

# Humanitarianism through Filmmaking



By Fattoum Abu Ghosh  
and Yara Istanbuli

The humanitarian challenges we're witnessing today are more complex than they appear at first sight. Humanitarian issues are

viewed mainly through the media, sometimes making them seem irrelevant to everyday life. We at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) believe that art enables us to grasp and better understand these complexities.

By creating a space that differs markedly from that offered by the media, artworks dealing with humanitarian issues can help us achieve a more concrete understanding of these issues and establish a dialogue between art and humanitarian action to enhance individual as well as collective commitment to humanitarian issues.

Building on this approach, the ICRC worked jointly with the Palestinian National Theater (al-Hakawati) and the Jerusalem Arab Film Festival (JAFF) to organize a workshop for Jerusalemite youth that focuses on storytelling for filmmaking, including cinematic storytelling, narrative documentary, scenario writing, and shooting and editing techniques.

"We are glad to be part of such a creative event which can expose the Jerusalemite youth to new perspectives and ideas aiding cross-cultural understanding and contributing to community engagement and well-being. We have accompanied the Palestinians on their journey of struggling to live with dignity over the past five decades, and now our support is more important than ever. Throughout this journey, we have witnessed how cultural heritage has shaped the Palestinian character and preserved its identity," says Els Debuf, Head of ICRC Mission in Jerusalem.



"Script-writing was my favorite part! Overall, it was an enriching experience. We're lucky to have been part of this workshop," says Mariam Khalil, one of the participants. Photo by Rula Tabari/ICRC.



## ICRC

Eleven young Jerusalemites took part in the three-month-long workshop, at the end of which they put their training into practice and produced three films. They received financial awards from the ICRC to help them develop their films.

"Because we are constantly striving to strengthen cooperation with all segments of this community, this year we have decided to support a platform that fosters art and culture and allows young Jerusalemites to make use of their energies and abilities that continue to fascinate us all," adds Els.

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