



PHOTOGRAPHING THE REMAINS OF A DEMOLISHED HOME, UMM AL-HĪRĀN. NOVEMBER, 2024. PHOTO: HAIDI MOTOLA

2024 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2024

At a glance



UMM AL-ḤIRĀN, NOVEMBER 14, 2024.
PHOTO: MIKI KRATSMAN & OREN ZIV

This year, the Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality (NCF) persisted in its dedication to fostering a more equitable and tolerant society in the Negev/Naqab, despite the challenges faced by Bedouin communities. In 2024, the State of Israel's turmoil and tragedy spanned both nationally and globally, and as Israel's most vulnerable and impoverished community, the Bedouin community felt the unrest intensely. We witnessed increasingly harsh demolitions—several villages and neighborhoods were completely razed in 2024—as well as a government intent on labeling the Bedouin community as dangerous and a liability to Israel. At times, our quest for equality and recognition felt hopeless, but our fight continued throughout.

When the year began, as we were all still reeling from the October 7th attacks, the immediate needs of the Bedouin community were stunningly clear. We addressed the three most pressing issues: food insecurity, lack of safety shelters, and home demolitions. In tandem, we continued our children's and women's photography projects to release stress and to maintain a sense of consistency and community. We also devoted much of our time to international and local advocacy, and continued our focus on Bedouin women's employment research through our knowledge and research hub, *Nagabiya*.

NCF hired a new CEO—an in-house promotion of our Local Advocacy Coordinator, Huda AbuObaid. Huda is a Bedouin-Israeli human rights defender from the Bedouin town of Lakiya in the Negev. She holds a BA in Middle Eastern Studies and Feminist Studies, as well as an additional BA in Law. Huda's human rights work focuses on issues affecting the Bedouin community, especially house demolitions, and advocates for the recognition of the unrecognized villages in The Negev.

She is the only Bedouin woman addressing the right to housing, home demolitions, and land ownership issues at a national level—all of which gravely affect the Bedouin community.

INTRODUCING

NCF's new CEO, Huda AbuObaid



HUDA LEADING A TOUR
IN THE NEGEV, 2024. PHOTO: NCF

Situation in the Negev/Naqab

RESUMPTION OF HOME DEMOLITIONS

In January, demolitions took place in Az-Zarnug, and Tel Arab (both unrecognized villages) and Bir Hadaj (recognized) – even recognition can't protect these communities. In the words of MK Yousef al Atawneh, "Home demolitions have begun as if there is no war."

Midway through 2024, the government decided to transfer the National Unit for Enforcing Planning and Construction Laws from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of National Security, Minister Itamar Ben Gvir's jurisdiction, resulting in a devastating surge in home demolition orders and structure demolitions in the Bedouin communities in the Negev/Naqab. NCF is deeply concerned that this trend will continue into 2025, as Ben Gvir has boasted on X, formally known as Twitter, about the "400% increase in home demolition orders" in the Negev/Naqab. This trend will only destabilize the region and breed hatred and resentment.

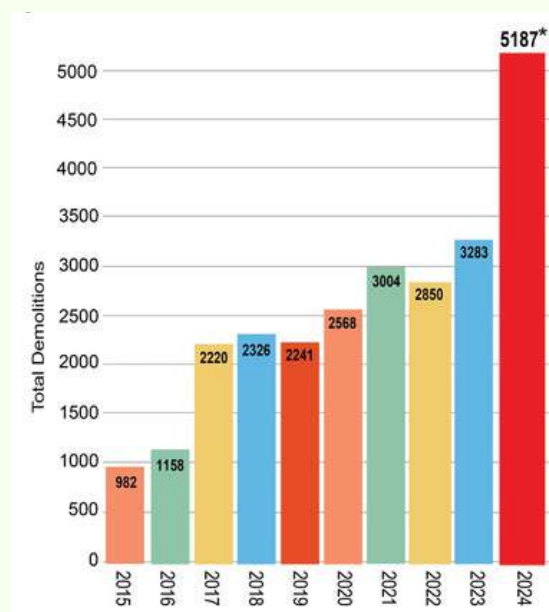
On May 8th, almost the entire village of Wadi al Khalil was razed, with only two houses remaining. The authorities destroyed about 60 homes, along with the local mosque and agricultural buildings. The action left around 350 residents - including women, children and the elderly - homeless. Wadi al Khalil is located where the State has planned to expand Route 6 southward, though construction has halted indefinitely due to a lack of budget allocations. The State demolished the entire village, without providing alternative, previously agreed-upon, adequate housing. On November 13th, residents of Umm al Hiran began destroying their homes in response to government-ordered demolitions scheduled for the following day. The Israeli police and Land Enforcement forces continue to carry out the demolitions of Bedouin villages under the pretense of "settlement expansion," while leaving families with no place to go. The demolition of Umm al-Hiran is part of a broader, systemic policy aimed at displacing Bedouin communities across the Negev/Naqab and concentrating them in government-planned townships.



THE DESTRUCTION OF WADI AL KHALIL. PHOTO: WALEED STUDIO

Situation in the Negev/Naqab

HOME DEMOLITIONS: STATISTICS



A record-breaking 5,187* building demolitions were recorded in the Arab Bedouin townships and villages of the Negev/Naqab in 2024, according to the the National Unit for Enforcing Planning and Construction Laws, headed by Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben-Gvir. This, even before the National Unit was transferred to the responsibility of the Ministry. While the Minister calls this "governance," in reality it is a path to ruin.

The significance of this data:

An **increase of 1,904 demolitions compared to 2023**. This represents a **58% rise** in total demolitions - **the largest numerical increase ever recorded in a single year**.

*Updated May 2025

Situation in the Negev/Naqab

LAND DAY & AL-ARAQIB MARCH

Every year on March 30th, NCF stands in solidarity with Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to commemorate Land Day, marking the protests against land expropriation in the Galilee that killed six Palestinians in 1976. On this year's 48th anniversary of the event, NCF joined the community of Al-Araqib, an unrecognized village repeatedly demolished since 2010 by the Israeli Land Authority.

LAND DAY IN
AL-ARAQIB,
2024.

PHOTO: HAIA
NOAH



Residents of Al-Araqib have been leading a democratic and non-violent struggle for many years, which has become one of the most significant struggles of the Palestinian community in Israel in recent decades.

Al-Araqib has faced relentless demolitions since 2010. In 2024, the village was destroyed for the 233rd time, while the village's ongoing legal battle with Israeli authorities highlights the residents' steadfast resistance, along with an unwavering broader struggle for Bedouin rights and land recognition. Marking the 14th anniversary of the demolition of Al-Araqib village, hundreds of Bedouin and Jews gathered and marched side-by-side from the highway to the village.

Situation in the Negev/Naqab

LACK OF SHELTERS

As tensions rose and the possibility of further escalations continued, the vulnerability of Negev/Naqab Bedouin communities remained a pressing concern for NCF over 2024. Without shelters, thousands of men, women and children were left exposed to the very real threats posed by the regional warfare.

The severity of this situation was highlighted in an article in the Jerusalem Post titled, "[Israel's Bedouins Remain Unprotected as Conflict Intensifies](#)." The lack of shelters is not just a logistical issue—it's a matter of life and death, heartbreakingly evident by the events of April 13th. On this night, 7-year-old Amina Al-Hasouni, was seriously injured by shrapnel while sleeping in her family's home in the unrecognized village of Al-Fura'h; she was the lone missile injury during the first direct Iranian missile attack on Israel. Amina underwent two surgeries and was still hospitalized at the end of 2024. It is no coincidence that the attack's only casualty occurred in an unrecognized village near Nevatim air-base, lacking the proper safety shelters.

NCF submitted a petition to the Supreme Court with other NGOs, and the first hearing was held on December 23rd. Regrettably, the petition was denied by the court.



MAKESHIFT SHELTER IN AN UNRECOGNIZED VILLAGE.
PHOTO: NCF

A [survey](#) conducted by Nagabiya, NCF's **Bedouin Society Knowledge And Research Hub**, within the Bedouin community in the Negev/Naqab at the onset of the war, reveals that more than two-thirds (67%) of the Bedouin population lack access to any protected area. Additionally, over 92% of residents in unrecognized villages are unable to reach a protected area during rocket attacks.

We continue to advocate for immediate measures to protect these communities and ensure their safety in the face of escalating threats, and we urge all stakeholders to prioritize these efforts.

Human Rights Work - Photography

WOMEN'S - "YUŞAWIRUNA"



ADVOCACY WORKSHOP IN AZ-ZA'ARŪRAH.
PHOTO: NURA SAGIRA

Throughout 2024, 43 photography and advocacy workshops for women took place in 9 Bedouin villages, with a total of 66 participants for both types of workshops, all of whom are of different ages, interests and backgrounds. Due to the formation of several new photography and advocacy groups, we were able to double the number of participants from 2023.

The introduction of the workshops to the project was well-timed, given the ongoing assault on democracy and, specifically, the Bedouin community, under the right-wing coalition government.

Several lectures on Naqab-Bedouin history and the community's expulsion from native lands by successive Israeli governments, laid the foundation for encouraging women to become active in resisting countless discriminatory practices and laws by current decision-makers this past year.

"UMM AL-ĤĪRĀN" SCREENINGS

The powerful, award-winning film, "Umm al-Ĥīrān," was screened at the **French Film Institute in Tel Aviv in September**. The film was also screened at a **Discussion on the Negev Bedouin Communities** with Architect Dafna Saporta from Bimkom - Planning and Human Rights in November.

"Umm al-Ĥīrān" intimately portrays the lives of two Bedouin women, Ā'ishah and Ruqayyah, participants in NCF's photography training project, as they grapple with the displacement from their ancestral village to a new township. This poignant film, created by women from Umm al-Ĥīrān, was awarded first place at the 2022 Solidarity Film Festival, a Tel Aviv-based festival that promote social justice and human rights.

Human Rights Work - Photography

CHILDREN'S - "THROUGH A CHILD'S LENS"



ABOVE:
UMM AL HIRAN CHILDREN DURING
A PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP
PRIOR TO THE VILLAGE'S
DEMOLITION.
PHOTO: NURA SAGIRA

Despite several challenges due to the ongoing war, we ran a total of 39 workshops for children, with 110 participants, from 7 different villages in 2024. Continuing NCF's tradition, these workshops culminated in the creation of a unique calendar, produced in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, marking respective Muslim, Jewish, and Christian holidays. The children love to see their work published! There is also a standing exhibition of the children's photographs at the newly inaugurated Cultural Center in Rahat.



LEFT: "THROUGH A
CHILD'S LENS"
PARTICIPANTS
HOLDING THIS YEAR'S
CALENDAR IN BĪR
HADDĀJ VILLAGE.

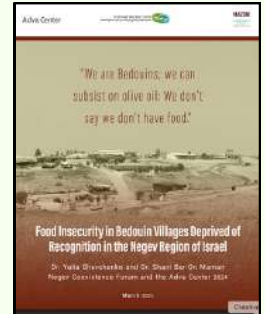
PHOTO: INTISAAR ABU
QWEIDER

Strengthening the Bedouin Community

COMBATTING FOOD INSECURITY

According to NCF research in 2023, poverty levels among families range from 45% to 86% in different Bedouin townships, and we can assume levels in unrecognized villages are much higher. As the most impoverished population before the onset of the current war, the continuous conflict and the relentless land appropriation in the Negev/Naqab by the State has doubtlessly exacerbated the issue.

In collaboration with ADVA Center and MAZON, this year NCF hosted an online symposium discussing the food insecurity that affects unrecognized Bedouin villages. MAZON financed two research reports that were presented in the symposium, written jointly by Nagabiya and Adva Center. Additionally, the organizations *published a study titled, "We are Bedouins; We Can Subsist on Olive Oil: We Don't Say We Don't have food," building on two previous studies carried out with the Adva Center*.



Throughout 2024, we continued to deliver food boxes to struggling families, such as in devastated Wadi al Khalil, and to families in 10 other unrecognized villages, with support from MAZON--A Jewish Response to Hunger.

300

**FOOD BOXES
DISTRUBUTED
IN 2024**



100

**FAMILIES
RECIEVED FOOD
IN FALL 2024**



300

**BAGS OF FLOUR
DISTRUBUTED IN
2024**



We were deeply honored to have our humanitarian work during the war recognized by Labor Party Knesset Member Naama Lazimi (pictured right).

The certificate presented to NCF (pictured left) acknowledged the strength that comes from Jewish-Arab partnership in times of crisis and the importance of working across divides when it matters most.



Strengthening the Bedouin Community

IFTAR CELEBRATION

During a time marked by increasing divisions and conflict, we found a beacon of hope in our annual Iftar gathering—a celebratory dinner during the Ramadan holiday. Against the backdrop of escalating tensions the idea of Arabs and Jews coming together was not just special—it was essential.

The event was hosted by a Bedouin resident in the village of az-Zarnug and was attended by 40 people. The event garnered both local and international media coverage, including an NBC article.



GUESTS & NCF TEAM AROUND THE IFTAR TABLE AT MUHAMMAD ABU QWAIDER'S HOME IN AZ-ZARNÜG.

PHOTO: AVISHAG SHAAR YASHUV FOR NBC NEWS, MARCH 24, 2024

Public Engagement REPORTS

In order to advocate for Bedouin communities at the highest level possible and when appeals to the Knesset make little to no headway, NCF submits reports to the United Nations' Special Rapporteurs and other human rights committees. The following reports were submitted in 2024:



August: Universal Birth Registration And The Use Of Digital Technologies: Bedouin Women In The Negev-Naqab – This report addressed the OHCHR's call for input on the question of the Universal Right to Online Birth Registration and examined the significant challenges Bedouin women face in accessing digital birth registration services.

August: "Unrecognized: Assessing Bedouin Children's Rights Infringements in Israel's Negev-Naqab" – NCF and Sidreh submitted this report to UN Committee of the Rights of the Child among the Bedouin population in Israel's Negev-Naqab region. This report evaluated Israel's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly concerning Bedouin children in the Negev-Naqab.



October: Call For Inputs To The Report Of The Special Rapporteur On Minority Issues To The HRC On The Right To Identity Of Persons Belonging To Minorities – NCF submitted a report to the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, focusing on the Bedouin community in the Negev. The submission aims to inform the Special Rapporteur's report, which will be presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2025, at its 58th session, and to advocate for policies that protect the Bedouin community's rights and identity.

November: Umm Al-Hīrān-Emergency Report Submission To The Special Rapporteur On The Right To Adequate Housing – The Emergency Report was submitted to Ms. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in response to the demolitions and evictions in Umm al-Hīrān and the upcoming evictions of other unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev/Naqab.



December: Safety As An Element Of The Right To Education And A Precondition For Its Full Realization – This report was written in response to the call for input by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Ms. Farida Shaheed, for her forthcoming report to the Human Rights Council in June 2025.

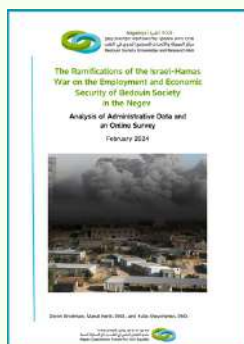
Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub

NAGABIYA: REPORTS

נגבייה | نقبية | Nagabiya
מרכז הידע והמחקר של האוכלוסיה הבדואית בנגב
מركز المعرفة والأبحاث للمجتمع البدوي في النقب
Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub

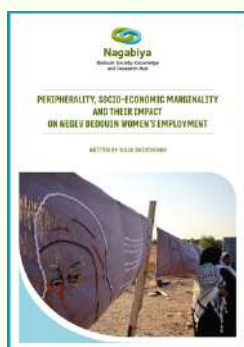
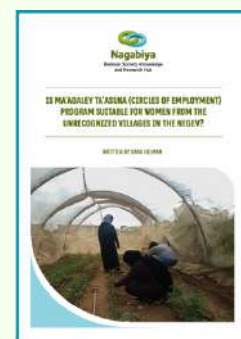


In addition to the aforementioned food security reports, with research conducted by Nagabiya and the Adva Center, and the reports submitted to the UN, which include information gathered and analyzed by NCF, Nagabiya, the following reports were published in the last year:



RAMIFICATIONS OF THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR ON THE EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMIC SECURITY OF BEDOUIN SOCIETY IN THE NEGEV-NAQAB – This report delivers insightful statistics that trace the conflict's exacerbation of systemic vulnerabilities, such as poverty and unemployment in the Bedouin Communities in the Negev-Naqab, and underscores the acute crisis in housing and civil amenities amidst a backdrop of heightened security concerns.

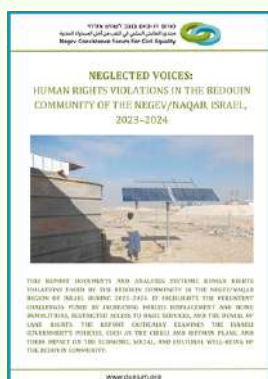
IS MA'AGALEY TA'ASUKA (CIRCLES OF EMPLOYMENT) PROGRAM SUITABLE FOR WOMEN FROM THE UNRECOGNIZED VILLAGES IN THE NEGEV? – This report is based on research involving 30 Bedouin women from unrecognized villages participating in Israel's Circles of Employment program, designed to prevent long-term unemployment among public assistance recipients. It describes the employment and educational challenges faced by Bedouin women in the Negev, analyzes the program's ideology and operations, and summarizes its limitations.



PERIPHERALITY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC MARGINALITY AND THEIR IMPACT ON NEGEV BEDOUIN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT – This report examines the employment status of Bedouin women in the Negev, based on a study of 30 women from recognized towns and unrecognized villages. It highlights how structural barriers, such as lack of infrastructure and limited access to education and childcare, significantly impact their ability to participate in the labor market.

Human Rights Reporting

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS REPORT



The Bedouin community in the Negev/Naqab has faced an unprecedented escalation in human rights violations. Over the past two years, home demolitions have surged to record highs, uprooting entire families from their land. This alarming trajectory highlights not only the state's failure to uphold its obligations under international human rights law but the pressing need for immediate action to halt the cycle of displacement and marginalization as well.

The findings of this report reveal a stark reality: a community systematically excluded from decision-making processes, facing forced urbanization, economic instability, poverty and the erosion of cultural identity.

Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub **NAGABIYA: CONFERENCES**

EXISTENCE IN THE SHADOW OF WAR: A CONFERENCE HELD AT THE MARCUS CAMPUS, BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV, IN BE'ER SHEVA, ON JULY 8, 2024

The Conference, hosted by NCF in partnership with Ben-Gurion University, focused on crucial issues within Naqab-Bedouin society since the onset of the war on October 7, 2023. Nagabiya, NCF's Bedouin Society Knowledge and Research Hub, presented ground-breaking research and data about the often-overlooked conditions in unrecognized Bedouin villages, with a focus on Bedouin women. About 100 people, both Bedouin and Jewish, attended the conference, which was also covered by various press outlets: Davar (Hebrew), Makan and Radio Nas (Arabic). The conference was very successful and marks the first event organized jointly by Nagabiya and Ben Gurion University.



**NAGABIYA CONFERENCE,
UNIVERSITY OF BEN-GURION.**
PHOTO: NCF STAFF

Two government officials, one from the Home Front Command, and another who is the Head of the Southern District Employment Service Center, had agreed to participate as speakers but failed to attend following political pressure and directives from their respective Ministers. Haia Noach, NCF Director, said, "At a time when we are fighting for equality and human rights, we faced anti-democratic efforts to cancel this conference. We insist on our right to present information and discuss it critically. Freedom of expression is the essence of democracy. It is our right to have an open and respectful democratic discourse."

THE 2024 STATISTICAL YEARBOOK OF THE BEDOUIN SOCIETY:



NAGABIYA CONFERENCE, RAHAT COMMUNITY CENTER.
PHOTO: NCF STAFF

NCF organized and hosted the launch of a conference for the 2024 Statistical Yearbook of the Bedouin Society, produced by Nagabiya, at the Rahat Community Center on December 24th. The event provided an in-depth look at Bedouin communities' socioeconomic challenges, including housing, education, and employment. The yearbook specifically presented data and a detailed analysis of 7 areas affecting Bedouin lives: **demography, education, employment, wages, higher education, public transportation and housing.**

In front of a diverse audience of 250 attendees, including four heads of local authorities, the Nagabiya research team presented findings on the state of Bedouin society between 2010-2023. This is essential data that has to date been unavailable to state authorities, causing decision-making, budgeting and action plans concerning the Bedouin population to be made without a sound factual basis. The data and analysis is presented in online dashboards on the Nagabiya website: www.nagabiya.org.

Advocacy LOCAL

Our local advocacy efforts consist of: Knesset attendance and correspondence, involvement in petitions, creation of position papers, conducting tours to the Negev/Naqab and lectures given to stakeholders. In 2024, NCF achieved:

31

Knesset interactions, both in person and via Zoom, where NCF staff members will engage with decision makers, gather information on current issues, and distribute published materials to stakeholders--some of which is previously unknown data on the Bedouin community.



HUDA ABU OBAID SPEAKING AT THE KNESSET, KNESSET CHANNEL

10

Position papers and petitions submitted to stakeholders. The topics addressed were: budget cuts for Arab communities, the overcrowding of schools in the Negev leading to high drop out rates, the unemployment crisis among Bedouin women--including employment bureau accessibility, a ceasefire in Gaza, the severity of the lack of safety shelters in the Negev, and the alarming increase of home demolition orders and instances.



ABOVE: STUDENTS VISITING UNRECOGNIZED VILLAGES DURING A HUMAN RIGHTS TOUR LED BY NCF. PHOTO: NCF STAFF

15

Tours conducted in the Negev/Naqab, after a period of absence, due to the onset of war as a result of October 7, 2023. There were over 300 participants in the 15 tours, and the audience included: students, other NGOs and NCF donors, and international stakeholders and decision makers. Of note, on three separate occasions, NCF hosted diplomats from Canada, the UK, the United States, and Germany.

16

Lectures were given in 2024, reaching a total audience of over 750 people, in person and via Zoom. Our lecture topics of discussion included: educating members of other socio-ethnic groups about Bedouin history and plight, relating and strategizing with members of other marginalized communities in Israel, and presenting previously unknown and under-researched information about the Bedouin population.



HUDA ABU OBAID (ABOVE RIGHT) TAKES PART IN A PANEL ON THE NEGEV AT THE 2024 HAARETZ CONFERENCE, HAIFA UNIVERSITY. PHOTO: NCF

Public Awareness MEDIA

NCF media strategies implement a two-pronged approach: seeking coverage in printed, traditional media for NCF events and findings, and simultaneously publishing information on our social media platforms, website, and in our newsletters.

**NCF AND NAGABIYA WERE
MENTIONED**

73
times

**IN HEBREW, ARABIC, AND
ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS.**

NCF DATA & REPORTS REACHED

2,000
recipients

**IN OUR MONTHLY
NEWSLETTERS.**

In light of the annihilation of Wadi al Khalil, NCF launched an impactful online campaign and developed a poignant photo project of portraits of the residents of the village of Wādī al-Khālīl, in collaboration with the renowned photographer, Miki Kratsman. Humanizing the individuals behind the statistics, the project showcases each villager who represents an entire world that has been brutally disrupted. Visit our social media platforms to see all the portraits.



NA'AMR ABU ASSA, WADI AL KHALIL RESIDENT, AND HIS 5-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, STANDING BESIDE THE REMNANTS OF THEIR DEMOLISHED HOME. PHOTO: MIKI KRATSMAN.

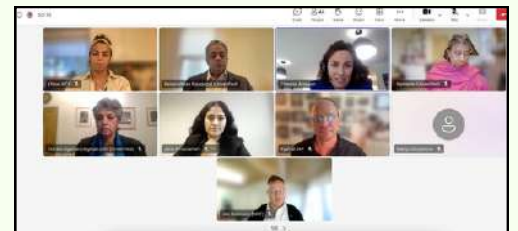
Advocacy INTERNATIONAL

In addition to global media efforts, international communications, and diplomatic tours, NCF's advocacy coordinators engage regularly with decision makers and international stakeholders. For example:

We endorsed the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and spoke at their summit about the lack of internet in unrecognized villages and how it impacts education, women's rights, and civil equality. The WSIS Forum is an annual multi-stakeholder event within the WSIS process.

In an exchange of knowledge and information, over 2024 we corresponded and Zoomed with representatives of the The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel.

NCF's International Advocacy Coordinator, Chloé Portheault (pictured right), attended a Zoom conference hosted by Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing. NCF's participation raised awareness specifically about home demolitions, forced urbanization, and displacement in the Negev/Naqab.



NCF contributed an article to the annual, "Indigenous World 2024: Respecting and Promoting Indigenous Peoples". The book was launched in April at the 23rd session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York, co-organized with Denmark in New York, and reached thousands of readers online. You can read NCF's contribution [here](#) (pp.164-172).

WITH DEEP GRATITUDE

Our heartfelt thanks to every donor who made our work possible in 2024.

Each donation—whether from individuals, community groups, or institutional partners—helped move us closer to a more just and equal Negev/Naqab.

Thank you to all our project partners, acknowledged below, whose support strengthened and sustained our efforts throughout the year.

MAZON | A Jewish Response
To Hunger

**Shalom
Salaam**
THE BRITISH SHALOM-SALAAM TRUST



**ROSA
LUXEMBURG
STIFTUNG**

האגודה לזכויות האזרח בישראל
جمعية حقوق المواطن في اسرائيل
The Association for Civil Rights in Israel



Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders
المؤسسة الأوروبي-متوسطية لدعم المدافعين عن حقوق الإنسان
Fondation euro-méditerranéenne de soutien aux défenseurs des droits de l'Homme