American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

supported by the Jewish Federations of North America

FIGHTING GLOBAL JEWISH POVERTY

A Paper Outlining a Core Jewish Priority

Submitted to the Jewish Federations of North America
February 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For nearly a century the steadfast support of the Jewish Federations of North America has enabled JDC to provide life-saving assistance to impoverished Jews across the globe.

In today's tumultuous economic climate, poverty threatens the well-being of Jewish children, families, and elderly on a scale previously unseen in many communities. JDC has the know-how and infrastructure in place to ensure the survival and human dignity of every one of these needy Jews; yet, our resources continue to fall short, forcing us to turn away people in desperate need day after day.

With the renewed commitment of Federations' Core funds we can offer critical relief and ensure the survival of hundreds of thousands of Jews struggling with poverty.

Together we can reach the world's poorest Jews:

1. **JEWISH CHILDREN: BORN INTO POVERTY** Tens of thousands of Jewish children are suffering in unimaginably dire conditions—hungry, cold, or ill, and lacking the nurture to grow into healthy, successful young adults.
   Federation Core funds can give these Jewish children the care they need and a chance at a better future.

2. **JEWISH FAMILIES: THE "NEW POOR"** The global economic crisis plunged thousands of Jewish families into poverty virtually overnight, while their Jewish communities struggle to stretch dwindling resources to care for growing numbers of people in need.
   Federation Core funds can provide help for these impoverished families and bolster communities as they work to rebuild after near financial ruin.

3. **JEWISH ELDERLY: THE CHRONICALLY POOR** More than 185,000 chronically poor elderly Jews around the world depend on JDC for their basic necessities—food, medicine, heating fuel, homecare—and ultimately, for their survival. These elderly Jews are utterly alone and isolated, with absolutely no one to care for them but us.
   Federation Core funds can offer a lifeline to these impoverished elderly Jews and ensure they live out their lives in dignity.

JDC leverages your Federation Core funds significantly to attract additional support from philanthropic, public, and other sources, enabling us to reach our total budget of $127.6 million for this Select Core Priority.

To continue to provide aid for the poorest Jews around the world, JDC must secure a minimum $14.8 million in unrestricted funds and Select Core Priority commitments from Federations in 2012.

FIGHTING GLOBAL JEWISH POVERTY

Over the last century, the Jewish people have confronted unthinkable tragedy and the most monumental of challenges—genocide, disaster, political instability, extreme poverty. And at every turn, wherever in the world a Jew is in need, JDC is there.

Federation Core dollars make this possible.

JDC'S HISTORY OF CARING

1914	JDC brings hunger Aid to Jewish Yishuv during World War I
1920s	JDC feeds, heals, and houses 600,000 victims of the 1918-21 pogroms of Eastern Europe.
1930s	JDC rescues 15,000 Jewish refugees in Shanghai
1940s	JDC cares for 265,000 Holocaust survivors in displaced persons camps across Europe
1950s	JDC provides food, welfare, and health care for thousands of poor North African Jews
1970s	JDC delivers welfare and medical help to thousands of survivors in Romania
1980s	JDC creates hundreds of day care centers and 20-plus old-age homes for frail elderly in Israel
1990s	JDC builds expansive network of assistance centers for 250,000 poor elderly Jews in the former Soviet Union
2000s	JDC aids 36,000 newly impoverished Jews in Argentina

Today JDC is reaching the world's poorest Jews:

1. JEWISH CHILDREN: BORN INTO POVERTY

Tens of thousands of Jewish children live in unimaginably dire poverty: they subsist in ramshackle housing without running water, electricity, or heat, or in dilapidated, cramped apartments in inner city neighborhoods. They never know where their next meal is coming from; when they're ill, medicine is nowhere to be found.

Some are orphaned, homeless, suffering from disability or victims of abuse and neglect. Others live in families unraveling from economic pressure; they are the innocent casualties of chronic unemployment, divorce, or single parenthood.

In countries throughout the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe in particular, these children's needs completely exceed the social services that are available. While the financial downturn and consequent rampant inflation have eroded existing welfare infrastructure, their personal suffering is exacerbated by insufficient healthcare, lack of support services, and prevailing social problems.

For these vulnerable Jewish children, JDC is the *only* hope.

Core Dollars in Action:
JDC reaches more than 35,000 of the world's neediest Jewish children and their families.

JDC provides impoverished Jewish children with basic necessities, including food, medical care and medications, clothing, and heating fuel. Children who've lost the sense of normalcy in their lives benefit from being part of their home Jewish community through inclusion in Jewish camps, youth clubs, and holiday events.

CASE STUDY: ANYA & YAAKOV - AZERBAIJAN

Anya, 5, and **Yaakov**, 8, live with their parents and older sister in a run-down tenement in Baku, Azerbaijan. The halls are dark and full of trash. There is not much furniture in the apartment. The parents sleep on a couch and the children sleep on blankets on the floor. They cannot afford clothes, toys or books.

Their father's income as a handyman barely covers the cost of the apartment and the family is constantly behind on their rent. Their mother is disabled and cannot work. The family often borrows money to buy food.

JDC provides Anya, Yaakov, and their family with food cards they use at their local grocery store and subsidies to pay for heat in the wintertime.

"JDC gives my children nutrition and warmth and provides our family with a semblance of stability," their mother says in gratitude.

2. JEWISH FAMILIES: THE NEW POOR

Each day thousands of Jewish families throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union face a decision they never thought they'd have to make: use their remaining savings to buy food for their children or pay for rent, water, or heat?

Not long ago, these families were becoming the backbone of bourgeoning, self-sustaining Jewish communities. They were attending synagogues, sending their children to Jewish summer camps, and proudly witnessing the first Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies to take place in their communities for generations.

Then the global economic crisis hit, plunging them into poverty virtually overnight. Unemployment, underemployment, and rampant inflation became endemic. Thousands lost their jobs, livelihoods, and any sense of security they'd managed to build.

When they looked to their local Jewish communities for assistance they learned the resources were far too sparse to help the growing number of people need. The crisis had undermined both individual families' survival and the organized Jewish communities' ability to provide for the New Poor.

For these desperate families and the communities struggling to assist them, from Bulgaria to the Baltics to Greece, JDC is the last possible option.

Core Dollars in Action:
JDC provide emergency assistance to families in need, including vital necessities such as food, medicine, and warm clothing; material support for school fees, mortgages, and utility payments; and restoration of livelihoods through job search help and retraining, and child-care assistance.

3. JEWISH ELDERLY: THE CHRONICALLY POOR

At this very moment, nearly 200,000 elderly Jews in need around the world—many of them Holocaust survivors—live in complete dependency on JDC. In their lifetimes they have endured war, economic crises, mass emigration, and major political shifts, but in their old age they're utterly isolated and frail, with real, pressing needs...and nowhere to turn for help.

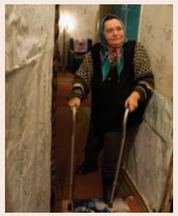
The majority of these elders live alone; many are homebound and have no families to care for them in their time of need. They have no safety nets; public services are few and pensions hardly cover the basic necessities of living. Local Jewish communities simply do not have sufficient financial resources to care for the increasing number of indigent elderly Jews.

Thousands of impoverished Jewish seniors look to JDC because it's their only hope.

Core Dollars in Action:
160 JDC-supported Hesed centers and other community organizations bring relief to over 164,000 elderly and chronically poor Jews in 2,665 locations across the former Soviet Union. In some 30 countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia JDC helps local community social welfare agencies provide essential support to frail and isolated aging Jews.

JDC's elderly care services include home visits for the incapacitated; food debit cards, vouchers, packages, and meals on wheels; subsidized medications and free medical consultations; and warm clothing, blankets and heating fuel for brutal winters.

CASE STUDY: IRINA IN UKRAINE



Irina, 61, lives in a dilapidated, two-room apartment in a run-down neighborhood of Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine.

In her lifetime she has suffered polio, disability, and cancer. Today, battling the crippling effects of old age, she has impaired hearing and can only move her legs with the aid of canes.

Irina is alone; her husband passed away many years ago after the birth of their son. Irina struggles to survive on a monthly pension of only $77.

Irina's only hope comes from JDC: She looks forward to visits from the homecare worker who comes four times a week and buys groceries to make her meals. She relies on a food card and subsidized medications, as well as emergency repairs like the rails installed in her apartment that enable her to go to the bathroom by herself.

Irina is extremely grateful. "Without JDC, I would not survive."

How your Federation Core dollars are impacting lives now:

- Providing 6.6 million hours of assistance for nearly 24,000 homebound elderly
- Alleviating hunger through food cards for close to 88,000 individuals, fresh food sets for nearly 32,000, and more than 458,000 meals-on-wheels
- Supplying medicines for more than 74,000 needy Jews; medical consultations for more than 10,600 sick or chronically ill Jews with no other access to medical care
- Helping nearly 30,000 impoverished Jews survive the brutal winter months with heating fuel, warm clothing, blankets, and boots

The Cost of Helping:

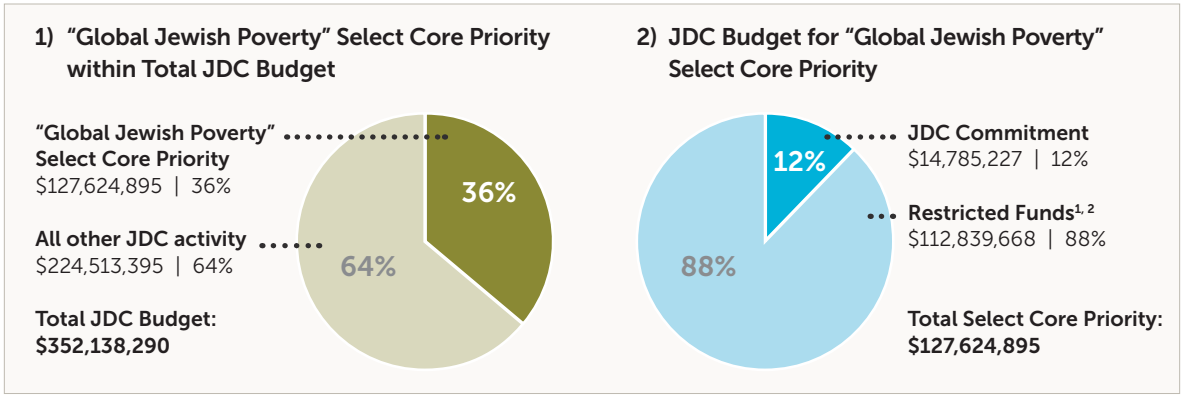
- $110 provides one Jewish child in the FSU with food assistance for one year
- $1,240 offers one year of medications for 10 sick elderly people in the FSU.
- $3,000 assists 20 "newly poor" families in Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia for one year.

THE FINANCIAL BOTTOM LINE

Your Federation Core dollars bring all these needy Jews life-saving services—from food, medicine, homecare, and winter relief to employment assistance and the strength of community—giving them desperately needed hope in their darkest days.

To continue to provide critical support for poor Jews across the world JDC must secure a minimum of $14.8 million from unrestricted Core funds and Select Core Priority commitments. JDC leverages Core funds to attract additional support from philanthropic, public, and other partners, enabling us to reach our total budget of $127.6 million for this Select Core Priority.

Program Area	JDC Commitment	Partners via JDC[1]	Partners Directly to Project[2]	TOTAL ($)
Born into Poverty–children in the FSU, C&E Europe, and Africa and Asia	1,968,548	5,790,883	3,162,722	10,922,153
New Poor–families in C&E Europe	187,690	868,375	0	1,056,065
Chronically Poor–elderly in FSU and needy in Africa and Asia	12,628,989	96,164,045	6,853,643	115,646,677
2012 TOTAL BUDGET ($)	**$14,785,227**	**$102,823,303**	**$10,016,365**	**$127,624,895**



1. Restricted JDC funding which is donor-designated for specific programs. These funds may come from Federations, foundations, individuals, governments, NGOs, endowment funds, or mailboxes.
2. These are funds that do not pass through JDC's books but are contributions directly to a JDC project. These funds may come from local communities, governments, foundations, and/or individuals.

While nearly 40% of JDC's total budget is dedicated to tackling Global Jewish Poverty, nearly 90% of funds are restricted: e.g. $88 million are restitution funds earmarked exclusively for the care of Holocaust survivors in the FSU.

Your unrestricted Federation Core dollars are essential in maximizing JDC's flexible capacity to help poor Jews anywhere and at any time with whatever support they need.