

# Jewish Agency Mobilization During the Second Lebanon War

Moving Forward  
to Rebuild the Galilee

Six Months Later



הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל  
Jewish Agency for Israel



“We live in a time when individual benefit is valued more than the whole... In my opinion, the gesture of solidarity that your organization expressed to the student reservists (a population of people who shoulder the responsibility for Israel’s future from every perspective), strengthens us and gives us a sense of Jewish unity that is glorious. It enhances my belief that the Jewish people, despite it all, are still a united people.”

Guy Taib, Technion student, Haifa  
Jewish Agency Scholarship Recipient

## Six Months Later: The Facts in the Field

Immediately following the war, the Jewish Agency once again mobilized its resources in the field to implement wide-ranging programs for Rebuilding the Galilee. With the support of the Israel Emergency Campaign (IEC) Funds, raised by Jewish Federations, through the UJC and Keren Hayesod, the facts in the field are astonishing:

## Transitioning Children from Crisis to Excellence

Within the framework of A New Tomorrow – Comprehensive Program for School Children, the following activities are being implemented:

### After School Activities

After months of careful planning, in cooperation with 36 municipalities in the North, an unprecedented 37,000 schoolchildren will be engaged in after school activities. The four fields of enrichment are: nature and environment, narrowing the digital gap, sports and art.

### Scholastic Assistance

200 new immigrant Ethiopian school children, traumatized by the war, are receiving assistance to get back on track in school.

### Master's Program in Psychology

28 psychology students are receiving assistance to finish their master’s degree.

### Language as a Cultural Bridge

More than 7,000 students in Jewish schools in the Galilee are studying conversational Arabic in a program aimed to advance Jewish-Arab understanding and cooperation. This program is implemented in partnership with The Abraham Fund Initiatives.



## Student Scholarships

### Students Called-Up for Emergency Reserve Duty (Tsav 8)

To date, 9,002 students have received a Tsav 8 scholarship for approximately 50 percent of their college tuition. Many of these students were unable to work during the summer to earn money for their college tuition and living expenses due to their unexpected military service during the second Lebanon war. This scholarship has helped many of them return to their studies. The scholarships were distributed to recipients at a special event sponsored by the Jewish Agency honoring these soldiers' dedication to their country.

### Students Studying in Northern Israel Colleges

Following the war, registration at northern colleges significantly decreased. These colleges play an important role in the Galilee's social and economic development. To date 4,189 students received scholarships to study at colleges in the North, and the number is expected to peak at 5,600. As a result of these scholarships, registration for the school year was higher than expected.

## Economic Development

### Emergency Grants to Small Businesses in the North

Many small businesses in the North were devastated during the war. Some 2,700 businesspeople received an immediate grant of \$1,000 to get their businesses back on their feet. This assistance was invaluable to small business owners.

### Economic Development Fund

This Fund will provide loans to small businesses with the capacity for growth, but without access to capital markets. The Fund is due to begin activities in the coming months to support the revitalization of northern Israel's war-devastated economy.



## Direct Assistance to Frontline Populations

### The Jewish Agency Fund for Victims of Terror

Two professional committees and one advisory committee have convened and awarded funding to Victims of Terror (from January 2006) for rent, purchasing household appliances and furniture, and tuition assistance. Thousands of civilians and soldiers will receive assistance from the Fund. The reestablishment of this Fund plays a vital role in meeting the needs of families and individuals injured by the war and other acts of violence against Israel not fully met due to various limitations or where other types of funding fall short.

### The Fund for Families of Fallen Soldiers

In cooperation with the JDC, the Jewish Agency granted the families of all of the War's fallen soldiers the sum of \$5,000. One hundred and twenty five families from every sector of society, including new immigrants from the FSU and Ethiopia, Druze, Bedouin and two families of lone soldiers who came from the United States and France, received this grant. The families used the funds to memorialize their heroic children. The bereaved families wrote moving letters to the Jewish Agency expressing their gratitude for this assistance, which was given by an anonymous donor.

### Supporting Lone Immigrant Soldiers that Fought in the War

Some 1,500 lone immigrant soldiers who made aliyah since 1999 and served as either active or reserve soldiers during the recent war received Jewish Agency assistance in the form of: financial support, gift cards worth approximately \$450 for purchasing essential personal items at some of Israel's best-known department stores, free calling cards to speak with their families and an optional five-day trauma seminar.

## Building Vital Communal Infrastructure

IDB, one of Israel's leading investment companies, headed by Israeli businessman Nochi Dankner, has committed \$25 million to building vital communal infrastructure in the North. The Jewish Agency is moving ahead with finding matching funds for renovating three northern hospitals, community centers, libraries, senior citizen centers, and schools throughout the region.



## Assistance to Sderot and Gaza Perimeter Communities

### Student Scholarships for Sapir Regional College

Special scholarships in the amount of some \$1,000 each were given to 1,200 students studying at the Sapir College in the western Negev, where Kassam rockets continue to terrorize students and local residents.

### Respite for Children and Families

During the recent Chanukah vacation, 4,500 children and youth enjoyed one-day trips to educational and cultural events in Central Israel, away from the falling Kassam rockets. At the same time, 1,295 families were treated to a weekend respite in hotels out of the line of fire and over 30,000 people participated in Chanukah Happenings held in the Eshkol region.

### Emergency Grants to Very Small Businesses in the South

Following the success of this program in the North, small businesses that are in deep financial difficulty due to the ongoing hostilities will receive emergency assistance. Applications are currently being received via the Jewish Agency's website. Some 600 small businesses are expected to receive assistance.

### Responding to Trauma at Friedman Ibim Student Village and the Calanit and Barnea Absorption Centers

This program will provide new immigrant young people living at the Friedman IBIM Student Village near Sderot, and the areas two absorption centers with individual counseling, workshops and structured activities to deal with the ongoing trauma they face from the terrifying Kassam rocket attacks.

## Youth Resources for Recovery

This pilot project aims to counteract the negative impact the war had on northern youth through deepening their relationship to their region, their connection to the land and to their Jewish Zionist identity.



## The Final Steps Toward Recovery

During the next and final steps, as the assessment of Israel's emergency situation is underway, our efforts of assistance must be driven by one primary factor: **directly meeting and reaching the people in need**. Thus all of our programs are designed with a comprehensive understanding of the measurable impact on the population. The projects described in the following pages were developed in full consultation with UJC Israel and JDC. Programs will be implemented in collaboration and will avoid unnecessary duplication. Similarly, programs have been designed in consultation with relevant municipalities, social service and government agencies. In this way, the programming is ensured to be as effective and impactful as possible.

We firmly believe that all of these programs respond to the following challenges:

- Shortage of appropriate programs
- Inaccessibility to programs
- Low rates of utilization by those most in need
- Insufficient information about service availability and eligibility
- Resistance to change

The Jewish Agency is uniquely positioned to undertake this task of deploying direct services and sustainable communal rebuilding because of our proven history of “in-the-field” services. This expertise gives us the proficiency to provide services and implement programs that adequately **meet peoples’ needs while involving them in the process**.

## New Ethiopian Immigrants in Absorption Centers—Family Ties

The following programs will be developed in collaboration with the Ethiopian National Project and Yadid in the hope that matching funds will be made available for these projects.

### **Post-Trauma support and rehabilitation**

Because of the immediate need to protect the children, many small children were taken from their parents during the war and are now experiencing several different forms of anxiety. The program will treat the immediate needs of 500 Ethiopian toddlers and preschool children. Also, parents will be taught the tools and skills to deal with their children's needs. This program can be enabled by existing programs including PACT or Etgarim; the Jewish Agency will be happy to explore possibilities of partnership and joint-directorship with other agencies.

### **Young Leadership**

Ethiopian young adults and teenage immigrants face particular challenges as they adjust to life in Israel. They are talented individuals with tremendous potential, but they need guidance toward realizing that potential. Creative activities, including broadcasting and drama are necessary to help them cultivate positive channels for their talents and interests, and prevent destructive behavior. This program will include indirect trauma intervention for approximately 1,000 Ethiopian young adults.

### **Prevention of Domestic Violence and Suicide**

Traumatized by the shock of war, and all its effects on family dynamics, many new immigrant families, the majority Ethiopian, are unraveling. Tensions and violent outbreaks have risen. These families need increased assistance and counseling on how to help themselves and their children cope. Statistical evidence suggests that Ethiopian immigrants are more likely to express extreme violent behavior; even take their own lives.

## **New Immigrants in the Wider Community— Smooth Transitions**

### **Helping the Brave**

More than 1,500 of the soldiers who fought in the war in Lebanon were lone immigrant soldiers- young adults who moved to Israel and chose to dedicate time to protecting their new country. Under the best of circumstances, these soldiers face significant hardships as they transition to civilian life at the end of their military service - issues that are only compounded after fighting in a war. These soldiers require post-trauma counseling and the opportunity to grasp the traumatic experiences of war, confront their new civilian realities, and build smooth paths to life in Israeli society.



### **Fund for Lone Immigrant Students**

New college-aged immigrants made aliyah in the hopes of building their academic and professional lives in Israel. Coming to Israel between the ages of 17-28, many of these young people registered in colleges and universities in the North of Israel. The war, however, has made many of these students feel anxious about continuing their studies. Since they are far from their familial and support networks, it is essential that these young people be given the tools to succeed.

### **Empowering the Unit—Strengthening the Whole**

After thorough mapping of Northern Israel and the aftermath of the 2006 war, the Jewish Agency is initiating programs that will directly address the needs of socio-economically challenged new immigrant families (in Israel for up to seven-years) who live in the North. Each 10 families will be assigned a mentor who will help them access the programs and empower them become independent, productive families.

## **General Population of the North— Direct Assistance to Frontline Populations**

### **Student Villages**

The best way to help the Northern region of Israel rehabilitate is to bring strong, young leaders to the region—people who will commit their energies toward making a difference and becoming a part of the fabric of the Northern region's tapestry. All these villages are located in close proximity to colleges or universities—institutions that play an essential role in facilitating the post-war rehabilitation process. 550 students will live in these villages, receiving scholarships, living accommodations, and leadership training in exchange for their participation in local communal programming.

### **Coexistence through Conversation**

Even at the best of times, the relationship between Jews and non-Jews (Arabs, Druze, etc.) living, studying, and working in the North are delicate. The war heightened the discord and made coexistence in these locations very difficult. Students have trouble studying because they are interfacing with their peers; colleagues find it difficult to work together because they are uncomfortable with their cultural \ political differences. For successful rehabilitation, it is critical that everyone must learn to get along, appreciate the other, and acknowledge differences.



### Youth in Movement Toward Leadership

The young-adult population of the North has limited access to youth movements and activities that can give them the peer interaction, leadership training, and pass-time they need. Through these movements, young people will be trained to initiate change and make a difference in their communities. These programs will compliment the existing programs and offer programs on Friday afternoons and Shabbat.

### Getting Started-Starting Up

The population of the North is eager to get back on its feet. They are seeking the tools and information necessary to put their lives back on track. There is a distinct and real need for a start-up hub that can service every need the citizens have: employment, phonics, educational enrichment and opportunities, and social activities. With one localized access point, located in close proximity to established educational institutions, a direct relationship between the existing services and the end-users, whoever they might be, can be made.

## Young Jews from Abroad— Growing By Giving

### Student Israel Corps

Jewish students from around the world are looking for ways to strengthen their relationship with Israel and their connection to Jewish heritage. This summer's war left many young people disheartened and confused, others are looking for ways to help and make a difference in Israel. Now is the time to bring these young students directly to where their idealism can make the difference—directly to where they can make an impact. This program will also enhance the academic opportunities in the North, and expand the unique landscape of existing educational opportunities in this region. This will include the development of MASA programs in these institutions. 1,450 students, which include full time equivalents, will impact the lives of 10,000 northern children as they mentor and tutor them.

## Partnering with purpose, all over the world.

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