



Mossawa 2016

The Mossawa Center

The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel



Our Mission

Established in 1997, the Mossawa Center is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that aims to promote the economic, social, cultural and political rights of Palestinian Arab citizens in Israel, and recognition of this community as a national indigenous minority, with their own national, cultural and historical distinctiveness. The Center develops programs to promote a democratic society, and acts against all forms of discrimination based on race, nationalism, religious affiliation, social status, gender, and disabilities. In advancing its mission of promoting the Palestinian Arab minority's rights, the Mossawa Center utilizes various methods, including governmental advocacy in the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) and government, international advocacy with a particular focus in Europe, the United States, and South Africa, socio-economic research and budget analysis, media campaigns, capacity building with a broad network of Arab NGOs, and cooperative work with local councils as well as Israeli-based and international NGOs.



Letter from the Director

Dear Friends of Mossawa,

Despite increasing opposition within the current Israeli government, the Mossawa Center and the Arab community in Israel experienced several major victories in 2016. As outlined in the following pages, and among other achievements, the Mossawa Center secured the allocation NIS 45 million in state funds for eleven early childhood centers in the Arab community, as well as the implementation of the state budgetary allocations for Arab local councils. We successfully convinced the Ministry of Culture to increase its budget for the Arab community and pressed the government to implement Resolution 922, a five-year budget for development in the Arab sector.

While worthy of celebration, these successes do not rectify the decades of systematic discrimination to which the Arab community has become accustomed since 1948. Although we make up 20% of the population, the state only allocates about 6% of its development budget to the Arab community. As a result, 62% of Arab children live below the poverty line, nearly 25% of Arab men are unemployed, and only 22% of Arab women are formally employed. The Arab community also faces racism and unequal treatment on the part of state officials. Highly influential politicians, including the Prime Minister himself, as well as the Israeli public and media, continuously incite racism against the Arab community without any serious repercussions. Meanwhile, Arab citizens who peacefully confront the state's discriminatory policies through protest or even so much as speaking out on social media are wrongfully charged with incitement of violence, harassed by state authorities, and sometimes even arrested. On top of that, the state has increased home demolitions, village evacuations, and arrests and fines related to unauthorized construction. With tens of thousands of Bedouin Arabs living in unrecognized villages in the Negev and countless Arabs living in unauthorized constructions throughout the country as a result of the state's past and present refusal to provide adequate planning infrastructure in Arab localities, we consider these actions to be deliberate efforts on the part of the state to target, dishearten, and provoke the Arab community.

This year the Mossawa Center held campaigns to promote employment in the Arab community, with a particular emphasis on women's employment. We created a youth advocacy group to encourage young Arabs to remain engaged in their communities politically and culturally. We also took our advocacy efforts to Brussels, where we shared the experiences of the Arab community in Israel with members of the EU, urging them to pressure the Israeli government to treat its Arab citizens democratically and equitably. The following pages outline these and some of our other major actions and accomplishments.

Your support and solidarity allow us to continue our crucial efforts in local, national, and international advocacy, in addition to our work in the community. For this, we sincerely thank you. For more information on how you can support the Mossawa Center, please see page 16.

Jafar Farah

Director of the Mossawa Center

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Knesset Advocacy

Fair representation in government employment

Arab citizens in Israel are underrepresented at all levels and in all branches of government. In 2015, just 9.25% of government employees were Arab. Several government departments, including the Ministry of Strategic Affairs and the Department of Transportation, do not employ so much as a single Arab. The Mossawa Center initiated two hearings in the Knesset to call attention to the government's failure to implement fair representation of Arab citizens in government offices, as delineated in the Equal Representation and Employment Law. In cooperation with MKs Dr. Yousef Jabareen and Dr. Ahmad Tibi, Mossawa called on the Judicial Committee and the Finance Committee, respectively, to take action. Following these meetings and continued advocacy from Mossawa and our partners, some government departments made steps to hire more Arab citizens. In 2017, more advocacy is required to ensure Arab citizens are hired more equitably in government offices.

The Economic Status of Arab Women

The Mossawa Center, alongside MK Aida Touma-Sliman, spoke out against the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law, which prevents spouses of Israeli citizens from the West Bank and Gaza from gaining citizenship or residency in Israel. Women who are granted entry are often denied basic services and refused the rights to work or drive. Those who leave Israel to unite with their husbands on the other side of the green line often find themselves isolated and, in turn, vulnerable. In a meeting with the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women and Gender Equality, Mossawa Director Jafar Farah condemned the law for its impact on Arab women.

In cooperation with Women Against Violence, Al-Tufula Center, Intima Waata, Al Zahra, and the Forum of Arab Women's Organizations in the Negev, the Mossawa Center launched a campaign to promote employment amongst Arab women. The campaign specifically called on the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women and Gender Equality to fulfill their duties to Arab women. Only 22% of working age Arab women are employed. Those who are employed make 40% less than Jewish women in similar positions.

The Fight Against Poverty

52% of the Arab community lives below the poverty line (compared to 13.6% of Jewish Israelis). The widening gaps between the Arab and Jewish sectors are largely a result of the government's failure to invest in the Arab community. In 2016, Mossawa called on Knesset Welfare Committee Chairman MK Eli Alaluf and other legislators to combat poverty in the Arab community. The Mossawa Center encouraged members of the Knesset to fund programs and policies to more equitably address poverty. The Arab community desperately needs greater access to social workers, financial planning assistance, and other vital social services.



Arab women demand equitable employment in the Knesset. The placard reads, "We want to work."



Members of the Arab community calling on the Knesset to address disproportionate unemployment, which results largely from a lack of industrial zones in Arab localities. The sign on the left reads, "We want to work." The sign on the right reads, "We want industrial zones."

The State Budget and Industrial Zoning in Arab Localities

The Arab community suffers from significantly higher rates of unemployment than the national average; 78% of Jewish Israelis are employed, while the employment rate among Arab citizens in Israel is just 50.5%. High unemployment in the Arab sector largely stems from the lack of industrial zones in Arab localities. Although Arab citizens make up approximately 20% of Israel's population, just 3.5% of the country's industrial zones are located in Arab localities. Furthermore, with sporadic and limited public transportation services, Arab citizens, particularly women, have difficulties commuting to existing industrial zones in Jewish communities. The Mossawa Center hosted a conference in the Knesset Finance Committee, where mayors of Arab municipalities called on members of the Knesset to fund industrial zones in Arab localities.

Socioeconomic Justice and the State Budget

The Mossawa Center has been a leading voice calling for the government to comprehensively address poverty in the Arab community in Israel. Mossawa and other allies of the Arab community demonstrated in front of the Knesset to call on the government to fulfill its responsibilities in the fight against poverty. The demonstration called on the government to work to end the cycle of poverty in Israeli society by allocating more resources to social services and employment opportunities in the Arab community. The protesters focused their demands around public housing, social worker caseloads, welfare, child care and health services for marginalized communities. The demonstration was sponsored by the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils, the Association of Social Workers, Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews, ACRI, Patient Rights Association in Israel, Social workers for Change, Rabbis for Human Rights, Shatil, and the Mossawa Center.

In addition to advocacy efforts to hold the government responsible for the poverty in Israel and the Arab community, Mossawa also worked with Arab communities to identify opportunities to alleviate poverty. Mossawa, in cooperation with the Freidrich Ebert Foundation and the



Demonstrators gather outside of the Knesset to protest poverty in the Arab community.

Committee of Heads of Arab Local Councils, organized a study day on poverty in Iksal to discuss possible solutions to common challenges, including unemployment, building and planning restrictions, violence, lackluster academic achievement, and family welfare issues. MKs, heads of Arab local councils, economists, representatives of the Ministry of Welfare, and NGOs participated in a discussion on how to integrate NGO, government, and community initiatives to more effectively reach Arab families living in poverty.



The Mossawa Center also provided anti-poverty workshops in nineteen Arab local councils. The workshops, led by leading experts from various fields, empowered participants to improve their individual socioeconomic status, budget for their families, and gain employment skills.

The Mossawa Center also advocated for and succeeded in bringing back child allowances for families. These allowances are essential to poor families and help to keep children, especially girls, in school.

2016 State Budget

Although Arab citizens comprise 20% of Israel's population, the state only allocates 6% of its development budget for the Arab sector. As a result, Arab Palestinian citizens have fewer education opportunities, fewer healthcare facilities, inadequate public transportation, and fewer employment opportunities. Israel's failure to invest in the Arab minority has exacerbated gaps between the Arab and Jewish sectors. The Mossawa Center engaged in extensive advocacy for equitable federal budgets and budget allocations to address the needs of the Arab community. The 2015-2016 Israel State Budget did not adequately address the Arab minority's needs and, according to Mossawa's analysis, would widen the gaps between the Arab and Jewish sectors.

Mossawa led advocacy efforts, in cooperation with MKs and Arab local councils, to push for increased allocations to the Arab community. As a result of the advocacy campaign, the government passed Resolution 922, which promised to allocate an additional NIS 9.7 billion over the next five years. In 2016, Mossawa monitored the allocation of funds from Resolution 922. Mossawa met with members of the Knesset, ministers, and Knesset committees to advocate for the Arab community so that it receives the desperately-needed funds, much of which, to this day, the government continues to withhold.

Mossawa also analyzed and distributed a report on the 2017-2018 State Budget detailing the needs of the Arab community and gaps in the budget's response.



Participants in Mossawa's Study Day on poverty in Iksal.

Call for improved Education budget

Politicians and local leaders of the Arab community in Israel declared their opposition to the 2017-18 state education budget on the grounds that it ignores the needs of the Arab education system. In a roundtable discussion at the Tamra Community Center, the Mossawa Center, the Follow-Up Committee for Arab Education and the National Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Authorities called for a revised budget that would increase classroom hours in Arab schools, increase teaching positions for Arab teachers, and fund the construction of over 3,000 classrooms needed in Arab schools around the country.

Knesset Members Massoud Ghanayem, Dr. Yousef Jabareen and Haneen Zoabi participated in the roundtable on behalf of the Knesset Committee on Education. Suhail Diab, mayor of Tamra and Mohammad Hayadreh, Chairman of the Follow-up Committee for Arab Education, facilitated the discussion.



Leaders and politicians in the Arab community participated in a roundtable, calling for improvements to the education budget.



Christian Schools Funding Allocation Follow-Up

In September 2015, Christian schools in Israel participated in a strike protesting budget cuts to church schools. Approximately 7% of Arab students, including both Muslims and Christians, are educated in church-affiliated schools. Many church schools are among the highest achieving schools in the country and provide important opportunities to Arab students. Nearly a third of Arab university graduates and more than half of Arab employees in Israel's lucrative high tech industry are alumni of church schools. While Christian schools are in the same "recognized but unofficial" category as many Jewish schools, church schools were forced to raise tuition due to steep budget cuts, while similarly-designated Jewish schools continued to receive full funding from the government. The Mossawa Center supported the students and parents throughout the duration of the strike. The strike ended with a government promise of a one-time budget allocation of NIS 50 million to the church schools. In 2016, Mossawa monitored the transfer of the funding to the schools and coordinated intensive advocacy to ensure that the church schools received their funding.

Planning and Building

Mossawa, the National Committee of Heads of Arab Local Authorities, and the Arab Center for Alternative Planning hosted a roundtable on planning and building issues in the Arab community. The Israeli government's failure to cooperate with Arab localities on planning has rendered many Arab localities incapable of issuing building permits. As a result, many Arab families are forced to build illegally. Arab municipalities have recently suffered a spate of home demolitions as the Israeli government intensifies enforcement of planning and building laws. The roundtable participants discussed the discriminatory Kaminutz Law, which will increase home demolitions in the Arab community and further criminalize unauthorized construction. The Mossawa Center has been a key partner for Arab municipalities seeking state funding to update master plans,



Members of the Arab community protest discriminatory funding in education.

improve infrastructure, and provide adequate services to residents.

The Struggle for Equitable Culture Allocations

Arab culture in Israel has very few outlets for expression. Although Arab citizens make up 20% of the population, Israel has no Arab cinemas, theaters or museums. Arab culture has a rich history of art, music, and film, but there are few opportunities for Arab citizens to explore their history or for Arab artists to showcase their work.

The Mossawa Center and the National Committee of the Heads of Arab Localities brought a case to the Supreme Court demanding equitable financial support for Arab culture programs and institutions. At a hearing for the case, the Ministry of Culture announced plans to increase their financial support for Arab cultural activities in 2016. The Ministry also announced that it will support the construction of a new Arab museum in the city of Umm al-Fahm. Additionally, the Ministry of Culture promised to construct one new cultural hub in an Arab locality and to increase funding for cultural institutions in other Arab localities. This announcement was a major achievement, but more action is still required. The Ministry's 2016 budget represents a significant improvement, but the allocation still amounts to only 6% of the Ministry's budget.



International Advocacy

Briefing for Embassies

In January, the Mossawa Center and the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation held a briefing for the diplomatic corps on the government's proposed budgetary allocations for the Arab community. Knesset members, government ministry officials, and representatives of Arab local councils were present. The Mossawa Center presented the budgetary needs of the Arab community, the shortcomings of the budgetary resolution, and the disparities between allocations to Jewish and Arab localities. Further presentations were given by Mr. Aiman Saif, Head of the Authority for Economic Development of Minorities at the Ministry for Social Equality, MKs Aida Touma, Bassel Ghattas, Zoheir Bahloul and Ksenia Svetlova, as well as by Mr. Mudar Yunes, Head of the Local Council of Ar'ara and the Association for Heads of the Arab Local Councils. Representatives of foreign embassies in Israel, various foundations, and the foreign press also attended the event.

Racism Report

In light of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Mossawa Center published the 2016 Racism Report in March. The report indicated an alarming increase in incidents of racism. The report revealed 465 recorded cases of racism between March 2015 and March 2016, double the figures of the preceding two years. In the report, the Mossawa Center warned against an escalation in civilian tensions and an increase in the frequency of systematic attacks carried out by organized groups. It also noted the state's general disregard for racial justice and the penchant of state officials to outright racial incitement. The report refers to the escalation of racial incitement during the last election period and the subsequent comments made by the Prime Minister, members of the Knesset, and Jewish religious leaders. It is important to note that the report only includes reported cases and, unfortunately, there are hundreds of cases that do not reach human rights institutions or the press.



Mossawa Director, Jafar Farah, shares the concerns of the Arab community regarding the shortcomings of the state's proposed budgetary allocations to Arab localities.

Last year's data pointed to 237 documented cases of racism. This surge is attributed to an increase in racist comments and acts of discrimination. The Mossawa Center works to encourage the victims of racism to file formal complaints and submit claims for compensation against institutions that carry out racial discrimination or racist attacks. The report points to a number of successful claims for compensation, including against El-Al airlines and Super Land amusement park which discriminated against Arab students by preventing them entry to their facilities on specific days. Human rights institutions filed a number of complaints and claims for compensation to the court of justice in cases of job dismissals. The latest case involved the compensation of an Arab employee from the company "Shekem Electric." Mossawa is currently involved in court cases against the website "Avoda Ivrit" (Hebrew Labor) and the company "Alpha Cosmetics".

The Mossawa Center presented the 2016 Racism Report in a Knesset conference led by the Coalition Against Racism on March 22nd. The Mossawa Center called on members of the Knesset to enact a law to establish a commission that fights against racism. This commission would be responsible for promoting anti-racism through education and coordinating the necessary legal efforts to fight racism.

Israeli state institutions often refuse to investigate cases of racial incitement, racism, and police violence. The report confirms that government institutions are responsible for these incidents and must make an active effort to put an end to racial discrimination in Israel.



Brussels Advocacy

In May the Mossawa Center's international advocacy team called on EU institutions in Brussels to act immediately to prevent Arab Community rights violations following the Nomination of MK Lieberman as the Israeli Minister of Defense. The Mossawa Center's international team held meetings with various EU officials to discuss the current issues facing Palestinian Arab citizens in Israel. The team met with members of the European Parliament from the S&D Group, the Greens, Alde and GUE, as well as representatives of the EU Commission and Council and civil society organizations. The team also met with Mr. Nicholas Westcott, the Managing Director of Middle East in the EEAS, and Ms. Emma Udwin, Deputy Head of Commissioner Johannes Hahn's cabinet as well as members of the Mashreq Maghreb working group at the European Council. During these meetings, it was agreed that the S&D, Greens, and GUE will increase their cooperation with the Arab community and Arab political and civil society organizations in Israel. Parliamentarians showed concern regarding the suspension of Arab Knesset members and the ban on certain Arab civil society organizations.

Participants in each meeting expressed concern regarding the appointment of MK Avigdor Lieberman to the position of Minister of Defense,

especially considering his history of racial incitement against Arab citizens in Israel, including his push for a transfer of the Arab population out of Israel. In light of this nomination and a more general racist shift in Israeli politics, the Mossawa Center called on the international community to adopt a minority rights protection program for the protection of the rights of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel.

The Mossawa Center is bringing the message to EU officials that the Palestinian Arab citizens in Israel must be protected as a national minority. We must also be included in consultation and direct participation in national and regional peace building.

The European Parliament also invited the Mossawa Center to provide an expert testimony in a hearing in the EU Subcommittee on Human Rights on the rights of Bedouins in Israel and Palestine. The Center demanded that the EU take actions to prevent further home demolitions and the forced displacement of the Bedouin community.



EU officials discuss the situation of Arab citizens in Israel with the Mossawa Center in Brussels.



International youth camp participants.

Youth camp

Youth from EU member states and the Palestinian Community in Israel came together in June for an international volunteer camp organized by the Mossawa Center. During the program, they explored the social, political, and economic challenges faced by Arab communities in Israel through projects and visits across the country, from the Negev in the South, to the Golan Heights in the North. The participants partnered with communities on service projects, all the while learning about the Palestinian and Arab communities in Israel. The project aimed to strengthen youth activism, fight racism and stereotypes, increase cultural awareness, promote human rights and build solidarity among young people in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Martin Luther King III and Dr. Johnny Mack

On Tuesday May 10, 2016 the Mossawa Center hosted Mr. Martin Luther King III and Dr. Johnny Mack for a symposium on the Arab Community. In the morning, Mossawa organized a tour for Mr. King and Dr. Mack, founder and president of "Communities Without Boundaries International" in the Arab town of Jisr az-Zarqa, where they met with members of the municipality including the mayor.

The symposium that took place in the afternoon at the Mossawa Center was entitled "The Arab Community: Civil Rights & Peace Building" and was attended by over 100 activists, journalists, political actors and representatives from embassies. Mr. King gave a speech in which he stated that he witnessed many family members being killed and that "it would have been easy to embrace the hatred but I [Mr. King] embraced love. Forgiving is sometimes difficult to do but I would have been a very hateful person if I gave in to that." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his son, who continues his father's legacy, are role models for many Palestinian and foreign activists.

Legal Advocacy

Legal status conference

Mr. King and Dr. Mack returned in October as keynote speakers at the Mossawa Center's annual conference on the legal status of Arab citizens in Nazareth. Mr. King and Dr. Mack presented the Unsung Hero Awards to Nabila Espanioly, founder and director of Al-Tufula Pedagogic Center for Women and Early Childhood Education in Nazareth; Jabir Asaqla, a respected figure in Arab civil society in Israel; and Al-Araqib, an unrecognized Bedouin village in the Negev that has been destroyed over one hundred times. King discussed the parallels between the African American civil rights movement in the 1960s and Arab citizens' human rights work in Israel. The honorees, Mr. King said, demonstrated that "we live in a world that is increasingly challenging, but also more promising."



Martin Luther King III, Johnny Mack, and the Mossawa Center staff.

His Excellency Ambassador Koji Tomita of Japan also spoke in the opening panel of the conference. He emphasized the need for cooperation between sectors and explained, "Any discussion should be underpinned by practical efforts aiming to find solutions to practical issues in the community."

The conference featured key issues in four panels. The first panel, "The Arab Community: Between Calls for Inclusion and Practices of Discrimination," highlighted discriminatory legislation and inflammatory statements made by government officials against Arab citizens in Israel. The panel on the effect of planning and housing legislation on economic development in the Arab community addressed gaps between budget allocations and Arab localities' needs. In the panel on the Knesset and Israel's court system, panelists discussed ongoing efforts and future concerns for Arab advocacy in the Knesset and the courts. The "Strategies to Combat Racism" panel focused on discrimination against Arab citizens, racial profiling, and efforts to eliminate racist policies.

As a whole, the conference provided a platform to discuss critical human rights and legal issues facing the Arab minority in Israel by engaging legal experts, politicians, academics, and journalists from the Arab and Jewish sectors and the international community. The conference brought together major actors to discuss strategies for combating discriminatory legislation, fighting racism, and promoting economic development in the Arab community. This year saw our highest level of attendance at 320 participants.

Court Case Against Ministry of Health

With the support of Adv. Michael Sfar, Adv. Uri Inbar, and Adv. Marian Abi Nader, the Mossawa Center filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Health in response to its decision to reduce funding for prenatal genetic testing in the Arab community. Though birth defects are one of the leading causes of infant mortality in Israel, prenatal genetic testing remains optional and scarcely funded for Arab citizens. Meanwhile, the state highly encourages prenatal genetic testing amongst its Jewish citizens. The Mossawa Center has filed a legal case against the Ministry demanding equal funding for prenatal genetic testing for Arab citizens and an end to discriminatory budgeting practices. The case was filed in partnership with the town of Jisr Az-Zarqa and many Arab families.

The infant mortality rate among Arab citizens in Israel is 6.3 deaths per 1,000 live births, much higher than the rate of 2.4 deaths per 1,000 live births found among the Jewish population. According to the Ministry of Health, the primary reasons for this gap are genetic diseases and birth defects. The highest rates of infant mortality are found in the communities I'billin, Jisr Al-Zarka, Fureidis and Qalansawe. Although infant mortality rates dropped over the past decade, the gap between the rates for Jews and Arabs has increased.

In 2016, the Ministry of Health allocated around 20 million shekels to close the gaps between healthcare for the Arab and Jewish communities, but this is far from enough to compensate for decades of discriminatory budgeting practices and neglect. For the 2017-18 State Budget, the Mossawa Center estimates that around 200 million shekels will be needed to address disparities in healthcare. It also remains unclear whether or not the 20 million shekels allocated for 2016 was ever actually distributed.

Community Outreach and Educational Development

Youth Empowerment: Let's Make a Difference

In the beginning of 2016, the Mossawa Center launched "Let's Make a Difference." The project was created and carefully designed to help Palestinian high school students increase their knowledge of Israeli politics, the socio-economic situation of Palestinians in Israel, and Arab civil society. This new educational program originated against the backdrop of discriminatory budget allocations in education. Prior to the announcement of the budget and presently, Arab schools suffer major disparities in funding and resources, in comparison to their Jewish counterparts. Arab schools are particularly lacking in resources when it comes to teaching students about political and socioeconomic processes.

As a result of these disparities in the education system, Arab political leadership, Arabic media, and Arab civil society organizations in Israel have difficulty recruiting qualified leaders, journalists, and activists from the Arab community. The Mossawa Center seeks to remedy this problem

by increasing awareness and building the capacities of Arab youth. Through participation in the group, the students are gaining a deeper understanding of the political and social issues related to the Arab community in Israel while also learning to use the existing tools and mechanisms to advocate for themselves and their community.



Members of Mossawa's youth political capacity-building group, "Let's Make a Difference," with MK Ayman Odeh





MK Ayman Odeh addresses "Let's Make a Difference" youth.



Participant in one of Mossawa's anti-poverty workshops.



A workshop to create an intervention plan for the village of Jisr az-Zarqa.

Poverty alleviation: Jisr az-Zarqa workshop

Jisr az-Zarqa is one of the poorest towns in Israel, with high rates of unemployment and low academic achievement. Jisr al-Zarqa is boxed in by the ocean, a major highway, a nature preserve, and the wealthy town of Caesarea. As Jisr al-Zarqa's population grows, the town is unable to expand, causing overcrowding and heavy strains on social services and public infrastructure. Despite its prime location on the Mediterranean Sea, the village's economic growth has been suffocated. The Israeli government has failed to approve or collaborate on plans to improve the quality of life in Jisr al-Zarqa.

The Mossawa Center and Jisr az-Zarqa's local council hosted a workshop to create an intervention plan for the village. The local council, concerned members of the community, and representatives of government ministries discussed strategies to capitalize on the village's untapped potential. Keynote speaker Martin Luther King III, son of the late civil rights leader, drew parallels between the African American civil rights movement and the situation of the Arab community in Israel. The workshop created a framework for investing in the village's economic potential.



Arab citizens of Israel attend one of the Mossawa Center's poverty alleviation workshops.



Promotion of Arab Palestinian Culture

Palestinian Museum in Israel

The Arab community in Israel is underrepresented in cultural institutions, with few theaters, cinemateques, or other institutions highlighting Palestinian cultural and artistic heritage. The Mossawa Center called for the creation of a Palestinian museum in Israel to share Palestinians' rich history and art. Mossawa hosted a forum in May with over forty representatives from Arab cultural institutions to discuss opportunities to preserve Palestinian culture in Israel and foster a network of culture-sharing between Palestinians in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Participants lauded the newly established Palestinian Museum in Birzeit as a model for protecting Palestinian heritage.

Culture institution sustainability

Many Arab culture institutions struggle to maintain financial support for their programs. To remedy this, the Mossawa Center hosted a capacity-building workshop to train leaders of culture institutions in how to access funds from the Israeli state and the international community. Workshop participants discussed collaboration opportunities to increase advocacy efforts and funding from institutions.



Jafar Farah accepts award for Mossawa's achievements in cultural advocacy.

2016 Month of Culture

In cooperation with Palestinian cultural institutions throughout Israel, the Mossawa Center held the fifth annual Palestinian Culture Month in March. Events which centered around humanitarian, national, and cultural concerns, while calling for peace, equality, justice, and mutual respect, took place in Arab and mixed localities throughout the country. The Month of Culture opened with a jazz concert at Beit Almooseqa in Haifa, a bazaar in Tamra, and a screening of Amer Alshomaly's film *Al-Matlobon* in cooperation with Cinemana in Nazareth.

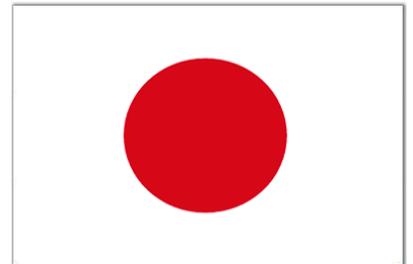
The 2016 Month of Culture also commemorated Land Day and incorporated International Women's Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in its program. Drawing from the support of Arab entrepreneurs and the visions of local artists, the Month of Culture aims to promote Palestinian-Arab culture in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Considering the lack of state-spending on Arab culture (only three percent of the Ministry of Culture's budget is allocated to Arab culture and Arabic language programming), systematic cultural programming is crucial to the promotion of Palestinian and Arab culture.

Honored for Achievements in Cultural Advocacy

In March, the Mossawa Center, MK Ahmed Tibi, and the Head of the unit for Arab Culture in the Ministry of Culture, Loubna Zoabi, attended an event for cultural achievements in Nazareth, delivering speeches on the importance of promoting Arab culture in order to strengthen Palestinian identity. The Mossawa Center was honored for its achievements in advocating for the allocation of additional funds for cultural programming for the Arab community in Israel. MK Ahmed Tibi noted in his speech that "the Mossawa Center is one of the most active organizations advocating [for the Arab community] in the Knesset." Pointing to the important role of local authorities in maintaining and cultivating Palestinian culture, Jafar Farah stated: "All Heads of Arab local councils must make our culture a top priority on the agenda of developing their communities." Mossawa's youth delegation, which aims to increase political awareness and capacity amongst young Arab citizens, also attended.



The Mossawa Center would like to give a special thanks to its supporters, partners, and donors.



Support the Mossawa Center

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You can also send a check to the following address:

The Mossawa Center
P.O. Box 4471
Haifa 31043
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Mossawa Center - The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel

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