

New Profile Projects and Activities

In October 2008 New Profile celebrated ten years as an organized movement. As a viable grassroots movement, we proudly count ourselves amongst the organizations working hard for social change in Israel.

During these past ten years certain many aspects of New Profile have not changed. We continue to work out of our homes, without paid staff or an office, and for the most part on a voluntary basis although some small stipends are paid to coordinators of our funded projects. In principle New Profile's work is achieved through non-hierarchic pairs or groups as a practical means of decentralizing authority, sharing power and building consensus. New Profile operates successfully with individuals assuming responsibility for projects and administrative functions on an almost total non-hierarchical basis. All participation in activities is voluntary and members organize and participate in committees according to their interests, optimizing motivation and engagement. This method has proved successful in a cost effective and efficacious manner.

When a given activity or project is particularly labor intensive, New Profile provides a stipend for limited segments of the work done by regular members. Therefore, though there is neither salaried staff nor an office, the long-term, daily work invested by active members is occasionally supported by the group and funds are raised accordingly. Funds are especially raised for our work with youth, which demands the ongoing and long term involvement of many members and the support of youth counselors. People directly involved in working on the youth projects receive small monthly salaries. New Profile does hire professionals to cover some aspects of our work and pays a monthly salary to a Certified Public Accountant and a bookkeeper. The amounts paid to attorneys vary according to our need for legal assistance. Yearly registration fees are paid to the Fellowship of Societies Registrar so that we can maintain our nonprofit status.

Since we do not have membership dues it is difficult to estimate just how many members and supporters we have. But at any given moment our active members list contains as many as 65 people with as many as 45 openly active members. Our members are both men and women aged from 15-76.

New Profile, although a relatively small organization, has an unusually large capacity and is able to maintain over 30 projects and activities during the year. Our work does

falls into four different categories: funded projects, non funded projects, team work and activities which contribute to continuity.

The list in itself is incomplete as New Profile's activities are widely varied and many activities are done quietly behind the scenes. Furthermore some of the projects and activities listed are no longer viable. But they are noted in this list as significant activities in order to illustrate to the reader just what else we are capable of doing. This includes past conferences and seminars, involvement in demonstrations and Women Refuse.

Funded Projects

1. Youth

This project is coordinated by two members of New Profile on a rotating basis. The coordinators are responsible for three areas within the project. Coordinators and counselors receive a small monthly stipend.

- ❖ The development of youth groups all over Israel which includes working with the counselors (each group has 2) on practical and pedagogical issues.
- ❖ Development of a platform for ongoing work including writing guidelines for work within the youth groups, building a database for materials that can be used and setting up a network for the counselors.
- ❖ The coordinators will strive to create a bond between the youth groups and New Profile, work with the financing team on creating a budget, and meet on a regular basis with the educational team.

2. Alternative Summer Camp

The weeklong camp for participants, between the ages 15-21, is held for the past four years in the Neve Shalom Forest. While at camp the participants are exposed to a large number of topics that are discussed and examined collectively, such as militarism, civil society, feminism, Occupation, equality, globalization, ecology, poverty, and activism. The aims of the summer camp are to provide a safe place for shared learning over a defined period of time.

While New Profile mentors this project, it is in actual fact an independent activity, although not autonomic from the mother organization. Whereas New Profile takes full responsibility for the camp, the organization does not dictate the content. The camp

activists are also responsible for finding funding for the camp. In order to find funding their fundraising team works closely with New Profile fundraising team. The camp activists also work in conjunction with New Profile's youth group and education committees. New Profile guarantees financial coverage of the camp until all promised donations are received. At the same time New Profile's fundraising, done specifically for the organization as a whole, also includes parameters that are earmarked for the camp. New Profile is responsible for all the camp's accounting and banking needs.

The Alternative Summer Camp budget includes payment for coordinators and counselors. Camp staff included 20 paid full time staff members and approximately 20 part time volunteers. (See annual report for Alternative Summer Camp, available upon request.)

3. Legal Aid Network

This project is coordinated by two members with only one receiving a small monthly stipend. The two are supported by a wider committee.

The project comprises a successfully operating network, involving several law firms, (who are employed by New Profile and receive payment) offering solid legal consultation and support for draft resisters and their families. Coordinated by two New Profile members and a consulting team, this is one of New Profile's most expensive activities and is assigned high priority among our practical strategies.

The network coordinates prison visits, consultations and interventions. They maintain regular contact with prisoners' parents and with the young refusers themselves, appointing various lawyers from the network to the different tasks and coordinating payments for the lawyers' work.

We focus on engaging and supporting the resister's parents and their families. We often find that it is the parents who suffer and are subjected to intimidation, undergoing serious stress, perhaps more acute than their children.

During 2008 New Profile actively supported the Shministim, signatories of the senior's letter. www.december18th.org

4. Refusers Support Network

The network is coordinated by two members of New Profile who receive a small monthly stipend. Approximately 25 activists from all over the country participate in the Refusers Support Network. The majority of requests for counseling came from teenagers who decided not to enlist and from conscripts who were already serving and had resolved to terminate their military service. All applicants for assistance were informed in detail of their legal rights and options and provided with descriptions of others' individual experiences.

The Refusers Support Network works through two major channels; ongoing counseling work carried out on a one-to one basis, and the Counseling Network Internet Forum, which is moderated by several activists. In many cases, and especially that of declared conscientious objectors, the counselors also met with resisters and/or their parents.

Notably, some of those who received counseling become counselors themselves after completing the process, visiting and advising the internet forum regularly, attending training sessions for the counseling network, taking phone calls and meeting with refusers and/or parents in person. In addition, after encountering the counseling network quite a few refusers or parents have joined New Profile's core group of regular activists.

Seminars are held for the network and provide an opportunity to update them on all relevant legal material regarding conscription and refusal. The seminar also provides them with an occasion to share experiences.

Non Funded Projects

1. Think Before Enlisting Campaign

This is a new campaign on the subject of draft avoidance. The campaign was initiated in reaction to the increasing media attention given to the phenomenon of "draft dodging" led by the "Parents Forum for an Equal Share of the Burden" with their public campaign: "A True Israeli Doesn't Dodge the Draft".

New Profile's campaign has a twofold objective: to argue the legitimacy of having doubts about enlistment and of choosing not to enlist through obtaining an official exemption. Hence we evolved the following central message: "Think Before Enlisting – The Majority Decide to be Civilians".

We discussed how we could utilize regular New Profile activities, such as the youth groups, and their mentors, to enhance the campaign. In addition members of the campaign team will participate in media workshops and learn how to present our ideas to the press and to the public.

2. Small Arms and Light Weapons

This project's first focus connects with New Profile's critical outlook on Israeli society specifically and relates to the large presence of small arms within the public domain. The project aims to create ongoing public awareness and discussion of the many dangers posed by this phenomenon. In doing so we also aim to contribute to New Profile's agenda of redefining the blanket term "security", so commonly used to silence real political debate in Israel and elsewhere.

The project's second, wider, focus is the global arms industry, in which Israel is a major actor. We hope to show how this industry not only profits from wars, but also creates and prolongs them to serve its own needs and interests, thus profoundly affecting both foreign as well as internal policies of entire states.

3. Study Circles

This project started running in January 2007, with the aim of offering an opportunity for joint learning on topics that interest New Profile members and relate to our activism. It is coordinated by three New Profile members. The format varies from an evening lecture or a study day to a workshop. Meetings are open to New Profile members and their partners and friends. The project offers 5-6 opportunities a year for members to meet and learn together.

4. "Study war no more..." – Our Revised Exhibit

In 2001 New Profile created its first exhibition of items collected from daily Israeli experience for the conference: "Militarism in Education", The exhibition, which aims to bear out the militarization of Israeli media, culture, and education has been displayed at a long list of venues throughout Israel, and has been used as an ice-breaker and a reference point for dozens of workshops hosted by New Profile members over the years.

In 2006-2007 the exhibition was revised to a more user friendly format. We added new texts and examples that visualize our analysis of militarism in our day-to-day lives in Israel.

Exhibit showings are coordinated by two New Profile members. In 2008 the exhibit was shown 18 times in various settings.

5. Website

Our website continues to serve as a significant source of information, drawing more than 12 hundred visits every month, and to provide a central channel for outreach which brings the movement a steady stream of new members. The discussion forums, especially the one focused on refusal, are extremely lively and informative. The website is constantly being updated, and a new and more user-friendly version is expected to be launched in the coming months.

The website is presently being reconstructed.

6. Lectures and Workshops

From our belief that real change in society cannot come without direct contact with the people, New Profile continues to offer lectures and workshops for a wide range of audiences all over the country. Some of these audiences were very close to our thinking to begin with, while for others it was the first encounter with some of the things we had to say. In keeping with New Profile's feminist practice of de-centralization, equalized participation and representation, the talks and workshops are presented in pairs by different activists.

The workshops cover several different aspects of militarization and militarized society that includes; civilian alternatives to militarism, equality and discrimination, violence, and marginalization.

New Profile also provides workshops in English to visiting delegations and groups.

7. Supporting Civilians Affected by Militarism

New Profile continues to support civilians who have been fired from their jobs due to their political stand or refusal to serve in the military or due to other claims they have made which oppose militarized practices within their place of civilian employment. Each case is considered individually with regards to amount of support that can be

offered which includes legal aid and representation, finding funding and New Profile representation at trials and hearings.

Teams and Committees

1. Educational Team

This team implements New Profile's belief that a necessary condition for creating a civil society is the de-militarization of education. The work of this committee has been ongoing from the beginning. Its goal is raising consciousness concerning the specific ways in which education is militarized in Israel, and initiating interventions to counteract these phenomena. The team's work focuses on protesting military presence in the public schools system and the promotion of conscription as a classroom topic.

2. Treasury and Financial Team

Two New Profile members act as the organization's treasurers. In this shared capacity, the work is divided between them but is also monitored by the wider financial committee.

New Profile has hired a Certified Public Accountant and a bookkeeper from a recognized firm. These are salaried positions outside the New Profile organizational framework. The treasurers are responsible for contact with our bank and accountant and preparing the monthly and yearly financial reports. Upon receiving donations they correspond with all our donors. The financial team is also responsible for the organization's legal status and maintains connection with the Fellowship of Societies Registrar.

3. Auditing Committee

Two members of New Profile fill the requirements of this committee as specified by the Fellowship of Societies Registrar

4. Coordinating Team

From the start it has been one of our guiding principles not to have a governing board that controls policies or makes the decisions for the entire movement. We have created this committee to deal with the occasional "snap" decisions that sometimes have to be made. Keeping in mind that the deep detailed discussion and decision making is

usually reserved for the monthly general meetings, this committee serves as a conduit between movement policies and the different questions regarding funding and procedure that may come up unexpectedly and can't be put off until the next meeting. This team does not meet on a regular basis and often holds conference calls to discuss different options as the problems or inquiries present themselves

5. Fundraising Team

This team collects and coordinates the requests for funding from the different teams and projects. Requests for funding and grants are usually prepared by one or more members of the team, where individual members are responsible for the ongoing connection with each funding body. Often a member will write an initial request and receive help from others in editing, budget planning and the final circulation.

6. The List-Serve Team

About 1500 members/supporters in Israel and abroad subscribe to our alternative information list-serve. Many subscribers distribute it further. The list provides information on developments in Israel and Palestine that are not always available in mainstream media. The list is monitored by a team of members in Israel and abroad.

7. Travel Team

As New Profile receives many requests to speak at conferences and meet with organizations and audiences outside of Israel, we have made it our policy to send as many different active members as possible in answer to these requests as another means of sharing power and visibility. A team of two members coordinate these requests and turn to members on a rotational basis.

We have developed an informal training program helping each member who is scheduled to travel to "find her personal voice" and prepare her presentations while providing her with practical coaching from her peers. These trips abroad provide an opportunity for our members to meet with supportive audiences, which is rarely the case in Israel. Members return empowered and energized and ready to continue their work following these events.

8. “Casting Team”

As much of the work in New Profile is done on a rotating basis, this team works actively to find candidates for positions that need to be filled.

General Shared Activities

1. Monthly General Meetings

Plenary meetings, held monthly since New Profile’s foundation in 1998, serve as the movement’s main decision making forum. Facilitation (in pairs) is rotated among members and the facilitator sets the meeting agenda in dialogue with all active members. Since we do not have an office or regular meeting place, meetings are rotated amongst members’ homes. They are open to all including potential new members.

2. Imprisoned Conscientious Objectors Alerts

The intensity of work on this project varies, depending on how many objectors are being sent to prison. Upon the incarceration of a refuser, a newsletter is virtually circulated on our wider lists, presenting a statement from the refuser, result of the court martial tribunal process, number of days the individual is subjected to imprisonment and a list of contacts to whom supporters can write letters of protest to government and military officials.

New Profile members and supporters fill out preaddressed postcards to send to the imprisoned refusers as an additional act of support.

3. Email/Info List “Checkers”

Due to the large amount of email that the organization receives through the website, a member of New Profile, “checks” the mail on a daily basis and forwards it to the appropriate teams or to members who volunteer in specified areas.

4. Archives

When New Profile’s original aim to create a Resource Center was deemed too complicated and involved, it was decided to continue to collect and document all topics relating to issues covered by New Profile and allow access to the material upon request. Our archives are coordinated by two members of New Profile.

The archives are kept in a small room that is rented from a business in Tel Aviv.

5. Networking within Israel

We maintain close relationships with many organizations within Israel. Each connection is continued by individual members of New Profile. The contacts include: The Coalition of Women for Peace, Zochrot, Nisan, Association of Citizen's Rights in Israel (ACRI), The Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), Bimkom, Women to Women Feminist Center in Haifa, the Al-Tufula Center, Qiar, Green Action Organization, the Druze Initiative Committee, Gush Shalom, Salon Mazal, Combatants for Peace, Yesh Gvul, and the Signatories of the Senior's Letter (the Shministim) and more.

6. International Networking

We also maintain close relationships with many international organizations. This includes organizations that support New Profile and promote opportunities for joint activities, or act as umbrella organizations for a wider project, as well as donor organizations. New Profile often provides workshops or presentations for delegations for these organizations visiting the region. Each connection is continued by individual members or by New Profile teams accordingly. They include: Bread for the World, Eper Heks, RSN (Refusers Solidarity Network), Quakers UK, SIVMO, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Cord Aid, Kroymann Family (Palestine Friedens-organization), War Resisters International (WRI), American Friends Service Committee, The Fellowship of Reconciliation (USA), The International Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP), , the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Connection (Germany), Oxfam GB, Novib (Netherlands), Heinrich Boell Foundation (Germany), Jews with a Different Voice (EU), Not in my Name (Italy), Jewish Voice for Peace (USA), Quakers UN (Geneva), Responding to Conflict (UK), Resource Center for Non Violence (USA), Trop c'est Trop (France), Women to Women for Peace (UK), Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Interfaith Peace Builders, Sabeel and others.

7. Contact with Researchers

Every year New Profile accepts many requests by academics and journalists involved in documentation to assist them with their research. The requests, for the most part, are made through our website, and forwarded to individual members who have expertise in the area of specific interest. Areas of interest include: conscription, war, feminism, child soldiering, non hierarchical organization practices, and occupation. New Profile members meet with the researchers upon their request and often continue an online dialog for the duration of the research.

8. Media

New Profile does not have a single spokesperson. New Profile's feminist practice of decentralization, equalized participation and representation allows for a large number of active members to be spokespeople for the organization. Some members give interviews to the local press. Others are practiced in speaking on TV and radio programs. Others write articles and opinion pieces. Others give interviews to the international press.

9. Internal Reporting

New Profile maintains an internal network that monitors and collects information regarding all ongoing activities and project. The reports are collected from members every three months and provide the basis for internal reporting and the annual activity report. The reporting team includes three members. Much of the material reported is translated into English for the annual report.

10. Translating and Editing

In order to remain transparent and also convey maximum information to our international supporters and partners, several New Profile members offer translating and editing services in English, Hebrew, and occasionally other languages.

11. Conferences and Seminars

New Profile has been invited on several occasions to participate in conferences and seminars, usually associated with academia. On these occasions we are asked to show our exhibit and often to provide a workshop or two.

On three occasions the movement was a member of the organizing body; in 2001 together with the Hebrew University, Departments of Education and Sociology, and the Kibbutz Seminar Teaching College we held the first international conference on "Education and Militarism", in 2003 New Profile held an international seminar with War Resisters International, "Militarism and Draft Resistance and Refusal in Israel, and in 2007, again with War Resisters International and the Coalition of Women for Peace, New Profile hosted an international seminar on "Gender and Militarism".

Each one of these events in which New Profile was the coordinator or co-coordinator, were very highly labor and resource intensive and members accordingly accepted the challenge.

12. Study Circles

New Profile grew out of two study groups that met for almost two years and studied about feminism, militarism, and the affects of militarism on Israeli society. Over the years we try to maintain an even balance between learning and planned action.

This project started running in January 2007, with the aim of offering an opportunity for joint learning on topics that interest New Profile members. The format varies from an evening lecture or a study day to a workshop. Meetings are open to New Profile members and their partners.

13. Administration

New Profile members continue to work out of their homes, for the most part on a purely voluntary basis, without salaries, paid staff or an office. Although New Profile's work is done non-hierarchically in pairs or groups constantly aiming to decentralize authority, share power and build consensus, there are still outstanding expenses such as phone bills, transportation returns, or rent for archive room, salaries for accounting and bookkeeping and yearly registration fees.

14. Publications

An introductory brochure depicts our new and critical approach and different way of observing the role of militarism in education, in culture and society itself. The brochure is available in Hebrew and English. In addition to the brochure on New Profile, the organization also has two other publications.

Following the conference on Education and Militarism, a compilation of lectures and articles was published under the same name. The book is often required reading for academic courses on education and media.

In March 2004, New Profile was commissioned by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers to prepare a comprehensive [Report on Child Recruitment in Israel](#). The result was a first ever survey and analysis of practices of child recruitment in Israel – compulsory, voluntary, direct, or indirect, published on July 29, 2004.

As the report shows in detail, such recruitment often violates international law and unfailingly violates Israeli society's commitment to defending its children from involvement in armed conflict. The report describes various forms of child recruitment by State authorities, private organisations and armed militias in Israel. It examines the deeper causes of this phenomenon and locates it within a broad cultural and historical context. Among the phenomena discussed are: children's participation in military training, military use of child labor, direct involvement of children in hostilities performed by armed militias, children required to wear military uniform or bear arms, forced use of Palestinian children by the Israeli military for its purposes, endangering these children's lives, and the symbolic recruitment and preparation for enlistment from the first years of life.

The report is appears in Hebrew and English.

15. Demonstrations

As an active participant in the Coalition of Women for Peace and other networks, New Profile steps up and participates in every call to come together to demonstrate against, the imprisonment of draft refusers, war, military incursions, occupation and human rights abuses.

New Profile also initiates demonstrations in support of incarcerated refusers in Israel and abroad. Demonstrations in support for Israeli refusers are often held before the military induction base in Tel Aviv, whereas demonstrations supporting international Conscientious Objectors are held before their respective embassies.

In 2008 New Profile was an active partner within the Coalition Against the War in Gaza and participated in the organization of the many daily demonstrations that took place.

In 2000 New Profile was one of the initiators of the "We Refuse to be Enemies" demonstration held in Wa'adi A'ara following the shooting of 13 Palestinians, citizens of Israel, by Israeli security forces. In addition New Profile coordinated condolence calls to the grieving families by activists from the Israeli Left. Following this demonstration the Coalition of Women for Peace was established.

Later New Profile was one of the key organizers of the "Refusing the Occupation" demonstration which brought about the short lived offshoot movement of "Women Refuse". This offshoot movement held as its platform the call to women to stop cooperating with the Israeli government and its military policies. Women Refuse noted that by quietly standing by as partners, fathers, brothers and sons and daughters are drafted into army service, women are actively submissive and support the continual execution of government policies at any cost. Women Refuse called upon all women to stop being traditionally silent and to dare to raise their voices by opposing to their loved ones participation in military actions.

16. Women Refuse Tent

During June 16-21, 2002, a protest tent, opened up for 24 hours a day that week, invited women for discussion and the creation a new dialog. The tent made space for women to discuss different approaches to refusal and the building a real peace community, and to listen to guest lecturers, hold open sessions, and most importantly meet with one another. The agenda held provided women with a platform within which they could discuss different approaches to women's refusal in promoting the building a real peace community, listen to guest lecturers, hold open sessions, and most importantly meet with one another.

The large protest tent was set up in Charles Clore Park, on the border of Tel Aviv and Jaffa. The location is symbolic in that Tel Aviv is predominantly Jewish city whereas Jaffa is predominantly Israeli Palestinian, representing the borders set up a between Israelis and Palestinians, between two countries and between the continuation of war and the need for peace.

Compiled by Ruth Hiller – April 2009