

## RESULTS SUMMARY

# Faith-Based Structures Facilitates Humanitarian Responses in Ukraine

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PROJECT	<i>Title:</i>	Humanitarian Response to the Ukraine Crisis
	<i>Partner:</i>	Caritas Ukraine, Caritas Moldova and Caritas Romania
	<i>Country:</i>	Ukraine and neighbouring countries
	<i>Period:</i>	2022

**CHANGE**



The project contributed to a surge in the humanitarian response capacity of the local partners Caritas Ukraine, Moldova and Romania after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Pre-existing church and organizational structures and infrastructure were upgraded and converted to receive- and address the needs of hundreds of thousands of IDPs/refugees. Pre-existing and new human resources were mobilised and capacitated where necessary, enabling localised and timely humanitarian support which reached the most vulnerable people and communities.

**CONTEXT**

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the Ukrainian Government and international relief organisations did not have the necessary resources and structures in place to deal with the sudden massive movement of people within and from Ukraine. Ukrainian authorities were trying to manage the chaotic situation, with the support of local volunteers, FBOs and NGOs. International relief organisations were struggling to set up basic organisational structures in Ukraine and in the neighboring countries which could provide effective and timely relief.

**CONTRIBUTION**

To address the humanitarian needs in and around Ukraine, Caritas Internationalis (CI) activated its emergency appeal system, through which Caritas Denmark could support the local Caritas organisations' responses by securing funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and collecting own funds. CI also provided crucial technical and organisational support to the local Caritas setting up an Emergency Response Support Team (ERST) capacitating and enabling local Caritas to provide community-rooted quality relief to the victims of war.

IMAGES		
	Distribution of relief – Caritas Donetsk in Dnipro. Photo: Caritas Ukraine.	Psycho-social support for children – Caritas Ivano-Frankivsk. Photo: Caritas Ukraine.

[See next page for more details](#) →

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### ACTIVITIES

At the outset of the war, the massive number of IDPs in Ukraine and the exodus of Ukrainian refugees to Western Europe called for immediate support and relief. Local NGOs became vital first responders in the first chaotic weeks. Caritas Ukraine mobilised thousands of volunteers and hired new local staff, whilst using and upgrading existing diocesan and parish centers, church schools, clinics and hospitals, monasteries, etc., to cater for the needs of the fleeing population in close coordination with the local authorities. Caritas organisations in neighboring countries similarly mobilised thousands of church volunteers and staff to receive the refugees and converted existing church centers and buildings to shelters, soup kitchens, transit centers, etc. Caritas Ukraine to a large degree also succeeded in continuing the pre-war services (soup kitchens, home-based care, orphanages, and support to handicapped) to the most vulnerable groups in remote communities who could not leave.

### LESSONS

The local Caritas' impressive capacity to scale-up and adjust their engagements benefitted from local anchored church structures ensuring local connectedness and reaching the most vulnerable, as well as being connected to a global confederation like CI mobilizing funds and providing organisational capacity support. An evaluation in January 2023 found that the CI's capacity support via the ERST mechanism had proven its value in enabling local Caritas to deliver highly localised humanitarian responses. The increased capacity of local Caritas was partly thanks to a considerable number of IDPs who, after staying in the shelters, joined Caritas as volunteers as a way of reducing boredom, feeling useful and showing appreciation. In some cases, IDPs supported parents taking care of their children allowing them to volunteer outside the shelters. The lesson is a reminder that people in need of assistance also can be a valuable resource for others and help expand the humanitarian response.

### EVIDENCE

The surge in humanitarian response capacity of Caritas organisations in and around Ukraine is documented in situation and progress reports. According to the available pre-war data from Caritas Ukraine, the annual turnover was 9,5 million EUR and the total number of people supported under Caritas Ukraine programs was 94,883. In 2022, the total turnover was more than 70 million EUR and the number of people reached was approximately 2,150,000. Total number of staff and volunteers had increased from 1,200 pre-war to 16,500 in 2022. In the first months of 2022, Caritas Ukraine managed to establish 198 shelters in converted church institutions. Similarly in Caritas Romania, in a matter of days, ten church buildings (monasteries, parishes and training centers) were converted to shelters with a capacity of 350 refugees in transit, and within 2 weeks of the invasion, Caritas Moldova formed a team of 40 volunteer psychologists, providing individual psycho-social support to 1500 refugees.

### DOMAINS

<i>Development strategy priorities:</i>	Insert strategy priority
<i>Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	(X)
<i>Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights</i>	X
<i>Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	(X)
<i>Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work</i>	(X)