

jewish heart for africa

Jewish Heart for Africa Provides Polio Vaccine to Over 10,000 Ugandans During Recent Outbreak

NEW YORK, January 6, 2011 – Jewish Heart for Africa (JHA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, provided the necessary technology through its Project Sol initiative to vaccinate in excess of 10,000 children in Uganda during a recent outbreak of Polio.

In August of 2009, Uganda was declared Polio-free. Yet in late September of 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed two cases of Polio in the Eastern region of the Bugiri district, not far from the area in which JHA currently operates its solar power initiative. Pursuant to the confirmed cases, Ugandan government officials, including District Health Offices in Mbale, Pallisa and Kaliro called on JHA to assist in emergency mass immunization efforts to contain the outbreak.

JHA uses Israeli solar technologies in rural medical facilities to provide light for nighttime medical care, and to power 50–75 liter solar powered refrigerators. These refrigerators are used to store vaccines designed to prevent diseases such as Polio, Tuberculosis and Measles. The refrigerators are powered by crystalline photovoltaic solar panels. To date, JHA has powered 12 medical clinics in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda.

Working in conjunction with the WHO and the Uganda National Expanded Program on Immunization, JHA's solar powered refrigerators enabled extensive expansion of the country's strategic immunization efforts. Just last month, JHA refrigerated and stored enough Polio vaccine vials to vaccinate over 10,000 children under the age of 5. During a three day window of time in November and again in December, the WHO and the Ministry of Health implemented a door to door immunization strategy. Health care workers walked to the doorstep of every household in the sub-counties of Bubyangu, Bufumbo and Wanale in the district of Mbale, and to Bumanya, Naiwakoke and Nabikoli in the district of Kaliro, in effort to immunize as many children as possible. JHA's solar powered refrigerators also made it possible for a second round of booster vaccinations to be administered to each child vaccinated in these districts. The third round of boosters will be given in late January.

The Ugandan Ministry of Health issued a statement of gratitude for JHA's efforts stating, "We would not have hit the targeted number without your support." A District Health Officer from Mbale commented, "We have even scored more than 100% just because the (JHA) fridges were down there making it easy for health workers to pick up vaccines."

JHA Founder and President Sivan Borowich-Ya'ari stated, "We are honored to have played an important role in this impressive campaign to save lives and protect the people of Uganda against Polio."

Borowich–Ya’ari attributed this accomplishment to JHA’s solar powered refrigeration technology. Solar technologies from Israel produced by JHA’s partner SolarEdge allow JHA staff to monitor the efficiency of their solar panels remotely, ensuring that vaccines stay cold when they are needed most. Borowich–Ya’ari noted, “Jewish Heart for Africa is honored to use Israeli technologies to support African development. We will be there for the people of Uganda in times of crisis and beyond.”

About Jewish Heart for Africa

Jewish Heart for Africa is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that brings sustainable Israeli technologies to African villages. Jewish Heart for Africa’s first initiative, Project Sol, installs Israeli solar technologies to power African schools, medical clinics, and water pumping systems. Their second initiative, Project Agro, uses Israeli drip irrigation techniques to fight hunger and promote economic growth. Jewish Heart for Africa is currently operating in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda, and will begin working in Malawi in early 2011. Since its founding in 2008, Jewish Heart for Africa has completed 37 solar and agricultural projects, bringing light, clean water, improved education and proper medical care to over 150,000 African people.

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