

hartbeat

Humanitarian Aid Response Teams



“HE DEFENDS the cause
of the FATHERLESS
and the WIDOW, and loves
the FOREIGNER living
among you, GIVING them
food and clothing.” Deut 10:18

TRAUMA IS EXPERIENCED BY ALL CHILDREN IN UKRAINE

Dear Friends, tragically, children are caught in the cross hairs of this conflict. The war in Ukraine is having a devastating impact on the mental health and well-being of children throughout the country.

An estimated 1.5 million children are at risk of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health issues, with potential long-term effects and implications.

The impact of the war on children will be long-lasting and significant. Many have had to endure the loss of parents or siblings, the destruction of their homes due to shelling, or the trauma of fleeing in the middle of the night to unfamiliar places.

These harrowing experiences, along with the constant uncertainty about the safety of loved ones and what the future may hold, have led to severe mental health issues for both refugees and their children, in particular.

The impact of the war is felt by children living even in the relatively safe regions of central and western Ukraine. Constant air raid sirens causes fear and anxiety for all. With numerous fathers, sons, and brothers fighting for freedom and democracy, the children left behind are not

immune to the trauma, pain, and anxiety that this conflict has caused. Children wait anxiously for news from their fathers and then experience ecstatic happiness when he returns from the war for a short time.

UNICEF says. "Children need an end to this war and sustained peace to regain their childhoods, return to normalcy and begin to heal and recover."

The sacrifices made by Ukrainian families has had an enormous impact on their children. **Please continue to pray for Ukraine's children, and for the end of this terrible conflict.**



Six year old Vlad in front of his mother's grave.



CHILDREN NEED SUMMER CAMPS! (Especially during this war)

One of the ways HART's community can alleviate some of the suffering of Ukraine's children is by giving them opportunities to attend summer camp programs.

During the same period last year, we were pleasantly surprised by the level of support from partner churches who were determined to proceed with summer camps despite the ongoing war. However, instead of organizing stationary camps lasting 7-10 days, which were considered too risky, they opted for local 'Day' camps. This year, we are witnessing even greater enthusiasm for camp programs.

WHY? The reason lies in the unique and powerful nature of Christian camps, offering children who have suffered

trauma an opportunity to learn about God's love and experience healing.

By providing a safe and supportive environment, offering spiritual guidance, fostering community and connection with other kids, physical activities, opportunities for creativity and self-expression, teaching biblical principles, and encouraging prayer and meditation, summer camps can help children deepen their faith and find hope and healing in God.

We sincerely thank all of you in HART's community (Canada & USA) who supported camps last year. Below are some comments by campers and camp leaders expressing gratitude for your support in 2022.

FROM A CAMPER: (Svitlana)

My name is Svitlana, and I am from southern Ukraine. Thank you very much for making it possible for me to go to a camp. I really liked it there and made a lot of new friends. **My friends and I cried all the way home because we didn't want to leave the camp.**

FROM CAMP DIRECTORS:

It was a great happiness to see the smiling faces of the children, a lot of joy and laughter, and happy parents who rejoiced with their children. They also cried when the camp ended because they didn't want to leave it. We praise God for the opportunity to hold the camps and give hope for salvation and a new life to children, teenagers, and their families.

Many thanks to HART and its sponsors in the United States and Canada for their prayerful and financial support of the camps; for many of the children and even the leaders, **these were the happiest days of the last six months, and for some of them the most blessed days of their lives.**

FROM A CAMP COUNSELLOR:

We want to thank you for the financial support for our camp. **Without these funds, we would not have been able to do this camp.** Thank you for your generous hearts.

The preparation for the camp was complicated this year. We had constant air raid sirens and worried for kids' lives. The whole team was praying because we knew how risky it is to take responsibility for other people's children in such times. But God made a miracle. **During the entire camp, there was not a single air raid siren!**



HOW HART IS RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS IN UKRAINE

The needs of our partner churches in Ukraine are enormous. So, how do we bring relief to Ukrainians whose lives have been torn apart by the conflict with the funds you have blessed us with?

First, we utilize our nationwide network to gather information on how best to assist churches practically and effectively. **Second**, HART program directors research and report from areas near the front lines or communities recently liberated. Their task is to inform us of the current or projected emergency needs in these conflict regions. **Third**, we determine whether we can resource needed items in Ukraine or send our teams to Poland to purchase goods and materials there.

Fourth, procurement happens, and **Fifth**, we facilitate delivery to our partner churches.

With YOUR support, through the winter and spring months we helped churches 'winterize' in response to the Russian attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure. We delivered food, hygiene products, and medicines, but most importantly, we purchased generators, power stations, and propane heaters in Poland and hand-delivered these to churches throughout Ukraine.



SMALL CHURCHES DOING BIG THINGS

One small church in Western Ukraine, under the leadership of Pastor Rostislav, came up with a novel idea to respond to the devastating effects the war has had on the food supply. They started a small factory producing food for refugees, soldiers, and civilians near the war zones. Months later, their canned goods are recognized as an elite product and are sent all over Ukraine, including to recently liberated towns and cities.

YOUR support has been instrumental in helping serve food to thousands of people during this war through Pastor Rostislav and his church. He is very appreciative not only for the financial support for this food factory but also for the generators we provided them.

"During the blackouts, we wouldn't have been able to do our jobs; our production would have stopped. But you responded to our needs, and you brought us generators. Now, when electricity is cut off, production can continue uninterrupted. **The generators saved us!**"



READING SCRIPTURE SAVED TWO SOLDIER'S LIVES

Part of my ministry is to serve the needy people in the conflict areas around my city of Kherson. Traveling from one region to another requires frequent stops at military checkpoints.

I make it a habit to always share something useful with the soldiers who are stationed at these checkpoints. Anything from essential first aid kits to food, fruits, or treats they rarely get.

However, the most important thing, of course, is the Word of God. During one of these trips, I met with soldiers at a checkpoint and, as usual, gave them Gospels. "Guys, just read it. This is a book of life," I told them as I said goodbye and continued on my journey. This is one thing I know; every time you say goodbye, you don't know if you will ever meet them again at this place. This is a war, after all.

Not long after, when I passed through this checkpoint again, the same soldiers came out to greet me. "We need to show you something," they said excitedly. "Remember you left us the New Testaments?"

One of the soldiers showed me a tattered Gospel and filled me in on the details. "We were sitting at the checkpoint one night and were reading this Bible you left us, and then suddenly, there was a whistle followed by a bomb exploding nearby.

Its shrapnel scattered over a radius of 500 meters. We realized it was the end for us. Everything around us was hit, even this little book, but we survived without a scratch."



Yevhen is a dedicated Pastor & Chaplain who has lived through the occupation of his home city of Kherson, serving the refugees and people impacted by the war and the Russian occupation. He is also a military chaplain, serving Ukrainian soldiers. The following is a story he recently shared with our HART team.



The soldiers smile and shake my hand vigorously, and I cry. They had been just reading...Thank you, God, I pray.

Pastor Yevhen, chaplain, and HART's partner

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- ✔ SUPPORT UKRAINE 'CRISIS Relief & Refugee Aid' Fund
- ✔ SUPPORT Summer Camp Programs
- ✔ PRAY FOR UKRAINE

Humanitarian Aid Response Team

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HART is audited annually by an independent accounting firm and our financial statements are available upon request. Our Board of Directors has established the policy that all contributions designated for specific projects shall be applied to that project, with up to 10 per cent to be used if needed for administering the gifts. Occasionally we receive more contributions for a given project than can be wisely applied to that project. When that happens, we use these funds to meet a similar pressing need.

