



Dear diplomats, partners and friends,

We want to provide you with a comprehensive update on the evolving situation in the Negev-Naqab region and how the Bedouin community is affected.



NCF's Local Advocacy Coordinator during a meeting of the Emergency Situation Room (Cheder Matsav) about the lack of shelters, education and other issues in time of war.

Photo: Cheder Matsav staff.

• Food insecurity

In a research that was published recently by NCF and the ADVA Center in 2023 on the subject of food insecurity, one of the main recommendations made was that “It is crucial that a plan will be designed for emergency situations in which residents of the Bedouin villages are unable to access food outside of their villages. Such situations will result in real hunger, as it appears to have occurred among some families during the Covid-19 epidemic.” ([Link to the article in English](#)). ([Link to the full report in Hebrew](#)).

Researchers have concluded that the prevailing security conditions make it considerably more difficult for the Bedouin population to access essential goods, which increases food insecurity and the risk of hunger. The longer the war continues, the more the situation will deteriorate, further affecting the livelihoods of a large part of the population.



In the aftermath of emergencies that restrict Bedouin villagers' mobility and keep them trapped in their communities, there is an increased risk of food scarcity, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this ongoing war, NCF has joined forces with various civil society organizations in the southern region to warn the authorities of the imminent threat of food insecurity in the Bedouin villages, and hopefully, to prevent it. The living conditions in these villages are catastrophic. A lack of food security, rudimentary infrastructure, anti-missiles shelters, unpaved roads, and unreliable access to water and electricity characterize them.

While many civilian organizations like ours have been making efforts to provide essential supplies and food parcels to distribution centers in areas like Hura, Abu Tlul and others, our volunteers on the ground stress the severity of the crisis. The dire situation requires more than these initiatives to fill the gaps and meet the needs of the population. We, therefore, call on the government to intervene immediately and implement a well-thought-out plan to prevent such crises.



This month, the NCF bought 5 tons of flour that were delivered to 200 families.

- **Incitement towards Arab citizens in Israel**

As highlighted in our previous updates, there has been a disturbing rise in the incitement against Arab citizens of Israel since the onset of the war. In collaboration with various civil society organizations, we have endorsed petitions urging political leaders (and some journalists) to halt the promotion of discord between Jewish and Arab communities.

Regrettably, there have been multiple instances of arrests, interrogations, university expulsions, and dismissals targeting Arab citizens. During the first month of the war, we have documented 190 arrests across Arab society, 97 cases of job termination, 105 instances of persecution against students and lecturers in universities, 23 cases of violence against media members, and 197 incidents involving the spread of false information and inflammatory posts against the Arab population on social media. These statistics are compiled by a coalition of emergency organizations, of which we are a part. In the Negev-Naqab, some Bedouins were interrogated by the Israel Security Agency, sometimes over no more than a post on social media.

We are deeply worried about how these repeated incidents will escalate in the near future!

We ask the international community to follow these events closely and to consider diplomatic intervention or other appropriate measures to resolve these issues. Your assistance in raising awareness and advocating for the protection of human rights and social cohesion in our region is invaluable. Only by working

together, can we create an environment where people of different backgrounds and understandings are valued and Human Rights respected.

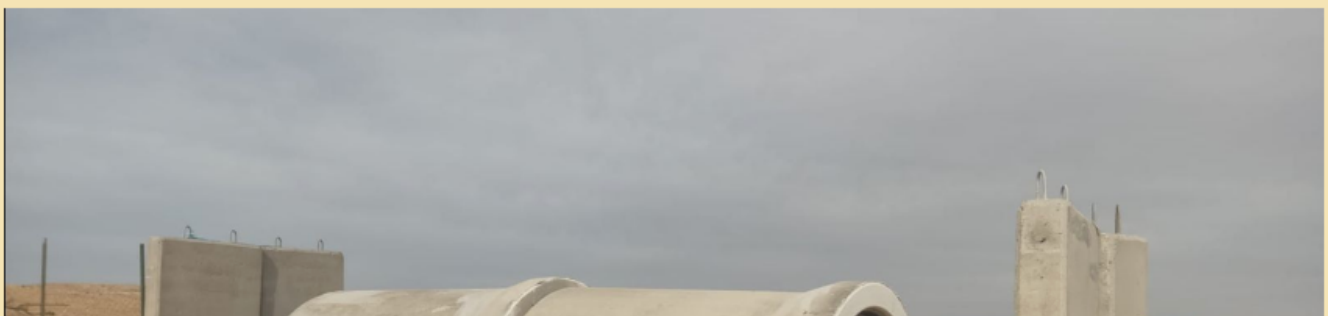


Activities conducted with Bedouin Children in the school of the unrecognized village al-Fur'ah, with kits offered by the Tel Aviv Museum.

- **Missile Protection Gaps in Negev's Bedouin Communities**

On October 13, the Association for Civil Rights along with other NGOs, including NCF approached the relevant ministers and the Home Front Command and asked them to set up protection zones, emergency shelters, and alarm systems in these villages. On October 18, the Ministry of Social Equality announced cooperation with the Home Front Command to close the "protection gaps" in the Bedouin communities in the Negev. Since then, 30 Hesco shelters - a protective shelter filled with sand, but with no roof - have been installed.

Together with the Organization Bimkom, NCF helped mapping the existing shelters in the recognized and unrecognized Bedouin villages. All the information we collected were regrouped in a position paper "[Lack of protection against missiles and rockets in the unrecognized villages in the Negev](#)".





Mobile shelter provided by the Israeli Islamic movement and other NGOs such as Ajeec in some of the unrecognized Bedouin villages. Photo: NCF staff.

Last week, NCF submitted this position paper to different members of the Israeli Government, such as Minister of Defense Yoav Galant, the Legal Advisor to the security system, Adv. Itai Ofir, Director of the National Emergency Authority, Yoram Laredo, Comptroller of the Defense System. In the position paper, NCF recalled the current situation and provided the names of the Bedouin Israeli Citizens that were killed by rockets on October 7 (More than in any other community in Israel). NCF reminded them that numerous requests have been made over the years (during every war) but that almost none were approved.

We hope that the demands will be heard: Alarm systems should be installed, shelters provided proportionally to the number of inhabitants, and structures such as schools and clinics should be equipped with shelters as well in Bedouin villages and towns. Any publication by the Home Front Command and other government bodies that refers to the conduct of citizens during an emergency must be made available in Arabic.

Today, as children are going back to school everywhere in the country, thousands of Bedouin children that study in the unrecognized villages don't have any shelter in the 13 schools and dozens of kindergartens, except for the school in Rakhamah that is equipped with two protective spaces.





Last week, in collaboration with Shatil and the Regional Council for the Unrecognized Villages in the Negev, we organized a tour across the Negev-Naqab, hosting both Israeli and International journalists. We held a press conference in the city of Hura, and presented the work of the Emergency Situation Room (Cheder Matsav). We visited the Al’Koran family, who lost four children killed by missiles launched from Gaza on October 7. We also visited Abu-Sabila's family in the village of Abu-Tlul. Amer Abu-Sabila was murdered in Sderot while trying to rescue a woman and her two children after the father had been murdered. Amer Abu-Sabila and the woman, Odaya Swisa, were shot dead by Hamas. The two little girls survived by hiding in the back of the car.



We continue to join petitions that [call for a ceasefire](#), a political solution to the war, the ending of incitement by government members, and the respect of International law.

We wish you a safe and peacefull month of December!

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