



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

2025
ANNUAL REPORT

“DARKNESS CANNOT
DRIVE OUT DARKNESS;
ONLY **LIGHT CAN DO**
THAT. **HATE CANNOT**
DRIVE OUT HATE; ONLY
LOVE CAN DO THAT.”

–DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

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Cover Art: The cover of this year's Annual Report was painted by Sofia, 12, who was rescued by Save Ukraine. Read her story on page 24.



A Word from Mykola Kuleba: **SHINING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS**

Dear Friends,

Rembrandt redefined art with his emotional use of light and shadows. Known today as “Rembrandt lighting,” his art features a single light source illuminating one side of a face, leaving the other side in shadows.

Looking at a Rembrandt painting, your eye is drawn immediately to the light on his

subject. But when you look in the shadows, you see the depth of meaning the artist intended. You see a whole different story.

That describes life in Ukraine for the past four years. While light shines in the darkness, the darkness seems overwhelming at times. We often feel as though life is lost in the shadows.

Nothing illustrates that more than the



MYKOLA KULEBA
Founder and CEO, Save Ukraine

cover of our 2025 Annual Report. When Sofia showed her beautiful painting to me, I asked if she was among the children.

Sofia pointed to a small figure hidden in a dark hole and said softly, “That’s me.”

While her painting portrays the life-giving work of Save Ukraine, it also reminds us of the thousands of children still living in the darkness of this terrible war.

Since 2014, Save Ukraine has been shining light into the darkness of war, poverty, and desperation. We have seen the power of light to overcome darkness in the lives of thousands of children.

Every child we rescue is one more light coming out of the darkness. As those lights grow, the darkness dims. And we are reminded that light is more powerful than darkness.

That’s why I’m grateful for your generosity. Your support is pushing back the darkness. Knowing you are with us reminds us of the countless points of light shining together, enabling more children to walk into the light of freedom, restoration, and reintegration.

In a world where so many children live in desperate darkness, it takes all of us working together – governments, faith-based organizations, and individuals. The darkness is too pervasive for one to shine without the others.

I am one light. You are another. We are each a light in the darkness.

With bright hope for tomorrow,

Mykola Kuleba
Founder and CEO
Save Ukraine

OUR 2025 IMPACT

POINTS OF LIGHT:

517 Children
rescued and reunited
with family and their
home country

2,106 Children and
teens helped

2,129 Families
strengthened and
stabilized

SHADOWS:

800,000 children
inside Ukraine live as
refugees

1.8 MILLION
Ukrainian children
live outside the
country as refugees

20,000 children
have been forcibly
removed or abducted

1.6 million children
remain trapped in
occupied territories

WHO WE ARE

Save Ukraine is a non-partisan NGO (non-governmental organization) established in Ukraine in 2014 with offices in the United States. We are focused on rescuing, restoring, and reintegrating boys and girls abducted by Russia. We also serve families trapped in occupied territories and on the frontlines.

Our Mission

To rescue and build a strong and resilient generation of children while strengthening families as the foundation of Ukraine.

Our Vision

To see a thriving and vibrant Ukraine, where every community empowers families and every child has an opportunity to reach their full potential.



The **LIGHT** We Shine

As a Ukrainian organization, we have a unique knowledge and understanding of our country during this devastating time of war ravaging the nation.

Our contacts and partners in Ukraine and across the globe rely on our understanding of situations throughout the country and those contacts enable us to reach into areas of Ukraine unknown and unseen by others.

We also work with more than 30 partners from around the world, providing support for our work and helping those organizations to fulfill their mission.

While every nation has vulnerable people, the four-year war has created a new level of vulnerability. Among those we serve are:

Children with disabilities and their families

Child survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation

Children and families of fallen soldiers and veterans

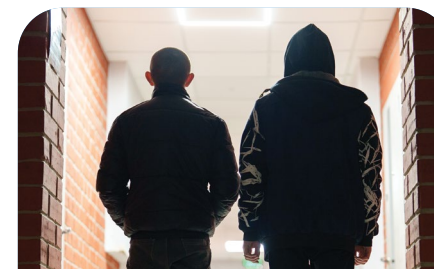
Children abducted by Russia, trapped in occupied territories, and in frontline communities, along with their families

Orphans and foster/adoptive families

Internally displaced children and families

Elderly and widows

How We **SHINE**



RESCUE

Save Ukraine rescues children abducted by Russia, as well as children and families trapped in occupied territories and in frontline communities. We work tirelessly to locate and safely extract children and families from dangerous environments. Save Ukraine ensures that no child is left behind.



RESTORE

Save Ukraine focuses on restoring the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of children and families affected by war. This includes providing urgent resources and services to help children and families recover from the horrors of displacement and abduction. By addressing their immediate needs, we help children regain their sense of safety, stability, and dignity.



REINTEGRATE

Save Ukraine supports children through family reunification or placement in safe, loving homes while helping displaced families integrate into safe communities across Ukraine. We ensure successful transitions by providing community support, education, and sustainable resources, empowering families to rebuild their lives and thrive long-term.

RESCUE

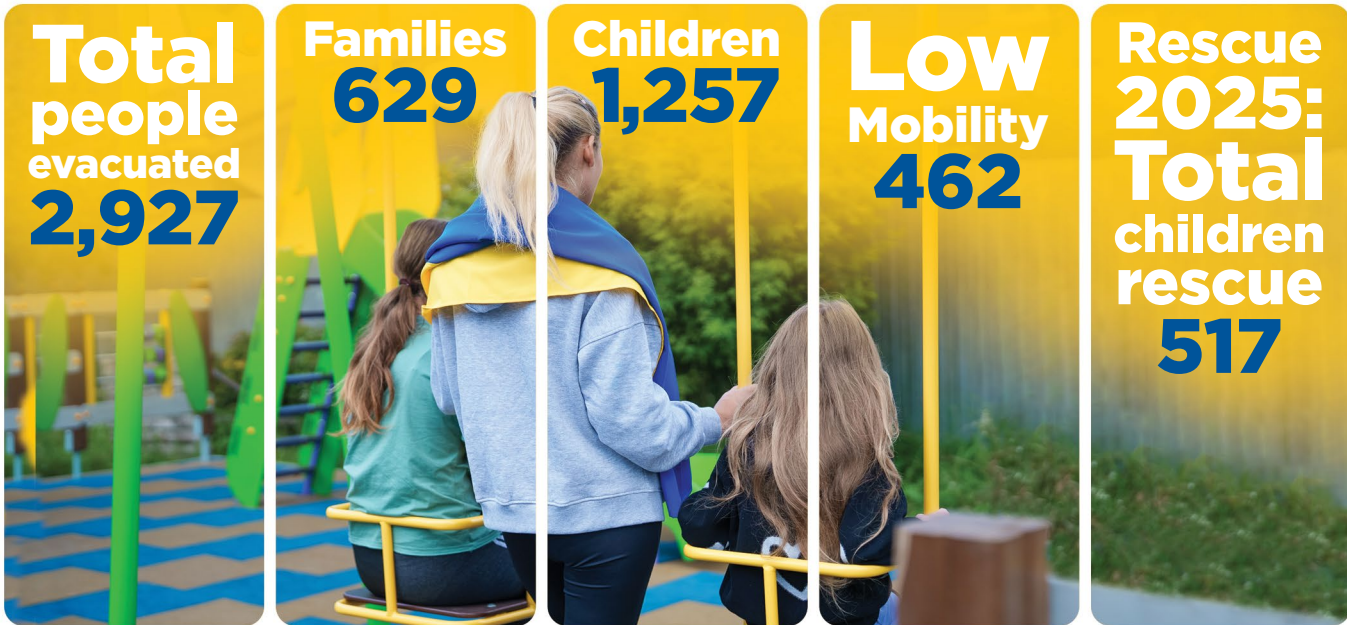
Save Ukraine rescues children abducted by Russia, as well as children and families trapped in occupied territories and in frontline communities. We work tirelessly to locate and safely extract children and families from dangerous environments. Save Ukraine ensures that no child is left behind.



“I give testimony in this historic moment of urgency - not experienced in generations - but with the same goals as Stalin’s Holodomor - to erase Ukraine. Not just by bombs but by stealing our innocent children. Our children continue to suffer a biblical plague conducted by a modern pharaoh. I plead with you from the bottom of my heart to require Russia to let our children go.”

*Mykola Kuleba
Testifying before U.S. Senators
December 2, 2025*

SHINING LIGHT





A *Light* in the darkness Misha's story: Choosing freedom, giving back

Misha's life changed overnight when Russia invaded his hometown.

Misha was a first-year student at the Institute of Radio Electronics. As Russian troops entered with armored vehicles and tanks, shooting in different directions to intimidate civilians, Misha barricaded himself inside an apartment, closing the windows and doors and waiting in fear as the sounds of gunfire echoed through the streets.

Life in the occupied city quickly deteriorated. Critical infrastructure stopped functioning. Residents had no centralized heating or hot water. Mobile networks and internet providers were jammed or cut off, isolating the city from the outside world.

Misha lived under occupation for three years. Despite the risks, he kept studying remotely at a Ukrainian university. Maintaining his Ukrainian education became a quiet act of resistance.

Meanwhile, his younger brother, only 12, was forced to attend a school reopened under the Russian education system. Ukrainian history was erased and replaced with propaganda.

Students were required to attend regular

ideological lessons called "Conversations about Important Things," where pro-Russian narratives were imposed. Children were even sent to camps in occupied Crimea.

The pressure on residents grew constantly. During the so-called "referendum," armed representatives went door to door questioning people. Misha encountered several patrol groups, though fortunately they did not detain him.

Friends became victims of war crimes. One friend's father was abducted and taken to a police station where he was interrogated, deprived of sleep, and exposed to gas during detention. Their apartment was searched and property confiscated.

Rumors spread that those who refused to support the occupation authorities could be deported across the front line toward Ukrainian positions.

To survive in these conditions and to access basic services and movement, Misha eventually had to obtain a Russian passport, a step many residents were forced to take. Yet internally, his rejection of the occupation only grew stronger.

For a long time, leaving seemed impossible. His family did not plan to leave the city and escape routes were dangerous and complicated.

In the summer of 2025, Misha completed his bachelor's degree online through Kharkiv University. Realizing he could not

RESCUE

imagine his future under occupation, he began searching for ways to leave — studying routes, looking for organizations that could help.

That’s when he found Save Ukraine. We coordinated his evacuation from the occupied territory. After years of isolation and fear, Misha finally reached safety.

He arrived at Save Ukraine’s Hope and Healing Center in Hatne, where the first weeks focused on stabilization. With support from the team, he restored documents and began receiving psychological help. Individual counseling, art therapy sessions, group meetings, and creative activities helped him gradually regain a sense of safety and belonging.

Step by step, Misha began rebuilding his life. Through workshops, educational activities,

and community events, he found new friendships and support. Over time, his initial plan to leave Ukraine changed. Instead, he decided to stay and build his future in his own country.

Misha began searching for work and housing. The first job did not work out, but he continued applying, preparing new resumes, and attending interviews.

In February 2026, an opportunity appeared that changed his path once again.

Misha was offered a position as a system administrator at the Save Ukraine Center — the same place where he had received support after escaping occupation.

Today, he helps maintain the organization’s technical systems, setting up equipment and supporting the team that assists other children and families affected by the war.

Misha’s journey began with years of

survival under occupation. It continues with something stronger — the chance to build a future in a free Ukraine and help others do the same.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Russia created a website advertising Ukrainian children for adoption to Russian families, complete with pictures and descriptions of the children’s personalities. It is the most brazen act of human trafficking anyone in child protection has ever seen by a government.

Military training is compulsory. Rescued boys and girls describe being taught to throw grenades, crawl through trenches, assemble and disassemble Kalashnikovs automatic rifles, and storm mock buildings.

During one so-called “psychological test,” a Russian officer asked a boy, “How do you feel about killing? Are you ready?” When the boy refused to answer, the soldier threatened him.

One of the first questions we’re asked at Save Ukraine is, “How do you do it? How do you rescue abducted children from Russia?”

We conduct dozens of dangerous rescue missions inside Russia and the Occupied Territories across thousands of miles through our Underground Railroad. We provide holistic medical and trauma recovery and safe reintegration of children and families into new communities.

Save Ukraine has documented testimonies of each of the 1,048 children we have rescued since our founding. [SU](#)

“The longer Russia wages war against Ukraine and the West, the more sophisticated their efforts become to entrap Ukrainian children.”

Mykola Kuleba
Testifying before U.S. Senators, December 2, 2025



RESTORE

When children and families arrive from being rescued by Save Ukraine, each receive a standard humanitarian aid package to meet their basic needs. They undergo a registration and assessment process to determine specific needs that are incorporated into an individualized recovery and support plan.

Hope and Healing Centers aid in the psychological and physical recovery of children who were abducted by Russia and returned to their family by Save Ukraine, along with children and families from frontline communities. Through specialized services and 3-6 months of safe shelter, we aim to see families focus on healing.



Children who come to Save Ukraine carry different experiences and needs. Some require educational support, others emotional recovery or help rebuilding social skills. But each child brings a unique world of strengths and potential. Our work is to help that potential emerge.

SHINING LIGHT

Number of families who received assistance: **2,129**

Number of children who received assistance: **1,129**

Number of food packages distributed: **4,146**

Number of beneficiaries /families provided with temporary housing :

2,106
beneficiaries from 691 families

Number of legal consultations provided: **2,129**

Number of psychological sessions:

8,513

Number of child survivors of abuse and exploitation: **216**



RESTORE

*From darkness to **Light*** **Kateryna's Story: Reclaiming Her Identity**

Kateryna was only 7 when Russia occupied her hometown in the Luhansk Region.

From that moment, much of her childhood unfolded under occupation. At school and in public life, Russian authorities systematically tried to erase Ukrainian identity from children like Kateryna.

Children were pressured to join pro-Russian youth movements such as the "Movement

of the First." Students were forced to attend "civic lessons" where propaganda became a regular part of education.

Kateryna resisted and refused invitations to propaganda camps near Moscow and in Dagestan. When constant shelling forced the city's schools to move online,

classes were conducted through a Russian platform.

Meanwhile, Russian soldiers behaved as if they owned the city. Armed troops walked through the streets freely, harassing girls from Kateryna's school, knowing they would face no consequences.

RESTORE

As Kateryna grew older, the gap between the reality around her and what she believed became impossible to ignore. She could not imagine building her future among people who openly supported the war and the occupation.

After finishing school in 2025, Kateryna enrolled in a Russian university in Krasnodar. But the decision only confirmed what she already knew – she did not belong there.

On Sept. 1, 2025, she made a life-changing choice. She withdrew from the university and began planning her escape to Ukrainian-controlled territory.

After seeing a YouTube video of a young man who had successfully left occupied Luhansk, Kateryna contacted him and received the information she needed to find help.

The journey was filled with anxiety and uncertainty.

But the moment she saw a Ukrainian passport at the border, everything changed.

Her hands trembled. Tears filled her eyes. When a Ukrainian border guard approached, Kateryna instinctively called out, “Slava Ukraini.”

Right there at the border, she tore up the Russian passport she had been forced to obtain under occupation. For the first time in years, she felt free.

THE JOURNEY OF RECOVERY

In October 2025, Kateryna arrived at the Save Ukraine Hope and Healing Center. Behind her was a difficult past — years of propaganda, constant pressure, and the painful decision to leave her home.

Her relationship with her mother had become increasingly strained. Her mother strongly supported the Russian narrative about the war. The disagreements created deep emotional conflict within the family.

The first steps with Save Ukraine focused on stabilization, such as restoring her documents, resolving legal issues, and helping navigate life in a place she had dreamed about but never known.

Psychological support became a key part of her rehabilitation. Through individual counseling sessions, Kateryna began processing the complex emotions she carried like grief, anger, and guilt over leaving her family behind. Slowly, she learned to regain emotional balance and rebuild confidence in her decisions.

Equally important were the moments of connection and creativity that became part of everyday life at the center. Kateryna participated in art-therapy sessions, vocal workshops, creative classes, and cultural activities. She attended concerts, took part in group events, and gradually built new friendships.

These small steps helped her rediscover something that had been suppressed for years — the freedom to express herself. Little by little, Kateryna began to feel she was no longer alone.

She hopes to remain in Kyiv, find a job, and begin living independently. One of her goals is enrolling in a Ukrainian university and continuing her education — something she was denied under occupation.

Kateryna’s story is one of courage and self-determination. She left everything familiar to reclaim something more important — her identity, her freedom, and the chance to build a future in Ukraine.

RESTORING LIGHT

Our live-in rehabilitation programs are delivered through Save Ukraine’s six Hope and Healing Centers and more than 120 transitional shelters across Ukraine.

These centers provide for the immediate

needs of the most vulnerable children, displaced families, and abandoned elderly affected by the war. This includes children with disabilities, orphans, child survivors or sexual violence, and those who have experienced abduction and other horrors of war.

Our methods for working with those who come to Save Ukraine include the latest counseling and social work techniques.

Our team is specifically trained in trauma-informed care.

OUR PROGRAMS OFFER:

- Temporary housing (3-6 months)
- Food/meals
- Psychological and social support
- Medical assistance
- Legal and humanitarian aid [su](#)

Save Ukraine’s pillar of restoring light provides a sanctuary and essential support to families and children impacted by war, offering them a path to recovery and a brighter future.



REINTEGRATION

The Save Ukraine integration program is aimed at providing comprehensive assistance to children and families who have experienced deportation or lived in temporarily occupied territories. Our goal is ensuring their safe return, rehabilitation, and reintegration into society by offering a wide range of social, psychological, and medical services.



Our reintegration efforts exist to relieve this hurt and uncertainty, providing long-term support to help war-affected families rebuild and adapt to new communities.”

SHINING LIGHT

DAY CENTERS IMPACT IN 2025
Across 21 Day Centers (including two Day Centers for children with disabilities), Save Ukraine provided support to thousands of vulnerable families.

People supported:

- ◆ Children: 7,473
- ◆ Adults: 3,899

❖ Services and activities provided during the year:

- Educational sessions conducted (Ukrainian language, English language, mathematics, and other subjects): more than 21,000
- Art therapy sessions: 4,829
- Psychological sessions for children:
 - 4,081 individual sessions
 - 1,930 group sessions
- Psychological sessions for parents and caregivers:
 - 3,504 individual sessions
 - 759 group sessions
- Children's events organized (celebrations, competitions, and other activities): 766

- Christian ethics lessons conducted: 2,191
- Rehabilitation sessions for children with disabilities and children with special needs: 9,222

SUPPORT CENTERS FOR ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY

(Irpina and Kamianka-Buzka)

The two support centers for elderly and people with limited mobility in Irpin and Kamianka-Buzka provided essential care and assistance to vulnerable individuals affected by the war.

People supported:

- ◆ 497 beneficiaries received support across both centers.

❖ Services provided:

- Every beneficiary received three daily meals, as well as medical and social support and humanitarian assistance tailored to individual needs.
- 43 individuals received support in

restoring essential documents.

- Psychological support provided:
 - 1,338 individual counseling sessions
 - 173 group counseling sessions
- 433 individuals were assisted with relocation and referred to longer-term accommodation and support services.

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

(Irpina and Hatne)

The early intervention program in Irpin and Hatne provided specialized support for young children with developmental delays and their families, helping them access early rehabilitation and strengthen family capacity for care.

Unique beneficiaries supported in 2025:

- ◆ Children: 549
- ◆ Adults (parents and caregivers): 606

Program activities delivered during the year:

- ◆ Parent support meetings: 3,485
- ◆ Individual sessions for children: 2,714
- ◆ Consultations for parents: 1,346
- ◆ Group sessions: 746

Children supported through the program in 2025:

- ◆ Total unique children receiving services: 313
 - ❖ 168 children participated in the full program cycle
 - ❖ 145 children received consultation-based support

Completed cases in 2025:

- ◆ 205 completed program cycles in total (including repeated cycles)
- ◆ 193 unique children successfully completed their final cycle of support during the reporting period.



REINTEGRATION



Walking into the **Light** **Bogdana's First Steps**

For the Rubel family, returning home to Ukraine was only the beginning of a long journey toward rebuilding their lives.

Oksana and Serhii lived with their young daughter, Bohdana, in the Kherson region, in the village of Novonatalivka. All members of the family live with different degrees of cerebral palsy, which made everyday life challenging even before the war.

When Russian forces occupied their village, the family found themselves trapped.

With limited mobility and serious health conditions, evacuation was nearly impossible. Yet despite the uncertainty and danger, they held onto one hope — to return to Ukraine and live in safety again.

That hope became reality when, with the help of Save Ukraine, the Rubel family was evacuated from occupation.

Their path to freedom was long and exhausting, passing through Russia and Belarus before finally reaching Ukrainian-

controlled territory. But in the end, they arrived where they had dreamed of being — home.

Today, the family lives in Hatne, near Kyiv, in a modular community for families displaced by war established by Save Ukraine.

Little by little, they are rebuilding their lives.

Serhii has become part of the community and now works at a municipal enterprise. The family continues receiving medical care, psychological support, and social assistance from specialists and doctors working with the Save Ukraine team.

But the most powerful story of reintegration belongs to their daughter, Bohdana.

THE POWER OF SMALL STEPS

Bohdana was born in 2018. She lives with complex diagnoses, including cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

When the family returned to Ukraine, Bohdana could not walk. She could barely sit without support and moved mostly by crawling. Years of war and occupation had deprived her of access to proper rehabilitation, education, and medical care.

But everything began changing in June 2025.

That month Bohdana started attending the Day Care and Rehabilitation Center for Children with Disabilities in Hatne. For the

“WE WERE WELCOMED HERE SO SINCERELY. I’VE FOUND PEOPLE WHO ARE NOW BY MY SIDE EVERY DAY. WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN EVERYTHING, AND IT TRULY BRINGS ME BACK TO LIFE.”

—Ms. Olena
Kharkiv region



first time in her life, she began receiving consistent support from a multidisciplinary team of specialists.

She worked with a special education teacher, speech therapist, and rehabilitation specialists, while also receiving therapeutic massages and individualized rehabilitation sessions.

In August 2025, doctors at the Boyarka Hospital performed a complex surgery on both of Bohdana’s legs.

The recovery process began immediately after her cast was removed. Rehabilitation specialists worked patiently with her every day, guiding her through exercises, strengthening her muscles, and helping her learn how to move her body in new ways.

And then something extraordinary happened.

Five months after the surgery, Bohdana took her first steps. And although she still walks with support — but she walks.

For many people, a few small steps may not seem like much. For Bohdana’s family, it meant the world.

Today, Bohdana participates in creative workshops, interacts with other children, and continues developing both physically and emotionally.

Her parents have noticed remarkable changes. She has become calmer, more confident, and increasingly curious about the world around her.

In December, Bohdana underwent an assessment at the Inclusive Resource Center in Vyshneve. The specialists concluded that she is now ready to begin attending an educational institution.

For Bohdana, this is only the beginning.

Each new step she takes, literally and symbolically, represents a victory; A victory for a little girl who survived occupation, traveled a long road back home, and is

now learning how to move, grow, and dream again in a free Ukraine.

HOW WE SHINE LIGHT

Our comprehensive model of children and family services supports reintegration for both repatriated and refugee children, along with those already in the community who are in need.

Through our **Save Ukraine Resiliency Centers and Education & Empowerment Centers** across the country, we offer:

1. Mental health support through art therapy for children, counseling services for all, and parent support groups.

2. Inclusive education opportunities to help children bridge learning gaps through individualized tutoring, language classes, and specialized support for sensory needs and disabilities.

3. Early development support through programs such as an Early Intervention Program for children 0-4 years old with developmental delays. We see remarkable results with early intervention, addressing a child’s developmental needs before critical growth stages end.

4. Our case management ensures timely identification of vulnerabilities and access to essential support services. Whether a child is orphaned, has disabilities, faces developmental challenges, is at risk, or has experienced abuse, we connect them with the benefits and resources they need.

Our centers offer safe, inclusive spaces where everyone feels welcomed. We strive to be a place where children rediscover joy, heal, grow, and thrive, while parents find support and a sense of community. [SU](#)

A Word from the U.S. Board Chair: **THE LIGHT IN YOU**

Save Ukraine's mission focuses, motivates, and unifies our team, donors, and volunteers across Ukraine and around the world. Our mission is to rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate Ukrainian children abducted by Russia or restricted from leaving Russia or the occupied territories and return them to their homeland of Ukraine.

We chose the theme of "Light in the Darkness" for our 2025 Annual Report because those contrasts illustrate so vividly not only the work of Save Ukraine to rescue children and families, but the continued darkness of war.

In 2025, we rescued the most children in any year of our history – more than 600 boys and girls – bringing the total number rescued to nearly 1,300 children from Russia and the occupied territories to add to more than 120,000 children and families Save Ukraine has already served in combat zones inside Ukraine.

We want to acknowledge and never forget the lives lost by the very brave "conductors" on our sometimes 3,000-kilometer-long underground railroad, who have helped the 1,300 to come home – the gallant few who have risked and given their all to enable children to reach freedom.

While the Russians continue holding vulnerable children with guns in camps, using

terrible and effective Soviet techniques to brainwash, indoctrinate and militarize these children against their families and homeland, we honor the fallen by rescuing even more of these children, as even now, others have taken the place of the fallen.

With the incredible help of the United Jewish Federation in the U.S., with the help of donors from Canada to South Korea, England to Lithuania, Brazil to Japan, Norway to the Philippines, the Netherlands to Spain, the United States to Ukraine, and everywhere in between, thousands of people, together with foundations, churches, synagogues and governments, have all helped Save Ukraine in the past year. And for your support, and on behalf of the over 300 people who daily try to create an environment where every child has value, every child has a future in freedom and every Ukrainian child can be Ukrainian, we offer our deepest and heartfelt gratitude.

We know the rescues receive the most attention which they deserve. Great acts of heroism deserve accolades. We also know that our mission only begins at the rescue. These boys and girls need love, guidance and a pathway to return to society. They have overcome so much mental, physical and in some cases sexual abuse.

Loss of family members, the trauma of



"NONE OF US KNOW WHERE THIS TERRIBLE WAR WILL TAKE US AND WHICH PEOPLE IT WILL TAKE NEXT. NONE OF US KNOW WHEN THIS TERRIBLE WAR SHALL END. BUT TOGETHER WE CAN SAVE UKRAINE, ONE CHILD AT A TIME."

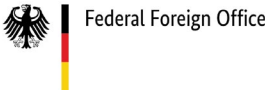
war. They need to overcome so much. We have witnessed that many can overcome what they have suffered and we know and have learned how incredibly resilient they all are – from the youngest toddlers to the oldest teens.

Every smile returned to a sweet young face motivates us to do more. It only takes hard work, patiently and lovingly delivered by caring professionals and volunteers. That is the light we shine together.

None of us know where this terrible war will take us and which people it will take next. None of us know when this terrible war shall end. But together we can Save Ukraine, one child at a time.

For the children of Ukraine,
Eric Gebaide
Save Ukraine U.S. Board Chair

OUR PARTNERS

ADRA 	Australian Aid 	CUF 	Daniel J Kobasic Foundation 
Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe 	European Commission 	Federal Ministry Republic of Austria 	German Federal Foreign Office 
Global Affairs Canada 	Humaniti 	The Humanity Funds 	The Jewish Federation of North America 
Kingdom of Belgium Federal Public Service 	Kingdom of the Netherlands 	Kleine Herzen 	LandsAid 
Longer Tables Fund 	Rossmann 	Rotary Club Vienna Maria Theresa 	RTL 
Samaritan's Purse 	Saving an Angel 	UNICEF 	We are all Ukrainians 
World Central Kitchen 	World Vision 	WE THANK OUR SUPPORTERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT.	



PARTNERS FOR GOOD

World renowned Chef José Andrés, founder of the World Central Kitchen, is among the dozens of partners working alongside Save Ukraine to help the children we serve. With more than 1 million followers on social media, Chef José posted about our work and through matching-gift philanthropy, he provides financial support.

Born and trained in Spain, Chef José moved to the U.S. at age 21. He soon settled in Washington, D.C., and began volunteering at D.C. Central Kitchen, where he started to think big about philanthropy.

Over the course of his career as a chef and restaurateur, he saw the role of cooks – and the power of food – to change the

world. This path inspired José to found World Central Kitchen in 2010 after a devastating earthquake in Haiti, with the support of his wife Patricia, as well as his business partner Rob Wilder and his wife Robin.

Since then, he's pursued a mission to fulfill the words of John Steinbeck: "Wherever there's a fight so that hungry people may eat ... we'll be there."

When war started, Chef José was among the first on the ground in Ukraine, working alongside our team to provide food and other desperately needed support.

We're grateful that commitment includes the work of Save Ukraine. [su](#)

We are deeply grateful to the journalists and media partners who have raised awareness to the mission and impact of Save Ukraine, and helped elevate the voices of Ukraine’s most vulnerable children. Their coverage has brought critical visibility and continues to inspire action around the world.



Washington Post
June 1, 2025
Thousands of Ukraine’s children vanished into Russia. This one made it back.



Washington Post
October 12, 2025
Her grandma saved her from the Russians, then chose to say goodbye.



New York Post
February 27, 2025
Free the Ukrainian children stolen by Russia.



BBC News
November 3, 2025
Youth Army. How Russia is making soldiers out of Ukrainian children



CBC
September 23, 2025
Chief political correspondent Rosemary Barton speaks to the founder of Save Ukraine, Mykola Kuleba, about Russia’s abduction of Ukrainian children.”



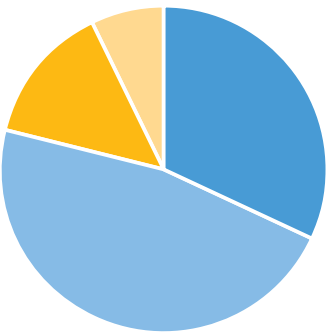
The Wall Street Journal
August 29, 2025
When the Kremlin Failed to Brainwash Them as Children, They Plotted Their Escape.



ABC News
September 4, 2025
Thousands of children have been abducted or forcibly displaced by Russia since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, according to Ukrainian authorities.

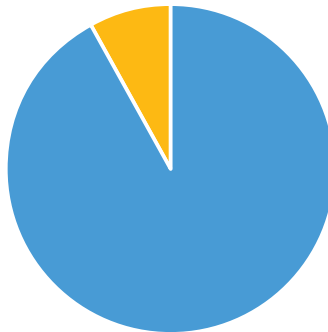


Reuters
August 29, 2025
Russia turns a Ukrainian nuclear city into a stronghold of fear.



REVENUE

- ▶ INGOs and Humanitarian Partners ... 33% – \$2,694,905
 - ▶ Foundations/Private Funds 46% – \$3,756,536
 - ▶ Government and Multilateral Donors.. 13% – \$1,061,629
 - ▶ Individuals & Corporate.....8% – \$653,310
- TOTAL REVENUE: \$8,166,380**



EXPENSES

- ▶ Program Expenses..... 92% – \$7,549,819
 - ▶ Administrative Support8% – \$616,561
- TOTAL EXPENSES: \$8,166,380**



COVER STORY

Climbing from Darkness to Light

Note: The drawing on the cover of this Annual Report is by 12-year-old Sofia. This is her story.

As Russian authorities were preparing to register children living in Sofia's village, her mother urgently planned their escape from occupied Ukraine.

Officers from the Russian secret police (FSB) and the military command combed through every neighborhood hunting for families with children. Neighbors were forced to report anyone who had children.

Families were screened for pro-Ukrainian views; homes were searched for what the occupiers considered "prohibited patriotic symbols" and phones were inspected.

Masked men armed with weapons stormed Sofia's family's home. Sofia's mother, Viktoriia, managed to throw away her phone just before the search so it would not be found. When she was ordered to go inside to retrieve documents, officers

attempted to put handcuffs on her as she turned her back, but she miraculously twisted free.

During interrogations, she was threatened with imprisonment and deprivation of parental rights. Sofia's grandmother had her identification number confiscated, and the occupiers attempted to seize Viktoriia's Ukrainian passport, returning it only after she promised to apply for a Russian one.

In September 2025, security forces returned for a second raid, this time carrying assault rifles. During interrogation, they demanded to know why Sofia was not attending a Russian school, questioned her online education, and pressed the family about applying for Russian social payments.

After prolonged questioning, the pressure continued through collaborators working in the local administration. When Viktoriia went to the village center one day, a collaborator stopped her and demanded that she submit documents for Sofia to



enroll in the Russian school, stating that the Russians “urgently needed to know how many children were here.”

This was the final trigger for organizing their escape.

Russian forces fired cluster munitions from military equipment positioned in a nearby forest into the village marketplace, where families were buying food. Six local residents were killed. Sofia’s family fell to the ground. Her grandmother was deafened by the blast wave.

They barely managed to reach a basement for shelter. When the children, including Sofia, emerged, they were confronted with the horrific sight of dead neighbors — including children who had been burned alive.

Another explosion occurred just five meters from Sofia’s home, when Russian forces killed their neighbor. Mortar shelling continued, drones circled overhead, and a large fire broke out. Terrified, Sofia trembled uncontrollably and rocked back and forth for a long time.

Because of the trauma, Sofia has suffered from severe anxiety and disturbed sleep.

When the family finally attempted to leave the occupied Kherson region, they were detained in Zaporizhzhia region because they carried only Ukrainian documents. They were taken to a police station for interrogation, where they were subjected to intense questioning, fingerprinted, photographed, had DNA samples taken, and were entered into a database.

They were pressured to obtain Russian documents, with threats of

imminent deportation — though no one would say where. At a checkpoint in the Luhansk region, Viktoriia was threatened with imprisonment over alleged pro-Ukrainian online groups and chatbots.

Sofia rejected everything Russian. She crossed out Russian words wherever she saw them. She continued studying in a Ukrainian online school, though any public visibility put her mother at risk of detention.

To access the internet signal, her mother climbed a tree to connect, receive assignments, and send completed schoolwork back to Ukrainian-controlled territory.

Sofia studied diligently and even participated in regional academic competitions. That’s why her mother feared so deeply that the phone containing evidence of Sofia’s Ukrainian education would be discovered during searches.

Sofia, 12, spent years living under occupation, facing repeated raids, surveillance, and threats simply for remaining Ukrainian. After being rescued by Save Ukraine, Sofia and her family are safe and receiving ongoing support, including trauma counseling and psychosocial care, as they begin the long process of healing and rebuilding their lives together.

When Sofia handed Mykola Kubela her painting, she said quietly, “I painted this exactly for you. I am so grateful you are saving the lives of children—and mine.”

Mykola looked at the painting and asked, “Are you amongst the kids?”

Sofia pointed to a small figure hidden in a dark hole. “That’s me.” **su**



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