



מدرسة السلام، واحة السلام
בית הספר לשלום, נווה שלום
The School for Peace

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



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2025

IN NUMBERS

THE SCHOOL FOR PEACE



813
TOTAL HOURS
OF ACTIVITY



1022

PARTICIPANTS IN ALL ACTIVITIES

COOPERATION
WITH

21

ORGANIZATIONS

97

PARTICIPANTS
IN OUR FOURTH
ANNUAL SFP
GRADUATES CONFERENCE



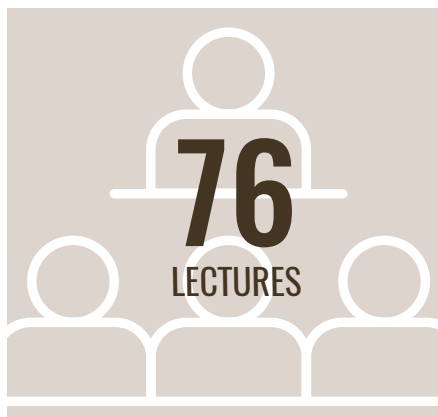
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Letter from the Director

This is not a typical letter. It is written in a time of ongoing war, including the recent escalation with Iran, which is being used by the Israeli government to intensify its policies of destruction toward Palestinians in Gaza, Jerusalem, the West Bank, and within Israel itself.

What once seemed unthinkable is becoming normalized. Many are withdrawing, overwhelmed or unwilling to engage. At the same time, those who do come to our activities arrive with a heightened sense of urgency; for them, participation is no longer optional, it is a necessity.

Within Palestinian society in Israel, we are witnessing a deepening crisis of intra-communal violence, mainly due to organized crime, leading to daily killings. Decades of intentional state neglect of effective, accountable policing, intensified by the current extremist government, has created a profound sense of abandonment and vulnerability. In response, we have supported and stood alongside protest movements led by Palestinians demanding safety and bringing the perpetrators to justice. We adapted our activities to allow participants to take part in these struggles, recognizing that civic engagement in this context is not separate from our work, but rather an essential part of it.

In the West Bank, we are witnessing an alarming escalation of violence by Israeli settlers, with government backing and often with backing of the Israeli army. These attacks on Palestinian villages are contributing to processes that increasingly resemble ethnic cleansing. In this context, SFP remains committed to fieldwork, and has offered support for protective presence initiatives. It is important to acknowledge that such presence no longer offers the protection it once did. International and Israeli activists are often unable to prevent settler violence; at times, their role is merely to witness and document, while they themselves are targeted more and more frequently.

In Gaza, the catastrophic aftermath of genocide continues to unfold.

The scale of destruction - human, physical, and social - is immense and ongoing. And despite the declared ceasefire, Israeli attacks continue and claim a heavy toll in civilian lives. It is essential not only to bear witness, but to actively support efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive ceasefire and rebuilding both infrastructure and the social fabric of life.



Dr. Roi Silberberg, Director,
School for Peace

It is against this backdrop that we turn to

historical lessons. Scholars of genocide have shown that mass violence does not erupt suddenly, but unfolds through identifiable processes.

The genocide in Rwanda for example, was preceded by systematic dehumanization, political radicalization, the arming of militias, massacres that went unpunished, and a constrained international response. **These are not abstract lessons. They compel us to critically examine the processes unfolding around us, to see the parallels, and to resist their normalization and demand accountability from the perpetrators.**

At the School for Peace, we do not offer comfort in the form of easy hope.

Rather, we support people in facing a reality they never wanted and could not have imagined. This requires looking reality in the eyes, without illusion, and acknowledging that there is little reason for optimism. Yet, recognizing the harshness of reality does not mean surrendering to despair. **On the contrary, our work is grounded in the belief that clarity is a central precondition to meaningful action.**

Participants come to our programs in order to understand that the current situation did not emerge by chance. It is the result of political processes, decisions, and structures that have been built over time. This is a difficult truth for many to accept, but it is also empowering: if reality has been shaped, it can also be reshaped. One of the critical insights that emerges from our work is that solidarity depends on confronting

difficult truths. **Avoiding the forces behind inequality and violence leads to superficial engagement, while honest, critical understanding enables real transformation.**

At the same time, this year has reinforced the importance of the international community. In a context where local dynamics are increasingly constrained, international engagement becomes a crucial arena for influence, accountability, and solidarity. This understanding has guided our efforts to expand our activities abroad including opening our second dialogue seminar in Europe and strengthening partnerships with organizations and audiences beyond Israel and Palestine (see “Reaching Local and International Audiences” for further details).

We continue our work not out of detached hope, but out of responsibility. Our commitment is to create spaces where the political reality can be confronted honestly, where people can find meaning and agency even in times of profound crisis, and where the foundations for a more just and equal future can still be imagined and built.

Dr. Roi Silberberg,
Director, School for Peace



Agents of Change for Climatic Justice trip to Jisr az-Zarqa, May 2025

The School for Peace - Creating Socio-Political Change

The School for Peace is the first educational institution in Israel promoting broad-scale transformation towards peace and more egalitarian and just relations between Palestinians and Jews. Founded in 1979 as an ideological-educational institution in Wahat Al-Salam – Neve Shalom (Arabic and Hebrew for “Oasis of Peace”, or WASNS), SFP forms part of the village’s wider commitment to equality, historical accountability, mutual respect & recognition.

Dialogue lies at the core of SFP’s 3-part political education model for socio-political change. Led by trained SFP facilitators it promotes critical thinking among Palestinian and Jewish participants and deepens their understanding of the conflict in which they are part. Participants develop analytical skills and explore identity and group dynamics through the prism of power relations and historical context. In doing so, they gain skills to effectively communicate and take action to challenge systemic injustices.

SFP refrains from using the misleading term “Arab-Israelis” when referring to Palestinian citizens of Israel. Instead, we refer to all members of the Palestinian people as “Palestinian(s),” indicating when speaking about specific communities within the larger group, so as to affirm that Palestinian citizens of Israel are an integral part of the Palestinian people.

Dialogue	Engaging in authentic communication anchored in the unique SFP method emphasizing group identity and power relations.
Learning	Developing critical thinking skills to better understand the conflict and one’s role in it, and to identify the systemic roots of discrimination and oppression.
Action	Taking concrete steps using newfound knowledge, tools, and the platform of an active SFP graduate network to contribute to ending the conflict and furthering equality & justice.

Agents of Change Courses for Professionals

Spanning 6 to 8 months, the Agents of Change courses for Professionals combine dialogue, theory, and hands-on training. This year's courses represent a critical response to the ongoing regional crisis in which Palestinians and Jews live. With more than two years of extermination in Gaza, ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in the West Bank, war with Hezbollah and Iran, and systematic curbing of civil liberties in Israel, the cost of the conflict has been unprecedented for all. SFP therefore, among other activities, renewed its Mental Health Practitioners course to prepare care-providers with tools to deal with the impact of the prolonged war on the collective mental health.



Agents of Change for Spatial Justice trip to Lifta, February 2026

Agents of Change for Climatic & Environmental Justice

In Partnership with Citizens For the Environment (CFE)



18 participants | 100 hours | 4 tours

What place can environmental concerns hold in the wake of war and destruction? How can environmental peacebuilding initiatives achieve impact within a geopolitical reality of injustice? At the time when this program was designed before the war, we had set out to explore what might emerge when environmental discourse and the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue process are intentionally brought together.

During the war in Gaza, we made a deliberate choice to continue our environmental justice course (January–November 2025) in partnership with Citizens For the Environment (CFE), a non-profit dedicated to representing

the environmental needs of the Palestinian community in Israel. We believe environmental discourse and critical dialogue are inseparable. The devastating war and the destruction it has wrought are themselves expressions of environmental degradation and injustice. Yet despite the urgency of this connection, few initiatives have adopted a truly intersectional approach.

The beliefs upon which a person's identity and behavior are based are deeply rooted and rarely examined. In our work at SFP, we uncover the heart of these beliefs so that they can be evaluated and confronted, and become a source of transformation.

“

The course demonstrated how nature can be a bridge for communication rather than a source of conflict.”

Palestinian participant

Environmental peacebuilding integrates resource management with conflict prevention and resolution. Through dialogue, field visits, and hands-on project development, participants confronted the root causes of environmental inequity

and gained practical skills for meaningful change.

A particular highlight was our tour to Jisr az-Zarqa on May 9, 2025, the only remaining Palestinian village along the Israeli coast after the mass expulsions of the Nakba in 1948.

Local leader and social activist Sami Alia guided the group through his hometown, revealing the lack of investment in basic infrastructure, the fishermen's struggles, and the ongoing discrimination and neglect in the face of environmental harm. The visit starkly revealed how environmental neglect functions as deliberate governmental policy, further weakening an already disenfranchised Palestinian community. At the same time, it showcased local grassroots efforts to overcome these obstacles, serving as a source of inspiration for participants to begin developing their own projects.

That work has already borne fruit: participants are developing four different follow-up projects, among them The Gardening Project – a horticultural nursery in the city of Jaljulia that will employ people with special needs and will serve as a community hub for environmental activists.

The course was also observed by Gal Harmat, an evaluation expert from Swiss Peace, a practice and research institute dedicated to advancing effective peacebuilding, in order to allow a deeper review of the course's long-term impact. Upon conclusion, she wrote: *“Conducting this research was, by far, the most difficult scholarly undertaking I have experienced. Engaging with the material required confronting not only the subject matter*

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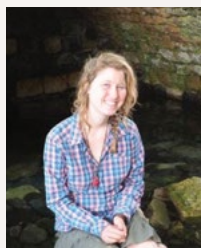
“I understood how important it is to create spaces that allow for in-depth discussion about the conflict, in an honest, genuine, and respectful manner.” Jewish participant



Agents of Change for Climatic Justice trip to Jisr az-Zarqa, May 2025

itself but also aspects of my own past that carry personal trauma. Rather than remaining a purely analytical exercise, the project became an emotionally and politically demanding process of self-interrogation.”

S p o t l i g h t



Einat Last, 27, lives in Kiryat Shmona

Jewish Alumna of the Environmental Justice Course

Einat is an environmental activist and was one of the leaders of the struggle for the preservation of the spring of Ein Fit in the occupied Golan Heights.

Ein Fit was originally a Syrian Village whose population was expelled during the war in 1967. In the coming decades the empty village and its spring became an ecological haven with an extraordinary variety of wildlife and nature untouched by human interference. The IDF had planned to build a massive training base which would have erased this rare site and also demolished the few traces left of the original Syrian village.

As part of the struggle, Einat lived in Ein Fit for seven months, one of a wide range of activities aimed at raising awareness among the public, the IDF, politicians and the Israeli courts, and surrounding local communities. Finally, after over two years of advocacy and grassroots activism, under mounting public pressure the IDF Chief of Staff announced the decision to cancel the project.

“It was our love for nature and for this unique place that succeeded in saving it for future generations – even though the construction of the army base had already been approved by official institutions”, says Einat Last.

Agents of Change for Spatial Justice: Facilitating Tours on the Ongoing Nakba

In Partnership with “Zochrot”

14 participants | 120 hours | October 2025 – June 2026



In fall 2025, SFP launched a training course for facilitating educational tours of Palestinian communities destroyed in the ongoing Nakba. Through our partnership with Zochrot – an NGO focused on collecting and disseminating historical sources about the Nakba, and that works towards the implementation of the Right of Return for Palestinian refugees – we drew on the expertise of renowned educator and activist Umar al-Ghubari, who has led hundreds of tours of Palestinian localities expelled and depopulated by Israel during the 1948 Nakba.

“The first weekend was already full of painful discussions,” recalled Rose Amer, the Palestinian facilitator of the group. Most Jewish participants were politically active and held public positions; historians, lawyers, professors. They joined the group feeling estranged from their society since October 7th, 2023. The Palestinian participants, many of them activists in local organizations around Nazareth and the Negev, were nearly all SFP alumni seeking a safe space to speak. *“They talked and talked. They said everything. They felt safe and could be honest,” Rose shared.*



The destroyed Village of Lifta

“

A Jewish participant said: *“I now have a new way of looking at the landscape – the superficial appearance is hiding something, deliberately, as part of governmental policy. I felt I had been deceived systematically. My responsibility is to examine what lies behind the appearances and make this knowledge accessible to my community.”*

Umar's opening lecture about the history of the Nakba was followed by a tour to Manshiye, a former Jaffa neighborhood almost completely wiped out in 1948 and its aftermath, as well as to Bayt Jiz, a small Palestinian village in the Jerusalem highlands, where refugees' empty houses still stand. **Meetings alternated between guest lectures, binational and uninational dialogue, and tours to sites like Lifta and Lod. The last part of the course will be dedicated to a practicum:** group members will lead four tours built from a decolonizing historical lens, in Al-Kabri (east of Nahariyya), Majdal Yaba (currently the National Park 'Migdal Tsedek') in Yazur (east of Jaffa), and in Hiribya in the South.

A Palestinian participant remarked: *"I collected pieces of my identity at every stop."*



Agents of Change for Spatial Justice trip to El-Mansheya, October 2025

During one of the tours the group participated in, they filmed a former mukhtar's (Palestinian village headmen) house, now private property of a Jewish family who moved there after 1948. A local resident called the police: participants were detained and interrogated for two and a half hours. *"Israel is no longer a place where you can just travel around,"* **said Rose Amer. Despite the risks, she remained hopeful:** *"I know the participants will bring this erased history into the world – through tours, films, and tell it in every possible way!"*

Mental Health as a Site of Peacebuilding



The prolonged reality of war, repression, and political fragmentation continues to exact a profound psychological toll on Palestinian and Jewish societies. In this context, mental health cannot be treated as an individual or apolitical concern, but rather as a collective one. Distress is shaped by collective histories, structural violence, and unequal power relations. For Palestinians, suffering is inseparable from genocide, dispossession, surveillance, silencing, and the ongoing Nakba. For Jewish Israelis, fear, moral injury, inherited and ongoing trauma intersect with militarism and denial, often narrowing the emotional and political space available for mourning, reflection, and accountability.

Against this backdrop, SFP views mental health as a critical site of peacebuilding. Therapeutic spaces are among the few arenas where emotional truth can still be articulated and held in relation to political reality. Yet, conventional psychological paradigms frequently fail to

address the collective and structural dimensions of trauma, insisting on a neutrality that ultimately reproduces injustice.

Over many years, SFP has deepened its engagement with mental health professionals, working to integrate psycho-political analysis of power dynamics into clinical, educational, and community-based practice. The first mental health course opened in 2006, and in the following decades SFP has held courses and a wide variety of other activities, with a total of hundreds of participants to date.

This work is grounded in a clear premise: healing in a context of ongoing violence is inherently political, and by supporting clinicians to critically examine power and politics in their professional roles and the communities they serve, SFP advances ethical practices that expand possibilities for resilience, solidarity, and social transformation. The following outlines SFP's 2025 programs with mental health professionals.

Agents of Change Course for Mental Health Professionals

18 Participants | 80 Hours of Coursework

The Agents of Change Course for Mental Health Professionals was the 7th course of its kind. It marks 20 years since the first cohort course and remains a cornerstone of SFP's work at the intersection of psychology and peacebuilding. The course responds to a growing recognition among practitioners that existing professional frameworks are insufficient for the realities they face. **Participants often arrive with a deep sense of professional dissonance, trained to bracket politics while working with clients whose distress is inseparable from genocide, occupation, racism, and collective trauma.**

Over the course of the program, participants engage in binational and uninational dialogue, critical learning, and discuss professional application. Drawing on the SFP method, the course centers on group

identity, power relations, and context, challenging the assumptions of classical psychology that dismisses social and political causes of suffering. **Through facilitated dialogue, participants examine how their own identities, as Palestinians or Jews, as citizens or subjects, shape therapeutic relationships and ethical decision-making.**

This year's course took place amid heightened repression and fear, particularly for Palestinian professionals who, amid Israel's rampant destruction in Gaza and repression within Israel, are facing growing surveillance, sanctions, and constraints on public expression. Within this reality, the course provided a rare space to speak openly about marginalization, burnout, and the pressures to self-censor in clinical settings. Jewish participants grappled with questions of complicity, denial, and the emotional costs of working within institutions implicated in systemic harm. **Rather than seeking false symmetry, the course explicitly addressed asymmetries in risk, legitimacy, and emotional permission.**



Agents of Change Course for Mental Health Professionals, September 2025

Learning components included engagement with liberation psychology, large-group trauma theory, and feminist and decolonial critiques of mental health practice. **Participants explored case studies drawn from their own work, examining cases where neutrality obscured injustice, or where political reality was pathologized rather than named.**

The action component of the course supported participants in translating the insights gained throughout the process into concrete initiatives.

Graduates developed projects ranging from trauma-informed group work in Palestinian communities, to developing critical training, to subsidized therapy for activists. By situating this work within the broader struggle for justice and equality, the course equipped practitioners to act as agents of change within their fields, institutions, and communities.

Learning and Development Group: “Psycho-Politics in Therapy”

In partnership with Maana Center 

13 Participants | 65 Hours of Coursework | 8 Lectures

SFP facilitated the learning and development Group “Psycho-Politics in Therapy,” in partnership with Maana Center, a Palestinian mental health and training center in Nazareth. **The group differed from the Agents of Change course in that it was for Palestinian and Jewish mental health professionals with a strong background in Palestinian-Jewish dialogue seeking to process evolving political realities’ impact on therapeutic work, beyond the confines of formal training programs.**

Meeting regularly over six months, the group functioned as a professional and political environment where participants examined how war, repression, and systemic injustices enter the therapy room through transference, countertransference, silence, and rupture. Sessions focused on questions often excluded from mainstream supervision: how can one work ethically with trauma amid ongoing violence? What responsibility is demanded of therapists whose institutions are embedded in structures of domination?

The group emphasized collective analysis over individual pathologizing. Through guest lectures and shared inquiry on liberation psychology, participants deepened their capacity to recognize how classical psychodynamic language can obscure power relations, and how therapeutic techniques may unintentionally normalize injustice. This

process strengthened participants' ability to hold complexity, tolerate discomfort, and sustain critical engagement over time. Participants developed projects ranging from professional writing and critical supervision models to workplace-based training that advanced psycho-political analysis within their places of work.

Mental Health Alumni Forum

In 2019, SFP launched the Mental Health Alumni Forum as a dedicated space for graduates of its mental health programs and it has remained active ever since. The forum recognizes that the challenges facing practitioners do not end with the conclusion of a course. Rather, they intensify as graduates attempt to apply critical approaches within often unsupportive or even hostile professional environments.

In a spring lecture, Dr. Amalia Saar introduced her concept of “abjection” from an anthropological and sociological perspective, and examined its relevance to Palestinian-Jewish relations during wartime and genocide. Through theoretical framing and the reading of testimonies describing Israeli attitudes toward Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israeli prisons, the lecture explored how processes of dehumanization operate emotionally and symbolically under conditions of extreme violence.

The forum equipped alumni with a shared analytical framework to examine the psychological and political dimensions of the current reality, reinforcing the value of collective spaces for ongoing learning and collaboration beyond formal training.

Dr. Amalia Saar in a lecture to the Mental Health Alumni Forum, May 2025



Convention in Berlin: “In Between Polarities: Psychosocial Work in Crisis”

In Partnership with AMCHA Germany



SFP also held a convention jointly with AMCHA Germany, a nonprofit providing psychosocial trauma-care for Holocaust survivors and their families. This marked a significant expansion of SFP’s mental health work beyond Palestine/Israel. Bringing together clinicians, academics, and activists from Europe and Palestine/Israel, the convention explored the role of psycho-political analysis in protracted conflict and repression.

Sessions addressed collective trauma, group identity, moral injury, and the limits of neutrality in therapeutic settings. SFP facilitators led dialogue groups alongside international colleagues, placing the Palestinian-Jewish context within a broader global framework of colonialism, racism, and state violence. The convention highlighted the specificity of the local reality and the universality of context-informed mental health approaches.



Participants in the Convention in Berlin, November 2025

Importantly, the convention provided a space where Palestinian voices were heard without constraints on their expression. This shift enabled deeper discussion of accountability, solidarity, and the responsibilities of professionals operating within unequal power structures. **The convention reinforced SFP’s role as a leading contributor to international conversations on mental health and peacebuilding, and laid the groundwork for future international collaborations.**



Shlomit Peled, 57, lives in Herzliya: alumna of the Agents of Change Course for Mental Health Professionals

Shlomit Peled is a psychologist and social worker. She holds an MA in body-centered psychotherapy from the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, focusing on body-centered talk therapy to treat trauma.

Shlomit is an alumna of the Agents of Change course for mental health professionals at SFP, which she described as “both amazing and challenging.” Upon graduation she crafted a vision for a therapeutic space for human rights activists, including those involved in protective presence, solidarity activism to protect rural Palestinian communities in the West Bank from settler attacks and army violence.

“If someone had a traumatic experience and feels that they need help, they simply fill out a form and we will contact them within a couple of hours. We offer up to four emergency counselling-sessions per person for free. I want us to evolve as a main contact point within the activist community – a space with like-minded people sharing similar political values, where activists feel safe and understood.”

In the months after graduation, she recruited more than a dozen therapists specialized in trauma-oriented therapy. Two of them also offer treatment in Arabic. Those therapists went through preparational training and Shlomit has also reached out to human rights organizations offering the service. Within the first month, more than twenty activists (60% of them involved in protective presence) already inquired and are in the process of receiving treatment. All costs of the therapists' work and preparational training are paid by the NIF (New Israel Fund) and no fees are charged from the activists.

Intensive Courses in 2025

International Dialogue Program

21 participants | 50 hours

Living abroad and encountering each other as Israelis and Palestinians outside the region is a profoundly different experience than meeting in Palestine/Israel. At SFP, we recognize that international intervention is pivotal in bringing change to the people living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. **To contribute to peacebuilding and an increase in international pressure, we understand the significant role of the Palestinian and Israeli diaspora.**

“

“This was the most difficult dialogue I’ve ever had. Intense, confronting, and raw. Everyone here was and is personally affected by this conflict. Through sharing our histories and the paths that brought us here, the asymmetry between our two groups became clear - in power, in citizenship, in privileges. Painful to hear, yet necessary to acknowledge, and it gave our conversations more depth and honesty.” (Jewish participant).

How do participants look from afar on what is happening back home? How do relations between the two peoples affect life in Europe? How can one have an impact from a distance? **The dialogue program for Palestinians and Israelis living in Europe has proven to be a crucial platform for exploring these questions and fostering understanding and activism among participants.**

For the third time, we brought together 21 Palestinians and Israelis living in European countries, guided by facilitators who themselves live

abroad. Nine dialogue sessions were held in addition to an intensive in-person seminar, providing a structured environment for participants to discuss topics related to their identities, life abroad, and perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“

“The experience of these meetings will stay with me for many years to come. Although the content was difficult to digest, there was something about the general atmosphere that was very safe, pleasant, and accepting. There was a lot of crying, but also laughter, and the combination of the two was so real and human.”
(Palestinian participant)

The highlight was an in-person weekend in Wuppertal, where participants met face-to-face for the first time after online sessions.

“The first hours felt like a test of whether it was possible to work together,” the Palestinian facilitator Dr. Slieman Halabi remembers. *“The Palestinians demanded openness from the Israelis, and it was also difficult for them to open up to the Palestinians from Gaza. We had to work on the fact that the voices not only belong to*

the Gazans and that the experience and feeling of the whole group matters.”

Only once a safe space and trust were established among the participants, difficult conversations could happen. *“We do not give them a topic to talk about. They tell us what they need. Topics differ: History, Zionism, Palestinian identity, narratives and the dreams they have for the future,”* says Slieman.



International Dialogue Program, weekend in Wuppertal, Germany

S p o t l i g h t

**Dr. Slieman Halabi, 37, lives in Munich: SFP's Europe Project Manager****Palestinian alumnus of the group facilitator course**

Dr. Slieman Halabi is a social psychologist trained in Israel and Germany, researching social identity, intergroup relations, conflict, and collective memory.

He works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Personality and Social Psychology at the University of Wuppertal. Slieman grew up as part of the Druze minority in Israel and received his qualification as a group facilitator from the School for Peace in 2011. Ever since, he has been working to promote dialogue between Palestinians and Jews. **In the aftermath of October 7th, 2023, he established a SFP group in Europe to explore how asymmetries of power, privilege, and responsibility manifest in dialogue and how diaspora settings can encourage reflection, solidarity, and political action.**

For his extraordinary commitment and contribution, the renowned German economy magazine “Capital” included him in the list of the “Top 40 young leaders in Germany under 40.” All of us at SFP congratulate him on this impressive milestone. You can explore more of his perspective and activities here: [Where Israelis and Palestinians listen to each other - even if it hurts.](#)

“To me, dialogue means building an alternative community of people, by which I mean Israeli and Palestinians, who share the common goal of caring for our homeland, the wish for it to look better one day, and the strong belief that human and moral values shall prevail. Dialogue is a space where a lot happens, and a lot is discussed. However, seeing people’s transformation is extremely moving for me - seeing people grow throughout the process of dialogue gives me hope and joy. Dialogue in the diaspora specifically can be a powerful motivator for action that is not possible back home - people are creative and are able to do a lot from here.”

S p o t l i g h t

Nuha - 46, lives in Germany**Palestinian Alumna of the International Dialogue Course**

Nuha is a Palestinian citizen of Israel and has been living in Germany for 12 years, working as a researcher. Since October 7th, 2023, she has diversified her activities diving into human rights work and advocacy. She works in a non-profit organization supporting refugee women from Middle Eastern countries and is also involved in [“Clean Shelter.”](#) A project born out of the first cohort of SFP International Dialogue course, aiming to bring sanitation equipment and clean water to displaced people in Gaza. Moreover, she is part of a collective that supports Palestinians in rural West Bank communities, helping them resist settler violence and preserve their livelihood, mainly by supplying food for their farm animals. Due to the worsening situation faced by shepherds and their families, who experience daily violence and harassment by settlers, Nuha also works together with her partner Yael to build a framework for mental and emotional support, with the help of Arabic-speaking social workers and psychologists.

During the course, one of the participants in the group shared that he has a close relative in Gaza – a 12-year-old girl named Layla*, whose entire family was attacked by Israeli forces, her father being the only one spared, while she herself suffered a severe brain injury. Subsequently, Nuha became the driving force in organizing an evacuation for Layla to get treatment. The group named the project “Ezra LeLayla”, Hebrew for “Help for Layla.”

Nuha explains: “I came back from the workshop in Wuppertal determined to save Layla’s life. The day after returning, efforts started: I created lists with names of people to reach out to who could help, and renewed old connections. I was constantly on the phone. But I never felt alone. Every single person in our group supported the effort in their own way.”

After multiple failed attempts to evacuate Layla to Germany, the group finally got in touch with an organization in Ramallah that collaborates with WHO (World Health Organization). **After a month, they succeeded in evacuating her to Jordan, where she finally underwent brain surgery. Right now, Nuha is involved in the process of helping the family obtain a humanitarian visa to Switzerland:** *“We hope they will get a green light soon. These days, there is still liquid in Layla’s skull that needs to be regularly removed. But her condition is stable.”*

Nuha also assists in providing prosthetic limbs for Gazans undergoing rehabilitation, an idea that originated with one of the group members, who immediately mobilized alongside Nuha to bring this project to life. The project is still in its early stages, given the current situation in Gaza.

***Layla is a pseudonym.**

Group Facilitation Course on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

24 participants | 80 hours

The SFP Facilitators Training Course is a cornerstone of SFP’s mission and carries a sense of pride and purpose: it equips Palestinian and Jewish activists with tools for leading meaningful dialogue. Unfolding against a backdrop of extreme violence and repression, this year it felt particularly urgent.

At its core, the SFP method holds that perceptions of conflict must not be repressed, confronting unequal power relations, encouraging Jews to acknowledge the mistreatment of Palestinians, and empowering Palestinians to speak on their own terms are all essential parts of dialogue. Sessions combine facilitation skills, analysis of power dynamics, and the courage to ask uncomfortable questions. Tension is deliberately allowed to persist in order to be learned from.

“

“A Palestinian participant read a poem in Arabic on Friday evening. I understood only half the words, yet the way she read it moved me - how meaningful it was to her, to share it with me in her own language.” (Jewish participant)

Jewish facilitator Michal Zak recalls the fragile opening: “Initially, the Palestinians sat there and did not dare to say anything.” But a shift came. Half the Jewish participants spoke Arabic and understood the political asymmetries at play, while two East Jerusalem Palestinians spoke no Hebrew. *“This unusual*

situation created a dynamic I had never witnessed before,” Zak reflects. *“It reduced the pressure for Palestinians to speak Hebrew all the time. But at the same time those in the Jewish group who did not understand Arabic felt left out. Yet, it gave us a glimpse for the potential of a truly bilingual Middle Eastern identity.”*



Group Facilitation Course tour in the village of WASNS, April 2025

Given the unique circumstances of extremely violent reality on the one hand, and politically aware participants on the other, the two groups approached each other more gently than in previous years. *“Once you finally find people who are able to listen and talk honestly, there is a sense that we do not want to lose this,”* **Zak explains.** Palestinian participants, most of them Bedouin, felt safe to share their first-hand experiences. They spoke of living with the constant fear of organized crime, discrimination by the state, and violence at checkpoints. **In the end, the course became**

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“I came to truly understand what Jews went through after October 7th. The course helped me hold on to my humanity, which I felt I could easily lose given the reality outside.”

(Palestinian participant)

an attempt to insist on political partnership at a time when the ground beneath felt like it was crumbling – and the proof that this partnership is indeed possible, albeit challenging.

The SFP Simultaneous Translation Course

8 participants | 45 hours | 10 sessions

At SFP, we believe that genuine dialogue requires participants to speak in their mother tongue. But in Israel, Palestinian citizens speak Hebrew, while few Jewish Israelis are fluent in Arabic, forcing Palestinians to abandon their native language in binational dialogue. The SFP Simultaneous Translation Course was born to address this gap and aims at creating an expanding cadre of simultaneous translators which will allow a more egalitarian Palestinian-Jewish dialogue.

For the third consecutive year, we trained employees from organizations engaged in binational work as simultaneous translators. There is a significant shortage of interpreters for such settings, due to both the technical demands of simultaneous translation and the socio-political complexities, including different emotional, historical, political and cultural meanings attached to various expressions, historical events, and places.

Simultaneous Translation Course graduation, July 2025



Eight Palestinian women, fluent in both Arabic and Hebrew, participated this year. They learned to use professional equipment and practiced translating videos, texts, and live conversations. The curriculum included transcripts from real dialogue groups and political, historical, and cultural materials.

The course went beyond technical skills. Participants engaged deeply with the conflict's subtleties, and many reflected that the training not only gave them new abilities but also strengthened their understanding of how language - and the way it is translated - shapes discourse, identity and worldview.

Academic Programs

For 36 years, SFP has facilitated meaningful engagement between Palestinian and Jewish university students through undergraduate dialogue courses across the country and consulting and guiding academic staff. These courses have become a cornerstone in forming new generations committed to the difficult work of promoting a more just society. This year, we maintained this commitment in spite of an increasingly repressive academic climate, to make sure open discourse remains possible during a time when critical expression is under threat.

Consulting and Guiding Academic Staff

In July 2025, 19 academic and administrative staff from 11 Israeli institutions, including the Hebrew University, Sapir College, and the Weizmann Institute, gathered at SFP for an immersive day of learning. The event was a rare attempt to create what has become almost impossible: an inter-identity academic space for Palestinians and Jews committed to equal partnership. The day combined theoretical learning and in-depth dialogue on safety, belonging, political identity, and institutional structures.



A learning day for academic staff at the SFP, July 2025

SFP invited historian Dr. Tawfiq Da'adli to speak about the “Gaza in Hebrew” initiative, a public lectures serie held at the Hebrew University throughout 2024-2025, sharing testimonies of Gazans and discussing their inhumane reality. These lectures were a lone voice against the silencing of protest, and their initiators faced significant pushback from university leadership and right-wing student organizations.

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“There were no buzzwords here. There was courage. We finally talked about what everyone is silent about.”

Palestinian participant

Sociologist Prof. Teresa Koloma Beck from Hamburg’s Helmut-Schmidt-University presented research on how the aftermath of October 7th, 2023 affected campus safety in Germany,

arguing that prioritizing institutional stability can suppress marginalized voices and that policies seeking “neutrality” often perpetuate existing inequalities rather than address them.

On a separate occasion, following a recommendation from the Hartman Institute, SFP staff led a workshop for 15 staff members of Kaye Academic College of Education in Be’er Sheva, an institution where more than half of students are Palestinian. The session addressed language asymmetry in academic spaces, the silencing of Palestinian voices, and widespread fear of institutional punishment.

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“This day allowed me to see myself not only as part of the system, but also as someone who can influence it.” Jewish participant

Those activities created a space where reality could be faced without falling apart. It offered the possibility to recognize that political dialogue is not a contradiction to academia, but a condition for its educational and moral existence. This is not a process completed in a single day, but the beginning of a long-term effort to reimagine the campus as not only a site of knowledge, but also of belonging, solidarity, and action.

University Dialogue - Academic Credit Courses in Tel-Aviv and Beer Sheva

Beer Sheva: 11 participants – 21 hours

Tel Aviv: 18 participants – 39 hours

October 2025 to February 2026



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

In the winter semester, SFP staff conducted two courses with academic credits in the psychology faculties of Beer Sheva University and Tel Aviv University. Facilitators reported that it was more challenging to find students for those courses than in pre-war years, due to a climate of conformity inside Israeli academic institutions.



Tel Aviv University Dialogue course, January 2026

Participants in Tel Aviv encountered each other with great sensitivity. Group facilitator Dr. Nava Sonnenschein reflects in hindsight: *“They were an outstanding example of the potential of dialogue, able to accommodate the other while also openly criticizing one’s own community and taking responsibility. Impressive, all the more so after two years of a terrible war.”*

Students were encouraged to keep a diary to write down their own impressions and feelings throughout the course. They were divided into binational couples. Each couple got to work on a conflict-related topic and connect this topic to a theory. In the end each couple presented their assignment in a 15-minute lecture.

“*I often didn’t speak because I was afraid there would be a conflict and an explosion, but now I understand that sometimes a debate is good and you don’t have to be afraid of it.*” (Palestinian participant)



Tel Aviv University Dialogue course, January 2026

“*The course helped me form a clear position. All the knowledge I absorbed, along with the honest and sensitive conversations with this wonderful group, helped me understand where I stand in my views, and also feel a renewed desire to work for peace between the peoples and for true coexistence. The course gave me so much - more than words can express. I will remember the course, the group, and the amazing facilitators forever.*” Jewish participant

Graduate Network

Introduction

In 2025, our Graduate Network continued to serve as a sustained framework for connection, professional development, and collective action among SFP alumni. Engagement does not conclude with course completion; graduates remain active members of a binational community committed to challenging power structures and affecting political transformation. Through forums, seminars, targeted initiatives, and our annual Alumni Conference, we strengthened peer support, expanded professional collaboration, and reinforced shared strategic purpose. **A focus of the graduate network is creating opportunities to build relationships and new projects that translate tools acquired in SFP programs into civic and political impact.**

4th Annual Graduate Conference

נס מוֹתָמַר חָרִיגוֹת
הַבּוֹגְרִים וּת-ה-4
מִדְרָסַת הַסְּלָמ הָרְבִיעִי
שֶׁל בֵּית הַסֵּפֶר לְשָׁלוֹם



The 4th Alumni Conference
of the School for Peace

97 Alumni attendees

5 alumni-led initiatives presented

In December 2025, SFP convened its fourth Annual Alumni Conference, bringing together approximately 100 graduates from across cohorts and years of activity. Held over two days, the conference reaffirmed the graduate network as a sustained political and professional community.

This year's theme, "Living in an Ongoing Catastrophe – From Dispossession and Erasure to Building Influence" framed the conference's political and pedagogical direction. Participants confronted a reality defined by mass

violence, ongoing genocide, displacement, repression, and institutional erosion. The conference asked how political agency can be exercised under conditions of sustained devastation: how to navigate the tension between physical and symbolic erasure and the effort to construct influence, responsibility, and shared futures.

The structured dialogue sessions in fixed binational and uninational groups created a space for sharing fears, criticism, and opinions that most are unable to share within wider Israeli society. Participants examined responsibilities within asymmetrical power relations, while acknowledging the feeling of being frozen and silenced. Palestinian participants addressed questions of agency under conditions of dispossession, silencing and dehumanization, while Jewish participants grappled with the implications of being in a position of structural power and complicity. The dialogue space enabled direct, rigorous engagement without collapsing into abstraction.

A highlight of the Conference was a panel, moderated by SFP's staff, featuring lawyer, urban planner, human rights activist and SFP alumnus, **Amal Oraby**, alongside journalist, translator editor and chairwoman of "Betsalem," **Orly Noy**. The discussion offered sharp political analysis of the present moment and served as substantive input for the dialogue groups. **Rather than formal lectures, the panel unfolded as a conversation among speakers, moderators, and audience, modeling principled disagreement and critical inquiry.** The discussion grappled with questions such as, What are our respective responsibilities given each of our positions within society? What forms of influence are available, or unavailable, to us under conditions of dispossession? How do these positions shape political agency?



Left to right: Noor Abo Ras, Orly Noy, Amal Oraby

The program included a screening of the film “The Sea,” a joint Palestinian-Jewish production portraying a Palestinian child from the West Bank, denied entrance to Israel to see the sea for the first time. The film, a recipient of an Israeli Academy Award, exposes through a “small” yet powerful story the harsh realities of the occupation, making it deeply personal and resonant with the audience.

The screening extended the conference’s exploration of aspiration and restriction within a reality of oppression and deprivation.

“The dialogue added a human and practical dimension to the conference, connecting theoretical ideas to reality.” Palestinian participant



Participants in the conference

On the second day, “The Field Speaks” session showcased five alumni-led initiatives, enabling participants to engage directly with ongoing civic and political projects and to join or strengthen collaborative efforts. One of the projects presented was “protective presence” activism in the West Bank, describing how activists stay in threatened Palestinian communities to deter violence, document incidents, and help farmers access their land. The session was presented by SFP alumni **Eden Fuchs**, **Ze’ev Arad**, and **Avi Dabush** (CEO of *Rabbis for Human Rights*), each bringing experience from their field activism and community organizing.

“The encounter with other alumni was highly meaningful - it revealed the scope of ongoing activity and exposed the range of possibilities for action.” Jewish participant

Participants in the conference



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“I returned from the conference with renewed motivation for action and a greater sense of optimism that change is possible.” Jewish participant

The Alumni Conference reaffirmed the Graduate Network as a political learning community that does not evade power asymmetries or emotional strain. It further demonstrated the capacity of sustained alumni engagement to translate critical dialogue into

collective responsibility and action. **This was an important gathering for our alumni community, as a place to meet, learn together, be empowered and inspired. Together we learned about the importance of speaking the truth in a reality of lies and gaslighting, to insist on seeking our agency and areas of responsibility, what can be done, and we received inspiration from the meaningful action within the community.**



Participants in the conference | Rose Amer and Tal Kulka, SFP facilitators

Alumni Planners Forum Weekend

32 participants | 5 Lectures

After a two-year hiatus during one of the most difficult periods in Palestinian-Jewish relations, the Alumni Planners Forum reconvened, bringing together 32 Palestinian and Jewish graduates from across the country. All participants are alumni of the SFP Change Agents course for urban planners, civil engineers and architects, developed and conducted in partnership with the Arab Center for Alternative Planning.

The program integrated dialogue with professional learning and political analysis. Journalist Nir Hasson addressed the catastrophic reality in Gaza, contextualizing the broader humanitarian crisis as an intentional Israeli policy. Professor Oren Yiftachel examined long-term land and planning policies of dispossession of Palestinians, and their connection to the ongoing conflict. He offered a path to amend the wrongs of settler colonialism via joint Palestinian-Jewish action. Architect Smadar Okel gave a lecture about the future governmental master plan for the city of Umm al-Fahm. A plan which instead of focusing on Umm al-Fahm future needs aims at giving a legal pretext for mass demolition of existing houses in the neighborhood of Ein Jarar.

Participants emphasized the forum's role as a space where political realities can be addressed while maintaining professional solidarity.



Nir Hasson in a lecture to the planners' forum, September 2025

The meeting concluded with a commitment to expand participation, deepen alumni networking, and advance joint advocacy initiatives promoting structural change in the field of public planning.

New and Ongoing Activities and Workshops

Unified Palestinian Uninational Dialogue Program

20 Participants | 25 Hours

For the second year, SFP offered a uninational Palestinian dialogue group for participants from the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Israel. This initiative addresses the issue of fragmentation within Palestinian society, caused by Israeli policy since 1948, affecting all aspects of Palestinian life. **This includes the ability to organize, oppose dispossession and oppression.** Our initiative works to mend this intentional rupture of the Palestinian social-political fabric that impedes communal healing and the collective struggle for freedom.

For the first encounter, the Palestinian group from Israel traveled to Beit Jala in the West Bank, but the participants from the

West Bank were delayed for about two and a half hours due to army checkpoints. This incident set the tone of the meeting, with many of the Palestinians from Israel sharing feelings of guilt, as they were able to move freely, while West Bank Palestinians face major difficulties doing so.

Discussing guilt led the Palestinian group from the West Bank to share their own feelings of guilt towards Gazans who face starvation and

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“The weekend helped to destroy what the occupation built by dividing and separating us. From there we can carry out activities for Palestinian society.”

annihilation. These mutual feelings led to discussion focused on mutual empathy and getting to know the challenges that various Palestinian groups have to deal with. It was also marked by the glaring absence of Gazan Palestinians.

“I joined this meeting in a very difficult period full of pressure that we experience every day at the political level, especially in Jerusalem. The meeting gave me a place to express what I am exposed to and cannot express in other places.”

Participants expressed the importance of creating a unified Palestinian vision, leadership and representation of all the Palestinian people. And the participants felt that SFP dialogue group created a basis for shaping a collective vision for Palestinian liberation.

New Program

Politicians Building Partnerships

23 participants | 16 hours of coursework

Safeguarding even the very partial democratic characteristics of the current Israeli political system cannot be achieved without Palestinian-Jewish partnership. Therefore, SFP former director Dr. Nava Sonnenschein proposed a program bringing together politicians from Palestinian and Jewish opposition parties in Israel, to strengthen their ability to cooperate against the backdrop of ultranationalist voices that gained prominence in mainstream society during the war in Gaza.

The initiative was launched in response to a politically unsettling moment: the attempt to remove MK Ayman Odeh from the Knesset, and a public discourse that exposed how Palestinians are perceived as a security threat rather than political partners and equal citizens entitled to having their voice heard.



Politicians Building Partnerships meeting, September 2025

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“Since the war began, all my energy has gone into stopping it and preventing the destruction of my people. Despair is a privilege. I try to build partnerships with Jewish society, even though I’ve paid a price. I faced a disciplinary hearing and public incitement... This government has crossed every red line and it must be stopped.” Palestinian Participant

SFP’s advantage was its ties to all Palestinian parties in Israel. The four-session program launched in fall 2025 with 23 participants from six opposition parties, including prominent figures from the protest movement against the judicial reform and the government. A WhatsApp group was formed, sustaining discussions and the exchange of materials well beyond the meetings themselves.

Although both sides shared a belief in the critical importance of bringing down the current government, the first sessions revealed fear, shame,



Politicians Building Partnerships meeting, September 2025

and confusion. Palestinians spoke of struggling with dehumanization and their difficulty in finding Jewish allies willing to oppose the war in Gaza. Jewish participants reflected on the trauma after October 7th, 2023, moral responsibility for IDF actions, and the rise of the populist right in Jewish society.

Despite tensions, the process of the meetings created a space for honest dialogue. Participants examined the boundaries of partnership, the need to uphold Palestinian political legitimacy, and the urgency of changing the public discourse. A shared understanding emerged: that Palestinian-Jewish partnership is essential for political change, especially ahead of the elections in 2026.

“I’ve come to understand that you can’t fight only for democracy, a strong judiciary, and rights while ignoring the occupation and the conduct of the war in Gaza. It will keep blowing up in our faces. It’s a disaster - all driven by the political center’s fear (from right wing propaganda).” Jewish Participant

Dialogue Sessions for residents of Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom

In addition to our political education courses, SFP runs dialogue workshops and activities tailored to meet changing circumstances around us. Of these, closest to our roots are those within our home community of Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom (WASNS). Since the outbreak of the war in Gaza, we have launched a number of programs to ensure that WASNS members can meet the challenges they face as an intentional binational community striving to uphold principles of equality and mutual understanding.

During 2025, WASNS residents gathered twice to discuss community practices. Among other things, the discussions touched on handling internal conflicts, strengthening community life despite the poisonous political climate outside of the community, reinforcing its ideological



Residents of WASNS in dialogue, July 2025

foundations and expanding external protest and public advocacy. The discussions sparked new initiatives, including a permanent protest sign at the village entrance opposing the war in Gaza, and the publication of a public statement calling for an end to the war.

The courage shown by WASNS members in engaging in difficult dialogue has laid a strong foundation for mutual trust and future community development. To continue addressing long-term challenges, we are planning additional meetings with SFP facilitators.

Sharing our Message, Knowledge & Expertise

Reaching Local & International Audiences

Each year, SFP expands the reach of its political education efforts and raises awareness about the importance of honest dialogue in advancing international struggles against injustice and discrimination. Through workshops, lectures, and participation in conferences, these efforts continue to grow globally. This year, we were present in multiple countries addressing new audiences including Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Taiwan.



Rondine Cittadella della Pace, Italy

Rondine is an Italian organization that brings together young people from conflict and post-conflict regions, helping them discover the human being in their enemy through the experience of living together. **In June we held a one-day workshop introducing the SFP dialogue method to Rondine's staff. The staff felt empowered by our workshop and our facilitators were asked to return in November to conduct a 4 day seminar, one day for the staff and three days for the participants of the Rondine programs.**

The staff day included a deep dive into the foundations of the SFP method and a discussion on how these principles can be relevant to the activities in Rondine. The three days intensive seminar for the 60 international



SFP facilitators give workshop to Rondine participants in Italy, November 2025

participants included guided reflection exercises and dialogue exploring personal and collective identity and a workshop allowing participants to share their experiences and interpretations of conflicts. **The participants' reactions to the seminar were exceptional. Several shared that it was the most emotionally intense experience they have had since arriving in Rondine, and many felt it allowed them to connect with their counterparts on a deeper level.**



NECE Lab, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

In June we participated in the workshop “Working with polarised groups in civic education,” organized by the NECE Lab Sarajevo, the Civics Innovation Hub, EUSTORY and the Körber-Stiftung. The exchange brought together educators and facilitators from across Europe to share strategies for how civic education can help bridge emotional and societal divides among young people in polarized societies marked by national, ethnic, political and religious tensions.



Taiwan Peace Fellowship

In September, SFP Director Dr. Roi Silberberg joined the Taiwan Peace Fellowship - three weeks with 250 peacemakers, activists and academics

from around the world. On Kinmen Island, participants encountered the history of the Chinese Civil War and ongoing tensions with the People's Republic of China. Roi gave lectures and workshops at National Chengchi University, National Taipei University and in Kinmen, focusing on dialogue, peacebuilding and resistance. **Roi summed up his experience in Taiwan, saying: “My time in Taiwan sharpened the importance of creating safe spaces for dialogue, even when the topics are charged, silenced, or politically sensitive. I learned about the significance of community-based peacebuilding, the integration of digital innovation in civil struggles, and the relevance of the Palestinian-Israeli story in other global arenas.”**

[Dr. Roi Silberberg's full reflection on his fellowship in Taiwan](#)

Academic Course, University of Verona, Italy

A seminar conducted by SFP facilitators at the University of Verona brought together a small cohort of students to allow for deep personal reflection. There were theatre, photolanguage sessions, and terminology workshops that helped students connect emotionally, articulate inner conflicts, and examine how political language shapes perception.

Students were initially hesitant and unfamiliar with dialogical methods, but engagement grew as trust developed. As key themes emerged, the challenge of expressing their authentic voices on political issues and the tense emotional climate on European campuses became central points of discussion. **Student and academic staff alike felt the seminar was an impactful experience. One student concluded by saying, “Talking more about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could help raise awareness and teach us how to move beyond stereotypes and fear. I think that such dialogues can inspire more empathy, understanding, and openness.”**



Lecturers & Presentations

Workshop “From Connection to Action: Skills for Dialogue and Leadership”



A workshop conducted for members of “*Humanity in Action*”, an international leadership development organization. The main topic addressed by the workshop was how to create a safe space for dialogue and what is the motivation to hold a dialogue in this difficult period.

The Martin Buber Center for Shared Dialogue Education at Beit Berl



The Center aims to bridge the socio-economic gap between the country's robust central areas and its weaker periphery and to provide better opportunities for the periphery's at-risk youth, including inside Palestinian communities. We had an on-site discussion with students on the educational approach of SFP and the dilemma of refusing military service.

Center for Shared Society at the Shalom-Hartman Institute Jerusalem



מכון שלום הרטמן
SHALOM HARTMAN INSTITUTE

The Shalom-Hartman institute works with Palestinian and Jewish agents of change inside Israel to integrate the notion of a shared society. SFP participated in a panel with other organizations about the challenges of creating a shared society, and presented a critical stance on the common definition of a shared society.

Solidarity of Nations



A group of young Jewish adults who come on a 4-month program of “Achvat Amim” (Hebrew for “Solidarity of Nations”) to Israel and Palestine to engage in activism and movement-building with Palestinians and Israelis. Lecture on SFP dialogue method followed by a tour at WASNS.

Bosch Foundation



The Bosch Foundation supports sustainable peace through long-term funding in conflict regions. With local partners, they initiate peace processes and their implementation of projects on the ground. We held a workshop for representatives from a range of peacebuilding organizations supported by Bosch.

Lindau Publishing House Think Tank



Online-meeting discussing the SFP concept of hope that comes not from optimistic illusions but from our work on political education. And on how to move beyond narrow political categories and instead build new language and alliances grounded in justice and equality.

Terminology workshop with American and British friends associations of WASNS



Over the past several years SFP has developed a unique terminology workshop about public discourses and perceptions regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Workshops were held with the American Friends Association online and with the British Friends Association in person.

Berghof Foundation



The Berghof Foundation works around the world to create space for conflict transformation. SFP facilitators met in Berlin with a senior consultant from the foundation and discussed methods of facilitating encounters of groups in conflict.

Bucerius Summer School on Global Governance



BUCERIUS SUMMER
SCHOOL ON
GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Online lecture on the SFP method for the 2025 Bucerius Summer School on Global Governance, hosted by ZEIT STIFTUNG BUCERIUS and Karl Schlecht Foundation on the theme of “Revisiting Global Governance – Adapting to a Growing Global Disorder,” for young leaders from all over the world.

Online-Lecture by Professor Ian Lustick from the University of Pennsylvania on “Hope and the Problem of Solutionism in the Israeli Palestinian Conflict”



Lecture for SFP staff and graduates on Professor Lustick’s research and book, “*Paradigm Lost: From Two-State Solution to One-State Reality*” focusing on the failure of the Two-State Solution and the necessity to replace the One-State Reality with a paradigm of democratization.

Online Testimony Panel hosted by Caritas Italy



Ahmad Mukbel, a SFP facilitator from East Jerusalem and graduate of the facilitators and international course represented SFP on an online testimony panel. He concluded his testimony with the following words:

“While participating in SFP courses I saw up close how deeply the place is grounded in knowledge, professional tools, experience, and above all, humanity. In these programs, myths on both sides are challenged, and participants gain real tools they can use in their own lives. I have a dream - to see true peace in my country. And perhaps the closest I’ve ever seen to that dream was in SFP and the village of Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom.”

Media Appearances Local and Abroad

SFP values engaging with international public opinion and offers critical analysis of the current reality, highlighting the failure of violent means to resolve political issues, proposing an alternative approach grounded in honest dialogue and an end to the occupation and brutal oppression of the Palestinians.



“Dialogue in Times of War: The School for Peace method and social justice pedagogy in education” (English). Education blog of Bristol Inter-Disciplinary Group for Education Research (BRIDGE), including a [lecture](#) by our director Dr. Roi Silberberg in which he shares his personal story and how it was changed by his encounter with SFP. He recounts the early days of SFP and the way it was influenced by global peace education theories and the works of critical pedagogists like Paulo Freire and Bell Hooks, emphasizing empowerment, transformation, and critical thinking.

January 2025 | [link to blog](#)

Arabic weekly newspaper Kul-Al-Arab (Arabic) :Dr. Samer Swaid on the Urban Planners Course of SFP

May 2025 | [link to article](#)



“Three voices on the issue of Israeli extremism in the West Bank. Interview with Roi Silberberg and Efrat Reubinof” (Italian). Italian outlet Terrasanta on settler violence in the West Bank

August 2025 | [link to article](#)



“Not fighting means working hard” (Dutch). In the magazine “De Groene Amsterdammer.” Article on WASNS with a section on SFP and an interview with Maisoon Badawi

July 2025 | [link to article](#)



“Beyond the headlines. A conversation on Peace, Gaza and Taiwan” (English). The 52nd episode of the Taiwanology podcast includes a discussion between Dr. Roi Silberberg and Dr. Hazem Almassry

September 2025 | [link to podcast](#) | [link to transcription](#)

“How Palestinians and Israelis can speak with each other” (German). In WDR5, German regional public radio broadcaster. Interview with Dr. Slieman Halabi and participants in the International Dialogue Group.

January 2026 | [link to podcast](#)

Research & Reports - Developing our Knowledge and Expertise

Introduction

Besides our educational mission, SFP regularly contributes to advancing knowledge for sociopolitical transformation. We produce research, reports, and position papers on our political education and dialogue methods as they relate to developments locally and worldwide. And we are proud to share that the article **“Education for Democracy and Justice Under Fire: Integrating Identity Perspectives into Global Citizenship Education in Conflict Settings,”** which we presented in our 2024 annual report and was written by Dr. Roi Silberberg and Noor Abo Ras, was selected for the UNESCO International Review of Education’s Editors’ Choice list.

Currently SFP staff is in the process of writing an article analyzing the three-year facilitation process with teachers in the Palestinian-Jewish bilingual school in WASNS. An extended summary of the article follows below:

Facing the Erupting Storm: Facilitating the professional development program of the WASNS elementary school Bi-National Educational Staff (extended summary)

This is an extended summary of an article which is in the process of being written by the SFP facilitators, analyzing a three-year facilitation process with teachers in the Palestinian-Jewish bilingual school in WASNS. Conducted as a voluntary professional development program, the process combined regular meetings during the academic year with full-day training sessions on the weekends. During its second year, following October 7th, 2023 and the war in Gaza, it also included a multi-

day seminar in Cyprus, underscoring both the staff's deep commitment to the elementary school's vision and the difficulty of participation under acute political constraints.

The process included dialogue workshops, day-long sessions, retreats, case presentations, and ongoing coordination with school leadership. In the immediate aftermath of October 7th, 2023, the staff met via Zoom in a state of profound shock. This initial interaction revealed a significant asymmetry in experience: Jewish teachers spoke openly of their helplessness, anxiety, and concern for family members in the military, whereas Palestinian teachers remained largely silent. This silence was not a lack of emotion but a mechanism of survival and resistance against “loyalty tests” prevalent in the Israeli public sphere. While Jewish colleagues sometimes misinterpreted this silence as support for violence, the Palestinian teachers were actually navigating fears of surveillance, professional risk, and the danger of speaking Arabic or wearing a hijab in public.

The facilitators employed the SFP approach to dialogue, which views the group as a microcosm of the broader society. A key methodology



Teachers group meeting outside the WASNS art gallery

involved splitting the staff into uninational subgroups, allowing participants to share authentically in their native languages without the fear of self-censorship or the need to appease the other side. This strategy helped transition the group from a “therapeutic” focus on individual trauma to a “pedagogical-political” discourse that acknowledged collective national identities and power imbalances.

Despite years of shared practice, including bilingual instruction, recognition of both national calendars, and sustained collaboration, the war intensified ideological gaps, emotional asymmetries, and unequal exposure to risk and systemic oppression. Teachers described a hesitant staff room, uncertainty about responding to students’ political statements, and a widening gap between what could be said at home and at work.

To further bridge the divide, the staff participated in a retreat to Cyprus.

The seminar deliberately removed the group from their immediate political and institutional context, enabling forms of reflection largely inaccessible within Israel. This distance generated comparative learning about the conflict in Cyprus and moments of pride regarding the rarity and difficulty of sustaining a shared educational institution during active conflict.

By observing the Greek-Turkish divide in Nicosia, the teachers could discuss sensitive concepts like “borders,” “occupation,” and “checkpoints” with less immediate defensiveness. This external perspective allowed for a deep discussion on terminology and power, such as when Palestinian teachers noted that what was a “crossing” in Cyprus was a “checkpoint” involving weapons and fear in their own daily lives.

A central challenge for the facilitators was managing the tension between “protection” and “challenging.” While there was a desire to protect the



Teachers group workshop session

teachers from the violence of the public sphere, the facilitators argued that avoiding political discussion is itself a political act that preserves the status quo. They pushed the staff to engage with difficult materials, such as an art exhibition about the war, which eventually served as a healing experience that enabled the group to return to their professional roles with greater awareness. Ultimately, the facilitation sought to integrate the “here and now” of group dynamics with the seemingly more distant political context. **By the end of the process, the staff had moved from a state of paralysis and suspicion to a more resilient partnership.**

The program explored different forms of silence. Palestinian teachers practiced strategic silence as a survival mechanism shaped by personal and institutional vulnerability, repression, and threat of sanction. Jewish teachers described silencing themselves out of caution, uncertainty, and an unfamiliar need to self-limit. Misreading these silences generated resentment and moral accusation.

The authors argue that self-censorship can function as a conscious survival practice only when named and collectively reflected upon; unspoken censorship produces stagnation and dangerous projections. They also critically examine moments when their desire to protect the group may have limited necessary challenges, raising questions about the educator’s responsibility to introduce political perspectives, despite resistance.

The process demonstrates that sustained, critically grounded facilitation can help binational educational teams and binational teams in general remain functional under extreme conditions. While power asymmetries cannot be resolved within the limitations of professional development in the constraints of a state-funded public school, they can be made visible and partially worked through. **The authors conclude that the ability of the staff to “look reality in the face” without their partnership collapsing demonstrates the possibility of maintaining a vibrant binational educational mission even during times of extreme crisis.**

SFP Partners

Through 2025, individuals and organizations in Palestine/Israel and abroad have supported and cooperated with SFP in promoting justice and equality. Without them, our successes and growing impact would not have been possible. These partners span a wide range of geographic locations and professional fields, amplifying our efforts while bringing new ideas to improve our work.

We would like to highlight our special cooperation with the Rossing Center:

Spotlight

The role of uninational dialogue: Workshop with Rossing Center Facilitators

The Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue is a Jerusalem-based interreligious organization striving to achieve justice and equality for both Israelis and Palestinians and to embrace religious, ethnic, and national diversity as an asset for society. SFP held a one-day workshop for 22 facilitators from the Rossing Center, presenting and discussing our unique approach to group dialogue. **The main focus was the role of uninational dialogue and its significance within the broader process of binational dialogue.** The Rossing Center team found the workshop enriching and expressed a strong interest in integrating the uninational dialogue tool into their dialogue groups.



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We would like to wish a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has enabled our increasingly important work to continue and grow. Your generosity and support is the foundation that strengthens the path to peace.

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