MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program*:* Achvat Amim
Year: 2024 (Year 12)

Name of the Program: Achvat Amim

Year of activity: 12

Name of the report's writer: Yoav Peck

Function of the report's writer: Executive Director

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Number of active participants presently in the program: 9

Estimated number of impacted participants: 180+

The current state of the Achvat Amim program:
Last October, we were forced to cancel our Fall Cohort. Over the following months we supported our partners and communities across Israel-Palestine and the diaspora, delivered dozens of talks, consultations, and co-delivered a Solidarity Speaks series to platform activists to keep people engaged with what's happening on the ground. We hosted 8 participants in the Spring, who joined volunteer placements with 972+, Rabbis for Human Rights, Hand in Hand, the Storytelling Project, and the Sinsila Honey Project in East Jerusalem. **Over the summer,** we were joined by 5 participants with strong backgrounds in both community organizing and participation in Jewish life. Despite the war and instability, **today** we are joined by 9 participants from across the United States, South Africa, Russia, and Israel.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

We want to start by highlighting a testimonial from one of our alumna, Kate Greenberg: “It was a privilege to work with the Storytelling Project, where I came to understand the role and power of language in co-resistance work. As a former English major, it was important to me that I could bring myself and my interests fully into my Achvat placement, and Storytelling facilitated that completely. I taught weekly English classes for women and teenagers in the South Hebron Hills; a highlight being teaching a poetry workshop on the theme of ‘home’. I also helped to draft and edit articles written by prominent Palestinian activists for publications such as +972. Eventually, compelled by the stories I was editing, and by the people to whom they belonged, I moved to the South Hebron Hills for three months, to participate in CJNV’s protective presence project, Hineinu. Never would I have thought

myself the kind of person to do something like that without Storytelling, and the imagination that it inspired in me."

Today, we are proud of both Kate (Summer 2023) and Elya Kaplan (Spring 2024), the new co-organizers of the Storytelling Project. This initiative is just one of the ways Achvat facilitates meaningful solidarity between our program participants and our partners to support leadership, community building, and changemaking in the land.

Each cohort participated in 18 learning days, totaling over 100 hours of learning. Participants each volunteered 8-15 hours a week in projects supporting youth empowerment and community gardens, among other initiatives.

The group covered material through lectures, tours, group study, mixed media, and discussion. The group was clear that Achvat Amim's approach to educational content was refreshing and stimulating- especially for a varied range of learning styles. We have witnessed participants sharing content from the learning days, connecting with speakers after the programming, and taking friends and families on the same tours that we included in the Justice Fellowship.

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future…):

We conduct two feedback sessions with the participants. The first is halfway through to reflect on the program so far and discuss what we can change for the remainder of our time together. The second feedback session, at the very end of the program, focused on structural changes that we can make for the future.

The feedback demonstrated that our participants had deepened their knowledge and understanding of this land and felt equipped to move forward as leaders in their communities. The majority of our participants became increasingly involved with activist organizations, NGO's, and/or had clear language around how justice work figured into their future. In the current context, many felt that Achvat had provided them with connections and community to address the loneliness they experienced on college campuses, isolation from their communities, and up to date language and knowledge to discuss the situation, in a way that respects the people most impacted by the war.

In the past, participants expressed the desire for a longer educational process that would allow them to dive deeper into the historical events that have led to the current situation. Over the years, we have adapted our educational arc, starting with an introduction framing that invites participants to discuss what they're interested in learning and how. We include a Gaza Download, a tour of Lifta which builds a connection between participants to Zochrot, a close reading of the Shoah and the Nakba, and more. We also cut some workshops in order to make space for processing and more relevant programming. We decided to include more creative and artistic programming to support mentorship and storytelling, and build connections to cultural workers and the arts scene in Israel-Palestine. These groups felt that they had the proper amount of time to build real and trusting relationships and as a result felt deeply connected to one another. Finding the balance between content and processing

is something we will continue to strive for and monitor along the way through team building and, when necessary, conflict resolution sessions between participants.

Another mechanism of evaluation we used was regular on-on-ones between participants and staff so that participants could share their thoughts and feelings individually outside of the group setting. From our feedback, we saw that the participants were very appreciative of the availability of the staff and noted that it was helpful for their personal development.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

1. Additional Content: Based on participant feedback, we will provide additional supplementary learning sessions to allow participants to discuss the content from the week, and build personalized narratives and develop projects. These sessions will build programmatic and facilitation skills among the participants, and deepen their understanding and connection to the content they feel passionately about

1. Diversified Learning Methodologies: Building on the success of our experiential educational approach, we will further enrich the learning experience by incorporating additional formats such as workshops, guest lectures, and panel discussions. This will cater to different learning styles and ensure a stimulating and engaging educational environment for all participants. We put an emphasis on alternate forms of storytelling - for example, music archiving and crate digging as a way of conceptualizing Center / Periphery in Israel through music with Yuval Wajima. Another workshop we have planned is DIY instrument making with Eyal Wahab, who through the workshop unpacks identity and fragmentation, Yemeni musical traditions, and complex ideas around art, expression, culture, and politics.

1. Strengthened Processing Sessions: We will continue to prioritize processing sessions, dedicating specific time and space for participants to reflect, discuss, and share their thoughts and emotions. These sessions have proven instrumental in fostering deep connections among participants, and we will further emphasize their importance in the program structure.

1. Enhanced Communication and Support: We will maintain regular one-on-one sessions between participants and staff, providing a safe space for individual discussions and personal development. We will also continue to ensure constant communication via social media, messages, and phone calls to address any concerns or questions promptly.

1. Alumni Engagement: We will establish an alumni network and organize regular activities to facilitate ongoing engagement and support among program graduates. Alumni

will have the opportunity to share their experiences, collaborate on initiatives, and contribute to the growth and development of the program.

1. Evaluation and Feedback: We will continue to prioritize feedback sessions throughout the program to gather insights from participants and make necessary improvements. These sessions will focus not only on program adjustments during the current year but also on shaping future Justice Fellowships, ensuring their continued relevance and effectiveness.

By implementing these provisional guidelines, we aim to further enhance the educational experience, strengthen participant connections, and equip them with the knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to become impactful leaders and activists in their communities.

Attached you will find participant testimonials and photos of recent Achvat program events. In the photos, the Zionism tour in the Old City, three participants with me at a Jerusalem Day event, and two participants working to support partners in the South Hebron Hills.

The 2024 **budget** can be reviewed at this link:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wtZ0BUEnGvG7iQA9khdNhrcsryDxDFSRHa1z-CMJFFU/edit?gid=1604167650#gid=1604167650

If there is further information you require, please let me know.
Thank you very much for your willingness to consider supporting our work this year. Moadim leSimcha!

Yours truly,

Yoav Peck, Executive Director

cc. Meir Gorodskoy, Development Coordinator