Garin Ometz Akko

- ♦ 20 years of activity
- ♦ 30 projects
- ♦ 130 young families
- ♦ 4,000 participants

At the request of the local community, five families from all over the country came to Akko in 1997 and founded Garin Torani Ometz Akko, with the intent to alter the harsh reality of the city, to lead a dramatic change and bring new growth and development to Akko and the Galilee region.

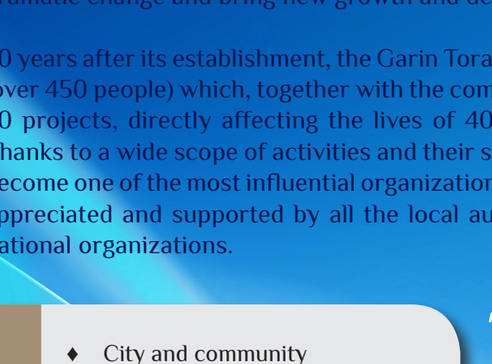
20 years after its establishment, the Garin Torani is comprised of 130 national-religious young families (over 450 people) which, together with the community and the local authorities, have established over 30 projects, directly affecting the lives of 4000 people, mostly children, youth and young adults. Thanks to a wide scope of activities and their substantial impact on the region, Garin Ometz Akko has become one of the most influential organizations in the North of Israel. The organization is recognized, appreciated and supported by all the local authorities and collaborates with businesses and many national organizations.

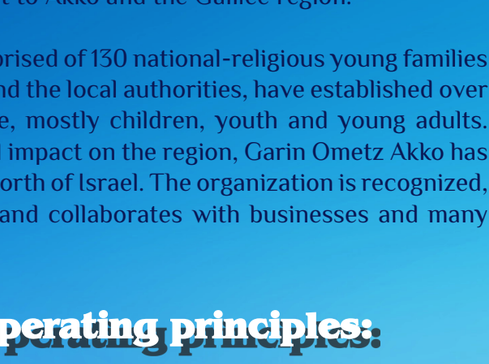
Among the goals of the organization:

- ♦ City and community advancement.
- ♦ Community involvement: reducing social-educational gaps of children and youth in educational institutions and improving welfare services in the city.
- ♦ Creating value-enriched cultural activities for Akko's residents.
- ♦ Establishment of an active young community and encouraging young families to join the city.

The operating principles:

Garin Ometz Akko creates and operates projects out of a desire to meet the needs of the community and, together with the local authorities, provides a real solution and response to inquiries and requests coming from the field. The Garin is interested in cooperation with national authorities and organizations, in general, and local organizations, in particular, and collaborates with many other organizations. Some of them, influenced by the Garin activity, specialize and develop their own projects in the city and the region. Members of the Garin are families are from the national-religious sector, but most activities involve all city residents, religious and secular alike.





Believing in Ometz Akko

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בע"ה

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Garin Ometz's projects include:

Strengthening the Jewish Identity

The Ometz Akko Torah Center, an organization run by members of the Garin, ran several programs and local centers of Torah, including:

- **A Zionistic Kollel** for married yeshiva students
- **A Torah enrichment program for children** in the afternoon and during school vacation
- **Community Batei Midrash**
- **Activities for children**
- **Torah lectures**
- **Events in preparation of Jewish holidays**
- **etc.**

Broad Social Projects Around the City

- **MISHOL,** a program operating in neglected neighborhoods in the city which empowers residents by forming a local neighborhood leadership for social matters, and by running local community activities, operated by the residents themselves with the instruction of coordinators.
- **The Women Project,** a project for the women of the community, attended every week by dozens of women aged 35-60. The program includes lectures, workshops for women's empowerment, and various stimulating activities.
- **The Women's Community Theater,** a program operated in cooperation with the regional college in which a variety of women from the city put on plays (for women only), thus expressing themselves and making their voices heard. This is a part of the women's empowerment project.
- **Running city-wide community events.** Members of Garin Ometz run a variety of educational events surrounding the Jewish calendar attended by hundreds of residents of Akko, both religious and secular. These include preparatory events for the holidays, joint study sessions, programs for school vacations, lectures in the evenings, and more.

Broad Educational Projects Throughout the City

- **Educational support for kindergartens.** Through this program, Garin Ometz aids kindergartens around the city, by supplying kindergarten Rabbis, delivering educational programs about the Jewish holidays, and more.
- **Group activities and classes for children and adults.** Garin Ometz runs various centers for afternoon activities, including extracurricular classes and activities for children at subsidized prices, and workshops and lectures for adults. There are also centers that operate in elementary schools around the city, delivering educational content in an informal manner. The centers address the needs of all sectors in the city, including residents of both the upper-class and lower-class neighborhoods.

Broad Projects in the Field of Social Welfare

- **Parents and Children Program:** A project for parents and children from families receiving welfare support, single parents, and families who suffer from many difficulties. The program helps the parents with emotional and physical support, gives them tools for effective parenthood, strengthens them vis-á-vis their children as family leaders, and helps them deal with the welfare and educational systems.
- **Absorbing Bnei Menashe.** In recent years, Garin Ometz has been accompanying the absorption in Israel of dozens of new immigrant families from the tribe of Bnei Menashe in India, including the operation of educational facilities for children and adults, vocational training programs, running a Torah program for the families, assistance with bureaucratic systems, and more.
- **Treatment of Addictions,** a program designed to prevent substance abuse among youth by a variety of educational tools, and to treat adults who deal with various difficulties in this area.

Projects to Strengthen the Periphery and Settlement in the Galilee

- **Empowering young adults in the Galilee.** Due to its proven ability to run major projects, Garin Ometz won a national tender to operate 11 centers for young adults throughout the Galilee, affecting tens of thousands of young men and women (aged 18-35). The centers help these people with a variety of issues relevant to this age group: Searching for a job and selecting one that is suitable for them, volunteering, choosing a field of study and the right academic institution, vocational training, social life, professional courses, and more.
- **Strengthening the center of the city.** This program places an extra effort to target the city center, which is an area in need of much support. Garin Ometz runs projects for absorption of young families and other social programs.
- **Student Village.** As part of the larger program for strengthening the center of the city, Garin Ometz is working on establishing a student village in a neglected neighborhood in the city center, where young students will live and combine their studies at academic institutions in the North with voluntary social activities throughout the neighborhoods.
- **The establishment of a religious neighborhood.** Over the past year, Garin Ometz completed the establishment of a Religious neighborhood with 150 apartments, including many families who came from outside Akko.
- **Pre-military mechina.** Garin Ometz has completed the establishment of a pre-military mechina in the center of the city, where young men engage in Torah studies alongside social activities.

Educational Projects Targeting At-Risk Youth and Children in Need

- **Torah Club,** a center for youth at risk, operates in the evenings and creates a social and educational framework for these youth, in order to keep them off the street; to give them a warm, homey atmosphere; to provide for them enriching and stimulating educational workshops; and to engage with them in conversations about various challenges (alcohol, drugs, violence, etc.).
- **The Girls Program** is a project that targets local female students who are considered on the verge of dropping out of high-school, in order to help them reduce gaps in their studies, in addition to social gaps, and to provide a nurturing framework to help them with their troubles.
- **The "Warm Home" center.** As part of its major plan for absorbing immigrant families, Garin Ometz runs an afternoon center for school-age children, providing them with an opportunity to reduce their gaps in school and in their social circles. This is accomplished by tutoring them and by running a warm and supportive framework for the children, which includes supplementary courses, instruction, and leisure activities.

Projects Operated Through the Chesed Center:

The Chesed Center founded by Garin Ometz is the largest food distribution center in the region.

- Every week, 350 packages of food are distributed to needy families.
- Every day, 600 sandwiches are distributed to needy students in the local schools.
- Before Rosh Hashanah and Passover, Garin Ometz runs city Chesed activities through which approximately 900 food baskets are distributed to needy families, the elderly, the ill, and new immigrants.
- The center is based entirely on volunteers, and works in collaboration with national organizations such as "Latet," "Shulkhan leShulkhan," and others.

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