



Arab Citizens of Israel and Jewish-Arab Relations After October 7: Opportunities for Solidarity Missions

Arab citizens were deeply impacted by October 7 and its aftermath, experiencing loss of loved ones, hostages, vulnerability to rocket fire, economic insecurity, and fear from violence and incitement. From the night of the attacks, Arab and Jewish organizations, leaders, and volunteers have been working together to preserve Jewish-Arab partnership in this difficult time, meet emergency needs, and prevent escalations. These stories are a vital part of the extraordinary Israeli mobilization around the crisis and are central to shaping Israel's social fabric moving forward.

Many of the organizations leading these efforts have been supported by the American Jewish community for years. They are eager to share the inspiration, challenges, and urgency that drives their work. Making them part of solidarity missions is key to enabling American Jewish communities to be well-informed and engage with the complex and critical work for Israeli society that lies ahead. Such visits also make Arab citizens and shared society organizations feel visible during these difficult days.

The following document lists nine organizations that are well equipped to rapidly host visits and missions. These organizations have joint Jewish-Arab teams and programs spanning emergency responses in the North and south, shared society in mixed cities, de-escalation and preserving Jewish-Arab relations overall. They span a range of locations and logistical considerations, and all have shelters. There are many other options that may also be suitable for different groups and itineraries.

To determine which visit is best for you, explore additional options, and contact the organizations, email Erica Shaps, IATF Associate Director U.S, at ericash@jdc.org. You can also see IATF's briefing paper on Jewish-Arab relations after October 7 [here](#) and our [resource library for educators](#).

NEGEV AND BEDOUIN EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOCUSED VISITS

1. Shared Emergency Center for Negev Bedouin (Hura)

Location: Hura

Work areas: Emergency response, Bedouin communities, volunteerism

Organization Description: Operated in the city of Hura, this center works in close coordination with the National Arab Emergency Information Center, focused on identifying and addressing emergency needs of Negev Bedouin communities. In partnership with government and local authorities, regional clusters, and dozens of local civil sector organizations, the center works to provide essential shelter in unrecognized villages, to identify needs and coordinate provision and support, and to provide information, equipment, and personal assistance to the community.

Partners include: Arab doctors union in the Negev, Negev - Bedouin municipalities and regional councils, Shatil, Itach Maaci, Desert Stars, Tamar Center, Arabs of 48', Siraj, Lena, Ministry of Social Equality, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, The council for the unrecognized villages, The Coexistence forum in the Negev, Eastern Negev Cluster, Hura young adults center, Trauma Coalition, Home Front Command, High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel, Hura Municipality.

Emergency response programs:

- Map needs and coordinate with local emergency teams and distributing goods and information.
- Coordinate with the national situation room to create a fully daily picture of needs in Arab society.

- Respond to incidents in the unrecognized villages.
- Track the missing, kidnapped and wounded in Bedouin communities and support families.
- Prepare a public campaign and disseminating information to residents.
- Deploy volunteers in the fields of informal education and advancing community initiatives.
- Arrange for mobile shelters in unrecognized villages.
- Operate hotline providing mental health support.
- Distribute first aid supplies to Bedouin villages and designating medical support contact.

Speakers:

Ilan Amit, co-CEO of AJEEC-NISPED and many other possible speakers

AJEEC-NISPED, the organization coordinating the emergency center, can arrange the most relevant speakers tailored to your group’s interest areas: health, shelter, education, volunteerism etc. You will be able to hear from both Jewish and Arab professionals and volunteers at the center.

Logistical note: The center in Hura has a shelter and bathrooms. If the situation allows the group can visit an impacted community, including unrecognized villages. Visits will be 1-3 hours. AJEEC requests advanced notice if possible.

2. Jewish-Arab Emergency Center (Rahat)

Location: Rahat

Work areas: Emergency response, volunteerism, Bedouin communities, Jewish-Arab relations

Organization Description: A joint Jewish-Arab emergency center in Rahat was established after October 7 to provide for needs in Bedouin communities and unrecognized villages and as a statement of solidarity between Jewish and Arab citizens. Goods are being collected and disbursed with the help of Jewish and Arab volunteers from across the country.

Partners in the initiative include: Alanshimat, Desert Stars, Have You Seen the Horizon Lately, and Itach Maaki.

Emergency response programs:

- Collect and disburse goods including food, clothing, and hygiene items to Bedouin communities.
- Promote joint volunteerism and a culture of solidarity among Jewish and Arab citizens.

Speakers:

Fuad Ziadna, Director of the Hura Community Center and the Jewish-Arab Emergency Center in Rahat

Adv. Hanan Alsaneh, Director of Center for Bedouin Women’s Rights at Itach Maki

Shir Nosatzki, Founder of Have You Seen the Horizon Lately

Logistical notes: The center is most active on Wednesdays and would strongly prefer Wednesdays for visits. However, other days may be arranged. There are bathrooms and a shelter on site.

3. Atid Bamidbar

Location: Yeruham and Rahma

Work areas: Emergency response, Bedouin communities, Jewish-Arab relations and shared society in the Negev, informal education, tourism to promote social change and community-building

Website: <https://www.bamidbar-en.org/>

Organization Description: Atid Bamidbar works to create an Israeli society that values diversity and maintains solidarity and collaboration, with special focus on empowering peripheral communities. It strengthens the Negev's underrepresented individuals and communities by showcasing their stories and cultural heritage, fostering a positive self-image, and promoting local sustainable economic growth.

Emergency response programs:

- Procure rocket shelters for Rahma residents.
- Offer informal educational and cultural enrichment for children in Rahma.
- Purchase of laptops for distance learning for impacted students.
- Offer food support for vulnerable Bedouin families.
- Run cultural and educational activities with a focus on the stories and people of Yeroham and Rahma for evacuees from Gaza border localities sheltering in Yeroham.
- Support elderly Russian-speakers in Negev towns.

Speakers:

Tal Ohana, Mayor of Yeruham (Hebrew and English)

Yael Agmon, Coordinator of Incubator for Bedouin-Jewish Initiatives (Hebrew with English translation)

Auda Zanun, Chair of Rahma Residents' Committee (Hebrew with English translation)

Debbie Goldman Golan, Co-Founder of Atid Bamidbar (Hebrew and English)

Nasser Alfrejat, Local Activist and Tourism Entrepreneur (Hebrew with English translation)

Logistical notes: The Atid Bamidbar Center has a shelter, bathrooms and is wheelchair accessible. Visits will be 1.5-2 hours in length. This area has generally had less rocket fire.

4. Negev Coexistence Forum

Location: Hura

Focus areas: Emergency response, Bedouin communities, unrecognized villages specifically.

Website: <https://www.dukium.org/>

Organization description: In 1997, a group of concerned Arab and Jewish residents of the Negev/Naqab (Israel's southern desert region) established the Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality (NCF) to build a shared society and to provide a framework for Arab-Jewish partnership in the struggle for civil equality and the advancement of mutual tolerance and coexistence.

Emergency response programs:

Arab and Jewish volunteers work together to:

- Provide resources including food, hygiene products, and baby formula to residents in unrecognized villages affected by the crisis.
- Visit grieving families who lost children during the bombing and to offer support.
- Strengthening Jewish-Arab relations and deescalating incitement in the Negev.

Speaker:

Huda Abu Obaid, Local Advocacy Coordinator, Negev Coexistence Forum

Huda, was born and raised in the village of Lakiya in the Negev. She holds a B.A. in Middle East Studies and Gender Studies, along with an LL.B. from Ono Academic College. Huda was actively involved with various organizations, including AJEEC-NISPED, the Negev Coexistence Forum, and the Center for the Study of European

Politics and Society at Ben Gurion University. In 2013, she played a key role in founding the 'Elhirk Alshbabi' youth group opposing the Praver Plan in the Negev. From 2015 to 2020, Huda was part of the team at Gisa-Maslak organization, advocating for freedom of movement from the Gaza Strip.

Logistical notes: The situation room in Hura has a shelter and bathroom. Visits will be around 2 hours.

SHARED SOCIETY, JEWISH-ARAB RELATIONS FOCUSED VISITS

5. Tzedek Centers

Location: Mixed cities and regions throughout the country

Focus areas: Volunteerism, emergency response, Arab-Jewish relations, informal education

Website: <https://merkazim.org/en/>

Organization description: Tzedek Centers is a national grassroots movement of local activist communities. We conduct leadership programs training citizens to promote change in their community and city. Tzedek Centers work as a national network to promote democracy, equality and solidarity in the Israeli society. Its 8 centers are home to thousands of activists, and over 130,000 citizens who took part in leadership programs, public events and campaigns.

Emergency response programs: Tzedek Centers' emergency response programs are divided into two key categories: shared society and supporting impacted families.

1. Shared Society

- Working in Ramle and Akko in partnership with local leaders to assess community needs and either respond directly or raise issues with the municipalities.
- Tzedek Centers, Givat Haviva, and Abraham Initiatives have partnered to organize local emergency rooms in Israel's mixed cities to build infrastructure for preventing and responding to violence and preserving Jewish-Arab relations. These emergency rooms will work in partnership with the municipality, local police, local leaders and organizations to: monitor fake news; build trust between different communities; and run campaigns for preserving the safety of all residents of the city. Additionally, this initiative is developing a training model for the "Kitot Konnenut" (neighborhood watch organizations) to prevent violence and deescalate tense situations.

2. Impacted Families

- A hotline for evacuated and host families: providing comprehensive support (welfare, legal advice, etc). There are over 7000 families in our system and 1500 placed families.
- Voluntary aid activities in 20+ local authorities, including setting up shelters, public aid hotlines, distributing equipment and donations for the evacuees, babysitting and more.
- Educational support, activities and respite for families evacuated from the South.
- With, Ajyal, an Arab youth movement, and the Rahat municipality, initiated an accelerated training program for volunteers in the city. Ajyal trains and manages volunteers in hospitals, community centers, and municipal call centers and aid facilities.

Speakers:

Shared Society: *Michal Sherez Shilor*, Director of Mixed Cities Department at Tzedek Centers;
Ayman Kabaha, Director of Ajyal Youth Movement

Evacuated Families: Several people are working on these initiatives. Be in touch to coordinate.

Logistical notes: Tzedek Centers work nationwide and can coordinate a suitable location. Any location will have access to a shelter and bathrooms. Visits of a variety of lengths can be arranged.

6. The Guard for Jewish-Arab Partnership in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Location: Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Focus areas: Arab-Jewish relations in mixed cities, local leadership, volunteerism

Organization description: The Partnership Guard (Mishmareem) was created after October 7 by leaders of the Arab community in Jaffa in cooperation with Arab and Jewish associations, organizations, and institutions. It aims to prevent incidents of violence, incitement, and racism throughout the city, particularly after the events that occurred in May 2021.

Emergency response programs:

- A hotline for residents to request assistance with equipment, food, legal aid and mental health support. This hotline is supported by thousands of volunteers.
- Training volunteers to provide a protective presence in the public sphere.
- Responding to reports of incitement and violence in public and online spaces.
- Promoting solidarity activities between Arabs and Jews.

Solidarity mission activity: We will engage Arab and Jewish children and youth in creative and dialogue activities to promote solidarity and partnership. We will also provide practical training for public safety.

Speakers:

Adv. Amir Badran Amir, co-Founder of the Guard for Jewish-Arab Partnership in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Amir is a member of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa City Council. Through his political work and activism, he focuses on housing, education, and equality for the Arab population in Jaffa. He is a native resident of Jaffa.

Omar Siksik, co-Founder of the Guard for Jewish-Arab Partnership in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Omar is a former member of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa City Council. He is the chairman of Al-Rabita - Jaffa Arab Association and lives in Jaffa.

Itamar Avineri, co-Founder of the Guard for Jewish-Arab Partnership in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Itamar is a candidate for the Tel Aviv-Jaffa City Council. He lives in Florentin in Tel Aviv.

Logistical notes: The program will take place in a single location with access to a bathroom and shelter. The activity will be approximately 1.5 hours.

7. The Abraham Initiatives (TAI)

Location: Tours sites are available in Haifa, Acre, Lod, Ramla and Tel Aviv-Jaffa. A meeting with shared society experts and local representatives can take place at the TAI's offices in Lod or a central location.

Focus areas: Shared society, Jewish-Arab political partnerships in mixed regions and cities, preventing tensions and violence in shared spaces.

Website: <https://abrahaminitiatives.org/>

Organizational Description: 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: A state which is the national homeland of the Jewish

people and a full, complete and equal home for its Arab-Palestinian national minority; A state that exists peacefully alongside a Palestinian state fulfilling the national aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Emergency response programs:

- TAI, in partnership with Tzedek Centers and Givat Haviva, has established an emergency initiative intervening in mixed cities and regions to ensure that incitement is stopped, tensions are defused, and violence is prevented. Working with local authorities, national decision-makers, residents and partners in the field, the project will strengthen relations between Jews and Arabs in mixed cities and regions and mechanisms to prevent violence and escalations.
- Advocate and advise policy on the local, national, and regional levels to reinforce that good relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel are vital to a healthy economy and strengthens the sense of personal security of all citizens.

Speakers:

Amnon Be'eri-Sulitzeanu, co-CEO of TAI

Amnon has been the co-CEO of TAI since 2004. Before, he served as the Director of Marketing Communications at the Jerusalem Foundation, under the leadership of the late Mayor Teddy Kollek and Ms. Ruth Cheshin, where he worked to develop educational, cultural, and social enterprises in Jerusalem.

Dr. Thabet Abu Rass, co-CEO

Dr. Thabet Abu Rass has been co-CEO of TAI since 2014. He has a PhD Geography and Regional Development from the University of Arizona. Since becoming co-CEO, Thabet has significantly strengthened TAI's partnerships with key leaders in Arab society and advocated for programs and directives at the highest levels of government.

Ruth Chen Levin, Deputy Co-CEO

Ruth Chen Levin joined TAI in 2018. Her skillset comes from her experience in directing conflict resolution programs and advocating for the representation of women in decision-making positions in the local council of Mevasseret. For the past decade, Ruth has been promoting a shared society in Israel, mainly through the facilitation of dialogue groups of Arab and Jewish youth in various framework.

Shahira Shalaby, co-Deputy Director of TAI

Shahira Shalaby is co-Deputy Director of TAI. She serves on the Haifa City Council, and previously served as Haifa's Deputy Mayor. Shahira brings her dynamic experience as a civil and community leader dedicated to improving the lives of Arab citizens of Israel. Shahira has held several key managerial roles at numerous social service organizations and was involved in the establishment of the Hiwar School for Alternative Education in Haifa.

Khalud Abu Ahmad, Director of Mixed Cities and Regions at TAI

Khalud Abu Ahmad is the newly appointed Director of Mixed Cities and Regions at TAI. She holds a law degree from Tzafat College and founded Abraham Alternative, a domestic tourism initiative that offers tours in Israel that share the various intercommunal narratives and promotes shared society. Previously, she worked for Co-Impact in strategic marketing and project management. She is the former parliamentary advisor for MK Sami Abu Shahedah.

Logistical notes for this visit: Logistics will be determined by the city we visit. Meetings will occur in buildings with a shelter. The availability of walking tours depends on security conditions. Visits will begin at a central point with access to bathrooms. We recommend two hours to meet with speakers and three hours if you would also like to do a walking tour.

8. Givat Haviva

Location: Givat Haviva Campus (North)

Website: <https://www.givathaviva.org/>

Focus areas: Shared society and Jewish-Arab relations, education, housing/emergency response

Organization Description: Givat Haviva is a civil society organization working for social change associated with Hashomer HaTzair. We work to promote an equal and just society in Israel. Givat Haviva is a 40 acre educational campus with guest rooms, classrooms, an auditorium, and a dining room. The grounds provide a tranquil, neutral location for bringing together members of divided societies.

Emergency response programs:

- Provide accommodations on the Givat Haviva campus, three meals a day, and a variety of activities for 260 evacuated families from the North and South.
- In partnership with Hashomer Hatzair operating:
 - A mental health clinic staffed by clinical psychologists and trauma specialists.
 - A kindergarten in a protected area for children age 1-6.
 - Space for alternative treatments such as acupuncture, reflexology, etc.
 - The "Givat Haviva Boutique" clothing for evacuated families.
 - A cultural hall with performances by Israeli artists and an art center with an art therapist, ceramics, painting and more.
- Within the next two weeks, Givat Haviva plans to begin several preventative initiatives pertaining to the economy and education:
 - A study day promoting employment of the Arab sector.
 - Preparing Arab students to enter higher education institutions during the time of war.
 - Social media campaign promoting inclusiveness in the labor market.

Speakers:

Ms. Michal Sella, Executive Director Givat Haviva

Michal received her M.A from Tel Aviv University in History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas and her Master of Public Policy (MPP) from the University of Oxford, Blavatnik School of Government and has extensive experience working with government and communication bodies in Israel and abroad. Prior to joining Givat Haviva in April 2021, she was the director of the Center for Policy Change of "Shatil," the executive arm of the New Israel Fund, and in 2016 was a founding member of The Whistle (The Israeli Fact Checking NGO).

Mr. Mohammad Darawshe, Director of Strategy

Mohammad holds a M.A. degree in Conflict and Peace Studies from Haifa University as well as B.A.'s in Political Science from Emek Yizrael College and English & Political Science from Hebrew University. Mohammad Darawshe is considered a leading political analyst and expert on Jewish-Arab relations inside Israel. He has been Director of the Center for Shared Society at Givat Haviva since January 2014 (as well as 2000-2005). He served as a member of The Three-sector Roundtable at the Prime Minister's office and on the strategic planning team of the Authority for Economic Development of the Arab Sector at the Prime Minister's Office.

Logistical notes: There is easy access to shelters and bathrooms. The length of the visit can be determined by the needs of the group.

9. aChord

Location: Huzot Shfayim, or speakers can come to your location

Work areas: Jewish Arab relations, diversity, equity and inclusion, social psychology, research

Website: <https://en.achord.huji.ac.il/>

Organization Description:

aChord Center specializes in the social psychology of intergroup relations. The center's unique added value is developing innovative, evidence based, practical knowledge and tools to improve intergroup relations between Jews and Arabs, by utilizing cutting-edge social psychological theory and data. aChord promotes Jewish Arab relations in various shared spaces: mixed cities, the education system, higher education, and the workplace. These days aChord is supporting dozens of employers,

universities, hospitals and more for making sure Jews and Arabs can continue to study and work together.

Emergency response programs:

- Develop guides and workshops for workplaces where both Jews and Arabs work, including hospitals, academic institutions, and local authorities, to promote responsible and peaceful conduct during wartime.
- Conduct workshops and provide consulting to major workplaces and academic institutions (high-tech, banks, universities, health care institutions etc.) addressing tensions in Arab Jewish relations.
- Research on Jewish and Arab attitudes and experiences of Jewish-Arab relations before, during and post-war to guide shared society work. Includes weekly public opinion survey.
- Examine the impact of the current crisis on the attitudes of Jews and Arabs.
- Develop resources for teachers tailored for Jewish and Arab schools and mixed cities.
- Completed and disseminated a guide for managing intergroup relations in mixed cities when tensions escalate. The handbook is designed for local governments in mixed cities and NGOs to aid them in averting potential escalations between Jewish and Arab residents.

Speaker

Ron Gerliz, CEO

Ron joined aChord - Social Psychology for Social Change, as CEO in October 2019. Under Ron's leadership, aChord has expanded its scope of activity to additional arenas, formed new partnerships, and deepened the impact of the implementation of socio-psychological knowledge in the field.

Before joining aChord, Ron served for more than ten years as Co-Executive Director of Sikkuy, a Jewish-Arab organization advancing equality and shared society between the Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel. In this position, Ron led Sikkuy's team to advance significant policy changes in the Israeli government toward Arab citizens. Ron is a Hebrew University of Jerusalem graduate with a B.Sc. in Mathematics and Computer Science and an MA in Public Policy, both *magna cum laude*.

Solidarity mission activity: The aChord team will present their research on social psychology and findings from their weekly surveys on Jewish and Arab attitudes toward the other. They can also present the tools they are developing based on this research to develop more inclusive environments.

Logistical notes: aChord is located in a comfortable office building with easy access to a shelter and numerous bathrooms. Visits should be around 1.5 hours.