


# Newsletter

June 2023

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



**“Social healing is made up of space moments of resonance, voices touching voices in a common space.”**

– John Paul Lederach

Dear Reader,

Thank you for participating in our June 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, and Board of Directors. Your participation is extremely valuable, especially “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.

# "In the Loop"



REFORM | 2023/06/01  
15:12:43 | GOVERNANCE  
AND PUBLIC POLICY  
PROGRAM

## Discrimination Against Palestinian Women: Custody as an Example

Written by: Rawan Abu Gaza, Lawyer and Legal Researcher

The patriarchal system, or what sociologists refer to as the concept of "the patriarchal family,"[1] has resulted in gender discrimination, the monopolisation of power,[...]



It seems that the patriarchal system is the optimal system that maintains family cohesion in which males are considered more suitable for decision-making privileges. However, internally, it erases the public persona of females, limiting their authority to only feminine characteristics. This imbalance within families is the result of several factors which include social inheritance to be based on customs and societal traditions, as well as certain interpretations of jurisprudence that align with personal interests.

Depriving or restricting women's right to child custody in legislative and practical reality is the narrow meaning of the discrimination faced by women in Shari'a courts. Legislators have imposed extremely specific conditions on the custodial mother to be eligible for child custody.

[Read More](#)



# Operations Unit

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

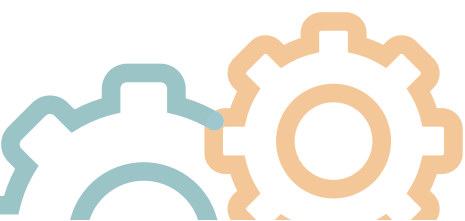


## Programmes:

**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 an educational trip on the topic of active citizenship entitled "Political Participation and Citizenship" with the attendance of 18 participants and a learning journey workshop in the Gaza Strip entitled "Party Democracy, the form of youth participation and the extent of involvement of political parties in social life."

The aim is to increase general knowledge and practices about political participation of youth in Palestine, with focus on explaining general concepts and basic practices about the democratization of parties, the ways of youth participation within political parties, the involvement of political parties' in social life, and the role of the political parties' in the elaboration and on the sharing of political information for the participants in the project.



## Training on highlighting the importance on "Student Council Elections in Palestinian Universities in the Gaza Strip and their Importance to Youth" Gaza Strip and their Importance to Youth



Nisreen Abu Halib, one of the participants mentioned that "student council elections are a way to represent the voice and interests of the students in the university." So choice of councillors among students is our right to choose and it will also helps us to improve the student experience of university by voicing our opinions and challenges. This reflects on our citizens and on practicing participation. As we have had disrupted democratic experience for many years, and my hope is it becomes a democratic process at the legislative and presidential levels. "



This training was done using Social transformation methodology, highlighting university elections in the Gaza Strip. During the session participants explored and discussed the reasons on the disruption of the elections.

Aims to improve the reality of youth participation in decision-making processes, through monitoring the plans and policies of official institutions, and the accountability of local institutions at the level of public policies that enhance youth participation in public life.



## “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.*

**Facilitated two Strategic Planning Workshops within 6 days designed to facilitate the development and implementation of strategies.**



The training sessions were divided into two segments, each referring to specific organisations and held on separate dates. The initial workshop, was tailored for Ayda Youth Centre. This intensive training aimed to equip 10 participants with the essential knowledge and skills required for strategic planning. The interactive nature of the workshop provided a conducive environment for active engagement, enabling participants to explore, exchange valuable insights and foster jointly and collaborative efforts.

The second training session focused on strategic planning for Balata Media Centre. This workshop, was attended by 9 participants with the aim to empower them with the necessary expertise to co-create and implement strategic plans that align with their organisational needs. Through interactive sessions, participants were encouraged to exchange their experiences and journeys engaging in meaningful discussions and using their collective knowledge for inclusive outcomes.

Strategic Planning Workshops proved to be successful, equipping participants with the tools and techniques to develop strategic plans tailored to their needs according to their organisations. By empowering participants with strategic thinking and planning capabilities, these workshops have supported the organisations for enhanced effectiveness and success in the pursuit of their long term objectives.

## Design Thinking Training

*The Design Thinking Training unfolded as a comprehensive and dynamic programme spanning four enlightening days. The programme started with an engaging Identity Initiative interview, attended by 19 participants.*

This training session provided participants with an opportunity to introduce themselves while also offering a platform for sharing their perspectives and experiences. Over the course of three days, the training sessions were designed to equip participants with the knowledge and necessary skills for approaching complex problems with creativity and innovation. Finally, the programme concluded, with participants showcasing their learnings by presenting their ideas and solutions before a panel of experts.



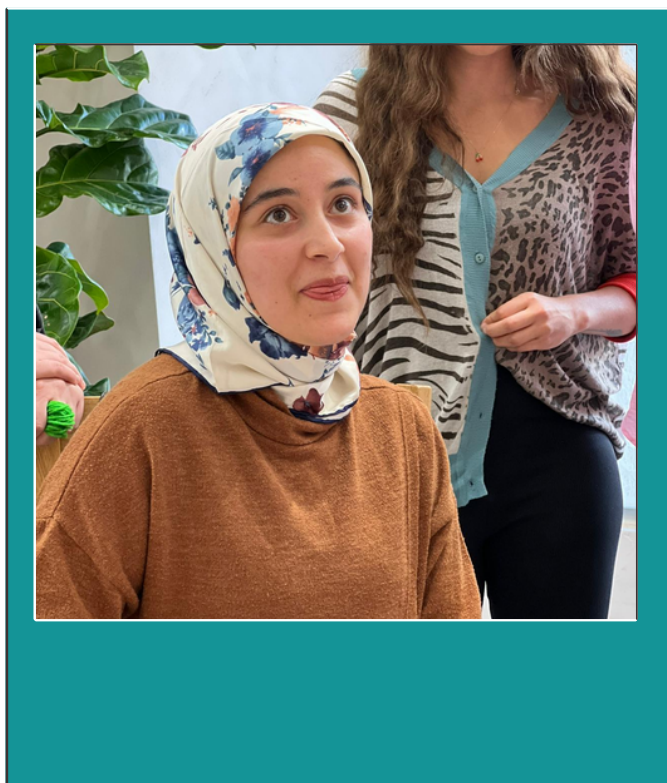
Overall, the Design Thinking Training emerged as a resounding success, with participants expressing their satisfaction with the programme's high-quality content and its profound impact on their problem-solving capabilities. This training serves as a remarkable testament to the potential of effective training in enabling individuals and organisations to achieve their goals and objectives in creative ways.

## REFORM's Cultural Cafés

*Is an invaluable platform for individuals to come together, exchange ideas and learn from one another. The series of discussions held on diverse topics were not only informative and engaging but also fostered a sense of community and solidarity among the participants.*

Tulkarem Cultural Café: session entitled "Path and Panel Discussion on Sun Roots Youth Cooperative Experience." A panel discussion format was adopted, engaging 15 participants. The session primarily focused on exploring the empowering experiences of the Sun Roots Youth Cooperative, shedding light on the collective efforts of young individuals in effecting positive change within their communities

Ramallah Cultural Café: several sessions were held on of them discussed the book "Country's Days." Nineteen participants came together to share their thoughts on the book's themes and characters. The session provided an opportunity for participants to engage in meaningful conversations and exchange diverse perspectives.



## "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.*



"We, the youth, must have a presence and representation in the political system and in making political decisions that affect our future. This also benefits the political system as we have passion and innovative solutions to the challenges facing our national cause."  
Mahmoud Tamizi

"Our presence as youth undoubtedly contributes to achieving comprehensive and balanced representation in the Palestinian political system. Therefore, we should have the opportunity to participate and influence at all levels and political decisions while preserving our spirit of citizenship." Saja Afana

This came as part of a learning journey with the attendance of 25 participants including activists with a dialogue session entitled "The Land of Sunflowers."  
With the aim of discussing the importance of acknowledging diversity within the Palestinian society recognizing the need of respecting existing differences in beliefs, interests and visions.

Through this dialogue platform, young people's perceptions and aspirations will be represented, which enhances their participation in the decision-making bodies within the Palestinian political system.



## "Ambassadors"

***In partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). This project seeks to establish a network of young activists who will act as ambassadors to lead democratic social and political change in Palestinian society. The project will enhance the individual and collective capacities of these ambassadors through communication, public diplomacy and social transformation training. Specifically, the project aims to rethink the Palestinian discourse and transcend the needs of the Palestinian community, presenting this in a manner that resonates with non-local audiences.***

An educational journey was carried out in the field of social transformation "the concept of needs and beyond goals", using the Facilitating Reform methodology with the aim of enhancing the ability of its participants to learn how to apply scientific methodologies in social development, tools of social transformation, polarization, dealing with differences between individuals and groups as an additional value in cultural diversity in society, and developing incubators capable of dealing positively with differences, pluralism, with the participation of 16 participants.



A dialogue session entitled "The Limited Participation of Youth in Political Parties and its Impact on the Values of Citizenship and Pluralism" was held with the aim of discussing the reflection of youth representation with the active political parties within the framework of the PLO on the role of Palestinian youth in leading an interactive dialogue between the various social components and its impact on the values of citizenship and pluralism in Palestinian society, with the participation of 42 participants.

# General Updates

## Reform 4 days team retreat



During the engaging sessions, REFORM team had the opportunity to express their individual dreams and visions for REFORM. These visions were categorised into distinct areas, representing the diverse perspectives and aspirations within the team.

The retreat brought together a total of 19 team members including board of directors. The main objective of the retreat was to foster a deeper understanding of REFORM's core values, vision and strategies among the staff. This with the aim of facilitating better communication and cohesion between the the Board of Directors and the rest of the team.

### **This were some of the guidelines:**

- REFORM, a 'Catalyst for Change': REFORM strives to be a true agent of change closely connected to youth and society.
- Updating the Social Transformation methodology: REFORM aims to obtain academic certification of the methodology and at the same time capacitate more facilitators on the methodology.
- Establishing an International Network for REFORM: Surrounding REFORM with a network of international friends to enhance our representation to a wider audience. Seeking recognition of REFORM's projects beyond their immediate beneficiaries, expanding our social media presence for greater impact. Additionally, we aspire to affiliate with reputable international organisations and actively engage in international relations.
- Monitoring and Evaluation through Beneficiary Engagement: Conducting meetings between the Board of Directors and beneficiaries to assess the effectiveness of our training programmes.





- Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Work Environment: To equip REFORM with a well-structured and dedicated team. Promoting self-financing and ensuring staff stability are key objectives. REFORM aims to enhance internal communication and effective utilisation of electronic programmes and applications.

-Expanding Reach and Establishing Regional Presence: We aim to further expand REFORM's presence to Gaza and Hebron and spread our visibility globally through additional offices and branches.

-Focusing on Social Dynamics and Governance: Our efforts will concentrate on understanding social dynamics and effective governance.

-Shaping Public Opinion and Legislation: REFORM seeks to influence public opinion and legislative processes to drive positive change. Establishing REFORM as a reference and role model for community institutions. Additionally, we will invest in the establishment and development of the REFORM Policy Observatory to monitor and analyse policies and their impact on local development.

-Cultivating an Identity that Reflects REFORM's Essence.

-Mobilising Old Groups and Empowering agents of change: Enhancing self-awareness to foster collective consciousness and enable young influencers to collectively lead societal transformation processes.

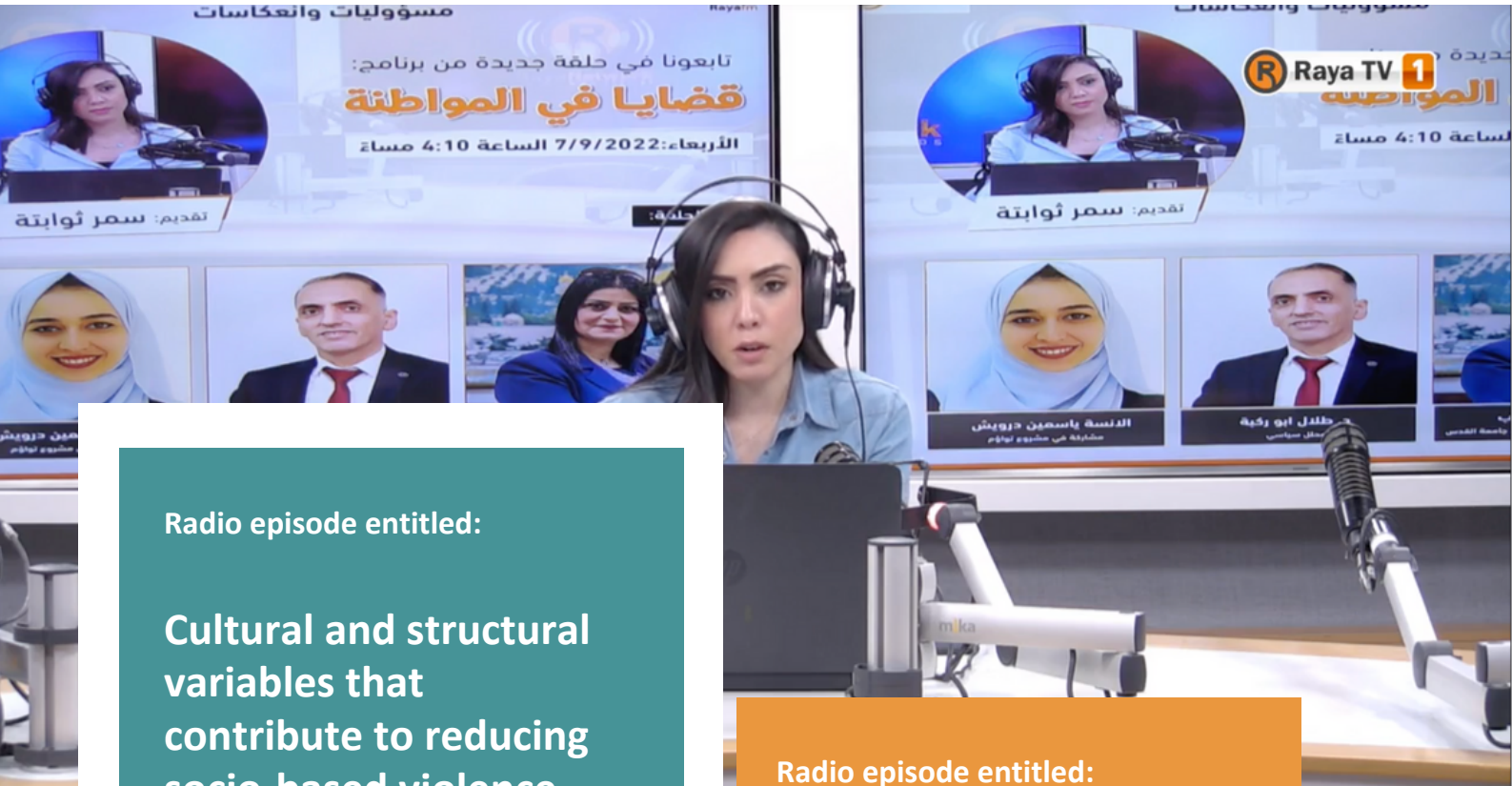


-Fostering an integrated and respectful work environment, incorporating more team building activities. Establishing an independent fund to sustain operation and procedures focusing on efficient processes, providing comprehensive trainings for employees, according to their needs while implementing a customised social transformation onboarding programme, investing in social change. Building a dedicated Social Transformation team is also on the agenda to drive impactful change.



# “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:

Cultural and structural variables that contribute to reducing socio-based violence

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode entitled:

Legal protection of civilian population and civilian eyes in the light of human law

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode entitled:

Elections in universities in the Gaza Strip

[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

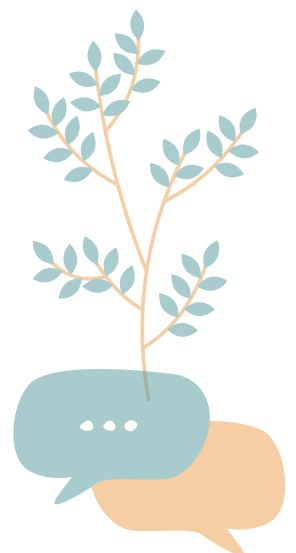
Creative Force through the Swedish Institute and in partnership with IM Swedish Development Partner  
"Women altering gender roles, controlling rigid masculine attitudes and deleting GBV" Project

DIAKONIA  
"Symposia" project

AEXCID in partnership with ACP  
"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

Finalised documents for the new UN Women project called Women Lead change through Conflict Prevention - WLCCP.

Attended a webinar with GIZ for Youth and Inclusion Workstream.

Collaborated with PSCCW and ACPP on a new proposal with Enabel entitled Improving the Availability and Accessibility of Youth and their Caregivers to MHand Psychosocial Support Services in West Bank.

Finished editing the 2022 annual report.

Attended REFORM team retreat virtually.

Constant management of partners and donor relations.

Submitted documents for collaborative proposal with ACPP for a project that aims to strengthen the voice of civil society by capacitating student councils and college clubs in Palestine universities to respond to women's needs.

Submitted a proposal for the Representative Office of Finland to the Palestinian Authority to enhance the rights and status of women with the focus on women, peace and security in support of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325).

Edited several documents including narrative reports and all project narrative reports.

Finalised relations and travel details with REFORM volunteers with new partner Go Romania.



# Get to Know Our Colleague

## Paulina Viladomat Civil Peace Project Advisor



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

Kindness in people and diversity in this world. The opportunity to have a profession that is my vocation. People that understands that all we do has a positive or negative impact in the people around us and in the world we live in.

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

My colleagues, the trust and space REFORM provides. The constant learning and the resilience I have built through time while working within this context.

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

Many writers, singers, leaders and people I have met and that I meet in my daily life. Some of them are: My sisters, my husband, my grandmother, my mentors; Gudrun Kramer and Wilfried Graf, my parents and friends.

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

The ability to adapt to change and to constantly try to find joy and laughter in life.

### **Favourite quote?**

I have many but one of them is "We shall understand those who does not understand us"

# Links to Journals & Articles

## "Educational Deficit: Causes, Manifestations, and Solutions"

Explores the educational deficit prevailing in refugee communities.

By: Tharwat Zaid Al-Kilani

Read more 

## "Social Crisis and the Future of a Political Solution"

By: Rezeq Attawneh

Read more 

## "Right of return of Palestinian refugees must be prioritized over political considerations:" UN experts

Read more 

## "An Official Statement issued by REFORM on the Israeli Occupation's Crimes in Jenin Refugee Camp"

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!