



Emergency Response to the War in Ukraine Two-Year Impact Report

February 2024

Overview

Two years after Russia invaded Ukraine, causing displacement on a scale [greater than anything](#) since the end of the Cold War, AmeriCares continues to provide long-term, health-focused support to those impacted by the war in Ukraine. Our work is focused on helping local organizations in Ukraine, providing them with medicine, medical and relief supplies, technical support and training. AmeriCares and our local partners are also focused on the safeguarding and protection of those most vulnerable in the midst of war and displacement, including women, children, older people and marginalized groups.

To date, AmeriCares has provided humanitarian aid valued at more than \$121 million. The organization has supported 83 local organizations assisting those affected by the war. Aid includes grants and shipments of medicine and medical supplies, including those delivered by volunteer Medical Outreach teams.

Emergency Situation

Russia and Ukraine have been involved in a territorial dispute since 2014, when Russia illegally annexed Crimea. The hostilities escalated dramatically in February 2022, when Russia sent missiles and ground troops into Ukraine and occupied parts of the country, a move that was internationally condemned. A full two years later, fighting continues with Russian bombings striking civilian centers and Ukraine countering with drone attacks. While Ukrainian forces have retaken significant areas of the country, Russia still controls nearly a fifth of Ukraine.

The UN estimates that as of January 2024, there are 6.3 million refugees from Ukraine, mainly in Europe, and 3.7 million internally displaced persons with a staggering [14.6 million people in need of assistance](#). Since the war started, more than 10,000 civilians in Ukraine have been killed and more than 20,000 have been injured, according to [the most recent figures](#) from the United Nations (UN). As reported by the World Health Organization (WHO), [over 1,500 attacks on health care infrastructure](#) have been recorded since the conflict began, and targeted and ongoing attacks on the power grid and other essential infrastructure continue to cripple the health system.

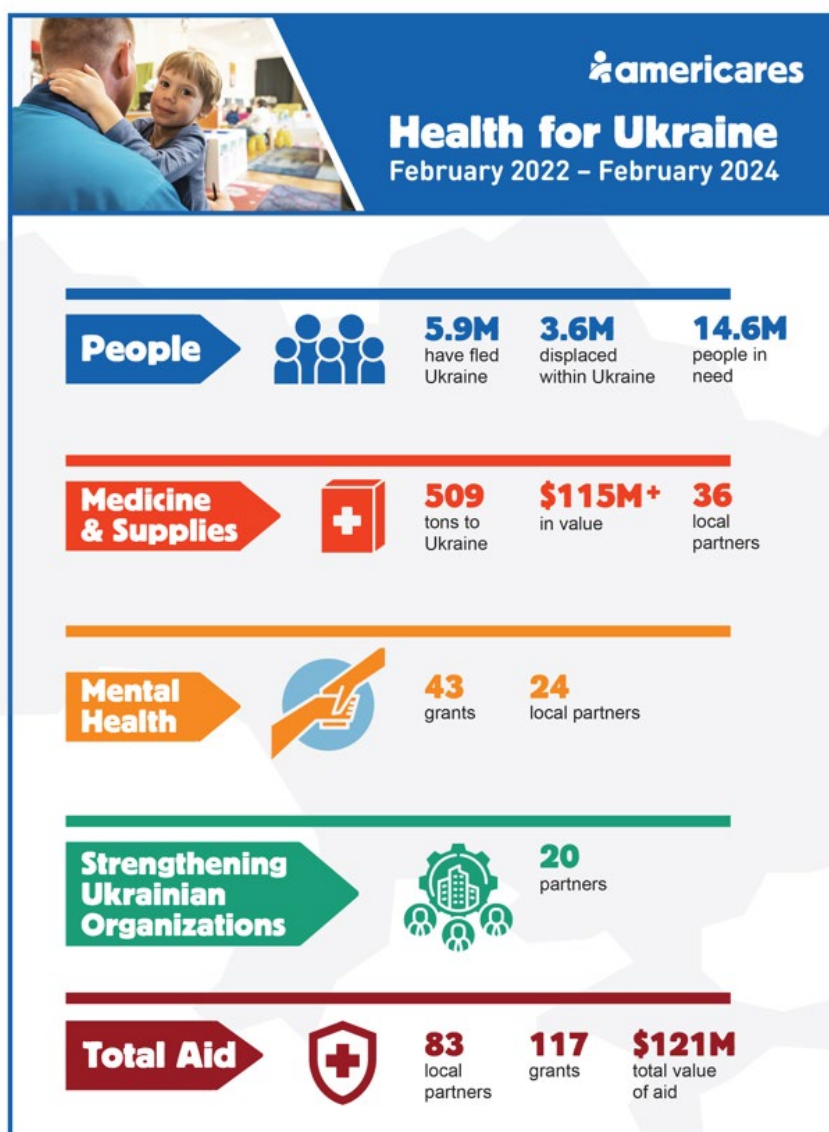
Americares Response Capabilities

Americares has professional medical relief workers [ready to respond](#) to disasters at a moment's notice and stocks emergency medicine and supplies in warehouses in the U.S., Europe and India that can be delivered quickly in times of crisis. The organization responds to more than [30](#)

[natural disasters](#) and humanitarian crises worldwide each year, establishes long-term recovery projects and brings preparedness programs to communities vulnerable to disasters.

Americares has a long history of supporting [clinical services](#) for refugees and migrants. Since 1986, Americares has provided more than \$2 billion in aid to Eastern Europe, including more than \$262 million in aid to Ukraine, which began in 1992. We rely on our trusted partners in the region and coordinate our activities with local, national and international relief organizations to ensure our medicine, medical supplies and resources are going where the need is greatest. Unlike many other response organizations, Americares partners span several regions, working near the contact line in the south and east of Ukraine, as well as in the west where many people affected by the war have taken refuge. We also donate medicines and medical supplies to U.S.-based [medical professionals](#) traveling to Ukraine to provide care for patients in need.

Response Activities



Since the onset of the war, Americares has an emergency response team in Poland to coordinate shipments of medicines and medical supplies into Ukraine and to support local partners that offer health services to displaced Ukrainians. The team, based in Krakow, has expertise in coordinating large-scale shipments of medicine and relief supplies as well as mental health. As in all our international emergency responses, we are working closely with the WHO, regional health authorities, and international, national and local response organizations in Ukraine to ensure a coordinated response.

Americares is focusing its response in three areas:

- Medicine and support for health services.
- Mental health and psychosocial support.
- Strengthening the capacity and sustainability of Ukrainian organizations.

As of February 2024, **Americares has shipped more than 509 tons of medicine and relief supplies valued at more than \$115 million to 36 partners and first responders in Ukraine**, a total of 194 shipments so far, with more shipments planned. Our medicine and relief supplies support has included the delivery of incubators in 18 hospitals to support neonatal treatment, hospital-grade generators, pediatric oncology medicines, and anti-dementia medicine. In addition, Americares Medical Outreach program has supported 30 trips by volunteer medical teams to Poland, Romania and Ukraine with more than \$4.5 million worth of donated medicines and medical products.

Americares is also continuing to provide financial and technical support to local partners. **To date, Americares has awarded 117 emergency grants valued at more than \$5.3 million to 62 organizations working in Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.** Last winter, this included funding for a partner to purchase and install 32 generators and 317 heating appliances in 26 hospitals across eight regions. We are also ensuring unique funding for, and safeguarding and protection of, special populations (e.g., people with disabilities, LGBTQIA individuals and victims of gender-based violence) who are too often acutely vulnerable during crises.

For example, Americares funded the [Acceptance Foundation](#), which used its ambulance to transport injured civilians to Poland for treatment. The organization also used its ambulance as a mobile clinic to treat transgender women in Ukraine, whose documents identify them as male, because the government prohibits them from leaving the country. The clinic operated by Acceptance Foundation in Lviv, Ukraine welcomes all patients and has dedicated days for LGBTQIA+ people. Patients can get bloodwork and other testing, which is transported by Acceptance's ambulance to Poland for analysis. Upon the vehicle's return to Ukraine, it brings the necessary medications based on the test results.



Julia, a paramedic with Acceptance Foundation, Anna Szymkowiak, the founder and CEO of Acceptance Foundation, and Olena Romanets, President of Avante, pose for a picture next to an Acceptance Foundation ambulance in March 2023 (Photo/Americares)

“Before the course, I had no idea about first aid. Now, in case of an emergency, I will be able to help someone. Today, it’s crucial knowledge.”- Olena, 13-year-old emergency medicine trainee.

In light of the ongoing attacks on medical facilities and disruptions in care, in October 2023, Americares funded the **Institute of Emergency Medicine Poland (IEMP)**, to provide tourniquets and tactical trauma care training to over 630 civilians across Ukraine through 26 sessions. By training civilians in emergency medicine, they are better equipped to save lives during bombings and attacks, which continue to strike civilian targets. This followed the success of an earlier program [funded by Americares](#), that trained instructors in Lviv, Odesa and Uzghorod.

Americares also supported **Tabletochki**, the leading pediatric oncology organization in Ukraine, which helped 565 families dealing with childhood cancer during a six-month period by providing medicine, psychological support and transport for emergency evacuation. In addition, Americares covered the cost of staff salaries and procured pediatric oncology medications.

Americares believes that mental health is essential to one’s whole health. **To support the mental health and psychosocial well-being of people affected by the war, Americares has supported 24 partner organizations in Poland, Romania and Ukraine. Of the 117 total grants awarded, 43 grants (valued at more than \$1.5 million) specifically support mental health and psychosocial programs.** These partners include:

- **Family Circle**, which developed an online educational campaign that shared evidence-based practices and self-help tools focused on resilience. The campaign has already reached over 93,000 people across Ukraine.
- **UA Mental Help**, an organization focusing on online therapy, has provided over 2,600 online consultations to Ukrainians living in 26 different countries.
- **Smart Osvita**, which is developing and implementing a training for over 700 educators and school psychologists to improve their well-being and their ability to support children and adolescents during situations of conflict.
- **Tabletochki**, the leading pediatric oncology organization in Ukraine, which is supporting more than 120 children with cancer and 200 adult caretakers with individual psychological support sessions and other activities aimed to help families navigate treatment during the war.

We have supported more **than 26,000 individual crisis** intervention sessions for internally displaced people, military personnel, veterans, and refugees needing emergency support with issues including suicidal behavior, anxiety, depression, acute stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Of those calls, **more than 3,800 were lifesaving**—focused on support for a suicidal person. **Through our partners, we provided more than 3,100 individuals one-on-**



A mother and her children play together in a safe space operated by the Jewish Community Center of Krakow for displaced children and mothers. It is one of the many programs they now offer to support the refugee population in the city. Americares provided a flash grant to JCC Krakow to support its programs that benefit Ukrainian refugees, such as this one (Photo credit: Americares/ Mike Demas).

one therapy, hosted 40 group therapy sessions, and created six new support groups focused on topics such as grief and loss.

Additional planned activities to support mental health include providing technical assistance and training for response partners located in Ukraine and Poland in topics such as mental health clinical services, war trauma, and preventing burnout among frontline volunteers. We are adapting Americares' online courses in mental health and psychosocial support to provide guidance to frontline workers serving global displaced communities in Ukraine, Europe and beyond.

Finally, in addition to our focus on providing medicine and mental health support we are providing Ukrainian health-focused NGOs ongoing mentorship on project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. In September 2023, the Americares Ukraine Response Partner Summit brought together 20 priority partners in Lviv, Ukraine to discuss best practices and build internal networks amongst Ukrainian non-profits.

Challenges and Next Steps

The diminishing international support for humanitarian (and other) aid in Ukraine means that ongoing health services are at risk, especially for displaced and other vulnerable civilians. While the international focus has shifted to the Gaza conflict, major humanitarian needs will persist in Ukraine for years to come, and the Ukrainian humanitarian community and its partners, including Americares, continue to call for urgent financial and in-kind support.

Americares strategy for the 2024 fiscal year centers on improving and increasing the impact of medicine security, which we believe will be the greatest unmet need in the coming months. There remains a critical need for specialty medicines and medical supplies to care for cancer patients, newborns and others with complex medical needs.

We define medicine security as equitable and reliable access to medicines and medical supplies for clinics, health workers and patients. We ensure medicine security by working to increase the *accessibility, availability, affordability and acceptability* of medicine and supplies for partner health providers—in this case, the hospitals, clinics and distributors throughout Ukraine that are requesting, moving and using these essential products. Americares has already provided partners with a range of medicines and supplies, including trauma and wound care, emergency obstetric kits and medications for chronic illness. We will continue to address shortages of essential medicines



Members of a partner organization in Ukraine pack up and transport medical supplies and medicine from Americares to be distributed to a medical facility that has been converted into a trauma center for the wounded following the Russian invasion. March 22, 2022. (Photo Credit: Razom)

and supplies, prioritizing cardiology and surgical medications, such as antibiotics, analgesics, anticoagulants, as well as oncology and psychology medicines. Our strategy considers:

- Medicines that are prohibitively expensive for most Ukrainians.
- High-quality medicines that are not available in local markets.
- Specialty medicines to treat Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and Hepatitis.

Americares will also focus its support on local organizations in Ukraine, providing them with technical support, including training, while maintaining protection principles in its support of populations most in need of humanitarian aid, including women, children and older people. For example, in December 2023 we partnered with the local **NGO Divchata** to carry out a capacity building project for five smaller Ukrainian organizations in our partner network by providing tailored weekly sessions on fundraising, strategic planning, policy development, operational support, and monitoring and evaluation so that our partners can strengthen their ability to implement programs that improve the health and wellbeing of Ukrainians.

Sheltering Hope: Reinventing a Safe Haven for TB Patients in Wartime Odesa

During wartime, living with tuberculosis becomes even more complex: Patients need a steady supply of medicine and a safe place to shelter during air raids, separate from uninfected people.

Now, in Odesa, Ukraine, TB patients have both. With funding from Americares, **LifePlus** transformed a hospital basement into a proper air raid shelter, with built-in safety features. The hospital serves patients with COVID-19, hepatitis, HIV and TB. The underground shelter is 89 square meters – about 958 square feet.

The shelter now has ventilation systems and power throughout. An electric generator is connected to the shelter, which ensures its operation and usability even during blackouts. The basement, after renovation, consists of four rooms and a bathroom, can accommodate around 150 people and is suitable for medical services.

“This disease is highly infectious; and if we are evacuating people to bomb shelters, we need to make sure that they are separated appropriately in order not to spread the disease to those without an active form of TB,” says Oleksandr Konopko, the general director of the hospital. “That’s why, in the early stage of designing the bomb shelter, we had to consider all these issues and ensure all health procedures were implemented.”

Even before the war, tuberculosis was a pressing problem for Ukraine. According to WHO estimates, Ukraine has the fourth-highest TB incidence rate among the 53 countries of the WHO European Region, with 17,593 new TB cases registered in 2020. The estimated TB incidence in Ukraine is over seven times higher than that of EU/EEA countries. Before the invasion, the Odesa region had the highest number of TB patients—140 cases per 100 thousand people—and the situation may be worse now, after interruptions in care. When complete, the shelter will be equipped with necessities such as a month’s worth of water and food, first aid kits, bed linen

and furniture to make an extended stay in the bomb shelter more comfortable for both patients and personnel.

“We know that tuberculosis is a serious health issue in Ukraine, leading to significant mortality and morbidity,” says Jake Wheeler, AmeriCares Ukraine field team lead. “That’s why in March, thanks to our partner in Kyiv, Ukraine Restoration Fund, we delivered more than 10 tons of medicines and critical supplies for four essential pulmonary facilities in areas serving the most vulnerable populations. The bomb shelter construction and supply of specialty medicines serve as a complementary approach that strengthens the existing service provision and addresses gaps where the health system might fall short.”

Photos from before and after the renovation:



Discover more inspiring impact stories and learn about the diverse ways AmeriCares and its supporters are making a difference in Ukraine by visiting our website at www.americares.org/emergency-program/war-in-ukraine/.

Thank you

As we look ahead to the coming months, AmeriCares will continue to support those impacted by the war. We deeply appreciate your generous support of this lifesaving work and your commitment to provide medicines and critical care to those who need it most.