

## **Jewish State Joins Fight against Ebola**

Israel is often on the front lines helping those in need around the world. As the Ebola crisis developed in West Africa, Israel sent more than a million shekels worth of medical equipment and priceless Israeli expertise.

MASHAV- Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, a part of the Foreign Ministry, sent a team of public health experts to Cameroon to prevent the spread of Ebola. The Israeli team trained local health workers and donated protective suits to African Union troops stationed in Ethiopia. Most notably, MASHAV deployed mobile field hospitals to Liberia and Sierra Leone, where the virus has hit the hardest. Israeli teams constructed the units, while Israeli doctors trained their African counterparts.

"We have experience in mobile clinics and mobile emergency centers, and that's where we want to lend our assistance," said Gil Haskel, deputy director general of MASHAV.

With support from MASHAV, Israeli humanitarian organization IsraAID is also working with other international agencies in Sierra Leone. IsraAID teams offer training to local communities in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) prevention and stress management to help Ebola survivors and their families. The organization has also used similar project models to help refugees in Jordan, Bulgaria and South Korea deal with psychological recovery and illness.

"Every country, no matter how small, has a role to play in combating the Ebola epidemic. Israel is ready for the new challenge standing before the world," said Israeli Ambassador to the U.N., Ron Prosor.

MASHAV and IsraAID's efforts against Ebola are just part of Israel's humanitarian contributions in West Africa. Both organizations operate development projects in many West African countries – spanning from agriculture, education, community development and public health efforts. Throughout the world, MASHAV and IsraAID export Israeli expertise to communities facing development challenges, natural disaster recovery, immigrant integration and much more. Israel's response to the Ebola crisis follows the work of Israeli emergency teams in Haiti, Ghana, and the Philippines – where they also constructed field hospitals, donated aid and leveraged Israeli expertise in addressing psychological trauma.

This December, in addition to celebrating the miraculous Hanukkah oil, we can take pride in Israel's miraculous ability to reach far beyond the limits of its borders, preserving the Jewish value of helping those in need wherever they may be. Indeed, the beloved startup nation is also the standup nation.