

Winterization Response in Newly Liberated and Conflict Areas



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“My windows shattered during the latest bombardments, and now we have no protection. It’s cold, so I covered the openings with wooden panels, but the house is dark. My children keep asking me when all of this will end”.

Right-holder in Kharkiv

SITUATION UPDATE

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has suffered from **widespread displacement** and destruction of homes and vital infrastructure, leaving as many as 12.7 million people in need inside the country. Displaced people are amongst the most vulnerable; an estimated 3.7 million Ukrainians are currently displaced inside the country, of which **1.9 million are children**.

As the harsh winter approaches, millions of **families are facing increasingly severe conditions** due to repeated missile and drone attacks on power, heating, and water systems. One of the largest attacks was launched on November 28–29, with more than 600 drones and missiles. Energy infrastructure is often targeted, and long blackouts are widespread,

affecting millions of people, while damaged homes struggle to retain warmth as temperatures fall well below zero. It is estimated that more than 50% of Ukraine’s energy generation capacity is offline. Power and heating are directed first to hospitals and essential services, forcing many households to struggle with cold, darkness, and interrupted daily life.

Children are at the center of this crisis. The absence of light and heating does not only affect comfort—it increases fear, limits mobility, interrupts learning, and heightens health and safety risks. Families report children developing night terrors, sleep disruption, anxiety, and stress symptoms linked to cold, darkness, and frequent air-raid alerts.

In frontline regions, unstable connectivity and energy shortages also make continued schooling extremely difficult. The total number of schools damaged or destroyed since the escalation of the war in February 2022 is 2,800, of which 340 were damaged or destroyed in the last year,

disrupting children's learning and depriving them of their right to education. As a consequence, this school year **4.6 million children face educational barriers** as they persist through a fourth academic year during the full-scale war.

KEY DATA FROM WEWORLD INTERVENTION in the past 6 months

+1,500

Children and adolescents supported through safe spaces, MHPSS and education activities

+3,000

Hygiene kits distributed

+100

Repaired houses damaged by the bombings

3

Health facilities serving children rehabilitated

+800

Vouchers distributed to support
3,000 people

130

Children in **19** family-type homes and **200** children in **4** institutional facilities supported

WINTER RESPONSE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

WeWorld foresees a multisectoral response on Education and Protection (Child Protection, MHPSS, Peace Education), WASH, Humanitarian Demining and Risk Education, Emergency Shelter, and NFI. WeWorld applies an integrated community-access model combining structured weekly child activities, mobile psychosocial support, monthly technical coordination, and direct collaboration with municipal and national childcare systems to enable continuity of services in wartime.

WeWorld's current winter programming focuses on **children and caregivers**, providing safety, warmth, learning, and psychosocial support.

- 19 **Child-Friendly Spaces** remain open and operational across residential childcare facilities and family-type homes. These are **daytime safe environments**, equipped with **generators and alternative heating sources**, where children access structured play, learning, creative therapy, and emotional support every week.
- Provision of psychosocial and recreational services **directly in communities** via mobile teams and a dedicated caregiver call centre, prioritizing families caring for children in the worst-hit areas.
- Winter shelter support through **cash-for-shelter for urgent home repairs**, helping families restore basic protection and reduce health risks for children.
- Assistance to ensure the functioning of **heating and water systems** in shelters and health points, essential for hygiene, dignity, and safety during the winter months.

- **Hygiene, menstrual health, and child stress support sessions** for children and educators, focusing on practical, age-appropriate messages and wellbeing strategies.
- **Mine awareness sessions for children**, adapted for winter, when low visibility and disrupted infrastructure increase dangerous exposure.

ChildFund Deutschland's current programming focuses on providing voucher assistance for vulnerable families most affected by the ongoing hostilities in the Mykolaiv region.

- **Direct voucher distribution** to families with increased vulnerabilities. This especially applies to families in frontline regions, families with children with disabilities, large families, and single-headed households. Vouchers can be used for purchases in the largest supermarket chain in the region.



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PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- Expand **MHPSS mobile teams** to reach conflict-affected rural and semi-urban areas, prioritizing families caring for children.
- Increase the availability of **heated and safe learning and play spaces**, ensuring that children can access support even during service disruption.
- Strengthen household support for **winter essentials and safe home insulation** where children live.
- Scale up support to **caregiver networks and professionals** working with children under stress.
- Continue expanding **mine awareness for children**, especially where displacement, limited visibility, and damaged routes increase exposure.
- Continue supporting Vodakanal and municipalities in rebuilding water supply and heating systems.
- Continue distributing hygiene kits to IDPs and vulnerable populations on the frontline.
- Continue rehabilitating bathrooms and heating systems, and upgrading hospitals and health centers.
- Scale up voucher distribution to support more families in securing their basic needs.

Priority groups for winter 2025: children (including children with disabilities), adolescents, caregivers, single-parent households caring for children, families hosting orphans or children without parental care, large families (three or more children), pregnant women, and families with young children (up to 3 years old).

Geographical consolidation and expansion focus: Kyiv city childcare network and frontline-proximate communities in the eastern and southern regions, including rural areas where services are scarce, and the Mykolaiv region.

USEFUL LINKS

- [Her Future at Risk | Pubblicazioni - WeWorld](#)
- [Ukraine: 2024-2025 winter risk assessment](#)
- [Ukraine: Russian attacks on energy could trigger major ‘crisis within crisis’ | UN News](#)
- [Ukraine | OCHA](#)
- [Mental Health of Adolescents Exposed to the War in Ukraine | Psychiatry and Behavioral Health | JAMA Pediatrics | JAMA Network](#)
- [UNICEF Ukraine Humanitarian Situation Report No. 57: October 2025](#)

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