

ESG IN TIMES OF CRISIS

THE ISRAELI CASE STUDY

2026



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This document is a companion to the ESG in Times of Crisis Business Playbook, published by Maala, Israel's leading organization for corporate responsibility, bringing together over 130 of Israel's leading companies under shared standards of responsible business conduct. While the Playbook offers a universal framework for corporate responsibility in crisis conditions, this case study presents the data, examples, and field insights from three years of documented corporate response in Israel, the experience on which the Playbook is built.

Between October 2023 and 2026, Israeli companies operated under conditions that tested every dimension of corporate responsibility: mass mobilization of military reservists, large-scale civilian displacement, supply chain disruption, psychological trauma at scale, and the sustained pressure of a multi-front conflict. What makes this experience particularly instructive is not only its scale, but its nature: Israeli companies were not responding to a crisis somewhere else. They were inside it – their employees affected, their facilities sometimes targeted, their communities disrupted. The corporate response that emerged was therefore not philanthropy directed outward, but survival and solidarity from within.

The data in this document is drawn from Maala's ESG Index research, including surveys of 60 of Israel's largest corporations conducted in the first months following October 7, 2023, and from the 2025 Maala ESG Index which surveyed over 100 companies on their ongoing crisis response.

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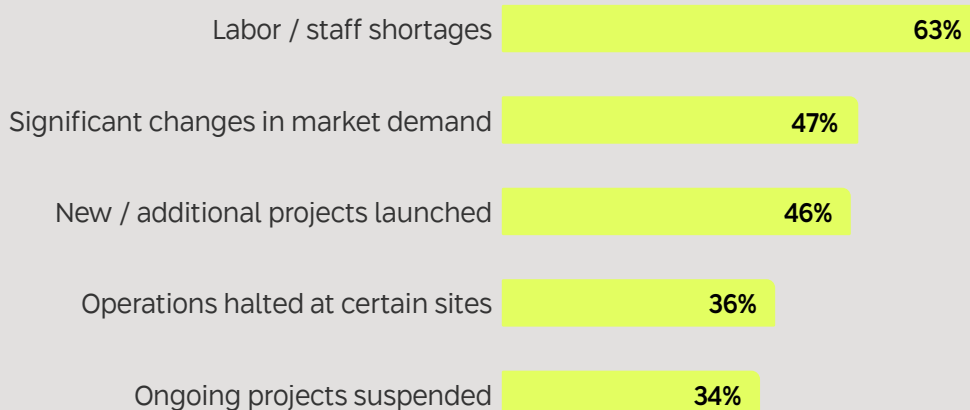
ISRAEL: A CASE STUDY IN CORPORATE RESILIENCE

Between October 2023 and 2026, Israeli companies operated under conditions that tested every dimension of corporate responsibility: large-scale civilian displacement, supply chain disruption, psychological trauma at scale, the sustained pressure of a multi-front conflict and mass mobilization of employees called up for military reserve service. The data gathered by Maala across this period offers a granular picture of what structured corporate responsibility looks like under real emergency conditions.

The Immediate Impact: Operational Disruption

Within the first three months following October 7, 2023, Maala surveyed 60 of Israel's largest corporations. The operational disruption was immediate and severe:

Reported operational impacts – % of companies surveyed (Q4 2023)



These figures underscore both the scale of disruption and the remarkable speed with which companies adapted. Rather than shutting down, the majority pivoted, launching new initiatives even as they managed workforce shortages and site closures.

Employee Support: Expanding the Duty of Care

The response to employee welfare went far beyond standard HR practice. Companies systematically expanded what “employer responsibility” means:

Employee support measures implemented – % of companies

Emotional and psychological support services	90%
Financial assistance programs	85%
Tailored programs for affected employees	81%
Dedicated emergency support centers	80%
Targeted support for employees in reserve duty	80%
Professional tools for displaced workers	73%
Strengthened internal communication channels	71%

The Reservist Challenge

One of the defining corporate challenges of the Israeli crisis was workforce management under sustained military mobilization. The scale was unprecedented in Israel's modern history:

18%

Average share of employees serving in reserves or with a spouse serving (2024, 100+ companies)

98.9

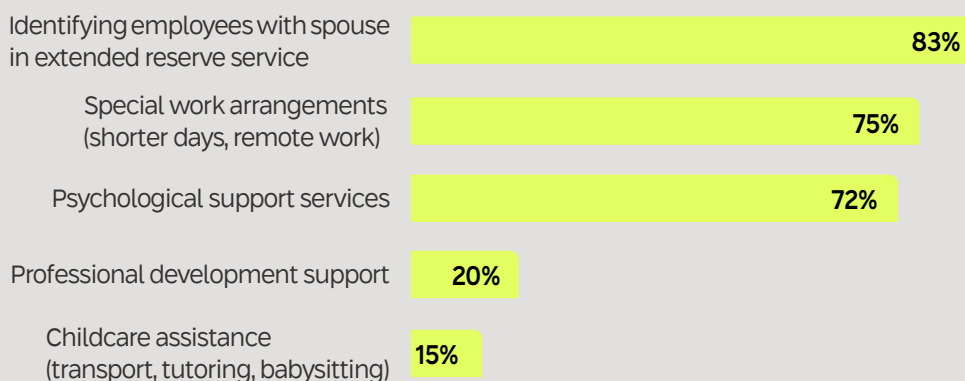
Average reserve service duration in days (2024)

60%

Companies launching new social initiatives through partnerships in response to the war

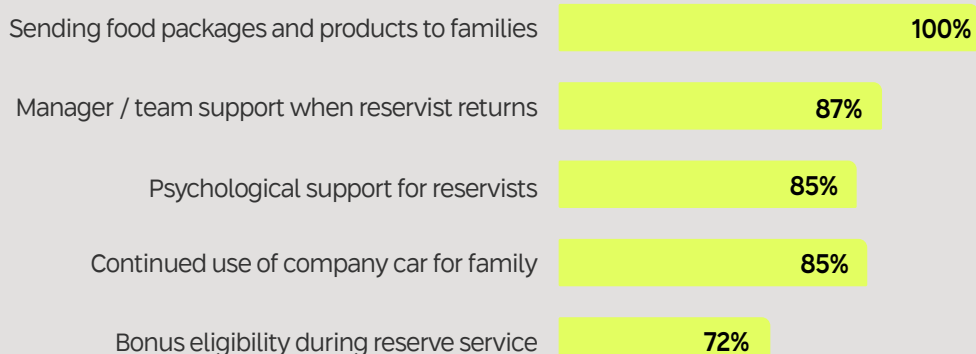
Companies responded by extending benefits that had previously been available only to direct employees to the families of reservists, a significant expansion of the traditional scope of corporate responsibility. Support for spouses included:

Support for spouses of reservists — % of companies



Meanwhile, support for employees themselves during reserve duty was nearly universal:

Support for employees during reserve duty – % of companies



Community and Humanitarian Response

Between October 7 and the end of 2023, the 60 companies surveyed by Maala donated 251 million NIS (approximately \$69M USD) in cash and in-kind contributions, and committed an additional 300 million NIS (\$82M USD) for restoration efforts. By 2024, total corporate philanthropic contributions had reached 960 million NIS (\$265M USD) – an increase of 340 million NIS compared to 2022.

Community support was not primarily financial. The most distinctive examples were those where companies deployed their core capabilities:

- **Fattal Hotels:** Providing temporary accommodation for evacuated residents.
- **Clalit Health Services:** Opening mobile medical clinics in evacuation zones.
- **Shufersal:** Launching new grocery operations in areas where evacuated families had settled.
- **Delta:** Distributing clothing and household goods to displaced families.
- **Isracard:** Issuing emergency credit cards to people who had fled without documentation.
- **Israeli banks:** System-wide payment moratoriums, fee waivers, and mortgage deferrals for affected customers.

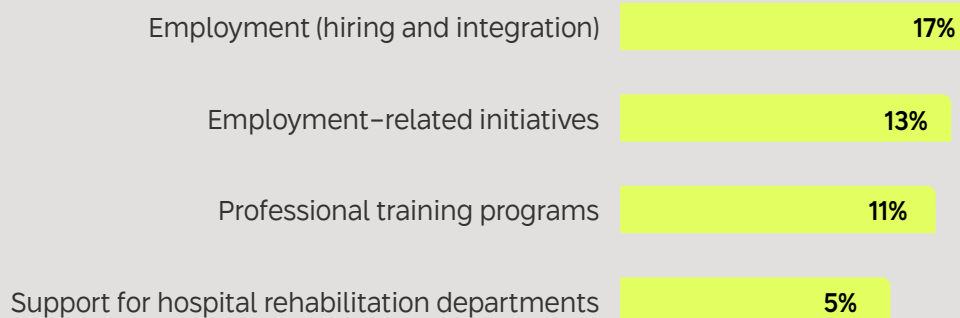
Distribution of philanthropic resources – % of total reported

NGOs and civil society organizations	33%
IDF and reserve-related initiatives	32%
Local authorities	9%
Hospitals	7%
Evacuated families	5%

Support for Wounded Soldiers: An Emerging Priority

As the conflict extended, support for injured reservists emerged as a critical and growing area of corporate action. 47% of companies surveyed reported launching new initiatives to support wounded soldiers. These included:

Initiatives supporting wounded soldiers – number of companies reporting



What Makes the Israeli Response Distinctive

The Israeli corporate response to crisis was not accidental. Several structural factors help explain why it emerged as it did:

- **A historically strong social orientation:** Israeli companies have long been primarily focused on the social dimension of ESG. Employee development, Arab-Israeli inclusion, and community investment have been the defining features of Israeli corporate responsibility practice for decades. This meant that when crisis arrived, the relevant muscles were already trained.
- **A foundation built over time:** The companies that responded most effectively were those that had invested consistently in corporate responsibility culture long before the crisis arrived, primarily: stakeholder relationships, ESG frameworks, and employee programs. The depth of that pre-existing investment determined the speed and quality of the response.
- **Genuine values, tested under pressure:** The crisis revealed which company values were real and which were performative. Companies with genuine cultures of responsibility, where values were lived, not just stated, responded most fluidly and effectively.
- **The social license logic:** Israeli companies understand, often viscerally, that their long-term legitimacy depends on their relationship with the society in which they operate. This is not an abstract ESG principle. It is a lived organizational reality.

Key Takeaways

The Israeli experience between 2023 and 2026 offers a set of concrete lessons for any company or organization preparing for crisis conditions. They are not prescriptions. Every crisis is different, and every organizational context is different. But they are a starting point.

- The social dimension always rises first. Whatever the nature of the crisis, employee welfare, family support, and community response become the immediate priority. Planning should start there.
- Relationships are the real infrastructure. Speed of response in crisis depends on trust built before the crisis. Stakeholder relationships with NGOs, municipalities, suppliers, and government are not soft assets. They are operational ones.
- Deploy what you are, not just what you have. The most distinctive and durable corporate contributions in crisis come from core business capabilities such as logistics, technology, healthcare, finance, food distribution, and less from generic philanthropic giving.
- Expand the boundary of responsibility. In crisis, companies that led effectively went beyond their direct employees – to families, to suppliers, to customers who had lost everything. Knowing in advance how far your company is prepared to extend its duty of care makes response faster and more coherent.
- Plan for the long haul, not just the emergency. Recovery takes years. The companies and organizations that sustained their commitment over time had the most meaningful long-term impact.
- Coordinate. No single company can meet the full scale of social need in a major crisis. Working through umbrella organizations and shared coordination mechanisms multiplies impact and prevents fragmentation and duplication.
- Listen before acting. The best crisis responses in Israel came from genuinely understanding what affected people needed. The discipline of listening before mobilizing is one of the most transferable lessons from the Israeli experience.
- Build the playbook before you need it. Crisis ESG cannot be improvised from scratch under pressure. The companies and organizations that responded most effectively had frameworks, relationships, and decision-making structures ready to activate. This document is intended as a starting point for that preparation.