

Eye-care treatment for South Sudanese refugees in Kenya

Over the past few months the Center for International Cooperation (MASHAV) at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been in touch with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Nairobi to offer assistance to South Sudanese refugees at the Kakuma refugee camp in Northern Kenya. The Kakuma camp, located in Kenya about 50 kilometers from the Sudanese border, houses over 75,000 people, mostly South Sudanese refugees.

Dr. Yossi Baratz, MASHAV's medical projects coordinator in Africa in cooperation with the UNHCR set up a temporary eye clinic near the camp utilizing medical material purchased beforehand by MASHAV. The clinic served as the base for two Israeli ophthalmologists,

Dr. Drora Tzarfati from Ha'Emek Medical Center in Afula and Dr. Nir Zeider from Rambam Medical Center in Haifa, who arrived for a two-week mission on July 2nd, 2007, to perform eye-sight restoring surgical procedures and treat ocular diseases.

Hundreds of surgical procedures are performed by visiting Israeli teams who work together with local staff, restoring sight to many of the patients. Israeli ophthalmologists also train the local personnel, and ophthalmologic equipment and supplies are donated by the Government of Israel.