



K A I M A

*Social, Business, and Environmental Action Learning
for Israeli Youth who have Dropped out of School*

2013/14 ACTIVITY REPORT

Executive Summary

Established in January 2013, Israeli NGO Kaima encourages the personal, educational, and vocational development of drop-out and otherwise marginalized youth. Through our main initiative, Kaima Organic Farm, we offer meaningful long-term engagement for Israelis, ages 15 - 18, who cannot adjust to other social settings. Participants learn to grow, cultivate, market and sell the farm's organic products according to the international CSA (Customer Supported Agriculture) model; earn a salary; and see themselves as fully invested partners in the undertaking. Our educational model, a hybrid of a social business and non-profit modalities, help these young adults turn their lives around through a unique endeavor with far-reaching social benefits. **Kaima is new, it is different, it is successful.** Since the launch of the project we have:



- Provided hundreds of hours of one-on-one and group programming for Israeli youth who have dropped out of school.
- Worked with 2,000 Israelis and Diaspora visitors, including IDF soldiers: educators: elementary, high school and university students; synagogue and youth groups; families.
- Built and refined our educational and economic model following a two-month 2013 summer pilot project and embarked on our 2014 summer session
- Launched our year-long 2013/14 educational program.
- Established important educational partnerships with other NGO's and government authorities.
- Secured 13 dunams (3.2 acres) of neglected land, cleared (literally) tons of boulders, built fencing and access gates to protect the fields, laid irrigation pipes, and brought to market thousands of kilos of fresh produce.
- Built a much-needed winterized outdoor shelter from which to conduct our educational programming and parcel out our weekly baskets.
- Developed English and Hebrew websites connecting educators and potential Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) members to the farm and its unique philosophy.

Project Evaluation

Evaluation notes: Information from which we evaluate the program is culled from participant feedback; ongoing staff and psychological evaluation based on criterion developed with partner NGOs; and, with increasing frequency, observations from parents. Presently, we are interested in assessing the following:

a. Educational:

- Individual satisfaction and attitudinal and behavioral changes, such as an increased sense of trust of adults and authority; self motivation; and curiosity
- Ability to develop problem solving capacities, follow a plan, and meet expectations of one's self and others
- Desire to continue the learning process

b. Organizational:

- Ability to provide a meaningful training programs for our educational partners
- Readiness and aptitude to scale up our model by adding new program elements and exporting it for use by other social businesses

c. Business:

- Sales relative to costs
- Crop quality and CSA customer satisfaction

Comparison: Kaima has made enormous progress in the last 18 months. Many participants who started out angry and depressed, now show up at the farm every day, ready and excited to make a difference. Though it is still early, we are beginning to see some return to more formal learning frameworks as well as improved relationships outside of the farm, particularly within participants' home lives.

Lessons learned: Kaima's 2013 summer pilot project, which brought together 24 local youth for an intensive two-month educational/vocational program, was developed as a learning process. The experience was wonderful both for the participants - who got their first taste of what it is like to learn and interact with others and see real results through their work on the farm - and for our educational team which used the opportunity to test Kaima's pedagogic/business model. We learned so much about what to do (and what not to do) regarding expectations, the flow of the day, assigning individual tasks, and more as we prepared for the yearlong 2013/14 program launch.

Employment as education: Such experiences confirmed our assumptions regarding the power of employment as an educational tool. By clearly delineating expectations regarding the imperative to arrive at the farm on time; follow a daily work plan which may include shifting priorities; turn out a quality product; and interact with the public, participants connected to a sense of purpose and community. We learned that when our educators raise their expectations, participants respond in kind.

Ripple effect: At some point we understood the need to add parents to the conversation, both in instances where a participant was progressing towards his/her personal goals (perhaps wanting to get more involved on the farm, or returning to more traditional educational frameworks) and in cases where he/she was not. In this effort we encouraged parental involvement but only at the invitation of the participant, thus empowering them to open new channels of communication outside Kaima, take pride in their work and claim ownership of its outcome.

Results were surprising: unsolicited feedback from parents who contacted welfare authorities and noted that their children seemed more open-minded, engaged and willing to take greater responsibility within their homes. It was truly a privilege for all involved to see the process of self-discovery unfold for the participants, largely helped by the farm's relaxed atmosphere. Witnessing how the experience affected their lives in ways not directly related to the initial interaction, reinforced our assertion that Kaima is truly onto something in the effort to help these kids integrate into their families and society at large.

Kaima's impact on stakeholders:

Participants

- A group of 24 youth from Mevasseret's Youth at Risk Club participated in the 2013 inaugural summer pilot program and continue during official holidays.
- A group of 12 young workers from Mateh Yehuda Kidum HaNoar, associated with the Ministry and another 10-15 from the Ein Kerem School participate once weekly.
- A total of 25 participants have participated for at least 3 consecutive months, 3-5 days per week as part of the yearlong program.
- A total of 16 young workers from Mevasseret's Youth at Risk Club are participating in the 2014 summer pilot program.
- More than 2,000 Israelis and Diaspora volunteers and visitors have taken part in farm activities.

Educational Partners

- Jerusalem and Mateh Yehuda branches of Kidum Noar (Advancement of Youth), a municipal-run initiative charged with aiding dropouts and finding them work. Both are sending us participants, but presently lack the budget to pay for them.
- The Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry wishes to establish a new club at Kaima for Mateh Yehuda youth and has asked that community to submit a proposal to this effect in August 2014. We assume the process will take three months. If approved, this will provide a mechanism for participant recruitment and, finally, a new income stream.*
- Israel's National Insurance Institute (Bituach Leumi). This body has already approved of their support contingent on the involvement of the Ministry of Social Affairs noted above.*
- The Municipality of Mevasseret Zion. The Municipality supported the participation of its own residents during the summer of 2013 and is doing so again in 2014.

* *Until we can overcome the bureaucratic obstacles which, to date, have stood in the way of securing public funding, Kaima is philosophically committed to working with as many participants as possible.*

Customers

In June 2014, Kaima set up a new distribution center in the highly-trafficked German Colony making it easier for Jerusalem Kaima CSA members to pick up their weekly basket. This has helped us attract new customers and provide better service to existing members. Currently, Kaima serves over 120 CSA subscribers out of five distributions centers, an accomplishment we initially projected would take three years to achieve.

New educational guidelines for 2014/15: One of the most significant determinations is that from this point forward, our thrust in the yearlong program will be to reach those who have already dropped out of school, whereas the summer program will add a focus on prevention, targeting those who authorities identify as on the cusp of dropping out. Additionally, we are ramping up to launch a new PBL pedagogic model - see box.

Kaima in the Community

Beyond our work with young Israeli teens, Kaima farm has become a gathering point for other groups and organizations interested in learning with and from us. Below are but a few examples of our work within the general community.

Kaima benefits from youth philanthropy: The growing field of youth philanthropy, born in North America, challenges teens to identify pressing social needs, research their resolution, raise funds, and award grants. The US-based Yavneh Teen Funders Network, sent by our friends and supporters at the Good People Fund, visited the farm in June 2014. During their visit, the group, which previously helped to fund our activities, logged hours and hours of work in our fields, and interacted with Kaima's own young farmers.

Food Insecurity Activists Come Together at Kaima: In April 2014, some 30 Project Lachma volunteers visited the farm for a morning of hard work in the fields and a community breakfast they made themselves in our outdoor kitchen using ingredients from the farm. An initiative of Kehilat Kol Hanishama, Project Lachma is a community tzedakkah project designed to assist local families in need of food and other social services. As is the case with other groups which visit the farm, the experience was exciting and inspiring as we discussed who to feed people's tummies and souls.

In the words of one participant: *Thank you again for hosting us with such warmth and openness. You can't imagine the email activity of thanks for the experience. I just made an amazing dish for Shabbat with many of the veggies from my box. Ever so grateful for your vision, reminding us to never stop dreaming, because the impossible is possible. In less than a year and a half no less!*

Photo Left: Project Lachma volunteers and Kaima team preparing a communal breakfast with fresh picked produce from the fields.



Kaima Collaborates with Israel's top permaculture expert: Talia Shneider is one of Israel's foremost experts on permaculture, an approach to food production and sustainable living developed in Australia in the 1970s. She is the first Israeli permaculture teacher, authored the only Hebrew-language guide to its principles, and translated several of its key English texts. This past spring Talia and Kaima started a four-month agricultural program for Kaima participants and more than 20 adults. Talia's stature in the permaculture community has brought additional attention to the farm and its activities and provides important opportunities for our participants to interact in positive ways with adults.

Kaima and Hebrew University: Throughout the 2013/14 academic year, Kaima hosted MA students connected to Hebrew University in Jerusalem. One group, studying for their second degree in non-profit management, gave generously of their time to the farm, both figuratively and literally. In fact, they presented their final course project and arranged for Kaima to receive a \$5,000 grant to be used for seed funding of our new Project Based Learning initiative!

Another group, affiliated with the prestigious International Glocal Community Development Studies Program, intensively studied the farm's social business model to help further social entrepreneurship in their home countries. For one full semester, they came to the farm one day a week and worked side by side with Kaima participants. We aren't sure who learned more - us or them! As a gift to us, they prepared a video to help promote our work. [Click here.](#)



Kaima Hits the Road: Yoni Yefet Reich, Kaima Founder, was invited by Kaima supporter, the Leichtag Foundation, to visit "The Ranch," located in Encinitas, CA. The Ranch allows the Foundation to carry out educational initiatives inspired by Jewish traditions that connect people to community, food, the land, and social justice. While Yoni was busy in California, a group of Leichtag Foundation Jewish Food Justice Fellows were in Israel where they visited our farm and learned about how Kaima merges concern for the land, our bodies, and young people.





The Next Big Thing at Kaima

See a Need, Fill it! - Project Based Learning



One of Kaima's organizational values is to scale up in planful, strategic ways. Looking to the future, the most significant new development will be the integration of Project Based Learning (PBL) into our yearlong program. PBL is a dynamic, student-directed way to combine real-life problem solving with new skill acquisition. One of the pillars of PBL is understanding that when young people are directly involved in planning and steering projects they are more invested in and stimulated by the learning process. PBL, utilized in many formal and informal pedagogic settings, is a learning method we believe can be adjusted and applied for use on the farm to develop and encourage a number of new skills.

Initially, we intend to pilot this new model with select participants who work 2-3 days weekly on Kaima Farm and wish to simultaneously pursue independent work with a Kaima PBL mentor. Participants will acquire new skills as they learn how to research the need for the project, prepare all plans, present their ideas in front of a committee responsible for providing feedback and additional guidance, if required. Upon project approval, participants will need to provide progress reports as is the case in real-world professional settings. Projects can benefit the farm (i.e. building a small greenhouse to enable Kaima to grow special crops out of season) or the community at large (i.e. designing the cabinetry, building, and maintaining a mini public lending library based on the concept of, "take a book, give a book.")

PBL is in synch with Kaima's larger organizational mission and one about which we are very excited. Initial funding for to pilot the project will come from a special grant made possible by students from Hebrew University who intensively studied Kaima's pedagogic/business model as part of their MA program in non-profit management.

Kaima Thanks its Supporters

Kaima is focused on the relationship between self sufficiency and sustainability. Our vision in the next two years will be to secure 30-40% of the needed funding from sales; in the next 3-5 years - by growing our customer base - this number will increase to 50%. In the meantime, philanthropic, community, and industry partners are critical to realizing our educational goals. Support and inspiration has come from many sources. Toda!

Philanthropy

Kathryn Ames Foundation
Gimprich Foundation
Good People Fund
IVN
Leichtag
Matanel Foundation
Sobell Foundation
Various

Community Partners

Beit Zayit
Ein Kerem
Jerusalem
Match Yehuda
Mevaseret Zion

Companies

Netafim
Eden Zraim

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