

Caritas warns of escalating civilian deaths as Ukraine war enters fifth year.

Caritas Australia is urging the international community not to look away as the war in Ukraine enters its fifth year, with 2025 the deadliest year for civilians since the full-scale invasion began on 24 February 2022.

More than 2,500 civilians were killed and 12,000 injured in 2025, a [31](#) per cent increase on 2024. Urban centres were increasingly struck by long-range missiles and drones, while attacks on critical energy infrastructure left communities without electricity, heating, and water for prolonged periods.

In 2026, [10.8](#) million people will need assistance, but only 4.1 million will be covered due to a US\$2 billion funding gap. Winter needs remain severe, with more than [353,000](#) people at risk of being left without adequate heating or basic supplies.

Unpredictable and repeated displacement continues, with families often forced to flee with no warning. Those most affected include people near the frontline, the elderly, people with disabilities, single-parent households, and families without stable incomes.

One of these vulnerable people is an 85-year-old woman with a disability who fled a frontline village. She told Caritas "I'm not afraid of death, but I really want to live. What scares me most is the thought that my house will be hit or I will be seriously injured, and there will be no one to save me."

Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Manager at Caritas Australia spoke of the ongoing suffering saying, "Communities are exhausted. People flee repeatedly, sometimes five or six times. Yet through our parish networks, local staff and volunteers, we continue to stand alongside families throughout Ukraine."

Caritas Australia supports partners on the ground such as Caritas Ukraine, a network of 51 active local organisations with over 2,500 staff, 11,000 volunteers and 400 parish hubs, that has reached 3.8 million people since 2022.

Assistance includes emergency support in transit centers and longer-term recovery efforts. This takes the form of food, hygiene kits, health services, counselling, protection services, child-friendly spaces, housing and shelter, and multipurpose cash support.

Ahead of the anniversary **President of Caritas Ukraine, Tetiana Stawnychy**, said "In Ukraine, more than four million people have lost their homes and need long term housing solutions because of the war. Initially, we focused on emergency shelter for the displaced. Today we are working with the government to develop a social housing plan to help people rebuild their lives."

To support Caritas Australia's Ukraine Crisis Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/ukraine or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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