

10 weeks surrounded by power women

My internship at the Al-Tufula Center

by Jovita Pander

A colorful entrance, children's voices, hope, zest for action and concentrated women's power - that's how the Al-Tufula Center welcomed me on my first day in Nazareth. I have been interning here for the past 10 weeks and have not only gained insight into the work of the Al-Tufula Center and the challenges Palestinians citizens of Israel face every day, but also learned a lot about hope, strength, and true woman power. In this report, I would like to take a look back at the past weeks and my experiences in my internship and show you why Al-Tufula Center is such a special place.

What is the Al-Tufula Center?

Al-Tufula Center is an organization and center dedicated to Palestinian women citizens of Israel and the promotion of Early Childhood Care and Development. Therefore, the Center offers a variety of activities, projects and trainings in these areas, publishes books and publications, lobbies, seeks legislative changes and networks with various actors, coalitions, organizations and politicians - both in Israel and abroad.

But Al-Tufula Center is much more than that. It is a place where strength and sensitivity come together, where vision and reality meet, where sincere interest in each other, empathy and helpfulness are on the agenda, where hope is born. It is a place marked by countless powerful women who give warmth to the house, make it come alive. There is Nabila, who is an inspiration to the whole city with her strength, wisdom and tireless perseverance and hope. Gosayna, who gives her all day after day, not only to fulfill her many tasks at the center, but also to be supportive and make everyone feel comfortable. There are the coordinators of the various projects, who go about their work with great enthusiasm and cordiality. There is the kitchen staff, who devotedly take care of the children in the Al-Tufula center - and also very successfully provided for my physical well-being, always with a friendly smile on their lips. And a number of other strong, inspiring women who are committed to the Center's goals and share the vision of a better society. Al-Tufula Center is a place with a vision, a place where reality is improved a little bit day by day, a place that inspires and that makes change tangible.

What were my responsibilities at the Al-Tufula Center?

My main task during my internship was to write various reports about the Al-Tufula Center and the challenges that the Palestinian population in Israel faces on a daily basis. For example, I wrote reports about the center's various projects, such as its activities with youth or its engagement with women with disabilities. This is intended to provide interested individuals and organizations with deeper insights into the valuable work of the Al-Tufula Center and to provide socio-political background information on the relevance of the work. At the same time, I also dealt intensively with a variety of issues that are highly relevant to the Palestinian population of Israel - for example, about gun violence, the Nation-State Law, and the Knesset elections. In doing so, I focused particularly on issues relevant to women and reported on the realities of their lives. For example, I addressed the triple discrimination against Palestinian women in Israel and women in the workforce.

I was also occasionally able to provide support to my coordinator, for example, proofreading project reports or doing background research for speeches.

Nabila and Gosayna gave me a lot of freedom to focus on the topics and areas of work that I was particularly interested in and to get exactly the insights into the working world that I wanted, which is why I focused in particular on research and report writing - but the exact tasks as an intern can be discussed with Nabila and Gosayna and there is a wide range of possible assignments.

One thing I particularly appreciated about the Al-Tufula Center is that Nabila and Gosayna always made an effort to provide me with as much background information as possible and to offer me insights - both into the work of the Center and, in particular, into the challenges of Israel's Palestinian community. I was given access to various annual and final reports that provided me with an overview of past projects and the Al-Tufula Center's areas of work, was allowed to accompany Nabila to an event in Haifa, was able to participate in content-related informational events with foreign groups, and was encouraged at all times to ask questions, which were always answered willingly and in detail. I always felt I could communicate openly and honestly with the center's staff - no matter how silly my question, how controversial a thought, or how complex a topic might be.

Let's make the change together

Al-Tufula Center is a special place that has been doing valuable work in various fields for many years and on a daily basis and deserves our support. There are a number of ways to support the center - whether locally or from abroad. For example, you can support them financially through their website by making a small donation, participate in their activities and projects, share their publications and posts, and engage with the issues that Al-Tufula Center advocates for. One can create publicity and awareness for these issues in one's own country, reach out to the domestic government and resident organizations, and network. One can become actively involved in the Al-Tufula Center as a volunteer or intern and support and advance the Center's efforts, and one can inform organizations about the Center's projects and thereby help fund its activities. What matters is not what you do, but that you do something. Because the Al-Tufula Center, all their staff and supporters, and their valuable work are worth it.

If you'd like to check out my blog, click here: <https://insightsaltufula.wordpress.com/>

Are you thinking about doing an internship at Al-Tufula Center and would like to get more information from a former intern? Then write to info@altufula.org and they will connect you with me.