Jewish values, global response
I am hugely proud that while the bulk of our efforts are targeted at helping a vulnerable Jewish client group, at times of major international disaster - in true Jewish tradition - we reach beyond our community and show the world that we care. I recently heard from our fabulous partner agency in northern Kenya which, thanks to our community's support, was providing water and food to starving women and children facing a looming famine. I'm amazed once again by our Jewish desire to save lives wherever we can.

My passion for this organisation is fuelled not only by those we help but by those who help us to help. I was humbled recently to see marathon runners breaking their bodies in support of our cause, 12 year olds allocating part of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah presents to our projects, couples getting married encouraging donations over gifts and thousands of others responding to our Pesach appeal or other fundraising initiatives. Those acts of kindness, the love of helping others, the knowledge that each and every one of us can change someone's life, is a driver for me to try and do even more.

One day technology will enable all of our supporters to meet and hear from those we help; to hear their story, feel their struggle and participate in their future. In the meantime let me say a big thank you on their behalf for all your help. You cannot imagine the difference it makes.

Thank you.
Ingrid Silver, 44, and her son Danny, 12, recount the experience of receiving historical records of family members who escaped Nazi-occupied Europe with the help of World Jewish Relief.

**Ingrid**

Sitting at my desk late one night I saw an email from World Jewish Relief explaining the archives project. So I emailed my grandparents’ names, as well as my grandfather’s sister and grandmother’s mother and the dates of birth I knew. The very next day papers came through. I printed them out and that Friday night I passed them around the table. Sharing that on Shabbat was special in itself, so life-affirming and meaningful considering what happened to my family because they were Jewish.

I loved showing Danny that these people existed, and bringing them to life in some way. With Danny preparing for his Bar Mitzvah and becoming even more aware of his Jewish identity, it’s a fitting time for him to place his own story and life in the wider context of his family background. Seeing their names, their handwriting, their story, helps me explain why I understand German, why we use certain quirky words, why we eat our traditional foods.

It was very surreal opening the files, but it made it all much more real and concrete – things that had never been clear, like how long it was between each of my grandparents’ arrivals in London, because they had to come separately. The way my grandmother had talked about it made it seem like it was such a long time when in reality it was just two months. I guess for newlyweds that seems a long time!

Without these files I wouldn’t have fully understood the logistics of coming here. I knew they were helped but didn’t realise World Jewish Relief was the same organisation that helped my grandparents then. When I look at my kids I’m reminded that without World Jewish Relief we wouldn’t be here. I wouldn’t be here. It’s as simple as that.

Danny

I learnt so much from these files, both about my family story and also about history. Like the story my mum told me when we read a file that says that her Opi spoke a little English, which is funny because my great Grandma told my mum they took English classes before they came here but said they didn’t learn very much because they were busy holding hands under the table!

Going through the files also reminded us both of family stories. Like how Omi begged officials in Vienna to be allowed to come here to get married, but had actually mixed up the words in English. She was trying to say she wanted to be with Opi for their wedding anniversary but had used the words ‘wedding day’. Mum said that might have saved her life.

I’d been with my family to see where Omi and Opi had lived in Vienna before they came here and I’ve met some of my extended family around the world, but these files helped bring the story to life even more.

It’s weird how they ended up in London but left and then how my own mum ended up in London too, having come from Australia. The most incredible thing was seeing how they lived just round the corner from us. Mum has been living here for almost 20 years and had no idea! They must have gone to the same shul as us and now we’ve been able to walk around there to see where they lived.

If your family arrived in the UK from Austria or Germany in the 1930s or 40s, World Jewish Relief may hold their records too. We want to give them back to you, for free. Find out if we helped your family at www.worldjewishrelief.org/archives or call 020 8736 1250
It is scarcely believable how much poverty exists within our global Jewish family. For those who are old and sick or lonely, or young and unable to support their families, life in countries including Ukraine, Moldova or Belarus is hard. Through expert, targeted interventions, together we can help. Together we can end Jewish poverty.

We work across every generation; from supporting older people, to working with their children and grandchildren so they can put food on their families’ tables. It’s the youngest who will benefit in the long run, growing up in homes full of hope. Here are a two stories of people we have helped recently.
ALEXANDRA IS THE LAST AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR LIVING IN MOLDOVA TODAY. PREVIOUSLY STRUGGLING IN A DILAPIDATED FLAT, WE ARE HELPING ALEXANDRA LIVE IN THE SAFETY AND DIGNITY SHE DESERVES.

Alexandra has two children and three grandchildren but lives alone having been widowed some years ago. She participates in meetings at the Jewish community centre, often speaking about her experience in the Holocaust.

Recently, the roof of Alexandra’s apartment sprung a leak, leading to terrible damp. Her ceiling, walls and furniture were damaged, compromising her health and safety.

On her tiny pension, Alexandra could never afford to make the repairs herself, so World Jewish Relief stepped in. Through our Home Repairs programme we were able to repair Alexandra’s roof and the damage. She said, “I feel that I can live a dignified and beautiful life now. This is a wonderful gift and for all this I am so grateful”.

World Jewish Relief’s Home Repairs programme provides practical and immediate help to Jewish people whose homes are in terrible disrepair. We create healthier, safer living environments for thousands; part of an holistic approach to meeting the physical and emotional needs of older people.

INNA LIVES IN ZAPORIZHYE, UKRAINE, SHE SHARES A CRAMPED FLAT WITH HER EIGHT-YEAR-OLD SON AND HER PARENTS, INCLUDING HER DISABLED FATHER. WHEN INNA BECAME UNEMPLOYED, SHE TURNED TO US FOR HELP.

When the war broke out, the family’s total income dropped to £87 per month, not enough to cover even the basics. Inna struggled to find work, losing her self esteem.

After being recommended to our Livelihood Programme, Inna received assistance with writing her CV and interview skills so that she could get a job. Just one week later, Inna became a permanent employee in a shoe shop. She describes how “the team helped me to make things clear, gave my thoughts the right direction...Now I have my favourite job”.

In Eastern Europe, finding work is the only way for people to find a route out of poverty. Our Livelihood Programmes eliminate barriers to employment. We provide training, recruitment advice, psychological assistance, vocational training and job search support. By enabling people to secure employment, we help them to build a future for themselves and their families.
An eye-opening trip to Moldova

Jake Leigh, a participant on World Jewish Relief’s Bar & Bat Mitzvah Trip in February 2017
IN FEBRUARY I TOOK PART IN A TRIP TO MOLDOVA’S CAPITAL, KISHINEV, TO SEE THE WONDERFUL WORK WORLD JEWISH RELIEF IS DOING. IT WAS AN INCREDIBLY MOVING THREE DAYS, CHANGING MY OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD AND HELPING ME TO UNDERSTAND THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE CHARITY’S WORK.

The first house that I visited really put things into perspective for me. We met a man in his 40s with severe Down’s Syndrome, living with his mother in a tiny flat. She had no other family, few friends and had been abandoned by her husband. World Jewish Relief fund home visits where someone comes to play with her son and bring vital food and medicine. It was very upsetting to see how they lived.

We then spent time with a youth group in the Jewish Community Centre (JCC), playing games and learning about Moldovan Jewish history. It was uplifting to meet kids like us – we had much more in common than I expected. There was still a vast difference in the way we live our lives, but the part of them that made them want to be in touch with their heritage was a fantastic thing to share.

The next day we went to Beltsy, the second largest city, which before the war had a 70% Jewish population. We went to two bakeries supported by World Jewish Relief’s Livelihood Programme - which helps people set up businesses and bring people into work. We learnt how to make Moldovan plaited bread, which to my untrained eye looked just like challah! It was inspiring to see that the money being put towards this was making people’s dreams come true.

We then sang Jewish songs at the local JCC with older people and learnt a dance with the youth group. We were treated with such respect and kindness and it was lovely to see our whole group feel so passionate.

We then made another home visit. I met an elderly couple whose state pension is so abysmal that it cannot cover their heating bills. They live in constant fear of being cut off. They started crying in front of us. It was very hard to watch such a tragic situation, which I was helpless to do anything about. It was so sad to be reminded that people are living with such hardship in 2017.

On our final day we had an incredible tour of the city’s Jewish sites. Before the war there were over 80 synagogues, now there is just one still functioning. We also saw the Holocaust memorial, an emotional place where you could see how much the war had affected Moldova.

The trip changed my life and added so much more meaning to my Bar Mitzvah. It made me feel so lucky and grateful for everything I have. To see such terrible conditions, which are not just happening in Moldova, gave me such a passion to do all I can to better the situation. After having been on this trip and experiencing the work that is being done by World Jewish Relief first hand, I will be donating a portion of my Bar Mitzvah money to this amazing organisation. I also hope to do lots more fundraising and help out in the future.
Tell me a little about your personal background – where you were born, live and how you came to do what you’re doing now.

Growing up, hatred and ethnic discrimination reigned in my country. The brewing violence eventually led to the genocide which started in April 1994. 100 days of a devastating frenzy of merciless killing. Death was made a painful, agonising, frightening, humiliating end. I survived hunger, hiding, running for my life, fear, and prayers to be killed by guns and not machetes.

During the Genocide a lot of my family were murdered so I became responsible for my younger siblings.

In 2002 I became a beneficiary of Uizenga Ni Manzi, a Rwandan NGO that I am now Director of Operations of. Since 2014 I have been managing the Icyerekezo (which means “Vision” in our language) Livelihood Programme, which World Jewish Relief funds.

How did the project begin? What was the need and where did the initial idea come from?

The project was initiated by World Jewish Relief, who were really impressed with the progress the country was making, but realised that to address poverty we need to focus on economic growth.

Together we discovered that commercial horticulture offers the best route out of poverty for rural youth - a very risky and innovative idea. By teaching them how to farm new crops, we helped these young disenchanted people to increase their income six times in about four months.

Are there any successes you’re particularly proud of?

To date we’ve helped 1,509 young people increase their income by on average 142%, through growing high-value watermelons, tomatoes, passion fruits and chilli peppers.

For me personally, I am very proud to see that young people who felt that their lives would never change, now say that they can see business opportunities and are not discouraged by setbacks.

One of our best farmers is Jean Claude. He was keen to go to university but considering that employment prospects are very limited even for graduates we convinced him to explore agricultural entrepreneurship. He is now known as a “master of passion fruits” because with our help he started growing this demanding but highly profitable crop. He has become very successful, earning the equivalent of more than £5,000 in one year - a huge amount for Rwanda.

What does the support of World Jewish Relief mean to you, and to the project participants?

In some way, the history of Tutsis (those persecuted in the genocide) is very similar to Jews. We also experienced pogroms, were denied access to education, had to live for decades in exile and then were almost exterminated. Israel is an amazing start-up nation that sets an example of what can be achieved.

World Jewish Relief helped us understand economic empowerment. We are very grateful for the Jewish community’s financial support but, even more so, we deeply value your care and your belief in us. It keeps us going.
1,509 young Rwandans whose income we’ve helped increase

142% average increase in income for project participants

Watermelons, tomatoes & passion fruits are some of the high-value cash crops

Isaac (middle) visiting London last year with Ekaterina (right), our Head of Impact and Livelihoods
‘We wait for the rain and hope.’ Responding to the East Africa Food Crisis

Mireille Flores, Humanitarian Programmes Manager

EAST AFRICA IS IN CRISIS. MORE THAN 20 MILLION PEOPLE ARE ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION. YOU’VE SEEN THE DEVASTATING PHOTOS – ANIMALS DYING BY THE ROADSIDE AND PEOPLE FIGHTING TO STAY ALIVE. WITH THIS IN MIND, WORLD JEWISH RELIEF FELT COMPULSED TO ACT. IN MARCH, WE LAUNCHED OUR EAST AFRICA FOOD CRISIS APPEAL.

A few weeks later I travelled to Kenya to deliver vital food and water and assess how we and our local partners would be best able to help with the money donated.

We have teamed up with an NGO in Kenya called RACIDA (Rural Agency for Community Development and Assistance), focussing our efforts on helping communities in Mandera county, where 2.7 million people are at risk.

We visited Malkaruqa village where I met Halima, a young mother of six. In the drought, the water tanks and reservoir that usually serve the community are completely empty. As their crops fail and their animals die, they are literally watching their livelihoods disappear.

Thanks to the UK Jewish community, this village is receiving vital water. We pay for tankers to make the long journey there every two days, providing Halima and others with water for cooking, drinking and washing.

She is hugely grateful for the project. The free water point is 500 metres from her home and she can even get some water for her animals, six of which had already died.

Even so, Halima and her children are still only eating one meal a day, drinking only black tea otherwise to stave off the hunger. “We have no other option. We can only wait for the rain and hope. In the meantime, I only wish you keep saving our lives.”

Together with our partner TPO Uganda, we are also supporting thousands of vulnerable female refugees arriving in Uganda, many of whom have been victims of sexual assault and rape. Uganda hosts the most refugees in Africa and many are settling in the most drought-affected areas of the region. We will help these women recover from the trauma and find work to give them hope for the future.

You can still donate to the East Africa Food Crisis Appeal at www.worldjewishrelief.org/foodcrisis

Over the next two months we will:

- transport 600,000 litres of water to vulnerable communities
- provide 300 families with food vouchers redeemable at local markets

These projects will reach 8,968 people
On April 23rd 2017, World Jewish Relief saw its biggest team of runners complete the Virgin London Marathon. 21 runners pounded the streets in support of our work, and through their dedication and commitment they raised a phenomenal £51,921 and counting!

Sam Helfgott, who ran with his father Maurice, said “It really was a very special day; the hardest but definitely the most rewarding thing I've ever done! It feels wonderful to know how effectively the funds will be used.”

Thanks to personal trainers Simon Marks and Karina Kaufmann of Freerange Fitness, who we partnered with to support the team in the lead up.

Feeling inspired by our runners? Not only do we have spaces for the London Marathon in 2018, but a variety of other events too, including:

- Royal Parks Half Marathon - 8 October 2017, deadline 18 August
- Kindertransport Commemorative Cycle from Berlin to London - 17-22 June 2018, deadline 31 August
- The Big Half 2018 - 4 March 2017, deadline TBC

Have your own ideas? We can help find a challenge that suits you. Contact Samantha Martin on sam@worldjewishrelief.org or 020 8736 1265 to discuss how you can challenge yourself to make a difference.

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 to those in need.

1. If you know someone who is celebrating you can donate to World Jewish Relief in their honour. We will send them a Mazel Tov card to let them know you have donated.

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 Richard Budden on richardb@worldjewishrelief.org or call 020 8736 1250.
Your 1% can help end Jewish poverty

A little from a lot of people can make unimaginable changes.

Leaving World Jewish Relief a gift in your Will of just 1% of your estate could end Jewish poverty and bring hope to the world’s poorest Jews.

To find out how or for more information on leaving a gift in your Will please contact Richard Budden on 020 8736 1250 or go to:

worldjewishrelief.org/will

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 Eastern Europe. We invest the other 19p to manage our income and to help raise the next pound.