



# the noOws

Edition 9 - Autumn 2022

## **Fleeing Ukraine** Page 4

How we've been helping those fleeing the war in Ukraine

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## **Persevering in a Pandemic!** Page 8

Not only did we keep going throughout the lockdowns, we managed to expand into new areas.

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## **Waste Nott Want Nott** Page 10

Find out how we have been turning bulky waste into life chances for children.

**KEEPING YOU IN  
THE LOOP FOR LESS**

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# We're back!

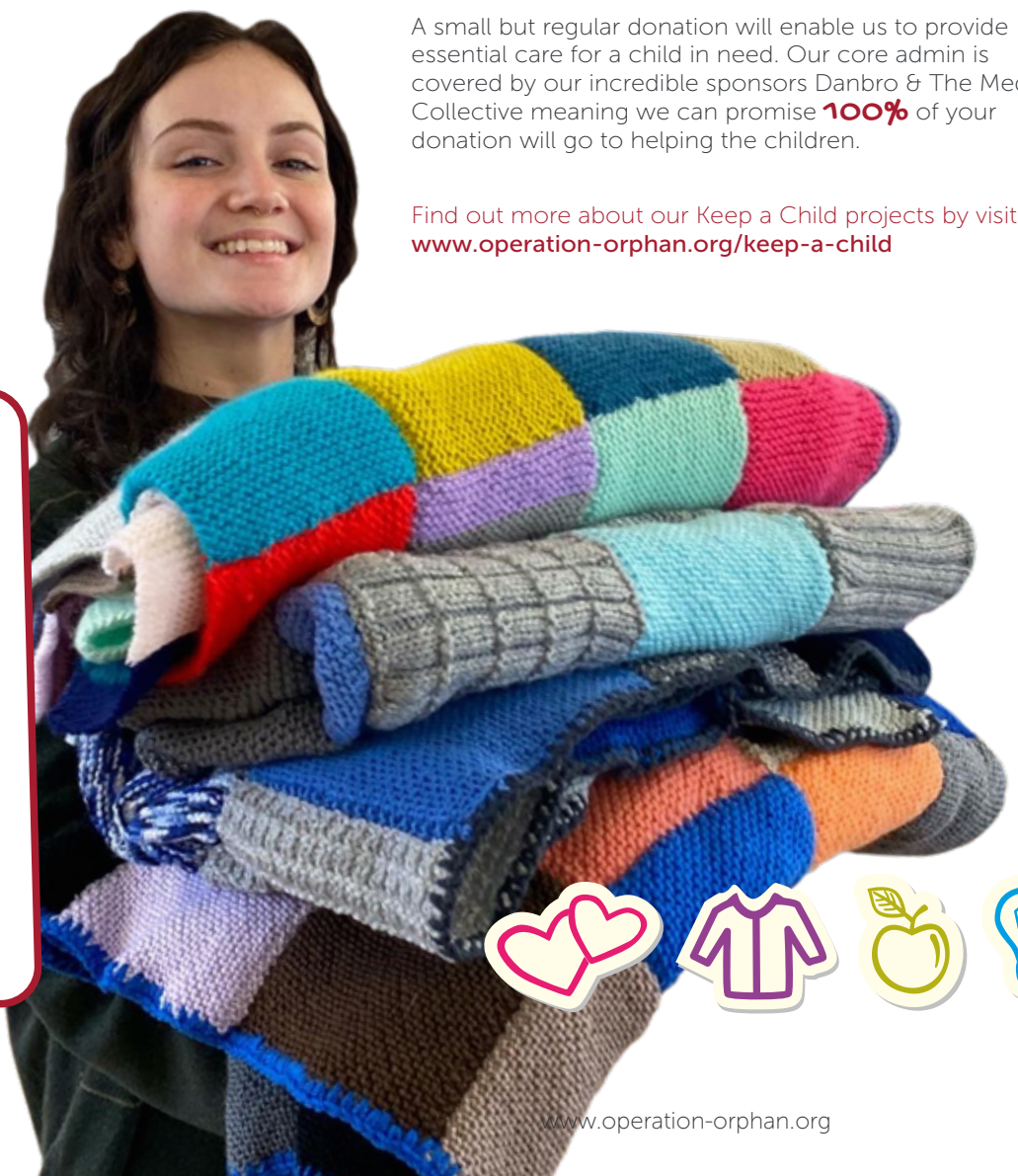
It's been a while since we produced a hard copy of our Noows and we are glad to be back with a bang! So much has been happening in the life of the charity, we hardly know where to begin.

As you will probably have seen, our response to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine was swift and is continuing to make a difference each day. We would sincerely like to thank those of you who rallied to help us get aid to the border and boots on the ground in Moldova. Your support means everything to us and we can guarantee each pound you've donated has been spent carefully to ensure the biggest possible impact.

Everything we do at Operation Orphan is centred around keeping orphans and vulnerable children safe, warm, healthy and learning. Through the pages of this little booklet, we aim to update you on a few of these projects and give you just a flavour of our work.



*Cynlyn*



# Can you become part of our Keep a Child Family?

Help us to stand in the gap for children whose care structure has been decimated through war, sickness or natural disasters.

A small but regular donation will enable us to provide essential care for a child in need. Our core admin is covered by our incredible sponsors Danbro & The Media Collective meaning we can promise **100%** of your donation will go to helping the children.

Find out more about our Keep a Child projects by visiting [www.operation-orphan.org/keep-a-child](http://www.operation-orphan.org/keep-a-child)

## Tailored Tuition

We rescued a sixteen year old girl in Uganda who was being forced to marry an older man.



Now she is thriving at a vocational boarding school, where she is learning a trade in tailoring. We are so happy to have helped set her up for life and have the ability to earn money by offering her bespoke tailoring services to clients.

Under age marriage is a serious issue and we are pleased to have worked together with the Ugandan authorities to rescue her and give her the opportunity to enjoy a brighter future.



# Fleeing Ukraine

We've all been affected by the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. As our news was flooded with stories of war, our team got ready to leave. Not to take sides, but to protect the women and young children who were suddenly fleeing Ukraine in search of safety.

The Crisis Response Team had never responded in a war situation before now. Usually the crisis is a natural disaster which will come to a natural end, then rebuilding can begin.

Nobody could foresee how long this situation would last for, we just knew we needed to act fast. Where there is mass movement of people,

disorientation, heightened emotion and uncertainty, there is also ill motive. People with no respect for human life, wait for these kinds of opportunities to lead individuals unknowingly into trafficking. This was our main reason for responding so quickly. Our aim; to prevent human trafficking wherever possible.

Our team spent time at the border and at refugee centres, initially trying to understand the situation and assess where our resources would be used well. With trustworthy relationships in Moldova, formed over the last decade, this was a good place to base ourselves.

*"We have helped families find comfort, safety, guidance as well as supplies for their needs. Children in distress, worried mothers know they are not alone, they are taken care of and there is someone near to reach out to."*

**Alina Papanea**  
Project Coordinator



It became clear that thousands of refugees were crossing on their way to Western Europe, yet thousands remained. Being close to Ukraine so that they could go home as soon as peace returned was their main reason for remaining in Moldova. They had received no support and were staying with families all over the region. Our team visited each one of these families to identify those most at risk and also to offer assistance with food, fuel and consumable supplies.



Help from the UK was close at hand as scores of people came to the warehouse to volunteer and donations of goods and financial support came in thick and fast. We couldn't have anticipated the overwhelming outpouring of generosity. It certainly helped us to ship goods out quickly and afford to meet needs as we came across them, literally preventing young mums from putting themselves in harm's way to provide for their children.



Huge thanks to IKANO BANK for their immediate financial donation to help us rapidly deploy our Crisis Response Team.



# Update from Uganda



Throughout Covid lockdowns, Uganda had very strict regulations, making it incredibly difficult for our team to make contact with our children while they were at-home learning. Sadly, it took the rape of a 14 year old student of ours to grant our team the necessary permission to check in with the unaccompanied children.

During the first lockdown, we found and recovered ten children living in the slum. Three of these children were on their own because their mother was gravely injured and in hospital after she had been shot by a local defence unit for walking home from work after curfew.

Through social services giving us temporary care, we were able to renovate a room to give these children a place of safety. As four of the ten children were reunited with parents or guardians, our most pressing matter was finding out how to provide long term care for the six remaining children. We refused to let these children be abandoned again!

We needed to raise enough funds to be able to provide long term housing and cover living/school costs for the children. To rent a space would be incredibly expensive, so we made the decision to build an extension. With support from Trinity School in Lancashire and some generous donations towards this project, we were able to complete all the stages of this build.

We are happy to report that the children are now settled into their new place of safety. It's amazing!



When Brad recently visited the project, he arrived days after the unprecedented flash floods. Homes and loved ones had been washed away and people were left destitute. Our team provided an immediate place of safety for individuals and families who lost their homes and all their belongings. When Brad arrived he helped the team provide a way forward for these families, to relocate.

New children were added to our Place of Safety for temporary care whilst their parents were tending to the baby's medical needs.

We linked up with the coordinated disaster response and focused on providing mattresses and food to those affected in the area surrounding the school. Thank you to those of you who gave generously to this appeal to help make this possible.

# Persevering in a pandemic!

## Covid-19

We never would have thought that our Crisis Response Team would be operating here in the UK but at the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the CRT stepped in to keep the Forget-Me-Notts project running for the first few months of lockdown #1.

During this time, thousands of the most vulnerable children were no longer at school. Despite provision through local authorities, many of these children did not show up for the offered childcare provision. Families were isolated, living in houses with no beds, no furniture, no nothing! Our Crisis Response Team was ready to help and the first wave of deliveries took place in March, 2020.

One of our lockdown referrals was for a single father who had recently fled domestic violence, along with his two young sons \*Taylor and Tyler. They fled with no possessions and had to start building their home again from scratch. Until our intervention, they were living in isolation in an unsafe, unstable environment but we were able to provide this family of three with a bed and bedding each, storage units, and some basic kitchen essentials.

\*names changed to protect child privacy

We also helped 15-year-old \*Zara who is a young carer for her mum; she helps out with tasks around the house and helps to look after her siblings, who display challenging behaviour where they are often putting themselves or others at risk. Zara struggles with her mental health and her poor school attendance was becoming a growing concern. She had given up her own bed for one of her siblings, which meant that Zara, her mum and another sibling were all sleeping on the floor. This family were urgently in need of two single beds and a double bed, which we were able to provide - thanks to the donations we received. We were also able to gift a fluffy friend for all the children, providing endless cuddles, which were desperately needed at the time - all thanks to Cubbies!

These stories prove what a positive difference we can make when we work together! Together, we can help the vulnerable families in our community who are battling through poverty. We are so overwhelmed by everyone's generosity (especially during the pandemic) and we continue to have new referrals being submitted every day - the need never stops.

In the first three months after we launched our Covid-19 response project, we helped **104 children** from **45 families**. We installed an incredible **40 beds**, all with their own bedding set, duvet, pillow and soft toy! We also installed **30 storage units**, **8 safety gates** and **2 washing machines**, and we provided **3 new mums** with baby essentials and **7 families** with kitchen essentials.

This really is something to be proud of and we couldn't do any of this without you - so thank you!

## Expanding into Lancashire

In the summer of 2020, we set up our Lancashire Hub which replicates Forget-Me-Notts in the Fylde Coast area, working alongside social workers to build and install beds, storage units, and other essential household items into family's homes. John, Jess, and Steve do an amazing job and we are so proud to have been able to extend the Forget-Me-Notts reach further afield. To date, this small team made up of dedicated volunteers have helped 207 children and installed 78 beds!

*"Since launching the Lancashire Forget-Me-Notts Hub in July 2020, it has become so much stronger. After about 12 months Lancashire Council asked us to increase our reach to cover some of the more deprived areas further afield, and we were able to react accordingly. As a team, we have found great joy in being able to bless and support struggling families in our community. It can be challenging at times but we count it a privilege to serve in this way."*

John Filmer

Lancashire Hub Team



# Introducing Waste Nott Want Nott



Although the pandemic has been a difficult time to navigate, one of the great things that we can say came out of this season is our new business: Waste Nott Want Nott!

WNWN is a bulky waste removal and recycling service. We collect old, unused, household items and take them to recycling plants for them to be recycled. Mattresses are taken apart and separated into metal and flock; the metal is then reused and the flock is used to generate electricity. In the beginning, we were able to offer collections of mattresses, bed bases, sofas, and footstools, but we have recently expanded to collect fridge/freezers and large domestic electric items including dishwashers, cookers, washing machines, and tumble dryers. Ikano Bank sponsored and funded a stunning new van, which you may have seen out and about in Notts!

November 25th, 2020 was our first week of domestic collections and since then we have skyrocketed! Growing our client base, we have been able to secure several partnerships with local bed shops and bulky waste companies. Within a year, we were able to partner with Ikea in Nottingham with hopes to gain even more corporate partnerships.

This exciting new endeavour has given us the opportunity to generate our own cash so we don't have to solely rely on donations. Being more sustainable has always been our dream so we are super excited to see this come about.



**We collect old:**

- Mattresses • Bed Bases
- Sofas • Domestic Fridges & Freezers
- Washing Machines • Tumble Dryers • Dishwashers
- Electric Stoves

↑  
Our Team

**"I LOVE IT! Smooth service, no issues, easy to book and hassle free!"**  
Tanisha



**"Speedy service from the guys and collected items promptly! Nice to know that disposing of the items responsibly and ethically! Highly recommend thanks so much!"**  
Charlotte

## Mattress Disposal for Business

We would welcome a warm introduction to the person responsible for disposing of old mattresses in any business. If you are a landlord or you work in the hotel/letting industry, we would be happy to provide your mattress and/or sofa removal at a great price. In turn, the profit from our service goes directly to support the work of Operation Orphan. We would love to hear from you!



# The new kid on the block!

Allow us to introduce **Kids League Kenya**, a charity focused on raising funds to offer scholarships to bright pupils who would otherwise not attend a school suited to developing their talents. We're so excited to work with them as a part of Operation Orphan!

## A Sporting History

Kids League has roots going back to 1993 with its origins in Kongowea, Kenya being under 'Assist a Child to School' charity Kenya and in Uganda as Kampala Kids League. ACTS KENYA supported scholarships in both primary schools (now free) and in secondary schools (still fee paying). KKL was a community sports league in the capital city of Kampala and then became Kids League Uganda, a Sport-for-Development NGO working in northern Uganda.

The charities combined their **40+** years of experience to form Kids League Kenya, registering there in 2017.

## An Exciting Future

FFWD to today and Kids League Kenya is excited to be a part of Operation Orphan reaching out in the UK and the USA through OO to support both its scholarship and sport for development programmes to impact the lives of disadvantaged children.

A wonderful Sports-in-Development football event in July 2021 sponsored by OO and Banner marked the launch of the OO-KLK relationship! Held in and targeting Kongowea, over 100 people of all ages played, ate and discussed their challenges together. It was absolutely wonderful.

Kids League Kenya will continue working in schools and communities to create safer places in which children and young people can thrive and level the playing field improving access to the global world.



# SPRING CHALLENGE!



After the success of the Hope Alive Tour in April, we are now planning for the upcoming Spring Challenge. If you are a runner (no matter how experienced) you are welcome to be part of our team.



Booking forms and more information can be found on our website:  
[www.operation-orphan.org](http://www.operation-orphan.org)

# Turning up the heat...ing

As recent events prevented us from running Keep a Child Warm as we had in the past, we adapted the project to continue helping children, especially amidst this difficult landscape.

Figuring out new ways of how to operate Keep a Child Warm, we decided to target our support by sending clothes directly to children's homes and social services.

## Staying Cozy During COVID

In 2020, we managed to send out clothing to a children's home in Romania, but we found this to be neither time or cost efficient. Instead, we regrouped with our contacts in Moldova to find a better solution.

Our Project Coordinator, Victor, worked with Social Services in Moldova to compile lists of children in the fostering system, care homes and the mother and baby unit. From these lists, we were able to pack boxes of winter clothing specific to the ages of the children. Before being able to send these boxes out, we had a trial run with nappies and sanitary products to the mother and baby unit.

This shipment, sent via a courier service rather than lorries, was successful, and we were able to send 11 boxes of winter clothing for children in foster care to Cahul, Moldova.

For **£15** per month you can help a foster family stay warm!



## Funding for Foster Children

Continuing Keep a Child Warm in Moldova, we have also started a monthly heating subsidy to families supporting foster children. We found that with rising fuel costs, families were unable to financially support foster children and therefore, could no longer look after them. We have now put into place a subsidy to help ease the stress of affording monthly heating costs. Through social services in Moldova, existing foster families can register to receive an allowance to help cover their heating bills or pay for fuel and firewood.

Considering the changes and difficulties these last few years have brought, we are so happy that this year we can once again ship coats. Aid will be used to help the most vulnerable children from Moldova and Ukraine.





## New Corporate Relationships

Recently we have been contacted by two incredible local business, who reached out help the children.



### The Nottingham Building Society

The Nottingham Building Society responded rapidly to our Ukraine appeal. Their very generous donation enabled us to get our Crisis Response Team in country, delivering support to those who needed it in record time.

### Monarch

We were very excited to hear from Monarch, an education furniture company based in Nottingham, a few months back. They got in touch with a desire to create a long term relationship. We have since launched this fantastic partnership and it was great to meet all the employees and share with them more about how we help the children.

## Interested in fundrasing?

If you're up for hosting an event to help us raise money to help the children, we would love to hear from you! Whether you organize a garden cake sale or a large scale event, every penny you raise will help us keep children safe, warm, healthy and learning.



Perhaps you could ask your school or workplace to run a sponsored challenge or jumble sale. If you'd like to chat about your ideas or you need support with putting the FUN into fundraising, please email us at [info@operation-orphan.org](mailto:info@operation-orphan.org)

