



The Kibbutz Movement



Planting hope for future generations

The kibbutz is an original Israeli creation – a multi-generational, rural settlement, characterized by its collective, community lifestyle, democratic management, responsibility for the welfare of each adult member and child, and shared ownership of its means of production and consumption.

A Bit of History

The first kibbutz, Degania, was founded by a group of a dozen, young pioneers in 1910, along the banks of the Sea of Galilee. Since then, 273 kibbutzim have spread across the face of the country and, to a certain extent, have defined its borders.

From the beginning, kibbutzim viewed themselves as endowed with a sense of duty, serving as a pillar of strength for Zionism. The members lived under extreme conditions, while tilling the soil, drying the swamplands, and building a settlement.

Kibbutzim and the Establishment of the State of Israel

Kibbutzim have served as leaders in national undertakings, including areas such as: youth instruction and guidance, assisting in the absorption of new immigrants, and most notable, service in the different branches of the armed forces – with a high percentage volunteering to serve in prestigious units. Kibbutzim have also excelled in creative, cultural innovation, combining Jewish tradition with a new, original perspective enhanced by the unique traits and “aroma” of the Land of Israel.



From Crisis to Renewed Growth



During the economic crisis that hampered the Israeli economy during the 1980's, many kibbutzim were deeply affected. Kibbutzim also faced a demographic crisis, as many members left the community.

New winds began to blow within the kibbutz courtyard. Many kibbutzim began to privatize consumer items and services, and adopted a graded salary scale according to the position and the type of employment.



Kibbutz – Take Your Choice

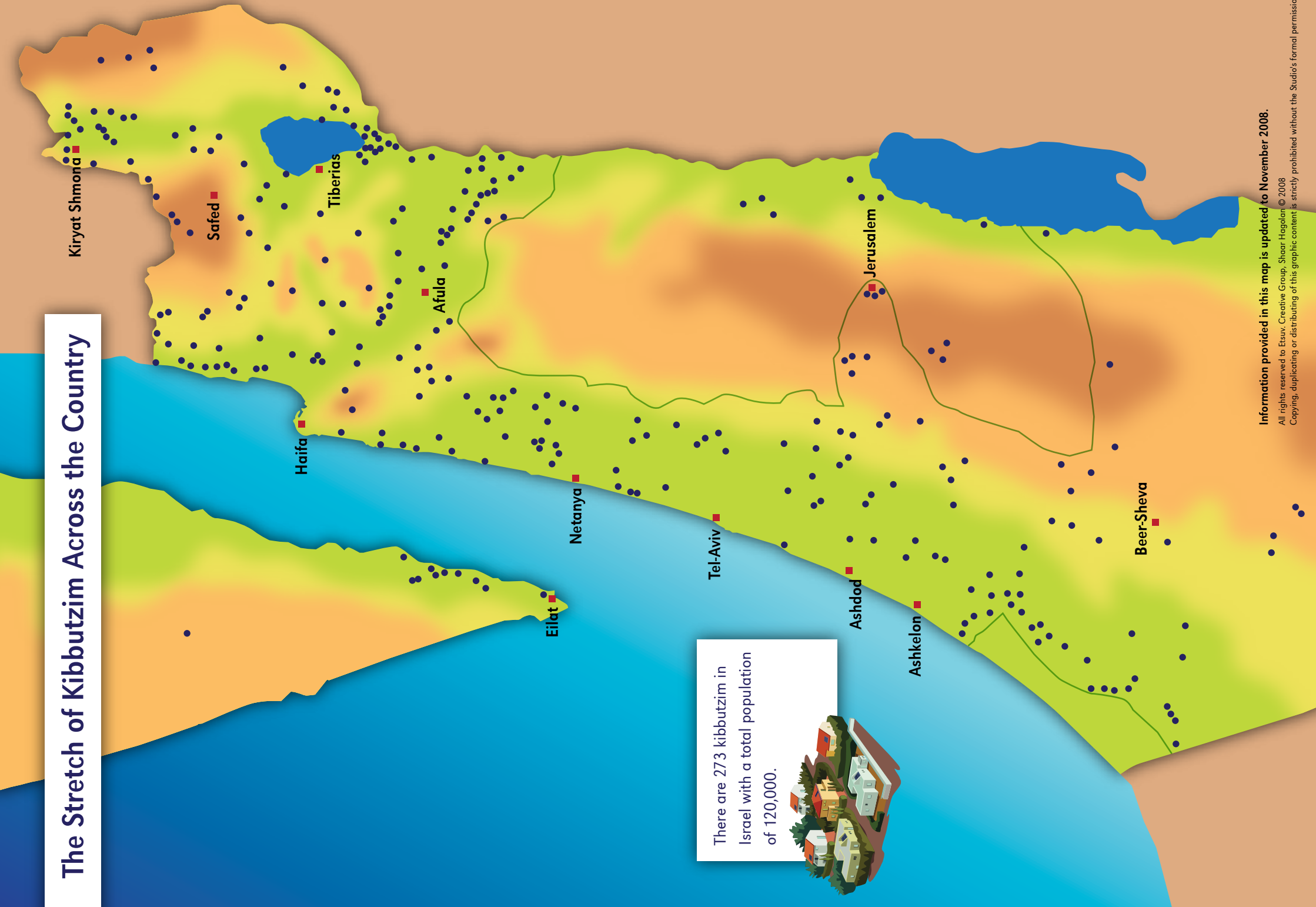
Today there are two primary types of kibbutzim – cooperative and “renewed” – and they have redefined levels of collectivity and equality to meet their desires. Another form of kibbutz life is exemplified by four “Urban Kibbutzim”, based on collectivity and thriving in deprived and underprivileged city neighborhoods. These cooperative communities focus primarily on social and educational activities. Education also serves as the main source of income for approximately ten “Educational Kibbutzim”, urban and rural, that were founded by members of the Pioneering Youth Movements.



The Kids are Comin’ Home

A significant trend has developed in recent years, in response to the demographic crisis that afflicted many kibbutzim during the past two decades. Many kibbutzim have begun to benefit from economic and demographic growth, as young people, who left the kibbutz in the past because they found it difficult to find their place within the kibbutz society, are now returning and requesting to build their homes and raise their children on kibbutz. The longing for a collective-community quality of life, a rural environment, a praiseworthy educational system and the ability to work and make a living according to one’s own talents and interests, have transformed the kibbutz into an attractive lifestyle, more than ever before.

The Stretch of Kibbutzim Across the Country



There are 273 kibbutzim in Israel with a total population of 120,000.



Information provided in this map is updated to November 2008.

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A Community Committed to all of its Members

The mutual guarantee of wellbeing always was, and continues to be the DNA of kibbutz life. Both the collective kibbutzim and the “renewed” kibbutzim, that have chosen to limit the levels of collectivity, view themselves as being committed to the principles of the mutual guarantee of wellbeing among all members. These principles were intended to protect and ensure the welfare of the weaker members of the kibbutz, as well as to guarantee the strength of the community as a whole. Among other areas, it is applied to education, health, concern for those with special needs, nursing care and social security. The funding for these needs comes from a monthly tax paid by each kibbutz member from his budget (or from his salary).

In the midst of the global economic crisis, with the decline in commercial activities and the reduction in industrial revenues, the economic strength of the kibbutz is being put to the test.



But, no less significant are the trials of community strength and the challenges of preserving the mutual guarantee of wellbeing for all members.

To the delight of many in Israel, the kibbutz is once again considered an attractive lifestyle, offering a qualitative alternative to other lifestyles and places of residence in the country.

The Kibbutz in Numbers

How many are there? There are 273 kibbutzim in Israel: 257 secular and 16 religious. 75% of the kibbutzim are located in the outlying areas of the country.

Population: 120,000 people; approximately 1.6% of Israel's population. In 2007, a positive "immigration" to kibbutz was registered for the first time in twenty years. More families and young people became members of kibbutz than the number of those who left kibbutzim. In 2008, Kibbutz revenues exceeded 32 billion NIS, with a 70% majority stemming from the yields of 350 production plants and industrial corporations. The volume of exports surpassed 12 billion NIS.

Agriculture: With close to half a million acres of crops (2.2 million dunams), the agricultural kibbutzim supply 33% of Israel's agricultural production and provide 15% of overall kibbutz earnings. Other sources of kibbutz income include tourism, individual initiatives and the earnings of those members who work off the kibbutz. The agricultural kibbutzim supply 33% of Israel's agricultural production and provide 15% of overall kibbutz earnings. Other sources of kibbutz income include tourism and the earnings of those members who work off the kibbutz.



33%



120,000



350



32,000,000,000



The future is here. The Kibbutz Movement

The Kibbutz Movement

"The Movement" is a central, administrative body that represents the kibbutzim in dealing with government authorities, aimed towards strengthening the kibbutzim economically, socially, demographically and ethically.

The Kibbutz Movement supplies services to the kibbutzim and kibbutz members by means of its economic department, its social and national task coordinators who accompany kibbutzim, and its various units, including the cooperative unit, demographic growth, health and welfare, security, education, human resources, legal services, the unit for the promotion of women, culture and volunteers from abroad.

In addition, the Movement deals with the absorption of new immigrants on kibbutzim including Ethiopian immigrants, conducts cultural and educational activities for Youth Movements in Israel and abroad, runs a publishing house, maintains archives and research institutes, sponsors the Seminar for Teacher and Educator Training, a theater group, a dance company and a chamber orchestra.

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