|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Negev** | | |
| **STRATEGIES** | | |
| **Vision, Ideas, and Policies** | **Public Mobilization** | **Leadership and Networks** |
| Put in here the Map of Programs AND Pie of Program Including Other | | |
| **The organization was established in:** 1989  **DA Support (in 2024):** $20,000  **Rapid Response Support (in 2023)**: $100,000  **Link to Organizational Website**: https://hechalutz.com/  **Link to Proposal:** | | |
| **INTRODUCTION** | | |
| The Hechalutz movement, established by the Midrash in Oranim, is an educational organization whose aim is to develop a leadership that is committed to creating a society that upholds social justice, mutual responsibility, democracy, peace, equality, and freedom. It runs leadership programs for young people before, during, and after their military service, which combine study and community engagement. These programs educate participants about Hechalutz’s values, help shape their identity and sense of belonging, and foster motivation and commitment to promoting change. In addition, Hechalutz operates an alumni network, providing a platform for graduates of the program to engage in activist and political activities, and encouraging them to take on influential roles and become socially engaged.  Hechalutz views itself as distinctively political, with a clear commitment to the progressive camp. Within this framework, Hechalutz has established numerous collaborations with NIF and various supported organizations. Hechalutz is also part of the Ha-Migdalor (“Lighthouse”) project alongside Idea, which has been funded by NIF since 2022. Since February 2024, Hechalutz has been funded by the Democratic Infrastructure fund. Hechalutz has extensive connections and deep roots in the kibbutzim of the Western Negev, which were severely impacted by October 7.  The “Protecting the Gaza Envelope Project” as created as part of a collaboration between Hechalutz and the Kibbutz Movement. Its aim is to provide a response from Israel’s democratic camp to the resettlement of the kibbutzim in the Gaza envelope region. The severe damage inflicted on these kibbutzim on October 7 – complete destruction, numerous casualties, and hostages – is a national-scale tragedy from which it will take many years to recover. Most of the Gaza envelope kibbutzim have temporarily relocated for a period ranging from one year to several years until they can return. Some residents have already returned to certain kibbutzim, while others are expected to take between 3-4 years to return.  The Takumah Directorate, which has been tasked with overseeing the return of residents to the Gaza envelope area, operates according to objectives and principles set by the government. It is therefore not necessarily committed to the identity of the communities, and certainly not to the liberal-democratic camp. It is seen as part of the threat felt by the kibbutzim in the area. At the same time, the Zor’im Forum, which is led by the religious-Zionist movement, has emerged, and aims to coordinate settlement and educational activities for returning residents. This forum is also not committed to the liberal-democratic camp.  Based on the understanding that the identity of those returning to the Gaza envelope communities will significantly impact the framing of the conclusions from the October 7 war, attitudes toward the situation in Gaza, and future war policies; and in light of the fact that the rightwing has already developed plans for resettling the kibbutzim using the “Garin Torani” (religious settler groups) model, the Kibbutz Movement and Hechalutz have developed the “Protecting the Gaza Envelope” project. The goal of the project is to safely return kibbutz residents to their homes, encourage kibbutz members from central and northern Israel to settle in the Gaza envelope communities, and provide an educational response and ideological value framework for all residents of the region.  This is a national-scale project aimed at providing a response and preventing rightwing messianic forces from forcibly taking over the kibbutzim using the “Garin Torani” model.  **Program details:**  Phase 1:  -- Mapping the affected kibbutzim, assessing needs, and creating a support package.  -- Establishing a coalition of movements and organizations from the liberal-democratic camp, allocating tasks, and deepening cooperation.  -- Forming a coordination group comprising kibbutz settlement coordinators and representatives from regional councils.  Phase 2:  -- Launching a campaign to recruit liberal-democratic educational staff to operate education systems in the Gaza envelope communities.  -- Running a “return home” campaign that encourages residents to return to their communities.  -- Campaigning to recruit young people and volunteers for settlement in the Gaza border area.  -- Establishing and supporting groups of young people (recently discharged soldiers, graduates, and families). The process will involve connecting young people and relationship building.  Phase 3:  -- Creating groups and internal leadership, supporting these communities throughout the settlement process, and assisting kibbutzim with the integration of new residents.  -- Creating a multi-year plan to establish educational institutions and leadership programs in all Gaza envelope kibbutzim, in line with their needs and wishes, including: student villages, pre-military academies, national service year centers, preferred employment programs, and more tailored initiatives. | | |
| **The overall current expected impact of the program**  **as a strategy for advancing NIF’s overall mission of a just and democratic Israel is:** | | |
| **The grantee uses strategies of: קמפיינים, עבודה קהילתית, עבודה התיישבותית** | | |
| **These are the goals of the organization and then some relevant benchmarks outcomes on the way to achieving the goals:**  The primary goal of the program is to resettle the kibbutzim in the Western Negev with residents who are committed to the ideas of the liberal-democratic camp in Israel, and to prevent rightwing messianic forces from establishing “Garin Torani” groups that would replace the kibbutz residents. | | |
| **Added value of this grant include that:**  The work carried out as part of this project by Hechalutz and the Kibbutz Movement is aimed at creating democratic infrastructures. This is a strategic, political, and critical initiative for Israel’s center-left camp. We are aware that the rightwing camp is already preparing to resettle the Gaza envelope kibbutzim, and this project offers an alternative from the democratic camp. The project of national scale, and national importance.  **Cooperation between the two parties:**  The Kibbutz Movement, recognized as the most legitimate body for working with the Gaza envelope kibbutzim, and Hechalutz, which specializes in creating content for the liberal-democratic camp, will ensure the effectiveness both of the practical aspect of the project – resettling residents and rebuilding the kibbutzim – and its ideological aspect, by establishing a comprehensive education system, including educational teams, and ensuring that the project counters rightwing plans and serves the broader liberal-democratic camp in Israel. | | |
| **EXPECTED PROGRESS** | | |
| **Overall Expected (1-2 Years) Impact:**  The establishment of a body focused on resettling the Gaza envelope kibbutzim, based on a liberal-democratic vision.  **Expected Strategic Activities (and Outputs):**  In the coming year:  Intermediate benchmark results in pursuit of these overall goals include:  Goals  -- The return of Gaza envelope residents to their homes.  -- Recruitment of 100 volunteers for educational activities in the region.  -- The establishment of 6 educational frameworks in line with liberal-democratic values in the Gaza envelope region.  -- Recruitment of 80 educators from the liberal-democratic camp to undertake educational work in the region.  **Expected Measurable Outcomes:**  **Indicator and Tools that the grantee/we will use for tracking progress:** | | |

**2024-2025 Budget**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **2024** |
| Annual project Expenses in US Dollars | $343,722 |
|  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Anticipated 2024-25 P Income** | **$** | **%** |
| Total Assured | $990000 | 13.8$ |
| Total Likely | $4585000 | 64.3% |
| Total Pending | $1450000 | 20.3%% |
| Recommended NIF Grant | $100,000 | 1.4% |
| **Total Anticipated Organizational Income** | **$203,000** | **100%** |

|  |
| --- |
| **RECOMMENDATIONS** |
| **2024 Staff Recommendation: $300,000 (175,000 עבור התנועה הקיבוצית, 125,000 עבור החלוץ)**  **Staff Analysis of Risk vs. Opportunity:** High opportunity/High Risk  In terms of opportunity – if the project is successful, there is a significant chance that it will directly impact the reality in Israel. The potential impact of the program, if successful, is very high and will have a broad influence on the infrastructure of the democratic camp and on how Gaza envelope kibbutzim are rehabilitated in the upcoming years. However, due to the rapidly changing situation – both politically and in terms of security – there is a high level of risk in providing funding. This risk does not stem from a lack of trust in the organizations involved, as both are well-established entities with proven capabilities in mobilization and resourcing.  **Explain Staff Recommendation:**  This budget will enable the program to run for two years and to fully establish itself. Additionally, it will provide capacity to secure additional resources from other sources.  **Recommendation of Board/Grants Committee 2024:** |