

# February & March 2022

christian  
response  
to  
eastern  
europe



Well, we have survived January and now have the shortest month to get over before Spring shows its face, warmer days, longer days, blossom and flowers. The budding leaves on the trees, - always so beautiful. All this is something we try to encourage our friends in Moldova to contemplate. At the moment there is so much despondency. With freezing conditions, very few work opportunities, ever increasing prices, especially gas, (gas was 4 lei now 15 lei, a three-fold increase), electricity and food, (potatoes in the autumn 3.5 lei per kilo and now 10 lei), food in village shops is about 20% more than in the city. With little food and Covid lockdown many have given-up or are on the brink doing so. Suicides are commonplace, especially amongst the younger generation, and despair prevails whatever age.



In the villages especially, lots of grannies and granddads have been left with their grandchildren to care for whilst the children's parents work abroad sending money home.

Many have been working away for years and only return for a few weeks in the summer. Their children do not know their parents – this is so sad. The children lack their parental guidance and grandparents are exhausted. Pensions can be between 1,000 and 2,000 lei per month, £50 to £100 monthly; insufficient to pay gas and electricity let alone food, clothing or even wood for the fire.



We have heard reports of an elderly couple, who have been married for many years, they were cold and hungry and lost all hope. Not wishing to suffer any more they walked together to a bridge and whilst holding hands jumped into the freezing water beneath. With no meaningful State support life can become just too hard.

Covid restrictions have again been strengthened in Moldova, schools closed and instructions for everyone to stay at home. Police patrol some villages in search of those who disobey. All this adds to their depression.

They have no confidence in the Health Service believing all they want is money, feel the government and all in authority are corrupt and the cause of increasing prices. It is all too difficult and confusing for ordinary village people and they see no end to it. The pressure of survival increases daily.



Our friends and colleagues in Moldova did a fantastic job distributing nearly six thousand Christmas shoeboxes. It is not an easy task but so rewarding witnessing such excitement and joy. When our friends Vasile and Sveta from Borceag were distributing in a neighbouring village they visited a family where the children were neglected by their drunken parents. The children were home alone and when they received the Christmas box they didn't know what to do -- they had never been given a present before!

We can try do to help these children but it will be a difficult road. We can encourage the parents to stop drinking and care for their children; this is very easy to say but undoubtedly very difficult to achieve. We have had experience similar to this before. We don't really want to interfere and tell people how to live but again we don't wish to turn our backs on vulnerable children. We will find a way to support them without providing funds for them to buy more drink.



**Braida Garth, Staplake Lane, Starcross, Devon. EX6 8QT**

Tel **01626 891945** Mobile **07970 204506** E Mail: [mail@cr2ee.org.uk](mailto:mail@cr2ee.org.uk)

Website - [www.cr2ee.org.uk](http://www.cr2ee.org.uk)

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With the memory of all the Christmas shoeboxes fading our supporters and volunteers here in the UK are now working hard so we can send our Spring aid truck, another message of hope. All being well and with the fantastic help and support we receive we should be able to fill our truck by mid-March.

We say many times how everything we send is of huge practical help, good clothing, disability aids etc. but also, and most importantly everything they receive demonstrates to them that there are people in another country thinking of them and working hard to help. They realise they are not forgotten and people they have never met care, care about them.

Many of our activities over the past two years have been blighted by Coronavirus and Covid restrictions. We hope the summer will reduce the effect of the pandemic and allow us to resume our plans rather than reacting to the crisis by sending more money each month.

There are so many plans in hand it is difficult to know where to start. If we had the funds we would like to complete all the work in Chiperceni and our Soup Kitchen there.



The building is largely complete but we need heating; the children have endured some very cold meetings! We have two options, electric or gas. Electricity is more expensive to operate but much less to install. The gas option would be less however we need to run the gas pipe some distance to the building and this is expensive, about £4,000 for the connection and installation. It is a dilemma.

Our Soup Kitchens are very popular and are an efficient way we can help.

Although we refer to these as “Soup Kitchens” they are so much more. Firstly, we give the best food we can afford, not just soup. Secondly, it gives us an opportunity to identify needs and problems and hopefully solutions! Thirdly and importantly, we can have fun; play games, muck-about and have a laugh. It is always good to have fun but in the current covid climate this is even more important. If funds permit, we would like to expand this to include older people, especially the elderly if they live alone. Maybe less “mucking-about” but still good fun and food.



We have the prospect of a very exciting project near the Transdnestrian border and soon we hope Covid restrictions will be relaxed so we can pursue the opportunities to help vulnerable individuals. We should be able to give more news later this year.

There is so much we can do, so much we have already done, so many achievements for over thirty years. This is all down to the wonderful support we have had; the fantastic team of volunteers, all the generous supporters who have donated such lovely items and helped financially.

On behalf of all the poor families and children we help in Moldova we thank you most sincerely and from the bottom of our hearts.

**Thank you for being part of the Cr2ee team**  
**We couldn't do it without you**