According to the United Nations, there are “3.1 million conflict-affected people who need critical life-saving assistance” in the Ukraine. Approximately 1.7 million children are in crisis throughout the country, with almost 600,000 of those children who live close to the front line, being “deeply affected” by the two years of almost continual shelling. With more than 9,000 people killed and many thousands more injured, the need for humanitarian assistance is immense.

As a former orphan living in Moldova, Elena Barlow, grew up knowing what it was like to live on the edge of society. Rather than allowing this experience to break her spirit, Elena, instead, decided to reach out. For the past few years Elena, who now lives in the United States, has returned to Moldova each year with a container load of donated supplies which she then distributes to orphanages and other distressed populations.

In 2015, when Elena began plans for the yearly container, her heart turned to the humanitarian crisis in the Ukraine, a neighbor country to Moldova. She decided this year’s container would be used to supply Ukrainian refugees and hospitals. Elena quickly began pulling supplies together, filled a container load and got it ready to ship. She was especially pleased when the Ukrainian American Operation Humanity (UAOH) organization agreed to cover the costs of shipping the container.

Upon arrival in the Ukraine in August 2015, poor infrastructure and further distribution costs caused delays, but the humanitarian aid, distributed by the Way of Unity, eventually arrived to help the most vulnerable groups. Two of these organizations, Children’s Hospital No. 3, and Maidan Hospital received medical supplies for patients and their needed procedures. Children’s Hospital No. 3 focuses on the medical needs of children in the community and Maidan Hospital takes care of more than 2,000 people who are undergoing complex rehabilitation as well as providing medical assistance in two different camps for displaced people.

In a place where conflict results in destruction, displacement, and broken families, Elena, and those who support her, are a bright beam of light to the people of the Ukraine. Thank you for your part in making this happen. Please keep Globus Relief in mind for any supplies, equipment or instruments you may have available for donation.