

## FROM A GOVERNMENT-BASED PARTNERSHIP TO A CIVIC-GOVERNED PARADIGM

Iris Posklinsky, MSW, PhD Candidate

### Abstract

This article reports a pioneering qualitative research study that illuminates the way a global philanthropic partnership enabled the Israeli government to launch a national program which later evolved into a non-governmental initiative. It examines the model of an urban and social rehabilitation program through the prism of its funding partnership, citizen participation practice, and collaboration with municipalities; it also illustrates the way this government-based model was transformed into a new program, detached from governmental ties and shifted to focus on communal and international people-to-people connections and collaborations. The article traces the programmatic transformation that unfolded over four decades.

*Keywords:* partnership; community development; philanthropy; citizen participation; diaspora Jewry; people to people

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### INTRODUCTION

Israel is a unique case of a state founded by a committed diaspora, which established the country and funded its development for decades before its inception and seamlessly thereafter. Motivated by historic ties and traditional values, world Jewry responded by addressing a myriad of needs ranging from the building of infrastructure to the absorption of new immigrants, and advancing the country in every socio-economic

sphere (Kabalo, 2009; Shaul Bar Nisim, 2019). Such undertakings and countless others were funded by an organized international system of Jewish communal institutions located in communities across the globe. For more than 100 years, whether as a federated system in the US or a united philanthropic foundation representing Jewish communities outside of the US, this system has been working separately and together in meeting Israel's needs (in addition to the communities' local priorities). Recognizing the distinctiveness of this philanthropic partnership, Wertheimer (1997) describes its scope and durability as incomparable. While diaspora philanthropy refers to the transferring of resources back to home countries (Johnson, 2007), it is important to note that unlike other diasporas, the vast majority of the Jewish people never lived in Israel as a homeland.

This article reports research on how two consecutive programs emerged out of the aforementioned philanthropic partnership. The earliest initiative, Project Renewal, was established in 1977 as a government-based partnership with the goal of improving the lives of the impoverished. This was a social and residential rehabilitation program intended to transform 160 deteriorated neighborhoods nation-wide. According to Weinstein (2008), Project Renewal was considered one of the most ambitious neighborhood regeneration programs in the world in terms of scale and scope. Later, Project Renewal was also recognized for making an important and historic shift in Israel-diaspora relations, as explained further below.

In 1994, the national institution that was the government's primary partner in Project Renewal launched a revised international program called Partnership2000 (P2K), later known as Partnership2Gether (P2G). The new model preserved core strategies and objectives of its predecessor, but developed independently from the government. Project Renewal continued to be operated by the government, but lost its main partnership base.

In the months between 2019 and 2020 a qualitative research was conducted to examine the development of P2G and to define it as a distinct international partnership model. Thirty-two personal interviews were conducted with communal leaders and activists, most of whom were involved in the transition from Project Renewal to P2G. Transcripts of the interviews were thematically analyzed and complemented by research of historical documentation. Together, both sources of data helped illustrate P2G as a model, while contextualizing it within existing partnership literature and enhancing the understanding of partnership as a theory. This article focuses exclusively on presenting data from this research pertaining to P2G as a program that developed out of a government-based model. Much has been written on Project Renewal, which after 44 years still exists in some capacity. However, there is no published research on P2K/P2G, despite its scope, sustainability for nearly three decades, and its comprehensive international partnership model.

#### A GOVERNMENT-BASED PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Project Renewal began as a national program initiated by the government of Israel. In its early years, it was based on what could be described as a three-faceted partnership. Those partnerships were conditional to the Project's establishment and sustainability, and shaped its ethos. They included a funding partnership with global Jewish communities; a participatory partnership with citizens of the renewed neighborhoods; and a collaborative partnership with local municipalities and mayors. Partnership was the inherent strategy of this revitalization and community reconstruction program, which compelled various sectors to work together. Impacting change in public spaces and housing, in community organizations, education, welfare and health services, leadership, philanthropy, and more, this was a multidimensional and comprehensive program.

Project Renewal was emulating similar national programs such as the Community Development Project in the UK, the Urban Renewal and Big Cities Policy in the

Netherlands, and Model Cities projects in the US. The universal underlying assumption was that the relocation of disadvantaged populations into new housing developments would eliminate the roots of poverty and social distress (King et al., 1987). Yet the Israeli model differed from other programs because it stemmed from other motivations than in the US or other countries, where business and economic concerns were leading factors in the governments' decisions to launch their urban renewal programs (Loney, 1981; Musterd & Ostendorf, 2008). The U.S. government placed urban renewal in the hands of private developers, who replaced housing for the poor with upper income housing. Conversely, in Israel the renewal task was kept under public control. While in the US only the lowest-income families were eligible for social housing, the Israeli government at that time allocated housing on a universal basis. In addition, the Israeli government was motivated by its political debt to the electorate, where the majority were residents of the slums in the big cities and towns across Israel's periphery (Carmon & Hill, 1984). The newly elected government aimed at assuming public responsibility for the hardship of the poor and changing the prejudice of holding them responsible for their condition (King et al, 1987). Finally, a major difference between Project Renewal and other urban and social restoration programs was the funding partnership that was forged between the Israeli government and an external party. The partnership with world Jewry constituted a unique feature that involved donors in a cooperative manner with the state government (Schwartz, 1999).

#### A GOVERNMENT-PHILANTHROPY FUNDING PARTNERSHIP

Project Renewal was planned to be a broad-based project requiring the investment of over one billion dollars. The young and struggling state realized it did not have the capacity to accomplish this project on its own. In addition, this initiative provided an opportunity to develop a new type of partnership with world-wide Jewish communities, asking their support in meeting some of the country's most pressing societal challenges. This new partnership transformed the future of the philanthropic relationship between Israel and Jewish communities around the world, where for the first time in history

funds were earmarked for a specific project rather than a general fund for Israel (King et al, 1987; Lazin, 1994). Yet the fundraising for Project Renewal was still responding to a collective call for action by the Prime Minister of Israel. A second innovative approach associated with this funding partnership was the matching of distressed neighborhoods with adopting communities abroad.

The national institution that historically coordinated the relationship between Israel and world Jewry was the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI). Established in 1929 with the financial support of diaspora Jews, it was responsible for carrying out missions that built up the country (e.g., founding new towns and villages, creating infrastructures and services, and absorbing new immigrants). After the state of Israel was born in 1948, JAFI continued to be the government's partner in fulfilling major national undertakings with the funding of world Jewry. In light of this historic background, it was only natural for the government to reach out to JAFI when it sought a strategic partner and funding for Project Renewal. The result was the launching of a bi-institutional committee with senior representatives from JAFI and the state government, which shared overall oversight over Project Renewal.

In addition to the bi-institutional committee, two other structures were formed to lead the Project's implementation. First, in each of the targeted neighborhoods a local steering committee was assembled, equally represented by residents and officials, though chaired only by the cities' mayors. This local leadership format will be further discussed in the article. Second, a central inter-ministerial committee was formed with representatives from each of the involved government ministries including Housing, Education, Health, Finance, Interior, Labor, and Social affairs, as well as representation from JAFI. Chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, this was a coordinating committee driven by an integrated approach. It was responsible for reviewing and authorizing the proposals for funding submitted by local steering committees (which outlined the neighborhood plans for restoration and development). It was also responsible for ensuring that all projects maintained national standards and criteria (The Renewal

Process, 1981; Organizing Project Renewal, 1979; Project Renewal Government-JAFI Relations, 1981). JAFI, as a funding partner representing world Jewry, was a member in each level of this Project's administration: The leading bi-institutional committee, the coordinating inter-ministerial committee, and the local steering committees active within the neighbourhoods.

A groundbreaking model of donor relations was developed especially for Project Renewal. The list of neighborhoods selected for restoration was divided up, and each neighborhood was matched with a funding Jewish community abroad. At that time, the relationship between the Israeli neighborhood and the overseas community heavily reflected the gap between the donors and the beneficiaries. In a few cases, in addition to contributing monetarily, donors chose to be more involved and to actively effect change in the neighborhoods. For example, they helped residents articulate their needs and priorities, participated in committee meetings, and modeled self-responsibility in caring for the environment in the renovated neighborhoods. Such direct involvement was not always possible because of political barriers erected by mayors who wanted to dictate the allocation of funding and control the relationship with the donors. In other cases, there were major communication barriers because the local Israeli residents lacked basic English skills and/or were culturally and socioeconomically different from the donors.

While the urban arena had been the domain of the central government, Project Renewal enabled JAFI to enter this field and to demonstrate its relevance in advancing it. The expertise JAFI gained through this project was demonstrated 16 years later when it created P2G, the revised international partnership program. Similarly, the partnership between JAFI and the government enabled the latter to deal directly with world Jewry, an exclusive prerogative of JAFI (King et al, 1987).

## A PARTICIPATORY PARTNERSHIP WITH CITIZENS

Citizen participation in government decision making is a complex approach which, despite its benefits and democratic values, often leads to disagreements and tension. Literature reflects a growing interest in this phenomenon starting in the 1960s and continuing till today, highlighting various models and analysis of its complexity (Arnstein, 1969; Connor, 1998; Contreras, 2019; Gerber, 2019; Tritter & McCallum, 2006). Like Model Cities in America, Project Renewal also aspired to empower citizens by increasing their participation in decision making that affected the future of their community. Developed as a response to the social uprising in the US during the 1960s, Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (Arnstein, 1969) introduced a new paradigm for social and urban planning based on intentional resident involvement. It emphasized the necessity to rely on public consultation for socially just reasons, for breaking the cycle of government dependence, and for service planning that adheres to identified needs as experienced by the consumers themselves. The gap between citizen-led and government-led planning is manifested in this model as in others developed thereafter. While Arnstein held a critical stance towards government attempts to control planning processes, naming the public "we" as opposed to "them", other literature presents a complementing perspective that recognizes the complex political environment in partnership-based government programs (e.g., Stouts & LeGates, 2015; Alterman & Churchman, 1991). Though the moral obligation for a participatory process is unquestioned, there is also an understanding that officials and citizens can both be manipulative and exploitive of power given to them, or that standards could be compromised due to citizens' lack of professional skills.

The reality in the case of Project Renewal mirrored the complexity described in models of citizen participation. Churchman & Carmon (as cited in Carmon & Hill, 1984) suggest considering citizen participation both as *a means* to better plan local intervention, and as *a goal* attained by empowering residents to rely on their own initiatives rather than depending on government provision. In attempts to address social apathy and

alienation, Project Renewal encouraged citizens to collaborate and lead with the authorities. Local steering committees comprising 24 members, half of which were residents, were established in each neighborhood. The steering committees' mandate was to set priorities, discuss plans, and make recommendations on the allocation of resources. Many other residents took part in taskforces or contributed by volunteering in actual renovation work. Some residents were employed in the Project, although often when professional work was needed their lack of skills was evident. Still, this strategy softened criticism against the power of so-called "experts" (Carmon & Hill, 1984; Weinstein, 2008).

As the notion of citizen participation was introduced and advocated by the Israeli government itself, it evoked great suspicion. Residents felt caught in the transition from client status to that of active participants (King et al, 1987). Particularly in disadvantaged environment, it could not be taken for granted that residents would negotiate confidently with professionals and authorities or feel comfortable with processes such as examining budgets or running an agenda. Though Project Renewal provided training for them to do so, in most cases their involvement was limited, partially because of superficial lip service for participation by the government (Lazin, 1996). In many cases, local governments actually blocked and prevented the participation of its residents through direct or indirect actions. On the one hand, the government aimed at decentralizing its service and policy planning process, but on the other hand it often acted as a double agent and revoked citizens' decisions which did not align with its goals. Nevertheless, the Project introduced new levels of democracy and resident participation in government-related decision making, which have made an impact on communal life in Israel ever since (Weinstein, 2008).

#### A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The control of the central government over municipalities' ruling was challenged during Project Renewal, and in general, by the worldwide social changes that marked the



1970s, including a greater tendency toward political decentralization, receptivity to participatory values, and greater involvement of local planning (Alterman & Hill, 1988; King et al, 1987). Lazin (1994) claims that Project Renewal was instrumental in reshaping the relationship between the national government and the municipalities by allowing mayors for the first time to exercise significant power in planning and directing public policy in their cities. The collaboration between residents, government officials, JAFI, and the municipality aimed at diminishing the extreme power held by bureaucrats. Yet it also revealed confrontations and demands for power by residents. In some cases, philanthropists from the adopting overseas community were important players in buffering opposition to citizen participation, modeling American democratic norms and acting as "watchdogs" who protected residents' autonomy when clashed with officials (Alterman & Hill, 1988). Overseas partners struggled in that power-driven climate. One of the interviewees who represented donors during Project Renewal said, "Whoever banged the loudest on the table made the call", and in most cases, the authority banged the loudest.

As chairpersons of the local steering committees, mayors had control over the project's budget and influential relationships with stakeholders, locally and nationally. Leaving the power to establish local leadership for the project in the hands of the mayors turned the structuring of the steering committees into a political experience in itself. Though the central government guideline stipulated that residents would comprise 50% of the representation, the mayors often nominated individuals who were close to them. They also used other manipulations such as not inviting "troublemakers" to critical meetings; lobbying intensively prior to meetings in order to promote their desired outcomes; and/or making promises they have no intention to keep (Alterman & Churchman, 1991; Weinstein, 2008). In their research, Alterman & Hill (1988) found that in all neighborhoods which were examined, the steering committee had no real impact on decision making, but rather acted as a "rubber stamp" of predetermined decisions made by the authorities. Though central government officials were members of the local steering committee, they rarely attended meetings or communicated with its members.

Their attitude was often presumptuous, assuming they knew what was best for the residents, especially for the poor. Together with the mayors, the ministries controlled the steering committees and insisted that their own programs be funded, while expecting the neighborhoods to compromise on their plans (Lazin, 1996). Clearly, creating local leadership was insufficient when it was done without reforming the way authorities operated; that is, changing institutional rigidity, control, patronizing demeanor, and bureaucracy.

According to Weinstein (2008), in many cases mayors eventually adapted to the new norms and expectations, as they wanted to peacefully enjoy the budgetary benefit the Project brought their way. Others claimed to represent the voice of their residents by virtue of being democratically elected by them. Therefore, they felt comfortable with their dominance, despite the cost of compromised citizen participation. Evidently, mayors played a critical role in shaping the spirit of the local project and affecting relationships with all stakeholders involved.

Despite the shortcomings and challenges of this government-based partnership program, it is important to recognize the revolution achieved. Project Renewal was launched as an ambitious national program aimed at reducing societal gaps in Israel through urban restoration and social rehabilitation of 160 identified neighborhoods in distress. The program was planned to be completed within five years, costing the nation 1.2 billion dollars. Today, 44 years later, Project Renewal continues in different capacities. A government status report from 2009 indicates that intervention has taken place in over 200 neighborhoods, involving approximately one million residents (16% of the country's population at that time), with a price tag of close to three billion dollars.

The literature and the vast research conducted around Project Renewal do not indicate an absolute conclusion as to the Project's success, which is conceived to be partial, and certainly not unified across all neighborhoods (Alterman & Churchman, 1991; Biton, 2009). Social mobility of residents and the socioeconomic status of the rehabilitated

neighborhoods have only partially improved. However, the Project can be recognized for pioneering citizen participation and innovative methods of community development, despite limitations in implementation. It also cultivated a new era of relationships between the central and the local governments. Lastly, it in part transformed the way in which world Jewish philanthropy engaged with Israel. It is that shift that led to the inception of a new partnership paradigm, this time not basing it on the leadership and operation of the central government.

#### DEVELOPING A PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PARTNERSHIP PARADIGM

In Project Renewal, the government originally partnered with JAFI in order to raise funds from world Jewry. Gradually, JAFI transcended its donor-relations role, becoming an instrumental partner for executing Project Renewal not only on a national level but also locally (Alterman & Hill, 1988), working closely with residents, municipalities, communal professionals, and obviously with donors. Therefore, when JAFI decided to establish its own national program in collaboration with global Jewish communities, it was experienced enough to build and lead it, while exercising lessons learned through the original model. JAFI began to gradually phase out of Project Renewal in 1985 (Report to the BOG of JAFI, 1993), and in 1994 it launched the next iteration of the program, called Partnership2000 (P2K), later known as Partnership2Gether (P2G).

Similar to Project Renewal, P2G formed a global network of twinned city partnerships by connecting Jewish communities abroad with communities in Israel, each governed by a joint steering committee. In contrast to the limitations of the local steering committee in Project Renewal, P2G's joint committee was sovereign to develop their annual work plan and budget, as well as to approve them in a democratic manner. The autonomous structure of P2G was supported by policies and procedures that were leaner and less bureaucratic, and were positively impacted by overseas best practices.

While developed separately and outside of the central government, during the first decade of its operation, P2G continued to maintain an official relationship with the municipalities by having the mayors continue to fulfil the role of chairman of the steering committees. This time, however, the mayors' power was constrained by binding them with a co-chair from the partnering community abroad. Together, the two co-chairs led a joint steering committee together with volunteer members from both sides of the ocean.

Despite the addition of a co-chair from overseas communities, in many cases the dominance and forceful control of the mayors continued to be a challenge. As such, in 2003, in an effort to abolish political influence on the partnership, JAFI adopted an official policy stating that mayors would be replaced by volunteer civic chairmanship. The transfer of power from mayors' domination over steering committees to a collaborative lay leadership can be viewed through the lens of the Partnership/Domination Continuum as presented by Eisler (2014, 2016). According to this model, a partnership configuration is characterized by relationships that are democratic, egalitarian, and mutual. It recognizes that in a true partnership, care and empathy are reciprocal, unlike the reality in Project Renewal, where only one side cared for the other.

P2G was notably different from Project Renewal in that it did not focus primarily on distressed neighborhoods in urban areas. Rather it divided the country into regions, many of which included both urban and rural communities and included multiple municipalities. Each region as a whole was matched with a partnering community overseas. Hence, the new model not only created a partnership between local and overseas communities, it also forced neighboring Israeli communities to communicate with each other and collaborate. This integrative approach served to enhance local social cohesion and connectivity, bridging major socioeconomic and cultural differences. By widening the scope beyond the borders of a distressed neighborhoods, this new model promoted greater diversity as well as the inclusion of strong populations

alongside those with greater socio-economic needs. Participants and mayors reported that thanks to P2G, friendships and collaborations were forged among residents who until then were neighbored geographically but estranged socially. Similarly, socioeconomic gaps were profound in Project Renewal between donors and residents of the neighborhoods; however the diversity and blend of locals enabled by P2G's regional strategy broke down the silos between the two, while creating opportunities for a more mutual dialogue.

P2G continued the mission of advancing communities in Israel as originated in Project Renewal, particularly during the first decade, when mayors still co-chaired the committees. But in addition to regional development, the program also included the stated goal of fostering relationships between residents on both sides of the ocean, forming an international connection referred to as "a living bridge" or "people to people" connections and programs. Projects such as school twinning, young leadership delegations, professional exchanges, and joint seminars were all means to build relationships. Even community development initiatives akin to Project Renewal (e.g., economic growth, welfare, education, etc.) often served as a means for collaboration and relationship building.

The most exceptional attributes of this new partnership model as demonstrated in this qualitative research were the mutuality and emotional connection between partners. These were the two most frequently reported factors by interviewees that uniquely characterized P2G. In the eyes of the research participants, connections were associated with "family ties", "brotherhood", and "friendship", and the region in Israel resembled "a home away from home" for the overseas partners. In addition, the close contact with western, liberal, often affluent societies, and the ongoing exposure to professional standards of conducting business abroad, have deeply impacted the Israeli local population. It was "an eye-opening experience" for some research participants and "a two-way street" for others.

Eisler (2014, 2016) describes a cultural transformation that emanates from the shift from dominance to partnership. This was also demonstrated by a change in terminology. P2G no longer referred to overseas partners as the strong "donor" who contributed to the weak "beneficiary", but rather considered them as equal partners. The cultural transformation attained by moving from Project Renewal to P2G gave birth to a caring terminology, which focused on the reciprocal relationship between the partners: "people to people", "a joint steering committee", "co-chairs", and "equal partners". *Power over* residents in Project Renewal shifted to giving *power to* residents in P2G, and utilizing *power with* others to accomplish things together (Mercanti, 2014). P2G created a narrative of togetherness and mutual care. As indicated by Reim Natale (2015), changes in language are an important step toward the creation of partnership societies. While the evolution of cultural paradigms is heavily influenced by the stories we are told, a partnership paradigm is constructed by the principle of linking rather than ranking (Eisler, 1987).

Direct relationships between beneficiaries in Israel and donors abroad were hardly in existence prior to Project Renewal, despite the fact that Jewish philanthropy was central to the country's birth and development. As donors become closer to their investments and their beneficiaries, a shift occurred in the relationship, which was recognized by Gottlieb & Schreter (1988) as a "personalization" process (p. 387). The transition in Jewish philanthropy is not unique. It is a reflection of universal trends in which donors seek direct involvement and transparent transactions (Coston, 1998; Sasson, 2013; Shaul Bar Nisim, 2019). While the community twinning platform in Project Renewal introduced donors to new opportunities for partnership and relationship building, it also revealed challenges and frustrations that could only be experienced by having direct involvement. For example, politicians' control over decision making, the lack of transparency in actualizing donations, and the paucity of maintaining professional standards in program implementation were all concerns that surfaced during Project Renewal. P2G addressed these issues, further improving the partnership model. New practices refined the connection between the partners, enhancing

accountability and transparency on the part of the beneficiaries, all while increasing donors' involvement. The direct and ongoing dialogue between them enabled an honest exploration of each sides' needs and aspirations, resulting in a wide range of programming and knowledge exchange. It has also impacted communal roles, volunteerism, and activism.

The main factor that hindered equality between the partners was the fact that only one side funded the partnership, creating an inherently asymmetric relationship. Nonetheless, many funders reported that in return for their monetary investment, they have gained important benefits and thus do see the partnership as mutual. For example, as a result of their collaboration on a programmatic level, frequent visits to Israel highlighted warm home hospitality and social opportunities, which strengthened their Jewish identity and connectivity to Israel as a homeland. Donors endorsed resident participation in decision making about funds invested by them more than government politicians. However, the uneven power between the parties was occasionally evident at times of major discrepancies, when, as reported by one of the Israeli research participants, "there was an unspoken understanding that the overseas committee will have the final verdict". In more recent years, calls for Israelis to have 'skin in the game' have also been voiced by donors and locals alike, though in reality very few partnerships have raised local funding. Each partnership is still dependent on the financial commitment of a Jewish community abroad.

Nearly three decades after its development from a government-based program, P2G is a distinct people-to-people partnership platform that has little to no resemblance to its original model. As one of the American executives stated, "Project Renewal was about the projects, and P2G was about the people." Though in the first phase of its evolution, P2G still gave the mayors the power to lead, a decade later citizens assumed responsibility by leading the partnerships together with their overseas counterparts. This global network of partnerships, with their anchors in local Jewish communities

worldwide, has shifted communal development from being a goal to serving the purpose of building people-to-people connections.

## CONCLUSION

This article examines the case of a global philanthropic partnership exemplified through the relationship between Israel and diaspora Jewry. As a historic partnership, diaspora Jewry's support and involvement were critical to the establishment of the State of Israel and were vital for the accomplishment of countless national missions. However, this relationship has changed, as this article demonstrates, in the development of two major national programs, beginning with the government-based Project Renewal and continuing with its evolution into P2G, a civic-governed model. The shifts in the programs' governance, donor engagement, and agenda reflect the transition in Jewish philanthropy and its relations with Israel, as examined over a period of four decades. A qualitative research using interviews and document analysis was accompanied by a literature review to produce the narrative presented in this article.

Diaspora philanthropy is a global phenomenon experienced by many nations, commonly involving motivations that are beyond altruism (e.g., personal attachment to a homeland, nationalism, and religious ties). Though its conceptualization is relatively straightforward, its operationalization is more challenging (Koff, 2017). The case of Jewish diaspora philanthropy can serve as a model for communal organization and international operation both in the realms of fundraising and fund disbursement. Specifically, the communal twinning strategy outlined in this article can enhance connectivity and partnership between diasporas and their homelands based on mutual purpose and shared interests. As gaps between locals and diaspora may surface around investment priorities and perception of needs (Dusenbery & Tatla, 2012), a partnership structure can enhance dialogue that bridges differences and promotes greater mutuality.



The case study presented in this article elucidates some of the dynamics that affected the philanthropic partnership between the State of Israel and diaspora Jews, namely the growingly interest in direct and designated giving, rather than transferring funds through a general allocation. In addition, as could be seen in Project Renewal, the government was not equipped to provide a satisfactory donor-oriented operation, which required leaner and less bureaucratic management, business standards, and egalitarian values that appreciate beneficiaries as partners. By increasing their own involvement in philanthropic endeavors, donors were able to steer funding based on unmediated relationships, which enhanced authentic understanding of needs and greater capacity to effect change. Their partners were no longer brokers, institutions, municipalities, or the government, but the people themselves. For the first time, personalized relationships between beneficiaries and donors enabled mutuality and reciprocity, in which donors were able to gain from their own giving. The change in investment priorities is also a reflection of that shift: While regional development in Israel mainly served the Israeli partners, investment in exchange of knowledge, development of human capital, and forging and nurturing connections benefited all partners. Building the country was less needed as Israel developed, today being recognized for its economic and technological achievements. From being a "start-up" of the Jewish people, Israel became known for being a "start-up nation", necessitating less of that historic support.

This article discusses only some of the factors affecting the partnership between Israel and diaspora Jews. Yet, the literature and the subject research disclose other interacting trends, such as the impact of Israeli politics on philanthropy; contemporary changes in Jewish identity; growing needs in Jewish communities, some of which struggle to survive; and more. Philanthropic shifts from collective giving to designated and direct investments align with the shift from concerns with Israel to concerns with relationships between Jews as a people. Clearly, collectivity is a core value that has bound Jews together and preserved their world-wide communal and philanthropic system. Will the trends drawn in this article be indicators of its decline?

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Iris Posklinsky is a PhD candidate at the University of Haifa, Israel, and a Master of Social Work graduate from the University of British Columbia, Canada. Her research interests are community development and partnership, two fields reflecting her longstanding professional experience.

Iris taught academic courses in advanced methods of communal practice, social work ethics and values, and poverty. She served as a communal planner and developer in various local and global environments, and is still practicing partnership management and training.

Correspondence about this article should be addressed to Iris Posklinsky at [iris.posklinsky@gmail.com](mailto:iris.posklinsky@gmail.com)