



The Former Soviet Union

GENERAL M&E UPDATE

In the former Soviet Union (FSU), JDC is building its M&E capacity through policy development and implementation, increasing integration of M&E for management purposes, and increased staffing. In addition, the region is expanding its use of research to understand context and impact.

In the FSU department, the regional policy aims to articulate what to measure, when and why.

The region is designing its M&E approach to address the multiple layers of strategy, program, and intervention or service, including regionwide programs (developing aligned M&E (i.e., for camps,

leadership); strategic initiatives that may not be cross-regional, and locally defined M&E needs and use. There is an ongoing process in place engaging senior management around logic model use and integration, as well as a focus on shifting to deeper integration of M&E practices into the organizational culture at the regional level for program management and planning purposes.

Given the wide geographic spread of the region, focal points/individuals at the field level have been identified as point persons for implementing the policy.

Assessing the Hesed Network's Response to Loneliness Among Elderly Jews in the FSU

A survey conducted in Hesed centers in five FSU cities has produced an overview of the challenges facing elderly Jews served by or registered with the Hesed network in those locations, as well as a set of recommendations for bolstering the support services and programs that are helping to alleviate their loneliness.

Among the survey's major findings:

- ◆ In all five cities, it was apparent that substantial relationships are created for the elderly through their participation in Hesed day center activities and social clubs, and these significantly help in alleviating loneliness.

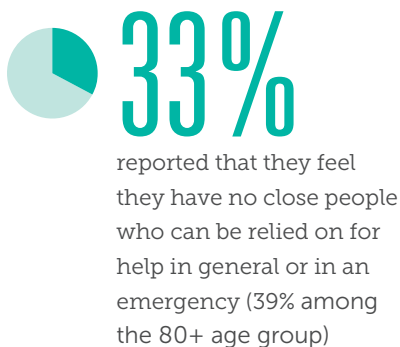
Recommendations for further alleviating loneliness included:

- ◆ Enhancing the Hesed workers' ability to engage in meaningful communication with their clients and accompany them outside their homes by providing additional training and allocating specific time for these activities.
- ◆ Recruiting volunteers from among the Hesed clients themselves is a win-win situation; it bolsters the volunteers' self-worth and adds to the number and variety of club and center activities. There is a need for a designated professional to recruit, train, and manage volunteers.
- ◆ The larger Hesed centers should consider developing activities that are suited for people with disabilities (while taking different types of disability into account).
- ◆ Improvement in physical conditions and provision of transportation solutions are warranted in many locations to meet the needs of an aging population.
- ◆ Basic measurement and assessment processes for program quality, satisfaction, and preferences should be performed at least once a year.

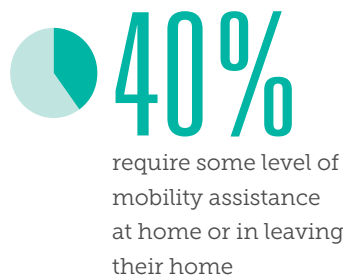
Objective Loneliness



Subjective Loneliness



Needs



Jewish Family Camps

For seven years, JDC FSU has been conducting evaluations of selected family retreats and Jewish camps. While initially this was done through external evaluators' on-site visits, three years ago a decision was made to develop an ongoing outcome measurement system for all family camps in collaboration with MJB.

Campers complete questionnaires assessing their involvement in and level of satisfaction with camp activities, how they have contributed to their Jewish

knowledge, and whether the experience has affected their plans for future Jewish involvement. This has enabled camp managers and educational teams to evaluate their camp, compare its performance to other camps throughout the FSU, and utilize their findings in planning future sessions.

The development of the system began as a pilot program in five camps in 2014; in 2015 and 2016, about 20 camps participated in this process. Selected findings are presented below.

OF 1,202 RESPONDENTS:

Camp Activities



Increased Knowledge of Jewish Issues



Jewish Identity & Community Engagement



81%

report that camp helped them feel closer to the Jewish history of their family



55%

report they intend to volunteer and/or initiate activities in their Jewish community next year because of camp experience



80%

report that camp made them think more about what being Jewish means to them

Camp Network



74%

expressed their intention to get together during the year



75%

expressed their intention to participate in JCC activities with their fellow campers



76%

report they will join related social media groups (Facebook, Vkontakte)



85%

expressed their willingness to keep in touch with the madrichim (counselors/guides)