



Outward Bound
Peacebuilding

2008 Outward Bound Middle East Peacebuilding Program

Summary

The *Outward Bound/Search for Common Ground Social Entrepreneurs Program* will bring twelve young social entrepreneurs from Israel and the West Bank on a shared experiential learning and leadership development program spanning one year. Outward Bound will provide the catalyst expedition experience for the combined group, building trust, constructive relationships and leadership skills. The partner organization, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) will facilitate participants' ongoing contact and communication with training and coaching during the following year, and with the Center for Peacebuilding will reconvene the group for refresher experiential programs.

The program endeavors to empower the young entrepreneurs both in launching initiatives that improve their local communities and in establishing ventures that reach across the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

Program

By providing a powerful shared experience of challenge and adventure using the neutral space of nature, Outward Bound aims to inspire mutual understanding and trust among participants. The experience will develop essential leadership skills, and inspire participants to act with creativity, compassion and courage in the face of perceived risks. A primary goal of the program is to build the foundation for strong cross-community relationships that can persist and be translated into individual and community cooperation in participants' home communities.

The *Outward Bound/Search for Common Ground Social Entrepreneurs Program* will bring young social entrepreneurs from a number of locales in Israel and Palestine on an intensive nine-day outdoor-based experiential program. Throughout the following year, SFCG will coach, mentor and advise these young social entrepreneurs. They will also be reconvened for Outward Bound refresher programs and training in management and fundraising. The program and its results will be monitored and evaluated at specified intervals over an extended period of time to establish changes in attitudes and behaviors relevant to peace and reconciliation.

Background on the Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding

The Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding is a new initiative of Outward Bound, an educational organization founded more than 60 years ago by German educator, Kurt Hahn. Outward Bound's mission is to help people discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others and the world around them by engaging in challenging experiences in new environments. The organization has grown into a network of schools in more than thirty-five countries on six continents, and currently serves over 200,000 participants annually. The Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding has been established to apply the organization's philosophy, expertise, methodology and capacity to the needs of individuals living in regions of conflict throughout the world.

Need Addressed: Strengthening Civil Society

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is characterized by a long history of bitterness, fear and violence. Despite intermittent periods of dialogue and hopefulness for peace, a negotiated settlement with crucial public support has proven elusive. Civil society plays a vital role in creating avenues for citizen participation and peace advocacy. Social entrepreneurs are a highly leveraged segment of civil society with the potential to influence the social environment. The *Outward Bound/Search for Common Ground Social Entrepreneurs Program* will nurture a cadre of young Israeli and Palestinian entrepreneurs and increase their ability to organize and act on behalf of the public good.

Applying Outward Bound's methodologies to building bridges of understanding and compassion and responsible leadership amongst young social leaders, the *Outward Bound/Search for Common Ground Social Entrepreneurs Program* supports the development and strengthening of individuals, their communities, and positive relations between them, as well as strengthening a crucial democratic institution and agent of social change—civil society.

