



#UNITEDFORUKRAINE

# UNITED FOR UKRAINE FUND INTERIM IMPACT REPORT

United Way Worldwide • February 2023





## UNITED WAY STEPS UP

Millions of people – mostly women and children – fled their homeland of Ukraine one year ago to escape the war that still continues. They made the arduous journey to 34 host countries across Europe, some for the short-term, others for the long haul.

Their needs are diverse – ranging from food, shelter, and support for the next leg of the trip to longer-term challenges around jobs, language barriers and access to education for children.

For the first time in history, no refugee camps were established, despite the waves of refugees to nearby countries in Europe. Instead, they were “absorbed” within a few weeks by local communities, NGOs and authorities.

United Way stepped up, as we always do during crises.

Local United Ways and our trusted partners at United Way Romania, United Way Hungary and Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw (Good Initiatives Foundation) in Poland, have been helping displaced families, working with partners on the ground to determine the needs and to meet them. PHINEO gAH/United Way Germany, United Way Spain and United Way Netherlands have welcomed and supported refugees with immediate and longer-term help.

UWW established the **United for Ukraine Fund**, raising **\$4.2M** in 6 months to support this vital work on the ground.

It's part of who we are. United Way brings people together to build strong, equitable communities where everyone can thrive. We serve 95% of U.S. communities and 1,100 communities across 37 countries and territories, impacting 48M people every year. Through United Way, communities tackle tough challenges and work with private, public, and nonprofit partners to boost education, economic solutions, and health resources.



## UNITED WAY STEPS UP

As the war continues, so do the needs of Ukrainians. Through United Way's partnerships on the ground in Romania, Hungary, Poland, Spain, Netherlands, and Germany, we're providing refugees with safe housing, food, support for their children, mental health services and more. Many will go back when the war ends.

But for the refugees who are relocating to their host countries, United Way and our partners are providing long-term job-seeking support, language training and comprehensive social and educational support for the children.

Of course, the war is having a ripple effect across the global economy, from supply chain problems, fuel shortages, food disruptions, and more. Around the world, United Way is not only helping those displaced by the war, but also families affected by higher fuel and home prices and other disruptions. Helping people build financial stability, and achieve economic mobility, has long been a cornerstone of our work. That's why United Ways are working across borders to support each other's communities. We want to help communities build equitable futures by leveraging our strength and knowledge across the globe.

The generosity and support we have seen through the United for Ukraine Fund make it possible for United Way and our partners to meet the escalating needs on the ground, providing life-changing support and hope during a time of uncertainty.

In this report, you'll learn more about the impact of our United for Ukraine Fund, country by country.

## KEY FIGURES

# 131,349\*

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

## 104,801

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

## 52,042

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

## 7,108

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

**UNITED WAY  
NETHERLANDS**

## 275

people helped

**UNITED WAY  
GERMANY**

## 15,000

people helped

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

## 81,000

people helped

**UNITED WAY  
SPAIN**

## 720

people helped



**UNITED WAY  
HUNGARY**

## 8,071

people helped

**UNITED WAY  
ROMANIA**

## 26,283

people helped

\* Number of people helped reflects the count within the first six months.





## INSIGHTS & PERSPECTIVES

The reality of refugee movement is that it's dynamic – and hard to predict. We've dug in to understand what drives this and are continuously adapting and adjusting supports accordingly.

Refugees arriving from Ukraine are a very diverse group, in terms of their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. A large number are lower income, ethnic minorities, young, or single moms. A wide range of assistance is required, and must involve local NGOs and NGOs working with specific target groups. It's a lengthy process for a refugee family to become self-sufficient, and the need for daily assistance places a heavy burden on helpers (often volunteers).

The language diversity is just as wide as the socio-economic and cultural diversity. Some Ukrainian refugees speak Russian; others can converse in Hungarian. But the vast majority of these refugees have a big language barrier – which impacts their long-term plans.

These are people who, before the war started, led a life similar to ours. They drank their coffee slowly or in a hurry in the morning. They would get dressed in the morning and get in cars, subways, or buses, to face the crowds on the way to work, or just put their office clothes on and sit in front of the computer to work remotely. However, at dawn on February 24, all this balance was shaken, just as the windows and walls of the houses where they slept peacefully were shaken just a second before.

– **Adriana Dobra, CEO of United Way Romania**

United Way and our partners also understand that refugees were forced to leave their entire lives, families or husbands behind. Many walked away without their wealth, equity or assets. Starting over takes an enormous toll on mental health.

Because the majority of those who fled Ukraine are women and children, these families now must build new skills, new routines and structures for the children -- without the help of friends or family. Given adequate support, younger children may be more adaptable at learning a new language and making new friends, but experts agree that it's much more difficult for adults to integrate into a new community, learn new languages and new cultures, and build skills needed in a new economy to support their families.

While many refugees were surprised by the warm reception and services provided by our response country partners, the long-term effects of their socio-economic situation and integration difficulties are very challenging. These women have lost their support networks, face language barriers, and the availability of adequate services, and access to housing, education, and jobs, is strained.



## INSIGHTS & PERSPECTIVES

While most refugees are hopeful to return to Ukraine, many are trying to figure out how to rebuild their lives in their host countries.

And they're worried about the impact on their children.

Ania doesn't know that her home country is engaged in a war with Russia. "I came to Romania on vacation," says the 5-year old who traveled 1,000 miles from Kyiv by train and bus with her mother, Maria. In customs at Sighetu Marmatiei, Maria managed logistics for their journey to a host family in Bucharest. Meanwhile, Ania took part in children's activities provided by **United Way Romania**. She drew, modeled play dough, had a snack, and played make-believe with toys. It's not home, but it makes the trip more manageable for both mother and child.



The trauma that Ukrainian children are experiencing as they're forced to flee their homes (usually without their fathers) is significant – and long-lasting. It's heartening that so many volunteers in host countries have raised their hands to help. But most aren't trauma experts.



In Hungary, for example, it's mostly volunteers, civic organizations, charities, and local governments who are supporting refugees, many of whom are children. In response, **United Way Hungary** is collaborating with CalmSchool to launch a program to support these volunteers, with a video series providing tips and tools to help traumatized children manage their stress.

The program is also providing materials from CalmSchool to help children cope with stress. For example, a soothing fairy tale that teachers or volunteers can read aloud is accompanied by a worksheet (in several languages) adults can use to teach self-soothing techniques to the children.



### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 81,000

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

450

transportation services

150

housing assistance

19,000

food

6,000

hygiene products

980

clothing

2,490

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

### CURRENT STATE

So far, more than 6.6M refugees from Ukraine have crossed the border into Poland. At last count, more than 1.4M, mostly mothers with children, remain in the country.<sup>1</sup>



In the first days of the war, United Way's partner, Fundacja Dobrych Inicjatyw (FDI), or Good Initiatives Foundation of Poland took immediate action to support the relocation of refugees, provide accommodations, sometimes makeshift, and equip places with essentials including products and resources. In the first few weeks, they saw 150,000 refugees a day. FDI helped organize transportation, worked with NGOs in Ukraine to finance evacuations, and prepared care packages of food (including food for infants), clothes, sleeping bags, cosmetics, hygiene basics, and more.

With the support of 1,000 volunteers, several hundred food and cosmetic kits were packaged for refugees in Warsaw. In the following weeks, FDI equipped children and teenagers at schools, organized Polish language classes, and provided additional classes for women to make it easier for them to start work. FDI coordinated with other organizations to provide camps, summer camps, holidays for refugee children, including inviting children who still live in Ukraine to Poland for the holidays.

Volunteers and staff prepared food packages to feed 5,250 people, and provided 6,640 warm meals on top of that. Volunteers packed hygiene kits and provided clothes for the women, and clothing, bedding, and more for children transitioning to Polish orphanages.

When you see dozens of volunteers who come to us after their day jobs, bring shopping, engage with neighbors, invite refugees to their homes... you have a feeling of solidarity, and you know that this is very important. I really like the new saying that Poland is now one big NGO, I totally agree with it.

– Katarzyna Szaniawska, Social Projects Coordinator, FDI

FDI has supported more than 81,000 people in partnership with 1,000 volunteers, companies and local government agencies, while minimizing costs of implementation.

United Way Worldwide's United for Ukraine Fund provided funds to support this work.

### WHAT'S NEEDED

FDI worked with other NGOs and local government agencies to best diagnose problems and help where the help is most needed. The greatest challenge has been the educational support system for children and youth from Ukraine in Polish schools. There is tremendous need to properly equip children with materials for education, integration activities with Polish peers, learning Polish, and compensatory classes.

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

<sup>1</sup> Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Poland: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 4 October 2022

Additionally, many women, often mothers, from Ukraine want to work in Poland, but language is often a barrier. FDI organized Polish language classes and additional classes to aid their efforts in finding work.



### OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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

### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Due to FDI's position in the country and its history of collaboration, and reputation as United Way's trusted partner in Poland, they were able to operate faster and more efficiently on a larger scale. They mobilized their current volunteer base, and coordinated with companies and local authorities. FDI has become an important support base for local organizations, communities and authorities.



### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 26,283

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



### CURRENT STATE

More than 1.2M refugees from Ukraine have crossed the border into Romania and over 80,000, mostly mothers with children, remain in the country.<sup>2</sup>

In the first days after the outbreak of the conflict, **United Way Romania** mobilized an immediate response, providing necessary and emergency support to cover basic needs and products to refugees at entry points at the Sighet and Siret borders, as well as in customs centers set up in the North Railway Station in Bucharest, for refugees traveling by train.

A suitcase, fear and hope, is all the luggage I carry through customs.

– **A Ukrainian refugee**

We cannot take the weight off their souls, but it is in our power to make their stay in Romania a comforting experience and reassure them that the power of humanity defeats war.

– **A Romanian working to help Ukrainian refugees**

United Way Romania offered transport from customs centers to accommodation locations and provided immediate relief services, including formula milk and diapers for children.

In addition, refugees received emotional support and

advice regarding their situation, depending on whether they wanted to stay in Romania or go to other countries. While specialists took time to offer emotional support to adults, their children played in playgrounds created for them by United Way Romania.

We've set up little playgrounds for children, allowing mothers to rest, giving them a breather, time to think... time to cry. While children are busy playing, mothers have time to process their thoughts of who they've left behind.

– **Adriana Dobra, CEO of United Way Romania**

The United Way team traveled to transit centers at the Oancea border, near the Republic of Moldova, to offer food, essentials, and phone cards. Refugees stayed in transit centers from a few hours to a few days, where they could regroup and organize. The center provided access to showers, along with warm meals and other essentials (especially for children). They also received transportation needed to solve problems related to transfer to other destinations, obtaining documents and even translation of documents.

United Way Romania launched a call for proposals to support refugees who decided to stay in Romania. Support will be provided for mid- and long-term programs focused on three areas:

- **Education** - access and educational activities for refugee children.
- **Financial Stability** - career guidance, legal advice to navigate labor market.
- **Health** – access mental health programs (i.e., psychological counseling and therapy), creating an anxiety management guide in the Ukrainian language, and other health programs (i.e., emergency dental treatments).

Many medium- and long-term projects were underway by summer 2022. Their results will be captured in the final United for Ukraine Fund report (after September 2023). The call for proposals will remain open until all funds are allocated.

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

<sup>2</sup> Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Romania: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 18 September 2022

### WHAT'S NEEDED

The most urgent needs involve providing access to education for the refugee children, and professional integration of adults who stay longer in Romania. At the same time, the cost per beneficiary in offering emergency support has increased, as refugees need longer-term support as they wait to obtain visas to other countries, or until they decide they want to stay long-term in Romania.

United Way Romania is now focused on addressing the biggest challenges identified by refugees (besides basic needs early on), including mental health and emotional supports and the need for psychological safety for women.

United Way is supporting the development of an Anxiety Management Guide. The digital guide (in Ukrainian and Russian) is designed to help Ukrainian mothers better understand their child's feelings and emotions in this difficult time and offers advice and practical solutions that help with the anxiety the children are experiencing. The material will also be distributed at transit centers.

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Create materials in native languages specifically for children, for parents and others to manage through anxiety and transitions.
- Use specialists and language experts to reduce communication barriers, and better understand the country origin culture to improve services and supports given.
- Expedite the process to get visas.
- Mobilize counselors, specialists, and volunteers to support individuals through traumatic and/or life changing experiences.



*"I understood that I had to leave, when one night a rocket hit close to our house."*

Olga left Kiev because she was afraid for the safety of her three children. Her youngest was just two months old when they arrived at a center dedicated to mothers in Bucharest. With donations received through the Smart Mobile app of Raiffeisen Bank, United Way provided mothers and children with the material and emotional support they needed.

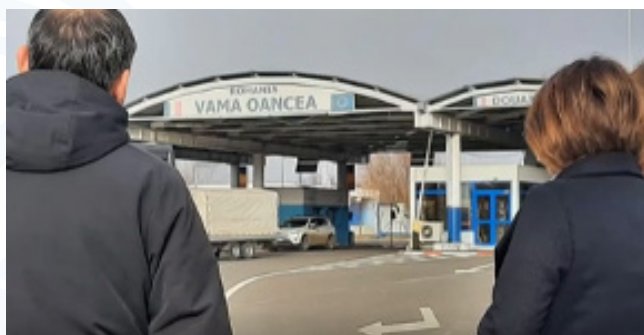


### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

The need for ongoing cultural competency was underscored in Romania. Leveraging specialists to understand cultural differences and ways of life, such as food preparation, is critical to better support refugees.

Many of the refugees did not know English, and language barriers often created communication challenges. With the support of partners, United Way Romania engaged Ukrainian-speaking volunteers, and later secured translators to facilitate even greater communication with the refugees.

Helping these women and children acclimate is not a short-term undertaking. United Way Romania will continue to actively participate with the community to stay abreast of what support is needed, for whom and when.



### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 15,000

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

## 500

transportation services

## 11,177

housing assistance

## 4,500

psychological support

## 500

hygiene products

## 500

clothing

## 10

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

### CURRENT STATE

At last count, more than 1M Ukrainian refugees, mostly mothers with children, remain in Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The refugee influx surpassed that of Syrian refugees only 7 years ago. It's brought a broad scope of social challenges for German society and individuals: housing, language, trauma, employment, civic participation, and integration. In the early weeks, inquiries flooded PHINEO-United Way Germany to support, donate, and volunteer to help Ukraine and its citizens. PHINEO-United Way tackles large issues related to civil society, and is a strong government partner on issues like migration (as exemplified during the 2015 Syrian crisis) and provides support to Southern Tier European countries.

Many German entrepreneurs, individuals and founders provided a wealth of ideas for initiatives; however, they lacked the structures and legal requirements to take action. This prompted support from United Way Germany to form WE AID gGmbH, a non-profit subsidiary of PHINEO, and a new United for Ukraine (UFU) platform for individuals seeking help, to ensure critical funded initiatives are provided the legal, administrative structure, and charitable status to implement initiatives that advance refugee relief efficiently.

The PHINEO-United Way Germany partnership supports programs and implementers pro bono and provides operational expertise with the support of ECOVIS Germany (a leading consulting firm) for back-office tasks, and an agency for communications and social media support. Currently, the focus is on empowering Ukrainians to create startups and become economically independent through a 'Startup Incubation' program. Some of the current initiatives include:

- **ALLRAIL – Alliance of Passenger Rail New Entrants in Europe** representing independent rail companies. The Ukrainian Railroad is the lifeline for refugees, medicine, food and other aid supplies. A joint donation campaign supported a multinational 'Support Ukraine Rail Task Force,' to operate additional trains between Western Ukraine and European countries to deliver supplies to the war-torn country as well as help refugees by transporting them to the European Union.
- **Ukraine Refugee Support (URS)**, founded by Dr. Tom Kirschbaum (Founder/CEO of Door2Door GmbH), initially began operations by helping refugees across the Ukrainian border. They organized vehicles for transport, coordinated drivers, and helped with supply delivery. With large aid organizations and federal governments stepping up, they are now focused on assisting refugees adjust to life in their new home.
- **Every Bed Helps**, founded by Florian Wichelmann (Founder/CEO of Nena Apartments), is a national alliance of services apartment operators that offer temporary, move-in-ready homes for refugees, and works to continue financing long-term shelters.

United for Ukraine Association seeks to leverage knowledge, network, and spirit to provide emergency relief and support rebuilding efforts. It brings to the table expertise in emergency relief, government relations, humanitarian aid, and fundraising. Also, partnerships with Airbnb and gut.org, and funding from Google, supports safe housing, digital travel credits, legal aid, mental health and informational support.

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

<sup>3</sup>Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Germany: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 4 October 2022



United Way Worldwide's United for Ukraine Fund provided funds to support this work.

So far, PHINEO-United Way Germany has:

- Established call centers in Berlin and Frankfurt am Main and provided paid jobs to 15 Ukrainian women.
- Activated 83 volunteers from Google to support call center operations and place refugees in adequate housing.
- Raised \$5.9M (4.8M travel credits from Airbnb) to provide safe housing to 11,177 refugees.
- Established a sustainable operational connection with International Rescue Committee chapters in Germany and the U.S. to strengthen collective emergency relief activities.

On the third day of the invasion, we launched the United for Ukraine platform to provide legal and information support, as well as assistance with temporary housing. Less than two weeks later, the initiative brought together more than 150 volunteers in 34 countries. To date, we have engaged more than 500 international and Ukrainian partners, provided information to about 200,000 people and helped more than 5,000 people find temporary housing.

– **Nina Levchuk, UFU Platform co-founder**

Corporate partners have stepped up, too. For example, HP (one of United Way's global corporate partners) donated 2,000 laptops to be distributed to local United Ways across Europe, and German NGOs, to advance the Ukrainian refugee work. Laptops were also distributed to Matan/United Way Israel for Ukrainian refugees there.

PHINEO-United Way Germany is actively expanding its pool of corporate supporters, donors, foundation partners and the Senate of Berlin to support the initiative.

### WHAT'S NEEDED

The war in Ukraine created a new set of challenges for German society and re-emphasized the lack of existing infrastructure to promote sustainable, impactful

volunteering and community-building. Particularly in times of crisis, experienced players in the non-profit sector must take the lead, promote the creation and strengthening of reliable, supportive structures and networks, and enable NGOs to achieve greater impact.

And it's critical to build on cooperation, partnerships, and synergies to create successful, sustainable, and impactful projects benefiting refugees. The international partner network also played an important role in the success of PHINEO-United Way Germany's efforts – from providing housing, to paid jobs, and local support on the ground. Similarly, the global United Way network and the support of United Way Worldwide is a clear advantage.

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Create sustainable infrastructures for impactful volunteering and community-building efforts.
- Enable NGOs to achieve best impact with accessible resources.
- Support initiatives and activities for children and youth.

### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

In Germany, entrepreneurship can play a vital role in addressing the challenges facing communities. The innovation that entrepreneurs are demonstrating in response to the plight of Ukrainian refugees is exciting.

With United Way's support, the Startup Incubation program promotes rebuilding efforts, economic recovery, and growth of Ukraine.

At the same time, a longer-term benefit will accrue. The Startup Incubation program creates the necessary infrastructure to support founders from ideation to scale, help impact startups achieve greater social impact, and educate and equip a new generation of entrepreneurs with the expertise, skills, and access to make lasting change.



*"We learned about the UFU platform from social networks. We urgently needed a place in Torrevies where I found a job, but we didn't know anyone in this city and there was no opportunity to rent. The UFU platform immediately offered us three options of temporary housing to choose from, and we chose a cozy apartment two minutes' walk from my new job."*





### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 8,071

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

## 179

transportation services

## 1,144

housing assistance

## 2,786

food

## 483

hygiene products

## 355

clothing

## 260

psychological support

## 2,830

medicine and access to health care services

## 710

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

Many NGOs tried to find solutions to meet the basic needs of refugees and at the same time try to restore their mental and physical health. These NGOs applied a holistic approach, including integration into local communities. Some of these NGOs are grassroots organizations with strong local knowledge, local connections, and are embedded in the community. This enabled them to find refugees who are in need, but may not actively be seeking help.



### CURRENT STATE

More than 1.5 million Ukrainian refugees crossed the border into Hungary since the war began; over 30,000 remain in the country at last count.<sup>4</sup>

United Way Hungary was among the first responders, even though resources were scarce. United Way Hungary delivered in-kind donations to settlements near the Hungary-Ukraine border and contacted NGOs to assess needs.

There are children who are crossing borders alone, or who have been separated from families, or women and children who have had to leave their fathers behind who have to stay and fight...it is incredibly traumatic, and they will be hurt for the rest of their lives, because this is something they will never forget. Immediate support is critical, because if children are properly taken care of in the first few days, they will begin to play...but the longer-term support for wrap around services and trauma support is equally critical.

– Kincso Adriany CEO of United Way Hungary

In the early days of the war, United Way Hungary put out a call for proposals to help NGOs alleviate the humanitarian disaster. United Way granted funds to 27 NGOs for programs across Hungary to improve the well-being and integration of refugee families, children and young people. The grants were also designed to provide help in critical areas:

- Education access and participation for refugee children and youth.
- Financial stability initiatives for the self-sustainment of refugees.
- Access to adequate healthcare and disease prevention.

United Way Hungary also supports organizations helping refugees with specific needs such as disabilities or enabling young refugees to play competitive sports. More than \$400K has been awarded to Hungarian NGOs registered, including school foundations.

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

<sup>4</sup>Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Hungary: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 4 October 2022

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Make contact information an accessible resource (specifically related to education) for refugees, professionals and organizations working with refugees. There is no easy access to information for refugees and their support organizations. To foster information sharing and encourage collaborations, United Way Hungary has developed a community of the organizations supported.
- Make integration a priority. Integrating school children into Hungarian school systems is difficult, especially for disadvantaged families with significant skills gaps. Social integration is a major challenge for disadvantaged families and limits their ability to lead independent lives.
- Provide resources and/or capacity in the state support system and schools. In Hungary, there does not seem to be any central funding for NGOs that are working on the care and social integration of refugees. United Way Hungary is closing this gap by providing funds for education and development activities.
- Send in-kind-support (furniture and equipment), whether for community spaces, development sessions, or mobile medical clinics.

### WHAT'S NEEDED

United Way Hungary proactively cooperates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with institutions and NGOs that support refugees. Based on our impact learnings, we aspire to collaborate and assist Hungary to develop a transparent, uniform system and procedures for the care, resettlement and integration of refugees.

Unfortunately, the integration of disadvantaged social groups has long been an issue in Hungary, and the presence of disadvantaged refugees only increases resulting social tensions.

Predictability in strategy and funding, financial support for the work of refugee organizations, transparency, and cooperation are crucial challenges to address.



### VOLUNTEERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

United Way has a presence in 1,100 communities across the world, engaging local leaders to solve local problems. Often that involves funding, leading or creating solutions that will work locally, but volunteer power makes a meaningful difference, too.

Gabor Renyi, a retired economist and renowned software developer, has been a member of United Way Hungary's Board of Trustees for 30 years. When the war started in Ukraine, Gabor volunteered for the Crisis Hotline, operated by the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities, which seeks to help refugees from Ukraine regardless of their religious or ethnic background.

As an operator, he took heartbreaking calls every day, while other volunteers connected refugees with local resources to meet their immediate needs – shelter, housing, food, safe transport, and health care.



Once, Gabor had to call an ambulance to a refugee in distress who was in an Airbnb apartment in Budapest, but did not know how to access Hungarian emergency services.

United Way Hungary's support is vital for NGOs that continue their work to meet the needs of refugees and get a bigger picture of the situation. For example, NGOs leveraged their network to connect educators and communities for children to be able to participate in much more targeted development.

No one can do this alone. Refugees need our support. The generosity of volunteers like Gabor reminds us that even during times of war, people are stepping up to help one another.



### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Delivering appropriate assistance, at the right time, to refugees requires a wide range of partners providing a wide range of assistance. Forms of effective assistance include:

- Immediate collaboration to assess needs, response and financial support to partner NGOs and specialized NGOs helping refugees.
- Programmatic support through an open call for proposals.
- In-kind donations wherever needed.



### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 720

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

## 30

psychological support

## 200

housing assistance

## 220

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

### CURRENT STATE

In Spain, more than 145,000 refugees from Ukraine, mostly mothers with children, remain.<sup>5</sup>

At the beginning of the war, United Way Spain launched a campaign to raise funds that were sent to United Way Hungary and United Way Romania, for relief efforts in support of Ukrainian refugees that were crossing their borders. United Way Spain has a history of supporting refugees and migrants and their integration experiences, and understands the importance of funneling support quickly.

But United Way also realized they were seeing an influx of refugees enter Spain that could reach beyond 100,000. They sought to better understand the situation, assess needs and gaps, and start programs and initiatives that could support Ukrainian women and their integration into Spanish life.

United Way Spain connected with the main humanitarian organizations working with Ukrainian refugees in Spain to conduct an in-depth situation analysis. Based on research conclusions, United Way co-designed a program and an intervention plan with the Red Cross, the Cepaim Foundation and the YMCA to help Ukrainian refugees tackle some of their biggest challenges. This included filling gaps left by the government and providing assistance with next steps once refugees leave shelters.

United Way Worldwide's United for Ukraine Fund provided

funds to support this work. United Way Spain collaborated with multiple NGOs specializing in refugee assistance, especially those that manage shelters and homes for Ukrainian refugees in the Spanish government's International Protection Program. This collaboration provided a true needs assessment of the socio-economic situation that drove the design and focus of the program, which will:

- Provide varied interventions and access to professionals (psychologist, social worker, housing experts, learning support for children, Spanish trainers) in different regions of Spain (Castile-Leon, Madrid, Aragon, Andalusia, and Region of Valencia).
- Include engaging activities for adults and children.

### WHAT'S NEEDED

Once refugees arrive in Spain, the government issues automatic work permits and sanitary coverage. They are provided lodging for a few weeks until they can find employment, as they rebuild their life in Spain. This process might seem simple, but language barriers pose real barriers to success. That, along with the lack of contacts or a support system, makes it much more difficult to overcome the challenges.

Access to housing is also a major concern. In Spain, the rental market is one of the smallest in Europe. Pair housing limitations with the stereotypes about refugees and migrants, and it creates a barrier for families to access rentals. For that reason, United Way Spain is designing a nationwide campaign to encourage populations to rent their empty or second homes to refugees, with a call to tear down the walls of discrimination that refugees suffer.

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Provide integration support, including holistic language/education support for families.
- Enable additional government resources and adequate measures.

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

<sup>5</sup> Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Spain: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 2 October 2022

- Create sustainable and accessible housing solutions.
- Actively campaign to eliminate discrimination and the stereotyping of refugees.

### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Throughout the process, United Way Spain identified several gaps in the help offered by institutions, and heard NGOs' concerns that refugee integration support would fade away once government funding ends.

In response, United Way Spain designed a holistic program to support refugees as government resources end. They created an intensive weekly Spanish language program with Ukrainian teachers, volunteers, and collaborators. The program also includes child care so parents can look for jobs or take Spanish lessons, language and homework support for children, career guidance from experts, and psychological support for families.

The experience of Olga and Andreii, who fled to Spain with their three children, illustrates the challenges refugees face. Back home, Andreii had been a civil servant, and the couple had started a small clothing business. But now, they were overwhelmed with how to start all over again – while helping their children adapt.

So they took advantage of the job coaching resources offered, and are now feeling optimistic.

*"I have prepared my CV in Spanish and now I have more possibilities of finding a job in Spain. We are extremely interested in being able to start our own business again, so we are carrying out procedures to find out about self-employment in our new country."*



### NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVED...

# 275

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

## 30

psychological support

## 27

housing assistance

## 250

clothing

## 200

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

### CURRENT STATE

More than 79,000 refugees from Ukraine, mostly mothers with children, remain in the Netherlands.<sup>6</sup>

United Way Netherlands aims to bring about lasting, positive change in Dutch communities by alleviating hardships for vulnerable population groups. United Way has a history of supporting refugees and migrants and integrating them into Dutch society; its last program 'Joining Forces' connects refugees/migrants with isolated elderly through technology.

United Way Netherlands also has the added benefit of the experiences of its CEO, Machiel Salomons, who served as the former Principal Policy Development and Evaluation Officer at United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

When United Way realized the influx of Ukrainian refugees could exceed 100,000, it created the 'Home From Home' program to support Ukrainian women's integration into life in the Netherlands. United Way provided a safe environment, a base in Amsterdam run by Ukrainians for Ukrainians, to welcome refugees during the day and help them rebuild their lives.

Through the program, Ukrainians already in the Netherlands shared their experiences of adapting, and

helped guide recent arrivals. This intentional space let refugees connect with others from their homeland, and reduced loneliness.

In fact, the coordinator of the program is a refugee from Ukraine, with managerial and language skills and knowledge of Dutch culture.

Through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' assessment process, United Way connected with 40+ Ukrainian women to find out what they most needed. As a result, focus areas include:

- Creating an improved space with food and beverage, and TV programs, magazines and books in Ukrainian.
- Bringing in employment, accommodation, and legal specialists to consult.
- Providing child care, psycho-social support, physical activities.
- Providing English and Dutch tutoring, and specifically English for teenagers.
- Providing travel and coverage for unforeseen expenditures.

Needs are evolving but with regular monitoring United Way Netherlands is able to adjust programs as necessary. United Way also established the Ukraine Refugee Women Association, to support growth and awareness of initiatives for refugees. In the future, the hope is to expand the 'Home From Home' model across the Netherlands, and possibly across Europe.

### WHAT'S NEEDED

The livelihood of women refugees is under threat. Most Ukrainian women speak neither English nor Dutch, making it difficult for them to assimilate into the new environment and find work. Lack of housing is a growing concern for long-term stability, as refugees have been accommodated in reception centers or with host families. Some 75% of the available housing inventory for refugees in the Netherlands has already been filled, and the remaining inventory can't house all Ukrainians arriving to the country.

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

<sup>6</sup> Source: UNHCR, UNHCR Netherlands: Ukraine Refugee Situation Update, 30 September 2022

The limited private space and the challenges posed by language and culture limits opportunities to thrive. Beyond shelter and jobs, most of these women have suffered psychological and physical trauma. It is essential that refugees get the support they need, to build up the confidence and capabilities to rebuild their lives.

The number of refugee women signing up to the 'Home From Home' program is increasing daily, and interest has more than doubled. In addition, more municipalities are approaching United Way Netherlands to set up similar programs in their communities. Additional funds will be required to respond to the increasing requests for help in scaling the successful initiative.

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Create sustainable and accessible housing solutions.
- Design holistic programs and safe spaces that empower and enable individuals to thrive.
- Continuously monitor, adjust, and refocus programs by taking the time to periodically speak to program participants and new arrivals, to learn and understand their true situation and socio-economic needs.

### IMPACT TAKEAWAYS

Sometimes, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. United Way Netherlands learned that the assessment methodology (developed by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) was a viable method to conduct a needs assessment of the situation. And by bringing in multiple stakeholders (NGOs, municipalities and refugees), United Way increased efficiency and effectiveness.

Involving Ukrainians living in the Netherlands, with managerial and language skills to coordinate and run programs for Ukrainians, made a big difference. That helped strengthen connections, lessen isolation, and further shared experiences. It's a valuable lesson.



### MENTORING PROGRAM HELPS REFUGEES FIND JOBS

In response to feedback from Home From Home's Ukrainian Women Refugees Association, United Way collaborated with the Tent Partnership for Refugees, a global business network supporting refugees' economic integration, to create a mentoring program aimed at helping Ukrainian women find jobs.

Ukrainian women were matched with mentors from four of the Netherlands' largest global companies. Anastazja Kolcowa, a senior manager and mentor from Adidas, is keen to get involved.

*"I see the mentoring as a great opportunity to engage with refugees who have recently arrived in the Netherlands."*



## THANK YOU

**Across 37 countries and territories, United Ways and our partners in 1,100 communities are working year-round to build stronger, more equitable communities.**

Of course, 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 6.8M people who donate to United Way, and the 1.5M who give their time as volunteers.

**Thank you for what you do every day, and for what you've done by supporting United Way's United for Ukraine Fund.**

Learn more about United Way at [www.unitedway.org](http://www.unitedway.org).





# ADDENDUM

## KEY LEARNINGS

Because United Way works so closely with cross-sector partners, we wanted to lift up key learnings from the United Ways involved in supporting Ukrainian refugees. For governments and NGOs, it might inform future work. For donors and funders, it might give deeper insights into costs incurred for comprehensive refugee support.

### Understand & Assess

- Understand the country origin culture and ways of life to improve services and supports given.
- Bring in specialists and language experts to reduce communication barriers.
- Continuously monitor, adjust and refocus supports, services and programs by taking the time to periodically speak to program participants and new arrivals to learn and understand their true situation and socio-economic needs.
- Actively participate with partners and groups to review the evolving situation, learn and share, and assess decisions and actions that impact those providing services and supports.

### Co-Design & Empower

- Create safe spaces that help refugees to thrive, and facilitate connections with others (especially from the same country) to reduce isolation.
- Provide psychological support for families. Mobilize counselors, specialists and volunteers to support individuals through traumatic and/or life changing experiences.
- Create the necessary infrastructure to strengthen founders from ideation to scale, empower impact startups to achieve greater social impact.
- Co-design holistic programs that are funded and staffed by entrepreneurs and refugees, to ensure the voice/needs of refugees are at the center.

- Connect educators to create programs for children.
- Make integration a priority. Build integration activities, language programs, and employment training.
- Create materials in native languages specifically for children, for parents and others to manage through anxiety and transitions.

### Share Ideas with Governments, Agencies, NGOs

- Advocate for host country governments to extend resources for a longer period of time for refugees in a period of transition and integration.
- Provide legal advice and services.
- Help expedite the process to obtain visas to other countries.
- Make contact information an accessible resource (specifically related to education) for refugees, professionals and organizations working with refugees.
- Provide resources and/or capacity in the state-supported system and schools.
- Provide central funding for NGOs that are working on the care and social integration of refugees, and those supplementing gaps by financing education and development activities.
- Send in-kind support (like furniture and equipment) for sustainability, whether for community spaces, development sessions, or mobile medical clinics.
- Create sustainable and accessible housing solutions.
- Actively campaign to eliminate discrimination and the stereotyping of refugees.