups of 10th grade students. As with the 9th grade students, the educational process was built to begin from a personal level of discussing identity and personal experiences of racism and discrimination, before addressing more general issues regarding the community and society as a whole. Additionally, we examined different social groups inside their own community.

Therefore, the first two workshops dealt with identity; first discussing identity in general, and then the personal identities of the individual students. We put an emphasis on how identity is relevant to their daily lives and how the students relate to their personal identities. After establishing this base, the next workshop moved on to issues of racism and stereotypes and how the students themselves view other identities. During this workshop, the issue of tension between Christians and Muslims surfaced. There were a range of opinions regarding this topic, including students who thought it was a major problem in their school and community and others who did not believe it existed. It was productive for the students to discuss this topic in an organized forum, because usually they avoid bringing up the issue for fear of increasing the tension and hurting the community.

The next several workshops continued with the issue of racism and also delved into subjects such as groups of belonging and segregation within their own communities and Israeli society at large. Next the groups discussed the idea of equality; whether or not it exists in their society and how to achieve it. Also during this workshop, they brought up issues of laws and government and what role they play in creating equality. The seventh and final workshop was designed to conclude the series and students discussed what questions the workshops brought up and what they learned from the experience.

Evaluation: After the completion of the workshops, we again met with the school's principal who gave positive feedback both regarding to the cooperation with the school and the educational work with the students. He emphasized that the school sees great importance in this program, and that he would like to continue the cooperation with Sadaka Reut and the TCF program in the coming year. Additionally, the students filled out post-workshop questionnaires aimed to examine both the impression of the youth from the program and some of its effect. In general, we can say that we received positive responses. Regarding one of the main goals of this program- encouraging motivation for bi-national dialogue, the questionnaires results show a significant increase- 88% of the students expressed interest in meeting with Jewish youth. One student wrote that he believes meeting with Jews and having the two communities get to know each other is the only way to solve the problems of racism in their society. Other students

commented on other elements of the program: *“the workshops provided an important foundation of knowledge for these discussion topics to continue”* and that *“the workshops helped clarify the identity of the ‘other’ and build relationships within the class.”* Students also expressed interest in continuing conversations and learning more about issues explored during the workshops, such as: Muslim-Christian relations, women’s roles in society and the Israeli-Palestinian/Jewish-Arab conflict, none of which had previously been covered in their school curriculum.

Overall, we hope and believe that this program was a meaningful experience for the students in this school. According to the school’s reports and our evaluation, it seems that the modification of the workshops to the needs of the students, together with the fact that it was very unique compared to their regular curriculum, provided for a positive experience for these youth. It was their first real opportunity to dialogue in school, and we encouraged them to take this chance to express themselves freely. This of course is only the beginning of the process, and we intend to follow through and accompany the school’s staff and students in this path of dialogue. As of April 2006, we have already set date for the implementation of the ‘Toward a Common Future’ workshops in this school in the coming year.

Katzenelson, Kfar Saba (Jewish School)

Background: Kfar Saba is an average middle-class city in the center of Israel. Katzenelson is one of the five major high schools in the city and includes students from the city and surrounding area. The students also include youth from boarding houses, nearby kibbutzim and villages and some students from close by settlements in the occupied territories. Additionally, the school has a very small number of Arab students from Tira, a neighboring Arab city.

Preliminary work: Our three year long cooperation with Katzenelson has given us a good idea about what to expect when entering this school. To prepare ourselves for this workshop series, we met with the 10th grade educational director and teachers in order to discuss the contents of the workshops. Due to our established relationship with the school, these meetings were very productive and cooperation from the teachers and educational director was very helpful in designing the workshops. Also, it allowed the teachers to play an active role in planning this type of alternative curriculum. As with every school, students filled out preliminary questionnaires discussing their background in Arab-Jewish cooperation, as well as pre-existing stereotypes and attitudes.

The educational process: We worked with three classes divided into four groups of students, offering a series of four workshops to each group. One significant difference in this set of workshops, as opposed to others we had run previously in Jewish high schools, was our decision to use uni-national facilitation, rather than bi-national. This decision came after a long and careful deliberation process, as well as several meetings and discussions with facilitators. As was the goal with uni-national facilitation for workshops in Arab high schools, we believe that the uni-national atmosphere can contribute to a more open and honest discussion in this specific case. Due to this switch in facilitation methods, we had to adapt the workshops to this new style. It was a learning experience for the facilitators, but overall this was a positive one, which showed the importance of flexibility in this program, even on the level of facilitation.



In collaboration with the grade’s educational director and classroom teachers, we designed a workshop series that focused largely on issues within Israeli society, specifically within the Jewish community, addressing tensions that exist between immigrant communities, Jews of Middle Eastern origins (“Mizrachi Jews”), class issues and more. It was an educational decision

to address first the inner problems of the Jewish society, an issue closer and easier to discuss for the youth, and from there carry on to examine its effect on and by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The students discussed stereotypes and racism first as general topics, then treated different ways of critically approaching these issues in their society, also relating them to the conflict. Discussions on specific aspects of individual identities were meaningful for the students who were eager to express how they view themselves and the pride they feel for certain elements of their personal identities. Later workshops moved on to deal with the issue of collective narratives, how they are formed and how they fit in with the larger Jewish-Palestinian conflict. Even while discussing these more difficult and sometimes controversial issues, the students remained cooperative and interested. However, the seeping of the educational values and goals depends on more than the youth's cooperation and enjoyment in the workshops. This differs between the groups. Two of the groups showed during the program increasing levels of critical thinking and willingness to process new information and points of view. In another class, things were more difficult. The beginning stages of identity workshops went relatively smoothly, but as the issues came closer to the national conflict, the facilitators encountered objections from the class, and had trouble progressing effectively in the educational process.

Evaluation: As the workshop series ended just recently, we have not yet been to complete our evaluation process. We met with the schools' educational coordinator, who gave positive feedback regarding the success of the program and the students' experience. She referred mainly to the youth's cooperation with the program and to her observations in the change of discourse in the groups she observed. From the facilitators' reports and Sadaka Reut's educational directors' observations in the classes, we are expecting to see differences in the program's effects between the four groups, even though such was not noted by the schools' educational coordinator. We are still waiting to receive the post-workshop evaluations all the students will fill out, and then it will be possible to combine all the evaluation data to a more complete picture. The same can be said in regard to the evaluation of the facilitation method.

Future plans for the program

As said before, for this activity year we have one school in Jaffa still in process of program implementation. After its completion, we will be able to conduct a full evaluation of this year's program. In the meantime, the gathered information for this year comes together with the evaluation of this program in the past two years and is quite positive. The success of this project, as perceived by verbal and written evaluations from facilitators, students, teachers and administrators, as well as the interest and desire of many of the schools we have worked in to pursue the cooperation, has made us at Sadaka Reut proud and optimistic. Therefore, we have decided to continue and expand this program for the following year. Thus, we will be able to involve a larger number of youth and exposed them to alternative and important discussions about identity, racism, stereotypes and the Arab-Jewish conflict. We plan to continue working with some of the same schools as this year, with new classes and different groups of students and we are working to establish connections with additional schools to even further expand the scope of the project. We believe that the 'Toward a Common Future' program provides a new forum to strengthen Sadaka Reut, as an organization and as a youth movement, as it will present us with opportunities to meet with and have an impact on a greater number of youth.

‘Building a Culture of Peace’-

Dialogue and leadership groups for Arab and Jewish youth

For more than two decades, Sadaka Reut has worked with bi-national youth groups as part of the **‘Building a Culture of Peace’** program - a long term program that brings Arab and Jewish teenagers together for group-building, dialogue and joint activism. The unique extended nature of this program enables participants to go through a process of building trust and understanding, which allows for open and meaningful dialogue to occur. Our goals for this program go beyond honest dialogue facilitation; we encourage each group to work together in a joint community project, thereby helping others while acting as a model of Arab-Jewish cooperation for their community. We hope that through this program, the participants acquire leadership skills, a deeper understanding of the conflict and its repercussions on people’s lives, and a greater appreciation for the value of bi-national dialogue and collaboration.

While some groups this year are continuing their activity from last year, with the same members, other new groups, with new participants, have been established. For each of these groups, the educational directors of Sadaka Reut take into account the location and target audience in order to develop a unique educational program and set individual objectives. Our general process begins with several uni-national meetings to introduce participants to the ideas and goals of the group and then continues with weekly bi-national encounters that alternate meeting location between both home communities of the participants.

As the year developed, we encountered several dilemmas and challenges, some of them we had felt in past years, but which manifestations increased gradually. Working in the informal educational field as an Arab-Jewish movement in today’s conflicted reality poses much challenges. Problems such as difficulties in recruiting or maintaining parallel groups in Jewish and Arab communities became all too common. In light of these difficulties, we initiated a thorough thinking process regarding this program, and wish to learn both from the successes and setbacks of this and past years, to improve the format for the year to come. Nevertheless, our endeavors this year have shown results, and important educational work was done both in uni-national and bi-national groups. We are especially proud of our activism groups which has shown that Arab and Jewish youth can act together, opposing the reality around them and at the same time continue to dialogue, think and challenge themselves as a joint group in the Israeli-Palestinian reality.

Groups- background and activities

Emek Chefer-Taybeh

Emek Chefer is a district of small Jewish communities in the center of Israel, mostly of mid-socioeconomic level, that include rural communities, kibbutzim and small villages. Taybeh is a nearby Arab city, which suffers from long term neglect by the government and consequently, severe problems of poverty, drugs and crime. Despite their proximity, these two communities rarely have contact with each other.

This group, which was initiated last year by a youth member, began its work this year as a continuation process; all the participants in the group wanted to continue the dialogue process as well as the social ties that were created in the previous year. In the first months of the year, the group met relatively regularly, but as the year continued, the group members, mainly 12th graders, were unfortunately too busy with their school work and exams to continue with weekly meetings. The facilitators therefore continued the meetings on a lower frequency and

incorporated the youth in periodic nation-wide activities. In addition, with the help and efforts of the current group members, we began working to recruit younger participants, mainly 9th graders, with the hopes of establishing a new group that could work in the same area the following year. As we come closer to the end of the year, we have begun preparation work, and are trying to establish parallel uni-national processes in both the Jewish and Arab communities in order to give them skills in leadership and community work.

Additionally, although the 12th graders are no longer meeting regularly, they have remained involved in Sadaka Reut. Many of the former group members attended our most recent seminar and we have been in touch with several of them as possible candidates to join the 'One Year of Life for Coexistence' leadership training program next year.

Tel Aviv-Jaffa: activism and theater groups

Jaffa is an ancient port city, which was once one of the most important urban centers in the Middle East. Directly north of Jaffa, the Jewish city of Tel Aviv was established in 1909, initially a neighborhood of Jaffa. Over the past several decades, with the establishment of the state of Israel and the rapid growth of Tel Aviv, Jaffa has often been viewed as the neglected Arab suburb of the second largest city in Israel, although Jewish residents make up more than half the population in Jaffa proper. Today in Jaffa, Arab and



Jewish citizens live side by side with very little positive contact and Arab relations with the Jewish citizens of Tel Aviv are almost nonexistent. Despite physical, historical and demographic divides, Tel Aviv-Jaffa is considered one Jewish municipality with a small Arab minority. As home to our office and center of activities, we have seen first hand how rarely Jewish and Arab youth within Jaffa, and between Jaffa and Tel Aviv meet and experiences. In the last three years we have increased gradually our focus of activities in Jaffa, and mainly on our educational work with the local youth. Two youth groups have been active here since the beginning of the year, showing a true alternative to the segregated and tense reality of the Arab-Jewish relations.

Activism group

Continuing from last year, this group, composed mainly of 11th and 12th graders, has shown great maturity and impressive aptitude for bi-national work. Since they went through early stages of encounter and bi-national dialogue last year, this year's work has focused on continuing this dialogue process through joint activism and organizing group projects. Meeting weekly for the past five months, the group discussed their mutual goals and vision and begun examining together ways of acting for the promotion of their joint ideas. For their first project, the group decided to initiate an Arab-Jewish event for the young Jaffa community. All group members worked hard to organize the event, which they named - "Spring in the Boulevard"- a community block party on the main street in Jaffa. Through their meetings there were able to continue their bi-national dialogue process, and even use the organizational work as a forum for advanced



dialogue. Organizationally, they took on responsibility for all aspects of the event; from making posters, to getting permission from the municipality to use the street space and planning the contents of the party. They divided themselves into small teams to work on different aspects of the event, which included a street theater performance, live music concerts, used clothing swap and bake sale/lemonade stand. The block

party took place in early April, under the sign "United against Racism" and "Arab-Jewish

Partnership” and was well attended by members of the Jaffa community, young people from Tel Aviv and beyond. We were all incredibly impressed with their work and dedication to this project, as well as the success they achieved both with the event and in their process as a bi-national group. The group has continued meeting and will do so through the end of the year. In the meetings after the project, they discussed the levels of bi-national cooperation and the conflicts vs. the collaboration that it brought. In order to increase their challenges of cooperation, they have decided to work for their next project in bi-national pairs, and examine all through the work the relevance of their project and joint action to both national groups. After their debriefing on their work from the block party event, they began preparations for another project: an Arab-Hebrew book week. We also expect that they will take an active leadership role in the summer volunteer camp.

Theater group

Originally intended for a street performance at the block party, this formed out of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa activism group. However, the project soon blossomed into something much larger, as they were joined by other youth from Jaffa and began thinking about additional future projects. This group has a very unique panel of youth from very different settings; youth from mid socio-economical backgrounds, studying in private high schools to drop-out youth and even youth from a nearby hostel for youth awaiting



legal trails. This was not initially planned as such a varied group, but the will came from the youth, and created a very interesting and important dialogue on multiple levels, for which the theater revealed to be a very constructive method. This group worked for over two months preparing a production for the block party. Guided by their facilitator (a graduate of the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ program, with experience in both theater and conflict-group facilitation), they decided to work using “forum theater.” Forum theater is an interactive method



of performance, designed to deal with difficult issues on diverse levels, both within the group, the audience and the larger public. It is intended to be performed in public spaces, rather than theaters, and it aims to create a dialogue with the public. The group wrote the script for the performance themselves; based on their own personal experiences, and they chose to focus on the issues of oppression and family relations in their community. At the block party, the performance was well-done and well received by the audience,

which included many people who came to attend the event, as well as pedestrians who were intrigued by the activity and stopped to watch. One audience member, from Ben Gurion University, who saw their performance, was so impressed he invited them to come and perform on his campus.

This group will continue working for the remainder of the year. They now plan to process the work they have done so far, including the performance at the block party, both as a bi-national group and as individuals. Additionally, they are using theater as a starting point for a dialogue process, tackling difficult issues. For example, one group member recently raised the question of how they can do equal work due to the fact that the Palestinians and Jews don’t come from equal places and backgrounds when arriving at the encounter. While dialoguing these



difficult questions, they plan to organize another performance and be involved in our annual summer volunteer camp.

Young theater group

The idea for this unique group was based on the same idea as an art group we ran in Jerusalem last year; which is to incorporate non-verbal dialogue into the educational bi-national process. Additionally, using theater, the influence of this group, as with our other theater group, aims to go beyond its individual members and to create a dialogue with their surrounding community through the use of performance arts. Also unique is our goal to form a group of Arabs from Jaffa with Jews from less privileged neighborhoods in Jaffa and south Tel Aviv, rather than wealthier Jewish neighborhoods in central or north Tel Aviv. Due to the nature of these goals, we faced a challenging recruitment process and after trying high schools and several other forums, we decided to work through informal educational settings.

Now, beginning in early May, a group of youth from the Institute for Education Advancement in Jaffa will be meeting. The group is composed of 7th and 8th grade youth from difficult backgrounds and family situations who are part of the institute. As with our other theater group, we plan to use forum theater as the main method for performance. After over a month's work, this group proves to be very challenging, especially due to the younger age of the participants and their backgrounds. However, we also see it as a great and important challenge to bring together both Jewish and Palestinian youth from Jaffa together and have the opportunity to work with them.

Haifa

The city of Haifa is often cited by local and national authorities as a symbol for Arab-Jewish coexistence in Israel. However, segregation and isolation between these two communities still exists within the city. Additionally, the two populations are divided by a wide socio-economic gap, separate educational systems and disproportionately low representation of Arabs in the municipal government. These circumstances result in a severe lack of communication and cooperation between Arab and Jewish youth in the city, despite their proximity to one another.

This can be seen in our difficulties to consolidate a bi-national group in Haifa. After several months of a difficult recruitment process, a group of Jewish youth began a uni-national process. However, the Palestinian group proved to be more challenging. Despite recruitment of many Palestinian youth, attendance was problematic during uni-national group meetings. Therefore, we have decided to work now on connecting the Jewish group from Haifa with a Palestinian group from Jaffa through a project that focuses on photography and creative writing. The youth committed to this project have expressed enthusiasm, and some of the Haifa youth attended our most recent youth seminar.

Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is a unique cooperative village of Jews and Palestinian Arabs of Israeli citizenship situated equidistant from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv-Jaffa. The village was founded in 1972 on land leased (and later received) from the adjacent Monastery of Latrun. In 1977, the first family came to live there and by 2004, approximately fifty families have settled in the village. The residents of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam have developed a democratically governed community based on the values of mutual acceptance, respect and cooperation, which demonstrates the possibility of coexistence between Jews and Palestinians. Since its establishment, Arab and Jewish children have been born and raised in this exceptional village

and most of them study at its bi-national primary school. However, the village is not large enough to support a high school, so by 7th grade, the children must continue their education in separate Arab or Jewish schools in nearby communities. Although these youth already grow up in a unique bi-national environment, quite different from what most of their peers throughout Israel experience, many of their parents believe that daily, routine activities of life in a mixed community are not enough.



Therefore, at the end of 2004, a group of parents from the village approached Sadaka Reut and requested the establishment of an Arab-Jewish youth leadership group in the village. Because it was an unexpected, although welcomed, request, we did not have the budget to support the group and it did not open in the 2004-2005 activity year. However, this year we are immensely pleased to be able to open a group in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam. The group has been meeting weekly throughout the year and plans to continue.

Additionally, in late April, this group held a special event, where the Palestinians from Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam hosted our Palestinian group from Jerusalem, as well as Palestinian youth Jaffa new to our movement, for a day dedicated to dealing with the Naqba (Arabic for catastrophe – referring to the war of 1948, a founding event in the Palestinian history and national identity). The day focused on both historical and emotional aspects of this event for these youth and their families. In addition to workshops and discussions, it included a tour of the village for the Jerusalem and Jaffa youth.

Eshel Hanasee-Rahat

Eshel Hanasee is a Jewish high school and boarding house in the south of Israel with a diverse student body, including youth from the city of Beer Sheva, nearby kibbutzim and development towns, which are largely underprivileged communities with high percentages of new immigrants. Additionally, the school has a small minority of Arab-Bedouin youth from Rahat, as well as from neighboring unrecognized Bedouin villages.

Rahat was constructed by Israeli authorities in the 1970's, as part of a policy aimed at forcing the highly scattered and partially nomadic Bedouin population to settle down in a planned, officially recognized community. The Bedouin population in the Negev consists of approximately 130,000 people, of which 35,000 live in the town of Rahat. Currently, Rahat is among the poorest and most neglected settlements in Israel, suffering from chronic problems of unemployment, crime and drug use. Probably the only communities which are worse off than Rahat are the unrecognized Bedouin villages surrounding Rahat, which do not even have access to elementary facilities (water, electricity, etc.) and basic services. The plight of Bedouin youth is especially harsh and over 50% of them drop out of the formal education system where they often join the rapidly growing circles of crime and poverty. Sadaka Reut has worked in Rahat for many years, both running empowerment groups for Bedouin youth and arranging encounter groups with Jewish youth from the area.

Despite many challenges, we were able to work with a uni-national Jewish group for several months. However, due to organizational difficulties with our partners in Rahat, as well as recruitment problems, a Palestinian group never formed. We are now assessing the best steps to take next.

Jerusalem

This group was initially designed to bring together Jewish youth from West Jerusalem and Palestinian youth from East Jerusalem, who have the unique status of permanent residents. The physical segregation of Jerusalem demonstrates an extreme manifestation of the strained relationships and isolation that exists between the Arab and Jewish populations all over Israel. Although this separation pervades the country, the concrete wall, which divides many Arab neighborhoods in the East from the mostly Jewish city in the West, even more severely partitions



these communities in Jerusalem and the segregation is perpetuated by a lack of communication frameworks.

Although we believe facilitating an East and West Jerusalem group is of the utmost importance, it has been difficult to find participants on both sides of the city, due to heightened fear and anxiety about meeting ‘the other’ side. After much work, we were able to recruit a strong Palestinian group, but not a Jewish group. However, due to the difficult situation of Palestinians in Jerusalem, we decided to run the group uni-nationally. We have been working with them for several months, focusing on issues of identity and empowerment. These meetings are very important to the youth, which has formed close bonds with the group’s facilitator. Issues of religion, gender and other subjects that are not normally discussed in their surroundings are being opened in the group and related to the Jewish-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, several Jerusalem youth attended our bi-national seminar in February and the whole group participated at the special event at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam in April.

Leaders of Tomorrow: 12th Grader’s Group

To further enrich the experience of our oldest youth group members, we invite all of our 12th graders to join a special nationwide group. Many of these youth have been involved in Sadaka Reut’s youth groups and activities for several years now; we have built strong relationships with them and we are consistently impressed by their motivation and dedication. The purpose of this group is to help prepare these youth for life after high school graduation in terms of social and political involvements. These youth are on the verge of becoming adults and at the same time, graduating from both the formal education system and from Sadaka Reut’s youth groups. It is a pivotal stage in their lives where they must chose life paths and make decisions about whether or how they want to continue their involvement in social activism and we want to encourage them to make this choice.

At our youth seminar, one of composed entirely of these 12th experience was evident impressed their facilitators with workshop sessions. During one specific aspects of individual’s components affect their lives discussions were so dynamic facilitators didn’t want to end at the scheduled time. They adapted the schedule for the rest of the day to allow these young adults to continue dealing with these issues, which they clearly had the need and desire to discuss.



the workshop groups was graders. Their maturity and throughout the seminar as they their depth and insight during session, which dealt with identities and how these positively and negatively, and passionate that the

In March 2006, we held several other special events for our 12th graders, centered on the issue of the ‘**One Year of Life for Coexistence**’ leadership training program, a project for which they

will be eligible for next year, as high school graduates. These events consisted of another weekend seminar, this time in Jaffa, and an extended meeting in Taybeh for those who could not attend the seminar, as well as many other personal conversations and interviews. The selection process for next year's participants is well underway and should be finalized in the coming weeks. We have many enthusiastic and qualified applicants and we are excited about the prospects for this upcoming leadership group.

Youth seminar

Every year, Sadaka Reut holds enrichment activities to enhance the experience of our group members. These events bring youth from all over the country together to meet and dialogue, and contribute significantly to building a cohesive Arab-Jewish youth movement. Additionally, such programs enable the participants to form more personal relationships that cannot always be achieved in shorter, afternoon meetings and they give our youth the opportunity to be exposed in depth to specific topics related to our goals of pursuing peace and equality.



In mid-February, we held a weekend seminar in northern Israel where over 50 members of our Arab-Jewish youth groups came together to discuss the topics of “identity, acquaintance and encounter.” The youth were divided into three smaller bi-national groups for a series of workshops that occurred throughout the weekend. The first workshop began with icebreakers and basic acquaintance, while subsequent workshops delved into deeper, more complex issues of identity. Through simulation activities and discussions, the youth were challenged to examine the complex ingredients which make up their identities and to explore how different aspects of their identity affect their perspectives and understanding of the conflict. Conversations in each group were thoughtful and dynamic with discussions often continuing into breaks and free time. Additionally, other social activities, theater games and more relaxed programming were interspersed between the small-group workshops to contribute to the encounter and acquaintance process, building strong friendships among our youth group members.

The organization of this seminar was the responsibility of the young adults in the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ leadership training program. From planning workshops to finding a place to hold the seminar, they were in charge of all aspects of putting on this event, both logistically and educationally. As this was their first major group project, they were assisted and advised by our staff, but we feel confident that they learned tremendously and will be able to undertake their next project with even greater independence.

Overall, we believe the seminar was quite successful. The ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ members made the transition from youth group members to leaders, and we were especially



impressed by the three of them who facilitated groups, each with an experienced co-facilitator. The youth participants of the seminar also impressed us with their insights and discussions, both within the framework of formal workshops as well as in free time throughout the weekend. It was an exciting opportunity to see so many of our youth group members together in one place, both new participants and veteran members, building friendships and working for Arab-Jewish cooperation.

‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’- Leadership training program

The “One Year of Life for Coexistence” is our most intensive leadership training project and has been running in this current format for the last three years, teaching participants to live as a model of Arab-Jewish cooperation and preparing these young adults for careers in social change. Each year a select group of exemplary individuals opt to devote the entire year following high school graduation to bi-national living, social change training and volunteer work, both for Sadaka Reut and in local community projects. In this project, the lives of these young men and women demonstrate the possibility of joint life and cooperation. Through the year, they receive intensive training in varied subjects including conflict resolution, Arab-Jewish group facilitation, community empowerment and more, and begin to practically implement them and receive valuable experience, while contributing to the community and youth around them.

This year’s group began with six individuals, representing both nationalities, as well as different ethnic and social background, who live and work together in the mixed city of Jaffa. Using the skills they acquire through training and hands-on experience, group members run various projects and make a significant contribution in promoting Sadaka Reut’s values and vision. The 2005-2006 group has already accomplished impressive work and we are excited to see their progress continue to develop through the end of the year and beyond in their efforts to promote Arab-Jewish coexistence and cooperation. Nevertheless, joint life and full time work as six young people, especially as an Arab-Jewish group, presents much challenges and difficulties. During the year, several conflicts arose in the group on basis of nationality, gender and on the personal level. These are dealt with both individual meetings and group talks together with the projects’ coordinators. Today, after more than half the year past, these challenges have not all been sorted - the group has much more to work at and overcome, but this is an inherent part of this program and the reality that surrounds it, and we have much confidence in these young men and women, their will and abilities.

Individual projects and organizational responsibilities

In addition to living together as an Arab-Jewish group, all members of the leadership training program work full time at Sadaka Reut’s youth and community projects. Each member of the program has individual projects and responsibilities according to his/her personal skills, interests and training needs. We expect that each group member will gain experience and learn to function on three main levels: educational, organizational and community work, in order to give them extensive and wide-ranging experience that is important for leading social change programs.

Zohar: From the beginning of the year Zohar, along with Hassan, has been a part of the media relations team and a spokesperson for Sadaka Reut. She has become quite skilled in representing the organization through different mediums, both speaking and writing in forums, ranging from writing articles to meeting with international groups to present the work of Sadaka Reut. She is also responsible for the documentation of Sadaka Reut’s work and is involved in the publishing of the Jaffa youth newspaper. Continuing her educational work, Zohar has taken the skills which she acquired and honed through facilitation in Haifa and Netanya, and continued her role in the ‘Toward a Common Future’ program in Kfar Saba. Additionally, she maintains a strong connection to her community projects, working with young women at the “Women’s



Yard”- center for women’s empowerment and tutoring students at a local youth center. She is planning to continue with this community work in the coming year.



Mahdi: Mahdi has continued his role in the ‘Toward a Common Future’ program, both as part of the organizational team, which creates and maintains contacts with schools, arranges facilitator meetings and more, as well as through his role as a facilitator at two Arab high schools in Jaffa and Ramle.

Due to his experiences growing up among tense relations between Muslims, Christians and Druze in his town, Mahdi was very excited to take on this role and he has learned and grown tremendously from this work, gaining confidence and skills as a facilitator and educator. In addition, Mahadi got involved in the theater groups in Jaffa, as a facilitator assistant, and has accompanied them all through the meetings and in their first performance. He was also part of the organization team for the Arab groups’ workshop day in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam. In his community work, he remains involved in co-managing a computer club for Jaffa youth, teaching them computer skills and helping them with schoolwork.



Renana: Renana has also continued her involvement in the ‘Towards a Common Future’ program, both in an organizational and educational context, most recently facilitating the series of tolerance education workshops at Katzelnelson high school in Kfar Saba. Additionally, she has gotten involved in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa youth activism group, as a facilitators’ assistant in the initiation and production of youth projects. She also got involved in the older theater group,

including performing with them at the “Spring in the Boulevard” block party, which she finds incredibly exciting and rewarding. Renana is working at her tendencies toward theatre in another bi-national group in Haifa. She has also found her community work satisfying, especially tutoring young women at the “Women’s Yard”- center for women’s empowerment, as well as writing for the youth newspaper, as it has provided her with an avenue to get to know Jaffa and connect to the community on a more personal level.



Hassan: In his role as spokesperson and the other half of the media relations team, Hassan has also learned a lot about media communications and representing the organization. He has continued to grow as a facilitator, both in the ‘Toward a Common Future’ program in Ramle, as well as taking on bi-national facilitation for the first time at the youth seminar. Maintaining his involvement with the community in Jaffa, Hassan continues tutoring struggling students in their school work and he initiated and arranged a special theater presentation for a local elementary school’s youth and

their families. He hopes to be able to bring similar events to the community in the coming months.



Naomi: With a strong interest in learning and understanding the nuts and bolts of an NGO, Naomi has taken an active role in organizational work in the office, as well as working in resource development, specializing in in-kind and community donations. She has learned a lot from this work and plans to continue with it. Additionally, as the leadership group participant responsible for the “Leaders of Tomorrow”- 12th graders group, Naomi maintains strong relationships with the high school seniors in the movement and helps with their special programming.

Along with Renana and Zohar, she has also been involved with the “Women’s Yard”- center for women’s empowerment, a very special community organization in Jaffa. Naomi gains additional experience in another NGO acting as facilitator for ‘Festival BeShekel,’ which acts out of the belief that culture is a right rather than a privilege and works to empower youth in periphery towns by having them organize and produce a music festival in their home community, headlined by popular Israeli bands who donate their performances.

Farid: For the first half of the 2005-2006 activity year, Farid was a dedicated and involved participant of the leadership training program. He co-organized and co-facilitated the 12th graders group, played an active role in recruitment for our bi-national youth groups, and was involved in several community projects. Joining the leadership training group was a difficult decision for Farid and unfortunately, due to family and financial pressures, Farid left the leadership program this winter in order to work full-time. However, he stayed in Jaffa, lives with one of our staff members and remains closely affiliated with Sadaka Reut, both professionally and personally. We respect that this was the right decision for Farid at this time and we continue to support him in all his endeavors.



Leadership group projects

Youth Seminar Planning

The first major project of the year for the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ group members was the planning of all aspects of the youth seminar. Although it was new territory for them, they embarked on this challenge with energy and dedication. They decided to split themselves into different teams, each guided by a staff member, in order to most efficiently take on all of the logistical and educational components necessary for a successful seminar.

Workshop Contents: *Hassan, Renana, Zohar*

Although they all had significant experience as participants in bi-national seminars, undertaking the planning and facilitation of an Arab-Jewish seminar was a new and challenging experience for these three young adults. With guidance from the educational directors, they selected the theme of the seminar and developed dynamic and stimulating workshops which took place throughout the seminar. The seminar, which focused on the issues of “identity, acquaintance and encounter,” began with sessions designed to deal with basic getting to know you, in order to build a comfort and trust level within each group. Subsequent sessions dealt with more complex issues of identity and nationality. This group thoughtfully planned each workshop to be both educational and interesting. Additionally, they each did a superb job facilitating the workshops at the seminar, alongside with an older, more experienced facilitator from the other nationality.

Organization and Logistics: *Naomi (with assistance from Farid)*

Naomi took on the organizational and logistical responsibilities of planning the seminar. Her responsibilities were numerous and varied, including securing a location to hold the weekend, setting the dates, coordinating transportation and food and more. Additionally, throughout the seminar, she maintained responsibility for making sure all of the logistical and organizational pieces of the weekend came together. This was a challenging and important role for Naomi and she learned tremendously about the behind-the-scenes work of putting together such an event.

Youth Recruitment: *Mahdi, Renana*

As the first movement-wide event of the 2005-2006 activity year, this task required a great deal of work. Mahdi and Renana worked hard to compile lists of all of our youth members who currently participate in our Arab-Jewish youth groups, as well as many who participated last year

and some who we encountered during workshops for the ‘Toward a Common Future’ project and who expressed interest in joining bi-national encounters. They composed an invitation and coordinated the publication, marketing and direct contact with the youth. Their professional attitude and dedication brought them to successfully recruit an impressive number of youth, both Arab and Jewish, male and female, to the seminar. Recruitment for future movement-wide events will be aided by the work and organization they did.

Future joint projects:

Arab-Jewish activism seminar

Finalizing project- community volunteer camp in Jaffa

Ongoing training and enrichment meetings

Although the leadership group received a great deal of training last summer and during the early months of the year, and is now qualified and capable to do excellent work, we continue to work with them on issues of educational and organizational training, as well as individual and group sessions on personal issues and group dynamics in an Arab-Jewish partnership.

I. Professional training

1. Educational training: Continuing throughout the year, the group meets regularly with our educational directors Adi Maoz and Maisoun Karaman, who help train the participants in skills and techniques for facilitating bi-national and/or conflict groups and provide them with additional tools for educational work in general. These are skills that will be useful both throughout this year and in their future endeavors. Another aim of the all-group meetings is to



provide a forum to discuss and deal with issues relevant to their experience as a bi-national group, and explore how to apply lessons learned from their personal lives to working with other bi-national groups, now and in the future. The impetus for this goal is based on the belief that their experience as an Arab-Jewish group living and working together will provide more real training for work in this field than any other sessions, workshops or lectures. By creating an educational forum to discuss their lives and debrief their daily experiences as a bi-national group, we hope they will further internalize the

significance of their work and the influence that they can have on others.

2. Enrichment programs and trips: Throughout the year, we aim to organize several innovative and varied plans such as guest lectures and educational trips to further enrich the group’s understanding of the social change field and their roles as young leaders. Additionally, we try to organize several fun, social activities to encourage group bonding in a more relaxed atmosphere. In recent months, the group has gone to the theater to see several movies relating to the conflict; one about female Israeli soldiers serving in Jerusalem and another about the soccer team from the Arab village of Sakhnin in northern Israel, which deals with issues of Arab-Jewish relations and tensions within Israel. Both films served as starting off points for discussions. Additionally, the entire leadership group, along with the Sadaka Reut and Markaz staff and volunteers, took a day-trip to the north of Israel for a hike and picnic, which was an excellent time for building community relations between all of our staff and volunteers.

3. Community work training: To aid in their ongoing volunteer work, group members have additional trainings to discuss the challenges they face in their community projects. Recently, the group met with a veteran community worker from 'Mahapach,' a social change NGO working to strengthen underprivileged communities, who shared her personal story and motivation for community involvement. The leadership group found this meeting with her to be inspiring and helped to remind them of the importance of community work, despite its many challenges.

II. Social facilitation and group advising

1. Individual guidance: Individual meetings with staff members provide opportunities to discuss issues that participants may not feel comfortable bringing up in group meetings. These sessions are more focused on the specifics of what the participants are currently experiencing in their lives and the personal significance of these experiences, as well as their work with the organization. These meetings occur on a regular basis, or per request of individual group members. Participants bring up varied topics, challenges and issues that they find relevant to their 'One Year of Life for Coexistence' experience and receive advice, feedback and support from our staff members.

2. Uni-national meetings: Uni-national meetings, which have continued regularly throughout the year, discuss the national experiences within the ongoing bi-national process, and due to the gender make-up of this year's group, gender issues also come up regularly in uni-national meetings. This helps promote the joint process as a whole.

3. Social enrichment meetings: To aid in the process of leadership training and building positive group dynamics and as another forum to discuss their lives in this unique project, the program participants meet weekly with our volunteer coordinator, Genevieve Nadeau, to debrief about their experiences and progression, as individuals and as a group. These meetings are important to bring the entire group together and provide a forum to discuss group issues and relations outside the office and their work with the organization and the community. Interspersed with more serious discussions, fun activities and movies, these meetings help to cement group bonding and reinforce positive relations between group members. Nevertheless, this is the place in which many group conflicts arise- friction, misunderstandings and sometimes full scale conflicts are not a rare occasion in the life of this group. The make-up of this group, as well as the personalities of its members, made this year into quite a interesting ride. In addition, Farid's leaving the group added a complicated element to the group's dynamics. These conflicts are usually not on the political level, but rather revolve around the day to day dealing with cultural and personal differences, which turns out to be much more challenging. This affects the experience of the participants, and of course their performance at work. In these meetings, along with the uni-national and the individual meetings, all these elements are processed and we hope that each one of them and all of them as a group will learn from each experience, crisis or conflict and that it will give them additional knowledge and maturity regarding themselves and the reality of being part of a bi-national group trying to act together for change.

Preparations for final project: summer volunteer camp

Although still several months away, preparations for the summer volunteer camp, the final project for the leadership training program, began in April. First, through a series of meetings the group discussed general ideas and came up with an overarching concept and framework for the camp. As in recent years, they decided they wanted to run the camp in Jaffa, the community they have been living and working in all year, and they chose to focus on the issues of segregation

and isolation between Arab and Jewish communities. Subsequent meetings began to discuss more specific topics; projects and tracks for the camp and how to tie the various ideas together. They also decided that, like last year, they wanted to run an 'Activist Training Seminar' preceding the volunteer camp. Once these basic foundations were set, the group then divided itself into several working teams, who will continue with preparations and organizations in the coming months.

These working teams deal with both logistical aspects of organizing the seminar and volunteer camp, as well as contents and building different tracks for the participants who will attend these events. Logistical responsibilities include: youth recruitment, solicitations for food donations and collecting supplies and materials for the week. Many of the group members are also taking a role in planning specific tracks of the Activism Training Seminar. Renana and Zohar are putting together a Theater and Arts track and Naomi and Mahdi are organizing a track focused on production of community events.

Additionally, each member of the leadership group is taking a leadership position in planning the tracks of the volunteer camp itself. Some tracks will continue from the Activism Training Seminar such as theater and arts and event production, while others will begin during the volunteer camp, including two community tracks. Everyone is already working very hard in planning all of these projects and we are very excited to see everything come together as testament to the hard work of the 'One Year of Life for Coexistence' group and all that they have learned about community work, organization and Arab-Jewish partnership throughout the year.

‘Markaz’- Center for bi-national activism in Jaffa

Our connection and commitment to the community in the mixed city of Jaffa continues to intensify, as our work in the city persists. Over the past three years, our local community projects in the city have grown and developed. These projects began as part of the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ leadership program, which puts a significant emphasis on community work in the local area, as one of the main pillars of the program. Due to these experiences, after graduating from this program, these young men and women are capable of independently initiating and running community programs, with a specialty in mixed cities. Therefore, the ‘Markaz’- center for bi-national activism, was founded and is largely staffed by graduates of the leadership program, with help from other volunteers, and includes young local full-time volunteers, as a completion of the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ leadership program. This year, two 18 years old young women- one Jewish from Tel Aviv named Feya and Lisa, a Palestinian-Christian from Jaffa, are working as full time volunteers. Besides their work at the Markaz, these two join the leadership training group in several of their training and activities.

The joint work of the Markaz staff has been impressively successful this year in coalescing all of our community initiatives and youth activism projects in one place, in order to further facilitate the promotion of Arab-Jewish activism. Also, the Markaz has made tremendous progress in initiating new projects and building relationships with community members in Jaffa. We are proud of our achievements and excited to continue our work in running community projects and strengthening the local community.

Youth work projects

Photography: Earlier this year we began ‘*Stairways*,’ an urban art project, which was initiated by Feya, our young volunteer in the Markaz. The project comes to involve Jaffa youth in their community through the artistic methods of photography, and uses this tool in order to expose segregated communities in Jaffa to one another.

The project trains a group of interested Arab and Jewish youth from Jaffa in photography, through a series of workshops, studying photography and engaging in dialogue. The group met with a professional photographer who is trained in community projects and portraits and they completed several different assignments. Composed of youth from Jaffa, both Arab and Jewish, as well as previous Sadaka Reut members, this group was also an interesting encounter and dialogue group. For them, the photos and camera served as a common denominator for dialogue. The second part of this project will be a unique exhibition. Participants are divided into four groups and each group is assigned a building in a different neighborhood of Jaffa. The participants will photograph the residents of the building in their home environments and the photos will then be exhibited in the stairways of the buildings. The exhibitions will then be rotated between the buildings every two weeks, so that the communities of the individual buildings will have unique two-week encounters with the faces of another community, from a different neighborhood in their shared city. This educational-artistic initiative is multifaceted in value as it involves Arab-Jewish collaboration, reclaiming public space, addressing issues of inter-communal encounter, and challenging the norms of what art means and where



art should be displayed. Additionally, after the exhibitions have circulated through all the buildings, all of the residents will be invited to a happening where they can meet, discuss the project and possibly establish ground for further community-relations building.

Despite our cooperation with the Ajame Neighborhood Council, we have encountered difficulties and the exhibition has been delayed. However, we have made contact with residents of four buildings and the project continues to progress.

Creative writing group: This group was established to cater youth from weakened neighborhoods in Jaffa, teenagers who have dropped out of school as well as youth from a hostel awaiting legal trial. Some youth were already writing poetry and prose on their own and this group, organized by a former ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ member, has established a forum where they can receive feedback and direction to help them improve their work, while at the same time encouraging other youth to write creatively for the first time. The work these participants have produced so far not only shows the importance of this medium as a way to express themselves as individuals, but also has created a platform with which the youth can present to the community their opinions and emotions about the difficult reality in their neighborhoods, even raise their voices in nonviolent protest.

In recent months, a second facilitator has joined the group, also a graduate of the ‘One Year of Life for Coexistence’ leadership program. He brings with him a background in theater and has added dramatic writing, playwriting skills and theater exercises to the group. One teen is currently writing a full length play while others are working on personal memoirs based on their life and experiences. Additionally, poems from two group members were recently published in “*Jaffa Ana*,” our new youth magazine.



“Yaffa Ana:” Although local newspapers are common throughout Israel, and especially in the Tel Aviv area, there isn’t currently a single newspaper coming out of the city of Jaffa. During the 1920s and 30s, while Jaffa was a thriving and vibrant port city and one of the main trade centers in the region, there were six different newspapers, in three languages, coming out of the city. Today, looking at the neglect the city has suffered over the past half century, it is difficult to imagine such prolific printed media. Most of the headlines regarding Jaffa in local Tel Aviv papers and the national media usually concern problems of crime and drugs in the city or relate to the Jewish-Arab conflict. To combat the negative images of Jaffa portrayed in other media sources, to publicize the positive on-goings in our city, to allow a platform for honest critical thinking of the Jaffa reality and to further empower the Jaffa youth with whom we work, we decided to create a local bilingual youth magazine.

The first issue was recently completed and included articles on police-community relations in Jaffa, criticisms of resources allotted to Jaffa police, poems, photography from several different Sadaka Reut projects and commentary on recent Arab-Jewish events that took place in the city. With all submissions printed in both Hebrew and Arabic, side-by-side, we hope that this magazine will serve as a common denominator for youth from different communities and will raise awareness about the uniqueness of their neighborhoods and city. Through the production of the magazine, a group of writers formed who will continue meeting and are already planning the next issue. There are also plans in the works to hold a launch party for the magazine in cooperation with the Arab-Hebrew theater in Jaffa.

Computer project: Another community project which has been brought under the supervision of the 'Markaz,' is the local computer club for Jaffa youth. Managed by one of the Markaz volunteers, with help from the 'One Year of Life for Coexistence' leadership program participants, the computer club offers local youth a place to go, free of charge, after school where they can learn important computer skills and/or get help with their schoolwork. This program has been running throughout the year, and will continue at least until the end of the school year.

Youth guides: as part of their program, several of Sadaka Reut's volunteers, under the coordination of Yonatan Kunda, are working as youth guides for disadvantaged, drop-out and delinquent youth from Jaffa and the area. The personal assistance includes regular personal meetings, assistance in school work and incorporation of these youth in several of Sadaka Reut's youth projects in Jaffa, such as the theater group, creative writing and more. This initiative is done in collaboration with the municipalities' department for disadvantage youth and a local hostel for youth awaiting legal trail. We are currently working with 15 youth in this format, and are planning to expand this work in the coming year.

Community awareness

Community gatherings: Throughout the year, we have held community gatherings once or twice a month, each dedicated to a different issue of concern for the residents of Jaffa. We make efforts to bring representatives from multiple communities and neighborhoods in Jaffa together to discuss these issues and work together to brainstorm solutions to problems.

This winter, we held a series of meetings regarding the issue of education. In one session, we screened a documentary about an Arab-Jewish school and held a discussion about the possibility of bilingual education in Jaffa. Another session focused on vocational schools, which are often considered a "last stop" before the street. Speakers from the school came to discuss the work they do, as well as the ability that the people of Jaffa have to utilize powers within the society to promote education and help their local community. Both events were well attended by head of neighborhoods committees, community members and other individuals.



Next, the Markaz organized a special community event on March 30 in commemoration of 'Land Day,' which this year marked the 30th anniversary of the Israeli government's attempt to confiscate lands from the Palestinian Israeli Galilee village of Sakhnin. Since then, the day has been observed annually, throughout the country, often with protests over unequal land distribution and confiscation. This year, the Markaz organized an educational tour of Jaffa, in cooperation with 'Al-Rabita,' the League for the Arabs of Jaffa. The tour discussed the history of the city, with an emphasis on land, neighborhoods and demographics. As a mixed city, Jaffa has an interesting history in regards to changes in landscape and population, especially concerning the Arab community. Following the tour, we held a rally on one of the main streets in Jaffa, holding up signs against land confiscation and house demolition, both of which continue to occur today, and distributing flyers to passing



cars and pedestrians with a history of Land Day in both Hebrew and Arabic. The rally was very successful, drawing a crowd of over 50 people of all ages and backgrounds.

Upcoming events: The Markaz staff is now busy planning a series of Naqba memorial events. The Naqba refers to the Palestinian catastrophe which occurred in the 1948 war. Due to the sensitive nature of these events, we have been carefully planning and discussing how to deal with these complicated issues without attacking or offending anyone, but at the same time commemorating and encouraging dialogue and awareness. We have decided to arrange a series of events throughout May, including discussions calling for reflection and examining the day's current relevance.

'Jaffa Ablaze' exhibition series: Following a successful opening event last fall, this exhibition series continued through the winter, providing a stage for young Jaffa artists to present their work to the public. This series of evenings showcases poetry, creative writing, music, photography and more from local Jaffa youth. Two more events occurred throughout the winter. The first was again in collaboration with an Arab-Jewish café in Jaffa and featured poetry-readings, drumming and a photography exhibition. Due to the large crowds which attended the first two events, the third was held in a different space, also in Jaffa, in order to better accommodate the audience. This most recent event focused on songs, poems and stories of Jaffa. Many of the artists who performed are closely affiliated with the Markaz and Sadaka Reut, as members of the creative writing group, photography group and more. Yonatan, a former 'One Year of Life for Coexistence' participant and current Markaz volunteer can be credited for the initiative and production of these events. Consistent high attendance is testament to the quality of the art that these youth are producing, as well as the interest in promoting the arts among youth in Jaffa.

Cooperation between organizations: Building partnerships with other organizations and institutions in Jaffa occurs through all of our projects, but remains a central goal for the 'Markaz.' Through our projects, we have strengthened our relationships with 'Al-Rabita'- the association for Arabs in Jaffa, 'Yafa' Café and bookstore, the Ajame neighborhood council, various high schools and different sectors of the scout movement (Muslim, Christian-Orthodox, Jewish and Naval). Additionally, we have built new relationships with NGOs, such as Ayam, as well as other local community members, including the Arab-Hebrew theater in Jaffa, which even invited one of our 'Building a Culture of Peace' bi-national youth groups to see a play which focused on the topics of longing and homeland. We continue to strive to further strengthen these relationships, build new partnerships and generally promote positive relations and cooperation between individuals, organizations and businesses in Jaffa.

Looking forward

We are incredibly proud and supportive of all the Markaz projects and their efforts to coalesce our community activities together; building connections with the community and strengthening each individual project. The energy and enthusiasm of the Markaz staff and volunteers is inspiring and we have great faith that they will continue to develop current programs and initiate new projects in the future, strengthening the Markaz, Sadaka Reut and the greater Jaffa community in the process.

Conclusion

Coming up to the final (and busiest) third of the activity year, we are energized by the activities and events that have happened so far and the potential for our culminating projects. Work is already well underway for our annual summer volunteer camp, which will be preceded by an Activist Training Seminar for our youth group members especially interested in gaining more specific skills related to activism. We believe the summer volunteer camp will be an important culmination of the year for all our youth, including those in the **'Building a Culture of Peace'** youth groups and the participants of our **'One Year of Life for Coexistence'** leadership training program, which are the organizers of this event. Leading up to the summer camp, we hope that the youth groups will continue meeting and making progress in bi-national dialogue and joint cooperation, both of which will help prepare them for the summer camp and for future Arab-Jewish cooperation. The leadership training group is already immersed with preparations for the seminar and volunteer camp; planning programs, workshops and activity tracks, recruiting supplies and youth with other logistical and exciting to watch them active leadership roles, confidence which they year.

We have run workshop year as part of the **'Future'** program. Now program, we have small pilot project, to of our organization. the success that this



are excited to continue our expansion, preparing for the coming year where we hope to enter more schools and expose a greater number of high school students to sessions on diversity and tolerance education.

As our newest program, the **'Markaz'** has experienced incredible growth this year, which has been thrilling to witness. They have successfully organized, produced and run a wide-variety of groups, events and activities dealing with Arab-Jewish relations, for the Jaffa community. It creates an excellent means of maintaining connections with our program graduates and we are proud to offer this year's leadership group a platform to continue their work in Jaffa if that is where their future plans take them.

We have strong faith that the 2005-2006 will continue and finish with the same levels of energy and enthusiasm that have existed all along. Our programs will continue to work in promoting social justice and equality in our society, and although we have made progress, there is still much to be done to promote multiculturalism, tolerance, justice and peace in this area of the world.

series in four schools this **'Toward a Common'** in our third year of the watched it grow from a one of the main focuses We are quite pleased with project has met and we