

# ANNUAL REVIEW

2022



**MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS**



A message  
from our CEO

**“For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together!”**

1 Corinthians 12:13

**In 2021, lockdowns remained in many of our field countries as the Covid-19 pandemic continued to affect children's education and their parents' capacity to earn.** Despite the challenges faced in Eastern Europe, Mission Without Borders continued to serve and to bless, often where others had pulled out.

Our educational support of children was more important than ever with the closure of schools, and in Bulgaria, for example, children without internet access or computers at home were able to use the facilities at our after school centre – and instead of falling behind, many of them did very well in their studies.

We began working in new communities in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Romania – and started formally working with families and elderly people living in deep poverty in eastern Ukraine.

In 2022, Covid-19 restrictions were mostly a thing of the past, and life was returning to normal – until February 2022, when the Russian military launched its large-scale invasion of Ukraine.

And so even as we celebrate all that God has done, a part of us is suffering; a part of us is crying out to the Lord for **“justice to roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream”** (Amos 5:24). Ukraine is at war, a war it didn't choose. When one member suffers, all suffer together.

Our staff, volunteers and partner churches in western Ukraine and in Romania, Moldova and Bulgaria, where millions of families have fled, have been doing everything they can to help refugees with hot meals,

emergency accommodation, transport to the next part of their journey, and food and hygiene parcels. This is only possible because of the generosity of our donors around the world – who together donated over \$2 million to the Mission to help the people of Ukraine.

We are thankful more than ever for our local staff, volunteers, and church partners for their compassion, knowledge and contacts that enabled them to respond so swiftly and effectively to meet refugees' needs as they arose.

One mother, fleeing the fighting, said of her time at the Mission's community centre in Palanca, Moldova, **“I am amazed at how we were treated here – like family members. I thought it must be made up: all this love and care? For free?”**

The war in Ukraine has reminded us more than ever of the fragility of the lives we build for ourselves, and the importance of establishing everything upon the Rock that is Jesus.

As refugee families settle down in new places, finding new jobs, new homes, new communities, Mission Without Borders will be there to support them in this next phase, helping to meet their needs over the longer term. Together with our supporters from all over the world, we want to see people restored, re-established, and flourishing; the Body of Christ built up in unity and love, as each part does its work. Thank you for your part in making this possible.

**Stephen Young**  
International CEO  
Mission Without Borders



## CONNECTED TO THE GOSPEL

Dimitar and his daughter.

**Our purpose remains, as ever, to reach people for Christ – and this runs like a thread through everything we do.**

We believe that ultimate transformation in life comes through salvation in Jesus Christ and whilst we direct our help to people’s physical needs, we are always conscious of their spiritual needs.

It is because of this purpose that we work, where possible, through the local church. Our work goes hand in hand with theirs. They help us to deliver our Christian Input events and provide a place of community for the children, families and elderly people we work with; we equip them to reach out to local people more effectively. Ultimately when the time is right for us to move on to work in another community, the church is in a stronger position to care for their own neighbours.

We love hearing testimonies every year about the people who come to know Christ through the Mission – people like Dimitar in Bulgaria, who was resistant to the gospel until his daughter came home excited from summer camp and got her dad reading the Bible with her. He later said, **“God came into my home and brought a change in all of us. Now our whole family attend church and believe in God.”**

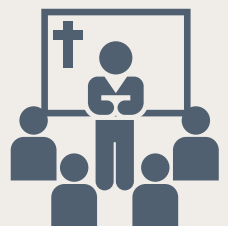


Children studying the Bible through our correspondence course

**8,610**

Adults regularly attending church

**4,261**



Partnering churches

**339**





**“The teachers are very patient and kind.”**

## CONNECTED TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

### No longer “stuck in a vicious circle”

**“I was so nervous at school. I felt as if I was stuck in a vicious circle, where I couldn’t grasp the material, I had no one to help me, and I kept getting poor marks.”**

Eleven-year-old Bilyana is Roma and lives with her family in Krupnik, Bulgaria. Her parents left education without any qualifications, and poverty has been a constant battle. In the Roma community in Bulgaria, many children drop out of school early. Around 22% of Roma are illiterate and only 9% have a secondary education even though it is compulsory, a recent study showed.

“My husband and I didn’t have the chance to finish school, and I don’t want my children to be like us,” said Lyubka, Bilyana’s mother.

“Lyubka is thankful that as a result of being enrolled on Mission Without Borders’ sponsorship programme, Bilyana now attends after school club, where she gets help with her homework.

“I love going to after school club,” she said. “The atmosphere is very relaxed – I feel free to ask any questions I have. The teachers there are very patient and kind, and they’re always available to help us. The teachers at school have noticed my progress and started praising me. Thanks to the help I receive, I’m getting very good marks, and that makes me feel very proud.”

Now Bilyana has the confidence to make plans for the future – and her dream is to study at university and qualify as a kinesiologist.

### We are like a big family

Kirilka is a teacher at the after school club in Krupnik, Bulgaria that Bilyana attends.

Children from Roma backgrounds are often neglected or rejected by their teachers at school here. The widespread notion is that they’re not as capable as children from a non Roma background.

At after school club we are like a big family. My goal is to motivate the children to move forwards, working hard, to fulfil their dreams.

**My greatest reward is the change in the children.**

The teachers at the school have told me that the children from the after school club are different from the others, not only in their grades but also in their behaviour. Working with these children is inspiring, and it is so rewarding to support them towards a better future.





**“I hope he will learn to love school.”**

## One of the most challenging boys in the community

**“The teacher told Cristi he could not come back to kindergarten because of his dirty clothes and his wild, trouble-making behaviour.”**

Seven-year-old Cristi lives with his family in a Roma community in Laslea, Romania. It is common for children like Cristi to struggle to fit into the school system. And teachers often lack sympathy for children from Roma backgrounds and do not attempt to understand them or help them overcome their difficulties.

As well as discrimination and poverty, Cristi’s family’s life has been marked by violence – like many other families in the community. Fortunately, he, his brothers and his mother have found a safe refuge in Mission Without Borders – a place of love, acceptance and provision. A place they can turn to for help where they will be welcomed and treated with dignity and respect.

Cristi is enrolled on MWB’s child sponsorship programme and now attends the after school programme, where he is given a healthy, nutritious meal each day, and then has the chance to do his favourite things, colouring and singing. He is also taught Bible lessons and receives support with his school work. His mother never attended school herself, but lately she has come to realise how important education is.

Paula Boruga, the MWB staff member who supports the children in the area and is like a second mother to them, said, “Cristi is one of the most challenging boys in the community. My hope is that he will not drop out of school. I hope he will learn to love school and he will feel more equipped for the challenges he faces there.”

With the help of our supporters, MWB can help children like Cristi to find their place not only in school – but beyond that, in the amazing plans God has for them.



Total number of children sponsored: **8,267**



Children attending after school clubs: **450**





**“Everything in my life has changed.”**

## CONNECTING FAMILIES TO THE SUPPORT THEY NEED



Number of families sponsored in 2021:

**2,376**

**98** families became self sufficient with help from MWB.



Communities: **62**

**“I have no job, my cow died... I have nothing.”**

**Suad Music, 57, was desperate when he phoned Mission Without Borders several years ago.**



He and his family live in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and he'd had a tough life. After fighting in the traumatic Bosnian War in his early 30s, he qualified as a technician but ended up losing job after job when the companies employing him declared bankruptcy.

MWB began supporting the Musics, providing them with a chainsaw so Suad could earn money cutting firewood. Later they were given a pregnant cow so they can sell dairy products, as well as growing and selling crops. They also receive emotional and spiritual support through the visits of staff member Nermin, who works with the family.

Their teenage son Sakib has enjoyed MWB's summer camps and has also attended the Mission's English classes; he now speaks English beautifully.

Suad said, “Nermin is like my brother. We drink coffee together. For me, he is the best. He's helped us a great deal to improve our lives.

“It's very difficult to find the words to express how grateful I am. Everything in my life has changed.”



**“I am thankful to God that I and my family are alive and healthy.”**

**When the hard times come, Mission Without Borders is there to help families back on their feet. Whether it is the earthquake that struck Albania in November 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic, or the current war in Ukraine, MWB is often first on the scene to give families the support they need.**

The Mission is there through the everyday struggles too – the ongoing battle with poverty, the freezing winter that comes every year with its extra expenses and challenges, the need for tools or seeds or advice to help family members take the next step forward.

When we’re connected to families, that’s when we are best placed to understand both their sorrows and joys – and be the support they need.

Nevila Kapxhiu, 45, is thankful that she and her family all managed to escape their home and run outside when the 6.4 magnitude earthquake hit Albania.

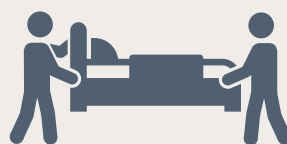
“When the earthquake happened, everything was being shaken and we couldn’t even stand up from the bed. Everything around the house was breaking, the walls were cracking and the roof from the next room was breaking and falling down. There was dust everywhere in the house and glasses broken on the floor.”

Her son, Igli, 20, knows how fortunate he is to be alive. He said, “I was sleeping in the same room where the roof got destroyed and started to fall down.”

MWB helped the family fix the roof and cracked walls and replace their window. In total MWB helped 31 sponsored families in Albania complete their reparation works and replace damaged household goods.



Temporary accommodation was set up in Palanca, Moldova for families fleeing the war in Ukraine.



**1,439**  
beds and mattresses  
distributed.



**84** trucks of  
goods were sent  
out to six countries.

**“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”**

Prov. 17:17



## THE ELDERLY CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY

**“When I first met the elderly people, I was distressed.**

**“I saw people who stay at home for months on end and can’t take care of even their most basic needs. They literally just exist and survive.”**

Nina is 17 and volunteers at MWB’s Soup Kitchen in Sarny, Ukraine. The Soup Kitchen has been running for over 14 years, providing meals to the elderly and disabled. Meals are delivered to those who are housebound, and there are currently 49 homes who receive visits every weekday from the Mission.

Nina added, “Social institutions do a miserable job of helping the situation of these elderly people living in such poverty. Then I realised that God wants us to take care of them. He needs us to get involved, to help them practically and to care for them as people. We receive so much love in return!”

Antonina, pictured above, is 92 and has been housebound for about seven years. Her house is older than she is, and it is cold even in summer. Antonina is rarely visited by her son, who is 67. He has a disability and can hardly walk.

Antonina always meets visitors with a broad smile and a sparkle in her eyes. Although she cannot hear well, she loves to talk and to listen to everyone’s news.

Volodymyr, the staff member who runs the Soup Kitchen, said, “Older people need to be prepared for eternity. I try telling people about the Lord wherever I go. But more than preaching with words, we preach with our works.”



**“Winter time is a painful period for many of the elderly and disabled people we work with.**

“Their living conditions exacerbate their poor health,” Volodymyr continued. “Most of these elderly people live in old, very cold houses in poor repair, heated only with wood stoves. The temperature outside drops to -3C (25F).”

“Older people just stay at home all the time. Often, they don’t have appropriate clothing or footwear. Their isolation gets even worse than usual. Going outside can turn into a dangerous adventure, as the roads are covered with snow and ice.”

Each elderly person living in poverty receives winter support such as firewood, and donated goods such as blankets, warm clothing and footwear.

Pictured above is Kateryna, whose electricity was cut off when she couldn’t pay her utilities bill out of her small pension. MWB provided her with firewood.

She said, “These people say that God inspires them to do these things for others. I’m not strong in faith, but their attitude shows me what Christian faith looks like.”





**“It’s amazing the difference we see in the elderly people we support,” said Boris, MWB staff member. “We have seen them become happier, developing a greater sense of worth.”**

Galina, an elderly woman MWB supports in Moldova.

## “The loneliness was eating me alive.

**“I had very few visitors and I was always looking for somebody to talk to. My three children live abroad and only manage to visit once every few years. I understand their situation. They have their own families to look after and it’s not easy to find enough time or money to come.”**

Now in her mid-70s, Granny Rista thought nothing would change – but one day, she saw people arrive on the field by her house in Bosnia-Herzegovina, beginning to work the land.

Mostar Brankovac Evangelical Church had purchased the land, and Granny Rista immediately invited the church volunteers into her house for a coffee. That first coffee was the beginning of a great friendship between Rista and the volunteers. Mission Without Borders partner with Mostar Brankovac Evangelical Church and were looking for ways to develop Granny Rista’s village and build a sense of community there.

Granny Rista became involved in the activities at the community centre, she began helping to plant and harvest potatoes and cabbages – and she continued to make everyone coffee when they took a break from work.

Claire, a church volunteer, said, “Granny Rista gladly keeps an eye on our property for us, calling us if she sees people there she doesn’t know, and answering our phone calls enquiring about how much rain has fallen and whether we need to irrigate the potatoes that day.”

MWB have been able to help Granny Rista, providing her with food parcels and help with her electricity bills. She was provided with chickens and she is now able to sell a few eggs to subsidise her pension.

Claire takes a group of elderly members of the community, most of whom live alone, out for lunch before Christmas and Easter.

“I’m not alone for the holidays anymore,” said Granny Rista. “When I returned home, I was on cloud nine.”



Granny Rista and Claire, a church volunteer.



## UKRAINE EMERGENCY APPEAL



UKRAINE  
CRISIS

EMERGENCY APPEAL

**In February 2022, the world was shocked by the scale of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the humanitarian catastrophe that quickly exploded.**

Suddenly the news was full of civilians hiding in basements from relentless shelling, refugees pouring into neighbouring countries, and many people killed and wounded.

At Mission Without Borders, our international community grieved for our colleagues in Ukraine and the children, families, and elderly people we work with there, as the country was plunged into a horrifying war.

MWB immediately began partnering with churches that are hosting and feeding refugees, providing them with food for cooking, hygiene items, cleaning products, clothing and footwear; attending the frequent prayer meetings now held; and working together with church volunteers. MWB vehicles delivered food packages to Kyiv and the wider region, and on the way back, took refugees to the Polish border. MWB staff started baking bread, sending hundreds of loaves to those in need. MWB's main office in Sarny, western Ukraine, was quickly transformed into a logistics hub for distributing donations, planning evacuations, and organising volunteers.





Mother in Chernihiv whose garden once had flowers.

As the war went on, staff visited Chernihiv region twice with food parcels – an area that has experienced terrible atrocities under Russian occupation. There is no way of purchasing food there, as all the local businesses have shut down. One mother told our photographer how her home had been set on fire and destroyed. “Our yard used to be full of flowers,” she said. “Now it is full of ashes and the fragments of bombs.”

Throughout this time, MWB staff have continued to support sponsored families and elderly people in Ukraine, most of whom were unable to leave the country because of poverty.

One family coordinator, Pavlo Melnyk, said, **“During these times of war many people struggle with fear and anxiety. Talking and praying together gives people so much relief, and I’m very thankful to God that I’m able to do that.”**

Oksana Pavliuk, our Bible Correspondence Course coordinator, talked about how children and their parents were keener than ever to do the course. She said, “People are especially thirsty now to hear the Word of God, to hear the Word of Hope! There’s no distinction now between believers and non-believers – every person is praying to Almighty God for peace and protection, everyone believes!”

As refugees fled into Moldova and Romania, other field countries where we work, our staff there were eager and ready to help in any way they could. MWB has staff running projects in Palanca, which also happens to be the main border between Ukraine and Moldova. We began giving out hot drinks and meals to refugees who had been queuing for hours in freezing temperatures and sometimes rain, many disoriented and in shock. In both Moldova and Romania, MWB have given lifts to refugees, distributed food parcels and hygiene items, and worked with local churches to help them find emergency accommodation.

Refugees have found their way to Bulgaria too, where MWB is partnering with local churches to support them with food and other essentials. Our staff have also been able to provide Ukrainian students with Wifi



A mother and daughter are comforted in Chernihiv.

access so they can continue their studies remotely, and they are running Bulgarian language classes for both children and adults.

Day camps held for refugee children to attend along with their mothers have been among the most rewarding ways MWB has been able to help. Some of these were held in picturesque places in western Ukraine for refugees who had fled from other parts of the country. Here, a trampoline, candy floss, fun games, Bible lessons and new friends brought joy to the children – and the mothers had a chance to confide in each other and enjoy watching their children laugh and play again.

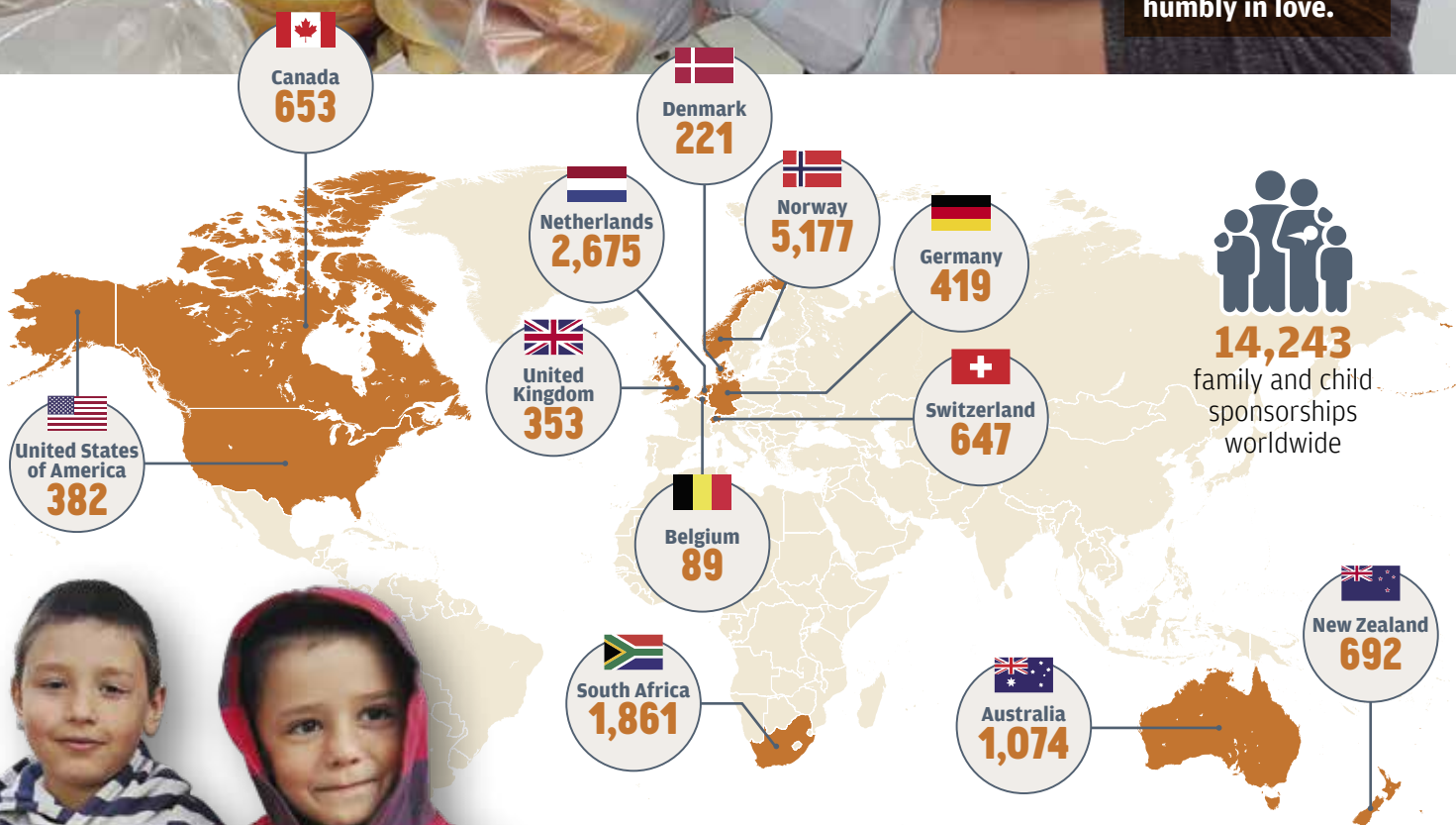
In Moldova, staff and volunteers in Palanca held a day camp for refugee children and organised fun games and activities for them. Staff member Sergiu said, “If I was going to use just one word to describe what we’re doing here, I’d use ‘hope’ – because this is the word we hear the most when we talk to the parents. ‘We hope that this ugly war will stop.’ ‘We hope we can go back home soon.’ ‘We hope our children will have a better future in Ukraine when we go back.’ Indeed, we have a great opportunity to speak to the refugees around us and tell them about the One who can give us eternal hope that never fails us.”



Thanks to our supporters, we are sharing this hope, a hope that doesn’t fail even when the world around us does. As refugee families settle temporarily in new communities, we have already started providing regular support to them as they seek to rebuild their lives in places far from home. It is a journey none of them asked to be on – and one that we don’t want them to walk alone. Thank you for helping us to be there for refugees, whatever the future may hold.



Serve one another humbly in love.



# GLOBAL SUPPORT

The work that we do with children and families is only possible because of the generous giving of our donors around the world.

(number of sponsors at the end of 2021)



## LOCAL IMPACT

	 <b>Albania</b>	 <b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	 <b>Bulgaria</b>	 <b>Moldova</b>	 <b>Romania</b>	 <b>Ukraine</b>
<b>Through family sponsorship</b>						
Supporting <b>2,376</b> families	352	150	157	694	478	545
Reaching <b>4,405</b> adults	655	291	382	1,417	900	760
and <b>7,541</b> children	653	404	412	1,632	1,440	3,000

<b>Through child sponsorship</b>						
Working with <b>5,550</b> children in communities				3,375	2,175	
and <b>2,717</b> children in government institutions						2,717

Supported by <b>245</b> staff	16	13	26	74	36	80
and <b>1,320</b> volunteers	64	271	330	307	178	170

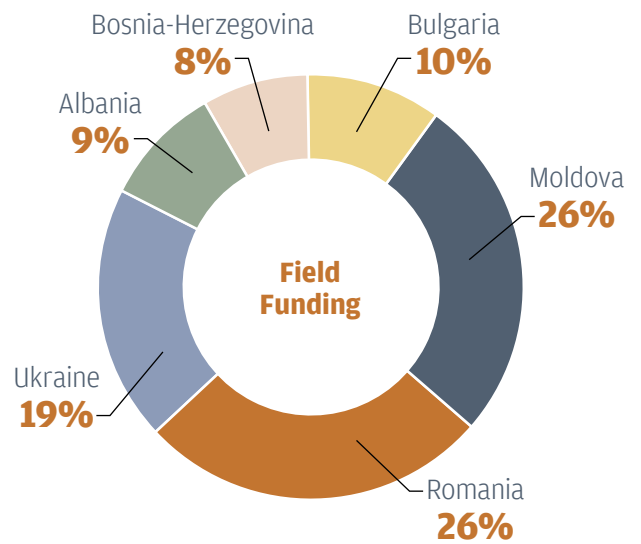
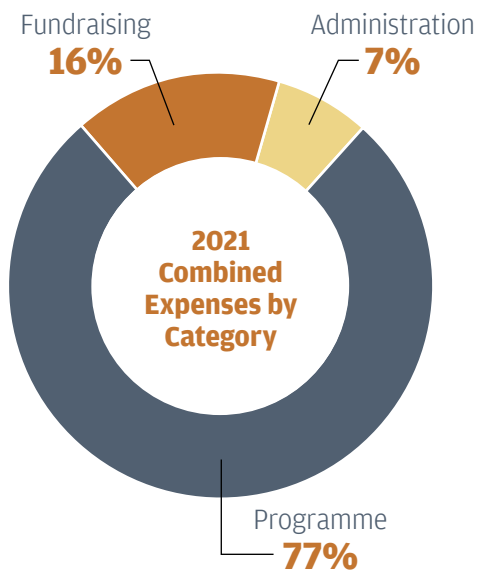
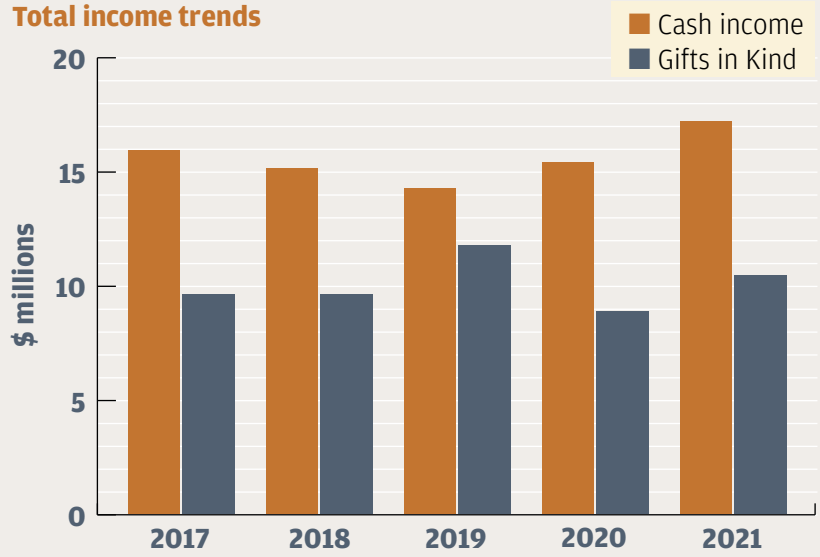




# FINANCES



### Total income trends



Total cash income  
**\$17.2m**

Total value of  
donated goods  
**\$10.7m**



Figures are all unaudited 2021 figures



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

**We look back over 2021 with deep gratitude to God for his encouragement and provision.** The year was different to what we might have wished for, largely due to the pandemic. Plans had to be changed and some areas that we wished to take forward were held back, but many other hugely beneficial events took place. I am most thankful for the hard work and dedication of our teams and the many volunteers.

The generosity of those who support the work was beyond our expectations, and we are grateful to each supporter for their faithfulness. In addition to the practical ongoing help that has been provided, we saw many people linked with local churches and hundreds choosing to ask the Lord to walk alongside them. Great joy for lives helped and changed!

Work also continued across the Mission to update and streamline internal systems and procedures; this work is ongoing. This will help us be more efficient and to respond more quickly to ever

changing opportunities as they occur. We remain within the overall goals of reaching people for Christ and providing life-changing, practical help.

I invite you to share our excitement for the future as we look forward and develop strategic plans to meet new needs. Indeed, the situation in Ukraine that has developed in 2022 is one such area of need that was not foreseen but has been one that we have been able to respond to. We seek to remain flexible and sensitive as careful stewards of opportunities and resources.



Thank you for your vital partnership.

**Michael Thomas**  
**Chairman of the**  
**International Board,**  
**Mission Without Borders**





**“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”** John 1:5



**MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS**

**MWBI.ORG**

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