

IKAR • עיקר

IKAR ISRAEL RESPONSE

Many of us feel deeply connected to the State and People of Israel, and have been greatly distressed over the violence that enveloped the region over the past several weeks. Now, as we struggle to understand the many dimensions of this crisis, as we work through our anger, grief, sadness, concern and fear, there is critical work that needs to be done. As hundreds of thousands of people return to their homes following weeks of intensive fighting, the enormity of the damage is becoming apparent. The aftermath of the war has created new urgencies to which we must be attentive.

- The **New Israel Fund** (www.nif.org) is providing emergency grants to organizations serving "invisible Israelis" —the marginalized and vulnerable individuals and communities in the North who have suffered and continue to suffer both economic and psychological harm from the ongoing conflict. At the same time, NIF is organizing and funding programs that address the schisms in Israeli society exacerbated by the current conflict, particularly between Jew and Arab, and laying the groundwork for post-conflict dialogue and reconciliation.
- The **Jewish Federation's Israel in Crisis Fund** (www.jewishla.org) was established to help meet the immediate humanitarian needs of vulnerable children, elderly and disabled. 100% of the money raised is going directly to Israel, to fund: emergency kits and trauma services for elderly, training for volunteers including first aid and fire department certification, psychological support for children and families who have suffered through the war, programs for visually impaired and physically disabled youth.

We mourn the loss of civilian life on both sides of the border, and offer support to grass-roots organizations working to bring healing to the most vulnerable segments of the population in Israel and Lebanon.

- **Save the Children** (www.savethechildren.org) is working to end the suffering of children in need in Lebanon and Israel. Save the Children is scaling up its response to meet the needs of displaced children and their families, by providing supplemental foods, medicines, first aid kits, hygiene kits and sleeping materials, with a special focus on ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Drawing on decades of experience helping young children cope in the midst of conflict, the agency will also establish safe play areas to help children regain a sense of normalcy, while providing educational and play materials.