

Executive Summary

The purpose of the research is to describe the profile of graduates of the Edmond de Rothschild Partnerships Programs as socially committed leaders, striving to reduce social and economic disparities in Israeli society. The research sample consisted of 17 distinguished graduates (out of 1471 Rothschild program graduates) selected based on parameters such as gender, place of residence, program attended, and sector of employment. Additionally, 11 peers, colleagues, and managers of four of the 17 graduates were interviewed using "360-degree" interview method. A thematic analysis of semi-structured in-depth interviews was conducted within the research framework.

The sample included 12 women and 5 men, with 14 of them belonging to Jewish communities, two from Arab communities, and one from a Druze community. Most graduates grew up in geographical or social peripheries. Following graduation, eight of them integrated into the civil-service sector, five into the business sector, and 4 chose the non-governmental, social sector.

The research findings reveal that these program graduates have achieved significant advancements in reducing societal gaps, diversity, inclusion, social leadership, community development, infrastructure improvement, and leadership development. Overall, they demonstrated the ability to create meaningful impact and positive change in the communities and organizations they integrated into. The research also found that graduates incorporated their social values into their work roles.

In analyzing the behavior of the graduates, a prominent inclination towards initiative - rather than waiting for things to happen - was evident. The graduates generate ideas and initiatives, establish connections with peers and stakeholders, set personal examples, and seek to inspire others for social goals. This is often facilitated by strong interpersonal skills and trust-building. The research highlights that the outstanding graduates' values often align with their workplace organization's values, allowing them to succeed as social leaders. This finding is supported by both managers peers of the graduates within the organization. Consequently, placing graduates in organizations which are aligned with their personal values is of significant importance, and it's advised to ensure support for such placements. The graduates' involvement extends beyond workplace social activities to a broader community level, where some actively participate in social endeavors in their original communities. The research's insights were reinforced through interviews with various stakeholders, emphasizing the host organization's role in enabling graduates to work on their chosen social issues.

Recommendations for action include placing more emphasis on the identified traits during program selection, prioritizing the development of relevant skills, and strengthening participants' connection to communities to encourage community resilience in the face of evolving realities.