



2023

Ukraine: One Year Later

An Impact Report

Thank You



Since conflict first broke out over a year ago, the Lord has faithfully opened doors for Samaritan's Purse to continue ministering to millions of Ukrainians, meeting the rampant uncertainty in their lives with the steadfast love and hope only found in Jesus Christ. We praise God that **10.9 million Ukrainians have been served in the last year!**

With your generous support and faithful partnership, our emergency response has transitioned to a long-term field office, through which our teams and partners have continued providing medical care, food and clean water, and essential items for the cold winter such as blankets and wood stoves.

"We do not know exactly what our work is going to look like as the months and years go on," shared Ryan Lane, the country director for Samaritan's Purse in Ukraine. **"But our duty, our job is to come here, speak the Word of Christ. How God continues to work here and develop that, that is something we're excited to see."**

Thank you for partnering with us in this vital work, and we pray this report is an encouragement for your heart, and a testament to the Lord's faithfulness.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

— 2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV

Safety Through the Storm

Yulia's Story

When eastern regions of Ukraine were first invaded in March 2022, hundreds of thousands of families fled their homes, frantically seeking shelter in areas to the west untouched by bomb strikes and invasion. However, for many, leaving was either impossible or avoided at all costs—even if that meant subjecting themselves to immense danger.

"I didn't want to leave because it's my country," shared Yulia, a resident of a village in eastern Ukraine. "If I was to die, I would die. God would decide whether I would die or live."

Just before violence broke out in her town, Yulia was diagnosed with gallbladder stones, but was unable to schedule an operation when medical facilities were forced to close. She was left to cope with immense pain from the untreated condition, while also caring for her bedridden husband, who is paralyzed and relied on Yulia for food and assistance.

For months, Yulia and her husband took shelter in a basement with a neighbor, their daughter, and their six-year-old grandson. Constant air raids and bombings roared outside, only increasing their fear and leading Yulia's daughter and grandson to flee for safety. Gradually, the couple's food supply dwindled and their electricity went out.

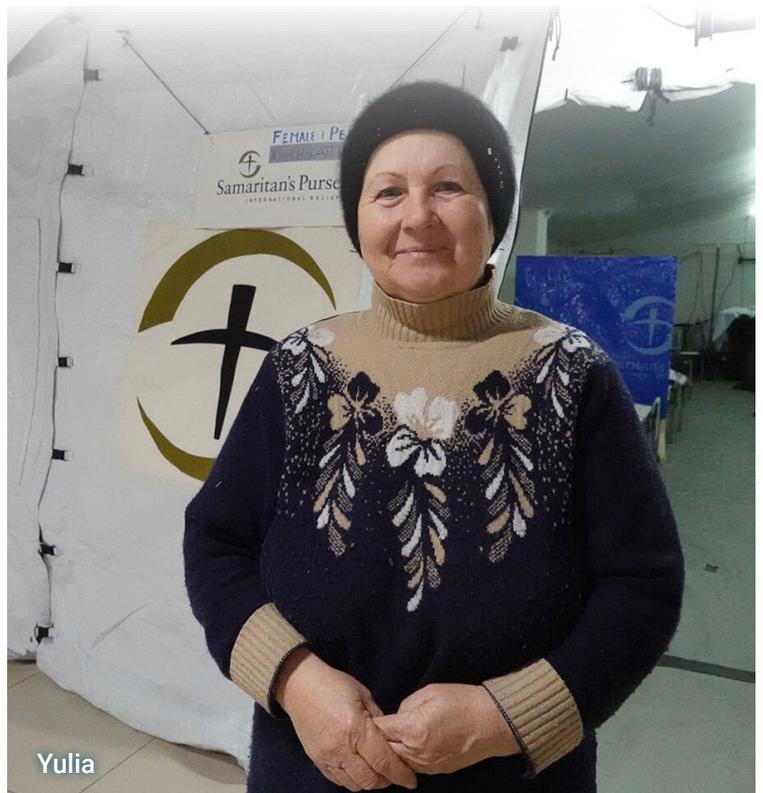
"I didn't know if we would survive. We cried and were afraid. **We asked God to save and protect us so that we could survive the attacks and bombings.**"

Following months of uncertainty and fear, the Lord answered Yulia's prayers. Ukrainian soldiers appeared at her front door and asked to see her identification papers—the region had been liberated from the conflict, and they were free. Overcome by intense relief, Yulia could hardly believe what she was hearing.

When the borders of previously-occupied regions in eastern Ukraine were opened, the world was horrified to see the torture and poor conditions that thousands had endured. Samaritan's Purse immediately deployed teams and an emergency field hospital to provide relief and urgent medical care to communities that had been shut off from the rest of the country.

When she was brought to our emergency field hospital by a local ambulance, Yulia's gallstones had become so painful, she could hardly move or speak. Within only a few hours, she received the desperately-needed surgery—without it, she would have most likely died.

"Your surgeon touched my wound and looked at me closely," she shared. "He showed me his attention. Your nurses here are real sisters of mercy. I have never experienced this kind of care and kindness."



Stepan's Story

Another patient, Stepan*, also chose to remain with his home when his village was occupied by enemy troops. After the region was freed, he was admitted to the field hospital for a broken leg, but had endured much more than physical injury. "I survived the occupation, so I can survive this," he said when asked about his pain.

Stepan had a good life before the war—he had a steady job, a relationship with his girlfriend, and was close to his mother. Once his city was invaded, everything changed. He lost his job, his relationship ended, and he tragically lost his mother to a heart attack.

Stepan was captured soon after, kept in a basement and constantly tortured for information. He lived each day with a dreadful uncertainty looming over him, not knowing if he would survive the day or if the soldiers would decide to kill him. Beyond worrying about whether he would live or die, he also had a severe break in his leg that needed medical attention. After the liberation, Stepan arrived at our emergency field hospital, where he finally received the urgent physical and spiritual care he needed. While his life is forever changed by the war, Stepan also saw the goodness of God through the Samaritan's Purse staff, and witnessed God intervening to save his life. **"I believe that if I survived,"** he said with determination, **"then God gave me a second chance."**

"It hurts sometimes and I really have some struggles, but this life—it's a difficult life. I have to keep moving on...we can't think about the past, we have to think about the future. I have to live, I have to keep moving."

— Stepan, patient

Over the past twelve months, our teams have been presented with countless opportunities to minister to hurting patients with stories like Yulia and Stepan's, all while providing them with critical medical care and life-saving aid. More than 20,000 patients have been admitted, assessed, and treated through two emergency field hospitals and six additional medical clinics that have operated since last March, each having their pain and trauma with genuine care and the hope of the Gospel.

**name changed for security reasons*





“But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’ My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies.”

— Psalm 31:14, ESV

Providing a Lifeline of Support

Before the war, Olga* enjoyed her life in far eastern Ukraine. She hopped the train to a job she enjoyed, and cherished a comfortable home with a small garden out back where she grew beautiful roses and carefully nurtured a prized cherry tree from sapling to maturity. Almost two decades in this small town rooted her to the land and the community.

With a mixture of despair, disgust, and determination, she showed our teams the state of her property. Her beloved home had become a wreck—an empty shell. Her outside kitchen and the adjoining bathroom were reduced to rubble. A missile fragment laid askew atop splintered

beams nearby. Her yard bore the scars of tank tread. Everything that was once beautiful and peaceful were ripped up, torn, and destroyed by conflict.

“When I’m walking here, I’m crying every time, because I don’t have anything, except for this property. I don’t have a family, I don’t have children, I don’t have parents,” she said. “Nothing is left.”

The war stripped Olga of nearly everything. She suddenly had no job and no money. With no car, she had no way to leave her town, and nowhere to go. The town was also going on many months with no electricity and a quickly approaching winter. With permission, Olga has taken refuge in the damaged home of a kind neighbor who fled the violence.

Despite nearly a year of devastating trials, including having to spend two months underground in a cellar turned bomb shelter, Olga never gave up on God or prayer. She would petition to the Lord for help based on Psalm 91:2, *“I will say of the Lord, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust’*. And, she is deeply grateful for the assistance she has received through Samaritan’s Purse.

A Ukrainian church partner in the village has been working tirelessly with the town’s mayor to identify and help those in great need, like Olga. A chaplain regularly delivers Samaritan’s Purse food baskets, including items like rice, pasta, oats, oil, and canned beans. In villages like Olga’s all over Ukraine, over 135 million pounds of food have been delivered.

In addition, we have provided Olga and others with stoves, which can double for warmth and cooking; wood for fuel; and construction materials—all to help them make it through Ukraine’s coldest months.

“Thank you for your support,” Olga said. **“We don’t have any other means to survive.”**



Olga receives a food delivery from Chaplain Danylo

*name changed for security reasons

The situation in this province remains precarious. While the area has been under Ukrainian control since early October, booming artillery exchanges continue and tanks remain on surrounding roads.

“We’ve never had such an opportunity. Today, we have open doors for the Good News, and we have to enter. We see this need, and we want to serve.”

– Chaplain Danylo, ministry partner

Olena, her husband, and two children take shelter in their small underground cellar as soon as they sense danger. With a Samaritan’s Purse stove installed now, she said, “We always keep it warm in case there’s an emergency and we need to hide.”

Alongside more than 3,200 church partners, Samaritan’s Purse teams have continued distributing essential winter items to communities throughout Ukraine, providing families with wooden stoves, blankets, solar lamps, hygiene kits, and tarps to cover bombed out windows and roofs.

Olena’s family is especially thankful this winter for the stove, food, and other help they have received. “In summer, we were okay because of the garden,” she said. But now, with no greens or potatoes left—and no way to work—they live on aid.

A few streets over, Darya and her family are also grateful for the food and a stove provided by Samaritan’s Purse. With temperatures dropping well below freezing, “the stoves are really needed,” Darya said. “Sometimes we’re down in the cellar a very long time; sometimes briefly.”

About 600 people live in the village now, down from more than 2,000 before last February. Most evacuated early on; some have never left. The mayor said 48 civilians were killed in town during the war’s first year. All remaining face the future with some level of dread.



Darya with her wood stove

Another couple in the village, Natalya and Vitaliy, had no intention of leaving their home, where they spent decades of marriage together. Natalya described how they suffered through the ups and downs, but did not flee even when Russians occupied the town and only one aid delivery came this summer. She also said that due to the lack of food, residents typically lost 20 to 60 pounds.

Now food comes more regularly, and the couple also keeps warm with a new stove.

“You [Samaritan’s Purse] have helped us so much,” she said. **“When I receive help from a Christian organization, I think it is precious because we are all Christians here.”**

Hope for the Broken

When she was a little girl in a Ukrainian orphanage, Elizabeth Groff received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox, and recalls her favorite item being a shiny yellow yo-yo. “It represented love. **God used that box to say to me that I was not an orphan—that I was His daughter.**”

Now living in the United States after being adopted years ago, Elizabeth has helped pack thousands of shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, and traveled to help share the very same gift she received with children in her home country.

When the war first broke out in early 2022, teams throughout Ukraine were in the process of distributing gift-filled shoeboxes with Operation Christmas Child. Since

1995, we have established relationships with more than 3,200 churches, something that became a vital part of distributing relief to Ukrainian communities during the conflict.

Church staff and ministry partners continued distributing shoebox gifts as they could, often sharing them in passing with children fleeing their homes with their families.

This year, we are distributing over 400,000 shoebox gifts to children in Ukraine, offering them a tangible representation of God’s love, and will then be invited to participate in the follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey. Children’s ministries throughout the country had to be put on pause due to the conflict, but through these outreach events, children are experiencing a renewed hope and are invited to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ.



Elizabeth giving a shoebox to a Ukrainian girl, Natalya

“When the Gospel is presented, I pray that the hearts of the children were opened, and the seeds of the Gospel were planted. In the midst of war, we know that God is powerful and bigger than all of this.”

- Elizabeth Groff, Operation Christmas Child

In Ukraine...



11,880,668
shoebox gifts
delivered since 1995



1,075,246
children enrolled in The
Greatest Journey since 2011



400,000
children will receive gift-
filled shoeboxes in 2023

In the Last Year...



139 m
pounds of food
distributed



58,606
solar lights
distributed



5,420
wood stoves
distributed



84,716
hygiene kits
distributed



24,389
blankets
distributed



60,998
Bibles
distributed



8
medical sites
since March 2022



42
airlifts with 890 metric
tons of supplies



115
Ukrainian hospitals
resupplied



6,452
healthcare
workers trained



23,612
patients
treated



258
surgeries
performed



20
freshwater
wells drilled



19
community water
filters installed



43.7 m
liters of clean
water produced





After sharing the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus said, "Go and do likewise." That is the mission of Samaritan's Purse—to follow the example of Christ by helping those in need and proclaiming the hope of the Gospel.