

REHABILITATING THE COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTH OF ISRAEL

Resilience Centre in Sderot's Bustanim Neighbourhood



ALIYAH &
ABSORPTION

STRENGTHENING
ISRAELI SOCIETY

CONNECTING
COMMUNITIES

EMERGENCY

**PROJECT PROPOSAL
2025**

SUPPORT THE PROJECT

Your generous donation to Keren Hayesod will enable the establishment of a Resilience Centre in the Bustanim neighbourhood of Sderot and will support treatment of PTSD victims at the Resilience Centre in the first year, aiding and strengthening Israelis living in the war-ravaged south of Israel.

In grateful recognition, you will be honoured with:

- **Exclusive naming rights to the new Resilience Centre**
- **Prominent signage on the facade of the building**
- **Internal signage within the Resilience Centre**

For more than a century, Keren Hayesod has worked in partnership with global Jewry to further the national priorities of the State of Israel, with a special emphasis on bolstering weaker communities; nurturing disadvantaged and marginalised youth; encouraging Aliyah and integration of new immigrants into Israeli society; implementing rescue operations; connecting young Diaspora Jews to Israel and Jewish life; and fostering social cohesion in Israel.

Israel's southern region is often associated with high unemployment, low-paying jobs, a substandard educational system, and a lack of essential services. For years, residents have suffered from relentless barrages of thousands of rockets, incendiary devices and terrorist infiltration attempts from Gaza which caused severe damage to life and property. The vicious 20-year cycle of Gaza's war against southern Israel has had a devastating toll on southern residents.

As part of its efforts to strengthen communities in Israel's southern periphery, Keren Hayesod-UIA created a working partnership with the City of Sderot. Over the years, Sderot has been the most highly targeted location for rocket attacks from Gaza. It is one of more than 20 southern communities that suffered significant loss of life, property and trauma on October 7th when thousands of Hamas terrorists murdered more than 1,200 Israelis and took more than 240 hostages (with over a hundred still held captive), including Israeli soldiers, babies, women, children and the elderly.



SDEROT

Sderot is located in the western Negev, less than 2 kilometres from Gaza. Founded in 1951 as a development town, today Sderot has a population of 30,553, including 25% who are new immigrants. The city suffers from increased rates of unemployment and poverty compared to the national average. It ranks 5 out of 10 on Israel's scale of socioeconomic wellbeing. An estimated 30% of Sderot's population are children and youth under the age of 18. The city also has lower rates of high school matriculation and army service compared to the national average.



Sderot suffered a severe blow during the October 7 attack, tragically resulting in the loss of 71 lives, including residents, soldiers, police officers, and civilians. Today, the city continues to be on the front line of the conflict in the Swords of Iron War, with only 15 seconds to seek shelter when the sirens go off.

As the fighting in the South continues, Keren Hayesod, together with the city of Sderot, is looking to the future, investing in projects aimed at restoring and strengthening the security, resilience, and community spirit of Sderot's residents to foster the city's growth. We are committed to improving the quality of life for residents and providing comprehensive support for their needs. By better supporting the residents, we can strengthen the city and secure its future!

One of the key initiatives to strengthen the residents of Sderot is the establishment of a new Resilience Centre.



Simulation of building exterior

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN SDEROT

Over the years, the pillars enabling Sderot's residents to live alongside the threat of terrorism have been resilience, community, and security. The horrific attack on October 7th severely impacted these pillars. As the Swords of Iron War continues, the residents are struggling to build and maintain their psychological resilience. Many are experiencing severe mental health challenges, including symptoms of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, sleep disturbances, depression, nightmares, parenting difficulties, and bed-wetting among children. The evacuation of residents to hotels and hosting facilities across the country, which disconnected them from their community, services, and familiar surroundings, has further exacerbated these challenges. Therefore, as part of the city's recovery efforts, it is critical to provide residents with the mental health support needed to restore their resilience.

The residents of Sderot receive mental health support through the municipal Resilience Centre, established in 2008 to help residents cope with the security situation and its consequences. The centre provides free psychological treatments and responds to emergencies throughout the city. In 2015, an Animal-Assisted Therapy Centre was established as part of the Resilience Centre, offering a highly effective treatment option.

Before the war, approximately 2,000 individuals were treated annually through the Resilience Centre and the Animal-Assisted Therapy Centre. Since the start of the war, the number of individuals seeking treatment has surged to 8,000. Accordingly, additional therapists have been recruited, increasing their number from 50 before the war to 300 today. However, the existing resilience centres in Sderot are not equipped to handle this growing demand. The number of individuals requiring support is expected to rise further in the coming years as the trauma is processed and the city's population grows.

As a result, we are seeking your partnership to establish a new Resilience Centre to provide essential mental health support to those in need.



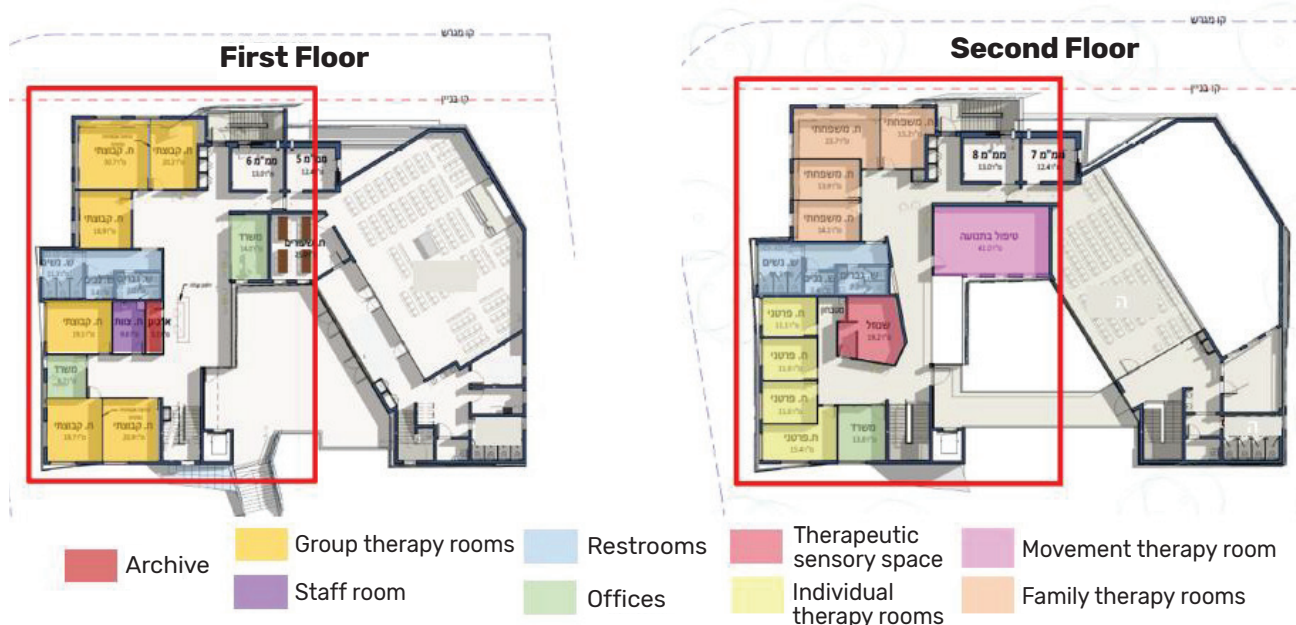
THE NEW RESILIENCE CENTRE IN SDEROT

The new Resilience Centre will be located in Sderot's new Bustanim neighbourhood, as part of a new building that will also house preschools and a synagogue, promoting a comprehensive approach to community resilience.

The planned three-story building will span approximately 1,700 square metres. The ground floor will include four preschools, while the second and third floors will house a synagogue and the expanded Resilience Centre. The Centre will cover an area of 800 square metres, and will feature:

- 6 rooms for group therapy
- 4 rooms for individual therapy
- 4 rooms for family therapy
- 1 movement therapy room
- 1 therapeutic sensory space
- An archive, staff room, 3 offices, restrooms, and kitchenette
- A protected space on each floor for emergencies

Proximity to the preschool and synagogue offers a unique advantage, as it embeds the Resilience Centre within the community's daily life. This approach emphasizes the importance of resilience as part of a communal perspective and allows treatment opportunities to extend to preschoolers and the synagogue congregation. The expansion will significantly increase the number of treatments provided, aiding in the recovery and fortitude of the residents.



TIMELINE

The tender for a contractor is currently underway, and construction is expected to begin in July 2025.

It is estimated that the building will be completed in 20 months, barring unforeseen delays due to security issues or other circumstances.



Simulation of reception area



Simulation of individual therapy room



Simulation of movement therapy room

Your generous partnership with Keren Hayesod will help restore and bolster the sense of security, resilience, and community for the residents of Sderot, reinforce the south of Israel, and strengthen the State of Israel.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL



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 1920 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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