



**YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK: CHANGING VETERANS LIVES
THANK YOU AUSTRALIA!**

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL



What is the Crisis Appeal?

By creating a Tax-deductible fund to maximise the impact of donations, the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO), partnered with Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS) and Caritas Ukraine, which together established the Ukraine Crisis Appeal (UCA). To sustain & coordinate humanitarian aid to Ukraine, a portfolio of Humanitarian Aid Initiatives Committee was established under the AFUO.

How does this work?

Rotary Australia World Community Service has accepted the Ukraine Crisis Appeal as a charitable fund and all donations are granted a tax-deductible status. AFUO – Humanitarian Aid Initiatives Committee (HAIC), identify needs, evaluate or develop programs, set define goals, guidelines, KPIs, reporting schedules and check ins for the nominated program. Once satisfied, they advise AFUO & recommend RAWCS release funds to CARITAS UKRAINE who implements the program / or pass on financial support to the nominated program. Caritas Ukraine take financial responsibility for the project, its execution, management and providing regular progress reports back to AFUO - HAIC.

Overview of the Veteran's Program

This program aimed to improve the living conditions of veterans & their families, who were impacted by the Russian-Ukrainian war. Many of these veterans assisted were injured and suffered disability as a result.

With the aim of a holistic care program, an in-depth assessment was completed by Caritas Ukraine qualified case workers to identify each of the Veterans specific needs. These otherwise would not have been fulfilled due to financial circumstances, ineligibility for support from the state, as well as the lack of specialised treatment in their cities or villages.

To further extend the reach of Caritas Ukraine, localized regional offices of Caritas were engaged. They put forward potential Veteran's and their families as candidates for participation in the program, based on the knowledge of the community they have been working with for many years. This allowed for a streamlined, accountable selection process, involving local case managers and social workers expertise. That in turn enabled broad regional scope of the project activities thanks to the active presence of Caritas in many regions including Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Mariupol, Kyiv & Lviv.

The major partners in Ukraine, working with Caritas were Ministry of Veteran Affairs (MVA) and the Center for Social and Psychological Rehabilitation (CSPR).

The project succeeded in providing support and rehabilitation to 24 Veterans, with 52 of their families as indirect beneficiaries, with 36 children among them.

The types of assistance provided includes:

- Health support (diagnostics, treatment) – 5 beneficiaries
- Household support (critical house repairing, thermal insulation, furniture) – 12 beneficiaries
- Livelihood and professional training – 5 beneficiaries
- Goods and services for kids – 4 beneficiaries
- Mental health support (Addressing addictions) – 3 beneficiaries
- Psychosocial support – 2 beneficiaries.

Successes

Free treatment sourced

Caritas Ukraine and the MVA have had a history of good working partnerships, which allowed for the delivery of a more prompt and qualified medical services. Importantly, a number of veterans were able to get access to leading rehabilitation facilities free of charge and without long wait lists. Through ongoing funding, the program has the potential to continue to assist veterans with severe and complicated cases living in rural areas, to gain access to the best specialized rehabilitation facilities for veterans in Ukraine.

Successful partnerships with regional branches

Collaboration with Caritas regional offices on the Veterans program has vastly improved over the last 12 months. A number of regional offices nominated suitable veterans and their families to participate in the project. The regional staff have a more detailed understanding of each family's situation and the specific struggles faced by Veterans, which enables far more specialised assistance.

Media support & Internal Communications Support

As the Ukraine Crisis Appeal – Veterans program developed, a lot of streamlining occurred in monitoring and documenting each veteran's progress. Psychologists specializing in trauma psychology had helped create a list of template questions that became the basis for interviewing Veterans to understand their needs, which were often videotaped. A page dedicated to the Veteran Project and Ukraine Crisis Appeal Initiative (<http://caritas.ua/uca/>) was created on the Caritas Ukraine page. Throughout 2020, stories of progress have been shared on the Caritas Ukraine Facebook page and Website. The following hashtags were launched - the #ветеранськийпроект and #veteranhelppua, which are used when sharing project news.

Challenges

Lack of self-care amongst veterans

There is a culture amongst some veterans of not caring for one's health. This leads to the reluctance to acknowledge that they have serious medical and/or psychological problems that require a full cycle of consultation, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. A constant challenge of the program is to educate veterans and counter the unwillingness to take steps to address ongoing physical and psychological problems.

COVID-19 in Ukraine

The COVID-19 pandemic and required quarantine measures, have caused severe economic consequences. Work opportunities for veterans significantly decreased and remain the main challenge to address in the near future. As a consequence, mental health and psychosocial aspects of Veteran's lives were negatively affected as well.

Veteran programs and support

The Veteran's status is not prioritized as a major issue by the state. As a consequence, the government does not establish programs that could be supported by the business sector and local authorities to fully reintegrate and re-socialize Veterans. Most of the initiatives are being led by civil sector, international donors, particular business brands or local authorities with a large number of veterans within their communities.

Beneficiaries and assistance provided

Yuriy Strilok, 39 & family (wife, 2 children)

Residence – Vyshneve, Kyiv region

(Partner organizations - Center for Social and Psychological Rehabilitation (CSPR), Boyarka, Kyiv region

Yuriy's Rehabilitation was impeded by extremely harsh & cramped living conditions in a 40sq.m apartment, where the families of the veteran and his sister are living. Three adults and six children live in the apartment. This led to the decision to upgrade critical elements in the

apartment, including the bathroom, toilet and completing general repairs. Some additional storage units and furniture was also acquired. Thanks to these much-needed improvements, the Veteran and his family are doing much better psychologically. In addition, Yuriy has also now has found steady employment thanks to the program, and is able to contribute to society & look after his family.

Olexandr, 51 & family (wife, 5 children), 1st disability group

Residence - Mangush, Donetsk region

(Partner Organizations - Caritas Mariupol, Ministry of Veteran Affairs (MVA))

This was one of the most challenging cases, because of the Veteran's extensive disabilities. His injuries included amputation of both legs, explosive and fragmental injury to the whole body and a mild brain injury. Not only does this impact his health, but his ability to provide for his family. There have been immediate building improvements to support the veteran and family in their current accommodation, and much needed furniture provided for the children. Additionally, legal support was provided to help find new housing suitable for a large family, now also facing the challenge of special needs. In terms of the Veteran's health & the potential complications that can arise with his injury, the program has ensured he is undergoing regular checkups, and attending various rehabilitation courses.



Anatoliy , 41 & family (wife, 2 children), 1st disability group

Residence – Sumy

(Partner organizations - Center for Social and Psychological Rehabilitation (CSPR), Boyarka, Kyiv region)

Anatoliy became a double amputee, losing both his legs after being caught in an explosion during the war. To assist with both his continued mental and physical recovery, he received some basic fitness equipment where he could continue to undertake rehabilitation.

Recently, Anatoliy's second child was born, and he says by staying fit using the equipment, he hopes to be a role model for his children and fellow Veterans.

Vitaliy Skarzheniuk, 49 & family (wife, 2 children, 1 child with special needs, Down syndrome)

Residence – Boyarka

(Partner organizations - Center for Social and Psychological Rehabilitation (CSPR), Boyarka, Kyiv region)

Vitaliy and his family, which includes a child with special needs (Down Syndrome), were residing in a cramped apartment with his wife's parents. In light of this and the stress which can arise, thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal critical work was undertaken at the family home to vastly improve living conditions. In addition, the child with Down Syndrome was able to attend specifically design developmental classes, to ensure the child would be ready for primary education.

Olexandr Gurinenko, 34 & family (wife, 1 child)

Residence – village of Zahirje, Kyiv region

(Partner organizations - CSPR, Boyarka, Kyiv region)

Olexandr's case is an example of collaboration between multiple partners, including the Ministry of Veteran Affairs and local Clinical Science and Psychopathology Research CSPR psychologists. The veteran had been neglecting his health while focusing on improving accommodation for his family. By collaborating with the Ministry of Veteran Affairs, Caritas ensured he undertook a necessary medical evaluation and a 3-week intensive rehabilitation course at a military hospital. This was in addition to funding the needed home repair work with the assistance of family and friends. The project team, together with CSPR's (Center for Social and Psychological Rehabilitation) psychologists, worked with the veteran and agreed on an approach whereby the purchase of building materials would only begin after he had taken real steps in his treatment. Moreover, the Veteran's daughter suffering from anxiety was sponsored to attend a summer camp, the family received building materials for much needed fixes in the Veteran's home, after he completed his rehabilitation.

***Vitaliy Shevchenko, 38 & family (wife, 3 kids), 2nd disability group
Kuznichenko Valeriy, 45 & family (wife, 2 kids), 1st disability group
Rehabilitation in Georgia***

Residence – Kharkiv

(Partner organizations - CF Caritas Kharkiv)

Both of these Veterans Vitaliy and Valeriy, suffered injuries that caused disability, and as a result are experiencing additional health issues. Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, both veterans received physical therapy, rehabilitation and mental health support. This was undertaken at the Georgian Sanatorium "Kolkhida" which was chosen for its suitable climate

and specialised health practitioners. The veteran's wives also accompanied them to the treatment centre as carers, to assist them during the rehabilitation programs.

Moving forward they both plan to undertake further education to improve employment prospects, and currently are undertaking repair work at home.



Vitaliy Migunov, 40 (1 child)

Residence – Merefa, Kharkiv region

(Partner organizations - CF Caritas Kharkiv)

This veteran's support involved undertaking critical repairs and maintenance inside his rural home, which was restricting his ability to rehabilitate effectively. Sadly, their limited income also had to be spent on Vitaliy's wife's illness.

Additionally, Vitaliy lost four months of truck driving work due to COVID-19 lockdown measures. Thankfully he has now started returning to work on a limited basis.

Valentyna Mykhailiuk, 61 (mother of 3 servicemen, one fallen)

Residence – Yakovlivka village, Kharkiv region

(Partner organizations - CF Caritas Kharkiv)

Valentyna tragically lost a son to the war, she now lives alone and has health problems.

Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal she received a month of treatment from a specialised rehabilitation center to treat her cardiovascular issues. She is now making great progress with her health & attempting to improve her living conditions through applying to local authorities.



Olexandr Darmoros, 35 & family (wife, 1 child), 1st disability group

Residence – Khmelnytskyi city (Partner Organization - MVA)

This veteran is an example of a successful reintegration into a productive occupation after a very serious injury. Olexandr started his own business in providing wellness massage services, which supports his family while providing vital services to other veterans. He combines massage sessions with communication and psychological work, thus implementing what is commonly called peer-to-peer veterans support services. He provides his services to fellow Veterans as well as the general public.

Olexander's case for support was put forward by the Ministry of Veteran Affairs on the basis of a case study in social reintegration and personal development. Together with the MVA, Caritas undertook the purchase of a vacuum massager, which will allow Olexander to perform massage more efficiently and expand the scope of his business.



Taras Vasylyshyn, 45 & family (wife, 3 children, 2 of them have disabilities)

Spouse - Kosheva Gulnora.

Residence – Zaporizhzhia city (Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhya CF)

A challenge in this case is that the veteran was charged with the death of a soldier as a result of an incident that occurred while on duty. Prior to this, the veteran had suffered concussion as a result of a combat injury. Defending the veteran in court exhausted the finances of the family and he was convicted and imprisoned. The wife and 3 children were living in extremely poor conditions, two children have disabilities and the eldest has given birth to a granddaughter.

His wife participated in social cohesion groups run by Caritas Zaporizhzhia. She is a volunteer seamstress. Her oldest daughter also has a seamstress qualification. In order to

support social reintegration and self-sufficiency, the Ukraine Crisis Appeal funded the purchase of sewing equipment and some necessary furniture for the children (beds and wardrobes). The family can now support itself. It is hoped that Taras will return home in two years.

Volodymyr Petrov, 40 & family (wife, 2 children), 3rd disability group

Residence - Malokaterinovka, Zaporizhzhia region

(Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF)

Volodymyr and his family live in a rural area. Their house needed critical repair works, so they had decent living conditions for their children & to improve his ability to rehabilitate. Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, the needed building materials were acquired. Volodymyr is also taking his first steps to become a psychosocial counselor for his fellow Veterans. There is a high demand for these services amongst Veterans.

Mykhailo Yekhlakov, 40 & family (wife, 1 child)

Residence – Berdyansk city, Zaporizhzhia region

(Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF)

Due to limited income, this Veteran requested a tablet/ipad be purchased to assist their child who is suffering from cancer. Now, the family is raising money for a bone marrow transplant treatment. Mykhailo still continues military service on a contract base.

A group of blind veterans

Igor Sakhniy, 33. 1a disability group

Residence – Zaporizhzhia city

(Partner organizations - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF, MVA)

Oleg Mamoshyn, 46. 1a disability group

Residence - Berdyansk city, Zaporizhzhia region

(Partner organizations - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF, MVA)

Following a 2-week program where blind veterans undertook a basic social orientation course, more specific training. thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal smartphones and computers specifically designed for visually impaired people were purchased. As well, a training program was provided to train them to use computers and mobile phone applications adapted for the blind. The training and equipment will enable the veteran to reintegrate into the workplace & society. Continued monitoring has also shown that both veterans have significantly improved their mental health and ability to interact with others.



Veterans suffering addiction injuries

Eugene, 47

Taras, 26

Yuriy, 31

*The place of rehabilitation – Dobrivliany village, Lviv region
(Partner Organization - Caritas Drohobych CF, Nazareth Rehab Center)*

These three veterans suffered from alcohol and substance abuse after injury & what they witnessed on the frontlines. Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, Eugene, Taras and Yuriy all got the necessary therapy and rehabilitation needed at Nazareth Rehabilitation Centre, so they could overcome their addictions. Yuriy and Eugen completed the program and have secured the jobs, while Taras received further mental health support via a psychologist, and has started transitioning from being in the center to living more independently. He also is interested in training to support other addicted veterans.



Galyna Gurska, 26. widow (2 children)

*Living place – village of Uluchne, Lviv region
(Partner Organization - Caritas Drohobych CF)*

Galyna's husband was a veteran, but passed away after returning from battle, which meant she was not entitled to any payments from the state as widow. Due to conflict, the grieving family was not allowed to reside in the Veteran's mothers house, where they lived before. Thanks to the collaboration of the project team, village council and local diocese, accommodation was secured for Galyna and her two young children.

Yakymets Vasyl, 45 & family (wife, 3 children), 3rd disability group

Living place – Lviv

(Partner Organization - Caritas Lviv CF)

Due to limited income at the time and Vasyl's immediate concern for providing for his family, funds were used to purchase much needed furniture for their children. Vasyl has now transitioned into a steady job. He also regularly visits treatment facilities for veterans to manage his symptoms and prevent further health issues, due to the traumatic brain injury he has from the war.

Kalashnikov Maksym, 42 & family (wife, 3 children), applied for 3rd disability group

Living place – Lviv

(Partner Organization - Caritas Lviv CF)

Maksym required specific advocacy support, as he suffered several concussions in the war zone, which were not officially registered. This means he is not automatically classified with the higher needs disability group, and thus would not access certain state support initiatives. Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, he is now undergoing the testing needed for a diagnosis to register within the 3rd disability group. Caritas Lviv has also provided support to his children with a variety of initiatives.

Oleg Koval, 42 & family (wife, 3 children, 1 has a disability)

Kamianske city, Dnipropetrovsk region

(Partner Organization - Caritas Kamianske CF)

The veteran's family has 3 children, one of whom has a disability and is on home schooling. Their home suffered significant damage as a result of a fire and subsequent water damage. An agreement was made to assist with renovation. The first phase of repair work is currently underway.

Kyrylo Zolotaryov, 37 & family (wife, 1 child), 2nd disability group

Residence – Kharkiv city

(Partner Organization - Caritas Kharkiv CF)

This veteran suffered serious bullet wounds & injury that required numerous surgeries and prosthetics. He has a strong desire to rehabilitate himself and become an IT specialist and take care of his own family. In consultation with colleagues from CF Caritas Kharkiv, the program agreed to fund specialised training in IT programming, culminating in an international IT certificate, which will open up a new career trajectory. Kyrylo and his family also received building materials to properly insulate their home to improve living conditions (especially during the extremes of winter and summer), and reduce living costs.

Oleksii Krasnoschoka, 43 & family (1 child), 3rd disability group

Residence - Kamianske city, Dnipropetrovska oblast

(Partner organization - Caritas Kamianske CF)

Oleksii's family were living in a house with a severely damaged roofing system. It was a health hazard, as it was leaking which caused mold growth and deterioration of the walls and floor. Thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, building materials were acquired to undertake repairs and ensure the house was safe and not a danger to the Veteran's health or his families.

How you can help & continue making a difference

This report concludes all of stage one supports for this set of Veterans. In order to continue this work and begin stage two, we need more donations.

By donating, you will enable other deserving Ukraine's veterans access to similar rehabilitation and supports that they desperately need. Please help change their and their families lives.

Donate to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, even the smallest donation will make a difference.

TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

Go to ukrainecrisisappeal.org to make a contribution.

TO MAKE A NON TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

Contribute via Bank Transfer:

BSB: 704235 ACCOUNT: 00015958 ACCOUNT NAME: AFUO U-HELP

Or

Contact your local representative

Understandably at this time, there may be financial constraints preventing you from making a donation. In lieu of donations, please help us raise awareness about the Ukraine Crisis Appeal, by sharing this report via email and sharing our social media posts.