

Ukraine Response

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) has a long history of humanitarian and development programming in Eastern Europe, beginning in the early 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. With strong partner relations across the region, particularly within the network of the Orthodox Church, and a portfolio of humanitarian response in Poland, Romania, Ukraine, and the western Balkans, IOCC is uniquely positioned to serve the millions now in need across the region as a result of the conflict in Ukraine.



With its Church partner in Poland, IOCC has distributed emergency items to Ukrainian refugees in need, to shelters, and to families hosting new arrivals.

Background

The conflict in Ukraine has greatly affected the civilian population through the destruction of infrastructure and has forced people to flee their homes in what has become one of the largest displacements of people in Europe on record. According to UNHCR, as of August 2023, more than 5.8 million refugees from Ukraine were registered across Europe, having fled seeking safety, protection, and assistance in neighboring countries. An additional 5 million people are estimated to be internally displaced inside Ukraine. UNOCHA estimated that 17.6 million people would need humanitarian assistance and protection in 2023. Women and children, persons with disabilities or serious medical conditions, as well as older persons and

minority groups have increasingly faced barriers in accessing critical services such as transportation, food products, medicines, fuels, and emergency health care in impacted areas. Humanitarian conditions have deteriorated as the conflict has continued, with growing needs especially in southern and eastern Ukraine and wide-scale disruptions to all forms of security and livelihoods.

The global response strategy has brought together the UN, NGOs, and local partners, focusing on humanitarian aid in Ukraine and assistance to host-nations including accommodation support, refugee registration, and humanitarian protection services.



IOCC's immediate response to the humanitarian emergency included meeting the basic needs of Ukrainians seeking safety in Romania. Here, donors, volunteers, and clergy worked a welcome station organized by Church partners near a border crossing.

Key Priorities

IOCC has identified the following key priorities for response that tie directly to global coalition and UNHCR strategies:

- **Humanitarian support for people inside Ukraine**, including emergency supplies and shelter
- **Assistance for refugees** in Moldova, Poland, and Romania, and for the institutions and individuals hosting them
- **Protection services** for women and children, including shelter and accompanying social services
- **Psychosocial support** for IDPs, refugees, and caregivers to respond to the needs of those affected by crisis and trauma

IOCC Response

Under its humanitarian imperative, IOCC and its local partners serve all people in need, without discrimination, and no program is exclusive to members of the Orthodox Church. In targeted communities, staff, social workers, and volunteers coordinate all outreach efforts with local government and coordinating authorities to identify people who need assistance based on each activity's criteria and to prevent duplication of efforts.



Ukraine

Fully registered and operational in Ukraine, IOCC has worked since March 2022 with local partners including the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and its social assistance arm, Eleos Ukraine, to meet emergency needs. As the conflict continues, the portfolio has expanded to also address longer-term needs. IOCC has implemented or is implementing the following activities:

Humanitarian assistance

- Through IOCC support of the Dnipro IDP center, run by local partner Eleos Ukraine, 85,000 IDPs have received food and nonfood humanitarian kits.
- With local partner Slavic Heart, IOCC provided transport vehicles to evacuate stranded civilians from Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv regions to safe accommodation in Dnipro and Dnipropetrovsk.
- In eastern Ukraine, IOCC worked with Slavic Heart to provide food, water, medicine, heating fuel, hygiene, and essential bedding supplies in Sviatohirsk and neighboring cities of the Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv regions.
- IOCC provided medical equipment to a cardiology hospital in Zakarpattia that serves tens of thousands, including IDPs.
- IOCC provided food, water, medicine, hygiene items, and essential bedding supplies in Lviv, Lutsk, Rivne, and Uzhhorod to displaced persons and to families and institutions accommodating them.

Shelter and Protection

- IOCC and Eleos Ukraine are renovating a community center in the Chernivtsi region into a safe accommodation center for 80 women and children, and provided accompanying services (social assistance, pastoral care, psychological and legal counseling, employment assistance, children's programs, etc.).



- Working with Eleos Ukraine, IOCC is repairing 200 apartments in Bucha and Irpin that were damaged in the conflict. With UMCOR support, IOCC also funded Eleos Ukraine's purchase of a building to be renovated as a shelter for displaced women and those fleeing domestic violence.
- Working with six dioceses, IOCC provided food and nonfood items, household appliances and other humanitarian support to shelters across the country. One diocese also received IOCC funding to prepare and serve hot meals to displaced people and others in need.

Psychosocial support

- With its long history providing psychosocial support in times of crisis, IOCC worked with Eleos Ukraine to train a corps of Ukrainian Orthodox Church clergy and psychologists in care and counseling in crisis situations, as well as in self-care for caregivers. Additional cohorts are in the pipeline. Annually, these trainees provide mental health and psychosocial support consultations to 1,000 IDPs in 10 regions.
- IOCC programming provided psychologist-led group therapy sessions for IDPs in 6 regions, with 1,100 IDPs participating.
- General social services such as medical care, legal advice, and IDP registration have served 1,000 IDPs in eastern and western Ukraine.



Eleos Ukraine



Through IOCC's Romania partner Federation Filantropia, IOCC support stocked a warehouse in Moldova, where local partner Diaconia has distributed basics to refugees from Ukraine.

Moldova

Working through the network of Romania Church partner Federation Filantropia, IOCC has coordinated with Association Diaconia in Moldova to serve both Ukrainian refugees and local residents in need beginning in March 2022. IOCC has implemented or is implementing the following activities:

- Distribution of food and nonfood items for Ukrainian refugees and Moldovan households in need and to 32 eldercare centers, serving in all more than 3,400 adults and 1,900 children in March 2022.
- Providing essential winter items in 2023, including winter coats and shoes, to more than 550 Ukrainian refugee children and Moldovan children in need. IOCC also supplied 120 Ukrainian refugee children with tablet computers so they could participate in online learning, and funded the purchase and installation of a refrigerator at a Church-run warehouse, ensuring safe food storage for the facility, which serves about 300 refugees per month.



THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, IOCC continued its projects around the world while taking steps to protect staff, partners, and beneficiaries. All projects are continuously evaluated for multiple risk factors, and appropriate modifications made. IOCC ensures that all staff and beneficiaries receive information about COVID-19, including testing locations, and integrates this information into ongoing projects, as indicated by local health authorities.



Poland

Registered in Poland, IOCC is included in the Regional Refugee Response Plan for the Ukraine situation, led by UNHCR. IOCC and local partner Eleos Poland are providing assistance to refugees and host families throughout the country, with a particular focus on small towns where opportunities for refugees are limited. In coordination with Polish authorities and Eleos Poland, IOCC is implementing or has implemented the following activities:

- **Humanitarian assistance**

IOCC provided regular distribution of commodities to 1,500 refugees in accommodation shelters in Jableczna, Stanisławów, Sokołowsko, Białystok, and Warsaw. Additionally, IOCC provided 900 families with cash assistance, primarily women with children and elderly persons. Hundreds of refugees and host families received household support packages that included food, toiletries, baby care items, and household cleaning supplies. An IOCC-funded information hotline connects refugees with legal advice, job placement, health-care, and other practical services.

- **Educational and livelihood assistance**

IOCC purchased laptops and established 26 online learning rooms in accommodation centers so school-age Ukrainians could continue their studies remotely. IOCC has also supported Polish language courses for refugees in 25 language centers across the country, serving about 1,000 refugees to enable them to better integrate into society and the labor market.





Romania

A Romanian-registered NGO, IOCC has had a strong operational presence in Romania since 2000. In that time, IOCC has provided critical aid during times of natural disaster and crisis as well as long-term health and development programs. Now, working closely with local partner Federation Filantropia, IOCC is implementing or has implemented the following activities:

- **Support for displaced Ukrainians travelling to neighboring countries**

IOCC provided vehicles for daily transportation for refugees from the Siret and Sighetu Marmatei border to pre-identified safe accommodation or onward transport hubs. IOCC also provided transportation for refugees who are accommodated with host families to essential shopping and services.

- **Humanitarian assistance for refugees**

IOCC delivers grocery vouchers and commodities to refugees in accommodation centers and living with host families and institutions, serving thousands of refugees. In addition, the Romanian Orthodox Church has enlisted numerous families to provide temporary accommodation for Ukrainian refugees.



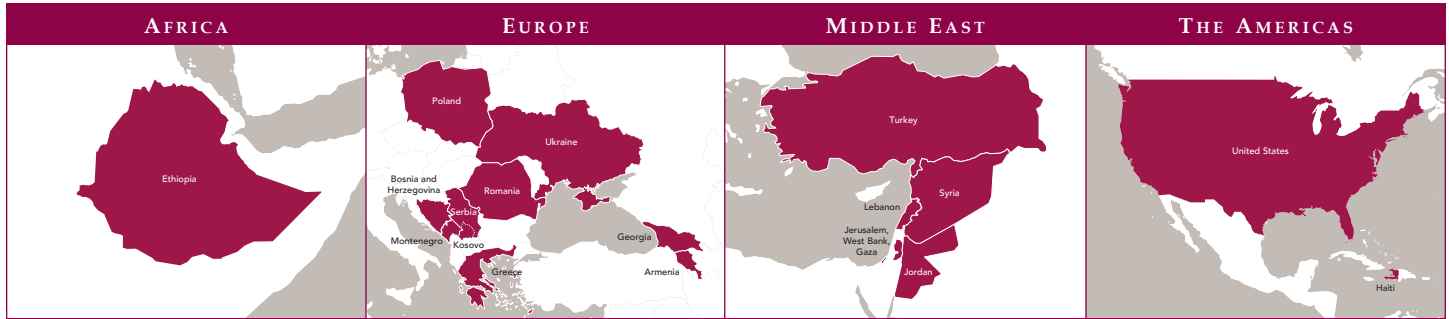
- **Protection for refugee women and children**

In Romania, IOCC and Federation Filantropia are working with the Romanian National Agency against Trafficking in Persons to train, certify, and register volunteers who work with refugees. This important protection initiative is helping to prevent human trafficking of refugees and provides training for volunteers and clergy in child safeguarding.

- **Psychosocial support**

As refugees settle into Romania for an unknown length of time, there exists an increasing unmet need for emotional and spiritual counseling both for refugees and for those who care for and assist them. With its long history providing psychosocial support in times of crisis to support them, IOCC has trained multiple cohorts of Romanian Orthodox Church clergy and social workers in the specific modalities of care and counseling in crisis situations and has provided training in self-care for caregivers.

Active Worldwide Programs



- Ethiopia
- Armenia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Georgia
- Greece
- Montenegro
- Poland
- Romania
- Serbia including Kosovo
- Ukraine
- Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Syria
- Turkey
- Haiti
- United States



● Emergency Preparedness & Response	150,044
● Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene (WASH).....	40,362
● Sustainable Livelihoods.....	2,869
● Food Security & Agriculture.....	129,203
● Health	607,594
● Other (Education, Nonfood Items, Shelter, Protection)	2,917

IN 2023, IOCC SERVED 932,989 PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

IOCC was established in 1992 and is the official humanitarian organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States. IOCC provides emergency relief and development assistance to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church and local NGO and community partners. Its global operations are managed from its headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States, with field offices in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, East Africa, and the US. Since its founding, IOCC has distributed more than \$800 million worth of aid in over 60 countries around the world, and has extensive experience implementing programs in partnership with United States government agencies (USAID, BHA, PRM) and the United Nations (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, OCHA), as well as with European and international donors.



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