

# Monthly Highlights

September 2023

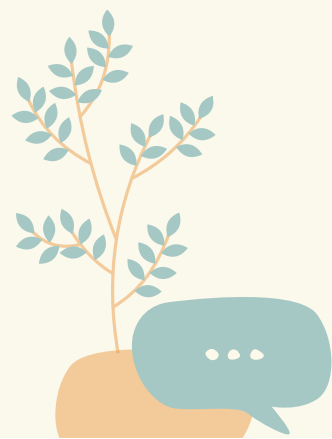
*Towards the formation of a more just society where every individual has the ability to participate effectively.*

Dear friends and partners,

Due to the current situation, we at REFORM are deeply concerned for all the people who are suffering from the high escalation of violence. The forthcoming consequences will pose difficult challenges that will not be easy to overcome.

This newsletter serves as an update of REFORM's work, which is now more crucial than ever during these times. It highlights our commitment to working together to create a more inclusive society, address social divisions to combat increasing violence and emphasise the significance of civil peace to improve the daily lives of all Palestinians.

Please note the delay in the September "Monthly Highlights" is a result of the recent developments we are facing in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Nonetheless, even in times of crisis, REFORM believes it is important to share positive developments and stories that go beyond this immediate crisis. We remain committed to staying connected with our friends and partners.



**REFORM is delighted and proud to share with you that it has been selected as one of the 10 finalists for the 2023 Global Pluralism Award by the Centre for Global Pluralism!**

*Ottawa, Canada, 13 Sept. 2023 – Responding to the urgent need to support positive responses to diversity.*



Selected from amongst 200 submissions from 60 countries, REFORM was shortlisted for bridging the gaps between different social groups, including refugees, those living in area C and other hard-to-reach areas to build more inclusive societies where diversity is valued and protected.

This achievement is a testament to the essential role each and every one of you has played. The success we've attained would have remained a distant dream without the dedication, hard work and commitment of the entire REFORM team.

It is not just about the individuals within the organisation; it is also about our cherished REFORM participants who have actively contributed their time, energy and expertise to our collective mission.

But it does not stop there. Your partnerships and support have been the bedrock upon which our progress has been built. Together, we have formed a network of individuals and organisations that have come together to drive positive change.



**GLOBAL PLURALISM AWARD**

**2023 FINALISTS / FINALISTES DE 2023**

**PRIX MONDIAL DU PLURALISME**



Your belief in REFORM and your trust in its vision and values has been the driving force behind our accomplishments.

In essence, we are a community, united by a shared vision and a common purpose. Together, we have proven that our collective strength is greater than the sum of our individual efforts.

# "In the Loop"



REFORM | 2023/09/14  
14:37:22 | GOVERNANCE  
AND PUBLIC POLICY  
PROGRAM

## Transforming Events into Opportunities: A Journey Toward Cultural Enrichment

Written by: Malik Al-Rimawi While walking on Rukab Street one evening, I suddenly came across a statue. At first, I thought it might be a performance art piece, but upon closer inspection, I realised it was a genuine statue. I stood there,[...]

**Written by: Malik Al-Rimawi**

While walking on Rukab Street one evening, I suddenly came across a statue. At first, I thought it might be a performance art piece, but upon closer inspection, I realised it was a genuine statue. I stood there, convinced it was a permanent fixture I would see again in the days to come. The following day, I witnessed the aftermath – someone had damaged the statue's head and hand, and I later saw the incident discussed on social media. Two things caught my attention. First, I noticed that people tend to pay more attention to and get more interested in an event when it is being destroyed rather than when it is being built. It is like we are naturally more intrigued by destruction, which leads to a "strong tendency to destroy" being visually evident. The second thing I noticed is that I learned about the various stages of creating the statue by looking at pictures and news that were published. There was no real evidence of the construction process happening on the street itself. This highlights how we often rely on virtual images more than the actual presence of reality.

As I followed the events surrounding the statue's construction and the subsequent attack on it, I could not help but notice the inherent contradictions and conflicts that arose. These contradictions raised questions about the complex web of relationships and actions in our social sphere, which is always rife with conflicts and the need to find rational solutions within the context of concepts like community, destiny and citizenship.

Continue Reading 

# Operations Unit

All shared activities are implemented by REFORM and linked to REFORM's programmes and 2022-2025 Strategic Directions.

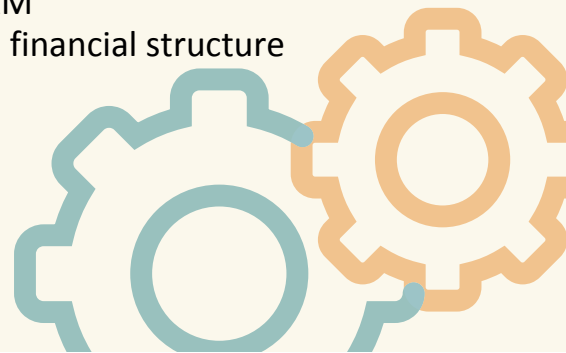


## REFORM Programmes:

- **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.*

### Public Discussion Session entitled: "Youth Emigration in Gaza and the Lack of Responsibility: Studying Challenges and Solutions"

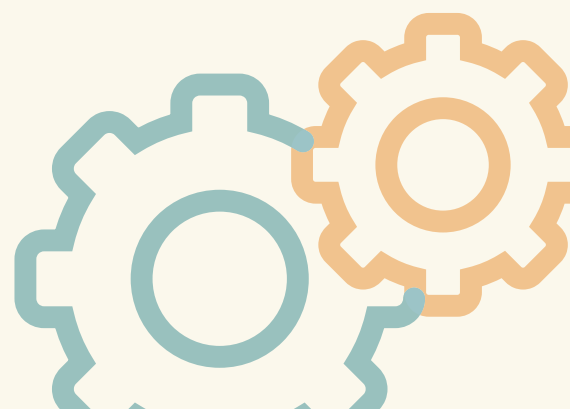


The session addressed the escalating rates of youth emigration from Gaza, the reasons and consequences, the lack of responsibility amongst officials and decision-makers and the ineffectiveness of government measures in increasing this trend.

Diverse speakers shed light on the political, economic and social factors driving youth emigration, including: unemployment, poverty and restricted freedoms.

Participants stressed the need of ending political divisions, involving youth in decision-making processes and generating employment opportunities to address the challenging living conditions in Gaza. Additionally, they appealed to the international community to lift the blockade and provide support to Gaza's 2.23 million residents.

[Read more here.](#)



## Social Mobilisation training entitled: “Towards Active Youth Participation in Student Council Elections at Universities at the Gaza Strip.

REFORM wrapped up a four-day workshop on social mobilisation at Al-Mathaf Hotel in Gaza City.



This workshop is part of their ongoing efforts to ensure the success of potential university elections in the Gaza Strip in the upcoming months. Upon the conclusion of the workshop, the youthful participants collectively outlined a strategic roadmap for essential collaborative actions with various sectors and institutions. This roadmap is designed to ensure the success of the electoral process, should it be implemented. The key interventions identified are as follows:

- Establishing four dynamic leadership teams comprised of 200 influential and autonomous individuals from within the universities.
- Educating students about the significance of engaging in student council elections and encouraging them to motivate others to participate.



- Forging collaborations and building partnerships with universities and proactive organisations.
- Fostering a positive atmosphere amongst the election-involved parties.

Watch video [here](#).





## Government Performance Monitoring Report for 2022: Results of the report were reviewed with the Palestinian Ministry of Local government: “Towards Promoting Accountability”



REFORM’s youth monitoring team presented the report's findings to Engineer Majdi Al-Saleh, Minister of Local Governance.

Mr. Rizeq Atawneh, REFORM’s project coordinator, conducted a thorough examination of the report. In his assessment, he emphasised that the Minister's field visits, which were closely monitored throughout the year, including those related to official duties and inspections of directorates in various governorates, as well as meetings with citizens, were extensively documented and made available to the public through the Ministry's website. These findings highlight the Minister of Local Government's dedication to active field involvement. In the year 2022 alone, he carried out an impressive total of 116 field visits. Concerning the Ministry's responsiveness to citizen inquiries and concerns, it employed communication channels accessible via its official website, email and WhatsApp.

The monitoring process revealed that the Ministry of Local Government addressed 5 out of 8 questions submitted by the monitoring team members.

As for the results of the public opinion survey evaluating the government's performance in Palestine in 2022, it is important to highlight that 41% of the citizens expressed contentment with the government's support for local government entities, including municipal and rural councils. In contrast, 53% registered their discontent in this regard."

At the conclusion of the meeting, His Excellency Minister Al-Saleh expressed his appreciation to the participants for their dedicated work in shaping the report. He emphasised that the Ministry had made substantial strides in advancing and strengthening the local government sector, reaffirming its dedication to empowering local authorities. Additionally, he underscored the importance of the extensive series of field visits to various local governing bodies.



## "Women"

**Implemented by REFORM and funded by Creative Force through the Swedish Institute in partnership with IM Swedish Development partner. This project aims to raise awareness of masculine behaviours and their impact on increasing gender-based violence (GBV) to contribute to changing men's attitudes towards women's roles and increase women participation in public life.**



REFORM held a meeting to support the initiative "Gaza on a bicycle" led by a young women, Iman Shahin with the presence of a number of activists and local and international organisations. They aimed to form a community incubator for the initiative's promotion and how stakeholders can play a significant role in developing it.

This initiative seeks to promote women's participation, increase awareness on GBV as well as enhancing physical and mental well-being. It also seeks to challenge stereotypes in the Gaza Strip and advocate for the adoption of eco-friendly and health-conscious transportation practices in the region while forming collective awareness.





## “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.*



At the Balata Media Centre, a training session was conducted to equip participants with the necessary skills for a series of podcasts on the current social context in their camps and their communities.

These podcasts will focus on communicating the daily lives of refugees, highlighting their social interactions amongst youth and their engagement with decision-makers and policymakers within the camps.

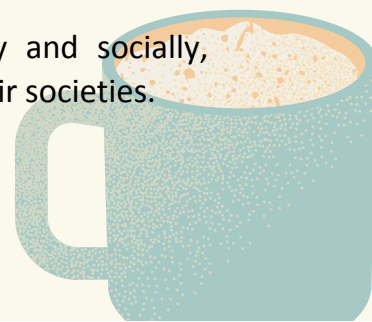
REFORM held a public debate session entitled: “The impact of social divisions on collective identity and civil peace in the Palestinian camps” with the aim of enhancing solidarity and unity. This was done through discussing the role of young men and women as agents of change in decision-making processes and its impact on civil peace. Recommendations included: raising awareness, promoting dialogue, supporting initiatives for social inclusion and enhancing the role of civil society organisations in fostering inclusion amongst different social groups. This discussion represented a significant opportunity for collaborative efforts to address these challenges and promote solidarity within Palestinian camps.

### **Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives for social and economic empowerment of women:**

This refers to studies and data in Palestine that show that empowering the social role of women in Palestinian society must go hand in hand with their economic empowerment.

This initiative includes efforts to facilitate the establishment of four social entrepreneurship initiatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These initiatives are designed to promote psycho-social integration towards the development of their societies and generate economic opportunities enhancing their impact and contributions.

It is necessary to support youth participants financially, educationally and socially, enhancing their impact and contributions towards the development of their societies.



## “Ambassadors”

*Implemented by REFORM 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 the 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.*

### “Dialogue with the World” sessions

With the participation of Palestinian and European activists, a session entitled: “Burning the Qur’an: Balancing Freedom of Expression and Belief While Respecting Values and Religious Sentiments” was held to emphasize the significance of preserving balance between these rights and the mutual respect for diverse values and cultures. This event was a part of the Association's ongoing endeavours to facilitate global dialogue and foster mutual understanding amongst various cultures and religions, aligning with its mission to construct bridges of communication and comprehension between diverse populations and cultural backgrounds.



With the participation of his Excellency Mr. Hadi Shibli, the Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Mali, and Dr. Abdulhakeem Adejumo, a political science professor at Federal University Dutse in Nigeria, REFORM hosted a session on “Niger’s transformations and its impact on African political dynamics within the context of international and regional politics”

The influence of these factors on the Palestinian conflict was also explored through the creation of alliances and the consideration of worldwide viewpoints concerning the Palestinian conflict. The aim was to provide participants with a foundation for understanding diverse international, regional and local issues that influence their lives as young individuals. This comprehension empowers them to actively participate in advocating for the rights of the Palestinian people on the global arena. It enables them to propose policies, strategies and interventions that tackle international developments in the context of youth efforts aimed at achieving independence and freedom from Israeli occupation.

يسرنا دعوتكم/ن  
للحضور والمشاركة في

جلسة حوارية بعنوان: “التحولات  
في النيجر وأثرها على الديناميات  
السياسية الأفريقية والنظام  
الدولي”

الاثنين 2023.09.04



12:00 – 01:30



السيد عبد الحكيم أديجومو،  
دكتوراه- قسم العلوم السياسية في  
الجامعة الفيدرالية دوتسي-  
نيجيريا

السيد هادي شبلي - سفير  
فلسطين في مالي



## "Symposia"

*Implemented by REFORM and 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.*



After several trainings, REFORM's participants are leading dialogue sessions and will subsequently elaborate reports after each one, highlighting the session's outcomes and findings. These reports will then be presented to the PLO with the aim of formulating suggestions and solutions to enhance youth political participation.

As part of this initiative discussion on: "The Gap Between Youth and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation" in the presence of youth and community activists.

This session discussed several topics, including the opportunities and challenges Palestinian youth face, as well as ways to enhance youth's role in political and social work.

This meeting is the first step towards a sustainable dialogue between the youth and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. A number of future sessions will be organised for achieving a common understanding and cooperation, which meets the aspirations of Palestinian youth in building a better and more sustainable future.



A session was held on "The importance of youth political participation and national identity, the risks and consequences of exclusion" in the Salfit Governorate.

Young political and social activists exchanged ideas and opinions on political issues and came up with recommendations to be presented and discussed with Palestinian politicians and parties in the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.



## "Unveil"

**Implemented by REFORM 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. 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.**



During the “Walk in another shoes” activity, participants said: “Understanding others is the way to spread empathy and build a society that includes everyone.”

This is the value that we learned from the "Walk in Another Shoes" experience, in which more than 40 young men and girls from Tulkarem participated, where they were able to delve into the details of gender-based power dynamics to raise awareness on the importance of the partnership between genders.

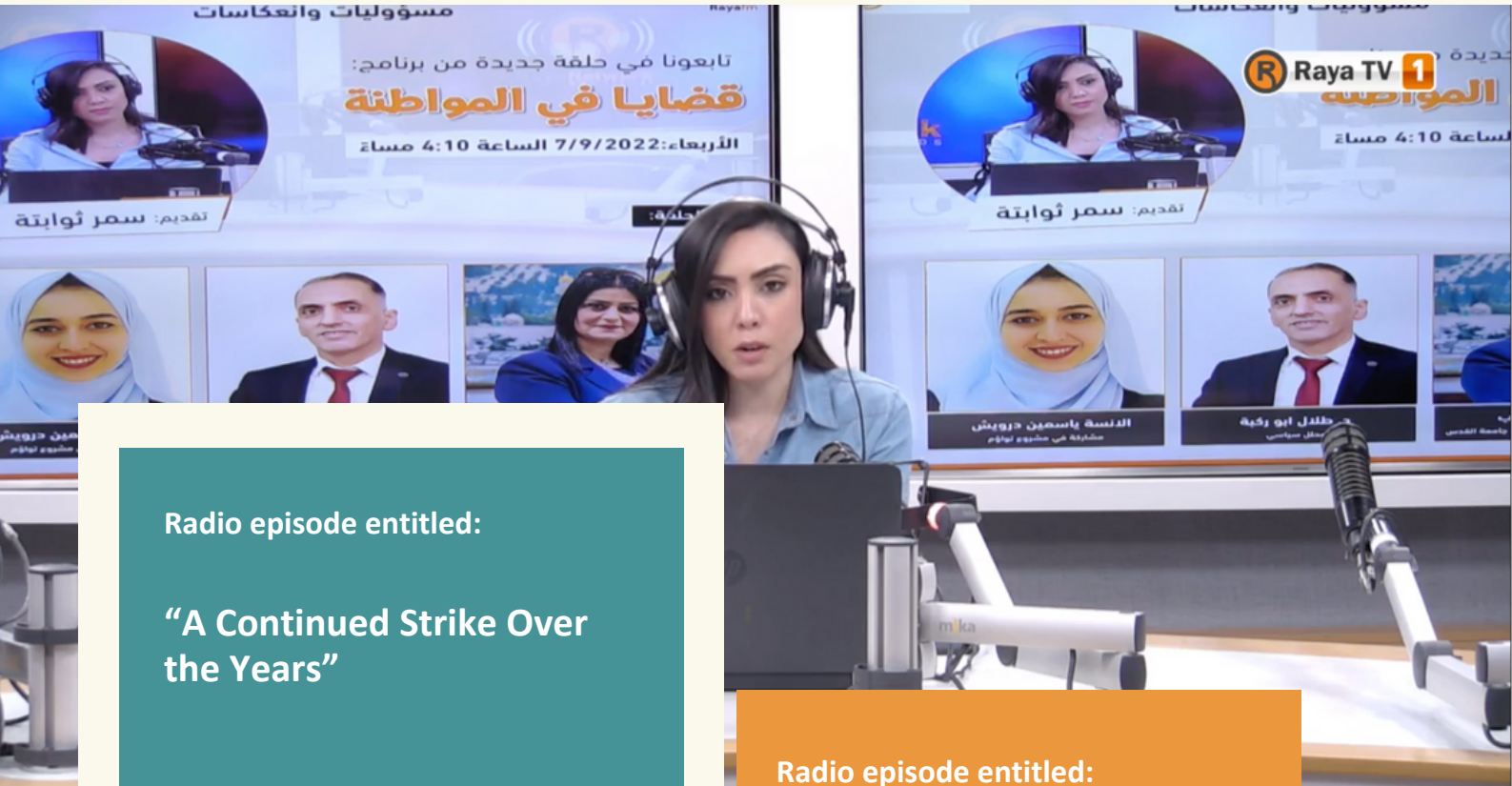
Participants went through multiple stages, i.e., understanding the game and its objectives, carried out an interactive activity to break the ice to create an interactive atmosphere and simulate gender roles.





# “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:

“A Continued Strike Over the Years”

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode entitled:

“Hebron under pressure: Assault and shootings threaten stability”

[Listen to this episode here](#) →

Radio episode entitled:

“Palestinian Civil Society Workspaces”

[Listen to this episode here](#) →



## Social Media Links

REFORM has been selected as one of the ten finalists for Global Pluralism Award. The award recognises individuals, organisations and governments around the world who are contributing to building societies where diversity is respected and valued.

Learn more about the award [here](#).

To watch a video about the Global Pluralism Award, click [here](#).



Palestine reaches the top ten finalists in the Global Pluralism Award. Tune into an exclusive interview with Mr. Rizeq Atawneh, REFORM's project coordinator. In this interview, discover the journey that has made REFORM a finalist.

To watch the interview, click [here](#).

For more information about the Global Pluralism Award, listen to this interview with Mr. Nadeem Qandil, REFORM's Operations Officer.

Watch the interview [here](#).

Tune into this interview with Ms. Ola Barghouti, REFORM's project coordinator. In this episode you will learn more about REFORM's participation amongst the top ten finalists.

To watch the interview, click [here](#).

Let's look deeper into the concept of the Global Pluralism Award, its goals and significance through a conversation with Mrs. Esraa Obaid, REFORM's project coordinator. To watch the episode from "Day by day" programme click [here](#).

Empowering youth in marginalized areas, interview with social activist Saeedah Qibha and Waseem Najm, student from Arab American University. An episode on how REFORM earned its place amongst the top ten finalists out of 200 competitors for the Global Pluralism Award.

To watch episode [here](#).



# Links to REFORM's Interactive Annual Report and Social Media



Enjoy reading REFORM's interactive annual report in three minutes! While listening to oud music, do not forget to pick some oranges from the tree; they will inspire you.

To read, click [here](#).

Discover the journey that has made REFORM a proud finalist for the prestigious Global Pluralism Award. Don't miss this chance to hear our story!

To watch the interview, click [here](#).

Join us in tuning into this amazing interview with Ms. Nourhan Al-Tabatibi, REFORM's Cultural Café's coordinator in Khan Yunis, Mr. Abdul Hakim Awad, one of the beneficiaries of the "Youth Led Action" project, and Mr. Rizeq Atawneh, REFORM's project coordinator! To watch the interview, click [here](#).

Watch the documentary video of the Salfit Initiative, "Positive Voices," which aims to pave the way for a violence-free society in Salfit. Click [here](#).

The video reflects the experience of the youth group of Project Light in Salfit during their distinctive journey to combat cultural and structural violence challenging stereotypes, customs and beliefs surrounding gender roles, family dynamics and the legalisation of violence. To watch the video, click [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





# 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 partnership!

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 highlights.

Thanks for reading!