



# Planning for a Shared Landscape Report

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**The Kathryn Ames Foundation**



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## Abstract

Neighbors for Joint Development in the Galilee initiated "Planning for a Shared Landscape" a dialogue and planning project among four Jewish and Arab communities, with the goal of building the groundwork for cooperative activities and neighborly relations in the region. The thinking that guided the initiators of the project is that the building of this groundwork must grow from the grassroots, from the residents themselves, and be based on each community learning and understanding its own needs as well as those of its neighbors. After this, a future of respect and prosperity can be planned jointly, not in the form of abstract ideas, but rather through practical projects to be implemented on the ground. The localities that were selected for participation in the project are the Arab cities of Tamra and Sachnin and their neighboring Jewish towns of Yuvalim and Mitzpe Aviv, respectively.

"Planning for a Shared Landscape" included the following stages: formation of groups of residents in each of the four localities; a two-day dialogue workshop for each pair of communities, ongoing work that combined dialogue with planning for a period of about nine months; and a creative workshop involving young people from the neighboring communities.

The uniqueness of this project stems from the interaction that occurred at several levels: the personal, the emotional, and the rational levels, as well as the national, communal and regional ones. Throughout the process the mixing of all these levels often caused confusion and difficulty. However, with time, they began to meld into a uniform understanding that made it possible for the groups to approach the practical phase in a more rational way and as consolidated groups that understand the material well and are interested, based on this understanding, in changing the unique reality of the region.

The last sessions of the planning groups led to numerous and various proposals for projects to be implemented in our region. The projects that were developed for Sachnin and Yuvalim included the creation of a meeting place for joint activities between residents of the two localities, the establishment of a new independent Arab community village, and projects to expand contact between the residents of the two communities. The projects that were developed at Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv included the development of an access road between the two communities, furthering a partnership for the strengthening of employment ties between the Jewish and Arab populations in the region, and activities for increased exposure and communication between residents of Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv.

At the youth workshop that was held at Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv, joint works of art were created that are now being exhibited in public buildings in the two localities. This workshop enabled a sharing of experience between neighbors from a young age, one that can broaden afterward into other areas.

The various processes that were employed in the project, despite their preliminary nature, brought about important results that in some cases developed into ongoing activities. The processes that were less successful were also significant for learning and drawing conclusions for the future, which will help us design more structured and effective projects with greater chances of long-term success.

The best summary can be taken from the words of one of the participants who said (inexact quote): "*Neighbors must quickly re-create this process and bring it to all of the communities in the region. This is so that the level of consciousness about what is happening here will reach as many people as possible, who will understand that the only possible way for us is dialogue and cooperation, which comes from direct familiarity with our neighbors.*"

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## Introduction

Neighbors for Joint Development in the Galilee (Neighbors) is an Arab-Jewish non-profit organization that views the Heart of the Galilee region as the home of all its residents, a region that may be developed for the benefit of all the varied communities that reside in it through creative planning work. Neighbors' members include engineers, architects, city planners, developers and other professionals who are prepared to contribute their time to achieve this goal.

The founders and members of Neighbors are keenly aware of the events of October 2000, which had repercussions throughout the area as a warning sign that mandates that Jewish and Arab citizens who decry violence work together for their common future.

Neighbors initiates activities that enable all residents of the region to participate in this important process. Neighbors' planning outlook provides a vehicle for expressing elements that are similar among the communities, while ensuring mutual respect for the cultural assets of the other. Neighbors' members believe that planning, development and preservation of the Galilee must be done in cooperation with the people who live in the Galilee and who love it.

Neighbors is committed to a sustainable, regional and systematic approach to issues of development and planning. This approach will enable all of the residents of the region to fully exploit their economic, cultural and social potential while preserving the environment and the unique landscape of the area.

### *1.1 Project background*

Neighbors for Joint Development in the Galilee initiated a dialogue and planning project among four Jewish and Arab communities, with the goal of building the groundwork for cooperative activities and neighborly relations in the region.

The thinking that guided the initiators of the plan is that the building of this groundwork must grow from the grassroots, from the residents themselves, and be based on each community learning and understanding its own needs as well as those of its neighbors. After this, a future of respect and prosperity can be planned jointly, not in the form of abstract ideas, but rather through practical projects to be implemented. We are sincerely grateful for the financial support of the European Union and the Kathryn Ames Foundation for this pioneering project.

The localities that were selected for participation in the project are the Arab cities of Sachnin and Tamra and their neighboring Jewish community villages of Yuvalim and Mitzpe Aviv, respectively. The participation of the residents of these localities was made possible with the blessing and approval of the cities' mayors and the community villages' managing committees, and with the support and knowledge of the former Misgav Regional Council Head. We express our thanks to them.

These two pairs of communities were identified as focal points that have, on the one hand, difficult points of conflict, yet on the other hand have great potential for cooperation. Our hope is that "Planning for a Shared Landscape" will contribute to solving these conflicts while increasing cooperation and prosperity among all of the communities that are participating in the project.

## ***1.2 Background on the participating towns***

**Sachnin** was declared a city in 1995 and has approximately 25,000 residents (with a population target of 40,000 in the year 2020). Its municipal jurisdiction covers approximately 9,700 dunams. The city has a low socioeconomic rating (2 out of 10 according to a national index of cities and towns prepared by the Central Bureau of Statistics). Its population is young, with about 50% under the age of 20. It has a low percentage of high school graduates. Average per capita wage is about 55% of the average wage in Israel. Its urban development plan was prepared in 1997 and covers an area of 4,635 dunams. The existing employment zone has an area of 270 dunams and includes workshops and industrial activities. Sachnin recently sought to expand its territorial jurisdiction by about 3,500 dunams, a small part of which is also located between Yuvalim and Sachnin. The lands that separate these two localities are mostly in open-space use. Sachnin together with the Misgav Regional Council tried to promote a plan for a joint industrial zone in part of this area and to implement joint projects in the fields of sports and recreation. These projects are not progressing, and most of the lands designated for them are located out of the Sachnin jurisdiction and are unplanned.

**Yuvalim** is the first community village built in Israel. It is part of the Misgav Regional Council and was founded by a core group of workers at Rafael, a government company, in 1982. It has about 1,100 residents in about 270 households (an average of 4.10 persons per family). Approximately 75% of its population is ages 0-19 and 30-44. Its residents work in the city of Haifa and its surrounding areas, as well as in the Teradion and Bar-Lev Industrial Parks (within Misgav), and in the cities of Karmiel and Acco. The community provides early childhood educational services, including nursery schools and kindergartens. Several committees work together with the community's managing committee in fields such as planning and construction, absorption of new members, education, culture, environment, maintenance, security, community and youth. Its budget sources are from monthly taxes of its residents as well as participation by the Regional Council and rentals of publicly-owned buildings.

**Tamra** was declared a city in 1996 and has approximately 27,000 residents with a population target of 50,000 in the year 2020. Its territorial jurisdiction covers 36,000 dunams. The city has a low socioeconomic rating (2 out of 10). Approximately 45% of Tamra's population is comprised of children up to the age of 18, while 15% is over 65. The percentage of high school graduates in Tamra is near the national average. Average per capita wage is about 55% of the average wage in Israel. The lands that separate Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv are owned privately by residents of Tamra and are in agricultural use and are expected to continue to be used for this purpose. The town's industrial zone (of about 270 dunams) is fully occupied, where its urban development plan provides for a doubling of this area. This additional area is designated for knowledge-based industry, warehousing and clean workshop industries. Most of the commercial activity in the city is located along the main entrance road and has the potential of expanding for a distance of approximately 100 meters to either side along this strip. The main entrance and exit from the city is located along this same route. A ring road is proposed that will connect via two intersections to National Highway 70.

**Mitzpe Aviv** is a community village belonging to the Misgav Regional Council. It was founded in 1981, named for Israel's first geographer Avraham Yakov Brawer, and is located near the towns of Tamra and Iblin. There are about 160 families in the village,

which has a total population of about 640. Its jurisdictional area covers approximately 1,275 dunams and allows the construction of about 600 housing units. About 62% of this land is designated for open space. Its residents are employed primarily in the Haifa Bay area and Misgav. About 93% are wage earners and about 5% are independent businesspeople. About 50% of all employees are college graduates. Of these, about 40% are engaged in engineering disciplines, 25% in teaching and 5% in medical support professions.

## **2. Description of the process**

Planning for a Common Landscape included the following stages:

1. Formation of groups of residents from each of the four localities;
2. A two-day intercultural dialogue workshop for each pair of communities;
3. Ongoing work that combined dialogue with joint planning for a period of about nine months;
4. An arts workshop involving youth from the neighboring communities.

It should be noted that despite the fact that the process was formulated and planned in advance, it needed to be monitored and readjusted throughout based on developments in the field and according to unanticipated crises that developed, such as turnover in participants or disputes that arose that required time to clarify and resolve. Furthermore, the project included numerous moderators from various disciplines, who entered and left the process each time, so that there was a need to provide continuity and to create a clear and understandable process for the participants. Looking back, we understand that the processes of dialogue and practical planning were intertwined throughout the entire project, which made it so challenging, both for the moderators that led it and for its participants.

The uniqueness of this project stems from the interaction that occurred at several levels: the personal, the emotional, and the rational levels, as well as the national, communal and regional ones. Throughout the process the mixing of all these levels often caused confusion and difficulty. However, with time, they began to meld into a uniform understanding that made it possible for the groups to approach the practical phase in a more rational way and as consolidated groups that understand the material well and are interested, based on this understanding, in changing the unique reality of the region.

### ***2.1 Formation of the groups***

At the first stage of the process, even before formation of the groups, contact was made by Neighbors with the formal institutional bodies in the four localities: to the municipalities in the case of Sachnin and Tamra, and to the managing committees of the community villages in the case of Yuvalim and Mitzpe Aviv. The process was presented to these institutions and their blessings were received for continuing with the process. It should be noted here that these approvals were a basic condition for Neighbors to begin the entire process.

At the next stage, an appeal was made to the general public in these localities. In the Jewish communities, the appeal went through the electronic messaging network of these communities. In the Arab towns, the appeal was issued via notices posted at various public institutions. For those who responded to the notices, meetings were set up in their communities, at which time they met with the relevant moderators of the process: Shiri Barr (in Yuvalim and Mitzpe Aviv) and Ziad Halaila (in Sachnin) and Muhammad Natur (in Tamra).

Each group was formed gradually over the course of several meetings, with some turnover occurring, while attempting to create a group of up to 15 participants (on the assumption that there would naturally be some dropping off along the way).

The groups began a process of getting to know one another, at first separately as single nationality groups, and later on as integrated groups, while orienting them toward the intercultural dialogue workshop. This formation process took about five to six meetings for each pair of localities and formed the basis for continuation of the entire process.

## ***2.2 Intercultural dialogue***

The groups that were formed were invited to a two-day dialogue workshop in order to begin the joint work process as two mixed groups: the Sachnin-Yuvalim group and the Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv group. The Sachnin-Yuvalim workshop was held over the weekend, where the group lodged at a hotel in Nazareth, and was held the guidance of facilitators from "Time for Dialogue"<sup>1</sup> – Hassia Chomsky-Porat and Rabia Hussissi. Observers were Shiri Barr and Ziad Halaila, who worked as moderators of the group throughout the process on behalf of Neighbors, as well as Jamal Elkirnawi, another observer representing Time for Dialogue. The Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv workshop was held at a small hotel in the Druze town of Beit Jann, and was led by Raghev Abbas and Hedva Brilliant. Shiri Barr and Muhammad Natur, group moderators for Neighbors, acted as observers, together with Project Director Tovi Alfandari.

The intercultural dialogue workshop is suitable for neighboring Jewish and Arab communities that are undergoing continual conflict such as border disputes, or communities that are trying to initiate joint projects and want to improve the chances for their success. The workshop is comprised of several stages:

**In the first stage**, participants work in single-nationality groups on expressing fears, needs, frustrations, anger and hopes.

**In the second stage**, one of these groups presents its statements to the other group. The group that is listening reflects what it is hearing to see if the message of the presenting group has been understood. The groups then change places and repeat the same process.

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<sup>1</sup> "Time for Dialogue" is a group of facilitators highly experienced in intercultural dialogue and conflict resolution. The group began its activities as an independent project under the auspices of two organizations: the Israel Center for Negotiation and Mediation (ICNM) and the International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation (IIMHC)

**In the third stage**, common needs are defined, as well as the barriers that prevent their attainment. Brainstorming then takes place, focusing on what to do next and on the means of overcoming these barriers, with proposals for continued action.

**The fourth and final stage** is intended to build consensus by selecting issues for discussion and action.

The last two stages raised ideas about needs and barriers and numerous and diverse proposals for joint initiatives among the two pairs of communities. It is interesting to compare the results of the dialogue workshop with the products of the long-term planning process that the participants underwent afterward. The workshop provided a stage for open and noncommittal brainstorming, while the products of the subsequent process were selected after deeper study and awareness of the limitations of what could realistically be accomplished. On the other hand, there are issues that were already identified as essential in the workshop and returned to become formulated as more detailed proposals for further work at the conclusion of the entire process.

The following are examples of ideas that were raised during the two workshops: Members of the Yuvalim-Sachnin group looked at various kinds of needs: needs relating to planning issues - such as housing for Sachnin residents, relating to social and educational issues - such as the lack of interaction between extensive cross-sections of the population and needs relating to the issue of inter-communal cooperation. This last issue referred to the relationship between the two local authorities, Sachnin and the Misgav Regional Council, rather than just between Sachnin and the individual community of Yuvalim. The group proposed broadening cooperation between the two local authorities by creating a central location for joint educational activities for various age groups and by establishing a forward medical emergency room. It was also proposed that joint representation be created for promoting common needs such as the setting up of new neighborhoods, landscape preservation, improving road safety, and environmental protection. Finally, the possibility was raised of establishing joint public services by consent that would be set up in Sachnin or Misgav. The barriers that prevent the realization of these needs were broken down by members of the Yuvalim-Sachnin group into external barriers such as the state's discriminatory policies against Arab citizens, internal barriers within the Arab population such as the ineffectiveness of local governments, and barriers that are created at the interface between populations such as ignorance about the other side among both population groups, language and cultural barriers and plain fear.

In its discussions on joint needs, the Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv group delineated four issues: communications, social interaction, environment and joint projects. The need for enhancing communication between the residents of Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv led to a proposal to establish a joint bilingual newspaper that would report on events in the two communities, advertise businesses and help in finding employment, while opening up a general discussion on Jewish Arab coexistence in Israel. The need for increased social interaction led to proposals for joint activities such as family outings, drama, cooking, women's basketball, a women's crafts group, bicycle riding, horseback riding, jeep tours and a group for mothers and babies. The need for environmental cooperation led to a proposal to set up a joint park between the communities that would include environmental sculpture and active recreation facilities. Activities were also proposed that would combine preservation and cleanup operations with nature hikes. The need for

executing joint projects was reflected in the three previous issues, but became focused on an overall regional conception that would lead to the promotion of a joint industrial area for Tamra and Misgav, to the promotion of an eastern entrance road to Tamra and to the setting up a joint artists' village in Tamra. The barriers to realizing such cooperation enumerated by members of the Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv group did not refer to barriers in Israeli society as a whole, as discussed by the Yuvalim –Sachnin group, but rather focused on the difficulties within their own group: the difficulty in recruiting Arab residents to the group and in maintaining the group, a feeling of a lack of symmetry between the participants from the two communities, where there was a feeling that the Mitzpe Aviv group was better organized, a gap between the goals of Neighbors and those of the participants, a gap between what was proposed for the parties funding the project and the reality on the ground, and a gap between the community level and the municipal level.

The dialogue workshop constituted an excellent opportunity to start the process with intensity, far from the daily distractions of the participants. As some of the participants stated at the end of the workshop:

*"I heard some very harsh things, and I said what I thought, true and honest things. Do I feel better understood? I think I do. It is very important to me to be in these kinds of discussions as an Arab woman; it is a real mission."*

*"I came with a lot of interest and curiosity. I have a lot of ignorance, many gaps in knowledge. I learned a lot about myself and about you. What was created allows for the next stages. I was happy to make acquaintances."*

*"When comparing myself and the group then and today: yesterday it was all opinions and mutual recriminations that were hard to bridge. Today, I know that if we wish it, it is no dream. Building bridges, thinking about things in common. Yesterday's fears have almost all disappeared."*

*"I'm a firm believer in deeper familiarity and we had that here in all dimensions and levels, including awareness of the hardest things that can be, an attempt to understand and include."*

*"At a moment of uncertainty, confusion, suddenly all of the chains fell and the fear left. When people talk and bring up issues, it's possible to create change. I am optimistic - there's hope for the future."*

### **2.3 Ongoing planning and dialogue sessions**

Following the conclusion of the dialogue workshop, the two groups, Sachnin-Yuvalim and Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv, entered into the heart of the project: working sessions that were held regularly, approximately once every two weeks, for about nine months, under the guidance of Shiri Barr and Ziad Halaila for the Sachnin-Yuvalim group and Shiri Barr and Muhammad Natur for the Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv group. The staff was guided by Project Director Tovi Alfandari, meeting periodically with him to deal with issues that arose in the field. This part of the project included a stage of getting to know one another and getting to know each other's community, which included an analysis of existing conditions by way of a site tour and detailed data gathering, learning about the

planning problems of each of the two sets of communities, setting goals and determining criteria for evaluating the various projects that were to be proposed and, in the end, the formulation of a list of projects for implementation.

### ***2.3.1 Analysis of existing conditions***

The goal at this stage is to become deeply familiar with existing conditions in order to make it possible to base the continuation of the project on well-based knowledge rather than on assumptions. As many relevant questions as possible need to be asked in order to obtain as much information as possible. At the next stage, the data that was gathered needed to be studied by analyzing existing conditions, and from this the principal issues that need to be faced had to be identified and the definition of options begun.

The first goal was to prepare a written report that described the existing condition so that each side would be better acquainted with the other prior to planning a common interface. The report was built around central questions that were raised by members of the groups regarding questions that they wanted to study about the other side. The report was compiled and written by Avi Cohen, a student who was employed by Neighbors through the Everett Internship Program at Shatil, the New Israel Fund's Empowerment and Training Center for Social Change Organizations in Israel. Copies of this report were sent in advance to members of the groups, were presented in detail by Avi Cohen and appear on Neighbors' website.

At this stage, lectures on planning of Arab localities and on the planning of community villages in Misgav were held. A summary of these lectures was transmitted in writing to members of the groups for further study and review.

### ***2.3.2 Formulation of goals and criteria***

The process of formulating goals was intended to more clearly define where group-members wanted to go. At the first stage, all of the goals of the various participants were raised. At the second stage, a classification and filtering were performed that defined several central and common goals. At the next stage, criteria were determined, which are the tools that would make it possible to choose among alternatives. With them, it would be possible to check how each alternative answered the goals that were set. At the end of this stage, a set of priorities was determined by the members of each group with respect to the various criteria. In order to understand the goals and criteria stage, several examples of the numerous goals that the groups discussed and the results of this stage within the two groups are introduced below:

In the Sachnin-Yuvalim group, the participants identified the goal of setting up a place and framework for meetings between the residents of the two localities. The criteria that were defined for evaluating whether this goal has been reached are as follows: that it will be an accessible place, and that it will be achievable, attractive and responsive to the needs of both sides. Another goal that was identified was finding a fair solution, acceptable to both sides, to the border dispute between Sachnin and Misgav. The criteria for evaluating the attainment of this goal were the extent of fairness toward both sides, the extent that it responded to needs, the extent of concessions on both sides, the extent of consensus that would be reached on both sides, the level of support that would be

created in the region for Sachnin's urban development plan, and the level of awareness and knowledge of the needs and opposition on both sides.

The following are two examples of goals and criteria discussed by the residents of Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv: for the goal of increased contact between residents of Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv, the criteria for the extent of success would be the number of meetings that would be held among residents, the quantity of joint activities and events in various fields, improvement in environmental quality in both localities and in the area between them, preventing the spread of unlicensed waste dumps, developing and increasing common lands, creating joint supervisory and enforcement mechanisms, creating joint planning coordination and monitoring mechanisms, and the scope of joint activities in the fields of education, industry and environment. For the goal of increasing economic and employment cooperation between Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv, criteria for success that were defined were the number of the joint forums that would be created between the localities (such as a forum of business people, for example), the extent of awareness that would be created for local businesses, professionals, and employment opportunities, and the number of joint business initiatives between the localities. As stated, these are only some examples of a wide variety of issues that were handled. These led to the selection of several practical projects as detailed below.

### ***2.2.3 The projects that were defined***

The practical and focused planning process that took place at the last meetings of the two groups was structured, and was comprised of several stages. The groups were divided into several subgroups of 4-6 participants each, which developed potential projects on the basis of the understandings, goals and criteria that had been developed at that point. The development of projects occurred on the basis of clear guidelines, which required a detailed description of the project, the goals that it sought to realize, internal partners and external partners required for its implementation, and the stages required for its execution. The overriding goal of the process was to identify projects that realized most of the goals that were identified and that had the highest chances of implementation.

#### **Sachnin-Yuvalim**

This group's process reached a high level of accomplishment, with much readiness on the part of participants to take charge and implement the projects themselves. Three projects were selected for implementation:

**Meeting place** – This will constitute a place for joint activities among residents of the two localities and will include playgrounds, sports fields, a picnic area, a walking course, a coffeehouse or kiosk, a petting zoo managed by the school, an attractive bicycle path, a building for meetings and activity groups, and an open amphitheater with a stage. Various activities will take place in this location such as a market, a bazaar, shows like a music festival, the annual Olive Festival, sports competitions with mixed groups, and joint activity/study groups. The following internal participants are to be recruited for its implementation: the Misgav Regional Council, the Municipality of Sachnin, Sikkuy – the Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel, Partnership 2000, the Misgav Wastewater Treatment Corporation, the Galileo Fund and industrial plants in the region. External participants proposed were: the Ministry of

Education, the European Union, the Abraham Fund, the Jewish National Fund, the Israel Lottery Fund, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, and the Arison Foundation,. The organizational structure to be operated will include members of the group together with the local governments and Neighbors. The stages of action required are: identifying alternative locations, statutory approval of the location, preparation of a promotional brochure with an action plan and costs, fundraising, convincing the local authorities, and modular planning of the various objectives.

**A new Arab community village** – setting up of a new and independent Arab community village within the municipal boundaries of the Misgav Regional Council between Sachnin, Arrabe and Deir Hanna that would provide a solution primarily for young couples from these three towns and assuage the current serious housing shortage in the area. The internal participants proposed for establishment of the village are the mayors of the relevant local governments and Neighbors. External participants proposed were the Interior Ministry and the Galilee Development Authority. The stages of action required are creating a core group of residents and a management framework, agreement on characterization of the community, clarification of the positions of governmental institutions and recruiting them for this idea, recruiting people, writing of bylaws, planning, identifying land and marketing the idea.

**Broadening the circle of acquaintances** – it was proposed that broader forums be established at which the personal stories of people from Sachnin and Yuvalim could be told. People with a personal story at various stages of life such as young couples, senior citizens, youth and others, or with an interesting specialty or occupation, such as therapists, educators and religious figures would be invited. Cultural figures from museums or from the theater could also be invited. It was proposed that these meetings be documented in writing as well as photographed, so that the documentation would lead to the production of a book or film. Internal participants include families, residents of localities, and the Abraham Fund. The organizational structure would include members of the group together with the local authorities and Neighbors.

### **Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv**

The process that was held in this group did not reach a high level of development at the final stages. When disputes in the group arose related to the projects and the manner of implementing them, participants stopped meeting and the projects that were proposed remained partially unformed ideas. The following is a description of the projects that were proposed by the group, with the hope that the process will be revitalized the future.

**Access road** – the issue of an access road between Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv has been in dispute between them for many years. The solutions that had been proposed in the past dealt with the development of an existing registered but non-statutory access road into a route that would connect Tamra in a southerly direction. This dispute remained open even at the end of the process, when participants from Mitzpe Aviv had become convinced that this road was essential for the city of Tamra, but preferred changing the route to a more southerly direction so that traffic congestion would not be created at the entrance to Mitzpe Aviv. Tamra residents requested reconsidering the route based on the existing non-statutory access road. Even though detailed consent was not reached, recognition by representatives of Mitzpe Aviv and Tamra of the need to create an agreed-upon route between the localities was achieved in the process, as well as some

readiness to proceed toward a plan that would review various alternatives on a professional basis.

**Employment** – the group was happy to have the opportunity to join an employment project in which Neighbors is taking part known as the TEVET-Employment Initiative, being managed by the local Sports & Recreation Center in Tamra and Kabul and the JDC. It was proposed that members of the group be partners in strengthening employment ties between the Jewish population in the area and the residents of Tamra and Kabul. One of the members of the group from Mitzpe Aviv proposed a project for training educational software development people in Tamra, an idea that was enthusiastically accepted.

**Mutual exposure** – the goal of this project is to increase and improve mutual exposure between residents of Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv by increasing meetings among residents, initiating joint events, initiating joint activities in various fields and with the participation of different population groups. This idea was not fully developed, but it has broad support in the preliminary proposals that were raised in the various sessions, both during the dialogue workshop and in the criteria development process.

In summary, though this process did not reach final fruition, it shows potential for a preferred means of dialogue between the communities. Despite the difficulties, there is a willingness and basic need among some of the members of the group to take this process forward and revitalize it. Neighbors is committed to helping with this important work.

## **2.4 Youth workshop**

Parallel to the work with adult residents, which constituted the core of "Planning for a Shared Landscape", Neighbors initiated an arts workshop for young people from both pairs of communities. It should be noted that the goals of the meetings with the various age groups were essentially different: while the work with the adult residents dealt with burning issues between the two communities, the work with youth focused on bringing them together for mutual acquaintance and joint artistic activity. The work processes for the two age groups were also different; sessions with the adults took place over a period of a year and a half while the activities with youth took place in a much shorter and more focused process.

The purpose of the workshop was to create an encounter that would be a positive experience for groups of young people from the two neighboring communities. The workshop was held in Tamra and Mitzpe Aviv and unfortunately did not take place in Yuvalim and Sachnin because of technical problems related to the surfeit of activities provided for Yuvalim youth. The process, which was intended to continue over a long period of time and structured based on weekly meetings, was condensed into a focused and continuous process of several days of intensive joint work. The moderators of this process were Dudu Rosenblum, a designer, planner and educator, and Ahmed Canaan, a highly esteemed artist from Tamra and manager of the town's art gallery.

The first meeting dealt with mutual acquaintance, presentation of the goals of the project and a description of the process. Because of the relatively young age of the children (grades 7-8), the moderators decided to enter directly into the hands-on work.

The process was structured so that the young people worked in mixed small groups with the guidance of the moderators and several adults who had volunteered to participate in the process on behalf of the two communities. The work was accompanied, beyond the artistic activity, also by social contacts, tours of the two communities, home visits and conversations that were held despite the language barrier. The products of this project are two mosaics that were created using local materials, primarily ceramic shards. The young participants themselves chose to work on the image of a horse in the mosaics since there are horse farms in both communities. After their completion, one mosaic was set up at the entrance to a school in Tamra and the second at the Omri Clubhouse in Mitzpe Aviv, named after Omri Goldin, a local resident who was killed in a terrorist attack.

The principal achievements of this project were providing an initial opportunity for mutual acquaintance among youth and adults in the two communities; the discovery of neighboring cultures – whether by lighting Hanukkah candles and eating traditional jelly doughnuts at Mitzpe Aviv or by visiting the gallery and entertainment and leisure center in Tamra; the creation of artworks in the two communities as an expression of the joint activity, and their installation in public buildings for the enjoyment of all residents. Lessons learned include the need for more ideas about how to overcome the lack of a common language, and the need to extend the process to deepen contact between participants and incorporate activities that enhance mutual trust.

### **3. Summary**

"Planning for a Shared Landscape" constituted an opportunity and a challenge for members of Neighbors to realize their vision on the ground. Instead of placing planning for the future of the region in the hands of external planners, professional as they may be, or in the hands of politicians, we proposed a structured planning process led by the residents themselves under the guidance of moderators and planners who also reside in the region. The overriding purpose of the entire process was to create leadership coming from the grassroots that would take on the task of promoting projects that combine formal and informal frameworks, while recruiting support from the public at the local, regional and national levels.

The goals that were derived from this were building understanding of mutual needs, the creation of tools for handling them, and the creation of permanent frameworks – not necessarily dependent on Neighbors – for developing projects and implementing them over time while increasing the scope of activity and participation of as many residents as possible.

We are currently at the end of an important phase of this complex process. The two groups of residents of the neighboring communities, Sachnin-Yuvalim and Tamra-Mitzpe Aviv, reached deep and close relationships, joint work and serious proposals for cooperation. We are committed to continuing these efforts and implementing the projects that were proposed. Furthermore, we are interested in proposing this model for dialogue and joint planning to other neighboring communities.

We learned a great deal from this process. Many lessons were learned about the reasons both for the success of the project and for the difficulties and obstacles that were encountered, some of which follow:

**The need for a long-term and deep process** – the process of developing cooperation between communities must be long-term and comprehensive, bringing about deepened interpersonal and intercommunity understanding about the national sensitivities of each separate group, the crystallization of group identity among the participants, and more intense study of the problems of each one and of the interface between them.

**Similar characteristics of group members** – it is preferred that members of the groups be similar in their socioeconomic characteristics, educational level, ability to express themselves (especially in Hebrew) and self-confidence in national identity. Groups with similar characteristics created a deeper process with mutual respect and a natural curiosity to become familiar with the truths of the other side, while at the same time presented their own side without self-doubt or doubt about national identity. In processes involving the greatest gaps between the groups, it was found that the process may slowly wither without creating the positive energy needed for its continuation.

**Peak points** – the process must have several peak points over a longer time period (weekends for example) at a hotel far from the participants' area of residence. Such peak points attract participants, allowing them to leave their daily routine, and provide the group with intense and secluded time in order to work together more deeply.

**Implementation** – another element that needs to be added will teach participants how to activate and lead community projects with volunteers from the community so that they will have the tools to progress toward implementation and maintenance of the projects that they themselves conceived.

**Field work** – going out into to the field, whether by guided tours by each community separately, or by visiting and working at friends' homes, was highly significant to the process. This part of the process needs to be expanded further in order to provide a better perspective on the partnering communities and on the area.

**Bringing people together** – processes that include intercommunity cooperation should begin with bringing people closer together, and primarily residents who do not have a political agenda or commitments to interest groups, and can therefore be more open and creative.

**Increasing mutual awareness of needs** – the process must take into consideration the needs of both groups and that whether these needs are different or vary in their severity, they must be understood well before moving on to any kind of action.

**Creating cooperation** – in various fields such as environment, education and leisure activities is important for the promotion of ties between communities that did not have any prior cooperation between them. At the first stage, such ventures should be in fields that lend themselves most easily to cooperation, such as environment; at later stages, attempts can be made to enter into more complex areas such as education and culture.

**Involving formal community institutions** – this is also essential for creating frameworks for promoting joint interests, together with groups of residents that do not have a formal status.

**Creating meeting places** – a necessary part of the process of cooperation is creating places and frameworks for meeting in order to encourage dialogue and the exchange of information. Without fixed and clear frameworks, it is difficult to promote processes of these types and to bring them to fruition.

**Increasing accessibility between communities** – part of the process of bringing communities together is increasing physical accessibility between them. Such access is essential for enabling residents of the communities to get to know one another and is a principal condition for deepening cooperation between them in other areas.

**Establishing joint projects** – the level of cooperation required here is higher and requires experiencing almost all of the previous stages in order to identify joint needs, recruit resources and public support for the project, and to define the physical location (if required), the project's development, operation and maintenance over time.

In summary, the various processes that were employed in the project, despite their preliminary nature, brought about important results that in some cases developed into ongoing activities. The processes that were less successful were also significant for learning and drawing conclusions for the future, which will help us design more structured and effective projects with greater chances of long-term success.

"Planning for a Shared Landscape" brought together residents from neighboring Jewish and Arab communities that despite the minimal physical distance between them had almost no contact with one another previously. The residents underwent a structured process of mutual acquaintance, joint and practical planning work that led to rich and diverse plans for a shared future. The success of the project is in the extensive work that it leaves us – making these plans a reality by creating activities that will lead to a life of cooperation, prosperity, and tolerance among residents of the Galilee.

The best summary can be taken from the words of one of the participants who said (inexact quote):

*"Neighbors must quickly re-create this process and bring it to all of the communities in the region. This is so that the level of consciousness about what is happening here will reach as many people as possible, who will understand that the only possible way for us is dialogue and cooperation, which comes from direct familiarity with our neighbors."*