

HOPE
AND
HOMES
FOR
CHILDREN



UKRAINE CRISIS ONE YEAR ON

Our Response
Report
March 2023

Ukraine Director, Halyna Postoliuk, looks through a mortar hole in a classroom wall in the Kyiv region.

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OUR MISSION

is to be the catalyst for the global elimination of institutional care for children.



OUR VISION

is a world in which children no longer suffer institutional care.



OUR VALUES

are courage, excellence and integrity.



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Mariia* and her three granddaughters from northern Ukraine. The girls' parents were both killed in the first few days of the war, and their grandfather was wounded. Our specialist mobile team is supporting Mariia to care for them, including counselling support, educational activities and essential household items.

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* To ensure the safety and privacy of the people we support, all the names of the children, relatives and carers featured in this publication have been changed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Before the war, Ukraine had one of the largest orphanage systems in Europe. An estimated 105,000 children and young people resided in various forms of institutions across Ukraine, employing more than 60,000 staff across almost 700 facilities. Nearly 1.5% of all children in Ukraine were incarcerated without family in some form of residential institution - one of the highest rates of child institutionalisation in the world.

The war has made the situation of Ukraine's most vulnerable children worse. And it has pushed children and families who were not previously at risk to crisis point. At the same time, the international community and the EU's response to Ukraine marks an opportunity to address the country's legacy of institutions, and rebuild its future, without replicating the mistakes of the past.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, and the bravery of our Ukrainian team, who have been working towards care reform in the country since 1998, we've been able to respond on a scale none of us had planned a year ago. This report shares our challenges, successes, stories of the children and families we've supported, and our joint ambitions for the future.

Six-year-old Sofia* and her brothers enjoying the colouring books and paints given to them by Hope and Homes for Children.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children

HOW THE WAR HAS AFFECTED CHILDREN

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, children in the country have suffered from the devastating effects of war. They live under the constant threat of being injured by explosive objects, unexploded ammunition and missile strikes. Persistent attacks on energy infrastructure have forced families into harsh conditions during the cold winter.

As of 17 February 2023, **over 1,384 children were killed or injured** in Ukraine due to full-scale armed aggression from Russia. According to the official information from Ukrainian juvenile prosecutors, 461 children have been killed, and more than 923 have been injured. A further 347 children are officially listed as missing. These figures are thought to be significant underestimates.

Not only did Russia's invasion of Ukraine create a humanitarian crisis, it also created a child protection emergency across the region. **The war exposed Ukraine's vast system of orphanages**, and the children within them, many of whom have been left to face the dangers of war alone.

As the Ukrainian government evacuated these institutions, **children and families were rapidly reunited, but without the needed support**. Many were internally displaced, and the risks of family separation dramatically increased.

“
The loss of financial opportunities and logistical connections has led to job cuts, wage cuts and rising unemployment. Fewer families with children can provide for themselves. The situation of families who had survived based on state social payments, remains critical, as the regularity of social payments has not been fully restored yet and prices are rising rapidly. [...] There is virtually no place to remove children. There is a catastrophic shortage of [emergency foster carers] in the region. Institutions do not work. The situation is really getting worse.
”

Halyna Postoliuk, Director of Hope and Homes for Children Ukraine



461
children killed



923
children injured



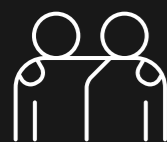
347
children missing

Destruction to a children's playground in the Kyiv region.
© Evheniy Zavhorodniy / Hope and Homes for Children


OUR RESPONSE: IN NUMBERS

We're not a humanitarian response organisation. But last year we became one. Our teams sprang into action to support the worst affected children and families.

Our priorities were to:

 provide essential, practical support

 strengthen families

 help families stay together

Our local team in Ukraine responded immediately to the acute needs of people forced to flee their homes. Our teams in Romania and Moldova deployed staff to the Ukraine borders and beyond to support refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries in search of safety.

As of the end of December 2022 we've provided humanitarian, psychological and practical support to over 62,000 people in Ukraine, including 33,000 children. We've also supported over 7,800 refugees in Romania, and more than 12,000 in Moldova.

In total, we've reached over **90,300** people, including more than **46,100** children.

OUR SUPPORT: IN NUMBERS

	UKRAINE	ROMANIA	MOLDOVA	TOTAL
Individuals we've supported (adults and children)	69,450	8,187 (refugees)	12,744 (refugees)	90,381
Number of these which are children	36,862	4,559	4,778	46,199

(February 2022 to January 2023)



A children's specialist from one of our mobile teams leading a children's workshop at one of our nine Mobile Children's Spots that we're running in partnership with UNICEF, in the city of Bucha in the Kyiv region.
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HOW WE'VE HELPED IN UKRAINE



Since February 2022, we've supported 21,499 families and 36,862 children through our programmes in Ukraine. Our work can be divided into six key areas: humanitarian, psychosocial and practical support; setting up mobile classrooms; preventing family separation; evacuating children from orphanages; supporting children sent home from institutions; and developing alternative family-based care services.

To deliver parts of this work, we've worked in close collaboration with our partners UNICEF, the EU and Save the Children.

HUMANITARIAN, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Children and parents have been suffering from deep psychological trauma and stress. For the communities we're supporting, our team has found that psychological support is their number one priority. That's why, in partnership with UNICEF, we've set up **11 counselling points** and **nine mobile teams** in the Kyiv region, offering social and psychological support to families with children. We provided psychological services, medical consultations, speech therapist services, and individual and group classes to **21,384 children**. They also learned what to do if they discover an explosive object, like a landmine. We engaged a wide range of specialists in the project including social workers, case managers, psychologists, child activity coordinators and teachers from communities. We formed each team based on the context of each community, taking into account the needs of individual families. **823 professionals** and specialists were trained in the project to provide services and organise activities with children.

Since November, we established five mobile teams with our partner organisation 'Responsible Citizens' in the liberated Kharkiv region. The mobile team specialists were among the first to provide social and psychological assistance, including medical counselling to families with children in the de-occupied territories of the region. A total of **1,202 children and 785 families** benefitted from the services.

Since the outbreak of the war, the team have provided food and non-food items, like hygiene kits and clothing to families displaced due to the fighting in their home towns or who had been suffering in occupied areas. When school restarted, we provided supplies like rucksacks, pencil cases, notebooks, and stationery, to help students continue learning. During winter and power cuts, we provided **warm clothes and blankets**. For children and families under case management, we also delivered individual items like torches, power banks, hot water bottles, heaters, and kettles.

Many members of remote communities have said that Hope and Homes for Children is the only organisation there, helping people in need, in these hard-to-reach areas.



Children orphaned at the start of the war being supported by our mobile support team in Invankiv region, Ukraine.

© Evheniy Zavhorodniy / Hope and Homes for Children



HOW WE'VE HELPED IN UKRAINE

MOBILE CLASSROOMS

Ukrainian children have limited access to education as many schools are severely damaged or destroyed. In the Kyiv region, in partnership with UNICEF, we set up **five local mobile spots for school classes**, allowing children to continue with learning and development. In December, we held festive events at these local mobile classrooms to put smiles on children's faces. In Hostomel, our specialists continued leading classes for younger children to prepare them for school, as no nearby nursery schools were open. In Makariv, we held Zumba classes for children to keep them active. The English language club and movie club were also popular with children. Children's parents were also able to take part in activities at the mobile spots, ranging from mutual support groups, and English classes through to art therapy and yoga. Including parents in this way is vital to supporting their mental health, which in turn has a positive impact on their children.

PREVENTING SEPARATION OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Our project in Dnipropetrovsk region, in partnership with the EU and Save the Children, aimed to improve protective family and community-based care for vulnerable children affected by the war. Through dedicated case management support, we've worked on **preventing the separation of 5,595 children** from 3,192 families. In December alone, our social worker specialists working in the Dnipropetrovsk region made 36 visits to families supporting 93 children. We started to follow up on an individual case basis with 20 families supporting 64 children to stay together with their families. Where needed, we work with other local partner organisations to provide these families with humanitarian assistance such as food, clothing, and computer or mobile phones for children to study. In some cases, we've also helped mothers to renew identity documents for their children or apply for social benefits.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN SENT HOME FROM ORPHANAGES

In 2022 we supported a total of **255 children** who were living in institutions but were **returned home to their families at the start of the war with no support**. Our social workers visited the families regularly to understand their needs and provide support accordingly. We helped families with essential items like food, medicine and nappies. We also helped them register for social benefits, and create a safe homely environment for the children. (Like Artem*'s family on the next page.)

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE FAMILY-BASED CARE SERVICES

After finding that several foster families' homes and family-type homes were damaged by the war, we arranged and paid for repairs to houses of families with the most urgent needs. We repaired **one foster family's home** and **three family-type homes**. The work included roof and building repairs, heating repairs and providing furniture and household appliances. Our repair work is important in ensuring alternative care provision exists for children without parental care, so that children are not sent to loveless orphanages.

EVACUATING CHILDREN FROM ORPHANAGES

Our team has advocated for the protection of children in orphanages, to ensure these children are acknowledged by the humanitarian system. In March 2022 our Ukraine team worked closely with our Romanian colleagues to **coordinate the safe evacuation of 43 children** from a support centre we'd been creating in Dnipropetrovsk to Romania. We also supported the **evacuation of 156 children from three orphanages in Ukraine** to Romania, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Our team of social workers facilitated the evacuation, finding suitable places to receive the children and advising on a safe and appropriate evacuation process.

In December, our specialists started to work with **40 children who were left without parental care** (six children in the Kyiv region and 34 children in the Dnipropetrovsk region). This included **two children with disabilities** and five children under the age of three. We also held the first training for candidates for the creation of family-based care in the Kyiv region. 22 candidates from 13 families took part in the training.



A children's specialist talking with a young girl at one of our Mobile Children's Spots, run in partnership with UNICEF, in the city of Bucha in the Kyiv region.

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**HOW WE'VE HELPED
IN UKRAINE**



**SUPPORTING CHILDREN SENT
HOME FROM ORPHANAGES**

**A FAMILY
DIVIDED,
UNITED
AGAIN**

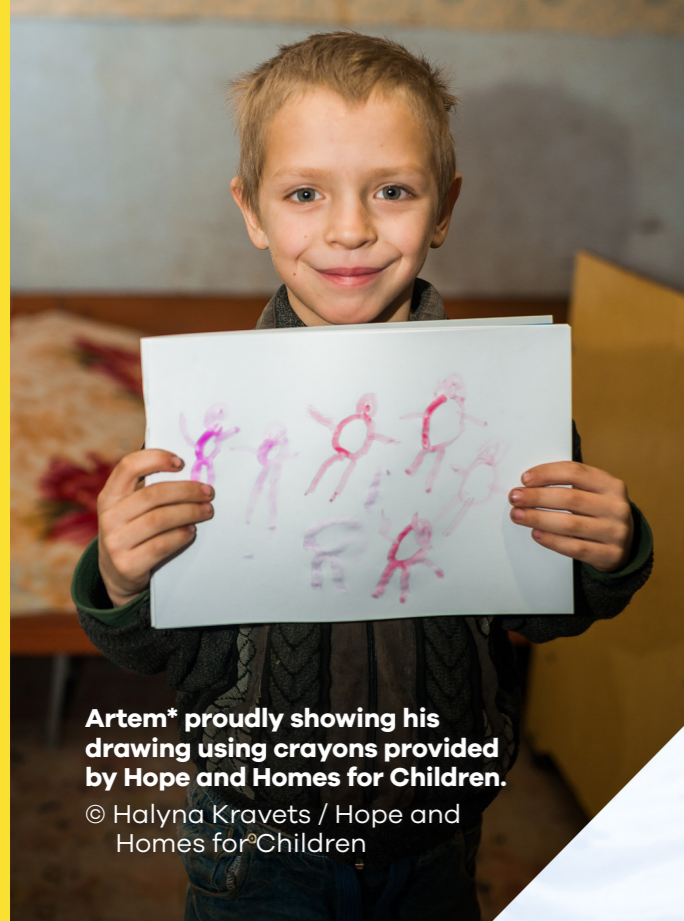
“We hide in the house immediately if we hear any danger.” These are the words of Artem*, an eight-year-old boy from Ukraine far too familiar with the signs of war. This is no game of hide and seek. It’s life or death. A childhood tainted by fighter jets, missiles and the enduring threat of violence.

Sadly, there’s a glimmer of joy hidden in Artem’s words. He has a house to hide in. He is, at long last, home. It’s a home surrounded by war, but a home nonetheless – one that was once taken away from him.

Artem’s story began in 2020 in a village in Central Ukraine. Alongside two siblings and a father, he lived with his mother, Olena*, in the Dnipropetrovsk region.

At 26, Olena was the sole breadwinner of her family of five. Despite desperate challenges, she worked relentlessly to hold her home together, doing cleaning and gardening work as often as she could. Pennies were low, but for Olena’s children, there was always food on the table and smiles on their faces. Until the authorities came.

The day everything changed began like any other. With childcare unaffordable, Olena left her children with a friend and went to work. Artem, then five, and Sofiia*, three, were taken to the supermarket, leaving Oleksi*, seven, alone at home. Word travels fast, and news of Oleksi’s whereabouts quickly reached social services. Their judgement was haphazard, their verdict severe. Olena, a tireless mother of three, was deemed unfit to parent.



Artem* proudly showing his drawing using crayons provided by Hope and Homes for Children.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children



Artem with his mum (back left), Yana (back right), and his younger brother and sisters, back home, where they belong.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children

HOW WE'VE HELPED IN UKRAINE



Olena* and children excited to receive their first delivery of essential items from Hope and Homes for Children.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children

Oleksi, Artem and Sofiia were placed in a "boarding school" institution, only to return twice a month. At the time, Artem was only five years old. Little Sofiia, was only three. Olena felt powerless: "They didn't even ask me if I wanted to send my children to a boarding school. I grew up in one myself. I know how hard it really is. The children cried constantly whenever they had to go back."

Our social worker Yana first met Olena at the end of 2021, to help her fight for her parental rights and get her children back. Yana's first step was to help Olena register for benefits and create a secure home environment. Then, Russia invaded Ukraine.

Orphanage staff fled, and the children were sent home overnight. With no warning and no support.

Olena was overjoyed to have her children under one roof again. But unable to work or receive government support, and with no help from the children's ill father, it was a struggle to feed the family. And with the terrible new reality of violence all around her, Olena did not know what to do. "My biggest worry was where to hide the children from the war," she says.

With the rapid launch of our humanitarian response, we soon provided Olena with food, furniture and medicine, as well as nappies for the latest addition to the family: 18-month-old Zlata*. For Olena, this was a lifeline.

Thanks to our supporters, we've been able to restock their supplies every month since, and will continue until Olena starts receiving the benefits she's entitled to.

We also bought story books, paints and colouring books so the children can continue learning at home and be distracted from the turmoil outside.

"Look how much the children like to draw," Olena said to Yana. "I've never seen them so focused and enthusiastic!" And Sofiia has already learned new letters! She wants to show you how smart she is! You help us so much!"

Inside their happy home they're together and thriving. Outside, war rages on. "My biggest concern is for the children's safety. Just today Russia fired 35 anti-aircraft guided missiles, as well as five drones and five Kalibr missiles," Olena told Yana last time she visited. "It's very scary for the kids, for all of us."

For most in Ukraine, the end of war means a return to peace. But for Olena's family, it could result in the children's return to the orphanage. One battle finishes, another continues.

Our aim is to ensure this doesn't happen. With financial, technical and compassionate support, we can help Olena maintain a healthy home and offer her children the stability they need.

Olena's story is not uncommon. So far, we've supported 288 children who were sent home from orphanages when the war broke out.

Olena longs for her children to stay under her wing and attend a local school instead. This will be difficult, because the children are behind their peers. So, we're looking to find and pay for a private tutor to help them catch them up and enable them to join their local school as soon as possible.

"I dream of buying a better house," Olena says, "and my children staying at home with me permanently, not in the institution, because I want a better future for them. Most of all, we dream of victory and an end to the war."

For Olena and her family, the road ahead remains long. But now, with the support of Homes and Hopes for Children, they can face whatever lies ahead the way they deserved to all along: united as a family.



Yana playing with the children on their new bunk bed provided by Hope and Homes for Children.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children

HOW WE'VE HELPED: ROMANIA



Since the beginning of the war, we've supported 8,187 refugees in Romania. 4,559 of these are children. Between February to May 2022, we deployed a team to support refugees in the Blue Dot Centres at two Ukrainian border points in Sighetu Marmăției and Siret. Since then, we've continued to provide support to refugees in multiple locations across the country, including the counties of Iași, Bistrița-Nasaud, Brașov, Cluj, Maramureș, Sibiu, Ilfov, Prahova, and Bucharest.

We provided **food, hygiene items and school supplies** to Ukrainian children who are refugees in Romania. These children now attend local schools with Romanian language classes, and we equipped Ukrainian students with laptops or tablets to use in classes. We also covered the costs of regular medical check-ups and medical interventions, including **psychological counselling sessions**.

We provided refugee families in Romania with **accommodation**, and supported mothers to attend Romanian language classes, helping to find day care for their children, so that they can find jobs.

We cooperated with other NGOs and state authorities, as well as with local authorities and agencies such as the **Red Cross** and **UNICEF**. Most of our interventions were made in cooperation with county authorities, as they are the ones that requested our support as there are many children coming either from institutions or from other childcare services in Ukraine.

CASE STUDY

A year ago, 17-year-old Daryna* was one of the 105,000 children living in one of Ukraine's 700 orphanages. She's been in the child protection system since she was five years old. When Russia invaded, she was evacuated along with 16 other teenage children to Romania, where she now lives in an emergency child protection centre which used to be an orphanage but was closed by Hope and Homes for Children and the local authorities in 2019. Our Romania team is covering the children's living expenses, from food, clothes, transport, and healthcare to laptops and support for their hobbies and interests.

"The journey was very hard," Daryna remembers. "I was very frightened about bombs dropping on us during our journey. When we arrived at the centre in Bucharest, we were very impressed with how the Romanians welcomed us. They were very warm and caring and gave us everything we needed."

"I've been living in Romania for a year now. When it comes to food, clothes, and being warm and safe, I'm ok. But I'm really sad most of the time. I miss my younger brothers and sisters who were evacuated to Poland. And I'm very worried about what's happening in Ukraine. I really hope I can go back to Ukraine soon, and that everything will be over."

Daryna* messaging her sister in Poland from the grounds of the emergency child protection centre in Bucharest where she's now been living for over a year.

© Ionut Stoica / Hope and Homes for Children

HOW WE'VE HELPED: ROMANIA



“

Hope and Homes for Children always responds positively to our requests, sometimes with very short notice. On 6 March 2022, we asked them to provide some beds for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine and they quickly provided 30 beds, mattresses and bedding within 24 hours. We're extremely grateful for our partnership and for their ongoing support.

”

Alexe Cortel, President of Iași County Council, Romania

EVACUATING 43 VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Between 16-18 March 2022, our teams in Ukraine and Romania worked together to evacuate 43 vulnerable children, nine carers, and their families (including 11 additional children), from the 'It's Good at Home' Centre in Dnipropetrovsk, when it became too unsafe to stay.

The group of children and their carers went to live at a Day Care Centre in Iași County which we renovated in 2018 to provide vital educational support to vulnerable children. In March 2022, at the request of the Iași County Council, we provided 30 beds to help accommodate the new arrivals from Ukraine.



The beds in Aliona's room at the Children's Day Centre, paid for by Hope and Homes for Children, at the request of Iași County Council.

© Andrea Tanase / Hope and Homes for Children

Aliona*, 12, is one of the 43 children we helped evacuate who has been living at the Children's Day Centre. One year on, Aliona reflects on her experience.

"I remember when the war began, sirens were sounding outside. Our tutor came in and told everyone to get dressed. 'For school?', we asked her. 'No,' she said. 'Today you are not going to school.'

"We were asked to go to the basement. In the beginning I was calm, but it became scary later. We travelled day and night, through the mountains, and everyone was very tired. I remember crossing the border on foot, carrying a lot of bags. The small children cried a lot.

"After our documents were checked, we were taken to big tents. It was warm there, and we were given tea and sandwiches. I started to cry. I was very tired and scared. I was afraid I was going to get lost. But Hope and Homes for Children took us here, to our new home.

"I've missed Ukraine all year. Romania is beautiful, but I want to go home soon.

"Hope and Homes for Children organise lots of day trips and take us to many places to have fun. That's when I am happiest. It makes us feel like a family.

"At school I like studying maths, biology and geography, and I enjoy doing dancing, gymnastics and drawing.

"I want the war to end. And one day I'd like to live in a family and become a policewoman."



Aliona*, 12, practising gymnastics outside the Children's Day Centre in Iași County, Romania, where she now lives, supported by Hope and Homes for Children.

© Flavius Solescu / Hope and Homes for Children

HOW WE'VE HELPED: MOLDOVA

Since February 2022, our Moldova team supported 12,744 refugees. 4,778 of these are children. We continue to operate at the Blue Dot Centre in Otaci, in partnership with UNICEF, where more coordinated services with government authorities and non-governmental organisations are in place, with better protection and integration at the heart of the services.

We worked in **14 Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs)** in Moldova and set up Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) with equipment, staff and training to provide social and psychological support including music therapy to traumatised children. In the CFSs, we provided structured **activities for children** aged 6-11 and 12-17 years old, which are proven to decreasing stress levels in children, especially after children attend four activities.

In December, we organised **Christmas parties in 11 RACs and two host communities**. 276 children attended and more than 150 adults. We supported refugees in RACs with breakfast supplies, hygiene products, beds and bedding items, winter shoes and other essentials.

Our social workers and psychologists organised informative sessions and provided psychosocial support for parents or caregivers. We provided **vouchers for children in foster families** or Family Type Homes across the country. We have supported **six unaccompanied and separated siblings** to stay together in group foster care. We also helped children to contact their family members who have stayed in Ukraine. We have

been piloting different ways of supporting refugees in communities by setting up referral mechanisms from social workers and enabling families to refer themselves to services and good practices of alternative care services. We also work to ensure there is **social cohesion and solidarity** between the host community and refugee groups.

As part of the coordination efforts on refugee response, we became part of an inter-agency coordination mechanism led by UNHCR, a child protection subgroup led by UNICEF, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) taskforce, Blue Dot taskforce and Education workgroup.



Refugee women crossing from Ukraine into Moldova at a border point in Ocnița county in March 2022 where we set up a 'Blue Dot' emergency reception centre in partnership with UNICEF.

© Tatiana Codreanu / Hope and Homes for Children



HOW WE'VE HELPED:
MOLDOVA



“
**THANK YOU FOR
COMING AND SHARING
IN OUR CELEBRATION.**
”

This is what a little girl told us at the Christmas celebration we held at the Refugee Accommodation Centre in Chisinau, Moldova. The children at the centre enjoyed songs and dancing, sweets and presents from Father Christmas and time spent together with their loved ones.

A Christmas celebration should not be an out-of-the-ordinary event for children, but the war in Ukraine made this Christmas party very different. Feeling far away from home, celebrating with people they didn't even know a few weeks or months ago, worrying about their loved ones who stayed behind to fight and help win the war – these are the concerns that children and adults fleeing the crisis in Ukraine are facing.

But at this time of year, what brings back some feelings of normality is the return to Christmas traditions and celebrations.

In early December, our facilitators did a round of consultations with caregivers and children at each of the Refugee Accommodation Centres and planned Christmas celebrations together.

Children kept asking if Santa would find them in their new country and if he would have the money to bring gifts to everyone. So, with the support of our donors, we helped organise Christmas celebrations all over the country.

The end of December brought with it Christmas cheer and spirit. Children sang carols and patriotic songs while holding their little hands over their hearts – it was moving and very special.



Christmas celebrations held at the Refugee Accommodation Centre in Chisinau, Moldova.

© Hope and Homes for Children

HOW WE'VE HELPED: MOLDOVA



PREVENTING SEPARATION OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Yulia* is a young mother of four from Ukraine. Having escaped the terrifying war in their homeland, Yulia and her children now live in one of Moldova's refugee centres. Until the war, the family, including Yulia's mother, lived in the Kherson region. But by July last year, they were forced to flee their home and country due to increasing violent, armed attacks.

"I never thought I'd have to leave my house. I agonised over what to take – and what to leave behind. Now I've run away with my four children as well as my mother to a foreign country. The war also took my husband. I haven't heard from him for two months", Yulia says.



Now living in a refugee centre in Moldova, Yulia's* three daughters are more settled and happy now they're able to attend a pre-school supported by CCF Moldova.

© Hope and Homes for Children

CASE STUDY

Despite these difficulties, the family found a haven in a Moldovan refugee centre. Yulia has even been able to enrol her three daughters into the local pre-school, where our colleagues at CCF Moldova involve the children in group activities. At home, they've provided the family with practical support like warm clothing and shoes, to see the family through the cold winter months, as well as medicine and food supplies.

“

Thank you for encouraging and helping me to get the girls into a local pre-school. I'm already seeing such a difference in our family - the girls are happier and I now also have some time to rest; to gather my strength to make it through each day. It is not just mentally hard for me. I am also physically tired, as I also care for my mother who has severe mobility issues.

”

Yulia

Yulia is determined to provide for her family now – and in the future. Using her own savings, she's enrolled on a professional beauty course to learn new skills, which she hopes to use to start her own business. We're helping by investing in Yulia's start-up, so her business can get off the ground and enable Yulia to support her whole family.



Yulia's* children are now safe in the Moldovan refugee centre.

© Hope and Homes for Children

ADVOCACY

When the war broke out, we coordinated the development of key advocacy messages, signed by multiple partners across the sector, addressing influential decision makers such as the European Union (EU), United Nations and UK Government. Our recommendations highlighted the need to monitor, track and ensure the safety of the 105,000 children trapped in Ukraine's orphanage system.

Shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine, the country applied for membership of the EU. In its Opinion on Ukraine's application for EU membership, the European Commission stipulated that **'Ukraine has one of the highest rates of child institutionalisation in the world (ca. 1.5% of all children), which is a serious concern and needs to be tackled as a matter of urgency.'**

For Moldova, also a candidate for membership, the EC Opinion identified the number of babies and children with disabilities in institutional care facilities as an area of concern.

Since the Ukrainian EU accession process has started, we've been advocating for the EU to **include care reform in the conditions for countries to join the EU** and to support the care reform process with technical and financial assistance.

Many of our priorities have indeed been **incorporated into European and international policy messages**, vitally ensuring that these children are recognised by the humanitarian system, including a commitment from the EU to **allocate 10 million euros** to the design of a comprehensive child care reform strategy in Ukraine, announced in a joint conference with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy.

“

Not in institutions, as you said, but in family-based care. We want these children to grow up in a loving environment that gives them confidence and strength. So, be reassured, we will support Ukraine to provide the best possible care to these orphans. We will share our experience, we will offer financial support. We are starting with 10 million euros to support here the design of a modern childcare strategy. This includes capacity building and a twinning project, because I think it is wise that Ukraine teams up with European Member States who have gone through the same process, to have the experience on what to avoid and on best practices.

”

Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

In our efforts to influence the EU accession process of Ukraine, we will contribute to the European Commission consultations of civil society organisations on the readiness of both Ukraine and Moldova to become EU Member States. **By pushing for care reform to be included in the areas where progress is needed to obtain EU Membership, we are creating an incredible opportunity to put an end to child institutionalisation in these countries.**

A destroyed building thought to be a school in the Kyiv region, Ukraine.

© Evheniy Zavhorodniy / Hope and Homes for Children

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The work described in this response report is only possible because of the generosity of the thousands of supporters who donated to us, as well as companies and organisations. These include UNICEF, UBS Optimus Foundation, World Childhood Foundation, Zurich Insurance, Connells and Clifford Chance. We also received significant funding from the European Commission in partnership with Save the Children.

As of the end of January 2023, these donations have enabled us to provide vital humanitarian, psychological and practical support to more than **90,300 individuals**, including more than **46,100 children**. They've also allowed us to be at the forefront of advocacy efforts to create a better future for all children in Ukraine and Moldova.

Our appeal encompasses our emergency response work in Ukraine, Romania and Moldova; our ongoing work in these countries, and our global advocacy relating to the crisis. Including money donated directly in Ukraine, Romania and Moldova, we have raised **a staggering £9m of the £23m we need over the next four years**.

By the end of December 2022, we had spent £5.5m on our immediate response (£2.2m in Ukraine and £3.3m supporting refugees in Romania and Moldova). With no end to the war in sight, families' needs continue unabated and increasing numbers of children find themselves displaced or orphaned. **We continue to use - and need - investment to provide essential, often life-saving, support for children and families and to work tirelessly to end child institutionalisation in Ukraine and the wider region.**

(The £9m income figure above includes £1.1m of income raised directly by CCF Moldova, of which £1.0m was spent in 2022.)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF UKRAINE REGIONAL RESPONSE IN 2022:

£5.5M

**UKRAINE
£2.2M
42%**



**MOLDOVA
£1.6M
28%**

**ROMANIA
£1.7M
30%**

Our Ukraine Country Director, Halyna Postoliuk, finds a child's artwork among the rubble at a school in the Kyiv region in May 2022.

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CHALLENGES

Continued conflicts with potential escalation of hostilities across different parts of Ukraine have increased the risks to civilians and posed threats to humanitarian access to communities. We noticed an increased number of children with different types of impairments and health conditions – physical and psychological. As a result, we increased the provision of psychological support for children and families.



Given the increase in the number of children separated from parental care, the possible return of orphans from abroad, and the UN's concerns regarding the placement of children into long-term residential institutions, **it will be critical to find family and community-based alternative living arrangements for Ukrainian children.** The problem of emergency placement of children who have lost their parents or who cannot stay with their parents is becoming increasingly acute. Therefore, our support to the most vulnerable families remains urgent.

Social services in Ukraine have been depleted, as many social workers and child protection professionals fled the country, or serve in the armed forces. There is also a dearth of NGOs and volunteer initiatives actually working in communities, which leads to burnout and re-traumatisation of staff who are managing complex cases involving vulnerable children, displaced and bereaved families.

The prolonged war and damage to energy infrastructure has not only impacted Ukraine, but has also continued to cause **economic stress within the region** and beyond. With an annual inflation rate of around 26%, the deteriorating economic situation in Ukraine has **driven more people into poverty.** Opportunities for paid employment in Ukraine have shrunk.

The majority of employers are unable to pay salaries at the pre-war level. The situation for vulnerable families in Ukraine has significantly deteriorated with rising food prices and inflation. Our team are seeing some families struggling to feed their children or purchase medicines for children who are sick, which puts **more children at risk of separation from families.**

The triple crises of energy, war and inflation have significantly affected Moldova. A huge 34% inflation rate drove energy bills and the costs of living through the roof. In Romania too, a 15% rate of inflation is exacerbating poverty within families, as food and wood prices rocket.

Although the number of refugees has stabilised since winter, the refugee crisis has increased. Refugees who decided to stay in Moldova are more vulnerable and have more support needs. The mental health and emotional wellbeing of refugees is worsening, leading to suicide attempts, depression, and conflicts within families.

A Ukrainian woman shows our team the damage to her home in the Kyiv region of Ukraine. We've been supporting her with food, essential items, and accommodation at our 'Ray of Hope' community centre.

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WHAT'S NEXT

With the prolonged crisis still ongoing and uncertainties about when the war will end, our response in Ukraine will continue to provide targeted humanitarian support and develop the conditions to implement our long-term plan on care reform.

Our emergency response continues to focus on keeping families together and mending the social fabric of childcare and protection system. This focus is crucial in order to strive for our long-term mission in Ukraine: continuing the trajectory of de-institutionalisation and establishing alternative childcare services, which we started before the war.

We'll continue **capacity building activities** for specialists to ensure promotion and protection of children's rights, and **case management** in humanitarian response, alongside **training for case workers** to support family-based care. We'll laser focus in on **children with disabilities** and those trapped in institutions - the most marginalised groups we work with. Our team will work to combat escalating needs, whilst we also develop **pilot community services for children with disabilities**.

As refugee families and children continue to stay in Moldova and Romania, we've extended our support to Ukrainian refugees in both countries. Psychological and practical support, including material assistance like food and non-food items, continue to be necessary.

We're also delivering **informal educational and structured play activities** for children, to ensure they can continue their development. We provide training, including vocational courses, digital and business skills and leadership development for women, to help refugees access the employment market.

We're making progress in **advocacy**, influencing policies at national, EU, global level and in the UK, for these are crucial steps towards achieving our objectives. We feel that real change can happen only when all international donors investing in Ukraine **work together to direct their support towards families, not institutions**. If this re-direction happens, an effective child protection system can be created in Ukraine, with children growing up in safe and caring families at its core.

Our teams will continue to advocate for care reform in Ukraine and Moldova during the **EU accession process**. In advance of the Ukraine Recovery Conference in June, we will be convening institutional and private sector donors to achieve the coordinated, targeted and sustainable funding that is required for care reform to progress in the country.

We'll continue to monitor the situation, adapting how we operate and our financial forecasting to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of children and families in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania.

Eight-year-old Artem* (right) joyfully playing in the snow with his brother and sister, having been sent home from the orphanage they were living in when the war broke out with no support.

© Halyna Kravets / Hope and Homes for Children





The invasion of Ukraine has provoked an extraordinary response from our team and supporters. We'd like to say a huge thank you.

We're continuing to support the most vulnerable children and families in Ukraine, as well as those who've become refugees in Moldova and Romania, and will do so for as long as they need. Our 30 years of experience shows that the best way to ensure the long-term safety of Ukrainian children is through replacing Ukraine's network of 700 orphanages with a child protection system based on family care.

"Our aim is to build a strong, effective child protection system with families at its core."

Halyna Postoliuk, Director of Hope and Homes for Children Ukraine.

**ALWAYS FAMILIES,
NEVER ORPHANAGES.**

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