



 RABBIS FOR קול רבני 
חאזמאט מן אגל לזכויות אדם
HUMAN RIGHTS حقوق الانسان

Annual Report

2023



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A famous Chinese proverb says, **"May you live in interesting times."** We are living in a fascinating and tumultuous time—one of the most difficult periods in the history of Israel and the entire region.

On the morning of Simchat Torah, October 7th, I was with my family at our home in Kibbutz Nir Im, about two kilometres from Khan Yunis. We endured a harsh attack by hundreds of Hamas terrorists. We managed to survive.

As of now, we are still displaced from our home.

"For Those Who Don't Believe - It's Hard to Live This Year"
-Leah Goldberg

Before October 7th, we were in the midst of an organisational upswing, a week from the start of our olive harvest campaign, which was significantly altered by the war.

Despite the immense heartbreak and upheaval to our personal lives, we significantly increased our activities.

We held a march of hundreds in the heart of Jerusalem and a prayer and song event at Jaffa Gate. We held two mass interfaith prayer events in the immediate wake of the war, following on from the year of strengthening our interfaith activities.

We created a humanitarian project for the first time. Our protective presence on the ground expanded instead of shrinking. We stood side by side with attacked communities and villages

We intensified our efforts to protect and assist Jewish and Arab Israelis living in poverty. We prevented electricity cutoffs and fought for the promotion of food security.

Leah Goldberg ends her poem "For Those Who Don't Believe" with the question: **"How can I wake up from sleep and have no faith in my heart?"**

I do have faith. We are committed to continuing this momentum for 2024.



LETTER FROM RABBI RUTI BAIDATZ - BOARD CHAIR

At the end of 2023, we are badly hurt. All the residents of the region, Jews and Arabs, are pained in a deep and bloody way.

The damage is unbearable. Hamas's murderous attack on Israel caused death and destruction, with Israeli hostages still being held in Gaza. This attack was followed by a war in the Gaza Strip, which led to destruction, famine, and a shocking humanitarian crisis. In the midst of the storm, we found ourselves as part of a strong civil society, determined to protect democracy and restore Israeli society.

Our growing staff and over 150 rabbis who are members of the organization, helped us work towards healing, hope and resistance to oppression.



*The idea that Amalek is a state of being rather than a people derives from Neriya Knafo

The Torah tells us in the book of Deuteronomy:

"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt. He bit you on the way, and all the serpents followed you, and you were tired and weary."

But who is Amalek? We do not know, historically, such people. Still, above the stage at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, we heard quotes from Israeli leaders, who spoke of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as Amalek. There is not, and never was, such a nation. Amalek is a social situation, a state of vulnerability. A state where all compassion and empathy has been lost is a state of Amalek.

Our rabbinic leadership choice, in these days of war, is to fight a desperate war against Amalek—the social neglect, poverty, oppression, hunger dominating our society. We demand life and human rights for all. We remember that our dream is to live a peaceful life, which can only happen once everyone in this land can live with dignity.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES



A solidarity visit to Turmus Ayya, June 2023

Since the November 2022 elections, which established one of the most extreme government Israel has ever known, human rights abuses have increased and deepened throughout the occupied territories.

Israeli organisations have little ability to engage with the catastrophe in the Gaza strip. Since the beginning of the war, RHR has been calling for a ceasefire, a return of the hostages, and an increase in humanitarian aid.

Our work in the West Bank has become more critical in the face of an increase in theologically driven, Jewish terrorism.

1038

Incidents of
settler violence
in 2023

17

Palestinians
killed by
settlers in
2023

1208

Palestinians
displaced as a
result of settler
violence and
military activity

As reported by OCHA



וַיְבָרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצִלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם
אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם.

Rabbi Ruti Baidatz guarding Ein Rashash - June 2023

PLANTING JUSTICE

In 2023 we brought **Israelis and Palestinians together to plant 650 trees** in Palestinian villages in the West Bank and in unrecognised Bedouin communities in the Negev.

PROTECTIVE PRESENCE

Across the Jordan Valley and in agricultural communities south of Nablus, RHR provided shepherding escorts. We assisted shepherds in protection from settler violence. In 2023, RHR brought 162 activists to the field.

OLIVE HARVEST

In the shadow of the war, Palestinians were prevented from harvesting their olives. An estimated 96,000 (OCHA) dunams remained unharvested due to Jewish settler terror and military restrictions.

Through this hard time, we assisted Palestinians in accessing their land and brought 40 activists to take part in harvesting.



162

Activists brought
to the field for
protective
presence in 2023

Daniil Brodksy, OT Director, protective presence, March 2023

HUMANITARIAN AID

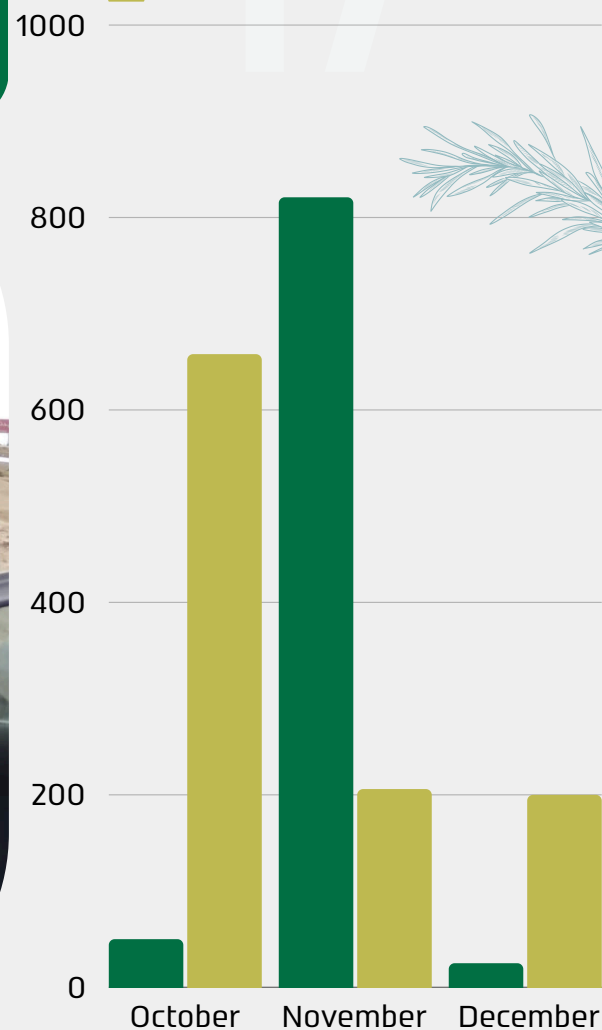
At the onset of the war, we initiated an emergency humanitarian aid campaign in collaboration with **Culture of Solidarity and Torat Tzedek** and many other organizations.

This project was crowdfunded by donations from Israelis and others around the world, who wish to express solidarity with Palestinian communities suffering at this time.

2000+

Boxes of food aid delivered to families across Israel-Palestine

■ Unrecognized Bedouin Villages
■ Palestinians in the West Bank



All data from 2023



Rabbi Dani Danieli delivering food aid, December 2023



Packing day in Rahat, December 2023



Anton Goodman, RHR, delivering packages to Jahalin tribe, December 2023



Packing day with Culture of Solidarity, Tel Aviv

INTERFAITH ACTIVISM



Faith Leaders at an Interfaith Event in Haifa, December 2023

INTERFAITH MARCH

In May 2023, we orchestrated a poignant interfaith march for equality, justice and peace in the heart of Jerusalem. Dozens of faith leaders and hundreds of participants marched through Jerusalem to the Old City walls to voice our share values. The march was a powerful counter-action to the violent Jerusalem Day flag parade, which took place the following week.

INTERFAITH EVENTS

Interfaith work provides a safe space for Israeli-Palestinian interactions and a platform to develop share values towards conflict resolution.

Since the outbreak of the war, many hundreds have participated in online gatherings and in-person events that RHR has held in Jewish and Arab towns.



Faith Leaders at our Interfaith march, June 2023

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION



A pre-military academy cohort visiting an unrecognized Bedouin family in the Negev.

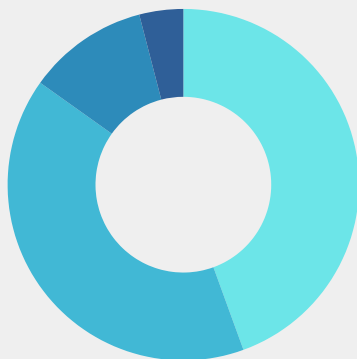
The November 2022 elections saw a lurch to the right in Jewish Israeli voting trends, with a hardening of right-wing thought particularly amongst young voters. These attitudes have only deepened during the war.

We remained determined to advocate for a human-rights-based approach with Jewish thought at its heart. The curriculum for our pre-military academies (Mechinot), led by Rabbinic educators, explores Jewish texts and traditions through the lens of human rights, social justice, and Tikkun Olam (repairing the world). Please see the below from a survey of Mechinot students.

“**I am more interested and caring in regards to human rights issues**”

”

I am alone in my opinion
11.1%

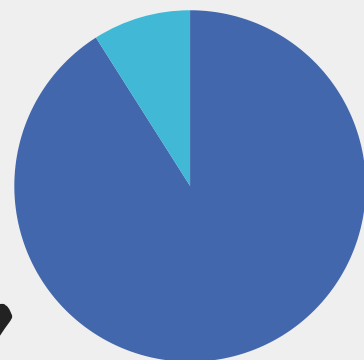


I just don't have the willpower
40.4%

I am worried about the response from my peers
44.4%

“

I want to do something to make my voice heard, but...”



Yes
91%

No
9%

RABBIS NETWORK



Rabbis Education Day in West Bank, August 2023

14 Rabbis from a variety of different Jewish streams participated in a five-part series, "Truth Springs from the Earth," designed to instill an understanding of the reality in the Occupied Territories. We strengthened our partnerships through programming with **Breaking the Silence**, **Ir Amim**, and **Combatants for Peace**, amongst others. The programme helped ensure that participating Rabbis would be informed in their conversations with pre-military students.

RHR led Rabbis in solidarity visits to Turmus Ayya and Huwara in response to large-scale attacks at the hands of violent Jewish settlers. Our visit to Turmus Aya was covered on Kan 11 TV news and across the Israeli media



160

Rabbis in
our Rabbis
Network

35

Beit Midrash
study sessions

A solidarity visit to Turmus Ayya

SOCIAL JUSTICE

This year, our social justice team was actively engaged in the Knesset, advancing a nationwide initiative aimed at addressing food insecurity among all citizens of Israel. Additionally, we collaborated with a network of social activists living in poverty. We organized an advocacy training day at the Knesset for over 50 activists representing various communities from across the country, with participating activists from diverse backgrounds—among them Arabs, Haredim, and Ethiopian-Israelis. A group of activists was formed in Hadera and meets at RHR's Rights Center there, led by Prof. Victor Friedman and Dr. Tamar Drori.



Members of our activist network in the Knesset



RHR's Rights Center serves the residents of Hadera, Wadi Aara and Pardes Hana.

At the Rights Center, professionals and volunteers provide information on rights, assistance, and guidance for exercising social rights and entitlements in matters of debt, public housing, social security and more. The service is free and available in both Hebrew and Arabic.

1380

Client
interactions in
the year 2023



ADVOCACY

The Social Justice Department made significant strides in addressing food insecurity within Israel during the past year. Our efforts in the Knesset, accompanied by a strategic social media campaign and a protest outside Aryeh Deri's residence, led to the successful allocation of one billion shekels for food vouchers to the state budget.

Our advocacy secured an extension for the voucher submission deadline until the end of February. We also actively addressed the lack of state action in safeguarding rights.

In collaboration with food organizations, we contributed to shaping recommendations for the 2023 state budget.

**100
Million**

**allocated for
food vouchers
in the state
budget**



POLICY ADVOCACY

In 2023, our efforts centred on addressing crucial issues affecting individuals living in poverty, working towards a dignified life for all. Engaging in comprehensive follow-ups on published law memoranda, we delved into diverse matters related to living conditions.

Our advocacy extended to presenting position papers and appeals, responding to the law memorandum on doubling allowances, and providing feedback on debt relief and economic rehabilitation regulations.

FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY & THE RETURN OF HOSTAGES

This past year has been one of protest and defiance. Israel is faced with an existential crisis, threatened by a government that at every turn undermines the democratic values at Israel's core.

The first three quarters of the year were dominated by our resistance to the proposed judicial overhaul.

Post-October 7th, our focus shifted to fighting tirelessly for the return of the hostages, and standing in solidarity with their families.



Avi Dabush speaking at a pro-democracy rally



FINANCIALS

The activities highlighted in this report would not have been possible without the generosity of our donors and community partners.

Your generous support has helped us expand exponentially over the years and support the human rights work we do in Israel/Palestine.

Thank you for joining us on the frontline of a more just, peaceful reality for Israelis and Palestinians.

Budget: 3,320,000NIS

Income

Programme and Activities Income
10.8%

Foundations
31.1%

Individual income
37.4%

Churches + Synagogues
20.8%

Administration
26.3%

Education
13.4%

Social Justice
21.2%

Public diplomacy
10.8%

Interfaith
4.7%

Occupied Territories
23.5%

Expenses

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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**Donate to Rabbis
for Human Rights
and defend the
dignity of all in
this land.**



**Make a difference
today.**

SCAN TO DONATE