

A man in a teal jacket and grey beanie is focused on adjusting a large metal pulley on a well mechanism. He is leaning over a concrete well opening. In the background, another person wearing a blue jacket and a grey beanie is also working on the same mechanism. The scene is set outdoors against a light-colored wall. The overall image has a teal tint, and there is a colorful diagonal graphic in the bottom left corner.

JDC's Global Strategy for Programs: 2019



JDC's Global Strategy for Programs: 2019



**American Jewish
Joint Distribution
Committee**

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Introduction

Seventy-five years ago, two heroic diplomats, Raoul Wallenberg of Sweden and Carl Lutz of Switzerland, saved thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis. The funding for their life-saving work came mostly from JDC. Wallenberg and Lutz showed the power of courage and resourcefulness against impossible odds.

JDC faces different challenges in 2019, but our mission remains the same: rescue, relief, and renewal. We help Jews who have nowhere else to turn. If a Jew is in danger—anywhere in the world—JDC is there. If a Jew is hungry or needs medicine, we are there. If Israel needs a better way to care for vulnerable citizens, we are there. If the spark of Jewish life needs to be reignited in a remote corner of the globe, we are there.

This document outlines JDC's strategy in 2019 to honor these eternal commitments. In all of our work, the problems are daunting. But when we pursue our goals with compassion, intelligence, resourcefulness, and resolve, nothing is impossible.¹

¹ JDC's planning process is a partnership between JDC's lay leaders, led by JDC's President, Stanley Rabin, and JDC's professionals, led by JDC's CEO, David Schizer. The process is guided by JDC's Global Programs Committee, which is led by its chair, Hannan Lis. The process relies on the lay and professional leadership of each program, who are acknowledged below. The process also draws on the expertise of a number of JDC professionals, including Elliot Halperin (executive director of external relations), Jennifer Heettner (director of global program evaluation and information), Inna Kotler (director of budget and restitution grants), Ophir Singal (CFO), Aviva Steinberger (director of global planning), and Pablo Weinstein (global head of HR).

I. Executive Summary

A. Applying Three Core Principles

To decide which challenges JDC should address across the globe, we apply three core principles. First, for JDC to respond, the challenge must be serious, and it must lie at the core of our mission. Second, our response has to be effective. Third, JDC must have a comparative advantage in responding. In other words, JDC should respond when the need is urgent and we are uniquely well positioned to address it.

B. Saving Jewish Lives

The heart of our mission is saving Jewish lives. We stand ready to evacuate Jews in danger, as we have in the past in Yemen, Syria, and other places. We also help Jews in need. In determining priorities, JDC focuses on clients who are especially vulnerable, and prioritizes aid that is most impactful.

The poorest Jews in the world are elderly Jews in Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Belarus, and other countries in the Former Soviet Union (“FSU”). This generation has experienced unimaginable pain and loss—the Holocaust, World War II, the Communist era, and now abject poverty. They struggle to survive on government pensions as low as two dollars per day.

In 2019, JDC is spending one-third of our budget—\$120 million—on care for over 90,000 impoverished elderly Jews in the FSU, including 42,000 Holocaust survivors. Thousands would die without the food, medicine, heat, and homecare they receive from JDC and our partners, including the Claims Conference, Jewish Federations, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, World Jewish Relief, and the Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Charitable Foundation. In providing this care, we navigate conflict zones (e.g., in eastern Ukraine), adverse economic headwinds (e.g., 9% inflation in Ukraine), and challenging operating conditions for international NGOs, but the social return from providing life-saving care to 90,000 people is immense: A client in Ukraine recently called JDC “the sunshine in my window.” We are bringing light into their lives.

Although Israel has a much higher GDP per capita than Ukraine or Russia, warning signs are flashing about Israel’s economic future. In recent years, Israel’s economic progress has been remarkable. But the nation’s fastest growing communities—the ultra-Orthodox (“Haredi”) and Israeli Arabs—have not participated in this economic

miracle. Half the children in Israeli kindergartens are Haredi or Israeli Arabs. We need to bring them into the economic mainstream.

Our goal in Israel is the same as in the FSU—helping vulnerable people—but we pursue it quite differently. In the FSU, our services *substitute* for a government safety net. In Israel, by contrast, there *already is* a meaningful safety net. Our role is to *improve* it.

So JDC partners with the government, running pilot programs to develop innovations in social services. We find new ways to help needy Israelis help themselves. These pilots offer unique leverage and impact, which other NGOs cannot offer. On average, the government funds approximately two-thirds of a pilot’s cost. If the new program succeeds, the government adopts it for the entire country, transforming the delivery of social services across Israel.

JDC also provides a safety net for Jews in Venezuela, where the economy is in free fall. In 2017, 75% of citizens lost an average of 24 pounds from hunger. Working with the local Jewish community, we provide food and medicine to a large segment of the nation’s 5,000 Jews. They are disproportionately elderly, since many young Jews have left.

In Central and Eastern Europe, JDC partners with the Claims Conference to care for Holocaust survivors. In Hungary, we provide the care ourselves. In other countries, we dispense Claims Conference funds to local communities, which provide this care.



Jews who are not Holocaust survivors also need care, and JDC helps to provide it in the FSU and Venezuela (as noted above), the Baltics, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Greece, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey, Cuba, and the provinces of Argentina.

We do not provide care in Western Europe, where government safety nets are generous and local Jewish communities are well organized. Instead, our focus there is on terrorism and antisemitism, which have become increasingly serious threats in Western Europe.

C. Building Jewish Life

In addition to saving Jewish lives, JDC is committed to building Jewish life. We strengthen Jewish communities across the globe. Our goal is to reignite the spark of Jewish life in places where it was nearly extinguished.

To strengthen local communities, we pursue three goals. First, we engage Jews who are disconnected from their tradition. Second, we nurture vibrant local institutions. Third, we encourage local communities to care for their vulnerable members; over time, as communities (e.g., in the FSU) develop the capacity to care for vulnerable members, JDC will no longer need to shoulder as much of this burden.

Central and Eastern Europe are key priorities in this work. Although Jewish life once thrived there, the Holocaust and decades of communist rule nearly wiped it out. In response, we launched the Lauder-JDC International Jewish Youth Camp at Szarvas, which has inspired over 25,000 Jewish children to reconnect with Judaism since 1990. Most leaders of Jewish institutions in these regions are Szarvas alums. JDC is launching a multi-year renovation of the camp in 2019. We also mint leaders with leadership development programs, help communities manage their assets and operations more effectively, incubate grass roots initiatives in our Mozaik Hub in Budapest, and partner with local communities on a range of other initiatives.

The FSU also is a critical community development priority. Because discrimination against Jews was widespread there during the Soviet era, many Jews in the FSU concealed their Jewish identity. Today, the FSU has almost 900,000 Jews. To engage them, we reach people at different stages of life. We also run a network of Jewish community centers, with programming on leadership training, volunteerism, youth and family engagement, and more.

JDC also strengthens communities in other places, tailoring investments to local

needs. In Israel, JDC nurtures nonprofits, develops innovative government institutions, and trains leaders for nonprofits and government. In Latin America, leadership development is a key priority. In North America, our Entwine program engages Jewish young adults by offering them service opportunities in JDC programs across the globe. In other places, our “Tikkun in Action” program strengthens Jewish communities by mobilizing them to aid their non-Jewish neighbors.

JDC focuses not only on *what* has to be done, but also on *who* does it. In deciding how to allocate scarce resources, we account for what other international NGOs are already doing. For example, although we operate youth camps in Central and Eastern Europe, we do not do so in the FSU, since the Jewish Agency operates youth camps there. JDC also is strategic in dividing labor with local communities. Since we want communities to become independent, we prefer to partner with them, instead of implementing programs on our own. But since communities are at different stages of development, the division of labor varies, depending on local conditions.

II. Key Multi-Year Goals in 2019

For 104 years, JDC's mission has remained the same: saving Jewish lives and building Jewish life. But the way we pursue our mission constantly changes. To highlight these changes, this Part summarizes JDC's key multi-year goals in 2019.

Former Soviet Union

- Developing new ways to provide care to FSU elderly with a lighter infrastructure, and restructuring other aspects of our operations, to address long-term declines in Holocaust restitution.
- Allocating scarce resources for care, to both elderly and children, by prioritizing the neediest cases.
- Strengthening Jewish communities in the FSU by engaging individuals, nurturing communal institutions, and encouraging communities to care for vulnerable members.
- Advancing these community development goals by prioritizing teen programming, volunteerism, and leadership training, while also enhancing the cost-effectiveness of our Jewish community centers.
- Focusing community development efforts in the FSU on major cities, which have the largest population of Jews (including younger generations of Jews), and de-emphasizing this work in places where the Jewish population is shrinking and aging.

Israel

- Partnering with the Israeli government to pilot innovative new social programs, which help children at risk turn their lives around and help vulnerable Israelis (e.g., in the ultra-Orthodox and Israeli Arab communities and in the social and geographic periphery) to enter or advance in the work force.
- Partnering with the Israeli government to develop new ways to enhance the independence of elderly Israelis (a rapidly growing share of the population) and Israelis with disabilities.
- Promoting grass roots initiatives in Israel that assist vulnerable populations.

- Strengthening the capacity of the Israeli government and nonprofit sector through training and other initiatives.
- Helping different Israeli government ministries, which serve vulnerable populations, to work more effectively together.
- Conducting research on macroeconomic conditions in Israel, the condition of vulnerable populations there, and strategies to enhance their well-being.

Europe

- Securing the future of Camp Szarvas as an engine of Jewish renewal in Central and Eastern Europe by renovating the grounds and creating an endowment.
- Preparing local Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe to provide care to their elderly members while Holocaust restitution declines and ultimately ends in the coming decades.
- Training leaders for local Jewish communities through local, pan-European, and global initiatives.
- Enhancing the security and resilience of European Jewish communities, especially in Western Europe.
- Reducing JDC's investment in classic community development efforts in Central and Eastern Europe, and prioritizing partnerships with them that focus on JDC's key priorities.

Latin America

- Increasing support to the local Jewish community in Venezuela, which is facing an acute economic crisis.
- Enhancing local community capacity, and phasing out direct support for welfare, in the provinces of Argentina.
- Recalibrating our strategy in Cuba, where we have partnered with the Jewish community for over two decades to support care and Jewish renewal.
- Training leaders for local Jewish communities in Latin America through local, regional, and global initiatives.

Asia & Africa

- Enhancing efficiency of community infrastructure and programming.
- Strengthening community security and resilience.
- Nurturing a vibrant regional Jewish community in East Asia.

Entwine

- Engaging more Jewish young adults in North America, the UK, and other places by offering more opportunities to participate in Entwine service trips.
- Enhancing programming for alumni of service programs to reinforce the programs' impact and to continue developing a cohort of leaders active in Jewish communal life.

GRID

- Expressing Jewish values and strengthening the ties of Jewish communities and Israel to other people in need by continuing the launch of “Tikkun Olam Ventures” or “TOV,” which uses Israeli agricultural technology to improve the lives of poor smallholder farmers in Ethiopia.
- Coordinating emergency relief and recovery efforts for disasters and crises outside the United States on behalf of the North American Jewish community.
- Partnering with Jewish communities across the globe to develop “Tikkun in Action” initiatives, which provide support to vulnerable non-Jewish neighbors.

III. Applying Three Core Principles to Allocate JDC's Resources

Since hundreds of thousands of needy people across the globe depend on JDC, as do hundreds of Jewish communities, we must use every dollar wisely. So JDC uses zero-based budgeting. In addition to vetting new initiatives, we reassess programs we already run every year, applying three core principles to everything we do.

A. How important is the problem?

First, we focus on important problems at the core of our care and community development missions. We focus on places where Jews are especially needy, Jewish communities are less organized, and there are more Jews.

For each region where JDC operates, the following table lists our budget, the Jewish population, and the GDP per person (as a proxy for economic wellbeing). To compare places with different Jewish populations, the table includes JDC's spending per Jew; notably, this is *not* our spending per client, since only a subset of Jews receive aid in each place.

Table 1: JDC Spending and Needs By Region

Region	Total \$ in 2019	Philanthropic \$ in 2019 ²	Number of Jews (or Israelis) ³	Total \$ per Jew (or Israeli)	Philanthropic \$ per Jew (or Israeli)	2018 GDP per capita (in dollars), by country ⁴	
Central & Eastern Europe ⁵	\$45,800,000	\$11,100,000	256,000	\$178.90	\$43.36	9,230 23,610 16,720 18,470 19,530 12,580 16,180	Bulgaria Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Romania Poland
FSU	\$129,100,000	\$35,000,000	866,000	\$148.96	\$41.87	6,300 2,600 11,950 2,820	Belarus Moldova Russia Ukraine
Asia & Africa	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	58,400	\$30.72	\$30.72	No data 5,090 3,440 3,460 11,110	Egypt Iran Morocco Tunisia Turkey
Israel	\$97,800,000	\$44,400,000	8,800,000	\$14.66	\$5.05	42,120	Israel
Latin America ⁶	\$2,600,000	\$2,600,000	515,000	\$4.85	\$4.85	14,040 No data 18,070 3,170	Argentina Cuba Uruguay Venezuela
Western Europe ⁷	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	1,658,000	\$1.51	\$1.51	44,930 44,180	France UK
North America	\$5,800,000	\$5,800,000	12,700,000	\$0.46	\$0.46	62,150 48,470	US Canada

² This total does not include Holocaust restitution or funds from the Israeli government.

³ Population data based on Sergio Della Pergola, using his "Law of Return" population figures, which are the most expansive: (<http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Studies/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=3584>), Government of Israel NIS figures for Israel, and JDC field estimates.

⁴ GDP data based on IMF, "World Economic Outlook," April 2018.

⁵ Central and Eastern Europe includes: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia.

⁶ Latin America includes: Central America, Caribbean, South America.

⁷ Western Europe includes: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

B. How effective is our response?

Second, in addition to targeting the right problems, we also need the right solutions. Our goal is to address issues as efficiently as possible. The following table shows the amount we spent per client in 2018 on a range of JDC programs.

Table 2: JDC’s Annual Spending Per Client on Selected Programs⁸

Program	JDC Investment	Number of Clients or Participants	Investment/Client
Homecare: FSU Non-Nazi Victims	\$9,540,000	8,818	\$1,082
Material Support: FSU Non-Nazi Victims	\$8,120,000	29,386	\$276
FSU Youth Group	\$ 880,000	4,400	\$175
FSU Family Retreats	\$ 579,000	4,700	\$172
FSU Volunteer Networks	\$768,000	2,600 (volunteers) 41,000 (clients)	\$268 (volunteer) \$17 (client)
Baltics Welfare	\$848,000	1,915	\$443
Community Leader Conference on Resilience	\$29,000	153	\$190
Families of Children at Risk in Israel	\$ 692,000 (27.5M with gov’t funds)	12,900	\$58 (\$2,350 with gov’t funds)
Children: 0 to 6 in Israel	\$2.636M (\$7.8M with gov’t funds)	21,488	\$123 (\$362 with gov’t funds)
Apprenticeships in Israel	\$594,000 (\$1.95M with gov’t funds)	300	\$1,980 (\$6,493 with gov’t funds)
Planning for Retirement in Israel	\$647,800 (\$1.295M with gov’t funds)	4,600	\$141 (\$242 with gov’t funds)
Venezuela: Food & Medicine	\$406,000	800	\$508

⁸ Expenditures and client numbers here generally are for 2018, except that the client numbers for community development in the FSU are for 2017. For the programs in Israel, the number in parenthesis includes both philanthropic sources and government funding; some of these government funds flow through the JDC budget, and some go directly to the program (e.g., as contributions to the cost of one of JDC’s nonprofit partners).

C. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

Third, even when the need is urgent and we can address it effectively, we still ask whether other organizations also are responding. If so, is JDC more likely to succeed? We are mindful of JDC's comparative advantages, including ties with Jewish communities across the globe; partnerships with the Government of Israel; global networks of professionals, who can apply expertise from one region to analogous problems in another; our ability to convene; and our reputation as an honest broker..

IV. Saving Jewish Lives

The heart of JDC's mission is saving Jewish lives. Across the globe, we provide urgently needed aid to Jews in need or in danger. We focus on Jews who are most vulnerable, and prioritize initiatives that make the most difference in their lives. Two-thirds of JDC's global budget fund two critically important welfare initiatives: first, care for elderly Jews in the FSU; and, second, innovations in social services in Israel. On a more modest scale, JDC also provides care in Central and Eastern Europe, North Africa, and Latin America, while also focusing increasingly on the threat of terrorism in Western Europe.

A. Care in the Former Soviet Union ("FSU")⁹

1. How important is the problem?

Of the 900,000 Jews who live in the FSU, about one-quarter are elderly. Over 90,000 receive care from JDC in 2019.

These Jews have lived unimaginably difficult lives. Most endured the devastation of WWII, and almost half survived the Holocaust. All lived under a communist regime that discriminated relentlessly against Jews and dismantled Jewish institutions.

These are the poorest Jews in the world. Many were professionally successful, but even retired engineers and doctors have government pensions as low as two dollars per day. They cannot buy basic necessities. Many would die without the care we provide.

⁹ Our FSU program is led by Harvey Schulweis, who chairs the board committee on the FSU, and by Michal Frank, who is our regional director for the FSU.

While FSU elderly generally rely on their children for care, most of our clients are alone, since their children, nieces, and nephews left the FSU decades ago. Almost one million Jews left for Israel, and approximately 600,000 went to Western Europe and the United States.

Over the next two decades, there will still be tens of thousands of needy elderly Jews in the FSU, as the next generation ages. Unless the FSU's economy changes significantly, which seems unlikely, many elderly Jews will be extremely poor, requiring food, medicine, and homecare to survive.

Even so, there are three reasons why the aggregate need will not be as acute in the long run as it is today, although there also is an offsetting reason why it will remain significant. First, because so many Jews left the FSU three decades ago, the number of Jewish elderly should decline from its current level.

Second, this cohort will spend a significant portion of their working lives in the post-Soviet era. As a result, they will have more opportunity to accumulate assets, although economic conditions in the former Soviet Union are still quite challenging. In other words, there will be fewer extremely poor elderly Jews over time.

Third, local Jewish communities are becoming better organized and the younger generation is more committed to communal needs. As a result, we expect local communities to bear a larger share of these burdens over time.

Finally, there is a (partially) offsetting effect. Among those who are extremely poor, an increasing percentage will be born after the Holocaust, and thus will be ineligible for restitution. To the extent that local Jewish communities are unable to meet all of their needs, aid from the global Jewish community will still be necessary.

2. How effective is our response?

For almost three decades, JDC has mounted an historic humanitarian effort to provide life-saving care to these elderly Jews. Thousands would die without this support. Indeed, notwithstanding the privations they have suffered, on average our clients outlive the life expectancy in their country, in some cases by several years:

Table 3: Life Expectancy in the FSU

Country	Average Life Expectancy at Birth	Average Age of JDC's Elderly Clients in the FSU
Russia	72	79.9
Ukraine	71	74.6
Belarus	74	76.0
Kazakhstan	72	75.9

JDC is spending approximately \$120 million in 2019 on food, medicine, winter relief, socialization, and home care for these elderly clients. The Claims Conference provides approximately \$95 million, and another \$25 million comes from the Jewish Federations of North America, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, World Jewish Relief, the Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Charitable Foundation, and other partners.

Although these sums are large in the aggregate, the cost per person is astonishingly low. On average, for clients who do not receive Holocaust restitution, \$21 pays for food and medicine for an entire month. On average, four dollars pays for an hour of home care.

a. Short Term Challenge

Unfortunately, our expenses are increasing because of rising wages and other costs, including 9% inflation in Ukraine. Nearly 1/3 of Ukraine's workers have left to work in Poland and other European Union countries. To keep others from leaving, Ukraine doubled its minimum wage in June 2017, increased it again by 16.34% in 2018, and is expected to increase it again in 2019. As a result, wages for Ukrainian home care workers have increased significantly.

Table 4: Inflation rate (end of year consumer prices), Russia and Ukraine—2016-2019

	2016	2017	2018*	2019*
Russia	5.4%	2.5%	3.5%	4%
Ukraine	12.4%	13.7%	9%	6.5%

* Projections

Source: IMF, "World Economic Outlook," April 2018.

Even though homecare costs are increasing, we are not reducing homecare hours for Nazi Victims. On the contrary, we enhanced this service in 2018 and will maintain these increased levels in 2019, since the Claims Conference has significantly increased our allocation for homecare, especially for low-functioning clients.

But for clients who are not Nazi Victims, the higher cost of homecare forced us to reduce the hours we offer to our healthiest clients. To minimize these cuts, we redirected funds from other programs, such as material support.

b. Long Term Challenge

In addition to these short-term challenges, this life-saving program also faces a major long-term challenge in the coming decade: the end of Holocaust restitution. In 2019, restitution covers approximately 80% of the program's budget. But this funding is available only for Holocaust survivors. As more survivors pass away, restitution funding will decline, and eventually will no longer be available.

But elderly Jews who are not survivors will still need care. Providing it will be much more difficult, since restitution funds currently help to pay for our infrastructure, including program management, buildings, supervision, training, financial oversight, and other back office functions. In 2019, approximately \$14 million of our \$95 million of restitution funding for the FSU pays for infrastructure. This infrastructure serves not only survivors, but also other elderly clients.

JDC is committed to maintaining this life-saving care. Fortunately, we can do so without replacing the *entire* \$14 million of restitution funding for infrastructure. Instead, we are developing new ways to provide care with a leaner infrastructure: 2019 is the third year of a multi-year plan JDC is implementing to lighten our infrastructure.

As part of this plan, we are consolidating welfare centers in places where the number of clients has declined significantly. We consolidated 20 welfare centers in 2018, and are consolidating another 10 or 12 in 2019. When we close a center, its clients still receive care. But supervision and back office functions are reassigned to other centers some distance away, which are the main ones in the region.

To lighten the infrastructure for providing material aid, we use bank cards and postal services, instead of food deliveries. To combat loneliness, we rely more on call centers.

Even though we are reducing our infrastructure costs significantly, we still need to replace *some* restitution funding for infrastructure. But instead of \$14 million, the annual amount will be approximately \$5 million. In other words, of the \$95 million of current restitution funding, we need to replace only \$5 million, which will help finance our lighter infrastructure for elderly Jews who are not survivors. So instead of raising \$25 million for these clients each year, JDC will raise \$30 million.

Another way to respond to these declines is to strengthen local Jewish communities, as discussed below. The goal is for them to bear more of the burden of providing care over time.

JDC also provides care to another needy group in the FSU: Jewish children with physical and psychological disabilities. In 2019, we are spending \$1.66 million through 12 Jewish family services centers. We have scaled back our Children's Initiative (CI) in recent years, prioritizing the neediest cases.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

JDC has been caring for FSU elderly for over 25 years. As the Claims Conference's sole care provider in the FSU, JDC has developed unique expertise and infrastructure. JDC has important partners in providing this care, including the Claims Conference, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, the Jewish Federations of North America, World Jewish Relief, the Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Charitable Foundation, and others. Yet no other international NGO has a comparable ability to discharge this life-saving responsibility.

JDC wants local communities to take on more of this burden, as discussed below. But for now, local communities generally do not have the capacity to provide this care. So for thousands of elderly Jews in the FSU, JDC and our partners are the only source of support supplementing their meager government pensions.

JDC also is proud of the care we provide to children, but we prioritize elder care for two reasons. First, modest sums are more likely to have a transformative impact on elderly (e.g., \$21 per month for food and medicine). For children, more ambitious interventions usually are needed, such as a better education and home environment.

Second, needy FSU children and their families are more likely than FSU elderly to receive support from other nonprofits (e.g., Chabad, Adayin Lo, and Tikvah), and also have other options that are less feasible for FSU elderly (e.g., *aliya*).

B. Innovative Social Services for Israel's Vulnerable Populations¹⁰

JDC assists vulnerable Jews throughout the world. This mission is crucial in Israel, where a remarkable economic boom has not reached everyone. So JDC spends over \$100 million—almost one-third of our budget—aiding Israel's most vulnerable citizens, including unemployed Israelis, children at risk, elderly and Israelis with disabilities.

1. General Description of JDC's Strategy in Israel

Even though our overall goal in Israel is the same as in other places—helping vulnerable people—the approach is quite different. Unlike the FSU, Israel is a prosperous country with a meaningful government safety net. So instead of providing social services on our own, as we do in the FSU, JDC partners with the government to make its social services more effective. This Section describes our approach in general terms, and the next Section focuses on specific areas of our work.

a. How important is the problem?

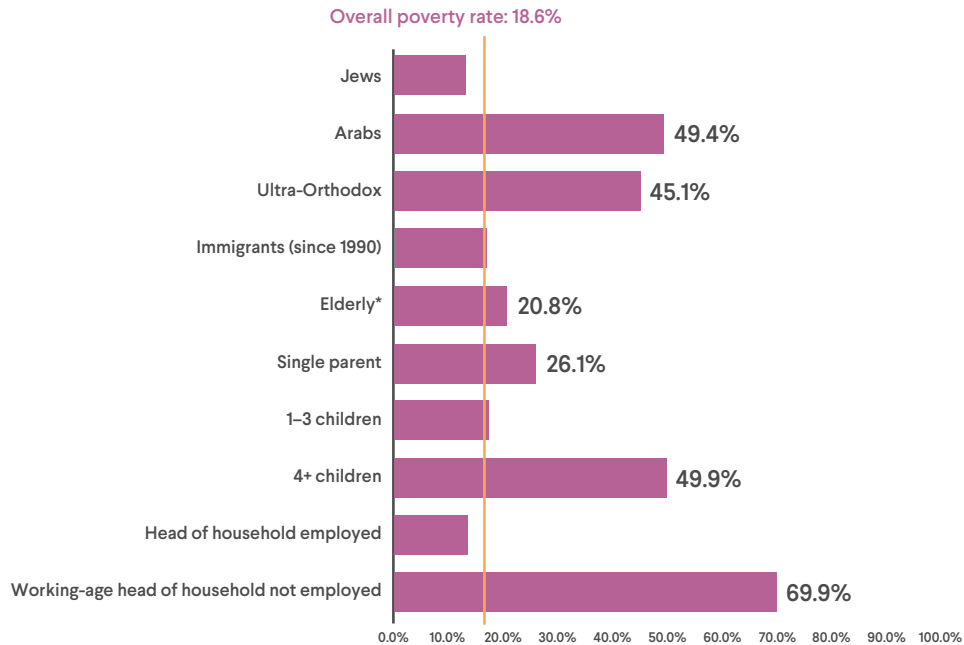
Even though the Israeli economy is thriving, Israel has the highest poverty rate in the OECD (19.6%) and the widest gap in workers' skills. Unless we help Israelis at the bottom of the economic ladder, this problem will get worse. Communities with low-incomes—the ultra-Orthodox (“Haredim”) and Israeli Arabs—have high birth rates. In fact, half of the children in Israeli kindergartens are from these communities. To sustain Israel's economic miracle over the long term, marginalized communities must join the economic mainstream.

Most of JDC's work in Israel helps Israel's vulnerable populations to help themselves. As Maimonides said, “The highest degree of charity—above which there is no higher—is he who strengthens the hand of his poor fellow Jew and gives him a gift or loan or enters into a business partnership with the poor person.”

¹⁰ Our Israel program is led by Martin Paisner, who chairs the board committee on Israel, and by Sigal Shelach, who is our regional director for JDC Israel.

Poverty Rates by Family Type

The Rate of Families Living in Poverty, by Family Type, 2016



*Age 60+ for women and age 65+ for men

b. How effective is our response?

In addressing these challenges, JDC uses a unique business model, which maximizes our impact. We promote innovation, running pilot programs to develop and test more promising ways to deliver social services. If a new idea succeeds, the Israeli government takes over the program and implements it throughout the nation.

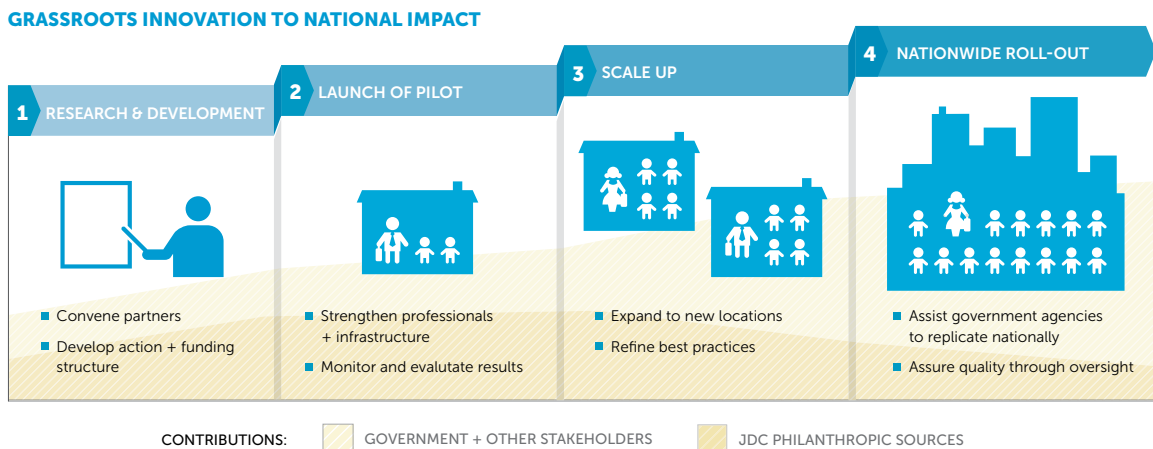
We use the acronym “DNA” to describe this approach, since our involvement with a pilot has three stages: 1) design (i.e., coming up with a new idea); 2) nurture (i.e., testing the new program); and 3) accelerate (i.e., if it works, scaling it up and handing it off to the government).

Nurturing “start-ups” is an especially impactful model for JDC for four reasons. First, we take maximum advantage of our professionals’ creativity and commitment. Their mission is not to run existing programs, but to launch new ones. Our new Wohl Campus for Learning and Development helps us cultivate this expertise by bringing together JDC Israel’s different divisions to offer training and share ideas.

Second, JDC's donors enjoy exceptional leverage. For each dollar donors invest in a pilot program, the Israeli government invests almost two dollars (on average). If the pilot proves successful, the Government of Israel takes over the program, so our donors no longer provide any funding. In other words, with an investment that is temporary and relatively modest, donors can transform the way social services are delivered throughout the country.

Third, and relatedly, successful pilots become national in scope, causing key areas of policy to change significantly. Of course, in scaling up the program, we need to make sure it remains effective. So JDC sometimes maintains a supervisory role after the government takes over a program.

Fourth, JDC enhances the intellectual capital of Israeli nonprofits by partnering with them in our pilots. JDC builds the partnership with the government, designs the program, and ensures that it is implemented properly. We rely on nonprofit partners for day-to-day operations. When a pilot is completed, our nonprofit partners know how to run it, smoothing the transition when the government takes over the program.



In addition to these “DNA” pilots, we also help the government in four other ways. First, we provide a fresh perspective on key challenges, influencing government priorities. For example, we encouraged ministries to focus not only on *entry* into the workforce, but also on *advancement*. Second, the Institute for Leadership and Governance (“ELKA”) trains government experts, and helps develop innovative government institutions, as discussed below. Third, JDC’s two research institutes—the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute (“MJB”) and the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel (“Taub”)—enhance government

performance through their research, as discussed below. Fourth, we help government ministries join forces more effectively. Although these institutions often compete for budgets and influence, JDC is a trusted partner to all of them, so we help them work together.

JDC also strengthens Israel's nonprofit sector and social services providers. Our training centers enhance their expertise, and our innovation hub in Lod nurtures grass roots initiatives, providing space, mentoring, and funding for social entrepreneurs. ELKA strengthens the nonprofit sector in other ways, as discussed below.

We ran a strategic planning process in 2018 for JDC Israel. One of the recommendations was to make greater use of these other initiatives, and to coordinate them with our pilot programs. In other words, we should play the role of an “architect,” as well as a “developer.” In some cases, when we target a social problem, we should formulate a broad strategy that includes not only pilot programs, but also research, policy advice, better coordination among government ministries, training for nonprofits, and the like.

c. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

JDC occupies a unique position in Israel. Because we have been delivering social services there for 104 years, we are a trusted partner that works with parties across the political spectrum. In recognition of our unique status, the government exempts JDC from some bureaucratic requirements that apply to partnerships with other NGOs.

Yet although we are unique, we are not alone. Other nonprofits also do important work in Israel. If others work on an issue, we are less likely to do so. If we do get involved, we are likely to partner with them. This way, we focus our scarce resources on problems others cannot address.

2. Employment

a. How important is the problem?

Perhaps the most powerful way to aid vulnerable Israelis is to find them jobs. This step helps not only unemployed Israelis themselves, but also their children, aging parents, and others who depend on them.

A key priority is the Haredi community, which represents 11% of the population

today, and is expected to be over one quarter of the population in four decades. Haredi men have a much lower employment rate than other Jewish men (51% versus 82.3%). In contrast, Haredi women usually have jobs, but earn 39% less than other Jewish women.

Israel's Arab citizens also are economically disadvantaged, and their numbers are growing. They represent 20% of the population today, and are expected to be 23% in four decades. Israeli Arab women have a much lower employment rate than Jewish women (34.9% versus 72.4%). Israeli Arab men usually have jobs, but earn less than half the average salary of non-Haredi Jewish men.

JDC also helps residents of the nation's geographic and social periphery, including low-income workers on the verge of poverty. For example, Ethiopian Israelis earn only a bit more than Israeli Arabs on average. Even families with two wage earners live in poverty when they lack skills and credentials for high-earning jobs; this is the stark reality facing 15% of working Israeli Arabs and 27% of working Haredim.

JDC also works to bring Israelis with disabilities into the work force. Only 41% are currently employed.

We also help unemployed Israelis over the age of 45, who face particular challenges in finding jobs. Over one-third of Israelis between the ages of 55 and 64 are not working.

Finally, JDC is preparing Israel for disruptions in the job market from changing workplace culture, technology, and "the sharing economy." Less skilled workers—mostly from the vulnerable populations described above—could lose their jobs unless they acquire new skills.

b. How effective is our response?

In 2019, JDC is spending \$15.4 million to help Israelis enter and advance in the workforce. The strategy of TEVET, our partnership with the government in this area, has four main elements.

First, JDC has launched national networks of job centers and employment programs, tailored to the unique needs of Haredim, Arabs, Israelis with disabilities, Ethiopian-Israelis, and disadvantaged young adults. In addition to counseling job candidates, these centers help employers integrate vulnerable populations in their operations. For Haredi clients, the employment rate

increased by 11% for men and 20% for women, yielding a net benefit to the economy of \$2,280 to \$3,100 per participant. Since the pilots of these job centers have succeeded, JDC is handing them over to the government.

Second, JDC pilots new initiatives to place unemployed Israelis in jobs, focusing on Haredim in alternative yeshivas, Israelis with disabilities, and older unemployed Israelis. We also help Israeli Arabs improve their Hebrew language skills.

Third, we help employed Israelis find *better* jobs. For example, JDC mentors low-income employees and pilots innovations in vocational training, such as apprenticeships and short-term training for high tech jobs.

Finally, JDC pilots new ways for vulnerable populations to prepare for rapid changes in the workplace. For example, JDC teaches computer programming to Israelis without a college degree, and also is designing a digital talent program, which gives employers a role in designing the curriculum and selecting candidates. JDC also uses the cloud to support long-distance jobs for Israelis in the geographic periphery.

In all these innovations, JDC partners with the government, the business sector, and other Israeli nonprofits, and benefits from the support of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and other generous funders.

c. Are we the right organization to respond?

JDC has a unique advantage in this work for three reasons. First, as in all our work in Israel, our partnership with the government offers unique leverage and impact.

Second, very few NGOs operate in this field. We are the only NGO working on some issues, such as the rapidly changing job market and advancement in the workforce. Viewed as an honest broker with no political agenda, JDC can work with populations that others cannot reach. When other NGOs also work on an issue, we usually have close ties to them. We helped launch a number of these NGOs, like Elfanar in the area of Arab employment.

Third, we are larger than other NGOs working in this field, so we can address a broader range of issues. Since we assist a number of disadvantaged groups, we can bring ideas developed for one group to others.

3. Children and Young Adults at Risk

a. How important is the problem?

We change the lives of disadvantaged Israelis not only by helping them get jobs, but also by reaching them when they are young. Poverty, abuse, special needs, and other issues can put children at risk, so they are less likely to become healthy and fulfilled adults.

Unfortunately, poverty in Israel often is intergenerational. As in other developed countries, parents with less education are less likely to have well-educated children. For example, only 25% of high school students from the lowest socio-economic cohort are eligible for higher education, compared with 75% overall in Israel.

b. How effective is our response?

A child's zip code must not determine her destiny. In the spirit of Maimonides, JDC helps children at risk turn their lives around. ASHALIM, our partnership with the government for children at risk, is spending over \$33 million to pursue four main strategies in 2019.

First, we prioritize early interventions during the first six years of a child's life. Like the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, research shows that services in early childhood are especially effective. So we spend approximately \$10 million to pilot a range of innovations, including new national standards for daycare, and early childhood services in the Bedouin, Israeli-Arab, and Haredi communities.

Second, we also target the other end of the age spectrum of children at risk: Israelis between the ages of 18 and 25. This is our last chance to help them turn their lives around before becoming adults. We spend about \$5 million to pilot a range of new services. For instance, our community courts program uses counseling, instead of punishment, to discourage recidivism among young criminal offenders.

Third, ASHALIM pilots programs not only for children, but also for their families. This nontraditional approach assumes that well-functioning families are more likely to produce well-functioning children. JDC is spending approximately \$11 million in 2019 on families in crisis.

Finally, although we no longer focus as much on children between the ages of 6

and 18, we still spend \$8 million on them. For example, we develop new education programs for underachievers and hidden dropouts, as well as programs preparing vulnerable youth for the army. The track record of our formal education programs is quite strong: 40% of elementary school participants and 68% of middle school participants show significant improvement in achievements or other behavioral and social measures.

c. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

In helping children at risk, the government faces an institutional challenge. Different ministries address various aspects of the issue, as do hundreds of municipalities, and their efforts are not always fully coordinated. Since JDC has close ties to all the relevant ministries and municipalities, as well as to other NGOs, we are well positioned to facilitate cooperation. We also have special expertise on risk prevention and treatment, as well as on Haredi, Israeli Arab, and immigrant communities.

4. Elderly

a. How important is the problem?

JDC also focuses on Israel's growing population of elderly. Less than half of Israelis over 65 have a pension, and almost 20% live in poverty. The number of elderly adults is growing 2.2 times faster than the population as a whole, and is expected to double in the next 25 years to 15% of the population. The number of Israelis between 65 and 75—the so-called “young elderly”—will increase by 66% in the next five years.

Elderly Israelis have to adjust to the financial and emotional burdens of retirement, deteriorating health, and the need to navigate complex bureaucracies for care and other services. The “graying” of Israel's population also puts increasing pressure on one million family members who currently care for elderly relatives, as well as on the health care system and government budgets.

b. How effective is our response?

All these pressures are eased if elderly Israelis remain self-sufficient for as long as possible. So in the spirit of Maimonides, we empower elderly Israelis to remain self-reliant. To keep them in the workforce longer, we run job placement programs: 30% of participants find work within six months, which is three times

faster than at the National Employment Agency. JDC also offers retirement planning services, which until now have been largely unavailable to low- and middle-income Israelis. For elderly who have been hospitalized, we pilot rehabilitation programs—an urgent unmet need in Israel—to help them leave the hospital and live independently again. We commit approximately 1/3 of the budget of ESHEL, our elder care program, to these initiatives.

We also help the various government institutions involved in elder care to work together more effectively. For example, our integrated care program creates more efficient and accessible systems for the frailest elderly—and professionals who serve them—to access services offered by different government institutions. We commit approximately half of ESHEL’s budget to these initiatives.

JDC also is pioneering an effort to help family members care for elderly relatives. We spend approximately 5% of ESHEL’s budget on this program.

c. Are we the right organization to respond?

Few Israeli NGOs focus on elder care or on job placement for elderly Israelis. None focus on retirement planning, rehabilitation services, or the needs of family caregivers. JDC is uniquely able to enhance coordination among government entities.

5. Israelis With Disabilities

a. How important is the problem?

JDC also helps Israelis with disabilities live more independent lives. They experience higher rates of poverty and chronic illness and lower rates of employment. Only 18% have higher education degrees. Israel also relies heavily on residential facilities: indeed, Israelis with disabilities are 18 times more likely than Americans to live in such a facility. They also have only limited access to sports and recreational facilities.

b. How effective is our response?

In response, ISRAEL UNLIMITED, our partnership with the Israeli government and the Ruderman Family Foundation, is spending approximately \$9 million in 2019 to help Israelis with disabilities. We re-examine policy, offer new housing options, develop a continuum of support services, and pilot other initiatives to help them live independently. JDC improves their professional opportunities by

helping them in the workforce, as discussed above, and by enhancing access to education for Israeli Arabs with disabilities.

ISRAEL UNLIMITED also pilots innovations to enhance the health and enrich the personal lives of Israelis with disabilities. In a partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Sports, we also pilot athletic programs for them, such as wheelchair basketball.

c. Are we the right organization to respond?

Many NGOs operate in the field of disabilities, but few serve multiple disabilities and none partner with the government. ISRAEL UNLIMITED has the expertise and scale to address an expansive range of issues. Our partnerships with the government and the Ruderman Family Foundation offer unique leverage and impact. We have close ties with other NGOs working in this field, and partner with them in our pilots.

6. Research

a. How important is the problem?

Life will not improve for Israel's vulnerable populations unless there is a clear understanding of their circumstances, and of policies to help them. In addition to the issues discussed above, research also is needed on Israel's housing crisis, the country's health care and education systems, the regulatory environment, the allocation of responsibilities among government institutions, and much more.

b. How effective is our response?

JDC's two research institutes, MJB and Taub, each contribute in different ways to a greater understanding of these issues. MJB engages in applied research on behalf of its partners in the Israeli government. By enhancing the effectiveness of government partners, MJB helps tens of thousands of Israelis who rely on those institutions.

To strengthen these partners, MJB engages in four types of research. First, MJB maps emerging social challenges, identifying best practices and advising the government to use them. Second, MJB offers process evaluations of new programs, including JDC pilots, assessing program design, comparing effectiveness in different places, and suggesting course corrections. Third, MJB also assesses programs at later stages, looking beyond the experience of

individual clients and managers to long-run impact on target populations. Fourth, MJB also offers a range of consulting services, helping ministries make greater use of evidence-based decision-making, and convening stakeholders to determine shared goals and recommendations.

The Taub center's research also is a valuable resource for government, civil society, philanthropy, and the global Jewish community. Taub focuses on broad trends in education, health, welfare, labor markets, and economic policy, analyzing not only today's pressing issues, but also issues that are not yet on the public radar. Indeed, one of Taub's singular contributions is its annual *State of the Nation Report*, which highlights key developments in the Israeli economy. Unlike Brookdale, Taub does not accept government funds, instead maintaining a strictly independent status.

c. Are we the right organization to respond?

MJB and Taub are among the most influential research institutions in Israel, but their missions are somewhat different. On one hand, MJB is a close partner of the Israeli government, which provides MJB with special access and also offers MJB donors significant leverage by matching contributions. On the other hand, Taub avoids partnering with the government so it can offer an independent perspective. While both organizations produce high quality research on general trends in the Israeli economy, MJB also evaluates specific government programs and offers consulting services. Each institution inspires better policy, and thus touches the lives of thousands of Israelis every year.

C. Care, Security, and Resilience in Europe¹¹

1. How important is the problem?

In addition to our work in Israel and the FSU, JDC also aids vulnerable Jews in Europe. In 2019, JDC is receiving approximately \$35 million from the Claims Conference to care for survivors in Central and Eastern Europe. In Hungary, as in the FSU, we provide care directly through a welfare center. In contrast, we provide grants to local Jewish communities, which are the service providers, in the Baltics, Bulgaria, and Romania.

¹¹ Our program in Europe is led by David Colman, who chairs the board committee on Europe, and by Diego Ornique, who is our regional director for Europe.

Like in the FSU, an important challenge in Central and Eastern Europe is that restitution funds will decline in the coming decade. Unless these communities prepare for these declines, elderly Jews might not receive life-saving care. For example, since elderly Jews in Hungary are *practically all* Nazi Victims, the Hungarian Jewish community is not used to paying for elder care. In the Baltics, as in Russia and Ukraine, the Claims Conference pays for infrastructure that also serves clients who are not Nazi victims, and thus rely on JDC to fund their care.

JDC saves Jewish lives not only by providing care, but also by rescuing and protecting Jews in danger. Unfortunately, the threat of terrorism has become more acute in recent years, especially in Western Europe. Attacks in France, Denmark, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Spain, and other places have targeted both Jews and the general population.

2. How effective is our response?

In response, we are devoting more of our budget in Europe to declines in restitution funding and the threat of terrorism. For both challenges, our response is to help local communities help themselves.

For JDC, responding to declines in restitution funding is easier in Europe than in the FSU because local communities are better organized and funded; unlike in the FSU, many have received property restitution. As a result, JDC's main response is to educate communities about the issue. For example, we are planning pan-European gatherings of community leaders to explore potential responses. We may also provide limited financial support during the transition, beginning sometime after 2020.

To respond to terrorism and antisemitism, we rely on three strategies, which all leverage our close relationships with local communities. First, our Jewish Community Resilience program helps communities prepare for crises. We bring community representatives together for shared learning, training, and planning. Every other year, we also host a conference on resilience, empowering over 100 community leaders to share ideas and develop networks for cooperation. In addition to these pan-European efforts, JDC also has launched intensive local initiatives in Leeds, Athens, and Rome, where we evaluate existing initiatives and develop new ones, such as contingency plans and crisis communications. In Paris, JDC opened a resilience center, offering specialized psychological treatment to terror victims in partnership with UJA-Federation of New York, the Israel Trauma Coalition, and OSE (a local Jewish welfare agency).

Second, JDC has joined a partnership called “Pillar” with four other organizations, which enhances the security of Jewish schools and community centers in Europe. Pillar conducts security audits to determine how to upgrade infrastructure and personnel to protect children, teachers, and community members.

Third, JDC also trains individuals to identify threats more effectively when they are at work, in stores, or on the street. In Israel, New York, and some other places, citizens routinely notice unattended packages, as well as suspicious vehicles and individuals. But European Jews are less attuned to these threats. In response, JDC is developing educational materials and presentations, and partnering with Israeli experts, as well as with the security arm of local communities.



3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

In general, we believe that local communities are the right institutions to provide care, and to work with governments in responding to terrorism and antisemitism. Yet JDC is well positioned to counsel and assist in these efforts because of our close ties to European Jewish communities. This counseling role avoids financial dependence and reinforces the local community’s responsibility to protect its members.

In deciding how much to invest in these activities, we prioritize initiatives that others cannot (or will not) pursue. For instance, we do not provide care in Western Europe,

since robust government safety nets and well-organized Jewish communities already address this need.

We are more active in Central and Eastern Europe, but our footprint is still lighter than in the FSU for four reasons. First, the economies generally are healthier than in the FSU. Second, government safety nets tend to be more generous. Third, local Jewish communities usually are better organized. Fourth, the communities are smaller.

Unlike our support for care, our work on community security focuses on Western Europe. Although our geographic focus is different, the principle for allocating resources is the same: we avoid duplicating what others do, and prioritize initiatives that leverage JDC's unique strengths.

For example, our resilience work flows from our close ties to local communities. Indeed, resilience became a priority for JDC because terrorism and antisemitism are so important to Jewish communities in Western Europe.

JDC's participation in Pillar also fits our mission and is coordinated with other nonprofits. Indeed, JDC joined Pillar at the invitation of other members, who already were informally tapping JDC's expertise about local communities. Moreover, the synergies run both ways. For JDC, it is more efficient to join an existing initiative than to provide a similar service on our own.

Training community members to identify threats is an extension of our resilience work, which fills an unmet need, since other institutions were not pursuing this goal. In providing this training, we partner with local communities and Israeli experts.

D. Care and Resilience in Latin America, North Africa, and India¹²

In addition to the FSU, Israel, and Europe, JDC provides care in other places as well. For instance, there are 500,000 Jews in Latin America, and 50,000 Jews in North Africa and Asia. In principle, JDC takes responsibility for vulnerable Jews everywhere. But in practice, we focus on places where needs are most urgent and our impact is greatest.

¹² Our program in Latin America is led by David Horwitz, who chairs the board committee on Latin America, and by Sergio Widder, who is our regional director for Latin America. Our program in Asia and Africa is led by Philip Rosenfeld, who chairs the board committee on Asia and Africa, and by Diego Ornique, who is our regional director for Asia and Africa.

1. How important is the problem?

A sobering example is Venezuela. The Jewish community there once was one of the wealthiest in the world. But severe economic mismanagement paired with low oil prices triggered rampant inflation of one million per cent in 2018, a deep economic crisis, and a breakdown of law and order. One third of the country's workers are unemployed, and the minimum wage is below \$5 per month. Violent crime is widespread, food shortages are acute, and the average citizen lost 24 pounds from hunger in 2017. The Jewish community also has witnessed hostility to Israel. The community has contracted from 20,000 to fewer than 5,500.

Some Jews have stayed because they do not have the resources to start a new life elsewhere. Others are too old and frail to move. The challenges for elderly Jews are especially stark, since Venezuela does not produce medicine domestically, and imports generally are unavailable because the currency is in free fall.

Half the Jews in Latin America live in Argentina, where unemployment was above 9% and inflation is expected to be 47% or more in 2018. These difficult economic conditions pose a particular challenge for elderly people living on fixed incomes.

Economic conditions in Cuba also are challenging, and the small Jewish community there depends on external support. Much of this support either comes directly from JDC or from foreign visitors, including on the missions we organize. Yet nearly half of these missions were cancelled in 2017 and 2018, causing a decline in funding for our work, as well as a decline in the support that flowed directly to the community.

In Chile, the challenge is different. The nation's Palestinian population—the largest outside the Middle East—is twenty times larger than the Jewish community there. Chile's BDS movement has significant support, and the Jewish community is concerned about harassment and violence.

Security issues are also significant for Jewish communities in Turkey, Iran, North Africa, and India. These communities are shrinking and aging. The remaining Jews are disproportionately poor and elderly. There are pockets of extreme poverty, especially in Tunisia, India, and Morocco.

2. How effective is our response?

Given the grave crisis in Venezuela, JDC is working closely with the Venezuelan Jewish community to ensure that basic needs are met. Isolated elderly Jews need

transportation, so they can gather together. In addition, over 20% of the community receives food or medicine, and this percentage is growing, as is JDC's investment there. Working closely with local leaders, we constantly reassess communal needs. JDC also has convened a group of institutions to coordinate support for the local community.

In Argentina, our main response has been to strengthen local communities, so they care for vulnerable citizens themselves. We have accomplished this goal in Buenos Aires, which is home to 85% of the nation's Jews. Local institutions such as the Tzedaka Foundation, which JDC helped to launch decades ago, have become very effective in providing care to vulnerable Jews in Buenos Aires.

Yet Jewish communities outside of Buenos Aires (in "the provinces") are not as well organized. In 2019, JDC will provide direct assistance to over 600 vulnerable Jews in the provinces. But in the next three to five years, we are gradually phasing out of this direct assistance, while strengthening local communal institutions.

In Cuba, where food and medicine are in short supply, JDC is a key source of both for the Jewish community. The Shabbat meals we provide are one of the community's main sources of protein. We also offer milk, breakfast, and snacks at the Jewish Sunday school. In addition, JDC funds transportation for elderly members of the community.

In Chile, JDC is exploring a partnership with the local Jewish community to enhance communal resilience, drawing on expertise we developed in Europe.

Security and resilience also are new priorities in North Africa, and Asia. In 2019, we will map security infrastructure in North Africa, Turkey, and India and invite a delegation to join our annual security and resilience conference in Europe.

We also stand ready to help evacuate Jews who are in danger, like in past rescue operations in Yemen, Syria, and other places. In these operations, we work closely with both local and international partners.

JDC will also spend approximately \$1 million on care in Asia and North Africa. In 2019, we will focus on enhancing the efficiency of the local community's welfare system in Turkey, and on improving the old age home in Morocco. We will also provide urgently needed care in Egypt, Tunisia, and India.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

In general, we want local Jewish communities to care for their vulnerable members. Our close ties with these communities alert us to emerging needs, and allow us to work effectively with these communities.

In partnering with them, we calibrate our support to conditions on the ground. For example, when economic conditions deteriorate suddenly—as in Venezuela—we significantly increase our support, focusing on needs that others are not addressing. We prioritize places where others do not work (e.g., the provinces in Argentina, instead of Buenos Aires). In addition to resources, we also offer expertise and advice (e.g., to enhance the efficiency of welfare institutions in Turkey and Morocco). The global scope of our work allows us to bring knowledge developed in one place (e.g., about security and resilience) to new locations where it is needed (e.g., Chile and North Africa).

V. Building Jewish Life: JDC's Community Development Programs

In addition to rescue and relief, JDC also is committed to renewal. We strengthen Jewish communities in three ways. First, we engage Jews who feel no connection to Judaism, offering programs that are inclusive and pluralistic. Second, we nurture institutions and train leaders, so communities are efficient, transparent, representative, and (eventually) self-reliant. Third, we urge communities to care for their most vulnerable members. As a result, there are synergies between our community development and care missions: Individuals are more likely to receive care—and JDC has less need to provide it—if vibrant local communities take on this responsibility.

A. Central and Eastern Europe

For the past three decades, nurturing vibrant communities has been our main focus in Europe, which has a Jewish population of approximately 1.5 million people.

1. How important is the problem?

Central and Eastern Europe once housed thriving Jewish communities. But tragically, the Holocaust and decades of Communist rule devastated Jewish life

there. For decades, Communist governments discouraged organized religion and discriminated against Jews. As a result, many did not openly identify as Jews or learn even basic facts about Jewish culture and rituals. Parents often waited years to tell children they were Jewish. There also was no ethic of communal responsibility. Citizens depended on the state, looking for any personal advantage in navigating Communist bureaucracies.

2. How effective is our response?

a. Szarvas

A key reason why Jewish identity and institutions are reviving in Central and Eastern Europe is the Lauder-JDC International Jewish Youth Camp at Szarvas. Every summer, this camp in Hungary serves 1,600 future leaders and activists from 22 countries. Since it was founded in 1990, it has hosted over 25,000 Jewish children, ranging in age from 6 to 19. They come mainly from Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Small cohorts come from North America and Israel.

Before their summer at Szarvas, many campers did not know they were Jewish or had only attenuated ties to Judaism. Szarvas connects them to their tradition, teaches them Jewish ritual and practice, and renews a sense of Jewish peoplehood. Campers go home to share what they have learned with parents, grandparents, and friends.

Across Europe and the former Soviet Union, alums are revitalizing communities, advocating for Jews and Israel, promoting Jewish literacy, and ensuring a Jewish future for the region. The camp's alums are deeply engaged in other JDC initiatives in Budapest, including the Balint House Jewish Community Center; "Judafest," the annual Jewish street festival, which drew 10,000 attendees last summer; and an incubator of grassroots initiatives, the "Mozaik Hub," which provides seed funds and mentoring for new Jewish organizations. Szarvas' reach extends well beyond Hungary. Twenty-nine Jewish community centers in the region have Szarvas alums in leadership roles.

Szarvas has also provided an invaluable opportunity for young Israeli and American Jews to meet their European counterparts. Together, they experience the power of global Jewry and the imperative to take responsibility for each other, shaping a global Jewish future as one people. They return home inspired by their European colleagues' enthusiasm, and mindful—much more than they

were before—of how fortunate American and Israeli Jews are to have access to so many vibrant Jewish institutions.

In order to build on this remarkable success, JDC seeks to secure the future of Camp Szarvas. We have launched a campaign to raise at least \$18 million, funded mainly from sources that would not be available for our other work, with two goals:

First, we are upgrading the camp's infrastructure, enhancing its security, expanding and upgrading the dining hall and dormitories, enabling the facility to be used during the off season, and renovating the sports facilities. We anticipate spending approximately \$12 million on capital upgrades, although the precise amount will depend on project costs, exchange rates, and other variables.

Second, JDC also is creating a restricted endowment to support the camp's operating expenses. We would like to raise approximately \$6 million of endowment, and this amount could be higher if we spend less than \$12 million on capital upgrades or raise more than \$18 million. This endowment will fund maintenance and operating costs, so Szarvas remains a fixture of Jewish life in the region.

b. Leadership Development and Volunteerism

In addition to summer camps, JDC also has significant impact through leadership development programs for both professional and lay leaders, such as our Buncher Community Leadership Program. We run programs for social welfare professionals, school principals, JCC directors, leaders of grass roots organizations, camp counselors, and community presidents. These investments are especially impactful, since capable leaders help communities serve members more effectively. Yesod, a pan-European partnership with the Rothschild and Schusterman Foundations, trains Jewish communal professionals. Likewise, the Kaplan Leadership Initiative trains Jewish professionals across the globe.

c. Community Sustainability

Since our main community development goal is to nurture sustainable local communities, we share expertise with them about managing assets and operations. We also help communities attract more resources. For example, we are helping the Jewish community of Bulgaria to create a new community complex, including a school as well as spaces to generate rental income (as a partnership

with the Lauder Foundation). JDC also is helping communities manage Jewish schools more effectively by joining a partnership with World ORT, the Lauder Foundation, the Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Charitable Foundation, and others. Since we have made significant progress in nurturing communal infrastructure in Europe, we are shifting our focus to specific programmatic areas that are shared priorities of JDC and local communities, such as resilience and security.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

We are less likely to undertake a community development initiative if other international NGOs do similar work. For example, since others focus on promoting religious life, these areas are not priorities for JDC.

Our initiatives in Europe are virtually always partnerships with local communities, so we tap local leaders' knowledge and encourage them to own the project. By forging closer ties with the community, partnerships enhance JDC's influence, even over activities we do not fund. But since our scarce resources have to advance JDC's own programmatic goals, our joint ventures focus increasingly on JDC priorities, such as resilience and leadership development.

B. FSU

1. How important is the problem?

Although the vast majority of JDC's budget in the FSU is for care, community development also is critically important for three reasons. First, since there are estimated to be almost 900,000 Jews in the FSU, a lot is at stake in engaging this large population.

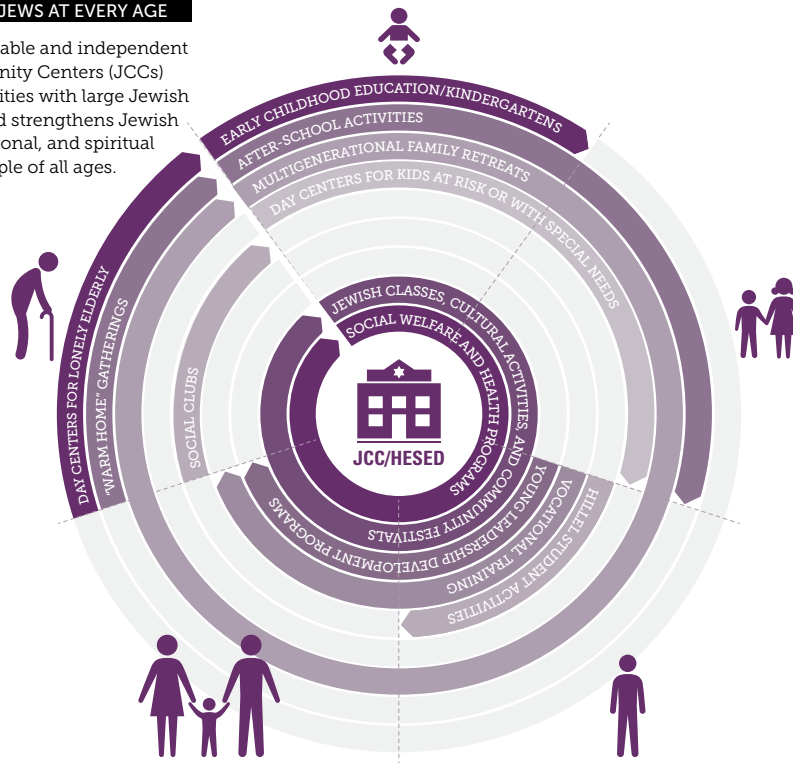
Second, reviving Jewish communities in the FSU is especially challenging, since communism was even more devastating there than in Central and Eastern Europe. The system was in place longer—starting in 1917, instead of in 1945—and treated both organized religion and Jews more harshly. In response, many FSU Jews did not openly practice their religion, identify as Jews, or even tell their children they were Jewish.

Third, community development has an especially important synergy with our care mission: over time, we want local communities to take on more responsibility for care.

REVITALIZING JEWISH LIFE

CONNECTING JEWS AT EVERY AGE

JDC develops viable and independent Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) and Heseds in cities with large Jewish populations, and strengthens Jewish cultural, educational, and spiritual services for people of all ages.



2. How effective is our response?

To engage the FSU's vast pool of unaffiliated Jews, JDC uses a life-cycle approach to reach people at different stages of life, serving approximately 50,000 people each year:

- Our partnership in Russia with PJ Library engages young children with free books on Jewish themes; in 2019, we are bringing this program to Ukraine.
- We also run Jewish kindergartens, Sunday schools, day camps, and other classes for children.
- Family Shabbat retreats, family clubs, and other family programming also reach young children and their parents.
- Our youth group, Active Jewish Teens, engages young Jews before college. We launched this BBYO-affiliated program four years ago with 30 teens in Kharkov, and now have 3,100 teens in almost 60 cities.
- We also offer places at Szarvas for children from the FSU.

- Likewise, our work with Hillel recruits college students.
- Our leadership programs reach college students and graduates.
- Our volunteer networks reach a broad range of age cohorts.
- For older Jews, we offer elderly clubs, warm homes, and day centers.

To anchor these initiatives, JDC created a network of over 50 Jewish community centers (“JCCs”) across the FSU, including large ones in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov, and Dniepro. While these JCCs are bursting with activity, they require significant resources, so we are exploring how to operate them more cost-effectively.

This was one of the recommendations of a board task force, convened in 2018, which analyzed our community development work in the FSU. The task force also prioritized three community development initiatives.

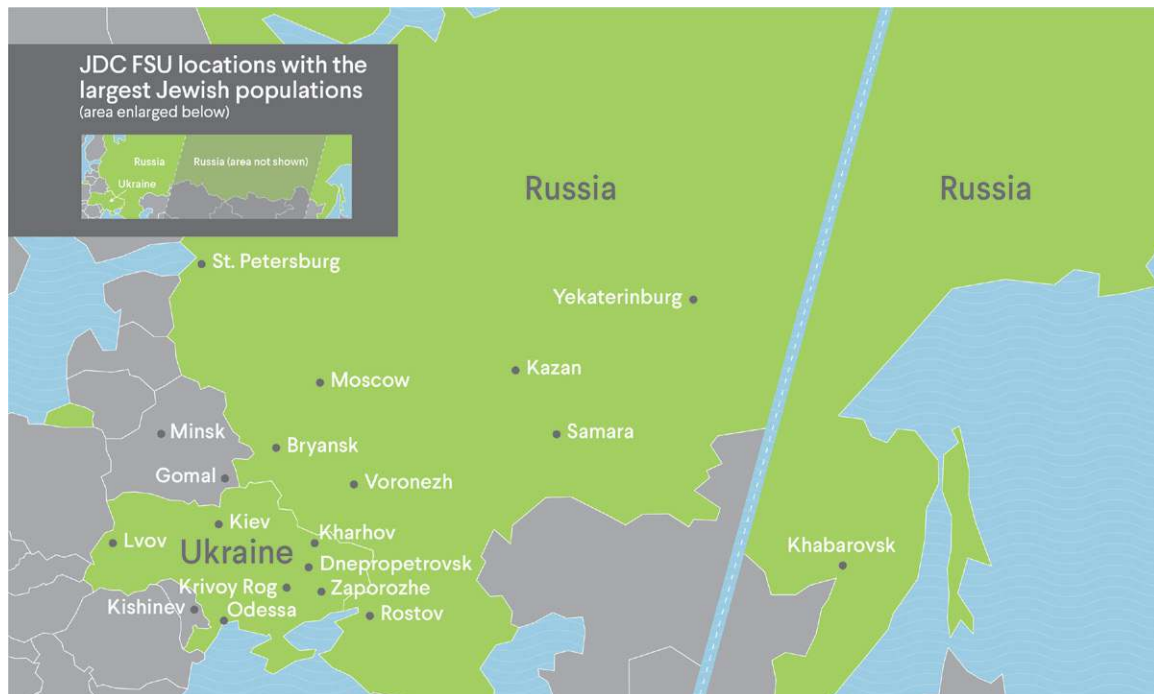
The first is training leaders, since strong leaders benefit the entire community. The Kaplan Leadership Initiative is a lynchpin of this strategy. It complements and reinforces our other FSU leadership programs, such as Metsuda and Knafaim, whose alumni have launched grass roots initiatives that JDC scaled up throughout the region. A recent survey of 300 alumni demonstrates the power of these programs: 56% have led a community project; 76% have made a donation, and 86% have volunteered.

In that spirit, a second key priority is volunteerism. In addition to providing a cost-effective way to deliver services, volunteer networks encourage volunteers to become more committed to care and community development, enhancing the community’s capacity to pursue these goals independently. In four years, this initiative grew from a small pilot in Moldova to a program with 2,600 participants in 37 cities.

Third, JDC also focuses on youth programming. Young Jews in the FSU have spent their lives in a post-Soviet environment. They are proud to identify as Jews, considering it cosmopolitan and even “cool.” In the FSU, the natural impulse of teenagers to become independent works in our favor; after all, embracing Jewish identity differentiates them from their parents and grandparents. At the same time, through young people, we can reach their families as well.

We prioritize young people not only because they are more receptive, but also

because they represent the future. So we focus scarce resources for community development on communities with meaningful numbers of young Jews. Although elderly Jews are spread out across the FSU, young Jews are concentrated in a few large cities. Our community development work prioritizes these communities, since Jewish communities need young Jews to be sustainable.



3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

We prioritize initiatives that would not happen without JDC. If local communities or other international nonprofits are providing a particular service, there is less need for JDC to do so. While local communities in the FSU are becoming more sophisticated, and grassroots organizations are being formed, local institutions generally are not as robust as in Europe, so there are more gaps to fill.

Some needs are addressed by other organizations, such as Chabad and JAFI, although our approach and focus are somewhat different. Compared with Chabad, JDC uses a more inclusive approach in defining who is Jewish, and our programming is less tied to traditional religious practices.

In these respects, JAFI is like JDC, but JAFI's focus is on connections to *Israel*, while JDC emphasizes connections to *Judaism*. JDC also strives to avoid overlap with JAFI's programs. For example, JDC does not operate youth summer camps in the FSU (even though we do in Europe) because JAFI has this responsibility. To avoid

duplication and to promote better coordination, JDC and JAFI engaged in a mapping exercise, in which we delineated the programs that each organization operates in particular areas.

C. Latin America, Asia, and Africa

1. How important is the problem?

JDC also seeks to strengthen Jewish life in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Communities across these regions are in different stages of development. Some are growing (e.g., Jewish expats in China) and some are shrinking (e.g., Morocco).

Some Jewish communities have become more sophisticated over the years, and thus need less from JDC. In Buenos Aires, investments we made during the financial crisis 20 years ago, as well as before it began, have produced vibrant communal institutions such as the Tzedaka Foundation, which are self-sufficient.

In contrast, local Jewish institutions are not as self-sufficient in the provinces of Argentina as in Buenos Aires. Likewise, in Cuba, although JDC has been supporting communal life for a quarter century, economic and political conditions create a stiff headwind. In North Africa, many young people are leaving, weakening local institutions.

2. How effective is our response?

In these places, in addition to engaging unaffiliated Jews—for instance, with Limmuds in Venezuela and in Chile and Shabbat dinners in Cuba—we also enhance the efficiency of local communal institutions. In the provinces of Argentina, as we phase out support for care in the coming years, we are running capacity-building programs, including pilots in Rosario and Santa Fe. In Uruguay, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey, we are strengthening the governance and management of Jewish old age homes. Across Latin America, JDC promotes knowledge sharing, for instance, by creating a network of Jewish schools to share best practices.

JDC also trains young people who head informal education projects, and also helped launch the first conference for women communal leaders in Latin America. LEATID, our regional training program, has successful graduates leading nonprofits. The Kaplan Leadership Initiative—a global effort to train Jewish communal professionals—includes a cohort from Latin America.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

To strengthen communities in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, we partner with these communities. Our longstanding ties to them, our reputation as an honest broker, and our global scope allow us to connect local communities to each other, and to bring innovative ideas from across the globe.

D. Israel

1. How important is the problem?

Since the Jewish state is a fundamental element of Jewish life today, our efforts to strengthen Israeli society through the social services innovations described above, are an important way to build Jewish life. This work enables Israel to be a more compelling beacon to disengaged Jews across the globe. In Israel, we also advance community development goals in ways that more closely resemble our renewal work in other places: the Institute for Leadership and Governance (ELKA), another JDC partnership with the Israeli government, enhances the expertise and efficiency of Israeli nonprofits and government agencies.

2. How effective is our response?

In 2019, ELKA will spend over \$7 million to pursue four goals. First, ELKA trains Israeli civil servants in the digitalization of government services. Second, ELKA convenes experts from nonprofits, government agencies, and the business world to cooperate in addressing specific social challenges. Third, ELKA trains Arab civil servants to access government resources more effectively, for instance, to facilitate Resolution 922's historic investment in Arab municipalities. Fourth, ELKA also promotes regional policymaking, using the network of voluntary partnerships among municipalities, known as clusters, launched by ELKA over the past decade.

ELKA has disproportionate impact for two reasons. First, as with JDC's other work in Israel, the government funds a significant portion of its budget. Second, by making government agencies and nonprofits more effective, ELKA helps everyone who depends on these institutions. For example, when ELKA enhances a government agency's performance, a modest expenditure by JDC increases the social return on the agency's entire budget. In effect, ELKA turbocharges the budgets of the organizations it helps.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

As trusted partners of government institutions and nonprofits, ELKA occupies a unique position in Israel. In addition to its expertise, ability to convene, and reputation as an honest broker, ELKA also leverages private support with government funds.

E. Entwine¹³

1. How important is the problem?

Although JDC mainly works outside of North America, the U.S. and Canada face their own community development challenges. A critically important one is that many Jews in their 20s and 30s feel only a weak connection to Judaism and Jewish communal life. If this cohort remains disengaged, Jewish life in North America will be much less vibrant. The work of JDC and countless other Jewish organizations can continue only if future generations commit to it.

While JDC wants to engage this generation as employees, board members, and donors, our interest in this issue is much broader: just as we build Jewish life overseas, we also are committed to this mission in North America, as long as we are making a contribution that other organizations cannot make.

2. How effective is our response?

JDC has a unique advantage in reaching this cohort of Jews: many are interested in international humanitarian work. Growing up in a global world, they have traveled extensively. Many are idealistic, and express this idealism by focusing on problems that are global, rather than local. Because JDC's global mission resonates with them, we have a comparative advantage in engaging them. Hopefully, if they become active at JDC, they will engage with other Jewish organizations as well.

In other words, we are building community at home through service abroad. Entwine, our main platform for engaging Jews in their 20s and 30s, offers volunteers the opportunity to participate in JDC's work across the globe, as well as other leadership and engagement opportunities.

Entwine offers three types of service opportunities: first, eight- to ten-day trips for people with full-time jobs; second, four- to six-week trips, which are well tailored

¹³ Entwine is led by Ellie Bressman and Charles Ribakoff, who chair the board committee on Entwine, and by Sarah Eisenman, who is the director of Entwine.

to academics and graduate students; and third, year-long experiences in our JDC Entwine Global Jewish Service Corps, which train future Jewish NGO professionals and lay leaders. The trips have an educational component, including discussions of Jewish texts and reflections on the connection between global service and Jewish values.

The analysis of an outside expert, Rosov Consulting, shows that Entwine strengthens participants' Jewish identity. For example, Rosov found that after their service trip, 73% of participants reported feeling part of a global Jewish community, compared with only 49% before the trip. Those who weren't currently involved in local Jewish life—40% indicate no current Jewish involvement—report being inspired to do so by our programs. For some, this becomes a professional calling; of those working in the Jewish communal sector, nearly 20% report that Entwine influenced or reinforced this choice.

Because these service opportunities are so impactful, we are increasing the number by 20% in 2019. We also experiment with trips dedicated to particular groups, such as Russian-speaking Jews, older participants, and professional cohorts. We also are focusing more on shorter trips than on year-long opportunities. The latter are important as a way to train future professionals and communal leaders, but are not targeted at unengaged Jewish young adults; someone who commits to a year-long trip is already engaged.

In addition to service opportunities, Entwine has alumni networks and educational events across North America and the United Kingdom, and is focusing more on these programs in 2019. These events ensure that an Entwine trip is not merely a one-time experience, but a first step toward broader engagement with JDC and the Jewish communal world. In addition, these events engage Jews who cannot join our service trips, allowing Entwine to reach 22,000 people since 2008. Approximately 50% of trip participants come to alumni events, and we seek to reach more by expanding the geographic scope of alumni programming.

Working with Bridgespan Consulting, Entwine is in the midst of developing a growth plan, which we will fund with sources that generally are not available for our other work. We believe that offering service trips and other engagement opportunities to more people will pay dividends for the Jewish community in years to come.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

JDC is unique in its ability to provide this service to the Jewish communal world.

Since the key to engaging Entwine participants is international humanitarian work, JDC is uniquely positioned to offer this experience. While other organizations have tried to run service trips, they face a daunting challenge: guaranteeing the quality of the service program. Since other organizations send participants to programs they do not run, they cannot be certain that the service opportunity is well run. Obviously, visiting a weak program is counterproductive, since participants are unlikely to try another after a disappointing experience. To mitigate this risk, JDC is able to send Entwine participants to programs we run, allowing us to guarantee the quality of the experience.

F. Global Response and Innovative Development Work (GRID)¹⁴

1. How important is the problem?

Although JDC focuses on aid for Jews, we also serve non-Jewish clients. The need is acute. Over 10 percent of the world's population live on less than two dollars per day, and the lives of vulnerable people are especially at risk in natural disasters and wars.

Serving non-Jewish clients advances JDC's mission in three ways. First, and most fundamentally, this work is an expression of Jewish values. We are committed to helping needy people of all faiths and nationalities. Second, joining together to put this ideal into action strengthens Jewish communities. Jews feel pride in their community, and are reminded of the profound connection between their moral commitments and Jewish heritage. Third, this work strengthens the ties of Jewish communities and Israel to other people in need, giving developing nations a more informed perspective on a people and a nation with whom they have had little contact before.

2. How effective is our response?

In pursuing these goals, GRID has two main programmatic priorities in 2019.

a. Disaster Relief

The first is responding to disasters. On behalf of the Jewish Federations of North America, JDC leads the North American Jewish community's response to

¹⁴ Our GRID program is led by Jayne Lipman, who chairs the board committee on GRID, and by Mandie Winston, who is our regional director for GRID.

natural disasters outside of North America. In doing so, JDC works with local and Israeli partners, and sends a response team to deliver critical aid and assist with recovery. The magnitude of our intervention depends on a range of factors, including the severity of the crisis, the presence of a local Jewish community that wants to assist in relief and recovery efforts, and the need for JDC's particular expertise.

b. Tikkun Olam Ventures (TOV)

GRID's second main priority is Tikkun Olam Ventures (TOV). This program uses market-based solutions and Israeli Ag-tech to improve the lives of thousands of farmers in Africa. We launched the program in Ethiopia in 2018. Ethiopia has 99 million people, and one-third of them live on less than \$2 per day. Because 80% of Ethiopia's workforce is engaged in agriculture, enhancing agricultural productivity—particularly of smallholder farmers—could transform Ethiopian society.

Israeli hybrid seeds and drip irrigation can dramatically enhance crop yields, but smallholder farmers in Ethiopia have not had access to capital, or to expertise in using this technology. In response, TOV offers a revolving philanthropic loan fund, which enables farmers to purchase Israeli Ag-tech. TOV also provides business services, agricultural technical support, and enhanced access to markets. Since this support significantly increases crop yields, farmers will be able to repay their loans. This capital can then be used for new loans to other farmers.

We ran seven demonstration plots in 2018, which produced impressive results. In 2019, TOV will reach more smallholder farmers, sharing the benefits of Israeli Ag-tech more widely in Ethiopia.

c. Other GRID Initiatives

JDC serves non-Jewish clients in other ways as well. Our Tikkun in Action program empowers local Jewish communities to support their vulnerable non-Jewish neighbors. In addition to helping needy people, this program strengthens Jewish communities and reinforces their ties to their neighbors. For example, in the Gabriel Project Mumbai, JDC partners with local communities and NGOs to care for children in India's slums and underserved rural villages.

In India and in Ethiopia, JDC works with rural women to improve their access to health, education, and income. Under the leadership of Dr. Rick Hodes, JDC also provides life-transforming spinal surgeries for children in Ethiopia. For a number of years, we operated health programs for women in Bosnia and Hungary (WHEP); to secure the future of these programs, we transferred them to local NGOs in 2018.

3. Are we the right organization to address the issue?

While many NGOs are committed to assisting needy people of all faiths, fewer help needy Jews who live outside the U.S., Western Europe, and Israel. Since JDC's support for these needy Jews is irreplaceable, our commitment to them is unshakeable.

We also have institutional advantages in helping non-Jewish clients, and can fund this work with sources that would not be available for our other work. Our close and longstanding relationships with Jewish communities across the globe allow us to partner with them in disaster relief, as well as in initiatives like Tikkun in Action. Our reputation as an honest broker, and our status as "point" agency for the North American Jewish community in disaster relief, enable us to convene groups of NGOs, share information, and coordinate a collective response. JDC also has special expertise in rapidly assessing needs, adapting and deploying Israeli technology, providing psychosocial support, and addressing issues of food security, health, livelihood, shelter, and education.

We are proud to deploy this expertise on behalf of non-Jewish clients. Because the needs are vast, as are the number of other NGOs addressing them, we use two criteria to decide which initiatives to pursue. First, as in all our work, JDC focuses on projects with high impact where JDC can offer added value. Second, among projects offering this high social return, JDC prioritizes initiatives that strengthen ties between populations at risk, on one hand, and Jewish communities and Israel, on the other.

VI. Conclusion

From Bobruisk to Beer Sheva, and from Caracas to Casablanca, JDC touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of needy people, while also strengthening hundreds of Jewish institutions. Wherever Jews yearn for comfort, JDC is there. Wherever they long for community, JDC is there.

This sacred mission will never change, but the world is constantly in motion. Tomorrow's challenges will be different. So we must be nimble and resourceful—even relentless—in meeting whatever lies ahead. Failure is not an option. But as long as we keep our boots on the ground, and set our sights on the horizon, nothing is impossible.



**American Jewish
Joint Distribution
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The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) is the world's leading Jewish humanitarian assistance organization. JDC works in some 70 countries and in Israel to alleviate hunger and hardship, rescue Jews in danger, create lasting connections to Jewish life, and provide immediate relief and long-term development support for victims of natural and man-made disasters. To learn more, visit [JDC.org](https://www.jdc.org).

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