Bringing hope to every generation
This year, because of our Rosh Hashanah appeal, we will be repairing her home and giving her warmth, safety and dignity. It’s truly life-saving and a very practical response to an unacceptable situation that so many of our extended Jewish family face in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

This is what World Jewish Relief does every day of the week, year in, year out. We support the world’s poorest Jewish communities, mostly in the Former Soviet Union where there remain hundreds of thousands of Jews. So if an older person like Svetlana needs help fixing their home, we fix it; if someone’s lonely, we bring them into the community; or if they lack the means to provide basics for themselves, such as food or medicine, we’re there to provide for them. Not only that, but we don’t want the next generation to face the same hardships in their old age as Svetlana, so we support younger people to find employment to escape the cycle of poverty.

Yet on that Friday something happened that forced us to challenge our priorities. I’m sure you all saw the devastation that Hurricane Matthew wrought in Haiti. Hundreds died. Whole towns were swept away, with tens of thousands of people displaced from their homes.

As you know, World Jewish Relief leads the Jewish community’s response to international disasters, showing the world that we care for those beyond our own community. On that October morning, we had the decision to make as to whether, if we appealed for Haiti, we would still raise enough money from our Rosh Hashanah appeal to fix Svetlana’s home. We were well aware that appealing for those in Haiti could detract from our work in the Former Soviet Union. We could be competing with ourselves!

What is ‘an emergency’? In international disasters, both natural disasters like Haiti or man-made emergencies such as the refugee crisis, we help people whose lives are devastated by a catastrophic event. Yet if you’re old and lonely or have to choose between food and medicine or can’t find work in Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia, every day is an emergency.

No individual is more or less deserving than another.

So on 7 October we appealed for Haiti so that we could provide immediate support such as food and shelter and help Haiti to rebuild. But we know that Svetlana’s house will not repair itself. So not only are we running an appeal for Haiti but we redoubled our efforts to make sure that our Rosh Hashanah appeal was not sacrificed.

And thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, we will be able to help in both contexts.

We will continue to do what we have done since 1933; support people who are facing an emergency every single day. We couldn’t do all that we do without your help.

Thank you.

Over the last decade or more, we’ve seen a strategic campaign in the UK to increase public awareness and understanding of dementia. But in the Former Soviet Union, the situation is drastically different. Social and medical support is limited and people lack knowledge of dementia – many assuming it is a natural part of ageing.

As a result, many older people who develop dementia are excluded by society or withdraw themselves due to stigma and embarrassment.

Friends and even family members often don’t know how to react. The life expectancy of a member of the Jewish community is significantly longer than the average, thanks to the life-saving social care provided by World Jewish Relief and other organisations. But as we know, the likelihood of developing dementia increases with age, so this is leading to more cases within the Jewish community.

In order to support communities with this, we brought in Jewish Care’s expertise as a social care provider to complement our more than 25 years of experience working in the Former Soviet Union. We are working with our partner, who deliver social care services to the Jewish population.

We have funded Jewish Care staff to run training seminars for homecare workers and staff in Jewish social welfare centres in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. In 2016 we trained more than 200 people and there was demand for more. Our ambition is to improve the lives of Jewish people living with dementia, but this isn’t possible without transforming wider society’s view of ageing and dementia, so we invited Government officials and civil servants to attend the trainings.

Each seminar started by covering the basics, such as ‘What is dementia?’ We emphasise seeing the person and their needs first, not treating them as a patient with a diagnosis.

The aim is to create ‘dementia champions’ in Jewish organisations who can deliver new services and raise awareness in the community and beyond.

In a previous job I witnessed horrendous cases of discrimination of people living with dementia in State-run institutions in Belarus. I’m proud that World Jewish Relief is contributing to a ripple of change. As we know from the UK, it will take time, but it is achievable.

On Friday 7 October 2016, we were sitting around the table having a conversation that felt pertinent to every supporter of our work.

If you saw our Rosh Hashanah appeal you’d have seen Svetlana from Odessa, Ukraine, the face of the appeal and the sweetest lady you can possibly imagine. When my colleague went to visit her home recently, her window pane fell into the road as he was speaking to her. Incredible. Her ceiling is moulder, walls rotten and her apartment filled with damp.
Transcending the bounds of faith

There are currently over 65 million refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) around the world, with stories like this. Innocent people forced to flee their homes, leaving behind established roots and abandoning skilled professions.

To date, we have raised over £1 million in response to the current refugee crisis, allowing us to support thousands of people in Turkey and Greece with life-saving assistance. But as we know, the refugee crisis has become a domestic story too, with the government pledging to resettle 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees in the UK by 2020. The British Government is providing housing, education and healthcare, but a missing part of the jigsaw of full integration is the lack of employment opportunities.

From our successful programmes in Ukraine and Moldova, World Jewish Relief has built up a great deal of expertise helping vulnerable people to find jobs and break the cycle of poverty. We have used that expertise to implement a similar employment programme in Bradford.

In April 2016, World Jewish Relief launched the pilot Training and Employment Programme in Bradford – the sole resource in the area for specialist refugee employment support. The aim of the programme, funded by private donors and not from our emergency appeal, is to prepare 1,000 Syrian refugees with the skills for, and access to, the UK job market. By enabling them to become ready for employment, secure work and contribute to society, we are reducing their dependency on state welfare and increasing their chance to successfully integrate. The programme provides services like employment assessments, CV workshops, interview practice, work placements and, crucially, English language classes.

Despite the hardships they have faced and many barriers that still lie in their path, the participants are highly motivated and their response has encouraged many other Syrian refugees to begin self-referring to the programme. As well as the five jobs secured so far, many are on the verge of employment and there are lots of potential jobs lined up.

In January, the programme will launch in Coventry to help around 60 refugees, initially.

Imagine you are a teacher from Syria. A year ago you were stood in front of a class of teens in your home town, now you find yourself with few prospects in a foreign country whose language you can’t speak. Your home has been destroyed, your country is in turmoil, that same classroom now rubble and dust.

Until last year, Nadia lived in Damascus, Syria. There she worked hard for years to build up her own retail business. Fearing the civil war raging around her, Nadia had little choice but to flee with her son, leaving behind their home and the 35 shops she managed in one of the city’s main shopping malls.

Arriving in Bradford, she found herself unable to secure work due to her poor English. Enrolling on our programme, Nadia undertook an employment assessment, English lessons and a CV workshop and we were able to find her a work placement at Marks & Spencer within the management team.

Despite excellent feedback, her manager didn’t think her English was good enough to be employed at this stage, telling her to come back in six months. Since then, with her stoic drive and determination, she has enrolled on an additional English course at Bradford College and is taking every opportunity to practice, until she can “speak English the way she speaks Arabic”. We continue to support Nadia in her quest for employment.

There has been an extremely positive public response, encapsulated by this email, received after a segment about the programme in July on BBC One and Radio 4:

Dear World Jewish Relief,

I listened to BBC Radio 4 news today about World Jewish Relief helping Syrian refugees in Bradford. I am a Muslim by faith, this gesture by you has humbled me and provided a new perspective into how we can transcend bounds of faith and give comfort to fellow humans.

Thanks, thanks and many thanks for your great work.
IN OCTOBER I MET NATALIYA AND SERGEI IN THEIR APARTMENT IN KURAHOOVO, JUST 25KM FROM THE FRONT LINE OF THE CONFLICT IN EASTERN UKRAINE. YOU CANNOT IMAGINE THE LEVEL OF HARDSHIP IN KURAHOOVO.
Responding to Emergencies

There are currently more people who have been forced to flee their homes by conflict and crisis than at any time since World War II.

Aida’s story is remarkable, but alarmingly typical of many others who have had to flee Syria.

When her teenage children were caught in a battle in the street on their way to school a year and a half ago, traumatized by the slaughter of their neighbours, Aida knew it was time to leave. With one son already dead, the hospital unable to treat his cancer, Aida wasn’t prepared to say goodbye to any more of her children. She left her job as a nurse, her husband left his as a journalist and they made the journey to Turkey with their children. With every mile further down, their lives turned upside down. The centre is a new lease of life in a rush, their future was uncertain.

In Syria, Aida had been imprisoned, severely beaten and witnessed horrific violence against women. Now, she attends our Women’s Support Centre in Gaziantep, close to the Syrian border; the only centre of its kind in the region. Aida loves being able to come to the centre. She is learning Turkish and in the evening goes home and teaches the children. She is learning Turkish and the border; the only centre of its kind in the region.

The Women’s Support Centre will help 1,000 women and girls like Aida, including widows, orphans and those sexually abused. It will provide health, vocational and psychosocial services, giving these women the opportunity to heal and form a support network. Many who end up here have fled similar dreadful scenes in Syria: beheadings, rape, and the constant fear of bombings. They often leave with very little and in a rush, their lives turned upside down. The centre is a new lease of life and the participants are seizing every opportunity. The women learn Turkish, English and IT skills to improve their job prospects. Some train in childcare, while others focus on recovering from their trauma.

Even more than the practical skills being provided, we have seen that the centre’s greatest quality has been as a safe space for participants to talk about their experiences and meet new friends.

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In the first four months alone there have been over 500 beneficiaries, many of whom use the centre for more than one purpose. One of those women is Yana, who is filled with optimism. “We have to improve our skills because we want a brighter future for our children. If we grow a new and better generation than before, we can make the world a better place.”

The Refugee Crisis Appeal

The Women’s Support Centre is just one of the projects we’ve been able to initiate thanks to the astonishing response of the Jewish community to our Refugee Crisis Appeal. The funds raised have also allowed us to provide immediate aid to those most vulnerable in the form of rescue teams on the beaches of Lesbos, a mobile medical unit, and the provision of urgent food and basic supplies. In the year since the appeal was launched, we have made a difference to 17,557 lives.

Nepal

Over a year after the devastating earthquake in April 2015, we are focused on long-term solutions for Nepali people.

Our agricultural livelihood programme helps farmers grow high value cash crops like tomatoes and cauliflower.

We provide business plans, skills training, start-up inputs (like fertiliser and tools) and mentoring and monitoring for the farmers involved. In areas lacking water suitable for agriculture, goat farming and beekeeping were introduced.

We are on track to help 450 participants begin to earn an income and rebuild their lives this year. Over the next two years, our programme aims to reach 1,400 people.

We have also conducted 10 Disaster Risk Reduction courses for the worst-hit communities, so they can assess risks and implement disaster plans in future.

Haiti

At the lowest estimate, Hurricane Matthew ended the lives of 546 people in Haiti. Realistically this figure is likely to be well over 1,000.

In the devastating aftermath people were left without homes, livelihoods and in many cases, families.

We are providing the most vulnerable with $250 cash transfers to purchase materials for home repairs or food; a dignified and enabling way to provide humanitarian aid.

We are providing additional vouchers for families to buy roofing materials, or agricultural supplies, such as seeds or fishing equipment. We are also conducting roof and whole home repairs for 34 families.

In total, we will reach 1,104 people.

We are looking for volunteers with relevant experience to strengthen our Rapid Response Team for future disasters. For more information see the back page.
The seeds Weizmann planted

Chaim Weizmann, the first President of Israel and a founder of World Jewish Relief, was born and raised in Belarus. Indeed, he struggled on arriving in England, exclaiming: “You cannot imagine what it means for an intellectual to live in the English provinces and work with the local Jews. It’s hellish torture!” Our connection with Belarus still runs deep – today we support vulnerable Jewish families across the country.

In a village outside Minsk, the capital, some 100 miles away from where Weizmann was born, lives Svetlana Voyevodinka, 41, a single mother with a large family. Svetlana has been out of work for years. “For many years I taught maths at a high school. I took maternity leave to have Sonja just over 7 years ago.”

After giving birth she was unable to return to teaching as her middle child, Alexandra, developed health problems which required special care. She needed expensive medicine and frequent monitoring by a doctor. The authorities said she had to be home-schooled.

Svetlana’s entire savings were spent on looking after her daughter. “What else could I do?” she says. “You do anything for your children.”

Despite everything she was facing, she refused to give up and began to look for a way to earn money to support her children without having to leave Alexandra. At a Jewish community event, Galina, Svetlana’s mother, learned about our work in Minsk and advised her daughter to approach us. “My mum was very insistent! It was thanks to her I found out about the business training and was able to attend as she looked after the children. It changed my life.”

In the past year nearly 2,000 people have found employment through our courses, which help people who have been out of work for many years find a sustainable job. Svetlana became one of the most active participants in her cohort. “My whole family told me how much my self-esteem changed. I felt better about myself too.” After completing the course Svetlana decided to become a beautician. “It decided it would give me a large enough income, but crucially allow me to still work from home.” She has not forgotten her family. “What else can I give to anyone looking for a job?”

“It wasn’t only Svetlana’s life which was transformed. “My eldest daughter saw what had happened to me and was inspired to go on the same training course.”

Alexandra can now receive the physiotherapy she needs and the other children can attend after-school activities and receive additional tuition. If things continue, perhaps it won’t be too long before Belarus produces its next Chaim Weizmann.

What is your connection to World Jewish Relief?
I always liked the way the organisation was run and the work it does, helping people to help themselves. Both mine and my husband’s grandparents came from Eastern Europe, so in other circumstances, it could have been us there now.

How do you support the charity?
For four years I’ve been giving talks on astronomy to the English-speaking community in Zichron Yaakov. My husband Jonathan puts the presentations together, and I deliver them on topics ranging from the Moon to Spectroscopy. We do this all in aid of World Jewish Relief, show a short film about the cause and we raise between £3k-£4k per year.

How often do you give talks?
As well as four-week long courses for about 30 people at a time, I sometimes give popular one-off talks, especially if there’s something of interest in the news. Extrasolar planets – planetary systems going round other stars – is one of my favourites, and it goes down well too.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to do the same?
Even if only two people show up, don’t give up! It grows from there and the best advert is word-of-mouth.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Whether you’re looking to achieve another personal best or have never been sporty, World Jewish Relief has the challenge for you.

Run
the Virgin London
Marathon (April 23rd 2017). Soak in the atmosphere as you run, jog or even walk the 26.2 miles past London’s iconic landmarks.

Cycle
from the gates of Auschwitz to the doors of the JCC, Krakow. Ride For The Living (June 22nd – 25th 2017) is a unique way to experience and support World Jewish Relief’s work rebuilding Poland’s Jewish community.

Trek
Kilimanjaro, Walk the family 1k Maccabi GB Community Fun Run, Tackle Tough Mudder... There is something for everyone.

CELEBRATORY GIVING

Mark a special occasion by supporting World Jewish Relief!
If you, or someone you know, is celebrating a birthday, anniversary, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, or wedding, you could use the opportunity to give hope for a better future to those in need.

1. If you know someone who is celebrating a birthday, anniversary, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, or wedding, you could use the opportunity to support World Jewish Relief!

2. If you have a special occasion coming up you can ask well-wishers to donate to World Jewish Relief in your name. We will keep you updated on who has donated and the total you raise.

For more information about Celebratory Giving please email hadas@worldjewishrelief.org or call 020 8786 1250.

OUR THANKS TO...

World Jewish Relief would like to thank the following supporters and their families for generous gifts left in their will:

Hillel Bender
Brian & Lynda Davis
John Jacques
Rene Nadler
Jack Vardy

Gifts in wills are critical to World Jewish Relief. We couldn’t achieve what we do without the invaluable support of those who want to leave a lasting legacy. We wish your families a long life.

For more information about leaving a gift to World Jewish Relief in your will please contact Richard Budden, Head of Individual Giving & Legacies on 020 8786 1250 / richardb@worldjewishrelief.org
When catastrophic disasters strike, we pride ourselves on leading British Jewry’s response assisting victims in the immediate aftermath and longer term.

We are looking to strengthen our Rapid Response Team and call for individuals with relevant experience who could deploy to a disaster zone at short notice, with permission from their employers, for 10-28 days.

We are specifically looking for individuals with:

- Previous experience of leading or working within the international humanitarian or development contexts.
- Expertise in logistics, food and non-food distribution, needs assessments, emergency shelter, rural or urban livelihood development or cash-based emergency intervention programmes.

You will need to be in exceptional health and available for security and other training inputs. If interested please send your CV to: info@worldjewishrelief.org

What does World Jewish Relief do?

Everything we do is THANKS to your GENEROSITY

Older people
- We support AGING POPULATIONS to live in WARMTH, SAFETY and DIGNITY

Livelihood
- We help people to FIND WORK and become SELF-RELIANT

Emergencies*
- We support people hit by DISASTERS worldwide

Physical needs
- We provide ESSENTIALS such as MEDICATION, FOOD and HOME REPAIRS

Back to work
- Our training helps people INTO WORK and OUT OF POVERTY

Supporting entrepreneurship
- We enable people to create businesses to SUPPORT THEMSELVES and others

Long-term solutions
- We help communities to REBUILD SUSTAINABLY

Immediate relief
- We provide FOOD, SHELTER and MEDICAL RELIEF

WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

For every £1 we receive, 81p is spent on our life-changing projects supporting older Jewish people and those escaping poverty, primarily in the former Soviet Union. We invest the other 19p to manage our income and to help raise the next pound.

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