

Baladna's Annual Report 2018-2019

Table of Content

Our Vision is Clear	04
2018-2019 at a Glance	06
Baladna in Numbers	08
Our Projects	14
16 Harak: Youth Leadership	
20 Hawiya: Exploring Palestinian Identity	
23 Youth for a Peaceful Society	
25 Tawasalo: Enhancing Social Cohesion and Combatting Stereotypes	
27 International Trainings and Youth Exchanges	
Looking Forward	32
Our Donors & Supporters	36
Our Local and International Partners	37

**Our Vision
is Clear**

Baladna envisions a future in which Arab Palestinian youth in Israel play a key role in advancing community development and promoting their human rights through activism and advocacy rooted in a profound understanding of the societal and political conditions that have given rise to their marginalization.

We strive to transform this vision into reality by enhancing youth capacities in networking, grassroots activism, critical thinking, community organizing, and advocacy. By enhancing these skills and offering frameworks for engagement, Baladna aims to strengthen Arab Palestinian youth's understanding and application of principles of democracy, gender equality, and human rights, and to enable them to advance these values in their society.

Baladna's many youth-led grassroots initiatives are driven by an overarching purpose: to empower Arab Palestinian youth with the skills and tools needed in order for them to effectively address their daily needs and to transform decades of inequality into a future in which their rights and entitlements are fulfilled.

2018-2019 at a Glance

Baladna has been more active than ever over the last two years, empowering thousands through our work with Palestinian Arab youth, as well as through our partnerships in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and our participation in trainings and exchanges in Europe. With diversified objectives and activities, we have both deepened and expanded our work. Our 'Harak: Youth Leadership' project has enabled Palestinian Arab youth to define, analyze, and devise solutions to the challenges facing them and their communities, empowering them to take the reins in community development and advocacy. Through our 'Hawiya: Exploring Palestinian Identity' project, we have provided Arab youth with opportunities to openly explore the various dimensions of their identities, enabling them to overcome the crisis of identity that burdens young Arabs living in Israel. Additionally, in response to a concerning rise in intracommunal crime within the Arab community, Baladna has launched 'Youth for a Peaceful Society.' Through this project, which is in its first stages, we have mobilized seven young researchers who have been working to uncover information relating to the roots of violence in the Arab community which will be leveraged in the coming years to develop and implement youth-led intervention strategies. Over the course of the last two years, we have continued in our efforts to combat fragmentation and stereotypes through our 'Tawasalo: Enhancing Social Cohesion and Combatting Stereotypes' project, which recently entered its second phase of implementation, following three successful years filled with exchange tours throughout Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. We have also amplified the voice of Palestinian Arab youth at the international level, with our volunteers and staff crossing borders to participate in international trainings, conferences, and youth exchanges.

Baladna in Numbers



Harak: Youth Leadership

25

New partnerships
with local
stakeholders

120

Youth trained
in 8 localities

40

Volunteers
Trained

05

Youth Leaders
Trained

Hawiya: Exploring Palestinian Identity

50

Youth

15

Educational
Sessions

05

Hiking
Tours

06

Board
Games

Youth for a Peaceful Society

A Team of

07

Young Researchers mobilized to gather data on intracommunal violence.



A **Report** compiling data on violence in the Arab community.

Tawasalo: Enhancing Social Cohesion and Combatting Stereotypes

2,080

Youth participants from the Arab society
in Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.

45

Exchange Visits
in 17 towns and
cities.

17

**Educational
Workshops**

International Trainings and Exchanges

14

**Youth Exchanges and
international trainings**

Social Media

Over

66,000

Followers on Baladna's Facebook page

Over

1,000

Followers on Baladna's new Instagram page

Thousands

Reached through Baladna's media campaigns

Baladna's Outreach

Through our projects and activities, we approached youth from three different regions, totaling thirteen localities:

North Region:

- **Batouf Area:** Arraba, Kafr Manda, Sakhnin
- **Shafa-'Amr Area:** Shefa- Amr, I'billin, Kabul, Tamra
- **Shagour Area:** Majd al-krum and Bi'ina

Nazareth Region:

- **Nazareth and Reineh.**

Triangle Region:

- **North Triangle Area:** Umm al-Fahm and Ar'ara.

Additionally, alongside our partners in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Baladna has joined in organizing activities and events in multiple localities in the West Bank and Jerusalem, giving Palestinian youth the opportunity to meet with their counterparts from other cities and villages.



Our Projects

Harak: Youth Leadership



Arab Palestinian youth aged 15-25
in 8 localities in the Galilee and the Triangle



**August 2018 to
December 2019**

Baladna—with the support of the European Endowment for Democracy, Broederlijk Delen, Grassroots International, and the Tsadik Foundation—launched its youth leadership project, ‘Harak,’ more than a year ago. ‘Harak’ is quickly becoming one of the organization’s biggest and most crucial projects. The gap is clear: There is a complete lack of frameworks and services to empower Palestinian Arab youth to promote the advancement of their communities, address their daily needs, and confront discrimination. ‘Harak’ aims to address this reality, giving youth the skills to develop strategies to create sustainable services that are responsive to their needs while empowering them to work collaboratively with local stakeholders to redress discrimination and human rights violations.

“Up until today, most organizations have been concentrated on very specific areas. Many other areas have been neglected. Youth are being subject to so many social and political difficulties—unemployment and, of course, violence. One of the reasons is the lack of frameworks in which we can take part and share a space to be active. Of course, I also see myself progressing and acquiring more skills and knowledge, which will be useful for me in the future.” (Siwar Abu Ake, 19, volunteer from Arara)

40 volunteers receive exhaustive training and engage in networking activities.

Youth aged 18-25 participated in multiple training sessions and intensive workshops throughout 2018. The trainings and workshops covered a variety of topics. One focused on team-building and collaboration through a kayaking activity in the Jordan River Park. Others dealt with topics such as identity and its complexities, gender and feminism, and democracy in its different forms and meanings.

Alongside the trainings and workshops, networking activities in over seventeen localities were carried out by the volunteers in order to introduce schools, local municipality representatives, community centers, women's organizations, youth organizations, and community leaders to Baladna's project and to explore future cooperation.

Youth Perspectives:

"I finished the session feeling that, from now on, I will stop judging people because of their sexual orientation, to start empathizing with them instead of attacking and putting them in a situation in which they have to defend themselves." **Tamer Atariya, 20 years old, Shefa-'Amer.**

"The workshop changed our perspective on democracy and gender and introduced us to new concepts to think more about our democracy. We talked not only about local issues but also how democracy works in a globalized world." **Noor Abu Hojool, Shefa-'Amr, 18 years old.**



Following a successful media campaign and extensive outreach to schools, 120 youth join the project.

After establishing a team of leaders and garnering local support, 'Harak' has gained incredible momentum. In September, we launched a social media campaign that reached thousands of people. The campaign not only attracted youth groups to participate in the project, but it also raised awareness of the project and the importance of youth activism and volunteerism in the Arab community. We combined the media campaign with outreach to schools to encourage tenth-graders to join the project. Through our outreach via social media and our visits to schools, we managed to build eight youth groups composed of 120 youth aged 15-17 from eight different localities. In addition to this, we have recruited five university students, aged 19-25, to lead the regional youth groups.

Youth groups engage in educational trainings and workshops.

Thanks to the efforts of the regional youth leaders and volunteers, as well as the support of professional trainers, the eight youth groups have already completed the training stage of the project which addressed a range of topics and skills, including group formation and team-building, time management, volunteering, leadership skills, gender equality, and democracy.

First steps towards identifying the needs of youth in their respective localities.

In recent months, Baladna has begun collaborating with Vraiment Vraiment, a French institute that has guided us in the process of developing a methodology for needs assessments that will be carried out by the youth groups and volunteers. The reports prepared by the youth through these needs assessments will not only be useful for this project, but they will also improve our understanding of the needs of youth and guide our future work, as well as the work of other organizations. Following the needs assessments, each youth group will identify one of the needs as a priority and, in turn, build and implement an action plan to address it. This process will ultimately culminate in the creation of services responding to the needs identified by the youth themselves.

Impact numbers:

- Over **25** networking meetings and activities with local stakeholders, namely local municipality representatives, schools, community centers, women and youth organizations, local activists, and community leaders
- **40** volunteers trained
- **8** youth groups in 8 localities composed of 120 youth trained
- **5** youth leaders

Hawiya: Exploring Palestinian Identity



Arab Palestinian youth aged 16-17
in Ramla, the Galilee, and the Triangle
and gaming professionals.



**January 2019 to
December 2019**

With the support of the Welfare Association, our 'Hawiya: Exploring Palestinian Identity' project was launched in the beginning of 2019. The project aims to provide Arab youth with a safe space to explore the various, often paradoxical elements of their identities, supporting them as they overcome the crisis of identity that often faces Arabs in Israel. Baladna has adopted a particularly innovative approach, targeting youth, students, and teachers through unconventional tools and activities. While the novel nature of our project has generated many challenges, it has also given rise to significant achievements.





20 participants from 'tijual' youth group are ready to start guiding local hiking tours in their villages.

'Tijual' which means 'roaming' in Arabic, refers to the ways in which people are able to learn about a place through the exploration of its history, geography, and social life. We believe that, through such explorations, youth can also learn about themselves. By generating a sense of belonging and connectedness, such experiences can combat patterns of detachment and alienation while contributing to societal cohesion and rights awareness. In the last year, a youth group comprised of fifty members from Ramla, the Galilee, and the Triangle participated in five hiking tours in various villages and natural settings. This experience not only provided an engaging experience through which youth participants were able to explore their identities, it also empowered them in leadership by training some participants to guide tours in their localities. In the next phase of the project, which will begin in January 2020, twenty of the participants who demonstrated impressive leadership skills will organize hiking tours themselves in their respective localities, extending the experience to hundreds of youth.

Six board games to foster introspection.

This component of the project was created with the ambitious aim of breaking the cycle of silence and passivity among youth by encouraging thoughtful introspection and dialogue through interactive games. This component of the project involved the ambitious endeavor to create new board games that address issues relating to identity among Palestinian Arab youth. Such a feat has never been accomplished before. Nonetheless, by the end of the summer of 2019, the committee responsible for developing the games had managed to create six board games addressing issues relating to identity concerns and challenges facing Palestinian Arab youth in a way that appeals to them directly. We look forward to the next stage of the project when tenth-graders from ten schools will have the opportunity to play the games during 'Game Days' that we have planned for 2020. The game developing process was not without hard work and challenges. As a result of the lack of comparable initiatives in this area, it was necessary to develop a guide that explained how to develop games that combine knowledge, politics, and fun in a way that is all at once effective and deferential. We believe that our game development guide will be helpful for any organization wishing to become involved in similar activities.

Impact numbers:

- 50 participants in 5 hiking tours.
- 15 educational sessions with 'tijual' youth group's participants.
- 6 board games.



Youth for a Peaceful Society: Combating intracommunal violence in the Arab Community



7 Young
Researchers



January 2019 to
December 2019

With the support of the European Cultural Foundation and in partnership with Coventry University, Baladna's most recent initiative 'Youth for a Peaceful Society' entered the exciting early stages of its implementation. The project aims to address intracommunal violence and crime in the Arab community. To do so effectively and sustainably, however, requires a deeper understanding of this phenomenon and its underlying causes. This has been the focus of the first stages of the project's implementation, during which Baladna has trained a team that has already begun gathering data on intra-communal violence in the Arab community. Their research to date has further indicated the need for such a project, finding that Arab Palestinian youth are widely affected by violence and constitute more than 40% of victims of violent crime in Israel from 2011 to 2018.

Collecting and organizing comprehensive data on intracommunal violence and crime.

490 Arabs have been killed by intracommunal violence in Israel from 2011 to 2018. After collecting data from multiple sources, we managed to build a list that includes the number of Arab Palestinians killed in Israel, organizing it according to variables such as location, gender, age, and weapon. We recognize, however, that the data gathered is only the tip of the iceberg and that much more must be gathered in order to truly understand violence in the Arab community and its roots. Over the course of 2020, we will work to close the gaps in our own understanding and the understanding of the Palestinian Arab community around this phenomenon, disseminating our findings to a variety of stakeholders. We will also take steps to transform this reality, working closely with youth to carry out in-depth field research in four localities and, in turn, partnering with them to build holistic strategies to tackle the roots of violence in their communities.

Impact numbers:

- A team of 7 professionals working on violence.
- A report compiling data about violence in the Arab Society.

Tawasalo: Enhancing Social Cohesion and Combatting Stereotypes.



Arab Palestinian youth aged 14-21
in Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.



January 2018 to
September 2019

Three years and one-hundred exchange visits later, ‘Tawasalo: Enhancing Social Cohesion and Combatting Stereotypes’—carried out in partnership with Palvision and supported by the American Friends Service Committee—concluded its first phase of implementation in September 2019. Having reached 3,000 youth over the course of 2017-2019, ‘Tawasalo’ will re-launch in 2020 with a new set of enthusiastic youth groups. ‘Tawasalo’ brings youth from Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem together with the aim of addressing stereotypes and overcoming geographical, social, and political fragmentation. The importance of such a project stems from a context in which Palestinian communities have been cut off from one another, generating misperceptions and disconnectedness.



In just two years, more than 2,000 Arab Palestinian youth in Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem were brought together to address fragmentation and break down stereotypes.

Since January 2018, more than 2,000 Palestinian youth were integrated in the 'Tawasalo' project. Aiming to give Arab Palestinian youth the opportunity to meet, learn more about one another, break down stereotypes, and discuss identities and fragmentation, the project organized forty-five exchange visits in seventeen different localities around Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. During each visit, the two participating youth groups not only got to experience a new place but they also—and most importantly—got to learn about the daily lives of their counterparts. In order to maximize the experience, the youth also participated in workshops before each exchange visit, discussing their expectations, preconceived notions, information gaps, and the socio-political reality of the place they were to visit.

Youth Testimonies:

“Meeting with other youth from the West Bank and talking to them made me realize that many things I thought were true about them were just based on stereotypes and false assumptions that I never questioned before”

“Before the meeting, I only went to Jerusalem for purchases without talking to other people, but today I felt like we are one group and can be real friends”

Impact numbers:

- 2,080 youth participating in the project in 2018-2019.
- 45 exchange visits in 14 different towns and cities.
- 75 educational workshops.



INTERNATIONAL TRAININGS AND YOUTH EXCHANGES.

At Baladna, we are committed to promoting international exchanges and trainings for our staff and volunteers not only as a means to provide them with additional tools and knowledge, but also in order to provide them with the opportunity to expose international audiences to the challenges facing Arab Palestinian youth in Israel. Thanks to our strong partnerships with international organizations, namely International Voluntary Service (CCIVs), Service Civil International (SCI), the Anna Lindh Foundation, Erasmus+, ICJA, and our partner foundation, CCFD-Terre solidaire, we were able to participate in a variety of trainings, conferences, meetings, and exchanges abroad.

‘Midilinks: connecting Mediterranean communities’ hosted by SCI-Catalonia.

Baladna’s staff participated in a forum in Barcelona that focused on the complexity of conflicts, how they are addressed by civil society organizations, and their impact on youth. During the forum, we expanded our network on both sides of the Mediterranean, exploring potential collaborations with a variety of stakeholders.

‘Education as a Tool of Liberation’ organized by the University of Paris.

With the support of our partner organization, CCFD-Terre solidaire, Nidaa Nassar, Baladna’s director, participated in a conference in Paris that brought together leading scholars and theoreticians in the field of education, including Paulo Freire. The conference exposed us to innovative methods through which we can develop our own work with Palestinian youth, with a focus on promoting critical thought. The conference also enabled participants to build their networks and exchange experiences and ideas with participants from other locations, including activism strategies and methodologies.

‘Exchange Platform Meeting’ organized by SCI-International in Finland.

Baladna, represented by Nidaa Nassar, participated in a meeting organized by SCI-International in Finland that brought together both local and international organizations working in the field of volunteering and youth work. During the meeting, participants evaluated joint activities that took place over the last year and planned activities and youth exchanges for the year ahead.

Idea Incubator workshop in Croatia.

Baladna participated in a two-day workshop in Zagreb organized by the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) during which different strategies for civic organization and advocacy campaigns were discussed.

Palestinian activists participate in a seminar in Paris, France.

With the support of CCFD, Nidaa Nassar participated in a seminar in Paris that aimed to bring together activists and supporters of the Palestinian cause through the formation of a working group within the CCFD network. The main issues discussed included the social and political reality of Arab Palestinian youth in Israel, the impact of Israeli policies on Arab Palestinian youth, and the recent wave of discriminatory legislation in the Knesset.

‘Makan’ training on the promotion of Palestinian rights at the international level.

More than fifteen volunteers from Baladna attended a training organized in cooperation with ‘Makan,’ a British Foundation active in the field of Palestinian rights. In the training, issues relating to Palestinian rights were tackled and participants received guidance on how to effectively communicate the Palestinian cause and cater clear political messages to international audiences.

Erasmus & youth exchange project in Italy.

Two volunteers from Baladna participated in an Erasmus+ youth exchange project in Italy where they received training on human rights and gained awareness of the refugee crisis, as well as useful skills on how to communicate a cause through arts and drama.



ARTEmide youth exchange project in Italy.

Five volunteers from Baladna took part in a youth exchange project organized by the Italian Association ARTEmide. During the exchange, they participated in several workshops and trainings focused on social inclusion, active citizenship, strengthening youth leadership, creativity, and entrepreneurship skills. The volunteers also participated in networking meetings and interviews with influential personalities in Italy.

‘Young Defenders’ youth exchange project organized by SCI-Catalonia.

Yara Abu Elhija, one of Baladna’s volunteers, together with an activist from the Western Sahara, participated in ‘Young Defenders,’ an exchange project focused on the role of young activists in the Mediterranean region as peace-builders and agents of positive social change. Yara gave many talks to showcase the political realities and challenges faced by Arab Palestinian youth in Israel and participated in workshops, meetings, and summer camps around Catalonia.

‘Youth4Remembrance’ training organized by SCI-Germany.

Khalil Garra, Baladna’s project coordinator, and Abeer Bishtawi, one of Baladna’s volunteers, participated in a one-week training in Berlin, which brought together activists from around the world, civil society organizations, gaming companies, and youth centers, to share experiences and spread knowledge about the best practices, tools, and mechanisms to expose youth to the topics of memory and history. At the end of the training in Berlin, the group developed a manual outlining various mechanisms for engaging young people around the world around topics of historical memory and remembrance.

‘Midi Memes’ youth training organized by SCI-Catalonia.

After completing their trainings in Berlin, Khalil Garra and Abeer Bishtawi attended a series of training sessions organized by SCI-Catalonia in Girona, Spain which lasted one week and focused on peer-to-peer learning and exchanging grassroots experiences between organizations and volunteer activists from youth organizations in the Mediterranean region. The participants deepened their knowledge of innovative methods and tools to work with youth on political and social issues. Khalil and Abeer gained hands on experience, designing exchange activities that will be used by international volunteers participating in next summer’s seminar.



**Looking
Forward**

Looking Forward

With 2020 already underway, Baladna is in the process of deepening and expanding its efforts to empower Palestinian Arab youth. Having completed intensive trainings in 2019, the 'Harak' youth groups are now prepared for the next stage of the project, during which we will provide them with structure and guidance as they take the lead in developing and implementing needs-responsive action plans in their communities. We also have plans to expand our 'Hawiya' project, reaching more youth through 'tjwal' hiking tours and launching the interactive board games in classrooms across the country. Meanwhile, the researchers mobilized through our 'Youth for a Peaceful Society' project, as well as our staff, are eager to get to the bottom of intracommunal violence and crime in the Arab community and to work with youth to develop strategies to address it in the coming year. We are also excited to work with a new group of youth from the Palestinian society in Israel, the West Bank, and Jerusalem in the next phase of our 'Tawasalo' project to break boundaries and overcome fragmentation.

In addition to the continuation and expansion of the projects described above, Baladna is launching a new initiative this year. In partnership with youth from Nazareth, Baladna is taking steps to establish a youth center in the old city of Nazareth. Despite its historical and social significance, the Old City is one of the most deprived neighborhoods in Nazareth, lacking in infrastructure and public services and characterized by high rates of poverty, unemployment, and drug-related crime. Out of this context, youth from Nazareth's Nabd Youth Group reached out to Baladna with the idea to establish a youth center in the Old City. The Nabd Youth Group has become increasingly active in recent years and its members are eager to scale-up their work, but lack a space to do so. Baladna is looking forward to supporting the Nabd Youth Group in this important endeavor and will work with them to establish and activate a youth center in the Old City over the course of the year to come.

Our work would not be possible without the sustainable support, advice, networks, and strategic guidance provided by our partners, including CCFD, the Galilee Foundation, and EMHRF.

Our Donors (2018-2019)



Our Local and International Partners

