

Kayan's Newsletter

August 2021



A Message from Our General Director

Justice, Equality, and Leadership. These three values are the base of our mission here at Kayan; they have become increasingly prominent as we have navigated these past 8 months. From ensuring no woman is left behind in the continued Covid-19 pandemic to expanding our organization's connections to an international scale, the pursuit of justice, equality, and leadership in Kayan has been a driving force in our organization.

This year, Kayan has had much success in all of our change-making arenas. We hosted diverse and empowering youth workshops to raise awareness on sexual assault and gender-based violence. Our youth have also had the opportunity to take charge of projects such as creating podcasts about Palestinian feminism. Kayan has also been fostering relationships with different groups--both new and old--to broaden our scope of work. We have continued leading organizations such as the Fada Coalition and the Jusur Forum to allow our mission to transcend geographical borders and hear new perspectives. We have met with many ambassadors from around the world to share our mission. We have strengthened our hotline to respond to the more significant sexual and gender-based violence cases, exacerbated by the coronavirus.

While we have had many successes this year, which we cannot wait to share with you, we know that our progress is not a reason to slow down but a reason to keep moving forward. Arab women in Israeli society still face threats of femicide and violence each day. We are still fighting for the personal status rights of Arab women. We still have to inform our youth of the dangers of sexual assault.

None of this work would have been possible without the support of our outstanding staff, donors, and community. As we move forward into the second half of the year, we look forward to continuing to strive for equity and justice together.

In peace,

Rafa Anebtawi
General Director



Leadership In Action

Kayan takes a bottom-up approach to social change. By investing in the grassroots, empowering them to become transformative leaders and change-makers, we can collectively work to break down the social and institutional barriers to gender equality.

12 local groups with over 100 women combat sexism, sexual and gender-based violence and become incredible leaders on the local and national level in the process.

These passionate and influential women in local groups have planned workshops, protests, and events even during the pandemic. Over the past



7 months, our grassroots groups have hosted over 21 seminars on SGBV, personal status rights, and community needs. For example, this June, the Majd Al-Krum locality held a neighborhood meeting to raise awareness and learn about sexual and gender-based violence from the perspective of local women to develop an action plan for the

future. Another local group in Yafit Al Nasirah held a workshop on the economic impacts of the coronavirus on women in March. Another in Arrabeh, "Atiaf", held a seminar to give women advice on dealing with the emotional stress and impacts of the pandemic.

Not only are our grassroots groups working to address gender-based issues and sexism, but they're becoming inspired to take action in other areas. For example, a group in Jdeideh Almaker held a protest in April to protest Israel's Road 6 plan, which would run through Arab-owned farmlands. Our groups of women grow nationwide, our impact expands. Our grassroots model allows us to make our mark all over Arab localities and provide Arab women and youth with the support they need - regardless of the place they live in.



Jusur Forum

The forum contains over **30 representatives from 17 localities**.

- It has held its first annual retreat since Covid-19 started, which took place in Majdal Shams.
- The forum learned about the Golan political situation through Diala Kedah's Majaz gallery and Emad Kedah's "Alternative Tourism" project
- Collaborated with powerful women from all across Israel.
- Chose to focus on providing media and advocacy training for women.
- Participated in two training days led by a media expert on June 27 and July 4th, to gain skills that will elevate their work and empower them to raise awareness through active social media.
- As a result of the political crisis in May 2021, the Jusur Forum focused more on addressing youth. We are currently in the process of deciding upon three localities, where the Jusur Forum will work more actively over the next 3 years to train and mentor about 40-50 youth to become local activists and community change-makers. So far, we have begun to communicate with 15 youth in Deir Hanna, and we will continue to work with them throughout this year.



Advocacy Through Kayan:

Bringing Women's Voices to the National and International Levels

International Action

* Kayan has spent the last 7 months cultivating and creating partnerships with embassies and political groups on a larger scale. We welcomed the Deputy Head of Mission of the Irish and the Spanish Embassy into our office and the Dutch ambassador. We spoke about the importance of promoting Arab Palestinian women's rights in Israel and creating more exposure for our organization at an international level.

* We submitted [our report on femicide](#) to the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, who will use the report in the UN General Assembly this fall. While we maintain a grassroots approach throughout the Arab society, our lasting connections with other nations have helped Kayan become an international force.



National Action

This spring, Kayan published a groundbreaking report on femicide in Arab society in Israel, based on an extensive research study that addressed multiple perspectives on femicide through a feminist approach. The research holistically studied several aspects of the phenomenon of femicide, including legal work to obtain information from relevant Israeli institutions, such as the police; investigation of media coverage; examination of relevant international treaties; and analysis of the perspectives of family and friends of victims. This included interviews with 22 relatives and friends of 14 women who were murdered by their husbands or other male relatives from 2015 to 2020 in different Palestinian towns in Israel, as well as with social workers who worked on the victims' cases both before and after the femicide. We addressed in the interviews several factors related to the cases of murder, including the victim's life before the killing occurred; relationships with her family, her marital life; and the involvement of official institutions with the victim and her family before and after the killing.

Kayan has also spent this year following up on our report in order to continue holding the Israeli government accountable for their policies towards Palestinian society, which have led to negative outcomes and death for so many Palestinian women. Recently, we made progress in our [Freedom of Information](#) Petition and received additional data on femicide in Arab society in Israel. According to this data delivered by the police, from 2015-2020, 73 Arab women were murdered in acts of femicide, 23% by their own spouses. In 2020, 60 percent of murdered women had previously filed complaint(s) with the Israeli police about domestic violence, showing the lack of protection that the police provides

to Palestinian women seeking assistance against violence. We continue to follow up on our petition, as police and prosecutors are still refusing to provide information on many other unanswered questions.

* We have also had success in helping shut down the Anti-Family Reunification Act in the Israeli Knesset. Voted on and usually renewed each year, Kayan and the Fada Coalition sent out educational materials and pushed back against the bill. The Act did not pass this year due to the political interests of the Knesset. Kayan will remain a force on the national level, holding political and non-political structures accountable for human rights and justice.

Kayan Across Borders

Fada Cross Border Coalition

The Fada Coalition is a groundbreaking collective that engages feminist groups across borders. Fada is the first and only coalition of Palestinian feminist organizations that include groups based in historical Palestine. By working with the **Fada Coalition** this year, we are continuing to strive for the 3 goals we created together during the strategic planning process:

- To increase social awareness of the problem of SGBV and lead people to take responsibility for ending SGBV against women and girls in Palestinian society.
- To improve and develop public feminist and human rights discourse on SGBV, be more feminist and gender-sensitive in the Palestinian community.
- To overcome the common obstacles and challenges that Palestinian feminist NGOs face in their advocacy work to improve their cooperation and collective platforms fighting SGBV on behalf of Palestinian women.

Youth Engagement

Youth Voices Heard

* This year, Kayan has engaged youth through an innovative new project called **"Start to Listen"** In this project, young people get together and record podcasts, often with notable guest speakers, about feminism and gender issues. (You can access all podcast episodes [here](#).) Through this project, young people have been able to find their voice on topics such as sexism and SGBV while spreading awareness through a creative platform.

* Youth have been responsible for over half of our participants in events relating to violence against women. Their engagement in our programming serves as a beacon of hope- that the people in the future are interested in gender equality and can imagine a world without the threat of femicide and SGBV.



Youth while recording the third and final episode of the "Start to Listen" podcast series. This episode was called "Feminism is Not Just For Women."

This year we have started a project with female law and criminology students in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. One of the 3 leadership projects is "Tamohat," meaning ambitious. Several cultural and educational workshops were held throughout the year that shed light on the importance of raising awareness of the psychological and legal sides of sexual harassment cases, based on the importance of the youth role in preventing the harassment phenomenon in university halls. The project concluded with an intensive awareness-raising day organized at the university—participants distributed hundreds of copies of the information leaflet and promoted Kayan's support hotline number.



Kayan's Resources

Legal Team and Hotline

Kayan's hotline for women and legal resources are being utilized and expanded now more than ever to defend the rights of Arab Palestinian women.

402

calls from January through July.

83

of these calls were from Arab women during May, during the violent conflict in Israel and Palestine.

63%

of calls to the hotline were from women experiencing violence.

30%

of women who called the hotline took concrete legal action on their situations, such as reporting to the police or receiving legal assistance from the state.

20%

of women who called the hotline were able to receive governmental social services.


15




new volunteers have been recruited and are getting trained to be first responders on the hotline.




36

appointees for the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace receive support, both in a group and through individual conversations and consultations.



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