MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

ACTIVITY REPORT 2025–2026

Program: Et-Yofia – Ethiopian Jewish Heritage, Education and Community Center
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1. Program Overview

Et-Yofia, operated by Kahan Association, promotes Ethiopian Jewish heritage, strengthens Jewish and Israeli identity, and builds connections between generations and communities. Based in Kiryat Gat, the program combines cultural education, community events, activities for senior citizens, children's enrichment and family experiences.

With support from the Matanel Foundation, the association expanded its activities during 2025–2026, reaching diverse age groups and strengthening community participation.

2. Current Status and Major Achievement

A significant milestone was the allocation of a dedicated facility by the Kiryat Gat Municipality in the Shofetim neighborhood, where approximately half of the residents are of Ethiopian origin.

Et-Yofia activities have already begun at the facility, establishing a permanent community base for educational, cultural and intergenerational programs. Its location provides an accessible setting for residents and creates opportunities for continued growth and cooperation with nearby schools and community organizations.

3. Activities Implemented in 2025–2026

Senior Citizens' Arts and Crafts Workshops

The Matanel Foundation supported 54 arts and crafts sessions across three locations, with 18 meetings per group and approximately 25 participants per group, totaling 75 regular participants. The workshops provided opportunities for creativity, social interaction, cultural expression and continued community engagement among older residents.

Family Excursion

A community excursion brought together 110 participants, including children, parents and older family members. The activity encouraged shared experiences, family connections and interaction across generations.

Community Holiday Events

Three community celebrations were held for Hanukkah, Purim and Lag BaOmer, each attended by approximately 70–100 participants. These gatherings strengthened community ties and provided opportunities to celebrate Jewish traditions together.

Children's Education and Heritage Activities

The association conducted ongoing enrichment activities, including weekly English classes and instruction in Amharic and Ge'ez. These programs supported learning while introducing younger generations to the language and cultural heritage of Ethiopian Jewry.

School Programs and Cultural Education

Educational activities addressing Ethiopian Jewish history and heritage reached approximately 5,000 students in schools across Israel. The programs presented Ethiopian Jewish history as an integral part of the broader Jewish and Israeli story, encouraging understanding, cultural appreciation and shared identity.

Additional community lectures and encounters with prominent Ethiopian Israelis broadened participants' exposure to personal experiences, cultural traditions and contemporary achievements.

4. Participation and Community Reach

During the reporting period, Et-Yofia and related community activities reached approximately:

- **750 direct participants** in Kiryat Gat.
- **750 indirect beneficiaries** through families and wider community connections.
- **1,500 residents in total** through direct and indirect local reach.
- **5,000 additional students nationwide** through school-based educational programs.

The nationwide school participants are reported separately from the Kiryat Gat figures.

The program served children, families, adults and senior citizens, creating opportunities for participation across different generations.

5. Use of Matanel Foundation Support

The Matanel Foundation's NIS 50,000 grant supported the program coordinator, arts and crafts workshops for senior citizens, the family excursion, community holiday events and activity materials.

This support enabled the association to maintain regular activities, organize shared community experiences and provide meaningful programming for different age groups. The detailed allocation of expenditures is presented in the accompanying financial report.

6. Achievements and Evaluation

The principal achievements of 2025–2026 were the establishment of an active community base in the municipality-provided facility, the implementation of regular senior citizens' workshops, the organization of family and holiday activities, and the expansion of educational outreach.

The activities created opportunities for social participation, cultural learning and intergenerational interaction. They also contributed to the association's broader objectives of preserving Ethiopian Jewish heritage and strengthening connections within Israeli society.

Participation figures and activity records demonstrate the scope of implementation. However, changes in individual outcomes, such as reduced loneliness or increased cultural knowledge, have not yet been measured through standardized evaluation tools. Further findings and recommendations are provided in the separate Program Evaluation Report.

7. Challenges and Future Plans

The principal challenge is sustaining and expanding activities while securing the staffing, resources and partnerships required for long-term operation.

During the next program year, Kahan Association intends to strengthen Et-Yofia as a permanent community center, expand heritage and educational activities, develop additional programs for senior citizens and families, and deepen cooperation with municipal institutions and schools.

The association also plans to improve participation tracking and introduce structured feedback tools to better assess program outcomes.

8. Conclusion

The 2025–2026 period marked meaningful progress in Et-Yofia's development, particularly through the establishment of an active physical center and the delivery of diverse educational and community programs.

Kahan Association expresses its appreciation to the Matanel Foundation for its support, which has helped preserve cultural heritage, encourage community participation and create a foundation for sustainable future activities.

Azaria Fetegu

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