



# Activity Report- Matanel Foundation

## The Women of Jerusalem Program

Submitted by: 0202 – Points of View from Jerusalem

Reporting Period: January 2025- February 2026

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## Summary of Program

Now entering its 4th year, the Women of Jerusalem Program equips women from East Jerusalem, West Jerusalem, and ultra-Orthodox communities with practical digital media and leadership skills, leading to increased confidence, capacity, income opportunities, and professional and personal development.

Between January 2025 and February 2026, the program conducted 6 cohorts, comprising Arab, Haredi, and West Jerusalemite women, each participating in a 12-session training program in media production and ethical storytelling. Participants produced original content, strengthened their ability to communicate their realities, and built cross-community relationships through facilitated dialogue.

As a direct outcome of the program, several participants secured paid media work, freelance opportunities, or relevant employment following completion of the training. This year marks a record high for the program in terms of participation, participant successes post-program, operational output, and social awareness, with news media coverage and interest from the broader civic society in Jerusalem and nationally. With the program activities now drawing to a close, this final report is provided as a detailed summary of the 2025 program's output and outcomes.



## Summary Achievements (January 2025- February 2026)

- **106 women** from across Jerusalem's 3 major demographic communities completed the full training course. **34 Arab, 40 ultra-orthodox, 32 West Jerusalemite women** (religious and secular Jewish women)

- **Estimated Number of Impacted Participants:** 700+ community members and family networks.

- **72 group workshops** were held, covering training subjects of: photography, videography, editing, journalism, activism, leadership, and public speaking.

- A total of **9 intercommunal dialogue sessions** were conducted, focusing on key cultural topics in Jerusalemite society, such as gender, personal and group identity, and the shared experiences of women across different communities.



- **80 creative media works** produced by participants, including podcasts, short films, photography exhibits and written essays. [Link to some of their media works here.](#)

- Participant stories and productions showcased on social media platforms, including 0202's pages, with a cumulative audience reach of **118,000+**.



- Partnerships expanded with the inclusion of the organisation's Takadom (East Jerusalem women's leadership organization) and Yuda's Yard (Organisation that supports ex-Haredi community) to increase the program's reach within population sectors, public recognition and inter-organizational resource support.



- Promotional video on the East Jerusalem cohort created by our student media team in collaboration with a project supporter: [watch video here](#).

- News media coverage of the program was secured from a project supporter resulting in dedicated articles published in:

[Jerusalem News](#) - [Walla](#) - [KolHazman](#) - [News08](#) - [Jerusalem Times](#) - [Segondya](#)

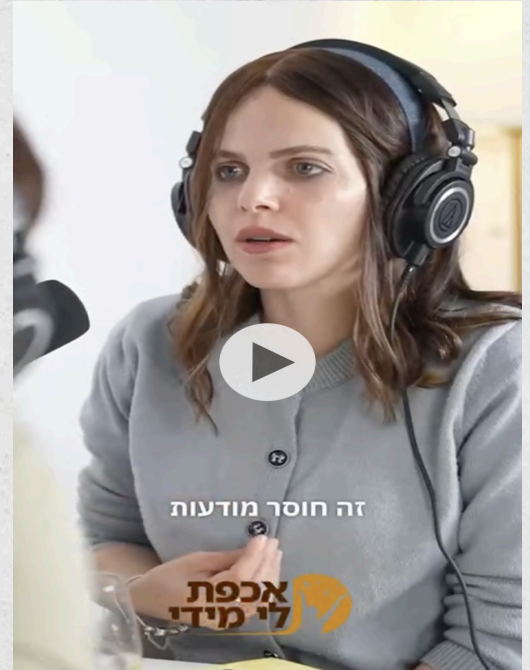


## Evaluation and Results

### Quantitative Assessments

Quantitative Outcomes (based on pre- and post-program evaluations of program participants) cover a range of key performance indicators tied to successful fulfilment of program goals. Over the full course of the reporting period these include:

- **Workshop retention:** 74% attended more than 8 consecutive sessions
- **Skills improvement:**
  - **Videography & Photography** – 76% significant improvement
  - **Editing** – 71% moderate to significant improvement
- **Storytelling & Media Marketing** – 80% stronger proficiency
  - **Leadership Skills & Self-Confidence** – 74% increased confidence
- **Cultural understanding:** 79% reported improved awareness of other communities within the frame of 2 or more intercommunal dialogue sessions
- **Increased positive perception of other demographic groups:** 74% reported a greater personal empathy and interpersonal connection with members and communities of other demographic groups within the frame of 2 or more intercommunal dialogue sessions



## Qualitative Outcomes testimonials

*“My whole life, I stayed silent. Not because I had nothing to say, but because I didn’t know how to say it, and I was scared of what people would think. This program gave me the tools and community of women to show me my voice mattered.”* **Haredi participant, 55 years old**

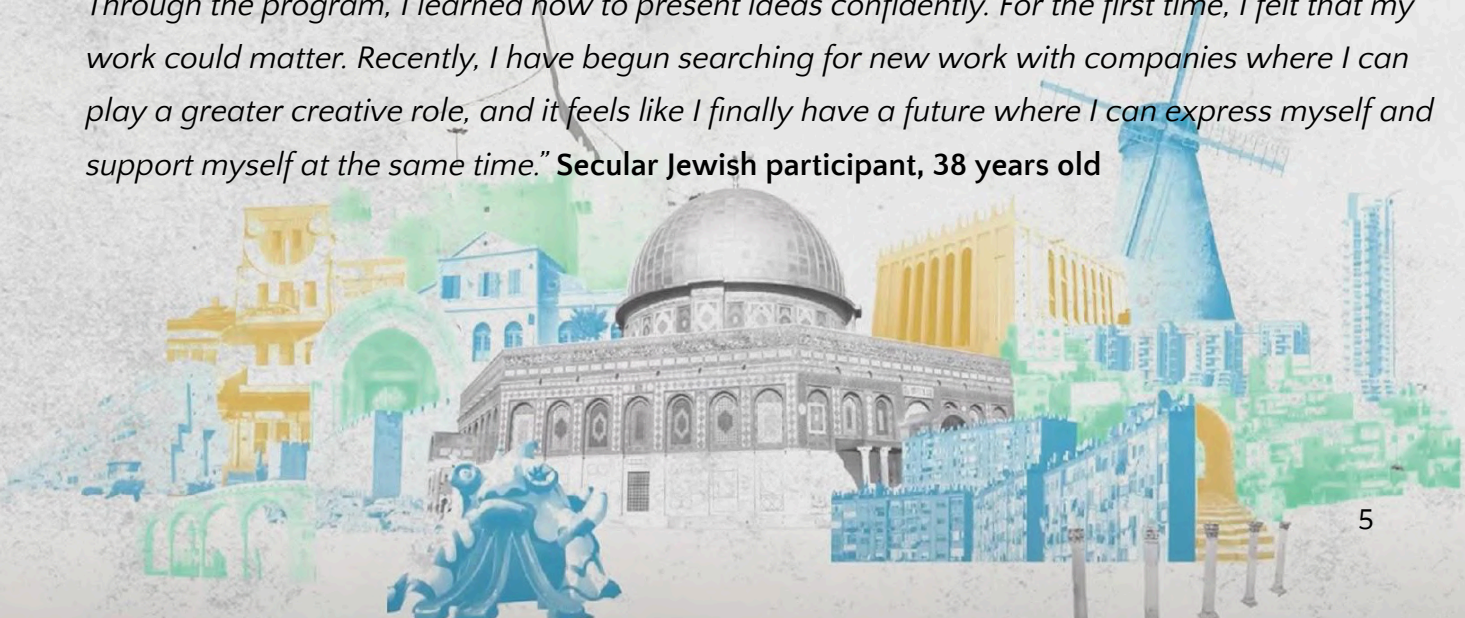
*“I got married at 16 and had 4 children by the age of 23. I never finished school, and my husband never let me study or get a job. I am now 34. The media and leadership program at 0202 was the first-ever skills course I have ever done. Recently, I divorced my husband, who was abusive and left me alone to provide for the children. The digital editing skills I gained in the program helped me get a job as a video editor at a company in East Jerusalem.”* – **Arab participant, 34 years old**



*“I am tired of being scared, of being angry. Meeting these Jewish women helped me soften. We are all just women. It doesn’t matter whether Jew or Arab, religious or non-religious, we all share this identity. Meeting Jewish mothers showed me our shared motherhood, how we just want our children to be safe.”* **Arab participant, 42 years old**

*“Before the program, I hadn’t taken a video of myself in over 20 years. I didn’t have the courage or the know-how. There was a shame behind it. Now, after the program, I give myself the mission to take a video of myself at least once a week to give myself the confidence that what I say does matter. I am not ashamed.”* **Haredi participant, 55 years old**

*My whole adult life, I worked as a receptionist, but I felt stuck, like I wasn’t reaching my potential. Through the program, I learned how to present ideas confidently. For the first time, I felt that my work could matter. Recently, I have begun searching for new work with companies where I can play a greater creative role, and it feels like I finally have a future where I can express myself and support myself at the same time.”* **Secular Jewish participant, 38 years old**



*"I had my first conversation with an Ultra-Orthodox woman in this program. I realised we are not so different at all. It was also my first time in my life at a cinema, where I watched my first movie about Jewish identity, hair wigs for Ultra-Orthodox women. I always looked at these women on the light rail with curiosity."* **Arab participant, 29 years old.**

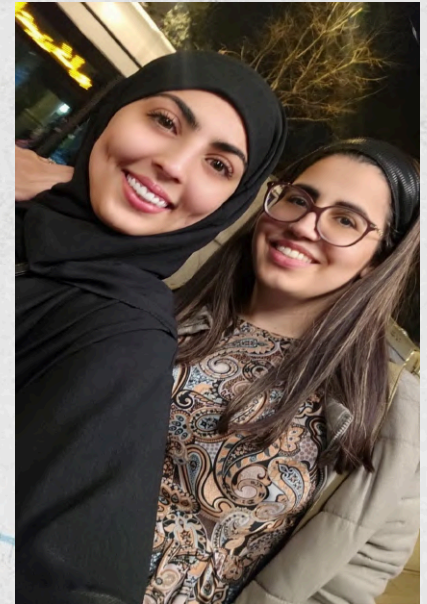
*"I used to be scared of the media. I grew up being taught it was dangerous. But through this program, I learned that media can also be a tool for good, for expression, connection, and even holiness when used with intention. The program gave me the courage and tools to share my own stories."* **-Haredi participant, 28 years old**

*"Leaving the Haredi world was frightening. I didn't know who I was outside of my Haredi identity. This program helped provide me with practical skills, confidence, and, most importantly, a community of women who supported me in my next steps. I feel less alone and more capable of creating the life I want."* **Ex-Haredi participant, 19 years old**



## Dialogue and Intercommunal Activities

Over the course of the program, participants took part in 9 in-depth dialogue sessions, bringing together women from across Jerusalemite communities to explore identity, womanhood, and the realities of living in a city shaped by conservative societies, religion and conflict. For many, these were their first meaningful encounters with women from other communities, offering a safe space to share experiences, ask questions, and challenge assumptions. Beyond conversation, participants shared the content they created during the program, including videos and storytelling projects, allowing their voices to be seen and heard across community lines.

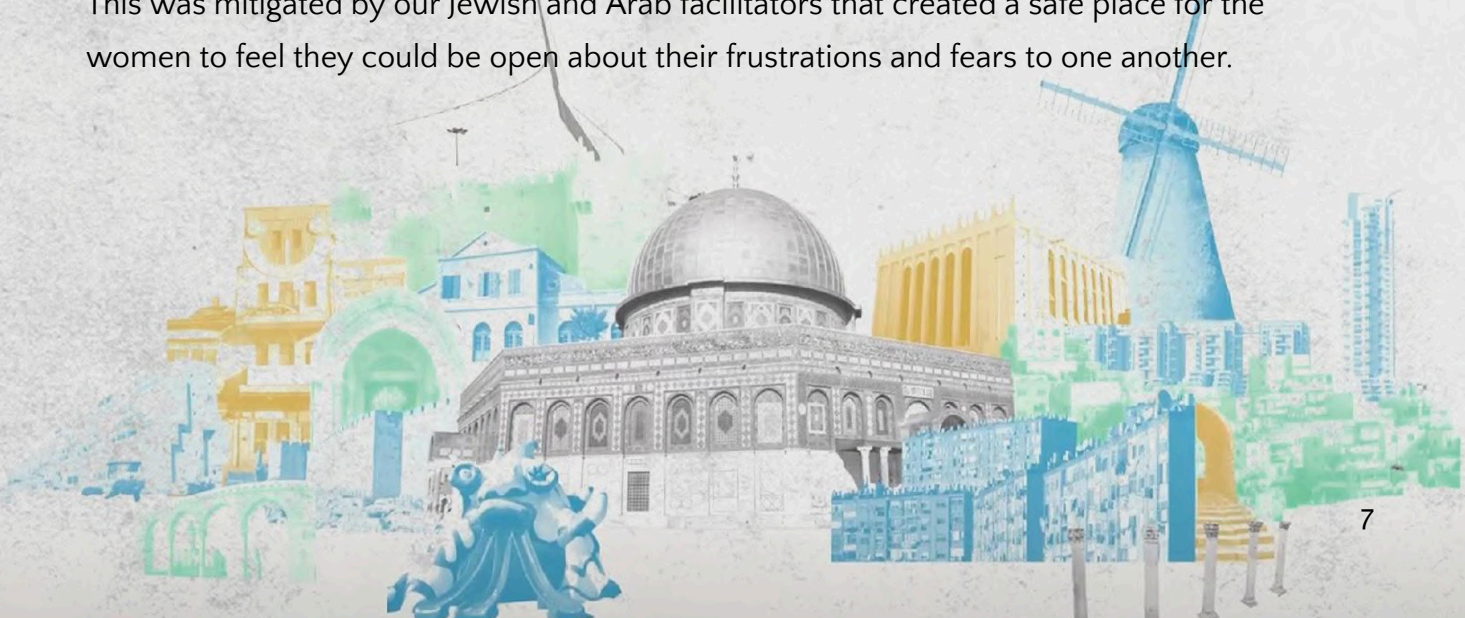


The participants also participated in tours of cultural centres, joint film screenings, and storytelling evenings, providing them with opportunities to experience one another’s perspectives firsthand. These activities have fostered lasting connections, increased participants’ confidence, and enhanced intercultural understanding. Follow-up events planned for 2026 will continue this momentum, ensuring that the relationships and dialogue cultivated during the program grow into deep and lasting friendships and connections.



## Challenges and Responses

1. **Motherhood and Scheduling Constraints:** Flexible hybrid online workshops were introduced to improve accessibility, and workshops rescheduled to accommodate group needs and requests wherever possible and appropriate.
2. **Arab Community Hesitancy:** Concerns about “normalization” were addressed through trust-building exercises with women from Arab and Jewish communities, clarifying the program’s political neutrality and skills-based focus, and offering optional dialogue participation.
3. **Regional Instability (Iran War, June 2025):** Addressed by keeping meeting schedules flexible, allowing workshops to be delayed in cases of imminent attacks, and venues with adequate safety measures and access to shelters were used. Participants were informed of proper routes to bomb shelters. Regional instability also heightened tensions during dialogue sessions. This was mitigated by our Jewish and Arab facilitators that created a safe place for the women to feel they could be open about their frustrations and fears to one another.



4. **Fear of Online Exposure:** Participants hesitant to share public work were supported with risk management guidance and the understanding that offline creation and personal development held equal value. Participants were given the option to publish items anonymously, gaining confidence from seeing social reactions while retaining a confidential identity.
  
5. **Low Digital Literacy (Haredi Cohort):** Women with no prior experience using smartphones were provided with personalized one-on-one mentoring and borrowed 0202 iphones. This support allowed all participants to participate and advance together, ensuring that workshop flow and group dynamics were not hindered by differing digital skill levels.
  
6. **Haredi Community Hesitancy Toward Feminist and Media Programming:** Some participants were initially hesitant, concerned that feminist and media-focused content might conflict with conservative community values. The program was framed around practical skills, personal growth, and professional development, with workshops carefully designed to respect community norms around modesty and visibility.
  
7. **Program Adjustments in Response to Budget Scope:** The original program design included a formal graduation event at the conclusion of each 12-week cohort. As the program reached approximately 75% of the higher-tier fundraising target, a modest and strategic adjustment was made during implementation, while all six planned cohorts were fully delivered as committed. In response to consistent participant feedback favoring dialogue over formal ceremonies, the number of graduation events was reduced from six to three, while dialogue-focused gatherings increased from seven to nine. This adjustment enabled responsible use of resources while strengthening participant engagement, learning, and inter-communal connection, with all cohorts concluding through meaningful end-of-course meetings aligned with program goals.



## Notable Participant Achievements

- New Ultra-Orthodox Coordinator- Tehilia Rut began her journey as a participant in the program's first cohort, having never met an Arab woman before. Through sustained dialogue, Arabic language study, and leadership development, she has now returned to the program as our Ultra-Orthodox Coordinator.

- Graduates have already begun securing new roles in video editing, digital marketing, and communications companies. Participants are also consolidating their skills and have been invited to facilitate lectures, such as lectures on public speaking.

- One participant initiated a successful crowdfunding campaign to publish her first book on the loss and longing of losing her husband in the Meron crowd crash of 2021. She stated that her fellow participants inspired her to create the book. -

<https://headstart.co.il/project/84666>

- Several participants launched podcasts exploring women's issues and identity in Jerusalem.

-<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5lobalKloz3klRVMi6D4xi?si=dSHELSPFTqyH4ZaRfPjKQ&preview=video&nd=1&dlsi=1c20ae010e15499b>

- Women have created support groups- 100+ groups of divorced women seeking to remarry in a conservative community and navigating its challenges. 30+ group dedicated to sexual violence survivors.

- Women have published written and multimedia works, amplifying underrepresented female voices in public discourse, such as providing commentary on Haredi army conscription and its impact on women.



## Provisional Guidelines for Advancement in 2026

1. In 2026, the program will consist of **6 new cohorts**, engaging up to 120 women from Jerusalem's three major communities (up to 40 from each). Each cohort will participate in an intensive 3-month training program combining weekly workshops, hands-on media production, leadership development, and facilitated cross-communal dialogue.



### 2. Alumni Network Development:

- 10 alumni meetups over 3 years for continued collaboration and peer mentoring.
- 7 advanced media workshops (AI tools, graphic design, website development, podcasting).
- Programmatic integration of internships, speaking opportunities, and publication of alumni media projects on 0202 platforms.
- Integrated dialogue events for alumni to maintain and strengthen relationships between women

### 3. Strategic Program Goals:

- Strengthen economic empowerment pathways for graduating participants through supported job placements and entrepreneurship training.
- Broaden program partnerships with local media outlets and NGOs.
- Expand cross-community collaborations to include mixed media projects and public exhibitions showcasing the diverse works of the women.





## Additional Resulting Developments

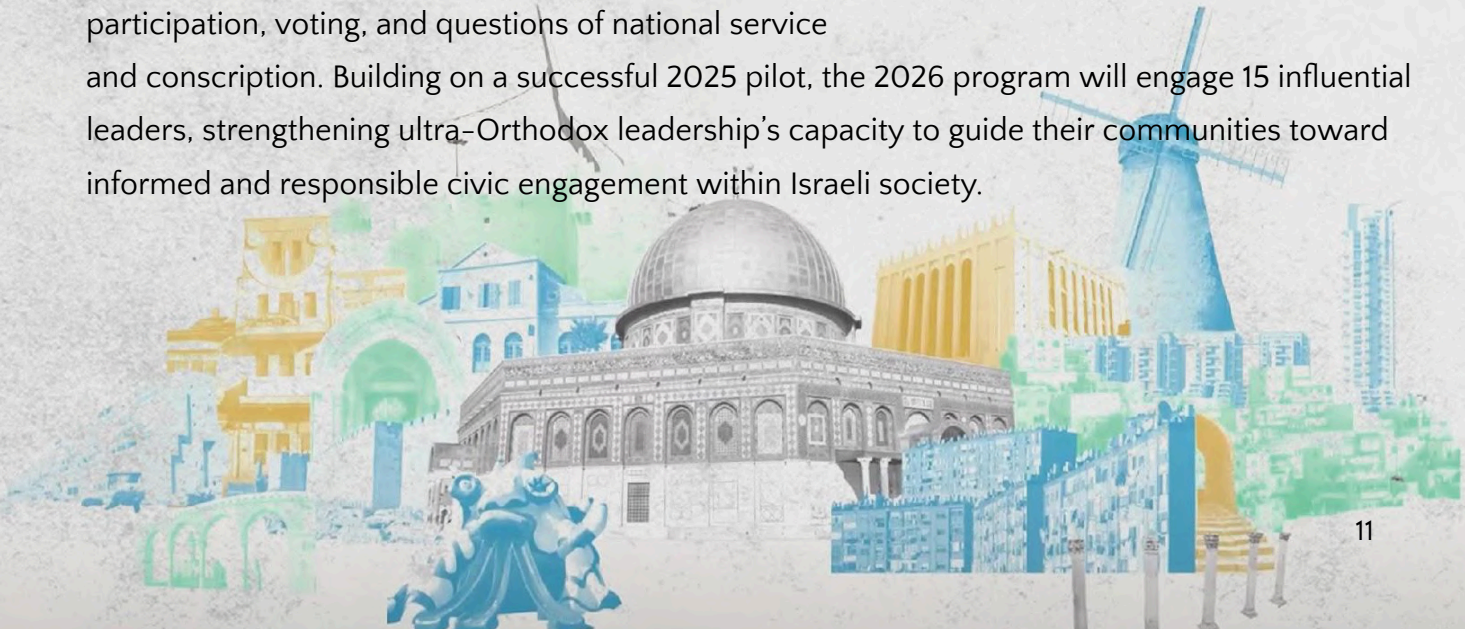
### Youth of Jerusalem Program

Building on the success of the Women of Jerusalem Program, 0202 launched the Youth of Jerusalem Program in 2025, piloted at Schmidt Girls School in East Jerusalem, to equip youth with digital media literacy, storytelling, leadership, and cross-communal skills. With a recent grant from the German government grant, in 2026 the program is expanding to eight schools across East and West Jerusalem. Participants engage in practical exercises to identify bias, misinformation, and manipulative content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. They also develop responsible media skills and take part in structured dialogue between schools, strengthening critical thinking and meaningful engagement across communities.



### Torah Responsibility Program

In 2026, 0202 will facilitate the Torah Responsibility Program to address a critical gap: limited Haredi rabbinic engagement with the ethical, civic, and democratic responsibilities of citizenship in Israel. Through a trusted forum, senior rabbis combine expert briefings with Torah-based reflection on issues such as democratic participation, voting, and questions of national service and conscription. Building on a successful 2025 pilot, the 2026 program will engage 15 influential leaders, strengthening ultra-Orthodox leadership's capacity to guide their communities toward informed and responsible civic engagement within Israeli society.



## Request for Renewal of Support

The Women of Jerusalem Program continues to demonstrate the power of media education, storytelling, and dialogue to empower marginalized women across Jerusalem. Participants emerge as confident storytellers and producers of ethical, engaging media content, while building meaningful connections across divided communities and promote a shared sense of womanhood in Jerusalem.

O202 kindly requests the Matanel Foundation's continued support through renewed funding of \$36,000 for 2026, enabling the program to build on its proven impact. With your continued partnership, we will expand these opportunities, equipping more women with practical media skills that strengthen economic independence, foster personal growth, and increase women's visibility and influence in Jerusalem's public sphere.



Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Warm regards,

Marsha Lubovny and the team at O202-Points of View from Jerusalem

