

OUR IMPACT

Overseas Stories:

African Orphans Find Hope at Nitzana



NITZANA, ISRAEL—A boarding school at Nitzana, operated by the Jewish Agency for Israel, is a home to more than 50 youths escaping the horrors of war, torture, and famine in Eritrea and Sudan. All of the 14-to-17-year-old students are orphans, who fled their home countries and crossed the Egyptian Sinai peninsula, in a bid to cross the border into Israel and safe refuge.

Center Director Yair Amir says the center, a “field-school” style cluster of

buildings set among tawny rolling hills, offers both immediate relief and a happier future for youths who have endured torture at the hands of Bedouin marauders.

“In the face of human evil, we offer a warm, supportive program 365 days a year, one which provides psychological counseling, enrichment activities, and vocational training.” Amir says. “We provide for them on the humanitarian level, emphasizing tolerance, mutual understanding, and respect regardless of religion, nationality or background. In addition, providing informal educational activities like soccer games, bike rides, trips to the city of Eilat—are experiences that help them reclaim their childhood and be boys again.”

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“They are seeds that will bring forth wonderful fruit, and I am very excited about this project” says Karen Kellerman, an educator at Nitzana. “We view this as an excellent example, both for us, and for the world, in how to solve the agonizing issue of child refugees—this is really ‘*Tikun Olam*’ (Healing the world)”.

