



The Jewish Federations[®]
OF NORTH AMERICA | Israel & Overseas

Update to Senior Leadership on ENP Task Force

Key Facts

- In December 2013, ENP shared that they had come to an in principle agreement with the Government of Israel to support the expansion of ENP's program- beginning in September 2014. Incremental government support would be contingent on ENP's ability to secure matching funds. ENP has approached Federations with a request for \$6.2M/year for the next three years towards the planned Government match. This amount assumes that Federations will continue to designate funding ENP at the current level and increase by an approximate additional \$4.5M per year to meet the GOI challenge and that the Myers Foundation will provide \$1M annually. In the last full fiscal year, ENP received \$1,751,396 from 31 Federations.
- In addition, ENP is proposing a formal timeline extension beyond the planned lifespan of the program. The program was originally envisioned as a nine year initiative, a period which began with the launch of ENP's first substantial programs in 2004.
- A task force was convened to validate ENP and recommend to JFNA whether to commit to funding ENP in this significant manner. Task force members include Dede Feinberg, Steve Hoffman, Shep Remis, Bruce Sholk (chair), Susie Stern, and Susan Weiss Firestone. The Task Force has met four times.
- The Task Force received updates on the latest research done by the Myers JDC – Brookdale Institute on the community and its challenges as well as the success of the ENP program, heard a presentation from ENP about their strategic planning, and learned from both the JDC and the Jewish Agency about their activities with the Ethiopian-Israeli community.
- Additionally, the Task Force heard clear and positive feedback from a senior government official both about the efficacy of the ENP program and the intent to expand the partnership. Government funds for ENP are provided by the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Aliyah and Absorption.
- Not long after the Government endorsed the program, significant progress was made towards sequestering funds to support it – with money from the Finance and Education Ministries on reserve. Then in early 2014, the Ministry of Aliyah and Absorption launched a holistic roundtable planning process to identify needs and strategies for addressing them to fully integrate the Ethiopian-Israeli community into Israeli society. This put the Government's funding for ENP's proposed expansion on hold pending the outcome of the roundtable process.
- At the end of 2014, the roundtable completed its meetings offering broad stroke recommendations, but no clear policy directives. Of note, is a policy shift of which government ministry is responsible for this population. Currently, both new Ethiopian immigrants as well those born in Israel are dealt with under the Ministry of Absorption. From here on: new immigrants remain under Absorption while Israeli born Ethiopians, like everyone else born in Israel, will be under the Ministry of Education.

- What is clear is that the promised government funds have not come through and it will be many months, following the formation of a new government before new budgets are approved.
- Taking this open-ended uncertainty into account, the Task Force has decided to wrap up its work and move forward under the presumption that ENP will be successful in fully locking in the necessary Government funds.

Other Significant Information

- In addition to the Government's roundtable process, two new initiatives were introduced in 2014 that are relevant to the broader conversation.
- In March 2014, the UJA-Federation of New York gave a \$40,000 grant to a new coalition of 30 leading activists and CEOs of organizations called "Merchav Hashpa'a" (Hebrew for Sphere of Influence) – a Coalition of Ethiopian Israeli Activists and Organizations that work within the Ethiopian Israeli community. In their own words, they are "working together to establish a comprehensive vision for the future of the Ethiopian Israeli community that reflects the desires of the community itself while focusing both on the community's challenges, as well as its leadership abilities and strengths." (Note: ENP is not part of this Coalition.) Sheatufim – the Israel Center for Civil Society - is providing consulting and coaching services in support of this effort.
- Further, last May, JFNA learned about a new enterprise driven by Joel Tauber (former Board Chair of UJC) in partnership with the Rashi Foundation—"The Tauber Rashi Challenge for the Advancement of Ethiopians in Israel." Their intention is also to partner with the Government of Israel going forward. In stage one, they plan to map and rate all "interventions" on behalf of the Ethiopian Israeli community. The intent is then to build a database that tracks individuals from within the community and their intersections with the various interventions and organizations active in the field. This new endeavor intends to work collaboratively with existing programs, to enhance and build upon them, and to find and fill gaps in service. At this point no financial request has been made but Mr. Tauber is looking for the Federation system to reaffirm its support for full integration of the Ethiopian community into the fabric of Israeli society.

Recommendation

- The North American Jewish community, with Federations often leading the charge, was instrumental in both advocating and financing the Aliyah of this community to Israel. Since that time, however, support has wavered and the community has not yet received the full support they deserve and require to fully integrate into Israel society. The Task Force feels strongly that the work of Federations with this community is not complete, yet it also acknowledges that needs are endless.
- The Task Force recommends that JFNA officially recognize and acknowledge the work of ENP and the potential value to the Ethiopian Israeli community and Israeli society in expanding ENP's scope of work. At present, we reaffirm the special status of ENP as a preferred partner of JFNA in regards to elective giving from the Federation system.
- Furthermore, the Task Force recognizes the enormous challenges to fundraising of this amount and type, and knows that there are critical factors to consider, including a decline in unrestricted overseas giving as well as competing priorities currently on the Federation's

agenda such as the Government of Israel World Jewry Initiative and the Global Planning Table initiatives.

- At the same time, the emergence of the Merchav Hashpa'a and the Tauber Rashi partnership reinforce the thinking of this Task Force and are a welcome addition to this critical discussion.
- As such, this request from ENP provides both a challenge and an opportunity. The Federation system should take the time to evaluate its support of the Ethiopian-Israeli community to date, taking into account the new programs on the horizon, and identify whether opportunities for additional support exist. Federations should also engage in open and frank discussion with the Government of Israel about the collective capacity to provide continued support in the future. Doing this in an open and planful way which takes into account competing domestic and overseas needs may also be a trigger for setting realistic expectations on all sides and potentially for developing and implementing a communal exit strategy with regard to future collective efforts.