

# News from Moldova & the Ukraine Crisis

christian  
response  
to  
eastern  
europe



We have all seen the traumatic images on the television of families crossing the border into safety, frequently leaving the menfolk behind to fight. These images burned painfully in our minds



Refugees continue to enter Moldova from the Ukraine. This image is from the far south-east of Moldova on the border with the Ukraine, just look at the lights on the line of cars waiting in the queue. The light from the shelling in Odessa can be seen on the horizon

The numbers entering Moldova are huge however many are fearful Moldova will be the next on Vladimir Putin's list. Many refugees intend to transit Moldova seeking sanctuary in Romania, part of the European Union, or beyond but need shelter and food in the interim.

It is heartwarming to see the ordinary people in Moldova who have so little willingly opening their homes and hearts and share their meagre provisions. To welcome those fleeing the bombs and missiles, to feed, provide beds and comfort.

As a charity we are supporting an increasing number of families. We will continue to monitor the ever-moving situation and try to respond accordingly. In the last few days, we have sent out substantial amounts of money to help feed and clothe the refugees and support the families who have accommodated them.

We would have liked to show photos of some of the families we help but they are reluctant in fear their families still in Ukraine may be punished if Russia succeeds. They are terrified and we want to respect their privacy. They have enough to contend with without us taking photos.

There are many Russian speaking Moldovans who



only watch or listen to the Russian media. For some time, we have been monitoring a lot of this news, or more accurately propaganda. It is all very convincing and believable and may be the only source of information some hear. We feel it is important to understand why some may feel this invasion is justifiable. Fortunately for those with access to the Internet or who watch Moldovan Romanian television they can see the truth.

Our fantastic team at our store in Exmouth and the wonderful supporters who have been so generous has enabled us to arrange our next Humanitarian Aid Truck which we hope to load around the 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Not only do we have to arrange the truck but also must plan everything properly to comply with all the UK, EU, and Moldovan customs regulations. It is very easy to rush and allow enthusiasm and emotions to take over but then we could hit so many problems enroute with the risk the truck would have to return

with its load. Under normal circumstances we send one truck before planning the next however, we are already collecting for the next truck to be sent soon.

We can look at the magnitude of the war; the might of Russia; the power of the missiles and bombs and feel we can do nothing. This is not our attitude and never has been. There have been so many obstacles over thirty-two years that could have stopped our work, so many reasons not to carry on but we have and will continue to do so.

There are thousands of families we have helped over these years who are very grateful we persevered. It is so important to remember what we are trying to achieve. In global terms it may be only in a small way but has made a huge difference in the areas in which we work.

We have said so many times how blessed we are and with each jumper or pair of trousers, each toy, every wheelchair, and every box of food carries a message of love. This may sound soppy but it is so important. Letting them know they are not alone; telling ordinary people, families that they matter, they matter enough that individuals in another country spend their time and money trying to help.

Despite the horrors in the Ukraine, we must not abandon those in Moldova, our Soup Kitchens and those who have a daily fight for survival.

Just a couple of weeks ago we were helping families in Chiperceni who are really struggling. Families who had not eaten for three days the children eating only when they came to our Soup Kitchen.



Marcel (8)

Andrei (12)

Valeriu (13)

These are just three of the children we see at our Soup Kitchen in Chiperceni. Here they have an opportunity to have food, play games and tell us of their problems so we can see if we can help. The work in all our Soup Kitchens is so important and despite the terrible needs for the people of Ukraine we must not forget others in Moldova.

There are so many lovely families working so very hard but achieving very little. Year after year toiling in the fields but just scraping survival. So many so desperate.

Whilst wanting to maintain our Soup Kitchens we have taken the difficult decision to temporarily close the one in Chiperceni and use it to house two more Ukrainian families feeling from the war.



Our young friends and colleagues, volunteers, Dima and Nastya were at the border and found two mothers with young children and nowhere to go. Ludmilla is a 27-year-old mother with two young children. The other family, Caterinca has two children, Kosteia age nine and two-year-old Mirabăla. We are delighted we can help but it comes at a cost, not only financial but what shall we do with the children who normally come?

If the weather is dry, we can have the children in the garden, this will be good, especially for the children of these families and they will have other children to play with. This will distract them, even if only for a few hours, from the reality of their lives, being parted from their fathers, away from home, their friends and all they find familiar.

Tragically, many Russians have been the recipients of continual propaganda, and many believe they are liberating Russian families from the oppression and killings that they have been told was commonplace in the east of Ukraine. Most Russians are the victims of years of fake news.

Many people both young and old, with the knowledge and access to the Internet are learning most of what they have been told is untrue. Those who are bold enough gather in overt demonstrations against this war, and some more subtly.



Prices at home in the UK will increase. Life will be increasingly difficult for so many families. - Bearing all this in mind, should you feel able to help us financially it would allow us to do that little bit more. Every little really does make a difference. We are a voluntary charity, with no paid staff, so can use your money for others and not on salaries, pensions, offices etc.



Of your donation will go to aid

## Christian Response

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