



#UNITEDFORUKRAINE

UNITED FOR UKRAINE FUND FINAL IMPACT REPORT

United Way Worldwide • February 2024



UNITED WAY'S WORK IN UKRAINE

Since the onset of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, some 6.2 million people, predominantly women and children, have sought refuge from the conflict. Across Europe, 44 countries have welcomed Ukrainians, offering not only immediate sanctuary and aid but also extended support for their eventual reconstruction and rehabilitation.

United Way Worldwide and our trusted partners at **United Way Romania, United Way Hungary, PHINEO gAH/United Way Germany, United Way Spain, United Way Netherlands** and Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw (Good Initiatives Foundation) in Poland, continue to help displaced families.

In 2022, the United for Ukraine Fund was established by United Way Worldwide, channeling \$4.7 million into refugee assistance programs. This report outlines the significant impact of United Way, enriched by narratives of hope and ingenuity, all a testament to the altruism of its benefactors.

An **interim report** in February 2023 shed light on the initial six months of the relief efforts. This comprehensive final report on the United for Ukraine Fund offers an expanded overview, incorporating additional insights and detailing novel initiatives undertaken since the preliminary assessment.

Despite our progress, attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure continue to deny millions of people access to heat, electricity and water.

The **United for Ukraine Fund**, set up by United Way Worldwide in 2022, has distributed **\$4.7M** to support Ukrainian refugees.

And the war continues to negatively impact global economic activity, inflationary pressures, mobility of people and goods, and more.

United Ways will continue to work across borders to support each other's communities. Our aim is to leverage our strength and knowledge – rooted in communities and reaching across the globe – to help every community become more resilient.

Across the world, United Way mobilizes communities into action – creating lasting impact. United Way serves more than 1,100 communities across 37 countries and territories, impacting more than 48 million people every year.

We aim to help communities tackle tough challenges and work with private, public, and nonprofit partners to create resilient communities where all can thrive.

KEY FIGURES

207,358*

total people received short-term relief and long-term support from United Way

172,428

people received essential food and non-food items, shelter, clothing, and mental and physical health services

20,964

people received assistance, advice, and referrals at border crossing points and reception centers, and transportation assistance including vouchers and phone SIM cards

35,772

people received long-term support with jobs, training, language courses, and access to education

**UNITED WAY
NETHERLANDS**

2,002

people helped

**UNITED WAY
GERMANY**

50,000

people helped

**FUNDACJA DOBRYCH
INICJATYW (GOOD INITIATIVES
FOUNDATION) – POLAND**

84,000

people helped

**UNITED WAY
HUNGARY**

20,998

people helped

**UNITED WAY
ROMANIA**

47,013

people helped

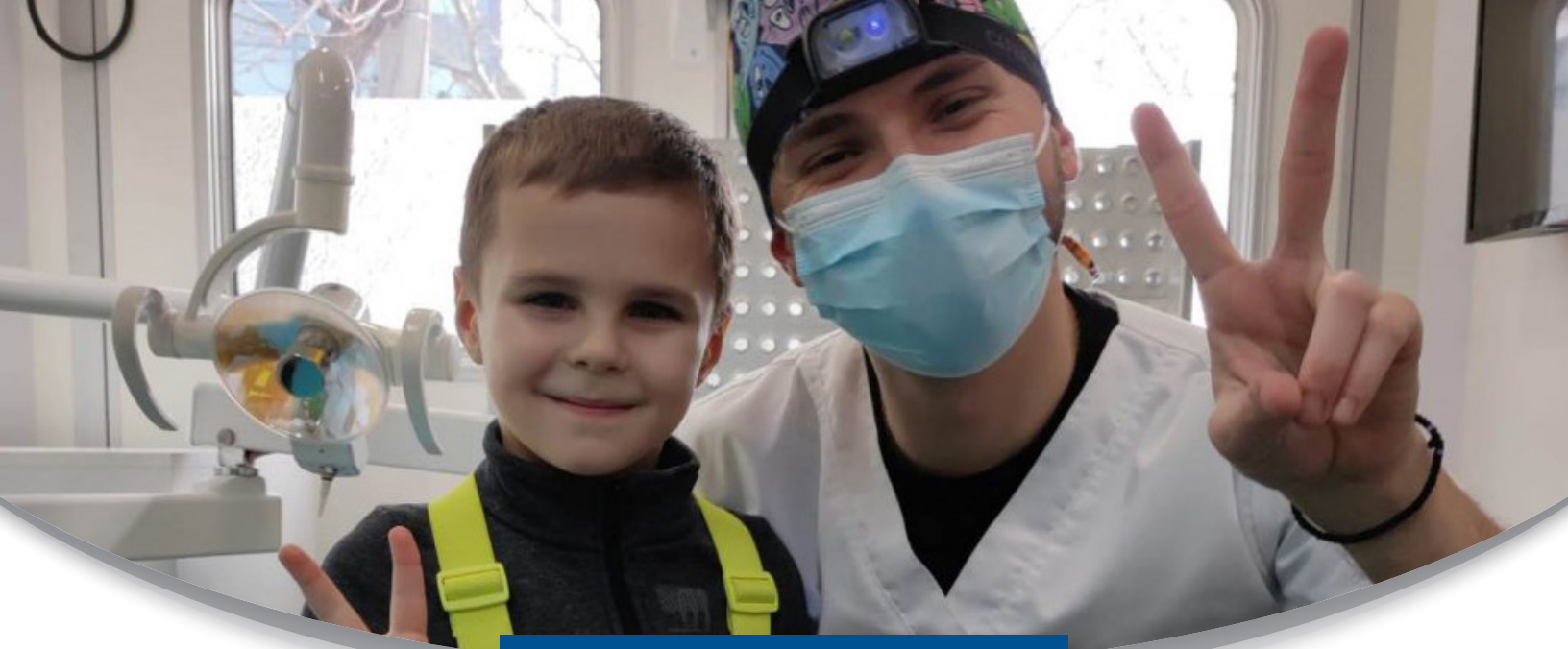
**UNITED WAY
SPAIN**

3,345

people helped



* Number of people helped reflects the cumulative total since February 2022



INSIGHTS & PERSPECTIVES

The situation of Ukrainian refugees is marked by continuous crisis, with significant psychological and societal upheaval. They navigate an uncertain existence between their past and an unclear future, with the long-term impacts on their children yet to be understood. The ongoing war necessitates their integration, a task requiring extensive resources and multinational collaboration.

Despite these challenges, there is evidence of resilience, hope, and global solidarity. The dynamic nature of refugee life, whether in transit or rebuilding, demands adaptable support from host countries and organizations.

In response, United Ways and similar entities have fostered cross-border partnerships, sharing best practices and resources. This collaboration has facilitated emergency relief, educational and language support, mental health services, and more, highlighting the effectiveness of agile, community-focused approaches in supporting Ukrainian refugees.

The future of the war in Ukraine is uncertain, but United Way and our partners are committed to supporting Ukrainian refugees in their new homes and promoting their self-sufficiency. This report provides an overview of the challenges faced and the ongoing efforts to overcome them.

I don't know if you, the people who support these programs for us as Ukrainians, realize how important the help you are giving to us is. The fact that we can participate for free in the activities organized especially for us, that we can make new friends and that you do everything you can to make us feel welcome in your country, even if we don't know the language, means so much to us. My family and I thank everyone who supports us in these difficult times and we guarantee that no kindness will go unrewarded! Thank you, Romania!

– Lyudmila

NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

84,000

short-term relief/long-term support in total*

450	190	26,000
transportation services	housing assistance	food
8,700	980	4,110
hygiene products	clothing	long-term support with job assistance, access to education and language courses
346	1,958	
psychological support	medicine and access to health education and services	

CURRENT STATE

To date, some 15 million Ukrainians have crossed the border into Poland. While millions have returned home, more than 954,874 remain— mostly mothers with children.¹



Photo: FDI - Psychotherapy Group

Many refugees are afraid to return to Ukraine while the war continues. With the support of local NGOs and the Polish people, previous migrants from Ukraine, and the Polish government, increasing numbers of refugees have found housing, work, and education for their children.

I came to Poland in mid-March 2022 with my daughter, who is studying in the 6th grade of primary school. My husband stayed in Kiev. When I managed to take care of my daughter's further education, I started looking for a job for myself. From the first weeks I had to do something, "occupy my hands" so as not to imagine the worst. I started working as a volunteer in one of Warsaw's organizations for refugees. Hundreds of people come here every day asking for help. We give out food, gifts in kind, we run classes for the youngest. I have been offered many times to take advantage of individual psychological help, but I did not want it. I was afraid. Then I forgot about it. There was always something to do.

Until one day I found out that a special support group was being created in the organization only for volunteers. Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw sent Zenia to our organization, who meets with us once a week to talk about how we volunteers feel. At the first meeting there were 6 people, now there are over 25 and we had to change the meeting room. Everyone is waiting for this meeting. This is our holiday. The moment when we talk to each other very sincerely behind closed doors.

– Marina, 46 years old

* Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service or relocation

¹ Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Poland: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, October 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

United Way's partner, Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw (FDI), or Good Initiatives Foundation of Poland, has supported more than 44,000 people with relocation services by connecting organizations in Europe (Switzerland, Great Britain) with institutions in Poland (including government institutions).

FDI was able to leverage its reputation, collaborative record and relationship with United Way to assist more than 84,000 Ukrainian refugees with short- and long-term needs.

FDI mobilized its volunteer base of 1,000+ community members and coordinated with companies and local authorities. FDI has become an important support base for local organizations, communities and authorities.

FDI continues to adapt its help for refugees to address current needs and challenges by collecting information/ conducting surveys. They do that with data: collecting research about needs from other NGOs, local authorities, official government reports, and directly from refugees.

Early on, it was clear to FDI that many refugees would need mental health support for the distress and trauma they were experiencing. At that time, FDI lacked resources, expertise and capacity to provide that. However, the United for Ukraine Fund helped the organization gain the capability to offer individual and group therapy sessions at their headquarters.

FDI also provided psychological and integration education to refugees and their children, with psychological support through group and individual therapy.

For many refugees, it took months to seek out mental health support. And the demand continues to grow. Individual and group therapy offers individuals a chance to share their trauma with those who have undergone similar ordeals. That's why FDI intends to allocate a portion of its remaining funds from the United for Ukraine Fund to deliver these services. The Fund is also helping support:

- A medical support initiative for 500,000+ refugees to address skin lesions which can increase the risk of cancer. Most refugees who escaped from Ukraine had no contact with a doctor. Their treatment courses were abruptly interrupted, and they lacked money/

opportunity to continue examinations and treatment. As part of FDI's initiative, almost 90 skin lesions were identified to enable life-saving diagnoses.



Photo: FDI - Medical Oncology Project

The results of the medical project resonated with me the most in recent weeks. Thanks to skin tests of oncology, cancerous lesions were detected in several dozen refugees. Thanks to the early detection of skin lesions, they have a chance to beat cancer. This is a very quick and tangible effect of actions, thanks to the support of the United Way community. And the awareness that we may have saved someone's life - not in a metaphorical sense, but literally.

– Bartłomiej Jójczyk, CEO of Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw

- A therapeutic and sports summer integration camp for hundreds of children from Ukraine and for children who stayed in Ukraine in 2022 and 2023. Children with intellectual and/or motor disabilities were invited with their guardians.

FDI also continues to support refugees with essentials, including:

- Delivery of medicines and warm clothing.
- Assistance in finding and equipping accommodations; purchasing equipment and materials (like furniture, mattresses, sleeping bags, medicines, first aid kits)

for grassroots organizations and social initiatives; and supporting rent and renovation of flats where refugees could live.

- Leveraging in-kind donations such as used IT equipment (e.g., laptops, PCs, telephones) and covering the costs of checking equipment; adapting the equipment to the needs of refugees; distribution to hundreds of youths and students; and providing backpacks, school accessories and more.
- Underwriting Polish lessons for children and adults, through local NGOs. That included access to animation (to speed learning) and integration activities.
- Financing professional support initiatives for adults, such as resume writing, job search and application assistance.
- Distribution assistance in Warsaw to support the long daily lines for food and other essentials.

At every stage of the journey, FDI has stood by refugees, helping to navigate the complex network of assistance.



Photo: FDI - School Starter Kits

WHAT'S NEEDED

While there is still support and compassion for refugees, that's undercut by the prolonged war and a drastic increase in prices due to inflation. Basic food prices have increased from 10% to 100%, energy prices have increased

from 15% to 60%, while rent in major cities has increased sharply as well. At the same time, government support has dropped. At the same time, there is a significant decrease in financial support for critical initiatives from the private sector and individual donors.

These trends forecast challenges for refugees and their children who are struggling, whether that's with housing, school, jobs, mental health or acclimation.

That's why FDI intends to allocate its remaining United for Ukraine funds to continue supporting social and integration activities for children and youth, along with support for senior citizens, and continued educational and psychological services.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Increase longevity of government activities and financial support.
- Improve the responsiveness of government actions by addressing inefficiencies, delays, and ineffectiveness. Implement a decentralized approach to swiftly meet urgent needs.
- Create awareness and compassion for refugees.
- Provide individual psychological support and group therapy.
- Establish and support more child care facilities for the youngest refugees that allow parents (especially mothers) to concentrate on their professional pursuits. Unfortunately, organizations face obstacles in providing child care, including procedural requirements related to education, health, and other factors.
- Understand the mechanisms of and diversify volunteering.

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Volunteerism is a critical asset.

As noted above, the engagement of volunteers in Poland

was critical to the effective, efficient response FDI mounted. To develop a volunteer base, FDI indirectly involved groups from their partner companies, and individuals from the community. This commitment enabled FDI to react faster to unpredictable situations.

Trust and collaboration are essential.

The Ukrainian refugee crisis in Poland over the last two years underscores the important of trust and cross-sector cooperation.

FDI would not have been able to respond as they did without support from longtime partners. Cooperation, commitment, quality of task implementation, and trust have long been foundational to FDI operations. Thanks to this capital, many previous partners trusted FDI in their relief and response. For example, what could otherwise have resulted in lengthy negotiations or discussions got expedited due to FDI's capital of social trust.

Each sector plays a vital role in helping millions of refugees.

The flexibility of non-governmental organizations, nimble reaction, the creation of new procedures in cooperation with a network of local government officials and local non-governmental organizations, and the involvement of companies and their employees (financial, material, personal) contributed to many initiatives.

The help of the global United Way community was the most important element of support for FDI's work. United Way's partnership in the early days of the war reaffirmed for FDI that it would be able to get more involved in relief and response efforts, and would be able to finance aid activities, because United Way Worldwide communicated and fundraised on behalf of the organizations supporting those displaced by the war.

Immediately after the outbreak of the war, I moved with my parents and sister to Ivano-Frankivsk from Kherson. At the invitation of the Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw, my brother and I came to Poland for 3 weeks for a summer camp, which was organized together with Polish scouts. I am also a scout in Ukraine, and my father is fighting at the front. It was 3 weeks without bomb alerts with new friends and over 40 participants from Ukraine. I have a lot of photos and memories, and for my brother it was the first holiday outside Ukraine. We also got backpacks for school and school accessories as well as laptops for online education.

– Dima, 17 years old



NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

50,000

short-term relief/long-term support in total*

500

transportation services

12,427

housing assistance

10,000

food

1,000

hygiene products

1,000

clothing

6,500

psychological support

133

long-term support with job assistance, access to education and language courses

CURRENT STATE

At last count, more than 1 million Ukrainian refugees, mostly mothers with children, remain in Germany.²

The funds provided to **PHINEO-United Way Germany** by United Way Worldwide's United for Ukraine Fund, helped launch activities supporting Ukrainian refugees and maximized the impact of relief initiatives (as described in the [interim report](#)). To date, PHINEO-United Way Germany has supported more than 50,000 people, in partnership with 150 volunteers, companies and local government agencies.

In spring 2022, PHINEO-United Way Germany, formed **WE AID gGmbH**, a non-profit subsidiary of PHINEO, and a new United for Ukraine (UFU) platform for individuals seeking help. The platform ensured critical funded initiatives get the legal support, administrative structure, and charitable status required to advance refugee relief efficiently. There is a strong focus on empowering Ukrainians to create transformative change and become economically independent through a '**Startup Incubation**' program. The PHINEO-United Way Germany partnerships continue to grow to support programs and implementers pro bono, providing operational expertise with the support of:

- ECOVIS Germany, a leading consulting firm, for back-office tasks,
- The Financing Agency for Social Entrepreneurship (FA-SE), which raises growth capital for social enterprises, brought its expertise on financing models and impact investments,
- And an agency for communications and social media support, to help get the word out to refugees and volunteers.

WE AID is expected to continue growing. Today, it supports 23 initiatives (17 dedicated to Ukraine), each representing a community of dedicated volunteers and providing a supporting infrastructure for a variety of endeavors addressing pressing challenges in the community. These include humanitarian and medical aid, housing, food, clothing, and transportation as well as local and federal integration and support efforts headquartered in Berlin, Hamburg or Herford.

The first initiative, Ukraine Response Program, launched in November 2022 and included rebuilding efforts, economic recovery and growth of Ukraine, as well as strengthened networks and community between nations.

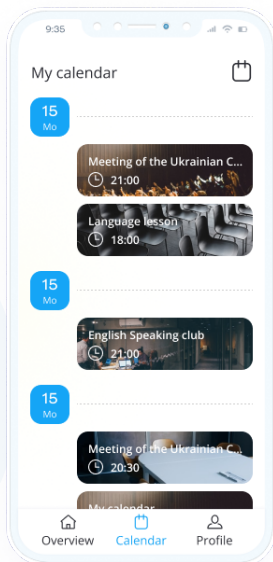
The first cohort had 30 program participants that expanded their network, improved pitching skills, validated and analyzed their impact vision, founded a company or felt encouraged to form a company, and are either generating revenue or are equipped to generate revenue in the coming year. Most importantly, participants felt emotionally supported with training and more. Since many Ukrainians have moved back home or to a different country since the program started, it's been digitalized for virtual participation. Recent cohorts include:

- **UAtalents** – A platform that **matches employers with displaced Ukrainian talent** via a job board, curated employer events, a central portal to explore and apply for upskilling opportunities and brings new remote jobs of EU employers into Ukraine. Since March 2022, there have been 60,000 job matches, 30,000 candidates, and over 8,000 employers using the platform.

* Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service

² Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Germany: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 19 August 2023

- **Podiya** – A one-stop shop digital platform for migrants who want to integrate into a new society. The mission of the platform is to reduce social isolation and increase social connection and integration. People can find, share and offer information about relevant events – work training, classes, activities for kids, language clubs, psychological support, etc. Since March 2022, Podiya has launched an Android and IOS app and has 2000+ downloads, 500+ active users, and 500+ active events on the platform. And through a collaboration with UAtalents, job offers can be made through the Podiya app.



- **Mexb.ai** – Still in development, is an advanced conversational AI chatbot for **initial mental health support**, designed to bridge the gap until professional treatment starts. The goal is to improve mental health care by supporting individuals in managing their mental health challenges, reducing stigma surrounding mental health issues, and making mental health care accessible to everyone. The chatbot directly and indirectly understands moods, providing human-like conversations, and offers personalized recommendations and support to create a safe and non-judgmental environment for anyone seeking help.

- **TYSHA** – An organization that **helps women through hard times by organizing mental health support groups**. Its 'Knowing How to Help' ('Знати, як допомогти') program is helping thousands of Ukrainians master the basics of psychological support, and how to provide help to kids and teenagers. Since April 2022, more than 300 women gained resilience skills through two groups in Ukraine, and 80% of the women reported improved sleep and overall well-being. Next is a podcast by Belgian psychotherapist Esther Perel, who will talk with Ukrainian couples about difficulties in relationships that arise because of the war.
- **GUTEmission** (Good Mission) – **Integrates and supports displaced people from Ukraine in their arrival to Germany with an intercultural and integrative approach**, through events and workshops. Since March 2022, it has organized 55+ events and brought together more than 4,500 refugees and volunteers in Berlin through music, cooking, workshops, language games, and cultural events to create an atmosphere of feeling at home.
- **Handstree** – Still in development, this is an online social platform that connects philanthropists to social projects in Ukraine, including an interactive charity map and scam/fraud protection. The platform ensures safe and easy donations and community support.

We got the chance to take the roots in Berlin, which seemed impossible for our startup from Mariupol. Their networking and professional expertise provided so many opportunities to grow faster and with more predictable results.

– Handstree

For PHINEO-United Way Germany, the growth of WE AID has brought learnings and helped refine their approach to identifying needs in various domains through a stronger partner network and independent working groups on the issues at hand. As new initiatives join WE AID, the scope of the support expands, as does the engagement of volunteers, donors and potential partners. PHINEO-United Way Germany also established a partnership with the crowdfunding platform **Startnext**, to enable grass-roots financing for projects benefiting a broader public and help startups finance themselves. WE AID has also raised additional funds and in-kind donations (i.e., 2,000 laptops from HP) to support organizations or initiatives directly supporting Ukrainians. A few of these efforts include:



How Berlins's economy is helping with reconstruction: Ukraine to Power

- **Ukraine to Power** raised more than €500,000 (USD \$562,000) and delivered and installed more than 100 modular power systems (batteries) to provide electricity to critical social infrastructure. The first such system was installed at the Netishyn hospital in Ukraine in December 2022. More systems are actively being prepared for delivery. The goal is providing a decentralized power supply to ensure people can survive Ukraine's winters. The focus will be on rural regions, especially small and mid-sized towns, which have great needs but have received little aid.
- **Freedom Convoy** raised more than €100,000 (USD \$105,000) to provide Ukraine with pickup trucks for humanitarian purposes and is seeking funds to send cars to medical units in Ukraine. Cars will be bought in the EU, refitted and then driven to Ukraine by volunteers. They will be maintained and used to

evacuate injured people from the most dangerous areas of the war zone.



Photo: UFU - PHINEO United Way Germany

- **Deutsche Stiftung für Engagement und Ehrenamt (DSEE)**, a foundation promoting societal engagement and volunteering across Germany, funded nearly €150,000 (USD \$157,000) to support 10 German NGOs which are actively implementing impactful projects for Ukrainians, such as **integration measures, language skills, job placement as well as training and education opportunities**. Children and youth will be a special focus, as well as structurally weak areas.
- **Smaller initiatives focusing on refugee support and awareness projects** in Germany were also funded with approximately €10,000 (USD \$10,500) each.

WHAT'S NEEDED

In late 2023, PHINEO-United Way Germany started updating its website and automating processes, so that new initiatives can onboard faster, more effectively and efficiently. With the help of the United for Ukraine fund, the organization developed a tool that is opening up new possibilities for people to get involved, and to become donors or even founders of initiatives. We encourage you to visit **WE AID** for a list of all ongoing initiatives (where PHINEO-United Way Germany intends to allocate its remaining funds for support). A few areas of need are highlighted below:

- **Ukraine-Hilfe Potsdam** provides humanitarian support and assistance in Ukraine and assists refugees from Ukraine in Germany. Considering the damage to the

dam in Kakhovka and the resulting ecological disaster, the initiative is seeking funds to support flood victims in the Kherson region with essentials like food, drinking water, medicine, clothing, and shelter.

- **Helpchain** has been running via volunteers since April 2022 to correspond with people seeking assistance through a number of messaging platforms (e.g., WhatsApp, e-mail, SMS, Telegram, Signal, mobile). They are seeking financial support to continue their work to guide travelers on known evacuation routes through Ukraine to ensure safe arrival into Germany, organize transportation, assist with accommodations and immediate needs (clothing, food, hygiene supplies), provide counseling (mental health) services, and support with authorities.
- **Team4UA**, founded by tech entrepreneurs to help the Ukrainian people cope with the aftermath of war, has launched a pilot project called 'Hive,' to build a 3D printed primary school for the growing number of internally displaced children in Lviv (Western Ukraine). The area is suffering from shortages of social and educational infrastructure and housing. Over 2,000 schools have been damaged or destroyed, so the team will use 3D construction printing technology to sustainably build schools in the war zone. Additionally, the team is working on its Humanitarian Situation Platform with a unique needs assessment to implement targeted aid for people in Ukraine.
- **Global Ukraine Rail Task Force** seeks funding to provide food packages for rail workers and their families in the war zone who continue to work to keep the network running. Each package, sourced in Ukraine, consists of flour, pasta, rice, salt, corn and wheat grits, oil, canned fish and meat, pâté, tea, condensed milk, sugar, and biscuits/cookies.
- **BerlinOdessaExpress** has been organizing relief supplies for Ukraine since March 2022, delivering medicines, technology, hygiene articles, food and more with local partners, humanitarian organizations and governmental structures. A proven supply chain has been developed, and the goods are redistributed

in the country within a few days to hospitals, social institutions, associations and church congregations. Now, in collaboration with Ukraine-Hilfe Lobetal, which has been organizing aid deliveries since the 1990s, they transport the supplies by truck. That means BerlinOdessaExpress can now also deliver hospital beds and heavy machinery such as generators, which is urgently needed due to ongoing attacks on infrastructure. The work is staffed by volunteers.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Create sustainable and dynamic infrastructures, and ad hoc opportunities for social engagement, impactful volunteering, and community-building.
- Digitize programs to enable virtual participation for accessibility.
- Facilitate or establish partnerships with crowdfunding platforms to enable grass-roots financing for projects benefiting a broader public and enabling startups to finance themselves.

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Take the lead.

Particularly in times of crisis, experienced players across sectors need to take the lead, promote the creation and strengthening of reliable and supportive structures and networks-- and support the non-profit community. This will enable NGOs to achieve the best possible impact for Ukrainian refugees based on available resources.

It is key to build on cooperation and partnerships to create successful, sustainable and impactful implementation of projects.

Empower and enable entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship continues to play a vital role in addressing the various and evolving challenges facing communities. This changing nature also requires new business models and approaches to strengthen the financial resilience of our socio-ecological system and make our world more livable and sustainable.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

47,013

short-term relief/long-term support in total*

1,145

transportation services

43,934

psychological support

22,989

food

6,032

hygiene products

5,025

medicine and access to health services

18,306

other materials support³

11,337

long-term support with job assistance, access to education and language courses

CURRENT STATE

So far, more than 3.7 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the border into Romania. At last count, some 113,000 mothers with children remain in the country.⁴

The initial funds provided by United Way Worldwide helped **United Way Romania's** response to the refugee crisis that was structured on two levels of intervention. As described in the February 2023 **interim report**, the first phase was emergency response, followed by a second phase centered on the protection and inclusion of Ukrainian refugees who decided to stay in the country. To date, United Way Romania has supported 47,013 people, and an additional 13,000 people are estimated to be supported at the conclusion of ongoing initiatives. This report includes additional insights and perspectives and updates on initiatives to date.

United Way Romania implemented:

- 30 short-term initiatives in partnership with 14 NGOs, providing emergency support for Ukrainian refugees. This includes two initiatives currently in progress involving the ongoing coverage of basic needs to an

estimate of 10,600 refugees at the entry points of the Sighet and Siret borders, and for people located in the customs center in the North Railway Station in Bucharest.

- 29 mid-term initiatives in partnership with 22 NGOs, in response to the educational, medical, social, and professional integration needs of 5,706 refugees in the country. This includes eight ongoing educational and health initiatives, which have served 2,400 refugees.

For refugees who decided to stay in Romania for the mid-term, United Way Romania and their partners, developed adapted initiatives based on United Way's three established areas of intervention:

- **Education** – access to education and educational activities for Ukrainian children.
- **Social-professional integration** – social counseling for integration into local communities, career guidance, and legal advice to navigate the labor market.
- **Health** – mental health programs (i.e., psychological counseling and therapy), creation of an anxiety management guide in the Ukrainian language, and other health programs (i.e., emergency dental treatments, cardiac treatments).

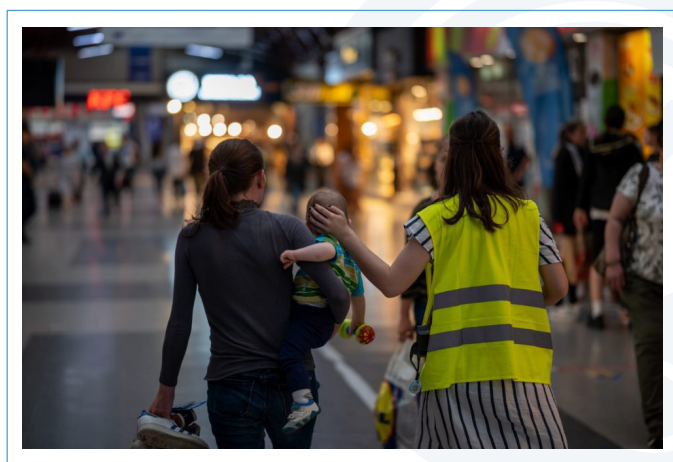


Photo: UFU - UW Romania by Dan Cretu

* Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service
³ Phone cards, trolleys, translation of various medical or official documents, social vouchers, material support to equip transit centers with necessary household items as washing machine, dryer, kitchen utensils, air conditioners, windows and office license for laptops etc.

⁴ Source: UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.org/us/emergencies/ukraine-emergency> (Oct. 2023)

A social worker in charge of one case, a mother of 5 children, reported:

As they gained trust in the center's employees, Aliona and the children began to be more open, more communicative and even made plans for the future. Even if at first Aliona did not want to enroll her children in school, hoping that the war would end soon and they would be able to go home, now she is happy to see the children's progress and hopes for a better future for them.

In addition to the defined focus areas, United Way Romania aims to support projects that have an integrated approach, develop real and effective partnerships, produce quantifiable and visible impact, can attract, manage, and involve volunteers, and develop/promote interaction between disadvantaged groups and other groups in the community. A few of these initiatives are highlighted below:

- Established a **mobile dental assistance clinic** in a refugee camp in Bucharest. To date, more than 600 Ukrainian refugees, mostly children, benefited from the emergency dental treatment, radiological examinations and packages with toothbrushes and toothpaste.
- Developed a **program dedicated to people with cardiac conditions** living in Brasov. The program enabled access to necessary specialists, tests and consultations that weren't covered by national insurance, or for which the waiting time was very long. Following examinations, 150 people received specialized medical recommendations and were equipped with electronic medical files. This will help them in emergencies, but also enable further

medical monitoring, wherever they end up, because all documents were translated into English.

- Opened a **social store** in Timisoara for Ukrainian refugees to come monthly and obtain food and non-food products for free. The store quickly turned into a space where refugees socialized, shared information of interest to them and felt at home. The manager of the store, also a refugee, regularly checks in on their needs.
- Opened a **social canteen** in Cluj Napoca to provide daily meals to Ukrainian refugees. On average, 250 meals are prepared daily. Since the government program that offered refugees \$20 RON (USD \$4.5) per day for meals ended after four months, the canteen had even more visitors. It's called the "friendship canteen" by Ukrainian refugees, because it's a place where they can share their fears, ask for help, and make new friends.

WHAT'S NEEDED

The most pressing needs of refugees in Romania are **housing, education, and emotional support**.

The government implemented a "50/20" program early on, which provided Ukrainian refugees with \$20 RON (USD \$4.50) per day for food, and 50 RON (USD \$11) per day for housing. The housing stipend was transferred directly to the homeowners where Ukrainians lived.

But the government found that program was seen as an attractive source of income for many landlords, which led to an increase in free-market rents, with a direct impact on Romanian citizens. The government then limited immigrants' ability to access food and housing expenses to four months – May through August 2023. From August through December, Ukrainian refugees got monthly sums to cover housing expenses-- if they have found jobs, and if school-aged, only if children are enrolled in Romanian schools.

The process of integrating Ukrainian children into the Romanian educational system has been challenging, as lessons are taught in a foreign language and the Ukrainian

children's attendance is not recognized as a study year. In response, many Ukrainian families kept their children out of Romanian schools, instead participating in Ukraine's online education system. United Way Romania provided Romanian and English language courses and other learning constructs (e.g., camps, one-day trips, painting, music therapy, therapeutic reading, theater, chess, etc.) coordinated by volunteers and team members.

We are all interconnected by technology. For Ukrainian refugees, however, access to a laptop is more than just being able to keep in touch with those left behind. It is the means by which they attend Romanian and English language courses, look for job opportunities and prepare for interviews and -- last but not least -- use the information accessed to get by in a new country. Children, in turn, participate in online courses held by Ukrainian schools, Romanian or IT language courses and non-formal educational activities facilitated by teachers and volunteers. We thank HP company that, through our colleagues from PHINEO-United Way Germany, donated 100 HP laptops to Ukrainian refugees whom we support through our projects.

– United Way Romania



Photo: United Way Romania HP Laptops Partnership

Overall, the greatest need has been **emotional safety**. One of United Way Romania's focuses was to offer socio-emotional support, whether it was through access to mental health programs or through the **Anxiety**

Management Guide (a digital guide in Ukrainian and Russian). More than 1,000 copies of the guide were distributed at transit centers and has been downloaded by more than 2,800 people.



In the first months of the intervention, specialists and psychologists from United Way Romania's partner organizations offered socio-emotional and psychological counseling as volunteers, without pay. With United Way Romania's mid-term initiatives, specialists are being paid for counseling for children and adults, whenever needed. The refugees benefited from group and individual psychological counseling sessions, mental health workshops, and health education.

United Way Romania remains connected to local communities, to continue to understand the needs, and to be part of the solution. United Way Romania intends to allocate its remaining funds to continue providing immediate assistance at the border and delivering services that meet basic needs, educational activities for children, social integration initiatives, and mental health support for adults.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Improve accessibility to clinics, treatments, tests, exams, and transportable files to address critical medical concerns that face refugees.
- Provide long-term housing solutions, with an increase

in government programs to enable refugees to get more integration support.

- Support the education and integration of children and youth.
- Provide language classes for every Ukrainian refugee, of any age.

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

A lesson in empathy.

Since their relief effort began, United Way Romania has been meeting with refugees to hear their stories and better understand their needs – to design holistic supports and services that go beyond basic education, integration and health. It's reinforced that working with people who have gone through a humanitarian crisis requires dedication, empathy and listening hard.

Benevolence knows no borders or language barriers. The same conclusion was reached by 26 Eli Lilly and Company volunteers, who, on Lilly Global Day of Service, spent a day together with refugees from Ukraine, accommodated at one of the transit centers supported by United Way Romania.

– United Way Romania

Integrated and holistic approaches.

Helping people rebuild their lives is not a short-term undertaking. United Way Romania used an integrated approach. The comprehensive support for children and their families illustrates this approach:

- Building on their experience in maximizing impact, United Way partnered on designing initiatives that facilitated children's access to education and offered different learning constructs through non-formal activities.
- At the same time, children participated in individual and group psychological counseling sessions (or with their families), to help them begin to deal with the traumas of war and forced relocation.

- Parents received help with housing, access to medical services and a family doctor, and enrolling children in school. But they also got information about the labor market in Romania, documents required for employment, and more.
- Both children and adults got support for medical and dental emergencies, as well as treatment for chronic diseases.
- For families in the most vulnerable situations, United Way made sure they had food, hygiene products and other necessities.



Photo: United Way Romania Kids Activities

Cooperation with local NGOs, local governments, and institutions.

United Way Romania partnered with 36 NGOs from Bucharest and 10 other counties, some of them in local border communities with reduced opportunities. Engaging in partnerships with small non-profits offers a unique opportunity to bolster their capacities and outcomes, and support for even more refugees. For example, United Way was able to provide meaningful assistance to the Impreuna

pentru Miroslava Association, which was helping more than 1,000 refugees from Iasi. Before collaborating with United Way Romania, the association's refugee support relied on volunteers, and limited donations meant only sporadic activities. With the start of the partnership, the organization's scope of activities has broadened, and community involvement has grown along with donors.

I am very grateful for the help I received; I have never experienced such kindness from complete strangers. We have everything we need; the children are used to school, and we have started a new life. For all this we want to thank you!

– Aliona, mother of 5 children



NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

20,998

short-term relief/long-term support in total*

538

transportation services

10,677

other mentor/ guidance support and program access

4,864

food

1,175

hygiene products

1,781

clothing

2,532

psychological support

13,697

medicine and access to health care services

3,843

long-term support with job assistance, access to education and language courses

CURRENT STATE

So far, more than 3.6 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the border into Hungary. At last count, more than 53 thousand, mostly mothers with children, remain in the country.⁵

At the outbreak of the war, **United Way Hungary** and its volunteers were at the Hungary-Ukraine border, delivering in-kind donations to settlements and assessing the needs. United Way connected with refugees, but also with local municipality leaders, NGOs and local citizens. This continuous listening and learning helped United Way Hungary get a better understanding of how best to help – and fueled a gradual shift to identifying and supporting local community partners, including grassroots organizations and larger NGOs working on the ground to support displaced people.

United Way Hungary's impact in the first six months was outlined in this [interim report](#). This final report includes additional insights, perspectives and updates.

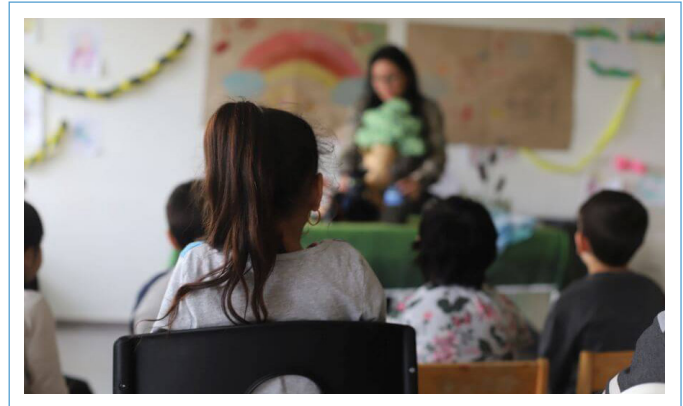


Photo: United Way Hungary Education Activities

United Way Hungary has supported more than 20,000 Ukrainian refugees with direct services or with short-term or long-term supports. To do that, United Way mobilized almost 500 volunteers, and collaborated with 50 NGOs to support a number of **programs**, including the “Together for Ukraine” umbrella program that serves evolving needs. This program aligned with United Way Hungary's focus on inclusion (access to education and healthcare), empowerment (stability initiatives for self-sustainability), and resiliency. Some NGOs also served high at-risk groups, including disabled children and youth, children requiring special early childhood development.

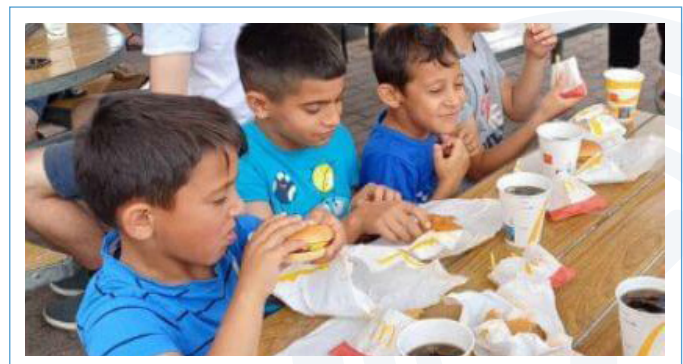


Photo: United Way Hungary Kids Summer Activities

Some of the initiatives that United Way Hungary supported and collaborated on with partners are described below:

*Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service

⁵Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Hungary: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, Sept. 2023 <https://www.unhcr.org/us/emergencies/ukraine-emergency>

- **'Határtalan Szív' (Heart Without Frontiers) Foundation** in Esztergom aims to help Ukrainian children by supporting them with developmental activities and a day camp in the summer to provide children with the opportunity to learn about their new home through excursions and activities.
- **Laurus Foundation** provides basic care and educational integration for refugee families living in and around Bonyhád. Through regular visits that build relationships and trust, it is able to mentor families, provide administrative assistance, donations and Hungarian lessons.

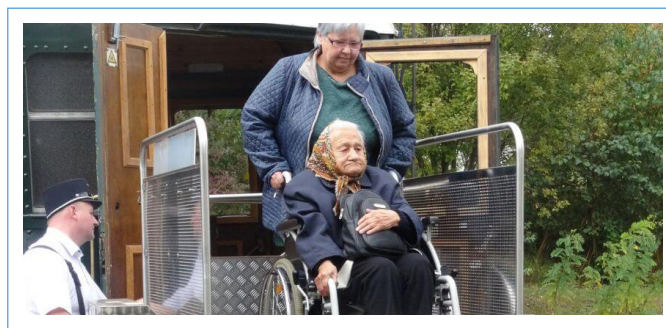


Photo: United Way Hungary #Együttukrajnáért – Strázsa Tanya Projektje



Photo: United Way Hungary Robotics Camp

- **Next Step Hungary Association**, founded and run by refugees, provides mental health care to Ukrainian refugees in Budapest; mental health care and trauma counseling for Ukrainian children, young people and parents and the volunteers who support them; and mental health care and informal education of refugee children through camps (e.g., robotics, foreign language courses).
- Through **Artemisszió Foundation's 'Flatmate' program**, individuals host refugee families for 3-6 months, and hosts are provided with cultural and social support. United Way Hungary also supports the program by offsetting hosts' overhead costs and contributing to meet recipients' basic needs.
- **Strázsa Tanya Tourism Training and Public Benefit Social Cooperative's project** aims to ease the situation of traumatized Ukrainian refugee families with disabled family members who have found shelter in Strázsa Tanya. With the support of United Way Hungary and the Hungarian Foundation of SOS Children's Villages, project leaders created a social cooperative on a farm. This provides experience-rich programs for families, equipment (like electric wheelchairs, trailers) to support mobility and independence of people with disabilities, and building and equipping a community space.
- **'Lélekkel az egészségért' (Soul for Health) Foundation** works to prevent burnout and manage stress using the latest tools of health psychology. Their main activity is the Sulinyugi program, a free school-based stress management session for children and teachers to improve the mental health of children and adults fleeing war (and the volunteers supporting them) manage stress, deal with trauma and prevent burnout. The exercises with instructions can be downloaded for free [here](#).
- **Vamos Foundation** organized creative and developmental activities for Ukrainian refugee pre-school and secondary school children, with the participation of a child psychologist. This included a Lego workshop, which provided children the opportunity to interact with each other, develop their structural and logical thinking skills, unleash their imagination and enjoy a positive experience.



Photo: United Way Hungary Lego Workshop

- **'Rejtett Kincsek' (Hidden Treasures) Down Association** helps children from refugee families with disabilities to ensure that the mental health of refugee children and families does not deteriorate, and that children in need of services don't miss long periods of time without them. The association conducts assessments and provides pedagogical and remedial educational development and neurofeedback therapy. They also use toys and a wide range of therapies to ensure their continued development and organize family counseling and outreach programs. The association's report about the program is available [here](#).



Photo: United Way Hungary #Együttukrajnáért – Strázsza Tanya Projektje

- **MedSpot Foundation** - Since the first week of the war in Beregsurany, on the Hungarian-Ukrainian border, MedSpot has operated a mobile clinic in a container equipped with the necessary equipment for the basic care of newly-arrived refugees. United Way Hungary

supported the purchase of an ambulance for a mission to Transcarpathia. The mobility of the clinic is ensured by using massive transport crates, which allow the equipment to be quickly moved and put into operation when needed.

In addition to the above initiatives, and thanks to PHINEO-United Way Germany's support, United Way Hungary was also able to distribute 99 HP laptops, thereby ensuring Ukrainian refugees have access to online services --including education.



Photo: United Way Hungary UAINFO portal image

And United Way Hungary co-created a **trilingual information portal** in Hungarian, Ukrainian, and Russian for families, teachers and assistants, including teaching materials and information on school enrollment. United Way utilizes the platform for best practice sharing and peer-group support and is active in all working groups organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or other refugee specialist agencies.

As the war continues, United Way Hungary remains committed to mobilizing resources including donors, volunteers and community partners to support Ukrainian refugees. United Way Hungary intends to allocate its remaining funds to support a small number of NGO partners so they can continue their work for helping refugees become self-sufficient -- especially helping women get jobs and supporting at-risk young adults.

WHAT'S NEEDED

Most refugees seeking temporary protection in Hungary are women and children who have lost their **support networks**, face language barriers. Availability of adequate services and access to housing, education and jobs is limited. The problems they face are complex, requiring collective, coordinated solutions. It is a lengthy process for a refugee family to become self-sufficient, and the need for daily assistance places a heavy burden on helpers, who are often volunteers.

Additionally, the **capacity of the refugee care system** had been drastically reduced by the Hungarian government in the last few years. United Way Hungary is committed to continuing capability-building efforts to help create stronger civil communities and better coordinated supports.

For example, government refugee centers can't provide shelter to refugees who need to stay temporarily in Hungary (or for an unknown duration). In response, local communities, citizens, towns and NGOs stepped up to become hosts instead. United Way Hungary, through its #TogetherUkrajnaért program, contributes to ongoing housing support at **Migration Aid's ('Segítők' (Helpers) Association's) refugee hostels** in Budapest and Győr.



Photo: United Way Hungary September 2023 Conference

In September 2023, United Way Hungary created a catalyst for collective efforts by hosting a cross-sector

conference and workshop for local and international NGOs, corporations, local municipalities and government organizations helping refugees. The event created a space for dialogue, best practice sharing, networking and partnership building.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Provide language classes.
- Create adequate and sustainable shelter, with long-term housing solutions.
- Build a more sustainable and resilient support system.



Photo: UFU Kids Activities

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Understanding the evolution of circumstances and needs.

The word “refugee” does not only mean a person who has been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster, but it also indicates a diverse community with differing socio-cultural backgrounds. It's important to understand the culture and needs of the different community segments.

Over time needs evolve and support must evolve too. Relief efforts should be regularly reviewed and adjusted for relevancy. As such, as part of the Pszi Pont Foundation's program to support an inclusive school environment for refugees from Ukraine, United Way Hungary supported the publication of “**Cultural and Social Differences between Ukraine and Hungary**”.

The publication is designed to help school psychologists and other professionals who come into contact with Ukrainian refugees better understand the differences between Ukrainian and Hungarian society and culture, and the customs and behavior of Ukrainian people. It covers nuances in schooling, Ukrainian and Russian language, names, communication styles, child-rearing, and important cultural markers like religion, celebrations, holidays, food, and hospitality. Understanding cultural difference is critical to supporting integration of Ukrainian children, who have the right to learn in an inclusive and supportive environment.

Excerpt from the publication of “Cultural and Social Differences between Ukraine and Hungary”:

It may be surprising, but in Ukraine it is customary to give a small gift (usually some kind of dessert) to the teacher, principal, or any decision-maker when they turn to them with a request. This is not perceived as corruption, but simply creating favorable conditions for considering the request.

important to ensure resiliency of the community providing their care. Helpers, volunteers and personnel also need mental health and professional assistance to guide them and prevent burnout. Peer communities create a sense of belonging and a platform for peer learning.

Kulturális és társadalmi különbségek Ukrajna és Magyarország között



Design resilient mental health approaches for all.

Mental health support is as important as meeting basic needs. While this is critical for refugees, it is equally

NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

2,002

short-term relief/long-term support in total*



CURRENT STATE

At last count, more than 94,000 Ukrainian refugees, mostly mothers with children, remain in the Netherlands.⁷

United Way Netherlands has a history of supporting refugees and migrants and integrating them into Dutch society. United Way also has a seasoned veteran at its helm. CEO Machiel Salomons formerly served as the Principal Policy Development and Evaluation Officer at the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

The funds provided through the United for Ukraine fund helped establish the **Ukraine Refugee Women Association**, develop the 'Home From Home' (now '**Healing the Mind**') program in support of Ukrainian women's integration into life in the Netherlands, and collaborate with the **Tent Partnership for Refugees** to create a broad-based mentoring program with 23 participating corporate partners (including Adidas, Google) aimed at helping Ukrainian women find jobs, and supported the growth and awareness of initiatives for refugees, and other relief efforts as described in the **interim report**.



To date, United Way Netherlands has supported more than 3,600 refugees, in partnership with volunteers, companies and local government agencies. And more than 7,000 Ukrainian women are part of an online community, where they can get information from United Way.

This final report includes accomplishments and updates achieved through the support of the United for Ukraine Fund. Key initiatives are as follows:

- **Work opportunities** – After leaving their homeland to find safety, many displaced women often face difficulties finding work, especially in a new job market, and new languages. To help women quickly adapt and find work, the Ukrainian Women Refugee Association provides the opportunity for every Ukrainian woman refugee to get guidance on navigating work opportunities through United Way Netherlands' trusted partners.

Women refugees usually find work in low-ranking positions without any opportunities to regain the career success they used to have in Ukraine.

– United Way Netherlands

* Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service
⁶ Activities provided include kids club, sports, mindfulness and other social benefit related materials

⁷ Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Netherlands: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 26 May 2023

- At the same time, United Way helps them prepare for job interviews, with support for CV writing, organizing LinkedIn profiles, filling out applications and navigating interviews with Dutch employers. United Way Netherlands also provides sessions to help the women build their confidence in the job search.
- **Consultation on social benefits** – Finding out what benefits are available to help refugees start getting back on their feet is critical – and depends on getting access to the information. United Way wanted to make it easy to find this information in a single place, through informational websites, informational events and with communities providing government support updates on how to continue living in the Netherlands. United Way Netherlands is proactively discussing challenges around receiving benefits, medical insurance, and other supports (which may not be connected to money, but educational opportunities). The United Way team also posts updates on a Telegram chat, which lets refugees share their knowledge and experiences with these specific challenges.
- **English and Dutch language classes** – Speaking, reading, and understanding the language is one of the most fundamental aspects of adapting to life in Dutch society. As most Ukrainian refugees do not have any basic knowledge of English or Dutch, this project aims to provide a high-quality and free opportunity for women refugees to learn and practice the language. United Way Netherlands employed English teachers from the Ukrainian community to provide essential language knowledge, share their perspectives and work with small groups to instill understanding of communication nuances.
- **Exercise classes** – One of the goals of the United Way Netherlands is to organize leisure activities for Ukrainian women refugees, and a block of those events is dedicated to healthy physical activities. In collaboration with partners, United Way Netherlands provided refugees with opportunities to participate in yoga and dance classes and spend time with other Ukrainians in sports activities.

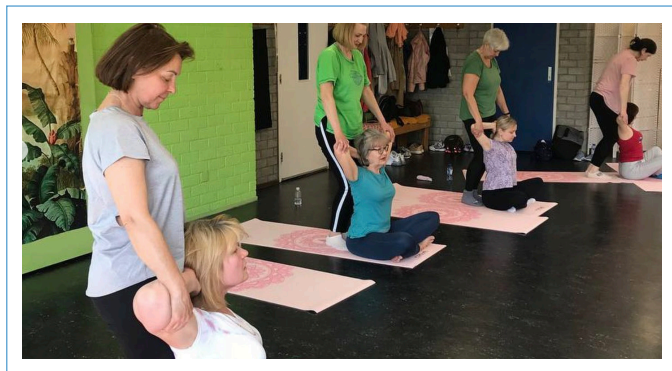
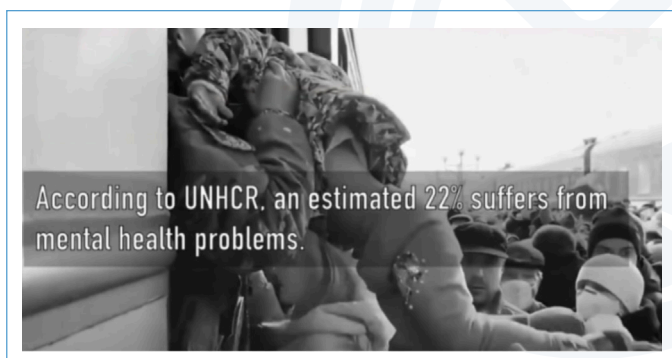


Photo: IG Ukrainian Women Refugee Association Yoga Activities

- **Child care** – While Ukrainian women refugees are applying for jobs or registering for a stay in the Netherlands, children are often left without supervision. In response, the Ukrainian Women Refugees Association and their partners came up with innovative solutions. With the Association's existing child care center, teenagers can participate in art, sketching and acting classes, and origami and pottery sessions. Children can also take Dutch language classes to help them assimilate into their new schools and neighborhoods.
- **Psychological support** – With the help of technology, United Way can provide support through art therapy. Refugees express fears anonymously through art; after a professional analysis of the art, they receive therapy to overcome those fears and help them have a new start. The doctors also offer group therapy sessions and individual consultations.



- **Leisure activities** – United Way Netherlands developed an initiative that provided a safe, welcoming space that feels like home. In addition to organizing events, the Ukrainian Women Refugees Association also encouraged refugees to organize events for themselves. In a circle of people with shared experiences, it is easier to find the strength to rebuild one's life. Events ranged from knitting, art classes, and gardening, to tours around Amsterdam, cooking, and casual meetings to drink tea.

WHAT'S NEEDED

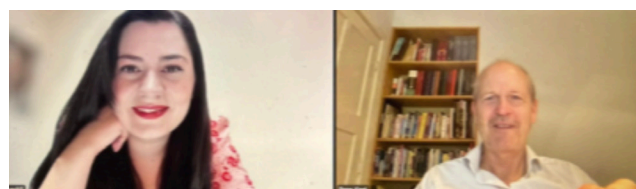
Challenges posed by a new language and culture limits opportunities to thrive. Most of these women have suffered psychological and physical trauma. Beyond shelter and jobs, it is essential that refugees get the holistic support they need, to build up the confidence and capabilities to rebuild their lives. That includes:

- **Language classes** in English and Dutch have proven to be indispensable for refugees to communicate effectively, access opportunities, and feel more connected to their new community. United Way Netherlands has seen that enhanced language skills – especially when paired with **job skills workshops and self-development opportunities** – open doors to better employment prospects and social interactions, ultimately leading to improved quality of life.



Photo: IG Ukrainian Women Refugee Association Classes

- **Building support networks** and a safe space for individuals to share their experiences, challenges, and aspirations is equally essential. In partnership with United Way Netherlands, the Combiwel community center in Amsterdam fostered connections and mutual support, helping refugees overcome feelings of isolation, and overcome cultural and geographical barriers.



Zoom clinical review meeting between Dr Lucia Veverita, Amplio Health and Dr Rene Keet, GGZ NHN

- **Mental health care** is too often overlooked in the context of refugee support. The most impactful effort the United Way Netherlands established was the 'Home from Home' project, which has evolved to include digital mental health services through **'Healing the Mind'**, in **collaboration with Amplio Health**, Amplio's psychologists and psychiatrists offered Ukrainian counselors training, virtual care, and an emergency referral pathway for people in crisis. Ukrainian counselors led the in-person and virtual counseling sessions with Ukrainian refugees, to let refugees express their feelings in their own language and be provided with care that was culturally sensitive and specific to their needs. Most refugees referred to Amplio Health received initial assessments, online psychotherapy (for anxiety, panic attacks, nightmares, insomnia, isolation, depression etc.) and end-of-treatment assessments. Doctors witnessed significant improvements in refugees' emotional well-being, leading to a more hopeful outlook. The Amplio Health program has been endorsed by the Director of General Immigration and Naturalization, Department Justice Ministry, UNHCR, the Ukraine Ambassador, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Free University Amsterdam. United Way Netherlands intends to allocate its

remaining funds to continue delivering these essential services and remains committed to providing ongoing support to Ukrainian refugees.

As the war continues, United Way Netherlands is creating the 'Competence Center for Rehabilitation of Ukrainian Civil Society,' focused on continued knowledge exchange and reconstruction practices between civil societies. It will also match local needs with potential investors, donors, and expertise to deepen positive impact on individuals and communities.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Enable language proficiency through customized classes.
- Cultivate a sense of community and belonging.
- Empower individuals through skills development and tools.
- Focus on mental health and the need for counseling services that eliminates language barriers and can also reduce congestions in the Netherlands healthcare system.



Photo: IG Ukrainian Women Refugee Association in Dam Square, Amsterdam

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Through United Way Netherlands support, the Ukrainian Women Refugees Association has gained valuable insights that could benefit other communities facing similar challenges.

Embrace the circumstances.

Through engagement with Ukrainian refugees, it became evident that one cannot change the circumstances they have faced, such as conflict and displacement. However, what one can do is offer the support and tools to cope with these circumstances and build a safe space for individuals to share their experiences. Providing mental health care, language classes, workshops, self-development/skill enhancement opportunities, and social benefits consultation has been crucial in helping refugees adapt and move forward positively.

Collaboration matters.

Effective collaboration with organizations like the Combiwel community center has maximized impact and created a sense of community. Building strong partnerships allows United Way Netherlands to leverage resources and expertise, enhancing the scope and effectiveness of support programs.

Adaptability and flexibility are key.

The needs of refugees are diverse and ever-changing. Its flexible approach has helped United Way Netherlands respond effectively to varying needs, requirements and challenges faced by refugees.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

3,345

short-term relief/long-term support in total*

91

psychological support

548

housing assistance⁸

285

guidance/ social worker support

45

medicines, clothing, supplies and other materials

1,970

other social engagement support⁹

432

long-term support with job assistance, access to education and language courses¹⁰

CURRENT STATE

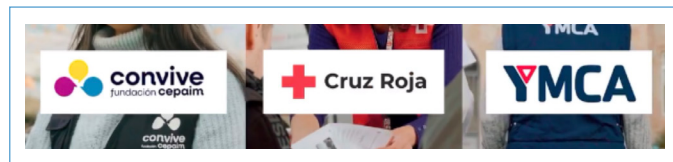
At last count, more than 186,000 Ukrainian refugees, mostly mothers with children, remain in Spain.¹¹

To date, United Way Spain has supported 3,345 people. The initial funds provided by United Way Worldwide helped **United Way Spain** respond in three important ways: identifying needs and partners, and designing and implementing programs in response (described in the **February 2023 interim report**).

United Way Spain has connected with many organizations managing the Ukrainian refugee crisis to conduct an in-depth situation and needs analysis. With government resources covering most basic and urgent needs – such as shelter, health care, food, clothing, education, housing and work permits – United Way Spain focused on closing the gap in psychological and emotional support and boosting social integration. Accordingly, United Way Spain led a partnership with the YMCA España (YMCA Spain), Convive Fundación Cepaim (Cepaim Foundation) and Cruz Roja Española (Red Cross Spain) to co-design a program and intervention plan.

Despite government measures, the increasingly large influx of refugees, most arriving simultaneously, made

it challenging to meet the large number of varied needs. Initial programs designed by United Way Spain and its partners targeted gaps and short- and mid-term needs identified (i.e., basic needs, transportation, etc.). But as the war continued, they pivoted to developing and implementing solutions to enable integration of Ukrainian refugees into Spanish communities over the long term.



United Way Spain and its partners designed programs that considered the gender perspective and cultural background of beneficiaries. The program was accessible in different locations and regions of the country, depending on needs identified in each place. Some of the initiatives implemented include:

- **Housing specialists** to provide comprehensive range of services for Ukrainian refugees that encompasses both practical and interpersonal aspects of the housing search and rental process. This includes access to instructional videos, workshops on navigating local housing markets, guidance on types of available housing and potential subsidies, and support with intermediation. Workshops also address essential considerations like documentation, costs, priorities, and provide distinction between renting from independent owners and real estate agencies, detailing requirements, and expectations of each. This encompasses knowledge of social norms, coexistence rules, and practical advice. The support continues beyond the workshop phase a specialist monitors the search process, accompanies refugees on house visits, facilitates negotiation and communication with property owners, and provides guidance during contract signing. In addition, specialists act as intercultural mediators, bridging potential communication gaps and fostering understanding.

* Numbers may add up to more than total served due to some receiving more than one service
⁸ Assistance included number of people supported by social educators in shelters and by housing specialists, and number of people contacted through the housing campaign

⁹ Support included number of people that were provided with education and local language training, and were supported by employment counselors and labor market specialists
¹⁰ Activities provided includes sports, camp, cultural, and health educational activities
¹¹ Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Spain: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, Oct. 2023

Once housing is secured, specialists remain involved and mediate in cases of conflict between refugees and owners, neighbors, or housemates. If necessary, they assist in transitioning to new accommodations to address persistent conflicts.

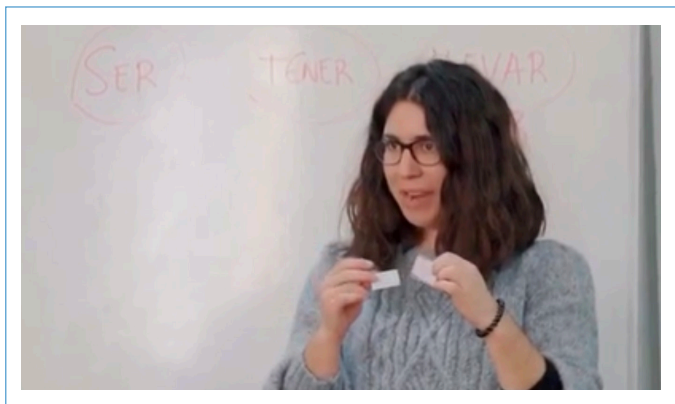


Photo: UFU - United Way Spain

- **Educational support** to improve the integration of children into the Spanish educational system, including coordinating with teachers to identify needs and design appropriate interventions, homework support, Spanish language training, cultural activities the new community, facilitated interaction with peers, and activities that enhance the values of companionship, diversity, and teamwork.



Photo: UFU - United Way Spain

- **Language learning support** for both adults and children, with activities such as Spanish language and culture lessons and tests/exams (basic, intermediate and conversational), group meetup opportunities, and training materials (e.g., worksheets, didactic presentations appropriate to the learning style).
- **Individual and family psychotherapy support** to help refugees develop strategies to adapt to the new situation, develop social skills, stress management strategies, and emotional management skills for critical situations. When needed, a translator was provided to assist with the language barriers.
- **Employment specialists** to help refugees navigate the local labor market, including assessment and follow-up activities that provide education, training and access to employment opportunities. Main activities include CV improvement and adjustment for the Spanish labor market, support and guidance on the recognition of qualifications, STEM skills training and referrals to specific training and courses according to experience, interests and needs. In addition to the emotional and motivational support offered, guidance and assistance is provided for job search, interviews, application assistance for training scholarships, and the actual analysis of job offers along with workshops about contracts and labor rights.
- **Labor market specialists** to analyze market needs and the labor profile of the refugee, to identify companies in the region and positions offered, and to facilitate partnerships with companies to hire and/or train refugees. Among the 219 companies contacted so far, 35 have established partnerships from the following sectors: beauty and hairdressing, hospitality, tourism, commerce, logistics, cleaning, agriculture, gardening, transport, timber, and the metal industry.



Photo: UFU - United Way Spain

Before arriving to Spain, I didn't know anything about Spanish or about the Spanish labor market. I was given Spanish classes and courses on how to search for jobs. Now I know several job search channels and in fact just got offered a job in cleaning. I am realistic, I know that I will not be able to work as a lawyer again, but I settle for having an office job in the future, and when the war is over, returning to my country.

– Nataly

- **Social worker support** to provide comprehensive assistance through various activities, including assessment and initial reception interviews, personalized plans for integration, guidance through legal, administrative, and educational processes. Social workers also refer individuals to relevant resources such as legal aid, employment assistance, housing services, psychotherapy, and language training. Ongoing support includes monitoring living arrangements and maintaining records.
- **Social educator support** involves accompanying refugees in the integration process, primarily by hosting them in shelters and guiding them through various activities such as informative sessions, workshops, and interventions to help newcomers adapt to their new context, including details about the Spanish government's International Protection Reception Program. Social educators also assist in finding rental housing for independent living and address intercultural conflicts and disputes among cohabitants or with landlords. Additionally, they organize a range of nationwide leisure activities encompassing health, cultural, sports, and recreational pursuits.

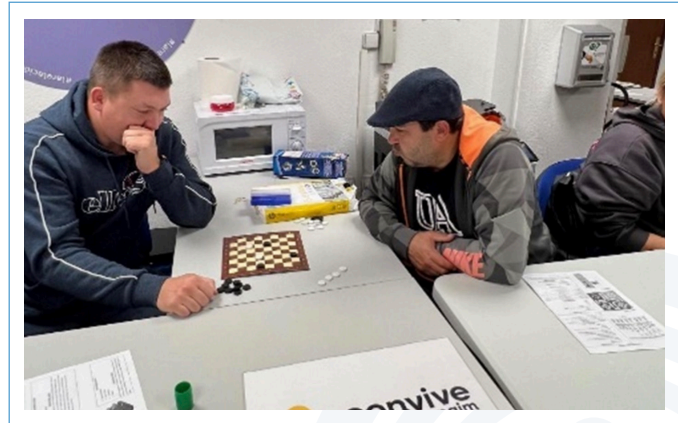


Photo: UFU - United Way Spain Convive

- **Access to more than 88 engagement activities** centered around health (e.g., yoga, children's hygiene workshops, teamwork), culture and education (e.g., conversational language, sharing holiday traditions, museum trips, cooking, etc.), sports (e.g., beach volleyball, pétanque, tennis, badminton, chess, etc.), environmental (e.g., visits to natural parks, lakes, local biodiversity and ecosystem education), and leisure (e.g., creative workshops: knitting, eco soap making,

intercultural exchanges, etc.) to promote the physical and emotional wellbeing and social integration of Ukrainian refugees. Activities were carried out in different regions (Murcia, Ciudad Real, Madrid, Mérida, Valencia, Catalonia, Salamanca, Extremadura, Zaragoza, and Huelva).

- **Access to a therapeutic and sports summer integration summer camp** for hundreds of children to promote education, enhance knowledge about the local community, and boost the values of cooperation, companionship, diversity, and team spirit. Camps took place in different locations (Gandía, Mérida, Madrid, Salamanca, Zaragoza, and Soria).



Photo: UFU - United Way Spain YMCA

Our boys, girls and teenagers hosted in Spain because of the Ukrainian war also participate in Day Camps. Thanks to the collaboration of United Way Spain each and all participants can enjoy a summer full of activities and leisure, having fun and meeting a lot of boys and girls of their age.

– YMCA España

In addition to the above initiatives, and thanks to PHINEO-United Way Germany's support, United Way Spain was able to distribute 100 HP laptops with the Cyrillic alphabet, thereby ensuring Ukrainian refugees can access online services including education and Spanish classes.

United Way Spain intends to allocate its remaining funds

to focus on continuing to deliver integration support, and educational and employment assistance.

WHAT'S NEEDED

Language learning is a major pivotal factor for refugees' successful integration into Spain. The intricacies of swiftly attaining fluency and native-like comprehension present challenges for adult learners. Despite participating in Spanish lessons, the hurdle of achieving adequate language proficiency remains a predominant barrier that significantly impacts employment and housing prospects. This challenge is amplified by the circumstances of many refugees, who find themselves as single parents. Striking a balance between work and familial responsibilities becomes a complex juggling act.

Access to housing is still a major concern. "Everyone has the right to a standard of living," as referenced in **Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948**. In reality Spain's rental market is one of the smallest in Europe, which contributes to not only the limited supply of accommodations, but also the high prices that cannot be met with salaries, in addition to rising inflation rates. Pair housing limitations with the stereotypes about refugees and migrants, and it creates a barrier for refugee families to access housing.



For these reasons, in addition to providing housing specialists as noted above, United Way Spain and Cepaim Foundation designed, implemented and executed a nationwide housing campaign called **La Comunidad**,

to raise public awareness of the lack of opportunities refugees and migrants face to access housing, with a call to tear down the walls of discrimination that refugees suffer. The campaign encourages populations to rent their empty or second homes to refugees and support United Way Spain and its partners in their collective efforts to overturn prejudice and fears about renting to foreigners. The campaign urged them to contact La Comunidad for help with administrative and legal procedures, and cultural and language intermediation. United Way Spain also provided workshops and training on housing, met with groups dedicated to housing to evaluate situations in neighborhoods, and met with real estate agencies to tackle prejudice and barriers that refugees face during their home search.



Photo: UFU - United Way Spain Campaign

The housing campaign was meant to last 3 months, but the campaign caught the attention of the General Director of the International Refugees Protection Program from the Ministry of Inclusion, and Amapola Blasco from Social Security and Migrations. They wanted to join the kick-off of the campaign and evaluate the possibility of merging the La Comunidad campaign with **Techo - Por un techo para todos (Put a roof for everyone)**, a platform created by the Ministry where people can rent their homes to displaced people, and where refugees and owners can be provided with mediation and support. As a result, the campaign was extended until December 2023 with a call to other NGOs and entities to join their efforts. United Way

Spain and the Ministry are actively working together to create long-term collaboration.

The Housing Campaign has been a very impactful action that tries to tackle a serious problem in Spain, which is the lack of access to housing, and that needs lots of efforts and dialogue from many parties- society, politics, real estate agencies and large landowners, etc.- to break down the barriers that prevent refugees and migrant from integrating properly in this society.

– Mencía Igartua Pascual, United Way Spain

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Create sustainable, accessible, and guided housing solutions to enable an independent life.
- Improve language learning to attain more fluency.
- Establish care facilities for dependents that enable parents to seek employment, train or work.
- Empower individuals through comprehensive employment guidance and cultivate employment opportunities.
- Provide psychological support to overcome trauma and loss, and integration support.



Photo: UFU - United Way Spain Katherina Story

We were born in Mariupol... Now there is no city, our parents, sisters and friends have lost everything... Many of our friends have returned to Ukraine, our relatives live in Germany, Romania and the US. We were scattered all over the world... We went to Spain. I have never regretted choosing this country. The Spanish are the most open and friendly people! They helped us from day one, we never felt abandoned. We were lucky enough to fall under the protection of the YMCA. It's like a big family. Everyone is very young, friendly and very patient. These guys will stay forever in my heart. Thanks also to the United Way and the United For Ukraine project for all the support to our children and our family.

– *Katheryna Shevchenko*

the minimum units of social cohesion that need to be promoted to generate an equal and cohesive society.

At United Way Spain, they speak about community in terms of that 'support network' that everyone needs, and which is not possible to create and develop without the collaboration of social agents with real power of change: companies, institutions, social entities and citizenship.

Efforts undertaken by United Way Spain and its partners enable each person and family to achieve autonomy.

We are at a moment in history in which we must ask ourselves what we can do to help society from our position, work and resources that we have. Because each action counts, each decision can open or close doors and opportunities for many individuals and families seeking to build a new home and integrate into the host society in an equal and dignified manner.

– **Juan Antonio Segura, General Director of CONVIVE Fundación Cepaim**

IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Multidisciplinary intentional integration.

When someone flees war, they expose themselves to another great danger: social (and residential) exclusion. To combat this, United Way Spain supports refugees in a multidisciplinary and integral way, putting at the service of specialized entities specific resources such as psychosocial support, educational reinforcement, social-employment integration, access to housing and much more.

Social agents with real power of change.

In the United Way offices of English-speaking countries, the word 'community' is used to refer to neighborhoods,





THANK YOU

Across 37 countries and territories, United Way and our partners around the world are working year-round to build strong, resilient communities in which everyone can thrive.

We don't do it alone. Our 45,000 corporate partners, and 29,000 community agency partners, are vital to this work. But none of it would be happening without the 6.8 million people who donate to United Way, and the 1.5M who give their time as volunteers.

Thank you for your generosity.

Your support brought hope to millions and fueled innovative approaches that can be sustained over the long term.

Learn more about United Way at www.unitedway.org.

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KEY LEARNINGS

The collaborative efforts across nations to provide refuge for displaced individuals underscore the power of international solidarity. Because United Way works so closely with cross-sector partners, we wanted to lift up their key learnings involved in supporting Ukrainian refugees, in addition to the early learnings already shared in the [interim report](#).

While you may not be able to alter past circumstances such as conflict and displacement, you do have the power to make a positive difference in lives by offering support and tools, fostering safe spaces and a sense of community, and providing opportunities for growth and healing. The lessons learned underscore the significance of holistic support with language education, mental health care, and building a strong support network. Sharing these insights with government and NGOs facing similar situations contributes to a knowledge base that empowers philanthropic endeavors with a deeper understanding of the multifaceted challenges refugees face and the nuanced strategies required for successful integration and well-being. It can also help others navigate the path to integration and empowerment, fostering resilience and hope for a brighter future. For donors and funders, it might give deeper insights into costs incurred for comprehensive refugee support.

Adaptive Engagement and Cultural Empathy

- **Cultural Proficiency and Conflict Avoidance.** Understand country origin cultures and ways of life to enhance services and prevent and have a better comprehension of the issues and challenges that might occur.
- **Continuous Engagement and Solution Design.** Maintain ongoing engagement with participants, newcomers, and the community to comprehend diverse needs, enabling the dynamic design of comprehensive solutions and remaining adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances and individual challenges.
- **Language Proficiency and Integration.** Understand that language is a major pivotal factor for refugees' successful integration. The hurdle of achieving adequate language proficiency remains a predominant

barrier that significantly impacts employment and housing prospects. This challenge is amplified by the circumstances of many refugees, who find themselves as single parents. Striking a balance between work and familial responsibilities becomes a complex juggling act.

- **Foster Inclusive Communities.** Mitigate the dangers of social and residential exclusion by fostering a sense of belonging and community. By addressing these exclusionary tendencies, you contribute to building inclusive societies that support refugees' integration.
- **Holistic Mental Health and Peer Support.** Understand the significance of mental health and peer support for all, which is as important as meeting basic needs. While this is critical for refugees, it is as important to ensure there is a resilient community that is providing their care. Counselors, specialists and volunteers also need mental health and professional assistance and a peer community to guide them and prevent burnout thereby ensuring sustainable assistance.

Comprehensive and Sustainable Empowerment Strategies

- **Holistic Integration Programs.** Prioritize integration through comprehensive initiatives that enable refugees to achieve a greater degree of autonomy and self-sufficiency, such as language fluency, skills development, dependency care, employment training and guidance, housing assistance, and more.
- **Community and Belonging.** Cultivate a sense of community and belonging. Create safe spaces where refugees can thrive and form connections with others, particularly from their country of origin, to significantly reduce isolation and contribute to their overall well-being.
- **Impact Startups.** Create infrastructure to strengthen founders from ideation to scale and empower impact startups to achieve greater social impact. Facilitate or establish partnerships with crowdfunding platforms to enable grass-roots financing for projects benefiting a

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broader public and enabling startups to achieve self-sustainability.

- **Digital Solutions.** Digitize programs to enable virtual participation for accessibility, thereby ensuring even those who have transitioned to different locations, or those with limited physical mobility can access online services without disruption.
- **Sustainability and Resilience.** Build sustainable, resilient and dynamic infrastructures and ad-hoc opportunities for social engagement, impactful volunteering and community-building efforts as well as mental health and support systems for all.
- **Maximized Impact through Multi-sector Partnerships.** Harness cross-sector strengths to broaden activities, enhance capacities, leverage resources and expertise to foster synergistic and innovative collaborations and strengthen networks and structures that amplify collective impact. For example, NGOs' agility and reach for company and employee involvement (financial, material, personal) complements local government processes. Diversifying volunteerism from partner companies, as well as individuals from the local community accelerates responses to unpredictable situations. An effective partnership strategy will garner community involvement and empower social agents with real power of change.

Foundations for Refugee Integration

- **Faster Financial and Legal Mobilization for Crisis Response.** Promote the establishment of rapid financial and legal structures to swiftly mobilize commitment during crises and disasters, ensuring timely and effective support.
- **Extended Resources for Transition and Integration.** Advocate for host country governments to extend resources for a longer period to refugees during transition and integration.

- **Independent Living.** Promote creation of accessible, sustainable, and guided long-term accommodation solutions that enable refugees to lead independent lives beyond stipends and initial set periods.
- **Campaigns Against Discrimination and Stereotypes.** Lead campaigns to eliminate discrimination and the stereotypes against refugees, fostering awareness, compassion and a more welcoming attitude in host communities.
- **Family Support and Care Facilities.** Establish and support more child care and dependent care facilities, enabling family members and parents, particularly mothers, to focus on their professional pursuits.
- **Mental Health Prioritization.** Focus on mental health services and counseling that alleviate the burden on congested healthcare systems and eliminate language barriers.
- **Accessible Healthcare Services.** Advocate for improved accessibility to clinics, treatments, tests, exams, and portable records to address critical medical concerns that refugees often encounter.
- **Skills Development and Employment Opportunities.** Empower individuals through skills development, tools and comprehensive employment guidance, and cultivate employment opportunities to enhance their ability to integrate into the workforce and contribute positively to their new communities.
- **Efficient Government Engagement and Information.** Advocate for an improvement of government actions to address inefficiencies, delays, and ineffectiveness through a decentralized approach to assistance delivery. Ensure standardized information is accessible and communicated.

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- **Education and Integration.** Provide resources and/or capacity in the state-supported system and schools to support the education needs and integration of children and youth.
- **NGO Funding for Impact.** Advocate for central funding to support NGOs that are involved in refugee care, social integration, education, and development activities, bridging gaps in support and amplifying their impact.

