MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program*:* Vocational Training Program
Year: 2023

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: Vocational Training Program

Year of activity: 2023

Name of the report's writer: Avia Cohen-Kosher

Function of the report's writer: Director of Partnerships

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Number of active participants in the program: 19

Estimated number of impacted participants: 100

Give the actually state of the program:
Hut believes that there is a light in everyone. The purpose of this project is to support vulnerable young people in acquiring the skills and capacity to seek, gain and maintain regular employment as part of their reintegration into normative society. Hut believes in employment as a discipline, a means to self-respect and a route for integration into society. Originally established in 2014 together with the National Insurance Institute of Israel, this project aims to prepare young people for the world of work.

The right job or profession can move an individual forward in life, toward a better future. For young people who lack the right tools, struggle with authority, and have been unable to take initiative, such a possibility may appear beyond their reach. To overcome such obstacles, this project imparts critical life-skills needed to develop self-confidence and discipline; interact in positive ways with others; secure gainful employment; and live productive lives. By meeting young people where they are - intellectually, emotionally, and temperamentally – this project enables them to set their own goals and work at their own pace.

The project includes three modules: intensive one-on-one counselling to assess the young person’s aptitude and goals; a 12-meeting group workshop series offering concrete skills, such as resume development, job interview preparation and so on; and follow up support for job interviews and up to one year after securing employment.

Two cohorts of young people completed the program in 2023, gaining the skills to access and maintain themselves in employment. Each participant took part in weekly intensive one-on-one counselling sessions, as well as the three-month program of group workshops. This included 12 sessions of 3 hours each, a total of 24 meetings, or 72 hours of training.

Cohort number 1 was made up of 8 young people, 4 young men and 4 young women. They completed the program, which was led by Tamar, an experienced Hut HaMeshulash social worker, between January and March 2023. On completion, one participant noted that he had never received a certificate for something he had worked so hard for, while others said it was the first time they had ever received a certificate for anything they had done.

Tamar, the program leader, noted: *All eight participants who completed the program came to the award ceremony. During this event, they wrote summaries of the professional content of the program and a letter to each other about the social aspects of what they had learned. They were very, very excited to write and receive the letters. After a presentation, including photos from the whole program, we handed out the certificates, then went out for a celebratory hamburger, sponsored by Burgers Bar.*

Cohort number 2 was made up of 9 young people, 6 young men and 3 young women. It was led by Shoshie, an experienced Hut HaMeshulash social worker, who took over the program from Tamar while she was on maternity leave. This cohort participated in the program between 11/15/23 and 1/24/24, during the current conflict. Hut thought long and hard about whether to hold the program in such circumstances. When everything was so uncertain and unstable, asking young people to commit to an intensive three-month program seemed like an impossible task. However, during interviews for the program, the young people expressed their need for more support and structure during such an unsettled time. They later reported that the workshop had served as a very significant anchor for them, which helped them get through an extremely difficult time. The program and group helped them to feel a sense of belonging, to believe that change was possible, and provided a little stability within a reality which destabilized everyone, but especially young people like these, who come from complex backgrounds and do not always have circles of support and belonging around them.

One of the participants noted that this was the first time he had been able to sit for a long time, listen, learn, be interested, be part of a group, and start and finish something, without dropping out in the middle.

Shoshie, the workshop leader, noted: *This was my first time leading the program. In the middle of a complex and turbulent time, I didn't know what to expect but I hoped that it would give the young people a safe and stable place to be, and to learn. I was amazed to see how much the program enriched them! From meeting to meeting, they worked together, learned, connected and devoted themselves. Despite all the difficulties of the current period, this was the first time that all the young people who started the workshop also finished it and where everyone came regularly throughout.*

Subjects covered as part of the program included principals of employment (rights, terminology, duties), teamwork, CV writing and interview skills. An employers' panel gave the young people an insight into what employers looked for, and their expectations of employees.

The program was assessed by Hut's in-house M&E team through questionnaires given to participants at the start and end of each cohort. Based on lessons learned, Hut aims to significantly grow the program next year to encompass all users of its services, not just Open Space attendees, and focusing on social mobility, rather than simply employment.

Please attach the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as PDF documents). Attached. The 2023 evaluation report is currently in production and will be submitted to Matanel as soon as possible. In the meantime, the last evaluation report for the project is attached.

Please join photos – as **JPG files** – and any link or any 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.