Supporting Kids of Ukraine Foundation in advancing psychosocial support and educational programs for war-affected children in Ukraine

Grantee: Kids of Ukraine Charitable Foundation
Location: Ukraine, Europe
Grant Cycle: 2026 - 2028
Type of Grant: 8-months program support, Protracted Emergency Relief
Website: kidsofua.org

Kids of Ukraine is a charitable foundation established in 2024 in response to the growing psychosocial needs of children, adolescents, and families affected by the full-scale war in Ukraine. Through safe centres and recovery camps in Lviv, Cherkasy, Khmelnytskyi, and Zhytomyr, the organisation provides psychological support, educational activities, mentoring, and opportunities for creative expression, helping more than 2,200 teenagers recover, reconnect, and continue their development.

As the conflict continues, its humanitarian consequences have evolved from an acute emergency into a prolonged social and psychological crisis. Ukrainian children and adolescents have experienced repeated exposure to conflict, forced displacement, family separation, disrupted education, and prolonged uncertainty. For many, these experiences continue to affect emotional wellbeing, relationships, learning, and their sense of safety and stability, while access to specialised mental health and psychosocial services remains uneven across the country.

Kids of Ukraine responds through its network of SviTY centres, which provide sustained community-based support rather than focusing on emergency assistance alone. Within safe and youth-friendly environments, the centres combine individual psychological counselling with group psychosocial activities, non-formal education, life-skills development, mentoring, creative expression, and family engagement. This integrated approach is designed to help young people process difficult experiences while rebuilding confidence, social connections, and motivation for the future.

Since its inception, the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation (NaEPF) has been committed to responding to humanitarian emergencies worldwide, with a particular focus on human dignity, resilience, and solidarity. Following the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine in 2022, the NaEPF mobilised support across different areas of needs in partnership with organisations including UNHCR, Swiss Solidarity, Humane World for Animals, and World Horse Welfare. More recently, this commitment has expanded through support to the EnableMe Foundation, strengthening locally led capacity in disability inclusion and psychosocial support.

In 2026, the NaEPF extended this commitment through an 18-month project with Kids of Ukraine, strengthening two existing SviTY centres in Lviv and Cherkasy. The initiative will provide sustained psychosocial and educational support to approximately 200 adolescents aged 11–17, while indirectly benefiting more than 400 parents and caregivers.

The project responds to the longer-term effects of war on young people, including anxiety, interrupted learning, displacement, the loss of familiar social networks, and the challenge of adapting to new communities. Participants will include displaced adolescents, children of military personnel

and veterans, and young people experiencing prolonged stress or difficult personal circumstances. Its overarching objective is to help them regain emotional stability, rebuild relationships, renew their engagement with learning, and participate more confidently in school and community life.

At the centres, adolescents will receive individual counselling and participate in regular group sessions focused on emotional recovery, communication, and mutual support. Creative activities will provide accessible ways to express and process difficult experiences, while educational sessions will strengthen critical thinking, emotional awareness, concentration, planning, financial and digital literacy, and practical life skills. Career guidance, mentoring, sports, excursions, and community activities will further help participants explore future opportunities, build confidence, and establish supportive relationships.

Parents and caregivers will also receive individual consultations and participate in support groups designed to strengthen communication within families and improve their capacity to respond to adolescents' emotional and developmental needs. Activities will begin with an assessment of each participant's circumstances and will be adapted throughout the project according to progress and feedback. Young people will also be actively involved in shaping the programme, helping ensure that activities remain relevant to their interests and experiences. Delivered by experienced psychologists, educators, and centre coordinators, the project incorporates clear child-protection procedures and the flexibility to move activities online when security conditions require it.

Over the course of the project, participants are expected to experience reduced anxiety and stress, greater self-confidence, stronger communication and self-management skills, and an improved sense of safety and belonging. The programme also aims to strengthen motivation for learning, concentration, and future planning, while equipping parents to provide more effective support at home.

By investing in established local centres and sustained relationships with young people and their families, NaEPF's support contributes to strengthening longer-term psychosocial capacity within Ukrainian communities. Beyond immediate recovery, the project seeks to help adolescents reconnect with education, relationships, and a sense of possibility for their future.