



Zochrot  
Annual Report 2008





# Annual Report 2008

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- Board of Directors • Oversight Committee

## 2. Conference on the Return of the Palestinian Refugees

## 3. Landscape and Space

- Tours of destroyed Palestinian localities
- Commemorative events • Advocacy
- Ad hoc activities • Bridging memory
- Jerusalem branch

## 4. Information and Resources

- Website • Visitors' center • Booklets
- Visual material • Testimonies project
- The journal "Sedek" • Art gallery
- Zochrot in the media • English brochure

## 5. Education

- Encountering the Nakba - A Learning Packet in Hebrew • Teachers' groups
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*Zochrot* (remembering) is an Israeli NGO (580389526) working since 2002 to raise awareness of the Nakba, the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948. The Nakba is an unspoken taboo in Israeli discourse, its memory expunged from the official history of the country and from its physical landscape. Yet the Nakba is also the central trauma of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and its legacy continues to unfold today – in the institutionalization of inequality and violence, in the erasure of the past, and in the deteriorating plight of the Palestinian refugees. We hope that by talking about the Nakba in Hebrew, the language spoken by the Jewish majority in Israel, we can engage the public in learning about and taking responsibility for the Nakba and its enduring consequences. A just and workable resolution to the conflict must be founded on this acknowledgment and on the pursuit of equality for all peoples of the region, including the right of the refugees to return.

The sixtieth anniversary of the Nakba was commemorated in 2008, along with the sixtieth anniversary celebrations of the establishment of the state of Israel. This conjunction raised awareness of the tragedy that made possible the creation of the Jewish state. The Nakba became a term widely used in the media, often in completely unrelated contexts (for example, a fan of HaPo'el Tel Aviv who was mourning the demolition of the Ussishkin basketball court called it "HaPo'el fans' Nakba"). There was a feeling that everyone was talking about the Nakba, but there's no guarantee they knew very much about it. Some probably tried to learn more about a word they'd heard so often, but the impression is that not many Israelis really learned much about the Nakba despite the frequent references to it. In 2008, *Zochrot* continued to conduct tours of Palestinian villages destroyed in the Nakba, hold commemorative events, operate an information center and gallery, publish the journal "*Sedek*", organize seminars, film video testimonies and conduct various educational activities. Two new projects stood out in 2008: A conference in Tel Aviv on the Return of Palestinian Refugees, and publication a Learning Packet about the Nakba, in Hebrew, to be used by Jewish-Israeli teachers.

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## Staff

### **Eitan Bronstein, Director** (full time)

One of *Zochrot's* founders. Previously involved in political education in various organizations. Worked for a number of years in the Shalom school in Neve Shalom/Wa'hat al Salaam, organizing youth activities. Born in Argentina; raised from age 5 in Kibbutz Bahan. Has three sons and a daughter. MA in Hermeneutics from Bar Ilan University.

### **Norma Musih, Associate Director**

(3/4 capacity)

One of *Zochrot's* founders. Mother of Amalya. Born in Argentina and grew up in Kibbutz Amir. Studied art at Bezalel and is currently a doctoral student in Hermeneutics at Bar Ilan University. Leads groups and studies visual culture.

### **Raneen Jeries, Testimonies Project**

(1/2 capacity)

Ranin joined *Zochrot* in 2004. She leads a program of women's empowerment, parenting and feminism. Active in a number of organizations working for social change, such as Assiwar, The Arab Feminist Movement in Support of Victims of Sexual Violence. Ranin is also a professional singer. She has a BA in social work from Tel Aviv University and is studying in its clinical social work MA program. Born in Kafr Yassif and lives in Haifa.

### **Umar Ighbarieh, Tour coordinator**

(1/2 capacity)

Umar is a professional group leader, focusing in particular on the Arab-Jewish conflict. He coordinated the youth section of the Shalom school in Neve Shalom before joining *Zochrot* in 2006. Today he is also the localities coordinator in the Karev Project for educational involvement. Studied group dynamics, Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic Literature at the Hebrew University. Born in Musheirfa; lives with his family in Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam.

### **Esther Goldenberg, Office manager**

(1/2 capacity)

Studied history at Tel Aviv University. Born in the Hungarian region of Romania and immigrated to Israel with her family when she was 10. Joined *Zochrot* in 2006; also looks after other animals in various organizations. Specializes in leading *Zochrot's* tours to Jaffa.

### **Tomer Gardi, Editor of Sedek**

(1/2 capacity)

Researches and writes about history and culture. Lives in south Tel Aviv. BA in Literature and Education from the Hebrew University; MA in Intercultural Education from Freie Universitaet Berlin. Tomer joined *Zochrot* in 2006.

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### **Michal Padeh, Coordinator of Resource Development** (1/2 capacity)

Completing her research for an MA in Anthropology from Ben Gurion University, dealing with Israelis encountering the Nakba in the local landscape by means of *Zochrot's* tours. Lives in Tel Aviv.

### **Amaya Galili, Educational Coordinator**

(3/4 capacity)

Joined *Zochrot* at the beginning of 2007. Involved in community work relating to social and economic rights. BA in Sociology and Anthropology from the Hebrew University, and MA in Community Social Work from McGill University, Canada. Grew up on Kibbutz Amir, lives in Tel Aviv.

### **Avivit Gros-Allon, Graphic Designer**

(1/2 capacity)

BA in Visual Communication Design from the Holon Institute of Technology. Mother of Naomi born in March 2009.

### **Rona Even, Organizer of the conference on the refugee's return**

(1/2 capacity, 6 months)

Worked for *Zochrot* for six months organizing the conference. Rona is a video producer, and a political activist, lives in Jaffa.

### **Oshra Bar, Office manager** (1/2 capacity)

Joined *Zochrot* in September, replacing Esther Goldenberg.

### **Tomer Baliti Dagan, Leads group discussions for teachers in Jerusalem** (freelance)

Trains teachers and involved in developing teachers' knowledge, language and professional culture. BA in Bible and Mathematics, MA in the Sociology of Education. Currently writing a doctoral dissertation on teacher training.

### **Oded Zipory, Coordinator of Zochrot's youth group** (freelance)

Involved in formal and informal education. BA in History and Education from the Kibbutzim College of Education.

### **Tamar Avraham, Coordinator of activities in Jerusalem** (freelance)

Organizes study groups and activities dealing with the Nakba in West Jerusalem. MA in Catholic Theology. Courses in Judaism, Islam, Religious Studies and History. Lives in Jerusalem.

### **Hadas Snir, Researcher for the exhibition, "Constituent Violence 1947-1950."**

Researcher in documentary films. Studied Art History.

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Eitan Reich, Chairman  
Shlomit Bauman  
Uri Gopher  
Dalit Baum  
Talya Fried  
Sheshtin Sadragron  
Javier Sabah

## Oversight Committee

Ahmad Hijazi  
Khoulood Edris

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Before describing *Zochrot's* activities, a word about this year's highlight:

## Conference on the Return of the Palestinian Refugees

This is the first political conference held in Israel aimed at the Jewish public and was based on recognition of the right of return. The goal of the conference was to begin thinking about the possibility that Palestinian refugees would return in accordance with UN Resolution 194. Rather than addressing the legal, abstract right of return, the conference focused on the return as a practical matter. The conference program. It was held at the ZOA (Zionist of America) House in Tel Aviv, a fact that didn't go unnoticed by the few media organizations which covered it. Rona Even coordinated the conference, along with a steering committee composed of *Zochrot* staff members. Some 300 people attended, most of them Israelis, which was many more than the organizers anticipated. Many of those in Israel and abroad who support the right of return commented on the conference. A number of important texts were presented and subsequently published in *Sedek*. Ben Dror Yemini published a hateful article in *Ma'ariv* opposing the conference "which," he said, "promises to fill the country with rivers of blood." A number of activities were held in conjunction with the conference. The exhibit, "Bridging Memory," was shown in the entrance lobby. Diana Allen led a workshop in which she presented the archive of testimonies of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and discussed issues related to collecting testimonies and oral histories; An evening of films by *Zochrot* was held in the Manshiyyeh neighborhood, along with an appearance by "System 'Ali"; A tour was held of Al-Sheikh Muwanis, during which participants visited the village cemetery, until a security guard from the nearby General Security Services (GSS) facility showed up and chased them away.

The organization's activities are divided into four programs, as is this report: Landscape and Space; Information and Resources; Education; Capacity Building.

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## Landscape and Space

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*Tours of destroyed Palestinian localities* Zochrot conducts tours of Palestinian localities destroyed by Israel in and following 1948. There are two kinds of tours: Those open to the general public, organized by tours coordinator, Umar Ighbarieh, and tours by invitation, conducted in response to requests by groups from Israel and from abroad.

The goal of the Open tours, which are open to the general public, is to learn about the localities destroyed by Israel during the Nakba (some were subsequently inhabited by Jews) and meet refugees from those places. These tours also encourage research into these localities, and tours are sometimes the product of such research. *Zochrot* publishes booklets in Hebrew and Arabic for these tours (with a small supplementary English section), containing testimonies which *Zochrot* obtains from the village's refugees, research material on the village, maps and sometimes also texts written by Jews who are connected to those locations.

During the tour we erect signs noting where different sites in the village were located. These signs are usually removed shortly after we erect them, by people opposed to the identification of evidence of the Nakba in the Israeli landscape. Removal of the signs testifies to their importance; the act of their removal relates both to the Nakba and to its significance in space and in history.

Seven open tours were planned and conducted, coordinated by Umar Ighbarieh, to the following locations: Al-Sheikh Muwanis, Khirbet Al-Luz, Khirbet Umm Burj, Kuwaykat (coordinated by Raneen Jeries), 'Ajjur, Ein Karim, Al-Ras al-Ahmar. A total of 580 people – most of them Jewish Israelis - participated.

The tour of Ein Karim had the largest number of participants, more than 200 men and women, about 40 of who arrived in a bus organized by the Israeli Committee of the Displaced. About 15 Jewish residents of Ein Karim participated in the tour and even helped by providing information and erecting signs. Preparations for the tour were carried out in cooperation with the UYAC (Union of Youth Activity Centers) in refugee camps in the West Bank and in Gaza, headed by Wajih Atallah. *Zochrot* had led an earlier tour to



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Kuwaykat

Sheikh Muwanis and published a booklet, which includes a fascinating interview with a Jew living in a house that was once part of the village. The tour to Khirbet Al-Luz was held at the initiative of Ilana Katzavman, who researched the location in the wake of the comprehensive study of the village by Dan Golan. Both of them helped to organize the tour, and the booklet includes information they provided. *Zochrot's* tour was the first opportunity they'd had to meet refugees from the village whom they'd never met before. The tour to Umm Burj was held at the initiative of Gid'on Sulimani, from the Antiquities Authority, who showed how Israel ignores "antiquities" connected to the country's Palestinian history. To write that

his views didn't help his relationships with his employer would be an understatement. Refugees from the village who live in the Hebron area weren't permitted to join the tour. The tour to Kuwaykat was special, in the sense that it was conducted at Kibbutz Beit HaEmek, established on the ruins of the Palestinian village. Judy Ben Et, a kibbutz member, initiated the tour together with Ranin Jeries from *Zochrot*. Judy was harshly criticized by angry members of the kibbutz. Most of the members preferred not to participate, although they'd probably never heard the stories of the refugees who'd lived where their own homes now stand, and who now live only a few kilometers away.



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The tour to 'Ajjur took place in an area ,most of which is now Britannia Park, established by the Jewish National Fund. Each year the JNF invites the public to pick "its" olives. Noam Dotan, a resident of a nearby moshav, proposed that *Zochrot* conduct a tour and try to pick olives and give them to refugees from the village living in the Hebron area and not even permitted to visit the site, much less enjoy the fruit of their trees. The JNF heard about the initiative and sent armed personnel, even called the police, to prevent the "theft of their olives." The tour was held without the symbolic olive-picking in order to avoid a confrontation. JNF staff were given booklets describing the village, which

they read with interest, as can be seen in the photo. The tour to Al-Ras Al-Ahmar was conducted as part of the "Bridging Memory" project which involves refugees living in Ein Al-Hilweh in Lebanon, and Kerem Ben Zimra, the moshav built on the remains of Al-Ras Al-Ahmar. The booklet that was published included testimonies collected by activists from Al-Najdeh, a Lebanese organization, which were given to *Zochrot* by European intermediaries. The booklet also included testimony by one of the first Jewish residents of the moshav. As part of the tour, life-size photographs of refugees in Lebanon, taken by photographer Thierry Bresillon, were posed. The moshav refused

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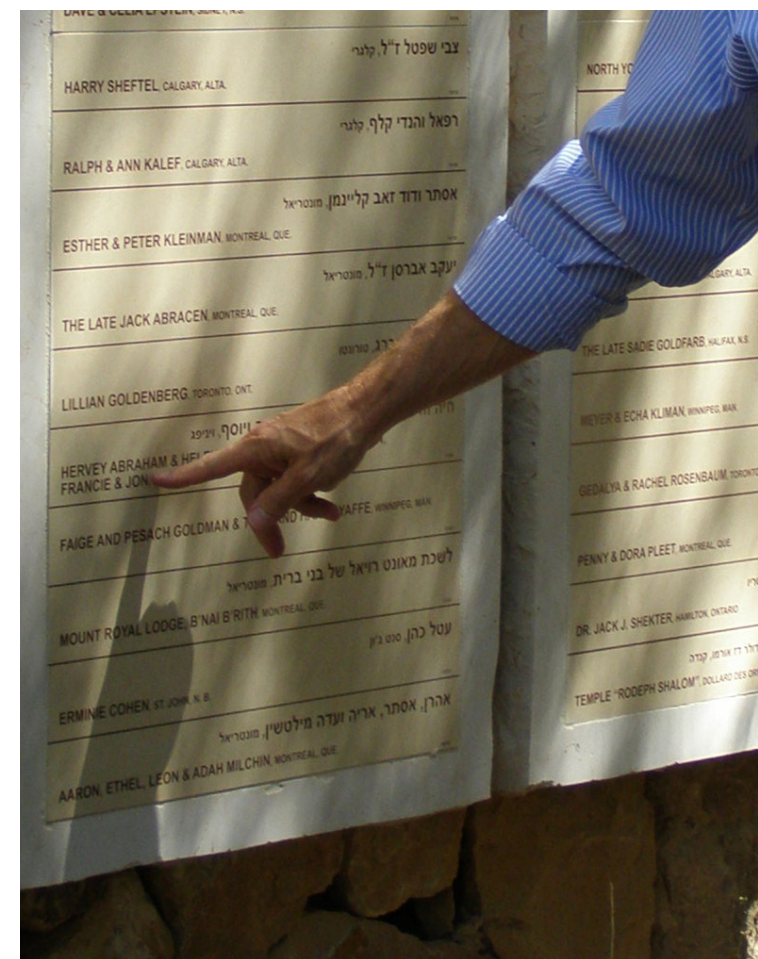
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to cooperate with the tour even though Eitan Bronstein went there for a special meeting in an attempt to convince them. Nevertheless, many booklets were distributed there during the tour. The tour was darkened by the IDF's brutal attack on Gaza which began that same day, December 27, 2008.

Zochrot conducted nineteen by-invitation tours for groups which contacted us. A total of 280 people participated in them, 100 Israelis and the rest from abroad. There were three tours to Jaffa, five to Canada Park, two to Maliha and two to Lifta. Despite the fact that they were private tours (or, perhaps, because of that fact), two of them were particularly special. One was to the village of Qula, conducted for Rula Awwad Rafferty, a Palestinian woman who lives in the United States, whose mother was born there. During the tour she found what remained of her mother's home. Cf. texts by Eitan Bronstein and Rula Awwad Rafferty: *Being in Place, of Place, in Qula...* / Rula Awwad-Rafferty *Visit in Qula village* / Report by Eitan Bronstein

One of the tours to Canada Park, which the JNF established on the ruins of 'Imwas, Yalu and Beit Nuba, was conducted for the Canadian ambassadors to Israel and to the Palestinian Authority. When they came to

the walls bearing the names of contributors to the JNF, built of stones from Imwas' houses, the Canadian ambassador to Israel was amazed to find his name on the wall, together with those of the rest of his family. Here's a photo of his finger pointing to his name:





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of Sheikh Muwanis, held in conjunction with the conference on the return of Palestinian refugees (see above). Israeli journalist Benny Ziffer participated in this tour, and was rather furious at being chased away from the village cemetery by a GSS security guard. He wrote about it in his blog, on Ha'aretz' website.

*Zochrot* decided not to conduct additional tours for foreign groups, except in unusual circumstances, as the organization's main target group are Israeli Jews, and the additional tours call for staff capacities that *Zochrot* does not have.

### Commemorative Events

This year *Zochrot* held a number of commemorative events:

As we do each year, *Zochrot* held a ceremony on the sixtieth anniversary of the Dayr Yassin massacre. About seventy people participated, including refugees from the village who told us what they remembered. We installed a sign on the home of Zeinab 'Akel, who died two years ago and who, in the past, took part in previous ceremonies. On the eve of Israeli Independence Day about sixty people filled *Zochrot's* gallery, located only a few dozen meters from Rabin Square,

the site of Tel Aviv's main celebration, in order to take part in an event commemorating the Nakba. We screened two films: "Still Life," by Diana Allen, and Edward Said's last interview. These were followed by an open discussion. The next day, Independence Day, about 200 people toured the ruins of the village of Miska. Refugees from the village and Israeli Jews listened to the testimonies of elderly refugees and erected signs commemorating the village. They then joined the March of Return that was held in the village of Saffuriyya. Ariella Azoulay spoke on behalf of *Zochrot* and the other Israeli organizations which participated and supported the event.

When the assembly ended the police violently attacked some of its participants who, it claimed, had blocked a road.

This year *Zochrot* participated in a special event in Jerusalem, organized by Muna Halabi, a Palestinian woman from Jerusalem who lives in the United States. The descendants of Palestinians who had owned buildings in West Jerusalem, together with hundreds of supporters, marched through the streets of Talbyyeh and Katamon, now Israeli neighborhoods, stopped in front of their family homes and recalled their



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memories. They wore black T-shirts on which was printed, "This is my home." Right wing activist Baruch Marzel and a few of his supporters tried to provoke us, until the police removed them. Many media organizations from Israel and from abroad, including Ynet, covered the event.

*Zochrot* activists commemorated International Nakba Day by releasing sixty black balloons in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square; balloons were also released at a number of locations on the West Bank.

### Advocacy

*Zochrot's* advocacy consists of two types of activities: Objections to building plans, and issues relating to the JNF.

### Objections to building plans

When possible, *Zochrot* submits objections to building plans relating to places where there were Palestinian villages before the Nakba, and which threaten to destroy them without mentioning that they used to be there. *Zochrot* isn't able to keep track of all such building plans; it can respond only when a particular proposal is brought to its attention. This year *Zochrot* opposed two building plans, one in Summayl (Tel

Aviv) and the other in Lifta. The plan for Lifta referred to the village's lands, not to its core, unlike the previous plan which led to a fairly extensive discussion. The "Semel South" plan addresses what had once been the village of Sumeil, within the borders of Tel Aviv. The objections were submitted in 2007 and the municipality considered them in 2008.

Eitan Bronstein tried to present objections but Deputy Mayor Arnon Gil'adi, the committee chairman, loudly objected. He argued that *Zochrot's* objections were irrelevant because they referred to the building plans themselves, which had already been approved. The discussion Eitan attended dealt with the subsequent looting of Summayl properties – that is, the allocation of profits among the various beneficiaries: the municipality, the promoter, the legal owners, etc. Sumeil's refugees do not, at this stage, participate in discussions regarding their property. Despite this scandalous situation, the dozens of people present at the discussion were shown a map of Tel Aviv (prepared by *Zochrot*) displaying the location of the villages within the city's boundaries. A number of committee members (Noga Hertz, for example) found it very interesting. One of the Jewish residents

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of Summayl was later given the floor; he opposed the entire plan, but was allowed to have his say without interference.

Issues relating to the JNF

*Zochrot* advocates vis-à-vis the JNF so that it will erect signs commemorating destroyed Palestinian villages in Canada Park and other sites for which the JNF is responsible. After the JNF was required to erect signs in Canada Park as a result of *Zochrot's* Supreme Court lawsuit, it has purposely dragged out its responses to *Zochrot's* requests and delays its response to our letters. *Zochrot* has two demands: to repair signs in Canada Park that were damaged a month after they were erected, and to place signs at all JNF sites where Palestinian villages were located before the Nakba. The JNF invited Eitan Bronstein to a meeting at their offices, along with Amikam Riklin and two legal advisors. They proposed that at those sites where there are signs describing the area and its history, the Palestinian villages that were there until the Nakba will also be noted. Nothing was agreed regarding other sites. The JNF undertook to provide in the near future a list of sites so that *Zochrot* can suggest texts for the signs. *Zochrot* gave the JNF a list of their sites, specifying the destroyed Palestinian villages that are found there. The list was

based on Noga Kadman's book, *Erased from Space and Consciousness* (published by November), in which she looks at how the destroyed Palestinian villages have been distanced from the Israeli discourse. The JNF never provided the lists of sites and signs as it had undertaken to do. They backed down because of heavy pressure from right-wing elements, which even raised the issue in an urgent parliamentary question in the Knesset, by Yisrael Beiteinu MK Dudu Rotem. Minister Ruhama Avraham Balila answered him: "The signs to which the question refers are intended to provide information about Arab localities, without indicating where the residents of the abandoned villages presently live. The JNF, which administers Canada Park, is forbidden to oppose the placing of the signs because the Supreme Court ordered they be erected as a result of a lawsuit." Michal Kortoza, who is in charge of signage for the JNF, was interviewed by right wing paper *Eretz Israel Shelanu* and said something very instructive: "The signs don't say that we expelled them, nor that they're in refugee camps. They only indicate where they're living. I suggest not raising this issue in the media, because it's very sensitive. And, it would be better not to raise the issue at all. So far there's only one park where it's mentioned. In fact,

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many of the JNF parks are on land where Arab villages were once located, and the forests were planted as camouflage. But we're afraid that it will spread throughout the country; it's apparently something that can't be stopped." She assumes the JNF won't be able to object to signs mentioning the villages at all the sites where they once existed. Legal advice is provided to *Zochrot* on this and other matters by Attorneys Michael Sfard and Netta Patrick.

### Ad Hoc Activities

In 2008, *Zochrot* participated in three ad hoc activities. The most prominent was organized by the group, *Kim'at Sha'hah'ti* ("I Almost Forgot"), whose members sprayed graffiti in Tel Aviv on the eve of Israel's Independence Day. They made stencils with pictures of four Palestinian refugees, and included basic information about them: Where did their families originally come from; where they live today; etc. Under each was written, "Have you heard? The refugees are returning." Hundreds of graffiti were sprayed throughout Tel Aviv, and some drew interesting graffiti responses, like "You're dreaming."

On Nakba Day, May 15, 2008, students in Tel

Aviv University organized a demonstration. Shira Pinchas, a member of *Zochrot*, initiated the demonstration, at which the life-size posters of refugees from Ras Al-Ahmar were displayed; they drew considerable attention.

Irgun (Etzel) veterans and their supporters organized an impressive ceremony to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of "Jaffa's liberation." Tel Aviv's Deputy Mayor participated in the ceremony, which was held near the Etzel Museum, located in a building that had once been part of the Manshiyyeh neighborhood. Many activists demonstrated against the capture of Jaffa and the expulsion of its 70,000 Palestinian residents. Most of the participants were members of anarchist organizations and the Women's Peace Coalition. They brought whistles which they blew to spoil the celebration of Jaffa's capture. A flyer prepared for the demonstration included



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information from Zochrot's website, and referred readers to it. Few Zochrot activists participated in the protest, but it well reflected our organization's spirit.. Zochrot believes that it is important for the Nakba to become an integral part of the activities of many organizations, and sees its role as supporting and participating in them, and sometimes as providing information about these activities after they occur.

Additional ad-hoc activities included Zochrot's involvement in the exhibit on "well houses" (cf. the section of this report

about "Information and Resources - Visual material")

## Bridging Memory

In 2008 the Bridging Memory project, which began in 2006, was completed. It involved a number of activities that are described in this report: a tour of Kerem Ben Zimra to see the remnants of Al-Ras Al-Ahmar, erecting posters of refugees from the village next to its remains on village grounds, publication of a booklet about the village and an exhibition at Zochrot's Conference on the Return. Students at Tel Aviv University commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Nakba placed the posters at the entrance to the campus.

## Jerusalem branch

The Jerusalem group of volunteers, coordinated by Tamar Avraham, continued its research on the Nakba in the neighborhoods of West Jerusalem. It conducted a study tour and collected research materials and refugee testimonies. The group is investigating the signs recently installed by the municipality which describe the history of various buildings but ignore West Jerusalem's Palestinian history.



Bridging Memory project - Al-Ras Al-Ahmar

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### W e b s i t e

In 2008 Zochrot's website added about 55 new pages, most of them in Hebrew and a few in English and in Arabic. The site received many inquiries from persons interested in the organization's activities, those who support its ideas as well as those opposed to them. The site averaged 1100 hits a day over the year. Some 300 letters arrived during the year, in comparison to 160 in 2007. Here are four examples:

//

Hello,

*I'd like your help regarding information about Bedouin who, until the Six Day War, used to live on the sandstone hills between Beit Oved and Beit Hanan. I remember that when I was a boy there was talk about an encampment that was removed on the eve of the war. I imagine that some order had them transferred to the Negev, but as far as I – an eight-year-old boy – was concerned, they simply disappeared. According to the rumor, they were put on trucks.*

*Sincerely,  
Asher Hin..."*

//

Hello,

*A friend and I had an argument. He said that in '48 the Arabs left as a result of instructions from the Arab countries to get out because of the war. And I said that they fled because they were afraid of the Israelis. Who's right? How can I prove what I said?*

*Thank you,  
Rona"*

//

Hello,

*I find your activities scandalous. Their effect will be to destroy Israel as a Jewish state and distort history, and they are filled with self-hatred toward the Zionist enterprise, that same enterprise because of which some of you are here. Is it realistic, regardless of one's political views, to absorb 4 million Arabs, filled with hatred of Israel, the majority of them supporting terror against us?*

*How, exactly, will this happen? By moving the millions who live here? By rebuilding 400 localities? Where will the money come from to incorporate these backward people in modern jobs, in the economy, in commerce? What about the country's Jewish identity? Why do*

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*the terrible conditions in which the refugees live - which sadden me as a human being - persist, while millions of refugees throughout the world have been rehabilitated, and millions have been moved from place to place during the twentieth century? Why shouldn't they be rehabilitated in the future Palestinian state, just as hundreds of thousands of Jews were rehabilitated after being expelled from Arab countries? And with regard to that - where is it mentioned?? The UN refugee agency also recognized the rights of those Jews.*

*Your web site is simply a shame and a disgrace to the state of Israel, and I hope you sober up from your terrible delusions.*

*Someone should investigate to see whether you're not breaking the law, and I intend to do so.*

*Happy Independence Day.*

*Yaron Av...*

*A student at the Hebrew University, originally from Ashqelon*

*(Or should I list the five villages which once existed where the city now stands?)"*

**//**

*First of all, congratulations on the success of your lawsuit against the JNF.*

*We're a group of Jewish and Arab students from Tel Aviv University, and want to transform public discourse so this will be a better place*

*for our children.*

*We are interested in learning about the precedent set by your lawsuit and, what is more important, we want to visit the six sites where signs will be placed in order to conduct memorial ceremonies.*

*We'd be very glad if you could send us a copy of the court decision (or a link to it), as well as the locations where the signs will be erected.*

*Thank you very much in advance, and we hope you continue your important work.*

*Yehonatan and the other members of the group"*

Each letter is answered quickly, except for those which show no interest in a dialogue, but only in condemnation and slander.

## Visitors' Center

Many people contacted Zochrot's visitors' center in 2008, seeking books, maps and pictures related to the nakba. Zochrot's library grew, primarily from donations of books by Zochrot supporter Anthea and others, as well as copies of research papers from students whom Zochrot helped, and the important atlases prepared by Salman Abu Sitte. The atlas, *The Return Journey*," is one of the books most useful to Zochrot staff and the visitors to the information center, because it makes available for the first time



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a current map of Israel (at a scale of 1:50,000) which also shows the villages destroyed in the nakba and the roads leading to them.

*Zochrot* distributes a newsletter every ten days or so, with updates on its activities. *Zochrot's* graphic designer, Avivit gross, designs the newsletter's layout, and it is sent to some 2000 people who have asked to receive ongoing updates.

### Booklets

Seven new bi-lingual booklets (in Hebrew and Arabic) were published in 2008, about the following locations: Sheikh Muwanis, Khirbet Al-Luz, Umm Burj, Kuwaykat, 'Ajjur, Ein Karem, Al-Ras Al-Ahmar. The booklets are an important part of each public tour conducted by *Zochrot*. This year the booklets also included sections in English. All of the booklets this year were prepared in cooperation with Jews living in the lands of the localities discussed in them, or who researched these localities. The booklet about Al-Ras Al-Ahmar was prepared as part of the Bridging Memory project, which "returned" refugees from the village who live in Ain Al-Hilweh in Lebanon to the moshav Kerem Ben Zimra which was established on the ruins of the Palestinian village. The

booklets are available in *Zochrot's* visitors' center and also on Zochrot's web site and many people read and respond to them.

### Visual material

*Zochrot* has developed visual materials for many different activities: lectures, exhibits, the learning packet, and more. The learning packet for teaching about the Nakba includes slide shows teachers can use which contain information about the Nakba, photographs, tables and video testimony. *Zochrot* presented its work in fifteen conferences in Israel and abroad. Special visual presentations were prepared for many of them. Visual materials were developed for various exhibits, and these were then shown on other occasions. The exhibit by Amnon Baror's architectural students on the "well houses" included a short video by *Zochrot* criticizing the exhibition, and also included *Zochrot's* map of Tel Aviv. The "Bridging Memory" project was exhibited at *Zochrot's* Conference on the Return, and included a poster describing the project's development. An activity in Brussels that came from Lebanon and Philadelphia, commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Nakba, used *Zochrot's* large map showing where the villages were located. An elderly

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Palestinian refugee came by chance to the Brussels exhibition and found his village on the map. *Zochrot* continues to collect photographs, and has added more than 200 to its archive as part of a photographic exhibition curated by Ariella Azoulay.

### Testimonies Project

In 2008, important audio testimonies were added to *Zochrot's* video testimonies project. Eight new video testimonies were filmed. Various video works by *Zochrot* were used in a number of events and activities. Most of the testimonies are those of Palestinian refugees, and two are of Jews who fought in 1948. Hava Keller describes her part in the capture of Akko, and Dov Yirmiya his role in the capture of villages in the western Galilee, testimony included in the booklet on Kweikat. Two additional testimonies were collected from Israelis who participated in the capture of the Latrun villages in 1967. They can be found on *Zochrot's* website, and the *Al-Haq* organization included them in its comprehensive report on the expulsion of the residents of the three villages.

Project coordinator Raneen Jeries' film about women's memories of the Nakba received a prize from It was also shown at

Stanford University; to a group of women in the village of Reina; at a Palestinian film festival in London; at a festival of women's films in Jaffa; and at a Greek Orthodox high school in Haifa.

*Zochrot* prepared 200 copies of a DVD containing 15 original films by and about *Zochrot*. The collection was launched during the conference on the return of the refugees, and is for sale by *Zochrot*.

### Sedek – A Journal for Political Culture

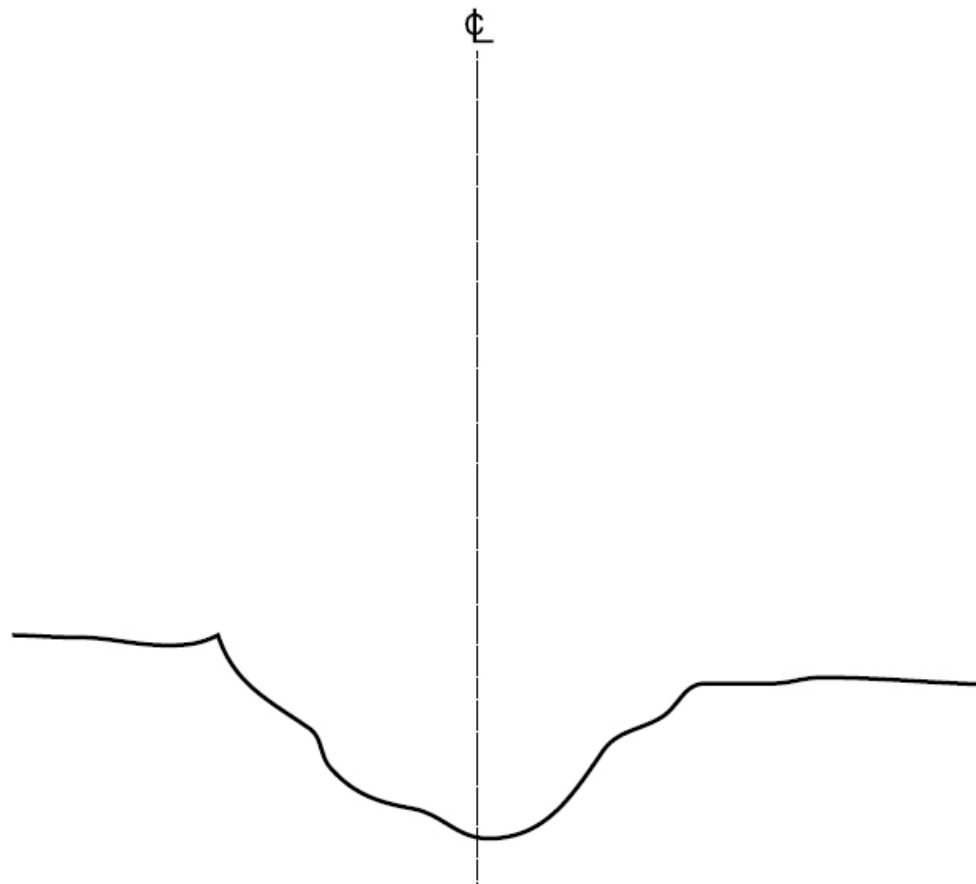
Issues 2 and 3 of *Sedek* appeared in 2008 (1500 copies each). *Sedek* 3 appeared in connection with *Zochrot's* Conference on the Return. Tomer Gardi is the journal's editor, joined by Norma Musih, Ofer Kahana and Osnat Baror (the latter two from the Parhessia Group). The Pardes publishing company distributes the journal. An article by Norma Musih and Eitan Bronstein which appeared in *Sedek* 3 presented a draft of ideas regarding practical aspects of Palestinian return. In print it was accompanied by thirteen responses; the article and responses were presented in a layout which was quite imaginative. It received considerable attention, and has been translated into English and into



צילום: סיקי קרצמן

מתנה ברזיל, רצועת עזה, 2006. באמצע הלילה, ימים ספורים לפני שצולמו כשהם נוסדים על שפת המכתש, למשטט שאנחנו המוכרת והמפסודת של מטוס הקרב, פתחו רבים מהם את חלונות בתיהם כדי לצמצם את טופסת ההדף שהם ניחשו שטומד עוד רנט לנשר את ביתם. הם מכירים את תוצאות החדידה של מטוסי F16 לשמי המזרח, וכל בשרם ורוכשם הם מכירים את המופרכות של התחכום והדיקו שהצבא מתנאה בהם. באמצעים הדלים העומדים לרשותם, הם מנסים להתנוגן לפני הווננה ולצמצם במידת האפשר את התפשטות הנזק. דאם אלטו חסאד, ילדה בת ארבע-עשרה שגרה סדק כשלוש מאות מטרים מן המיקום בו נפלה הפצצה והפכה את הבית שעמד שם למכתש, נהרנה במקום מפניטה של אחת מן הקורות שעפה משם לטבר בית הוריה. הצבא התנקש שאין הוא אחראי לפנינה בראש אלטו חסאד ועמד על כך שההרס שביצע היה מדויק והפצצה פגעה ידקו בביתו של סמי אלשעאר. הבית הזה נבחר מפני שבחצרו הוסתרה לטענת הצבא מנהרה להברחת נשק. המבטים של קהל הצופים [למעלה מטורים איש] הנוסד על שפת המכתש הטעוס [קוטרו כשלושים מטרים וטומקו כשבעה], המתפצלים בין מוקדי ההרס השונים [מרבית הבתים הסמוכים לציר פילדפי הנשק לסחנה מנוקבים ככברה], סמחיישים את הפער בין הלשון הסמי-שפפית הנקייה שאותה נוקס הצבא כדי להצדיק את מעשיו ובין פני המרחב שההרס בו אינו נראה מסודק כלל. האלימות האנושית הטוהרה שהופעה כאן ובלטה את הבית כמטט מבלי להחיד סמנו זכר, סנוניינת בקהל הצופים הזה, שישתאה ולא יתן לה להיעלם, אלא יחדיק אותה כשול של תזכורת: אף אחד מבין הצופים אינו מונן מפניה ובכוחה לשוב ולהפתיע. נוכחותם יחדיו של הצופים סביב המכתש היא אחת הצורות הבודדות של התקהלות במרחב ציבורי שמשטר הכיבוש לא רק סובלני כלפיהן, אלא גם יוזם אותן ומספק להן חזיונות ראווה. נדסה לו שהוא יכול שלוש במוכן שלהן.

7 בינר פריזס על הארצות ראה: ליל, גרוען 2006 / "אחור וחימומים", הארץ, 13.10.2006.





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Arabic. Sedek had a number of favorable reviews in the press. Here is a portion of Omri Herzog's review in Ha'aretz (April 2, 2008): "Sedek operates on the margins of political discourse; the opinions and information it contains can be found almost nowhere else. When they ask to be heard – in demonstrations against the separation wall in Bil'in, in the struggle over the land of Kfar Shalem, in research that tries to expose the visual archive of Israeli colonialism, in attempts to talk to those who participated in the expulsion and killing – they're silenced, accused of treason and often also exposed to invective and physical violence."

Zochrot also published an abridged English and Arabic appendix to Sedek 2, with selections from the texts for those who don't read Hebrew, as well as some of the visual images.

In 2008, 180 copies of Sedek were sold. The journal was sold in bookstores, at Zochrot's offices and through the web site of Pardess, the publisher. Zochrot also sold copies at two conferences, in Haifa and in Jaffa.

## Art Gallery

Four exhibitions curated by Norma Musih were mounted in Zochrot's exhibition space, located in Zochrot's offices in the heart of Tel Aviv. An additional exhibit, of the Bridging Memory project, showed at Zochrot's Conference on the Return. Zochrot also participated in an exhibition on "well houses" in Tel Aviv organized by architectural students from Tel Aviv University. A comprehensive research project was undertaken for the photographic exhibition, "Constituent Violence 1947-1950," curated by Ariella Azoulay. Researcher Hadas Snir burrowed through many archives, most of them belonging to public institutions, in preparation for the exhibit which opened in 2009.

The works in Masha Zussman's exhibition, "Tzi'yurim" ("Drawings"), are ballpoint pen drawings on wood, some of which appeared in Sedek 1. Shulamit Baumann curated "Amnesia," in which a number of artists participated: Ido Bruno, David Goss, Zivia, Einat Leider, Ravit Letzer, Gad Charney, Yasmin Da'hr. The exhibition focused on the material culture associated with the Nakba – for example, items belonging to Palestinian refugees. A number of the artists participated in a gallery talk. Shlomit

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also spoke at her former kibbutz (Amir) about her 2007 exhibit at *Zochrot* on the Palestinian village that was near the kibbutz until the Nakba. Ariel Myodoser's animated film, which was part of the "Al-Duwarah" exhibition, was shown at the Palestinian film festival in London. Israeli students from art college *Minshar LeTzilum* prepared an exhibit in cooperation with *Zochrot* at the initiative of their teacher, Susannah Unterbach. They learned about the Palestinian villages that until 1948 were located on sites which later were included within Tel Aviv's municipal area, toured them with the help of *Zochrot's* map and guides, and took classes led by Norma Musih. Each student showed one or two pictures of the places he had chosen to photograph. Ariella Azoulay presented the exhibition, "Architecture of Destruction, Fear and Subordination", about the 1967 war, which was, in a way, a continuation of the photographic exhibition she showed the previous year in the Minshar Gallery, and a stage in the preparation of the "Constituent Violence" exhibition shown in 2009. Two gallery talks were held in conjunction with the exhibition, in which experts participated, as well as a special session for *Zochrot's* teacher's groups and youth group. The exhibition about Palestinian homes in West Jerusalem, curated by Norma Musih and

shown at *Zochrot*, was later invited to show at the Willy Brandt Center in Jerusalem, curated by Cheb Kamerer. Tzachi Ostrovski took the photographs and Haim HaNegbi wrote the texts.

About 500 people took part in exhibition openings and gallery talks. At least twice that number viewed the exhibitions [photo]. The gallery and exhibitions were mentioned a number of times in the on-line and printed media.



"Architecture of Destruction, Fear and Subordination"

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## Zochrot in the media

Media coverage of *Zochrot* increased during 2008, despite the fact that the organization makes no special effort to obtain it. We have copies of 66 news reports and articles about *Zochrot*, compared with 63 during the previous year. Forty-five of the pieces were in Hebrew, six in English, four in Arabic and nine in German. Three articles published in the Hebrew press were particularly noteworthy. Two unusually poisonous pieces in Ma'ariv, by Ben Dror Yemini and Gadi Taub tried to make the Israeli public afraid of the organization calling for "the elimination of the state of Israel." Tomer Gardi, from *Zochrot*, answered them brilliantly, in a response published by Ma'ariv as well as in blogs and websites. The best article about *Zochrot* was written by Yishai Friedman in right wing journal HaTzofeh. His comprehensive essay presents a fascinating analysis by two experts of why *Zochrot* has been successful in influencing the Israeli public. Here's what Dr. Uri Lebel, who teaches Political Psychology, has to say: "This group is different in a number of ways," he says. "It's not a protest movement, even though it includes elements of protest. Its strategy, in contrast to all the other left-wing organizations, is to influence the Israeli discourse and the Israeli subconscious, the Israeli language and the academic, research,

cultural and intellectual environment. Its strategy is to influence indirectly – which is much more effective." After the conference on the return of the refugees we were contacted by Platto Sharon's program, *Platto B'li Heshbon*, who wanted to interview Eitan Bronstein on the air. Eitan was interviewed six times on that program during 2008, each time for 25 minutes. It's a popular call-in program on Radio Radius 99 FM. Platto Sharon is a well-known, very nationalistic public figure. A conversation with him isn't really a dialogue, but more of a verbal cockfight. He habitually incites listeners to hate the interviewee. We were uncertain whether to participate in this unpleasant program, but Eitan agreed because he would be exposed to an audience other than the one *Zochrot* usually reaches.

## Brochure in English

Avivit Gros-Allon designed a brochure in English about *Zochrot*, using images and an abridged English text to describe the organization's various activities. Talia Fried wrote the text in English.



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Zochrot undertakes various educational activities: developing and distributing a Learning Packet in Hebrew for learning about the Nakba • Teachers' groups • Zochrot youth - a learning groups learning about on the Nakba • evening lecture series • workshops and lectures for specific groups • a joint project with *Mahapach - Taghir* aimed at vulnerable communities • participation in conferences.

### Encountering the Nakba - A Learning Packet in Hebrew

Three years of work with teachers and educators in Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv culminated in October, 2008, with the publication of the *Encountering the Nakba* – a learning packet in Hebrew. Amaya Galili, the project's coordinator, led a steering committee which developed the educational packet. The group began working in 2007, and met five times during 2008 to complete the project. In addition to *Zochrot* staff members, the group included Noa Zandbank-Rahat, Nurit Cohen Evron, Uri Gopher, Efrat Even Tzur, Oded Tzipori and others. Amaya led the group and was also responsible for two years of extensive research, planning and writing of the packet. The learning packet contains 13 educational units dealing with different topics related to the Nakba, and is intended for use in Israeli

high schools, colleges and universities. It was written especially for an Israeli audience. It was published in a loose-leaf binder so that new units could be added in the future. Its design and layout, by Avivit Gros-Allon, is quite impressive. The educational packet is easy to use, accessible on the internet, and includes a CD with video clips and slideshows. The short introduction describes *Zochrot* and its goals, but the individual study units do not aim to convince people to support the right of return, or that it is important for Israel to accept responsibility for its role in the Nakba. Rather, the learning packet's main goal is to provide Israeli educators with a convenient and effective means for teaching about the Nakba, one containing a wide range of educational materials. The learning packet's design is modular, allowing teachers to choose individual units for classroom use or teach several units in sequence. Each unit is accompanied by a discussion of its theoretical background and pedagogical rationale. The learning packet is based on critical pedagogical principles, and includes many visual images with which students can work. Hagit Gur Ziv and Galya Zalmonson Levy, from the Center for Critical Pedagogy at the Kibbutzim College of Education, reviewed the packet and their comments helped us design its

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structure. We have begun distributing the educational packet. We've shown it to the following organizations: Kav LaOved, Mercaz LeHinuch Humanisti, Halonot; and presented it at a conference of Israeli and Palestinian teachers in Beit Jala.

### Teachers groups

Two groups of educators met during 2008: one in Jerusalem, led by Amaya Galili and Tomer Baliti Dagan, and the other in Tel Aviv, led by Norma Musih and Noa Zandbank-Rahat. The groups met six times during 2008, worked with the material in the learning packet, which was in then in its last stages of preparation, and considered ways to use it in various educational frameworks. Here is what one of the participants in the Jerusalem group had to say:

//

*Hi, Amaya,  
I was very excited by the learning packet, by the interesting opportunities it offers and by how applicable it seems to be. Especially the selections on the CD. I think a great deal can be done with them. I can present some of them to the 12th grade home-room teachers and the principal, and ask them what they think could be used in the classroom, in particular in view*

*of their upcoming induction into the army. The study guide is very convenient, clear, very well designed, the material in the envelopes are to the point and excellent, and can even stand on their own...I can't fully express my appreciation.*

*I saw your lovely photograph of the Etzel Museum; I didn't realize you were also a photographer.*

*Does the selection by Eyal Sivan include the interview with Leibowitz? I wasn't able to locate it, and something there gets stuck after the video clip.*

*The film about South Africa is amazing and, once again, can stand on its own for a lesson on reconciliation, human rights, etc.*

*Thank you very much for the learning packet, and I'm filled with admiration at the impressive undertaking.*

*Galya"*

A second participant has informed us that she'll use the learning packet in the school where she will begin teaching this coming year.

### Zochrot youth – a learning group

A group of 15 young adults (18-35) was formed in Tel Aviv to learn together about the Nakba, led by Oded Tzipori and

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Amaya Galili. Its members carried out the activities in the learning packet as it was being developed, and their experiences were useful to the steering committee as it worked to complete it. Five soldiers doing their compulsory service were among the participants. One of the other participants joined *Zochrot*.

### Evening Lecture Series

*Zochrot* continues to organize public lectures on a variety of subjects connected in one way or another to the Nakba. Twenty-one such discussions were held in 2008, attended by a total of some 600 people. Many participated in more than one event, but the variety of topics attracts people from different fields, such as art, architecture, film, history, Jewish studies, etc. Three particularly interesting events should be mentioned. One included screening the films "Beit Avi", by Dani Rosenberg, and part of the 70's film "Hirbet Hiz'a," by Ram Levy. Both directors participated in the vigorous discussion that followed the screening. A second event involved Talmudic study of "Judaism and *Zochrot's* activities dealing with the Nakba," led by Rabbi Sara Lev and Alissa Wise, both of them members of the Reconstructionist movement. Poets Almog Bahar, Matti

Shmualoff, Raj'a Natour, Anat Zakariyya and Yanai Yisraeli participated in an evening of poetry readings on the Nakba.

### Workshops and lectures for specific groups

*Zochrot* arranges lectures and workshops for various groups who contact us, looking to learn about the Nakba and about our activities. In 2008, *Zochrot* staffers met with 70 such groups. Of them, 25 were Israeli, some of them mixed Arab-Jewish, with a total of 380 participants. There were 45 groups from abroad, 22 of them during a lecture tour in the United States given by Eitan Bronstein and Muhammad Jeradat from Badil, with a total of 1400 participants. Two lectures were given to Palestinian groups in Israel. Most of the lectures in Israel were to groups of students and to activists from social change organizations.

### Discovering the Past – Developing a Joint Future: a joint project with Mahapach – Taghir

The project with the *Mahapach – Ta'ir* organization is in its second year, aiming to raise awareness of the Nakba in 7 low-income communities in Israel (5 Jewish



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communities and 2 Palestinian ones). Umar Ighbarieh and Amaya Galili of *Zochrot* led eight workshops for the organization's community coordinators, in which they were trained to use *Zochrot's* learning packet on the Nakba. Students from the organization, as well as other young activists, were taken on a tour of Beersheva, led by Nuri Al-Okbi. About twenty students from the project toured Al-Maliha with Umar Ighbarieh. The first workshop of its kind on Israeli and Palestinian collective memory was held for women in communities where the organization is active. Some of the Jewish women participating reacted very strongly to the activity because they felt threatened by references to the Nakba. The Palestinian women were moved by the experience. *Zochrot* and *Mahapach – Ta'ir* decided that in the future *Zochrot* staff will continue to meet only with the community coordinators and the students, who will be the ones, together with *Mahapach-Taghir* staff, who will work with the communities themselves on this sensitive issue. The joint project will continue for a third year in 2009.

## Participation in conferences

In 2008 *Zochrot* participated in 17 conferences in Israel and abroad, some of them socio-political in nature and others professional and academic. *Zochrot* presents visual material prepared specifically for each conference, and also slide shows and films of the organization's various activities.

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## Organizational Capacity Building

This includes:

- development of organizational capabilities
- strategic planning • resource development
- Zochrot volunteers.

### Development of organizational capabilities

Significant activities were carried out in two areas: improving *Zochrot's* financial management and administration and development of the organization's evaluation program. Financial management: After consulting experts outside the organization, with the help of board member Uri Gopher, Esther Goldenberg created an Excel spreadsheet that allows us to track the organization's cash flow and its labor costs (and their components). This spreadsheet, along with the ongoing work of *Zochrot's* financial team, significantly improved the organization's financial management. An expense index was also developed in cooperation with the organization's accountant and bookkeeping operation, so as to match the organization's audited financial report to its annual budget. Evaluation: *Zochrot* was advised by anthropologist and evaluation expert Maya Meltzer-Geva regarding the development

of a program to evaluate our activities, a continuation of the 2007 pilot program evaluating the tours. *Zochrot* staff then held a series of evaluation sessions dealing with each of the organization's projects. *Zochrot* members also considered about the organization's goals, its target audience and about updating the organization's vision. *Zochrot* members spent an entire day discussing the organization's vision. Earlier this year, the team participated in a group dynamics seminar led by Ariella Be'eri Ben Yishai.

### Strategic planning

This was the first year in which the entire staff participated in the preparation of *Zochrot's* strategic plan and budget for the following year. Michal Padeh coordinated this activity, which will be carried out annually.

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## Resource Development

Michal Padeh coordinates this activity for *Zochrot*. The amount contributed this year to *Zochrot*, and the number of contributors, continued to increase. We were delighted that several of the *Zochrot's* partners decided to make two- and three-year commitments. The following organizations contributed to *Zochrot* in 2008:

Misereor, ICCO, CCFD, Broderlijk Delen, HEKS-EPER, Mennonite Central Committee, medico international, KerkinActie, Oxfam Solidarity, Trocaire, Stichting SIVMO, Stichting Solidariteitsfonds, ACPP, Oxfam GB, Iris OBrien Foundation, ifa – ZIVIK

Thousands of people who participated in our activities contributed to cover their cost.

## Volunteering

Some of the material *Zochrot* publishes in Hebrew is translated into English by Charles Kamen. A number of young people from abroad volunteered for *Zochrot* in 2008. Inbar Hyman and Alexandra Chen volunteered during the summer to transcribe tape recordings, and were also involved in graphic design and updating the web site.