

Coexistence Forum

Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality Organizational Description and Development

The Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality is an independent NGO organization that was established in 1997 by Arabs and Jews - Israeli citizens who live in the Negev. The Forum's aim is to provide a framework for a joint struggle for equal civil rights for the indigenous Bedouins of the Negev. The Forum's activities include meetings and social events between the communities, campaigns for civil equality, information dissemination to raise awareness of the plight of the Bedouin minority, environment justice campaigns, recognition of the unrecognized Bedouin villages of the Negev, legal aid and representation, the struggle for employment equality in the Negev and similar activities.

We face many problem and injustices that include: denial of the most basic services such running water and electricity. House demolitions by the Israeli State, destruction of crop's in our fields, counter land claims filled against us by the Israeli Ministry of justice, lack of access to the Muslim holly places and more.

I would like to inform the Working Group on one success we had this year. For more than ten years there is a constant flow of sewage through my village and two more unrecognized Bedouin villages. This causes a dramatic health hazard to the people of the village and a severe problem of bad smells and mosquitoes. After we formed a coalition of organizations and appealed together to the Israeli Supreme Court of Justice, and through a public campaign that involved media work and organizing tour's to the general public, we forced the government to build a sewage purification facility next to my village.

We will continue our efforts to promote civil equality for the Arab-Bedouin community in the Israeli Negev.