

# THE UKRAINE CRISIS IS A CHILD RIGHTS CRISIS

## What can business do for children and their families?

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine poses an immediate threat to the lives and well-being of the country's 7.5 million children and is displacing a growing number of them from their homes. Children have been killed, wounded, uprooted and severely distressed by the escalating violence all around them. Hundreds of thousands of children and their families have been internally displaced and, to-date, over one million forced to flee the country in search of safety—the majority are women and children. Amongst those fleeing, many are unaccompanied children or have been separated from their parents or family members. As this crisis evolves, many more are expected to be displaced in the coming days and months.



© UNICEF/UN0599229/Moldovan—Valeria arrived in Romania on Monday, 28 February 2022, from Khmelnytskyi Region in Ukraine

The operating environment in Ukraine has become extremely complex, and humanitarian needs are rapidly multiplying both inside Ukraine and in refugee hosting countries. Access constraints, clashes, shelling and air strikes and rapidly changing front lines are affecting civilians and damaging civilian infrastructure, posing significant challenges to UNICEF and partners in delivering critical life-saving services to vulnerable children and their communities. In response, UNICEF is scaling up its humanitarian response, with priority focus on child protection, health, WASH, nutrition, learning, cash interventions and social protection efforts. UNICEF is also coordinating with refugee hosting countries to prepare and respond to the humanitarian needs emerging from population movements. UNICEF is working to support over 3.5 million people, including 2.2 million children affected by this crisis.

Support from the international community is urgently needed to provide the following services:

- > **Child protection services, psychosocial support** and the creation of 'Blue Dot' safe spaces for mothers and children for critical support to and information for children and families on the move.
- > **Cash transfers** to support vulnerable households with children, and to meet a broad range of financial needs
- > **Provision of water and sanitation** facilities in shelters, and re-establishment of water trucking where infrastructure is damaged

- > **Resume learning** for displaced children and children on the move, and support for temporary enrolment of children in local education facilities and within safe learning spaces
- > **Support the ongoing polio outbreak response**, increase COVID-19 vaccination rates, and prevention of a measles outbreak
- > Resumption of **health and nutrition services** in local health facilities, including primary healthcare in communities and through mobile health teams. Additional support will include the provision of health supplies and procurement and safe delivery of essential vaccines.

Given the scale of needs and complexity of the crisis, UNICEF calls on companies to consider these areas of support.

## 1. Donate critical funds needed to provide key services for children

**UNICEF is calling for US\$349 million** to scale up its efforts in the next three months to respond to the growing humanitarian needs across Ukraine and surrounding countries. Providing financial support is the most effective way in which business can enable the rapid provision of life-saving products and services for affected children and their families

**Contributions-in-kind** are currently not being accepted. Whilst hugely appreciated and very well intentioned, offers of contributions-in-kind add complexity and risk management, which UNICEF cannot afford in this challenging situation. If your company is interested in supporting UNICEF, please contact [corporate-partnerships@unicef.org](mailto:corporate-partnerships@unicef.org).

### Examples for how companies are giving:

- > **Mobilize your customers:** Companies can support UNICEF by mobilizing their customer base. Apple and UNICEF launched a global appeal for the children of Ukraine reaching millions of customers on [Apple's homepage](#), Apple TV, Apple Music, Apple Books, the App Store, Podcasts, and online news sites.
- > **Engage your staff:** Companies can unite employees during crisis by engaging them in giving programmes, which can also be matched by the company. UNICEF has a mechanism to set up a company Global Giving Page for employees all over the world to support UNICEF's response in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.
- > **Direct company grant:** Grants are the fastest way to accelerate UNICEF's emergency efforts. Recent examples include [the LEGO Foundation](#) and [Pandora](#) that made public announcements on their decision to take action and support UNICEF. Depending on the level of support, UNICEF offers a variety of recognition opportunities.

## 2. Raise awareness and advocate with business peers on what can be done

Businesses can play a key role in raising awareness on the need to protect children at all times, and can call for peers to support efforts to provide critical services for children and their families. Companies and business leaders can use their influence, reach and channels to promote the following messages on social media and internal and external websites to rally the business community:

## Sample messages:

- > The Ukraine crisis is a child rights crisis. We join [UNICEF](#) in calling for an immediate cease-fire and remind all parties of their international obligations to protect children from harm, and to ensure that humanitarian actors can safely and quickly reach children in need.
- > No child should grow up in fear and darkness or be forced to hide in basements. Children need to be kept out of the line of fire and we join [UNICEF](#) in calling on all parties to abide by their obligations to keep children safe.
- > The situation of the 7.5 million children caught up in the conflict in Ukraine is deteriorating by the minute. Children are being killed and wounded. The children and families on the move in and outside of Ukraine are in need of urgent support and protection. We join [UNICEF](#) in calling on all parties to abide by their obligations to keep children safe.
- > The Ukraine crisis is a child rights crisis. They urgently need access to protection, learning, health, water, sanitation and other critical services. [Support UNICEF](#) to scale up life-saving support for children and their families and to prevent further deterioration of their welfare in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.
- > The conflict in Ukraine poses an immediate and growing threat to the lives and well-being of the country's 7.5 million children. [UNICEF is also scaling up its response](#) to meet the urgent needs of children and families crossing into neighbouring countries. These efforts include setting up 'Blue Dot' safe spaces along transit routes for children and mothers to access services
- > More than ever, children are disproportionately represented among refugees seeking safety from the escalating crisis in Ukraine. We must be ready to meet their specific needs. Help [UNICEF](#) provide life-saving support.
- > UNICEF and its partners are working 24 hours a day to meet rapidly escalating humanitarian needs in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries—from trucking in safe water for drinking and hygiene, providing emergency medical services, and providing shelter and protection for those displaced from their homes. Here is how you can [Support UNICEF](#)



© UNICEF/UN0599199/Golichenko—On 28 February 2022, 7-year-old Elvira rests in an air-raid shelter in Lviv, western Ukraine

Video/photos/content for sharing: [Video, Ukraine families on the move](#); [Video, UNICEF distributing supplies](#); [Girl in shelter in Lviv](#); [Girl with her dog at Moldova border](#); [Girl after arrival in Romania](#)

Follow UNICEF on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)

### 3. Act to support employees and suppliers and their families in Ukraine and surrounding countries

Businesses that have an operational presence in the conflicted areas can provide direct support for their employees, suppliers and their families by:

- > Checking that staff and their families are safe and move them to safety, if possible.
- > Sending relief assistance to employees and their families, prioritizing the children of the most affected employees.
- > Continuing to pay salaries so that employees' children do not become vulnerable.
- > Granting special leave to parents or caregivers to ensure their children are safe and are located, if separated.
- > Reaching out to affected employees to understand what support they need, and proactively share available mental health resources to employees
- > Where and when possible, ensuring market availability and accessibility of essential goods.
- > Maintaining affordable prices of products and services despite the crisis or shortage of supply, so it does not reduce the disposable income and deprive families from accessing products that are essential for their well-being.

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