



Childhood in Ukraine

One year after the invasion



CHILDHOOD

WORLD CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION
FOUNDED BY H.M. QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN

"All staff accounted for yesterday evening"

"I've volunteered to help transport food and water for people who are staying in a shelter, mostly women with kids and pets. (it's in underground metro station)."

Voices from our partners in Ukraine

Introduction

The Russian invasion in Ukraine has shattered the lives and safety of millions of children. Thanks to your very rapid and generous support, we were able to connect with and activate our local and international network from day one. We intensified our work to ensure that we were doing all we could, to protect, support and strengthen children and families affected by the war.

20 years of work in the region to strengthen the protection of children who are most at risk of violence and sexual abuse has provided vast experience, knowledge and trustful relationships that helped us and our local partners during the most urgent crisis. More than 200 projects together with around 40 local partners reflect how the need and possibilities are in constant change. In the early years of 2000, our focus was on the large groups of children living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in sewers and in the large governmental institutions with constant staff rotation. Awareness about child sexual abuse was low and so was the capacity to deal with it. Very few cases of child sexual abuse were reported, as there was no place to turn for children experiencing abuse. Together with our partners in Ukraine and in neighboring countries, this is changing.

With the support and collaboration with our international network we have built capacity around child sexual abuse. Thanks to those efforts, there is now support and protection to especially vulnerable groups of children, such as young children with disabilities and youth identifying as LGBTQ. We supported our local partner (NGO Resource center) in the development of a curricula to strengthen the capacity of the local civil society to identify and support children having experienced abuse. This course has been invaluable during the past year as many small organizations that did not earlier work with children through their humanitarian efforts, now meet both children and families carrying trauma.

Since 2017 we have supported and funded the establishment of the Barnahus model in Poland and Moldova. In Poland there are now 6 Barnahus establishments specializing on the investigation of, and support to children having suffered sexual abuse. The first Barnahus in Moldova opened its doors to the public in March 2022. The staff in the Barnahus have the required expertise and awareness to receive and accurately support families fleeing Ukraine. The same goes for developing parenting programs that are now offered to mothers fleeing together with their children.

One year on, we can confirm, that our long-term work in Ukraine during the years before the war, laid the foundation and were pivotal to the quick and accurate support that our local partners in Ukraine, Poland and Moldova could offer the children and families that needed it the most.

Voices from our partners in Ukraine

"The Childhood funding made it possible for us to remain active, relevant and provide crucial support and equally important retaining staff; not losing them too easy to the big INGOS and UN temporary coming in offering higher salaries."

"We really appreciate cooperation with World Childhood Foundation, find it smooth and full of trust."

"It greatly helped the families fleeing the war, all those who arrived where in a state of anxiety or stress and working with a psychologist helped to prevent the condition of PTSD."

"Many lost their documents during the move, or they were destroyed during the bombings, the work of a lawyer helps IDPs renew their documents and provides support."

"In times of war, safety and prevention of sexual violence become even more relevant. I think that children who have completed the program are safer because of the knowledge they have received."

"Four children who participated in the Steps to Safety program were evacuated. Parents say that the knowledge they received (rules for dealing with a stranger, safety circles) helped them in the evacuation process".

"We currently support cases of child rape. Youngest victim so far is 8-years old. The funding received from Childhood is absolutely critical!"

"Childhood's patience and understanding provides us with stability and flexibility that is crucial in emergency situations."

"While the context has changed, the relevance of the program has significantly increased. Not only due to the increased number of child sexual abuse and violence, but also because of the significantly increased number of NGOs currently working on child protection issues, many of which had no previous awareness and experience of the topic."



Child Friendly Space NGO Resource Center – Ukraine

“We are grateful to Childhood for the continuous support and Childhood’s immediate reaction to the beginning of a full-scale war and assisting those most vulnerable.”

Voices from one of our partners in Ukraine

Our activities during 2022

Through flexible, direct and long-term support to our partners we have contributed to protecting and supporting the most vulnerable families, those who were vulnerable and at risk even before the invasion. We prioritize our actions supporting both children and families right now whilst also contributing to building long-term competence and sustainability within the local civil society. In close dialogue with our partners, we focus on activities that complement and strengthen initiatives funded by the international community. We have approved projects for a period of two years, giving our partners the mandate to decide when funding is spent. This way we ensure accuracy, quality and sustainability of our actions and the ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment.

We are focusing on 7 areas that complement each other to strengthen protection and resilience of children and families affected by the war in Ukraine. Our focus is the **safety and protection of children** in all ages affected by the war, from an abandoned baby to a traumatized teenager. We reach out to children aged 0-18 through a range of interventions and specialist partners.

1) Preventing children from being separated from their families.

- Open daycare activities giving children to families fleeing to Poland the chance to play, enjoy a sense of normalcy and have access to safe adults. Our support covers integration and longevity. A big part of the staff themselves are Ukrainian refugees.
- Establishment of child friendly spaces in Dnipro, receiving around 400 children.
- Establishment of child friendly spaces, integration, and recreational activities for refugee children in school age as well as children from the local community in Moldova.

2) Family and community-based placement and tracing of children without parental care, including safe evacuation of children in care.

- Ensuring quality care for the children who were left behind in a baby home in Dnipro when the staff fled the war. Collaborating with authorities to identify foster families to care for the children.
- Identifying abandoned children and working with families where there is a risk of family separation in Ukraine and Moldova. These two projects are at an early stage.

3) Individual and group support to vulnerable and traumatized children.

- Psychosocial support and protection to youth identifying as LGBTQ. Individual support calls online through Skype, Zoom, Viber and chat with 30 youths, both refugees and those who remain in occupied zones. Support groups to 138 LGBTQ youths on topics such as protection against violence during the war, sexual education and coming out, sometimes involuntarily.
- Psychosocial support to 600 children and parents in Ukraine by psychologists with experience from war and trauma. Mentoring to other organizations so that they too can offer qualified trauma support.
- Individual support and therapy to traumatized children at Barnahus in Poland (with Ukrainian speaking staff). Capacity building of staff on trauma treatment to refugee children and families. 40 psychotherapists from Barnahus have received training of an evidence-based method on how to contribute to improving the relationship between children and parents. Until October, 800 children received support from professionals who had completed the training within the project.

4) Providing support to parents and caregivers who fled or remain in conflict zones.

- The war comes with an additional level of stress and vulnerability to parents of children with disabilities. The organization Healthy Society has been able to adapt their prevention program for children with intellectual disabilities to their current reality. More than 100 families have taken part of the program that offers children and adults knowledge about risks and protection against sexual abuse. The education now includes aspects such as play during blackout and safety in shelters. Individual support sessions every week, home visits and emergency aid has helped overwhelmed parents to stay physically and mentally present for their children. 1793 online sessions have been held with parents.
- Advice and support groups for displaced Roma parents and their children. The support has been given in combination with food, shelter and legal advice. Humanitarian support, legal advice and psychosocial support has been provided to 233 children and their parents.

5) Emergency assistance to children and families

- All our Ukrainian partners were offered to take part of the unrestricted funding during the first weeks of the invasion to protect, evacuate and help their staff and vulnerable children and families.
- Our partner Blaho converted their education center to a reception center for internally displaced Roma families and have received more than 1200 children and adults since the start of the invasion.

- Food, water and medicines for children evacuated from Ternopil. Food, diapers and blankets for children evacuated from an orphanage in Transcarpathia and deliveries of daily rations of water to a children's hospital. The humanitarian aid is distributed by our partners and give families the opportunity to receive psychosocial support so that they can be physically and mentally present for their children.

6) Technical solutions to find children and track perpetrators.

- Shortly after the invasion, Libra was launched. A new tool developed by the company Web IQ with the support from Childhood. The software Libra searches the internet for illegal images and child sexual abuse material so that these can be blocked and taken down. The program finds previously known images and videos and identifies new, likely illegal material by scanning it from different angles. Since May, Libra is scanning fora on darknet and social networks connected to Ukraine and surrounding geographies to identify and document potential increase and spread of sexual abuse material, and other sexual exploitation of children.

7) Safeguarding training and support to adults meeting children along the entire flight route, through coordination, collaboration, and capacity development

- **Capacity building on child sexual abuse for community-based organizations** providing humanitarian assistance to children and families. More than 100 people from 54 different organizations throughout Ukraine have strengthened their capacity and knowledge about child sexual abuse.
- Training in how to work with prevention of child sexual abuse against children with disabilities in a context of war.
- Training in psychological first aid specially focused on strengthening the relationship between children and adults during a crisis. The method has been adapted to Moldovan context and is used in the work with refugee families near the border to Ukraine with the purpose of reducing the risk of family separation.
- Information campaigns directed to children, caregivers, parents, teachers and social workers about online child safety. 20 568 teachers and other adults have concluded the training.

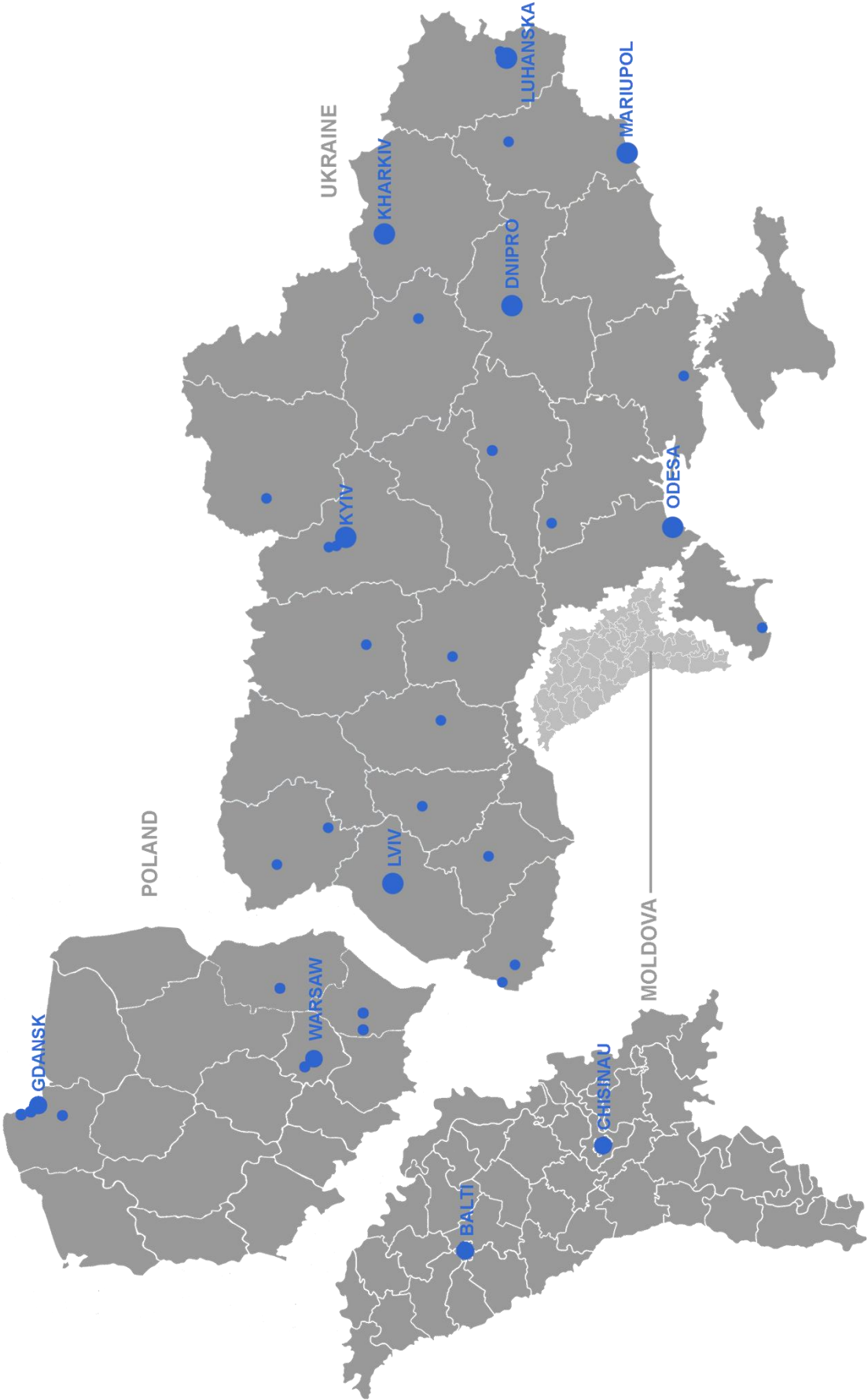


Child Friendly Space NGO Resource Center – Ukraine



Comenius Foundation – Poland

Childhood projects and partners in Ukraine, Moldova and Poland



“We currently support cases of child rape. Youngest victim so far is 8-years old. The funding received from Childhood is absolutely critical!”

Voices from our partners in Ukraine

Financial information

The response from our donors and supporters has been overwhelming. During the first months of the invasion, many of you showed great generosity and willingness to help the children affected by the war in Ukraine. In this exceptional case, we have chosen to transfer 100% of donations of these earmarked donations directly to our local partners in Ukraine, Moldova and Poland. Costs for due diligence and support to our local partners, the strategic development of our activities as well as our active participation in international coordination is covered by our long-term partners and donors. Our overhead costs are covered by our co-founding capital.

The direct financial support to our local partners in Ukraine in 2022 was distributed as follows:

Ukraine	USD
Support to Roma children and families together with the organization Blaho.	91 000 USD
Preventive work with children with disabilities and their families, in collaboration with Healthy Society	135 745 USD
Working with children in institutions at families at risk together with Hope and Homes for Children	200 000 USD
Protection of and support to children in institutions and families at risk of separation in collaboration with Partnership for Every Child	250 000 USD
Education and information about child safety online together with International Leadership and Development Center för	18 000 USD
Psychosocial support and information for children identifying as hbtq in partnership with LGBT Association Liga	72 002 USD
Psychosocial interventions and capacity building of the civil society together with NGO Resource Center	172 000 USD

Moldova

Working with refugee families and Moldovan families at risk together with CCF	80 000 EUR
Psychosocial support and trauma treatment to children and families affected by the invasion of Ukraine in collaboration with CNPAC	110 000 EUR
Supporting refugee children to continue school and offering recreational activities together with Terre des Hommes	10 000 EUR

Poland

Psychosocial support and therapy to children fleeing the war, parenting support and education of adults meeting refugee children, coordination and capacity building together with the organization Empowering children	188 000 EUR
Quality development and integration of child friendly spaces together with Comenius Foundation for Child Development	60 000 EUR

International activities

In addition to above local activities, Childhood has invested in an international initiative focusing on technology

Scanning the internet, identifying child sexual abuse material and sexual exploitation of children related to the war, in collaboration with the company Web-IQ	20 000 EUR
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***“Most important: Your mails and messages mean the world to the staff!
Please keep writing, encourage, ask questions and give assignments”.***

Voices from our partners in Ukraine

Looking ahead

One year after the invasion, both the need and support have entered into a new phase. There is still a great need of humanitarian aid and adapted trauma support for those children and families who remain in Ukraine. But the Ukrainian civil society has proven as strong and creative as their army. With relatively scarce resources, they manage to reach the people who need it the most. By remaining flexible, patient and through a close dialogue with our partners, we can ensure that our investments end up where they are most needed in a rapidly changing environment.

Since the start of the invasion, we have been active in coordination meetings with the UN and other international actors. We want to ensure that our efforts fill identified needs, emphasize child protection as a lifesaving intervention and that international aid is directed to the local civil society, mitigating the risk of undermining local capacity, or creating parallel systems.

Despite enormous suffering there are still glimpses of hope. Awareness about the risks of child sexual abuse is now higher than ever. Information about the increased risks of trafficking, and children being separated from their families during refuge spread quickly through several international and national organizations. Initiatives to register refugees and creating child friendly spaces were rapidly in place and have shown to mitigate feared risks. In many cases, our partners have established a closer collaboration with local and national authorities than earlier. They contribute to document and stop war crimes against children and LGBTQ youth, and to develop a national strategy for early intervention for children with disabilities.

Many of our projects are entering their most active phase in the coming period, whilst the masses of international volunteers and donations are decreasing. New initiatives are starting, for example the development and launch of a new portal to report war crimes against children, with a special focus on children that have been abducted to Russia.

Our local partners prove, time and again, what we at Childhood have always believed and worked for, that the local civil society is not only always first to respond, but also best placed and quickest to adapt to real and ever-changing needs. We are proud of and filled with admiration of how our partners support children in the midst of war. And we are deeply grateful to our generous donors who are making all this possible.



Healthy Society Ukraine, Support group for refugee children. Before the invasion, children wished for sweets and birthday gifts, now they wish for their fathers to come home, sirens and explosions to stop and to return to their homes.



Barnabus in Moldova opened in March 2022. Here children will meet professionals with accurate competence to receive and meet children that suffered from sexual abuse and who carry trauma from the invasion.



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