

SAVING LIVES AT THE HEIGHT OF WAR

A Heartland Story

Making a Difference in the Lives of So Many



“These bomb shelters have given such great relief and a sense of security to all the families of Bar Kochba!”



Living in mobile homes and prefabricated structures, Bar Kochba's pioneers have chosen a life of idealism over convenience.



CFOIC Heartland donors like you gave Bar Kochba's residents a secure place to seek shelter during a ballistic missile attack.

Minutes before dawn on June 13, 2025, everyone in Bar Kochba, a new small community located just south of Jerusalem, woke up to sirens blaring and roaring. Slowly but surely, a sense of urgency spread throughout Bar Kochba as news broke that Israel had struck Iran's nuclear program. A barrage of ballistic missiles and drones from Iran was imminent. Everyone across Israel knew they would soon be running to bomb shelters. However, the families of Bar Kochba, numbering under twenty and residing in mobile homes or prefabricated structures, had no access to any bomb shelter nor the financial means to acquire one. But just one week later, the families of Bar Kochba unexpectedly received all the resources they would need to bring two bomb shelters to the community!

“We now feel much calmer every time the siren sounds,” said Or Ashuach, Chief Administrator of Bar Kochba. “These bomb shelters have given such great relief and a sense of security to all the families of Bar Kochba!”

Even before the 12-day-war with Iran, the fledgling community of Bar Kochba, founded in just February of this year, had already faced its fair share of security threats. Situated in a very strategic spot that greatly serves to further connect all of Gush Etzion with Jerusalem, Bar Kochba is also surrounded by a very hostile Arab population. Moreover, ever since their arrival on the northern edges of the Gush Etzion region, Bar Kochba's pioneering families have been living with an underdeveloped infrastructure and water delivery system. Yet, their decision to establish a new community with all the challenges and hurdles involved in doing so, exhibits their strong commitment towards a life of ideological dedication over one of mere convenience. Naming their community after Simon Bar Kochba, the heroic military leader who valiantly led the Jews of Judea in battle to liberate the Land of Israel from the pagan Roman empire, the residents of Bar Kochba



Thanks to CFOIC Heartland friends like you, the toddlers in Bar Kochba's childhood daycare can speedily seek shelter during an air raid siren!

remain focused on carrying a national and spiritual legacy of safeguarding the Biblical Heartland.

"They wanted to be part of something bigger than themselves by doing their part to protect the land," explained Dhalia Gottlieb, Director of Development and Special Projects for the Gush Etzion Foundation, an organization that helps develop communities in the Gush Etzion region.

Yet, when the 12-day-war with Iran broke out, the residents of Bar Kochba suddenly found their greater mission and very lives in grave danger. Bar Kochba had been a hot spot for falling shrapnel from missile interceptions, and any piece of such debris descending at great velocity could be deadly. Bomb shelters instantly became absolute necessities to protect the residents in Bar Kochba. However, with barely any resources of their own, the community had no means to purchase nor transport any bomb shelters to Bar Kochba.

Desperate for help, the pioneers of Bar Kochba along with the Gush Etzion Foundation turned to CFOIC Heartland, whose donors over the years have given generously to the Gush Etzion region and its communities. On June 19th, in the middle of Israel's 12-day-war with Iran, members of CFOIC Heartland's family sincerely extended themselves to pay a solidarity visit to the community. Upon their



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Bar Kochba," noted Yaron Rosenthal, Chairman of the Gush Etzion Regional Council.

"On behalf of the residents of Bar Kochba, thank you from the bottom of our hearts!"



Your unforgettable contribution to the safety and security of Bar Kochba's families has brought them strength and uplifted their spirits!

arrival, CFOIC Heartland committed to providing Bar Kochba with not just one but two bomb shelters! One of the bomb shelters was placed in the vicinity of the community's homes, with the second adjacent to the children's daycare center.

"At the start of the war, Bar Kochba's families had nowhere to run to for shelter, but suddenly, CFOIC Heartland amazingly stepped in," Dhalia excitedly remarked. "The fact that CFOIC Heartland came in person meant so much to all of us and was a clear demonstration that CFOIC Heartland truly operates from the greatest depths of the heart!"

"CFOIC Heartland's visit, precisely during a time in which we were all under threat of Iranian attacks was an open display of commitment and courage and served to greatly strengthen the spirit of the residents in



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