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American Jewish  
Joint Distribution  
Committee



## JDC'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN UKRAINE: HUMANITARIAN AID TO VULNERABLE JEWS IN THE CONFLICT ZONES AND TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS



Prepared for:

**JDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

## Ukraine Crisis Update: JDC assistance in the zones of conflict and to internally displaced persons

### Executive Report

Eight months after the beginning of Maidan and five months after the sniper shootings in Kiev, the situation in Ukraine continues to be very hard. The pro-Russian separatist forces have been holding the Eastern part of the country (Donetsk and Lugansk regions) since April 2014, proclaiming the Donetsk Peoples Republic and the Lugansk Peoples Republic independent from Ukraine in May.



The Ukrainian government has intensified its anti-terrorist operation in that region over the past two months trying to force the insurgents out of the country.

The stronghold of the separatists, long-beseaged town of Slavyansk along with Kramatorsk and many other smaller locations have been liberated over the past few weeks, and the fierce battles involving bomb shelling of the cities continue in the cities of Lugansk and Donetsk themselves.

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**In Lugansk**, where the Hesed serves 2,405 clients in and around the city, the situation has been deteriorating every day. The shooting continues for over a week, there are a lot of destructions and victims in the city. All big supermarkets are closed; in the smaller ones, the range of goods is limited. Most of medications are

absent in pharmacies. ATMs do not work regularly, but JDC bank cards are still accepted in some stores. To provide the help to others, JDC has found one supplier who agreed to prepare a small amount of food packages, but it is quite difficult to deliver them with almost no transport moving in the city, and the continued firing. The transport around the city is restricted, except ambulance cars and firefighting vehicles. The electricity supply is scarce in the city as some electrical stations are damaged. As the result, pumping points are not working properly and the city now lacks water supply. Hesed employees work from homes, calling clients and arranging for necessary assistance to be provided, struggling every day with connection difficulties. Homecare service works as possible and serves primarily the most fragile clients. However, more and more staff are leaving the city.

Three members of the Jewish community of Lugansk were killed in fighting over July 19-20.

Svetlana Sitnikov, 57, her daughter Anna, 31, and Larisa Faschuk, 75, were killed in two separate incidents during the shelling of the city.

The Sitnikovs were hit by a missile on their way to buy shoes. Anna and her 5-year-old son, Vadim, were clients of JDC's Jewish Family Service, an innovative program set up to help struggling families.

Faschuk died on her way to buy bread. She was both a client and a volunteer at JDC's local Hesed welfare center, where she often organized social activities and is fondly remembered for her kindness and affability.

For July 22, only one Homecare instructor stays in Lugansk together with 32 homecare workers who serve about 120 clients.

**In Donetsk**, where local Hesed serves 2,577 people in the city and oblast, the situation is just a little bit better, with all the fighting being concentrated around the airport area. While shooting and explosions are heard from remote areas of Donetsk, most food stores and pharmacies in the city center continue working; however the products are not delivered to Donetsk and all stores are selling what they have in their storage. For now, no problems have been reported with buying food via Hesed bank cards, although the Privatbank cards have been largely rejected in other banks ATMs. Homecare and Hesed office workers are mainly still in the city and come to their working places daily. Hesed has already transferred August sum for food to clients and caseworkers notified them that it is necessary to utilize these funds as soon as possible.

411 of 424 homecare clients receive HC services both in the city and in periphery. Thirteen clients are looked after by their relatives.

**Kramatorsk and Slavyansk** are recovering gradually after being liberated by Ukrainian military forces. Over the past week, active distribution of food sets continued with the help of Olga (who is a representative of private delivery company) and Viktor (Hesed volunteer) who managed to deliver 28 food sets in Slavyansk. ***"Thank you. Everyone left us to cope with challenges by ourselves and only you stay with us"*** - it is the common phrase used by many clients, who received the emergency assistance from Hesed. Slavyansk Hesed branch

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coordinator has returned to the city and immediately started to make phone calls to clients in order to find out whether they are in the city and what assistance they might need.

### JDC response in conflict zones and to

Since April 2014, when Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts were taken by the pro-russian separatist troops, the Ukrainian citizens residing in those areas have started to flee to other parts of the country or abroad. As a result, JDC has adopted its ways of assistance to the clients staying in the rebels-controlled locations, as well as has started to provide new types of support for the internally displaced persons (IDPs).

JDC has taken an unprecedented action of **making direct contact with all 6,405 clients** of Donetsk, Lugansk, Kramatorsk and Mariupol Heseds located in the conflict zone. Within a matter of days, hundreds of staff and volunteers from all over Ukraine contacted the clients of these Hasadim to find out about their location and needs. An online data base was created to follow up on the clients whereabouts and condition. ***As of July 28, it is known the JDC that 902 clients have left their hometowns, out of them:***

- 182 are elderly victims of nazi persecution (NVs);
- 343 are Hased clients who are not eligible for restitution funds (NNVs);
- 303 clients of Children Initiative (Families at Risk);
- 74 have not been our clients before.

*This is a summary of what was said by UNHCR spokesperson Melissa Fleming at the press briefing, on 27 June 2014*

In Ukraine, UNHCR is seeing a rise in displacement. We now estimate that 54,400 people are internally displaced – 12,000 from Crimea and the rest from the Eastern region. Increases are also being seen in the numbers of Ukrainians in Russia and other countries, although so far only a relatively small number have applied for refugee status. Most people are seeking other forms of legal stay, often because of concerns about complications in case of return to Ukraine.

The rise in numbers of the past week coincides with a recent deterioration of the situation in Eastern Ukraine. Displaced people cite worsening law and order, fear of abductions, human rights violations and the disruption of state services. Insecurity in some areas of Ukraine is hampering access to many areas where displaced people are located.

In Ukraine, the main challenges currently faced by displaced people are access to social services, long-term shelter and employment, and difficulties transferring residence registration. UNHCR has delivered assistance in support of efforts by the local authorities to the town of Sviatohorsk, where the largest concentration of internally displaced people is found. UNHCR is also launching a self-reliance program for vulnerable internally displaced people in western and central Ukraine.

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Most of the displaced persons stay in Ukraine moving to a safer locations. We know of 166 people who moved to Russia, 69 – to Israel, and over 600 Hesed clients and community members have relocated within Ukraine. All of them are now being contacted and served by the Heseds in their new temporary homes. There is still a number of people whose current location is not known to JDC...

### Kiev JDC: over 150 IDPs registered

- Material Support monthly sum transferred to bank card
- Accommodation covered at hostels or at rented apartments
- Providing full subsidy for Family Camps participation
- Providing connections to local charities and volunteer funds for additional humanitarian support
- Self help psychological support group for young families at Beiteinu

### Dnepro JDC: over 200 IDPs registered

- Material support monthly sum transferred to Hesed bank card
- Resort homes rentals for temporary accommodation; rent of apartments covered
- Family Camps participation covered
- Reaching out to Jewish IDPs via general refugees camps
- Psychologist home visits to people who are in trauma

### Kharkov JDC: over 180 IDPs registered

- Material support monthly sum transferred to clients bank cards
- Apartments and hostels rentals
- Reaching out to Jewish IDPs via general refugees camps
- Family Camps participation covered
- Special activities for children within the Jewish Family Service
- Help with job search to those who plan on staying longer

### Odessa JDC: over 40 IDPs registered

- Material Support monthly sum transferred to bank card
- Accommodation covered at hostels or at rented apartments

### Moscow, SPB and Rostov JDC: over 160 IDPs registered

- Material support monthly sum transferred to Hesed bank card
- Rent of apartments covered
- Reaching out to Jewish IDPs via general refugees camps



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Most of the people whose whereabouts are known to JDC have already registered with local Heseds and have started receiving the abovementioned types of assistance.

<b>PRINCIPLES OF PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE</b>
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**CATEGORIES OF IDPs/REFUGEES**

- Hesed clients who stopped receiving pensions – NV & NNV
- Hesed clients who receive pensions – NV & NNV
- Non-Clients: Community members & CI

**TYPE OF ASSISTANCE (DURING THE FIRST MONTH)**

- Food according to basic daily basket (clients getting pensions will get 50% of basic daily basket)
- Medications according to the needs – to be approved by offices
- Accommodation according to the needs

**MONTHLY BUDGET TO SUPPORT 833 IDPs IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA**

Basic daily basket (Ukraine)	\$130 *629 people = \$81,770
Basic daily basket (Russia)	\$200*166 people = \$33,200
Accommodation for 50% of refugees	\$20 per day *415 people = \$249,000
General SOS + medications	\$30,000
Special operations*	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$408,970</b>

WE EXPECT THAT WE WILL NEED TO PROVIDE THIS TYPE OF ASSISTANCE FOR AT LEAST THREE MONTHS, SO THE **TOTAL REQUEST FOR IDPs SUPPORT IS \$1,226,910**

**FOR JEWS REMAINING IN ZONES OF FIGHTING**

- Food packages or money transfers according to basic daily basket
- Water
- Medications

**To provide monthly additional material support to the size of 50% of basic daily basket to 3,292 clients remaining in Donetsk and Lugansk regions today we need:**

Material support	\$52*3,292 clients = \$171,184
Medicines	\$12,000
Delivery of services	\$8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$191,184</b>

WE EXPECT THAT WE WILL NEED TO PROVIDE THIS TYPE OF ASSISTANCE FOR AT LEAST THREE MONTHS, SO THE **TOTAL REQUEST FOR SUPPORT JEWS REMAINING IN CONFLICT ZONES IS \$573,552**

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Re the mode of provision of this assistance, we will have to be very creative because in some places we will not be able to transfer the money to bankcards or even deliver food packages.

### **Other needs**

#### **ASSISTANCE TO JEWS IN ALL PARTS OF UKRAINE: CLIENTS AND STAFF**

##### **Winter relief:**

Given the problems with Russian gas supplies Ukraine needs to get ready for a very harsh winter. JDC has started to develop special plans to help its clients keep warm, while there is a risk of very poor central heating and very expensive communal payments due to the gas deficit.

JDC is developing assistance plans including, but not limited to: electrical heating appliances purchase, communal payments subsidies, insulating of walls, replacing water heaters, warm clothes purchase, etc.

**We estimate the needs may go up to \$300,000**

##### **Post Trauma:**

JDC is planning to continue and extend its post trauma seminars in cooperation with ITC to help its local staff overcome the stress of the current situation and be able to help their clients and fellow community members. The first round of such trainings proved to be very successful and we have received a lot of positive feedback.

In addition, JDC HR division is developing special programs for all staff and their family members who are working hard and selflessly to help our clients, however need support themselves. They are caught in the crisis like everyone else, and exposed not only to their own difficulties but also to the difficulties of thousands of vulnerable clients they are taking care of.