

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: Leadership Program

Year: 2019-2020

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

Name of the Program: Ayalim Association Leadership Program

Year of activity: 2019-2020

Name of the report's writer: Anna Suchy

Function of the report's writer: Grant Coordinator

Mail: partnership@ayalim.org.il **Phones:** 054-6824610

Website: <https://en.ayalim.org.il/>

Number of active participants in the program: 13

Estimated number of impacted participants: The 13 leaders, 1,500 Ayalim students in its various villages, as well as the hundreds of thousands of residents of the local communities where the villages reside.

Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

In light of the program's success, and despite the challenges we face due to the Covid-19 outbreak, we are currently halfway through another cycle with 18 leaders. Due to the leader's meaningful role in the local authorities during the pandemic, more municipalities have requested that we open villages within their jurisdiction, thus expanding the number of participants in the program.

In light of social distancing and other limitations put into place to fight the pandemic, we needed change the program. The annual opening event, the journey to a community in the diaspora, and other events couldn't take place. Several group and personal meeting take place virtually, when face-to-face meetings isn't possible. Still, the important values, principles and tools are being instilled in the young leaders.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

Although this past year has challenged our leadership program and its participants, it also serves as a testament to the program's success.

Before the outbreak a number of events did take place as planned. First, the 2019\2020 academic year did open with a journey to Greece, where the participants met with members of the local Jewish community, learned about their heritage, and helped renovate a local Jewish cemetery. A number of group meetings did take place before the Covid-19 outbreak. They included a tour in Gush Etzion, discussing pioneering, communities and coexistence and a day in Yeruham, discussing entrepreneurship in the Negev.

Once the pandemic sent the country into a state of emergency, unlike anything it has experienced, the program's participants proved to be true leaders, not only for the students in their villages, but also within the local authorities. During the first wave the leaders each started managing command centers, receiving requests for help from the field and managing the volunteers in ensuring that every request was answered immediately.

Later, the leaders partnered with the Ministry of Social Affairs to head up command centers for mapping the needs of senior citizens in their areas, thus again providing a much needed support system.

Ayalim was one of the only organization prepared to manage the large numbers of volunteers to support the communities in these unique times, serving as the authorities' executive branch. Ayalim's leaders became key players in this array, actually managing large numbers of tasks and people, making sure that every request for help is answered immediately, and ensuring that the local authority's needs were being answered. The rest of the students in the villages followed these leaders, answering every need.

During the summer the leaders took a break from the command centers to come to Dimona, where Ayalim was to found a new off-grid rural neighborhood, and learned how to participate in the construction of the neighborhood. When the rest of the organization joined them, they led their villages in the construction of the neighborhood.

The leadership program's goal is to provide its participants with a variety of tools so that they can successfully execute the plans in the villages, ultimately leading to the birth of new communities. These plans and programs usually include events that during the pandemic seem like a distant dream. But even when we had to stray from these plans, leadership was shown, and 3 new communities were born this year. The pandemic challenged Ayalim and its leaders, but we quickly adapted to the new needs. As a result of the true leadership shown by the program's participants, the local authorities realized what an asset Ayalim, its students, and particularly its village leaders, are to the local community. This resulted in several authorities requesting to expand the villages and the collaboration with Ayalim, and several others asking for new villages to be built in their jurisdiction, thus expanding the impact Ayalim can have.

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

As stated, the program's goal is to provide the leaders with the tools for executing the programs and plans in the village. If they are successful in executing all the students' ideas and dreams for programs and projects, then the students will have a greater sense of meaning and belonging. This will lead to a greater chance of the students forming communities and remaining in these areas. This year these events and plans were replaced by real-time needs.

Several times a year, the students are asked to fill out questionnaires, measuring their sense of meaning and belonging. According to these questionnaires, this past year has also helped the students develop these aspects.

Also, the plans and events are a means to an end, with the actual goal being the creation of new young communities. This year, 3 new young communities, born in Ayalim villages, chose to form and settle in the areas where they spent their college years. At the end of the day, this is the program's actual goal, proving its success more than anything else.

In these difficult times, Ayalim's leaders chose to take a stand, be active and take responsibility, proving to themselves, the students they lead and the local authorities that they are worthy leaders and that Ayalim's method works.

This of course led to the expansion of existing villages, as well as new villages being founded, all requested by the local authorities. This allows for Ayalim to expand its impact on Israeli society.

The students' sense of meaning, the new communities and the added and expanded villages, prove that the program is effective.

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

Ayalim views itself as a hub for young leadership in the various local authorities. This means that the local community's needs are the guidelines for our leaders' practicum. This past year proved to us more than ever how important this aspect of the program is. Senior citizens and at risk populations needed more help, and the younger generation needed to step up, due to the reduced risk to their safety.

Because this model was so successful, and because Ayalim's leaders took charge so naturally, more authorities asked to expand the project in their region (for example, Kiryat Shmona and Karmiel) and other authorities that Ayalim hasn't worked with before asked for villages to be set up in their jurisdiction (Ramle, Ashdod, Eilat and more). This allows for more participants in the leadership program (thus explaining the program growth from 11 to 18 participants this year).

We plan to continue guiding our leaders to be active, to be attentive to the local needs, to work together with other bodies, and to show personal example to those they lead.

This will allow us to continue expanding, impacting more people, and creating more and more young communities and leaders.