



مركز مساواة لحقوق المواطنين العرب في اسرائيل  
Mossawa Center The Advocacy Center For  
Arab Citizens In Israel

## MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER

# Palestinian Arab Citizens of Israel and the Coronavirus Outbreak

In the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Palestinian Arab community in Israel has had to deal with another major problem: deliberate neglect by the Israeli government in its efforts to combat the COVID-19 outbreak. In response, the Mossawa Center has stepped in to lead an intense advocacy and awareness campaign in order to help the Palestinian Arab community in Israel cope with the outbreak. We were one of the first organizations to produce and broadcast videos with Palestinian Arab medical professionals in the Arabic language, and flooded the media on the needs of the community. Here are some more of the countless projects and initiatives we have carried out.

## HEALTH SERVICES AND TESTING

At the outset of the outbreak, testing facilities and healthcare services were concentrated exclusively in major Jewish localities. However, following intense advocacy we were able to do the following in the Palestinian Arab community:

- Establish testing sites in the major Palestinian Arab localities of Nazareth, Umm al-Fahm, Taibeh, Rahat, Tira, and the Triangle area.
- Open Coronavirus clinics and treatment facilities.
- Ensure the equal deployment of respirators.
- Arrange for isolation centers for patients.
- Allocate resources for mapping and locating patients.
- Provide priority testing, care, and training for senior care teams & strengthening nursing home care.



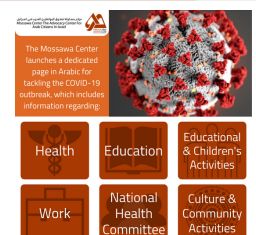
## INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

One of the most dangerous problems facing the Palestinian Arab community regarding the outbreak is the lack of information given to it by the government. Thus, we have worked to provide the community with information by:

- Pushing the Health Ministry to provide information in Arabic about the outbreak on its website.
- Launching a dedicated page in Arabic on our website which concentrates and translates all relevant and vital information for the Palestinian Arab community.
- Working with the Joint List and High Follow Up Committee to raise awareness about necessary precautions and actions the community must take.
- Hosting a live Q&A session with Dr. Mogher Khamaisi, Director of the Department of Internal Medicine "D" at Rambam Health Care Campus, about the virus.



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## STUDENTS ABROAD

Many Palestinian Arab students were stranded in universities abroad. A large portion of students were stranded in Italy, a country heavily impacted by the virus. We worked on bringing students back home safely from around the world by:

- Appealing to the government to help bring back students abroad who wished to do so.
- Being directly involved in organizing flights from Italy to bring back 268 students. We worked in cooperation with the Ministry of Health to bring the student to quarantine locations in order to ensure their safety.
- Helping a dozen students returning from Jordan who were diagnosed with the virus be transported to treatment facilities and quarantine at a hospital in Tel Aviv.



## WELFARE AND FOOD SECURITY

Food scarcity and welfare services have emerged as another problem that will impact the Palestinian Arab community disproportionately. In response, we worked to combat the issue by:

- Demanding the Ministry of Welfare to expand its aid programs and provide Palestinian Arab families in need with food packages.
- Pushing for the allocation of 450,000 hot dishes for the elderly.
- Pushing for the allocation of 300,000 coupons worth 300 NIS (about \$100) each for families in need.
- Helping people apply for unemployment benefits.
- Securing over 400 food packages through our community solidarity initiative in Haifa.



## COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

In order to ensure that its efforts are carried out and maintained successfully throughout the Palestinian Arab community, we, in cooperation with the High Follow Up Committee and others, established a robust network to effectively carry out our work by:

- Establishing headquarters in mixed cities (such as Haifa) and major Palestinian Arab localities in order to coordinate activities between organizations and extend our reach to all members of the community.
- Establishing headquarters in the Negev in order to coordinate community activities in the unrecognized Bedouin villages.
- Communicating and coordinating with local municipalities in order to effectively allocate resources and report data to relevant government ministries and bodies.



## MOSSAWA CENTER IN THE MEDIA

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