



On the Way

to Business



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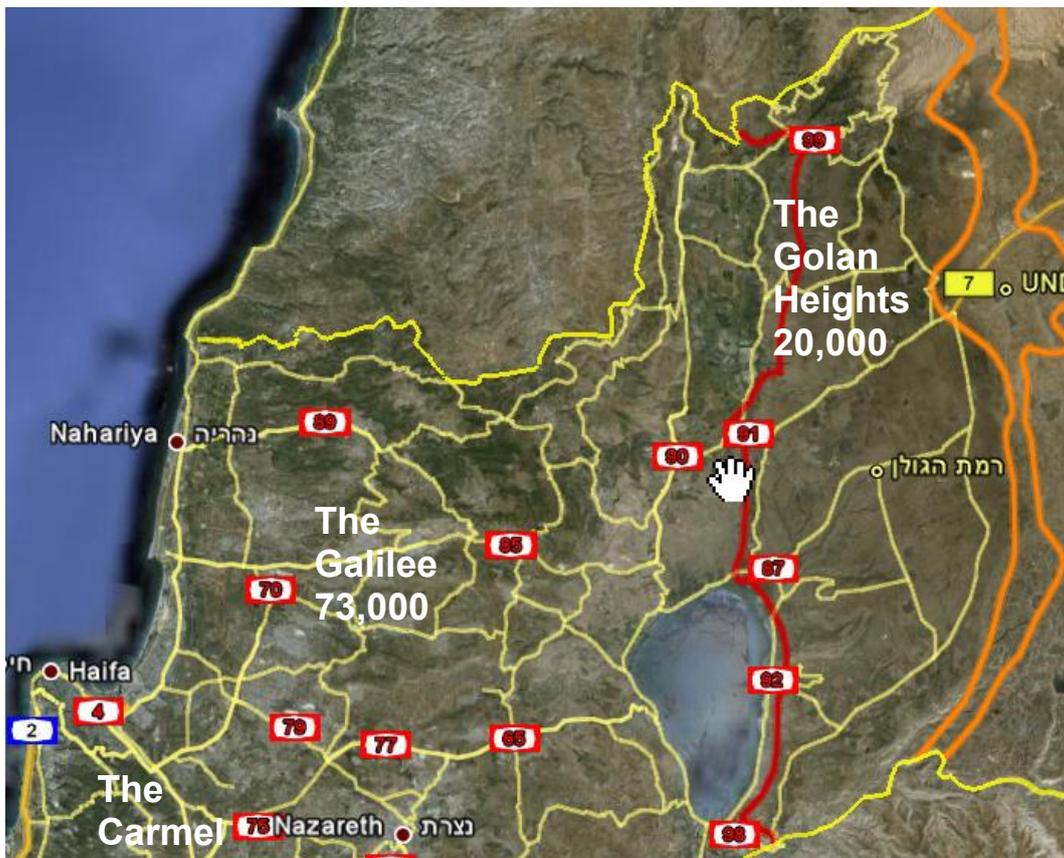
On the Way to Business

The Mission

To help establish new businesses. The programme will provide the basic tools and know how required for entrepreneurship. The target is the Druze from villages in the Galilee region that have the desire to work but cannot integrate into the labour market. It is expected that the majority, if not all, of the participants will be women.

Background

The Druze population in Israel is approximately 115,000 people. The population is divided into 3 main areas: the Golan Heights (with a population of about 20,000), the Carmel region (with about 22,000 people) and the Galilee region (with an approximate population of 73,000).



The 73,000 Druze living in Galilee are located in 13 villages, of which the biggest are Yarka (13,000), Mghar (11,000) and Bayt Jan (10,000).

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This project is focused upon the Galilee Druze villages which are significantly under developed in comparison to the Israeli economy. This underdevelopment is as a result of inadequate capital, lack of regional opportunities, and a lack of organisations who are able to provide access to capital.

The year before the project was launched, several meetings were held with the Druze leadership in order to determine the best ways in which to help the Druze population enhance their economic situation.

The Portland Trust worked together with Druze political leadership (mayors and heads of municipalities), religious leadership (Sheikh Muafak Tarif), and leading

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Druze businessmen. By meeting the various leaders in the Druze population, we sought not only their input, but also the way in which the programme should be tailored to meet the specific needs of the community.

The project proposal was approved by the Druze leaders and business community and a desire to help and be directly involved in the project was expressed by them.



The partners

- A. The Portland Trust.
- B. The JDC (JOINT) – Tevet
 - The JDC Provides social community assistance programs to over 60 countries around the world. Their mission in Israel is to work with the government, non-profit agencies, and local authorities to help develop new and more effective methods of assisting those in need.
 - Tevet is a sub-organisation of the JDC that addresses cultural and behavioural barriers amongst others. It is specifically aimed at welfare-dependant working-age Israelis who require help in finding and maintaining employment. Tevet provides: Pre-employment assistance;

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encouragement for employers to hire "hard-to-employ" workers; workplace support and long-term self-sufficiency programs.

C. MATI Villages (Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour).

- With 25 offices across Israel, MATI Villages are entrepreneurship centres that engage in the development of small and medium sized businesses. Their main services include consulting (in areas such as business start-up, development of business plan, and financial advice) as well as training courses on business management, marketing, small exports, new immigrants, and encouraging women entrepreneurs.

The Target Population

The project is aimed at individuals who have the desire to work but cannot integrate into the labour market due to a high unemployment rate and lack of opportunities in their neighbourhood. It is expected that the majority of participants, if not all, will be women.

Whilst some of them are undecided about whether to become entrepreneurs, others who have perhaps been absent from the labour market for a prolonged period of time, lack the self-esteem and belief to allow them to break back in.

Other women, having established the initial stages of a business already, require additional knowledge and skill sets in order to advance their businesses to the next level. Their specific business needs will also be addressed in the project.

Objectives

The project is focused on:

- A. Encouraging education in entrepreneurship amongst the Druze, by providing a 3 stage course.
- B. Encouraging business activities and the establishment of small businesses amongst the Druze, by using the knowledge and experience acquired during the course.

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The course

Each course takes place in a different location in order to minimize the participants need to travel. Although the project was initially aimed at men and women, we anticipate that it will now be centred on women.

The course has 3 main stages:

- A. Preparatory stage (20 weeks) – skills and business development workshops, coaching, business establishment course.

The main objective of the preparatory stage is to deal with the issues mentioned above, to identify which of the trainees have the potential to become a business owner, and to prepare those people to the advanced stage of the program. This is the regular training that MATI gives to entrepreneurs seeking help in establishing a new business.

- B. Advanced stage (20 weeks) – business initiative course, business plan preparation, mentoring.

- C. Practical stage (on-going) – consulting and mentoring the trainee in the establishment of his/her own business.

According to MATI, approximately 20%-25% of the graduates that have the opportunity to take part in these courses open their own business.

We anticipate that most of the businesses established will be in the areas of tourism, hospitality, restaurants, services and handcrafts. These businesses usually employ between 1-5 employees.