Exploring the Values Driving IsraAID

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS COLLECTION

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Exploring the Values Driving IsraAID, Israel's Leading Nonprofit Humanitarian Aid Organization

What is this program series about?

IsraAID is Israel's leading nonprofit humanitarian aid organization that supports people affected by humanitarian crises. They partner with local communities around the world to provide urgent aid, assist in recovery, and reduce the risk of future disasters.

Through the following programs, participants will explore powerful real-world examples of the values driving the work of IsraAID. Inspired by IsraAID, the activities will encourage participants to explore and articulate their own values and motivations for helping others, both locally and globally.

Learn What IsraAID is All About:

- [IsraAID: 20 Years of Humanitarian Aid Around the World](#) (7-minute video)
- [Responding to India's COVID-19 Crisis](#) (2-minute video)
- [IsraAID FAQ](#)

Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings

Enduring Understandings:

- IsraAID, Israel's leading nonprofit humanitarian aid organization, is a values-driven organization. It supports and collaborates with emergency-impacted communities around the world, to address immediate and long-term needs, regardless of politics, religion, and ethnicity.
- IsraAID brings Israeli expertise, innovation, and technology to help vulnerable people globally.
- The decisions and actions that IsraAID's team must make are influenced by complex and fast-changing emergency situations.
- We can support IsraAID in many different ways.

Essential Questions:

- What values guide us in our decisions in complex situations? In our daily lives?
- What is IsraAID and why is its work important? What makes it an Israeli organization?
- What values drive IsraAID? How do these values manifest themselves in our lives?

A Note on Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings are meant to answer the "why" and "what" of any program or activity. "Why" are we learning about this? "What" does this add to my relationship with or insights about Israel? "What" does it teach me about myself and "what" is important to me? These ideas and questions are intended as a guide to help facilitators focus activities and conversations.

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45-60 minutes

Introduction: Simulation   25-35 mins.

Share:

Oh no! It is storming outside and a large tree fell through the roof of the *chadar ochel*
(חדר אוכל), cafeteria. A few of your friends got injured by falling debris (we don't know exactly
their injuries). In addition, a lot of rain is flooding the cafeteria, and the water level is rising.
How can we help?

Note: This hypothetical scenario is intentionally general. Feel free to add additional details.

Divide into small groups and have each create a list of actions to take.

If needed, provide examples:

- Put a tarp over the hole in the roof
- Take injured students to get medical attention
- Prioritize care and evacuation of most vulnerable people, like younger children, those
  with special needs, special health conditions, etc.
- Move tables, chairs, and other items that could be ruined by water
- Dry expensive items that could be ruined by water damage
- Evacuate everyone to avoid any electrical safety issues
- Call the fire department for help

**Challenge each group to plan their response by ranking their list of actions from most
immediate to least.**

There are no right answers, but teams can only do one at a time, so no ties are allowed!

Give the groups five minutes to rank, and ask each to share and explain:

- What did you decide was the first response to take?
- How did you prioritize your actions?
- Why did you prioritize the way you did? What did you decide was most important to address?
- What was difficult about this exercise (lack of time or information, prioritization of things that are all important)?
- Was any part of the exercise of your ranking list easy? Why?
- How did you handle differences of opinion?

Now that the groups have examined how they might prioritize immediate actions, challenge them to consider how they might plan for a longer-term response:

- What longer-term actions would you suggest to better prepare for and limit potential damage in similar situations in the future?
    - Examples: teach first aid to students and staff, run severe weather drills, remove trees and poles that could fall on the building, etc.
- How might you engage the wider school community in thinking about preparing for the unexpected?
    - Example: consult with community members who are first responders to work with school staff and students to develop an emergency plan.
- Can you envision ways that this incident might lead to community growth?

Values Exercise   10-15 mins.

Ask participants to work in pairs to brainstorm and identify the values/priorities that influenced how they set priorities in the previous activity.

> Alternatively, provide them this list:

- Preparedness
- Flexibility
- *Pikuach nefesh* (פיקוח נפש), Saving a life
- Empowerment
- Timeliness
- Supporting the most vulnerable people
- *V'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha* (ואהבת לרעך כמוך), Love your neighbor as yourself

Discuss:

Every decision we make—during normal and challenging times alike—is influenced by our values, regardless of whether we actively think about it in the moment. With that in mind:

- Which values do you think were behind your choices in the simulation?
- Why are these values important to you?
- What did you and your partner value similarly? What was different?

Introduce IsraAID   15 mins.

When introducing these topics, be sure to do so in an age-appropriate way while also providing real-world examples. We recommend previewing the short IsraAID videos below. The IsraAID FAQ also provides background.

If a question comes up about IsraAID for which you don't know the answer, it is ok to say so— you do not need to be an expert!

We've learned about how we might respond to a disaster and the values that are a part of those choices. Now we are going to learn about the values that drive IsraAID's emergency responders around the world.

Share:

What is IsraAID and what does it do?

> IsraAID is a non-governmental, apolitical, international humanitarian aid organization based in Tel Aviv, Israel. Since its founding in 2001, IsraAID has worked in emergency and long-term development settings in 55 countries, providing life-saving emergency response and long-term support to communities affected by natural disasters, post-conflict situations, and health epidemics. Utilizing Israeli expertise, innovation, and technology, IsraAID's professional and diverse teams, in partnership with local communities, have served more than 8 million people worldwide.

What values drive IsraAID and what are its priorities?

> IsraAID's values are demonstrated through their mantra of "Communities First." The people and communities IsraAID works with are the leaders and decision-makers. They understand best which solutions will work for their own communities based on cultural sensitivities, local customs, available resources, and more. They are ultimately responsible for taking action to create long-term sustainable solutions in their communities and country.

> IsraAID also focuses on caring for the most vulnerable people. They strive to be the 'First in' and 'Last Out' of an emergency situation—a commitment to supporting communities for as long as is needed to reach a stronger, more stable place than before.

Screen a few videos showcasing IsraAID's work:

- [IsraAID: 20 Years of Humanitarian Aid Around the World](#) (7 minutes)
- [Responding to India's COVID-19 Crisis](#) (2 min.)

For a low-tech option, share [this interview with the head of IsraAID](#) and let participants read in small groups.

Wrap-up   5 mins.

Think back to the descriptions and videos of IsraAID's work and discuss:

- What are a few things that make IsraAID unique?
    - For example: It is an Israeli nonprofit (they are not official representatives of a government), they stay to help communities for as long as it takes, empowers local communities to lead, and more.
    - While there aren't many like IsraAID, there are some other humanitarian aid nonprofits doing work with similar values.
- How does seeing videos of IsraAID's work make you feel? Why?
- Which of the values discussed during the emergency simulation did you see being enacted in the videos?
- How does seeing these values put into action by IsraAID change any prioritizations you made in the simulation activity?

A Deeper Dive into IsraAID's Humanitarian Work

45-60 minutes

Note: This program is intended to be facilitated after program 1

Values and Reframing   5-10 mins.

Briefly review and discuss some of the work that IsraAID does around the world. Screening the short "Disasters Don't Wait: IsraAID Emergency Response 2021" video may be helpful.

Ask:

- What values reflected in IsraAID's work do you think are universal?
- Which of these values have you seen expressed in Judaism?
  Examples:
  - The belief that all humans are created in God's image, *b'tzelem elohim* (בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹקִים), and deserve and are worthy of respect and support.
  - *Tikkun olam* (תִּקּוּן עוֹלָם)- The Jewish value of working to improve the world.
  - Welcoming and caring for the stranger in need is a command in the torah, *v'ahavtem et ha'ger* (וַאֲהַבְתֶּם אֶת הַגֵּר).
  - "Teaching a person to fish"—or in this case, helping communities reach long-term self-sufficiency. In Judaism, this is considered the highest form of *tzedakah* (צְדָקָה), charitable giving.
- Which of these values resonate with you?
- What is an example of when you have seen them expressed in your own life?

Exploring Stories of IsraAID's Challenging Work   15-20 mins.

Print and hang these photographs and captions from IsraAID missions, around the room.

- If in a virtual or hybrid setting, you can share the images using an online bulletin board program like Padlet or Google Jamboard.

Select one of the following activities:

Option 1:

- Have participants browse the images and captions. Provide a few sticky notes to write values and principles they see enacted in each photograph and stick their note near the corresponding photograph.
- When they are done, make sure they go around to look at the different sticky notes on the photographs.
- Discuss:
    - What things stood out to you in the photos?
    - What common themes and values emerged across many of the photographs?

Option 2:

- Have participants browse each of the images and captions.
- Each person should then select a photograph with which they feel connected, find interesting, or about which they have a question. It is ok for participants to choose the same photo, but encourage the group to diversify their choices.
- Ask participants to share why they selected their image.
- Discuss:
    - What common themes and values emerged across many of the photographs?
    - Was this a difficult choice? Why?

Brainstorm: Turning Values Into Action   10-15 mins.

Explain to the group that thinking about our values and priorities is important, but more important is turning our values into action. It is time to come up with ideas about concrete ways to support vulnerable people around the world.

Together, or in small groups, discuss and share ways that participants can help IsraAID support vulnerable communities globally:

- What social causes are important to you? Your family? Your community?
- What about them is important?
- Think of some ways you or others have been involved locally in supporting such causes. How might these same efforts also benefit IsraAID and its partner communities?
- Brainstorm and share ways to potentially support IsraAID's efforts addressing similar issues globally. Be sure to detail how these could be enacted in real life, not just theoretically.

If needed, share some of these ideas with the groups:

- Educate others about humanitarian issues and IsraAID's responses: Follow and share about IsraAID on Instagram, and other social media platforms, with friends and family, at school, in your shuls.
- Host an IsraAID event or Invite IsraAID to speak in your community.
- Create a fundraiser/FB fundraiser or donate to IsraAID.
- Speak to your community about supporting a specific IsraAID project through IsraAID's "Better-Together" program.
- Share your own ideas with IsraAID on how to raise funds to support vulnerable communities around the world.

Wrap-up and Reflection   10-15 mins.

In small groups, one-on-one, or together, have participants reflect on their learnings.

After this program...

- Hand: What are you inspired to **do**?
- Ear: What is something you want to **hear** more about?
- Eyes: What do you **see** differently?
- Heart: What is something you are **feeling**?
- Brain: What is something you will keep **thinking** about?