



We Rescue Jews in Danger



JDC PROGRAM DASHBOARD

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OUR WORK

We Rescue Jews In Danger

...because Jews around the world still face threats — anti-Semitism, terrorism, and political and economic upheaval.

We have their backs. We stand with them.

Our priority is to help Jewish communities live safely where they choose, whether it's Caracas, Kiev, or Casablanca. But it's when things get tough that Jewish communities around the world know they can count on us most—because we are there, we're part of them. We have the reach, the relationships, the resources to act. And act we do: Out of a deep commitment to save Jewish lives, we've launched daring operations into crisis zones since our founding in World War I —wherever the crisis, whatever it takes.

And when there are threats to Jewish lives or Jewish life today, we're there with the boots on the ground and know-how to take them out of harm's way.

For more than a century, we have been the 9-1-1 of the Jewish people. And we will continue to be there at a moment's notice, because our future needs us now.

PROOF POINTS*

*All statistics as of June 2019

All proof points are illustrative and do not represent all of JDC's programs

1,000,000+ JEWS RESCUED since 1914 by JDC and our partners.

WORLD WAR I JDC channeled funds and life-saving supplies to Jews facing hunger and poverty, having lost homes, family members, and livelihoods in Europe and Ottoman-ruled Palestine.

In March 1915, JDC sent \$1.5 million and 900 tons of food and medicine

to Palestine on the S.S. Vulcan. A second shipment was made the following year.

WORLD WAR II As the war drew to a close, JDC raced to ship **227 million pounds** of scarce supplies to Europe to feed tens of thousands of newly liberated Holocaust survivors.

By 1946-47, JDC had mobilized an army of professionals and thousands of tons of supplies to sustain the

700,000 Jews across Europe now depending on it for aid.

It organized medical care, job training, educational programs, a vast tracing service, and emigration assistance for those crowding the DP (Displaced Persons) camps, intent on rebuilding their lives.

Nourishing both body and soul, JDC provided religious supplies (as well as wedding rings), organized Jewish holiday celebrations and cultural activities, and facilitated the publication of a DP Haggadah and the DP Talmud.

From 1948-1950, **JDC worked with the Jewish Agency to bring some 440,000 Jews to Israel**, over 270,000 from Europe's DP camps and nearly 170,000 from North Africa and the Middle East.

OPERATION MAGIC CARPET

JDC chartered nearly 450 flights to bring **approximately 48,000 Yemenite Jews to Israel between December 1948 and September 1950.**



These were Jews who had trekked across 200 miles of desert to reach their point of departure in Aden. Upon arrival, they received food, clothing, shelter, and much-needed medical aid from JDC, a pattern it would replicate four decades later for Ethiopian Jewry.

OPERATION SOLOMON In May 1991, with rebel forces closing in on the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, JDC helped negotiate, plan, and implement Operation Solomon, which airlifted **over 14,000 Jews to Israel over a 36-hour period.** The operation capped a decade of involvement in Gondar and Addis, where JDC's comprehensive health and welfare program had, at its height, some 24,000 beneficiaries.

JDC was meeting crisis-generated needs in Ukraine from November 2013 on, caring for the tens of thousands of impoverished Jews already served by its social welfare centers and furnishing emergency relief to thousands of new clients who suddenly faced unemployment and poverty as economic conditions deteriorated.



By 2016, JDC was also providing food, medicine, medical care, clothing, housing subsidies, post-trauma care, and Jewish community

connections to more than 8,000 Jews in the eastern conflict zones and more than 4,000 displaced Jews in Ukraine and Russia.

Where Are They Now: Three Stories of Rescue



A public health advocate in Sarajevo, a retired Wall Street banker in New York, and a Holocaust survivor in Kharkov might seem to have little in common, but Nela Hasic, Claus Hirsch, and Meri Zegelman are linked by something ineffable and profound: All three are among the more than one million Jews rescued by JDC and its partners since 1914.

A Bosnian Jew, Hasic was living with her husband and two children in Sarajevo in 1992 when the four-year siege of that Balkan capital began. The Jewish community, operating in partnership with JDC, gave her just an hour to get to the airport and get on an emergency flight evacuating the city's Jews to safety in Belgrade.

"It's a big question: Would my family even be alive without JDC? Growing up, I knew that the Joint provided this, or helped us with that, but I didn't really know what JDC was," Hasic said. "Now, I know I'd never be where I am today without JDC. If I say that I'm blessed or lucky, it's not enough."

After 10 years in Israel, Hasic and her family returned to Sarajevo, where she joined JDC and helped launch the Women's Health Empowerment Program (WHEP), which provides psychosocial support, mobile mammogram units, free aid packages, and more to breast cancer patients and survivors in the Balkans.

After 15 years, Hasic launched an independent NGO, ThinkPink, which continues the work and was among the first recipients of JDC's new Tikkun in Action grants rewarding projects inspired by Jewish values that strengthen civil society and serve marginalized populations.

Nearly 80 years ago, Claus Hirsch and his family were living in Berlin, struggling to survive during the Holocaust. As countries broke off diplomatic relations with Germany one-by-one, there was soon only one place left to go: Shanghai, China.

The family lived there for seven years before coming to the United States, and Hirsch credits a JDC-sponsored soup kitchen with saving their lives.

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“We saw firsthand what JDC is capable of and what it does for Jews in need. The most important thing was that they fed us,” said Hirsch, who retired from a career in finance 10 years ago and has been volunteering once a week for the JDC Archives ever since. “JDC keeps people alive. What more can I say?”

JDC is in the business of modern miracles, too.

When war broke out in 2014 in eastern Ukraine, Holocaust survivors Meri and Leonid Zegelman had to flee their hometown of Lugansk, leaving with just two small suitcases for what they thought would be a week or two in evacuation.

When it became clear their relocation to Kharkov would be permanent, JDC staff provided food, medicine, and psychosocial support, helping the Zegelmans rent and get settled into a new apartment.

“Life felt like it had collapsed for us, but in Kharkov, we immediately found like-minded people at JDC. Thanks to them, we know we’re not alone, and we know where to turn to when we need help,” Meri said. “This helped us not fall into despair during such a difficult time. Thanks to JDC, we still feel like Jews and we still feel needed.”

Meri has become a Warm Homes volunteer in Kharkov, gathering other elderly Jews together for food, conversation, Jewish holiday celebrations, and more. She’s become a crown jewel of the city’s Jewish community, said

Lily Krichevskaya, a volunteer at the city’s JDC-supported Hesed social welfare center.

“Meri is a true motion machine, a source of energy, joy, and optimism for everyone,” she said. “If you hadn’t asked me now, I wouldn’t even remember that JDC rescued Meri during the conflict. She’s just a member of our community, like a relative, and a very important person for me. It’s thanks to people like her that we’re able to keep a community.”

For Hasic, it’s humbling and a little remarkable that the same organization has played such a profound role in her family’s story through the generations.

“I can’t imagine the Jewish world without JDC. I tell my story from the ‘90s, others tell their story from the ‘40s, and my father would tell you a story of JDC helping him send his kids to summer camp,” she said. “JDC touches the lives of so many Jews and non-Jews that it’s really essential. It’s like the Red Cross. It’s part of the system of how the world is able to function.”

