

## **From "Eradicating Ignorance" to "Tehila": Summary Statement**

***Rachel Tokatli<sup>1</sup>***

### ***Introduction***

I came to the Adult Education Department in Jerusalem in 1977. I had met Avraham Tsivion previously at an inter-university meeting on a matter relating to students in Israel. Tsivion was then the acting Dean for Student Affairs at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, while I represented the faculty of Tel Aviv University, and was joined by the students' organization representative. A short time later Tsivion suggested that I leave the university, where I had a good chance of an academic career, and pursue a career at the Israel Ministry of Education. My immediate reaction was negative. He persuaded me to come with him to a conference on adult students held in HaMalachim Forest, which I agreed to. What I saw and heard there shocked me, and I then decided to join the Ministry of Education and work with adults who lacked education. I had no experience or knowledge in this field. Maybe that was an advantage, because I was not necessarily bound to what had taken place in the past. When the new adult literacy system was established, I suggested changing the name from "Eradicating Ignorance" to "Tehila" (an acronym meaning "Special Education Program for Adult Students"). Eventually I took upon myself the management of Tehila at the national level. Everything I know, I learned while working with members of the education and teaching system – and more than anyone, from the students themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rachel Tokatli is a sociologist.

***Eradicating Ignorance: The Initial stage of good intentions but only partial results***

In 1954 the Government of Israel announced a comprehensive voluntary campaign for a concentrated program for teaching basic knowledge and Hebrew language skills to new immigrants. Enthusiastic volunteers from all levels of society, headed by Yaakov Maimon (<http://www.maimon-volunteers.org/Yaavov-Maimon.html>), answered the call to participate in a project to teach basic literacy to the masses in development towns and new immigrant villages. This project was accompanied with guidance and assistance from the Ministry of Education, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the General Labor Federation, local authorities, various voluntary organizations, and the Hebrew University's "Center for Public Education".

In 1958 the Ministry of Education and the General Labor Federation announced a further voluntary campaign to eradicate illiteracy and increase basic education in development towns and the ma'abarot (immigrant absorption camps), under the management of Shlomo Kodesh, then director of the Adult Education Department. Three thousand teachers with no specialized qualifications were sent to these places after short, inadequate training. Not surprisingly, a short-term immersion in basic knowledge did not enable adults with very low education and poor language skills to break out of cycle of poverty and illiteracy in which they lived, and this projected ceased after a year.

The only frameworks that demonstrated success in enabling adults to move out of poverty, illiteracy and low employment were those in which the studies were longer-term, intensive, tiered, and systematic, such as the school for laborers in Jerusalem, where Ora Grabelsky (an Israeli authority on adult education) was principal and teacher, and in the IDF's Marcus Camp in Haifa, a military base under the command of the Education Corps. In 1963 Avraham Tsivion, the third commander of the

Marcus Camp added basic studies for uneducated youth who until then had not been accepted for military service because of their low education level. Classes were run by female soldier-teachers, who received targeted training in how to teach youth and young adults. The study materials used in this program were prepared with the help of expert educators. The Marcus Camp acquired a reputation for its open atmosphere that encouraged students to complete a matriculation certificate.

In 1961 the population census showed that a quarter of a million Israeli Jews aged 14 and up, most of them from Asia and Africa and a minority from Eastern Europe, did not know how to read or write in any language. In the Israeli Arab population in Israel, particularly among the rural populations, the rate of illiteracy was higher. In 1964 Yitzhak Navon, then director of the Department of Culture and Language Teaching in the Ministry of Education – later Israel's fifth president – led a national campaign to teach reading and writing to adults, in collaboration with the IDF. The then Minister of Education, initiated and encouraged the campaign. Lieutenant-Colonel Stella Levy, head commander of the IDF's Women's Corps, led a national program with soldier-teachers who undertook this large-scale teaching task. In 1965 Navon was elected to the Israel Parliament.

The campaign was entitled "Eradicating Ignorance." There were educators who maintained that this name was offensive and insulting, but other proposed names such as "Education for the People," or "Basic Education," were rejected. It was decided to distinguish between people who were "completely ignorant," who had never studied, and those who were "semi-ignorant," who had attended school for one to four years.

The aim of the campaign was to reduce gaps in education by improving Hebrew reading and writing skills among adults. The first stage involved determining priority geographic areas according to the percentage of population in need of the program in the 20–50 year old

age group. First priority was given to 120 immigrant settlements with a percentage of illiteracy or semi-illiteracy greater than 50 percent.

Three hundred and fifty female soldiers who had completed high school were assigned to the soldier-teacher program. After completing basic training, they attended a one-month training course in the fundamentals of education and teaching, under the supervision of Ministry of Education inspectors. After the classroom-based training the soldier-teachers became practice teachers in schools in the Jerusalem corridor. At the conclusion of this practical "internship" they were sent to teach in Israel's peripheral settlements and poor urban neighborhoods where there was a high concentration of illiterate adults. During their first year of teaching they were supervised by educational-mentors.

In addition to the IDF soldier-teachers, the volunteer division of the Labor Federation's executive committee helped recruit volunteers for this campaign. The Ministry of Education's Language Teaching Department helped organize classes, transport volunteers and train them.

Studies usually took place in the students' homes, but also in schools, community clubs, sometimes laundry rooms and a variety of other, often unlikely, places. As most of the men worked in physical labor out of doors, they did not have time to study, but the women found the time, mostly individually at home, between the hours devoted to childcare and housework. In 1966 the Ministry of Education requested that reserve soldiers work in the campaign, as well, to enable men to study at times convenient for them.

The curriculum was designed as three stages: instruction in reading and writing; learning the basics of Hebrew grammar and arithmetic; acquiring skills in reading comprehension and fluent verbal expression. Texts used included the newspaper *Sha'ar LaKoreh Hehadash* (Gateway for the New Reader - later entitled: *Sha'ar LeMathil – Gateway for the Beginner*) provided relevant information on current events, and was the

primary tool for reading comprehension and language learning for many students. . The monthly journal Ma'alot was also used, as it covered the histories of many of Israel's different ethnic groups.

Women students learned to sign their names (instead of a fingerprint made with ink!), to read and write letters; to read the Sha'ar LaMathil newspaper (including writing letters to the editor!).

In 1967 it was decided to change the project's name from "Eradicating Ignorance" to "Providing Education." The campaign continued until the mid-1970s, and over the years employed some 1,200 female-soldier-teachers. In all, the campaign taught some 40,000 adult students, most of them women, who successfully learned to read and write.

During its operation the "Eradicating Ignorance" project encountered many difficulties and problems for which solutions were hard to find within existing public systems. For example: in many places there was private, individual, irregular study in homes, taught by a young woman-soldier who was sometimes asked to help care for babies; men refrained from participation because of a combination of fatigue and embarrassment at admitting their illiteracy to young women teachers; there were no staggered, progressing stages in the curricula; there were not sufficient suitable study materials; and there was no regular program of in-service training for the teachers.

### ***Tehila – Special Education Program for the Adult Student*** **Beginnings and Development**

In 1976, when Dr. Avraham Tsivion came to manage the Adult Education Department in the Ministry of Education and Culture, the "Eradicating Ignorance" campaign was in the stages of decline. The Department's inspectors considered that everything possible had already been done regarding this situation, and those who remained illiterate and "ignorant"

were the "desert generation,"<sup>2</sup> and as it seemed that they would remain ignorant, they should be left alone. They believed that those who came after them, the "young adults," should be nurtured. But reality proved that illiteracy in the parents' home was a bed for cultivating a second generation of underprivileged people. At that time 40 percent of the adult population in Israel, including a high percentage of women (immigrants, and women born in Israel who had not attended school), were unable to understand the publications of government and other public bodies, television broadcasts, basic financial documents (such as bills), or a daily newspaper, and they had difficulty reading street names and bus numbers. They were helpless when faced with basic written tasks: signing their name, writing a simple note or a telephone number.

Tsivion decided to try again, as there was a growing feeling among the target population that they were missing something, and this factor could be used to increase their motivation to study. Senior officials in the Ministry of Education disagreed, maintaining, as stated above, that everything had already been tried for the older generation, and resources should be invested in providing education for the young people. However, there were some teachers of adults, including Dr. Ora Grabelsky, who believed that renewed efforts in suitable programs would yield good results among older students, as well.

Encouraged by their support, Tsivion began to organize three-day seminars for laborers in Ashdod port, whose public image in Israeli society in those days was rock bottom due to their raucous strikes. The laborers attended lectures on the history of Jewish settlement in Israel, Israeli society and similar topics, and met twice with social psychologists

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2 A demeaning expression used to justify lack of progress or change in certain populations by comparing them to the biblical Israelites who joined the exodus from Egypt, but were not deemed worthy of entering the Promised Land.

in small groups. The programs were conducted on the Hebrew University campus and the laborers lived in the student dormitories for the duration of the seminars. In view of the exceptional success of these events, a cultural center was established in the Ashdod port which was active for many years. A few of these laborers, today retired, continued to telephone TSivion for many years before holidays to offer him their good wishes.

Concurrently, five-day residential seminars were organized for groups of 50 women. Local authorities participated in financing and organizing these programs. Study materials were prepared by the Adult Education Department of the Ministry of Education and the Department's senior personnel also conducted in-service training for teachers.

Given the success of these seminars for "mothers" and in response to the participants' requests, it was decided to establish permanent study centers near the places of residence of various population groups. The first experimental center was established in Beersheva, to where the student groups were bused in from nearby settlements on fixed days. At the center they were divided into groups according to language and general knowledge levels. Study materials were prepared a page at a time in the Department in Jerusalem and sent weekly to the center. The center's teachers received ongoing supervision, and a daily report was submitted to Jerusalem on the center's activities. Over time, professional teams were established to prepare suitable the curricula.

TSivion believed that encouragement and enthusiasm by a collective of dedicated teachers and principals could arouse motivation among potential students. He also believed in the power study centers with large numbers of students, and indeed, before the second program year eleven additional centers were established, in collaboration with local authorities, women's organizations and workers' councils, and by the third year there

were 35 centers. In 1981 the administrators of Project Renewal<sup>3</sup> were convinced of the importance of Tehila and allocated generous budgets to establish study centers in neighborhoods of the Project which were also attended by women students from stronger neighborhoods. Tehila centers were also established in the Druze, Arab and Bedouin sectors. Customized curricula were prepared by teachers and supervisors from these sectors and the Ministry of Education provided partial funding.

During the peak years (1982–1985) there were 86 Tehila centers throughout the country, from Kiryat Shmona in the far North to Eilat at Israel's southern tip. Over the years more than 100,000 women studied in this program.

### **Aims and Programs**

Tehila's initial aims targeted three areas of achievement: (1) on the educational level it inculcated study habits and skills, expanded horizons and developed critical thinking skills; (2) on the personal level it sought to motivate students to self-empowerment and increased autonomy; on the social level it aimed to reduce educational gaps, strengthen the sense of belonging to a community and society, and to nurture affinity with the values of democracy, the State of Israel, Bible, and to increase familiarity with the cultural heritages of the many different ethnic groups that comprise Israeli society.

At first, students learned one page at a time, as "Page after Page," the material was prepared concurrently with the studies. After a short time

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3 "Project Renewal, the joint program of the government of Israel and the Jewish Agency for Israel for rehabilitation of distressed neighborhoods. Founded in 1978, by 1983 a total of 82 urban neighborhoods and towns throughout Israel, with a total population of 450,000, had been included in Project Renewal. By the early 21st century the number had risen to 100."  
[http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0016\\_0\\_16111.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0016_0_16111.html)



it emerged that a substantial portion of students needed more advanced materials to strengthen reading and writing. The newspaper *Sha'ar LaMathil* continued to be useful to the program. Later on, teams were established to prepare study materials in additional subjects, such as: basic arithmetic, geography, the history of Israel, and Judaism. Over time a need emerged for classes organized into levels, four or even five, up to advanced levels. Dozens of workbooks, books, teaching manuals and supplementary materials were written. Specialized teams, both national and local, worked continuously to prepare suitable study materials. Over time the subjects studied expanded with the rise in levels. Programs in math, literature, Bible, geography, history, and information about Israeli society were added. In some centers, in response to students' requests, the directors extended the curriculum at the high school level to studying remunerative vocational subjects such as bookkeeping, clerical and office management skills, neighborhood and community organization skills, caregiving in geriatrics pre-schools, and early childhood daycare, business entrepreneurship, business management, and more. In minority sectors as well, remunerative vocational studies were also included in the program.

Students at all levels received enrichment sessions in varied subjects: painting, singing in a choir, and various crafts. There were encounters with a range of volunteer guest lecturers, including physicians, writers, psychologists, rabbis, actors and public figures. Students went on trips throughout Israel, visited other centers, attended theater performance and organized holiday parties.

In 1981 "high school Tehila" was founded, with the active collaboration of the Open University, after its president, Prof Abraham Ginzburg, responded enthusiastically to a proposal from Tsivion and myself to jointly design a program to function in parallel with high school classes until Grade 11, and to award recognized certificates to

graduates of the different stages. This was in addition to the high school programs for adults which operated in various places in Israel and offered two tracks: one for completing Grade 10 and the other for a high school equivalency and matriculation certificate.

### ***Meetings and Events***

Once a week in-service training took place in the centers under the guidance of the directors and instructors. In these meetings up-to-date lesson plans and teaching materials were also prepared. Once a month the center directors met for national in-service training. Opinions and teaching materials were exchanged, lectures were presented, and various workshops conducted in subjects relating to the ongoing activity. Center directors in the Druze, Arab, and Bedouin sectors participated in the general in-service training.

Once a year, on Adult Student Day, thousands of students, teachers, directors and instructors attended a colorful and moving joint national convention. Moshe Adorian, Tehila's national supervisor, led these meetings.

During this convention representatives of the different centers marched around the huge yard carrying the centers' banners. Participants listened attentively and excitedly to speeches made by important figures – government ministers, members of parliament, and authors. The impact of this spectacular gathering on those present was immense. For example: in one of the meetings Yitzhak Navon, fifth president of Israel, who was then the Minister of Education, described how his father had taught his mother to read and write so that she could write her own letters to her son while he was in the USA. His mother was a wonderful, talented and wise woman, but had not had the opportunity to study in her childhood. Navon pictured how moved he was when he received the letter she had written him, on which there were marks of her tears. The audience responded

with enthusiastic applause. Some mothers, who had difficulty studying as they did not believe in themselves, said: "If a woman like me can be the mother of this great and important man, I too can learn." And indeed, they did.

When beginner students finished the initial stage of study and knew all the vowels and consonants, a "Book Festival" party took place in their honor. Dressed in their finest clothes and accompanied by family members, they stood in front of the audience that honored them with their presence – educators, students, families – and read a note they had written themselves (sometimes with the help of the teacher). At one of these events a new reader-writer stood excitedly holding the note that she had written, but was unable to read it! I was sitting in the front row and I said to her: "Ignore the note. Speak from your heart." The student raised her head and announced: "I was letter blind..." I don't remember what else she said. I adopted this wonderful expression and used it. The expression became accepted in the international literature on the subject of literacy. The book on Tehila, which I wrote with Dr. Ora Grabelsky, is entitled: *I was Letter Blind*.

### ***Relationships***

Relations between the teachers and students were warm and supportive. The teachers encouraged their students, and the students responded with a warm attitude, expressed in "motherly" concern for the teachers through the recipes they gave them, and in many other ways. At all levels, relations in the system were characterized by enthusiasm, belief in the project's mission, joy in the work, and satisfaction with the achievements. Relationships between students were also imbued with willingness to provide mutual support and encouragement.

Reciprocal visits between centers took place at the initiative of the

directors. Meetings between students from different centers were an encouraging and strengthening factor, and took place between centers from all sectors – religious, secular, Jews, Arabs, Druze and Bedouin. As a result warm ties were formed between teachers and students from different centers.

In the warm accepting atmosphere at the centers, students overcame their fears and concerns and placed their trust in the teachers. A comfortable, positive social and academic atmosphere strengthened students' awareness of their personal, social, cultural, and national identity and opened up new areas of creativity in expanding fields of information and spiritual enrichment.

Participants in an international seminar of adult educators from Europe who visited the centers were surprised by the optimistic atmosphere they encountered. They asked: "Why are they so happy? It's a known fact that illiterate people are ashamed of themselves and sad!" We answered: "Ask them; they speak French." The women's answer was: "Here we have been given back our youth. We study, understand, progress, and become stronger; that makes us happy. We're happy here, the directors and the teachers are wonderful; we're grateful. Here we are like a big family – everyone cares about the others. That gives us the strength to change our lives." Cathy Moorhouse, who headed the literacy campaign in Britain in the 1970s, explained: "We also have people who didn't study in their childhood, and dedicated teachers who are grappling with the curricula content, but the atmosphere is different. Here I encountered adult learners who are happy, animated, and willing to converse. I also detected a national vision, whereas in our program the approach is individualistic, with more social divisions and less equality. Moreover, we have greater difficulty in persuading women to attend studies; most of our students are men."

The satisfied students felt a duty to give something back to society

in exchange for the gift of studies that they had received. Many of them joined volunteering activity in the community, in both voluntary organizations and hospitals. They organized bazaars and donated the proceeds. In some centers, committees were elected that established a national Students' Council, which was headed for many years by the senior student Zvia Hadad. Continuing classes for senior students take place in the study centers to this day.

### ***Personnel***

This extensive and energetic activity was accompanied enthusiastically and with dedication by activists at different levels of responsibility: at the local level – center directors, teachers, education coordinators, directors of education departments in the local authorities, and directors of community centers and labor councils; at the regional level: inspectors of the Department for Adult Education; and at the national level: the division's director Dr. Avraham TSivion, who initiated the project and was its driving force, myself, deputy director Dr. Rachel Tokatli, national head of Tehila who was responsible for budgets, personnel and curricula; Moshe Adorian, national inspector of the Tehila system; Leora Laufert, head of beginning level reading curricula. Later, after I retired from adult education and managed the division for teachers' in-service training, the Tehila system was headed by Chaya Meiri-Minervi, founder and former director of the Tehila center in Beit Hazani. Chaya organized a national writing competition among the students on the subject of the Ministry of Education's annual topic. The authors of the winning entries were awarded an annual scholarship to Tehila: these scholarships were funded by memorial philanthropic donations. Chaya continues to hold study sessions in her home every month for her senior students.

After Chaya Meiri-Minervi retired, Maggie Koren succeeded her, and later, after both Dr. Avraham TSivion and Dr. Meir Peretz retired, she

managed the entire division. Today, she is responsible for management of adult education projects at all levels, although the budgets for adult education were transferred to the Ministry for Equal Citizen Rights when it was established.

### ***Evaluation***

In 1984 Tehila's leadership, which I headed, was awarded the Minister of Education Prize for education. Four years later, in 1988, we received the President's Prize for education. In 1996 Tehila, which had become a renowned concept worldwide, received a UNESCO commendation.

The structural foundations in Tehila were: intense studies in a tiered level framework; systematic studies that continue over a period of several years; customized curricula suited to the different target populations – religious, traditional, and secular Jews, Arabs, Druze and Bedouin; bespoke teaching methods and materials; ongoing teacher training in workshops and in-service education concurrent with work; follow-up of achievements and modifications to correct problems, enrichment activities, encouraging democratic values and community involvement.

On the tail of the termination of the "Eradicating Ignorance" project, Tehila became a popular movement of tens of thousands of adult women students in study centers throughout the country. A multitude of women joined the wave of an exodus from darkness into the light.

The scholastic achievements of the program manifested first and foremost in the change from shame and fear of failure to motivation to read and express oneself in writing independently, to understand concepts, ask questions, and expand knowledge in varied fields. Many of the women climbed the ladder of achievements to high school level education and acquired various vocational skills, including use of a computer. Many of the advanced students found employment, and some continued to study in more advanced programs. Support from family

members was of utmost importance.

On the personal level, it was found that students' self-confidence improved, as did their feeling of community belonging, their ability to cope with cognitive tasks, and their status at home and in their immediate environment improved. Their lives were enriched with new meaning.

Social and community achievements were clear and obvious. In particular, they were expressed in joy in life and team spirit within the centers and between the centers, involvement in community life, and extensive voluntary activity. As attested by Tehila students, participation in this community-based learning framework had an outstanding impact on their quality of life, their feeling of belonging to Israeli society, their self-confidence and happiness.

Looking back, I have no doubt that Tehila was a great success in its time. This was thanks to Tsivion's leadership, and to the enthusiasm, dedication and positive outlook of all those involved in the project's development and implementation: the national heads, planners, instructors, teachers, inspectors. The overall success was also a result of the students' feeling of togetherness and their success in leaving the cycle of illiteracy and spreading their wings.

A combination of factors in Tehila created a winning formula: a leader with vision and influence; the dedication of everyone involved in the project at the administrative, planning and executive levels; a robust academic structure; a well-organized framework ; a rare level of collaboration between all involved; and above all – the motivation of students who caught the "learning bug". Tehila was a symbol of optimism and hope. The project's success would have been impossible were it not for the emotional bonds and sense of mutual responsibility and partnership between all those involved in teaching and learning. A profound experiential process and a new educational vision transpired both at the administrative level and within the classrooms in the various centers.

### ***Difficulties along with Successes***

Alongside the successes there were also difficulties. The Tehila project, which was received with enthusiasm by women, mostly mothers, did not attract men, although there was a willingness to open afternoon and evening classes for them. It seems that they were less aware of the importance of study and were satisfied with their situation in life, as they were more involved in the world of work outside the home, or were embarrassed to have their illiteracy exposed. They preferred to participate in classes that were organized for them in large factories and workplaces, which met their educational needs in various fields: academic, vocational and personal.

We had to cope with increasing difficulty in acquiring budgets and convenient physical facilities for adult education in centers that were not financed by Project Renewal. As we could not guarantee the teachers permanent work, most universities and colleges, with the exception of the David Yellin College in Jerusalem, refrained from a regular ongoing commitment to this field of work. Because of these difficulties, there was no long-term methodical assessment of the project's activity and achievements.

The program also suffered from difficulties of another kind: some students, mainly the oldest individuals, did not manage to progress for a variety of reasons. For example: they did not succeed in making the connection between the written language and daily life, nor did they learn to comprehend the economic, social and political situation in Israel, acquire the ability to engage in logical thinking and with complex concepts, nor did they assimilate the new skills taught, such as: writing, including the concept of a writing direction; phonetic distinction between syllables; identifying different graphic forms of letters; map reading; correctly understanding and interpreting complex questions or suggesting solutions to a problem that arises in a text. As a result some dropped out.



### ***The situation today***

Centers that dwindled and did not absorb new students closed, but there are centers where activity continues in full swing. Tehila classes continue in study centers for adults which conduct a variety of training programs: computers, languages, arts, and various other subjects.

There are women who continue to attend Tehila as a kind of social club in which they read, have discussions, meet friends and forget their troubles...

Today there are programs for completing education for anyone who needs it. As part of Government Resolution 3708 on advancing the Bedouin population in the South, there are study programs to prepare Bedouin women for employment. Most of these classes are at the stages of pre-elementary and elementary education. New classes have also opened in the Druze and Arab sectors and a curriculum has been prepared in Arabic. There are classes in the Prison Service for completion of elementary education, in collaboration with this organization's Education and Welfare Department.

A significant part of the work on illiteracy and elementary education in recent years has been directed towards work with immigrants from Ethiopia. According to a report prepared by Maggie Koren, current director of the Adult Education Division, the Division has developed targeted programs for adults of Ethiopian origin. With the help of JDC budgets, the "Mila Tova" pre-elementary education program in reading comprehension was developed for this target population. The program is intended mainly for parents of young children who are due to begin elementary education. There are also a few classes conducted in factories. As part of the activities with Ethiopian immigrants, there are classes for complete beginners and education programs that deal with different subjects and intercultural topics. Detailed curricula have been prepared on different subjects to address the need to develop suitable

basic skills, e.g., textbooks have been written for mathematics, reading comprehension, behavioral sciences, and the “Open Door” program was prepared on the subjects of employment, elementary education skills and parenting workshops. Materials are also written in Amharic based on learning through folktales, and the Yediot Nagat<sup>4</sup> newspaper is also used, as was the Sha’ar LaMathil newspaper (until it closed some years ago). These materials are financed by the JDC for immigrants from Ethiopia and also serve students from other communities. The “Mila Tova” program, which was translated into English by Mayer Fialkoff, won the UNESCO prize.

Adult study programs have been formulated recently that allow for flexible tracks, unique combinations of study subjects, professional courses directly connected to the job market, and enable provision of a second opportunity to attend specific goal-oriented studies, and those that address populations with special needs.

However, the problem of the educational gap in Israel has not yet been resolved. A quarter of the adult population still does not have complete elementary education. In 2013 (according to Statistical Yearbook No. 64), 3.4% of the general adult population above the age of seventeen had 0–4 years of schooling and 15.1% had less than ten years’ schooling. Of them, 2.4% of the Jewish population had 0–4 years of schooling and 11% had less than ten years’ schooling. In the non-Jewish population 7% had 0–4 years of schooling and 15.1 % had less than ten years’ schooling.

There is a need for legislation that will guarantee appropriate funding and resources to provide adults with low education a “second chance” at education, concomitant with setting standards for training teachers in the field of adult education and guaranteeing their status. A partial budget for this purpose was transferred to the Ministry for Social Equality upon its establishment.

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4 This is a current events simple Hebrew newspaper of which a third of the content is translated into Amharic .”