



Hungarian Reformed Church Aid
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CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN IN SUB-CARPATHIA

BACKGROUND

Mission in the Carpathian Basin

The Hungarian Reformed Church Aid (HRCA) sees its primary field in the Carpathian Basin in terms of the universal Hungarian, the national borders crossing reformed responsibility. However thanks to the development we have exceeded these territorial borders and do relief and development works in several parts of the world.

One of the strengths of our organization is that we actively use the several-hundred-year-old church institutions during our relief and development work. In the Carpathian Basin there are more than 1,200 congregations and their associated institutions at our disposal, and almost 100 in Sub-Carpathia.

Of course these church institutions help us in our work, not only with local background information, but also by providing infrastructure, specialists and instruments. One of the most typical examples of this was the flooding of the Danube River in 2013, when our Church Aid was able to use the kitchens of every institution along the Danube to provide the background for the food distribution program.

Existing programs

Development of education

Schools, kindergartens

Operational support of schools and kindergartens, delivery of educational items and furniture.

Scholarship program

As part of our *Nyilas Misi* scholarship program, about 50 pupils obtain regular assistance. Our aim with this program is to uphold and preserve the education of children living in Sub-Carpathia with Hungarian as their mother tongue.

Orphans and disabled children

Orphans

We continuously support the institutions for orphaned children with food and clothing as well as educational tools necessary for children's education.

Disabled children

The drastic growth in the number of disabled children is currently a major challenge in Sub-Carpathia, since the state institutional system is not set up for nor prepared for the education and development of children. Therefore, as part of several international collaborations we are trying to create a physical background (establishment of daycare centers) and provide specialists as well as professional training for locals.

Community aid

Due to the restriction of **relief supplies** by the Ukrainian state, it is increasingly difficult to get relief items into the country. Nevertheless, the HRCA transfers 1-2 trucks-worth of supplies to Sub-Carpathia monthly.

A part of this goes to the massive daily aid, which typically consists of food, medicine, clothing, school supplies and household tools.

In addition, we are now developing a **social bakery**. The bakery provides the local population in Beregszász (Berehove) and the surrounding region with at price bakery products. We are currently expanding the factory by nearly 40,000 euros.

Catastrophes

The state of Ukraine has weak capacities for disaster management, fire-fighting and rescue – especially in the Hungarian areas. Therefore, it is a primary and continuous development field for the Church and for the HRCA to develop this area.

In recent years we provided the following tools for the **volunteer fire department and rescue team** of the Sub-Carpathian Church:

- 2 fire engines
- 4 ambulances
- 3 minibuses
- 2 passenger cars
- technical equipment (suction pumps and fire extinguishers)

Moreover, the HCRA continuously supports the operational costs of these units as well as the qualification and training of professionals.

Public health

We continually support the Sub-Carpathian healthcare institutions with **healthcare tools and supplies**.

Considering the incoming requests, we finance 10-15 medical therapy cases yearly of Sub-Carpathian Hungarian citizens within Hungary. These are usually serious cases in which the local medical treatment is not available or cannot be financed.

Considering the incoming requests, we also consistently purchase and support expensive medication in the framework of our **medical subsidy program**.

Agriculture

We support the development of Sub-Carpathian agriculture by providing seed and fertilizer as well as training professionals. We also support farmers by providing them used farming equipment from Western Europe (tractors and other equipment).

Refugee issue

Our foundation has the appropriate **experience and professional staff** in a potential exodus situation to provide professional treatment.

In the Hungarian area we are completely prepared to handle a potential exodus. We are in standing communication with the staff of the National Directorate General for Disaster Management of the Ministry of Interior. At the moment there are refugee receiving stations suitable for up to 150 people at the border area, but if needed this number can be extended to 1,000 people.

Our Church Aid has set up professional receiving stations based on **international standards**, which means that at the stations we can provide not only accommodation and meals but also medical supervision, bathroom and laundry facilities, babysitting services and employment.

We are **constantly monitoring** the situation in Sub-Carpathia and more broadly in Ukraine, so our organization will not be caught off guard in the case of an exodus.

Should an exodus occur, the church related institutions in Sub-Carpathia are also at our disposal. It is highly recommended, and should be considered, that their capacities be utilized in the future so that families who leave their homes are able to get the same treatment but are able to stay in Ukrainian territory.

Our organization has significant **secure storage capacities** on the Hungarian side of the border, which is also an important resource to handle such a situation.

Our foundation runs a **disaster-pastoring group** which is ready if needed to offer professional pastoral care for families and individuals coming to the receiving station. This group also has – keeping the values of the Church in mind - psychological case management training, providing the availability of a neutral service.

Also, our **medical team**, which has been tested and proven in international areas such as Burma, Afghanistan, Haiti, Japan and Philippines, is ready and able to work in the field if necessary.

Social crisis

The effects of the consistently escalating political situation in Ukraine since the autumn of 2013 are becoming more and more noticeable in the average household. Day by day the crisis can be felt not only in the crisis regions (around the capital, Crimea and in the Southeast of Ukraine) but also in Sub-Carpathia, within the Hungarian minority. Inflation is constantly increasing and the payment of civil servants is unpredictable and not always paid in full. The communities are required to bear extra tasks, and the individuals enlisted to the army have to provide the necessary safety equipment (e.g. bulletproof vests, etc.).

That is why we must be prepared for the drastically increasing need for general relief in the autumn and winter months.

In addition, this may turn into a **social disaster** because of the fact that the debate on gas between Ukraine and Russia has still not been decided. The Ukrainian gas reserves are rapidly running out. If there is no agreement, it is also possible that there will be a full gas deficit affecting the entirety of Ukraine and also in Sub-Carpathia. That is why we have started preparing to **provide a larger amount of firewood and fuel to those most in need as well as to transform the heating system.**

Setting up a crisis kitchen

We are able to undertake the setting up of community kitchens through expanding the actual institutional capacities, in cooperation with the church related institutions in Sub-Carpathia in case of a refugee exodus or social catastrophe.

ACTION PLAN (version 1.0)

During the discussion on 15th August 2014, Sub-Carpathian church leaders and representatives of the local government informed the leaders of HRCA about the actual political and social situation. And the leaders of HRCA informed the local leaders about the possible assistance capacities. Based on this discussion we have assigned the following tasks.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIRECT CRISIS INTERVENTION RESOURCE

Due to the evolved and anticipated situation, the following relief items are needed to be supplied and replaced in the border areas as soon as possible.

name	amount	unit price	total
blankets	2500	2 000 Ft	5 000 000 Ft
10 liter water tanks	500	2 370 Ft	600 000 Ft
water filtration bottles	1000	4 960 Ft	4 960 000 Ft
candles	5000	(50 sticks) 990 Ft	99 000 Ft
flashlights	1000	800 Ft	800 000 Ft
detergent	2500 pkgs	2 200 Ft	5 500 000 Ft
toiletry kits	2500 pkgs	1 900 Ft	4 750 000 Ft
food	2500 pcs	5 000 Ft	12 500 000 Ft
TOTAL			34 209 000 Ft

MANAGEMENT OF THE GAS SUPPLY AND HEATING CRISIS

Due to the evolved and anticipated situation, the following possible solutions have been developed by the local leaders and the HRCA.

First, the heating system of the Sub-Carpathian Reformed parsonages should be redesigned to a solid fuel firing system. This step is not only important for the maintenance of the Church institutions but the parsonages are also suitable for various public functions in case of crisis. The detailed estimation of the redesign was made by Bishop Sándor Zán-Fábián.

name	amount	unit price	total
properties	42 places	individual	27 232 950 Ft

We also recommend to supply and collect small wood burning stoves to alleviate the heating problems of the people as much as possible. In an optimal case, this means the implementation and distribution of 500 small stoves.

name	amount	unit price	total
small wood burning stove	500 units	16 000 Ft	8 000 000 Ft
fuel/firewood	500 m ³	17 000 Ft	8 500 000 Ft
TOTAL			16 500 000 Ft

We do not recommend collecting and supplying electric heaters, since the stability of the Sub-Carpathian electrical system is unsure in an extreme case, and additionally the increased payment of electricity bills would mean another extraordinary burden for the supported group.

It shall be taken into consideration that the gas shortage will be most problematic not for those living in the villages and in detached houses but for the communities living in block of flats. Consequently, we have to be prepared for the possibility that heated centers/temporary heated accommodations will have to be opened in case of a crisis situation like this. Therefore, we have begun the assessment of such estates and capacities.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Both in the case of a wave of refugees and a social catastrophic situation we can undertake to cooperate with the institutions of the Sub-Carpathian Reformed Church in order to open community kitchens through the extension of the present institutional capacities.

name of kitchen	daily capacity (person)	unit price of meal	daily costs total
	500	350 Ft	175 000 Ft
	500	350 Ft	175 000 Ft
	500	350 Ft	175 000 Ft
	500	350 Ft	175 000 Ft
	500	350 Ft	175 000 Ft
DAILY COSTS TOTAL			875 000 Ft
MONTHLY COSTS TOTAL (daily costs x 30)			26 250 000 Ft

OTHER LOCAL REQUESTS

The local governance has expressed the following requests towards the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid and those supporting programs in Sub-Carpathia through HRCA.

Due to the evolved instable political and security situation, the local government plans the launch of a voluntary **militia**. This service, in cooperation with civil volunteers and local law enforcement bodies, would help to control and sustain the security situation.

The following equipment would be needed for this:

name	amount	unit price	total
uniforms	100 sets	12 500 Ft	1 250 000 Ft
CB radios	100	6 500 Ft	650 000 Ft
TOTAL			1 900 000 Ft

Additionally, in order to ensure the security of the drinking water system, they would welcome the help of Hungarian hydrographic engineers who could offer expert advice to the local hydrographic engineers. The Hungarian Reformed Church Aid is going to begin discussions with the Waterworks of Debrecen and Budapest in the following days so as to answer this request.

Sándor Pál
Board Director HRCA Foundation