

ANNUAL REPORT

2006



Photo Credit: John Menszer



amcha

National Israeli Center for Psychosocial Support of
Survivors of the Holocaust and the Second Generation

המרכז הישראלי לתמיכה נפשית וחברתית בניצולי השואה והדור השני

20
1987-2007

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Introduction



Dan Waldman

Dear friends and colleagues

As I write these words, bombs are falling over the north of Israel, causing death and destruction to the civilian population. During this state of military crisis, Amcha's staff continues providing services to the elderly Holocaust survivors. To respond to the crisis needs of the most vulnerable Holocaust survivors, Amcha has opened an emergency telephone hotline and it is receiving hundreds of desperate calls from the entire area of northern Israel. We are also reaching out to survivors who are trapped in bomb shelters and in their homes, and who are suffering from overwhelming states of anxiety. At this difficult time, Amcha is surely living up to its reputation of being 'a second home to the survivors in Israel.'

Since its inception 20 years ago, Amcha has provided support to tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors and their families and has played a central role in the documentation of their tragic memories. Today, Amcha is recognized internationally as the primary treatment center for this traumatized population in Israel.

The founders of Amcha, inspired by the vision of the late Manfred Klaffer, began working towards its fulfillment with a strong sense of purpose and determination. As the organization grew, many survivors and mental health professionals joined them, and together, they succeeded in building an organization of admirable proportions. We pledge to continue to work hard to keep this vision and this organization alive as long as it is needed.

Only during the last few years, I look back with a deep sense of achievement of what we have succeeded to build. Today Amcha has branches, groups and programs in most of the larger survivor communities in Israel. In each one of these locations, we provide a wide range of services to our clients; including individual and group therapy, social clubs, volunteer activities, social casework in the homes of survivors, and documentation services. Together, all these activities constitute a continuum of services that strengthens the survivor community in Israel.

As we mark Amcha's 20-year anniversary, we express our deepest gratitude to everyone who has worked over the years to create this dynamic organization helping transforming it into the vibrant activity and mental health center that it is today. The strength of Amcha comes from the involvement and generosity of many people whom

we want to thank. Most importantly, we want to thank the many staff members who make their utmost to contribute to the success of Amcha. Under the professional clinical supervision of Dr. Nathan Durst, we have managed to bring together a network of excellent professionals and volunteers who have joined in the mission of Amcha. This network functions as a large team in which each person provides his or her input and who is equally important: the many volunteers who give of themselves and their time so generously and who make the survivors feel that someone really cares about them; the friends' groups and charitable foundations who provide essential financial support; the professional and administrative staff who supply high quality services; and the board of directors who navigates and steers the ship.

Clearly, the success of Amcha would not be possible without the generosity of its contributors from all over the world. On behalf of the entire Amcha organization, we would like to thank the private and institutional sponsors who have donated funds to Amcha. These gifts have made it possible for Amcha to continue to fulfill its purpose beyond all expectations.

But our work is not finished. While many of the most vulnerable survivors are around their 80s, there are still thousands of younger victims, particularly child survivors, who are only in their 60s and 70s. The idea that Holocaust survivors will be gone in 10 to 15 years is just wrong and the need for Amcha will continue to be urgent for many more years. Although we are proud of the work we have accomplished until now, we are always looking for ideas on new and better offerings and delivery mechanisms. During the last years, we were able to open new centers in Netanya and in Petach Tikva. There is a pressing need and constant requests for a new satellite branch in Nahariya, but due to budget limitations, this has not been possible.

On behalf of all the survivors that we serve, I send you my sincere gratitude. Without you, nothing of this would have ever been possible.

Dan Waldman,
Executive Director,
Jerusalem, August 2006

Program Highlights

Personnel Changes

Dan Waldman, who was for many years the administrative director of Amcha was promoted to the position of Executive Director. Dr. Nathan Durst continues to provide his expertise as the clinical advisor to the board of directors. Hani Oron became the director of the Tel Aviv branch, replacing Sima Weiss who had served in this capacity ever since the branch was founded.

Statistical Highlights

Over 8500 clients received services in Amcha during 2005 (22% increase from 2004). 63,681 hours of treatment were provided (15% increase).

51,021 volunteer hours (18% increase). Overall, activities increased by 19% in 2005 as compared to 2004. The 2006 budget of Amcha is expected to grow 20%, to reach US\$ 5,300,000.

Professional Recognition

Amcha branches in Tel Aviv and Haifa were approved for clinical internship by the counsel of psychologists (within the Israel Ministry of Health). This considerable achievement is a testimony of the high level of supervision and mental health services provided by Amcha.

New Branches

A new affiliate Amcha center (to the Tel Aviv branch) has opened in Petach Tikva, with the active assistance of Mr. J. Kfir and the municipality. Over 360 participants already visit the social club on a regular basis and several psychotherapists treat clients there. However, due to the large success of this center, the rooms are already too small to house everybody and we are searching for solutions to this problem.

The new branch in Netanya which was opened last year with the support from the **French foundation for the Memory of the Shoah** is growing steadily. During 2005, it had 18% higher growth in activities than expected.

Thanks to the devoted staff under the leadership of Mrs. Marga Ganon-Junowicz, it has been able to attract survivors from various survivor communities in the area. Apart from mental health treatments, more and more psychosocial activities are offered each year, including social club programs, volunteer services and special groups for people who were hit by the many terrorist attacks in the area.



**Dr. Nathan Durst
& Anne-Marie Revcolevschi**
(During the opening ceremony in Netanya)

In response to the needs of the elderly survivors in and around the town of **Holon**, a new Amcha center has been planned in this area. Previously, there was a vibrant social club run by the municipality that functioned both as a documentation and learning center and as a meeting point for survivors. Amcha's entrance will provide a more complete roster of psychosocial support services for survivors in this town. The new center will function as a satellite branch of the Tel Aviv branch.

Amcha's Jerusalem branch has made special efforts to reach out to the ultra-religious community. This community has many Holocaust survivors who have hitherto not utilized our services. A first group was formed within the old age home "Beit Tove Hair" within the Meah Shearim neighborhood and also in Har Nof. Individual psychotherapy was also offered in these places. The project is being coordinated by a Haredi social worker and with the approval of the local religious authorities. Similar efforts to reach out to the religious population were also made by the Tel Aviv branch in B'nei Brak.

Amcha's Haggadah:

In a unique innovative project, Beer Sheva staff members compiled a Haggadah based on stories and memories told by survivors in connection with Pesach throughout their lives.



As the survivors grow older, it has become increasingly more difficult for them to reach our centers in the larger towns. As a result, Amcha has initiated many smaller groups and social clubs located in the periphery. With financial support provided by the **Austrian Nationalfonds**, we have been able to provide various psychosocial support activities in towns and settlements such as Kiryat Gat, Nir Israel, Markiim, Meitar, T'kuma, Yad Natan, Bat Yam, Savyon, Hof HaSharon, Yad Benjamin, G'dera, Pardes Hana, Kiryat Tivon, Arad, Hadera, Nes Ziona and many other smaller places and in kibbutzim around Israel. Presently, we investigate the financial possibilities to meet the various needs of the population in Nahariya and in northern Israel who are affected by the military tension caused by the Lebanon war and the rocket attacks.

Inter-Generational Projects

With the financial support of the **German foundation "Remembrance and Future"**, Amcha implemented



an inter-generational pilot project in Beer Sheva and Rehovot-Nes Ziona. 127 young students took an active part in providing support, on a regular basis, to over 70 Holocaust survivors. Special inter-generational activities were created which facilitated the interaction between the generations and provided an opportunity for the elderly survivors to meet and learn from the youth, as well as for the youth to meet and learn from the elderly survivors. The inter-generational activities included the following:



- (1) Art-workshop in the Eshkol elementary school of Nes Ziona,
- (2) The inter-generational Drama Project in Beer Sheva,
- (3) Regular inter-generational meetings with the Scouts Movement from Meitar, and
- (4) Student Volunteers in Rehovot and Beer Sheva providing psychosocial support and visiting homebound survivors. Despite the success of this program, the German foundation declined to continue its support.



In Tel Aviv, two inter-generational projects were implemented: one with the Zeitlin school in which 16 students taught 20 survivors computer use. In addition, there were 5 meetings between soldiers from an Israel Air Force unit and members of the Tel Aviv social club for survivors, both in the Amcha branch and at the military base.

MARGARETH BUSER [1911-2004]

The name 'Buser' was an Americanization that masked her German name 'Buscher' early after WW II following her immigration to the US. The name derived from the French "Boucher" (Baker), which was the name of her great grandparents who emigrated from France to the enlightened Germany of the emancipation.

Margareth was born in Solingën, Germany. She was the only daughter of parents who later on moved to Düsseldorf and then to Cologne where Margareth spent her youth. She went to Berlin in order to become a pharmacist, but before her final exams, she illegally crossed the border to the free Holland after the Night of Broken Glass ('The Kristallnacht') on November 9, 1938. Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina's government granted her political refugee status in the Netherlands. She was allowed to bring over either her husband [she had a fiancée] or her parents. She selected the latter. During the years of persecution, Margareth was in hiding with Christians but her entire family perished. After the war, she came to Palestine as a pharmaceutical agent for a drug-company from Great Britain, the rulers in those days. After some time, however, she left because of the new war in Palestine and the new tragedies she experienced there. It was too traumatic for her to bear. Subsequently, she became a successful businesswoman



in New York, showing diligence, perseverance and courage. During a visit to Cologne many years later, she decided to stay there and became the co-founder and a greatly honored member of the influential Christian-Jewish society.

Although she never married, she had many friends, primarily from the "late-born" in Germany and in Holland, her second home country in Europe. Margareth was a compassionate person with great sensitivity for the suffering of others. After her death at the age of 93, on October 9, 2004, she left her estate for the benefit of the needy elderly in Israel, a clear preventive social intention and a loving act of solidarity. The foundation that was created in her name provided essential financial support to Amcha's volunteer program in 2006.

She was greatly honored and loved and was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Cologne in the presence of many friends, since there were no surviving family members left.

May her Memory be Blessed!

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H.D.

Visitors and Supporters

Mr. Avraham Pressler, the representative of the Claims Conference in Israel, visited Amcha's centers in Tel Aviv and Petach Tikva and traveled to Holon to discuss future plans for developing a new Amcha center in that location.

Generalmajor Mag. Karl SEMLITSCH, the president of Amcha Austria, and long-time driving force behind the friends of Amcha in Austria was decorated in Vienna for his many years of loyal support to Israel. For his tireless work and moral support, we send him our sincere congratulations and gratitude!



**Karl Semlitsch & Natan Kellermann
in Austria**

Elie Ayalon touched many people's lives as a tour guide in Israel. A courageous child survivor of the Holocaust, he guided many through the remnants of what must have been hell on earth. With a self imposed mission of exposing the Nazi atrocities, Elie tells his story in his book - **A Cup of Honey**. In it he assumes the important task of informing the world of what transpired during that era and inspiring others to speak out against injustice. In a recent lecture and book-signing tour abroad, Elie offered to donate all proceeds to Amcha in Israel. As a result of his efforts, **The Miami, Mexico and Costa Rica Jewish Communities** and especially the **Alberto and Rossana Franco** and the **Simon and Michelle**

Galante families helped to raise substantial funds for Amcha. They were honored in a moving plaque unveiling ceremony in Tel Aviv in the summer of 2006



The Franco Family in Amcha Tel Aviv

Initiated by the Chairman of the Netherlands friends of Amcha, Mr. **Roel van Praag**, a group of 25 Dutch supporters visited some of Amcha's branches in Israel. They came to Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and were welcomed by members of the social clubs and by staff who presented the various programs of Amcha to them. They were also invited to an evening dinner where speakers included both Prof. Haim Dasberg and Dr. Nathan Durst, and enjoyed a performance by the choir of the social club in Tel Aviv.



We grieve the loss of **Simon Wiesenthal** who passed away last year. He was a loyal supporter of Amcha in Austria and our Tel Aviv branch "**Beit Wiesenthal**" was named after him.



In July 2006, the honorable Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau visited Amcha Tel Aviv in connection with the opening of an art exhibition there

Invited by the creative writing group in Amcha Jerusalem, author **Aharon Appelfeld** visited us in July 2006. During the meeting, Appelfeld showed great interest in Amcha's work, listened to the stories of the participants, and the achievements of the writing group, and also shared some of his own survivor stories with the group. It was a moving and profound experience for the group. Participants felt that they were all talking the same language within a warm family atmosphere.

The **Claims Conference** continued to support various Amcha programs in 2006. These programs included social casework for homebound Nazi victims; friendly visitation program; treatment hours; rent in many locations and some limited initial refurbishing costs. In addition, **the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation**, from Baltimore, US, generously supported Amcha's program of social casework in the homes of Holocaust survivors for the last two years.

UJA Federation of New York

UJA-Federation of New York continued to support Amcha in a substantial fashion during the last year. Five different projects were funded:

- (1) Community support for elderly Holocaust survivors;
- (2) Helping Survivors cope with the Intifada;
- (3) Training Caregivers at end-of-life;
- (4) Grief Counseling for Seniors; and
- (5) Helping the Helpers.

Training Caregivers: The process of aging in the survivors and their vulnerability raises new needs within the community. Amcha staff was asked to provide lectures and seminars to social workers in various medical institutions, including medical and paramedical staff within hospitals and old age institutions.



With support from the **UJA-Federation of New York**, and in cooperation with the **Israel Trauma Coalition**, Amcha provided essential emergency and other trauma related services to the Israeli society. This included the **Helping the Helpers** program. During last year, about 35 groups of rescue workers received the special kind of debriefing workshops that has been developed by the staff during the years. AMCHA is the lead agency for providing such support to rescue personnel: (ambulance, police, fire fighters, medics) and to social workers who have been involved in providing assistance for victims of terror.

Amcha in times of war

During the recent war in Lebanon, thousands of rockets hit towns and settlements in northern Israel, including Haifa - Israel's third-largest city, killing many civilians and seriously wounding others. Israel responded by attacking Hezbollah positions in Lebanon, and carrying out air and artillery strikes as well as sending ground troops over the border. Residents sought shelter wherever they could find it, many fleeing to the underground bomb shelters for long periods of time.



During this state of military crisis, Amcha's satellite branch in Kiryat Motzkin had to be closed because it had no bomb shelter, but the Amcha branch in Haifa remained open to serve its vulnerable population of Holocaust survivors. It is located in a building with strong stone walls. However, it was difficult for most survivors to get there since there was no public transportation and people were afraid to be hit by bombs. For the vulnerable survivors of the Holocaust, each air raid sirens were reminiscent of the air raids during WW-II and they aroused unimaginable anxiety. When hearing the air raid sirens sounding, the rockets coming, and the bombs falling over Haifa, an elderly Holocaust survivor in her 90s panicked. Her entire body shook as she vividly recalled a time from her childhood in Europe during World War II. "Now the war is here again!" she exclaimed.



To respond to the crisis needs of the vulnerable Holocaust survivor population, Amcha opened an emergency telephone hotline, which was advertised both in the newspapers and on TV, and it received hundreds of desperate calls from the entire area of northern Israel. Another elderly woman called the Amcha's hotline, sobbing: "I am the only one left in this entire apartment complex... 'I defend the block' - alluding to the 'Block' in the concentration camp... In a tense voice, she said that she gets crazy from not having anybody to talk to.

Everybody else had moved away from the area and she was the only one left. When asked if she would like to move, she declined because: 'there is nowhere to go at my age and I cannot move around easily.' An Amcha social worker went to visit her in between the air raids, and made sure she was OK.

Other survivors called the hotline, complaining of fear, loneliness and despair. 'What will happen to us now?' they asked. Some had run out of food and water, and

medicines. Because many shops were closed, they could not buy basic necessities. Amcha's social workers intervened to make sure that they were taken care of; food parcels were brought, medicines prescribed and delivered, and one couple from Rumania was helped to evacuate to the south, receiving free room and board from another Amcha client in the south. Amcha's staff (also from other branches in Israel) took turns to populate the hotline. They tried their best to calm the fears of the survivors who called, to help them better cope with the situation, and to strengthen their resolve.

But there were also survivors who were taking this crisis in their stride, not being afraid and emphasizing that they had been through much worse. Some of these volunteered to make house visits to other, less fortunate, elderly. help was very important because many of the staff members were overworked and tired and the director of

Amcha's Haifa branch - Dalia Sivan, used whatever last strength she had to comfort and support them. She made an extraordinary job in holding everything together and trying to respond to each and every request. Everybody helped; secretaries, volunteers and regular staff, to keep the branch open and to make the people feel that there was a place where they could always receive support.

Thank you letters

July 2006

This is the letter that I sent to Ester Herst
who took care of my mother Raja Drevkin (Haifa).

Dear Ester,

They say that there is a word of magic, that only special people can hear ...

I assume that in this case, one should use it: "Thank you!"

*Thank you to the humble but industrious woman, who entered the life of my mother five years ago
and who was like a pleasant good fairy.*

Thank you for the attention and for the understanding.

Thank you for the timeliness and for the sensitivity for your ab

*for such a long period. For your ability to find a common language with a woman who endured so
much suffering in the Holocaust, and who therefore found it difficult to b*

give her the feeling that she is important to you more than anyo

*Through you, I got to know the Amcha organization and I learned that there are 'good people in the
middle of the road' who know how to make life better for others*

in order to see them happy.

And thank you again from all our hearts for your devoted care of our mother.

Eliezer Drukin and family

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Haifa August 7, 2006

Dear Amcha Staff,

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the treatment r

hours. I am a Holocaust survivor and live on my own. After a very painful operation,

I had to stay at home whith no medicines and whith no help from

Porat, was ill at the time, she took upon herself to contact Amcha and a

I received a phone-call every single day from Ms Dalia Sivan, director of the Haifa branch. She listened to

all my complaints, cheered me up and offered her invaluable assi

Sivan arranged for a psychologist to visit me and bring me the medicines I needed. Each and every one of

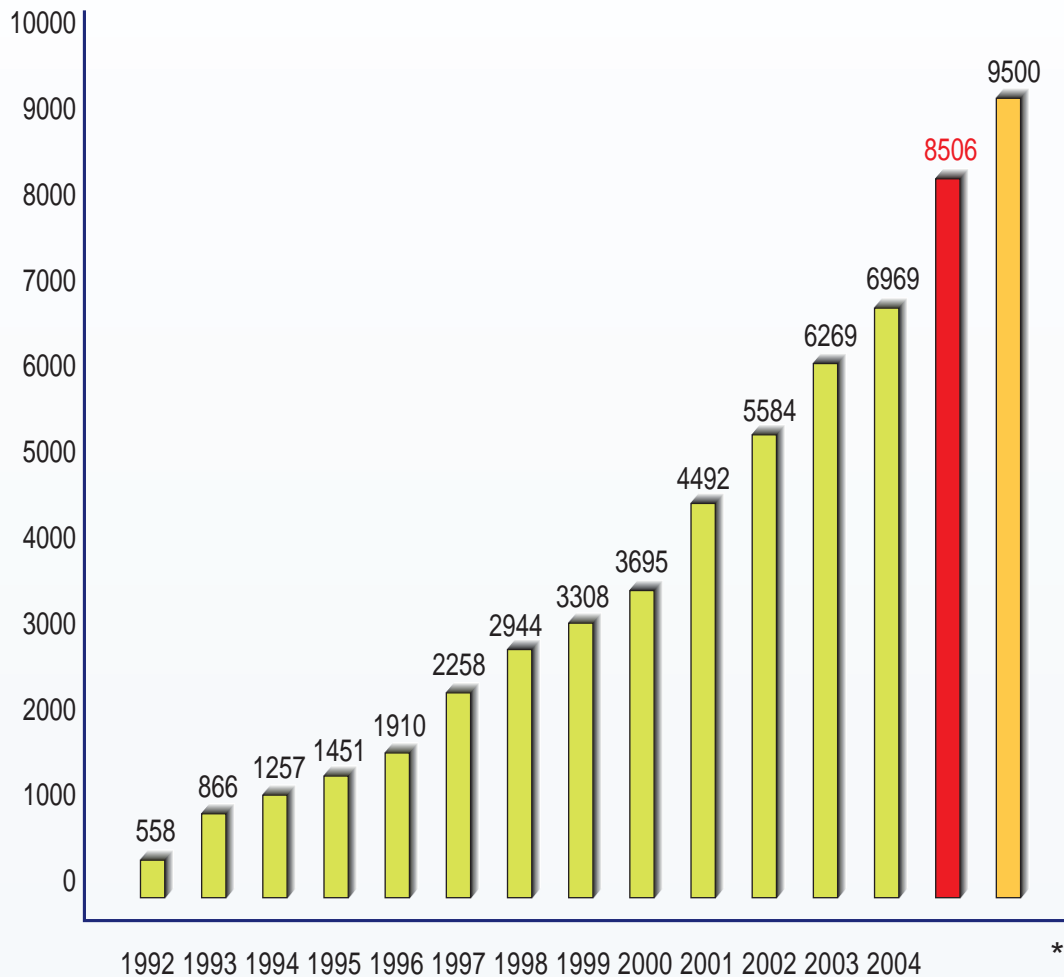
the people mentioned in my letter deserves all my praise for the sacred work they do.

My profound gratitude to them.

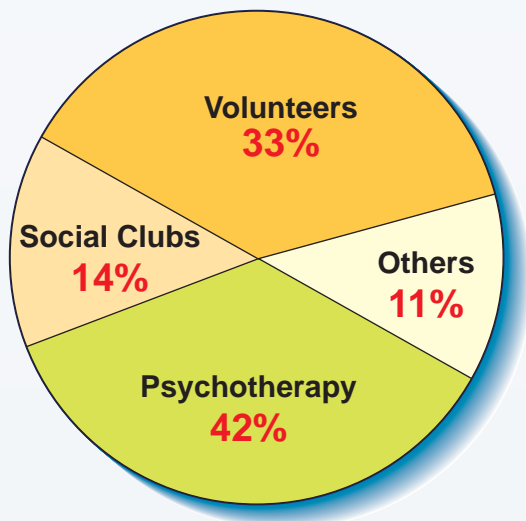
Sarah Feldman,

Financial Report 2005

Total No. of Clients 1992-2006

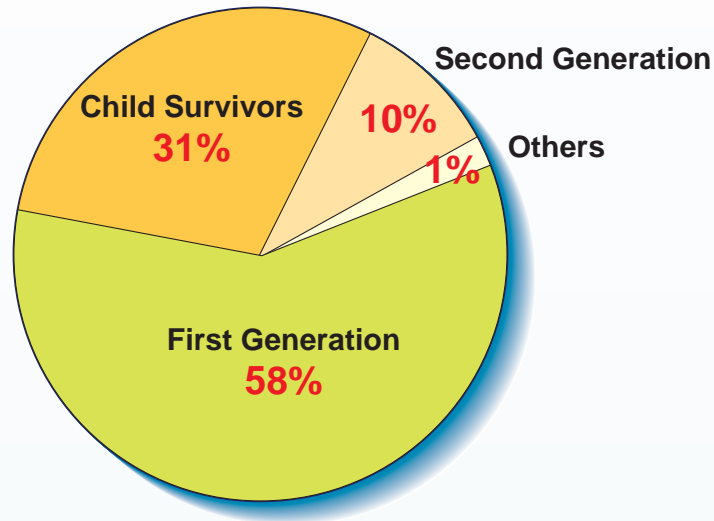


* 2006 Estimated Numbers

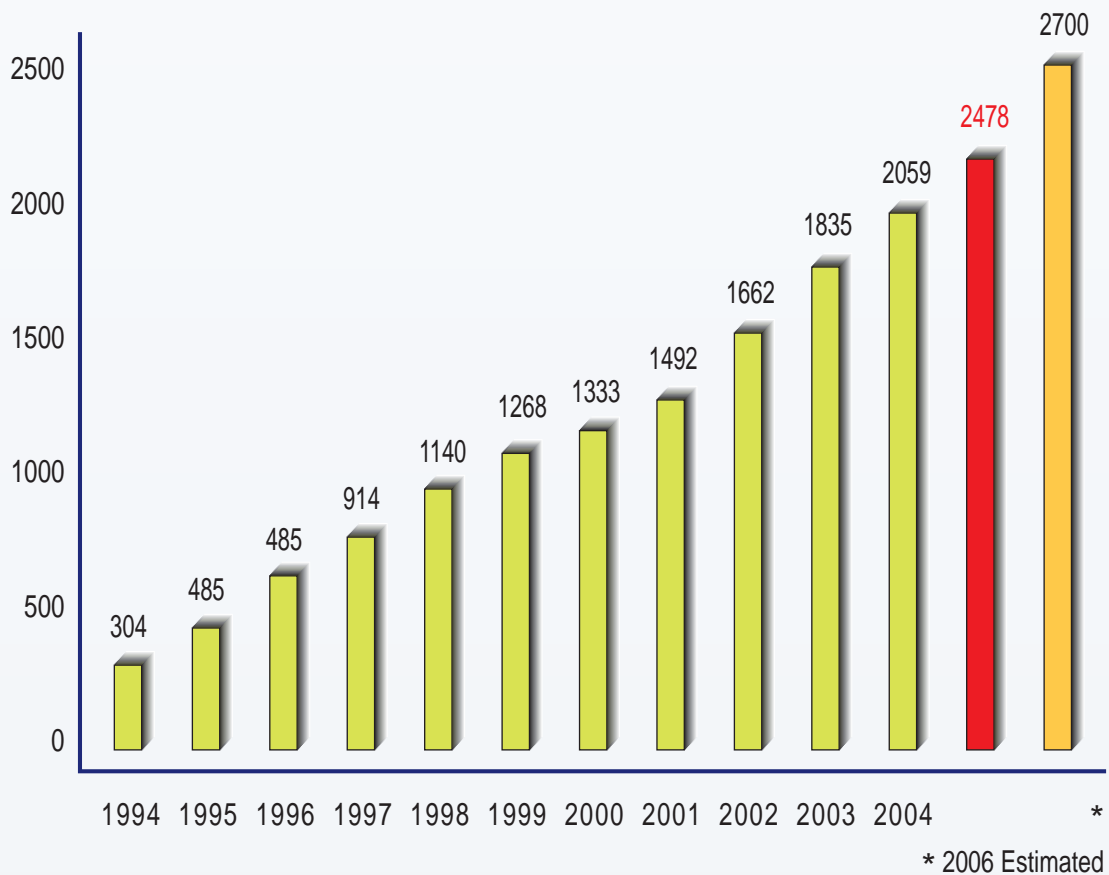


Distribution of Services Per Working Hours

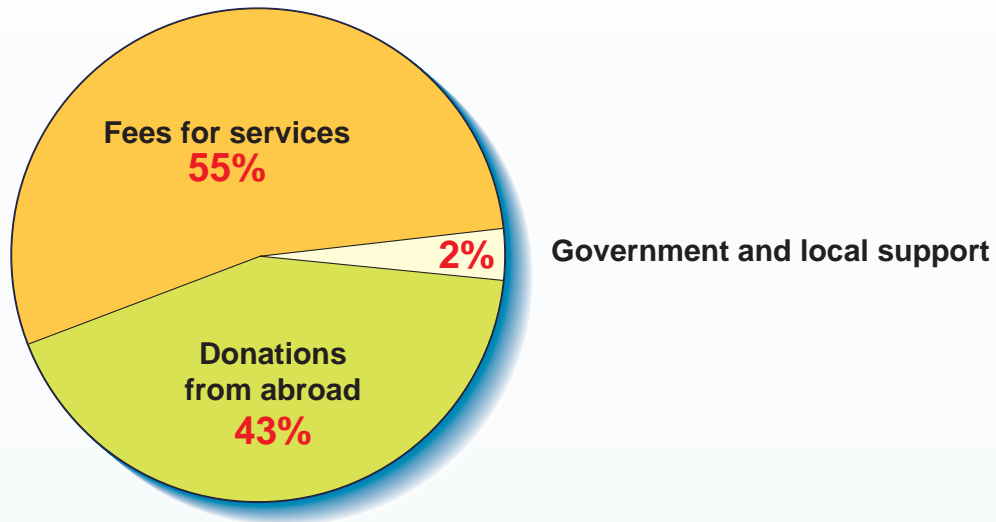
Clients in Therapy 2005



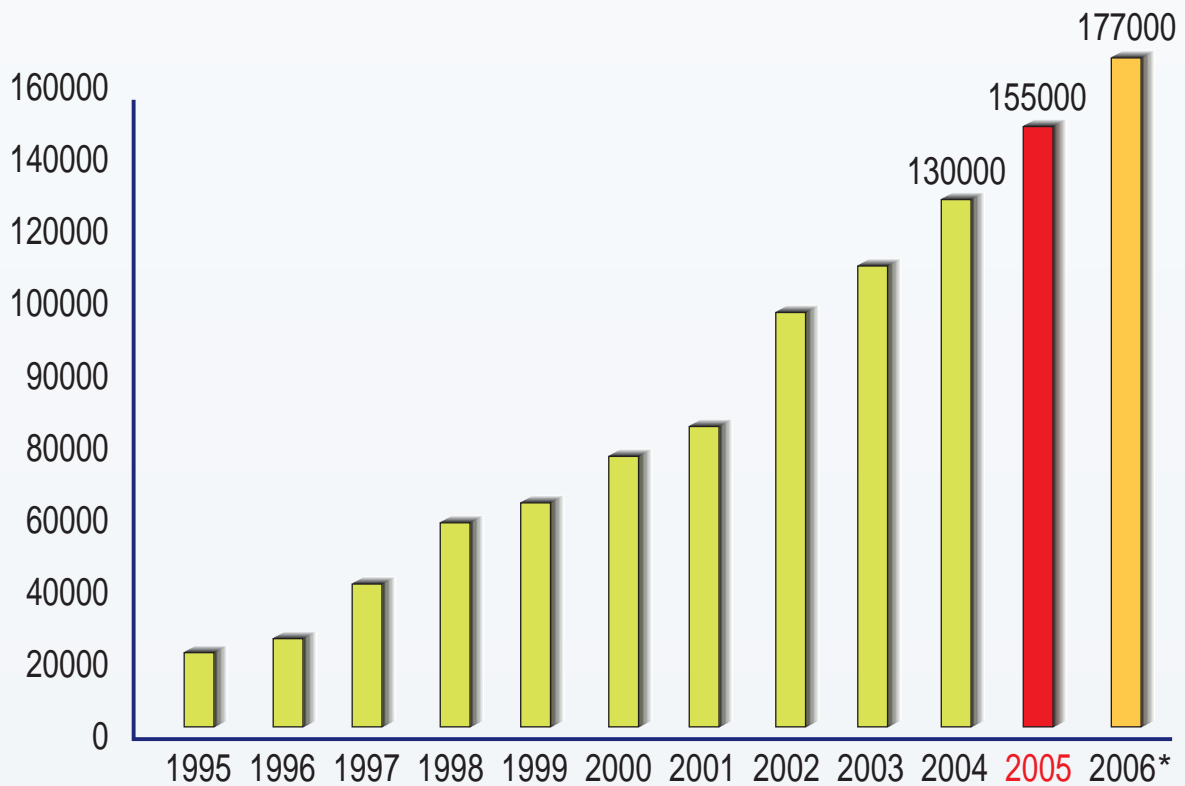
Number of Social Club Members 1994-2006



Distribution of Income 2005



Total No. of Work Hours 1995-2006

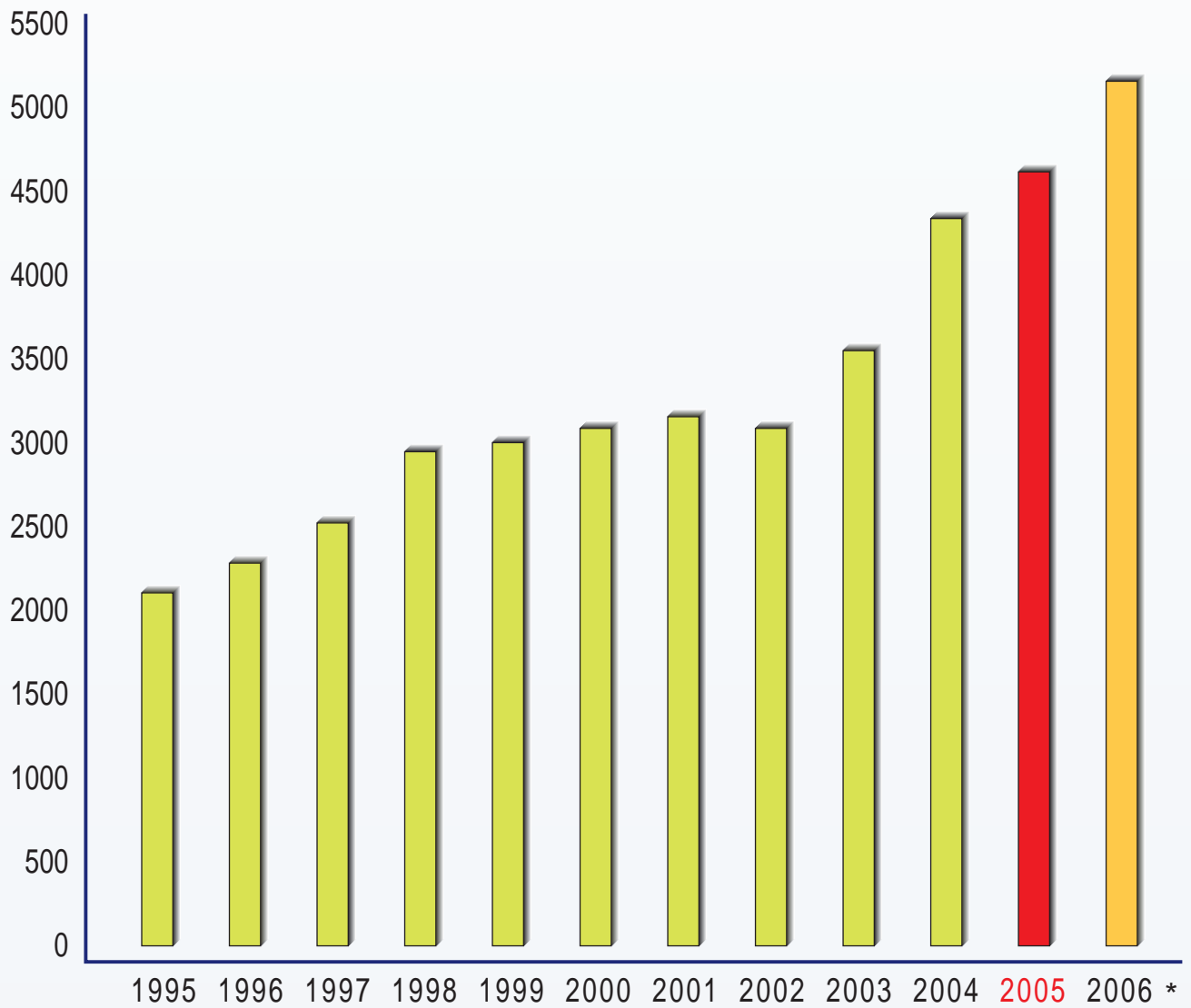


* 2006 Estimated

Income & Expenses 2005 (in NIS)

Income		Expenses	
Germany - fund	1,738,779	Salaries incl. fringe benefits	7,403,133
Germany - friends	22,060		
Remembrance and Future Foundation	135,531	Other operational costs	11,969,702
Claims Conference	3,763,465		
Shoah Foundation (France)	269,270	Projects	280,837
The Netherlands	1,949,043		
Nationalfonds, Austria	411,074		
Norway Friends	43,790		
Switzerland	52,876		
Weinberg Foundation	265,413		
UJA - Federation of New York	1,146,928		
Others	129,543		
Total donations	9,927,772	Total costs	19,653,672
Israel Health Ministry	253,000		
Matan	75,050	Administration & General	1,654,411
Others	26,154		
Government & Israeli Support	354,204	Total costs	1,654,411
Fees-for-services	10,072,249	Deficit	(953,858)
TOTAL INCOME	20,354,225	TOTAL EXPENSES	21,308,083

Yearly US\$ Expenses in thousands



* 2006 Estimated Expenses

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EUROPE

Mr. Maurits Cohen
Rodenburghlaan 9,
1181 PX Amstelveen, The Netherlands
Tel. +31-20-645 9985
e-mail: m.cohen@wartrauma.nl

Amcha Netherlands

STICHTING VRIENDEN VAN AMCHA NEDERLAND

Roel van Praag (Voorzitter/Chairman)
Postbus 1197, 3800 BD Amersfoort,
The Netherlands
Tel. +31-33-4727649
Fax +31-33-4759129
e-mail: info@amcha.nl

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Australia

Prof. Allan Borowski
76 St. Georges Road, Elsternwick
Victoria 3185
Australia
e-mail: A.Borowski@latrobe.edu.au

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Neumayrgasse 22/1, A-1160 Wien
Tel/ Fax +43 -1- 4929 410
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SCHWEIZ FREUNDESKREIS

VON AMCHA

Edgar Abraham, STEP AG
Mainaustasse 35, Postfach 1064
CH-8034 Zürich, Switzerland
Tel. +41-1-3891313
e-mail: edgar.abraham@step-ag.ch

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Amcha Germany

AMCHA Deutschland e.v.

Grosse Hamburger Strasse 30
10115 Berlin
GERMANY
Tel. +49-030 - 280 980 38
Fax +49-030 - 280 998 71
e-mail: info@amcha.de

Dr. Peter Fischer (Vorsitzender/Chairman)

Bundenbacher Weg 5
13086 Berlin
t. Zentralrat: +49 - 030 - 28 44 56 31 4
mobil +49 - 0172 - 320 45 27
e-mail: fischer@zentralratdjuden.de
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7, Penn Plaza No. 1600, New York
NY 10001, USA, Tel: +1-212-3306054
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The Righteous Persons Foundation

Europe

Fondation pour la Memoire de la Shoah (France)
Margareth Busher Foundation (The Netherlands)
*Nationalfonds der Republik Österreich für Opfer
des Nationalsozialismus (Austria)*
*The fund for Support of Jewish Institutions
or Projects Outside Norway (Norway)*
The Sobell Foundation (UK)
Foundation 'Remembrance, Responsibility and Future' (Germany)
Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur (Austria)
Solidarity Fund for Holocaust Victims (Switzerland)
Anne Frank Fonds (Switzerland)
Levi Lassen Foundation (The Netherlands)
Palma Foundation (Denmark)

Australia

Pratt Foundation (Melbourne)
The Lieberman and Abeles families (Melbourne)
Allan Borowski (Melbourne)
Fraser and Jayne Harding - Prayer for Israel (Queensland)

ISRAEL

Jerusalem Foundation
Matan
Aviva Klackstein (Lehavim)
Elie Ayalon
Pierre and Ziwa Nochimowski
*(In memory of Joseph & Rachel Nochimowski & their children
Jeanne & Nicole who were killed in Auschwitz 1944)*

Amcha Location in Israel





National Office

amcha

PO Box 2930, Jerusalem 91029, Israel
Tel.: +972-2-6250634, Fax: +972-2-6250669
Website: www.amcha.org
Email: amcha@netvision.net.il

Kiryat Motzkin
8 Yoni Netanyahu Street, Kiryat Motzkin 26417
Tel: 04-8766967, Fax: 04-8750830

Haifa
95 Sderot Hanassi, Haifa 34642
Tel: 04-8375649, Fax: 04-8360352

Netanya
4 Smilanski Street, Netanya 42431
Tel: 09-8341670, Fax: 09-8842447

Ramat Gan
80 Bialik Street, Ramat Gan 52536
Tel./ Fax: 03-6130425

Petach Tikva
19 Hahistadrut Street, Petach Tikva 49540
Tel: 03-9300577, Fax: 03-9390618

Tel Aviv
58 Mazeh Street, Tel Aviv 65789
Tel: 03-5665701/4, Fax: 03-5660817

Holon
14 Herzog Street, Holon 58343

Rehovot
143 Herzl Street, Rehovot 76266
Tel: 08-9467293, Fax: 08-9474853
Email: amcha1@netvision.net.il

Jerusalem
23 Hillel Street, Jerusalem 94581
Tel: 02-6250745, Fax: 02-6250669
Email: amchajlm@intermail.co.il

Ashkelon
4 Johannesburg Street, Ashkelon 78438
Tel: 08-6710545

Be'er Sheva
91 Herzl Street, Be'er Sheva 84220
Tel: 08-6270224, Fax: 08-6234535
Email: amchas@netvision.net.il