

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED & AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN ISRAEL

Project Overview: Providing urgent relief and psychosocial support to displaced families, and communities affected by this crisis, in southern Israel.

Project Location: Across Israel, where displaced communities are being hosted.

BACKGROUND

Hamas launched a large-scale attack on Israel in the early hours of October 7, 2023. So far, as of today, more than 1,000 people have been reported killed and over 2,500 injured in Israel. Attacks are ongoing, including forced entry into homes; kidnapping and hostage taking; and missile strikes on homes and hospitals. Schools have been closed indefinitely, leaving children without access to their familiar frameworks and parents with little respite.

There is an urgent need for psychosocial support and relief supplies for the most vulnerable populations. IsraAID is focusing on families from the areas immediately surrounding Gaza. After up to 48 hours of uncertainty and fear, they have been evacuated to hotels, hostels, and communities elsewhere in the country, bringing very few personal possessions. Many – if not most – are also loved ones of those killed, missing, or held hostage.

Powerful community-led responses are already up and running, but many of these civil society actors lack robust emergency experience. Even those with expertise in local conflict and displacement need support, given the unprecedented scale of this crisis, to adapt their methodologies and structures; ensure effective management of resources and expertise; and avoid harmful interactions, in alignment with humanitarian principles.

IsraAID'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Using our global expertise and experience, IsraAID is providing urgent relief to children and families evacuated from southern Israel. Our first team of Protection and Mental Health specialists deployed today, October 9, 2023. We are working in partnership with

local organizations and civil society initiatives to support Israel's southern and affected communities.

Initial emergency response programs include:

- **Establishing Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSs)**, which offer a safe environment in Evacuation Centers for IsraAID-trained specialists to provide displaced children with therapeutic and educational play, crafts, and sports.
- **Distributing resilience kits for children and their families.** These include recreational activity books, toys, games, and other stress relief items. They may be complemented by **hygiene kits** containing essentials such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, and sanitary items, depending on ongoing needs assessments.
- **Equipping parents with tools and techniques to support their children's wellbeing** through parents' guidance forums, in collaboration with therapists. Topics will include how to talk about conflict, behaviors to expect, positive management tools, and positive coping mechanisms. Since parents and children are unwilling to be separated, these support forums will be established near CFSs.
- **Ensuring mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) provision for professionals working directly with those affected.** This includes staff at Evacuation Centers, where displaced families are being accommodated; teachers; and volunteers from community-led organizations and local NGOs. IsraAID will deliver capacity-strengthening programs for these partners so that they can support displaced and conflict-affected communities appropriately in the context, as well as care for themselves. Training modules will include basic psychosocial first aid; introductory psychosocial support in emergencies; and self-care, burnout prevention, and vicarious trauma prevention for service providers and volunteers.
- **Training psychosocial support (PSS) specialists on emergency-specific methodologies and principles of intervention**, including psychological first aid (PFA), PSS, and key humanitarian principles, such as Do No Harm, in crisis contexts; and establishing mechanisms to coordinate volunteers.



IsraAID's experts will continue to assess needs in Israel, and we anticipate scaling up our emergency response in the coming days and weeks – updates to follow.

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IsraAID is a registered non-profit organization in Israel (Amuta/Org. 580472959) and in the United States as a 501(c)3 (EIN 462118225)

IsraAID has extensive experience in supporting communities displaced and affected by conflict worldwide, including ongoing and recent programs in Ethiopia, Kenya, Moldova (pictured), Mozambique, Uganda, and Ukraine. We previously responded to COVID-19 in Israel, focusing on underserved communities including refugees and displaced populations.

***When the need is urgent, so is our response.
Thank you for your support.***