



JCC Association
Reshaping the Israel /JCC Relationship
Task Force

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DRAFT



JCCs of North America
מרכזים קהילתיים יהודיים בצפון אמריקה

Chairman's Message

In 2004 the JCC Association of North America created a task force to reevaluate the JCC's relationship with Israel. The 2009, the JCC/Israel task force was formed to review the findings of 2004 and to continue to move the process forward.

The Israel Task Force report has grown out of an unwavering love, respect and support for Israel, and a deep commitment to the continuing strong relationship between JCC's and Israel. We can gain strength from each other as we move forward together.

The recommendations that you will read in the attached report, represent an incorporation of the proposals put forth in 2004, the addition of a number of new proposals, and a focus on action items for JCC's to implement.

The JCC relationship to Israel is a dynamic one, and is constantly growing and changing. This task force report has responded to the challenge of this continued dynamism and change, and we have approved the attached report as a living document for JCC's to embrace in their Israel programming.

I thank the members of the task force for their devotion to our mission, for their thoughtful and serious input into this process, and for their continued dedication to the work of the task force. They have been wonderful! Leah Garber, our professional, made it all happen with grace, devotion and an incredible amount of hard work. We are all grateful to her. Thank you also, to the JCC Association - both professionals and board, for their continued support of this process and their love of Israel.

Cheryl Fishbein
May 2010

How does Israel connect to the vision/mission/strategy of JCC Association?

As JCC Association is currently defining its vision, mission, and strategy so it can best deduce how to serve and lead, the Israel Task Force offers the following report as a contribution to this effort.

JCC Association President Allan Finkelstein writes:

“One cannot consider the future direction of North American JCCs without articulating a renewed vision for a vibrant relationship with Israel. The classical Zionism of *nation building* is not persuasive for younger generations as a reason to connect to Israel. Still, Israel is, and must remain, central to our understanding of Jewish identity and peoplehood. The JCC has a unique ability and responsibility to create real and meaningful connections to Israel for our members and for the larger community. We must articulate this vision for what is real and meaningful for the future. The conversation must take place where it is not already occurring, and must continue as an integral part of the JCC agenda.

This agenda—or any agenda that seeks to reshape the very nature of Jewish community in North America’s Jewish Community Centers—will require bold and unprecedented strategies that are outside our traditional way of doing things. The challenge to the JCC Movement is to take the lead in stimulating the conversation between a variety of thinkers and leaders in Jewish life in order to yield the most forward looking, innovative and bold approach.”¹

Why Israel?

Most JCCs know how to connect to Israel; they are aware of the tools, the variety of Israel programming, the shlichim, and partnerships available to them. However, in order to maximize the value of these resources, JCCs must first feel comfortable talking about why connecting to Israel is important. JCCs need to have thought through questions such as Is Israel as important to this generation as it was in the past? Is engagement with Israel different when dealing with young adults?

We know that North American Jewry, aside from the Orthodox community, is less connected to Israel. Many believe that the growing number of interfaith marriages adds to the disengagement with Israel². However, other opinions exist, such as Ted Sasson’s, who argues that it’s the ways of connecting that have changed³.

Today, the narrative that existed after the glorious victory of the Six-Day War in 1967 has lost its power, which results in more realistic, complex attitudes towards Israel. The existence of multiple narratives makes dealing with Israel even more challenging for many Americans.

However, the traditional view of the State of Israel, and why its existence is an imperative, remains. The Ukrainian-born cultural Zionist Ahad Ha’am believed that the creation in Eretz-Israel of a Jewish cultural center would reinforce Jewish life in the Diaspora. His hope was that in this center, a new Jewish national identity based on Jewish ethics and values might resolve the crisis of Judaism. He wrote, “The cultural goal of the Zionist movement is to leverage Israel to inspire the Jewish world with the sense of nationality, a shared, joint notion of one nation, beyond geographical, linguistic and politic dispersals.”

Since JCCs and their members need to feel comfortable answering why the connection with Israel is important, the Task Force offers the following as the most important reasons:

- The State of Israel is a unique experience of sovereignty and community, different from any other Jewish experience, even in the most politically and economically powerful Jewish communities in the world.
- Israel is in Eretz Yisrael, the nexus of Jewish history and tradition, which has been the subject of yearning, commitment, passion and concern of millions of Jews throughout history.

1 Allan Finkelstein’s Position Paper, *Strategic Directions for the JCC Movement*

2 Steven M. Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman, *Beyond Distancing*

3 Ted Sasson, *Mass Mobilization to Direct Engagement: American Jews’ Changing Relationship to Israel*, July 2009

- Israel is the epicenter of Jewish culture and creation today in terms of halacha, literature, poetry, art, theater, and archeology.
- Israel is the hub of the Jewish world. It has more relationships and connections to Jewish communities worldwide than any other Jewish entity.
- Israel houses the largest Jewish community in the world. While its absolute size may not exceed the size of the North American Jewish community, it is the fastest growing; more than fifty percent of Jewish babies are born in Israel.
- Israel represents a “safe haven,” especially for the post-Holocaust generation.

What Is the Right Approach toward Israel?

As detailed above, Israel has a unique status for Jews. In this context, building and protecting the State of Israel has been and remains a major effort for the Jewish world. However, the nature of the effort and the relationship has been transformed in recent years as Israel has evolved into a strong and relatively prosperous nation.

The JCC approach should promote a vision of Israel that successfully balances its security, democracy, prosperity, and Jewishness, and which allows world Jewry to rally around Israel and to partner for its success. JCC members should ultimately feel proud to belong to the Jewish people and to be connected to Israel, although criticism and doubts may exist. **Connecting to Israel means celebrating its achievements, heritage, and wonders, as well as being able to question its policies. The main challenge is to celebrate Israel and still be able to disagree with its policies and politics.**

The Task Force suggests that a new approach should be taken, one that encourages an open discussion allowing criticism and arguments, otherwise known as the wrestling and hugging approach⁴. This approach encourages constant engagement with Israel, the opposite of indifference and estrangement. An honest dialogue about Israel welcomes a variety of feelings and opinions, because apathy creeps in when honesty is discouraged. However, in order to talk openly about Israel's policies, a certain level of knowledge and familiarity with trends and current events is required. JCCs can and should provide the opportunities for informal Israel education and open forums for discussions.

When encouraging critique and openness, JCCs should be careful not to give the impression that only criticism is appreciated. This is especially relevant with young adults, who sometimes feel that they must choose between the Israel-is-all-right or all-wrong approaches. Young adults should know that it is acceptable to be pro-Israel, as well as to be critical of its policies, or any combination of the two.

The Israel discussion among the younger generation is one of the main challenges for JCCs. In many cases, young Jews see Israel as more of a burden and not as a place for opportunity. Often we expect young Jews to love Israel, but we do not provide them with enough compelling reasons. Many young Jews do not believe they need Israel in order to live full and complete lives as Jews. They have all they need within their communities and social circles. This generation, especially after 9/11, is more connected and affiliated with America than with Israel. The reasons for them to connect to Israel should be relevant and associated with their lives as young, active, aware Americans and Canadians.

Our goal should be to create a vibrant relationship between each JCC member and Israel. JCCs need to connect to Israel based on the character of their communities and members; it is up to each JCC to tailor its local programming. In order to reach the younger generation, JCCs should turn themselves into networking platforms, as we will detail in this report. Allowing social networks to develop in an informal environment is one of the many strengths of JCCs. This is especially relevant for young Jews who see JCCs as places to celebrate the Jewish experience without taking a specific political stance.

4 *Wrestling and Hugging*, Robbie Gringras. MAKOM, Jewish Agency. October 2006

A Conceptual Framework of Israel's Changing Relationship with the Jewish World⁵

When articulating a renewed vision for a vibrant relationship with Israel, one must take into account the paradigm shift that has been taking place in recent years regarding the relationship between Israel and the Jewish world. Below is a conceptual framework for the future of the relationship between these two communities. It outlines the ethos and historical foundations of the relationship, and analyzes the changing reality that has led to a growing rift between them. Finally, this section offers principles and guidelines for redefining the relationship by focusing on issues that represent an opportunity for a more meaningful partnership. This analysis has been provided by the Reut Institute⁶.

The Relationship Between Israel and World Jewry

For years, the relationship between Israel and world Jewry has been based upon an unwritten agreement that stemmed from classical Zionism and was shaped by the Holocaust and the miracle of the rebirth of the State of Israel. This covenant generated values, priorities, working assumptions, patterns of behavior, and institutions that have dominated the relationship for decades.

- Classical Zionism negated the Diaspora and engaged in a systematic attempt to dismantle it through a strong call for aliyah.
- State-building was the major effort of the Jewish people, and the government of Israel was the exclusive representative of this endeavor.
- Israel was to become a model society that would make world Jews proud, as well as provide them with a safe haven.
- The Jewish Diaspora was to provide financial and political support to Israel, as well as immigrants (*olim*).
- The blood-for-money narrative legitimized a rich uncle-poor nephew mindset, with a wealthy Diaspora supporting a needy Israel. At times, the Diaspora even financed activities that were within the direct responsibilities of the government of Israel.
- The identity of many Israelis was fully realized through their Jewish nationalism, which rejected the heritage of the Diaspora and diminished the importance of Jewish tradition, post-biblical texts or rituals.
- The relationship was managed by an old boys' network that included the lay leaders and key professionals of the prominent Jewish institutions, a few representatives of the government of Israel, and the leadership of JAFI.
- A permanent and vibrant Israeli Diaspora did not fit with classical Zionism, so its existence and needs were ignored.
- While every Jew around the world was expected to be keenly interested in Israel and to mobilize for its financial and political support, Israelis showed lack of interest in and often even arrogance towards world Jewry.

However, over the past years, it has become clear that powerful trends have been undermining this relationship to the point of rendering it irrelevant.

Trends in North America include: growing interest in direct relationships that no longer require the existing communal institutions; increasing apathy and even alienation from Israel; rise of tikkun olam as a cause that mobilizes many; and growing importance of community life.

At the same time, Israeli society has been transforming as well. Israel has become relatively secure and prosperous, while its central government has been subject to a prolonged crisis of governance; community life in Israel is surging, and more Israelis are engaging with their Jewish heritage; many Israelis travel for education and work, and an Israeli Diaspora seems to be permanent in the foreseeable future.

5 The Reut Institute: *A New Covenant between Israel and the Jewish World*.

6 The Reut Institute is a not-for-profit and non-partisan policy group with the mission of sustaining significant and substantive impact on the security and well-being of the State of Israel and the Jewish People. The insights presented here are based the Reut Institute paper titled: *A New Covenant between Israel and the Jewish World*.

A new paradigm defines the relationship between Israel and the Jewish world. As a consequence of the above, there have been a number of ideological, conceptual and practical developments that have altered the relationship:

- Classical Zionism has been evolving into New 21st Century Zionism, which blends nationalism with the concept of peoplehood and views the mission of Israel in a broader, more nuanced context of the Jewish people.
- Denigration of the Diaspora is being replaced by the understanding that a vibrant Diaspora is an imperative for long-term survival of the Jewish people.
- A strong call for aliyah has morphed into encouraging cycles of commitment to Israel and movement between Israel and the Jewish world.
- Israel is no longer viewed as a model society by many. For some Jews it has even become a moral liability. The rich uncle-poor nephew mindset is being replaced by an expectation for synergy, mutuality, and partnership among equals, as Israel ascends to first-world prosperity. Israeli foundations and philanthropy can be a source of a true partnership in helping to shape the strength of each community.
- In the past, world Jewry underwrote Zionism and significant budgetary needs of the Israeli government. Now it seeks its unique voice in Israeli society.
- The narrative of state-building and *mamlachtiyut* (statehood) has been replaced by a focus on community-building and embracing diversity.
- Power to shape the relationship has been disseminated from the government of Israel and a few big machers to countless direct philanthropists and peer-to-peer and community-to-community connections.
- Israelis have embraced their Jewish heritage, and Israel's public sphere has been filled with spiritual innovation. In the past, progressive Judaism was exported to Israel. Today, Israel is enriching world Jewry with its cultural and substantive creativity.

The breakdown of the old arrangement is evident across the Jewish world. Significant resources have been allocated away from those who still represent it, and large constituencies have shifted loyalties. In this reality, organizations that are unable to shift their mindset and adapt to the new reality may find themselves irrelevant to the point of losing the loyalty of their constituents.

The Five Foundation Stones of the New Zionism

The New Zionism blends peoplehood with Jewish nationalism and focuses on the following five efforts:

1. **People's state: A secure and prosperous Israel offering a unique Jewish experience.**
2. **People's structure: A worldwide network of prosperous and resilient communities.** This effort focuses on expanding and strengthening the Jewish network by establishing communities where there are Jews but no community life, connecting individuals to communities, and strengthening the connections among existing communities.
3. **People's language: Hebrew.** The Hebrew language is the tool for global communication between Jews and for engaging the richness of our history and culture.
4. **People's mission: Tikkun olam.** In the past two decades, the powerful energy of tikkun olam has been directed toward improving the human condition around the world. This mission offers a unique opportunity for partnership and synergy, whereby Israel has the actual on-the-ground knowledge and experience of development work, while the Jewish world has the ethics and the resources that are essential for it.
5. **People's culture and tradition:** A pillar of the new Zionism is the joint commitment towards the preservation, development, and dissemination of the collective wisdom of Jewish culture, rituals, and traditions through text study, art, literature or poetry, and in a way that enriches individuals, households and communities.

The following are practical recommendations to address the challenge of implementing the new relationship in the JCCs.

Practical Recommendations for JCCs

People's state: A secure and prosperous Israel offering a unique Jewish experience.

Why is this important?

For all the reasons mentioned above, Israel has a unique status among the Jewish people. In this context, building and protecting the State of Israel has been and remains a major effort for the Jewish world. However, the nature of the effort and the relationship has been transformed due to Israel's socioeconomic development and political evolution.

The new Zionism must serve a vision of a State of Israel that balances security, prosperity and Jewishness as follows:

- **Security: physical and political** A continuation of the present partnership to preserve Israel's security, one that fights for its fundamental legitimacy, as well as fending off any threat to its existence and to the safety of its citizens.
- **Prosperity: becoming one of the leading nations in the world** The Jewish world and Israel should partner to promote the social and economic development of Israel into one of the leading nations in terms of quality of life of its citizens. The Jewish world and Israel should collaborate on technological developments and investments. The perception of Israel should clearly include Israel's achievements and advantages in modern developments, which will attract more Jews to connect with the state and its people.
- **Jewishness: a uniquely Israeli and qualitatively Jewish Israeli experience** The Jewish world and Israel need to continue to develop the spectrum of opportunities for meaningful Jewish experiences that are distinctly Israeli, thus enriching Jewish life around the world.

How to implement in JCCs

In a globalized world, an increasing number of people have international personal and business connections, and are relocating more than once in a lifetime. This is a global phenomenon, and Jews are at its forefront. Today, a growing number of Israelis are spending longer periods overseas, seeking global, intellectual, political, technological, and business and leadership exposure. In addition, Jews who have not made aliyah seek a multi-faceted, lifelong and meaningful connection to Israel and Israelis.

JCC Association Israel Office offers several models of Israel experiences to address this:

- **JCC staff and board Israel seminars** provide an opportunity for intensive personal and professional Jewish learning experiences in Israel. The seminars enable board members and staff to visit Israel and enjoy an immersion experience. The journey through modern Israel provides a useful prism for contemplating Jewish issues and their implication for the community back home. This process often sharpens participants' Jewish consciousness and enriches their Jewish learning, which translates to their work at the JCC. The seminars can be designed for staff and/or board members from individual JCCs, or for groups of JCCs in a special interest seminar for professional staff from a specific discipline such as early childhood educators, camp directors, assistant directors or camp staff, teen directors.
- **Free Taglit-Birthright trips to Israel** are open to Jews who are 18-26. JCC Association Taglit-Birthright Israel trips focus on understanding the diversity of Israeli society, Jewish pluralism, and community building. Our trips offer a better understanding of Israel as a modern state, and a leading country in many fields, as well as present the social complexity and challenges that exist. JCC Association reaches out to JCC camp directors to encourage them to send their counselors on these trips, thereby developing a cadre of more experienced camp counselors.
- **JCC Maccabi Israel programs for teens (JMI)** provide North American Jewish teens with a meaningful Israel experience. For many, this specially designed Israel trip becomes a memorable event that builds Jewish identity. The program is informal and fun while focusing on themes such as Jewish history and Israel, Israel-Diaspora dialogue, leadership training and personal challenges, Judaism and spirituality, and the role of community in Jewish life. A central component of the experience is an in-depth mifgash or encounter with Israeli youth. Often, this project is organized with a sister city or a Partnership 2000 community in Israel. JCC Association recently joined the High School Israel experience coalition, Lapid, in order to maximize Israel experiences for teens.

- **JCC membership trips to Israel** offer a variety of themes, such as Volunteer in Israel, Israel through the Arts, Greening, Fitness and Wellness, Interfaith trips to Israel and more.

JCCs should encourage their boards, staff, and members to travel to Israel. Israel seminars and trips should provide the basic level of connection through personal experiences, as well as providing an opportunity to network, meet Israelis, and create long-lasting relationships on a personal, professional or communal level.

JCCs can help create the impetus for a lifestyle of movement for individuals and families. Israelis traveling from Israel or residing in Jewish communities abroad should be engaged with the community centers. JCCs should take the opportunity to collaborate with Jewish education agencies and other organizations in Israel to convene the entire community around Israel issues. Moreover, Jews from abroad should be given a spectrum of options for meaningful involvement with Israel, whether through arts, business, academia, or philanthropy.

People’s structure: Building a worldwide network of communities, which includes Israel

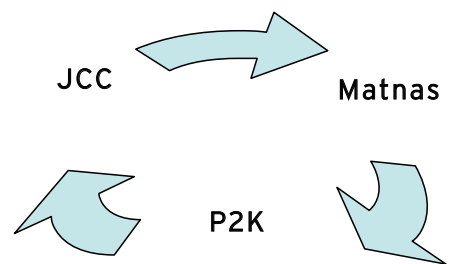
Why is this important?

- **This network structure, or the Diaspora, has been essential to Jewish survival and prosperity** - The geographic dispersal of our Jewish people has been key to their longevity. Even when significant parts of this network were compromised or eradicated, the network survived and thrived in other parts of the world.
- **The whole is stronger than the sum of its parts**, therefore, the common goal of the Jewish people needs to be to expand and strengthen our network. We do that by establishing communities where there are Jews but no community life, by connecting individuals to communities, and by strengthening the connections among existing communities.
- Israel’s focus under Ben-Gurion’s ethos of *mamlachtiyut* (statism) was to build the state at the expense of community life. Decades later, **most Jewish Israelis do not belong to a Jewish community in any meaningful way**, one that offers them an increased sense of association, security, well-being, or comfort.
- The Israeli Diaspora, believed to be more than one million, also requires a massive effort to educate its members on being a part of their Jewish communities.
- There are growing trends of individualism and “make your own Judaism” in North America, which discourages individuals from joining structured communities.

How to implement in JCCs

- **Forging JCC-matnasim partnerships**
 - Establishing JCC-matnas direct partnerships:** In communities where the Partnership 2000 program does not exist, the Israel Office helps JCCs to connect directly to Israeli matnasim and establish their own, direct partnerships. The Jewish Agency for Israel and the Israeli Association for Community Centers is collaborating with the Israel Office to identify Israeli matnasim and JCCs with similar profiles. The Israel Office plays the role of facilitator between the two organizations to move the partnership and new projects forward.

b) Leveraging Partnership 2000 Platform (P2K): The connection with Israel should focus on personal ties, which will encourage a more direct connection that lasts beyond a single visit. The connections should include all demographics. In areas where there is a good Partnership 2000 program in place, JCCs should leverage their relationship to the local matnas.. A meaningful relationship should include lay and professional connections, mutual programming, Jewish learning, professional development, e-learning, etc. The relationship should include visits, home hospitality, and different levels of shlichim.



The connection can be reinforced through:

- JCC board members joining the Partnership 2000 steering committee to be part of policy decisions.
- Collective learning on a professional level, such as between early childhood professionals, social workers, youth workers, and Jewish educators.

c) Tri-partite relationships: This includes a model in which World Confederation of JCCs (WCJCC) partners with two other communities, one in Israel (may or may not be original P2K community) and one abroad. This tri-partnership emphasizes the *arvut hadadit* (mutual responsibility) between Jewish communities and enhances connections within the Jewish world.

- Inviting Israeli members of local Jewish communities in North America to play an active part in the JCC. (Engage them in Yom Ha'atzmaut/Yom Hazikaron committees, Israeli dance groups, Israeli programming committees, Israeli-American dialog groups.)
- Suggested guidelines for implementation include:
 - Engaging the community on a family level
 - Building commitment and mutuality between the two Partnership 2000 communities
 - Promoting Israel as a home, not a tourist attraction
 - Including home hospitality experiences while traveling to Israel and/or hosting Israelis at communities

Additional requirements for implementation

- Lay-driven committee should be run by devoted senior professionals committed to the process
- JCC board and/or staff should sit on Partnership 2000 steering committee
- JCC Association Israel Office should follow the process in order to overcome cross-cultural differences and maintain follow-up

People's language: Hebrew

Why is this important?

- **As a tool for global communication**, connecting all Jews, in any community and any nation-state.
- **The richness of the Hebrew language connects us to our history and culture.** There are certain words and phrases that can receive the full extent of their meaning only in Hebrew. Furthermore, this is the language of the Bible and ancient texts and provides a gateway into the collective past.
- **As a tool for connecting with Israel's culture, music, and people.**
- **Language helps maintain identity abroad.**

How to implement in JCCs

The goal of each JCC should be to promote a learn-Hebrew campaign throughout its constituency. The perception of the Hebrew language should be as a modern, living language, which connects to Israel's arts and culture, high-tech sector, and daily life, and not necessarily as the language used only in religious schools and synagogues.

Hebrew language curriculum should be designed according to the following parameters:

Level of Hebrew Knowledge: advanced, mid-level, basic, none

Target Group: early childhood, teens, adults, senior citizens

Platform: Hebrew lessons and engagement can take place through the following platforms:

Camps - Through Israeli summer-camp shlichim, Hebrew names for groups, Hebrew songs, Israeli films, Israeli music, etc.

Family Room - Modern Hebrew classes. Offer online Hebrew classes, dialog opportunities with local Israeli teens (small talk).

Gyms - "Learn While You Burn"--Use Israeli songs, DVDs with Israeli sites on treadmill screens.

Adult Programming - Offer Hebrew classes, online Hebrew classes.

Community-wide Events - Invite Israeli musicians, artists, authors, and filmmakers.

Space - Hebrew signs, Israeli music.

Additional requirements for implementation

- A financial commitment is usually necessary by the local JCC.
- Commitment to the Process - Build a workshop in which shlichim or other representatives go to each JCC in the program and hold a one or two week training session.
- Marketing strategy should be developed. For example, a first step could be the hanging of Hebrew names on door signs or business cards.
- JCC Association Israel Office will assist with connecting to existing programs through Israeli organizations such as The Jewish Agency, the Center for Educational Technology (CET), or Beit Hatfutsot (the Museum of the Jewish People).

People's Mission: Tikkun Olam

Why is this important?

Tikkun olam is an opportunity for Israel and the Jewish world to work together towards a common mission, acting as equals and bringing a unique added value to the table.

- **Ethics: To make a specifically Jewish contribution to the world** - Because the Jews have endured tremendous suffering and emerged by developing new forms of social and economic capital, the Jewish people are in a unique position to appreciate the importance of assisting the world's less fortunate. The Jewish people now have an opportunity to share their hard-earned knowledge with the world, and to make an authentic contribution to international development.
- **Strengthening Jewish Peoplehood** - Since they no longer have the same unity of purpose that existed around building the state, bonds between Jewish communities are gradually loosening. Tikkun olam can ignite a collective challenge for Diaspora Jews and Israelis, shifting the current paradigm of "support for" and "defense of" one another to one of working and dreaming together for a better world.
- **Helping to undermine the de-legitimization of Israel and Jews** - Adopting a comprehensive tikkun olam agenda may enhance Jewish and Israeli legitimacy by exposing developing countries to the generosity of the Jewish people, as well as broadening cooperation and forging partnerships with other states, NGOs, and international bodies.

Role of the Jewish world:

Offers a language of universal values - Individuals in Jewish communities around the world are more familiar with global trends promoting human rights and international development. In Israel, this discourse is not as widely developed. The Jewish world brings to this effort the language and values of philanthropy, universal human rights, and an appreciation of social and economic justice.

Financial and human resources - Jewish financial resources have been mobilized toward the goal of tikkun olam for decades, and may continue to be the financial engine. Jewish youth are also well organized in these efforts, providing on-the-ground presence.

Role of Israel:

Knowledge and experience - Israel has the technology and experience to build healthcare and welfare systems, irrigate deserts and develop agriculture.

Human resources - Many Israelis travel the world following their military service. They can be a part of this effort as well.

How to implement in JCCs:

- Jewish service corps - JCCs can encourage volunteers to connect with Israeli volunteers during crises around the world, such as the recent earthquake in Haiti.
- JCC-matnasim partnerships can develop around the tikkun olam agenda. JCC staff and members can volunteer, with their Partnership 2000 peers, at the partnership region in Israel or North America. Many teens and Taglit-Birthright participants volunteer with Israeli teens or college students when traveling to Israel. The same happens when Israeli teens or other matnas members visit communities in the United States or Canada.
- Connect to organizations abroad that are already involved in volunteer projects, such as American Jewish World Service or Chabad.

Additional requirements for implementation:

- JCC Association Israel office will connect JCCs to relevant organizations in Israel that are involved with tikkun olam, such as the Volunteer Jerusalem Center, Livnot, GoEco, and Haruach Hatova.

People's culture and tradition

JCCs can play a pivotal role in bringing Israel to North American audiences through cultural arts programming. The arts create a platform for Jewish/Israeli culture and tradition. Arts and culture programming makes it possible to deal with complex issues within Israeli society such as religious/ethnic diversity, political dysfunction and corruption, the religious identity of Israel, the growing presence of non-Jewish immigrants, and more. Arts programming is one of the most effective ways for people of all ages to connect to Israel, including teens and young adults. Most Israeli artists view Israel through prophetic eyes, demanding that it fulfill its mission, which makes it easier for idealistic young people to identify with the Jewish State.

Why is this important?

- **Jewish culture and tradition are integral to our identity** - Going beyond religious denomination, Jewish culture includes the collective history and traditions of the Jewish people. For example, the ability to analyze and understand traditional Jewish texts, including the Hebrew Bible, contributes to a collective sense of belonging, as does a familiarity with the outline of the history of the Jews.
- **Israel is a hub of Jewish tradition and creativity** - Dance, theater, literature, music, and film created in Israel include Jewish motifs drawn from biblical and classical sources. Yet, Israel's art scene is aggressively modern, adapting and transforming traditional Jewish themes.
- **Connect to the complexities of 21st-century Israel**- Art goes beyond and ahead of the classical Jewish texts to deal with contemporary issues in the society.
- **Art is a portal for individuals regardless of religious denomination**

How to implement in JCCs:

JCCs can implement arts programming for three types of audiences: Israel knowledgeable, Israel interested, and Israel ignorant. The primary target populations are early childhood, teens, adults, and seniors.

Additional possibilities for implementation:

- JCCs can work with local Israeli consulates to get access to current list of Israeli speakers, artists, and performers touring North America.
- JCC Association Israel office will recommend special events or Israeli artists touring North America.

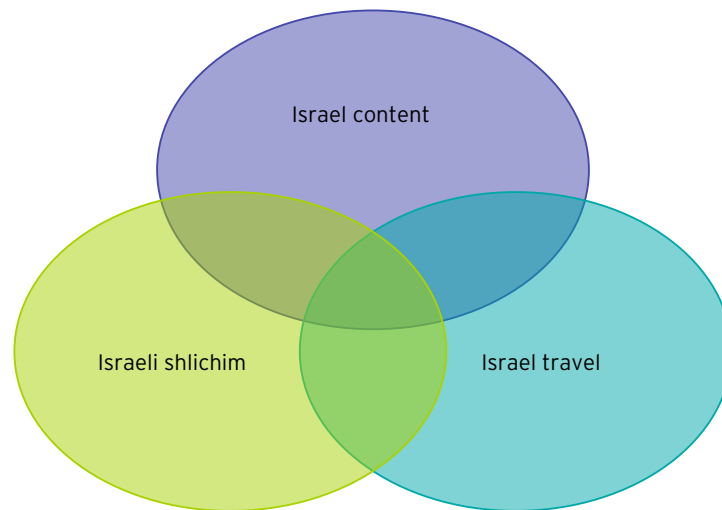
Implementation Strategies for Local JCCs

In addition to the specific recommendations above, the following is a list of some general implementation strategies that the Israel Task Force suggests for local JCCs:

- **Israel must be part of the JCC's core mission.**
- **Israeli shlichim** - JCCs should hire Israel experts such as Israeli shlichim to lead Israel programming; they are knowledgeable and dedicated to their mission.
- **JCC leadership need regularly to visit Israel.** As JCCs are lay driven, JCC presidents and board members must share their passion for Israel with JCC professionals, leading them towards a stronger connection to Israel.
- **Israel discussion:** Most JCCs are preoccupied with survival, so Israel may be a low priority. However, JCC leaders should encourage the vibrant discussions that will eventually lead to stronger connections. (See suggestions for topics in appendices.)
- **Funding:** For many JCCs, funding is the biggest reason they don't send their staff or other groups on Israel seminars and trips. However, JCCs can turn Israel programming into a revenue stream. JCC Association's new

teen initiative offers a \$200 commission for each teen enrolled on a JCC trip to Israel. Selling tickets for Israeli performances and Hebrew classes, and charging administrative costs for members' trips are additional ways for JCCs to earn money.

- **Technology:** JCCs should maximize the use of technology to increase Israel awareness.
- **Next generation:** JCCs should try to connect younger members through relevant programming such as Israeli Café, Israeli cooking classes, and singles events with an Israeli atmosphere. Invite younger members to sit on committees and plan Israel programming for their peers.
- **Discounts as marketing incentives:** JCCs can offer special discounts and free facilities to host special events for young Jews, with no pressure on becoming members.
- **The Israeli community:** JCCs should encourage local Israelis and Israel long-term program alumni to participate in JCC programming.
- **Priorities:** JCCs should focus and prioritize their efforts in terms of Israel programming and connections.



When a JCC implements Israel engagement through these three elements, it will reach the point of maximizing opportunities. These three elements apply to each of the five pillars.

Task Force implementation strategy

The following are eight strategies that the Israel Task Force intends to deploy:

1. **Eliciting Best Practices** through a two-phase process that involves the board and directors of local JCCs:
 - **Phase I - Pilot Program** - Implement the main recommendations of this report at seven to ten JCCs that volunteer as test cases. The piloting JCCs will be chosen to reflect different levels of Israel engagement. For example, JCCs such as Michael-Ann Russell in Miami, which has many Israel-oriented programs, and JCCs that are less Israel oriented. The process will include the following steps:
 - i. The pilot program will begin with a one to two-day regional retreat. The conceptual framework will be presented and discussed, and an individual implementation plan will be created with each JCC, including milestones.
 - ii. JCC Association's central shaliach, along with a representative of the Task Force, will guide the process. Their role will be to help with the implementation and to study what works well and what doesn't work as well.
 - iii. The JCC Association-MAKOM Network Audit, which was developed to examine the extent Israel is communicated and programmed in local JCCs, will be used as a tool for evaluating the implementation of the five pillars outlined in this report. JCC Association's shaliach will work individually with JCCs on completing the audit.

- iv. At the end of the one-year process, the Israel Task Force will submit an updated version (Version B) of the report, which incorporates the lessons learned from the pilot program.
 - v. JCCs that have successfully completed the pilot program will then be able to move on to a mentoring program with other JCCs (described below).
 - vi. After the first year of the pilot program, a new pilot program will be created with another seven to ten JCCs, based on information gleaned from the first go-round.
 - vii. The Israel Task Force offers to present the conclusions of the pilot program at the 2012 JCCs of North America Biennial.
- **Phase II - Mentoring** - After the first cohort of JCCs successfully completes the pilot program, they will move on to Phase II of the program. During this phase, the advanced JCCs will act as mentors to interested JCCs to promote Israel engagement.
 - i. Each partnership of two JCCs will work with an Israel Task Force member who will oversee and help implement their Israel strategy in their particular community.
- 2. Leveraging existing forums connected to Israel** - The Israel Task Force will incorporate a new session at each forum where JCC professionals already meet to discuss the conceptual framework and report recommendations. Such forums include Merrin Teen Fellows; Lekhu Lakhem; ECE meetings; Fitness and Wellness; and others.
 - 3. Using shlichim as change agents** - The Israel Task Force will try to reach out to each of the shlichim to present findings and recommendations. The shlichim should be active in their local communities AND part of the pilot and mentoring programs where applicable. JCC Association is working to expand the number of shlichim working in North America.
 - 4. Holding quarterly webinars and conferences** - The Israel Task Force will hold quarterly regional webinars and conferences to discuss the recommendations and implementation of the report.. The goal is to start an ongoing conversation. JCC Association will work with MAKOM and JAFI on these.
 - 5. Leveraging the JCC Association Professional Conference** - The Israel Task Force is eager to present its work to professionals at the conference.
 - 6. Developing a new Israel website** - Such a website (IsraelintheJCC.org) will offer best practices in terms of Israel programming, speakers, trips, or cultural events. All Israel resources should be branded under one source in order to be accessible to JCCs.
 - 7. Leveraging the JCC Association Israel office** - JCCs should be advised to use the staff at the JCC Association Israel office as a resource for Israel education, travel and programming. (See appendices for further information about the Israel Office.)
 - 8. Leveraging Israel programming through JCC Association's community consultants:** JCC Association's community consultants should be more aware of Israel programming and the work of the Israel Office in order to promote Israel programming to JCC execs.

Appendices

1. Members of the Task Force
2. Chronology of Task Force Activity (2008-2010)
3. Survey Results : "Israel in the JCC" August 2008
4. Task Force Study Trip to Israel (November 2009)
5. Suggested Discussion Topics
6. JCC Association - Israel Office
7. August 2008 Survey results - Israel within the JCC
8. JCC Association - MAKOM network Audit
9. Acknowledgments

Appendix 1

Members of Israel Task Force

Chair: Cheryl Fishbein, New York, NY

Stephen Bayer, West Hartford, CT

Phil Schatten, New York, NY

Alvin Berkun, Pittsburgh, PA

Warren Blumenthal, Milwaukee, WI

Gary Bomzer, North Miami Beach, FL

Julius Eisen, Upper Saddle River, NJ

Gary Jacobs, Del Mar, CA

Ron Leibow, Los Angeles, CA

Larry Magid, Searingtown, NY

Sid Miller, Columbus, OH

Betty Melaver, Savannah, GA

Scott Menaker, Charlotte, NC

Marvin Pertzik, St. Paul, MN

Rose Robinson, Boca Raton, FL

Danny Rubin, Englewood, NJ

Linda Simon, Presto, PA

Doron Steger, Martinsville, NJ

Andrea Solow, Chicago, IL

Mary Rita Wiessman, Dayton, OH

David Posner, New York, NY

Staff: Leah Garber, Jerusalem, Israel

Contributors to the Israel Task Force

George Blank, New Hope, PA

Harriet Blank, New Hope, PA

Allan Finkelstein, New York, NY

Bonnie Finkelstein, Maplewood, NJ

Milagro Magid, Searingtown, NY

Noreen Gordon Sablotsky, Miami, FL

Rachel Sablotsky, Miami, FL

Shirley Solomon, Boca Raton, FL

Allan Solomon, Boca Raton, FL

Appendix 2

Chronology of Task Force Activity

2004: JCC Association appoints task force to examine relationship between Israel and JCCs. Task force proposes JCC Association adopt the following mission statement regarding Israel:

“The mission of JCCs and all community agencies is to ensure the significant continuation of the Jewish people. Towards this end, JCC Association strives to maximize the role of Israel in enhancing Jewish identity and love of Judaism, and building bridges to the Jewish people.”

Task force makes 10 recommendations.

2010: New task force appointed with goal to find out why no change in JCC/Israel relationship is seen. Despite 10 recommendations in 2004 report, trend is still the same.

The mandate of 2010 Task Force is to:

- Examine changes since 2004 report. Were recommendations implemented? If so, how?
- Map what programs currently exist at JCCs.
- Develop goals for JCC Israel programming based on mapping results.
- Define implications, insights, and findings for JCCs and JCC Association. Write summary report.

September 2008: An overview of the impact of the 2004 Task Force report.

- **February 2009: A conference call with Prof. Barry Chazan**

Based on eight quotes relating to “My Relationship to Israel.” Barry led a discussion that focused on what the essence of the task force should be.

Barry argued that we should challenge ourselves in deep understanding of Israel and the relationship with the Diaspora. We mustn't rely on stereotypes and past insights. The reality is changing and the new understanding should change accordingly.

Barry believes that a real understanding of Israel includes looking deeply into some challenges and realizing Israel is not perfect. A true relationship will take into account the history, where Israel is at the moment, and the future we hope to have for the state.

- **March 2009: Conference call with Dr. Debbie Weissman**

Dr. Weissman pointed to one of the 2004 Israel Task Force recommendations: “Israel should be an explicit part of the mission statement of JCC Association and every JCC.” In reality, most JCCs do not have Israel included in their mission statement.

If Israel is in fact the central force in Jewish continuity, should each and every JCC include Israel in its mission statement?

Building and enhancing Jewish identity is the core message of many JCCs. Does Israel have a role in these efforts? Many JCCs have ongoing Israel-related programs such as Israeli shlichim, ECE programs, Israeli arts and culture, etc. The how is pretty clear; the problem is that these JCCs are not always sure about the why and what.

- **May 2009: Panel lead by Prof. Steven M. Cohen and Jonny Ariel**

The panel discussed **Israel and JCCs- Challenges and Promises.**

Prof. Cohen discussed the challenges facing the Jewish community of North America, especially since the Jewish community is becoming more variegated, and multiple Jewish identities are emerging. He pointed that these trends don't include Israel, and in fact, there is a pullback from Israel connections and content. (Exception is the Orthodox community.)

Cohen argues that the role of the task force is to enhance Israel connection, as he believes Jews of all streams must be connected to Israel both mentally and physically.

Jonny Ariel then talked about the opportunities that Israel offers. Ariel argued that JCCs can and should relate to themselves as the Israel Connector, Israel Collaborator, Israel Catalyst, and the Israel Container. Ariel claimed that up to now JCCs have not been assertive enough in dealing with Israel. Many Jewish organizations choose to avoid these issues.

- **September 2009: Conversation with Rabbi Paley from UJA.**

One of our goals is to look at Israel as a laboratory for Jewish life. Israel is struggling with matters that the Jewish world is dealing with on an ongoing basis. The discussion focused on the case of Shabbat as a focal point for Jewish pluralism, and who owns Jewish life in Israel and around the Jewish world in general. Rabbi Paley suggested looking at these kind of issues through three questions: What is right? What works? Who makes the decision?

Appendix 3

Task Force Israel Study Trip

October 25 - November 2, 2009 Israel Seminar

The seminar was planned and implemented with MAKOM. Renewing Israel Engagement.

PARTICIPANTS

George Blank
Harriet Blank
Gary Bomzer
Allan Finkelstein
Bonnie Finkelstein
Cheryl Fishbein
Gary Jacobs
Lawrence Magid
Milagro Magid
Noreen Gordon Sablotsky
Rachel Sablotsky
Allan Solomon
Shirley Solomon

JCC Association Staff

Leah Garber
Sara Sless

Makom Staff

Scott Copeland
Robbie Gringras

Seminar goals

- To engage in debate over issues in Israeli life.
- To use Israel as a mirror against which to reflect on some of the issues faced by JCCs.
- To explore the JCC as Jewish public space and all that such exposure entails.
- To provide space and assistance for participants to translate the experience of the seminar into strategies for change for JCCs.
- To explore different narratives of place or topic.
- To ask the question What is the relevance to the JCC?
- Battering or bettering Israel: Do we have “red lines” when talking about Israel?
- To nurture advocates for open Israel debate that is both rewarding and complex.

Program highlights

- ***The JCC should serve as a forum for open discussion on Israel (2004 Task Force recommendation)***
What Israel are we talking about to our JCC staff and members?
We viewed an Israeli commercial film, and met with the project manager of the Branding Israel campaign to discuss “marketing and branding Israel,” and the type of discussions JCCs should encourage.
- ***The mission of the JCCs and all community agencies is to ensure the significant continuation of the Jewish people. Towards this end, JCC Association strives to maximize the role of Israel in enhancing Jewish identity and love of Judaism and building bridges to the Jewish people. (2004 Task Force Mission Statement)***
We visited the Kotel to analyze the place and its symbolic value to our Jewish identity. We spent time studying at the Elul institute and discussing the connection to Israel through Jewish texts.
- ***JCCs should play a pivotal role in bringing Israel to the JCC, first and foremost through cultural arts programming (2004 task force recommendation)***
We met with an Israeli film school representative, a cartoonist, and a musical festival coordinator to discuss the role and potential of Israeli art and culture in strengthening connections with Israel.
- ***Reshaping the Israel /JCC Relationship***
We met with the Reut Institute and with MASA long-term program participants to discuss strategic thinking for Diaspora-Israel Relations within the JCC, and ways of reaching young adults.
- ***Next steps***
Where Do We Go From Here? Priorities and Practice: What are the priorities for the task force?
 - spread the word
 - engage lay leaders
 - engage professionals and our members

Appendix 5

Suggested topics for discussions

Suggested topics for discussions at JCCs:

- Use Israel as a mirror against which to reflect some of the issues faced by JCCs
- Battering or Bettering Israel - Do we have "red lines" when talking about Israel? What is the Israel we are talking about to our JCC staff and members?
- To what extent should we or can we deal with the tough issues faced by Israel?
- How does our engagement with the real Israel affect our relationship to Israel?
- Is there an Israeli point of view and an American point of view?
- Are communities interested in the classical emotional message, or are they ready to hear a more relevant message that encourages them to wrestle with and hug Israel?
- Should Israel be presented similarly to all generations, or is the younger generation interested in a different kind of discussion?
- Is the goal of the discussion to an educational one, a branding one?
- Should we brand Israel as if it was a product?
- Should the message be "Israel is a strong, successful state" or "Israel needs Jews for support and funding"?
- Is wrestling with Israel and branding Israel compatible?
- Is the role of JCCs to educate about Israel or should JCCs focus on providing the space for Jewish peoplehood, or both?

Appendix 6

JCC Association - Israel Office

JCC Association Israel Office—Your Representative in Israel

JCC Association Israel Office is there for individuals, for JCCs, and for the Jewish people. Our office in Jerusalem should be your first stop to plan an educational seminar, to register for a teen trip, and to get information about Israeli life, culture, language, and history. We can do so much to make you feel at home.



- **We plan and operate Jewish educational seminars for JCC leaders and for JCC professionals.** A JCC seminar in Israel is a unique opportunity for intensive—and intense—personal and professional Jewish learning. Seminar participants not only absorb the amazing sites and sights of Israel, but engage with knowledgeable and fascinating people they would never meet otherwise. Your group will have the time and space to reflect on critical issues for your JCC and community, and for the Jewish people. This experience has deepened the Jewish mission in many JCCs, and inspired a greater passion in JCC leaders and staff.

Types of JCC Israel Seminars:

- * Seminars for JCC board members and local lay leadership, which can also be designed as board-staff seminars
- * Seminars for professional staff from one or more JCCs (in some cases including professionals from other local agencies)
- * Special interest seminars for professional staff from different JCCs in specific disciplines, such as early childhood educators, camp directors, assistant directors or camp staff, teen directors
- * Seminars for graduate students in Jewish communal service

- **Our Staff Makes JCC Association Israel Seminars Special:** Our experienced guide-educators bring unusual depth to our seminars so participants experience the real Israel in all its amazing diversity. We design each seminar to fit the special needs and goals of your JCC through an ongoing exchange of ideas and suggestions. We provide materials for preparation and follow-up for the participants. We include meaningful encounters with Israelis, which make our seminars much more than a typical trip. Participants transcend the tourist experience and have an opportunity to exchange personal viewpoints on political, social, educational, professional, and other issues. These encounters often take place in the context of Partnership 2000 communities, which can lead to a more significant relationship with your sister city.

- **Nothing is more transformative for teens than an extended visit to Israel.**

Each year, JCC Maccabi Israel (JMI)

gives North American Jewish teens that kind of experience. The program is informal, fun, and revelatory.



A central component is a *mifgash*, or an in-depth encounter with Israeli youth. Often, this project is organized with a sister city or a Partnership 2000 community. Meeting Israeli young people so much like themselves opens up the eyes of Jewish teens to the bonds between Jews worldwide.

Our staff is topnotch, and we adhere to the highest standards of safety and security. We include pre-trip preparation, and follow-up activities. We communicate year-round with the community, and throughout the summer with the relatives of each participant.

- **Free Taglit-Birthright Israel trips:**

These free ten- day trips are open to

Jews between 18 and 26. Our trips

focus on the diversity of Israeli society,

Jewish pluralism, and community building. These are great trips for JCC camp counselors to go on together. The

trip encourages bonding and a much deeper connection to Jewish life and heritage, building a more effective

counselor corps.



- **We design JCC membership travel programs to Israel:**

Would your members enjoy volunteering in an immigrant preschool, or at an archaeological dig? Do they want to spend a few weeks learning about the Israeli wine industry, with plenty of samples? How about exploring Israel through its dynamic arts scene? Does your interfaith family group want to visit the birthplace of the world's monotheistic religions? We can create great itineraries on any subject or theme.

- **We cultivate ongoing people-to-people partnerships** between North American JCCs and Israeli matnasim (community centers), often under the auspices of Partnership 2000, to bring teens, families, lay leaders, teachers, professionals and others together for collaborative programs.

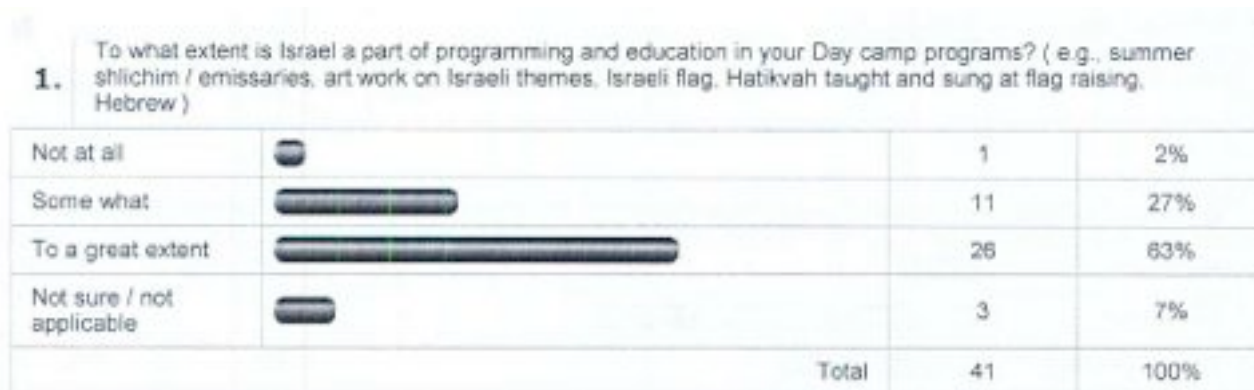


- **We work with the Jewish Agency for Israel on bringing shlichim to North America.** JCC Association's central shaliach, and the Israel Office, partners with the Jewish Agency for Israel's education department to offer new models for sending Israeli emissaries to JCCs and JCC camps. Young, energetic Israelis come to the U.S. and Canada after their military service to volunteer in camps and communities. These young people have the background, skills, training, and experience to initiate, lead and implement Israel programs, and to liaison with other Jewish groups.
- **We work with Israeli organizations and institutions** on issues of common interest among Jews in Israel and North America. We work closely with the Jewish Agency for Israel, Israel Association of Community Centers, Maccabi World Union, and the Lapid Coalition for Teen initiatives.
- **We house the office of the World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers (www.wcjcc.org),** an umbrella organization that represents more than a thousand JCCs worldwide. From Buenos Aires to Paris, from Sofia to Tel-Aviv, from Moscow to Toronto, WCJCC takes the best of what each region has to offer and shares it to make other JCCs stronger.
- **We send Israel updates:** Each month, we write and send topical material to JCCs to post on their Web pages. This material includes stories, information and anecdotes about life in Israel, holiday recipes, and cultural news.
- **We welcome new initiatives:** We are here to serve the field, and we endeavor to be receptive to ideas and programs. For example, the Friedberg JCC in Oceanside, New York, asked JCC Association Israel Office to represent their interests in setting up the Sunrise Israel Day Camp, a camp for Israeli children who suffer from cancer and their siblings. This camp will mirror Sunrise Day Camp in New York, which has successfully answered a need for children who suffer from cancer and has been an energizing force in creating community and volunteerism at the Friedberg JCC.







Appendix 7


August 2008 Survey results - Israel within the JCC







2. In the JCC early childhood department? (e.g., curriculum, pictures, music)

Not at all		1	2%
Some what		17	41%
To a great extent		17	41%
Not sure / not applicable		6	15%
Total		41	100%





3. Resident camp? (e.g., summer camp Shlichim/emissaries, partnership programs, Israeli culture-art, music, dance, food, Flag and map of Israel. Programs about issues in Israeli life. Incentives / subsidy for program in Israel for older campers)

Not at all		2	5%
Some what		1	2%
To a great extent		6	15%
Not sure / not applicable		32	78%
Total		41	100%




4. Teen services (e.g., JCC or community sponsored teen trip to Israel such as JMI (JCC Maccabi Israel) exchange programs, home hospitality for JCC teens in Israel)

Not at all		5	12%
Some what		15	38%
To a great extent		12	30%
Not sure / not applicable		8	20%
Total		40	100%





5. JCC Maccabi games (e.g., hosting Israeli teens from partnership 2000 region in JCC and local community, who become part of local JCC delegation to Games)

Not at all		9	22%
Some what		12	29%
To a great extent		12	29%
Not sure / not applicable		8	20%
Total		41	100%





6. Adult services (e.g ,educational / cultural arts programs, travel opportunities including Birthright Israel)

Not at all		4	10%
Some what		24	60%
To a great extent		12	30%
Not sure / not applicable		0	0%
Total		40	100%


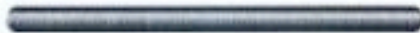


7. Cultural Arts (e.g. , programs featuring Israeli artists, musicians, performers, writers)

Not at all		1	2%
Some what		25	61%
To a great extent		14	34%
Not sure / not applicable		1	2%
Total		41	100%





8. Utilize Israeli human resources (shlichim/emissaries, speakers, scholars, educators, artists and official representatives)

Not at all		3	7%
Some what		22	54%
To a great extent		15	37%
Not sure / not applicable		1	2%
Total		41	100%





9. Israel reflected in your JCC facility (Israel corner in the lobby, Israeli art on display, pictures of Israel, Israeli music)

Not at all		1	2%
Some what		26	65%
To a great extent		12	30%
Not sure / not applicable		1	2%
Total		40	100%

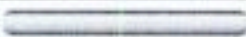



10. To what extent is there Israel related content in your JCC's leadership development program?

Not at all		19	46%
Some what		17	41%
To a great extent		4	10%
Not sure / not applicable		1	2%
Total		41	100%

11. To what extent is there Israel related content in your JCC's staff training programs?

Not at all		16	40%
Some what		17	42%
To a great extent		6	15%
Not sure / not applicable		1	2%
Total		40	100%

12. To what extent are lay leaders involved in Israel related activities (partnership projects, educational trips to Israel) under JCC auspices?

Not at all		15	37%
Some what		18	44%
To a great extent		6	15%
Not sure / not applicable		2	5%
Total		41	100%



13. Is your JCC involved in an Israel partnership project, such as with a Matnas (Israeli community center) through partnership 2000?

Yes		24	60%
No		16	40%
Total		40	100%

14. Is Israel explicitly mentioned in the JCC's written vision and/ or mission statements?

Yes		21	51%
No		20	49%
Total		41	100%

- 15.** Since 2000, has your JCC sponsored in-service Jewish educational opportunities including travel and study in Israel for professionals staff?

Yes		23	56%
No		18	44%
Total		41	100%

- 16.** In your community, is your JCC the agency primarily responsible for community celebrations of Israeli independence day?

Yes		20	49%
No		21	51%
Total		41	100%


- 17.** Is Israel mentioned in your JCC website home page?

Yes		18	45%
No		22	55%
Total		40	100%

- 18.** Does your JCC provide information to members about opportunities for travel to Israel?

Yes		26	65%
No		14	35%
Total		40	100%

- 19.** Does your JCC have a Jewish educator on staff?

Yes		18	44%
No		23	56%
Total		41	100%







- 20.** Does his / her job description include Israel related educational programming?

Yes		16	47%
No		18	53%
Total		34	100%






21. Does his / her job description include building partnership ties or projects between your JCC and people in Israel?

Yes		9	27%
No		24	73%
Total		33	100%





22. During the past 4 years, to what extent has the scope and intensity of Israel related activity / programming in the JCC changed?

Greatly increased		5	12%
Increased		22	54%
Stayed about the same		10	24%
Decreased		1	2%
Greatly decreased		1	2%
Don't know/not sure		2	5%
Total		41	100%

23. During the past 4 years, to what extent has there been any change in the scope and intensity of your lay leaders' involvement in Israel related activities?

Greatly increased		1	2%
Increased		14	34%
Stayed about the same		23	56%
Decreased		1	2%
Greatly decreased		0	0%
Don't know/ not sure		2	5%
Total		41	100%

24. Please respond to the following questions regarding your own personal Israel experience: How many times, if ever, have you been to Israel?

Never		1	2%
Once		3	7%
Twice		4	10%
Three+		2	5%

Appendix 8

JCC Association - MAKOM network Audit



JCC Israel Audit

Introduction

The JCC Association is currently in the process of defining its vision, mission and strategy so it can best deduct how to serve and lead in its field in the most appropriate and effective way. The Israel Task Force was assigned to look into maximizing the role of Israel in enhancing Jewish identity, and building bridges to the Jewish people. However, the task force feels that long, meaningful and substantial Israel connection is a result of a committed and profound process that includes all aspects of JCC activities.

To help with this process, we have partnered with MAKOM, the Israel engagement network of the Jewish Agency, to devise the JCC Israel Audit. The purpose of the Israel Audit is to help you draw a picture of the myriad of ways, some overt and some subtle, in which the place of Israel is expressed on your JCC

When you are asked to look at the place of Israel within your JCC, the natural response is to point to Israel related programming. Another approach to this question is to examine hard evidence, artifacts, and documents, and see what messages about Israel are communicated overtly and subtly, intentionally and accidentally about the place of Israel in your JCC. As we work through this audit, we hope that you will think about the implications of the picture that you are creating for the type of JCC you are trying to build, and for the place of Israel within that enterprise.

The shaliach to the JCC Association and the Israel Office will work with you to complete the audit through a serious series of discussions. We believe that the completed audit will sensitize you to the ways in which the relationship to Israel is currently articulated within your JCC, and give you a baseline to think about ways in which a deeper, more sophisticated, more nuanced and more compelling relationship with Israel can be created for your institution and the community it serves.

Assaf Goren JCC Association shaliach
Leah Garber Director, JCC Association, Israel office

Part One: Mission, Vision and Policy

1. Is there a reference to Israel in the mission statement of your JCC?

Is Israel explicitly mentioned? _____

What to Look For:
(Cite the Israel-related statements and attach a copy of the entire mission.)

Is Israel mentioned in the context of another value in the vision? (e.g., Jewish Peoplehood, klal Yisrael) _____

If Israel is mentioned, what is the suggested connection between Israel and the overall work of the JCC? _____

Is there an explicit or implicit connection between the engagement with Israel and the community building mission of your JCC? _____

Analysis:

- What does the inclusion or exclusion of Israel in the mission/vision say about your JCC and the role that Israel could play in community building? _____

Part Two: Programming and Activities

1. The JCC initiates programming of different sorts. Note the Israel related programming in each of these areas over the past year:
 - a. General Community Programming (large events)
 - b. General Cultural Programming
 - c. Advocacy type programming
 - d. Hebrew language
 - e. Fitness and wellness activities
 - f. Programming for young adults
 - g. Programming for seniors
 - h. Teen programming
 - i. Pre-school
 - j. Adult education
 - k. Summer Camp

Analysis:

- As you review these various areas, in which of them is Israel programming systemic and on-going and in which is it episodic? _____

- What is your estimate of how many people are involved in systemic and on-going Israel programming and how many people involved in episodic Israel programming? _____

- What is the image of Israel and the type of relationship with Israel that is communicated by your programming? When looked at from an overall perspective, how does the amount and type of Israel related programming reflect on your overall JCC agenda and mission? _____

Part Two: Personnel

1. Are there any positions on your staff that are specifically dedicated to advancing an Israel agenda? If so, in what areas of your JCC do they contribute? _____

2. Do you take you encourage or require your staff to be involved in professional development opportunities in the field of Israel education and Israel engagement? Are these opportunities facilitated by the JCCA? What is the impact on your JCC of such professional development resources? _____

3. Do you have Israeli staff in your JCC? Are there shlichim that are employed by your JCC? _____

4. Do you have contact with or access to shlichim in the wider community? _____

Analysis:

- In what ways does your programmatic agenda, or the overall ambience and approach to Israel in your jCC change because of the input and influence of Shlichim? _____

Part Three: Israel Travel

1. Member Travel What is the extent of JCC membership travel to Israel? In what ways has travel to Israel influenced your JCC culture and your Israel agenda?

- How many members have traveled to Israel and on which kinds of programs?

Type of Program	Number of participants
JCCA\Maccabi teen travel	
Birthright	
MASA programs	
Family missions	
Staff missions	
Board travel	

What to Look For
 (Gather data of member travel to Israel by surveying any and all programs that the JCC has sponsored as well as other trips in which members have participated. Collect literature about Israel programs that are advertised on your bulletin board and lobby)

- Does your JCC actively promote Israel travel? If so, which programs and which means do you use to promote them? _____

- Does your JCC have a relationship with any national Israel travel programs? (i.e. birthright Israel, MASA, high school programs) If so, describe that involvement (grants, recruiters, promotion, etc.) _____

- Do you have any follow-through programming for program returnees? To what degree do you see Israel program returnees as a source for leadership and activism you're your JCC? _____

2. Staff Travel

- Have you brought your staff to Israel or encouraged them to participate in other P.D. opportunities in Israel in the last several years? If so, have these been local or national?
- If so, have you seen an impact on your JCC after such travel experiences to Israel?

Analysis

- What kind of impact has Israel travel in general, and program returnees in particular had on your JCC? _____

- Are you satisfied with the current rates of Israel Travel? If not, do you have some ideas about how to increase particular components of the travel agenda? _____

Part Four: Governance and Budget

1. Your JCC is governed by a lay board which sets overall policy. Examine minutes of board meetings for the previous 12-18 months. See how often Israel is mentioned and in what context.

What to Look For:
Board agendas and minutes pertaining to Israel

- Is there explicit mention of Israel in the minutes and agendas of board meetings? (Note the tone of these statements.) _____

- Do they indicate the desire to do more, or the wish to do less? _____

- Is there consensus on items relating to Israel? _____

Analysis:

- What are the overall directions about Israel given by the Board? What has been the impact of Board statements regarding Israel on the functioning of your JCC?

2. Budget: Search the current budgets for expense categories related to Israel.

- What items, if any, in the JCC's budget relate to Israel? _____
- How does this amount compare to previous years? _____
- Are Israel programs budgeted separately, or subsumed under a larger category? _____

What to Look For:
Budget lines related to Israel and the projected outlays.)

Analysis:

Does the way in which the budget is laid out reflect the priority of Israel in your JCC? _____

Part Five: Communication Media

1. Communication:

- What if any specific aspects of Israeli society (causes, problems, partnerships etc.) are referenced? In particular, note the appearance of any of the following:

What to Look For:
References to Israel in various communication vehicles: print and e-mail updates, e-newsletters, solicitations, bulletin boards and flyers of upcoming events

- i. Columns written about Israel _____
- ii. Information about upcoming trips and reports on trips that occurred. _____

- iii. Israel cultural programming _____

- iv. Calls to advocacy for Israel _____

- v. Announcements about meeting visiting Israeli delegations _____

- vi. Pieces in or about Modern Hebrew _____
- vii. Travel opportunities to Israel and information about Israel programs _____

Analysis:

- What do you note about the tone and style of the pieces? Do they seem to focus on one aspect of Israel or is the image of Israel conveyed more heterogeneous and multi-dimensional? _____

2. JCC Website

What to Look For:
images of Israel on website, links, content material- on your web site.

- Images of Israel in the background _____
- articles about Israel or from the Israeli press _____
- messages from the staff about Israel (politically or otherwise) _____
- mentions of fundraisers for Israel _____
- pictures of member trips to Israel _____
- various links related to Israel _____

What to Look For:
features that connect to Israel e.g., flags, artwork, posters Jerusalem stone, biblical garden, Israel specific donation plaques, tzedakah boxes for Israeli causes, etc

Analysis:

- Is Israel immediately visible on your website, or do visitors have to search to find it? _____
- What kind of messages about Israel does your JCC send out to the wider community and your various stakeholders through the website? _____

Part Eight: Partnership

- Does your JCC have a partnership with an Israeli "Matnas"- if so, describe the way in which this partnership expresses itself, and the impact it has had on your JCC. _____

Appendix 9

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