



IsraAID Global Coronavirus Emergency Response

- Location:** China, Italy and in our ongoing missions around the world
- Project Overview:** Providing emergency psychosocial support for health workers; promote hygiene practice in high-risk locations like refugee camps, where a secondary health crisis could occur; ensuring vulnerable communities have access to information, resources, and psychosocial support
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BACKGROUND

Since the beginning of the spread of the deadly Coronavirus in January 2020, the disease has claimed the lives of more than 10,000 people, and infected more than 250,000 individuals around the world. **The World Health Organization declared a pandemic on March 11, as the epidemic spread to 176 countries.** Travel between countries has been largely curtailed, with widespread quarantine enforcement and hundreds of cancelled flights.



With mass quarantine, cancelled travel, and a disrupted lifestyle across the globe, IsraAID is working to help respond and prevent to this most recent public health challenge. **The need to isolate the infected and those potentially infected can break down the social ties and connections that are particularly necessary in times of crisis, both for logistical preparation and response purposes, but also for our mental and emotional wellbeing.**

Vulnerable communities and frontline responders are at even higher risk. Without access to regular services, children, lactating mothers, the elderly, people with disabilities, and displaced communities are facing additional difficulties in obtaining the support they need. **Refugee camps, IDP camps, and other locations where communities live in densely populated conditions limited hygienic standards, are at high risk for the rapid spread of disease,** causing a secondary crisis and exacerbating humanitarian aid efforts. Health workers and other service providers are overwhelmed with the deluge of new and constantly evolving needs.

In the past years, IsraAID has responded to multiple epidemics and health-related disasters across around the globe, including providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for aid workers, burial teams, and community members affected by the spread of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone in 2014; and supporting survivors of the earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent exposure to radiation amid the meltdown of the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in Japan in 2011.

PLAN OF ACTION

IsraAID and its partners sent two shipments of emergency medical and protective supplies to China in February. In each of our current countries of operations, our teams are on the ground, ready to support communities amid the shifting reality. IsraAID is currently launching the following emergency interventions, and is continuing to monitor developments around the globe.

- 1) Stress management webinars & psychosocial support for frontline healthcare workers:** IsraAID psychosocial support specialists will provide a series of 5 sessions to offer new and important information on the stresses of living through this period, and provide consultations for best practices on psychosocial issues coming to fruition amid COVID-19. Participants in China, Italy, and other will attend webinars involving experiential methods relevant to local culture and customs. Topics addressed will include: administering Psychological First Aid; self-care; working with stress & trauma; building resilience; and developing positive coping mechanisms.
- 2) Hygiene promotion & public health awareness in IsraAID's ongoing missions:** With long-term humanitarian aid workers based around the globe in 14 countries, we are ideally positioned to bring our expertise in hygiene promotion and integrate this important, life-saving matter into our daily work with communities. **Especially in crowded refugee camps like Moria Camp in Greece where two potential cases of COVID-19 have already been identified, and in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, the fourth largest in the world that has already been shuttered, prevention activities are urgently needed to save lives.** IsraAID's teams on the ground have already launched these efforts, with support from IsraAID's Medical Coordinator who will continue to create key materials and methodologies to promote proper hygiene, and led by our refugee staff members. **Our teams are additionally ensuring that these vulnerable communities have equal access to public health information by translating and sharing information**
- 3) Psychosocial support and awareness campaign efforts in IsraAID's field offices around the world:** Isolation and increasingly limited access to resources can have extremely adverse impact on our mental and emotional health, creating barriers between individuals and communities and inspiring high levels of panic. IsraAID's teams are working to transition its psychosocial support programs to answer this need, and ensure that the social fabric that holds societies together is strengthened, rather than fragmented in these challenging situations.

IsraAID missions around the world are hard at work planning strategic interventions to mitigate the ongoing situation:

- In **South Sudan, where IsraAID runs Women and Girl Friendly Spaces across the country**, our team will install hand washing stations & distribute soap, to reach some 24,000 beneficiaries.
- In **Northern Greece, IsraAID is transitioning its ongoing programming at the Sindos Community Center** within the country-wide government shutdown. The IsraAID team will



implement its Psychosocial Support programming remotely, online, to combat the stress that can be caused by isolation & uncertainty.

- On the Aegean Island of Lesbos, **IsraAID's teams will continue its education work with children refugees**, creating handouts for distribution that provide lessons for students in the camp even when they cannot attend school.
- In the Bahamas, **IsraAID is installing handwashing stations at water distribution points**, where communities are still working to recover safe water access following the devastating effects of Hurricane Dorian.
- Our mission in Vanuatu is **working in our community mobilizer approach to prevent the spread of disease through hygiene promotion**, toward combating misinformation.
- On the Caribbean island of Dominica, **our teams are supporting health workers, teachers, and caregivers, with remote Child Protection and Psychosocial Support training** to ensure children feel safe in a time of chaos and uncertainty.
- In Italy and China, **IsraAID is providing Psychosocial Support training for frontline health and hospital workers**, to emphasize resilience, self-care, and stress management in these challenging settings, hardest-hit by the pandemic.
- Our Child-Friendly Spaces in Colombia have been closed by the government, but the team is **continuing to distribute daily meals to the children who attend our programs**, many of whom would otherwise lack access to food.
- In Kakuma Refugee Camp, located in Turkana County, Kenya, **IsraAID is supporting COVID-19 vulnerable patients, by providing Ready-To-Use Food Supplements for children combating malnutrition**; as well as donations filling other gaps in medical supplies including soap, hand sanitizer, Malaria test kits, and more.
- The IsraAID team in Mozambique is integrating **hygiene and sanitation content into all workshops provided for schools in Sofala Province**, many of which were severely destroyed by Cyclone Idai last year.
- In Guatemala, the IsraAID team is **providing support to municipal service providers, and publishing hygiene awareness videos** and posters in communal locations and online.
- In the Morelos State of Mexico, **psychosocial support tools will be provided to key affected communities** including teachers, those in quarantine, and children out of school.

PROFILE

IsraAID is a leading humanitarian non-governmental organisation, committed to providing life-saving emergency relief and durable solutions for populations affected by natural disasters, epidemics and post-conflict situations. Its medical teams, post trauma experts, community specialists and other professionals have led international responses in natural disasters and civil strife around the world. After the initial emergency period, IsraAID shifts to long-term programs, all to accompany communities and governments as they strive to build a better tomorrow. As of 2020, IsraAID has responded to crises in more than 53 countries, and has on-going programs in 14 countries.