



*MATANEL FOUNDATION
ACTIVITY REPORT*

**Program: From “Babysitters” to Day Cares
2020 Annual Activity Report**

Name of the Program: From “Babysitters” to Day Cares

Year of activity: 2020

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Number of active participants in the program: 1450

Estimated number of impacted participants: 4000

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

In our mutual project we work to improve the quality of life of children at early childhood ages in the asylum-seekers' community through promoting optimal and maximal transition of asylum-seekers children in Tel-Aviv from the “babysitters” to beneficial daycare centers and municipal kindergartens. We also work intensively with caregivers and educators in the “babysitters” and afterschool settings in order to improve the physical conditions and the quality of care and education in these settings. Our work influence the lives of children in early childhood in the asylum seeker community in all aspects of their lives.

The year 2020 was undoubtedly one of the most challenging and complex years we have experienced. It started with great momentum, but in March, COVID-19 erupted into our lives and we had to adapt our activities to the constraints created by the pandemic outbreak. Despite the crisis and its dire consequences for the asylum seeker community, we have achieved the majority of our goals and objectives.

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

Mesila is a partner in steering the innovative model of the government-municipal day cares, funded by the government, and located in buildings rented by the Municipality and administered by Israeli nonprofits. We advance the opening of good alternative settings in collaboration with the Municipality, government, NGOs and philanthropists. We found a new space at the Central Station for a new daycare center that would accommodate another 400 children. We are now waiting for the government approval to budgeting new day cares.

We promoted the registration to the municipal kindergartens - Prior to the registration period, the Early Childhood Unit staff went to all the settings known to Mesila in order to provide information and raise awareness about registration. They approached all the parents in the guided babysitters program and



informed them of the registration. At the other babysitters, they distributed information. The unit's staff also wrote all the posts published on Mesila's [Facebook](#) page and the information distributed via WhatsApp and Telegram groups regarding registration, preparing children for school and kindergarten routines, etc.

We worked closely with the Municipal Education Department to make the registration process accessible to the community's parents. During registration week, Mesila's staff has worked parallel to registration hours and helped whoever needed assistance. We helped approximately 250 families as part of this project. Furthermore, the municipal placement system was not suited to the community's needs and in previous years, the parents were required to come to Mesila or the Municipality to find out about their children's placements. This year, as a result of our joint work with the registration unit in the Tel-Aviv Municipality, the parents to receive text messages directly to their phones. We translated the placement announcements into Tigrinya and English and opened two special phone lines for parents and parents with questions or appeal requests contacted these lines.

Collaboration with government-municipal day cares and municipal kindergarten staffs in Tel-Aviv: We increased our professional collaboration with municipal kindergarten staff working with the community's children and our work with the educational staff in the government-municipal day cares. There is a gap in staff understanding of the community's characteristics, which creates crises in the relationship between parents, children and the settings. In order to bridge the gap, we conduct lectures for various educational staffs who work with the community regarding the different communities' characteristics, work with children with developmental delays, and children who have experienced trauma. This contributes to the well-being of the children.

We held four online parental guidance groups towards entrance into first grade and municipal kindergarten and two frontal parents' groups, in which parents of children at-risk participated. In these groups, we placed emphasis on parenting in situations of ongoing health, economic and psychological stress.

Furthermore, The Or Program to increase early childhood literacy has operated in the 4 classes for older children in the municipal-government model day cares along with work in 3 municipal kindergartens. The program provides individual services to more than 100 children each week.

Babysitters and afterschools in the Guidance Project: In 2020, we guided 17 babysitter settings. Up until mid-March, our guidance included weekly intensive on-the-job pedagogical training with caregivers and staff on a variety of topics: early childhood development, language interactions, healthy nutrition, educational schedules and routine, etc. We also improved the physical and safety conditions. We identified 28 children at-risk and children with special needs in the settings and referred them to further treatment in Mesila's units.

For the first time, a guidance project at two afterschool settings for children ages 3-7 in the HaTikvah neighborhood has begun. Hundreds of children attend these programs daily. These settings are mostly operated by Eritrean men and connect the children to their culture and roots, while providing a solution to their wandering the streets in the afterschool hours. Although Mesila sees this as positive, there have been reports of violence, humiliating punishments and overcrowding. The purpose of this project is to improve education and care in the after-school settings. The guidance content included: The Israeli education system's use of non-violent educational tools, classroom management, coping with challenging children, etc.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of the education system, we had to stop guidance and concentrate all our resources on providing direct financial assistance and emotional support to community members including caregivers, parents and children in all educational settings. We resumed guidance in August 2020.

In total, 15 professionals had volunteered at the babysitters from January until mid-March, either with a group of children or as individual tutors for children with developmental delays/emotional problems.



We conducted two groups for Eritrean caregivers. We also held a group in collaboration with the Para-Medical staff for English-speaking caregivers. The group for identifying distress signals in infants and children included a CPR and first aid workshop. Unfortunately, the trigger for this group was the death of a one-year old at a babysitter in January.

COVID-19 pandemic dramatically and severely affected the asylum seekers community, who is in a state of humanitarian crisis and acute hunger. Without the opportunity to earn a living, the community has remained reliant on direct food aid. Due to financial hardship, many parents didn't send their children to educational settings and the children stayed at their homes for many months with their unemployed parents. We provided psycho-social and financial support to babysitter staff as well as to the children and families; located community children in all educational settings in Tel-Aviv, assessed their needs and provided assistance accordingly; distributed tablets and arts and crafts kits for children at risk and children with special needs and tablets to the 10 babysitter caregivers, which were used for on-line guidance.

Overall, Since March and through the end of December, Mesila has distributed: 12,305 food vouchers; 4,357 food packages and meals; 2,083 diaper packs and baby formulas; 603 toys arts and crafts kits; 113 tablets; 264 backpacks, pencil cases, and school equipment; 683 hygiene packages and 96 winter packages – blankets, radiators, umbrellas, etc.

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

At the conclusion of every group, the participants receive brief questionnaires that relate to the content learned, its relevance, and the manner in which the content was presented. The questionnaires analysed and if necessary, changes and adaptations are implemented.

90% of caregivers and educators under Mesila's guidance find the received guidance and support very useful in 2019 and 2020. The evaluations help us improve and fine-tune our projects and follow-up on the target populations' progress.

The evaluation of the project in relation to registration for day care centers and municipal kindergartens was measured numerically. Each year we see steady increase in the registration to the day cares. In addition, following our intensive work to make registration to municipal kindergartens accessible, most community parents send their children, ages 3-6, to municipal kindergartens.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

The number of children in municipal government daycares, especially in the Lasova daycares, is still lower than it used to be before covid-19 and Mesila has set a goal to support them by advertising to parents and further guiding the Israeli staff in order to stabilize these programs.

We will conduct monthly training for the educational instructors and the social workers in Lasova daycares and conduct a parental guidance group. In addition, we will hold orientation and training sessions for the municipal kindergarten staff and elementary school teachers, focused on working with the asylum-seeker community.

We will continue to promote the accessibility of enrollment to municipal education frameworks to community parents.

We will work in 13 babysitters, with a focus on areas that do not have early-aged educational settings nearby (HaTikva neighborhood) and on caregivers who show desire and motivation to undergo training for the benefit of the children and who can later be integrated into educational work in other educational settings. We will also provide guidance to teachers in four afterschool settings.



Unfortunately, the economic instability caused by COVID has led to a loss of donations. Some donors who have supported this project in the past are no longer able to do so.

We are aware that 2020 was the last year *MATANEL FOUNDATION* supported the project, but in light of COVID-19 severe affect on the asylum seekers community and Mesila, we would appreciate if you consider continuing your support for an additional year.

We would like to thank you for your on-going partnership and support in this important project and we hope that you will choose to continue our collaboration in 2021.

Best Regards,
Mor

Please join the Evaluation Report - attached

Financial Report - attached

A list of the participants to the program (**as PDF documents**) – Not applicable due to confidentiality.

Please join 5 photos – as **JPG files** – attached

Other document connected to the program which will seems to you relevant – as **PDF document**.

Please join a 5 minutes movie which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation. The movie should be accessible to the philanthropic world and to other potential donors.

[A short film we made about going back to school after lockdowns during COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[A short film we made with tips for parents before September 1st](#)