



סיכוי סיקווי Sikkuy

העמותה לקידום שוויון אזרחי الجمعية لدعم المساواة المدنية
The Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality

THE SIKKUY REPORT 2001-2002

MONITORING CIVIC EQUALITY BETWEEN ARAB AND JEWISH CITIZENS OF ISRAEL

***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY P. 4**

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The Sikkuy Report 2001-2002

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Executive Summary

The Nature of Citizenship in Israel

This report marks Sikkuy's tenth anniversary. The ongoing effort to monitor the state of civic equality between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel was the first among Sikkuy's variety of current initiatives.

Sikkuy is implementing civic empowerment programs that promote professionalism in local Arab government. It is working among the Jewish public to establish regional civic action groups that advocate for civic equality between Jewish and Arab citizens.

This report is the first to examine the actions, in this realm, of the government headed by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. The data presented in this report shows clearly that, from the perspective of promoting equality between Jews and Arabs, this government promises much and delivers little.

“The Four Billion Shekel Plan”¹

– a road to continued and intensified discrimination

Do 1.2 million Arab citizens of Israel (18.5% of the population) enjoy equal access with Jewish citizens to state resources? Is the pie now more equitably divided?

A highly touted “four billion shekel” development plan to boost Arab communities out of neglect and into parity largely turns out to be classic bureaucratic sleight-of-hand.

Housing for Arab communities: 2002 housing development budget is 40% lower than in 2000.

Family health clinics: Down from NIS 9.2 million for Arab communities in 1999, to NIS 8.6 million in 2000 and only NIS 2.5 million per year from 2001-2005.

Culture: Only 4% of 2002 funding for cultural programs goes to Arab communities.

Sport: Only 6.2% of government sports funding goes to Arab citizens in 2002.

Employment: 9.8% of students in vocational training courses are Arabs – half of their proportion (18.5%) in the overall population.

Road systems: Arab towns have higher road accident rates and more fatalities than Jewish towns. The State Comptroller's Report for 2002 attributes this to sub-standard road systems in Arab communities. In 2002, budgets for ground transportation construction in and around Arab localities decreased by 11% in contrast to a country-wide budget increase of 28.4%.

Industrial development: 66% drop in allocations compared with 2000.

Building for the future: For a daunting combination of reasons (history, prejudice, mutual suspicion, mismanagement), master plans have been approved for only 12 out of 82 Arab municipalities – an almost insurmountable impediment to development efforts.

¹ At current exchange rates, NIS 4 billion = \$800 million (NIS 5 = approx. \$1)

The Five-Year Plan for Advancing Arab Education in Israel

An analysis shows the current Five-Year Plan to advance education in the Arab school system to be:

- ♦ well-intentioned but cosmetic; a narrowly conceived, hastily planned attempt to boost matriculation scores without a thorough reform of the system.
- ♦ lacking in meaningful participation by Arab stakeholder constituencies (Arab educators and academics, parents, teachers, principals).

In 2001-02, actual allocations fell short – by NIS 21 million – of amounts budgeted in the plan, and 40% of this funding is really for special education programs that should be budgeted separately.

Hatred, Rejection and Racism Toward Arab Citizens from Israeli Politicians and the Israeli Establishment

This report warns of more frequent, more blatant and more public expressions of hatred, rejection and racism – from the Knesset plenum to an elementary school party for second-graders. Officialdom is urged to stop turning a blind eye and begin a concerted campaign to reverse this alarming trend – which threatens the shared future of all citizens of Israel, Jewish and Arab, who aspire to a truly just and equitable society.

Looking Ahead

Over the last decade, research into the situation of the Arab citizens of Israel has grown tremendously. This research shows clearly that in Israel there is full citizenship for Jews and “citizenship lite” for Arabs. Sikkuy has now been working for a decade to draw attention to this situation and to change it. One recent success was in convincing the state comptroller to examine the severely restricted access of Arab citizens to state resources, particularly infrastructure.

An additional field of action is burgeoning in the democratic world: civic action. The core of strength in civic action is the power of citizens’ own recognition that they are responsible for their destiny. Cognizant of this, citizens are themselves working on behalf of their interests, as is Sikkuy – as an organization of Jewish and Arab citizens who understand that equality between the two groups, equality in and at the hands of the state and its institutions, is the key to our future life here.

Beyond reporting about the problems, Sikkuy will also formulate position papers and alternative proposals for the government. Meanwhile, we still have an obligation to inform the public about our findings in a clear and straightforward way that citizens will find readily accessible. For Sikkuy and others working in this field, there is still a long hard road ahead in the struggle for full civic equality.

Introduction

THE NATURE OF CITIZENSHIP IN ISRAEL

Sikkuy marks its tenth anniversary this year, during which we have diversified our activities and enriched our experience. Founded by Alouph Hareven and Faisal Azaiza to promote civic equality between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, Sikkuy today pursues that aim in three modalities – working with government, with the Arab public and with the Jewish public.

Early efforts focused on publication of an annual report on the status of Arab citizens and on monitoring their integration into senior roles and positions in the public and private sectors. In recent years, we have broadened our reach to include development of educational programs in the realm of civil rights and human dignity. We are also implementing self-empowerment programs that promote professionalism and efficiency in local government and provide professional training in fields crucial to Arab society. These programs are directed and conducted by the Arab staff members of Sikkuy.

With the Jewish public, we are now working to establish regional civic action groups for Jews seeking to promote civic equality between themselves and their Arab neighbors. In these ways, Sikkuy is working both to change government policies with regard to equality between citizens, and to support Arab and Jewish citizens who see themselves as stakeholders and are actively pursuing civic equality.

This report has changed over the years, becoming a central means for Sikkuy to provide updated information to decision-makers and ordinary citizens, Jews and Arabs alike, about achievements and setbacks concerning discrimination against Arab citizens. In its first report, published in 1993, Sikkuy reported broadly on the first steps toward change taken by the Rabin government with respect to Arab citizens and expressed hope that this initiative would lead to fundamental change in the status and circumstances of Arab citizens. Regrettably, the reports that followed, and particularly those published in the last four years, have documented extensive and significant erosion of such equality as had been achieved earlier and an ongoing deterioration in the civic status of Arab citizens.

This report is our first to examine the actions in this realm by Ariel Sharon's government. When elected, Sharon committed himself to what is popularly termed "closing the gaps" between citizens and said he favored a systematic survey of the basic needs of Arab towns and villages. This report is the first to examine what has come of that promise. The development plan for Arab communities was prepared during the Rabin administration, was adopted by the present government and is central to any governmental provision of services to Arab citizens. Hence we have chosen to monitor implementation of that plan and set forth our findings in this report.

We have been monitoring this plan from the moment of its creation two years ago, periodically offering critiques and proposing various alternatives. As part of our activities in Arab communities, we have even produced a detailed handbook, together with the local authorities in communities where we are working, which enumerates the needs and requirements of the community, item by item, against each budget allocation in the development plan. The more we looked into what the program theoretically offers and what it has actually implemented, the greater our

disappointment. The data presented in this report shows clearly and unequivocally that, from the standpoint of promoting equality between Jews and Arabs, this government, like the two preceding administrations, promises much and delivers little, if anything. The data further demonstrates that, within the framework of the “development” plan itself, there has been a very considerable decrease in investment in Arab towns and villages.

The second chapter in this report examines the “Five-Year Plan for Advancing Arab Education.” Bakr Awawdy finds that the plan was conceived without any meaningful participation by Arab constituencies and that actual allocations in 2001-2002 fell NIS 21 million short of amounts budgeted in the plan.

An article by Ali Haider in *The Sikkuy Report 2001-2002* also addresses the exclusion, rejection and even racism suffered by Arab citizens in Israel. The Sharon cabinet includes several ministers who have adopted public positions against Arab citizens: Minister Avigdor Lieberman has published a plan for separation between Arab and Jewish citizens; Minister Limor Livnat has taken the position that funds for Arab schoolchildren should be contingent on “loyalty” to the State; Minister Ephraim Eitam has termed Arab citizens “a cancer on the body of the State”; and Minister Ephraim Sneh went even further in suggesting that Arab communities in the Triangle area be transferred intact to the control of the Palestinian state (when it comes into being). These pronouncements and many others are the outcome of a government attitude toward Arabs conditioned on their “good behavior.”

This also harms Jewish citizens, because it perpetuates a situation in which their relations with Arab citizens are premised on Jewish citizens’ superior access to resources and a structurally inferior position of Arab citizens vis-a-vis the state. This injects conflict and contention into the daily reality of Arabs and Jews in Israel. By creating, perpetuating and even, as shown in this report, intensifying this gap over many years, the state sets the two main groups living here – two national groups – on a collision course. The state is thereby endangering all of its citizens. The price of living with this structural gap places the very existence of the state increasingly at risk.

The facts set forth in the following pages concerning this situation of discrimination cast a heavy shadow on the quality of citizenship in Israel and raise the fundamental questions: Are Arabs effectively citizens of Israel? If so, what is the practical meaning of that citizenship? The situation described herein is very bad indeed. Any real and fundamental change in this situation will obviously require a combined effort on the part of the state and of its citizens. There is, however, neither symmetry nor equality between the state and its citizens in terms of their power to promote such change. The main power to change the situation lies with the state. Hence the state must lead the way by undertaking a concerted effort to arrive at full and complete equality for all citizens.

This is the arena in which *Sikkuy* has chosen to work. The following report is intended to focus the questions and suggest directions for changing the situation documented in these pages.

We hope you will find the report interesting, pertinent and useful.

-- The editors

Development Plan for Arab Communities – Tracking the numbers

THE “FOUR BILLION SHEKEL PLAN” – A ROAD TO CONTINUED AND INTENSIFIED DISCRIMINATION

Shalom (Shuli) Dichter
Research by Molly Malekar*

The development plan for the communities of the Arab sector, better known as the “Four Billion Shekel Plan,” was slated for implementation from 2000-2004. In October 2000, amid the tremendous tension then prevailing, its implementation was announced and gave rise to a great many expectations. The plan was presented as an appropriate and practical response to discrimination, and followed an official acknowledgment by the Rabin government (1992-1996) that Arab citizens are in fact discriminated against. Publication of the cost – NIS 4 billion, the phrase by which the plan would henceforth be known in popular parlance – created the illusion that this was the sum that would be budgeted for the benefit of Arab citizens, over and above pre-existing allotments.

As a consequence of this expectation, or as part of the public relations for the plan, the Jewish public was left with the mistaken impression that structural discrimination toward Arab citizens was ending (enabling them to hope that Arab citizens’ claims of discrimination would cease accordingly). The Arab public saw clearly that this plan was inadequate, yet heads of Arab local and municipal councils had little recourse but to accept it, on the principle that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

The data presented in this chapter will show that, in general, despite the new plan, there has been no progress in implementation of development in Arab towns and villages in Israel. On the contrary, in some ministries allocations for development in Arab towns and villages have fallen by a figure well beyond what the overall reduction in the budget as a whole would have implied. Indeed, our main criticism of the plan in last year’s Sikkuy Report (June 2001) concerned its basic premise, which from the outset did not aspire to a real change in policy.

The following review monitors the beginning of the plan’s implementation, and is based on data received from the various government ministries concerning activities in 2001-2002, and on data from the government’s 2002 budget. As to the government’s own monitoring of the program’s implementation, we ought to mention that the staff in the Prime Minister’s Office who prepared the plan and oversaw its assimilation by the various ministries have since left public service. Consequently, the director-general of the Prime Minister’s Office was made responsible for implementation of the program.

* Shuli Dichter is Sikkuy’s co-director.

Molly Malekar is Sikkuy’s director of research and coordinator of the Jerusalem civic action group.

The development plan for Arab communities in the context of other recent development plans

The intention was that implementation and management of the “Four Billion Shekel Plan” would be the purview of the Division for Policy Implementation in the Prime Minister’s Office from 1999-2002. This was all taking place at a time when there were five other development plans on the agenda:

- The Ofek program for disadvantaged communities – NIS 1.13 billion.
- A special development plan for “confrontation line” communities – NIS 1.6 billion.
- Development plan for communities over the Green Line (i.e. in the territories) – NIS 0.27 billion.
- Development plan for Druze communities – NIS 0.8 billion.
- Development plan for Bedouin communities in northern Israel – NIS 0.5 billion.

Implementation of all of these programs has thus far proceeded as anticipated, except for the development plan for Arab communities (the “Four Billion Shekel Plan”). As shown by the data presented below, this plan has been implemented only partially; and most of the ministries have in the process relied on allocations similar to, or even lower than, those of prior years.

Major differences between the plan for Arab communities and the other five:

1. Funding is almost exclusively an amalgamation of existing budgets, rather than allocation of additional funds from new sources.

Two-thirds of the allocations for the other five plans relies on ministry budgets not ordinarily allocated for specific objectives of this nature, but which had to be reallocated due to internal deviations in the respective ministry’s budget, while one-third of the funding came directly from the Finance Ministry. Funding for the plan for Arab communities, in contrast, is simply an amalgamation of existing monies that were already earmarked for development of Arab citizens’ towns and villages in prior years.² Hence there was no need for reallocation within the ministry budgets, which would have required changes in their order of priorities. What took place was re-packaging as opposed to re-prioritizing.

Above and beyond these sums, the program called for the Finance Ministry to allocate another 25% of the funding. The assumption was that each ministry would adopt this added budgetary burden and assimilate it over four years into its basic budget framework. But the notion was entirely theoretical and not compulsory. In this way, the plan did not pose any challenge to decision-makers in the various ministries, and the existing order of priorities that discriminates against Arab citizens in Israel was not slated for change in the near future, even in the context of this latest development plan.

² See Sikkuy Reports for 1998-1999 and 1999-2000.

2. Assistance from major, non-governmental organizations does not extend to Arab communities.

In a review of development plans conducted for a seminar by the Joint Distribution Committee, held in Jerusalem on March 6, 2002, one of the staffers responsible for implementation said that a large proportion of the development plan's success was due to thorough preparation on the part of recipient communities. When someone from the Prime Minister's Office went about implementing the development plan in a given community, this staffer explained, a steering committee would be set up in that community to work with him. In the Jewish communities, the local steering committee often includes not only local figures, but also partner institutions like the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael); the Jewish Agency; the Soldiers' Welfare Fund and other such national and international agencies. These organizations and others like them are part of the support system of world Jewry and of the Jewish civil society that established the state. Naturally, organizations of this kind, particularly in the realm of infrastructure, do not support Arab towns and villages, but solely Jewish towns and villages.

From a historical standpoint, the great investment of the Jewish Agency, Keren Hayesod and Jewish National Fund in Israeli infrastructure encouraged the government over the years to direct government matching funds for infrastructure along lines agreed upon with these Jewish organizations. Both before and after the founding of the state, Arab communities were not on the cognitive map of these institutions, and certainly not in the context of developing infrastructure. This is clearly one important key to the success of various development plans in Jewish towns and the lack of success of the plan for Arab communities.

This is not the place to determine whether it was these Jewish organizations that dictated the agenda, or the state that shepherded them in the directions it desired. Either way, the state must bear responsibility for the course taken and, above all, for the consequences.

3. The development plan for Arab communities will not provide the needed impetus for expanded budget allocations.

From the outset, the intention was that the Finance Ministry's allocation of 25% of the program's budget would be assimilated into each respective ministry's priorities over the course of four years, and would encourage the professional strata at the ministry to support development of Arab communities. In that manner, the program's initiators hoped to raise ministry allocations for development in Arab towns and villages by at least 25% over the long term, even beyond the time frame of the current program. Under this program, however, unlike other development plans, some of the Finance Ministry allocations to the other ministries have not arrived on schedule. More crucially, there are those who evidently view this tardiness, like the plan's very existence, as a good opportunity to finesse a decrease in their allocations for development in Arab communities as compared with prior years.³

For all these reasons, it would seem evident, despite the good will and efforts invested by the Division for Policy Implementation in the Prime Minister's Office, that the

³ See below: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Transportation; Ministry of Housing; Ministry of Tourism; etc.

plan for the development of Arab communities – of all places – is liable to afford the administration a convenient way to continue existing patterns of discrimination at current or even greater levels.

Methodological comments:

- This report's findings rely on responses received between February and April 2002 from the ministries that are part of the development plan.
- The draconian dimensions of pending budget cuts associated with the Defensive Shield campaign (to "root out the terrorist infrastructure in the territories," Spring 2002) will require readers of this report to obtain updated information in order to maintain an accurate picture as time goes by, since the situation described in these pages reflects the responses given at a very specific moment. The Finance Ministry has lately promulgated additional austerity measures to fund ongoing military activity, and these new cuts will undoubtedly have ramifications for the development program examined here.
- The relevant yardstick for how the pie is divided and what proportion is allocated to Arab citizens, strictly speaking, is not the total proportion of Israel's Arab population, but rather that proportion of the nation's population comprised of Arab citizens living in the communities encompassed by the development program (c. 10% of Israel's population, or 634,000 Arab citizens). However, most of the allocations, as our data will show, did not in fact reach even that 10%.
- Despite this qualification, one can reasonably argue that the budget allocations under this program ought to be evaluated as if intended for all Arab citizens, given the wide geographic distribution of the communities involved, and because the residents of the included communities do comprise the greater part of the Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel.

Our findings and related clarifications follow.

Impressive Growth in the Number of Community Policing Centers – a service to citizens or a means of control?

General budget, 2002:	NIS 6.03 billion
Development budget, 2002:	
Development budget for Arab communities, 2002:	NIS 10 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 1999-2000: Eight community policing centers were established in Arab towns, at an estimated cost of NIS 1.2 million.

In 2000-2001: Another 33 community policing centers were added, at an estimated cost of NIS 5 million.

Relations between the Israeli Police and Arab citizens have suffered tremendously from the traumatic events of October 2000. Most conspicuous is the crisis of trust; a concerted effort on the part of the state will be required to rebuild these relations. With utmost caution, it may be said that the police have taken a practical step in this direction with two projects, described below:

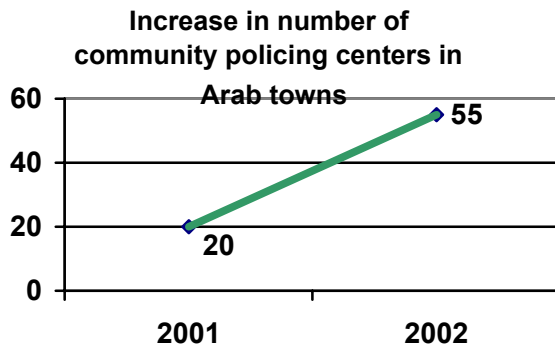
- ♦ **“A Safe School”** – a pilot program aimed at creating a safe atmosphere in the school, including education about verbal and physical violence, drugs and alcohol, the experience of being a victim and road safety. The programs are operated in conjunction with the community policing center. The model is being run in 60 junior high schools in Arab towns, of 258 junior high schools nationally (23%).
- ♦ In 2001, 33 **community policing centers** were established in Arab towns. This meant an increase from 20 to 55 such centers in Arab communities in one year. There are now some 358 community policing centers in Israel, of which the 55 in Arab towns represent 15.3%. The police have reported difficulties in setting up the centers because residents and their representatives, distrusting the police at the outset, are suspicious about the idea of such a center. Nonetheless, with a concerted effort, the Community Policing Division of the Israeli Police has been able to set up the 33 additional centers.

While the cost of establishing one such center is about NIS 150,000, more significant is the budget for annual maintenance of the community policing centers (some NIS 600,000 a year each). The establishment of these centers is laudable, but who can promise that the first big budget cut won't see the funding pulled for these new centers on the principle of “last in, first out?” We will continue to monitor the ongoing, routine operation of the centers in years to come.

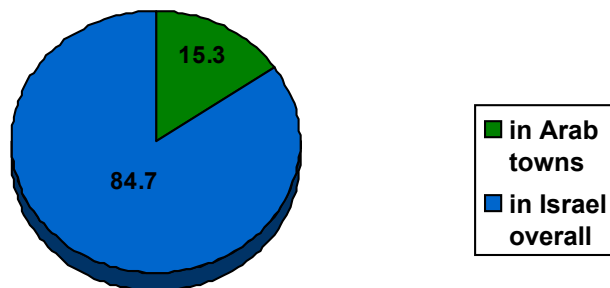
Meanwhile, the number of community policing centers in Arab communities is still lower than warranted by the proportion of Arabs in the population as a whole.

Diagram 1:

Community Policing Centers in Arab Towns



Community policing centers in Arab towns, and in Israel overall (%)



Data: Israeli Police

The role of the police: to serve citizens, not to serve as a means of control

In October 2000, police fired on Arab demonstrators and killed 13 of them. Though the establishment of community policing centers had already begun, after October 2000 the number of such centers in Arab communities grew by 2.5 times. Given the circumstances of profound mutual distrust, and the inherent suspicion on the part of Arab citizens toward the police, the community policing centers were liable to be perceived not as a friendly service rendered cheerfully to the citizen, but as an effective arm of control penetrating the very community itself. Will the police be able to guarantee that the community policing centers, friendly to local residents, won't be used to fire on demonstrators some day?

The positive aspect of community policing centers will be judged by the ability of the Israeli Police to make them centers that truly serve citizens. Otherwise, they will become yet another stumbling block to good relations between the Arab public and the state.

Development of Housing Infrastructure – blueprint for the future

		For Arab communities:
General budget, 2002:	NIS 10.7 billion	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 2.57 billion	NIS 66.5 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 2000: NIS 108 million for development in Arab communities = 5.4% of the ministry's development budget.

In 2002: NIS 66.5 million for development in Arab communities = 2.6% of the ministry's development budget.

The State of Israel's investment in housing infrastructure is a statement about how the state views the future, in residential terms. Young Israelis seeing the development of infrastructure for residential housing on the hillsides adjacent to their town can see their own future right there. Aside from lending a sense of security for young people and their parents, new infrastructure work paints a kind of portrait of their future in that place. And the fact that this infrastructure is built by the state on the basis of planning for the future signifies that the state is interested in their future in that place.

A comparison between the 2002 Housing Ministry budget for the development plan for Arab communities, compared with the budget for the Jewish city of Modi'in, provides weighty evidence of the substantial existing gap:

Diagram 2:

Ministry of Construction and Housing budget for 2002 – Arab communities vs. the Jewish city of Modi'in

Arab localities in the framework of the development plan (pop. 634,000)

NIS 66.5 million: NIS 104 per resident



Modi'in (pop. 21,802)

NIS 252 million: NIS 11,554 per resident



Data: State Budget (on the internet)

Drastic Decrease in Allocations to Close Gaps in Arab Communities

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002	NIS 14.9 billion	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 277 million	NIS 1.6 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 1999: NIS 9.2 million to build family health clinics in Arab communities.

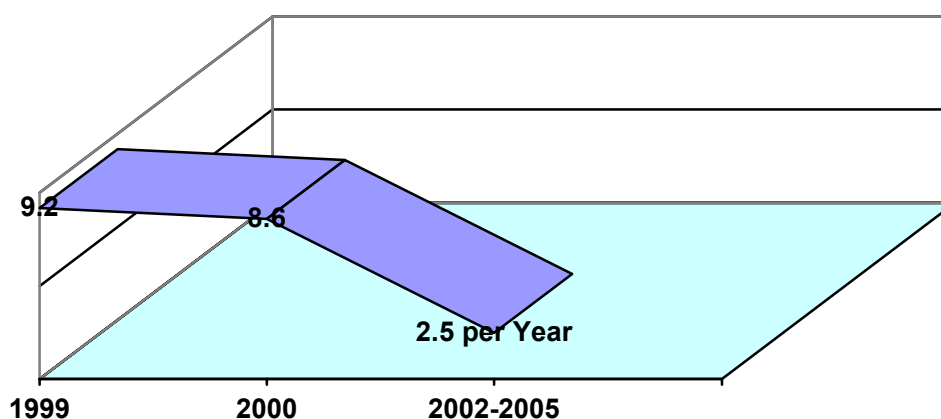
In 2000: NIS 8.6 million.

For 2001-2004: NIS 10 million – NIS 2.5 million a year, based on the plan.

NIS 56.1 million in 2002 (actual expenditure)

Diagram 3:

**Health Ministry budget for Arab communities 1999-2005
(NIS millions)**



Data: State Budget (on the internet)

The pace of development under Ministry of Health responsibility:

- ♦ The budget of the development plan allows for the establishment of 12 family health clinics over four years. In August 2001, the 12 Arab municipalities selected were advised by the Ministry of Health of the anticipated construction of clinics in their jurisdiction. Five of the municipalities submitted building plans and results of a tender for construction, yet as of April 2002 only two of these had been funded, at a total sum of NIS 1.6 million.

At this rate, there is grave doubt that the Ministry will be able to make full use of even the low budget designated for this purpose in 2002 (NIS 2.5 million). As the project proceeds, the Ministry of Health takes a passive role, making do with conveying notice of intended funding to the local authority selected.

Given the existing situation of both the Arab localities and their relations with the national administration, one might expect the Ministry of Health to take more initiative and assume a more active role.

- ◆ This year, the National Lottery (*Mifal Hapa'is*) has managed to fund construction of 10 family health clinics, which is five times the number of clinics funded by the Ministry of Health, and for 2.5 times the cost of what the Ministry spent.

In addition to the clinics slated for construction under the development plan, the Ministry of Health provides professional services to the National Lottery by examining and approving requests for establishment of family health clinics funded by the National Lottery. This year, 10 family health clinics were approved, and the budgets already allocated, to Arab communities, from National Lottery funds totaling NIS 6.7 million.

The National Lottery collects funds from the public by persuading them to buy lottery tickets, and returns that money to the public in the form of development. Money collected from the public by the government is never freely given; it is collected as taxes.

Family health clinics are a basic necessity that the state must provide its citizens. In 2002, the citizenry is itself funding 10 family health clinics in Arab communities (via the Lottery), while the government is funding only two or three. For such a basic need, the government ought not rely on voluntary fundraising from citizens to accomplish what the state itself is supposed to be doing.

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Crawling Toward Parity

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002:	NIS 1.16 billion	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 102.7 million	NIS 13 million

Comparison to prior years:

The Ministry of Agriculture significantly increased its development budget for Arab agriculture and Arab farmers, from 2.2% in 1999 to 8.4% in 2002.

Funding items in 2002: Farm roads – NIS 5 million

Beit Netufa/Batuf Valley development: NIS 7.5 million

Equipment upgrades for olive oil production: NIS 0.5 million

The agriculture sector of the economy is shrinking, in general. But the main operational problem of Jewish farmers – farm labor – is actually not among the chief issues for Arab farms, which suffer mainly from a lack of infrastructure and development.

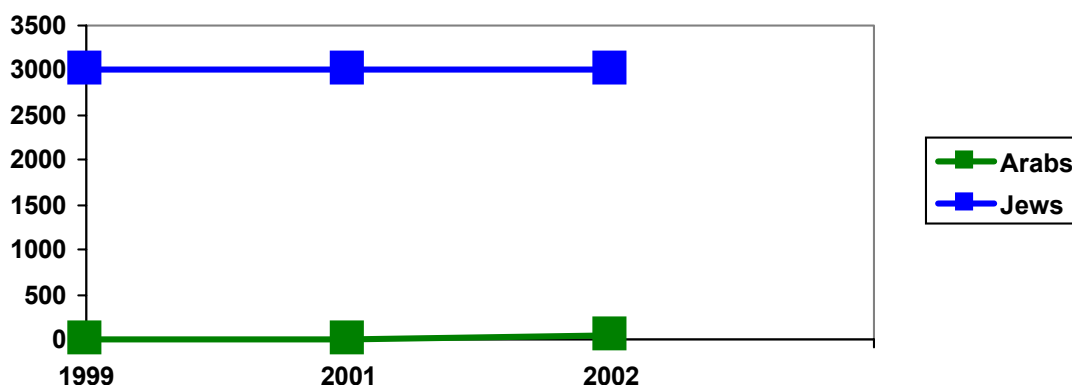
Rate of Gap Closure: poultry, a case study:

The Ministry of Agriculture offers the poultry industry, raising chickens for meat in particular, as an example of how the gaps are being narrowed. However, a closer look reveals a disappointing picture. In 1999, there were about 3,000 approved chicken enterprises in Israel (the industry is regulated, with production quotas), of which 1,031 were actually operating. Only one of these belonged to an Arab grower, but it was not in operation. During 2000-2001, there was a decrease of about 15% in the number of operating facilities.

In 2001, the Ministry of Agriculture granted approved-enterprise status to 10 Arab growers. At this point, four growing facilities are under construction; the ministry assisted the process with planning advice and help in obtaining building permits. In 2002, there were 140 requests (all by Arabs), of which 55 were granted approved enterprise status.

Diagram 4:

Closing the gap between Jewish and Arab poultry farmers



Year	1999	2000	2002
Jews	3000	3000	3000
Arabs	1	10	55

Data: State Budget (on the internet)

Lack of access to ministry resources

The Ministry of Agriculture distributes quotas that authorize production volumes for agricultural enterprises, almost a form of licensing. This holds true for growing chickens as well. Traditionally, for more than 50 years, agricultural production quotas for eggs, milk and other products were handed out to favored recipients based on partisan political and organizational connections. There was no Arab representation in any of these forums – the Milk Board, the Fruit Board, the Chicken Growers’ Board, for instance – nor were Arabs members of the various national settlement movements. Private Jewish farmers had their own organizations as well.

Historically, the agricultural associations were created well before the founding of the state by Jewish civil society under the British Mandate. When the state was founded, many of these institutions were reborn as state institutions, but Arab farmers, who meanwhile had acquired Israeli citizenship, were not included in these organizational structures. Since Arab farmers were on the outside, their access to production quotas was partial at best, and the longstanding obligation of the Ministry of Agriculture was to the Jewish farmers who were already organized. Jewish farm enterprises (on the semi-collective and collective farming communities – moshavim, moshavot, and kibbutzim) prospered, with their access to the source of production quotas already established.

A large proportion of the more intensive Arab-owned farming, the kind that can be greatly improved by state resources, is found in the Triangle region (to the north and east of Tel Aviv). Despite problems with land distribution in the region (exacerbated by the planned Trans-Israel Highway, Route 6), the Arab agricultural enterprise there

is comparable to that of Jewish farmers in the area. The main problem is that this region does not have preferred enterprise status due to its proximity to the center of the country. For Arab farmers in the Triangle, proximity to the center of Israel bestows no advantages: Proximity to largesse in terms of agricultural development resources has nothing to do with geographical proximity to the center of the country, but comes from organizational access to decision-makers in government.

Government policy dictates that being granted preferred enterprise status accesses the wellsprings of state resources for the area so designated. Despite their geographic proximity to central Israel, the Arab farmers of the Triangle, from a civic-social-economic standpoint, live in the farthest corner of the State of Israel, and the time has come to bring them closer to the center in reality. The Ministry of Agriculture should embrace the objective of making the Triangle region a Priority A preferred enterprise area with respect to agricultural development.

It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Agriculture, in the last two years, has adopted a policy of improving its services to Arab farmers, but this is a drop in the bucket. Narrowing the gap between Arab and Jewish farmers will require bridging the abyss created by 54 years of structural discrimination and differential access to state resources. Given the extent of the inequity, the pace of redressing it – as with the chicken growers – is indeed far from that required. Hence the ministry's declared change in policy is not in fact much of a change.

Fostering Outstanding Performance Means Perpetuating Inequity

General budget, 2002:	NIS 770 million
Development budget, 2002:	
Development budget for Arab communities:	NIS 26.3 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 2000: NIS 20.7 million for Arab citizens

In 2002: NIS 26.3 million for Arab citizens (an increase of 12% over two years)

The Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport has acknowledged longstanding discrimination toward Arab citizens, and the minister has emphasized this in his public pronouncements. Nevertheless, even the special development plan did not manage to change the picture substantively. The budget intended for Arab citizens under the plan is NIS 26.3 million, only 3.2% of the parallel budget for the rest of the population, yet still a bit higher than the budget allocated for Arab citizens in 2000 (NIS 20.7 million).

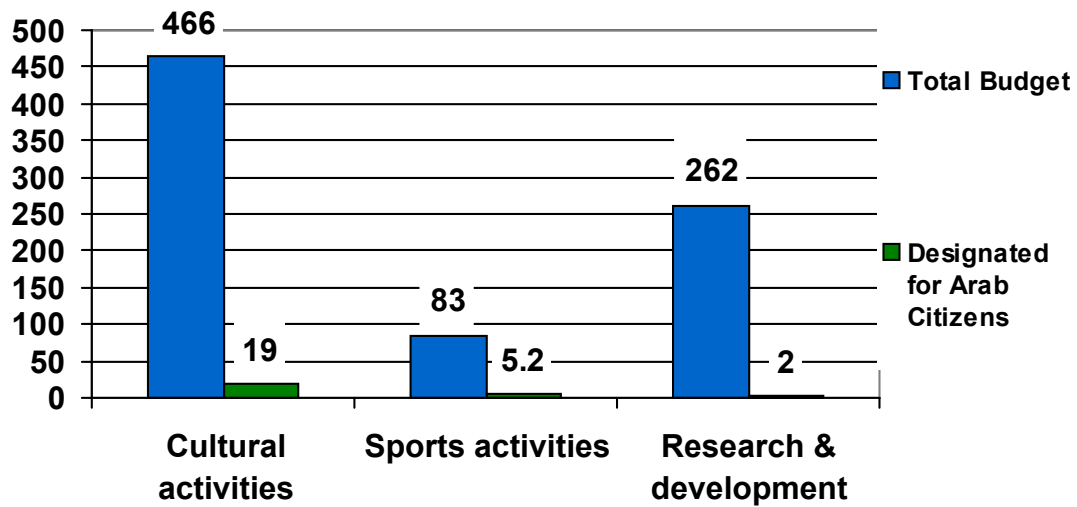
Table 1:

Arab citizens' share of the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport budget (NIS millions)

Item	Total budget	Amount designated for Arab citizens	Arab share as a percentage of the total
Cultural activities	466	19	(4%)
Sport activities	83	5.2	(6.2%)
Research & development	262	2	(0.7%)

Diagram 5:

Arab citizens' share of the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport budget (NIS millions)



Data: Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport

In general, the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport responds to excellence on the part of citizens, rather than initiating activities on its own. Hence, for instance, the Ministry will fund an existing theater, will assist an outstanding scientist, will support a star athlete – with no connection to their group identity, based solely on their individual excellence.

With this policy, the Ministry is liable simply to perpetuate the already very considerable gap, since an enriched and supportive environment from childhood onward tends to produce excellence. This environmental factor, with respect to which a tremendous gap exists between Jewish and Arab citizens, is precisely where the state must step in and act to change the picture. Hence the Ministry should now begin to devote a much larger proportion of budget to the development of the scientific-cultural environment in Arab society in Israel, one that will nurture excellence while nurturing the promise in every youngster, outstanding or otherwise.

Vocational Training: Under-funded

		For Arab Communities
General budget, 2002:	NIS 4.3 billion	
Division of Vocational Training / 2002 budget:	NIS 797.3 million	NIS 100 million

Comparison to prior years:

At the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, it was decided to define vocational training within the framework of the development plan for Arab communities, although the funds are supposedly intended for the entire Arab population in Israel and not just for those Arab communities included in the development plan. The sum decided on at the outset, back in 2001, was NIS 100 million. In 2002, there is no significant change in this budget, and the additional NIS 9 million allocation from the Treasury was not transferred.

- ♦ Arab citizens' share of the general budget of the Vocational Training Division (including for youth) is only 12.5%, although Arabs currently comprise 18.5% of the population.
- ♦ 8,625 Arab citizens currently study in the division's vocational training programs - a mere 9.8% of the overall total of 88,053 persons in such courses.

Diagram 6:

Arab citizens' share of Vocational Training Division funds and activities, relative to their proportion in the population (percentages)

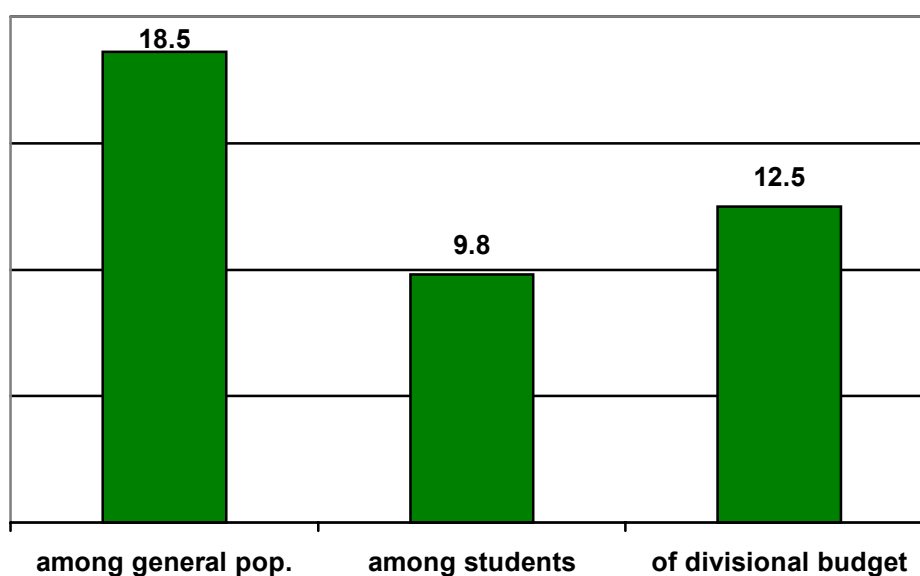


Table 2:
Arab citizens' share of Vocational Training Division funds and activities
(NIS millions)

Item	Total	Allocated for Arab citizens	As a percentage
Budget of the Vocational Training Division	793.3	100	12.5%
# persons in Vocational Training Division programs	88,053	8,625	9.8%

Data: Ministry of Labor

Heading the table of national unemployment data published periodically is a group of 15-20 Arab communities where, collectively, about half the Arab children in Israel are living under the poverty line. Due to historical circumstances of limited access to jobs, Arab citizens, particularly Arab women, are the first to suffer from fluctuations in the job market. This population works for a living and does not subsist on government allowances; hence it is dependent on the job market.

In such a situation, the share of vocational training programs devoted to Arab citizens, especially Arab women citizens, should be especially high. Yet thus far, even after the special effort under the development plan, Arab citizens continue to receive an exceedingly low share of the vocational training budget in absolute numbers, as well as in comparison to Jews. Instead of maintaining that relatively low investment level, the investment in vocational training for Arab citizens, and Arab women citizens in particular, should be raised drastically, beyond the level due them based on their relative proportion in the population.

Ministry of the Interior

The Master Plan: Bottleneck on the Road to all Future Development

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002	NIS 6.015 billion	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 565 million	NIS 111 million

In 2002: master plans for 21 Arab communities in implementation; of NIS 56 million allocated for master plans, NIS 11.8 million allocated for Arab communities (21%).

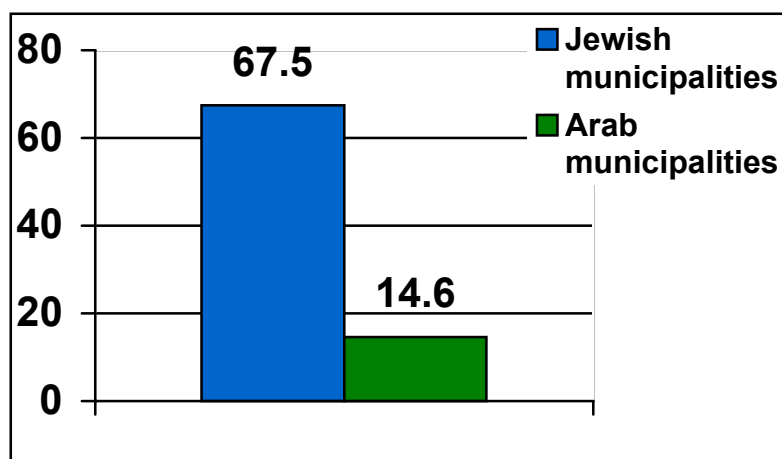
Master plans are the bottleneck on the path to all future development.

Of 82 Arab municipalities, only 12 have approved master plans in place.

Of 148 Jewish municipalities, about 100 have approved master plans in place.

Diagram 7:

Approved master plans - Jewish vs. Arab municipalities (%)



Data: Municipal Planning Authority, Ministry of the Interior.

An approved master plan enables:

- ♦ Planning of employment centers and allocation of state lands held by the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
- ♦ Planning and implementation of housing projects by the Ministry of Construction and Housing on state lands.
- ♦ Sewage purification systems.
- ♦ Internal road system with underground water and drainage system.
- ♦ Issuance of residential building permits.
- ♦ Collection of capital improvement taxes and fees by the local authority.
- ♦ Long term planning for construction of proper infrastructure.
- ♦ Designation of buildings for public use and services – neighborhood clubs, clinics, educational campus, etc.

The main problem is one of trust:

The process of preparing a master plan requires reaching agreement at some point with whoever owns the land. During the planning process, land must be transferred – even virtually – to a neutral planning agent; the land is then received back again in a standard swap arrangement under the master plan (with areas designated for public use, right of way, roads, etc.). Under present circumstances, this appears to be impossible, mainly due to a problem of trust. Arab landowners have absolutely no trust that the state will act for their benefit. The 54 years during which the land under their ownership only shrank has made landowners loathe to allow their precious remaining land to pass even temporarily into other hands, no matter whose.

The gap in master plans between Jewish and Arab municipalities is also a statement of the state's attitude toward the future of these communities. While the future of the Jewish communities is discussed and planned, most of the Arab communities have no master plan. This situation necessitates a complete reversal at the Ministry of the Interior: 79% of the budget should be invested in Arab municipalities and 21% in Jewish municipalities, instead of the other way around.

In most Jewish communities, the largest landowner is the Israel Lands Authority (ILA) and, for purposes of coordination, the ILA and the Interior Ministry are essentially part of the same system. In Arab communities, on the other hand, most landowners are local residents and there are numerous private parcels.

Those master plans that do exist for Arab localities were drafted under the minimalist approach prevalent in the 1980s, which sought merely to sketch the existing situation without addressing future growth. Despite periodic updates made to these plans, they are not relevant for residents today because they are based on a restrictive premise and provide no encouragement to the community. This engenders a sense among the Arab public that the master plan has no real value and ought to be opposed.

The state has an interest in developing Arab towns and villages and must therefore make a special, broad-based effort to resolve this problem, once and for all. This would appear to be possible only through dialogue with the local authorities and the Arab public leadership, because it is a process of building trust from scratch. Such a process could become a cornerstone of the state's confidence-building with its Arab citizens.

In a lecture during a seminar at the Arab Center for Alternative Planning in Nazareth on March 25, 2002, Dr. Hanna Swaid, director of the center, raised the idea of a tripartite covenant among the citizens, the municipality and the state, embodying the rights and obligations of all three. The idea is to find a creative way to break through the vicious cycle of distrust. The Arab Center for Alternative Planning is currently hard at work preparing a draft of what would be entailed in the process of formulating such a covenant.

**An Increase in Ground Transportation Budget vs.
a Decrease in Allocations to Arab Communities and Environs**

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002:	NIS 916,106 million	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 2.98 billion	NIS 139 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 2000: NIS 155.7 million for development of urban and interurban roads in Arab communities.

In 2002: NIS 139 million (11% decrease).

While Jewish communities enjoy suitable infrastructure from the outset and need only maintain it properly, in most Arab communities there is a need to rehabilitate the very structure of the village in order for the transportation infrastructure to serve residents safely. To arrive at that situation, a disproportionately large investment will be required relative to Arab citizens' proportion of the population of the country.

Nevertheless, were the state to invest in Arab localities even at a level equal to their proportion in the general population, that would be sufficient at this stage. As noted, investment in Arab municipalities and environs is three times (or more) lower than their proportion of the population overall.

The development budget for ground transportation (urban and interurban) of the Ministry of Transport increased in 2002 by 28.4% (from NIS 2.13 billion to NIS 2.98 billion).
The development budget for Arab communities in the same category dropped in 2002 by 11% (from NIS 155.7 million to NIS 139 million).

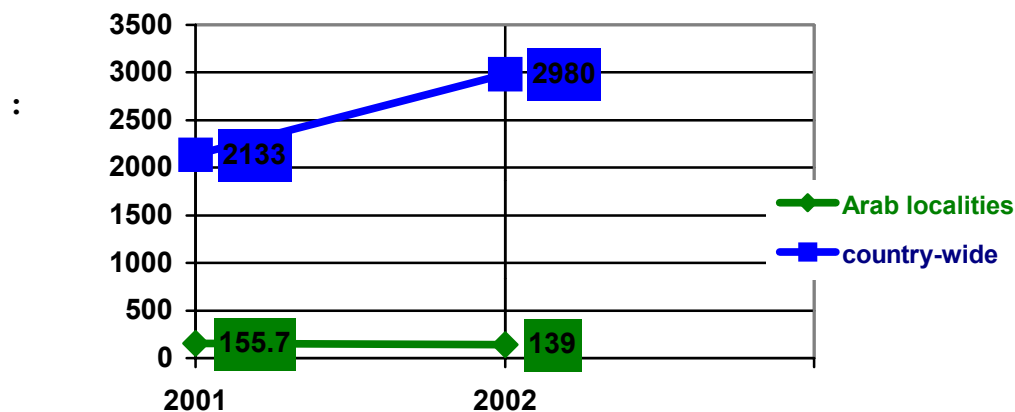
Table 3:

**2002 budget for overall development
vs. development in Arab communities and environs**

	Arab communities	Overall	% of overall
Interurban (in Arab residential areas)	NIS 89 million	NIS 1.8 billion	4.9%
Urban	NIS 50 million	NIS 1.17 billion	4.2%
TOTAL	NIS 139 million	2.98 billion	4.6% (average)

Diagram 8:

Increase in ground transportation budget vs. decrease in allocations for Arab communities and environs (NIS millions)



Data: Ministry of Transportation

This year's report by the State Comptroller quotes studies, commissioned internally by the Ministry of Transport, showing that the most common type of road accidents in Arab towns are caused by infrastructure problems: "An analysis of the vehicle-vehicle collisions... points to another characteristic of large towns in the minority sectors, and that is frontal collisions. The authors of the study contend that this characteristic is also generally linked with infrastructure problems." The Comptroller's report adds that this picture "demands that infrastructure be addressed, e.g., traffic flow, shoulders in disrepair, barriers between opposing lanes of traffic."

Rate and type of injuries in road accidents in Arab and Jewish towns, 1995-1997:

- ◆ Injuries in Jewish urban areas, 62,749 persons.
- ◆ Injuries in Arab urban areas, 2,025 persons.
- ◆ Seriously injured: 21%-25% of all injuries in Arab towns.
14%-17% of all injuries in Jewish towns.
- ◆ Although the number of injuries is much smaller in Arab towns, the severity of the injuries of those hurt in Arab towns is about 35% higher than in Jewish towns, evidently due to the particularly bad infrastructure of the roads in Arab communities.

A study conducted by the Ministry of Transport with the aim of creating a safety profile for a local council, analyzed data from the Central Bureau of Statistics on accidents with injuries. The study encompassed 85 communities, 22 of them Arab towns. Highlights of the findings:

- ◆ 14 of 25 communities with the worst safety profiles were Arab communities.
- ◆ Of 111 children (aged 0-14) killed in 85 communities, 36 were killed in Arab towns (32.4%).
- ◆ Children accounted for 58% of those killed in road accidents in Arab towns.
- ◆ The probability of being hurt in a road accident in an Arab town is 22% greater than the probability of being hurt in a Jewish town.

The State Comptroller notes that, in light of these data, the Ministry of Transport and the local authorities must formulate a comprehensive plan of investment to improve the safety level of the transportation infrastructure in Arab towns. The budget data supplied by the Ministry of Transport, however, shows that the sums designated for that purpose are particularly small.

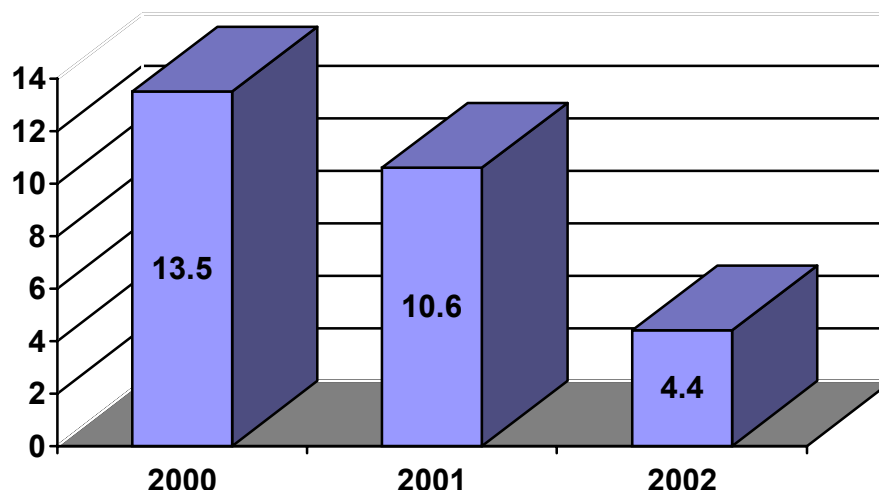
Access to Tourist Resources Depends on Investment in Infrastructure

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002	NIS 506 million	
Development budget, 2002:	NIS 275 million	NIS 4.4 million

Comparison to prior years:

Diagram 9:

Persistent decrease in tourism development budgets for Arab communities during the last three years (NIS millions)



Data: Government Tourism Company

Tourism is an economic resource for all citizens of the state, but access to this resource depends on the investment in infrastructure. Tourism infrastructure determines the extent to which residents of a given region or sector can have access to that resource and utilize it to their benefit. The drop in investment in infrastructure development in Arab towns also means that residents will be less able to utilize this resource in the near future.

Domestic tourism has more than an economic influence

The economic situation, which is continuing to deteriorate, will in the near future apparently mean an increasing trend to promoting domestic tourism. Since October 2000, many Jews simply avoid Arab towns. Among the public and in the media there has even been an unofficial, undeclared boycott by the Jewish public of Arab communities. Aside from the economic aspect so crucial to the recovery of Arab tourism, development of tourism infrastructure in the near future might help bring

together Jewish and Arab citizens once again, and help build healthier relations between them.

The investment in tourism infrastructure in Arab towns and villages must be raised significantly, to a share of the available budget well beyond the percentage Arabs comprise in the population as a whole.

Ministry of Industry and Trade

66% Drop in Allocations for Development Compared with 2000

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002:	NIS 5.9 billion	
Development budget for industrial zones:	NIS 440.6 million	NIS 15 million
Development budget for light industry and services	NIS 260 million	NIS 10 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 2000: NIS 30 million for developing industrial zones in Arab areas (16.9% of the ministry's development budget).

In 2002: NIS 25 million for developing industrial zones in Arab areas (3.5% of the ministry's development budget).

The contribution made by industrial and light industrial zones is crucial in two modalities. In terms of the community's tax base, property taxes from industrial zones are one of the principal sources of income in the budgets of local authorities in which such zones exist in Israel. In terms of employment, industrial zones bring jobs closer to where people live. A combination of these two modalities is imperative if Arab citizens are to make their way out of the crisis-level circumstances in which they've been living for the last 54 years.

A built-in gap between neighboring communities creates social and political tension and promotes a terrible wall of alienation. Industrial zones, light industry and service centers are obviously crucial if Arab citizens are ever to break free of the cycle of inferiority vis-a-vis their Jewish neighbors. An awareness of this fact is not evident in the budget allocated by the Ministry of Industry and Trade for developing industrial zones in Arab residential areas in the year 2002, under the current development plan.

For example:

The Central Galilee region is one of the most blatant areas in the country of longstanding inequality between Jewish and Arab residents, showing how that inequality decisively influences their daily lives and the future of the region.

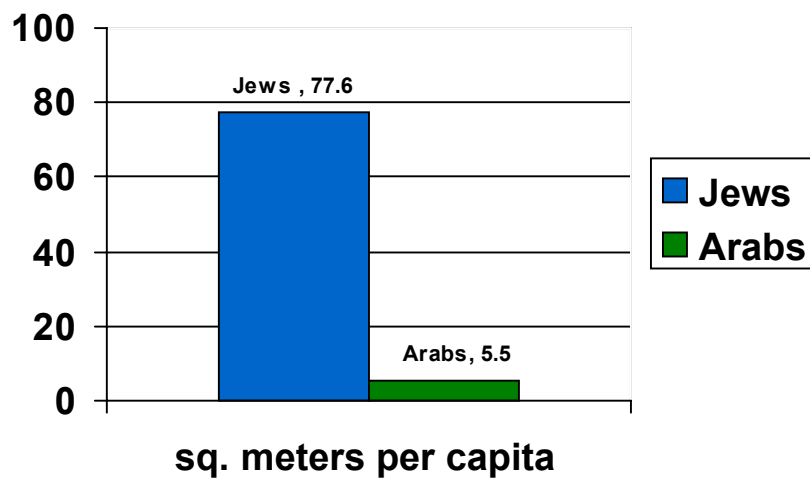
The Central Galilee is home to 210,000 Arab citizens and about 60,000 Jewish citizens. The land area devoted to existing industrial zones is as follows:

In or adjacent to Arab areas, industrial zones encompass 1,159 dunams (1 dunam = c.1/4 acre), as follow: B'ineh, 19.6; Tamra, 466; Caucab, 28; Kufr Manda, 24.5; M'ghar, 167; Nahef, 10; Sakhnin, 267; Ilabun, 70; Arabe, 18; Sha'ab, 89 – or **5.5 square meters per person.**

In or adjacent to Jewish areas, industrial zones encompass 4,658 dunams: Tardion (Misgav region), 858; Bar-Lev (Misgav region, Mateh Asher region, and Carmiel), 1,100; Carmiel, 2,700 – or **77.6 square meters per person.**

Diagram 10:

Area zoned for industry or light industry in municipalities of the Central Galilee



Data: Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development

Property taxes from industrial zones comprise a large proportion of municipal income.

Property taxes from industrial zones are a key means for municipalities to improve services to the community and affect fundamental, meaningful change in quality of life for residents.

Nationally, the minimum and maximum property tax rates which municipalities are currently permitted to collect, per square meter, are as follows:

Industrial: NIS 18.22 – NIS 121.8.

Light industry/commercial: NIS 33.74 – NIS 164.34.

Assuming that all the land designated as industrial zones in the Central Galilee is actually in use, the projected minimum and maximum annual tax income (per resident) from industrial zones would be:

In Jewish areas in the region: NIS 1,415 to NIS 9,455 per capita, per year.

In Arab areas in the region: NIS 100 to NIS 672 per capita, per year.

The large gap in the size of industrial zones within Jewish jurisdictions compared with Arab jurisdictions is reflected in a large gap between incomes from industrial property taxes that benefit the local communities. The state can, and must, urgently move to balance this situation and close the existing gap by creating real partnership between localities. Real partnership in an industrial zone is one that includes a division of income from property taxes. The Ministry of Industry and Trade has the power to set up such partnerships, not merely in new industrial zones but in existing ones as well.

“An Outlying Area” – in central Israel

- ♦ In a strip about five km wide along both sides of the Trans-Israel Highway between Rosh Ha'ayin in the south and Wadi Ara (at the junction of Kibbutz Barkai) in the north, the population comprises about 130,000 Jews and about 130,000 Arabs. In the various municipal jurisdictions within that area lie 16 industrial / light industrial zones – six regional and ten local – that are either operating or planned. Of these, only four local industrial zones are in Arab jurisdictions (Taibe, 420 dunams; Baka al Gharbiyye, 100 dunams; Jatt, 36.7 dunams; and Kalansua, 20.3 dunams).

The common argument among government bureaucrats is that the ministry's support is extended for establishing industrial zones only pursuant to nationally determined priorities, hence preference is always given to “peripheral” (i.e., outlying) areas over areas in the center of the country. Despite their geographical proximity to the center of the country, however, all the Arab areas along the route of the Trans-Israel Highway are in fact marginal – “peripheral” – from a civic, social and employment perspective. Based on any objective criteria, they ought to be eligible for designation as national high-priority areas. Given the damage being caused to these communities by the brutal intrusion of the highway in the first place, this would appear to be a last, historic opportunity to redress the gaps between Arab and Jewish towns. The Ministry of Industry and Trade is empowered to initiate and direct such a process. Evidently, for the present, the Ministry of Industry and Trade is not pursuing such action.

Infrastructure is Built on Trust

		For Arab communities
General budget, 2002:	NIS 1.4 billion	
Development budget for sewage / drainage systems:	NIS 1.8 billion	NIS 55 million

Comparison to prior years:

In 1999: Loans totaling NIS 52.9 million were given to Arab communities, of an overall NIS 357.2 million for all local authorities in the country (14.8% of loans to local authorities).

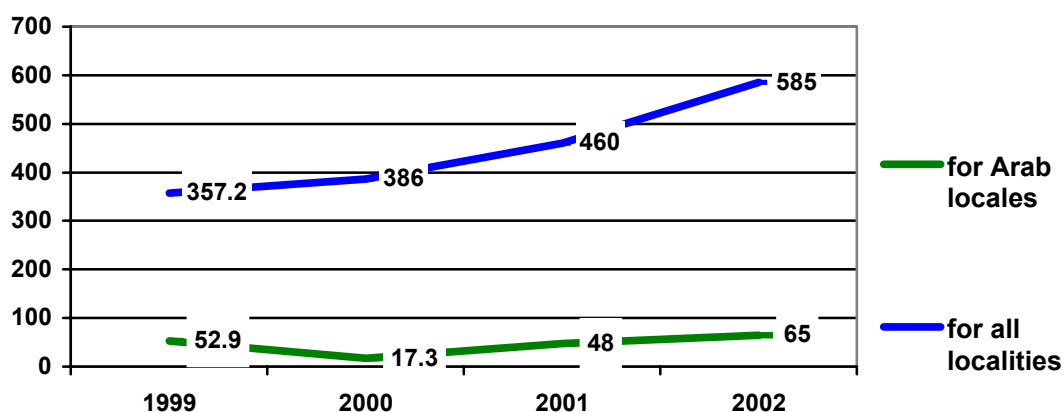
In 2000: Arab communities were allocated NIS 17.3 million in loans, of NIS 386 million allocated to local authorities nationally (4.4% of loans to local authorities).

In 2001: When the development plan began operating, NIS 48 million in loans was allocated to Arab local authorities of an overall NIS 460 million to local authorities nationwide (10.4% of all loans to local authorities).

In 2002: Loans totaling NIS 65 million were allocated for Arab communities, of a total of NIS 585 million allocated for all local authorities in Israel (11% of all loans to local authorities).

Diagram 11:

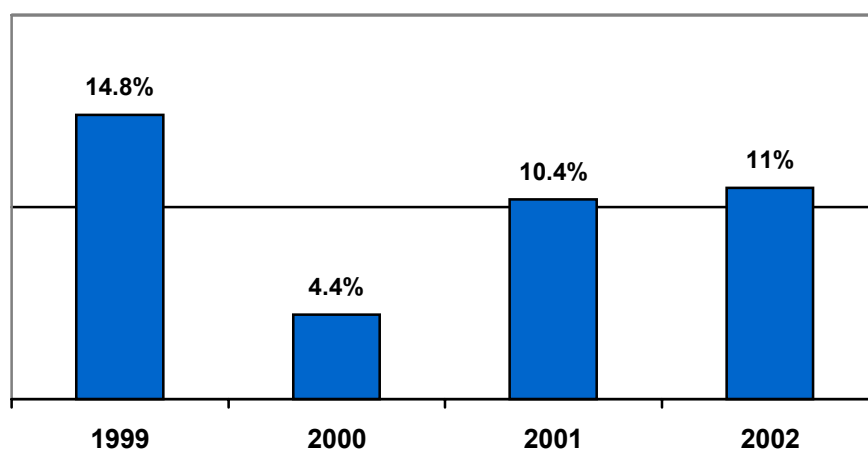
**Allocations for sewage infrastructure loans in recent years in Israel
(NIS millions)**



Data: Ministry of National Infrastructure

Diagram 12:

**Loans to Arab authorities for sewage infrastructure
as a percentage of all Israeli authorities**



Data: Ministry of National Infrastructure

Arab Local Authorities and the Treasury - breaking the cycle

The decreased rate of loans to Arab communities in 2000 is explained by the fact that the Arab localities were waiting for funds to be made available under the new development plan. A short look back to 1999 shows that there was no need to wait; the sums for loans approved at that time were not appreciably different. Unlike Jewish communities, the proportion given to Arab communities has not increased. Instead, funds for sewage systems, with the amounts essentially unchanged, were incorporated within the special development plan.

Developing and managing sewage systems involves direct contact between the Ministry of Infrastructure and the local authorities. The Ministry approves the plans submitted by local authorities, and this professional stamp of approval makes local authorities eligible for loans from the state's Treasury. Allocations for sewage systems are all loans from the Treasury to the local authorities, of which 50% becomes a grant and the remaining 50% is repaid to the bank.

Over the last year, the relevant review committee of the Sewage Infrastructure Authority approved sewage system plans for Arab localities in the sum of NIS 250 million. At present, the ball is in the Treasury's court. At issue is the local authorities' ability to repay the loans. The Arab local authorities have insufficient income from industrial property taxes, low collection rates (due to citizen distrust) and long memories. Historically, despite institution of what is known as the Suweiri formula for weighted comparison of grants, the Arab localities received insufficient allocations from the Ministry of the Interior, which originally created the large gaps in infrastructure between Jewish and Arab communities. Under these circumstances, the ability of Arab local authorities to repay loans is low. Thus it is harder to get the loans approved. The Treasury must break through this vicious circle with a special, comprehensive program of loans and grants to support the ultimate aim of installing complete sewage infrastructure in every Arab locality.

From the State Comptroller's Report:

- ♦ National Water Authority data for 2001: 58 of 82 Arab local councils do not have a complete sewage system in place.
- ♦ About 15% of the councils have no sewage master plan.
- ♦ About 7% of the councils have only a partial sewage system.
- ♦ About 15% have a complete internal sewage system.
- ♦ About 33% of the localities have no proper arrangements for sewage when it leaves their town's system, and some simply channel it to open areas.

Data: from a questionnaire distributed to 88 Arab local councils, of which 47 responded.

Restoration of towns and their residents' trust

Arab communities suffer such broad neglect that, from the standpoint of sewage systems, some kind of massive, wide-scale campaign is now required – as if the Arab communities were only just now starting out, or were starting over from scratch. Every year that passes only enlarges, and substantially so, the cost of the required rehabilitation. And while the cost of physical rehabilitation may be quantified, it is harder to say exactly what kind of public campaign would be able to earn the trust of Arab citizens. Yet the attempt must be made. The infrastructure that actually exists now is one of broad, in-depth suspicion vis-a-vis the state as a result of the conduct of the central government toward Arab communities over more than half a century.

Hence, on the question of sewage infrastructure - as on so much else - the state must make a mighty effort to win back the trust of citizens in these towns and villages. Meanwhile, when the State of Israel finally makes up its mind to put the physical infrastructure in Arab communities in proper order, it will discover that broad rehabilitation is going to be needed in every built-up area of virtually every locality. This is an extremely complicated matter, and will necessitate very expensive improvised solutions due to a lack of prior planning for the community; the use of know-how and expertise from around the world concerning rehabilitation of historical landmark areas amid existing residential communities (like the old village centers in large Arab towns); and a long-term effort that will unavoidably inconvenience residents. In some places, there will be a need for sensitive and complex relocation-construction processes. The biggest difficulty may prove to be lengthy and continuing negotiation with private landowners for whom the land still in their possession is like the last few remaining coins of a great treasure stolen from them.

How to proceed?

The Sewage Infrastructure Authority announced that an Arab engineer had been hired to oversee the process and to maintain ongoing contact with Arab local authorities. This step signifies a certain progress, though it falls short of actually bringing Arab citizens into the planning process, and the approach should be system-wide. Given its complexity, the entire effort demands a conceptual breadth that simultaneously encompasses both infrastructure rehabilitation and planning. Two complementary processes are necessary:

1. Allocation of appropriate funding, for a decade, from the Ministry of Finance treasury for the implementation of infrastructure. This funding could close the gaps in infrastructure created during a massive, ongoing funding gap over a period of 54 years. This funding will evidently necessitate a slowdown in sewage infrastructure projects in Jewish areas during that decade, and the funding for Arab communities will have to

be disproportionately high in terms of their relative representation in the population nationally.

2. On the road to physical rehabilitation of the infrastructure, Arab citizens' trust in state institutions will somehow have to be rehabilitated as well. The state can initiate such a process, but full and authentic participation of residents is necessary from the outset. If all parties adopt a comprehensive approach revolving around citizen participation in both planning and responsibility for implementation, a creative effort to plan a fully equal future for Arab communities in Israel may yet be possible.⁴

⁴ See the treatment of this subject, including a practical recommendation, in the section on the Interior Ministry.

Monitoring Year Two

THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR ADVANCING ARAB EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

Bakr Awawdy*

In 2000, the Ministry of Education began implementing its “Five-Year Plan” for the advancement of education in the Arab sector, in accordance with recommendations by three state commissions that had examined the situation then prevailing in Arab education: The Ben-Peretz Commission on the Status of Arab Education (1998); the Katz Commission on the Status of Education for Bedouin in the Negev (1998); and the Goldstein Commission on the Status of Education for Bedouin in Northern Israel (1998). According to estimates from the Monitoring Committee for Arab Education, an adjunct of the Supreme Monitoring Committee of Arabs in Israel (a national player in Arab affairs), the cost of implementing the recommendations of these three commissions would total about NIS 1.5 billion, but the government’s five-year plan actually budgeted only NIS 250 million over five years. The latter is intended for activities designed to narrow the gaps (narrowly defined) in achievement between the Jewish and Arab educational systems, and to assure equal opportunity for graduates of the two systems. The program does not address the subject of gaps in educational infrastructure and the lack of school buildings in the Arab sector.

When implementation of the program began, Arab educators who felt they had not been partners in the planning or implementation of this long-awaited program responded with outrage. Now two years into the program’s operation, a great many Arab educators have yet to be made participants in implementing the five-year plan. Our survey found that a substantial proportion of teachers does not even know what the goals and objectives of the plan are.

In April 2002, we sent a list of questions to the public affairs department of the Ministry of Education and to various other government figures. To date, we have received no response to our questions. Hence the following information relies on data published by the ministry, and on our own field survey. We will address several of the basic components of the program, the manner in which it is being implemented in the field and some issues that arose during workshops and conferences held by the Monitoring Committee for Arab Education.

I. The Five-Year Budget

Despite the fact that the five-year plan in its present form does not meet all the needs of the Arab educational system and does not redress the ongoing discrimination of five decades, the Ministry of Education reduced even the small sum allocated for operation of the program. According to the ministry’s own pamphlet on the plan (published in 2001), the ministry was to have budgeted NIS 50 million in 2001 and a

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similar sum in 2002. In practice, the program was allocated only NIS 41 million for 2001 and only NIS 38 million in 2002. Clearly, there is already a shortfall of NIS 21 million in the program's implementation, with corresponding damage in the extent to which the ministry has been able to achieve the goals and objectives it set for itself.

About 40% of the funding is allocated for special education in each year of the program. The state of special education in Arab school systems is a crucial subject in its own right and requires immediate attention, but action in this sphere will not serve to "narrow the gaps" between Arab and Jewish students in terms of educational achievement in the standard sense. Apparently, the five-year plan is being used to camouflage the transfer of funding for an essentially different purpose, when each of these issues so obviously deserves appropriate funding of its own.

II. Program Implementation

The results of our examination of the program's implementation during the past year follow, summarized under nine specific points:

1. Preparation of a plan for the individual school. The Education Ministry's model calls for setting up a community steering committee and a steering committee in each school. In practice, in many communities there is no community steering committee, and in a great many of the schools there is no school steering committee. Hence the burden falls almost exclusively on the school principal. The principal, together with the teaching staff, is supposed to prepare a school plan that reflects the needs, vision, objectives and goals of the interested parties – the Ministry of Education, the Local Council, the parents and the students. What happens, however, is that the program arrives at the school as a complete package in the form of courses for weaker students, with participating students to be selected by the school. Thus the school is obliged to adapt its needs to the five-year plan, rather than the other way around.
2. Participating teachers. The program activity takes place on weekends or after normal school hours, and there is no contact between the teachers carrying out the intervention and the permanent teaching staff. When we checked, we found that many of these teacher-interveners had not undergone any special training and lacked experience in working with weaker students.

Under these conditions, the ministry cannot bring about changes in the instructional approach used in the schools, and certainly the permanent teaching staff will be not be able to institutionalize any success achieved during the course of the five-year plan.

3. Coverage. During the 2001 budget year, the program operated in 242 schools at all grade levels, and 301 schools are supposed to participate during 2002. There are currently 605 schools in the Arab educational system, so that under the existing implementation schedule, the program has yet to be implemented in about 50% of Arab schools. Only 59 additional schools were added between the close of the 2000-2001 school year and the start of the 2001-2002 school year.

The criteria for which schools are included are as yet unclear. Schools not yet included do not know when or whether they will be participating, and hence they cannot prepare properly. Program hours are allocated to the various schools on the basis of undisclosed criteria. School principals are in the dark and only the ministry's own supervisors have this information.

4. Partnership. Minister of Education Limor Livnat instructed the director-general of the ministry and the directors of its various divisions not to cooperate with the Monitoring Committee for Arab Education, and forbade any further meetings to discuss implementation of the five-year plan or other issues of concern to the Arab sector. Most educators in the Arab sector neither understand nor accept this decision, which only reinforces the Arab public's sense of helplessness vis-a-vis the educational establishment.

Non-cooperation with the Monitoring Committee for Arab Education, an organization viewed as a source of professional support by most Arab local government officials in charge of education in their communities, makes implementation of the program that much more difficult. Like any other process of change and improvement, the five-year plan needs to be carried out in cooperation with the target population.

Thus, for example, parents often do not send their children to weekend courses, and when the program takes place during the school day, they do not agree that their children miss regular classes in order to attend enrichment classes. This points to a lack of outreach and inadequate involvement of the population in the program's implementation.

5. Assimilation. The program does not include any sort of process to facilitate assimilation of planned change. As things now stand, there is no established learning process. Teacher-interveners come to the schools after regular class hours or on weekends and teach pre-defined courses to selected students; once the course is over, things return to status quo ante. The absence of any framework to assure assimilation of new methods reduces the ability of the educational system to innovate. As the program is currently operating, the added value of innovation by schools and of the introduction of new tools is not guaranteed. The great danger is that, once the five-year program has been concluded, things will go back to the way they were before it began, because there are no processes designed to insure continuity and institutionalization.
6. Evaluation. Thus far, the ministry has yet to make public any evaluation of the effectiveness of the program's initial implementation. School principals have received no documents indicating new deployment of resources in response to any lessons that may have been learned at this point. Evidently there is to be no evaluation process within the individual school with regard to the whole issue of the program's implementation. There is an internal ministry publication introducing the program, in Arabic, written in November 2001, but it contains not one word about evaluation or about lessons learned, making do with some vague information from a few old publications of the Education Ministry in Hebrew.

7. Improving matriculation performance. According to Education Ministry data, of all students who do not pass their matriculation exams, 73% fail in one subject, while the other 27% fail in more than one subject. An enrichment program in the schools for the right groups of students can certainly bring about an improvement for those groups. One of the main goals of the five-year plan focuses on improving the percentage of students who pass their matriculation examinations. This is a worthy goal in its own right, but does not constitute the central problem of the Arab educational system. Low matriculation scores are simply an outcome of a failed system. To address achievements alone is to address the symptoms and not the real and fundamental problems of the Arab educational system.

Unrelated to the five-year plan, programs have been put in place to provide students with the chance to repeat a matriculation examination at a later date (Mo'ed Bet, a program already in place in the Jewish sector), which could certainly result in an improvement in percentages of twelfth-grade students passing their matriculation exams. This past year's matriculation results have not yet been published, though it would appear that there will indeed be an improved rate of success. Data for matriculation exams for the three years preceding the inception of the five-year plan already showed a slight annual improvement.

One of the strengths of the five-year plan is its ability to demonstrate results over a relatively short period of time, thanks to a concerted effort. Yet this is also a weakness, in that short-term achievements alone are insufficient. The success of the five-year plan must be evaluated at the next stage – i.e. university admissions. Thus, beyond an increase in percentages of students who pass the matriculation, the five-year plan must be measured in terms of whether it enables students to succeed in matriculation subjects of relevance for university admission.

Table 4:

Rates of eligibility for matriculation, by age cohorts

Sector	Year	Age cohort (# students of relevant age)	Percentage in 12th grade	Percentage who pass matriculation
Jews	1997-98	82,000	84.16	43.07
	1998-99	82,700	85.44	45.92
	1999-2000	85,600	83.02	45.56
Arabs	1997-98	13,700	67.34	27.41
	1998-99	13,200	73.39	31.54
	1999-2000	13,900	71.18	28.95
Negev Bedouin	1997-98	2,000	49.65	9.60
	1998-99	2,100	57.43	13.14
	1999-2000	2,100	62.81	16.76
Northern Bedouin	1997-98	2,100	76.00	29.76

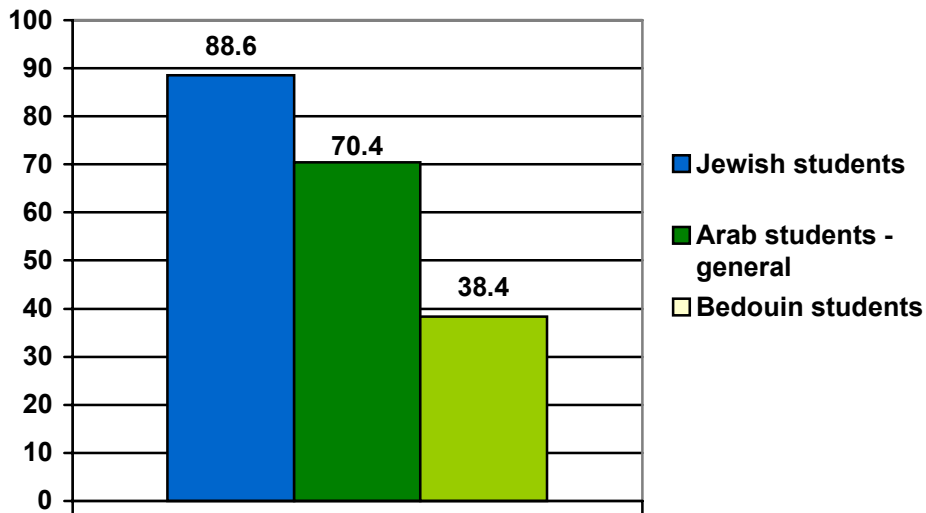
	1998-99	2,000	83.70	35.35
	1999-2000	2,100	79.76	28.57

data: Chief Scientist page on the Ministry of Education website

8. Eligibility for matriculation and university admissions. To be admitted to university, every student must meet minimum requirements in passing matriculation examinations: English at a four-point level or higher; mathematics at a three-point level or higher; and the mother tongue at a four-point level or higher. (Institutions such as the Technion have additional threshold requirements in the exact sciences, e.g. math, physics, biology and chemistry.)

Diagram 13:

Percentages of those receiving matriculation certificates who met minimum requirements for admission to university in 2000



Data from the Advah Center on receipt of matriculation certificates by place of residence 1999-2000 (reported by Dr. Shlomo Svirsky and Alon Etkin, June 2001) shows that 88.6% of Jewish students who passed their matriculation exams in 2000 met the minimum requirements for university admission; 70.4% of all Arab students met the minimum requirements; and only 38.4% of Negev Bedouin students.

9. Dropping out. The current five-year plan offers teachers in the schools no tools or skills to help reduce the phenomenon of students' dropping out of school. The plan's focus on achievements, as described earlier, does not solve the problem of the high drop-out rate which, in the

Negev, stands at 40% of the relevant age cohort, and among the Arab and Druze sectors totals 30%. It is unclear how the program proposes to deal with the dropouts themselves.

III. In conclusion:

Sikkuy's previous report (2000-2001) identified problems with this five-year plan, but the Ministry of Education in its wisdom did not respond to the issues raised. One could argue, with a high degree of certainty, that the intervention plan as it now stands, like most such intervention plans involving Arab citizens, was formulated without sufficient thought or appropriate preparation, and of course with insufficient funding. Educators in the ministry itself are responsible for the conceptual foundations of the plan, and there was no broad participation by those involved in Arab education – leading figures in education, public life, the humanities – or by organizations like the Monitoring Committee on Arab Education or heads of local departments of education. This calls into question the plan's ability to catalyze change and renewal in a way that could comprise a turning point for the state of Arab education.

Thus, for example, the five-year plan skips over all components of non-formal education. No suitable allocation is made for this in the ministry's regular budget, indicating that those formulating the five-year plan did not realize the tremendous inherent potential of non-formal education to leverage change in the Arab school system. It would be worthwhile for the ministry to take this element into account in future.

Urgent structural change is required, for example, in the system of administrative and instructional staff appointments. Recent publication of the fact that the Shin Bet is deciding who will or will not be appointed as a school principal reflects a reality of suspicion, lack of trust and absence of partnership. These factors alone are liable to prevent the plan from introducing fundamental change in Arab education, yet they must be added on to all the other factors already noted in this review.

The Five-Year Plan for the Improvement of Arab Education in Israel is supposed to deal with the failures and problems engendered by 54 years of discrimination. With the designated budget and program package as currently constituted, success appears unlikely.

It would be well for the Ministry of Education to take the Arab educational system much more seriously from both a technical and a structural standpoint, and invest the money and thought appropriate to an undertaking of this nature. The plan thus far has chosen merely to ornament the roof of the Arab school system, i.e. mainly to improve outcomes of matriculation examinations. The truly required change, as noted, is structural and technical, and at a much more fundamental level.

HATRED, REJECTION AND RACISM: TREATMENT OF ARAB CITIZENS BY ISRAELI POLITICIANS AND THE ISRAELI ESTABLISHMENT

Ali Haider*

The Al Aksa Intifada and the events of October 2000 marked a turning point in the relations between Arab citizens of Israel and the state. Anyone who cares to take a look at the Israeli reality since that crucial hour will see, as described below, that rejection, hatred, exclusion and racism toward Arab citizens have begun to take on new dimensions.

Statements of collective hatred toward Arab citizens on the part of some politicians have garnered increasingly broad influence among the Jewish public. We will not discuss this dynamic here, both because our focus has thus far been to offer a critique of the current administration rather than of the behavior of citizens, and because a separate, in-depth report would be required to address the changing picture properly. We have therefore limited ourselves to listing manifestations of rejection and hatred on the part of the establishment.

We will begin by briefly defining and clarifying the terms “racism” and “hatred”, and then try to shed light on certain aspects of these phenomena. It should be noted at the outset that a brief overview like this cannot pretend to offer a broad, intensive investigation of the issues of racism, hatred or exclusion. Rather, it is offered by way of introduction, as a cautionary warning about the dangers portended by this trend and its intensification. A tremendous effort must be made to contain this trend and indeed to reverse it, especially at a time when discussion of the notion of “transfer” (of population) has become part of legitimate discourse in the broadcast and print media.

Defining The Concepts

Different disciplines and different scholars define racism differently. Some adhere to a narrower interpretation; others ascribe broader significance to the term. Two definitions of racism follow; the first is literal-ideological, the second judicial-legislative:

1. Racism is

a leading way of classifying humanity into superior and inferior groups, ostensibly based on collective, identifying characteristics, physical or mental, and relating in a discriminatory manner toward people, based on an attitude toward the group to which they belong. Racism is a complex phenomenon comprising a mixture of beliefs, ideas, outlooks and preferences based on two tenets:

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(a) a classification of the human species into groups and discrimination against some of them in favor of others; (b) the adoption of an arbitrary attitude toward any individual based on that classification. These axioms are an outcome of prejudice, meaning the adoption of a negative position concerning a person or group based on their affiliation with a particular social circle, in accordance with a baseless attitude toward that group.

The various meanings attributed to the term ‘race,’ its common use as an interchangeable term for people of a different nationality or mother tongue than one’s own or who belong to a different ethnic group, the arguments over racial classification – all these, and other factors, make it difficult to render a precise identification of the phenomenon of racism or to distinguish it clearly from other terms like ‘beliefs,’ ‘religious fundamentalism,’ ‘gender-based discrimination,’ ‘hatred of the enemy’ or ‘hatred of foreigners’ in general.⁵

2. Article 144A of Israel’s Criminal Code, 5737-1977, defines racism as

hounding, humiliating, degrading, expressing hostility toward, threatening, behaving violently toward or provoking a quarrel with a public or any part of a population on account of color, affiliation, race or national-ethnic origin.

The law forbids racist incitement and imposes prison terms on anyone making public statements that aim to incite to racism. Incitement to racism is also liable to nullify key basic rights of those engaging in such behavior, like the right to be elected to public office and to register as a political party.

The concept of hatred is described as “a feeling that negates its object in an essential and comprehensive way.” Thus it is differentiated from other negative feelings, like anger, which only partially negate the object. Hatred arises when there is “a change in the existing situation that endangers what is considered essential by the one who hates.”⁶

Expressions of Hatred and Racism Toward Arabs in Israel (examples from the last two years)

Following are several examples chosen from among many others. Evidently hate and even racism against Arab citizens can appear in many guises and touch on many areas of life.

A. The politics of hatred and exclusion

At the core of this phenomenon stand a few Jewish politicians who act against Arab Members of Knesset (MKs) in a variety of ways. These Jewish politicians present the Arab MKs as extremists, traitors, fifth columnists and foreign agents, as collaborators with the enemy, as crazy. Some Jewish MKs delegitimize Arab MKs as a way of devaluing them, excluding them from positions of influence, preventing them from

⁵ Lexicon Dvir: “Citizenship, Society, State”. Ya’acov Schatz, S. Ariel.

⁶ See article by Aharon Ben Zeev on contention and hatred, in “Hatred” edited by Avinoam Ben Zeev, Zmora Bitan, 1977.

speaking, from voicing their opinions and from pressing the claims of the Arab public.

Getting work done in Knesset committees depends on the structure of the coalition in the Knesset as a reflection of the government. Real achievements in Knesset committees, which are where the budgetary pie is served, are an outcome of parliamentary deals between the various parties. The stock in trade is the coalition's ability to bring influence to bear, if not during the current term, then in the subsequent one. The complete exclusion of Arab MKs from the coalition prevents them from attaining any real achievements for the public that voted them into office; they have nothing to trade, no substantive means of persuasion, in their dealings with MKs from other parties.

The Knesset plenum therefore becomes the main arena for action by Arab MKs. What they say in the plenum is sometimes sharply worded, and in recent years such talk has exceeded traditional boundaries for representatives of the Arab public. In the past, they spoke softly, and their discussion generally embodied the position of built-in civic inferiority assigned to them. In the last decade, Arab MKs have begun to voice the authentic feelings of the Arab public, which do not accept as self-evident the old relationship of ruler and ruled. While, as noted, effective parliamentary representation of their constituents is materially blocked, public discourse remains open. This position in the vanguard of free speech draws the fire of Jewish MKs, some of which is aimed at the Arab MKs and some apparently at Arab citizens in general. Despite attempts to create a symmetry permitting anyone to say anything, such is not truly the case. The examples that follow clearly illustrate how the power of the Jewish MKs, even those from the political margins, is immeasurably greater than that of the Arab MKs, with very grave consequences for Arab MKs and their constituents.

1. The law to encourage emigration: The Knesset's legal adviser, Attorney Anna Schneider, ruled against a private member's bill submitted by MK Michael Kleiner (Herut) to encourage Arab emigration to Arab countries. Her ruling was based on the bill's anti-democratic and racist nature, which contravenes the Basic Law of the Knesset in that a list of candidates cannot stand for election to the Knesset if its goals or actions include explicit or implicit negation of the democratic character of the state or incitement to racism.⁷

Kleiner's legislation proposes that an Israeli resident or citizen who wishes to emigrate to an Arab country be entitled to collect a package of benefits. The proposal states that entitlement to the emigration benefit package will be contingent on relinquishment of Israeli citizenship or foreign resident status. In Attorney Schneider's words, "passing MK Kleiner's bill would create a situation in which the state offers material benefits to the Jewish population to come to Israel and settle here while encouraging Arabs, who are citizens of the country, to leave."⁸ Early in 2002, the House Committee approved submission of Kleiner's bill despite the recommendation of the Knesset's own legal adviser.⁹

MK Kleiner's proposed legislation is clearly leading to the physical removal of those belonging to the group comprising Arab citizens of the State of Israel through material inducement, and the inducement, by the same means, of those belonging to

⁷ *Ha'aretz*, September 2, 2001.

⁸ *Ha'aretz*, December 31, 2001.

⁹ *Ha'aretz*, February 19, 2002.

the Jewish group to enter the country. The Knesset legal adviser's characterization of this bill as racist did not stop the House Committee from approving its submission.

2. The law to circumvent the Supreme Court's Katzir ruling: In January 2002, Knesset Legal Adviser Anna Schneider asked the House Committee to consider ruling against a bill submitted by MK Haim Druckman (National Religious Party) because it appeared to be essentially racist.¹⁰ This bill was designed to circumvent a Supreme Court ruling allowing Arab settlement in a thus far wholly Jewish village. It was signed by 61 MKs in response to a Supreme Court ruling obliging the Jewish village of Katzir to accept an application by an Arab family (the Ka'adan family) to buy a lot and build a home there. The bill called for an amendment to the law governing the work of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency in order to emphasize the value of Jewish settlement as a goal. It also proposed an expansion of the Israel Lands Law, such that the Israel Lands Authority could set aside land for Jewish settlement if authorized by the Defense Minister for reasons of national security.

The opinion conveyed to the House Committee by Attorney Schneider did not adopt an unequivocal position, but clarified that the bill was problematic and that the committee needed to discuss it further, only then reaching a decision. The House Committee approved the bill by a majority vote.¹¹

This trend in the Knesset, aside from abrogating a Supreme Court ruling, is a dangerous precedent because it gives a political stamp of approval to the exclusion of Arab citizens from residential areas. This sends a dangerous signal to Jews that what the Supreme Court says does not count. What matters is what the Knesset does – a kind of parliamentary nose thumbing at the judiciary.

3. Leaving the floor of the Knesset while Arab MKs are speaking: In January 2001, MK Eliezer Cohen (National Union-Yisrael Beitenu) suggested that all Jewish MKs leave the Knesset chamber whenever an Arab MK mounts the podium to speak. Cohen distributed a letter among all MKs entitled "The State of War with the Palestinians." In it, MK Cohen asked: "Does anyone believe that during the Second World War, a German, not an officer in an SS uniform, not a Nazi, just an ordinary German, could have stood at the podium of the British Parliament in London and made a speech in favor of Nazi Germany?"¹²

Physically turning one's back on Arab MKs as a group is extremely dangerous and sends a dangerous message to Jewish citizens of the country. Moreover, relating to Arab MKs as a wartime enemy goes beyond marking them as a personal target for potential harm. Rather, they represent a public under scrutiny from a nationalistic perspective. Thus, in targeting them, MK Cohen targets the entire Arab public, stigmatizing them as "pro-Nazi." The consequences of this act could be disastrous for both groups comprising the civilian population of Israel.

4. MK Yisrael Katz distributes pictures of Arab MKs alongside that of Bin Laden: MK Yisrael Katz (Likud) initiated a bill designed to prevent participation in elections by a list from any party supporting terror. Before the Knesset Legal Affairs Committee met to consider his bill, Katz handed out to MKs photographs of Arab MKs alongside a picture of Osama Bin Laden, with the inscription: "To each his own

¹⁰ *Ha'aretz*, January 16, 2002.

¹¹ *Ha'aretz*, February 19, 2002.

¹² *Ha'aretz*, November 24, 2002, headlined: "Eliezer Cohen: Leave Knesset When Arabs Speak."

Bin Laden/We must stop terror in the Knesset.” On the envelopes were pictures of MKs Abd al Malik Deheimshe, Ahmed Tibi, Azmi Bishara and Muhammad Barake beneath pictures of Bin Laden, Arafat, Hezbollah Chief Hassan Nasrullah and Palestinian security figure Marwan Barghouti.¹³

This act is not merely a matter of taste or style, but a carefully calculated public and political act. MK Katz evidently sought to sully the image of Arab MKs and create a direct and conscious link between them and other figures, as if to say: the Americans have Bin Laden in Afghanistan, and we have our Bin Ladens here in the Knesset. He simultaneously characterized the actions of Arab MKs as “terror,” in a phrase that could be taken two ways. The envelopes were distributed inside the Knesset building but “leaked” to the press, and the proud Katz was even interviewed by the broadcast media. This was not a parliamentary act among MKs, but rather use of the Knesset and its debate to imprint a negative image of Arab MKs on the consciousness of the Jewish public, as though the Arab MKs were collaborating with the enemy and serving as terror’s representatives in the Knesset. MK Katz, in so doing, branded them as enemies of the state.

5. The idea of population “transfer” as a political act: In December 2001, on Israel TV 2’s “Meet the Press” with Shelly Yachimovitch, then cabinet minister Avigdor Lieberman called for affecting the transfer of some Israeli Arabs. Lieberman said in the interview: “I don’t negate the option of transfer. We needn’t run away from reality. If you ask me what the number one problem of Israel is – it’s not the Palestinian problem. It’s first of all the Arabs who are citizens of the State of Israel. Those who identify as Palestinians will have to move to Palestine... We aren’t playing games here... We see everything that’s happening in Umm al Fahm, including identifying with Bin Laden and Hezbollah and all the enemies of Israel. Do I see them as citizens of the State of Israel? No! Will we have to have a reckoning with them? Yes! They will have to find a place for themselves where they feel comfortable.”¹⁴

The transfer idea is not new, but the way former Minister Lieberman talks about it as self-evident does not hide the explicit threat in his words. While this threat evokes real fear among Arab citizens, it should also evoke fear among those who ascribe to a humanitarian view of human relations, and should sound a loud and clear warning to all citizens of the state. Transfer of any kind is an anti-human, anti-citizen act. So is talk of transfer, especially when it comes from a cabinet minister. A government is supposed to protect and care for the nation’s citizens – not transfer them.

6. Dehumanization and demonization: Minister Brigadier-Gen. (Res.) Ephraim Eitam contends that Arab communities in the Galilee are cancerous cells on the body of the nation, that Arabs in Israel are destroying the country and that they are a strategic threat to the Jewish state. Eitam said all this at a Haifa University conference on “The City in the Twenty-First Century in the Shadow of War.”¹⁵ On another occasion, Eitam spoke of Arabs as “like a cancer...they are mainly a ticking bomb under the entire democratic and Israeli system within the Green Line. It’s an

¹³ *Ha’aretz*, October 22, 2001, headlined: “MK circulates pictures of Arab MKs alongside picture of Bin Laden.”

¹⁴ *Yediot Aharonot*, December 28, 2001.

¹⁵ *Fas’l al Maqal*, February 14, 2002.

existential threat and it's notable because it's elusive. Elusive threats by their nature resemble cancer."¹⁶

Cancer is the name of a threatening illness that plagues modern man. The use of this concept to characterize people, to describe citizens of the country as "cancerous cells" is more than humiliating and dehumanizing, it is a demonization; it turns them into dangerous devil figures. These same "dangerous devils" are also citizens of the country, and Minister Eitam, like every other minister, has an obligation to keep faith with them. In such comments, the minister abrogates his covenant with the citizens.

This matter should infuriate all citizens of Israel. The citizenship of Arabs in Israel has been so eroded that Minister Eitam doesn't even see it. More damaging is that he was named a minister without anyone demanding that he cease such statements. Statements like these, and the fact that they are made by a government minister and leader of an important political constituency, cause serious long-term damage to the state and its citizens. Beyond that, this kind of talk from this kind of source awakens a deep fear that the ideas will take root within the Jewish public. If the government cannot disown such statements and their source – the public (Jews and Arabs alike) should.

B. Media

The print and broadcast media in Israel play a centrally important role in determining the public agenda, but at the same time are influenced by the political-social environment. When the media deals with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it doesn't always adhere strictly to the tenets of fair newsgathering and reporting. By any objective standard, Israel's newspapers do not stick to supplying the audience with the correct facts, but instead rush the story into print with pre-determined conclusions. This can be misleading for the audience. Moreover, some newspaper editors use editorial license to choose pictures, colors and headlines that create effects that do not always convey the truth, with little or no connection to the substance of the articles themselves. Here are a few examples:

7. " Hamas is here": On Friday, December 17, 2001, six days after a bus bombing on Bus No. 16 in the Halissa neighborhood of Haifa, "Kolbo" (the Haifa supplement to the "Ha'aretz" newspaper) published an article on page 31, headlined "Izzadin al-Kassam [military wing of Hamas], Haifa branch (Halissa)." On the facing page, page 30, which opened the section dealing with the bombing, a large headline declared: "After bombing, Shiekh Ra'ed Salah dedicates Islamic movement house of prayer in Dalia [a Haifa neighborhood]"; with a sub-head on "New Twist in Druse Villages – Palestinians settle in Trailer Homes," and an article on Muslim women who marry Palestinian men and bring them to live in Carmel-area villages. But the reporter himself writes, "The dimensions of this phenomenon aren't broad and at this stage only a few isolated cases of young women are involved."

At the top of page 30, as on all the other pages relating to the bombing, there is a horrifying picture of the bomb scene with a man lying on the street covered with a blanket, alongside the caption "Haifa is Red" (i.e., with blood).

¹⁶ *Yediot Aharonot*, April 5, 2002.

The link and interweaving of the articles on page 30 and the reporting on the bombing raises an issue of disingenuousness because the bombing is not related to the dedication of the house of prayer or the residence of young Palestinian women in the villages of the Carmel. Furthermore, the front page of that same edition bears a picture taken on the West Bank or in Gaza that has nothing to do with the Haifa bombing incident. It is unfortunate that the bombers chose to attack in Haifa at all. But for the paper to create an overall impression of such a situation adds insult to injury, misleads the readers and approximates incitement against Arab residents of Haifa.

8. “Castrate the Arabs”: Partisan political media in Israel publish pronouncements that threaten Arab citizens. Arabs in Israel are not exposed to these media outlets, and do not follow what they print. They are not aware of the nature and extent of the racist ideas found there, of the cruel solutions proposed for getting them out of the way or of the images used to depict them. On January 18, 2001, “Ha’aretz” published an article under the headline “*Novosty* article calls for castration of Israeli Arabs”:

An article calling for the castration of Israeli Arabs and offering a financial prize to young men who agree to be castrated voluntarily was published last week in the Russian-language paper “*Novosty*.” Headlined “How we can force them to leave,” an article by one of the paper’s prominent writers advocates “castration of Arab prisoners and people arrested for anti-Israel activity.” The reporter thinks that “Given the special Arab mentality, castrating Arabs who are caught could be a strong psychological tool for use by Jewish underground figures to sow panic among the Arab population and encourage the emigration of Arabs from Israel.” To curb the birthrate among Arabs in Israel, the author proposes to implement the Chinese solution of punishing parents who have more than one child with loss of benefits, losing one’s job, sending the children to boarding school and exiling the parents to remote locations. Along with such punishments, the author proposes to encourage curbing the birthrate by handing out free or discount birth control to Arabs, and setting up systems for adoption of Arab children with the purpose of transferring them to Arab countries.¹⁷

Had this been a marginal, incidental, negligible article, or even had it been the only such article to appear lately, it was not printed in some amateur neighborhood rag, but in a wide-circulation newspaper read by broad segments of the Israeli public. For many of its readers, what is written there reflects reality and gives them direction. This is chilling in and of itself, and should frighten every citizen of the country irrespective of national origin, religion, race or gender.

C. Education

The educational system is one of the principal modes for political and civic socialization. It serves as a conduit for passing on the values that those running the

¹⁷ A detailed analysis of the way print media in Israel were functioning at the start of the Intifada appears in a book by Dr. Daniel Dor, “Journalism under the Influence,” Babylon, 2001, and in publications of the Keshev Center, the Center for the Defense of Democracy in Israel, and Aalam Media Center for Arab Society in Israel.

system wish to inculcate in the younger generation. Here we have a case that reflects the attitude of the educational system. My intention is not to criticize the children, but rather to point out the government's responsibility for messages conveyed through the educational system.

9. “Arabs are used to killing people”: On November 15, 2001, the Netanya local paper “Emtza Netanya,” published an account of a celebration at a local school under the headline “Arabs are used to killing”:

This chilling incident is taken from a script for second-grade students at a ceremony celebrating their receipt of copies of the Torah at the Hadar Hasharon Elementary School near Kfar Saba, in the Tel Mond area, when like many of their fellow students around the country they mark the start of their study of the Bible... The performance began; the children went up on stage as a group... representing the different nations, recreating the legend of how Israel received the Torah. The student who played the angel held a Torah and walked among the various nations, offering each one the Torah and the Ten Commandments. The only two groups of people wearing representative costumes were the group of Arabs, who were wearing keffiyehs, and the Jews, who were wearing yarmulkes.

During the performance, the “angel” met the “Arab people” who asked, like all the other peoples: “What is written in the Torah?” The angel replied: “Thou shalt not kill.” The children answered in a chorus: “No, we don’t want it because we are used to killing,” and they made way for the next group, the “Jewish people.” The “Jewish people” asked no questions; they simply answered [with a verse from the bible], “We will do, and we will listen.”

This performance was not written by the students, as may sometimes be the case with, say, a high school graduation. One must assume that adults, either within the school or elsewhere, wrote the text for the children. Even if this is just a local event, responsibility for it lies with the system – the Ministry of Education. Just the few rehearsals held at that school prior to the performance were enough to drill that racist text deeply into the souls of the children of Hadar Hasharon. Aside from the collective defamation of an entire group, the episode ties the “national character” to very deeply felt religious associations. Rooting out such slanderous words from the souls of these children will be very, very difficult in the future; if indeed it will be possible at all.

Some day, when Jews and Arabs sit down and attempt to do what must be done to achieve a historic solution, both the adults and the children from the Hadar Hasharon Elementary School will have to live in a reality of peace. Incidents like the one just described, for which responsibility rests with the school system, will make it very difficult for Jewish citizens ever to live alongside Arabs, never mind within a single political entity.

Concluding Comments

With this brief list, we have tried to elucidate some of the manifestations of hatred, racism, exclusion and distancing of Arab citizens in Israel, with particular attention to

the statements of people in positions of official responsibility in politics, the media, the religious world and education.

This is far from a complete survey of all instances of racism and hatred as reported in the media over the last two years. Still, an intelligent reading and interpretation of the foregoing descriptions will reveal a dangerous and worrisome phenomenon that is evoking existential fears and anxieties on a daily basis among Arab citizens. This humiliating and contemptuous treatment does not arise solely from the significance given to cultural differences between Jews and Arabs, but from the absence of a willingness to accept Arab citizens as citizens with equal rights, and as partners in shaping the image and the future of the state and its citizens.

Statements, acts and ideas like those surveyed above create fertile ground for the growth of even more severe racism, to a point where the situation is liable to deteriorate into violence between Jews and Arabs. In order to struggle against such negative phenomena as racism and hatred, we must identify and address all the feelings and beliefs that give rise to them and expose all the mechanisms that nurture them.

Leaders naturally influence the public; hence the damage is even more serious when public figures utter racist ideas. Statements of this kind can too easily be translated by their listeners into negative acts. This negative trend must be stopped immediately, starting at the top. The state must invest whatever energy and resources are necessary to halt this awful process and reorient public discourse in the direction of our shared future.

Summarizing and Looking Ahead:

THE LEGISLATURE, THE EXECUTIVE, THE JUDICIARY – AND CIVIC ACTIVISM

Over the last decade, research on the situation of Arab citizens of Israel has progressed and dozens of academic studies have been published, in addition to reports from Sikkuy, Adalah, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Massawah and the Advah Center. To this we may add even official reports published by various state institutions, including the most recent annual report by the State Comptroller.

Monitoring all of this, one can clearly see that in Israel there is full citizenship for Jews, and then there is “citizenship lite” for Arabs. The citizenship for Arabs is vulnerable, deficient, and incomplete. As things stand, it can even be nullified, if the ruling majority so wishes. In contrast to this citizenship, the state and its institutions guarantee the superiority and the dominance of the Jewish majority. This situation leaves little doubt about the nature of the existing regime in Israel: Rule is not in the hands of the representatives of the people (all citizens), but rather in the hands of the Jewish group.

In the near term, Arab citizens are the ones suffering from this situation. The damage to the citizenry as a whole and to the state, however, is already visible and getting worse with every passing year. Contrary to popular belief, democracy is not simply the right to vote, to be elected and to speak freely. A democratic regime also guarantees equality for all citizens of the state, i.e. equal partnership and equal access to material resources (like budgets and infrastructure) – plus resources on the plane of awareness which are also bestowed by the state (a sense of belonging and of being at home in the space around you: familiar names for mountains, for valleys, for streets, for landmarks...).

Given existing circumstances, the State of Israel must undergo a process of fundamental democratization, to include basic change on the symbolic, structural and political levels. Since the state is evidently not going to initiate a process of this nature, the citizens must assume the responsibility for doing so.

In addition to the three spheres of governance – legislative, executive and judicial – an additional field of action is burgeoning in the democratic world within the confines of individual states: civic action. This is not an arm of government, and organizations of civil society have no authority delegated by the state. The core of their strength comes rather from the power of citizens’ own recognition that beyond the franchise – the right to vote in elections – they are responsible for their destiny and cannot leave it in the hands of the three branches of government alone. They must act to shape their fate, for themselves and constantly. Cognizant of this, citizens are themselves working on behalf of their interests, as is Sikkuy – as an organization of Jewish and Arab citizens who understand that equality between the two groups, equality in and at the hands of the state and its institutions, is the key to our future life here.

Sikkuy has been working for ten years now to draw attention to discrimination toward Arab citizens in Israel, and to change the situation. We do this by bringing the findings of our research to the attention of decision-makers in government and to the attention of the public; by pressing the administration to change its policies; and by giving our support to citizens working for change. Our work to strengthen Arab

municipal governments, for example, has recently yielded a weighty publication detailing the needs of those authorities with respect to each of the items in “The Four Billion Shekel Plan.” Another aspect of our work includes meetings with senior government officials, going literally “door-to-door” in an attempt to persuade them to change policies with respect to Arab citizens.

One of those meetings took place in February 2000 with the State Comptroller, Justice Eliezer Goldberg. Participating were Husam Abu-Bakr and Dan Pattir, at the time coordinators of a Sikkuy program for integration and fair representation of Arab citizens in government institutions, along with Shuli Dichter in his capacity as co-director of Sikkuy. During the discussion, the subject was raised of severely restricted access of Arab citizens to state resources, particularly infrastructure. The Comptroller expressed interest in the matter, and promised to examine it again. When the meeting was over, the participants from Sikkuy joked among themselves that if a future State Comptroller’s report really were to investigate the lack of access for Arab citizens to resources and infrastructure in Israel, Sikkuy’s intensive decade-long struggle would be over and we could all hang up our boots and go home.

About two years later, a detailed and comprehensive report was issued, of the kind only the State Comptroller can produce. This report leaves no further room for doubt: The limited access of Arab citizens in Israel to state resources and to basic infrastructure bears a cost in lives (see the section on the Ministry of Transport in our survey); in separation from the center of the country; in inferior medical services compared with those provided to Jews, and so forth.

Theoretically, with publication of the Comptroller’s Report this year, we ought to have closed our organization and “hung up our boots,” as we joked after our meeting with Justice Goldberg more than two years ago. Tempting as that may be, for now we shall evidently have to postpone that step. For precisely in the wake of this important milestone, in itself a significant success for Sikkuy, we have come to an even stronger realization that the job is unfinished. A large part of the task of civic organizations is to bring the needs and demands of citizens directly to the government. Alongside the legislature as a body representing citizens, civic organizations can influence the agenda of both the legislature and the administration without going through parliamentary filters. Moreover, we have an obligation to the citizenry as an ongoing and updated source of relevant information.

Hence it would seem that the State Comptroller’s Report for 2002 will become, from our perspective, a point of reference from which we shall continue to sally forth in quest of reliable and precise formulation on citizens’ demands. Henceforth, basing ourselves on the reality definitively portrayed in the State Comptroller’s report, we can go one step further and begin formulating position papers and alternative proposals for the government. Meanwhile, we still have an obligation to inform the public about the findings of the Comptroller’s Report as well as our own work – in a clear, straightforward way that citizens will find readily accessible.

Together with other civic organizations working in the field, we still have a long hard road ahead in the struggle for full and absolute civic equality. Only at the conclusion of that process will we be able to claim that Israel is a democracy, and perhaps find renewed hope that it won’t be “the only democracy in the Middle East.”

-- The editors

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SIKKUY *THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF CIVIC EQUALITY IN ISRAEL*

Sikkuy is a non-partisan NGO that develops and implements projects designed to advance equality between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel in government budgets, resource allocation, hiring policy, land usage and more.

Sikkuy ("opportunity" in Hebrew) was founded in 1991 as a Jewish-Arab advocacy organization dedicated to mainstreaming civil society through the values of:

CIVIC EQUALITY - Advocating complete civic equality between Arab and Jewish citizens and total civic partnership.

CITIZENSHIP AS EMPOWERMENT - Promoting the concept of citizenship as the basis for individual empowerment and shared civic identification for all citizens.

HUMAN DIGNITY - Inculcating human dignity for every human being as the supreme value in the relations between the citizen and the state, and the state and its citizens.

Sikkuy is jointly governed by an Arab co-chairman and a Jewish co-chairman and jointly managed by an Arab and a Jewish co-director. Sikkuy's programs produce results:

- ***THE SIKKUY REPORT*** - This annual report monitors government actions regarding civic equality between Arab and Jewish citizens.
- ***AFFIRMATIVE ACTION*** - This project advocates for affirmative action in hiring in the public and private sectors.
- ***QUALITY ARAB MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT*** - A long-term, holistic project to advance Arab municipalities towards high quality municipal management after years of neglect and discrimination by all of Israel's governments.
- ***CIVIC ACTION GROUPS (CAGS)*** – Develop local Jewish citizen’s groups advocating for civic equality in their own “neighborhoods.” Four groups are now operating. New groups are forming.
- ***INFORMATION CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY (ICEA)*** – A research center providing “real-time” data to facilitate civic action and advocacy advancing civic equality.

A broad spectrum of individuals and foundations in Israel and abroad supports Sikkuy. Some of Sikkuy’s projects are joint ventures with Israeli government bodies and public institutions.

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