

# Newsletter

May 2023

*Towards the formation of a more just society where every individual has the ability to participate effectively.*

**"Our environment is in us just as we are in the environment, which is creating us."**

– By Edgar Morin

Dear Reader,

Thank you for participating in our May issue. Without you, this newsletter would not have been possible. Through this newsletter, we encourage the participation from all of REFORM's units, as well as the General Director, Board of Directors and General Assembly. Their participation is especially shown in the "In the Loop" section.

The "monthly highlights" do not include an extensive list of all REFORM's monthly engagements. Rather, the newsletter is used to highlight some of the monthly activities to enhance transparency and internal and external communication, which will bring us closer together.

Kindly note that for this edition, we included some of April activities to create an understanding of the upcoming initiatives happening this year.

# In the Loop

REFORM | 2023/05/18  
15:22:07 | SOCIETAL  
TRANSFORMATION

## Post-Refugee Crises... Refugee Camps without Education and Healthcare

---



The suffering of refugees in the West Bank camps is increasing without paying attention to the deteriorating health conditions and the lack or absence of services. This is alongside the forced absence of students from schools due to the three-month strike of the Arab Workers Union in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). The situation is a result of the bitter dispute in Jerusalem with the UNRWA management in order to achieve their demands.

[Read More](#) 

# Operations Unit



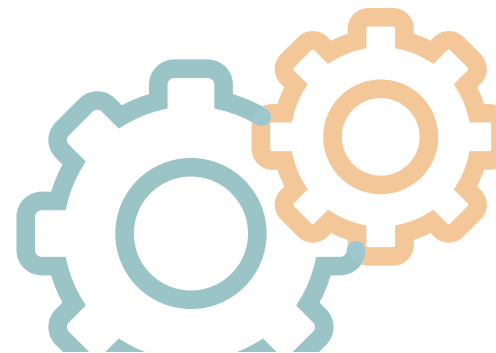
All shared activities are implemented by REFORM and linked to REFORM's programmes and strategic directions for 2022-2025.

## Programmes:

**Diversity and Cohesion Programme**  
**Governance and Public Policy Programme**

## Strategic Directions:

1. Combat polarisation and fragmentation
2. Enhance the access of local and marginalised communities to justice and security
3. Promote active citizenship practices and foster youth and women engagement
4. Advance outreach and targeting capabilities of REFORM
5. Develop REFORM's organisational, administrative and financial structure



## "United in Diversity III"

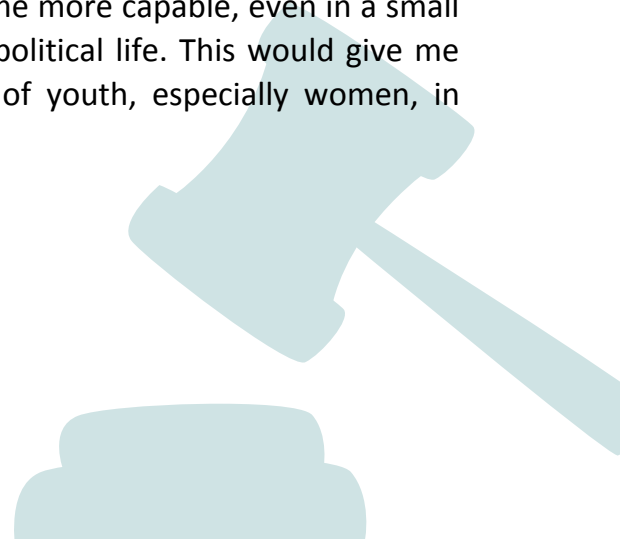
*In partnership with NPA, This project aims to promote young men and women's participation in decision-making processes through monitoring plans and policies of organisations and holding local organisations accountable at the level of public policies that increase youth's participation in public life. The project aims to enhance the values of good governance and transparency in the work of local organisations and to inform policy makers of citizens' rights and needs.*



REFORM conducted a learning journey workshop that focused on the topic of "Youth Political Participation in Palestine and its Legal Framework" in the Gaza Strip. The primary aim of this activity was to enhance understanding and promote best practices concerning youth engagement in the political sphere in Palestine. The training provided a comprehensive overview of the fundamental concepts and practical aspects of political participation, alongside an introduction to the relevant legal framework.

One of the participants Warda Al-Derimli, says the following about the learning journey: "It provided me with new information and knowledge about the legal frameworks for political participation and their mechanisms. This made me more capable, even in a small manner, to understand the Palestinian public affairs in political life. This would give me and others greater opportunities to enhance the role of youth, especially women, in political life and have an impact."

[Read More](#) 





In May, REFORM's team in Gaza successfully conducted two out of five days of training on social transformation, with the participation of 17 individuals. The final three days will take place in June.

The training programme was designed to tackle the issue of alienation among young activists within the Palestinian political system. A key focus of the training will explore the relationship between identity and citizenship, with a specific emphasis on the significance of youth involvement in student council elections in Palestinian universities located in the Gaza Strip.

The training will utilise interactive activities to foster a conducive environment where all participants can freely express their experiences, ideas and opinions. This approach aimed to create a comfortable space that encouraged active engagement and open dialogue. Additionally, the training will focus on enhancing participants' understanding and awareness of the historical, legal, political and social context of universities. By providing this contextual knowledge, the training aims to equip participants with the necessary tools to effectively survey and identify community issues. The training will further emphasise the importance of addressing these issues within the framework of human rights and the fulfilment of basic human needs.



## “Youth Led Action”

*“Youth Led Action” project, strengthening the Influence of Palestinian Refugees on their living Conditions (PART II), implemented by the GIZ on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). This project aims to empower marginalised young men and women to become transformative leaders within their societies and to combat the shrinkage of civic spaces in Palestine by creating a set of platforms for social mobilisation.*



REFORM Cultural Café - Ramallah, or what the participants of the Café chose to call Malath Cultural Café (Malath in Arabic means haven), discussed democratic practices in Palestine. They spoke on how to build campaigns and mechanisms to enhance the role of women in the elections and facilitate community members' unimpeded access to the democratic process.

In an interview with Ayad Dawood, a participant of the REFORM cultural café in Qalqilya, sheds light on the cultural cafes and their role in community engagement. These cultural cafes serve as platforms for various activities aimed to promote cultural awareness and fostering dialogue. Ayad discusses the significance of these cafes and highlights their ability to create spaces where individuals can express themselves, share ideas and actively contribute to societal development.



[Full Interview](#) →



The inaugural meeting of the Youth Shadow Council of the Executive Office for Refugees was convened, marking the launch of the project's first phase by REFORM as part of the YLA project. The meeting was held at the Executive Office for Palestinian Refugees in Ramallah and was attended by Mr. Mahmoud Mubarak, the Executive Office's Head, Mr. Ahmed Zouqan, a member of the Executive Office and the Oopular Committee for the Balata camp, Mr. Nasser Sharayha, the Director of the Executive Office, Mr. Nadim Qandil and Ms. Ola Al-Barghouti from REFORM. The 19-member Youth Shadow Council also attended to represent various refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza.

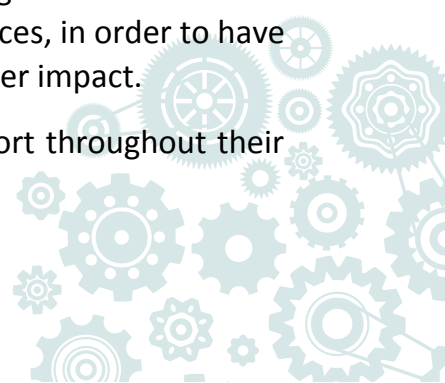
**In turn, Mrs. Al-Barghouti spoke about the purpose of establishing the council, which aims to enhance the presence of youth in public affairs by exercising their leadership roles through meeting with members of popular committees to express their needs and interests. This is preceded by an empowering process aimed at developing their leadership abilities, as well as their skills in influencing, communicating, public speaking and addressing needs.**

[More Details](#) 



In May, the members of the Youth Shadow Council participated in a three-day leadership training programme. The training focused on key aspects of effective communication, including body language, tone of voice and adapting language to suit different audiences, in order to have a greater impact.

The members of the council will receive ongoing coaching and support throughout their engagement process.



## "Unveil"

*In partnership with the Assembly of Cooperation for Peace (ACPP) and the Psycho-Social Counselling Centre for Women (PSCCW), supported by the Extremadura Agency for International Development Cooperation (AEXCID). Unveil aims to build a network of Agents of Change to enhance the protection of the rights of women and youth and to combat exclusionary values. This will be done by building the capacities of the participants and enhancing their presence and partnership in public spaces through Social Transformation trainings. In addition, the project studies the social values that enhance gender-based exclusionary behaviours.*



REFORM, conducted 12 days of trainings on social transformation in the governorates of Qalqilya, Tulkarem, Salfit and Tubas, with the attendance of 25 participants from each governorate. The trainings followed the methodology designed by REFORM "Facilitating Reform" with a focus on transforming masculinity and gender stereotypes. The trainings provided participants with analytical tools to understand the drivers of different gender behaviours and attitudes in their society. In addition to the different conflict management styles and methodologies, which they used to design their future social transformation initiatives and interventions.

During the process, the participants designed four initiatives, each tailored to address the specific needs of their respective governorates:

### **Qalqilya:**

The initiative focuses on women's education to recognise the importance of empowering women through education. This initiative aims to enhance access to educational opportunities and promote women's learning.

### **Tubas:**

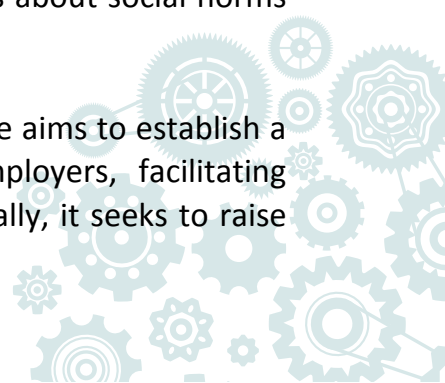
Primarily an agricultural governorate with women lacking the necessary skills to develop their work, the initiative revolves around entrepreneurship for women. The participants plan to create six videos called "Tubas models" that showcase successful women entrepreneurs and provide guidance and inspiration for others.

### **Salfit:**

This initiative aims to address social norms and their impact on gender-based violence. In an urban area where men often work in settlements and women primarily stay at home, the participants plan to produce radio episodes that raise awareness about social norms and their connection to gender-based violence.

### **Tulkarem:**

The focus; is on creating a platform for working women. The initiative aims to establish a hiring platform that serves as a link between women and employers, facilitating employment opportunities and promoting women's rights. Additionally, it seeks to raise awareness about women's rights in the workplace.





## Symposia

*Funded by DIAKONIA in partnership with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) This project aims to enable young activists to lead an interactive dialogue with members of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the National and Central Councils, through a dialogue platform in which the perceptions and aspirations of young people are being represented, leading to social and political change within the PLO. This will be done through the formulation of draft policies and discussions with policymakers to discuss social and political life.*



As part of improving their participation in decision-making levels, a number of Palestinian youth and REFORM met with Mr. Ramzi Rabah, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. During the meeting, the young activists discussed the obstacles they face in participating in the decision-making process and public institutions of the state and parties. They spoke about the decline of the centrality of the Palestinian cause at the international and national levels, the deep gap between various societal components and the stagnation of various representative institutions as a result of the democratic process. The meeting also discussed the Palestinian division and the decline of the Palestinian cause at the international level. The young participants stressed on their entitlement to participate in all official and party-representative frameworks.

Mr. Rabah said that “Palestinian youth have the skills that enable them to be active partners in policy-making and decision-making. They have the full right to be empowered in this role that meets their aspirations, hopes and dreams”. At the end of the meeting, Mr. Rezeq Atawneh, the Project Coordinator at REFORM, called for the necessity of empowering Palestinian youth to participate and to implement their demands at various levels.

[Read More](#) 

## "Alternative Dispute Resolution: Enhancing Access to Justice and Security" Conference

*The conference is in partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Justice/General Administration for Professional Affairs and Alternative Tools to Conflict Resolution, supported by Sawasya Programme: the Joint Programme of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Commission for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and the United Nations Children's Fund.*



The conference brought together numerous local partners, practitioners and experts in alternative dispute resolution methods, as well as representatives from local authorities and women's organisations. Dignitaries in attendance included His Excellency Dr. Mohammad Al-Shalalkeh, the Minister of Justice; Her Excellency Dr. Amal Hamad, the Minister of Women's Affairs in Palestine; Dr. Khaled Ishtayeh, the Assistant Undersecretary for the Local Bodies Affairs at the Ministry of Local Government; and Dr. Christopher Decker, the Director of the Sawasya Joint Programme. Legal experts specialising in conflict management and resolution, arbitrators and practitioners of ADR methods also participated.

During its sessions, the conference deliberated on the significance of ADR methods in areas beyond the legal jurisdiction of Palestine. It underscored the importance of employing alternative methods such as arbitration and mediation as supportive frameworks for the formal judiciary, emphasising their role in upholding human dignity, promoting civil harmony, the rule of law and safeguarding human rights, while considering gender equality.

In the second session, the participants explored the role of women in arbitration and discussed alternative dispute resolution methods. They also examined the challenges that prevent women from participating in conflict resolution, including cultural, societal and structural factors that limit their ability to manage and resolve disputes.





In the third and final session, the participants focused on the effectiveness of establishing arbitration and mediation units in local authorities, drawing on the experience of chambers of commerce.

**During the conference, the Minister of Justice highlighted President Mahmoud Abbas's decision to establish the "National Committee for the Development of the Justice Sector." The committee's discussions will focus on promoting alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, including the implementation of the judicial mediation law, the adoption of conventional mediation law and enhancing coordination among all justice sectors to further advance ADR methods.**

The conference ended with a statement including recommendations from the participants to facilitate the implementation of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods across Palestine, including Area "C" and advocated for the establishment of arbitration units within local authorities.

Participants also stressed the significance of raising awareness on using ADR mechanisms and empowering women to engage in these approaches.

[Full Statement](#) →



# General Updates

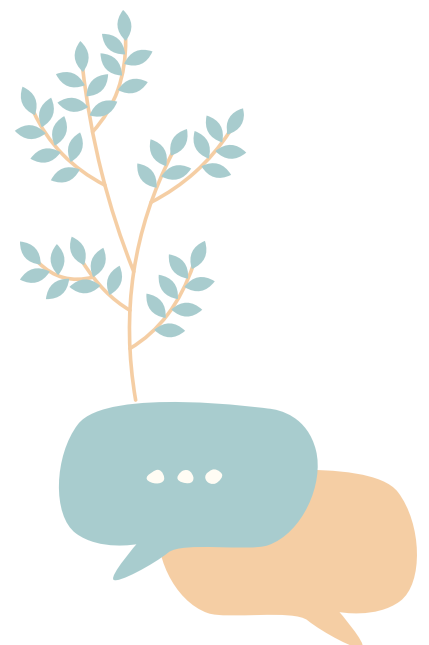


## REFORM holds a Meeting for its General Assembly and Elects its new Board of Directors

The meeting discussed the annual financial and administrative reports, the annual budget for the year 2023, as well as accepting a number of requests to join the General Assembly. The meeting concluded by holding elections for the Association's Board of Directors for the years 2023-2025. Nine members were elected to the Board of Directors for the next two years.

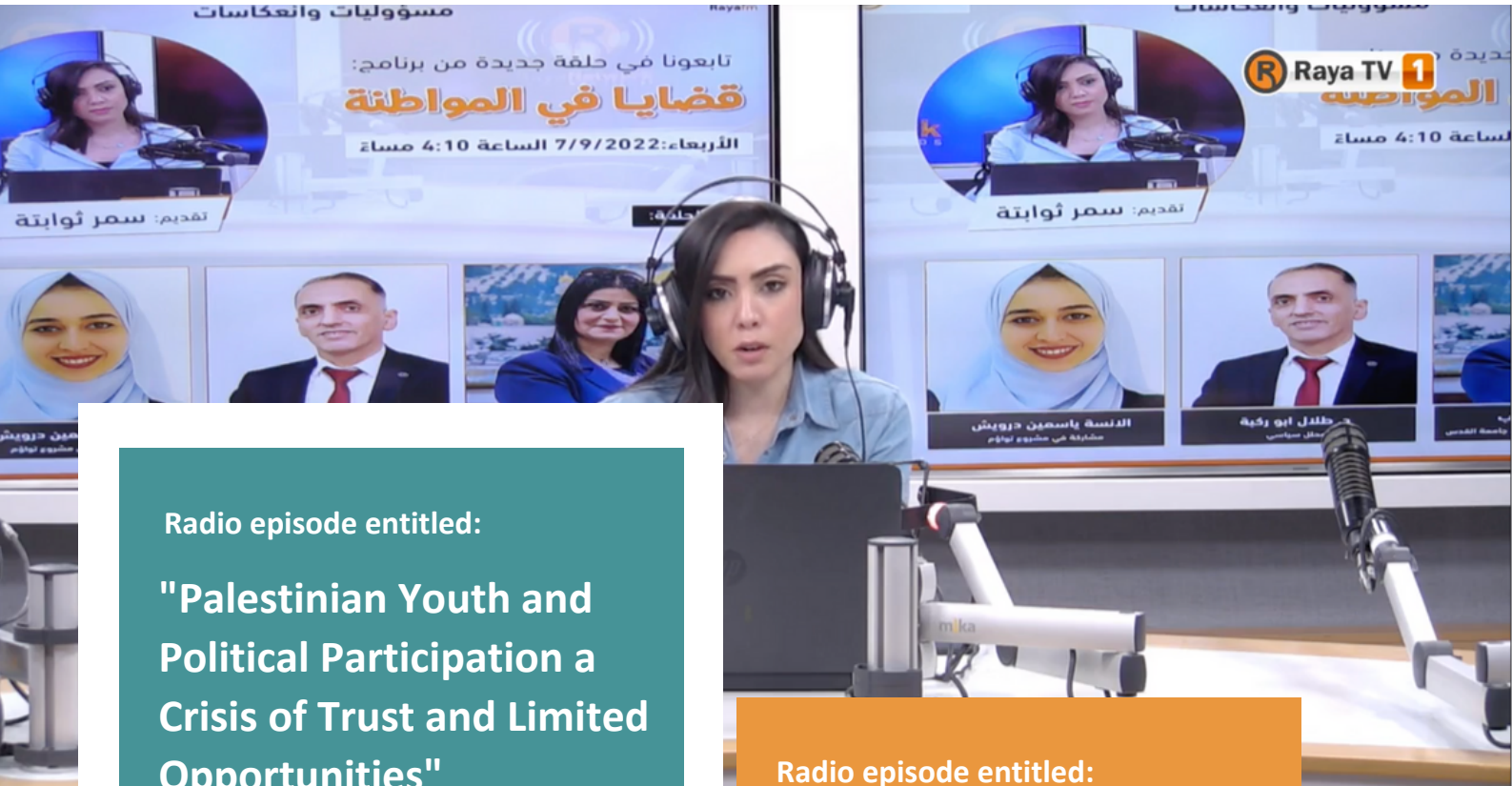
Ms. Ayat Kanaan, the Fundraising and Communications Advisor, and Ms. Rana Barqan, the Development and Communications Officer, also reviewed the Association's relationships and partnerships at the local and international levels, as well as presenting its most important achievements in fundraising, communication and influence in 2022.

[Read More](#)



# "Citizenship Issues Under a Microscope"

Broadcasted every Wednesday on Raya FM and shared live on our Facebook page. All episodes are produced by REFORM and presented by Ms. Samar Thawbteh.



Radio episode entitled:

"Palestinian Youth and Political Participation a Crisis of Trust and Limited Opportunities"

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode of the programme entitled:

"Opportunities to Develop Civil and Democratic Participation Mechanisms for Palestinian youth"

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode entitled:

"University Education for Young Women... Realising Opportunities and Overcoming Challenges"

[Listen to this episode here](#) →



# Communications & Development Unit

## Our current donors and projects:

Norwegian People's Aid  
"United in Diversity III" project

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung  
"Ambassadors" project

GIZ-PART  
"Youth Led Action" project

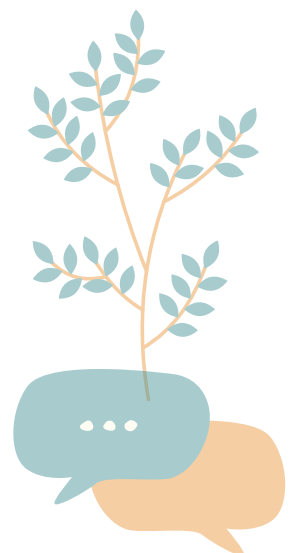
Creative Force through the Swedish Institute and in partnership with IM Swedish Development Partner  
"Women altering gender roles, controlling rigid masculine attitudes and deleting GBV" Project

DIAKONIA  
"Symposia" project

AEXCID in partnership with ACPP  
"Unveil" Project

AGIAMONDO/Civil Peace Service  
"Cohesion and Diversity in the Palestinian Society" Project

United Nations Development Programme  
"Enhancing access to justice in Hebron, Bethlehem, Salfit, Nablus and Qalqilyah through promoting ADR and early response mechanisms" – Phase II project



# Communications & Development Unit

- Began a proposal for The Fund for Local Cooperation (FLC) at the Representative Office of Finland.
- Finalised a proposal submitted with ACPD called Gender Accountability Promotion (GAP)
- Finalised a concept note partnered and submitted with ACPD and PSCCW for Enabel called Improving the Availability and Accessibility of Youth and their Caregivers to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services in West Bank.
- Began a proposal for a consultancy with MDLF on civic engagement and social accountability.
- Held several meetings with current partners for general updates and discussions on current projects.
- Supported the Operations team in producing and finalising two publications including the Civil Peace in Palestine - Factors and Context and the Eighteenth Government Performance Monitoring Report
- Managed logistics and promotion for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Conference including videos, agenda, visibility material and social media posts.
- REFORM's General Director facilitated a "social transformation training" for the IM Swedish Partner team.
- Translated and published 3 analyses and 3 press releases.

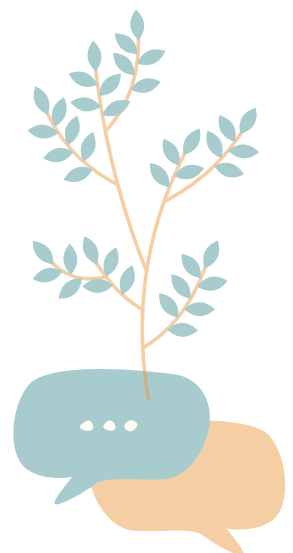
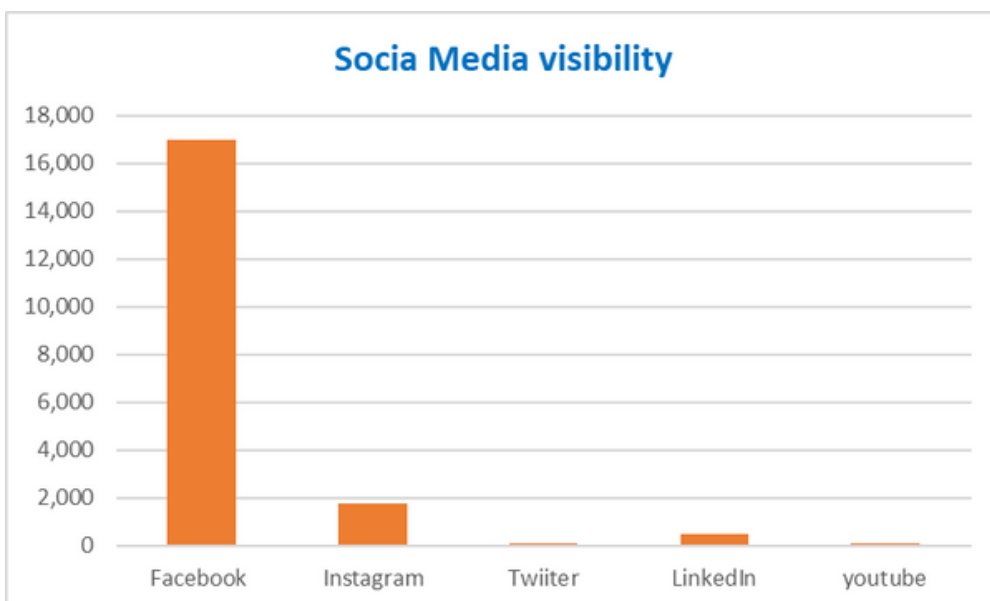




The REFORM team met with Mr. Orhan Aydin, Coordinator of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) in Palestine. The meeting explored potential areas of collaboration between the two parties. We look forward to building a strong partnership to empower marginalised groups and enhance their effective role in public life.

## Social Media

REFORM gained 1,000 more followers on Facebook in the last two months.  
REFORM gained 64 more followers on Instagram in May.

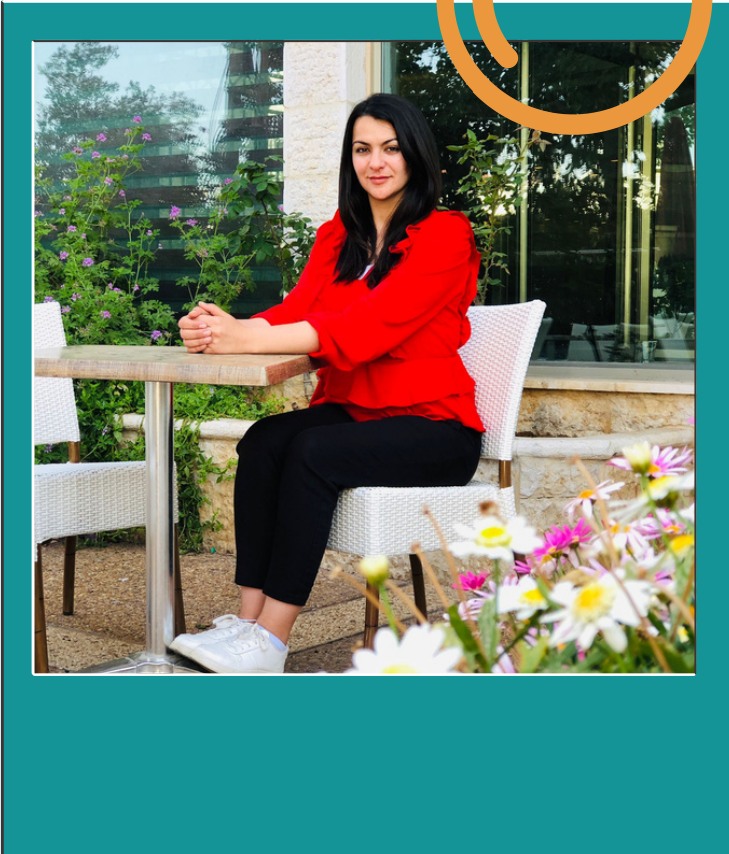




# Get to Know Our Colleague



## Ola Barghuothi Project Coordinator



### **What inspires you the most?**

The idea of discovering my full potential and what I am capable of achieving. I find inspiration in everyone around me because I believe there is always something to learn from each person's experience and perspective.

### **What is the best thing about your job?**

The opportunity to constantly learn new things and interact with a diverse range of people. I enjoy expanding my knowledge and gaining insights from various perspectives, which ultimately helps me in providing better assistance and understanding to individuals like you.

### **Tell us what you like the most about yourself?**

One of the things I appreciate the most about myself is my positive outlook on life. I strive to maintain an open mindset and avoid passing judgment. I instead focus on understanding and appreciating the diverse ways in which people live their lives. Additionally, I consider myself to be adventurous, always seeking new experiences and embracing the excitement that comes with exploring the unknown.

### **Favourite quote?**

"Be the change that you want to see in the world." Mahatma Gandhi

### **Who is your role model?**

I do not have a specific individual as my role model. Instead, I find inspiration in the qualities and strengths exhibited by different individuals. Each person possesses unique attributes and abilities that can serve as sources of inspiration and learning.

# Links to Journals & Articles

## "Discrimination Against Palestinian Women: Custody as an Example"

By: Rawan Abu Gaza

[Read more](#) →

## "United Nations on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People"

NGO Action News, 25. May.2023

[Read more](#) →

## "Young Palestinians' Aspirations for the Future"

By: Yara M. Asi

[Read more](#) →

## "Day of mourning': 200,000 Palestinian families lose UN food aid"

By: Maram Humaid, 28. May. 2023

[Read more](#) →



# Know More About REFORM



- [What does our logo symbolize?](#)
- [REFORM's Characteristics](#)
- [REFORM's Personality](#)
- [REFORM's Tone of Voice](#)
- [Who we are](#)
- [REFORM's Strategy](#)
- [REFORM's Theory of Change](#)

# Thank you for your participation!

We hope you enjoyed this month's brief.

Please let us know if you have colleagues who would be interested in receiving REFORM's monthly newsletter.

Thanks for reading!