



Uri Carmel

Words From Our CEOs



Keren Ben Dor

This month, we want to share with you about the new program we are leading as part of the initiative by the Yad HaNadiv Foundation to improve educational and community support infrastructure for early childhood educational settings (from birth to age 3). The informal and unregulated educational system for this age group faces many challenges, as state involvement is almost nonexistent. Our program aims to help create a supportive framework and community for caregivers, educators, and parents alike.

Early childhood isn't the only age group we are focusing on - we are also working with the older adult community. This month, we launched an initiative to support and guide older adult communities (a joint initiative of the Shacaf Foundation and the Ministry of Social Services), as well as an initiative to develop long-term housing solutions for this community. As part of this effort, we held a meeting with the Minister of Construction and Housing to help us advance projects for long-term rental housing and to find the best possible solutions for them.

As we know, high quality urban life is also measured by sustainable and resilient lifestyles that respond to the climate crisis we are facing. Therefore, we are also actively supporting community-led initiatives at the forefront of sustainable urban community life in Israel.

All of these efforts contribute to building and shaping community-centered cities characterized by resilience that is so essential in these times.

In continued doing and faith,  
Uri & Keren

## “Community-Sustains-City” Course

Supporting Change Makers in Communities



Urban density brings with it significant environmental and community challenges, often leading to feelings of alienation and loneliness. These challenges threaten quality of life, health, and the environment, but they also present opportunities for innovative solutions that integrate sustainability, community collaboration, and a connection to nature within the urban space. In our “Community-Sustains-City” course hosted by our professional training initiative, The Bustan, that was held this month, we saw how the collaboration between residents, municipalities, and nature can transform cities into vibrant, healthy, and sustainable living places.

As part of the course, we held an inspiring tour and meeting with the communities already driving change. The content was carefully selected and focused on issues that concern every sustainability initiative, which led to an immediate encounter between participants with a shared passion: promoting the environment, community, and urban ecology.

We met participants who are “all in,” who brought energy and new ideas along with a strong desire to get to know each other, network, and to be inspired together. Many participants are already leading sustainable initiatives on the ground and are eager to strengthen their connections with a rich ecosystem of collective action. The course, which combines face-to-face and Zoom meetings, continues to prove its power in promoting meaningful connections and networking.

Our upcoming meeting in Be'er Sheva is just around the corner, and we're excited about the enthusiasm of our members to take initiative and play a meaningful role in the process. This strengthens our shared sense of purpose - to build more sustainable, more communal, and more connected cities - and that is nothing short of amazing.

Curious to see what happened in the meeting?

Here's a Taste

## The 'Reshit' Program

Improving Early Childhood Education in Southern Israel



Infancy is a crucial stage in shaping a child's development, influencing their future and the social mobility of entire generations. Unfortunately, many early childhood education settings in Israel operate without sufficient professional support, making it difficult to fully realize the immense potential of this stage of life.

We are excited to introduce 'Reshit', a new initiative we deeply believe in, launched in collaboration with the Yad Hanadiv Foundation. This program is designed to enhance the quality of education and care in small, early childhood education settings in southern Israel by providing tools, professional guidance, and ongoing support—ensuring that every child gets a strong and empowering start in life. In its initial phase, the program will be piloted in two municipalities in the South, with the goal of expanding the program in the future.

Over the past few months, our team has been working diligently—studying a successful working model from the Galilee, meeting with nursery school directors, professionals, and municipal representatives, and laying the groundwork for the program's implementation in the South. We are now focused on developing the program's logical framework, theory of change, and an evaluation system to ensure that our intervention meets the unique needs of each setting and family.

We are filled with excitement and the strong belief that small educational settings can make a big impact—both in their quality and in their ability to create meaningful change. We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress!

Eretzir is a professional, organizational and economic platform that enables and encourages residents to positively impact the space in which they live. We connect with residents who are interested in creating change in their environment and help them organize, acquire professional tools, and meet like-minded partners, while increasing their capacity to effect change and create cities that are great places to live.

## The Best Cities Start with Their People

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