

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Building hope. Shaping futures.

Children deserve protection, stability and the chance for a good future – also in times of war and poverty.



Children need more than aid – they need a future

Crisis has many faces – and children are often most affected. In Ukraine, war remains part of everyday life: it says whether a home is safe, how children learn, and whether families can plan for the future. Meanwhile in Malawi, children face daily realities of poverty and limited access to education. Children without parental care have even fewer resources to cope. And yet, we see something else every day: hope. Life journeys that turn toward a better future. Hope grows where support is reliable – and where people do not give up on each other.

This year, **care in action** reached into new locations, supporting many children and families. We continue to create safe learning spaces, provide psychosocial support, and offer creative programmes that help children process their experiences. At the same time, we deliver practical, everyday assistance – where it is most needed.

Our approach combines immediate support with long-term prospects. We help young people develop goals and build skills for their future careers. We create places where children can simply be children again – places where they can learn, play, and rebuild trust. And we strengthen carers, professionals, and local government departments to ensure that support leads to sustainable structures.

The 2025 Annual Report offers insights into our work, our projects, and the impact we are achieving. We see people who can now help themselves, and our impact multiplied in communities. This work is only possible through strong partnerships: through our dedicated teams on the ground, committed local organisations, and the people who support and sustain our mission.

What drives us is a simple belief: every child deserves protection, dignity, and a real chance at a better future – no matter where they live. We thank everyone who stands with **care in action** and makes this work possible.

Yours,
Jasmine Lehnis



Jasmine Lehnis

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Das Deutsche Zentralinstitut für soziale Fragen (DZI) bescheinigt: **Geprüft + Empfohlen**

Ukraine 2025 – Growing up Between War and Hope

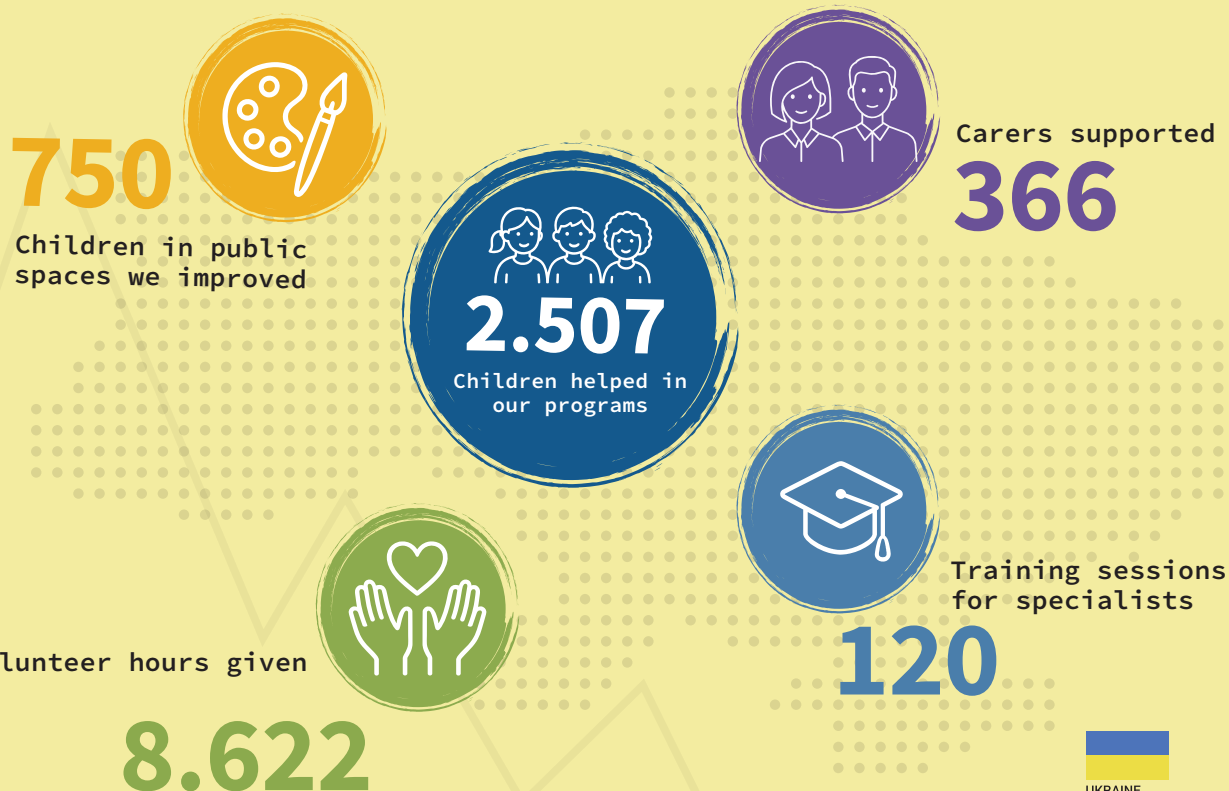
Where crisis dominates children's everyday lives, **care in action** creates spaces for stability and a future.

2025 was a year when support truly mattered. In Ukraine, the war continues to shape the daily lives of many families, with disrupted education, uncertainty and loss. 44% of children show signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and 70% lack basic needs.

care in action responds to these challenges with a clear approach: we combine immediate support with long-term prospects.

We create safe spaces and creative activities where children can start to feel safe, learn, and rebuild trust. We support families in their daily lives and empower young people to actively shape their futures. At the same time, we work closely with local communities, partner organisations, and professionals – helping to build structures that last.

Our impact highlights



Step by step into new lives

New Stability for a Family from Mariupol



Polina and Emilia

When **Halyna** fled the besieged city of Mariupol in spring 2022 **with her two small daughters**, she left behind her home and her business. Emilia was just three months old at the time. Together with her sister Polina, the family began a new life in Lviv in 2025 – marked by uncertainty and the search for stability. The girls' father is a soldier by profession. After spending two years in Russian captivity, he needed treatment in several rehabilitation centres. The family had to cover some of the costs themselves – a significant financial strain.

care in action supported the family on several levels. Through our expert advice, Halyna gained access to a start-up grant from the city of Lviv, helping her get back on her feet professionally. At the same time, our team helped find a dentist who provided the father with prosthetic teeth free of charge.

The children were given personalised support: **Emilia and Polina** now do gymnastics activities funded by a kind sponsor. Our summer camp offered the family valuable time together, supporting both emotional recovery and stronger family bonds.

Today, **Halyna** looks to the future with cautious optimism. Step by step, the family is regaining stability.

... When Families Need Support

In 2025, 222 children and their families were helped in crisis with individual aid and support from a social worker. This reached children in Lviv and Dnipro Regions who were in desperate situations.

To help children have stable family care, 217 adults with a parental role were supported with training, advice and support groups. Our goal is to make it possible for children to grow up in families and prevent them going into care institutions. We are proud that the campaigning by our Care for Carers Program has made a difference: in 2025 two new Emergency Foster Families were formed with our support.

For the first time we offered our Family Camps to help families who

were bereaved or strained by military service. The methods we developed over decades of strengthening foster families brought healing and recovery, and renewed family bonds.

Thanks to our work with communities, two local government departments have added a social worker to their permanent staff, which together with new methods brings long-term change to their services for children.

Our approach goes beyond short-term support: we guide families on their journey towards greater stability, whilst at the same time strengthening local structures through training, specialist advice and targeted resources. This creates

sustainable support – for children, families and the communities in which they live.

“We are thankful to the care in action team for their work, dedication to their mission, and their valuable contribution to supporting families and children.”
Lviv Regional Social Services, 2025

Creativity strengthens confidence and wellbeing

Many children in Ukraine have experienced war, displacement, or prolonged uncertainty. For them, it can be difficult to express their feelings or to trust others. In our creative programmes, children find a safe and supportive environment. Through theatre, painting, and group play, they learn to express their thoughts and emotions. At the same time, they form new friendships and develop a sense of belonging.

One social worker describes the change like this:

“Many children are very withdrawn at first. After a few weeks, they begin to laugh, play, and share their ideas.”



These Programs not only nurture creativity but also make a vital contribution to children’s emotional stability and overall wellbeing. Through activities at our Creative Hub and at orphanages and community centres, we can regularly reach **1,600 children**, bringing support where it’s truly needed.

Some of these activities are delivered by dedicated volunteers who receive training and ongoing support from us. They help ensure that assistance reaches even remote areas – while also strengthening local communities.

Another **750 children** join activities hosted by their own communities, in creative spaces we have equipped.

This is how confidence, resilience and new possibilities can grow.



From a Dream to a Career – Oksana's path to pastry chef

How many lives were changed by our Connect and Grow project time will tell – but for **Oksana**, the turning point is already clear.

Oksana grew up in a large family in a small village, where opportunities are very limited. For a long time, the idea of choosing her own career path seemed out of reach. Yet one passion had always been with her: cooking. Through the project activities, Oksana could realise a long-held dream. In February she made her first step into a professional kitchen. In July, she took part in a two-day cooking course – an experience that opened up new possibilities and changed her outlook on the future.

With guidance from our social worker, Oksana gained not only practical skills, but also self-confidence and the belief that she could succeed. In September, she began her vocational training at a college in Lviv. She is studying culinary arts and is particularly excited about her baking classes – where she feels truly at home.

Oksana's story is one of many. Other young people have discovered an interest in IT, while those completing driver training are preparing to enter a profession that offers good earning potential and growing demand.

After that
course I
realised
I wanted
to become
a pastry
chef

Oksana



When Young People Find Their Way



War and uncertainty make the transition to adulthood challenging for many young people. Through youth empowerment, mentoring and tutoring, our programs help them discover their strengths and shape their future.

Through training sessions and workshops, participants engage with key topics:

- Self-confidence and personal strengths
- Communication and teamwork
- Understanding and defending their rights
- Education and career development

Delivered by our team, specialists and trained volunteers, the programs provide a safe space for exchange, guidance and personal development.

In 2025, **556** young people took part in empowerment training through our STEP Program. This included the **Connect and Grow project**, which focused on wellbeing and career development and received German public funding from **EZ Kleinprojektefonds**.

Another **187** children and young people received in-depth support to develop their future prospects– through tutoring, mentoring, or sponsorship in the **Individual Child Support Program**.

Our programs strengthen their motivation and open up new pathways for education, personal development and careers.



Many young people gain renewed confidence in their abilities – and start to shape their future.



Malawi 2025 – Where Education Shapes Futures

care in action supports education for children and youth in Malawi through scholarships, pre-school and learning support – so that poverty doesn't decide their future.

A visit from Jasmine Lehnis in November 2025 confirmed that 46 young people are making good progress in their education because of our support. Our work in Malawi began with a personal connection: Jasmine lived and worked there for fifteen years. The collaboration with our local partners could also be strengthened.

More information and
insights here:



Why our help so important:

Malawi is one of the ten poorest countries in the world. Only 33% of children complete primary school.

Support where it's needed

46 youth – sponsored in secondary school, vocational college and university

Blantyre project – 85 preschool children received meals and preschool education

Mulanje project – 70 primary school children have lunch and afternoon learning support

Our Impact Highlights



46 Young people supported in higher education



2 Education projects funded





My Name is **Tinali Champiti** and I am studying **Public Health**. During my attachments, I had the opportunity to give women the Tetanus Toxoid Vaccine (TTV). This vaccination achieves important health goals:

- **Prevent tetanus**
protect against tetanus infection, especially in pregnancy and childbirth
- **Protect newborns**
pass immunity to babies during pregnancy

In Malawi, this vaccine is often given to pregnant women, to reduce maternal and neonatal tetanus and protect the health of mother and child.

Thank you for the support. May the Good Lord continue blessing you.

Thank you very much for your support and encouragement. Your support allows me to work towards my dream of becoming an **electrical engineer**. I will keep working hard and give my very best to achieve my goal.

I am truly grateful for your support.

Mailosi Namacha

Bachelor of Science in Electronics



I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for your generous sponsorship. Thanks to your support, I have officially graduated with my degree in **Horticultural Sciences and Landscape Design**.

Your financial support more than just covered costs; it gave me the peace of mind to master my studies. I am eager to begin my career and create innovative and sustainable natural environments.

Thank you once again for investing in my education and my future.

Chifuniro Chimimba



Thank you so much for your support. I am currently pursuing my Bachelor studies in **Water Resources Management and Development**.

I will continue to work hard to reach my goal.

Your support has meant a lot to me throughout my academic journey.

Ronald Chitimbe

Organisation and Transparency

Acting responsibly. Working transparently.

care in action e.V. is a registered non-profit association based in Munich (founded in 1998). Our work is guided by clear structures, transparent governance, and strong oversight mechanisms.

Our structure

General Assembly

The highest governing body of the organisation.

It elects the Executive Board and approves the annual accounts, annual report, as well as project and budget planning.

(2025: 27 voting members)

Executive Board

The Board is responsible for the organisation's strategic direction. It is elected for a two-year term and meets regularly to guide developments and make key decisions.

Executive Management

The Director leads the operational work of **care in action**.

She is responsible for implementing strategy, managing finance partnerships, and overseeing activities.

People in positions of responsibility

- Chair: Josef Lierzer
- Board Member: Dr. Horst Goss
- Board Member: Janice Lehnis
- Extended Board: George Collins
- Secretary: Lydia Bauer
- Director: Jasmine Lehnis

Transparency & oversight

Our financial and control systems ensure the responsible use of funds:

- External accounting by PSW Steuerberatungsgesellschaft (tax advisors)
- Internal audit of accounts with no objections provided by Thomas Kuch and Hannes Weiland on 8 May 2026
- Annual financial statements approved by the General Assembly
- Recognition of charitable status by the Munich tax authorities

care in action is exempt from corporation tax.

(Date of latest exemption notice: 15 February 2024)

Remuneration

The association's members and Board serve on a voluntary basis. Director Jasmine Lehnis is engaged as an independent contractor, and Janice Lehnis is employed part-time. To protect personal privacy, details of individual remuneration are not disclosed.

Transparency and fundraising

We report on the outcomes of programs and grant funding via our website, email communications, annual reports, and newsletters. We also communicate directly with individuals and organisations interested in supporting children in Ukraine. Our aim is to keep donors and stakeholders well informed about how funds are used, while raising the resources needed to support more children and young people.

care in action operates with a lean cost structure:

- Marketing and communications in Germany: 4% of total costs
- Administrative costs in Ukraine: 8% of project costs
- Marketing in Ukraine: 2% of project costs

Our partners

Ukraine – Turbota v Dii

Our long-standing partner organisation in Lviv manages programs efficiently and reliably.

At the end of 2025, it employed **19 full-time** and **6 part-time personnel**, and **7 project-based team members**. **More than 100 volunteers** were actively involved. Together, we build capacity, strengthen local structures and improve quality.

Malawi – Local education projects

We work with two community-based organisations:

- **Bloomfield Day Care Centre**, Mulanje
- **GEMO Day Care Centre**, Blantyre

In addition, we work with partner organisation **care in action** Malawi in England (UK) to support education projects sustainably.

Quality and Impact

We systematically measure the impact of our programmes:

- Use of clear performance indicators
- Feedback from participants
- Regular evaluation by the team and experts

This ensures that our work is continuously improved.

Organisational Development

In 2025 we reached important milestones:

- Three-year project launched with support from Hasso Plattner Foundation
- Our third grant from Sternstunden towards Creative Hub costs

- First public funding from EZ-Kleinprojektfonds covered 70% of costs for the project “Connect and Grow: Wellbeing and Career Opportunities for Young People in Ukraine”
- STEP Life Skills training materials were developed for training programmes in Ukraine, helping young people strengthen their career prospects, wellbeing and key competencies.
- Development of a logic model and improved impact measurement



Our funding enabled significant progress in Ukraine:

- 27 training sessions for team members- including working with war trauma, psychological support and recovery, and impact evaluation
- Award from Lviv City Hall for 3rd year on International Children's Day
- Contribution to national program “United by Mentorship” to improve care for children, and to development of a Mentor's Manual for Children with Mental Disabilities
- Continued development of policies and management processes
- Local fundraising generated income of 39,486 €, and donations in kind and services of 23,797 €

Since 2023 we have the DZI Donation Seal – a sign for proven transparency and responsible use of funding.

Our structures build trust – and enable lasting support for children and families.

Organisation profile

Name: **care in action e. V.**

Address: Waldspielplatz 44, 82319 Starnberg, Germany

Purpose: Youth work and charitable purposes

Court of registry: Munich, Germany

Registration number: 16143

Date of registration: July 1998

Legal form: non-profit charitable association (Verein)

Tax exemption: 15.02.2024 (Freistellungsbescheid)

Website: www.care-in-action.org



Finances 2025

Expenses and Income (Euro)	2025	2024	2023
Expenses			
Projects			
"Care for Carers" Fostering and Community Services	139.900,96	111.789,59	86.312,94
"Aid in Wartime" (includes Sternstunden project)	126.026,49	98.699,01	118.266,30
"STEP" Life and Career Skills	107.592,52	52.493,69	53.931,35
"Individual Child Support" Mentoring, Tutoring and Therapy	71.116,55	27.109,15	21.849,13
"Together" – Volunteers for Children	68.438,80	28.033,21	26.672,93
"Turbota v Dii" Ukraine Capacity Building	32.393,59	25.589,66	19.574,75
"Sponsorship" Education Support in Ukraine	22.405,00	26.137,87	42.667,28
"Sponsorship" Education Support in Malawi	24.377,31	8.725,96	
"Malawi" Education and Community Projects	16.585,90	25.326,82	24.404,12
Added to Ukraine Reserve (unspent transfers for future use)	-6.995,66	17.479,41	10.935,83
Total Project Expenses	601.841,46	421.384,37	404.614,62
Administration			
Administration, accounting and banking costs	12.941,81	12.530,72	8.937,45
Admin personnel expenses	15.070,96	12.434,26	12.604,57
Total Administration Expenses	28.012,77	24.964,98	21.542,02
Marketing and Publicity			
Marketing expenses	4.505,00	4.740,07	8.102,29
Marketing and public relations personnel expenses	20.278,46	16.976,31	16.794,78
Total Marketing Expenses	24.783,46	21.716,38	24.897,07
Total Expense for the Year	654.637,69	468.065,72	451.053,70
Income			
Donations	231.318,87	180.881,50	244.313,57
Grants from Sternstunden e.V.	10.000,00	26.000,00	25.000,00
Grants from other organisations	354.884,22	279.597,86	78.591,55
Membership fee	530,56	475,56	255,56
Interest and similar income	2.631,01	1.120,73	0,00
Total income for the year	599.364,66	488.075,65	348.160,68
Balance of Income to Expenses end of calendar year	-55.273,03	20.006,93	-102.893,02
Reserves: cash in hand and bank balances (Assets)	151.041,37	206.314,40	186.304,47

Transfers to Ukraine partner	Euro
Balance from 2024 (Ukraine Reserves)	46.850,57
Transfers to Ukraine 2025	492.195,75
Total Finances in Ukraine 2025	539.046,32
Total Expenses in Ukraine	499.191,40
End Balance of Finance for Ukraine	39.854,92
Added to Ukraine Reserve in 2025	-6.995,65

Balance of Reserves	Euro
Balance from 2024 (Reserves)	206.314,40
Total Income 2025	599.364,66
Total Finances 2025	805.679,06
Total Expenses 2025	654.637,69
End Balance (Reserves 2026)	151.041,37

Overview

The finances show that **care in action** was able to allocate significantly more funds in 2025 than in the previous year. Both income and expenditure have risen, enabling the organisation to reach more children, families and communities in Ukraine and in Malawi.

Significant grant partners

- Stiftung Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe
- Hasso Plattner Foundation
- Sternstunden
- EZ-Kleinprojektefonds (managed by Schmitz-Stiftung)

Donations were crucial in supporting the children and the work of our project team. At the same time, they made it possible to secure additional funding, as they covered the required contribution for Sternstunden and EZ Kleinprojektefonds projects. Most expenses were for Ukraine (86 %) and Malawi (6 %), with Admin and Marketing making up only 8 % of costs.

Main reasons we spent more than our income

1. Implemented agreements for use of funds received in 2024
2. Salaries and taxes paid in Ukraine increased with economic and legal changes
3. Some expenses for the Creative Hub project in 2025 were repaid by Sternstunden in 2026

Reserves provide security for our project work and help us to respond to new challenges. To meet the growing demand and maintain our services in the long term, donations remain essential.

The following outlook sets out the priorities and objectives of **care in action** for the year 2026.



Outlook for 2026

In this year our goal remains clear: to offer children protection, development and open doors for their future.

Ukraine: protection, stability and psychosocial support

Children in Ukraine need us to stand by their side. Their wellbeing and mental health will remain a central focus in 2026. We see the scale of the need – and we understand how to respond: by combining psychosocial support with a strong emphasis on education and safe, stable family environments. In this way we can help children to cope with the effects of war and create new hope for the future. In daily work with children, our team encounters panic attacks and clear signs of trauma. At the same time, access to therapy is limited, with long waiting lists across the country. Our priority is still to help children who have lost their parents, and tragically, the war continues to separate many children from their families.

Key funding priorities for Ukraine:

- **Individual psychosocial support:**
add therapy consultations and enable mentoring
- **Creative Hub –**
provide a safe community space with individual support for children
- **Education Sponsorship –**
both with child sponsors and funding of tutoring, courses and materials
- **Empower youth –**
develop more training and career opportunities, and camps that build skills and resilience
- **Support foster parents –**
maintain the Support Groups, give expert training, add aid for generators and for basic needs when new children join care
- **Enable volunteers –**
fund materials and transport so volunteers can meaningfully support children and families

Goals for three-year project:

- **Creative Spaces and Activities in new locations** – especially in regions which are highly affected by war
- **Launch Child Protection in Volyn Region** – where evacuation trains bring newly displaced families and our services are needed
- **Launch Child Protection in three new communities in Lviv Region**, while guiding the three communities helped in 2025

- **Move online tutoring to a structured digital platform** – to support online safety, track learning and streamline processes

Malawi: Education as a Path out of Poverty

In Malawi our focus for 2026 is **education and sustainable opportunities for the future**. Children and young people should access education, learning support and higher education, despite their background. Together with local and international partners **care in action** will support students to complete their education and develop their potential.

Goals for Malawi

- **Student scholarships –**
15 students in higher education and 15 students in secondary school supported with funds from Stadema Stiftung
- **Community education projects –**
find funding for Learning Support for 70 children in Mulanje and Nursery School for 80 children in Blantyre
- **UK partnership –**
Coordinate with partner charity in the UK, “Care in Action Malawi”, to support 11 students in higher education and 5 students in secondary school

Organisational development

Strengthen Visibility and Impact

To sustainably reach more people we are investing in our development in 2026. A focus is on communications in Germany:

With a new website, stronger visual design and complementary communications resources, we will clearly, regularly and impactfully inform donors and the public about our work.

Together, we make a brighter future possible

From a Quiet Girl to a Confident Performer

Maria (13) joined **care in action's** theatre workshops after being displaced from her home. At first, she was very shy and hardly dared to speak in front of others. But through drama exercises, improvisation and the support of the group, she gradually grew in confidence.

By the final performance, Maria stood proudly on stage, captivating the audience with her strong presence.

"We witnessed an incredible transformation. Maria has become a confident young participant who can speak in front of an audience and express her feelings."

Angelina Tsaryk, Head of Caritas Radekhiv



Finding Hope After a Painful Loss

After the loss of her husband, Iryna struggled to see a way forward. Together with her son Dmytro, she joined our Family Summer Camp, where she had her first chance to work with a therapist. Through creative therapy, conversations and shared activities with other families, she gradually began to regain hope and find joy in everyday life again.

"For the first time since losing my husband, I was able to laugh again and watch my son play." *Iryna*

The camp gave Iryna renewed strength and helped her and her son look to the future with hope. Alongside emotional recovery, they found valuable time to reconnect, create positive memories and grow stronger as a family.





care in
action



Finding security changes everything

For many children in Ukraine, security means more than having a roof over their heads. They need protection, support, and people who believe in them.

care in action supports children and young people with educational assistance, psychosocial support, and safe spaces where they can heal, learn and grow. Together, we create opportunities for a brighter future – step by step.

Your support can change
a child's future.



This support is only
possible because of
people who choose
to care.



Donate now

care-in-action.org/en/donate



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