

Autumn 2022

christian
response
to
eastern
europe



What a year it has been. With Covid restrictions finally being lifted our thoughts were turning to our next step for cr2ee. During the pandemic we had been unable to send any aid trucks out to Moldova but with Spring on our doorstep we saw the opportunity to start collecting goods to send.

Then disaster struck when Russia invaded Ukraine. Apart from the devastating loss of life in Ukraine the invasion impacted on Moldova, being a neighbour with close links to the Ukraine. It was extremely worrying as part of Moldova is still occupied by Russian forces, would they be next? Ukrainian refugees started flooding over the border, with little food for themselves the Moldovans now had a huge number of refugees to find food, clothing and housing for. We had to help.

Moldova at 'breaking point' after taking in more than 300,000 Ukrainian refugees



Ukrainian refugees take shelter in a sports hall in Chisinau, Moldova's capital | CREDIT: GIL COHEN-MAGEN /AFP/Getty Images

So started a manic six months. A huge number of people rose to the challenge and donations came flooding in; clothing, bedding, food, medical aids and medicine as well as financial contributions. Within days our store in Exmouth was full but others stepped in and found additional storage space all across Devon.

The generosity of you all was amazing but our special thanks have to go to our fantastic team of volunteers in Exmouth. For many what was usually an occasional day a month turned into a full-time job, opening the store to receive goods, sorting and packing everything ready to send.

So far this year we have sent five articulated lorries each carrying 14 tonnes of aid, (and for those who help load they can tell you this is no small amount)! In addition to which we have sent £87,000 to support the Ukrainian refugees.

What Next?

Christmas! Yes, it's coming and we will be collecting shoeboxes to send, both for the Moldovan children and the Ukrainian refugees. We know times are tough here too but if you are able to get together with a group and fill a shoebox with lots of lovely new things, that would be fantastic. This is likely to be the only present the Moldovan children will receive and although Ukraine was wealthier the refugees have lost everything and many are totally reliant on support.



The future.

Sadly the war in Ukraine doesn't look like ending any time soon and people continue to be displaced and seeking refuge elsewhere. The need is still great and we will be looking to support them and Moldova during this time. On top of which we will continue with our plans for the additional soup kitchen and to support those already giving vital food and shelter.

We are indebted to all the supporters who donate financially to enable cr2ee to fund the soup kitchens, summer camps and all our other projects. There is still a tremendous amount of work to be done and your support in this struggle would be wonderful.



Many things have changed since the start of the war. When Russia first invaded, they attacked by land from the North and East and from the sea in the South. Being attacked from all angles by such a powerful aggressor understandably caused panic; many fled during the first weeks of the conflict but it was difficult to obtain fuel with very long queues and a 20 litre limit, a very dark and scary time.

Six months have passed and Ukraine has shown great courage and fought fearlessly against the power and might of the Russian forces. There is a strange sense of normality away from the fighting with families and people going about their day. Factories remain closed as are theatres, cinemas and other centres of entertainment, but shops and most offices are open as normal and fuel is readily available now.

Parents fear for their children's safety when schools reopen after the summer break. There are so many horror stories about the Russian forces violence against civilians, evidence of what may be considered war crimes, that they fear schools may well be a target and are therefore reluctant to send their children back.

In stark contrast to Moldova, the harvest in Ukraine looks

good, vast fields of sunflowers and wheat stretch to the horizon.

Huge silos await the convoy of tractors laden with grain, however, as we all know, Russian hostilities are preventing much of this harvest leaving the "breadbasket of the world".



Vinnitsia is a city on the Southern Buh River in central Ukraine. It is the administrative centre for the region but has little industry and is of no military importance, nevertheless on the 14th July was the victim of missile attacks as part of Russia's attempt to terrify Ukrainians into submission by spreading panic and fear. I thank God I left the city the day before this attack but nowhere in Ukraine is safe.

The city is relatively central in this huge country and is where our aid trucks go as the aid can more easily be distributed to where it is most needed.



Thought to be a comparatively safe place, there are hundreds of internal refugees seeking safety in the city, nearly 1,000 displaced families. So many have lost everything, their homes, belongings, jobs, only memories remain. These families are sheltering in schools, kindergartens, unfinished buildings etc. all temporary measures. With the schools due to return in September the problem is critical as they will have nowhere to shelter and winter approaches.

This is Bogdan with his wife Oksana and their eight-year-old daughter Angelena. They used to live in Odessa.



They were awoken at five in the morning and were terrified to see and hear missiles overhead. Their building shook as it was hit by a missile. After one hour of sustained bombardment they decided to flee whilst Russian fighter jets were still flying overhead.

The next 24 hours the family were in sheer panic as they fled in their car. They had to make a 200 km detour to avoid the fighting and were praying that they had sufficient fuel.

Having successfully escaped the bombing and fighting to arrive in Western Ukraine the very difficult decision had to be reached, do they leave Ukraine for safety in another country or stay? Bogdan cannot leave the Ukraine but his wife and child would be allowed.

It was agreed Oksana and Angelena would flee the war so they boarded a train for Poland. The train was so full of refugees, women and children, they had to sit on their luggage for all the journey as there were no vacant seats.

Eight-year-old Angelina told me she was very frightened but also a bit excited about going to another country for the first time. She remembers how everyone around her was crying.

Understandably the family hated being apart and, thinking that the war would be over soon, in early July felt it would be safe to return to central Ukraine, to Vinnytsia where they could be together. Two weeks later Vinnytsia was attacked! Although safe for now this family live in constant fear.

Mark and Marianna were in the city for different reasons.

Mark and Marianna are from the north, from Cherihow, a city only 25 miles from Belarus and 40 miles from Russia.

The photo below shows their house before the war and then after the bombing. They have lost everything.



They had a good life before the war and were happy. However, Marianna had had problems with her eyes and before the conflict she'd been diagnosed with a cancerous tumour in her head, affecting her sight. She also has four lumps in her breast though they believe these are benign.

Before the war she was having tests every month. Since the onset of the war they have been in various parts of the country seeking medical help but finding help during this war is very difficult. Finding somewhere safe where ongoing tests can be carried out is almost impossible. They are understandably very worried about the future.



Fighter Jets overhead



One of many checkpoints

For the internal refugees, the ones who choose to stay in Ukraine, life is very difficult; not only have they lost everything but temporary accommodation is very difficult to find.

Initially they can go to one of the welcoming centres, albeit there are only a few, often just a tent. But here they can rest, have something to eat and drink, a chance to catch breath.



Frustratingly, the next hurdle is paperwork. Emotions may be running high but everyone has to be registered.



Once registered clothing and other essentials can be collected from the store and temporary arrangements made. Most accommodation is only temporary and much of this is not particularly comfortable. There are so many families but little accommodation.

Having food in your stomach and a roof over your head is great, but what next? The uncertainty must haunt them every day.

We spoke with many helpers as well as refugee families. A lot of these families live in schools but the children return in September, what will happen then? There are so many displaced families with nowhere to go.



One of the rooms accommodating several families

Everyone we met was an absolute delight; wonderful people doing superb work under the most difficult of circumstances. Impossible challenges and horrifying stories from the internal refugees.



Typically, a family's possessions would consist on what they could carry

Whilst we were at the welcoming tent, I was approached by a refugee who wanted to thank us profusely for all the help we have given. I felt somewhat embarrassed as we've only sent two trucks and a limited amount of money to this region. Her intervention did however fill me with enthusiasm and the determination to help more.



Medicines and sleeping bags being taken for the soldiers on the front line



Our trucks carry a huge amount of aid but finding clothes of the correct size for specific individuals is a challenge. You can see from the photo (above and left) the queues of refugees seeking help.

It is so difficult to distribute everything in a way to preserve the dignity of those who have lost so much but we do our best.



Refugees desperately searching for clothing and shoes to fit

The photo below shows just a small section of the queue of lorries waiting to leave Ukraine and enter the EEC in Romania. This queue will take four or five days to clear. Our loyal driver Zamfir has had to sit in this queue with temperatures approaching 40 degrees! He tells us he is willing to do this as he sees first-hand the importance of our work.





The Eastern City of Kryvyi Rih is the birthplace of Volodymyr Zelensky, the former comedian and actor, now the world-famous president of Ukraine. Kryvyi Rih is also the steel heart of Ukraine and the industrial steel hub of the country. The city is dominated by the factories and furnaces now silenced by the war. Usually the city is bathed in a dark red blanket of pollution.

Lying in the east of Ukraine the city is close to the battlefield in the Melitopol and Kherson regions and many residents justifiably feel anxious. Walking around the city on a warm summer's evening it is difficult to comprehend the front line is so close.



The city centre could hardly be described as bustling but people try to live as normal a life as possible. Many offices, shops and cafés are open, though not busy.

The main buildings have sandbags to protect them and flats and many residential homes



have clear tape over the windows in an attempt to prevent flying glass in the event of attack.



Many young couples spend valuable time together before the men return to the front line. The people of Ukraine are fighting gallantly against a giant of an enemy, returning to the front line against such an aggressor must be terrifying to say the least.

For those left behind there is not only the constant fear of missile attack but also the worry for loved ones fighting for their country.

Mothers have to make the agonizing decision to stay near their husband or seek sanctuary and safety with their children in another European country.

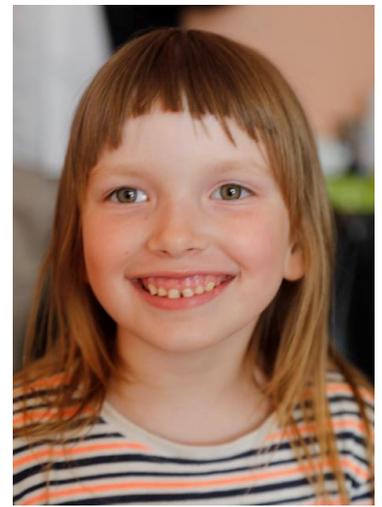
Having seen and witnessed the surreal normality of life in a country at war reality returned with a bump, or should I say a shout. Shortly after 4:00am I awoke to the scream of the Air Raid siren.

Having quickly dressed I then realized I had no idea what to do next! To leave the building I could be showered in debris if a missile struck any of the nearby buildings, If I stayed where I was there could be no escape. I decided it would be safer to stay where I was so I returned to bed.

I had only myself to consider, I wondered what would be going on in my head if I were here with my children or grandchildren. How could any parent become used to this, day after day?



This happy face hides the sadness in her heart. Six-year-old Nastya lost all her toys when they escaped the fighting. Her beloved teddy left in the horrors of the home she loved. What must be going on in her head having witnessed all she has?



At the moment Nastea lives with her elder disabled sister Iulianna age 9 and her parents Victor and Natalia. Victor is a retired miner. They live with many other families in a school but they will have to move before the new term starts at the beginning of September.

There are many families in a similar situation, they have lost everything and have nowhere to go.

Imagine living in a quiet village, a village of no importance and hearing explosions, attacks on domestic houses.



Unexploded ordnance may have saved the total destruction of this home, but for how long?



This war is not just the Russian army against Ukrainian forces but is a war of terror frequently against innocent civilians; women and children included.

Others may cautiously look out of their window and see the terrifying ZZ on the side of the vehicle outside - too late to leave now but what future under Mr. Putin's regime?



It is impossible not to dwell on the unimaginable stories of rape, torture and murder retold by so many who have witnessed the actions of the occupying forces.

Putting these fears aside, others in the village have different problems, not fear of rape or murder but how to survive injuries received though the bombing and shelling.



This family were living peacefully and working in the village; grandparents, children and grandchildren all getting on with their lives; until the invasion.

This is mum Natasha with her beautiful little daughter Marina.





Marina is the innocent victim of Mr. Putin's war. Rather than playing with dolls and thinking of school Marina is struggling to come to terms with her life-changing injuries.

From the day your baby is born, you know life will undoubtedly send challenges their way; you will teach them about sharing, help with homework and guide them through quarrels with friends. But what parent could ever imagine they'd have to explain to their daughter that because of a man's desperate grasp for more power she lost a leg? Her mother, pushing her own war wounds to one side, trying to comfort her child through the agony and emotional distress of learning to live without one of their limbs.



Hospitals, especially those near the front-line, are overrun with casualties and frequently lack the essential supplies normally associated with hospitals. The surgeons and doctors, although dedicated and very hard working often lack the expertise in dealing with the injuries of war.

All this unnecessary suffering, only in existence because of war. And whilst watching their daughter being so much braver than a child should ever have to be, they know it is not only the physical injuries they must overcome. For the rest of their life they will be haunted by the memories of these awful events. Harrowing memories that no amount of love and care can ever erase. A mother powerless to protect her own child from a war they shouldn't have to be exposed to.

Seeing and speaking with so many internally displaced families, (these are just a few), is upsetting. Frequently stories being retold with broken voices and tears. In many cases words were not necessary to experience the hatred that is growing.

It was the day after I left Vinnytsia that Russian missiles attacked the shopping centre of this beautiful city, killing men, women and children.

Following this attack a good friend, a lovely gentle man, who is one of the pastors, said to me, "*in my favorite beautiful city of Vinnytsia that was bombed by the Russian terrorist, "orks". there are at least 22 casualties and 90 injured, including women, children and even babies. Praying for God's judgment upon them*". Very sadly, he went on to say, "*For me there is no such a term as "good Russian" any more. If you look at their comments of what has happened in Vinnytsia, they rejoice of children's deaths.*". He has seen their comments on social media, people in Russia celebrating the death and destruction in Ukraine.



The featureless faces of the sunflowers seemingly looking quizzical as we headed west towards Moldova in the fading light of the day, wondering if we will ever return. Hour after hour, field after field, we make our way home to Moldova.

The long journey gave time for reflection, a time to think about all the lovely people I met and the tragic stories I heard.

Unimaginable horrors - what has turned young Russian men into barbaric torturers, rapists and murderers?



Moldova



It is so important not to forget the dreadful situation that prevails in Moldova and has done so for many years. Moldova remains the poorest country in Europe and with the lack of meaningfully paid employment and an absolutely disastrous harvest, with increasing gas, electric and food prices, the prospects for the coming winter are terrifying.

Harvest – What Harvest!

Even the flies seemed to be affected and hate the scorching temperatures and parched earth in Moldova this summer. The long dry spell in Moldova, and indeed in most of Europe, has had a devastating effect on this year's harvest.



Months of no rain have seen lakes and streams dry up, decimated fields of stunted sunflowers which are barely knee height with flower heads so tiny.

Sunflowers are a very important crop producing much needed sunflower oil.



The maize crop has also largely failed. Maize, usually prolific and the foundation of food for the animals not to mention a basic and filling ingredient of Mămăliga, a traditional porridge eaten by most families, especially in the villages. This year the crop is pathetically small and generally useless. At this time of the year the bright yellow corn-cobs should be bursting from the stems as in previous years, but not this year.

This is a disaster as families rely on maize not only for their food, but importantly to feed the hens, ducks, geese etc and other animals. Now much is not even worth the effort of harvesting and at best will just be cut to the ground, stalks and all and used for cattle feed. How they will feed their chickens etc. is an unknown challenge. The fear is they will not be able to keep them over the winter. These birds may become food for today, but there will be nothing for tomorrow. Autumn is normally a time to celebrate the harvest, the reward for all the year's hard work. However, all the toil and sweat this year has been for nothing.

For many here in the United Kingdom this winter will be horrendous but at least we have various agencies who can help, Food Banks and importantly the NHS. There is nothing like this in Moldova.

Putting the appalling harvest to one side, in Moldova, as with the rest of the world, the price of electricity, gas and fuel has skyrocketed and become unaffordable.

For so many families with children this is very worrying but for the elderly and alone living in uninsulated houses the prospect of the forthcoming winter with little food and no electricity or heating is terrifying.

Unless friends or family are able to help there is no safety net. The reality is people in Moldova will die this winter from the cold, lack of food or the inability to get medical help.



A typical early morning routine for a family in the village

The chorus of the cockerel announces the early start of the day, sleepy headed children appear one by one moving slowly and seemingly awakening on the move. Their drowsy eyes barely able to cope with the early-morning tasks.

Typically, the younger children look after the birds; the chickens, ducks etc. They feed them, make certain there is water, and collect the eggs.

Meanwhile dad, or one of the older children will milk the cow and do heavier work.



Whilst all this is going on mum will be at the stove making breakfast, she may have gathered some tomatoes and cucumbers from the garden to go with the eggs the children bring.

By the time breakfast is ready everybody is awake and ready for the day's work ahead, there is always a lot to do. Children to school and adults to the fields.

For the elderly, the day may start in a similar way however many may not have children to help them therefore, despite the aches and pains, the work still has to be done and they will have to do it all.

This is Eugenia Rabadă she is 89, very very old for someone in Moldova where life expectancy is about ten years less than here in the UK.

We send money regularly to our friend Boris who brings her food as well as biscuits which she loves. She has no pension and no family. Unfortunately, she has a very ulcerated and painful leg, wrapped in old bandages.

Without friends and neighbours, she would not survive. She has so much that she should be worried about but her main concern is who will pay for and conduct her funeral.





Emilia Midrigan lives in the village of Chiperceni and is blind, she was saying she is aged 88 but she cannot really remember!

Her son lives with her but is not a terribly good or kind person. He works in the village but only has a very small income.

Emilia used to receive a pension from Russia but this stopped since the war began so she has to rely on her son.

When we visited, the only “food” Emilia had had in the previous two days was two cups of coffee; there was no proper food in the house.

There are so many examples of elderly people who survive despite all the odds, men and women. Neighbours share all they can afford and help in practical ways, fetching water from the well etc..

Alexi is another example. He has had a hard life, is blind in one eye and lives alone. Three and a half years ago, during the bitter winter, Alexi was working outside. His shoes were old and not suitable to fight the cold and snow, but he had no alternative. Sadly, he continued to work despite freezing feet. Both feet were affected resulting in the Moldovan doctor’s decision to amputate. With no feet and blind in one eye he struggles to live on his meagre pension of just £90 per month. The price of food and clothing is similar to here in the UK.



His house is in need of repair and in his kitchen area he manages to prepare



some simple food but really struggles, especially in the summer as Alexi has no fridge therefore cannot store food.

Village houses generally have no running water and the toilet is outside, usually



just a hole in a wooden floor over a pit. This can be a real challenge to the leg muscles and for Alexi, with no feet, even more difficult.

He relies on friends and neighbours to help with food and clothing. The village is very poor but nevertheless they share what they can.

After several days of fairly stressful activity, it was a delight to go down to Chiperceni in central Moldova and see the children at our soup kitchen having a good time. Fun and games in the very hot summer sunshine.

It is extremely hot in Moldova during the summer months and joining in at the summer camps is a fantastic distraction from the horrors in Ukraine and the grinding hardships many in Moldova are forced to endure daily. It always amazes me how the children find the energy in such oppressive heat to play so enthusiastically in all the games. What it is to be young!



Summer camps are a wonderful opportunity for children to escape the reality of their lives and just spend the days having fun, playing games, and most importantly, making new memories, memories of happy days that may fade a little over time, but will last a lifetime.

Rather than feeding the animals and tending the crops in the garden their imaginations can take them anywhere they wish.



From princesses in fairy castles to knights brandishing swords fighting bravely to save them.



It may be for only a few hours but there are many children who, for a few days every week, attend one of our Soup Kitchens where again they can relish in being a child as well as enjoying a good meal.



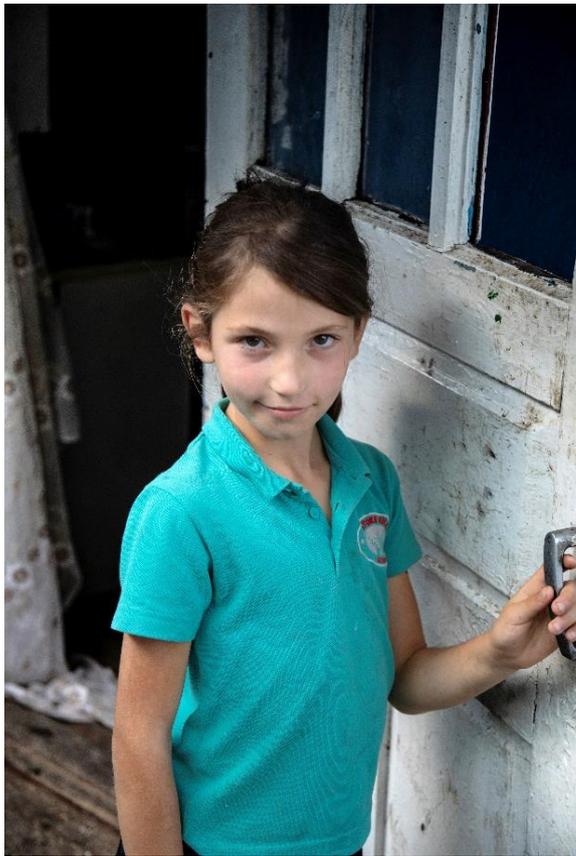
The games are varied and some very messy. Water often features in a variety of ways but the outcome is usually the same, everyone gets wet!



The food we provide is the best we can afford but it is not only the food and fun that welcomes the children. Seeing them regularly and building up trust allows them to share their troubles, troubles and problems we may be able to help with.

There are so many families in great need in Moldova, we cannot support them all but in our Soup Kitchens we can feed, clothe and help these children in other ways. The children can also be the gateway to identify other problems within their family where we may be able to help. With so many families we try to identify those with the greatest needs where we can offer some assistance.





You will agree, Nastea does not look like Oliver Twist in any way but sadly there are certain similarities .

This is Nastea, she is a slim eight-year-old who lives with her mother and young sister in a village.

Nastea's father is a drunk and does not like the idea of working for a living. He was also violent towards her mother. After many years of suffering they left the house they shared with their father and now mum and the children have a different home, however it is in the same village.

Unfortunately her drunken father who lives close by still sees the children. Nastea is often taken by her father to help him burgle. As she is very slim and small for her age he takes her to various houses to find a small window that can be opened and pushes his little daughter through. He has taught her how to find things of value and pass them back to him.

Nastea's mother wants to move far away, to a different region of Moldova to start a new life and protect her children from their father but is understandable nervous moving to a new village where she will not know anyone.

Alcohol is a very common addiction in Moldova and a curse for so many blameless children who have to suffer the consequences.

These children are innocent but unless we help they will be the victim of their upbringing. By supporting them and showing we care they can blossom and become responsible adults leading a meaningful life, or we can turn our backs and hope for the best!

There are so many families in need just through the grinding poverty so prolific in Moldova. Some try to escape the reality of their grim life through the effects of alcohol; home-made vodka is very popular; the ingredients mean it is cheap to make and many people distil it.

Schools will restart in September after the three-month summer break. For many, as in the UK, this is a very expensive time. Schools expect the pupils to look smart and parents have to buy clothes and shoes, but unlike here they also have to give money to schools at the beginning of the new school year. Frequently this is not affordable.

Parents want their children to go to school. In the villages, where almost everyone is poor, those who have no smart clothes or cannot pay are in the majority. However, in the city, it is quite different and those from poor families can easily be identified and children suffer condemnation as a result.

We have been fortunate to be supported by Thomas Moore in Exeter who have donated a huge amount of new school uniforms, and have also had generous donations of uniforms from Exeter School. All of which we have taken to help these children.





Vasily was only eight years old when we first met him. To cut a long story short, the previous year he was playing in the electricity transformer in his village. Inevitably he was electrocuted.

He survived but received bad burns, especially to his arms. Rather than dealing with the burns the doctors amputated both his arms.

The operation was not done well and he had limited use from the residual limbs. cr2ee brought him to England where some wonderful doctors and specialists gave their time to help him and made his limbs more mobile.

Whilst in England Vasily met some lovely people, especially in the London area where he was being treated. He stayed for some time with Ian and Evelyn in Ashted who not only took him to his appointments but also treated him to the sights in London and surrounding area. Vasily often speaks about this and has wonderful memories that will last his lifetime.

Having no arms is a huge handicap but especially in Moldova where so much work is manual labour. Despite Vasily's fantastic attitude and personality his prospects are grim. Following his mother's death Vasily is reluctant to leave the tiny run-down family home, as his father would be alone, but this has meant he has limited prospects.

Vasily was a delightful child and now a very pleasant young man. Despite our efforts to help him with the operation and prosthetic arms his prospects are bleak. Life in Moldova is tough, especially in the villages. In the city he may have found office work but prosthetic arms for an adult are unaffordable and would not withstand the manual work required in the village.

We are delighted to tell you, despite everything, Vasily has married a lovely lady. She has three children and they all live in the family home. Vasily works in the forest collecting wood.



The photo left shows Vasily with his father and wife Daniela and her three daughters, Gabriella, Iliana and Aurelia.

The children were dressed beautifully, in their Sunday Best, (news had obviously spread and they were expecting us). Despite all their difficulties it is a very happy family.



Although we were unable to "grow new arms" for Vasily we have been able to help and encourage him over the years. All the people he met during his visits to England for medical help as a child have given him the confidence and determination to succeed.



To fill an articulated lorry crammed to the roof takes a lot of effort and a huge amount of donations, not to mention the cost of transportation. Over the years, and especially this year, all our volunteers have worked so hard, many hours of sorting and packing, the heroes of our Humanitarian Aid trucks.

Just after the start of the war in Ukraine we were inundated with donations of clothing, bedding, food and so much more. We



had more than we could cope with. Our store in Exmouth was crammed but the donations were still coming in. There are so many people who stood up to the challenge and exceeded all expectations. Others, relatively new supporters, found temporary additional storage facilities, Colin and Helen found a lovely modern barn near Silverton that filled over just one weekend, Andrew and Di were very generous and allowed us to use this barn at no charge. There must have been nearly a truck full there, fantastic. Other groups formed and supported our efforts to react quickly to the growing needs in Moldova and Ukraine.



Play is such an important part of childhood and development. For many years now we have been given some fantastic new toys by our friends at Wilton Bradley. Toys may well not be considered Humanitarian Aid and therefore unnecessary but you tell the children this! Eight-year-old Nastya and her three-year-old brother Maxim were so delighted with the scooter and toy car they insisted on taking them to bed with them! Not particularly cuddly but precious and the first new toys they had ever had.



There are many examples of this and the shouts of excitement can be heard for miles. A bit of sunshine in their difficult lives.



Photo left shows some of the sports clothing we have taken making the children very happy, now all part of the same team.

Most families in Moldova have about three or maybe four children but this is reducing drastically, the birth rate has fallen substantially. Occasionally there are big families, take the Pascari family for example. They are a very good and hard-working family with twelve children! Albeit the eldest Sveta is married and lives in the city of Bălți so only eleven children remain at home.

When I visited, they told me this year's harvest is a disaster. Sadly, a story I have heard many times on this trip. Only onions and garlic have produced anything. Potatoes are tiny, corn is non-existent, tomatoes scarce, an absolute disaster.



All the children looked good; clean and happy. They were working when we arrived, their mother was inside looking after the new baby.

They took me to the garden to see their crops, or lack of them. So sad to see all their hard work this year produce so little.

Mother, Adela has signs of cancer but didn't want to see the doctor whilst pregnant. She will now go to Bălți to have tests and then to Chişinău if necessary. She was

scared if she went when pregnant she would be given treatment that could harm her unborn child. Having given birth, she can now seek the medical help she desperately needs.

The donations of very good quality clothing, shoes and bedding has been fantastic but has now dwindled as people and the media turn their attention to other disasters.

For many of us here in the UK the forthcoming winter will be difficult but we must not forget those in Moldova, Europe's poorest country, nor those fighting and suffering the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Yes, there are other disasters in the world but should we flit from here to there with our efforts or concentrate in the areas we know have great need and where we are achieving so much?

We still need food, clothing and disability aids to take as well as ongoing financial support. Please help if you can. **Help is needed more than ever as we head into winter.**

Please remember, everyone who works with cr2ee works voluntarily, nobody is paid

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