



What is Rawa?

A community-driven support model that mobilizes Palestinian creativity.

Rooted in collective community decision-making, Rawa is a funding and support model that aims to raise hope, build trust and dignity, and promote successful alternative local solutions generated by Palestinian communities. Rawa fuels civic engagement, funds creative solutions, and raises social capital among communities and grassroots organizations across Palestine.

In moments of political urgency, grassroots groups are the first to lead community mobilization, but are too often at the margins of philanthropy. Rawa brings progressive Palestinian community voices to the international philanthropy table, while at the same time working to fix a broken funding model.

In an initial three-year pilot (2018-2021), Rawa's model entrusts local people to set funding priorities and allocate resources for innovative community development. We envision supporting 60-90 projects over the initial pilot period, with grants ranging in size up to \$35k.

Leveraging and amplifying the impact of both local grassroots activism and international philanthropy, Rawa aims to incite new thinking on how best to foster organic, effective, and community-determined resource allocation and social investment.

History

To date, hundreds of people have come together to shape this unique initiative with their time, expertise, advice, ideas, vision, and solidarity.

In October, 2014, two dozen philanthropy and development professionals from Palestine, Europe, and the US attended a convening in New York to discuss the need for the initiative and its initial parameters, establishing a working group to help steer activities and progress. The results were overwhelmingly supportive and productive, creating a mandate for a radically inclusive and open fund that values and mobilizes Palestinian creativity.

In spring 2015, Rawa held consultations in Jerusalem, Aida Refugee Camp (Bethlehem), Gaza, Nazareth, and Ramallah with several dozen Palestinian community leaders and activists. Over 60 individuals working closely with communities on the ground spent a day in reflection about urgent and ongoing needs, funding experiences, and their desire for a new platform of support for their work. We explored the potential of grantmaking as a creative and developmental process with the potential to entrust power and resources to local leadership and often ignored initiatives, and examined various models of resource distribution that might be suitable for Rawa to adopt. Meetings were convened with the technical and hosting support of A.M. Qattan Foundation, NGO Development Center, Dalia, YWCA, Al Feniq, Aida Youth Center, Al Maamal Foundation and the Arab Academic Union. An additional 50 local activists and community leaders were interviewed by the Coordination team.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, Rawa facilitated meetings with recruited community participants based in Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza, and '48/Israel, establishing a strong network and foundation for a series of workshops and retreats and forming Rawa's first Community Clusters - the heart of this novel participatory funding model. We also participated in working groups and conferences in Europe and the US to learn from and contribute to a growing movement increasingly exploring and championing participatory grant making.

Rawa's planning and exploration period has been supported in part by Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Open Society Foundations, Middle East Children's Alliance (our fiscal sponsor), Global Fund for Community Foundations, Al-Maamal Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.

Why Rawa Now?

Today more than ever, it is critical to support the community-based and civil society groups that form the bedrock of Palestinian society.

Since the 1990s, an influx of international aid in Palestine has largely prioritized emergency and humanitarian relief, creating aid dependency. Over time, increasingly bureaucratic and measurement-driven processes have shifted resources away from alternative, community-owned solutions to the problems caused by decades of occupation and structural discrimination. Foundation resources allocated to Palestine have shrunk, particularly as other regional priorities have intensified, and donor fatigue has worsened in the face of a seemingly intractable situation on the ground.

Grassroots groups—the traditional pillars of Palestinian society—risk losing the tenuous ground they currently have; if they are to survive, they need *urgent, simple, flexible support* to move toward self-determination and fortify steadfastness at the local level. Since international aid has largely blocked creative problem-solving at the local collective level, Rawa, along with a growing movement of philanthropy professionals and communities concerned about aid models, believes it is time to try a new approach.

Our Vision & Values

Toward a vibrant, self-determined, self-sustaining, and open Palestinian society.

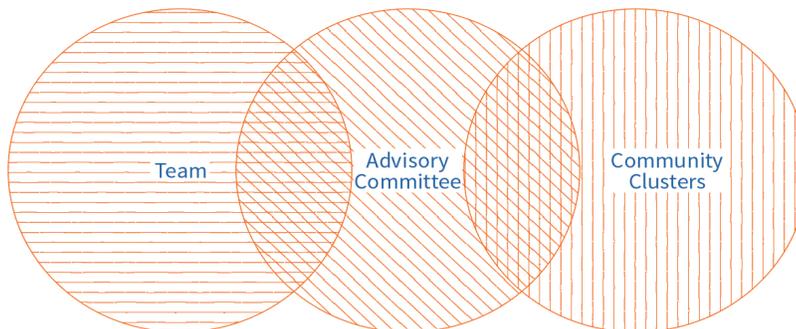
Rawa's participatory funding model supports creative Palestinian community development and inspires a new culture of international aid and local resource mobilization. We value:



Who We Are

A deeply rooted and growing movement—of people, resources, and hope.

By design, Rawa's intensely participatory and community-based model is fueled by, and in turn continuously expands and strengthens, a diverse and expansive local and global network of people who want to support new solutions for Palestinian society.



Team: Team members have decades of experience in international philanthropy and activism. We are responsible for administration, management, outreach, operations, fundraising, public relations, and evaluation. In 2017-2018, Rawa aims to hire 7 part-time staff positions, located remotely and locally. Current team members include: Areej Daibas, Moukhtar Kocache, Josie Sheilds-Stromsness, and Colleen Jankovic.

Advisory Committee: The Advisory Committee is an oversight group made up of 1 Team member, 4 Community Cluster members (1 from each cluster), and 4-6 individuals from our network of local and international Friends & Supporters. We ensure 360-degree communication, oversee fiduciary, legal, and administrative responsibilities and development, and serve as strategic thought leaders responsible for the fund's wellbeing. We share our specific knowledge and experiences, and serve as advocates for Rawa and the Palestinian communities it serves. Our term limits ensure a dynamic process and prevent gatekeeping. Chaired by Fadya Salfiti, the Advisory Committee's current members are Nur Abdi, Jamal Jumaa', Moukhtar Kocache, Jamileh Sahlieh, and Ahmed Sourani; we will continue growing the Committee in the coming year.

Community Clusters: Community Cluster members are influential and visionary Palestinian community leaders working on the ground with and/or in Palestinian communities and organizations. We are the heart of Rawa. We belong to four Community Clusters (that will number between 25-35 at any time), which represent geographic areas fragmented by Israeli military occupation, and diverse in needs and perspective: The West Bank; East Jerusalem; Gaza Strip; and '48/Israel.

Current members work in diverse, multi-sector community development fields, including: youth engagement, women's rights, arts and culture, agriculture, cultural heritage and preservation, political advocacy, environment and sustainable economies, local governance and civic engagement, and education. Many are engaged in the new wave of youth initiatives, or in place-based popular resistance initiatives. To maintain a balance between group continuity and a dynamic, fair process, we have term limits; a handful of new members rotate in every year after the 3-year pilot.

Cluster members currently committed to serving for a 3-year term are independent activists and cultural practitioners, or affiliated with a number of local organizations, including: American Friends Service Committee, Ramallah; Palestine Writing Workshop, Birzeit; Nawa for Culture and Arts Association Program; Dalia Association; Culture & Free Thought Association; Aid Watch Palestine; Mada al-Carmel Arab Center for Applied Social Research; Stop the Wall Campaign; Baladna Association for Arab Youth; NGO Development Center; UN Women; Rosa Luxembourg Foundation in Gaza; Gaza Urban & Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform; Jerusalem Tourism Cluster; and Burj Al Luqluq Social Center Society; 7amleh: Arab Center for Social Media Advancement.

Current members of growing clusters include (* indicates advisory member):

West Bank	East Jerusalem	Gaza Strip	'48
Alaa' Abu Saa'	Muntaser Edkaidek	Reem Abu Jaber	*Nur Abdi
Basma Abu Swai	Anan Ghaith	Abdallah Al Sayyed	Fathi Marshoud
Maya Abu Alhayyat	*Jamileh Sahlieh	Moheeb Shaath	Nidaa' Nassar
Fatin Farhat	Fida Touma	Bessan Abdel Salam	Nadim Nashef
*Jamal Juma'		Shehadeh	Sameye Sharqawi
		*Ahmed Sourani	

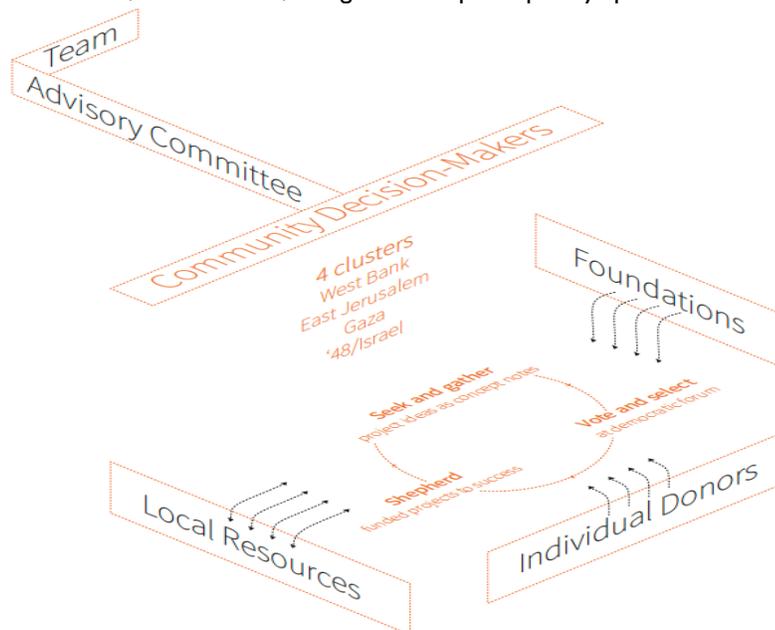
Fiscal Sponsor: Rawa functions as a basket fund under the institutional and nonprofit fiscal umbrella of the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) located in Berkeley, California. As the fiscal sponsor for Rawa, MECA provides charitable receipts for contributions, keeps records and accounting of all funds donated, and sends grant funds to Palestinian organizations.

Rawa also has a secondary fiscal sponsorship with Network of European Foundations (NEF), for donors and foundations that prefer to donate through a European entity.

**Rawa
Support:
How it
Works**

A locally-led model of community development support, and a new way to fund Palestinian community development.

Rawa’s initial three-year pilot (2018-2021) will result in a tested experimental model of participation, resource management, community development, and philanthropic strategies that can be scaled up and replicated. Rawa’s unique model and process aims to instill pride, respect, and hope—critical to move the reality of the conflict and challenges facing Palestinians from a stagnating environment into a more creative, multi-faceted, and generative participatory space.



**Our Funding
Focus**

Rawa’s broad mandate is to support creative community development solutions (using social, economic, and/or cultural approaches) from *small-to-medium sized Palestinian organizations and unregistered groups*.

Aiming to support truly innovative and experimental ideas, prospective initiatives may use a wide field of social, economic, and/or cultural approaches and diverse, unrestricted tools and strategies. Maximizing the potential impact of supported projects, the model encourages cross-sector collaborations and solutions that draw from local resources and enhance local social capital. Funded groups might use tools and strategies such as:

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| infrastructure development | capacity building | education |
| marketing & entertainment | social enterprise | mobilization |
| campaigns | public programs | advocacy |

Rawa’s support mandate covers creative community development solutions that:

- | | |
|---|--|
| strengthen the social fabric of society | empower local leadership |
| spark open discourse | expand volunteerism |
| build social cohesion | harness local social and financial capital |
| inspire community engagement | grow sustainable economies |

Since local funding decision-makers represent progressive voices within Palestinian society, we expect projects that benefit youth, women, people in rural areas, and that create alliances between typically fragmented and divided communities across a region variously affected by military occupation, widespread discrimination, stifled economies, and strained resources.

Community-led

The funding process begins and ends with community decision-makers (our four Community Clusters). Rawa believes that community-led priority-setting and oversight of support resources is the right approach from a social justice perspective. It's also smart strategy. Our model enhances and strengthens existing on-the-ground resources and networks, raising community groups' existing capacity to be creative and dynamic. And, with a light and nimble structure, fewer resources and energies are spent on institutional costs and development.

Drawing from their intimate local knowledge, community members prospect (seek out ideas and gather them as simple concept notes) and select (at an all-cluster democratic forum) innovative community initiatives. This participatory, collaborative, and democratic process fosters communication, learning, networking, solidarity, and exchange between fractured and separated Palestinian communities. After proposed community development solutions are selected for funding, local partners shepherd them throughout the support process, rather than impede them with arbitrarily imposed conditions and outcome-based documentation.

Experimentation & Learning

Since the most successful outcomes are sometimes unforeseen and unplanned, Rawa prioritizes learning together, remaining open to different pathways to success, and accepting that occasional failures are unavoidable, yet often illuminating. Rawa's support model embraces flexibility, honoring the organic and creative ways communities generate and implement authentic solutions. In doing so, we pave the way for experimental ideas that carry the potential to cross disciplinary and political boundaries, but that funders might otherwise overlook or be unable to support (because they lack knowledge, scale, or capacity, or because of legal restrictions or political concerns).

New Ways to Give to Palestine

As a basket fund, Rawa is a *global philanthropic resource mobilizing platform*, designed:

- 1) to make it easier for people to donate to Palestinian communities, and;
- 2) to ensure Palestinian communities can effectively and autonomously use that support.

Rawa advocates for progressive Palestinian community development at the international philanthropy level, leveraging the funding power of foundations, development agencies, individual donors, fundraisers, and novel fundraising models (like crowdfunding), while ensuring equitable power dynamics between donors and local communities when it comes to the distribution and use of funds.

Seeing sustainability as a shared responsibility, Rawa's alternative support model is designed to move to the next level of participatory funding and community self-reliance—by raising diversified, rather than centralized funds, and by incentivizing local social resource mobilization.

Now more than ever, Palestinian grassroots and community organizations need the type of support that not only opens the door to much-needed resources, but also instills new hope in the philanthropic process and affirms the autonomy and existing creative capacity of local communities.

Support Rawa!

By supporting Rawa, you tell communities that you trust them to decide what the best solutions are to the most challenging problems they face. We cannot do this work without a large, diverse network of friends and supporters like you!

For more information on how to donate or get involved:

Contact: info@rawafund.org

Donate at: <https://www.mecaforpeace.org/partners/rawa-creative-palestinian-communities-fund>.

Visit Our Website at www.rawafund.org, and Sign Up to Our Mailing List!