KEREN קרן
HAYESOD היסוד
For the People of Israel

TOGETHER WITH ISRAEL

6 Month Update on Keren Hayesod's Impact During The Swords of Iron War



MAY 2024

PROVIDING A LIFELINE AND DEVELOPING RESILIENCE

Early on the morning of October 7th, 2023, Hamas and other terror organizations in Gaza launched the most devastating terrorist attack in the history of Israel and the Jewish people. As terrorists attacked on multiple fronts and thousands of rockets were fired into civilian areas, 3,000 terrorists infiltrated towns in southern Israel, killing and injuring thousands of people as well as kidnapping soldiers and civilians into Gaza. In response to the attack, Israel launched the Swords of Iron War in order to defend and protect Israel's citizens, restore Israel's security and bring all of the hostages home.

The magnitude of the October 7th attack and aftermath was unprecedented:

1,200
Israelis were confirmed dead, more than 10,000 injured

11,000
rockets fell in Israel, launched by Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

244
people were kidnapped and taken to Gaza; over 130 of whom remain in captivity to date.

Over
200,000
Israelis were internally displaced because their homes were destroyed or in the line of fire, including 120,000 who have yet to return home.

360,000
reservists left their families and jobs and families to serve in the IDF.

Keren Hayesod and the Jewish Agency, in our joint role as representatives of world Jewry, responded immediately to the crisis. Our emergency management teams—always in a state of readiness thanks to the undesignated Core support we receive from our philanthropic partners jumped into action.

Thanks to the support of our partners and our strong relationships with the Israeli government, local municipalities, the IDF, and numerous community organizations in Israel, The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod had the infrastructure and the agility to meet urgent needs while working toward long-term recovery and resilience. The enclosed report highlights our mutual efforts to address the most pressing war-related needs over the past six months. All data is updated as of April 7, 2024.

DIRECT RELIEF

The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod rapidly mobilized emergency response protocols after the October 7th attacks, offering immediate assistance to families of victims, survivors, and affected businesses.

SUPPORTING THE VICTIMS OF TERROR

The Jewish Agency's **Fund for Victims of Terror (FVOT)** is the first responder in the recovery process of families and individuals who have been impacted by acts of terror and violence. The Fund delivers emergency financial grants within 48 hours of an attack— long before government aid has arrived— followed by long-term assistance that aids victims in rebuilding their lives, coping with trauma, and accessing government support.

Individuals eligible for grants following the October 7th attacks and outbreak of war include victims who were been injured in a terror attack, hostages who returned, individuals with a family member who was killed or taken hostage, and people whose homes were severely damaged or destroyed. The FVOT works closely with municipalities, local authorities and organizers of the Nova Music Festival to identify eligible victims, reach out to displaced families, and publicize its services on a variety of social media channels to reach as many victims as possible.

The scale of the October 7th terror attacks and the emerging needs are unprecedented. In the entire 20-year history of the Fund, until the outbreak of the Swords of Iron War, it served around 9,000 beneficiaries. Since October 7th, the FVOT has provided immediate grants to nearly 8,000 people who are now eligible for support.

IN JUST THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF THE WAR, THERE WERE TEN TIMES THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY TERROR ATTACKS THAN TYPICALLY SERVED IN ONE YEAR.



In response, the FVOT hired additional staff— growing from just three employees to 17— and created a hotline to meet the demand. Due to the extraordinary scope and cruelty of these attacks, the FVOT also established a special fund for Israelis with the greatest needs, including orphans, the families of hostages, welfare recipients, and those who lost their homes.

In addition, The Jewish Agency provided emergency aid to border communities in southern and northern Israel. The funds were promptly transferred to eight regional councils in the south and 15 regional councils in the north (each of which represents many towns, villages, and kibbutzim), enabling the communities to take care of their residents immediately during this traumatic time. They have used the funds to meet urgent emergency and safety needs. **To date, 20 million ILS has been distributed to 23 regional councils in southern and northern Israel.**

In addition to emergency grants, the FVOT offers respite camps during school vacations for children who are victims of terror, which help children process trauma and build resilience while enjoying games, activities, and excursions. For example, over Hanukkah break 2023, the FVOT served about 80 young victims of the October 7th and previous terror attacks. The FVOT also offers long-term interventions for traumatized teens who are preparing to join the IDF, recognizing the significant challenges they face as they prepare to defend their country after experiencing horror and upheaval.

8,555

grants were distributed by the FVOT to 8,243 households

6,468

phone calls handled by the FVOT hotline between October 2023 and February 2024.

Emergency Aid

was distributed to 8 southern and 15 northern municipalities and regional councils.



ELAD KEDAR'S STORY

Elad was born and raised on Kibbutz Be'eri, as was his mother. On the weekend of October 7th, Elad's two older children were staying at the home of relatives on Kibbutz Netiv Ha'Asara. Elad, his wife, and two younger children were woken by explosions and sirens. The ran into the safe room and he told his children very bluntly, "There are terrorists on the kibbutz. They want to kill us. We have to stay quiet." Meanwhile, Elad called his mother, who was out taking a walk. She screamed "they are shooting at me! Stop! Stop!"

Seconds later, the call disconnected and she didn't answer anymore. Elad called his father's caregiver, Joey, who said his father refused to go into the safe room. Elad instructed Joey to go in by himself. A little while later Joey messaged that there are terrorists in the house. Elad's sister Yael, who lived with his mother, has special needs. She told Elad the house was on fire, and she couldn't breathe from the smoke. Elad's older children started messaging him at 10:00 am that there were terrorists in Netiv Ha'Asara as well, that other kids had already been killed, and there were homes on fire. They messaged "we love you, please don't die." The entire family believed they were going to be killed any minute.

Miraculously, Elad, his wife and children survived. Tragically, Elad's parents and many of their friends are dead. The terrorists took his mother's body into Gaza. Yael sustained minor injuries from smoke inhalation, and now lives in sheltered housing. Joey was very seriously injured and spent more than two months in medical facilities.



THE KEDAR FAMILY LEFT THEIR KIBBUTZ WITH NOTHING. THE FUND FOR THE VICTIMS OF TERROR IS HELPING THE FAMILY WITH EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO GET BACK ON THEIR FEET AND OVERCOME THEIR TRAUMA.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Thousands of Israeli small businesses had to close permanently or temporarily after the October 7th attacks. Some have had all of their employees called up for reserve duty in the IDF, others had to evacuate their production facilities, and still others were destroyed entirely. Moreover, the owners of many of these businesses experienced the tragic events of October 7th firsthand. They have seen friends and relatives murdered, killed, and kidnapped, and they and their families were displaced, without the means of supporting themselves. The Jewish Agency immediately took emergency measures to assist these small businesses and reinforce Israel's economy.

Grants

The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod worked quickly to provide immediate support to business owners who had been evacuated or called up to the reserves. In partnership with Shva, Klirmark Capital, and Israel Venture Network, we launched **Support Business IL**, an initiative to provide immediate grants to small businesses in affected communities. In addition, in February 2024, we launched **Business IL Miluim** to provide grants to IDF reservists whose small businesses have suffered due to their absence while they are on the front lines.

Loans

The Jewish Agency's **SparkIL** program is distributing loans and support to small businesses throughout Israel that have been affected by the war. In cooperation with Ogen, SparkIL offers up to 100,000 ILS in interest-free loans to applicable businesses to help them weather this crisis. An additional loan fund provides low-interest loans of up to 150,000 ILS to businesses in southern Israel. In March 2024, together with philanthropic partners, a 20 million ILS loan fund was established to serve the city of Ashkelon, which has already started to receive applications.

Emergency grants given to 1,781 small businesses and 205 reservists.

Interest-free and low-interest loans approved for 195 small businesses.

"ALL THREE OF US OWNERS AND MOST OF OUR EMPLOYEES WERE CALLED FOR RESERVE DUTY, SO THERE WAS NO ONE TO OPEN THE PLACE. THE LOAN FROM SPARKIL HELPED US KEEP OUR HEADS ABOVE WATER."

- Tal Malihi, Co Owner of Jacob Cafe and Wine Bar

COMMUNITY REBUILDING

Israeli communities in the western Negev face a painful reality and a long road to recovery. The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod are with them every step of the way, bringing together Jewish communities from around the world to facilitate and support their rehabilitation.

COMMUNITIES2GETHER

The Jewish Agency for Israel, together with local municipalities, the ravaged communities, and the government's Tekuma Authority (The Government arm for the rehabilitation of the south), has launched a long-term rehabilitation project called Communities2Gether, aimed at restoring personal and communal resilience in 10 communities in the Gaza Envelope. Eight communities in particular suffered dramatic damage: 1,900 buildings were damaged including 200 which were totally destroyed - making it necessary to evacuate the residents to temporary facilities for at least a year until these communities are rehabilitated.

Communities2Gether pairs each impacted Israeli community with a Jewish community abroad that is committed to offering sustained support for three to five years to rebuild infrastructure, mend social bonds, foster lasting connections. Jewish communities and federations around the world have so far formed 25 new multiyear partnerships with specific Israeli kibbutzim and communities in the western Negev. This is in addition to **6 pre-existing partnerships** in the region.

RenewSouth: Fund to Rehabilitate Communities in the South - Together

Keren Hayesod also established the Fund to Rehabilitate Communities in the South to help rebuild and rehabilitate the following 10 communities that were decimated in the October 7th massacre: Kfar Aza, Yated, Magen, Yesha, Mivtachim, Shlomit, Ein Habesor, Nir Am, Be'eri, and Or Ha'ner.



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The Fund will connect Jewish communities in the diaspora with these 10 communities in the Western Negev region in order to address their needs during the rehabilitation and reconstruction period. Support will be disbursed to individual communities, according to specific needs, and adapted to the particular circumstances of each community. Given the uncertainty and fluidity of the current situation, all decisions will be based on an ongoing dialogue and discussion with the community with changes and adaptations made as needed. The budget is also subject to change as new needs emerge.

Aside from the efforts to rebuild the region from a physical standpoint, efforts will focus on four key areas:

- Revitalizing, Rehabilitating and Building Resilience
- Revitalizing, Rehabilitating and Building Resilience
- Psychological Rehabilitation
- Solidarity Missions and Partnership

CAMPERS2GETHER

Since October 7th, Israeli teens have experienced overwhelming levels of anxiety and trauma. Compounding the stress of being unable to return home for weeks or even months, many have family members or friends who were killed, injured, or kidnapped. At the same time, Jewish teens around the world face unprecedented levels of antisemitism in their daily lives and encounter hateful misinformation about Israel spread on social media and among their peers. In 2024, Campers2Gether—an initiative of The Jewish Agency for Israel and Mosaic United, together with our partners at the Foundation for Jewish Camp—will bring up to 900 Israeli teens ages 14 to 16 from the western Negev and northern Israel to Jewish overnight camps in Canada, Europe, and South America. Israeli teens will travel to camp in cohorts of up to 20 for two weeks of respite and cultural exchange, building supportive bonds with their peers from around the world.

VOLUNTEERISM

The Jewish Agency has mobilized a passionate force of volunteers from within Israel and beyond. A new initiative, Masa Volunteers, gives Jewish teens and adults ages 16 to 50 a pathway to contribute to Israel's recovery through a six-week volunteer opportunity. Parternership2Gether has developed service programs for adults aged 50+ as well as solidarity missions that bring dedicated individuals to Israel. Within Israel, our pre-army academy participants, university students lending a hand to senior citizens at our Amigour facilities through Choosing Tomorrow, and Shinshinim (year of service) volunteers, provide vital support.

33,776
volunteers mobilized so far.



SUPPORTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Immediately after the October 7th attacks, The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod stepped in to support to Israel's most vulnerable residents: youth at-risk, lone soldiers, new immigrants and senior citizens.

YOUTH AT RISK

The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod supported **Youth Futures** Program pairs Mentors with some of Israel's most vulnerable children, providing them with community-based interventions to help them and their families overcome challenges and thrive. The impact on Youth Futures families, who struggled with resilience even before the war, has been devastating. Many families know someone who was murdered, injured, or kidnapped during the October 7th attacks and/or a soldier who has been killed during the Swords of Iron War. Some were displaced from their homes. Moreover, schools were closed during the first weeks of the war, widening academic gaps that we had just begun to close after the pandemic. Some parents were called up to the reserves, as were the spouses of many of our Mentors. As the war has contracted the Israeli economy, families' financial challenges have worsened. Many parents lost their jobs as businesses closed or were forced to stay home to care for children during remote learning.

In the first days of the war, Youth Futures developed a comprehensive emergency approach, including weekly in-depth assessments for each program participant and their family members, to identify and address urgent needs. The program also distributed emergency grants to families in need, connected beneficiaries to therapeutic services, and established afterschool learning centers to lessen academic gaps.

14,000 direct beneficiaries (children and parents) served nationwide.	**700+** financial grants to families in need.	**280** children, families and staff members connected to therapeutic services.	**15** new learning centers to provide academic inter vention.



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LONE SOLDIERS

Currently, an estimated 3,600 immigrants are serving in the IDF as lone soldiers. These lone IDF soldiers are brave young men and women from around the world who moved to Israel without their fami-lies to serve in the IDF and protect the Jewish State. **The Wings Program** provides lone immigrant soldiers with a continuum of services from the time they first arrive in Israel until five years (or more) after their release from the IDF.

The war has intensified lone soldiers' challenges and put many of them in direct physical danger. Wings is assisting with urgent needs including food, financial grants, social services, help with bureaucracy, and emotional support. The Wings team is also providing counseling over Zoom and WhatsApp to soldiers on the front lines.

Among the soldiers who have been killed was a lone immigrant soldier from France whose family decided to sit shiva in Israel; Wings provided them with a full-time French-speaking social worker to stay with them and help with anything they needed. Our team has also stayed by the side of soldiers who have been injured, during and after their hospitalization, showing them they are never alone.



2,200
current, incoming and former lone soliders are part of the Wings network.

50
lone immigrant soliders have been injured, 14 have been killed in combat, and 2 are still being held hostage in Gaza.

980
soldiers received individual guidance.

RECENT IMMIGRANTS

The Jewish Agency operates more than 18 absorption centers throughout Israel that offer transitional housing and an array of supportive services to thousands of new immigrants each year, including 9,000 who have arrived since October 7th. After October 7th, immigrants were evacuated from absorption centers that were in the line of fire and housed in temporary residences including hotels, youth hostels, youth villages and the Jewish Agency's Nitzana Educational Eco-Village, which is located on the Israeli-Egyptian border, and its Kiryat Moriah campus in Jerusalem. In addition to offering housing and meals, additional efforts included heightened security measures, structured Hebrew classes, distributing tablets so children could participate in remote learning, and income assistance for those who lost work as a result of the war. Most were able to return to their absorption centers in late November, although residents from the Ibim Absorption Center, located in the western Negev, could not return until mid-March. Absorption center staff continue to support the new immigrants as they cope with varied levels of trauma.

2,500
olim evacuated from absorption centers.

139,462
hotel stays provided (cumulative).

418,386
hot meals provided (cumulative).

Grants to
1,385
new olim who lost their jobs when they relocated.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Nearly 7,000 Israeli senior citizens, including many Holocaust survivors, live in The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod's subsidized **Amigour** homes. After the October 7th attacks, Amigour swiftly inspected and equipped all bomb shelters with necessary supplies and essentials. The ongoing threat of missiles and sirens meant that residents could not venture out for groceries, prompting Amigour to distribute food baskets, particularly in high-risk areas like Ashkelon, Ashdod, Tel Aviv, and northern Israel. To ensure emotional well-being of its elderly residents, Amigour offered complimentary group and individual psychological treatment.

24,731
food baskets distributed.

5,700
hot meals provided.

SAFETY & SECURITY AROUND THE WORLD

Rates of antisemitic violence have been increasing dramatically worldwide for many years, but the October 7th attacks opened a floodgate of anti-Israel and antisemitic hatred that is spreading fear among Jewish communities all over the globe. Many Jews are afraid to openly identify as Jewish. They are taking down mezuzot, removing kippot, and tucking Star of David necklaces under t-shirts. Just entering a Jewish institution—a Hillel, synagogue, or a Jewish community center—comes with risks. In this environment, The Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod are committed to supporting the safety and security of Jews and Jewish communities around the world.

SHLICHIM

The Jewish Agency's highly trained Shlichim (Israeli emissaries) around the globe, including campus Israel Fellows, swung into action immediately following the events of October 7 to combat antisemitism and the delegitimization of Israel. Shlichim provide invaluable resources to their communities: Israel education, advocacy tools, and a personal, meaningful connection to Israel. In many of the areas they serve, they are the only available source of Israel education and connection. Because of their existing networks and extensive relationships, Shlichim were able to mobilize quickly to share personal stories as Israelis; speak publicly about what is happening in Israel and counter misinformation; initiate and take part in rallies, vigils and pro-Israel demonstrations; raise awareness for the hostages; take part in fundraising events; and much more.

75,075
educational activities organized by Shlichim for 908,386 participants.

92
Israel Fellows on college campuses supporting 13,600 students who are encountering antisemitism.

97
IDF soldiers trained to speak at overseas events this spring in commemoration of Israeli Indepen-dence Day.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

First established to help Jewish communities cope with the pandemic, and adapted to serve in any crisis, the Jewish Agency's JReady platform provides tools, connections, and other forms of resilience-building support to communities worldwide. Since October 7th, weekly webinars with community leaders have kept them updated on the situation in Israel and provided tools such as how to address collective trauma, how to advocate for Israel, how to use social media in the current online environment, best ways for community members to volunteer for Israel, and more. JReady also reaches out to community leaders daily to hear their challenges and connect them to each other and to experts on issues such as how to respond to bomb threats.



Since the attack, JReady has facilitated 10 webinars for some 500 community leaders from 40 countries across the globe. JReady has also coordinated resilience sessions for 30 delegations to Israel and provided in-depth seminars for young leaders and other key cohorts.JReady's Emergency and Disaster Management course, held in partnership with the Department of Emergency Management at Tel Aviv University, has just commenced its 10th cohort, welcoming 42 diverse community leaders from 14 European countries.

SECURITY GRANTS

Since its founding in 2012, The Jewish Agency's Security Fund for Jewish Communities has been helping Jewish communal life thrive in areas where Jewish gathering places are targets of violent attacks. We help Jewish institutions such as schools, synagogues, JCCs, and organizational offices install security improvements such as armored doors and windows, access control systems, window bars and CCTV systems. In some cases, we assist in hiring security guards. In total, in the past 12 years, we have allocated close to 90 million ILS ($25 million) to over 800 Jewish institutions in 70 countries.

Due to the current threats, The Jewish Agency is assisting Jewish communities worldwide, outside the United States, by providing urgent financial security grants. With the assistance of relevant security bodies, we have mapped those most in need of urgent aid, based on factors such as the potential danger in the city, whether the local government is friendly or hostile to Jews, the community's size, costs of security measures and services, etc. Grants range from $1,250 to $5,000; in many countries these are large sums. For example, in Ukraine and Russia the employment cost of a high-level security guard is around $1,000-$1,200 per month.

SHELTERING

Following May 2021's Operation Guardian of the Walls, The Jewish Agency identified vulnerabilities in a number of facilities in Israel's southern and northern regions. Many absorption centers that house olim have inadequate shelters - cramped, poorly located, or outdated. The new immigrants often spend nights packed into these shelters to ensure they are safe while sleeping. Urgent upgrades are needed to these shelters to ensure better physical protection for both residents and staff during rocket attacks.



Similarly, numerous Amigour buildings housing Isael's most vulnerable senior citizens, including many Holocaust survivors, lack proper communal shelters. These shared spaces must be immediately renovated to protect the elderly who are incapable of dashing to a shelter with short notice. The attacks of October 7th underscore the urgency and we must act now to rectify this critical situation, and ensure the residents of our facilities have access to safety.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Israelis have endured unimaginable trauma during the six months since the October ٧th attacks and the start of the Swords of Iron War. We have accomplished much in the past six months, but the needs are great.

Keren Hayesod and The Jewish Agency continue to rely on the support of our philanthropic partners to ensure we can help Israelis rebuild their lives and that we can help Jews around the world deal with an tisemitism and maintain their security.

Thank you for your ongoing support.
Together, we will stand beside Israel for years to come.



Keren Hayesod-UIA (United Israel Appeal), in partnership with global Jewry, works to further the national priorities of the State of Israel and Israeli society, with special emphasis on advancing weaker communities; nurturing disadvantaged and marginalized youth; encouraging Aliyah; implementing rescue operations, and connecting young Diaspora Jews to Israel and Jewish life.

Keren Hayesod was first established in London in ١٩٢٠ to serve as the fundraising arm of the Jewish people and the Zionist movement. After more than a century of achievement, it remains an integral force in shaping Israeli society.

For further information, please contact your local Keren Hayesod - UIA emissary or Projects Department.

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