

2024 Global Wellness Summit
Country Briefing Paper

ISRAEL

By Amir Alroy, Co-Founder, Welltech Ventures, and Oded Rahav, Oded Rahav, Business & Strategy, Dead Sea Guardians

1. What is currently making headlines in your country when it comes to health and wellness?

Israel is facing a national mental wellness crisis following the events of October 7th. The widespread trauma, affecting civilians of all ages, has led to increased rates of PTSD, anxiety, and depression. The country's mental health services are overwhelmed, with many seeking psychological support, leading to a surge in digital solutions such as teletherapy and mental health apps.

A significant focus has been placed on children and families, who are particularly vulnerable. Schools are implementing mental health programs, while family counseling is gaining priority. Long-term care for these younger generations is essential for national recovery. Community-led initiatives are also gaining traction, with local organizations offering peer support networks, group therapy, and resilience workshops. These grassroots movements underscore the collective effort to support mental well-being during this time of national distress.

Additionally, Israel's wellness tech ecosystem is thriving, addressing this crisis with innovative digital tools. Mental health apps, AI-driven therapy platforms, and mindfulness programs are now integral to national wellness strategies. Alongside traditional methods, there's a growing focus on holistic wellness approaches such as mindfulness, yoga, and nature-based therapies, offering more integrative paths to mental recovery.

The Dead Sea region, a key wellness destination, is also making headlines, facing environmental challenges that threaten its future while remaining a symbol of natural healing. Efforts to preserve this natural resource while promoting wellness tourism around the Dead Sea form a critical part of Israel's wellness narrative this year.

For more information on the mental health crisis, you can refer to this detailed article: [Israel's Mental Health Crisis After October 7](#).

2. What do you think are your country's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to the various sectors of the wellness economy?

Strengths:

Israel's core strength lies in its thriving tech ecosystem, which is fueled by visionary founders who continually push the boundaries of innovation, even during times of crisis like the current conflict. Israeli entrepreneurs are remarkably resilient, with a strong culture of entrepreneurship that drives them to launch new companies at an astonishing pace. The wellness economy in Israel is powered by cutting-edge advancements in various sectors, including nutrition, food technology, medical innovations, sleep optimization, movement, mental health, AI and more.

A key factor in this success is the convergence of wellness, health, and longevity technologies, creating a synergistic environment for rapid innovation. Israel benefits from a unique combination of highly skilled talent, strong government support, world-class academic institutions, and a healthcare system that integrates HMOs and hospitals, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors. This foundation allows for the seamless translation of research into scalable, tech-driven wellness solutions that impact both domestic and global markets.

Israel's strength also lies in its capacity for interdisciplinary collaboration, with tech startups working alongside established industries to integrate AI, data analytics, and biotech into wellness solutions. This ecosystem not only accelerates product development but also allows for quick adaptation to new trends, making Israel a key player in the wellness tech revolution.

Weaknesses:

However, despite these strengths, Israel faces several challenges. The mental health sector, which is critical given the ongoing conflict, remains under strain as resources are stretched to address widespread trauma. While technology is helping to mitigate some of these issues through teletherapy and digital platforms, the demand for mental health services far exceeds the supply. Another weakness is the relative fragmentation within wellness sectors, where startups and innovation hubs often operate independently, missing out on the potential for even greater collaborative impact.

In addition, the wellness ecosystem, while innovative, still struggles with scaling some solutions to reach the broader population. For instance, access to cutting-edge wellness technologies and services may be limited to urban areas, leaving rural populations underserved. Furthermore, regulatory challenges and the slow adaptation of new policies to keep up with rapid technological advances can sometimes hinder the growth of new wellness companies.

3. The theme of this year's Summit is "A Watershed Moment for Wellness." What wellness industry developments, business opportunities, or trends are emerging at this pivotal moment for your country this year?

At this pivotal moment for wellness, water plays a key role in Israel's wellness industry, particularly through the iconic Dead Sea. Known for its mineral-rich waters with unique healing properties, the Dead Sea faces an environmental crisis due to its rapid shrinking. This watershed moment is driving Israel to explore sustainable solutions to preserve this vital resource while maintaining its reputation as a global wellness destination.

Innovative water management technologies and eco-friendly tourism models are emerging as potential solutions to the Dead Sea's environmental challenges. These efforts aim to balance environmental preservation with the promotion of wellness tourism, positioning the region as a leader in holistic health. Israeli entrepreneurs are also focusing on integrating water-based wellness treatments with advanced digital health technologies, enhancing the overall experience of visitors seeking rejuvenation and healing.

Beyond the Dead Sea, water is a fundamental element in other wellness sectors. Israel is a global leader in water desalination and water treatment and conservation technologies, pioneering solutions that are vital to wellness-related industries such as spa resorts, wellness retreats, and therapeutic centers. These innovations in water management not only help sustain the wellness economy but also create new

opportunities for businesses and wellness practitioners to integrate sustainable water practices into their services, ensuring the long-term health of both people and the environment.

Israel is currently in an existential moment, the likes of which it has not experienced since its founding. And yet, it does not stop moving forward, developing and evolving, looking straight into the future, inventing, initiating and creating.

The number of challenges it faces can paralyze an entire continent and for a long period of time, but in the midst of all this, Israel continues to encourage and nourish entrepreneurs in diverse realms such as water, agriculture, and mental health and wellness.

Water, for example, is crucial and strategic in this region and thus attracts great minds who literally create water out of thin air. This is just one of the leading industries here that can and will bring hope and livelihood to the whole world.

These complex times encourage us to act with more determination to embrace and push forward new connections that involves faith, multiculturalism, and a variety of disciplines, so that we can all, jointly, come out with a new announcement for the world, one that is ever so needed these days.

Contact:

Amir Alroy

Co-Founder

Welltech Ventures

45 Rothschild Blvd.

Tel Aviv, 6520216

ISRAEL

Website: www.welltechventures.com

Email: amir@welltechventures.com

Mobile: +972544555505