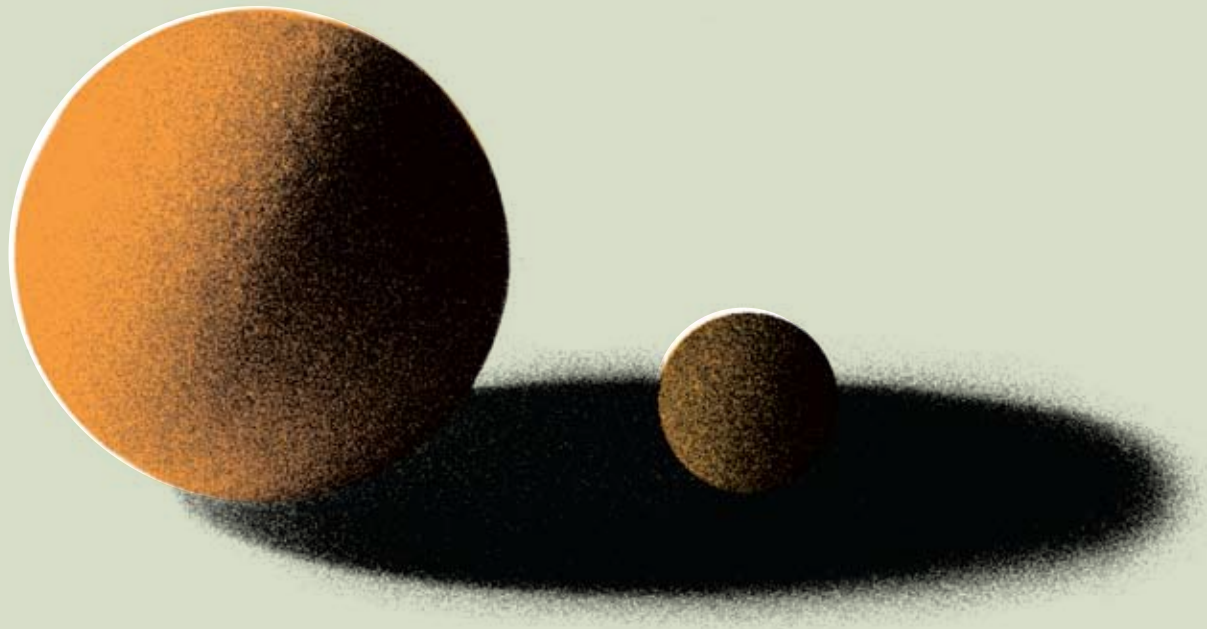


# Expanding Philanthropy to the Israeli Arab Community

Attitudes from Jewish Donors



■ From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

Our strong support for the State of Israel and concern for Israel's long-term security, health and future charged the Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues with the challenge to educate North American Jewry on majority/minority relations in Israel and to make civic equality in Israel a priority for the Jewish people. The strength of the Task Force is our diversity. We are led by a Steering Committee made up of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, The Anti-Defamation League, The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, The New Israel Fund, Rabbi Brian Lurie and UJA-Federation of New York. As exhibited by our leadership, our membership transcends the political and ideological boundaries of the Jewish communal spectrum and is united by our mission to educate North American Jewry on the issues facing 20 percent of Israeli society, one of every five Israelis – the Arab citizens of the State of Israel.

The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies commissioned the Greenberg

Quinlan Rosner Research Firm to poll a diverse cross-section of American Jews who contribute to pro-Israel and/or Jewish organizations on the various reasons why they donate to Israel, their perceptions of the current realities in Israel and their knowledge of Israel's Arab minority. The survey participants ranged in age, gender, geographic location, type of organization and level of annual giving upwards of \$100,000.

The following report highlights realities and perceptions, the possibilities and the great amount of work that needs to be done to educate North American Jewry on what the Or Commission\* determined to be the most sensitive and important domestic issue facing Israel today. This official Israeli board of inquiry noted specific action items necessary to give true equality to the country's Arab citizens in accordance with the essence of the State of Israel as a democracy. In this context, the Or Commission stressed that Israel must initiate, develop and operate programs to quickly close gaps in education, housing, industrial development, employment and services.

I share these findings with you in the hope that we can continue to increase awareness of the issues and advance the mission of the Task Force.

Sincerely,



Jessica Balaban  
Executive Director  
Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues  
[www.IAtaskforce.org](http://www.IAtaskforce.org)

*\* The Or Commission is an official Israeli board of inquiry that convened after the violent events in 2000 when the government of Israel pledged to make elimination of inequality and discrimination between Jewish and Arab citizens a top national priority.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**At 20 percent of the population and growing,** Arabs constitute a significant minority population in Israel. As a minority population, Israeli Arabs face different circumstances relative to Israeli Jews in terms of quality of life, including discrepancies in life expectancy, infant mortality, education, employment and standard of living. The Inter-Agency Task Force seeks to educate the American Jewish community on majority/minority relations in Israel; to increase awareness of economic, educational and social service weaknesses facing Israeli Arab communities; and to increase grant-making in Israeli Arab communities – all areas where the Task Force sees considerable need. In a domestic environment preoccupied with the war on terrorism and uncomfortable with the Muslim world, however, fundraising in this area is difficult, particularly if foundations are perceived to be making choices that help Israeli Arabs at the expense of Israeli Jews.

This memo presents the key findings from over 50 in-depth interviews with significant

Jewish donors.<sup>1</sup> The research explores the reasons people contribute to Jewish organizations, benchmarks how much opposition there might be from significant donors to the Jewish community if foundations increase philanthropy in the Israeli Arab sector, and identifies messages that can help foundations frame their choices to donors.

We find a wide range of attitudes toward the issue of philanthropy for Israel's Arab communities. At heart, contributors are committed to Israel and hope their donations can contribute to the survival of Israel for generations to come. They value the democratic principles that Israel and the United States share, especially equality under the law and equality of opportunity.

At the same time, their loyalties are primarily toward Israel as a Jewish state, which creates some tension over direct support for Israeli Arab communities, stemming from a concern that supporting Israeli Arabs will undercut the needs or interest of Jews in

Israel. Moreover, in a country characterized by many inequalities (e.g., secular versus orthodox, new immigrant groups, etc.), some donors wonder if Israeli Arabs, a group about whom some are uninformed and whose loyalty to Israel is sometimes questioned, are the best place for investment.

It is possible to persuade some reluctant donors of the urgency of the situation and the benefit of funding initiatives to help Israeli Arabs. The most effective framework reminds donors of the democratic character of Israel, a nation that guarantees equal treatment to all its citizens, and at the same time makes the point that equity is necessary for the long-term survival of Israel.

<sup>1</sup> *This research is based on 51 in-depth interviews conducted with donors in the Jewish community between April 2006 and May 2007. For more methodological details, please see Appendix A.*

## KEY FINDINGS

- Most donors give out of a profound connection to the State of Israel and a deep connection to the Jewish people. There is a strong belief in the importance of preserving of Israel as a homeland, a place for Jews, and as a nation that connects Jews around the world. Maintaining the integrity of Israel as a Jewish state is of paramount concern.
  - There is considerable variance in depth of knowledge about domestic affairs in Israel and even more about how Israeli Arabs live. Donors who read the Israeli press are much more likely to be knowledgeable about the Israeli Arab population than those who read the United States press or depend upon bulletins or newsletters from Jewish organizations. Donors who often travel to Israel, moreover, are more likely to understand the geography (i.e., separateness) of where the Israeli Arabs live and to have observed infrastructural and housing differences in Israeli Arab villages.
  - Regardless of their levels of knowledge, donors suspect that Israeli Arabs live less well than Israeli Jews and experience social discrimination. At the same time, many donors assume that all Israeli citizens have equal rights and are treated equally under the law. Donors can imagine that Israeli Arabs experience discrimination, but they also posit that, as a democratic nation, Israel affords them equal social and political rights.
  - Respondents are divided on whether the situation of Israeli Arabs should be a priority for donors. Nearly equal numbers describe it as a high priority, a medium priority and a low priority. Attitudinally, donors who feel that helping Israeli Arabs should be a high priority tend to express a *social justice* worldview when it comes to Israel and support establishing a baseline standard of living for all citizens. Donors who rate it a lower priority tend to hold a *security* worldview when it comes to Israel and tend to focus on the security threats (inside and outside) to the State of Israel.
  - Donors who support increased funding for Israeli Arab issues offer both principled and instrumental reasons for their support. First, many see it as an ethical imperative intrinsic to both Judaism and the requirements of a democratic state. Second, many believe that reducing social inequality would lead to better internal and external relations, which would result in greater security and stability for Israel.
  - Donors who oppose increased funding for Israeli Arab issues offer a range of reasons. Some prefer to help Jews specifically; given limited resources, helping Jews in Israel is a higher priority for them. Others think there are many equally important concerns, and they have a hard time singling out Israeli Arabs for special efforts. Some express doubts that funding from the Diaspora will solve major problems like potential terrorist threats or large demographic change. Finally, some simply do not trust that the money will be used appropriately; they wonder where the money will go, who will administer it, and who will provide oversight.
  - More generally, we encounter some resistance to direct assistance to Israeli Arab communities if this aid is seen as coming at the expense of the Jewish community in Israel. Instead, many donors would like to see assistance that helps both Jews and Arabs, rather than help that targets a specific group. Also, the recent treatise Future Vision poses real challenges to even the donors most supportive of Israeli Arab causes because it is seen as undermining the Jewish character of Israel.
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Framing

- The strongest messaging to help Israeli Arab communities asserts that Israel is a democratic state, built upon values such as equality and equal rights. Israel should be, in donors' views, a country where people have equal economic opportunity and certainly should not face discrimination because of faith or ethnicity. Israel's democratic character is a core piece of what these donors love about Israel, and it is disturbing and distressing when the State does not live up to this promise. As some donors point out, equal treatment of all its people will be necessary for the long-term survival of the State of Israel.
- This framework is most compelling to donors who already hold a social justice worldview; for donors more focused on security, concerns about the impact of population growth among Israeli Arabs and the potential security threat posed by Israeli Arabs are somewhat more compelling

arguments. That said, security focused donors comprise a harder group to engage on social justice issues; they simply believe that Israel faces more important issues.

- Even some of the most supportive potential donors are cautious about giving specifically and directly to Israeli Arabs. The Inter-Agency Task Force needs to carefully consider how it frames its giving, as many donors would prefer to support programs that help both Jews and Arabs, rather than singling out one population. Moreover, some donors are concerned that quality of life differences related to infrastructure are so fundamental to how the State operates that they really are the responsibility of the Israeli government and not the Diaspora. Rather, these donors would like to see programs that promote better relations between Israelis and Arabs as opposed to direct aid.

### Targeting

- In approaching philanthropy geared toward helping Israeli Arabs, it is important to think carefully about the mechanism for giving. Donors to only a very few organizations (for example the Abraham Fund or the New Israel Fund, in this study) give specifically to help Israeli Arabs. Others rely on umbrella organizations like the Federations or Hadassah to make decisions about how to give to Israel. Working with these organizations on their giving strategies – as much as with donors – is crucial to increasing levels of support for Israeli Arab causes.
- We see that the greatest potential for increased giving to assist the Israeli Arab community comes from the better informed donors who articulate social justice concerns about Israel. There is clearly untapped potential among these donors, many of whom are quite sympathetic but simply do not know much about the issues facing the Israeli Arab community.

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## DEEP AND ABIDING COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL DRIVES GIVING

Donors are driven by a profound connection to the State of Israel and to the Jewish people. Donating is not only viewed as “the right thing to do,” it is

also a means to preserve the State of Israel. Equally as important, donors want to preserve Israel as a *Jewish* state.

Most people donate out of a deep connection to the State of Israel and a deep connection to the Jewish people. Donors are strongly Jewishly identified and look

upon Israel as a homeland for Jews. For some donors, this view is quite personal, and they describe Israel as a home even if they happen to live in the United States. Though only a couple of donors explicitly mention the Holocaust, it is clear that loyalty to Israel is ultimately connected back to Israel's origin as a "safe haven" for Jews in a world where at best they are a minority and at worst face hostility. Donors want to ensure the survival of the State of Israel, and some think of the survival of Israel as a metaphor for the survival of the Jewish people.

*I contribute because blood courses through my veins and arteries. And just as blood courses through my veins and arteries, I would contribute to pro-Israel activities. In the same vein, it is that important to me. It is my life, it is 4,000 years of my history, it is the very essence of my spirituality, it is the critical aspect of being Jewish.*

*I believe that the strength of Israel, a strong Israel means a strong Jewish people. And I feel like Israel is an integral part of my own personal Jewish identity, and my own visits to Israel have played an important role in the building of my Jewish identity and will do the same for future generations. So really, the thing that motivates all of my giving is Jewish continuity. And I feel that Israel plays a key role in ensuring Jewish continuity for disparate Jews.*

*I think Israel needs to be a Jewish country. I think that's why it was founded and sort of its reason for existing.*

The routes to donating are diverse, but many donors have grown up in families with a strong connection to tzedakah. Many talk about being raised by parents who regularly gave to organizations, Jewish and non-Jewish. Some feel an obligation to give because of their Jewish values, invoking the Jewish ethic around giving.

*As far as contributing money to organizations, my parents always did, and it just seemed like that was a natural thing to do.*

*I was raised with a very strong, you know, sort of sense of Jewish community responsibility and got a very strong Jewish education, you know, the day school level and high school, so my thinking is driven by how I see myself and the notion of also giving back and helping to support things that are socially and politically important.*

For others, an organization came to them and offered an opportunity to get involved with Jewish causes. Once invited to give to an organization, exposure to the issues facing Israel sparked an interest, and involvement grew.

*I was asked to co-chair a dinner. And at the dinner, I saw a video and learned more about the organization and then was invited to join the lawyers' committee, and that's how I got involved.*

*I had a friend,... and he said to me, "You would love to go to the Young Leadership Conference in Washington; you would love that." And I did. I went, "This is fantastic." And from that point on, I was hooked.*

A few mention direct, life changing experiences in Israel that created a connection with the State and therefore led to an interest in donating to Israel. In fact, the vast majority of donors in this study have been to Israel at least once, and some travel there regularly. These experiences are either personal (e.g., considering making aliyah) or connected to a program actively working in Israel (e.g., Project OTZMA, Federation missions in Israel).

*After my first trip to Israel in 1976, I really gained an understanding of why we need Israel. At that time I wanted to make aliyah, and I'm not giving up yet.*

*I wasn't doing any kind of philanthropy as a kid. I was doing community service and things like that. But then when I went to Israel, let's see, my senior year in college was my first time in Israel, that was in '95, '96, right after Rabin was assassinated was when I went. And then I was working in the Jewish community, and then I went on Project OTZMA. I worked for Hillel for two years before I went on Project OTZMA, and then I stayed another year in Israel. And I think Project OTZMA exposed me to the reality of Israel, not the myth of Israel, and I worked in Palestinian Israeli schools and Jewish schools. And I worked with undocumented foreign workers, and I worked with the Bedouin community, I mean, every community you could imagine, the Ethiopian community, the olim, everybody. And then you see what's really going on.*

*My Jewish sense really came, my Israel support... really came more recently and was really to some extent developed to*

*a much higher degree when I went on a mission with the Jewish Community Federation Board last November.... I had always marveled at how a country in that kind of conflict could function. And we met with such outstanding people who clearly just went on with*

*their lives.... The passion that I saw there; we met some remarkable Arab Israelis. We met people who worked in conjunction, went to schools in the upper Galilee. My wife, who's not Jewish, was as equally impressed as I was. We made the biggest contribution.*

Regardless of how these donors begin donating to Israel, the act of giving to Israel plays an important role in their lives; it is an expression of their Jewish identities, a sign of religious commitment and, for some, a statement of their political beliefs.

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## **PROUD OF ISRAEL, BUT AWARE OF SHORTCOMINGS**

Donors are proud of Israel, which they see as a strong country built in a relatively short period of time. They believe that Israel's strength rests upon the character of its people and the country's determination to preserve its existence. At the same time, few believe Israel is perfect, even among its strongest supporters. Donors understand that there are pressing domestic issues such as economic inequality (despite the overall growth of the economy) and conflict between the religious and secular. There is great awareness of the corruption issues facing the current government and real concerns about competence post-Lebanon. In other words, love of Israel does not blind donors to the real challenges the country faces, some of which are of its own making.

Donors share a common view that Israel's main strength lies in its people: their determination and ability to persevere, their brainpower, their strength of character and moral fiber, and their ability to survive adversity. There is real pride that the country survives and thrives despite its hostile surroundings.

*Strength as a nation,... its people, its know how because of its technology, because of its Army. Its people have a determination to be Israelis, the majority of them do. The Jewish people will live.*

*I think [Israel's strength] is probably its intellectual and moral character. Of course everyone knows that it has significant, you talk about strength in the physical sense, it has a powerful military, but that is not sufficient, and I think that the ideology is probably what helps it survive in the face of a very difficult situation.*

*[Israel is] strong and independent. They do what they think is in their interest, and they don't cow-tow to other countries or regions or governments, and they maintain their own strength. They keep themselves strong so they don't have to depend on somebody else's protection.*

Others feel that Israel draws strength from being a democratic state, a place that upholds democratic values.

*[Israel] has many [strengths]: I think its resolve, its institutions and its commitment, ultimately, to democracy.*

*I think its Jewish identity is important and its democratic values are important.*

*Democracy in the middle of the Arab world.*

But donors are also aware of Israel's weaknesses, ranging from security challenges to corruption. Above all, donors see internal conflict among different groups as a real challenge for Israel. This comes up most frequently as it relates to the Orthodox community and the role it plays in society and public policy making. But concerns about divisiveness emerge across a number of dimensions, including between Jews and Muslims but also within the problem of integrating new immigrant communities. In fact, people who know less about the Israeli Arab situation are apt to liken the differences between Israeli Arabs and Jews to other internal divisions, including Ethiopian Jews, the differences between

Orthodox and secular Jews, and in a few cases, race relations in the U.S. In fact, the domestic challenge of immigration issues, especially as presented by the Ethiopian Jews, is mentioned as a problem for Israel almost as often as the Israeli Arab situation.

*[Israel has] got so much going for it because it's such a diverse population with such talent and such incredible passion and education and caring and having a Jewish value system, and yet its divisiveness and lack of community feel, at the same time, I think is its biggest challenge.*

*The government is run by the ultra-conservative Orthodox, and that gets in the way a lot.*

*It's a very kind of stratified, divided society. I'm talking the religious/secular divide, the numerous cultures. Its strength is that it's a place to try and integrate all Jews and bring them*

*together.... But their weakness, I don't think they've been able to totally deal well with, as I say, the different cultures, and particularly the religious/secular issue; that's a problem.*

Many donors, while acknowledging a relatively strong economy, also perceive that Israel is a nation with real economic problems. Nearly all respondents mention the growing gap between rich and poor; they understand that only certain people benefit from Israel's economic growth. They see an underclass – which includes Israeli Arabs and immigrant groups such as Ethiopians, Russians and others – that Israel has not successfully integrated into society economically.

Finally, many donors have real concerns about the educational system in Israel. Given that many see Israel's "brainpower" as a major strength, they are discouraged by what they see as inequities within the educational system and a decline in the quality of education. This is a vivid example of

social inequalities that donors see within Israel. To these donors, an unequal educational system is troubling, and they worry it perpetuates unequal opportunity with the potential for disastrous consequences in years to come.

*You can't have a democratic state where there is such a huge gap between the different groups, you know? Let's just say the socio-economic groups. If you go to Israel and see the schools, it's appalling. So I don't know what to say. I mean, you just can't have that. I don't want to say it's bound for revolution, but it's certainly bound for chaos.*

*One of the weaknesses at this point, I think, is the social economic gap, poverty rates, the growing distance between the very poor and the other people. Their educational system, which used to be one of the greatest in the world, is now behind all these third world countries in achievement.*

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## **KNOWLEDGE OF THE ISRAELI ARAB COMMUNITY UNEVEN**

Donors come to this issue with very different levels of knowledge about the Israeli Arab community. Most have at least a vague understanding that there are Arab citizens of Israel and that they live differently from Jews. But fewer are aware of the conditions under which these communities live and, even more importantly, how the situation has come to evolve over time. It is important to understand

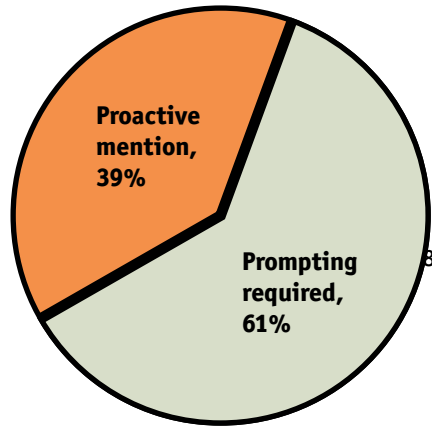
what donors know about the Israeli Arab community and how they learn about this community, as there is a direct correlation between knowledge and support for greater philanthropic efforts.

In this study, we find no common baseline of information about Israeli Arabs. Some people know next to nothing about this minority group, while others are extremely

knowledgeable. When we ask donors about Israel's domestic situation, roughly 20 of the 51 respondents proactively mention the Israeli Arab situation without prompting from the interviewer.

Following news about Israel, and in particular reading the Israeli press, makes a difference in knowledge about Israeli Arabs. People who read the Israeli press





**Figure 1:** Proactive and prompted mentions of Israeli Arab situation

*Thinking about all of the domestic issues that Israel faces, what domestic issue do you think is Israel's biggest challenge?*

are much more likely to know the size of the Israeli Arab population (which is roughly 20 percent and growing), make the assertion that there are social and economic inequalities, and document real tensions between the Jewish and Muslim communities. The most knowledgeable also know there is religious diversity among Israeli Arabs, including Muslims, Christians and Druze.

Having a personal experience of the Israeli Arab community makes a difference as well. Some seek out these experiences, and others come by them passively. Regardless, donors who have traveled throughout Israel are more likely to understand the geography of where Israeli Arabs live and to have seen Arab villages. They understand there is segregation between Jews and Israeli Arabs. They also describe infrastructural and housing differences in Arab communities compared with the rest of the country.

*I've visited Arab villages from time to time, and what I've seen is not very pleasing. Their physical situation is not good. In some communities there are open sewers in the streets.*

*I remember driving around and seeing the areas in which [Israeli Arabs live], and this is really primarily in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, although we did drive all over the country. But it was just that they, the Israeli Arabs did not seem to be, their living circumstances seemed to be less prosperous, let's say, than the typical Israeli. But, again, I remember the conversations there, one of the Israelis we were talking to said that they didn't feel that the Israeli Arabs worked as hard to change that circumstance as Jewish Israeli citizens. So I don't know if that was just prejudice speaking or if that was reality, but I do remember the conversation.*

On the other hand, donors who read the American press or are infrequent visitors to Israel have little concrete knowledge of the demographic composition of the Israeli Arab population or of the social and economic circumstances of Arab life. Similarly, standard communication coming from Jewish organizations to members and donors does not lead to in-depth knowledge of the Israeli Arab situation. Donors who depend on e-alerts or newsletters from Jewish organizations to keep up with the news from Israel are clearly less familiar with the issue than those who regularly read the Israeli press.

Regardless of the level of concrete knowledge, when we ask about the situation of Israeli Arabs, donors can easily guess that

they live less well than Israeli Jews and even experience discrimination. As we see above, there is great awareness of conflict and inequality in Israel. Many know, or at least suspect, that there is an unequal distribution of resources within the State, for instance, with Israeli Arab schools receiving less funding than Jewish schools.

*[Israeli Arabs] generally don't have the same standard of living, they don't have the same educational level. If you read enough Israeli newspapers, they claim, and I don't know if it's true or not, it may very well be true, that their schools are not funded to the same level as non-Arab schools.*

*I would imagine that there is some [difference between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs]. I don't know for a fact. I have never been to an Arab home. I have been to some of the Jewish Israeli homes but not the Arabs, and I don't know that driving through the country I would recognize, other than I understand through the rooftops, how the buildings are built, that you can tell which is more of an Arab community.*

*I feel that the Arab communities are not, they are treated as second class citizens. Their electrical system, if they don't do it, nobody does it, and yet they are part of the government.... Maybe I'm wrong, maybe it has changed, but I have heard too many people speak about the embarrassment... because of the lack of funding for that.*

Donors imagine that Israeli Arabs experience discrimination and inequality relative to Jews, but they also assume that as

a democratic nation, Israel should and does afford them equal social and political rights. In other words, they believe that the economic hardship Israeli Arabs experience comes from discrimination by individuals within the system, not necessarily from the system itself.

*Anyone who is a citizen of Israel certainly deserves the same, whatever*

*accommodations might be made in terms of social services or education or access to vote or whatever that would be. I would certainly think that everybody deserves exactly the same if they're a citizen. That should be no different than it is here.*

*I would have to say I'm sure [Israeli Arabs] are treated differently. I would*

*like to say that in the courts and in the official things, that they're not.... Nevertheless, people who carry out all these things on a lower level, policemen, etc., people have their own biases.... Can we legislate how individuals act? We can't do that. But we can at least have appropriate laws and try to have control [so] that it would help them as much as possible.*

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## **AMBIVALENCE ABOUT THE ISRAELI ARAB COMMUNITY**

Few donors see the Israeli Arab population as an imminent threat to Israel, but many do see this group as a potential threat. Even supporters of expanding philanthropic work among Israeli Arabs worry that having a disgruntled or disenfranchised population within Israel's borders could potentially pose a risk to the State. But there are real differences in ascribing blame for the current situation. Some see it as an outgrowth of Israeli Arabs being victims of discrimination and social inequality. Others, however, wonder if the segregation is self-imposed by adherence to Islamic fundamentalism or even loyalty to the larger Palestinian cause. Clearly, one's perspective on the source of inequality affects willingness to support Israeli Arab causes.

When donors try to think about the Israeli Arab point of view, they consider a number of possibilities. First, some note that Israel's prosperity and democracy puts Israeli Arabs in a better situation than

they might experience elsewhere in the Middle East. There may be discrimination and other problems, but they have equal rights and educational opportunities not available elsewhere. Donors also express empathy for the internal conflict Israeli Arabs might feel if they have ties to family in the occupied territories or elsewhere in the Middle East where there is hostility towards Israel.

*Lord knows there have been enough opportunities to invite Israeli Arabs into the fold of the Intifada, and I think it happened maybe once or twice that an event over the last four or five years has been precipitated by an Israeli Arab. The very fact that it has been so small, miniscule, is indicative of the fact that the Israeli Arabs understand, and they don't love the Israelis, but they understand that they have it so much better off than outside Israel, and they ain't going to rock the boat.*

*They must be caught, I mean, they must be very conflicted. A lot of them have family who lives outside of Israel. They must have family intermarried with Arabs living in Judea.*

At the same time, other donors believe Israeli Arabs' Arab or Muslim identities create tension and divide their loyalties between Israel and their compatriots in the occupied territories or elsewhere. At least since the second Intifada, some donors feel there has been a change in relations with the Israeli Arab community, and they are unsure of whether or not Israeli Arabs are on Israel's side or if Israeli Arabs are truly committed to Israel's right to exist. Some donors even blame Israeli Arabs themselves for choosing a path of segregation and separation rather than making good faith attempts to work with Jewish Israelis.

*There is a percentage who are no longer wanting to be Israeli citizens or wanting Israel to exist and who*

*have identified with the terrorist movement.... Certainly there's a very large percent of people who would much rather be Arab Israelis with equal rights, which was given to them in the constitution, than belong to any other country. But they did change, like, for example, they used to be Arab Israelis. Today they're called Palestinian Israelis. They've changed their identity name.*

*You don't really know who is a friend and who isn't. They might say that they want to be an Israeli Arab and they want citizenship, but the reason they want the citizenship is because of what they gain by being a citizen.... When we first started going, I remember guys*

*used to say, "They are cousins; we are cousins." That has changed.*

*I don't think the Jews are unfair to them. I think that they have kind of chosen their own path. They kind of blame the Jews for the situation they're in, but they were given opportunities in the past to kind of change things around, and they really didn't agree to it.*

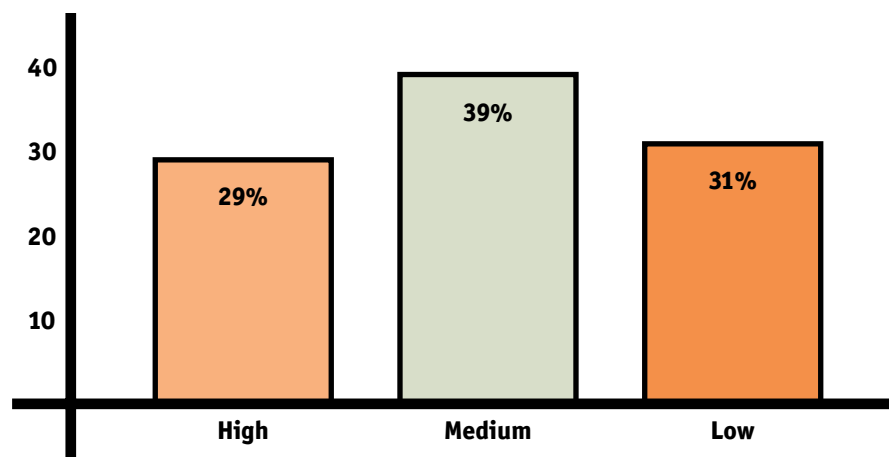
Regardless of the source of inequality and difference – imposed by discrimination or self-imposed – donors share a worry that the deep inequalities that currently exist between Israeli Arabs and Jews will have serious security consequences if left unaddressed, either from a few people acting

alone or a community that sees terrorism in its midst and chooses to look the other way. Some donors who feel it should be a high priority to help Israeli Arabs look at this support as an investment in the survival of Israel.

*I imagine that [Israeli Arabs] could cooperate with their brothers in the Palestinian area and that that might be very difficult even for Israeli intelligence to figure it out. I think that they are human enough that if there was a major complication there, their loyalties will be very divided and therefore unsure which way they would go. They're human. So, yes, I would say they do constitute a threat but not to the extent that I want them thrown out.*

## TO HELP OR NOT TO HELP

The discussion of whether or not to increase assistance to the Israeli Arab community takes place in the context of uneven knowledge and understanding and different perspectives about Israeli Arabs. It is clear that donors who enter the debate with greater knowledge and concern about social inequality place a higher priority on helping this community. At the same time, donors with less knowledge and less interest in Israel's domestic challenges are less likely to place a priority on helping Israeli Arabs. Few express outright hostility, but we see clear concerns among the less supportive about how resources are distributed, seeking assurance that donations are not used indirectly to fund terrorism or at the expense of helping Jews.



**Figure 2:** Priority to help Israeli Arabs (percent responding)

*How much of a priority should it be to help Arab Israelis? (percent responding)*

From the start of the study, donors are nearly evenly divided between believing the situation of Israeli Arabs should be a high priority (15 interviews, 29 percent), medium priority (20 interviews, 39 percent) and low priority (16 interviews, 31 percent) for U.S. based funders.

Donors who say it should be a higher priority are likely to have higher knowledge levels and an ideological point of view that makes them more attuned to social justice issues.<sup>1</sup> These *social justice* donors are likely to express concerns about internal inequality in Israel and come to the discussion knowing something about the situation facing Israeli Arabs.

Donors who suggest that helping Israeli Arabs should be a low priority often know very little about the situation. They tend to articulate more concerns about security than internal domestic issues; these *security* donors believe there are more important priorities (e.g., helping Jews, dealing with security) and are skeptical that the U.S. Jewish community should bear responsibility for mitigating the differences between the populations.

Among donors who believe that helping Israeli Arabs should be a medium priority, we find that the issue is not at the top of their minds, but as they learn more, they see the need to address the Israeli Arab situation in a more serious way. This group is very rarely hostile to directing more aid to the Israeli Arab community, but they bring more ambivalence and less information and urgency to the issue.

Social justice donors, who support increased funding to causes related to assisting Israeli

	Total	Knowledge of Israeli Arabs		
		Low	Medium	High
Low Priority	31	59	24	8
Medium Priority	39	41	48	23
High Priority	29	0	29	69

**Figure 3:** Priority to help Israeli Arabs by knowledge of issue (percent responding)

Arabs, offer both principled and instrumental reasons. First, many cite the ethical imperative intrinsic to both Judaism and the requirements of a democratic state. As a democratic state, donors feel that it is important for Israel to provide equal rights and opportunities for all its citizens, regardless of religion.

*Let's say you have a situation where the worst off Arab Israelis are so much worse off than the worst off Jewish Israelis, then I would want my money from a moral imperative perspective to help the Arab Israelis.... Say every Jewish Israeli was not hungry, [but] there were Israelis that were hungry, and they were Arab Israelis. I would want to feed them. They shouldn't be hungry, that's all there is.... I kind of think it's a prioritizing order, basic needs should be addressed for all the population.... I think it's an important part of our culture to take care of people that aren't our own.*

Many donors also believe that reducing social inequality would lead to better internal and external relations, which would mean more security and stability for Israel. They believe this is a problem that must be addressed because Israel will not survive if it has a significant proportion of its population living unhappily as second-class citizens.

*[Increased philanthropy] might show, reinforce the idea that [Israel is] a democratic society and that it pays close attention to all citizens, whatever their religion is, within Israel, and might even help to quiet criticism of other Arab countries as to Israel's attitude towards the Muslim world.*

*I think that if Israel is going to survive, it's going to survive by finding a way to accommodate its Arab population and have them feel part of the country.*

*If you continue to treat them like second-class citizens and continue to*

*make them grow up in a bitter fashion, I think they're more apt to look the other way when more fundamentalist activity occurs, or even support it. I don't see that you can possibly have a continuing State of Israel without [helping Israeli Arabs].... What do you do? You relegate 20 to 25 percent of your population to continuing second-class status? I don't think so. We've had that experience in this country; it doesn't work very well.*

*Only by improving the economic and social conditions of Arabs in Israel. Particularly by increasing education and employment. Specifically employment for women. Once the social and economic condition of Arab citizens in Israel can be improved, there will be less animosity to a democratic government, which happens to be predominantly Jewish.*

Donors who oppose increased funding to causes related to assisting Israeli Arabs offer a range of reasons. Given limited resources, some feel that helping Jews in Israel is simply a higher priority. Others have a hard time singling out Israeli Arabs for special efforts, particularly if donors feel that Israeli Arabs are a group whose loyalty cannot be completely trusted. Some ask if the money will be used appropriately. They wonder where the money will go, who will administer it, and who will provide oversight.

*I don't want to be so selfish that every dollar I give has to be good for the Jewish people. But on the other hand, no one helps the Jews but the Jews.*

*I think the benefit would be, hopefully, that [Jews and Arabs] could once again coexist peacefully. Then do you throw your money and make [the Israeli Arabs] stronger so that they can turn around and stab you in the back? That's the big question. I don't have an answer.*

*I'm sure that the foundation would have to be very careful, as they would. I have no doubt in my mind that they would be incredibly careful about this just to make sure that the money is going where it should go and not to fund anything that it shouldn't be funding in terms of terrorist activities or extremist beliefs, etc., etc. And I don't know enough about this population.*

Some look at the bigger picture and feel that Israel has more urgent problems. They acknowledge the real tension and hostility between Israeli Arabs and Jews but believe that Israel's security is such a huge external challenge that improving internal relations simply is not a top priority.

*I just don't feel that for the most part that would stop any of the terrorism that's going on. It might help some, but it wouldn't help the Israelis, I think.*

*One of the [problems] is that Israel has to deal with security and can't focus on social justice issues.*

*A lot of the dollars are going to, obviously, the defense and not social issues. That's a major problem. The next tier is [do] you take care of the*

*Israelis or the Arabs? They're probably pretty far down the ladder.*

These donors also raise questions about whose responsibility it is to help Israeli Arabs; they even question whether philanthropy has an appropriate role to play. Many understand, at least at a basic level, that Israeli Arabs are not doing as well as Jewish Israelis but feel it is the government's responsibility to provide infrastructure (roads, sewage, etc.), not Jews in the Diaspora. Even among people who think that helping Israeli Arabs should be a greater priority, many believe the Israeli government should be charged with dealing with fixing infrastructure and education problems. A few suggest that the best programs would foster interaction and relationships rather than trying to fix major social and economic problems.

*It's everyone's responsibility to help the Israelis. It's primarily Israel's responsibility as a nation to take care of their own. They may lack the resources because of the military burden, but I think there has to be, I don't know enough about the Israeli taxes and the Israeli budget to really have an informed opinion about any budgetary reallocations that might be made, but they do need help.*

*I don't feel any responsibility. Why does the Diaspora have to take responsibility that the Israeli government should have?*

It is also important to note that while there are many who see the benefit of directly funding work in Israeli Arab communities, some of the most supportive think that

these communities should not be singled out. Rather, they feel foundations should pick a cause (e.g., education or hunger) and make sure that both the Jewish and Arab communities benefit equally. This is a particularly important perspective that must be considered when thinking about how organizations do their philanthropic work in Israel.

I would say if you're giving directly to Arab organizations, it's not going to help much. If it's given toward programs that foster integration between Arab and Jewish populations, it will be successful.

*who are already highly attuned and supportive of efforts to help Israeli Arabs. They comprise 8 interviews and are among the most supportive donors.*

<sup>2</sup> *We should note that this sample includes contributors to the Abraham Fund and the New Israel Fund*

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## **INCREASING SUPPORT FOR PHILANTHROPIC EFFORTS IN THE ISRAELI ARAB COMMUNITY**

During each interview, we introduced frameworks designed to gauge if donors think that it is important to direct philanthropic efforts to lift up the Israeli Arab community. We tested four frameworks: 1) an inequality message, which pointed out the social, educational, political, economic and employment differences Israeli Arabs face; 2) a demographic message, which pointed out that the Arab population is growing at a faster rate, and it is therefore in Israel's interest to build good relations with its growing number of Arab citizens; 3) an equality message, which argued that as a democracy, Israel must guarantee equal rights to all its citizens, which currently it does not do (using marriage residency laws as an example); and 4) a security message, which argued that Israel cannot risk its security by allowing the Arab minority to support terrorist causes.

We find that the strongest messaging to help Israeli Arab communities presents the

argument that Israel is a democratic state built upon values such as equality and equal rights. In donors' views, Israel should be a country where people have equal economic opportunity and certainly should not face discrimination because of faith or ethnicity. More instrumentally, democracy, when operating properly, is not only the fairest form of government that confers the best treatment to all citizens, but it also leads to greater acceptance of Israel by the global community. In donors' minds, Israel must present an image of an effective democracy, treating all its people equally, if it is to survive.

*Our Jewish values and democratic values should be reflected in the government's treatment of all of its citizens. It's a core civil right, and it's important for Israel's security but also its image in the world.*

*They're Israeli citizens. Why shouldn't they have the same rights as the others? Either you're a citizen or you're not. If*

*you're a legitimate citizen, shouldn't you have the rights that other citizens have?*

*If you look at what's been happening over even the last couple of decades, history has come to prove to us that if you limit representation, it leads to more radical activity both in terms of at a state level and at the mass levels. And Israel is an absolutely fabricated nation state put in maybe the most difficult situation you could possibly think of in terms of creating a viable and stable land. And the only way, in my mind, that you're ever going to see true stability and longevity in Israel is to make sure it's a working democracy. And in order to make sure it's a working democracy, you must, from the highest level, the highest political philosophy of that nation, you must make sure that you are inclusive of minorities, not just politically, but socially as well, and the necessary institutions and infrastructure that go along with that.*

The messaging does best, however, when phrased positively, invoking images of what Israel should be, rather than ascribing blame. Most donors are more comfortable addressing economic inequality and discrimination than the question of basic citizenship rights. As we see above, many assume that Israeli Arabs – as citizens – have the exact same rights as Jewish Israelis. These donors reject messaging that calls that belief into question; it is outside their framework for understanding Israel. As an example, most donors react negatively to both examples of different treatment – residency restrictions for non-Jewish spouses and pledging allegiance to Israel in order to serve in the Knesset. Most donors do not see having residency restrictions or having to declare one's loyalty to the State of Israel as a violation of rights.

*I think that is a prime loophole to what I was saying before about [Israeli Arabs] sheltering terrorists. I think, you know, fake marriages have been done in other countries for reasons of that sort, so I would say they can't bring, I think there should be strong restrictions on marrying Palestinians and bringing them into Israel. You know that an Arab Israeli who is a member of the Knesset has to pledge*

*allegiance to the flag. I mean, every American has to do that, right? So it is assumed that every Jewish Israeli member of the Knesset does that. And it is not unreasonable after 50 years of war to ask an Arab Israeli to do that. Is that discriminating? I don't know.*

Taking this a step further, many donors do not have a problem with rules – such as declaring one's loyalty to the State – designed to preserve Israel as a Jewish state. Nearly every donor supports Israel in its current form, with only 3 of 51 respondents saying they would be open to Israel as a non-Jewish, democratic state.

Though not as uniformly persuasive as the democracy message, messaging can also be effective if it is more instrumental in nature and seeks pragmatic ends. In some ways, messages focused on population growth and internal security are informative as much as they are persuasive. Particularly for donors who are less informed and more security oriented, the population argument clarifies the scope and contours of the issue. The security message does very well among those with low levels of information, particularly as they tend to be the most conservative in their orientation toward Israel. What is key about the demographic and security

arguments is that they argue that in order for Israel to survive and maintain its security, it is necessary to forge a better relationship with the Israeli Arab population.

*I mean, I don't know a lot about the Arab Israeli population, but I think that tells you right off the bat what the population issues are, what we face. It strikes at the Jewish value component that we have a sense of, that there's a sense of equality that we need to be dealing with, that there are social conditions and economic issues that we need to face and to support, and that this then will help us, help strengthen our Israeli state.*

*If we improve their lives then they're less likely to join terror organizations and become terrorists. I think the bottom line is that the average Palestinian on the street or the average Israeli Arab wants to make a good living and have a place to live with their family. It's the extreme factions that don't.*

It is important to note, however, that donors who know more about Israeli Arabs largely reject the security argument – though some concede that happier people are less likely to commit terrorist acts – because they think the issues are more complex.

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## TARGETING EFFORTS

We see that the greatest potential for increasing giving to assist the Israeli Arab community comes from the better informed donors who articulate social justice

concerns about Israel. There is clearly untapped potential among these donors, many of whom are quite sympathetic but simply have not yet become completely

conscious of the problem. In other words, some of the most supportive are not yet donors to Israeli Arab causes. Beyond information levels and worldview, there is

little that distinguishes donors from each other; in other words, age, donation level and donor organization do not separate these donors from each other with regards to their interest in assisting the Israeli Arab community.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, there is clearly targeting work to be done by looking at how donors give. There is a great deal of variation in what people know about how organizations direct their funds in Israel. Some donors very clearly direct their donations to specific organizations and causes (e.g., one respondent only gives to social justice causes). We find this orientation particularly among the donors in our sample who already give to Israeli Arab causes.

*I have allocated a fair amount of my philanthropic dollars to that cause; [the recipient organization] dedicates not an insignificant percentage of the grants that they give to efforts to help in various ways Arab Israelis. So I do think that's important.*

More frequently, donors give to organizations they trust, particularly if they share the same ideological view of that organization (e.g., AIPAC, the New Israel Fund). Other donors make all-purpose gifts; they give their major award to primarily one organization like a Federation or Hadassah that sponsors many programs in Israel. In fact, some donors are focused on giving in the United States, but they do know and support that their organizations also give to Israel.

*I don't have strong feelings about supporting Israel, but I have confidence or I trust the judgments that are being made as far as certainly the [local Federation]... and the national organizations and so forth.*

*You're not associated with [the local Federation], but you probably know that there is a very, very wide net of services and programs funded.... So it certainly is giving to Israel. But it also is giving to a wide variety of programs here. So I've always felt that they*

*covered bases very nicely and we didn't need to be going around looking for 20 other specific Jewish charities to be able to donate to.*

*...I really don't like having to choose among agencies. I support a lot, I give a lot of small contributions to various agencies, primarily motivated by someone asking me if I would do something. But I don't try to evaluate the relative merits of the agencies and so forth.*

Given that many donors rely on umbrella organizations for directing philanthropy, it is as important to work with these organizations as with individual donors.

<sup>2</sup> *It is very difficult to distinguish donors demographically in small sample, qualitative research. It is possible that a large scale quantitative survey would find demographic patterns in support for increased philanthropic efforts to Israeli Arab causes.*

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## **FUTURE VISION**

One of the challenges with philanthropy to the Israeli Arab community comes as the Israeli Arab community begins to organize and demand rights that conflict with donors' notions about what Israel should be. *Future Vision*, a treatise recently put forth from the Israeli Arab community on how the Israeli state should work with the Israeli Arab community, put forth a set of requests that raised questions

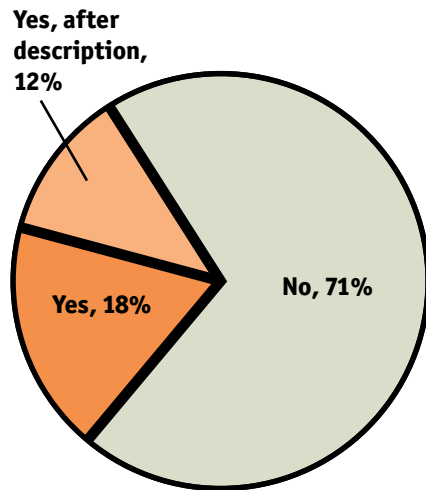
and doubt about the author's thoughts on Israel's existence as a Jewish state. Note, Jewish, Arab and joint Jewish-Arab groups in Israel are still debating this paper.

Relatively few donors have heard about *Future Vision*. Of the 17 interviews conducted after the Lebanon conflict, only 3 had heard of *Future Vision*; two said they recalled something about it after hearing

a brief description, and the remaining 12 were unfamiliar with the document. Donors who are aware of *Future Vision* doubt it will ever get heard because "there are so few people who are really knowledgeable about really what's going on. They just don't take the time."

When told about the report, most donors vehemently disagree with its requests.





**Figure 4:** Heard about *Future Vision* (percent responding)

*Have you heard anything recently about Israeli Arabs publishing any papers that deal with the future of Arabs in Israel and their relations with the state of Israel? (percent responding)*

Donors reflect upon their a deep attachment to Israel as a Jewish state, and do not want to see Israel as anything else. Donors react passionately.

*No. Very strongly against it. The trouble with me and Israel is that I am so emotionally bound up in Israel that I can't think straight.*

*You can't do that. The whole point of having it as a state, as a Jewish State is our homeland and I guess when you use that world homeland, I see it as our homeland, as Jews, not as a joint homeland.*

*Future Vision* does not leave donors sympathetic to helping Israeli Arabs. It clearly suggests that Israeli Arabs do not share a common idea of what Israel should be. This in turn suggests to donors that they do not have Israel's best interest in mind. Under such circumstances, donors anticipate that it will

be difficult to persuade people that this is a population that needs and deserves support.

*I think if those papers came out then people would be very against it and those organizations would lose a lot of support.*

*I think it will be negative. I think even if people really want to help them, they still think that it really should be a Jewish state. I don't think it's going to be positive for people who want to help.*

## CONCLUSION

There is great potential to increase attention and contributions to improve the status of Arabs in Israel. There are members of the donor community who understand – at a gut level – that there is social inequality in Israel that must be rectified for both principled and pragmatic reasons. For the most social justice minded of these donors, they simply need more information and education about the situation in order to support a greater commitment in this area. They believe that Israel has an obligation to live up to its democratic principles and that, as Jews,

they have an ethical imperative to make sure that Israel's citizens do not experience gross injustice or inequities.

At the same time, even the most progressive donors voice concern about the *Future Vision* initiative. They want to know that Israel will remain a Jewish state and that contributions will not inadvertently help people who have nefarious intentions toward Israel or Jews. Moreover, the burden on these donors to seek out information about these issues is high, especially if they do not read the

Israeli press. The Task Force needs to carefully consider how it reaches out to potential donors and philanthropic organizations, particularly how it frames the information it provides about its work. Potential donors want to know how donations will be channeled to causes and precisely whom they help. They want to know that these donations are not intended to undermine Israel as a Jewish state, but in fact, will strengthen a nation that they so strongly believe needs to survive.

## APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

<b>Sector</b>	
Community	17
Service	26
Policy	8
<b>Gender</b>	
Men	26
Women	25
<b>Age range</b>	
Over 40	38
Under 40	13
<b>Region</b>	
East	27
West	12
Rust belt	12
<b>Donor Amount</b>	
\$25K - \$100K	23
\$100K+	15
n/a	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>

**Table 1:** Interview counts

Greenberg Quinlan Rosner wrote and administered in-depth interviews with 51 donors in the Jewish community. 35 interviews were conducted April through July 2006, and 17 interviews were conducted March through May 2007. An eight-month hiatus was taken during the fielding period because of the conflict in Lebanon.

Respondents were contacted and recruited to participate by contacts at Jewish organizations to which they donate. We aimed to interview large donors – people over

the age of 40 who gave at least \$25,000 to their organization. Respondents were selected so the interview pool had a mix of people who donated \$25,000 to \$100,000 and \$100,000 or more. We also interviewed 13 donors under age 40. For this group, there was no lower limit on the donation amount.

Donors were recruited to represent a mix of the community, service and policy sectors; a mix of men and women; and a mix of donors from all over the United States.