



Providing for Rising Needs During an Ongoing Pandemic

Your support protected and comforted
stressed and struggling elderly Jews in the
Former Soviet Union and Argentina



Prepared for XXXXXXXXXXXXX

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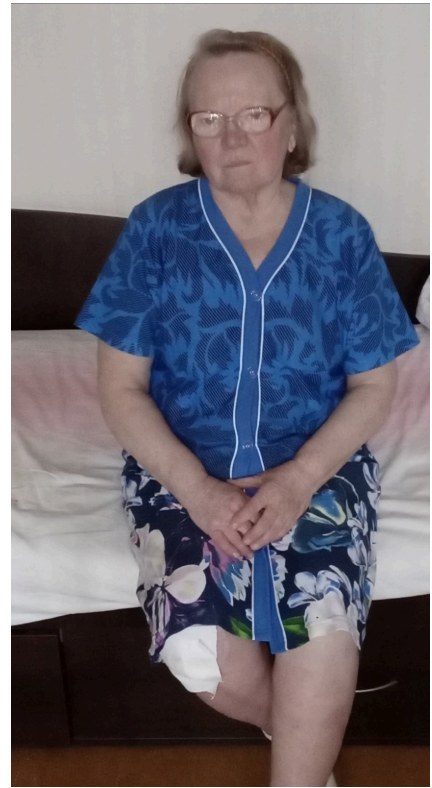
You are their hope

As another winter approaches, poor elderly Jews in the former Soviet Union (FSU) are once again filled with worry. How will they survive this winter with only a basic coal-burning fireplace for heat? How will they make it through another day without food in the kitchen? How will they endure their diabetes, blindness, high blood pressure, hip fractures and other illnesses? How can they bear the loneliness at home by themselves day after day?

And, in Argentina, as COVID-19 and economic hardships continue, elderly and families are faced with how they will keep putting food on the table?

Your compassion, kindness and support keep these people alive. When that delivery of a bankcard or a box of groceries, wood and coal, or medicine arrive, these destitute Jews feel relief. They have received a lifeline for survival: food to eat and treatment for their illness. They feel cared for. They feel connected, and their anxiety and stress ease a bit.

The following stories demonstrate how your ongoing thoughtfulness and dedication continue to save lives.



Lives You Touched in the FSU

During today's global health crisis, your support helped Jews in the FSU more than ever.



Mikhail from Kharkiv, Ukraine

Mikhail, 79, had a wife, two children, a job as a driver that paid him enough to take his family on yearly vacations to the sea. He smiles at the memory of that special time. His smile fades. Vacations by the beach are a distant memory. His wife died several years ago leaving him alone. He misses her and his children are now adults living in Israel.

Mikhail lives in a dilapidated one-room apartment that has not been renovated in over 30 years. The plumbing and pipes are unusable, the linoleum on the floor is thin and disintegrating, and the window frames are crumbling. In winter, frigid air seeps in and Mikhail must wear a coat, hat and gloves indoors to protect himself from freezing. His eyesight is poor and he is unable to use his right arm due to an old injury



so going out to purchase the food and medicine he needs is impossible. His disabilities keep him homebound. He is lonely. He has become like the people he used to assist as a volunteer: an elderly Jew in need.

“I never thought this is what the future would be like,” Mikhail says. If his wife were alive, she would be dismayed by what has become of him. He’s ashamed just thinking about it.

Mikhail thinks about giving up. But then he remembers. You refuse to give up on him. You make sure Mikhail receives a bankcard so that the vital food and medicine he needs to make it through another challenging winter can be purchased. Your kindness ensures that several times a week, Mikhail enjoys a healthy hot meal prepared by a homecare worker who also brings groceries and medications that he cannot afford, or even shop for, on his own. He looks forward to the homecare worker’s visits. He always feels better after for the food that bolsters him, and for the conversation. In addition, in 2021, Mikhail received SOS emergency support for medicines he couldn't afford, provided thanks to you.

“I am very grateful. Life is challenging for elderly people and if there is an opportunity to help, this is a good deed,” Mikhail says. “The worst thing is loneliness and helplessness, let it never happen to you.”



Alexander from Kherson, Ukraine

COVID-19 struck Alexander, 72, hard in late fall 2020. He was taken to the hospital for treatment and was lucky to survive. However, his lungs suffered permanent damage and his body, ravaged by the disease, was so weak that he fell shortly after returning home, and hit his head. He suffered a concussion that left him immobile, unable to speak or care for himself.

He began receiving assistance from you via Hesed, including food and medication, essential for his recovery and wellbeing. He has slowly begun to walk with a walker and some speech has returned.

Alexander is grateful for these lifesaving resources you are providing. There is no one else to help him. He lives alone in a tiny one-room apartment. Divorced years ago, Alexander has two sons, one in Israel, the other in Kiev but they do not maintain contact with him. He worked as an engineer for many years at a leading electrical manufacturer but receives a monthly pension of a mere \$61, which really doesn’t cover much. He is still surprised that after working hard for so long, his pension is this miniscule. Then he remembers your support ensures he has food and medicine and takes a deep breath. Alexander is relieved and thankful.



Sonya from Glodyany, Moldova

Life in Moldova does not change much for most people, including for Sonya Gershstein, 75.

Sonya has lives in the same house her family moved to in 1950 when she and her late twin sister were children. There has never been plumbing or running water. Sonya uses an outhouse in the backyard and has to carry small buckets of water from a well to the tiny green and blue house to wash and cook. The only devices she owns is a transistor radio and rotary dial telephone. There is no central heat so Sonya keeps her jacket and hat on indoors where the thin walls are lined with carpets, towels and curtains to help keep out cold wind. Besides a lack of modern infrastructure, the house is over 100 years old and is basically falling apart. There is no money to fix it and even if there was, the house is beyond repair. Yet, it is Sonya's only home.

She used to be a receptionist in a busy outpatient clinic but now even basic chores, like carrying buckets of water to the house, are becoming increasingly difficult for Sonya who suffers from cataracts and rheumatoid arthritis. She tries not to despair as that only aggravates her conditions. What gets her through the cold winters, the hunger, pain and discomfort, is the knowledge that she has your support. Through your generosity and thoughtfulness, Sonya is able to obtain the food and medication she depends on to survive. She breaks down in tears as she expresses her wonder at being helped by someone she doesn't know. She is so grateful for this critical aid.



Lyudmila from Odessa, Ukraine

Lyudmila, 79, did what most loving parents would. When her son needed financial support, Lyudmila sold her apartment to help him. But she never recovered from the loss of her own apartment. Unable to afford a decent home, she ended up in this tiny, dilapidated room that is her current home. Her son has little contact with her so she cannot lean on him now that she is in need herself. Lyudmila makes do and tries not to allow the despair she often feels to overtake her.

Even if she had a larger, nicer home, she wouldn't be able to get around it. As it is, Lyudmila has difficulty navigating her tiny space. A hip fracture and botched surgery in 2019 left her with limited mobility. In addition, she suffers from diabetes and high blood pressure. The medications these high-maintenance diseases require eat up most of her \$110 monthly pension earned from years as a teacher.



Despite her vulnerable situation, Lyudmila wants to be a giver not only a receiver. She volunteers for the Jewish community, coordinating the Odessica Club, a social group that has been limited to phone calls between members during the pandemic. Lyudmila could not meet in person anyway due to her difficulty in walking. So, she sits in her room, alone, her only outlet the telephone. The one aspect of her life that brings her comfort are the groceries and medication you provide through the bankcard Lyudmila receives, and the homecare worker who cooks and engages Lyudmila in conversation. Lyudmila feels less alone.

Mikhail, Alexander, Sonya and Lyudmila are just a few of thousands of elderly Jews across the FSU who are impoverished and suffering. JDC is so grateful that with the steadfast support from XXXXXXXX, together we can give these clients the most basic necessities to live their elderly years in dignity.

Lives you touched in Argentina

In Argentina over 40% of the population is poor and the unemployment rate is 9.6%. Annual inflation has been in the double digits for over a decade – 51.5% for 2021¹. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed elderly, who were already struggling, literally to a breaking point. Many are in need of material assistance— including food, housing support, and vital medicine.

Older Jews who live in the provinces outside the capital city of Buenos Aires, are particularly at risk as they are less self-sufficient, more isolated and with fewer resources.

The XXXXXXXX's support helped these seniors survive. Below please find several examples of your lifesaving support in Argentina.

Raul and Marta from Rosario City, Argentina

Although it has been a little more than a year since they had to move from their longtime home, Raul Nehmad and Marta Tigani are still dismayed by the turn of events their lives have taken.

Raul is 80 and Marta is 76. Major change is difficult at this stage of life. Raul worries about what will happen to Marta when he is no longer here. Marta worries about Raul's health. The stress of their situation weighs heavily on him. She can see it in his face.

The couple used to own a house with Raul's brother in the eastern part of Rosario. Structural problems and deterioration caused water leaks and other problems. The house became unsafe for them to continue to live in. The problems with the house and a legal dispute with Raul's brother ended with Raul and Marta forced to move out. They now rent a small home in the southern section of the city, separated from their community, their friends and familiar surroundings. With two million residents covering 69 square miles,



¹ [Central Bank of Argentina](#)



Rosario is one of the country's largest, most populous cities. A move to a different part of the city is like moving to a new city.

Retired, the couple have no income, receiving the standard minimum pension. They often have difficulty with utility payments as well as buying groceries and medications. With the inflation rate in Argentina constantly increasing, it makes it even more difficult for people like Raul and Marta to meet basic needs.

Thanks to you, Raul and Marta receive food assistance and medical support. This assistance, coupled with the housing support they receive from JDC and the community, is what allows them to live. Over the last few years, this support was especially urgent as they were also dealing with their legal situation and had to find a new place to live. To ensure that the couple's basic needs are met during this tumultuous time, JDC is grateful for your generosity and commitment to providing for those in dire need.



Raquel from Cordoba City, Argentina

Raquel, 67, has always been a determined, independent "doer." Not one to complain, even through challenge and difficulty, Raquel would find solutions. When she needed an income to pay for food and rent, and to help her daughter, a single mother with two children, Raquel took jobs as an hourly maid and caretaker of the elderly. It was hard, physical labor but it provided the money she and her family needed to live.

But then the pandemic hit and those jobs halted as she and her clients, terrified of contracting COVID-19, shut themselves inside their homes. But in protecting her health, Raquel lost her ability to protect her survival in other ways. No longer able to afford food, utility payments and rent, she became what she never wanted to become: poor and in need.

On top of that, the stress and worry of her predicament affected her health, causing depression and worsening her asthma condition.

Your concern for her well-being means that she receives the food and medications she needs. Each time those deliveries arrive, Raquel breathes a little easier.



In gratitude

The individuals you just learned about are only a few of many lives the XXXXXXXXXX has had a direct, positive impact on in the FSU and Argentina. Thank you for understanding their needs, sharing their values and priorities, and safeguarding their survival. Your generosity strengthened their endurance and existence despite the obstacles they face.

On their behalf, JDC thanks you for bringing them comfort and peace of mind in their senior years.

About JDC

JDC is the world's leading Jewish humanitarian assistance organization, impacting millions of lives in more than 70 countries today. JDC leverages a century's experience confronting poverty and crisis around the world to save the world's poorest Jews, build Jewish life and leaders, empower Israel's future, and rescue victims of global emergencies.

More information can be found at www.jdc.org.

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