

29 June 2024

Dear friends,

This newsletter is a semi-annual report on the work of REALIS, made possible by your prayers and support.

Background. This year, life in Ukraine has become more difficult and often even more tragic. In 2022, after the full-scale Russian invasion, we hoped that the Russian occupiers would retreat within a year or two, facing the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people, which received fairly adequate support from the West. In 2024, we realize that in a world when dictatorial regimes are uniting against democracies, Ukraine may not see peace and freedom for a long time to come. We don't know how long the men in our team will be able to continue working in various programs, as many businesses have already lost 30% of their employees due to the new mobilization. General fatigue and exhaustion are becoming a problem for our team, especially when we need to meet deadlines in a rapidly changing environment.

Almost everyone in Ukraine now has a list of friends or relatives missing or killed in the war. Vadym Boyko, who was a preacher in our church Spring of Hope died defending Ukraine as a heroic soldier this spring. Vadym was also an informal chaplain in his military unit. Kyrlo, the husband of my niece Sophia (David's sister), has been missing in action for over a week. These are just two of the many such people we know personally. It is difficult for soldiers today to fight without proper munitions against an aggressor supported by Iran, North Korea and China.



Vadym Boyko

It is also becoming very difficult for civilians to live in a country whose power plants are systematically destroyed by Russian missiles when the Ukrainian army was left without reliable air defense.

In such circumstances, what people need most is hope. Together with you and thanks to your support, REALIS is doing its part to help Ukrainians keep hope alive.

REALIS Education for hope. Due to the new restrictions, we face during the war, students in our three educational programs study mostly online. The Ministry and Leadership program was developed for new preachers, Bible teachers, and leaders, some of whom live near the front line. Interestingly, not only evangelical students are currently enrolled in this program, but also two Orthodox priests and one Greek Catholic chaplains' trainer. The Christian Counseling program is focused especially on trauma counseling and is combined with special training for another 600 counselors and school psychologists. The program "Mission in Digital Culture" is led by Ivan Bilodid, who himself graduated from the REALIS program in digital theology two years ago and later graduated from Spurgeon College in London. During a special meeting on the last day



Student from Semenivka



of the school year, several students said that our programs give them an eternal perspective to their everyday existence filled with the horrors of war. Others shared that these programs equip them with skills and knowledge to help others affected by war.

Treating Psychological Trauma. More than a year ago, the REALIS counseling department developed a program to treat children and their parents who have experienced psychological trauma. Only in the first half of this year, more than 100 families from Chernihiv, Sumy, and Zaporizhzhia regions received social and psychological assistance. When they leave Kyiv, we see the first rays of hope in the eyes of almost every child!



The main grants for this ministry were provided by Integra Foundation, World Relief, Tearfund Netherlands, SlovakAid, several other organizations and individuals. In the past few months, we have had the honor of working with First Aid of the Soul, a professional trauma treatment organization founded by Nathalie Robelot-Timtchenko.



Hope for Semenivka. Semenivka is a small town in the Chernihiv region of Ukraine, located about 5 miles from the border with Russia. The city was founded in 1680 and is currently the center of the Semenivka district, which includes 17 village councils and a total population of about 18,000 people. The Semenivka district was under Russian occupation for 40 days from the first day of the full-scale war and has been subject to regular Russian shelling ever since.

For the past two years, the REALIS team has been regularly visiting Semenivka, providing humanitarian assistance to its residents and local church. This year, we continued to provide food and basic necessities to widows with children and internally displaced people. We have built five modular houses as temporary accommodation for people, whose homes have been destroyed by Russian shelling, to stay until they find a more permanent and safer place. We are working on preparing 15 additional temporary homes. Additionally, we've provided new renovations and equipment for a dental clinic and a much-needed industrial washing machine for a local hospital. We have also set up two bomb shelters in the central part of Semenivka, where people come to get food and other essentials.



Hope for Kyiv region. Semenivka was not the only place where REALIS helped people who were affected by the war and could have helped themselves. With the support of Global Housing and Next Generation, REALIS was able to build and repair three houses in the Kyiv region this year.

Livelihood: hope for development. Thanks to a generous grant from Next Generation Ministries, we were able to expand our Livelihoods program. This new REALIS program is designed to help those who have lost their small businesses due to the war and need funds to restart their businesses, often in a new location.

Here's how REALIS helped three internally displaced people from eastern and southern Ukraine and one person who continues to live and work under constant shelling and bombardment:

- **Greenhouse business.** REALIS purchased flower seedlings, greenhouse equipment for Pleshivtsev Pavlo - an IDP from Kherson.

- **Cleaning company.** REALIS purchased equipment for cleaning for Natalia Nedzvedska, an IDP from Donetsk.

- **Shop-café.** REALIS purchased a mixer, waffle maker, microwave oven, fridge, and a grill for Serhiy Tretiakov, an IDP from Makeevka.

- **Bakery.** REALIS purchased baking equipment, convection oven, meat grinder, dough mixer, and a coffee machine for Vitaliy Voroshilov, who lives in Kharkiv.



On a personal note. Irina and I just arrived in the United States a few days ago and are going to return to Ukraine in early September. Over the next two months, we plan to visit New York, South Carolina, Florida and California, to meet with many of you, our partners and friends.

We are very grateful to those churches, organizations and individuals who have decided to support REALIS on a regular or one-time basis. Without you, we would not be able to give hope to suffering people. If you would like to support our educational programs, children, temporary housing, and/or livelihood, please make check out to “DAI” and include a note stating your gift is for REALIS. Mail to **DAI, PO Box 49278. Colorado Springs, CO 80949.**

You also can go online <https://daintl.org/give/dai-partner-gifts/> and choose “REALIS” under “Designation”.

Thank you for your partnership!

Sergiy & Irina Tymchenko
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