




MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

# ONE YEAR AT WAR

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**Kateryna and Sasha's father was killed by a missile in August 2022. Sasha's mother explains, "Sometimes he acts as though his father is still here. He'll sometimes ask the others to be quiet because father is sleeping."**



**In Posad-Pokrovskiy, a village in Kherson region, a local man cycles home with an Operation Christmas Love box received from Mission Without Borders. Posad-Pokrovskiy was once a comfortable, flourishing community of about 2,500 people, characterised by lots of cherry trees and a friendly welcome – and now, like so many towns and villages in this region, it lies in ruins.**



**"Now I live in a penthouse," Oleksandr said. His dry sense of humour and optimism is evident, even as he shows his visitors how a mine destroyed the roof of his apartment and made his home a ruin. There is sadness in his voice only when he shares how the soldiers took away his Bible. Oleksandr lives in a village in Chernihiv region, which endured over a month of continual shelling, rocket assaults and airstrikes.**



**This apartment block in a village in Chernihiv region was used by Russian troops as living quarters. Now residents are returning home to find their homes in a terrible condition. Widespread Russian looting has been reported since the early days of the war. Homes that have been occupied have often been vandalised, with empty vodka bottles, cigarette butts and food waste strewn around, and overflowing blocked toilets. They have also been stripped of anything of value – from clothing to washing machines.**



**Olha is pictured inside her house in a village in Chernihiv region, where a single bulb lights up the dark interior. 80 per cent of houses have been damaged or destroyed in some towns and villages in Chernihiv region. Air attacks in October 2022 left 1.5 million homes without electricity and about 40 per cent of Ukraine's electrical grid damaged.**



**"It was a nightmare that went on and on," Olha said, describing the Russian occupation of her village in Chernihiv region. She is pictured by her half-destroyed house. "The day that the Russians fled, one of their tanks shot straight into our house. Thank God we were all in the cellar, as there was such heavy combat that day," she said.**



**Three-year-old Denys Bobyk was the first to meet visitors at the gate of the house, with an open and curious gaze. He lives in poverty in a one-roomed house with his parents and seven siblings. The war, cost of living crisis and destruction of infrastructure means that children like Denys are even less likely to access the essential services they need to be safe and thrive. They are more at risk of child marriage, violence, exploitation and abuse than they were a year ago.**



**Six-year-old Davyd Bobyk helps his mother by preparing potatoes. He is singing a children's song under his breath. He lives with his family in western Ukraine, where they are enrolled on Mission Without Borders' sponsorship programme and receive regular support. The war has caused a steep rise in deprivation in Ukraine – with half a million children now living in poverty. There are also an estimated 1.5 million children at risk of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health conditions.**



**Ivan Bobyk, 38, holds his eight-year-old daughter Nelya on his lap. The Bobyk family live in a rural area of Sarny region and are enrolled on Mission Without Borders' family sponsorship programme. They have a piece of land where they grow potatoes, beets and other vegetables, and keep two cows. The family of eight live in an old one-roomed house, with its toilet and bathroom outside. They had hoped to build an extra room onto the house but the war put their plans on hold.**



**Two older ladies in Lyman, eastern Ukraine, pose with food parcels they received from Mission Without Borders in October 2022, moved to tears by the way people from all over the world are helping Ukraine. With their city under Russian occupation for four months, many were gripped by fear as their neighbours were killed and the bombardment went on and on. Both women are afraid that the Russians will come back – but they are also worried about how they will survive the winter.**



**This woman received a freshly baked loaf of bread from volunteers in Lyman, Kharkiv region, in October 2022 – ten days after Russian troops retreated. After months of constant shelling, Lyman became like a ghost town – with so many of its buildings destroyed, infrastructure wrecked and homes now lacking basic utilities. A study in May 2022 by the World Food Programme found that one-third of households in Ukraine were food insecure.**



**Ruslan, 14, is writing the words 'Glory to Ukraine' on the chalk board of a destroyed school in Kherson region. For children affected by war, school is critical in providing them with a safe space and a sense of routine, as well as ensuring they don't pay a lifelong price for missed education.**



**Artem, 15, sits in the room that used to be his classroom in Kherson region. Ukraine has 5.7 million school-aged children. Around two-thirds of them are now displaced, while about half a million students are continuing their schooling from abroad. In September 2022, when the new school year began, 3,000 schools reopened in person, 5,660 operated virtually, and 3,602 used a mixed method. For the thousands of schools that operate virtually in Ukraine, electricity blackouts and poverty affect children's ability to access their online classwork.**



**Pictured is a classroom in a school in Kherson region that was severely damaged by Russian air strikes. Sixteen schools in Kherson region have been completely destroyed, and 48 have been so badly damaged that it is impossible to resume classes in them, the Ministry of Education and Science in Ukraine reported. In Ukraine as a whole, 2,621 educational institutions have been damaged, and 424 have been totally destroyed.**





**A woman weeps in the yard outside her apartment block. She lives in Luch, a village in Kherson region, an area that was occupied by Russian troops for months and left severely destroyed. Along with so many other people, she cannot understand how such atrocities can be committed – or how her community will ever recover from all the tragedies it has suffered.**



**“Lord, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry.” Psalm 88:1-2. Eyes tightly shut, a bombed-out car the backdrop, a woman leans onto her cane and prays to the Lord, together with her neighbours.**



**Pictured are the hands of an elderly lady with disabilities who lives in the village of Luch in Kherson region, a community that has been almost wholly destroyed by bombs and rockets. The woman's daughter said, "Our apartment is on the fourth floor of the building. It was incredibly painful for me to run down the stairs to the basement every time the bombs started, leaving my mother in her bed. Every single time, I was afraid to return in case I found that that my mother was gone. Once, a rocket hit the apartment across from ours."**



**A brother and sister happily read the children's Bible that Mission Without Borders gave them. The family were also given an Operation Christmas Love box filled with food and other necessities. The siblings live in Kherson region, an area that was occupied by Russian troops for eight months and relentlessly shelled. Before the occupiers left in October 2022, they destroyed critical infrastructure, leaving residents without electricity, water supply or heating. There are severe food and water shortages.**



**A man in the village of Posad-Pokrovskiy, Kherson region, sits in his house that no longer has a roof or windows. He is thinking about how to prepare his home for the winter. He plans to use the less damaged room and install a little wood stove in it. Misha, the MWB photographer who took this picture, said, "So many people have returned to find their home in ruins – but they're all eager to rebuild. If the situation stabilises, even more people will return home. "Our help is urgently needed in the Kherson region as well as in other regions. There are people with almost nothing left."**



**Yhaidne village, Chernihiv region – where this man lives – hit the news when over 300 locals, including babies, children and elderly people, were locked into a school basement for over a month by Russian troops. The man pictured here had his house in Yhaidne broken into and trashed by soldiers, after it had already been bombed.**



**Volodymyr, a pastor from Sarny, visited villages in the Chernihiv region, an area that came under heavy bombing in February and March 2022. Mission Without Borders works closely with church partners to offer support and distribute aid.**



**Nadiya hugs and plays with her daughter at a day camp for refugee children and their mothers, organised by Mission Without Borders. They hid in a school basement when their town came under heavy bombing in Donetsk. This was a particularly challenging time for Nadiya's autistic daughter who needs routine and calm. As they escaped on an evacuation bus, they all had to lie down on the floor as Russian tanks began shooting the bus.**



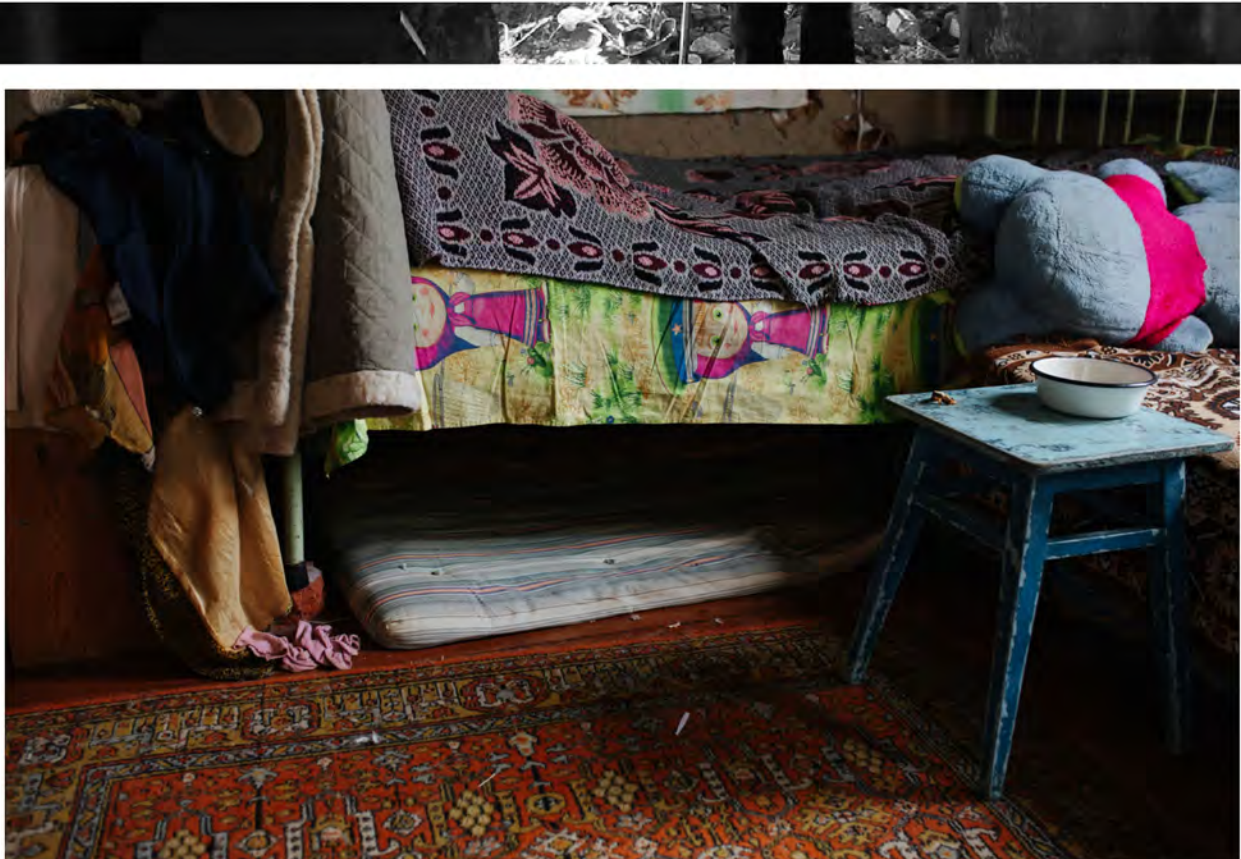
**A Mission Without Borders summer camp held in Voloshky, Ukraine, provided some much needed fun for children whose parents are serving on the front line, in the army, police, fire service and rescue units. Some of their parents had already been killed.**



**Pavlo from Sarny, Ukraine, misses his wife and four children who fled to the Czech Republic after several rocket attacks struck their town. Pavlo chose to stay in Ukraine and help his country towards victory. He is a mechanic and is working hard to repair damaged military vehicles.**



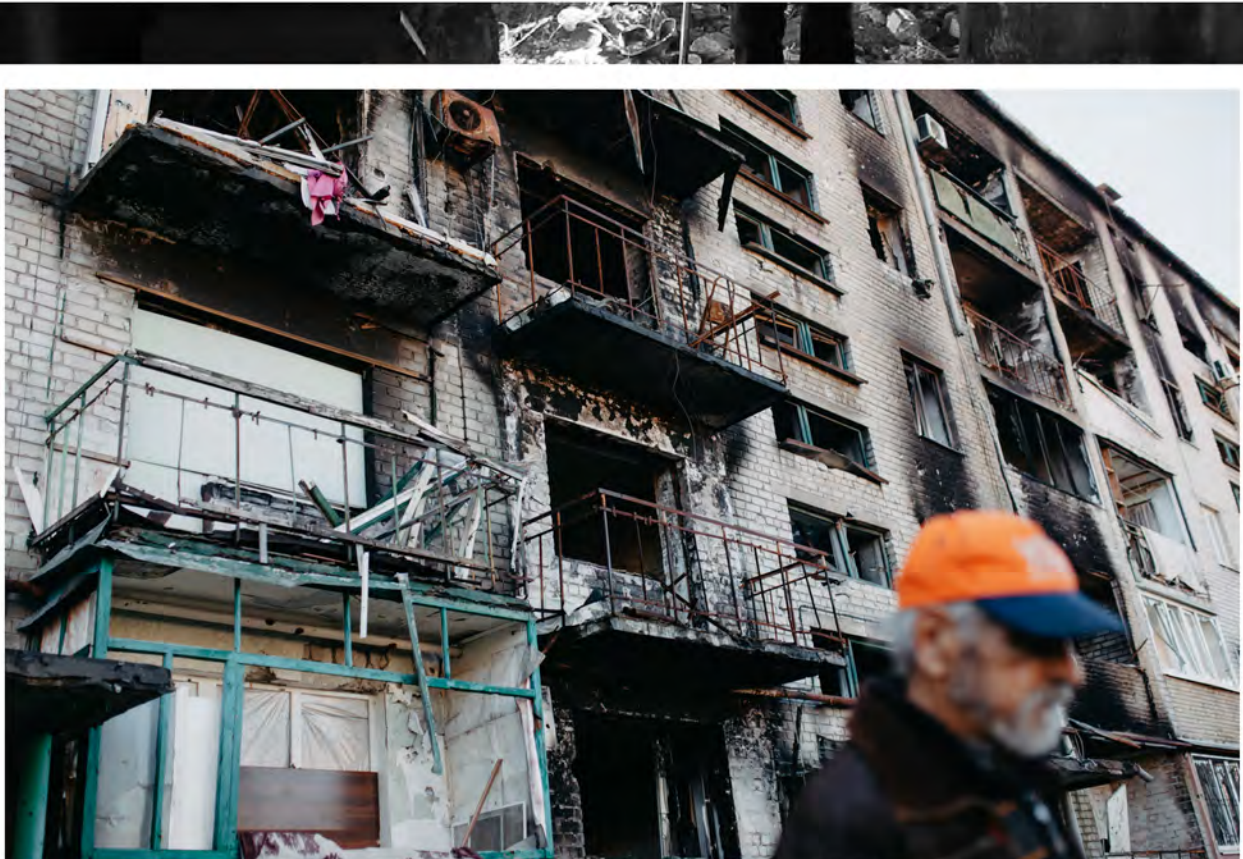
**Pictured is a sunset in Lyman, Kharkiv region, and a typical scene of a house and yard, once someone's cherished home – now totally destroyed. As one resident said, "One bomb ruined everything I carefully gathered and built just to live a normal life. What should I do now? How can I start all over again from the beginning?"**



**In this cold cellar in a family's home in Krasne, the thin mattress under the bed is where a little girl plays and draws fairy tale pictures to distract herself from the bombs exploding close by.**



**A woman sits outside while volunteers replace broken windows in an apartment block in Nova Basan, a village in Chernihiv region. She had returned home after the region was liberated to find everything in her home broken, destroyed, robbed, and contaminated. The apartment block was used by Russian soldiers as living quarters after they expelled the owners.**



**This apartment block in Lyman, Kharkiv region, has been severely damaged and burned, but people are still attempting to live in sections of it. There is no electricity, gas and water here. Residents cook outside with firewood and take water from the water stands, and they have placed beds in the basements and sleep there.**



**When Oleksandr opens the door to his kitchen, it is a picture of utter destruction – broken glass, rubble, debris. He looks out the window at what was once a peaceful community, surrounded by farmland. Before the war, families from Kyiv would spend their summers here. Homelessness has skyrocketed in Ukraine since the start of the war, a result of homes being destroyed as well as millions being displaced.**



**Locals gratefully accept hot tea made by volunteers in a community near Kherson. As there was no electricity or heating here, the hot drinks and meals were particularly welcome. Similar to many places in Kherson region, Posad-Pokrovskiy's water supply, electricity, gas and communications infrastructure were destroyed by Russian troops before they abandoned the town.**





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