Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole report will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

**Name of the Program:** Mechinat BINA  
**Year of activity:** 2016-2019  
**Name of the report's writer:** Noga Brenner Samia  
**Function of the report's writer:** Deputy Director, BINA  
**Mail:** noga@bina.org.il  
**Phone:** +972 52 275 1577  
**Website / Facebook address of the organization:** www.bina.org.il  
**Number of participants in the program:** 183  
**Estimated number of impacted participants:** 950 beneficiaries

**Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):** We have just completed another successful year of activity at Mechinat BINA, with 58 Israeli and international Jewish high school graduate participants. Over the last three years, with the support of the Matanel Foundation, Mechinat BINA has seen 183 young adults complete the one-year program. We have seen a growth in the numbers and diversity of our participants who come from all backgrounds, cultures and streams (Ashkenazi/ Mizrahi/ Ethiopian/ kibbutznikim/cities etc.) and from across Israel. Each cohort studied five full days each week and volunteered in the communities of south Tel Aviv two afternoons a week. The students lived together communally in shared apartments in the Shapira and Hatikva neighborhoods of south Tel Aviv. Each cohort celebrate alternate Shabbatot as a group with activities led and planned by the participants, themselves. Throughout the three-year grant period, Mechinat BINA participants volunteered in BINA’s urban farm and ran Shabbat activities for families from the surrounding neighborhoods, connecting Judaism with the environment and nature. They took part in trips exploring diverse parts of Israel and Israeli society, strengthening and enriching their relationship with the Land and People of Israel, as well as participating in BINA’s holiday events and celebrations. In September 2019, we welcomed our 14th cohort – our largest group to date - made up of 62 Israeli and 16 international Jewish participants from across the globe.

**The main achievements during the last three years of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):** During the grant period, we have undertaken a process of refining our evaluation of our Mechina programs and activities. We built a multi-year strategic plan for the Mechina. Our strategy includes recruitment, marketing, and alumni programing, and aims to increase the size and scope of the Mechina, as well as to further diversify and expand our student demographic. We have already seen some very positive results. 2016-2019 was a period of growth for Mechinat BINA. We increased the numbers and diversity of our participants, deepened our social action, and held even more Shabbat and Jewish holiday events. We introduced a new environmental cohort, “Shikma,” into the Mechina, with a focus on the topics of sustainability and the connections between society, Judaism and the environment. The “Shikma” group study texts and sources focusing on (but not limited to) environmentalism and sustainability and volunteer in the Urban Farm and the Botanical Gardens, creating and leading environmental educational content programs for local schools and kindergartens. We established a second traveling "Masabacha” Mechina alongside Mechinat BINA that gives Israeli young adults from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to live, learn and study in different communities across Israel. Through complete immersion in the
communities, the group learns about the populations that make up Israeli society - their challenges, culture and heritage - and think about how they can impact Israeli society for the better.

All of our Mechina participants enjoy in depth study of Jewish texts and sources. The introduction of the Matanell Tikkun Olam course in English (for the international GAP participants) and Hebrew has been a popular and thought-provoking addition to the curriculum.

We grew our team, have ‘professionalized’ our staff structure and have improved our recruitment processes. We have already seen results in the numbers of potential participants that we have had to put on a waitlist due to the increased volume of interested applicants.

Mechinat BINA graduates who are at the start of their IDF careers and those currently serving in the army, tell us that their time at BINA prepared them for a meaningful army experience and for life beyond the IDF, at university or at the start of their careers.

Each year we increased the number of organizations that our students volunteer with and diversified the beneficiaries of the volunteerism. Our participants work on projects that support the asylum seeker population of south Tel Aviv and the homeless, help those trapped in the cycle of prostitution, and meet with the diverse residents of the neighborhoods surrounding the Mechina. Our participants continue to work to support the underserved and marginalized communities of south Tel Aviv and Jaffa – including senior citizens who take part in BINA’s support for the elderly program, making weekly home visits, collecting personal histories and visiting homes for senior citizens. After school hours, participants create and lead enrichment activities for children and youth at risk at the local absorption centers and community centers in the neighborhood. Participants staff the BINA-founded Moadonit (after school program), providing homework support and enrichment activities for twenty elementary-school students. Our participants help oversee BINA’s environmental program wherein local children work with the volunteers in planting and caring for BINA’s urban farm and help with the renewal of the botanical gardens project in south Tel Aviv. Each year participants organize a series of pluralistic family friendly Shabbatot for local families in the BINA botanical gardens.

In the most recent activity year, Mechinat BINA participants planned and coordinated several large- and small-scale Jewish holiday events across the Jewish year: Yom Kippur – the students were involved in planning aspects of the annual community event which included music, poetry, study and introspection and was attended by hundreds of individuals. Tu Bishvat – 400 local elementary school students enjoyed a day of environmental themed activities organized and led by Mechinat BINA. Yom Haatzmaut – the participants were involved in the torch lighting ceremony and planning and preparing the party, attended by 150 people. Shavuot – the Mechina students planned aspects of the all-night learning event that was attended by 500 participants and included study, discussion circles, music, spoken word and poetry performances, creative workshops, walking tours of the neighborhood and much more.

Over the last three years Mechinat BINA has worked towards equality and inclusion. Last year the campus was modified to be more accessible with the addition of new paths and wheelchair accessible ramps. We had our first blind participant, Ohad and our first wheelchair user, Maya. We are so proud to have provided them – alongside their peers - a transformative Mechina experience and are proud to show other Mechinot that inclusivity and accessibility is possible. Our students embraced any and all challenges and together made sure that Ohad and Maya were included in all Mechina activities. Our program has proven that anyone can and should be able to participate in pre-army programs and we hope to pave the way for others to follow.

We wish to thank the Matanell Foundation for your generous support of Mechinat BINA – with your help the Mechina has reached new heights of study, social action and work in the community.

**The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, and conclusions for the future...):** All Mechina participants complete comprehensive pre-program, mid-year and end-year written and oral evaluations, as individuals and as groups with Mechina staff. We assess our programs using pre-program and post-program surveys. The surveys combine quantitative
measures using a Likert scale to measure attitude changes during the year and open-ended questions to receive more qualitative feedback on program impact. The aim of our evaluation is to learn the impact of our programs in two axes: Jewish Identity and Social Responsibility. In each axis we measure

- Attitudes (How has the program effected participants' perceptions, opinions?)
- Behavior (How has the program effected participants' actions and life choices)
- Cognitions (How has the program effected participants' knowledge?)
- Motivation (How has the program effected participants’ motivation to act?)

Each program participant is surveyed regarding the particular classes, activities and meetings in which they participate and also more global questions regarding the impact of BINA’s programs on their attitudes, behavior and cognitions regarding their Jewish identity and their intention to continue learning, their view of the role of social action in their lives and its connection to their view of Judaism, and their views on community. We also conduct alumni surveys to assess long-term impact, as well as collect general feedback from alumni about the transition from the programs into the IDF and their needs, interests, and desire for continued connection to BINA and the Mechina as well as to Jewish study and social action post-program. Full evaluation summary attached.

Looking toward the future:
As Mechinat BINA goes from strength to strength, our alumni community grows. We have been working to improve the way we engage with our alumni – how we communicate with them and keep them involved. We know that participating in Mechinat BINA is the start of a lifelong journey and by supporting our alumni to build their own communities, as they move through different stages in their lives, by continuing to engage with them and their friends and partners, we are building a new model of Jewish spiritual communal life that is transformative of self and of society. Through a range of activities, utilizing multiple formats, styles and frequencies, we provide diverse options and pathways for engagement with our program participants and graduates, all over the country, whether they are current participants, in the army or university or at the start of their careers. Each cohort has an alumni coordinator that keeps in contact with graduates and is available to help them as they adjust to life in the IDF and beyond. The coordinators work directly with BINA’s current program participants and alumni, serving as mentors, providing guidance and training to generate new social action projects and initiatives that will, in turn, engage more young adults across the country. The coordinators also work with groups of alumni to initiate, plan and implement events of all sizes, including large scale events open to the public. These programs include weekly or bi-weekly Beit Midrash study programs, Kabalat Shabbat, Friday night dinners, holiday events, "chafflot" (evenings that combine learning, food and music), street parties, weekend retreats, volunteer initiatives, group activism, conferences and entrepreneurship training

As we look forward to the coming year, we once again, want to thank the Matanel Foundation for your support which is invaluable to Mechinat BINA, allowing us to fulfil all our existing and planned activities, as well as serving as an important endorsement which we proudly use to leverage future funding from municipal/governmental sources, from other foundations, and from private donors both in Israel and Internationally.

Thank you.

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as PDF documents)

Please join photos – as photos – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seems to you relevant – as PDF document.