

Putting Down Roots in Maskiot



Shirat Hayam was a small beachfront community on the southern edge of the Gush Katif bloc of communities in the Gaza region. It was founded in the year 2000, on the very same day of the brutal terrorist bombing of a Kfar Darom school bus. Five years later it is gone, wiped away from the face of Biblical Israel. But the people—these heartbroken but never broken pioneers, are alive and struggling, to keep their spirits alive and to reestablish their dream somewhere else on this holy soil.

But for now they're refugees. When you hear the word refugees you probably picture people wandering aimlessly, with their worldly possessions on their backs. The picture is correct. The refugees of Shirat Hayam are still wandering; they are still not home. At first they spent two months in the Yeshiva dormitories in Alon Shvut. Then they had to move. They were placed in an abandoned Youth Hostel in Brosh Habika, a neighborhood in the Jordan Valley, where they remained for another four months. In mid-2006, the families were forced to move, yet again, to Hemdat, a nearby community, where they are still living in mobile homes. They were told that their permanent homes, in Maskiot, would be ready in three to six months. In fact, the entire project has been frozen indefinitely and they languish in their run-down, cramped mobile homes in Hemdat.

Maskiot, in the Jordan Valley, is a small and barely populated community. There is a school there, which teaches Bible to young men about to enter the army. But there is nothing much more there to help the few residents of Maskiot hold on to their hilltop. The people of Maskiot are thrilled to welcome the refugees from Gush Katif, counting on their dormant but very alive

pioneering spirit to help turn their hilltop home into a vibrant community. Due to political complications, all permanent building has been frozen and the families were forced to invest in mobile homes until true homes can be built.

The economic basis of the community will be farming and one of the first projects that they started, even before their homes were ready, was the planting of an olive grove and a date orchard. They were allotted land for this purpose and have created a green spot in the middle of the barren Jordan Valley and providing an income for several of the Shirat HaYam families.

CFOIC generously answered the call to help raise funds to plant trees. Now, due to the success of the project, the families of Maskiot would like to continue expanding their agricultural enterprise. Until now the people of Maskiot have been borrowing agricultural equipment from farmers in the area who have been trying to be helpful. But the equipment is not always available. So they would like to invest in the purchase of a tractor and a pest control sprayer. They have done the research and found reliable second-hand equipment

The significance of this entire project is enormous. The people of Shirat HaYam were uprooted from their homes, their few trees and gardens destroyed, as part of “disengagement.” And yet, they are ready and eager to put down new roots, to make another barren area come to life again. By partnering with these pioneers, you too can partner in the settlement of a new community in Israel and you can help fulfill prophecy. “And I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant.” Ezekiel 36:30.

Tractor	\$15,125
Pest control sprayer	12,375
TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED:	\$27,500

To participate in this project:

Visit our website at www.cfoic.com/projects ~ Or mail a check with the project name in the memo: CFOIC~ Box 50833~Colorado Springs, CO 80949 (US & Canada) ~ CFOIC~PO Box 752~Ginot Shomron, ISRAEL (All Others)