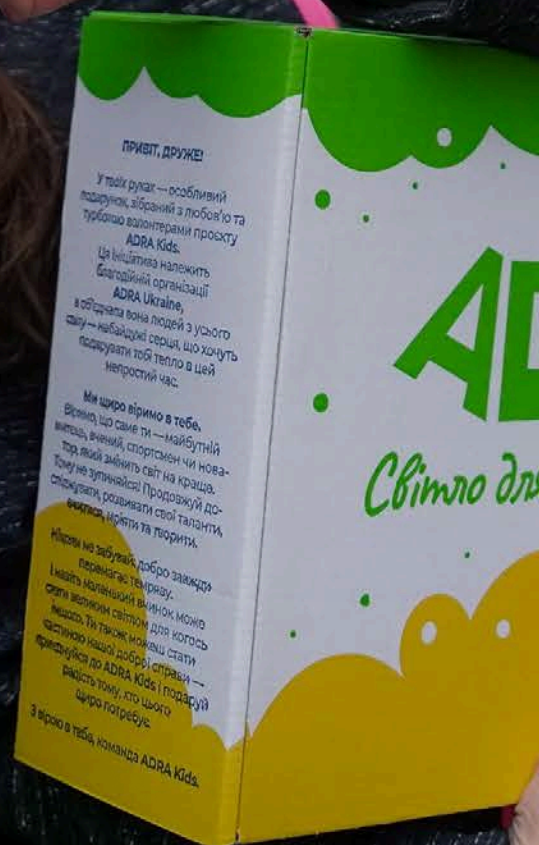






MARYNA PIDUBNA
ADRA Kids Project Manager

«The task of adults is to give children back their childhood»

ADRA KIDS IS A NEW PROJECT OF THE CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION ADRA UKRAINE, AIMED AT SUPPORTING CHILDREN AFFECTED BY THE WAR.

— **Maryna, tell us a little about your work and the project you lead.**

— I joined this project not long ago. Before me, it was coordinated by Olga Makarchuk, who put a lot of effort into its creation. It's a great honor for me to be part of such an important initiative. The war has left deep scars on children: they've lost stability, friends, and the sense of safety. Many live in constant stress, witnessing relocations and separation from parents. We, as adults, must support them now so they can grow up without deep trauma and with faith in a peaceful future.

— **How did the idea of ADRA Kids come about?**

— It was born out of reality itself. Every day we see how the war has taken not only homes but also the very sense of childhood away from children. Alongside humanitarian aid, we must pay attention to children's emotions, dreams, and needs. That's why ADRA Kids became a natural continuation of ADRA Ukraine's work — a way to show children that they are not forgotten and that they are cared for.

— **What is the main goal of the initiative?**

— We aim to help children affected by the war regain inner balance, find joy, and rediscover motivation for growth. We want every child to feel that there are caring adults nearby. After all, the future of Ukraine depends on how much this generation preserves its ability to love and create. Our ambitious goal is to help 100,000 children regain psychological balance, socialize, and rediscover the joy of childhood.

— How is ADRA Kids different from previous ADRA Ukraine programs for children?

— We've supported children before — since 2014, over 50,000 Ukrainian children have received gifts with the support of [the Seventh-day Adventist Church](#). Previously, we didn't assemble the gift boxes ourselves — we sent empty boxes to local Adventist congregations, where people filled them with presents, and ADRA Ukraine distributed them to children. Now, within ADRA Kids, we create the gift sets ourselves.

Also, activities that were previously separate components of various projects (for example, 22,000 psychological consultations for children) are now united under one holistic program dedicated entirely to children. Thus, ADRA Kids combines psychological support, leisure activities, creative clubs, and social adaptation — along with wonderful gifts. The project doesn't have a specific donor; we're seeking partners among businesses, NGOs, philanthropists, and anyone willing to join.

— Which children are covered by the program?

— These are children of veterans* (former military personnel), children who have lost one or both parents, internally displaced children, and those who were injured or otherwise affected by the war. All of them are among the most vulnerable. We want to help them regain trust in the world.



Educational kits for schoolchildren from ADRA Ukraine



— What types of assistance are provided?

— Not only gifts but attention — something children deeply need. This includes psychological support (both online and in the centers), extracurricular education, camps, creative and sports clubs, and social events.

We've already designed six types of gift sets for two age groups — 6–9 and 10–14 (three sets for each group). For instance, the “Art Master” set includes a canvas, sketchbook, and markers, while the “Athlete” set includes a volleyball, tennis rackets, a water bottle, and a T-shirt.

We want each child to feel unique, so the sets vary, and the choice depends on the child's interests.

* The term "veteran" is used exclusively for individuals discharged from military service.

— You mentioned creative clubs. What will that look like?

— We plan a range of directions — from language learning to IT and programming. Specific courses will be determined after surveying children and parents to match their needs and age.

— What are the first results so far?

— We began with a major event — the project launch in Kyiv at the Cossack Village “[Mamayeva Sloboda](#)” on September 28. The event was attended by children of veterans*, who received 149 gift sets purchased through donations made on the project’s website.

Younger children under six painted on the “Dream Wall” and participated in quests, while parents joined a psychological workshop by [Health360 team](#), creating guardian angels.

Among the guests was Mykola Kuleba, the Presidential Commissioner for Children’s Rights (2014–2021) and founder of [Save Ukraine](#). Recalling the missile attack Kyiv endured the night before the event, he said:

“Adults — you can see they didn’t sleep, they were worried about their families. But the children — they smile and rejoice. It’s vital for us to help restore their lives. I want to wish you, adults, to sometimes look at hardships more simply — like children do. We must be strong for them.”

He also expressed readiness to support the **ADRA Kids** initiative.



Mykola Kuleba — the founder and head of the Save Ukraine fund



Alyona Luhantseva — leader of the Supermentors community

Another guest, **Alyona Luhantseva**, mentoring program assistant and leader of [the Supermentors community](#) of the Association for Mentorship of Children and Youth, emphasized the importance of such events and expressed willingness to cooperate.

There were creative surprises as well.

* The term "veteran" is used exclusively for individuals discharged from military service.



Anzhelika Rudnytska — a Merited Artist of Ukraine

[Anzhelika Rudnytska](#), a Merited Artist of Ukraine, shared:

“Today I was invited to a fancy party in Lviv — and at the same time ADRA asked me to perform for the children of our heroes. Guess which one I chose?”

She performed together with [Sofiia Nersesian](#), a young singer and volunteer who has already raised over 15 million UAH to support Ukraine (by the way, Sofiia recently won the national selection for Junior Eurovision 2025 with her song “Motanka.” The contest will take place in December in Georgia).

The event included games, contests, and activities for both children and parents. Many kids received not just gifts but warmth, attention, and care.



Sofiia Nersesian — winner of the national selection for “Junior Eurovision 2025”



ADRA Ukraine psychologists conduct training for adults expecting children

— What feedback did parents share?

— They wrote us words of incredible gratitude:

“You gave not just gifts, but an atmosphere of care, joy, and support. It’s priceless to see the happy smiles of our children. May this project continue to give back childhood and hope for a bright future.”

Another mother shared:

“Many thanks for the wonderful event for our children and the amazing workshop for moms. The angel we created with your help will always travel with our family.”

Parents thanked us for the laughter, shining eyes, new friendships, and emotions. One mother wrote that for the first time in a long while, she spent a full day together with her husband and child — that was a true gift for the whole family.



Entertainment and master classes at the ADRA kids event

— How many people were involved in organizing of the event?

— Around 30 people — volunteers, the technical team, coordinators, and drivers. Each made their contribution to this good cause.

— Not everyone in society is ready to donate to children's initiatives. Why, and how can this be changed?

— Most of society's attention today is focused on the military and humanitarian aid for adults. But children are those who will live with the consequences of war for many years.

We can shift this mindset through real stories — by showing how such events affect children, how much joy a bit of attention, a gift, or simple care brings. People will then realize that these are not "small things for kids," but the foundation of our future.



Children received gift boxes from ADRA kids



Gift boxes from ADRA kids

— **How can people donate?**

— It's very simple — through [the ADRA Kids](#) website or directly via [this link](#).

We also actively share updates on social media, especially Instagram, and invite everyone to join.

— **And if someone wants to help not only with money?**

— That's possible too. We need volunteers, craftsmen, psychologists, teachers, and animators. If you have skills you can share with children — we need you. We're open to cooperation and always happy to welcome new people.

— **What are your plans for the coming year?**

— Expansion. We want to extend the project's reach, provide psychological support to more children, and involve businesses and communities. We're starting in the Kyiv region, but our focus includes Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia regions. The project will eventually cover all of Ukraine.



Entertainment and master classes at the ADRA kids event

— **What are the biggest challenges your team faces?**

— The main one is funding. We have many ideas and a motivated team, but without resources, it's hard to move fast. We're actively seeking partners and have no plans to stop.

— **Finally, what does “giving back childhood” mean to you personally?**

— I'm a mother of two and I understand how much a parent's emotional state affects children. The war has taken away our peace, but projects like this are a kind of “magic wand.” They help bring smiles, attention, and faith in goodness back to children. They remind them they are not alone, that they are needed in this world — and that's the most important thing.

STATISTICS ON ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

September 2025

Direction of assistance	Number of beneficiaries	Amount of assistance	Region of assistance	Name of Donor
Food Security	157 811 beneficiaries	63 112 food kits, 5 089 canned food kits, 342 675 loaves of bread, food products for 2 protection centers, 1 500 ATB vouchers	Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, Kyiv, Chernivtsi, Cherkasy, Vinnytsia regions	The UN World Food Programme & ADRA Switzerland, AWW Deutschland, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints & ADRA France & ADRA Ukraine
Legal Assistance	501 beneficiaries	-	Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Lviv, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa regions	ADRA Germany & ADRA Czech Republic & Aktion Deutschland Hilft, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), ADRA Japan
MHPSS	3 606 beneficiaries	2 391 individual sessions, 709 group sessions, 506 training	All of Ukraine	ADRA Germany & ADRA Czech Republic & Aktion Deutschland Hilft, (GAC) IHA Canada & ADRA Canada, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), ADRA Japan
Protection centers	999 beneficiaries	11 protection centers	Zhytomyr, Poltava, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Chernihiv, Sumy, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv regions	Radiohjälpen & ADRA Sweden, (GAC) IHA Canada & ADRA Canada
Social transportation	2 045 beneficiaries	107 trips	Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson regions	ADRA Germany & ADRA Czech Republic & Aktion Deutschland Hilft
CASH assistance	112 beneficiaries (52 households)	1 209 600 ₪ (29 233 \$)	Kharkiv, Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Sumy regions	ADRA Japan
WASH	-	7 water purification systems	Dnipropetrovsk region	ADRA Germany & ADRA Czech Republic & Aktion Deutschland Hilft
HEALTH	-	141 wheelchairs	Kyiv, Odesa, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Zakarpattia regions	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Winterization in kind	420 beneficiaries (150 households)	300 tons of fuel briquettes	Chernihiv, Kharkiv regions	(GAC) IHA Canada & ADRA Canada
Children of veterans* and other vulnerable categories	149 beneficiaries	149 children gift boxes	Kyiv city	ADRA Ukraine

* The term "veteran" is used exclusively for individuals discharged from military service.



HIGHLIGHT

MORE THAN 5,000 KITS FROM THE UN WFP AND ADRA WERE DISTRIBUTED IN THE MYKOLAIV REGION

In **September**, ADRA Ukraine employees handed over 5,287 food kits from [the UN World Food Program \(WFP\)](#) with the support of [ADRA Switzerland](#) to the residents of the Kutsurub community of the Mykolaiv region.

Representatives of vulnerable categories of the population received monthly assistance, including — people aged 60+, persons with disabilities, large families and others.

The Kutsurub community, located near the front line, suffers from constant arson. This is one of the most dangerous areas of Mykolaiv region, so residents of the community need monthly humanitarian support, including food.

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HIGHLIGHT

FAMILIES FROM FRONTLINE AREAS PREPARE FOR WINTER WITH SUPPORT FROM ADRA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

As part of the MHWP (Mental Health, Winterization and Protection) project, which is implemented with the support of [the Government of Canada](#) and [ADRA Canada](#), on September 9 and 12, offline registration of households for obtaining fuel briquettes for winter period housing heating took place in the Koryukiv district of Chernihiv region and Bogodukhiv district of Kharkiv region, located near the line of hostilities.

A total of 150 households — of 75 were registered in each community. In just a few weeks, these families will receive briquettes from ADRA Ukraine with delivery directly to their homes.

The MHWP project envisages: payment of funds for the purchase of fuel briquettes in the Chernihiv region; provision of psychological and psychosocial support in six protection centers (Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Kryvyi Rih, Mykolaiv cities); provision of fuel briquettes to 150 households in Chernihiv and Kharkiv regions, as well as 17 collective centers in Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy regions for the winter period of 2025–2026.

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HIGHLIGHT

ADRA UKRAINE HANDED OVER ATB CERTIFICATES TO DISPLACED PERSONS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN LVIV AND TERNOPIL REGION

On August 30 and 31, in the city of Lviv, ADRA Ukraine issued certificates for ATB stores with a denomination of 500 UAH in a modular town where more than a thousand displaced people live, including the elderly, people with reduced mobility and people with disabilities.

Distributions at this location take place almost every week. This time, 200 certificates were issued to the residents of the town. In addition, another 200 certificates were distributed in the Ternopil region to patients of the educational and rehabilitation center in the city of Kremenets (founded by the NGO «Society of Parents of Children with Disabilities and Their Friends “Dawn of Hope”).

The donor of the project is [the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#).

Published on: 04 / 09 / 2025



NATALIA LEMISHCHUK
from the Kherson region

Natalia has been living in a shelter with her children for two months.

They managed to leave the occupied territory — the path was difficult, full of fear and anxiety. It was difficult and scary to leave their native home, familiar streets, everything that made up their lives. However, they are now — in a safe place where a sense of peace gradually appears. Here you can live again without constant fear that outside the window — is unknown and dangerous, where every day could be the last for your city.

In the shelter, they found a roof over their heads, warmth and care. When Natalia had already more or less settled in a new place, the phone rang —, that were volunteers.

«They said that they were giving out school supplies here. We got two boxes of — for Roma and Kira», — she says.

It was a charitable organization of ADRA Ukraine together with partners from [ADRA Japan](#) who prepared school kits for children. Inside —, everything is necessary for the child to be able to study, because the school year begins very soon. Children opened the boxes with special enthusiasm: they laid out pencils, touched new felt-tip pens, turned over colored notebooks. For them, it was more than a set of things — like a little holiday happened.

«We really need it», — Natalia shares.

For a family that has left behind all — home, favorite things, friends and familiar places, — these boxes have become a sign of support and care. They reminded that even in the most difficult times there are those who are ready to lend a helping hand.

Thanks to ADRA Ukraine and ADRA Japan, another family was able to feel that they were not alone. And Natalia, looking at Roma and Kira's smiles, says that these are the moments that give hope and make their lives even a little happier.



JULIA KOSTYNIUK
from Kharkiv city

Julia, along with her husband and three children—two sons and a younger daughter—was evacuated from the Kharkiv region.

The family now lives in Kharkiv, a city that continues to live under the daily threat of shelling. Despite all the difficulties and dangers, the parents are trying to create a sense of stability for their children and give them everything they can.

Julia shares that it is especially important for them that their children do not feel deprived and have the opportunity to develop, learn, and simply enjoy the little things.

«I received educational kits for the children. My youngest child, Nika, was the most delighted. She found it very interesting and looked at the gift with excitement,» says the woman.

For the children, this was not only material support, but also a moment of joy and celebration amid difficult everyday life.

«The contents are very good: albums, notebooks, paints, pencils, pens — everything you need,» emphasizes Julia.

For many families who remained in Kharkiv, purchasing stationery or school supplies is a serious financial challenge. Due to the constant danger, job loss, or unstable income, parents are forced to choose their priority expenses—clothing, food, and necessary medicines. That is why the assistance received was a significant support. Julia and her husband were able to use the money they saved to buy clothes and food for their children, as ADRA Ukraine, with the support of its partners at [Japan Platform](#), had already taken care of the educational kits.

For the family, this is not just about school supplies, but also an important sign of care and support in difficult times.



NATALIA
from Lviv city

«This school year has presented me with many challenges,» says Natalia.

She works as a teacher and last year became a first-grade homeroom teacher. She loves her job, but sometimes it can be difficult. There are displaced children in her class who need more attention. They were frightened and afraid of everything around them. These children have been through things that even adults would find difficult to endure. Natalia tried to support them in every way she could.

In addition, she had to bring the class together so that the students would be friends with each other. Another task was to establish mutual understanding between parents and create a comfortable atmosphere for everyone. It was not easy, because teachers have many duties and responsibilities. Over time, she felt that she desperately needed rest, but often could not relax and was in a state of constant tension.

«I liked everything about this retreat, but most of all I liked the training sessions,» Natalia shares her impressions.

Thanks to ADRA and its partners, the teachers at this school were able to draw, share their emotions and impressions with a psychologist, and discuss what was bothering them.

«Such events are very important. We live in a time when anxiety has become commonplace. I feel that I really can't relax, and here they helped me with that,» says the woman.

Natalia is always ready to support her students, and she goes through many trials with them. But she herself needs help.

ADRA Ukraine, together with its partners [Schulzentrum Marienhöhe](#) and [ADRA Germany](#), created an atmosphere of comfort and care for teachers that they had been lacking. Educators were able to feel that not only do they care for others, but others also care for them.

«Thank you very much!» says Natalia for such wonderful support.



MORE NEWS

[89 educational sets from ADRA Japan were handed over to schoolchildren of the Kyiv region](#)

04 / 09 / 2025

[ADRA Ukraine provided children of Zaporizhzhia with educational kits](#)

04 / 09 / 2025

[ADRA Ukraine and the Embassy of Canada discussed the implementation of the MHWP humanitarian project](#)

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[Residents of Kryvyi Rih were taught stress resistance](#)

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[The UN WFP delegation visited the distribution of aid in the village of Studenok](#)

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