



TIKVA UK
A HOME FOR HOPE

HOPE

YOUR UPDATE FROM TIKVA UK

ISSUE 14 • WINTER 2023

TIKVA STANDS WITH ISRAEL

Recent events in Israel have cast a shadow of unspeakable heartbreak and loss upon the entire global Jewish community. It is difficult to imagine a family in the Jewish world that does not know someone who has been directly affected by Hamas' barbaric brutality.

Our Tikva family is no exception.

We are providing essential assistance to our Tikva alumni in Israel, including shelter, sustenance, and any necessary support.

Heartbreakingly, Tikva children know better than most the horrors of war. For the last 21 months they have learned to 'live' with bombings, evacuations, and displacement. The psychological effects of war don't just disappear. These children will need support for many weeks, months and even years ahead.

7

FAMILIES
live at the Tikva Centre
in Jerusalem

881

TIKVA ALUMNI
have made Aliyah

28

TIKVA GRADUATES
in the IDF today

Tikva is working with our soldiers and the 59 Tikva families that live in the south to ensure they have the support that they need.

A WORD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As I write these words, our community grapples with an intense and deeply heart-wrenching time that extends far beyond the borders of Israel, touching lives across the globe. This ordeal, beyond imagination, reverberates through Jewish families worldwide, sparing few from the unfolding tragedy. Within our Tikva family, the impact is equally profound.

Tikva's mission has broadened yet again, embracing a more extensive domain of compassion as we reach out to support our Tikva alumni in Israel. Our aid goes beyond providing shelter; it extends to the crucial psychological support required to navigate these trying times. We stand with the 28 brave soldiers currently serving in the IDF and the 59 families of Tikva alumni living in the South of Israel. Additionally, seven families have sought refuge within the protective haven of the Tikva centre in Jerusalem, offering solace to our alumni and students amidst this turbulent period.

Simultaneously, we remain unwavering in our commitment to overseeing the largest displaced persons camp in Europe, which offers refuge to over a thousand people, including more than 500 children. Our efforts also ensure that 1,200 elderly individuals and 200 children, along with their families in Odessa, continue to receive vital hot meals and food packages.

It's deeply poignant to acknowledge that Tikva's children, dealing with the horrors of war for the past 21 months, have become intimately acquainted with the harsh realities of bombings, evacuations, and displacement. The psychological scars of war are enduring and demand ongoing support in the weeks, months, and years ahead.

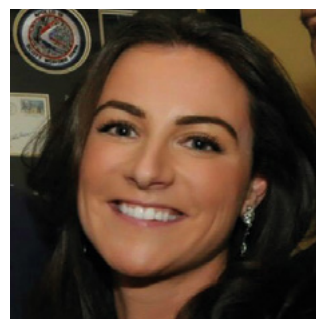
I recently had the privilege of taking my children to visit Tikva's children in Romania, an experience that reinforced my belief in the power of educating our children about Tikkun Olam and Tzedakah. Children absorb knowledge and values through observation and emulation. Bearing witness to the unwavering compassion, indomitable spirit, and relentless determination of Tikva's children and community, I hope this transformative encounter inspires them to become catalysts of compassion in a world hungry for healing.

My heartfelt gratitude extends to each one of you for your unwavering support during these exceptionally challenging times.

With very best wishes



KAREN BODENSTEIN
CEO, TIKVA UK



4,900+

refugees safely evacuated out of Ukraine

1,066

refugees in our care

500+

refugee children

380

children attending school daily

TIKVA IN NUMBERS

SERVICES

1,500

hot kosher meals served daily

230

apartment units occupied



JOBS

30

people employed by local Romanian employers

40+

students enrolled in IT/Information tech schooling

43%

of adult refugees are now employed

BACK IN ODESSA

Our facilities have been opened up to families who have lost their homes

4,600

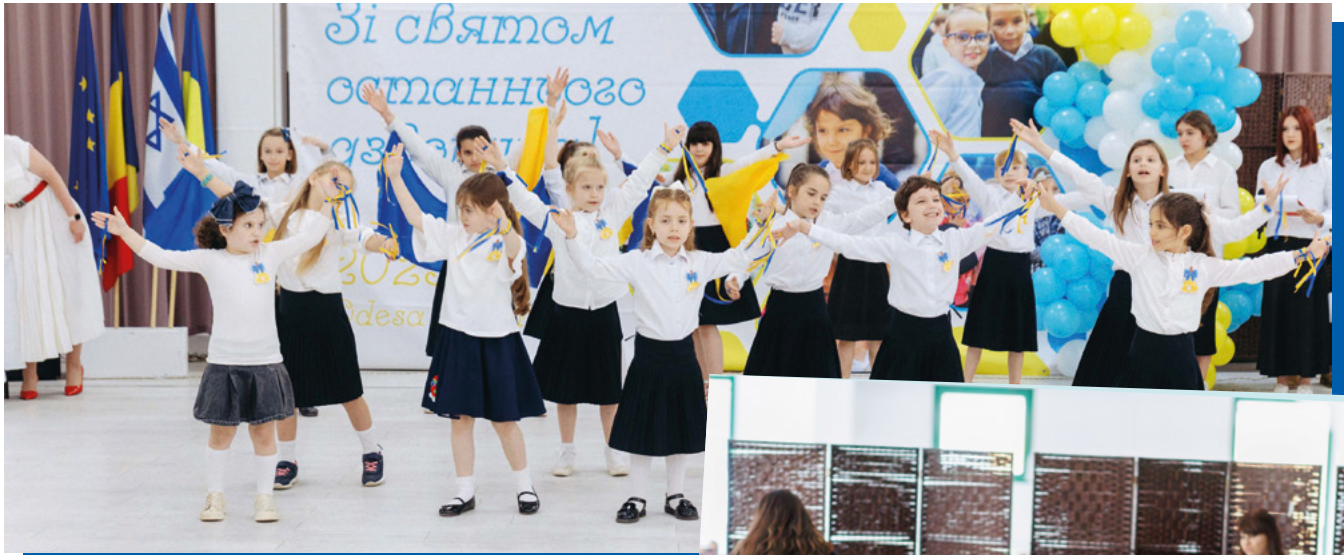
meals on wheels distributed monthly

1,200

weekly hot meals for the elderly

200

children in our school



PERSEVERING IN BUCHAREST

Tikva in Romania is currently focused on finding employment for all able adult refugees. In doing so, Tikva has been able to reduce food costs by more than 50% as working adults are now able to provide breakfast and dinner for their families.

Nonetheless, Tikva is still providing 1,500 hot meals a day: three hot meals for each child in our care and member of staff in our community, and one meal a day for the wider cohort.

Families have finally begun to lead a relatively normal family life, like they had before war broke out. They can now sit around a kitchen table, eating self-prepared meals together as a family, and with children doing homework at desks and sleeping in beds located within their own bedrooms.

We have established a fully functioning orphanage for 230 orphans /social orphans* who are finally somewhat settled, with a bed to call their



own, after a year of sharing a bed with two or three other children in our previous accommodation. Psychologically, the children are responding well to the new structure, and they enjoy bedtime and playtime and walking over to the school building daily that is located within the same complex.

Tikva originally brought eight psychologists and their families to work with the children and adults in Romania. The team has now been expanded to twelve specialists who are treating the children and community daily as the reality of returning home seems less likely. Nevertheless, it's a true testament to the amazing things Tikva has accomplished when our children tell us that they feel closer to one another now more than ever before, and that the close knit community, despite relocation, has given them hope throughout the year.



*Children who had previously been.... were neglectful or abusive or if they had been living in abject poverty

THE WAR IN UKRAINE WAGES ON

While Tikva has found respite in Bucharest, the war at home in Ukraine rages on and we continue to provide support to those who remain. We will never forget those that need our help and stay committed to providing shelter and emergency relief.

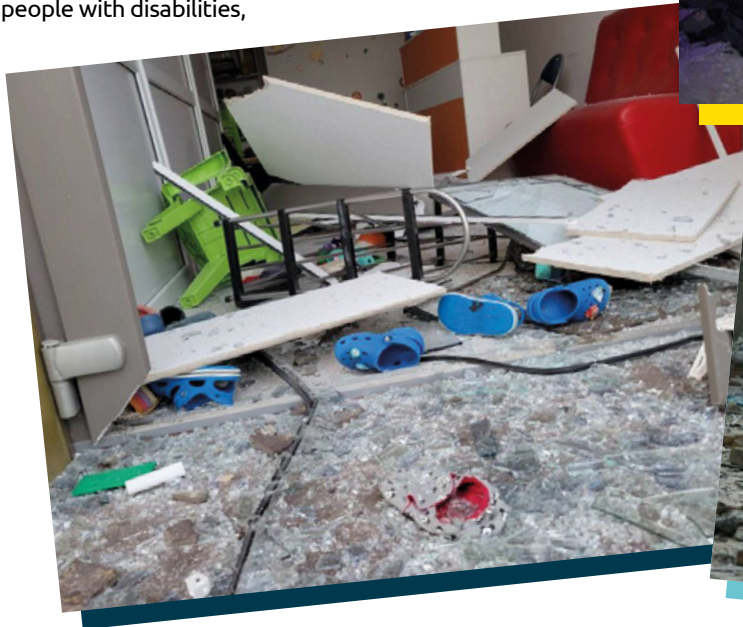
Despite conditions in Odessa, Tikva has built bomb shelters attached to the school buildings and reopened them as classrooms. We have over 200 students attending schools on the days in which the bombings aren't happening close by.

We are also providing meals to all 200+ students enrolled in Tikva schools and send them home with meals for their families daily. These families are not able to work and would not have a hot meal if Tikva didn't provide it.

Tikva serves over 1,200 hot meals daily for elderly, people with disabilities,

and disadvantaged people, some of them Holocaust survivors. Tikva also distributes 11,000 parcels of basic necessities and nonperishable goods monthly through our meals-on-wheels programme.

The demand for evacuations is on the rise and Tikva continues to organise the logistics for the safe evacuation of bus-loads of refugees weekly, as well as mental health care for the trauma being experienced.



“Children spend much of their day in the bomb shelters attempting to learn, even though they are distracted by fear for their lives”

THE HEADLINES HAVE MOVED ON. TIKVA HASN'T.

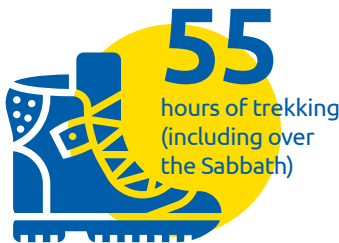


It has been more than 21 months since we were forced to leave our homes in Odessa, Ukraine, which, at the time, felt like living through a nightmare. Collectively, we took whatever we could reasonably travel with, and ran from an atmosphere of war and destruction in search of safety and refuge wherever we could find it.

Men, women and children trekked for over 55 hours, and over the Sabbath, to Western Ukraine where we camped temporarily for two weeks until we were told it was safe

to cross the border. Those fourteen days of uncertainty and a feeling of transience are ones which we never want to experience ever again.

Despite finding ourselves in crisis, we created a temporary home in the sleepy town of Neptun, Romania, on the Romanian coast, where we were able to create a semblance of normality. Here, alongside the Black Sea, with G-d's help, we found a safe haven for our 283 orphans and 660 community members.



Within a week of our arrival, Passover preparations were already in motion, school was back in session, and psychologists were recruited in to assist our families and children in processing the trauma we had just experienced only days prior. Our makeshift headquarters became a safe haven for the evacuation of an additional 4,000 refugees who sought our support in these unprecedented times. All the while, the place we had called home for all of our lives was under the threat of total and utter destruction.

I'd like to say that at this point, life had stabilised and we were approaching a new normal, but in truth, the expenses had become too great and the living situation still felt temporary. Neptun was fairly remote which meant jobs



660
community members
with 260 orphans

were scarce and finding suitable housing was impractical. And after much consideration, and for the best for our community, we resolved to move to Bucharest. Today, we are a community one thousand strong in Bucharest.

We are the single largest Ukrainian refugee community to remain intact and in existence and we are persevering thanks to the support of our loyal donors. Additionally, we have been able to secure employment for many and further opportunities look promising as we continue to work with local agencies to find employment for all able adults.

No matter how stable life seems to be in Bucharest, in our hearts and in our minds, we are still a people in flux. We miss our homes, but also know the home we remember no longer exists. Picking up from life as you knew it in a moment's notice and transplanting to a whole new existence is a profoundly traumatic experience and we need support more than ever to make this transition – whether permanent or temporary – as stable and comfortable as possible.

Over the course of this newsletter, you'll gain deeper insight into Tikva's new environment and the many ways in which we now find ourselves looking for help and hope. It may feel overwhelming at first, but we know with your support, we can provide our children and our community with the best life possible, given the circumstances.

Thank you to every single one of you.

RABBI REFAEL KRUSKAL,
CEO, TIKVA ODESSA



**"TIKVA
IS A FAMILY, AND NO MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS, WE'RE GOING TO STICK TOGETHER"**

Rabbi Refael Kruskal, CEO, Tikva Odessa

YOUNG VICTIM OF WAR

Ilya is only nine months old, yet in his short life, he has already fallen victim to the cruelties of war. For one, he will never come to know his mother, who was struck and killed by debris during a bombardment of shells on their hometown in Ukraine. And his father, recruited into battle, could not continue to raise his own child and had to leave Ilya in the capable hands of Tikva. As the war progressed and worsened, Ilya was then transported from Odessa to Romania where we have been caring for him since March, and will continue to do so until his father's hopeful and eventual return. Ilya may not be with his immediate family, but for the time being, he will be with ours.



PROFILE ON IGOR HNITZA



This is Igor Hnitsa. Igor is a graduate of our Tikva community. He is serving in the Israeli army supporting his brothers and sisters during this time. Tikva is so proud of him and we are praying for him and everyone else in Israel to stay safe.

TIKVA MOURNS THE LOSS OF VITALY MATZVETZ

Vitaly Matzvetz first joined the Tikva community in 2010 and remained with us until 2016. During his time with us, he grew in his appreciation of his heritage and thrived as a young Jewish man.

When he turned 18 years old, Vitaly got notice to join the Ukrainian army and did so as many men his age did, and despite his completion of two years of service, when war broke out, Vitaly returned to fight for his country.

For six long months, beginning in January 2023, no one had heard from Vitaly, but his mother and community maintained a hopeful daily search for him, until it was reported on June 27th that Vitaly Matzvetz was killed in action.

Tikva, along with the rest of the community, mourns over this profound loss. BD" E. May his memory be a blessing.



Vitaly at Tikva in 2014, age 9



Vitaly in 2023

TIKVA THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The Tikva Unbreakable Dinner



Dressing up for Purim



The Tikva Unbreakable Dinner



Making Succah decorations



Rosh Hashana



Men's BBQ



Autumn Arts and Crafts



Men's BBQ



Shabbat Party



"WE REMAIN UNWAVERING IN OUR COMMITMENT TO OVERSEEING THE LARGEST DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP IN EUROPE, OFFERING REFUGE TO OVER A THOUSAND SOULS"



STAY IN TOUCH WITH US

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