



WIZO at WAR

Impact Report



In the wake of Israel's most devastating catastrophe on October 7th, WIZO swiftly responded, standing resilient alongside the citizens of Israel, bolstered by your unwavering support.

Through the ongoing pain, this crisis has highlighted the importance of our partnerships worldwide, alongside our 38 Federations around the globe, supporting and encouraging us through these challenging times. At our core, leadership and innovation drive us forward, allowing us to adapt and rise in adversity.



The Global WIZO Movement

From the first hours of October 7th, the WIZO global network, in **38 countries on six continents**, rallied as one behind WIZO and the State of Israel.

In addition to the incredible outpouring of financial support provided to our Iron Swords Emergency Campaign, WIZO federations organized countless protests and events, bringing Jews and non-Jews together, as people of decency and morality outraged at the atrocities committed against us, and at the unforgivable ignorance and moral bankruptcy of those who justified Hamas, negated Israel's right to defend itself, and spread vile hatred against Jews and Israel.

WIZO stood at the head of the international chorus of people of good will, chanting "bring them home", and screamed out at the hypocrisy of international women's organizations, who were silent in the face of the most horrific crimes committed against women.

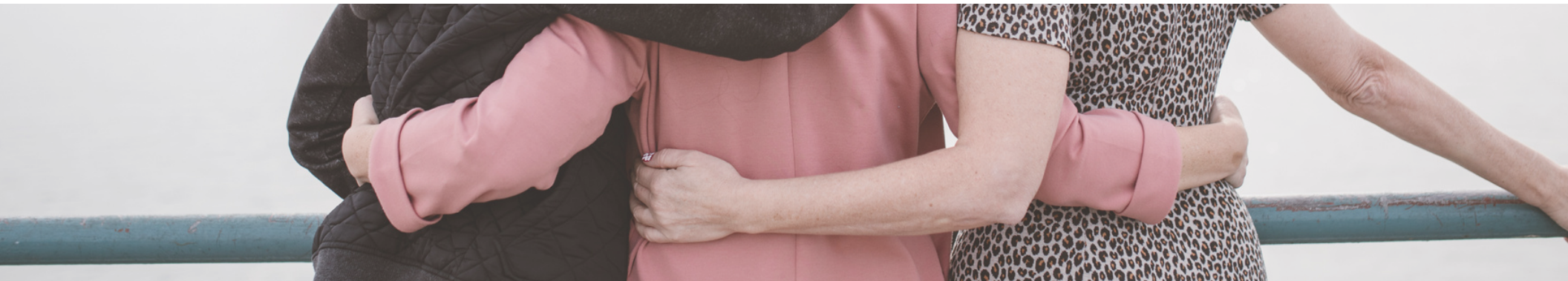
A prominent recent example is a side event to the U.N. Human Rights Council session in Geneva on February 29, organized by WIZO Lausanne, called "Living Through Hamas Captivity". You can watch a recording of this impressive and important event by clicking [here](#).



Iron Swords War Initiatives

Amidst the challenges of the war, we've been diligently working to ensure the well-being and safety of our communities.

- **Immediate Opening of 11 Day Care Centers in Hospitals:** WIZO is the sole organization authorized from the start of the war to open its 11 child day care centers within hospitals nationwide for parents who are medical professionals. All this was done so they could provide crucial care for the hundreds of injured civilians and soldiers.
- **Reopening Additional Day Care Centers:** With the IDF Home Front Command's approval, most of WIZO day care centers are now open with fully compliant safety rooms and shelters.
- **Invested in Safety:** Upgraded shelters in youth villages, schools and WIZO centers to ensure maximum safety.
- **Hosted Evacuees:** Hundreds of evacuees found refuge in WIZO Gan Vanof Youth Village during the initial weeks of the war, with others housed in WIZO Parents Home and WIZO Hadassim Youth Village.
- **Emergency Aid for Women:** WIZO's Safety Net program has offered vital emergency assistance to numerous women and children facing economic and psychological hardship.
- **Tech for Education:** To prevent education disruptions, WIZO provided laptops and tablets to high school students, enabling them to continue learning from home.
- **Student Volunteering:** Thousands of WIZO high school students are volunteering on farms in the north and south, supported by WIZO funding for transportation costs, addressing severe labor shortages due to the war.
- **Emotional Resilience Programs:** WIZO teams in day care centers, schools, villages, and shelters benefit from various emotional and professional support activities.



The Early Childhood Education Division

Chairperson: Professor Lea Kacen; Director: Sharon Zigdon

Division Profile

The Early Childhood Education Division operates a nationwide network of premium supervised day care centers catering to infants through age 3. WIZO's highly coveted DCCs are in high demand among parents, consistently boasting annual waiting lists.

Iron Swords War Impact

Right at the start of the Iron Swords War, WIZO received immediate authorization to open 11 day care facilities within hospitals, allowing the medical staff to function properly. During the following weeks, WIZO staff worked diligently together with the IDF Home Front's Commander until approval for the safety of our additional day cares was received.

Despite the uncertainty and fluctuations in service utilization caused by the war's dynamics, as of today, there are close to 11,000 children in WIZO day care centers. **The return of children to our day care centers is an important expression of stability and of the faith that parents all over Israel have in WIZO**, the quality of our care, and the knowledge that these infants and toddlers are safe and protected. Together, we navigate the uncertainties, adapting our services to the changing landscape and Home Front Command directives.



167

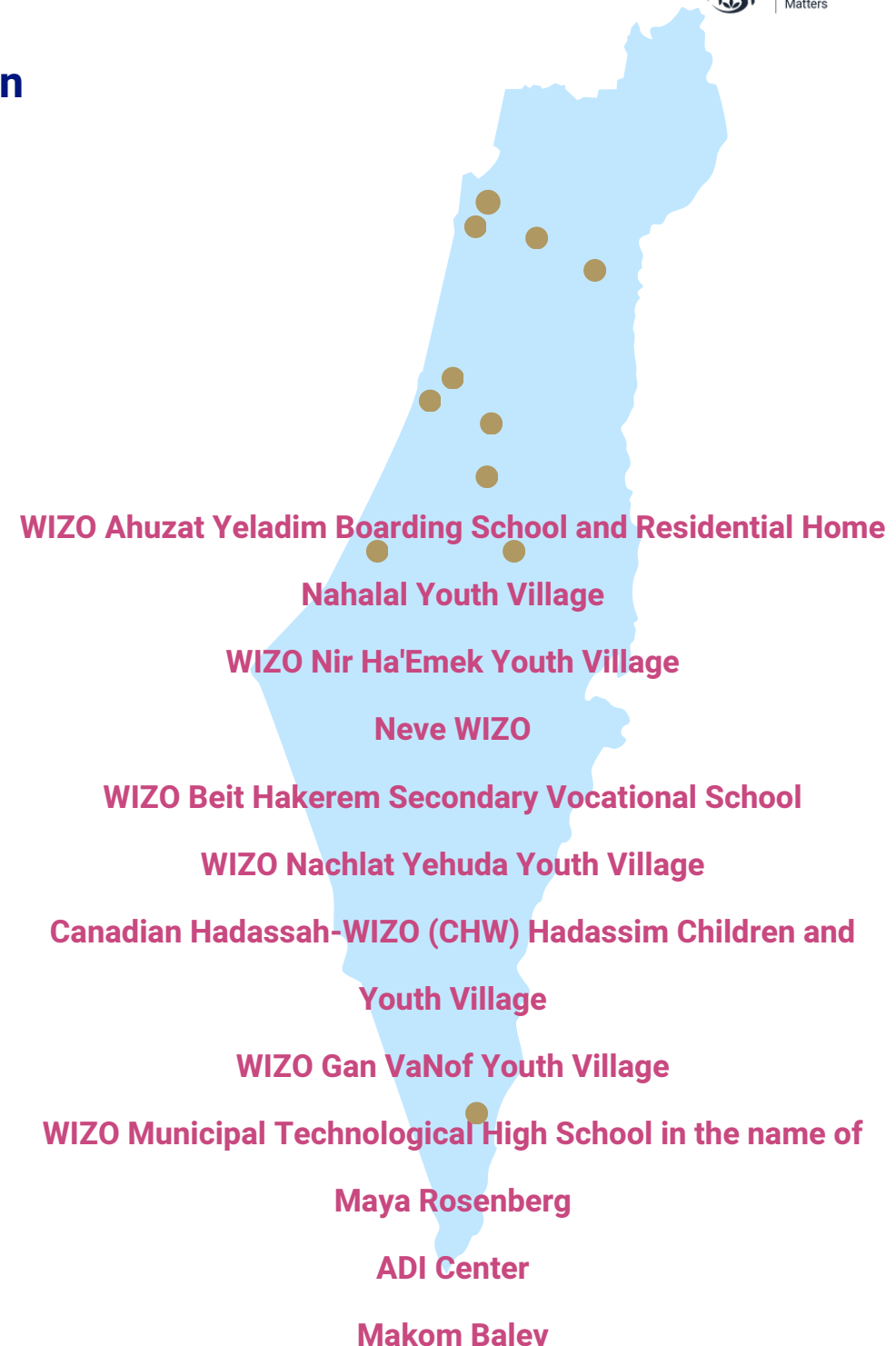
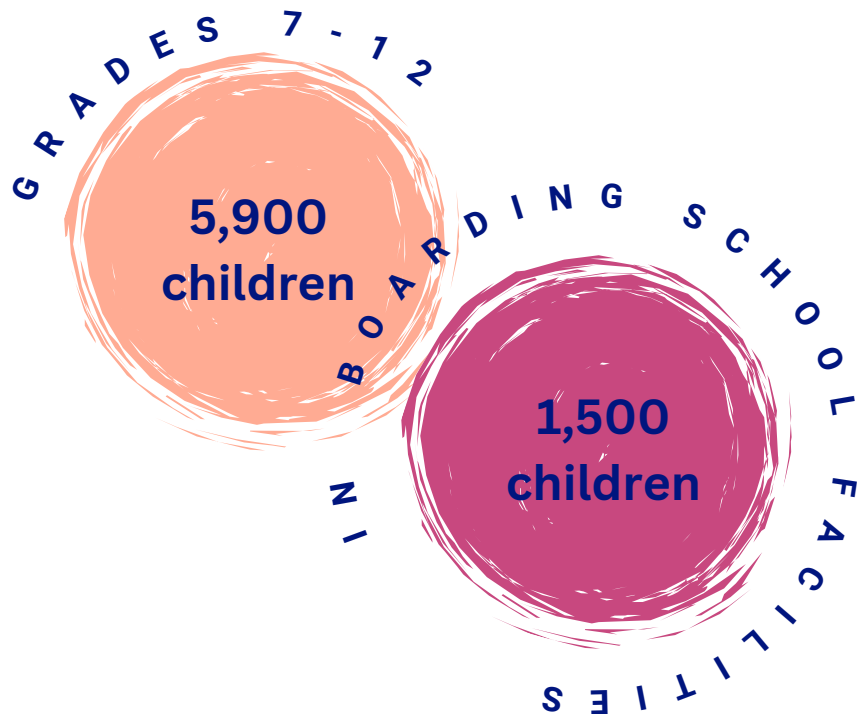
**Day Care Centers
Spanning the Entire
landscape of Israel**

The Education Division

Chairperson: Nina Shapira; Vice Chair: Ety Burkin
Director: Gadi Yaakov

Division Profile

Our Education Division caters to 5,900 school children from grades 7-12, with 1,500 children in boarding school facilities. The following locations in which we operate include **5 youth villages**, **2 emergency centers**, **2 high schools**, **1 post-trauma boarding school**, **11 foster family homes for at-risk youth**, **ADI Center** for young women at-risk and **Makom Balev Center** for young women in distress.



Iron Swords War Impact

As a leading Zionist organization, WIZO is committed to supporting the resilience and well-being of Israel's citizens, who are the foundation of our nation. During the Iron Swords War, our Education Division swiftly responded by hosting evacuees, organizing activities, and providing essential support. We adapted to Home Front Command guidelines and ensured educational continuity through remote learning.

Our Education Division has devised special programs for emotional support and resilience, in times of War, which address the unique challenges youth face during conflict. Our "Emotional Resilience" program empowered them with vital coping skills. This program has been adopted by the Ministry of Education and is now being implemented throughout the country.



The Education Division

YOUNG EMPOWERMENT

Links youth in resilience development with creative leaders for dynamic workshops. Through art forms like writing, visual art, theater, and dance, they learn to cultivate resilience and self-expression.

YOUNG LEADERSHIP

Empowers women through leadership development, teamwork, and education in feminism and equality, preparing them to contribute to social activism in any situation.



SHIELD



Empowers adolescents with self-defense techniques and positive thinking. Led by certified instructors, it reinforces security.

SELFREE

Empowers Israeli adolescents to develop positive body image and self-perception. In response to ongoing trauma, SELFREE strengthens personal and national resilience, fostering awareness and inspiring positive change for enhanced well-being.

BREEZE OF HEALING

Offers emotional support, resilience training, and therapeutic interventions for trauma and grief. Staff are trained to provide effective support, and personalized therapeutic plans are available when needed.

The Division for the Advancement of the Status of Women

Chairperson: Rama Enav; Director: Rivka Neuman

Division Profile

The Division for the Advancement of Women at WIZO drives societal change by addressing women's diverse needs. Through innovative programs, advocacy, and legal support, we empower women, prevent violence, and promote gender equality. Our initiatives include state-sponsored projects, social entrepreneurship, prevention programs, and legal aid, impacting individuals, legislation, and societal attitudes. We strive to create a more equitable and inclusive society where women can thrive and contribute to their fullest potential.

Iron Swords War Impact

Amidst the challenges of war, our division remained steadfast in providing impactful solutions for women, particularly those affected by violence. We've expanded our support through hotlines and legal aid, adapted domestic violence prevention programs, and introduced engaging Zoom workshops for widespread participation. Our commitment extended to studying the resilience of "Safety Net" women communities and offered individualized support and coping tools.

We remain committed to making a positive impact on the lives of these women, fostering resilience, and providing them with the tools they need to navigate their respective journeys successfully. Healing the emotional and psychological wounds of the vast population we serve throughout the country is vital for their future well-being and the stability of the State of Israel.



Women Receiving Support

The Division for the Advancement of the Status of Women

Our resilience initiatives address psychological, emotional, economic, and familial challenges faced by women across Israel during crises.

- **Confidential Legal Assistance:** The center for legal assistance was launched during the war. The amount of counseling has been growing ever since, reaching close to 100 sessions in January.
- **Safety Net Program for Women/Families:** One of WIZO's innovative programs, the only one of its kind in Israel, and one of few in the world. It provides critical and diverse long-time support for women after they complete their stay in shelters for domestic violence, together with their children
- **Workshop for Mothers After Giving Birth During the War:** Targeting women who gave birth during the challenges of war, this workshop aims to provide emotional support, coping strategies, and parenting guidance.
- **Workshop for Women Going Through the Process of Separation or Divorce:** Crafted for women navigating separation or divorce, this workshop offers support, legal insights, and emotional coping mechanisms.
- **Workshop for Single Mothers:** Tailored to the unique needs of single mothers, this workshop addresses financial management, emotional well-being, and strategies for balancing parenting and personal resilience.



The Division for the Advancement of the Status of Women (DASW)

SPEAKING UP

WIZO DASW drafted a powerful letter demanding action regarding the hostages, amplifying the voice for justice.

INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

WIZO DASW sent an appeal to Gal Hirsch, who serves as the coordinator of the hostages since the outbreak of the war, advocating for the integration of women in the government team engaged in negotiations, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard.



GLOBAL ADVOCACY

WIZO DASW sent an extensive appeal to the international authorities, advocating for the swift release of the hostages.

CIVILIAN TREATMENT DURING CRISES

WIZO DASW sent an urgent request for the establishment of a home front cabinet, calling for immediate improvements in civilian treatment during crises.

SPEAKING AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Division drafted a comprehensive document of requirements presented to the social-economic cabinet on behalf of women's organizations, with a specific focus on addressing domestic violence.

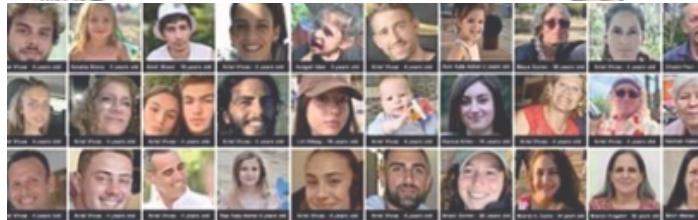
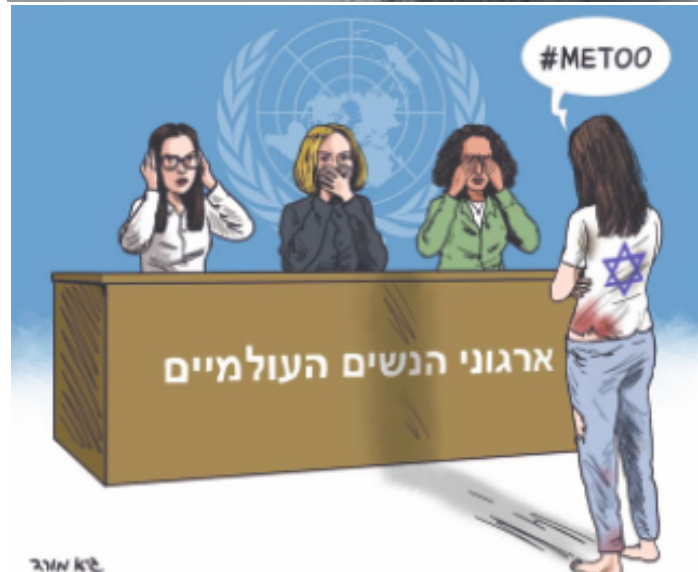
The Division for the Advancement of the Status of Women

DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY

A firm response letter was sent from WIZO's division for women's rights to the UN WOMEN's announcement, demanding recognition of the brutal abuse suffered by women during the war.

GLOBAL COLLABORATION

An appeal initiative spearheaded by Anita Friedman, World WIZO Chairperson, urged WIZO federations worldwide to advocate for the release of the hostages through joint action and advocacy efforts, including a request forwarded to government officials.



A CALL TO ACTION

The Division participated in various parliamentary discussions and committees, advocating for women's rights across multiple fronts, including aid for conscripts, weapons licensing, and healthcare provisions.

STANDING UNITED AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

An additional letter sent by Rama Enav, Chairperson Division for the Advancement of the Status of Women, personally endorsed by Anita Friedman, World WIZO Chairperson, addressing international organizations regarding gender violence on October 7th, standing united against injustice.

The WIZO Israel Federation

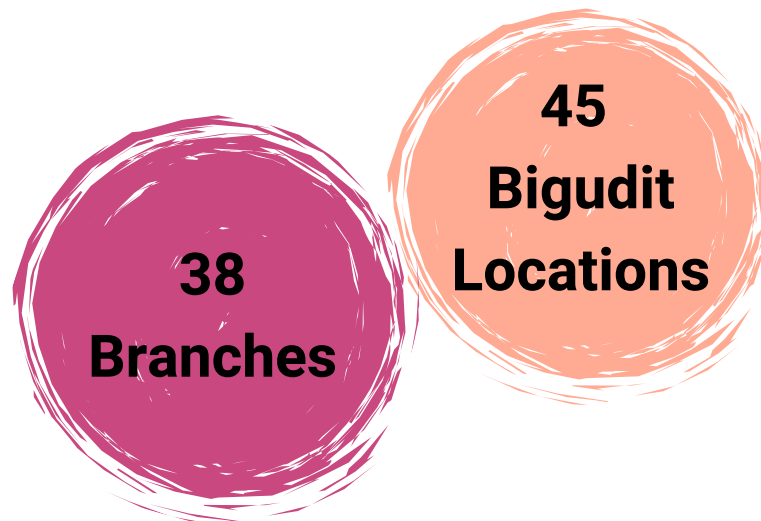
Chairperson: Ora Korazim; Director: Michal Danin Hollander

Division Profile

WIZO Israel, with 38 branches spanning from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat, is a dynamic force shaping Israeli society. Our mission centers on advancing gender equality, empowering women and youth, and prevention of violence through impactful projects tailored to local needs.

The Bigudit (Chain of Secondhand Clothing Stores)

WIZO Israel's premier secondhand chain with 45 locations nationwide, is powered by a dedicated team of 900 volunteers. Our chain's proceeds drive impactful programs, tackling social disparities and empowering women, children, and girls. Our mission is to promote environmental sustainability through recycling clothes, celebrated during Earth Day and Secondhand Day events. Our older volunteers experience the joy of meaningful volunteering, fostering social connections, and combatting loneliness.



Powered by

2,000

dedicated volunteers

Iron Swords War Impact

Immediately upon the outbreak of the Iron Swords war, in addition to our ongoing activities, WIZO Israel began working to strengthen the resilience of Israeli society with dozens of exciting projects. The following is a summary of our important work to support survivors, evacuees, and soldiers **from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat.**

**Clothing and Toy Donations
through WIZO's Bigudit**

**Activities for evacuee children
at evacuee sites**

**Supporting WIZO volunteers
who lost their loved ones**

**Displays to raise awareness in
WIZO Bigudit locations**

**Knitting warm clothing for
soldiers**

**Project "WIZO with You"
supporting women on the
home front**

**Providing support for injured
and lone soldiers**

**Supporting Small Women-
Owned Businesses**

**Distributing portable chargers
to soldiers**

**Converting WIZO Israel
branches to day care centers**

**Creation of Mourning Wreaths
for funerals**

**Baking goods and collecting
donations for food**

**Organizing lectures and
workshops to bolster
resilience**

WIZO A&P Gold de Leonescu Parents Home

Chairperson: Elisheva Levavi; Director: Matanya Ben Yaacov

Division Profile

WIZO's Parents Home is a haven offering holistic therapeutic solutions for elderly residents. From lodging and catering to healthcare and meaningful activities, we cater to diverse needs. With two main departments (Independent seniors and a nursing home) supervised by the Ministry of Welfare and Health, we provide continuous care as residents' needs evolve. Our dedicated team of approximately 60 employees ensures 24/7 support, fostering a vibrant community.

Iron Swords War Impact

With the onset of the war, WIZO Parents Home provided much-needed housing for several evacuated families from the south, most of them elderly people who required constant supervision and medical attention.

Our dedicated staff **prioritizes our residents' emotional well-being**, particularly during times of war and especially for residents who have faced past trauma such as the Holocaust. Coping with frequent missile alerts, the stress and sorrow of the ongoing war, family members serving in the army, and the loss of friends and acquaintances requires additional attention and support.



**Hundreds of evacuees
found refuge at WIZO
Parent's home and
centers.**

Remembering Those We Have Lost

"They gave their tomorrow for our today"

It's been almost 6 months since that devastating and fateful day – October 7th, 2023.

Everything we do is being held in the shadow of those events, and the war in Gaza. Tragically, more IDF soldiers continue to be killed or wounded, and over 130 hostages are still living in the endless nightmare of Hamas captivity.

We mourn the loss and take the time to remember those who were killed, wish the wounded a speedy recovery, and hope for the safe return of the hostages.

May their memory be a continued source of strength for us all.

יהי זכרם ברוך.



WIZO Returns to Sderot

The terror experienced by the people of Sderot on that devastating morning of October 7, 2023 is simply unimaginable. The 30,000 residents of Sderot, including the families of nearly 200 children that attend WIZO's three day care centers in the town, and 50 professional staff who cared for them, were forced to flee their homes, refugees in their own land, piling trauma upon trauma.

On March 3, we began reopening our three WIZO day care centers in Sderot. This is an act of dramatic importance for Israel, and a declaration of victory over our enemies, who thought that their murderous atrocities could drive us from our homes, from a part of the sovereign State of Israel; and it is a defiant message to the world: **this is our land, and we will never leave.**

Reopening these centers, which is so critical for a return to routine life in Sderot, will be a major undertaking, requiring significant resources.

To this end, we have launched an international fundraising campaign to support this vital undertaking.

We need your help.

