



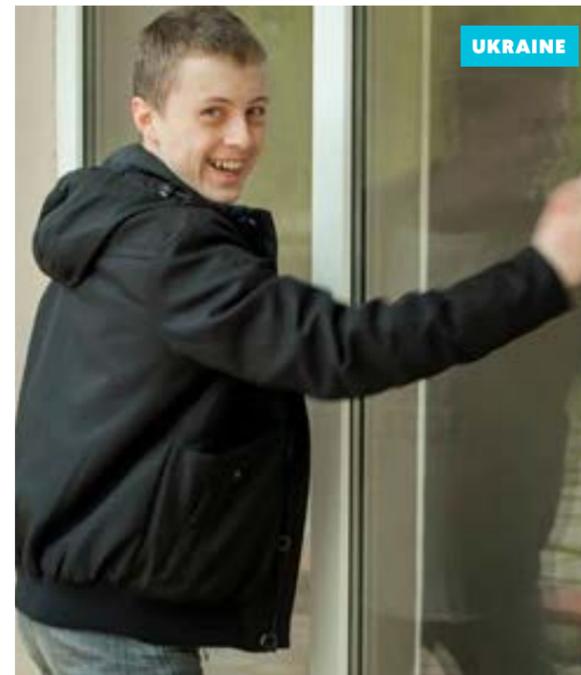
MOLDOVA

JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS AND VOLUNTEERS SPRUNG INTO ACTION

Strong community is vital during the COVID-19 pandemic, both as a safeguard against isolation and as a powerful tool for sharing knowledge and resources. When lockdowns spread across the world and new challenges arose, communities quickly found innovative ways to support and engage their members.

The long-term investment that JDC donors made in strengthening communities proved its mettle during the pandemic. JCCs built, the leaders trained, and the networks of skilled volunteers created during times of calm became invaluable in bolstering community resilience once COVID-19 hit.

This is especially evident in the former Soviet Union. Just six years ago — during the conflict in Ukraine — there was no way to speedily mobilize volunteers during the emergency. Volunteers were few and far between. The eradication of volunteer culture in the region was a lingering Soviet legacy even 20 years after Jewish life had been rekindled there. A key part of JDC's effort to help rebuild caring Jewish communities is to reinstate a culture of volunteerism in them.



UKRAINE

Igor has been volunteering for nearly three years through his local JDC-supported Volunteer Center. He says that this experience made him realize we all have a responsibility to help.

This work paid off. When COVID-19 swept across the region, the difference was remarkable. Over 6,000 volunteers from 44 JDC Volunteer Centers immediately deployed to help their community members. They made essential deliveries of food and medicine, tutored children online, and taught elderly how to use smartphones to access vital services and keep in touch with family and friends.

Igor, 20, is a prime example of how community responsibility is once again part of the former Soviet Union Jewish identity. "During the pandemic, I've been focusing on elderly in my community, as they're the most vulnerable," says Igor. "I hated to think they might feel no one was there to help. Helping others is everyone's responsibility."

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Strong community has proven vital during the coronavirus pandemic, both as a safeguard against isolation and a powerful tool for sharing knowledge and resources. That's why JDC has continued to leverage its expertise to support Jewish communities worldwide.



Over 32,000

people reached by 6,000 volunteers in the FSU

3,218
clients received food delivered by volunteers

6,075
elderly called regularly by volunteers

973
volunteers took active part in online activities for elderly and children at-risk

791
children in need received free schools supplies in September, thanks to a Volunteer Center campaign that spanned five countries. They raised double the amount from last year

600
European top community professionals and lay leaders from 39 countries took part in an e-Summit that strengthened collaboration and resilience in times of COVID-19

13,700
adults in the US were reached with JDC Entwine virtual programming