



WHAT'S JEWISH ABOUT AJWS?

The values, history and lessons that motivate our work to build a better world



AJWS is the leading Jewish organization working to fight poverty and promote human rights in the developing world. In 19 countries, we fund more than 450 human rights organizations, including small grassroots groups, regional and national organizations and international social change organizations. Together, they wield the power to influence governments and policymakers worldwide to foster equality and justice.

WHAT'S JEWISH ABOUT THIS WORK?

For us, it's everything. AJWS is inspired by the Jewish commitment to pursue justice. We are motivated by Jewish values, the lessons of Jewish history, and the movements for equality of the past century that have fought for the rights and dignity of others. And we're moved by universal values that bind us to our fellow human beings and shape our vision for a more just and equitable world for all.

These inspirations are at the core of everything we do, whether we're working to respond to natural disasters, stop the persecution and mass murder of the Rohingya people of Burma, end child marriage in India, or protect the land and natural resources that the world's rural poor depend on for survival.

WE'RE INSPIRED BY...

■ *Jewish Values and Teachings*

For many AJWS supporters, *tikkun olam*—the Hebrew phrase for repairing the world—is the essence of what it means to be Jewish. Jewish teachings to help the poor, care for the stranger, and recognize the inherent dignity of every human being animate our commitment to build a better world. The Jewish tenet that all human beings are created

b'tzelem Elohim—in the Divine image—underscores our belief that all people are infinitely valuable and deserving of respect.

“THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS MY FAITH AND TO PERSONALIZE MY PHILANTHROPY CONNECTED TO MY JUDAISM HAS BEEN PARAMOUNT. **AJWS IS A VEHICLE FOR EXERCISING MY RESPONSIBILITY TO ENGAGE IN REPAIRING THE WORLD—TIKKUN OLAM**—AND TO HELP ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES THAT PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD ARE FACING.” —DENA KIMBALL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE KENDEDA FUND

■ *History*

In response to persecution and genocide perpetrated against Jews in the past, many of our supporters are committed to ending hatred and bigotry against all people. The Holocaust is a sobering reminder that we must act on behalf of people everywhere who are denied their basic humanity. Elie Wiesel, a renowned writer, thinker and Holocaust survivor, said it best: “Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere.”

■ *Human Rights*

Motivated by the degradation and destruction that Jews and other minorities experienced during the Holocaust, the United Nations in 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—a document that asserts that all people, regardless of religion, nationality, ethnicity or geography, possess a set of basic inalienable human rights. These include the right to live free from violence, discrimination and oppression; to have a voice in the laws that govern society; to earn a fair wage and a safe livelihood; to own land and have a stable source of food; to express their religion, culture, or identity without fear of persecution; and to live life with dignity.

From El Salvador, to Burma, to Sudan, our commitment to upholding these human rights is at the root of our vision for a just and equitable society—today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

■ Social Movements

American Jews have a rich legacy of leadership and participation in social movements—the labor movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the women’s movement and the LGBTI rights movement—to name a few. In our work, we draw energy and insights from these movements to work for changes in U.S. and international policies that will improve the lives of millions of people in the developing

world. And we glean wisdom from those who have been forces for change on a national and global scale: Martin Luther King, Jr., Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Harvey Milk, Gloria Steinem, Rose Schneiderman, Emma Goldman, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi—and so many others.

“JEWISH IDENTITY IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH ASSISTING THE SICK AND POOR. IT IS NOT ONLY A GOOD DEED BUT A DUTY, A MITZVAH. **AMERICAN JEWISH WORLD SERVICE IS A SHINING EXAMPLE OF HOW REGULAR PEOPLE CAN MAKE AN ENORMOUS DIFFERENCE.** THEIR EFFORTS HAVE PROVEN TO BE INVALUABLE AND THEIR LEADERSHIP COURAGEOUS.” —**CONGRESSMAN ELIOT ENGEL**

AMPLIFYING JEWISH ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE *AJWS has...*

190,000 SUPPORTERS

from all 50 states and around the world

1,800 RABBIS, CANTORS AND EDUCATORS

in our clergy network

14 GLOBAL JUSTICE FELLOWS

rabbis honing their leadership for social change

556 ALUMNI OF THE FELLOWSHIP

fostering activism from pulpits and communities across the U.S.

200,000+ DOWNLOADS

of our Haggadah and other Jewish social justice resources in 2017

“**THE JEWISH WORLD IS BLESSED BY THE CONTINUED PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP OF AJWS IN MAKING THE WORLD MORE JUST.** FROM DARFUR TO HAITI TO BURMA TO WASHINGTON—AND BEYOND, **AJWS IS A POWERFUL FORCE FOR GOOD,** LEAVING A TRAIL OF GOODWILL AND RESPECT WHEREVER THEY WORK.

“I CAN’T IMAGINE A BRIGHT JEWISH FUTURE WITHOUT AJWS.” —**RABBI RICK JACOBS**

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