

The deep desire among Palestinians to pursue an education and create meaningful businesses and careers is not limited to those living in Palestine but also extends to the diaspora. Success stories of Palestinians in the diaspora are many.*3 In a visit to Riyadh, former US President Bill Clinton praised Palestinian industriousness, saying “I have never met a poor Palestinian in the United States.”*4 Examples include Abdel Majid Shouman, founder of Arab Bank, US Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, or Loay Elbasyouni, who started life in Beit Haroun in Gaza near the heavily guarded Israeli frontier and eventually led the NASA engineering team that helped design the Ingenuity helicopter that would end up on Mars in 2021.*5 In addition to their formal education, the challenges that Palestinians face on a daily basis have helped fuel their creativity, resourcefulness, and resilience. What do you do when there is a closure or a roadblock or a curfew? For Palestinians, it means getting out of the car or taxi and walking, sometimes for hours, and sometimes off proper roads. It means having a plan A, B, C, and D. It means thinking of creative ways to reach your destination or achieve your goals. Palestinians had mastered remote work and meetings long before the COVID-19 pandemic hit and forced everyone to go online. Closures are one example, but the creative mentality applies equally to all facets of life. How do you find and connect with customers? How do you transfer money securely and within the regulatory framework? How do you travel and attend conferences, exhibitions, and business meetings? What non-Palestinians take for granted often requires extensive resources and effort from Palestinians, but they have found innovative ways to seamlessly overcome what might be considered a major obstacle for others. As George Bernard Shaw said: “The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want and if they can’t find them, make them.” Palestinians have a habit of making the circumstances they want and need