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| **SOCIAL CHANGE DOMAIN** | | | | | | | |
| **STRATEGIES** | | | | | | | |
| Safeguarding Civil Society and Activists: The Civil Society Protection Hub | Advancing Religious Freedom and Fighting Religious Extremism | | Combating Crime & Violence in Palestinian Israeli Society | Strengthening Anti-Racism Initiatives & Organizations | Fighting the Occupation | | Promoting Shared Society |
| Advancing Equity in Land, Planning & Housing | | **Strengthening Gender Equality NGOs** | | Safeguarding Human & Civil Rights | | Strengthening Palestinian-Israeli Society | |
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| **The organization was established in:** 2000   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **NIF Funding Type** | **Past Years of Support** | | General Support | 2000-2023 |   **DA Support (in 2022):** $350  **Rapid Response Support (in 2022/23):** None  **Link to Organizational Website:** <https://achoti.com/>  **Link to Proposal:** <https://nif.my.site.com/Portal/a0NAb000000RiGA?srPos=4&srKp=a0N>  **Link to Interim Reports:** <https://nif.my.site.com/Portal/a0N3X000019nuvq?srPos=3&srKp=a0N> | | | | | | | |
| **INTRODUCTION** | | | | | | | |
| **The overall current expected impact of the program as a strategy for advancing NIF’s overall mission of a just and democratic Israel is:**  Especially in the current reality with the most anti-feminist government in Israel’s history, and as a mandatory component of any just society, gender equality will be advanced and anti-feminist forces thwarted in measurable ways, through the widening of public knowledge and dialogue and the strengthening of activists and organizations working with wider and more diverse (especially disenfranchised) populations, including ultra-Orthodox, Palestinians, Mizrachi. | | | | | | | |
| **The grantee uses strategies of:**  Advocacy, legal activity, production of cultural events, book and periodical publishing, community organizing. | | | | | | | |
| **These are the goals of the organization and then some relevant benchmarks outcomes on the way to achieving the goals:**  The goals of the organization include: empowerment of women from disenfranchised communities (mainly in south Tel Aviv), supporting Mizrachi art and culture and in particular empowering Mizrachi women artists, protecting the rights of residents in south Tel Aviv, creating collaborations between residents in south Tel Aviv and asylum seekers and protecting the rights of asylum seekers.  Intermediate objectives to achieve these goals include:   * A change in the Tel Aviv Municipality's policy regarding gentrification processes in the southern part of the city in a way that benefits veteran residents * Establishment of independent organizations of disenfranchised groups that the organization works with (for example, the organization of women who work in prostitution) * Increasing the scope of the Ministry of Culture's support for Mizrahi culture and Mizrahi artists | | | | | | | |
| **Main Indicators for the grant include** (among others, the total list of indicators and targets can be found in the Salesforce):   * The number of legal and advocacy actions to protect asylum seekers in south Tel Aviv and their degree of success * The number of advocacy actions to promote an increase in the Ministry of Culture's support for Mizrahi culture and Mizrahi artists and their degree of success * The number and quality of cultural events and books that the organization produces and their degree of exposure | | | | | | | |
| **Added value of this grant (for the project and in general) include that:**  "Ahoti" is the oldest and main Mizrahi feminist organization operating today in Israel. The organization is located and operates mainly in south Tel Aviv and plays an important role both in protecting the rights of the veteran residents in the face of gentrification trends and in protecting the asylum seeker community from racist phenomena on the part of residents and attempts by the government to harm their rights. In addition, the organization has a central role in promoting Mizrahi culture – especially regarding its feminist component – and it manages to influence the Ministry of Culture to increase support for Mizrahi culture and Mizrahi artists.  The organization plays a key role in promoting de-escalation in the South and fostering good relations between the various communities living in South Tel Aviv. It has been actively engaged in this work, particularly in the wake of October 7. | | | | | | | |
| **(For organizations receiving support 5 or more years) Significant PAST achievements - relevant to this program or not - of the grantee since NIF began support include:**   * As part of the struggle to stop the deportation of asylum seekers in 2018, the organization played a key role in presenting the view of veteran residents of south Tel Aviv who opposed this step. Against the background of the government's claims that the veteran residents are suffering because of the asylum seekers and support the deportation, making the voices heard of residents who oppose this move was a very significant contribution to the success of the struggle and to stopping the deportation. * Following the years-long struggle to clear the Tel Aviv central station of buses, which the organization led, in October 2021 the Minister of Transport at the time, Merav Michaeli, and Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai announced in a joint statement that the buses would be removed by the end of 2023. However, it was later decided to postpone the date to 2026. * Following the organization's intensive work with asylum-seeking mothers, an independent organization of asylum-seekers – United Children of Israel – was established. | | | | | | | |
| **PROGRESS** | | | | | | | |
| Overall Progress Evaluation: Fully Met Expectations  Explanation re. Score:  Ahoti successfully represents the voices of women and minorities in South Tel Aviv and across the country. It has adapted and retained its relevance with the outbreak of the war, aiding hundreds of South Tel Aviv residents and evacuees to South Tel Aviv neighborhoods through humanitarian aid. Ahoti also promotes de-escalation between different communities and works to continue fulfilling its goals from the previous year by building partnerships with other civil society organizations.    Main Progress in 2022/23:  Outcomes:   * In the wake of October 7, and amid concerns about escalations in relations between Jews, Arabs, and the various communities that make up south Tel Aviv, the Ahoti movement established a “Peace Guard” (with emergency funding from NIF). The Guard has recruited 250 volunteers who have maintained security in the city's Southern neighborhoods, helped distribute food packages, and provided humanitarian assistance to South Tel Aviv residents and evacuees. * For the first time, Ahoti worked with the Tel Aviv municipality to successfully promote an initiative to provide scholarships to asylum seekers in South Tel Aviv in exchange for their volunteer work with the “Peace Guard.” * Ahoti assisted over 20 evacuee families from the North and South who had been housed in hotels in South Tel Aviv, providing them with food and humanitarian supplies. * As a result of a public campaign led by Ahoti on the issue of air pollution at the New Central Bus Station, air monitoring stations were set up in April 2023 in nearby schools. However, in February 2024, the municipality informed the parents of children at a local elementary school of its decision to remove the school’s air monitoring station. Ahoti is currently assisting residents in their fight against this decision, which has yet to be implemented. * Ahoti, together with 38 other human rights organizations operating in various fields, were added as amici curiae to a petition to the High Court of Justice by the Association of Civil Rights in Israel opposing the amendment to the Basic Law: The Judiciary. The petition was filed in August 2023. In an 8 to 7 majority decision, the High Court of Justice ruled against the amendment. This collaboration resulted in significant outcomes for Israeli society, as the proposed amendment would have granted the government unlimited power, potentially harming the rights of many groups, including women and marginalized communities.   Outputs:   * Ahoti published two issues of its journal, Hakivun Mizrach. The first focused on the fight against the reckless distribution of weapons (a cause that Ahoti is involved in as part of the Gun on the Kitchen Table coalition, which is supported by the NIF). The second issue was published following the outbreak of the war, which addresses topics related to the war and neglect. * The “Libi Bamizrach” (“My Heart is in the East”) festival took place on 18-21 December 2023. Initially, the security situation and the fighting in Gaza raised doubts about the feasibility of holding the festival, which had originally been scheduled for November. However, together with the Arus al-Bahr organization, Ahoti shifted the focus of the festival to Jewish-Arab culture, emphasizing the particular importance of such a theme during wartime. The festival took place in four different locations in Tel Aviv over four days and featured original productions in Hebrew and Arabic. The festival attracted a large audience and received significant media coverage. * As part of the project to engage with the Palestinian narrative, Ahoti organized two tours this year. The first was to Rahat, where 20 women from South Tel Aviv visited the head of the Rahat council and met with 30 Bedouin women residents of Rahat. The second tour was to Lod and involved 20 women from South Tel Aviv and 20 Palestinian women social activists from Lod, as well as local civil society organizations. These tours are a gateway to fostering collaboration between these communities. * Ahoti is actively working to renew the struggle against the detention of migrant worker mothers and their children born in Israel and against attempts to deport them due to a resurgence of arrests by the immigration police. At the start of 2024, Ahoti played a leading role in organizing a protest on this issue and participated in dozens of discussions in the Knesset on this topic. | | | | | | | |
| Particular **challenges and/or significant program or organizational changes:**  This year, a key challenge facing the organization is the strategic focus between all its activities and areas of interest. Another challenge is that, following the outbreak of war, Ahoti shifted its focus significantly toward promoting de-escalation and providing humanitarian assistance. As a result, the program to help women start small businesses has been temporarily put on ice. | | | | | | | |
| **2022 Organizational income:** $306,000  **2023 Expected Organizational Budget:** $298,000 | | | | | | | |
| **2023 RECOMMENDATION** | | | | | | | |
| **2022 Grant:** $93,000  **2023 Staff Recommendation:** $60,000  **% of NIF Grant out of Total Organizational Budget:** 20%  **Explain Staff Recommendation**  The organization, which operates primarily on a local level, successfully influences policy and represents population groups with which no other organization is working effectively. The organization’s de-escalation work, its work with various communities, including migrant workers and asylum seekers, as well as long-time residents of South Tel Aviv, are rapidly expanding and are very significant, especially during times of intercommunity tensions. Despite a substantial reduction in grant funding last year, Ahoti effectively carried out its activities this year. Therefore, we recommend maintaining stability in grant funding for this year.  **Recommendation of Board/Grants Committee 2023:** | | | | | | | |