



## Emergency Relief

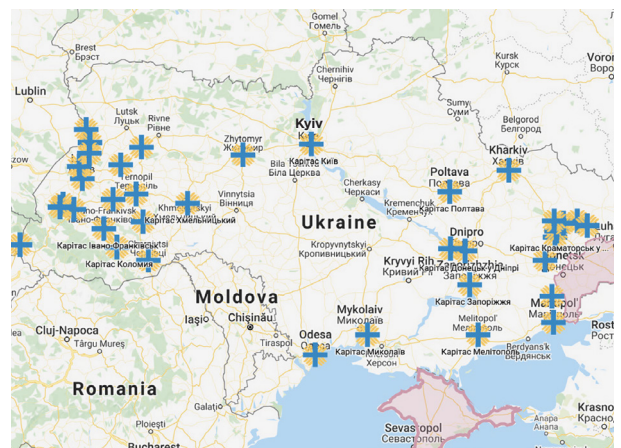
As reports emerge of families being displaced by the recent attacks in Ukraine, Catholic Relief Services is helping Caritas teams prepare to respond to urgent humanitarian needs across the country—including for evacuation, food and safe shelter—while taking every precaution to ensure the safety of their staff.



Caritas Ukraine teams conducted emergency simulations in October last year in preparation for a potential humanitarian crisis. Photo courtesy of Caritas Ukraine

### OVERVIEW

The first signs of a humanitarian crisis are emerging in Ukraine after Russia invaded the country from three sides in the early hours of Thursday, February 24. The capital city of Kyiv and the eastern city of Kharkiv were targeted with attacks that quickly spread across central and eastern areas of the country. In less than 24 hours, attacks have displaced people from their homes, especially in those cities and towns along the contact line in the east. As events quickly evolve, Caritas teams are preparing to respond to urgent humanitarian needs, including evacuation, food and safe shelter.



CRS has been supporting Caritas Ukraine as it ramps up its emergency preparedness for this potential humanitarian crisis.

Photo courtesy of Caritas Internationalis



**CRS and other agencies are planning to receive Ukrainian refugees in neighboring countries.**

**CRS is helping Caritas Moldova and Caritas Romania prepare for people fleeing across the border.**

The logistics present significant operational challenges: Key arteries between major cities in the east are blocked by military vehicles, hampering evacuation and the transport of goods. Cash is unavailable in many areas due to the banking systems not working. There are reports that people have limited or no access to groceries, food and fuel, and that airports have been damaged or destroyed.

CRS and other agencies are also planning to receive Ukrainian refugees in neighboring countries.

Years of conflict along the eastern border have already displaced 1.3 million people from their homes and claimed 14,000 lives. Throughout this time, Caritas Ukraine, with support from CRS, has been providing emergency relief and recovery.

### CRS' ONGOING SUPPORT FOR CARITAS UKRAINE

CRS has supported Caritas Ukraine in its emergency efforts since the conflict began in 2014, by providing shelter, food and livelihood support for individuals and families displaced and affected by crisis. Emergency assistance supports people who have been displaced to safe areas, as well as conflict-affected residents of isolated settlements along the contact line. Caritas Ukraine is actively working in eastern Ukraine.

CRS has been supporting Caritas Ukraine at the national and diocesan levels as it ramps up its emergency preparedness for this potential humanitarian crisis. This includes planning across each of the 17 diocesan offices for the reception, care and support for displaced and affected people. In its emergency response efforts, CRS takes a holistic approach to comprehensively meet people's immediate and long-term needs. These include food, water and safe, dignified shelter, as well as counseling and care for psychosocial needs, opportunities to strengthen livelihoods and the resources to rebuild homes.

### CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

Despite the enormous challenges and uncertainty, Caritas Ukraine is responding across the country through its 17 diocesan offices.

Initial urgent efforts and plans to support displaced families include the following:

- Field kitchens to provide food.
- Reception services at Caritas offices, train stations and other locations for displaced families in transit. These will provide information, referrals, food, water, hygiene items and psychosocial support.
- Transportation of displaced families to friends, families and local social services.
- Evacuation centers providing shelter, food and psychosocial support for displaced families. These centers will include support to address emotional care, including case management and child-friendly spaces.
- Evacuating vulnerable children from centers in conflict areas to centers in safe zones.

In an effort to respond quickly and efficiently, Caritas Ukraine has worked with its own network and that of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to mobilize and train 1,000 staff and volunteers in their mission, code of conduct, and humanitarian and safeguarding principles.

**Neighboring countries:** CRS is helping Caritas Moldova and Caritas Romania prepare for potential waves of displaced people, mapping out a likely initial response and conducting assessment and planning sessions with its network near Ukraine's borders.

### HOW TO HELP

- Donate online: [support.crs.org/ukraine](https://support.crs.org/ukraine)
- Donate by phone: 1-877-HELP-CRS
- Donate by check: Ukraine Response, Catholic Relief Services, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, Maryland 21297-0303