



SIRF Ukraine Impact Report
November 2022

Our number one priority is the safety of our seafarers and their families. Ships and their crews in the conflict area are under threat, while seafarers with families in Ukraine are rightly concerned. We urge the maritime industry to give generously to this important cause and help our seafarers at this time of crisis.

Guy Platten, Secretary General at International Chamber of Shipping



About SIRF Ukraine

The Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF), a central charitable Fund to respond to emergencies affecting seafarers and their families, was established in 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Managed by The Seafarers' Charity and supported by The Mission to Seafarers, ISWAN, Sailors' Society, Stella Maris and other charities, urgent support was delivered in key seafaring communities initially in India and later in the Philippines.

In March 2022, the SIRF launched SIRF Ukraine Appeal, in response to the humanitarian disaster caused by conflict in Ukraine, to provide emergency support to seafarers and their families devastated by the crisis. The conflict caused unimaginable human suffering, ripping families apart. The environment continues to be chaotic, extremely dangerous, and fast moving. The size, scale and scope of need is both desperate and growing. Continuing violence and uncertainty caused thousands of people to flee their homes.

Many Ukrainian seafarers continue to be stranded at sea and in ports with scarce supplies. In many areas across the country civilian buildings and critical infrastructure have been destroyed affecting running water, electricity and gas. Phone connectivity is very poor with many people unable to contact their loved ones. The greatest need remains basic human welfare – shelter, food, water, transport, access to medical services, along with practical financial help.



Uzhhorod, Ukraine
– February 26,
2022: Refugees
are waiting for
permission to cross
the border into
Europe through the
Ukrainian-Slovak
border.

The funds already raised by SIRF to support seafarers impacted by the Ukraine crisis are providing immediate, practical support to those in need and we are so grateful for the generosity of all those who have donated.

Deborah Layde, Chief Executive of The Seafarers' Charity

The Impact of Your Donations

Thanks to an incredible level of support from key industry players and corporate supporters, along with trusts and foundations, SIRF Ukraine raised over **£300,000** in donations to-date to support seafarers and their families affected by the crisis.



Since March 2022, funds from SIRF Ukraine have already supported many seafarers and their families through activities delivered by maritime charities, trade unions and other not-for-profit organisations operating on the ground in Ukraine, as well as in other countries,

including Romania, Poland, Hungary, Germany, and Moldova. In addition to the Fund's existing and established delivery partners, we're also establishing new contacts with operations constantly expanding as more is understood about the need required.



Cadets of the Kherson State Maritime Academy received medicines thanks to SIRF Ukraine funding.

“ Over £300,000 raised to-date to provide urgent assistance for seafarers and their families affected by the crisis ”

Grants Awarded

To-date SIFR Ukraine awarded a total of **£353,499** in grants to deliver emergency support for seafarers, funding a wide range of essential human welfare needs, including shelter, food, water, transport, access to medical services, as well as providing hardship grants for those in greatest need.

The following grants have been awarded:

- **£10,000** was awarded to **Aberdeen Seafarers Centre** in March 2022 to support 25 Ukrainian seafarers working from Aberdeen and Peterhead ports with short-term accommodation costs for a total of 442 bed-nights. A further grant of **£10,000** was awarded in October this year to support mainly single Ukrainian seafarers who are on a 5-week rest break from working at sea and who have no family in other European countries and do not want to or cannot return to Ukraine.



Thank you very much for your support to Ukrainian sailors at this difficult time. I am very grateful to you.

Anatoliy Yakovenko, from Sea Tantalus who was also able to take an additional short-term contract on Normand Springer

- A total of **£84,700** was awarded to **Stella Maris** to provide accommodation for 30 days for 44 people at Stella Maris's Recreation Centre at Kashuby, Gydnia, Poland. Apart from accommodation facilities, the Centre also provided regular meals, toys, dedicated space for online learning with free access to the Internet, and SIM cards without limit to keep contact with loved ones. **£7,650** was awarded to cover costs of arrival packages for refugees to include clothes, blankets, toiletries, and other essentials.



Stella Maris Recreation Centre at Kashuby.

Case Study

A Ukrainian family of eight, mostly women and children (ranging from 5 months to 15 years of age), were provided with accommodation, food and some basic essentials at the Recreation Centre at Kashuby, after spending 17 days under fire back in their home in Kharkiv region.



Because of air bombs being dropped on their hometown, the family spent their last three days back at home in the basement without electricity or food, and without any possibility of contacting their loved ones by phone. Some of the nearest villages to them were destroyed and a lot of civilians were killed, including their friends.

“We prayed in the basement just to save our lives... The sound of the planes was unbearable. On March 13 2022, the Mayor of the city organised a green corridor. Thanks to him, we escaped from hell.” After travelling for four days in an overly crowded car, the family finally crossed the border to Poland on foot and got to Gdańsk, where they were helped getting to Kashuby.

I want to express my gratitude for your kindness and understanding of my family's hardship. We received the money. Your help assisted us a lot. We highly appreciate your help to us and other seamen suffering from war.

A seafarer who was made homeless after his house was destroyed in the attack

- A total of **£140,099** was awarded to **Ukraine Crisis Support Fund (UCSF)** launched by International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) to help provide immediate and urgent financial support to seafarers and their families directly impacted by the Ukraine crisis. Since the inception of the Fund, ISWAN has received over 800 applications comprising mostly of Ukrainian seafarers, some Russian, and a few Nigerian and Filipino seafarers. Consequently, due to limited funds, the criteria were revised to give priority to seafarers and their families who came from severely affected regions like Kharkov, Kherson, Mariupol, Donetsk, and Nikolayev regions, with 569 total beneficiaries paid up to US\$500 each to cover expenses ranging from medical bills, children's educational support, rent deposits, living and transport costs. Two families received US\$1,000 each as the seafarer had died due to the Ukraine crisis.



English version of the poster designed to promote the UCSF to seafarers and their families.

Case Study

Valeriy, a seafarer, lost his home to the war in Ukraine. Fortunately, his family was able to escape before a rocket struck their home.

He said: “My father and brother lived in Mariupol. When the war began, I was on a voyage and told my relatives to leave the city. They didn’t want to leave our house because that’s all we had. Along with their neighbours, they hid in our basement for more than three weeks. When a rocket hit a neighbouring house, my relatives decided to leave. On 1 April, they were able to leave in their car to a neighbouring city, but they did not have enough fuel to go any further. On 3 April, a rocket hit our house. Now we don’t have a home.”

Valeriy received a grant from Ukraine Crisis Support Fund and managed to help his father and brother reach a safe place to live temporarily: “The only thing that makes me happy is that my relatives managed to leave. Thank you for your support in such terrible times. We will try to live on.”



Valeriy's home was hit by a rocket on 3 April, 2022.

“People were left without food, water, medicine, and financial support. Numerous families were forced to hide in bomb shelters for a long time. We had to collect information about the need required, unite everyone around us, and turn to all our international partners for support.”

Antonina Shkamerda, Director of MORTRANS

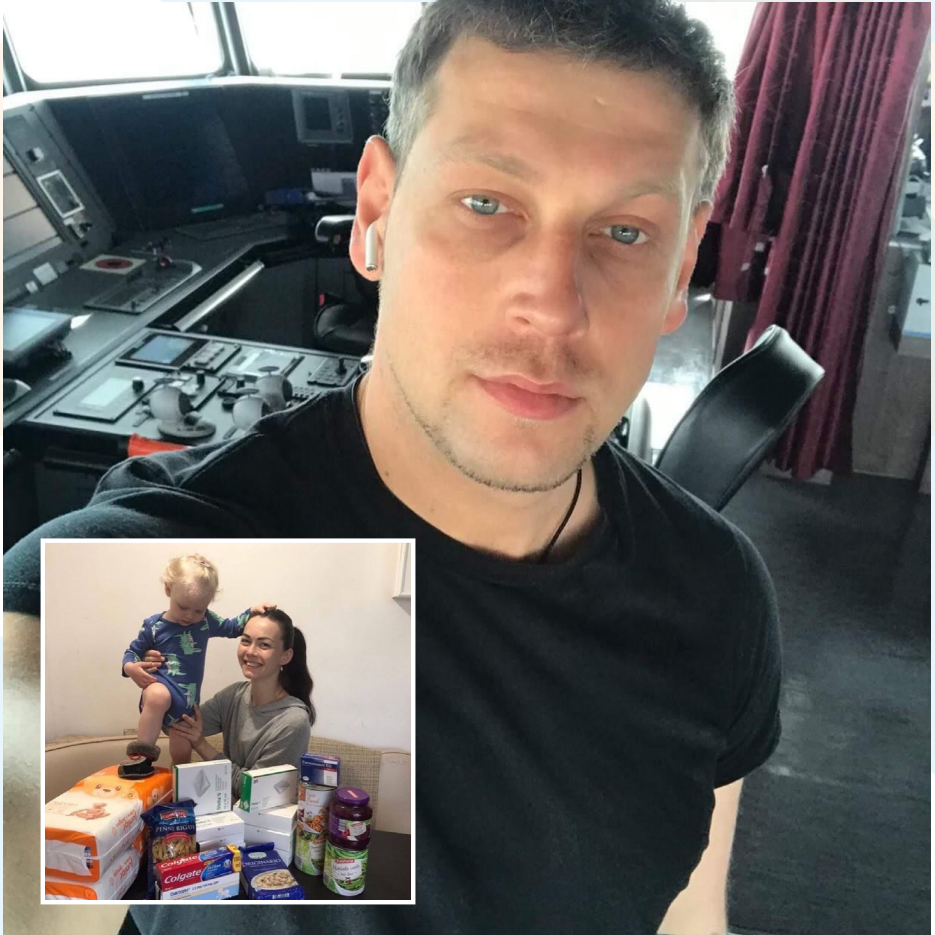
- A total of **£108,700** was awarded to **The Welfare Fund of Maritime Transport, 'MORTRANS'** (established by the Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine (MTWTU)), to help pay for transport, rent deposits and other basic needs of affected seafarers, including shelter, food, water and medical services.

Thanks to funding received from SIRF Ukraine, MORTRANS was able to support many of the MTWTU members including:

- 50 teachers from Azov Maritime Institute of the National University 'Odesa Maritime Academy' who received non-refundable financial assistance
- 392 Kherson Sea Commercial Port employees who received non-refundable financial assistance
- 7 cadets from Kherson State Maritime Academy, who had no chance of leaving the occupied territory, and who received vital medicines
- 50 seafaring families who sadly lost a family member, or received an injury or lost their home as a result of military aggression, who also received non-refundable financial help.

Case Study

Artem, a seafarer from Mykolaiv (pictured below on board a vessel before the war). He had an opportunity to take his family from a hotspot to Reni in the Odessa region, while he remained in the city to help his parents. His wife (pictured with their son) was unable to buy any baby food and nappies in Reni and was in despair. Artem contacted MORTRANS for help, who purchased all the necessary aid for the seafarer's family – baby food, personal hygiene products, food, and medicines. The seafarer was also provided with non-refundable financial assistance.



Case Study

Vladimir* was working on board miles away from home when he heard that his family had been caught up in a war back at home.

He said: 'Communication with my family was completely lost for almost two weeks. Thus, almost two weeks of ignorance, lack of interest in life, and complete apathy passed – I did not know where my relatives were and what was happening to them. Are they alive? Do they have food and water? When I read the official reports on the approximate number of dead, I calculated the chances that my family was not a part of this number. I was not there, but I felt pain and anxiety for my family. I listened to the interview and looked at the records from the burning city. In a week, peaceful and flourishing Mariupol turned into ruins, burying thousands of its inhabitants underneath.'

**Name was changed to protect seafarer's anonymity*



The struggle is far from over for Vladimir and many other Ukrainian seafarers, as they remain on board, as their families flee to safety, or seek work to support their loved ones during the crisis. SIRF Ukraine wishes to express its sincere thanks for all donations that have been received to-date since the launch of the SIRF Ukraine Appeal. We couldn't possibly support so many seafarers devastated by the crisis and their families without your generous support. Thank you.

Ongoing Need

Thanks to the generous support already received, SIRF Ukraine has delivered aid in the form of the most essential human needs, including shelter, food, water, transport, and access to medical services, but more is needed as the conflict continues to escalate.

Following on from SIRF Ukraine's initial support to seafarers affected by the crisis, a survey was conducted by SIRF and the Ukraine Charity Co-ordination Group to better understand ongoing seafarers' needs, where the gaps are, and how it is best to respond to the most pressing priorities in the coming months.

The survey results highlighted the full extent of global efforts to help seafarers and their families affected by the war. One hundred organisations from across the maritime and welfare sectors, including charities, trade associations, welfare providers, unions, and shipping companies, participated in the survey to detail the steps they are taking. The response was truly global with respondents including those with operations in Ukraine, and from Yokohama to Seattle, Baltimore to Tilbury, and Cape Town to Manila.

“To understand how we can best continue to support those impacted by the Ukraine crisis, we wanted to hear from those who have been working so hard to help seafarers and their families. We received a wealth of feedback that brings to life how the maritime community has mobilised across the globe in support of seafarers, as well as highlighting what they see as the most urgent priorities.”

Deborah Layde, Chief Executive of The Seafarers' Charity, speaking on behalf of SIRF Ukraine



KYIV, UKRAINE – 25 February 2022: Child on a swing against a residential building damaged by a rocket in a residential area of Kyiv.

The following challenges have been identified as the most significant in the coming months:

- Limits on travel to/from Ukraine for seafarers (74% of respondents)
- Mental health and wellbeing (70%)
- Extended contracts, discouragement fatigue (49%)
- Employment/new contracts (38%)
- Money remittances or other banking problems (34%)
- Cost of living for refugee families (32%)
- Data or Wi-Fi to contact family (26%)

SIRF has identified the following immediate recommendations for all organisations that are involved in supporting seafarers affected by the crisis:

- Continue to provide funding for hardship grants and/or accommodation support for seafarers and their families.
- Continue to support communications through the provision of data-enabled SIM cards and Wi-Fi in ports around the world.
- Initiate a feasibility study on the development of a mental health support service for seafarers and their families.
- Support efforts to allow Ukrainian seafarers to travel internationally for work.



In light of the latest escalation of the conflict, the need is likely to grow, taking even longer to rebuild lives, homes and communities in Ukraine. With many challenges identified by the survey, we continue to rely on your support for donations to further provide immediate practical help and build a fund for the future – a fund of hope for seafarers and their families.

To make a donation, please make a bank transfer (preferred) to:

Account Name: The Seafarers' Charity (formerly Seafarers UK – KGFS)

Reference: Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) Ukraine
NatWest, City of London Office

Sort Code: 60 00 01

Account No: 00 77 31 23

BIC: NWBKGB2L

IBAN: GB41NWBK60000100773123

Or donate online at:

www.seafarersinternationalrelieffund.org

For more information, please get in touch with Mike Allen, Corporate Partnerships Manager at: michael.allen@theseafarerscharity.org

The SIRF Ukraine is administered and overseen at no cost by The Seafarers' Charity, a grant funder which has embedded and well-established governance mechanisms and processes for monitoring and evaluation to ensure efficiency and transparency. The Seafarers' Charity provides robust governance to the Fund, ensuring that any funds awarded by SIRF charitable partners meet stringent governance requirements, can deliver effectively, and that efforts are not duplicated.