

A Breakthrough in Arab Employment

There are about 1.7 million Arab citizens in Israel, roughly 21% of the population. However, Arabs contribute only 8% of the nation's GNP, and make up just 5% of employees in the private sector.

A new initiative brings together leading Israeli companies, who are using research, analysis and data-based interventions to take on the Arab unemployment rate, an issue crucial to Israeli society and the nation's economy.

The objective is two-fold: First, create solutions in the business sector to bolster Arab Employment while designing models to support businesses that make Arab employment part of their measurable goals.

The initiative's approach is based on an in-depth study conducted by the consulting firm Shaldor. An 8 months long study on Arab employment with the participation of 46 leading companies and market leaders was recently completed .

The second objective is to build a network of partners that includes the government, NGO's, foundations and Arab society, and business sector - and to establish a collective-impact process. This will ensure that while employers create change internally, they are supported externally by NGO's, government and additional stakeholders, to enable sustainable change on a wider scale.

Initiative supporters include the Klarman Foundation, UJA - Federation of New York, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, Lautman Foundation, RosenzweigCoopersmith Foundation, Gandyr Foundation, FOHS Foundation, Pears Foundation, Charles H. Revson Foundation, Jacob and Hilda Blausein Foundation, and the Israeli government – the Authority for the Economics Development of the Minorities Sector at the Israeli Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of Economy.

The initiative operates as a joint venture of Sheatufim, the Reut Institute, Matan and JFN, led by a steering committee that involves stakeholders from all sectors.

By integrating the stakeholders' professional expertise and entrepreneurial spirit, this initiative is creating a breakthrough solution to create employment opportunities for the Arab population in Israel. It is a worthy and important goal, for all.