

# As Mechola Grows

On September 24, 2001, Salit Sheetrit and her husband Barak, were on their way to deliver sweets and food for the Jewish New Year, to soldiers serving in the area. While traveling on the road outside of Mechola, terrorists sprayed their car with bullets. Salit was shot in the head and mortally wounded. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

The young men and women, who were born in Mechola, took their frustration and their pain and decided to establish a new neighborhood, Salit Hill, in her memory. Salit Hill overlooks the original site of Mechola and serves to enlarge and extend the community. Growth is the best response to terror. Setting down roots is the only answer to terrorists who keep attempting to throw the Jewish people from their land.

Mechola is surrounded by Palestinian owned agricultural fields. Their homes are open to the roads where there is a great deal of Palestinian traffic. The residents feel very vulnerable. Recently, they have been the victims of burglaries and have had property destroyed. CFOIC Heartland helped set up security cameras at key points around Mechola.

Mechola was established in 1968, the very first community in the Jordan Valley, and the very first community to be established in Israel, after the Six Day War. It was built by a group of young religious Zionists and, to this day, the residents are affiliated with the Religious Zionist movement where Bible study and a religious lifestyle go hand in hand with serving the country and serving in the army. Most of the people of Mechola work in agriculture and their crops include fresh green spices, dates, and citrus fruits. There are also chicken coops and dairy barns, and more recently a few studios of local artisans. Mechola's location, right near Bet Shean and not far from Tiberias, offers their children many educational options.

And there are many children. In the past few years Mechola has seen quite an influx of second generation residents returning to make their homes where they grew up. It's a wonderful testimony to Mechola's success and the community has happily made the necessary adaptations to new young families with young children.

Last year they decided to invest in a library for their residents. The closest library is a half hour ride away. The 95 families—the over 200 children—cannot be expected to visit the library on any regular basis under these conditions. The temporary structure they appropriated for the library is in a residential building and happily, newcomers need the building as a home.

The building designated for the new library was used once as an archive and needed refurbishing and renovations in order to make it accessible and attractive. After the transformation is complete, the residents would like to invest in a nice selection of books. The library has already been partially funded and they are so eager to see the project completed.





- The people of Mechola are no stranger to terror, but they took their frustration and pain and built a new neighborhood in memory of the victims.
- A testimony to this lovely Jordan Valley community's success is the influx of second generation families. Mechola would like to provide for this younger population and refurbish a building for a library and purchase a selection of books.

The pioneers of Mechola have made it clear that they are going nowhere. They will build and grow and flourish in the Biblical Heartland as they serve G-d and their country and they are asking you to help them realize this dream.

## Project Budget

Library Renovations and Books .....	\$10,400
Funds already raised .....	-5,955
<b>TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED: .....</b>	<b>\$4,445</b>

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