



SECOND STAGE FUNDING

# UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Interim report on  
Assistance to Veterans and their Families



## Executive Summary

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In the first six months, the project focused mainly on finding and selecting candidates for assistance, establishing the necessary contacts and understanding the types of assistance needed. The first report can be read here <http://www.ozeukes.com/community/crisisappeal-funding-report/>

The second half of the year has been fundamentally about implementation, monitoring and reassessing priorities where required. Developing tools of engagement, refinement of candidate evaluation and strengthening assistance networks has been pursued.

Adopting assessment methodologies from other humanitarian projects, an approach has been developed that allows the progress of the program to be monitored according to established measures. This includes baseline surveys, the collection of photos and videos and interviews.

Recommendations have also been made on how to further help traumatised veterans still undergoing treatment for injuries.

Below is a summarized update on each candidate and their families who are receiving help, thanks to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal. As well as links to live interviews of these veterans

## ONGOING CHALLENGES OF THE PROJECT

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### *Lack of self-care amongst veterans*

There is a culture amongst some veterans of not caring for one's health. This leads to a 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. Many cannot refit their homes to a standard required for their disabilities and rather than undergo expensive rehabilitation programs would prefer assistance to improve the poor living conditions of their families (in some cases whom have children with disabilities) as well as themselves. Acknowledging this, we have approved some home renovation/rehabilitation projects conditional on commencement of the recommended medical programs.

## ***COVID-19 in Ukraine***

2) The COVID-19 pandemic has led Caritas regional branches to a remote mode of operation, reduced mobility, suspension or restriction of activities. Several veterans' projects are currently on hold.

## **SUCCESS / PROJECT PROSPECTS**

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### ***Free treatment sourced***

There have been numerous instances of successful collaboration between Caritas Ukraine and the Ministry of Veteran Affairs, which have facilitated the delivery of a more holistic solution encompassing medical services and reintegration to society. Importantly, a number of veterans were able to get access to leading rehabilitation facilities for combat veterans free of charge and without long waiting 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.

### ***Voluntary Labour***

Where living conditions were identified as a priority for the veteran and his family well being, UCA covered the cost of materials but the Veteran, called upon other able veterans and family to assist in completing these modifications.

### ***Synergy with other Caritas Ukraine projects***

Collaboration with Caritas regional offices on the Veterans program has vastly improved over the last 12 months. Some of these regional offices have selected and nominated suitable veterans and their families to participate in the project. The regional staff now have a far more detailed understanding of each family's situation and specific veteran issues. This enables far more specific and effective assistance.

### ***Cost efficiency of resources***

Increasingly, Caritas has been effective in using networks (Ministry of Veteran Affairs, Hospitals, Local and Regional Councils) and negotiation skills to assist veterans without the need to expend project funds.

Unfortunately, at the time of Caritas writing the report, a complete change in leadership of the Ministry of Veteran Affairs (MVA) has occurred. Fortunately, the project does not depend on the MVA directly, but will now need to rebuild its networks with the new ministry.

### ***Promotion of National Language and sovereignty***

Of note, is the fact that the Manager of the project, Oleksii, reports that he has been able to move around and conduct activities and negotiations in the East of Ukraine speaking Ukrainian rather than Russian and encourages his team to do the same.

### **Media support & Internal Communications Support**

As the Ukraine Crisis Appeal – Veterans program has developed, a lot of streamlining has occurred in monitoring and documenting each veteran's progress. Psychologists specialising in trauma psychology have helped create a list of questions that have become the basis for interviewing, which is 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. Those stories, showing the progress of assistance from start to finish, have recently been published on the official Facebook page of Caritas Ukraine. The following hashtags were launched - the #ветеранськийпроект and #veteranhelpua, which are accompanied by project news.

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## **PRIORITIES identified by Caritas**

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Looking ahead to the future, below are 7 priorities which will help shape the next steps undertaken by the Ukraine Crisis Appeal Veteran program.

1. There is a desire to increase focus on regions with low socio-economic indicators. Caritas hopes to work more extensively with the local authorities in those regions most affected by the Russo-Ukrainian war, especially as these authorities are not able to offer social, economic or medical programs for proper support of veterans.
2. To strengthen communications activity including profiling of the veterans' project progress through the resources of Caritas Ukraine, thus better enabling the ability of the program to request private donations, apply for grants and more.
3. Engagement of regional Caritas branches located in smaller cities and towns to access rural veterans who have more acute problems, and no access to the resources needed for rehabilitation.
4. Collaboration with CETA Ukraine program (Free Psychological Support for Veterans and family members) of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, which, with the support of USAID, started conducting studies of veterans' families in 3 regions (Kyiv, Zaporozhye, Kharkiv). Develop synergies of the CETA program with Veterans' project capabilities.
5. Further development of collaboration with public veterans' organizations, uniting internally displaced veterans (veterans whose homes remain in the occupied territory).

6. The formation of a photo exhibition as part of another CU's project titled "Linking people for peacebuilding: from healing to cooperation". The photo exhibition will contain a veteran block, with the on-going exposition held in Ukraine and in Australia to continue to raise awareness of the veteran's plight and struggles
7. Providing health safety for veterans with injuries as part of COVID-19 response measures. Injured and disabled veterans are especially vulnerable to coronavirus. The aim is to provide them and their families with suitable PPE (personal protective equipment).

## **Beneficiaries and assistance provided**

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### ***Olexander (wife, 5 children), 1<sup>st</sup> disability group***

*Residence - Mangush, Donetsk region*

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

This is one of the most challenging cases, because of extensive disabilities. His injuries included amputation of both legs, explosive and fragmental injury to the whole body and a mild brain injury. There have been immediate building improvements to support the veteran and family in their current accommodation. Additionally, legal support has been provided to help find new housing suitable for a large family, now also with the challenge of special needs.

### ***Yuriy (wife, 2 children)***

*Residence – Vyshneve, Kyiv region*

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

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.

### ***Olexandr (wife, 1 child)***

*Residence – village of Zahirje, Kyiv region*

*(Partner organizations - CSPR, Boyarka, Kyiv region)*

A prime example of good cooperation with the Ministry of Veteran Affairs. The veteran had been neglecting his health while focusing on improving his accommodation for his family. By collaborating with the MVA, 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.

### **Vitaliy (wife, 1 child)**

*Residence – Merefá, Kharkiv region  
(Partner organizations - CF Caritas Kharkiv)*

Rehabilitation was being hampered by poor domestic living conditions. The project focused on upgrading the bathroom and kitchen and has now been completed.

### **Olexander (wife, 1 child)**

*1<sup>st</sup> Disability Group, vision loss, shrapnel, left limb amputation  
Residence – Khmelnytskyi city (Partner Organization - MVA)*

This veteran is an example of a successful reintegration into a productive occupation after a very serious injury. Oleksandr 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.

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 (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 already 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.

The 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, Caritas purchased sewing equipment and some necessary furniture for the children (beds and wardrobes). The family can now support itself.

### **Volodymyr (wife, 2 children)**

*3rd disability group  
Residence - Malokaterinovka, Zaporizhzhia region  
(Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF)*

Rehabilitation was being hampered by poor domestic living conditions. The project focused on upgrading an apartment and has now been completed.

### **Myhaylo & family (wife, 1 child)**

*Residence – Berdyansk city, Zaporizhzhia region  
(Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF)*

This veteran requested support for his child with cancer, by purchasing a child's tablet/ipad device. Currently, the family is raising money to perform a bone marrow transplant for their baby.

### **A group of blind veterans**

#### **Igor, 1a disability group**

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

#### **Oleg, 1a disability group**

*Residence - Berdyansk city, Zaporizhzhia region  
(Partner organization - Caritas Zaporizhzhia CF)*

Following a 2-week program where blind veterans undertook a basic social orientation course, more specific training was organised. The following training allowed them to learn using computers and mobile phone applications adapted for the blind. Caritas also purchased smartphones and computers specifically designed for visually impaired people. The training and equipment will enable the veteran to reintegrate into the workplace & society.

### **Veterans suffering addiction injuries**

**Eugene**

**Taras**

**Yuriy**

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

After completing a rehabilitation course lasting 9 months, Eugene successfully got a job in Hungary and temporarily went to work there. Yuriy found a job at a glass factory in Lviv and has moved there. Taras continues his rehabilitation at the center & he receives additional services from a psychologist.

**Galina, widow (2 children)**

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

This case involves supporting a widow to acquire accommodation. In February, Caritas met with the head of the Uluchne village council to discuss the situation of Galina. A deputy of the Drohobych District Council was also present at the meeting.

The question of co-financing the purchase of a house, by the district council, the village council and the Veteran project was put forward. The case is extremely complex but worthwhile as it may provide a solution for a veteran's widow and two young children. Local authorities budget committees are expected to render a decision on funding soon

### ***Oleg & 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 & family (wife, 1 child), 2<sup>nd</sup> disability group***

*Residence – Kharkiv city  
(Partner Organization - Caritas Kharkiv CF)*

This veteran suffered serious bullet wounds 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 specialized training in IT programming, culminating in an international IT certificate.

### ***Maxym & family (wife, 2 young children)***

*Residence – Kharkiv city  
(Partner Organization - Caritas Kharkiv CF)*

### ***Alexey & family (1 child), 3<sup>rd</sup> disability group***

*Residence - Kamianske city, Dnipropetrovska oblast  
(Partner organization - Caritas Kamianske CF)*

An assessment of the specific needs of these veterans is currently pending, due to quarantine restrictions in place, due to COVID-19 response measures in Ukraine.



## Further resources

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Below are links to videos which includes some veterans who were beneficiaries of the project, and them discussing how much the Crisis Appeal funding has helped them.

Training for Blind Veterans:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cxm3yZJ\\_fjKP4hw6yWMCrLXmQhmZPdV1/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cxm3yZJ_fjKP4hw6yWMCrLXmQhmZPdV1/view?usp=sharing)

Veterans who attended the Rehabilitation Centre:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Fqz3bR8vIEjnu6Gt8xKS6cHkbC-dniJ/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zGjzzCavOd34PXKebhWcPTIzRleqS3gr/view?usp=sharing>

Veteran who got a business running

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HbZba3MnJVr9311Li0q2fQ2xKVPLcsy9/view?usp=sharing>

## How you can help & continue making a difference.

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***Please continue to donate to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal.***

*TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION*

*Go to [ukrainecrisisappeal.org](http://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.*