

# Israeli Aid to Syria

The Syrian Civil War has caused a massive humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of deaths and at least 6.6 million internally displaced as of December 2015<sup>1</sup>. Israel, located right next door, has offered aid to Syrians in many capacities despite the Syrian government's ongoing hostility towards the Jewish state. Much of this aid goes unreported, mainly to protect the lives of Syrian civilians who receive it.

## Everyday Israelis are committing their time and money to help Syrians in need.

Israeli Flying Aid gives emergency aid to civilians inside Syria. These Israelis are leaving their own children and risking their lives to help children in an enemy country<sup>2</sup>.

In 2014, Working and Studying Youth movement, Israeli Flying Aid and others collected roughly 20,000 jackets, blankets, sleeping bags and other items to aid Syrian refugees<sup>3</sup>.

A group called Kitchens Without Borders started a two-week campaign in January 2017 to raise money for refugees - all proceeds went to an NGO called Karam ("generous" in Arabic)<sup>4</sup>.

Just Beyond Our Border raised over half a million shekels in December 2016 to go towards food, medicine and equipment for Syrian children<sup>5</sup>.

## Israeli has been offering aid to Syrians since 2013.

In 2013, Israel opened a field hospital to treat Syrians and has been admitting patients to other hospitals as well<sup>7</sup>. Since that time, the IDF rescued and treated over 2,000 people<sup>8</sup>.

One Syrian man was admitted with a handwritten note from his Syrian doctor, asking Israeli surgeons to treat him because this doctor could not provide the care his patient so desperately needed<sup>9</sup>.

In another high profile case, Israelis treated a young girl with a shattered leg and performed an operation that allowed her to walk again<sup>10</sup>.

Israel treats any wounded Syrian who reaches the border—if the person is badly wounded enough, they are transferred from the field hospital to a permanent one<sup>11</sup>.

At first, aid to Syrians was very quiet, due to Syrian mistrust of Israelis and fears of Syrian retribution for taking aid from Israel. As Syrians began trusting Israelis, field hospitals were able to operate more openly<sup>12</sup>.

## Israel has quietly made it a point to assist refugees and others in need.

IsraAid is operating in Lesbos, Greece, assisting refugees who escape Syria on boats.<sup>13,14</sup>

Tali Shaltiel, a doctor working there, said "When we say 'Never again,' it is also an obligation to do something...Apparently I can't stop the war in Syria, but I can do something"<sup>15</sup>.

Israel is also planning on giving asylum to 100 Syrian orphans<sup>16</sup>.

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- <sup>2</sup> Kershner, Isabel. "Despite Decades of Enmity, Israel Quietly Aids Syrian Civilians." The New York Times. January 29, 2014. Accessed February 17, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/30/world/middleeast/despite-decades-of-enmity-israel-quietly-aids-syrian-civilians.html>
- <sup>3</sup> Kershner, Isabel. "Despite Decades of Enmity, Israel Quietly Aids Syrian Civilians." The New York Times. January 29, 2014. Accessed February 17, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/30/world/middleeast/despite-decades-of-enmity-israel-quietly-aids-syrian-civilians.html>
- <sup>4</sup> "Israeli Restaurants Serve Syrian Cuisine to Raise Funds for Refugees." The Tower. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.thetower.org/4443-israeli-restaurants-serve-syrian-cuisine-to-raise-funds-for-refugees/>
- <sup>5</sup> Lieber, Dov. "Israelis raise \$100k in two days to aid Syrian kids." The Times of Israel. December 18, 2016. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.timesofisrael.com/israelis-raise-100k-in-two-days-to-aid-syrian-kids/>
- <sup>6</sup> Israelis raise half a million NIS for Syrian children." The Jerusalem Post | JPost.com. December 16, 2016. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Israelis-raise-quarter-of-a-million-NIS-for-Syria-children-475716>
- <sup>7</sup> TheTower.org Staff | 07.27.16 2:35 pm. "Israel Opens Border With Syria to Humanitarian Aid Deliveries." The Tower. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.thetower.org/3695-israel-opens-border-with-syria-to-humanitarian-aid-deliveries/>
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- <sup>9</sup> Press, Viva Sarah. "Syrian doctor asks Israel to save man's life." Israel21c. June 13, 2013. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.israel21c.org/syrian-doctor-asks-israel-to-save-mans-life/>
- <sup>10</sup> Press, Viva Sarah. "Israeli doctors save Syrian lives." Israel21c. September 13, 2016. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.israel21c.org/israeli-doctors-save-syrian-lives-2/>
- <sup>11</sup> Press, Viva Sarah. "Young Israeli paramedic honored for helping wounded Syrians." Israel21c. May 18, 2014. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.israel21c.org/young-israeli-paramedic-honored-for-helping-wounded-syrians/>
- <sup>12</sup> TheTower.org Staff | 07.27.16 2:35 pm. "Israel Opens Border with Syria to Humanitarian Aid Deliveries." The Tower. July 26, 2016. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.thetower.org/3695-israel-opens-border-with-syria-to-humanitarian-aid-deliveries/>
- <sup>13</sup> Rabinowitz, Gavin. "When Israeli volunteers help Syrian, Iraqi and Pakistani refugees." The Times of Israel. September 23, 2015. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://www.timesofisrael.com/when-israeli-volunteers-help-syrian-iraqi-and-pakistani-refugees/>
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