

Annual Report

Spring 2021 - Spring 2022

Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network



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Palestine, No Longer a State of Exception

This is the first letter I write in my capacity as president of the board of Al-Shabaka. I'm composing this letter against the backdrop of war in Europe.

In the days and weeks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, I watched the news, astonished, both at the horror Ukrainians were facing, and at the duplicity of Western leaders. In that parallel universe, where Western lives are at stake, international law mattered, refugees deserved safety and return, resistance was noble and patriotic, occupation was illegal, and sanctions were readily available.

I should have known better than to be surprised. Palestine has historically been held in a state of exception, its colonization by Zionism permitted - even celebrated - as the world cheered on anti-colonial movements elsewhere.

Yet, increasingly, this state of exception appears flimsy.

My tenure with Al-Shabaka's board began a few months before the Unity Intifada of 2021, a fleeting moment which shattered many of the misconceptions that onlookers have come to believe about Palestinians: that we have accepted our fragmentation; that we are tired, fatigued, indifferent; that we will no longer resist our erasure; that we could be subdued with economic largesse. The intifada challenged these illusions, and in so doing, demonstrated not only the power of the Palestinian people in their unity, but also the fallibility of the apartheid regime that oppresses them.

While the intifada lasted a month and a half, its implications will resonate much longer. Because of the hope it ushered in, and the reinvigorated energy it channeled into all those struggling for Palestinian rights, the backlash was and continues to be immense. Israel carried out an extended campaign of arrests; it designated leading organizations working tirelessly to challenge its violent regime as “terrorists”; it expanded its ethnic cleansings of Jerusalem, al-Naqab, and more recently with the seal of Israel’s supreme court, Masafer Yatta.

These tactics are not merely a continuation of settler-colonial practices that are now a century old, they are also part of a concerted effort to break the backbone of the Palestinian movement for liberation – to imprison its advocates, dismantle its institutions, and dispossess its people.

Israel’s effort to force a return to the status quo that prevailed before May 2021 is doomed. With the Unity Intifada, Palestinians glimpsed their collective power and the potential of their movement. We are now shifting the narrative. Daily, it is becoming harder to deny that Israel is an apartheid state. As the world continues to grapple with the legacy of colonialism and slavery, and with what decolonization means in the 21st century, Palestine – practically and metaphorically – can no longer be held in a state of exception. Rather, the struggle for Palestine is at the forefront of the debate. And Al-Shabaka, as an organization that draws on Palestinian knowledge, analysis, and perspectives – an organization rooted in Palestine, but spanning the globe – is rising to the mission.

Tareq Baconi

Al-Shabaka Board President



Al-Shabaka Analysts & The Unity Intifada

“It wasn’t just a unity intifada of fragmented people holding different-colored IDs and passports. **It was a unity of their claims.**”

Zaha Hassan, Al-Shabaka board member
BBC Newsnight

Al-Shabaka Analysts & The Unity Intifada

2021 was a watershed year, where a decades-long struggle to reclaim the Palestinian narrative gained ground. Al-Shabaka policy analysts were at the center of this moment, providing testimony and expertise to audiences across the globe.

Original Analysis

We released a commentary on [defying fragmentation](#), policy labs on the role of [Palestinian citizens of Israel](#) and the [PLO](#), and podcast episodes on [Sheikh Jarrah](#) and shifts in the [media narrative](#).

Political Briefings

Our analysts briefed various stakeholders on urgent developments on the ground and their political implications, including the Atlantic Council, Médecins Sans Frontières, UNRWA, the European Union, and representatives from the Belgian, Irish, Italian, and Spanish consuls, among others.

Al-Shabaka Analysts & The Unity Intifada

Opinions & Interviews

Members of our policy network provided crucial commentary on the uprising and Israeli repression through op-eds and interviews in such major news outlets as *Foreign Policy*, *The Nation*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *CBS News*, *BBC*, *CNN*, and *Al Jazeera English*, among others.



Defiance in the face of Israeli aggression gives Palestinians everywhere hope
Ziad Al-Qattan

The violence in Jerusalem is part of a plan to repress Palestinian life in the city. Yet there is a heartening refusal to be cowed



Original Analysis

Over the past year, Al-Shabaka released **19 original publications**.

In addition to our coverage of the Unity Intifada, analysts reimagined liberation through the revitalization of popular committees, community accountability, and Palestinian-led development. They tackled issues such as workers' rights, the Palestinian security sector, and US military aid in light of continued normalization efforts.



Politics



Economy

Refugees



Civil Society



Original Analysis

Reviving a Palestinian Power: The Diaspora and the Diplomatic Corps

In May 2021, we published our second long-form report with contributions from four authors. Collectively, they review the corps' legal foundations, days of glory, shifting roles, and interaction with the diaspora and solidarity groups. They present clear, doable recommendations to the PLO and to the Palestinian diaspora.

“This report indicates how these essential political and national dynamics can be revitalized by the actions of Palestinians themselves.”

– Rami G. Khouri, Director of Global Engagement, AUB; Senior Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School

“This study offers a rare lens into the complex relationship or lack thereof between the PLO and a diverse Palestinian diaspora, and why fixing this is critical to break the current paralysis.”

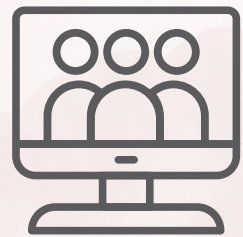
– Joyce Karam, Senior correspondent, The National



Outreach

Summary of Engagement 2021 – 2022

9



Policy Labs held throughout the year

47



Op-eds published and dozens of appearances in global media outlets

#35



Of 'Best Think Tank Networks' in 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report

12.8



Million people reached through social media channels

15



Diplomatic missions briefed in Palestine

36



Public and private events with civil society organizations

44



Citations in academic journals and scholarly texts

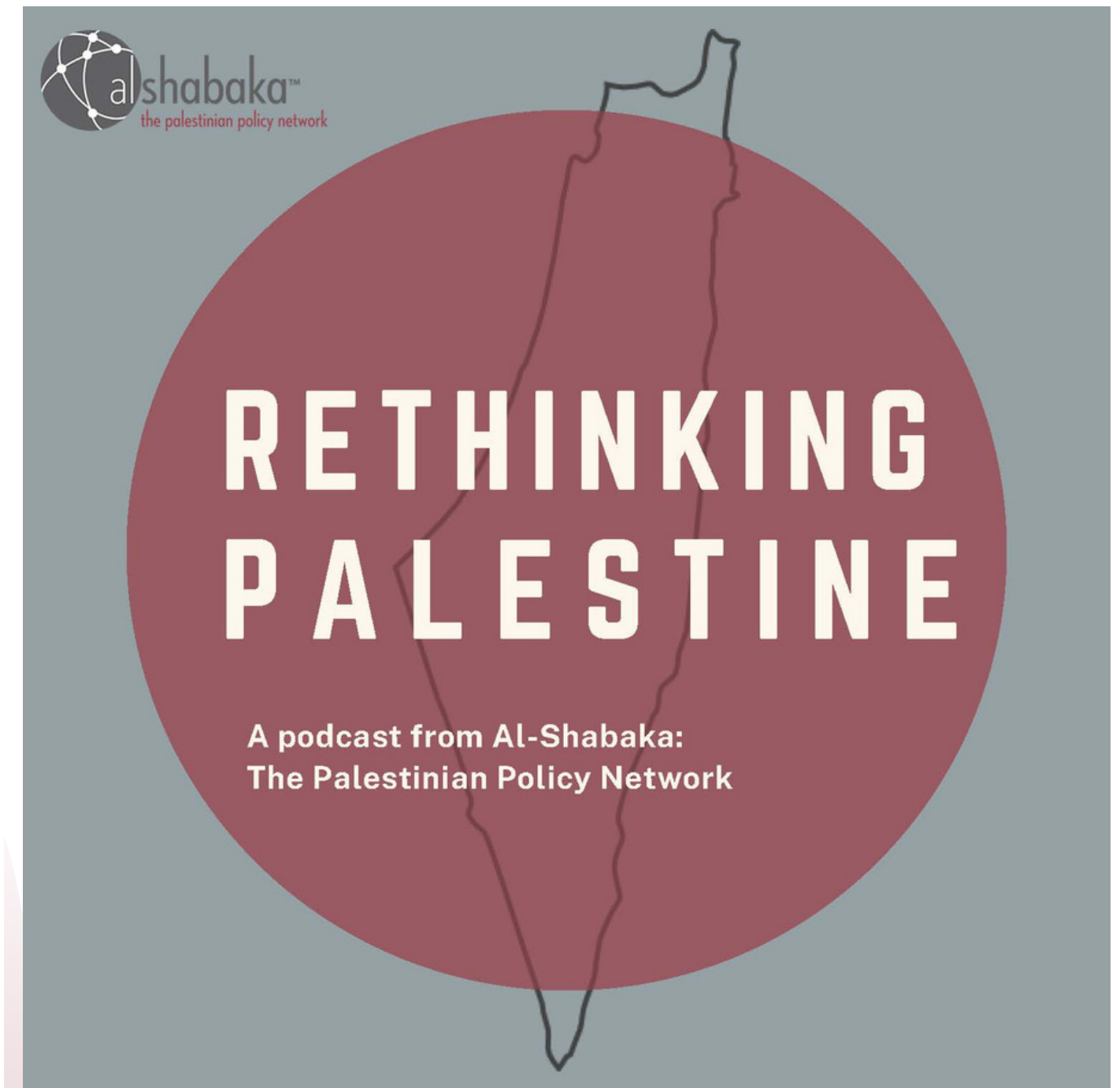
Outreach

Rethinking Palestine

Launched in 2020, our podcast series, *Rethinking Palestine*, is hosted by Senior Analyst Yara Hawari, and co-produced by Communications Specialist Mohammed Hamarsha.

In the past year, we released 12 monthly episodes spotlighting issues such as the surveillance of Palestinians and the challenges of Palestinian securitization, ongoing resistance in Sheikh Jarrah and the Naqab, and incarcerating Palestine in life and death.

Rethinking Palestine garners an average of over 2,000 downloads per episode and has been cited as a resource by Rutgers University, FFIPP Europe, and the Freedom is the Future Coalition.





Policy Network

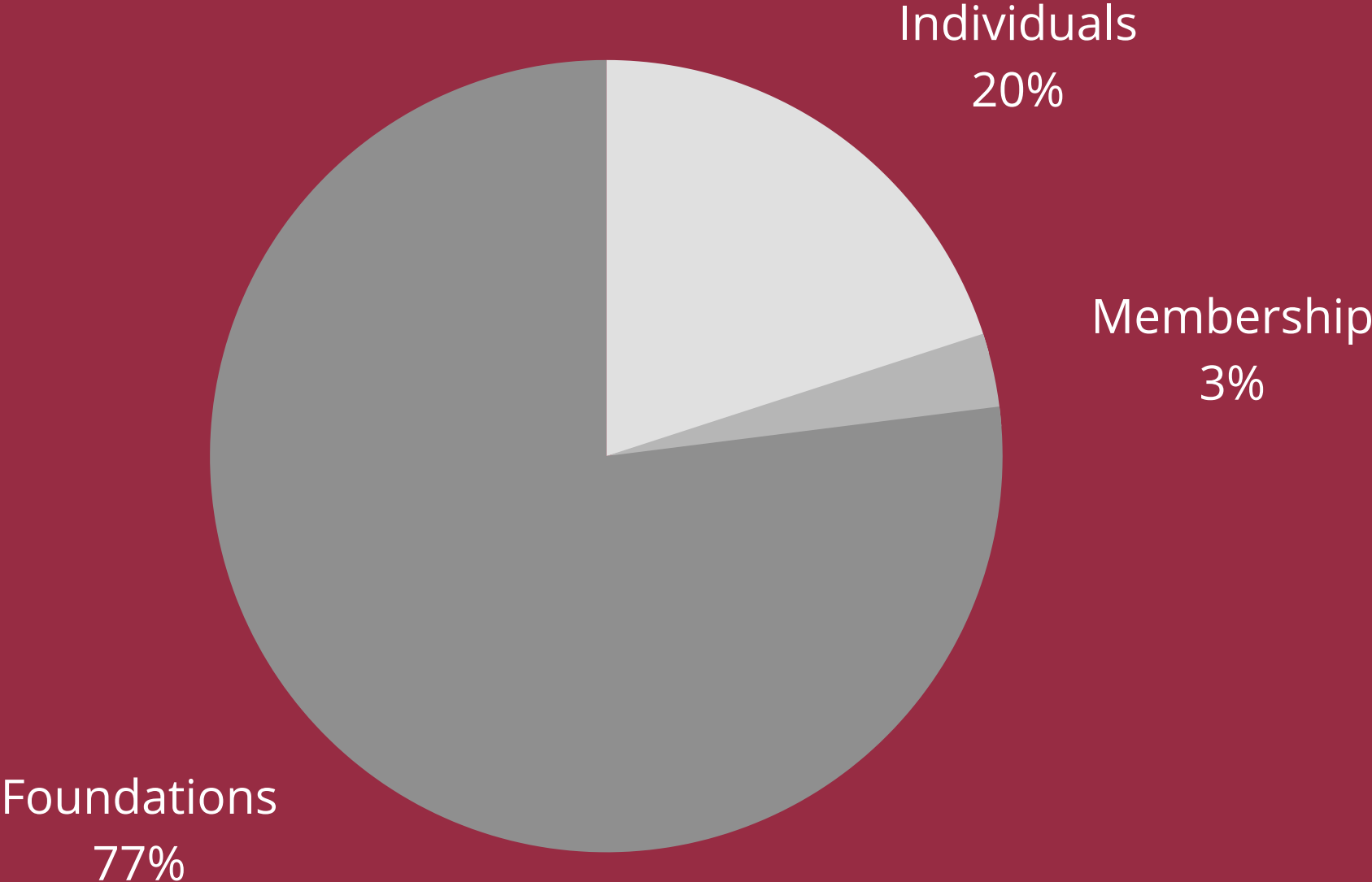
Our policy network surpassed 200 members based across 6 continents and nearly 20 nations.

In the past year, we welcomed six new members: Nadi Abusaada, Mark Ayyash, Walid Habbas, Layth Hanbali, Ihab Maharmeh, and Lana Tatour. Collectively, they bring expertise in the fields of decoloniality, indigeneity and race, labor and labor migration, global health, and urbanism, among others.

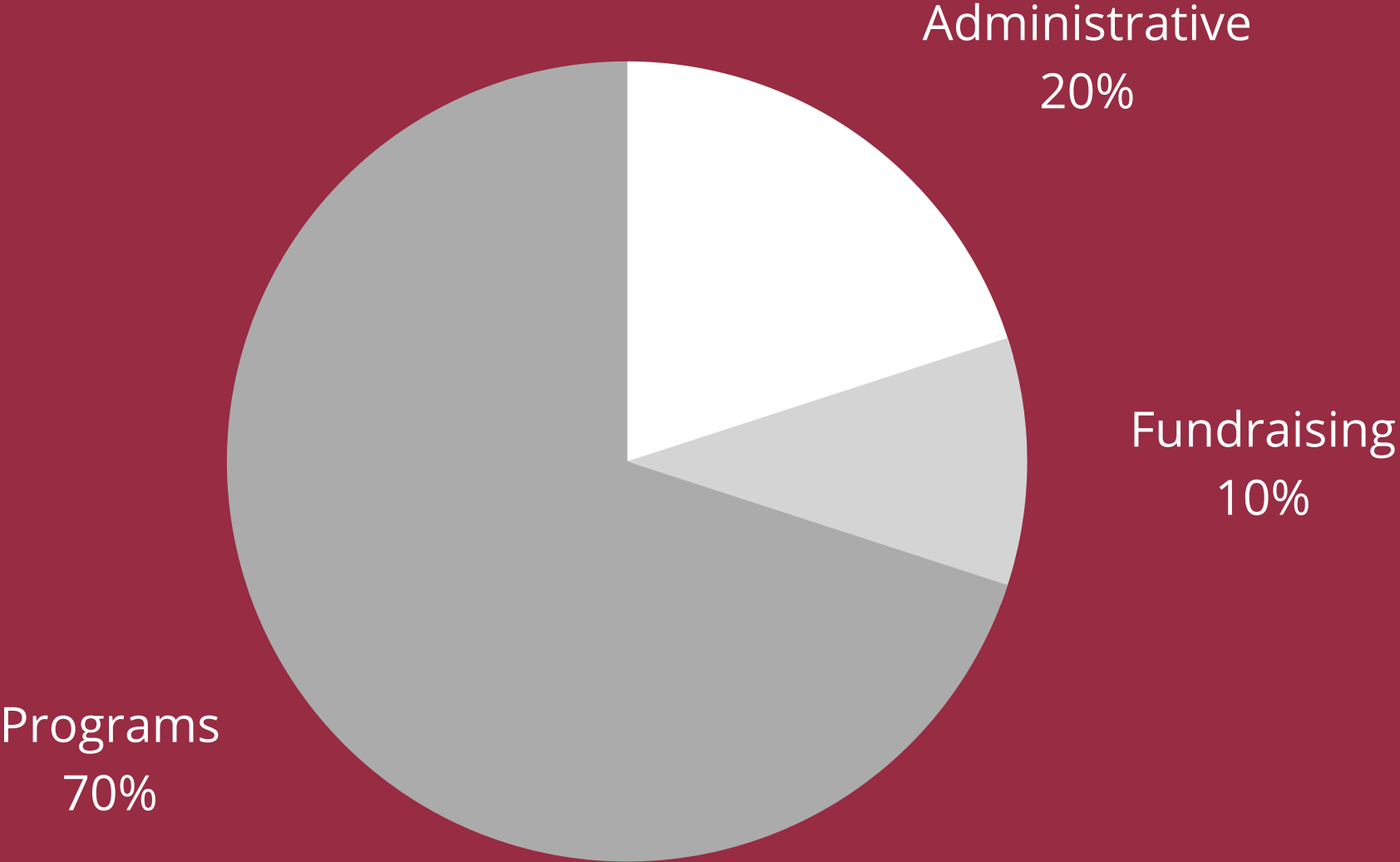


Financials (FY2021)

Revenue



Expenses



Our Valued Supporters (2021)

The Al-Shabaka staff and board wish to express their deepest gratitude to the following supporters, as well as to those who wish to remain anonymous.

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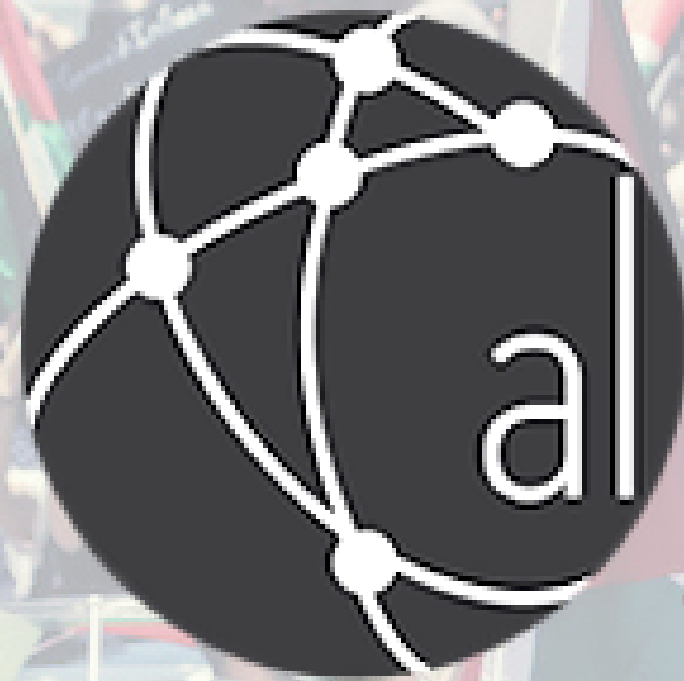
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