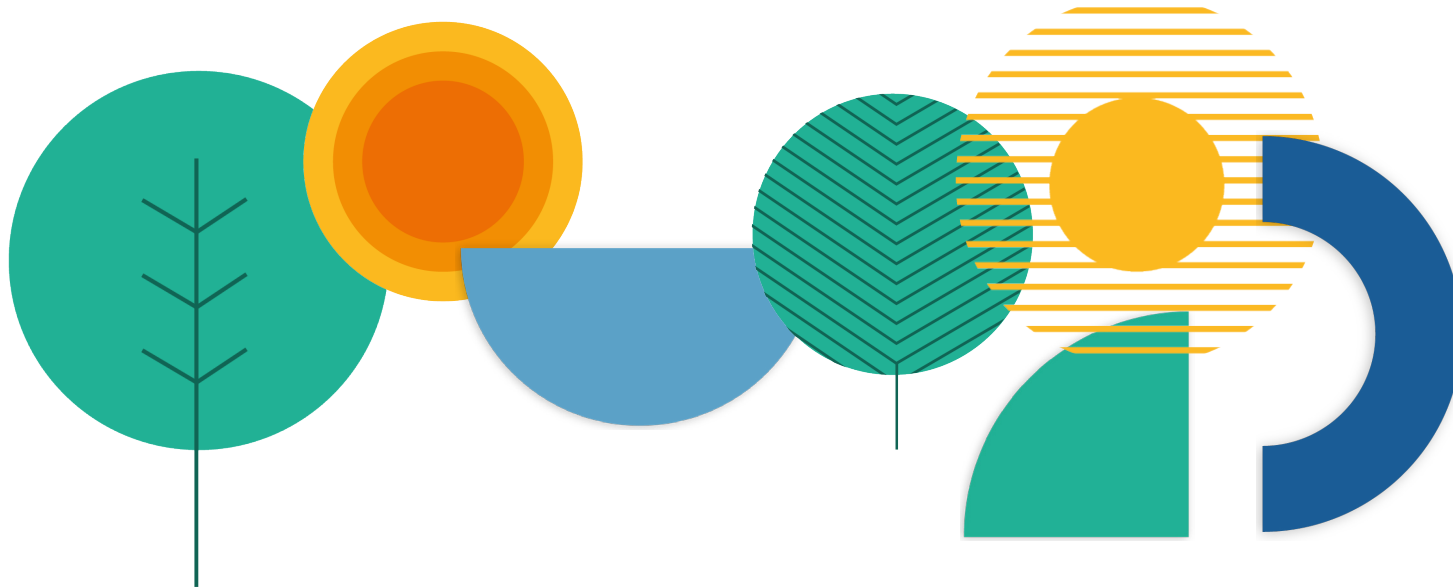


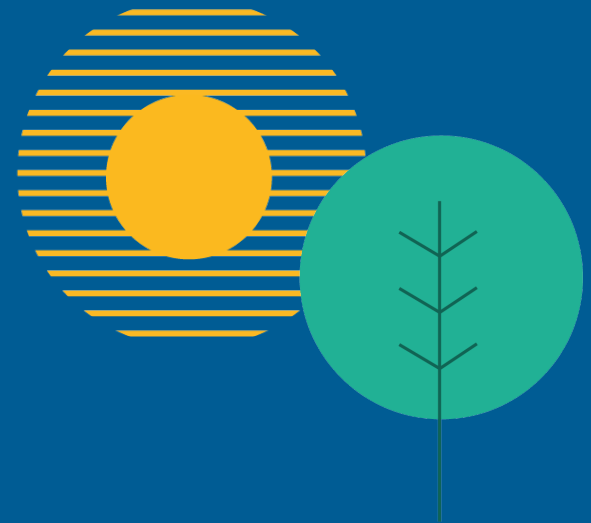
Community-Run Environmental Initiatives



Dear residents, environmental, and community advocates,
As our cities face increasing environmental and social challenges, the power to lead change lies in our hands—the hands of the residents. Community-led environmental initiatives are central tools for improving public spaces, promoting sustainability, strengthening the sense of belonging, and fostering shared responsibility. Through these efforts, we protect natural resources, reduce our ecological footprint, and contribute to creating a healthier, cleaner environment for future generations.

This catalog was created to inspire you, share knowledge, and provide practical tools for advancing environmental initiatives led by local activists. Whether it's community gardening, resource reuse, or strengthening urban nature, each initiative contributes to a healthier environment, a stronger community, and residents who feel connected and empowered.

Together, we can build greener and more sustainable cities, reinforcing values of partnership, mutual care, connection to nature, and local resources.



Be'eri Farm

Earth's Promise, Be'er Sheva

Be'eri Farm, located in the courtyard of the "Be'eri Library" in Be'er Sheva's Old City, is an urban ecological farm designed to encourage sustainable agriculture and strengthen community connections. The farm serves as an open space for community activities, natural vegetable cultivation, and empowering residents to lead sustainable initiatives.

How It Works

Community Workdays & Activities: Held weekly, open to families, young adults, and retirees who cultivate the farm together, learning and connecting with one another and the land.

Workshops & Courses: Public sessions on natural vegetable growing, medicinal plants, food preservation, and more.

Impact

Environmental: Reconnecting residents to the land, creating an urban "oasis" that provides fresh, healthy food while promoting sustainable lifestyles.

Community: Building a diverse community across ages and backgrounds, fostering community resilience and a sense of empowerment to influence urban spaces.

Personal: Providing a peaceful retreat and a sense of belonging within the city through meaningful activities.



Resources & Partners

Funding: Primarily supported by government grants and self-generated income.

Collaborations: Operated by Earth's Promise, with community-building and resource development guided by EretzIr. Supported by the Municipality of Be'er Sheva, which provides physical infrastructure.

Volunteers: About 50 active volunteers from across the Negev maintain the farm, run physical projects, and organize activities.

Challenges:

- Developing self-generated income for economic independence.
- Creating year-round outdoor activities.



Edible Forest

Writers' Park, Be'er Sheva

The Edible Forest in the Writers' Park is a community initiative that combines sustainable agriculture, educational activities, and urban nature conservation. The forest offers residents of the Bet Neighborhood in particular and residents of the whole city of Be'er Sheva in general, a green space for gathering, growing plants, fruits and local food, and promoting community resilience.

How It Works

Weekly Maintenance: A permanent group of about 5 volunteers meets once a week for activities such as weeding, fertilizing, planting, and repairing irrigation systems. The entire forest community of all ages is invited to the workdays, which usually include a shared rest time with refreshments.

Meetings & Events: The project hosts community meetings throughout the year, alongside two peak events on Tu B'Shvat and Earth Day, which provide an educational experience and content for the whole family.

Sharing Educational Frameworks: Schools and kindergartens in the area are integrated into activities and receive training on sustainable agriculture.



Impact

Environmental: Conserving urban nature, creating food gardens, and raising awareness of sustainability for diverse populations in the city.

Community: A meeting place for residents, developing joint initiatives, and improving the sense of belonging.

Personal: Promoting a sense of calm, connection to nature and practical learning about working the land, and social entrepreneurship.

Resources and Partnerships

Location & Infrastructure: The forest is located on public land in Be'er Sheva with the support of the local authority in urban infrastructure such as water and irrigation.

Funding: Budget based donations and income from educational activities.

Partner Support: Organizations such as EretzIr and Earth's Promise provide professional guidance and strategic support.

Volunteers & Residents: A leading group that maintains the forest and cooperates with the local community.

Challenges

- Ongoing maintenance and financing of irrigation systems and related infrastructure.
- Recruiting additional volunteers and expanding the circles of community involvement.
- Coordination and cooperation with the local authority.



The Olive Grove Garden

Transition Shapira Community and Kiryat Shalom, Tel Aviv-Yafo

The Olive Grove Garden, established in 2020 by the Transition Shapira community, transformed a neglected area into a flourishing green space. The garden was established out of a need for community connection during the lockdown period of the Covid-19 pandemic and received support from the Tel Aviv Municipality. Since then, it has served as a meeting place for residents, strengthening the sense of belonging and promoting biological and human diversity.

How It Works

Expanding on What Exists: The garden was established in an area where several olive trees were already planted. Additional fruit trees, citrus, almond, pecan, strawberry, fig, and more were added, alongside herbs, seasonal vegetables, ornamental plants, and wildflowers.

Volunteers: The garden is maintained and strengthened by volunteer coordinators and an active WhatsApp group.

Community Work Days: Once a month, community work days are held, operated by a group of residents living near the garden. In addition, special events are held throughout the year, seasonal harvest, seed exchange, seedling preparation, and more.



Impact

Environmental: Rehabilitating a neglected area, creating fertile soil, expanding biodiversity and sustainable abundance for residents.

Community: Strengthening a sense of belonging, creating connections between residents, and promoting social solidarity.

Personal: Satisfaction in doing, relaxation, shared experiences, and fresh, healthy food.

Resources and Partnerships

Local Residents: Local residents with a vision for community connection and creating a green space.

Municipal Involvement: The Tel Aviv Municipality provides resources, irrigation infrastructure, and seedlings on an ongoing basis.

Active Community: A diverse group of residents who lead maintenance and events.

Challenges

- Coping with vandalism and disrespectful use of the area.
- Maintaining the community of activists over time.



Urban Compost

Green in the City Community, Harish

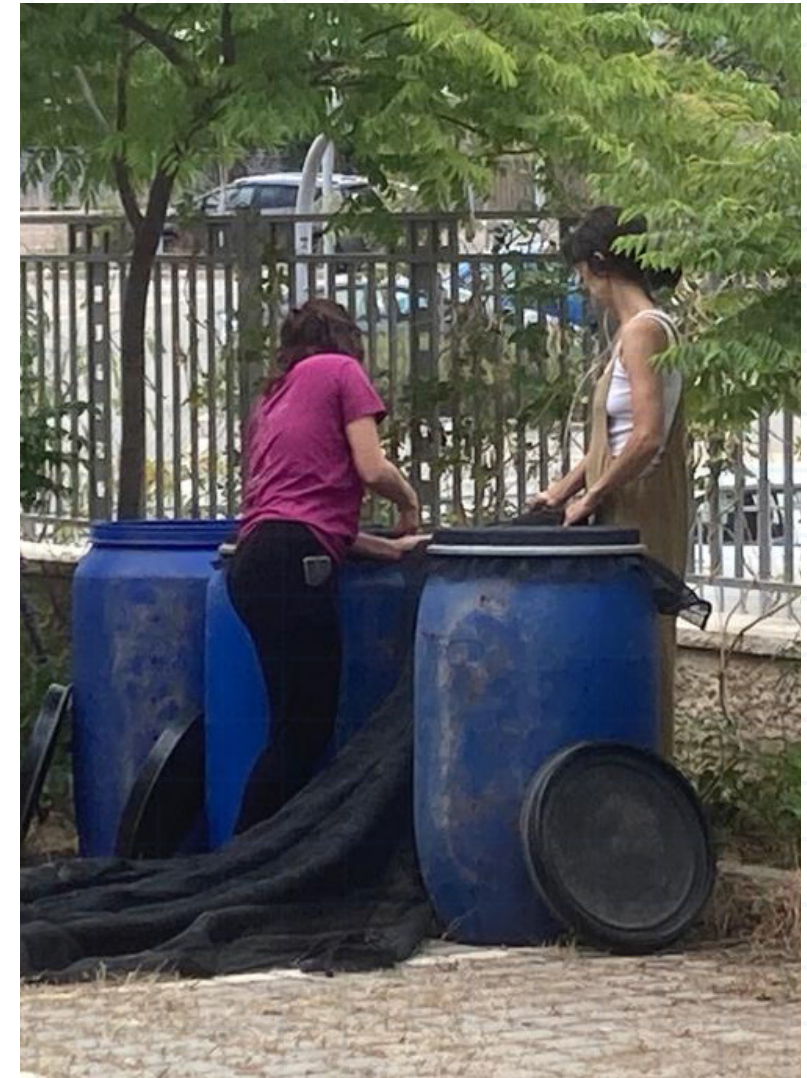
The Urban Compost project, operated by the Green in the City community, is designed to reduce organic waste in the city of Harish through composting, while creating fertilizer for community gardens and making the project an educational model for city residents. The community began in 2011 with a core of 6 members with an ecological vision, and expanded over the years when tenants joined the building where the community garden was established. The compost is produced in containers located at the end of the building's parking lot, and is managed by community members who volunteer for ongoing operation. The long-term goal is to operate an urban compost system that operates with minimal investment, provides quality fertilizer, and helps reduce waste in the city, while strengthening community ties and making the project a model for other cities.

How It Works

Regular Organic Waste Disposal: Community members dispose of organic waste in the compost bins at the end of the building's parking lot in their free time.

Regular Maintenance: Every few days, a team member handles the compost, aerates the pile, and monitors its condition.

Collaboration & Management: Members are partners in maintaining ongoing maintenance, and the team changes every few months to prevent erosion. The project is managed by community member coordinators.



Impact

Environmental: Creating high-quality compost and maintaining a clean environment.

Community: Strengthening cooperation and ongoing operation of the community.

Personal: Satisfaction and a sense of success in contributing to the environment.

Resources and Partnerships

Space & Infrastructure: The project operates in a limited space with designated compost bins, located on private property with the support of the local government.

Volunteers: Community members handle the compost on a regular basis and centralize the management of the project.

Community Investment: The Green in the City community lives in the building, leads the project, and is committed to its success.

Challenges

- Ongoing maintenance in a limited space and finding solutions for excess compost production.



Local Food

“Transition” Community, Yavniel

The project works to strengthen sustainability and community resilience in Yavniel in northern Israel, through initiatives such as local agriculture-for-local consumption, agricultural training, a community nursery, training for activists, food rescue, and establishing a local circular economy. The project promotes food security, local food growing, and training for sustainability, while connecting residents, growers, and local entrepreneurs. The “Yavnela Fair” is the highlight, and serves as a platform for local produce.

How It Works

The project operates through four axes of action: establishing community gardens, courses and training for growing food, a weekly market that connects residents with producers, and promoting community leadership.

Community Gardens: Public space converted to grow vegetables and fruits using sustainable methods.

Training & Courses: The project offers seasonal courses for growers and nutritionists on growing, maintaining, and distributing local food.

Yavnela Fair: A weekly market that connects residents with local producers, encourages collaborations, and provides livelihoods.

Local Food Forum: A community leadership group that organizes educational activities, promotes environmental awareness, and develops long-term plans to improve food security.



Impact

Environmental: Reducing waste, better use of land for sustainable food production and conservation of natural resources.

Community: Creating connections between residents, strengthening a sense of belonging, and having a positive impact on the local way of life.

Personal: Empowering personal capabilities, access to healthy food, and improving quality of life.

Resources and Partnerships

Community Infrastructure: The community garden is located on public land with logistical support from the local government.

Funding: The budget is based on collaborations with local communities, joint purchases of gardening materials, and volunteer support.

Partner Groups: "Transition Israel," local growers, and professionals contribute knowledge and resources to advance the project.

Community Engagement: Neighborhood residents, both children and adults, take an active part in the activities.

Challenges

- Ongoing maintenance of the garden and support for small producers.
- Encouraging new collaborations and maintaining resident commitment over time.



Contact Information: Matan Yakov Golan | 📞 052-381-7216 | ✉️ shivke@gmail.com

Field of Treasures

In Honor of Roni Lakish, Kiryat Tivon

The Field of Treasures is a social-community center where residents can give and take items free of charge, while encouraging reuse and reducing local waste. The project strengthens the sense of community by employing volunteers, holding collaborative events, and creating local partnerships. Today, the Field of Treasures is part of the "Kiryat Tivon Sustainability Center" – a group of environmental initiatives jointly managed by volunteers and the Sustainability Department of the Kiryat Tivon Local Council, and is an example of successful cooperation between the community and the local government.

How It Works

Give & Take: The field is open three times a week, for two to two and a half hours, and invites residents to give or take items free of charge.

Volunteer Activation: A group of volunteers is responsible for arranging the items, managing the activity, and providing service to residents. Maintenance, expansion, and construction is carried out by volunteers from Kiryat Tivon and the surrounding area.

Community Events: The project combines ongoing activities with events such as repair workshops, clothing exchange, and activities for children to strengthen the sense of community belonging.

Round Table: The project is managed in cooperation with the Kiryat Tivon Local Council with the involvement of residents and volunteer professionals.



Impact

Environmental: Reducing waste by encouraging reuse and recycling of existing items.

Community: Strengthening cooperation between residents, creating a sense of belonging, and joint social activity.

Personal: Satisfaction from community involvement and the well-being of participants, a sense of home and belonging.

Resources and Partnerships

Location: The field operates as part of the Kiryat Tivon Sustainability Center, which previously served as a shopping cart field.

Infrastructure: Water and electricity are provided by the Kiryat Tivon Local Council at no cost, and in addition, the local council takes care of the volunteers' insurance.

Logistical Support: The Hevrata Foundation and the local supermarket collaborate on financial and administrative support, including managing the project fund, purchasing used beverage containers and ensuring refund deposits go to the project, and donating second-hand equipment.

Additional Funding: The project's income is based on the refund of deposits from beverage containers and the sale of used items at community fairs.

Challenges

Dealing with a large number of items that do not fit the field.

Maintaining a consistent level of activity and retaining the volunteer team.



A Restorative Experience

Repair Cafe, Kiryat Tivon

Repair Cafe is a community initiative designed to give new life to objects and reduce waste while encouraging responsible consumerism and sharing community knowledge. At monthly meetings, local volunteers meet with community members to repair various types of objects—clothes, furniture, appliances, jewelry, and more - while creating a sense of belonging and strengthening the bond between participants.

How It Works

The meetings are held once a month, on Fridays, and include a variety of repair stations such as textiles, furniture, electronics, jewelry, and more. The repair stations are opened according to the needs of the participants, and they operate on a “chair-to-chair” approach.

During the meeting, participants register with the object that requires repair and approach the appropriate repair station when a suitable volunteer becomes available. The repair process is done collaboratively: participants are active in the process itself, alongside close guidance from experienced volunteers, while learning and sharing knowledge. The meetings are open to the general public from the age of 16 and up. Young children are welcome accompanied by an adult.

The atmosphere is communal and inviting, and there is always light refreshments and coffee. The meetings serve as an opportunity to create social conversation, strengthen personal connections, and build a sense of community belonging. The volunteers, aged 18 to 80, often work in teams and enjoy mutual enrichment. The youth learn from the rich experience of the adults, and the adults learn from the youth to use modern technologies, such as 3D printing of spare parts.



Impact

Environmental: Reducing waste, reusing products, and reducing the demand for new products.

Community: Strengthening the sense of belonging, sharing knowledge between generations, and expanding personal connections.

Personal: Satisfaction from a meaningful activity, acquiring new skills, and enjoying the experience of sharing.

Resources and Partnerships

Location & Infrastructure: The activity takes place at ORT High School in Kiryat Tivon, which provides the project with classrooms, a carpentry workshop, and a 3D printer.

Community Support: 40 volunteers, including a permanent core of about 20 participants, give their time to repairs and ongoing management.

Funding: From donations from residents, government support, and occasional support from the local council.

Challenges

Load Management: Logistics coordination, recruiting and retaining volunteers, and organizing monthly activities.

Volunteer Retention: Dealing with the need to expand the circle of regulars and maintain a sense of commitment.

Operation: Queue management, enforcing the "one repair at a time" rule, and integrating high school students while maintaining safety.



Thank you for your interest and willingness to take part in projects that lead to social and environmental change. Your involvement is the driving force behind change – every initiative, small or large, adds an important layer to the fabric of a green, sustainable, and prosperous community.

Successful environmental projects are based on local resources and thus not only improve nature and public space, but also strengthen a sense of connection between people and generations. Partnership with local governments is key to the success of the initiatives and to establishing broad circles of support.

Challenges are an integral part of the process, but through them we learn, grow, and achieve significant results. We invite you to join the common journey – together we will build green, vibrant, and influential cities.

Good luck,

The Eretzlr Green Communities Network

