

# Protecting the vulnerable

Meeting needs through grassroots organizations, [Ukraine](#), [Romania](#), [Moldova](#)

The Global Fund for Children (GFC) is responding to the emergency needs of children and families in Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasion. GFC, in support of its local partners, is providing critical access to fully flexible funding for partners to provide humanitarian assistance including food, safe shelter, transportation, medicine, evacuation support, psychosocial assistance and educational access.

## The problem

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, 4.8 million of the country's children have been forced out of their homes. That's over two-thirds the country's estimated 7.5 million total child population. At least 2 million of those children have crossed the border into Poland, Romania, Moldova and other neighboring countries to escape the ongoing violence since February 24, according to UNHCR. The rest of Ukraine's children remain inside the country, trapped in a national nightmare.

## The partner

Global Fund for Children (GFC) partners to build a world where all children and youth enjoy equal resources and opportunities in society and live free from violence, discrimination, and exploitation. To that end, GFC invests in innovative local organizations, helping them deepen their impact and build their capacity for social change. Since 1997, Global Fund for Children has invested \$51 million in more than 900 organizations, reaching 11 million children and youth worldwide.

## The philanthropic solution

GFC has been responding since the first week of the crisis and is continuing to scale its response across the region, currently supporting 37 local organizations, 30 in Ukraine and another 7 along the Ukrainian border in Moldova and Romania. GFC is focused on providing support to organizations targeting

vulnerable children, youth and families in Ukraine including orphans or young people who have aged out of orphanages; children with disabilities; LGBTQI youth and girl-centered organizations; internally displaced children and families.

GFC and its partners are balancing the need to provide immediate humanitarian support with long-term assistance that will enable partners to sustain their work for months or even years to come. GFC expects to make several rounds of fully flexible grants to its partners and provide additional capacity support as requested.

GFC partners are using the fully flexible emergency funds to cover wide-ranging needs, including:

- Food, medicine, water, and other emergency supplies
- Shelter and transportation to safer areas/evacuation
- Cash transfers to displaced families and youth
- Counseling and legal support
- Educational support for school-aged children
- Specialized support for Roma, LGBTQ+, and disabled children

## The evidence

GFC has used its global network of community-based partners in previous emergencies, most recently during the Covid-19 pandemic. GFC has seen that its ability to quickly move resources directly to the grassroots fills a gap in traditional humanitarian response mechanisms, one that is critical to the protection of children and families during times of extreme stress and instability.

## The impact

This funding will enable GFC to provide support to its partners for 2-3 months of operations via a second round of grants. In addition to the grants, GFC will also provide capacity support as requested from the network of partners, providing advice, connections, information about other funding opportunities as the crisis continues.

All programmatic data provided by Global Fund for Children. The UBS Optimus Foundation is a grant-making foundation that offers UBS clients a platform to use their wealth to drive positive social and environmental change. The Foundation selects programs that improve children's health, education and protection, ones that have the potential to be transformative, scalable and sustainable as well as programs tackling environmental and climate issues.

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