



*Sileshi Mengistu*  
*Chair of the ENP Leadership Committee, Beit Shemesh*

Sileshi, a father of seven children, made Aliyah from Ethiopia in 2001. Having taught math and English for many years to junior high school students in Ethiopia, he started off in Israel by working as a security guard in a Jerusalem mall. However, Sileshi was determined to qualify as an English teacher in Israel and enrolled at the David Yellin Academic College of Education in Jerusalem. In 2006, he succeeded in obtaining his BA in Education and qualifying as an English teacher.



Today, Sileshi coordinates the Fathers program at the Gevanim Center for Community Diversity in Beit Shemesh. The Fathers program in Beit Shemesh empowers Ethiopian-Israeli fathers to become more involved in their children's education and strengthens their self-confidence and belief in their ability to support their families.

Sileshi has always taken an interest in community issues, particularly relating to education and was inspired to get involved with the ENP Community Leadership Program after hearing community members praise the Leadership Committee's role in establishing the Inya Linya program and the Youth Outreach Center.

As the incoming chair of the Leadership Committee, one of Sileshi's main objectives is to spread the word about the fantastic achievements of the ENP programs in Beit Shemesh among both the Ethiopian-Israeli community and the wider community in Beit Shemesh.

Beit Shemesh represents a tremendously exciting and unique model of how by empowering and investing in Ethiopian-Israeli activists, the community itself can spearhead and sustain long-term change. Thanks to the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the United Jewish Endowment Fund's vision, trust and belief, an unbelievable conceptual model has become a living breathing organism which is transforming futures.