

Samaria Family Assistance Programs

They're people like you and me. They too have dreams; they too have needs. But unlike you and me, their dreams are much more basic, their needs more extreme. They dream of a time they can put food on the table for their hungry children-- children who have already learned to stop asking for something to eat. They dream of looking at their spouses and feeling respect instead of desperation... seeing pride in their children's eyes instead of shame. They want to provide the basics for their families and they need a way to help themselves and their families out of the depths they have found themselves in. Their pain is real and it is great.

There are over 100,000 Jews living in Samaria, spread out over 30 small communities and several larger towns, covering a large area in the heart of Israel. The Israeli economy is doing well but there are still so many people who find themselves in precarious financial situations. Many do not know where their next meal will come from. Many breadwinners are unemployed or disabled; sometimes an illness has forced the family to spend its last shekel on medical bills. There are about 8 communities where over 20% of the population are known to Social Services. In total, out of 28,000 people 1,200 are receiving aid. At this time, fifty residents are terror victims though through the years the number was three times that. About a third of all families living in Israel live below the poverty line and the same harsh statistics apply to the communities of Samaria.

No one in this day and age should be allowed to go hungry and the Samaria Family Assistance Program works with social services in Samaria municipalities to provide food packages and other necessities for many needy families until they can get back on their feet. The food packages enable these families to maintain a basic standard of living. Food packages are also allocated before Passover, to allow them to feel the joy, and not the burden of the holiday season. The Ethiopian immigrant girls from the Lehava High School in Kedumim are also presented with special Passover food coupons to bring home to their families, so they can celebrate Passover respectably and without sadness. The program relies on private contributions, but the shortfalls are formidable, and social workers are often unable to respond to all the requests.

When parents are unable to provide for their families, the damage goes far beyond a financial one; it affects their emotional state. The Social Services Departments keep trying to find creative ways to help these families, so many of them blessed with many children. They have come up with a promising initiative—second hand stores, which will be open to the entire population, neutralizing the possible stigma of receiving aid. The store will sell second hand clothing and house wares which will be collected from all over the country, but primarily from local communities, then sorted and laundered. The prices will be nominal, a handful of change per item. This will allow the buyer to maintain a sense of dignity and will allow the store some extra funds. The income from these modest sales will be used to buy items which cannot be sold second hand, like socks and underwear, and to cover the cost of rent, water and electricity bills for each store. The municipality is providing the stores with shelving, closets, racks and air conditioning, and is helping with part of the maintenance costs. One such store already exists, but because the Samaria communities are widespread, three more stores are needed: in North Samaria, Barkan, and Avnei Chefetz.





- The Samaria Family Assistance Program provides food, second-hand clothing and other basic needs for a growing number of needy families. No one should be turned away.
- Not being able to provide the basics isn't just about a hole in the pocketbook. It creates a loss of self-worth and a sense of humiliation and failure. Dignity must be restored.

COFOIC Heartland is asking you to see the pain, the shame and the emptiness of what has become of these families' lives, to give them hope. Help give them a future filled with pride, confidence, self-respect and purpose.

Project Budget

Monthly food packages for 100 families	\$38,095
700 Passover food packages	33,330
Passover food coupons for Lehava Ethiopian immigrants.....	10,475
Initial Set-up of 3 second-hand stores.....	24,000
Annual ongoing maintenance costs.....	5,715

TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED:..... \$111,615

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