

OVERCOMERS

2008



Mission Without Borders, Australia



MISSION
WITHOUT
BORDERS



Reaching People for Christ

OVERCOMERS 2008

MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

MWB International:

Rev Harry Graham –
United Kingdom
International Board
Chairman

MWB Australia

Michelle Dorey –
National Director

Overcomers Editor

Michelle Dorey

MWB Affiliate Offices

Australia, Belgium, Canada,
Germany, Netherlands,
New Zealand, Norway,
South Africa, Switzerland,
United Kingdom and the
USA.

Our statement of Faith:

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose in-dwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.

Mission Without Borders is independently audited annually.

Overcomers 2008 ©

Printed and Published by:

MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS
PO Box 265
Bankstown NSW 1885
AUSTRALIA

Phone: (02) 9793 8100
Email: australia@mwbi.org
www.mwb.org.au

MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

Mission Without Borders is an international Christian organisation, dedicated to serving the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those suffering the effects of poverty or persecution. By involving those it serves, Mission Without Borders recognises the dignity of the individual and strives to help build capacity for self-sufficiency. People are served without regard to their religion or ethnic background.

For the poor of Eastern Europe, silent tears of parents who do not know where their next meal will come from are common, as are the tears of children who do not know the constant love of a family. The need is overwhelming, the situation is grim, and yet stories of hope and help can also be found. Thanks to your support, children are fed, families are receiving the assistance they need to survive, and work toward self-sufficiency, Vocational Training Courses are giving skills for the future and meals are in abundance at the Community Centres!

However, all of these ministries are an outworking of the love of God that compels us to:

REACH PEOPLE FOR CHRIST IN EASTERN EUROPE!

Full bellies and warm bodies today, are wonderful, but a soul secure in knowing their Heavenly Father loves them and they have an eternal future safely in the arms of our loving God, is what propels us through the challenges of our ministry. Mission Without Borders Australia is experiencing growth, praise God; but there is still so much more we need to do!

Thanks to your support, generous funds have been raised; children,

families, Vocational Training and Scholarships have been sponsored and the ministries are flourishing; generous donations from companies and individuals filled three container loads of aid, and are now blessing thousands of children, families and the elderly- the excitement surrounding our ministry is palpable – what a blessing for all involved!

OUR FIELD COUNTRIES:

Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine each have their unique areas of need, but the results of our ministries, thanks to your support, are amazing!

ALBANIA

is struggling with devastating poverty and many families live without proper housing, electricity and water, with disastrous consequences!

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

continues to struggle from the devastation of war, economically, physically and emotionally and the care of MWB Bosnia is central to the coping of many families and elderly citizens.

BULGARIA

is struggling to balance the benefits of European Union membership, while trying not to alienate the poor as prices sky-rocket.



Reaching People for Christ in Eastern Europe

MOLDOVA

the poorest country in Europe, is landlocked, drought-ridden and struggles to provide the minimum of needs for children in the Homes, families and the elderly.

ROMANIA

now a member of the European Union, continues to struggle with devastating poverty while going through a time of transition as they close many Children's Homes down and yet still must care for the thousands of children without permanent, caring, self-supporting families.

UKRAINE

a country with much potential, still struggles with the affects of the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster, now 22 years ago. Health, welfare and employment are still badly affected and the biggest sufferers are the families and the 100,000+ children in the Children's Homes.

On visiting some of our projects this past year, people were continually thankful to me – that is to you, with me as your representative, and yet their sacrifices, for the sake of the Gospel and the love of God, were incredibly humbling to witness.

People had so little and yet were compelled out of a love for Christ to sacrificially give of themselves – their time, love and resources.

Just as Jesus gave Himself for us-- becoming poor that we might become rich (2 Corinthians. 8:9), so

His disciples are to follow His example and freely give of themselves to serve others. I know that you are faithful in your love and service for the Lord. Thank you for considering sharing in the work of Mission Without Borders.

Mission Without Borders is reaching out to the lost, hungry, lonely and hopeless with the Message of Hope and we need your help! Perhaps your heart is for the children – we have thousands of children who need our help! Perhaps you would like to make an investment in a family, who try as they might, cannot get on their feet in a self-sufficient way! Perhaps our Vocational Training Courses, giving teenagers in Children's Homes and through the Community Centres skills for the self-sufficient future, are projects you are passionate about? Or perhaps investing in young people through our Scholarship Fund, giving them a chance to finish their schooling and work towards a University Degree is something you would like to get involved with? Or perhaps you would like to use the resources God has given you to knit or sew, making beautifully hand-made items for our containers of aid blessing thousands in our programs?

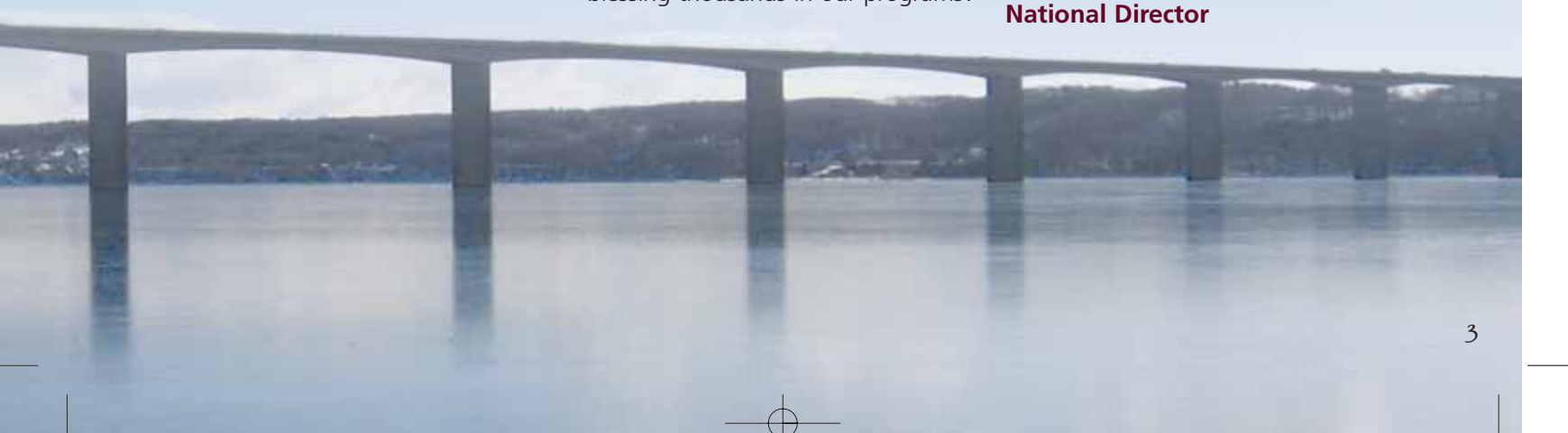


There are lots of ways you can show the poor of Eastern Europe they are worthy of investment, worthy of hope and a future! I hope the following stories will challenge and inspire you!

Please contact us (02 793-8100 or email: australia@mwb.org) if you have any questions about our ministry and how you can become involved. Regularly check our website (www.mwb.org.au) for updates, news or to make a secure donation. We are now offering a Direct Debit facility. If you would like to set up this facility for your sponsorships or regular giving, please contact us.

Thanks for your partnership and many blessings for the year ahead!

Michelle Dorey
Michelle Dorey
National Director



more hope



MORE FAITH

The most important goal of Mission Without Border's Family-to-Family (F2F) program is to 'Reach People for Christ'. Every day, we share the Gospel with the beneficiaries and pray God will touch their hearts and help them change their lives. Bible Correspondence Courses are offered to the children and parents; counselling is central to those struggling; a Plan for each family is initiated and updated annually - the Spiritual, Emotional, Educational and Material goals; monthly deliveries of food, hygiene items, clothing, footwear, blankets and other practical needs are supplied; and some also benefit from the Pharmacy Project, Urgent Needs Fund and Special Projects.

However, each family has their unique struggles, and despair, hopeless and an overwhelming sense that they are forgotten and alone is a common theme of families when they enroll in our programs. The role of the Coordinators can never be underestimated. **They are precious, treasured individuals to the families.** The families know they cannot survive without the

food, clothing, hygiene and medical deliveries, but the encouragement, emotional and spiritual counselling for many of our families, is on top of the list of their priorities.

Such is the despair of the poor in Eastern Europe, that emotional struggles and serious mental illness are widespread. The poor do not happily subsist on generous government handouts, but rather are neglected as worthless and not worthy of assistance.

What is the result of this treatment? The stories of the Memko and Koci families of Albania show how desperation can be changed with some emotional, spiritual and material support. The daily prayers of both families; do not ask for riches, just for daily bread and survival. Suicide was every present in their minds, and still plagues them on their worst days.

Suicide has become a common phenomenon in Albania in the early decades of post-

communism. The spiritual, ideological and moral emptiness, as well as problems of economical inequality, are factors that have the most influence. Albania is suffering a crisis of identity. Desperation, loss of hope, unemployment, poor physical and mental health, are the main reasons why Albanians see the act of suicide as the only macabre solution to their problems.

Even among the families of the F2F project, the risk of committing suicide is ever present and is a never ending battle for the Mission's staff. Not only are they trying to relieve the physical suffering of these desperately poor families, they are committed to offering counselling and spiritual encouragement in an attempt to convince desperate families to turn away from suicide, because there are no other options of treatment in the entire country.

Shpresa Koci is the mother of six children. Deep depression has plagued her life for years, with numerous unbearable crises augmenting her struggle. The family tries to survive on an invalid pension, while the twins, her youngest children, live and attend school in another town, due to the harsh living conditions the family endures. "I don't want to suffer anymore. I suffer so much when I see my children can't live a normal life. For me it's better to die than to live with the anxiety of what to feed my children. It is unbearable that my husband and I can't find jobs and must survive on a miniscule income. This suffering is unbearable and I cannot see an end to it," explains Shpresa despairingly.



Left:
*Shpresa Koci
in her house*

Right:
*The
Pharmacy
Project is
a lifesaver
for many
families*

The desperate screams of Shpresa have continuously upset life in the Koci family. When the situation becomes unbearable, the children not only run to the doctor but come knocking on the doors of MWB to ask for any assistance we may be able to give. "Your prompt assistance is like healing medicine for Shpresa. She stops her screaming and trusts in you, before taking that fatal step we all fear. We are deeply grateful to you for the care you show us, and for the free medication you are able to provide through your Pharmacy Project", shares her husband Kujtimi.

Both Irfan and Giyle Memko also struggle with serious mental illness. They are also members of the Family-to-Family project. Suicide is a constant goal they struggle against, and yet they do try as hard as they can to create a comfortable environment for their only son, 11 year old Xheini. They live in a one room, small apartment which serves as a sitting and bedroom, as well as a playroom for their son. Because the state of Albania has no commitment to treating the mental illness of their citizens, suicide is ever present in the minds of Irfan and Giyle. Unemployment makes the head of families feel useless, and with many factories and State industries never resurrected after the 1997 crisis, the ranks of the unemployed continue to grow.

With all these factors in mind, MWB's work in Albania is vital! The result of our assistance has had profound affects on both families in Albania. **"I have begun to accept the reality of my health and our life. Your counsel gives me courage and makes me stronger"**, said Shpresa Koci, who is now under the care of a psychiatrist

and provided with the medication she needs through our Pharmacy Project. Even Giyle and Irfan Memko are feeling better now. The assistance and the continuous visits of the coordinators to this family have improved their communication and relationships with others. "People do not treat us kindly due to our mental illness. You are different though. You treat us with dignity, kindness and care – thank you!" Irfan frankly explained.

Really knowing the families in our care through the F2F project ensures we are aware of those struggling with mental illness. Mental illness and intense struggle are of course not isolated to Albania alone. Bosnia is another country plagued with large scale mental illness, with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder prevalent as a consequence of the war. Coordinators therefore play a role far more important than just delivering material supplies. We offer assistance where we can, but covet your prayers and support! **We know the greatest gift anyone can receive is the Peace of God that transcends all understanding.**

We would love to be able to expand our help and ministry to many more families in Albania and throughout all our field countries, but need your support. Your gifts to our ministry will help fund the assistance we provide to all families, and the ongoing sponsorship of families through our Family-to-Family Program, is a wonderful way to show families you care. The correspondence between the families and their sponsors is greatly encouraging to all families and has a profound affect on those struggling the most, such as the Koci and Memko families. **If you would like to join the wonderful band of supporters of**



Mental illness plagues both parents and they therefore are reliant on our emotional and material support.

families through MWB's Family-to-Family program, please contact us. We have families waiting right now for **Sponsorship** (check out our website for a sample) and there are many other families on the doorsteps of our field country offices daily hoping that they too can enroll in the F2F program... they just need our help!

**Contact Us for details
Phone: (02) 9793 8100
Email: Australia@mwbi.org
Web: www.mwb.org.au**

Scholarships

THE TALE OF TWO BRAVE WOMEN

This is the story of the sacrifice of a mother who sought to provide her daughter with an education so that she could fulfill her dreams; and the heart of a daughter, who desired to show love to others.

Meet a young woman whose greatest asset is her heart for Christ and his children. Blazenka is her name, and she is the fourth of six children in the Vrgoc family of Bosnia. Her mother is dedicated and determined to provide her and her siblings with a good education, in the hope that this will enable them to fulfil their dreams. Two of Blazenka's sisters are at university and one of her sisters has finished high school and is currently looking for work.

When Blazenka was only nine years old, doctors diagnosed her with cancer. This diagnosis was followed by a series of treatments, including both chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Trusting the Lord the entire time, thanks and praise overflowed when Blazenka was cured!

As she finished school, and made the choice of what she would like to study, she expressed her desire to go to Medical School. When asked why, this was her reply...

"Because," said Blazenka. "When I finish Medical school I will be able to help patients, and give them all the love, care and understanding they need. From my own time of struggle with cancer, I can attest to how significant it is to not only receive excellent care, but also be treated with great love and compassion. Sometimes this care is just as powerful as the medical care given..."

This desire presented an immediate challenge, as there was no Medical School close to her home, and the fees were prohibitive. Not wanting to deny her children any opportunity, Blazenka's mother tried her best to provide for her needs so she could fulfil her dream to become a doctor. This came at a tremendous cost however, as the only way for her to finance her daughter's dream was to earn a living by clearing land mines. Fraught with danger, that daily terrified her children... Davorka did not want to deny her daughter this opportunity.

However, when the third year of Medical School arrived, and costs arose once again, she could no longer pay the fees and the costs of travel for her daughter. **The school year began and Blazenka remained at home, crying and praying for help – for some solution.**

Mira, the MWB Coordinator, who cared for her family as part of the Family-to Family project commented, "It was so difficult for me to watch her, especially because I knew what a great student she was and how much she wanted to finish

Medical School. We discussed this need and made the decision to enroll Blazenka into MWB's Scholarship Program. On sharing the news, she was overjoyed and her eyes shone with delight. The only thing she could say at that moment was, **'THANK YOU, DEAR GOD, FOR YOUR GRACE.** I promise I will never disappoint You and MWB.' We kept our promise by finding an apartment for her, paying her rent, stocked it with food and ensured she had what she needed to undertake the third year of her study". ■



Blazenka's scholarship has provided accommodation, food and all of her study costs, everything she needs to continue Medical school

The Scholarship Fund has recipients in all six field countries. The program is highly successful in Moldova, Romania and Ukraine for teenagers from Children's Homes.



This is Ana's story

Ana Zgherea is a former pupil of Leova Home, Moldova. She is, thanks to a Scholarship from the MWB Scholarship Fund, studying at the Technological College of Chisinau, to become a Tailor. Ana is 18 and has four brothers and sisters: Galina (19), Elena (18- Elena and Ana are twins), Andrei (in 8th grade) and Denis (in 6th grade) at Leova Home. Elena, Ana's twin suffers from an intellectual disability and is therefore still studying at Leova Home.

The five Zgherea siblings have only known suffering. From the time of Denis' birth, their mother collapsed into severe mental illness and was incapable of caring for them. After their father's death in 2002, they were homeless. Sometime after, they were found and bundled up into a policeman's car and taken to Leova Home. What grieves the children to this day is they have no knowledge of their Mother's whereabouts, what happened to her and if she is okay...

The Leova Home cook, Mrs. Lidia Colciu, has a special place in her heart for the children of this family. She was working in the kitchen the first day they were brought to Leova Home. **"I cannot forget that sad picture... five children with thread bare clothes, heads bowed, and just occasionally we would see 5 pairs of empty large blue-green eyes lift and just stare into nothingness..."**, shared Mrs. Lidia.

The transformation has been a slow one. Ana appreciates the Scholarship and takes seriously the responsibility to not take it for granted, but use it as a stepping stone to self-sufficiency. "I do not desire any special treatment or gifts. All I want is for God to give me the strength and health in order to carry out my responsibilities. It is hard living life without the love and care of parents, but I have no choice. I am grateful to Aunt Lidia (the cook of Leova Home), who opens her home for me to spend the weekends and summers with her. To just be able to say I am going "Home" means so much!" shares Ana.

Studying at the College will enable Ana to become a good dressmaker. This qualification will enable her to secure employment and sew clothes for herself. This self-sufficiency is attainable and for that Ana cannot thank those who made it possible enough!

If you have been touched by the stories of Blazenka and Ana and would like to help – here is how:

The best way to support the Mission Without Border's Scholarship Fund is to give either one-off gifts or regular pledges to the Fund. Rather than student's anxiously waiting to see if we can find sponsors for an entire scholarship (in the order of a one-off gift of approximately \$1,500) in funding countries like Australia, Mission Without Borders internationally is committed to providing Scholarships for hundreds of young people committed to undertaking study that will lead to self-sufficiency.



Ana Zhgerea enjoying the college exhibition



Ana at 'home' with Mrs. Lidia and her husband



Ana visiting her siblings at Leova Home

If you make contributions to this Fund and particularly contribute regular pledges to this Fund, large or small, we will keep you updated four times per year with stories of recipients of the Scholarships and how their loves have been changed.

Contact us for details – (02) 9793 8100 or email: australia@mwbi.org

SUMMER CAMP – *A dream come true!*

Petraq (13) and Dhionis (11) Gazhani of Albania, endure tremendous poverty. Now their family is enrolled in our Family-to-Family program, their life is a little brighter. It is not hard to imagine why the dream of Summer Camp, when life at home is like a cold prison and your Mum is hard pressed to feed you more than half-rotten apples for your meals, is one you desperately cling to and cannot wait for!

It was therefore a joy to read of their dream come true! Here are Petraq's impressions.

“Since our family was enrolled in the Family-to-Family (F2F) program, my brother and I had a dream: to attend a Summer Camp with our friends. We often talked about it, hoping our dream would come true! Such a wonderful experience was often talked about by the MWB Coordinators, who visit our home, and the other kids of the F2F program.

The dream of endless sports, as much food as we could eat, lots of fun and hearing more about God was always at the front of our minds. We tried our best to show our Mum and Dad that we were well behaved enough to be allowed to go!

Our dream finally came true this last summer! When we arrived at the camp site my brother and I were initially shy, but this lasted only a few minutes! Straight away we made new friends and dived into many wonderful activities, showing us there are many reasons to smile! We felt we were living another life, a new life. Never before had we been to such a place and treated with so much love and care.

My brother and I had purchased a ball at the “Gabi” market (a market where second hand clothes and toys were sold at a very low price). That was our “common property” and it never left our side. Every night I fell asleep with it firmly

under my arm. But we had the opportunity to play many others ball games – football, volleyball, even playing in the sea with a beach ball!

The days were filled with various activities, such as eating as much food as we liked, competitions, games, drama and craft. We sang songs of praise to the Lord; swam in the sea and above all, **we will never forget the greatest gift we received at Summer Camp: learning about Jesus and His incredible love and care for us. We will treasure this gift forever!**

When the day of departure arrived, we were sad this experience of a lifetime had come to an end... However the memories will remain etched in our minds...

Maybe one day, we'll feel hungry; maybe in the winter we'll feel cold; but after this wonderful time at the Summer Camp organised by MWB, our dream came true and we are changed forever! Just like in the fairytale of Hirushe, who with the help of the fairy, went from her poor hut to the Prince's palace, this experience transformed us from our hard life to a dream come true! **We heartily thank MWB and their supporters, who, like “the fairy,” made this Summer Camp possible for us.** This is a special gift, indeed. We know we need never feel alone anymore. The wonderful ten days of fun, laughter, swimming, sports and fellowship with God, showed us that there is a “Prince”-Jesus who leads us in His path to Eternal Life, and our lives are now dedicated to Him!”

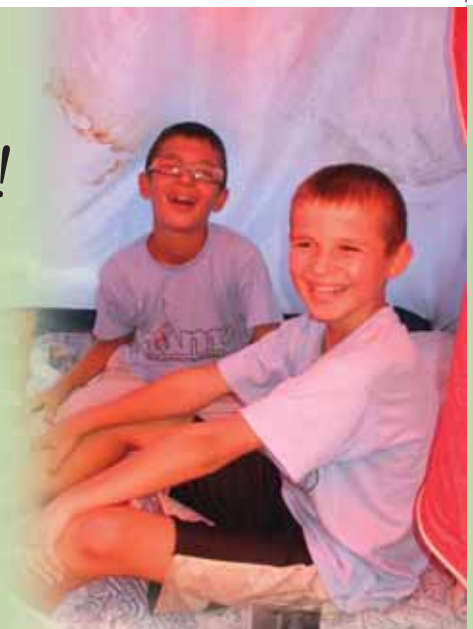
If you ever wondered whether your support of MWB and our Summer Camps was worthwhile, Petraq's conclusion is proof that with a little love, care and sharing about Jesus, lives can be changed for eternity!

Photos from top:

Petraq and Dhionis Gazhani enjoying their first time in a tent!

Summer Camp is a great chance to make new friends.

Natasha Gazhani preparing the common meal of rotten apples for supper.



WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN ABANDONED, ORPHANED AND NEGLECTED?

Summer Camp takes special care of these children. The Summer Camps in Romania took the opportunity to make a difference in these lives full of sorrows, by sharing the Biblical truth that is having a lasting impact on their lives, 'GOD CARES WHEN CHILDREN ARE SAD', and He is able to alleviate their pain and offer solutions for their problems.

Dobrin (10) is one young boy that blossomed with this message, love and care. He comes from a poor and disorganised family. His parents are divorced and Dobrin and his brother, Valentin (7), lived with their mother only briefly when they were young. After the divorce, Dobrin's mother took the boys to a Children's Home because she was too poor to take care of them. Over the next few years, Dobrin and Valentin were moved from one Children's Home to another because Romanian law states that institutionalised children have to live in a Children's Home or a familial-type Home located in the same county as their relatives (if this information is known). After she abandoned her children, Dobrin's mother had multiple de facto relationships and she changed her residence numerous times.

The Homes have differed dramatically. Although they now live in a small familial-type Home, they had to leave their good friends behind and no longer receive the good care and education they received in their previous large Children's Home. **"When I first saw Dobrin, I saw a very shy, introverted child. During one of the visits I made to the apartment he now lives in, he told me the sad story of his childhood.** All he remembers is violence from his Mum and Dad and the abuse suffered has left permanent emotional scars. They both continue to suffer

psychologically, even to the point of seizures", shared Georgeta Enuca, their Coordinator.

Both brothers were looking forward to Summer Camp, but when Valentin broke his leg a few days before, Dobrin made the hard decision to go alone. "I had a lot of fun at this camp, even though my brother couldn't come. I loved the puppet shows, and the Bible stories and songs were great! My favourite song was 'Jesus, You're my joy!' I also loved swimming in the pool, drawing Thank You cards for the sponsors, learning verses from the Bible and participating in the sport competitions."

"The change in Dobrin during the Summer Camp was remarkable! We are so thankful to God for these changes and are praying this is just the start of a wonderful transformation of this sweet boy! It was a real blessing to witness the emotional healing take place and it was a true joy to witness him make the decision at the end of Camp to give his life to Christ!", shared Adrian Enuca, MWB Coordinator.

I don't know about you, but these stories of fun in the sun are wonderful aren't they! Lives changed for eternity, whilst enjoying non-stop fun and food!

Our kids in Australia have at their fingertips amazing opportunities that we take for granted.

PLEASE, IF YOU CAN, SUPPORT US AS WE ENDEAVOUR TO RAISE AS MANY FUNDS AS POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THOUSANDS OF KIDS NEXT SUMMER GET TO ENJOY THIS WONDERFUL LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE!



Community Centres

Places of ministry where people are fed – Emotionally, Physically and Spiritually

'I was eyes to the Blind'

If you were to find yourself at a table at one of the Community Centres run by MWB and local churches, in any of our 6 Field Countries, you would be guaranteed to hear tales of woe. And yet, there would also be thankfulness, thankfulness for the warm meals, for the fellowship and the spiritual food.

The Bethel Church Community Centre in Bulgaria is one such place. **The Soup Kitchen serves daily meals to countless elderly who would otherwise go hungry, encourages the beneficiaries to seek the Lord for peace and comfort, and offers Vocational Training Courses in Computers and English, for the young people who desperately need assistance finding employment.**

The wonderful thing about this ministry, and the ministry of all the Community Centres, is that with MWB's assistance, and your generosity, churches are able to fulfil the Great Commission they are called to, as well as care for their congregations, families and elderly in their local areas with the resources we provide- a wonderful partnership! With over 200,000 meals provided this year, many calories will be consumed and many Bible Studies enjoyed! But I know what touches your hearts are the personal stories, not just the statistics!

Every day before lunch is served; Pastor Ivelin Minkov shares a short

sermon, with salvation through faith, by God's Grace always central. The beneficiaries are open, show a growing interest and enjoy the atmosphere and care. Volunteers from the church play a strategic role. Ruska Petrova volunteers by not only serving the food, but also in the counselling ministry.

One of the Soup Kitchen beneficiaries is 70 year old Jelyazko Vasilev. He was born in the small village of Kosti close to the Bulgarian-Turkish border. When he was two years old, his mother died. He was then ultimately left in the abusive care of three step-mothers, during his father's three subsequent marriages. At 16, he escaped the abuse and went to live in Burgas. Jelyazko never married and has no remaining friends or family. Loneliness and isolation were overwhelming feelings experienced by Jelyazko, when we first met him.

In the early 1990s, while still working, Jelyazko started loosing his sight. By 2005, he was completely blind in his left eye and there was only 4% of vision remaining in his right eye. Alone, with no home or family to speak of, Jelyazko found himself receiving a meager pension, of \$80/month.

Jelyazko was invited to the Soup Kitchen by Bethyl's pastor, which has literally changed his life! Before attending the Soup Kitchen, Jelyazko's diet consisted of one can of beans per week. Now he enjoys five very nutritious meals. His past

loneliness and isolation have now been replaced with friendship and conversation. Although he has not yet accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour, Jelyazko enjoys the daily Bible teaching.

Although 96% blind, every day he walks the same route, the few kilometres to the Community Centre. He is always neatly dressed with a tie, and always clean-shaven, even though this takes him an hour and a half. Pastor Minkov shared how he once saw Jelyazko helplessly searching for the door of the Soup Kitchen room, but in the neighbouring yard. Right then he recalled the words of Job in the Old Testament "I was eyes to the blind..." (Job 29:15). **"I am grateful that through the Soup kitchen project we are able to help people like Jelyazko. My prayer is that God opens this man's spiritual eyes for the Kingdom of Heaven, so he can have the joy of life eternal!"** Ivelin Minkov shared.

Dignity, love and care are on offer at our Community Centres. The partnership with local churches is wonderful, but we need your support. Your prayers are needed as we reach out and encourage the lost and lonely. Your generosity has enabled the birth and growth of this ministry. However, most Centres have countless people asking if they can benefit too, but many are turned away because of a lack of resources. Help where you can, to ensure many more like Jelyazko have reason to get up and find joy in their day!





Attentive students during the human trafficking lessons

The Dangers of **HUMAN TRAFFICKING EXPLAINED...**

The Statistics of Eastern Europe reveal the prevalence of the soul destroying and dangerous 'industry' of human trafficking. When children live their lives in Children's Homes, or grow up in families devoid of love and care, they are tremendously vulnerable when they finish school and graduate. With employment for the unskilled scarce, many leave their area, and even the country, to find work elsewhere. Teenagers and susceptible young adults are enticed to leave all they know, with the promise of a self-supporting employment opportunity elsewhere.

TRAPPED INTO THIS FORM OF SLAVERY, MANY NEVER RETURN. OR IF AND WHEN THEY MANAGE TO ESCAPE, THEY ARE DAMAGED FOR LIFE...

Mission Without Borders is committed to warning the teenagers about the dangers of this illegal trade. The Emotional Support lessons in the Children's Homes give the topic special attention, and

are proving very successful. For teenagers living in the large towns and cities, they notice the posters enticing teenagers. For those living in rural areas, they are completely unaware and the most vulnerable. The Children's Homes do not take the care and attention to warn the kids, so we want to make sure they are informed.

"It has never occurred to me that my own friends or acquaintances might entice me into this illegal trade... It is good for us to have these valuable discussions, because after graduation all this information will help us when we are left to fend for ourselves and need to make wise decisions", expressed 15 year old Leahu Elvira of Moldova.

Tomis is another pupil from the same Home who remained speechless during the entire lessons. "I thought only women could be trafficked and forced into sexual slavery, but after watching the movie about trafficked victims

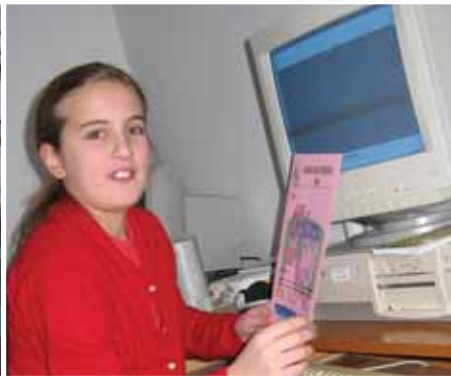
and discussing this evil trade, I realise what I knew was only a drop in the ocean of this dangerous trade. **Thank you for informing us and giving us the information and tools to ensure we do our best to not fall into this death trap".**



Tomis is now aware that teenage boys and men are just as vulnerable as women to human trafficking

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

– a Firm Step to Self-sufficiency



Thousands of children do not know the constant love and care of a family in Eastern Europe. They live in Children's Homes, but they face a bleak future when they graduate. At 18, they must leave the Homes and many have no place to go. Without firm plans for study or employment, they will most likely join the 50-60% of graduates from Homes who fall victims of homelessness, crime, prostitution and human trafficking. You will have just read the story about the lessons to warn kids of the dangers of human trafficking in Moldova, but it is one thing to warn them, it is another thing to provide them with an alternative...

It is a huge task and one the Children's Homes are pleading we assist them with. They cannot feed, clothe and care for their kids today; they certainly do not have the resources to prepare them for their future. Step by step we are playing our part by providing resources, funds and equipment to ensure kids leave the Homes with vocational skills, which provide a basis for employment or a foundation for future study.

The stigma of growing up in a Children's Home is bad enough,

having no skills to provide for yourself is even worse.

When I visited Bosnia and Moldova last year, my impression time and again was kids really are the same the world over. They have hopes, dreams and plans for their future. However, with little opportunity, dreams quickly die... But, if you just give them a chance, they will grasp it with excitement and run with it! Such was the case in Moldova. With my limited recollection of the Russian language (I lived in Russia in the early 90s), I could understand many of the kids in the Russian-speaking Homes. In comparison to our kids who finish school with all the opportunities and support in the world, these kids just wanted to be able to provide a life for themselves, one that mirrors our normal everyday existence- to have a family and be able to provide for that family in a self-sufficient way. This is not too much to ask, is it?

AGRICULTURE, APICULTURE, CARPENTRY, CAR MECHANICS, COOKING, COMPUTERS, HAIRDRESSING, PIG FARMING, SEWING, AND ENGLISH COURSES ARE ON OFFER. These Vocational Courses come in many forms. Some are run entirely by the Children's

Homes; we just provide the resources. Other are run by Mission Without Borders entirely. As Mission Without Border's workers in Eastern Europe are all nationals, we are able to provide nationally recognised courses and diplomas, as well as work with educational institutions and Homes to ensure we are providing courses and help that are relevant for the graduates and the job market.

With the courses run completely by Mission Without Borders, we are able to intertwine Vocational Training with Life Skills and Christian Input lessons. We want to prepare kids for life with skills and the ability to not only earn a living, but live as socially apt citizens, with a firm sense there are not alone- their Heavenly Father will never leave or forsake them and they have a church family they can call home. **Learning about relationships, personal hygiene, manners, relationships, how to cook, and knowing how to apply for a job, are foreign skills for kids who have grown up in Children's Homes. Without them, society will have more reason to ostracise them.**

Aron Gaidanu is one of the 14,000



Vocational Training opportunities abound in the Children's Homes and Community Centres - teenagers now see a brighter future of self-sufficiency!

children who live in Children's Homes in Moldova. Our Moldovan colleague had the chance to meet him at the Vocational Training Centre in the Leova Children's Home where he currently lives. The life story of this fourteen-year old is similar to that of most of his peers. Several years ago his mother left Moldova to go and find work. She has never returned. Aron is determined to learn how to be a Beekeeper. He dreams of setting up his own business, becoming self-sufficient, and never leaving Moldova and his father. Aron's Uncle, a successful Beekeeper, has made Aron a promise- to give him several bee hives after graduation. This is all the incentive he needed to grasp hold of the chance to study Apiculture.

Beekeeping is a famous occupation for Moldovans. It is the most popular occupation for rural Moldovans. The elderly have memories of an Apiary at Leova Children's Home in Soviet times. After the collapse of Communism, the equipment and facility disappeared. Four years ago, Mission Without Borders, with the help of some generous donors, was able to re-establish the facility. The one-year Vocational Training Apiary

Course is now a popular fixture of the Home for 12-16 year olds.

As an Apiary does not require large financial capital to get up and running, it is the perfect occupation for graduates of Children's Homes. It does require patience and dedication though. However, success in this occupation will hone the personal qualities of responsibility, commitment, perseverance and diligence.

Honey and its medicinal qualities are well-known in these parts. The Apiculture Course produces over 200kg of honey annually for Leova Home and they can attest to the definite decrease in Acute Respiratory Disease cases thanks to the children adding honey to their tea.

Thirteen year old Marina, an orphan, is very interested in learning new things. She is keen to find an occupation that will lead to self-sufficiency. She is a very enthusiastic student of Apiculture, as she is one of a number of students who dream of having their own Apiary after graduation. She knows of two boys who, having graduated last year, are already on their own way to having their own successful business. She is

good at Maths, and has calculated that such a business can produce a gross profit of \$800 per year. For a Home graduate, that amounts to the beginning of 'financial freedom'!

Beekeeping is just one of a number of courses teenagers are enjoying. All of the other Vocational Courses on offer: Agriculture, Carpentry, Car Mechanics, Cooking, Computers, English, Hairdressing, Pig Farming and Sewing are also very popular.

How can you support this wonderful work? Mission Without Borders is dedicated to providing these Courses, but the need and potential is massive!

If you would like to make a one-off donation we would use it to fund the ongoing work of Vocational Training.

Another exciting initiative gaining momentum is the regular Pledge Program for Vocational Training. People pledge money on a regular basis, large or small to this ministry. They receive updates four times per year on the courses changing lives.

If you would like to join this initiative,
Contact Us for details:
(02) 9793-8100
www.mwb.org.au
or email: australia@mwb.org.au

The Knitting Projects of MWB's 'Gift in Kind' ministry

Operation Cover-Up

WHAT A YEAR 2007 WAS AND HOW PROMISING DOES 2008 LOOK!

Looking back on 2007, we were overwhelmed and humbled, by the incredible generosity of thousands who knitted frantically and generously donated knitted items and numerous other needs to our 'Operation Cover-Up' and 'Gift in Kind' appeals! Three big containers full of knitted items, shoes, clothing, hygiene and school supplies – amazing- were delivered to the field and thousands benefited from your generosity – thank you!

We know how much you like to do something practically and love to see the results, so we hope these few photos give you a taste of your blessing!

The children and families enrolled in our programs own little or nothing and therefore the gift of anything is a blessing. How special to receive something hand-knitted, truly knitted with love! We heard of so many dear supporters knitting furiously and thrilled when they discovered their donations will be more than useful, they will be treasured!

With more than 210 Children's Homes and thousands of families and elderly in constant need, if you are willing and able, keep it up – it will always be useful and appreciated!

Many thanks must go to Sheryl Rumball and the large team of volunteers who have sacrificially given of their time to organise, collect, pack and ship your donations – we couldn't do it without you! In this incredibly busy society we live in, Volunteers are like gold – so thank you!

■ WHAT IS NEEDED:

With companies in Australia, and internationally, such as Pumpkin Patch and King Gee clothing, generously providing large quantities of their excess stock, we would like to focus your donations on Knitted items, which are treasured and highly sort after by our field countries. They were thrilled with the quality you sent and were delighted they

could deliver them on mass to Children's Homes or include them in the 'Operation Winter Rescue' special deliveries to the Children's Homes, families and the elderly.

■ KNITTED ITEMS ARE NEEDED:

- Blankets – large and small for children in Children's Homes, poor families and the elderly. (large blankets can be knitted by: Size 8 needles, 8-ply yarn, 40 stitch x 80 rows to make 56 squares, for a blanket 1.6m x 1.4m)
- Jumpers – the older children, teenagers and adults are in greatest need. Patterns with a crew neck are most appropriate for the climate.
- Scarves.
- Beanies.

■ All items for sewing, embroidery, knitting and craft activities for the Vocational Training Courses, as well as for the poor families and elderly, who would love to sew or knit for themselves, but cannot afford the materials.

ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW PLEASE – (CUSTOMS REGULATIONS WE MUST ADHERE TO)

OUR WEBSITE AND OFFICE

(www.mwb.org.au (02) 9793-8100 or email: Australia@mwb.org), can always assist you with information about collection points, deadlines, and what is needed.

We also have two coordinators who you can contact about this vital area of our ministry:

1. Sheryl Rumball in Sydney, our amazing volunteer who coordinates the Australia-wide collection of our 'Gift in Kind' from companies and individuals: Sheryl Rumball, Phone: 0432 952762 email: sherylrumball@hotmail.com.

2. Jenny Grainger in Melbourne, who is playing a strategic role in collecting our 'Gift in Kind' and also acting as a spokesperson for our ministry in Melbourne/Victoria Jenny Grainger, phone: (03) 9795 6141 email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net



GIFT IN KIND

Companies played a strategic role in donating their excess stock to Mission Without Borders in 2007, and the prospects are bright for this fledgling area of our ministry in Australia.

With Mission Without Borders internationally shipping 220+ truckloads of aid into our six field countries in 2007, 'Gift in Kind' has become a strategic area of our ministry blessing thousands of children, families and the elderly in Eastern Europe.

Company donations in Australia in 2007 were significant and those donating loved the fact that their donations were going to a worthwhile cause and they would eventually get feedback from the thankful recipients. Perhaps you would like to join the group of companies like PUMPKIN PATCH and KING GEE CLOTHING who have contributed their high quality excess stock in 2007.

We want to provide the children, families, elderly and disabled in our programs with high quality products that will last. Cheap imports do not survive the harsh conditions of Eastern Europe, and that is why we need your help! When Pumpkin Patch donated great quality gumboots for kids in the Children's Homes, we were thrilled! When King Gee Clothing donated Work Wear, we knew the Vocational Training programs and families would be over the moon!

Please contact us if you have stock your company would like to donate. Our field countries constantly update us with their biggest needs, so we would love to share with you the current needs and hopefully we can come to a mutually beneficial arrangement.



We would be grateful to have your company's support

We can promise the following:

- At no time will your goods be sold in Australia or Eastern Europe.
- Our containers are packed by volunteers.
- All our aid reaches the children and families who rely on our support.
- We have dedicated workers in Eastern Europe and Internationally with 'Mission Without Borders' who watch our aid every step of the way.
- If you are interested, we can promise to report back to you with pictures of where and to whom your goods benefited.
- We will endeavour to clear your excess stock quickly.
- Finally, we would be more than happy to publicly promote your organisation as being generous to a good cause.



Please contact either our office **(02) 9793 8100**
email: australia@mwbi.org
website: www.mwb.org.au

Or alternatively, contact the following Coordinators for assistance:

Sheryl Rumball in Sydney, our country-wide coordinator: **Ph: 0432952762**
email: sherylrumball@hotmail.com

Jenny Grainger in Melbourne:
(03) 9795 6141
Email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net



Share God's Love by volunteering your time!

Have you ever dreamed of changing the world?

Contributing to a good cause? Exploring a new culture and meeting new people? Have you ever wanted to hand out meals at a Soup Kitchen? Distribute clothes to the needy? Make crafts or play soccer with children at Summer Camp? Renovate a bathroom? Shower impoverished families with Christmas gifts? Would you like to make children smile? Teach them Bible songs? Reach out a caring hand to an elderly person? Invest your time in others? See people come to Christ!?

These are the opportunities on offer as a short-term volunteer of Mission

Without Borders!

Having had my first taste of cross-cultural missions in Russia, I can attest for the fact that I returned with a burden and passion for reaching the lost in Eastern Europe. I can promise a few things if you volunteer with Mission Without Borders:

You will have an amazing time and return passionate about the ministry of Mission Without Borders and the tremendous need in Eastern Europe!

Visit the MWB International Volunteers Website

www.mwbi-volunteer.org

or contact us for further details (02) 9793 8100
email: Australia@mwbi.org



Volunteer Opportunities in Australia

Perhaps the opportunities in Eastern Europe are a little too adventurous, or getting over to Eastern Europe is out of the question because of family commitments or cost. There are still lots of ways you can make a difference:

- We are always in need of people willing to volunteer in our office in Sydney— packing those monthly Focus News, and general administrative tasks.
- Or, perhaps you would like to help pack those wonderfully generous donations to our 'Operation Cover-Up' (OCU) knitting and 'Gift In Kind' (GIK)

appeals from individuals and companies. All of these donations are packed in Sydney and there is a wonderful team who weekly pack for us (on Sydney's North Shore). They are always in need of helpers, so please contact us if you would like to lend a hand. All help will be gratefully received and any men able to lend their muscle will be welcomed with open arms, because the boxes get heavy!

- We are still in need of coordinators to act as collection points for our 'Gift in Kind' donations around Australia.

Please contact us or Sheryl Rumball (phone: 0432 952 762 or sherylrumball@hotmail.com), if you would like to take up this challenge!

- Getting the message of Mission Without Borders into the community is vital! What is being achieved in Eastern Europe, thanks to your generosity, is changing lives! We need to get out into the community to spread the word! If you would like to be an Advocate for our ministry, a mouthpiece spreading the word in your local church, group or area, please contact us! We can supply you with materials to assist you and some guidance to get you started!



SPONSOR TOURS



The Puscasi family loved a visit from Clive and Jenny

Having the chance to visit your Sponsored child or family is a trip of a lifetime. You are more than welcome to visit your children/families on your own, with the approval of us and the guidance of our staff in the field country, or alternatively, it is our plan to offer Sponsor Tours once per year, bi-annually at a minimum, to enable you to do that. If you join one of these tours, you will have the chance to meet and spend time with your sponsored child or family, as well as visit many other ministries of Mission Without Borders in one or two of our field countries.

If you think this is something you would love to do, please contact us. When we gauge the interest and the countries you would most like to visit, we will organise a tour and give extensive notice through our publications and website. Due to the distance and cost involved, the trip is likely to be 2-3 weeks and will cover two field countries. For those who have visited our field countries, they return with a passion for our ministry and become some of our strongest advocates.

Clive and Jenny Grainger is one such couple. This was their impression...

On the outskirts of the town, where sealed road gave way to gravel and the houses were little more than shanties, two small girls danced with delight as our car came around the corner. I recognised them immediately from the photos we had of our sponsored family.

We were welcomed into their home by their mother, Eleanora, and with Alexandru, the Field Coordinator translating, an easy rapport was soon established. Eleanora's gratitude to us, the Mission and to God was humbling as she told of her faith in God and hope for a better life. Grosan, the father, arrived home soon after followed by Mihaela, who thanks to a Mission

Without Border's Vocational Course, is now able to work in a sewing factory.

This family live in one room; where two beds serve as both seats and beds for the whole family. A set of shelves, a table and two chairs almost fill the room. While we were delighted to meet our sponsored family, what impressed us most was the professionalism and dedication of the field coordinator and entire staff of Mission Without Borders Romania. Back at the office in Sibiu we were able to see how our contributions were spent and the difference sponsorship was making in our Family's life. The honesty, openness and integrity of Mission Without Borders was truly inspiring.

Susan McGregor is another passionate advocate for Mission Without Borders and her sponsored family in Bosnia – these were her impressions...

Like many others, I have the privilege of being brought close to another family through the Family-to-Family program. The Kurtanovics – parents, Snjezana and Rifo, and their four children, live in Mostar, and last year we were able to meet. It was a very special time and the MWB team in Bosnia, are brilliant! They give so much of themselves and watching the reception Mira, the Coordinator

receives, is proof she is far more than an 'aid worker', she was Snjezana's best friend!

Going to Bosnia-Herzegovina came with some trepidation: was the family as keen to meet me as I was them, and even, would my visit be thought of as an imposition? I soon discovered that my thoughts couldn't have been more off track. In fact, Snjezana couldn't wait! We drove to their home on the outskirts of Mostar and it was hugs all round. We went inside to the warmth of the wood stove cum heater and the room where they live, eat and sleep – the two couches becoming sofa beds every night for the six of them. The rest of the small house might have been freezing, but we were snug.

The whole time I felt as if I were being ministered to, that I was the one being blessed as I received their love and generosity as well as that of the MWB Bosnian staff. When we parted, it felt as if we'd known one another all our lives.

In Mostar I was amid a culture not too dissimilar from our own, but one that lay riddled with the scars and devastation of war- both to buildings and people. It shows how a life, not so dissimilar to our own, can be thrown into chaos, destroying all we take for granted. It was a living reminder that



Susan McGregor and the Kurtanovic Family

our money is not our own, nor even our belongings, but that we are simply stewards.

I had a wonderful time with the Kurtanovics which I wouldn't have missed for the world! I would recommend that should you have the chance to meet your sponsored family, go for it! "



Operation Christmas Love- Delivering the Spirit of Christmas to the poor

The Eastern region of Romania is one of the poorest parts of the country. Families live in small houses made of clay, without water, gas or electricity. Most work in agriculture, but the summer drought destroyed their crops and they were forced to sacrifice their animals because they had nothing to feed them.

In Cotul lui Ivan, most of the families are poor. They live on social allowances and what they can produce in their small gardens. The houses are made of clay and during winter it's freezing inside. The children cannot attend school everyday because they don't have clothes, shoes or school supplies and their priority is helping their parents find something to eat otherwise they go to bed hungry.

The Muscalu family is one such family for whom each day represents a new day of worries.

Every morning, the parents – Mihai (32) and Mihaela (31) – worry about how they will feed their four children – Dana (8), Claudia Mariana (6), Daniel Mihai (5) and Andreea Elena (2). Mihaela is pregnant and within a few months, the family will have a new member. The place they call home cannot be called a house. It is made of clay; has a small hall, another room,

the family from the freezing outside temperatures. This family has two beds and a small stove, made of bricks. They don't even have a table on which to eat or a cupboard to keep their clothes. Their clothes are dirty and worn-out and the lack of available water makes it impossible for the family to keep up any acceptable level of hygiene.

The Muscalu family has a cow and a horse. **The milk they obtain from the cow is the only constant source of food for the children.** The father used the horse for the occasional agricultural work he was able to secure, but a few months before Christmas the father had an accident and had to have an operation on both hands. He now has restricted use of his hands and this has gravely affected the family's situation.

The Operation Christmas Love (OCL) parcel this family received was a precious gift; a gift sent by God in one of the most difficult periods of their lives. Enduring the level of poverty they are trapped by, suffering from constant illnesses because they do not have adequate winter clothing and shoes and surviving on a few litres of milk and some flour, the situation of this family was perilous! **Their table was**



from the children's allowances for this special occasion. Thank you for helping us and for making our children smile," said Mihaela Muscalu.

The parcels were a real blessing to all the families. Most of them thanked our workers and volunteers with tears in their eyes because the moments when generous people remember and help them are rare. MWB's workers and volunteers shared the Gospel to all who received the OCL parcels, reminding them of the meaning of Christmas - the celebration of Jesus' birth, God's Son who was sent to Earth to die for our sins. The people were touched by the Gospel message and understood that all these wonderful blessings come from God.

The Muscalu family is just one poor family who received OCL parcels for Christmas. **In 2007, MWB delivered 30,000 parcels containing flour, sugar, rice, cereal, salt, pasta, oil, tea, lollies, school supplies, towels, Christian literature and in addition, some special items purchased locally that the beneficiaries loved.** Families, the elderly, disabled, churches and workers in the Children's Homes all enjoyed the wonderful parcels – **THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY!**

” The place they call home cannot be called a house”

with no flooring. The ground is clay, and that's why the family never take off their boots. They have no electricity and use candlelight in the evenings. The doors and windows are not sealed, making it impossible to protect

bare for Christmas and they were hoping for a miracle! The parcel they received was the answer to their prayers. "These food supplies will help me prepare a Christmas meal for my family. We hope to buy some meat



An extra special blessing for Family-to-Families and Sponsored Children!



Operation Christmas Love blesses thousands of families, children, elderly and disabled.

In addition, for the first time last year, we were able to offer a large scale Christmas Gift List for your sponsored children and sponsored families. For those able, you responded with amazing generosity! We hope most have received their thank you cards, but we would like to share with everyone the joy three families experienced, when on Christmas Eve, they received their extra special, generous gifts from their Sponsors!

The gifts donated and delivered on Christmas Eve created enthusiasm and brightened the faces of those Family-to-Families who continue to be overwhelmed with poverty. Every parcel they touched was considered a real blessing and the love conveyed from afar helped in assuring this region, that the true meaning of Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, the Saviour of the world!

"Thank you from the bottom of our heart for this wonderful gift! May our Sponsors be blessed, our second family that through their donations have turned the important events of Christmas, into a time of celebration for our families!"

exclaimed Zyber and Shkendije Meta. With tears streaming down her face, Shkendije continued, "We were just thrilled when we received the presents from our Sponsors. There is so much love in this parcel conveyed to us by our Sponsor's family..."

It is the first time the Himadhi family have decorated a Christmas tree. Lindita was now able to place presents under the tree, in the form of gifts from their Sponsors. **"This year we'll have a blessed Christmas. We send A BIG THANK YOU to our generous Sponsors who made this possible!** Our Sponsors have helped and motivated us to gradually change and improve our life, and receive Jesus in our hearts. It's their great support that has drawn us closer to Him."

Thank you for your love, care and support of your sponsored families and children this year. Your love in word and deed means so much!



If you would like to join the large army of people sponsoring children and families through Mission Without Borders, we have many children and families waiting – contact us or view our website (www.mwb.org.au) for details!

Operation Winter Rescue - THE LOVING GIFT OF WARMTH



at school and comes top of her class! Veronica loves attending kindergarten. She enjoys memorising poems. ***"I like going to kindergarten because there we learn many interesting things, play games and it is warmer than at home," confessed Veronica quietly, not to embarrass her parents.***

When winter hits, this family will be in strife! The recent drought not only pushed the prices of food and commodities sky high, those who rely on growing what they can in the short summer, to store it up for the winter for themselves and their animals, are people with empty cellars! Many have had to sell livestock they

relied on for work and food because they simply no longer have the fodder and resources to feed them. They have no idea how they will face the winter's frost... Maricica's prized possessions of 12 hens and ducks have been preserved thankfully, and provide a good food source for the family.

Last year, they endured the wintertime with little hardship, as Valeriu was able to take their horse, and collect firewood from the forest or assist others, who in return would give him flour, wheat and corn. Two

As much of the world gets caught up in the latest fashion and technology, the poor of Eastern Europe simply struggle to survive, particularly during the harsh winter when the temperatures plummet well below zero for numerous months... The Popa family is a caring family who has no idea how they will survive the cold...

Maricica and Valeriu Popa enjoy a modest life in a village in the Southern area of Moldova. They raise two wonderful girls, Luminita (9) and Veronica (7). They endure tremendous poverty, but love and encourage their daughters that life is not as hard as it seems. This family of four live in a tiny two-room house we would not consider habitable in Australia, but it is their home. One room, the girls' room, is used as a kitchen, bathroom, dining and bedroom. The wall that divides

the girls' room from their parents' room is a heating stove. As they have no wardrobe, they keep their clothes in a makeshift wardrobe made out of an old piece of fabric. As they prepare food (never enough to sustain them sufficiently) in the same room as the clothes are kept, they absorb the cooking smells, leaving the girls embarrassed to go to school as children taunt them for being poor with foul smelling clothes.

Despite this adversity, Luminita, in second grade, loves reading books and learning new things. She excels





carts of firewood were enough for one month's heating. The horse was their basic income source. However, they lost their horse last winter when he broke the fence to find food, overate and consequently died. As if they could not take anymore grief, in the summertime Valeriu, while working, fell from a tractor and broke his leg. The cost of the surgery he required was enormous and with follow-up surgery looming, they have no idea how they will find the funds for it.

With Maricica the only adult capable of earning an income, until Valeriu successfully recovers from the subsequent surgery on his lame leg, she is working tirelessly to provide

whatever income she can. ***"I know I need to trust God for His provision in this crisis, but we are exhausted... We are in so much debt to pay for the basics needed for survival, such as bread, electricity, gas and schooling, we are completely incapable of providing the clothing and shoes our growing girls need..."***

They hold off heating their tiny home, until absolutely necessary, as

wood is very expensive. Their gas stove is unsafe and has only one burner working. In the evening, dinner is tea with bread and cheese they have produced themselves. The tea is prepared with a makeshift plastic container, as they could not afford a proper kettle or saucepan...

This is only one family among thousands, who will join thousands more elderly and disabled people who have no idea how they will face the harsh winters of Eastern Europe. They lack warm shoes, thick clothing, warm blankets, medicines, food, wood, and fodder for their animals and they need our help!

Mission Without Borders, through our 'Operation Winter Rescue' deliveries, will provide the families, elderly and disabled with what they need, as far as our resources stretch, please help where you can!

Let Us Not Forget the Children!

As we consider the harsh Eastern European winter let us not forget the plight of our sponsored children, and all children who reside in the 210+ Children's Homes Mission Without Borders assists every year!

Winter will not be any easier on them...The governments that run the Children's Homes simply do not have the resources to buy winter clothing and shoes for the children... There is no planned defense against the onslaught of bone-chilling winds – winds that will infiltrate the poorly heated buildings they call home. Kids grow and grow, they also play hard, which means they need clothes every year. For the kids in Children's Homes, most if not all clothing is shared, in a pool, and therefore your gift this year that buys a warm winter coat will be passed down and down until it wears too thin.

We need to help, and I know you see this as a priority and your gifts in prior years have proven you have responded to this critical need with love and compassion – thank you!

If you would like to help, your gifts are always appreciated. The wonderful thing about 'Operation Winter Rescue' is this gift of warmth is an expression of God's love and the recipients of this blessing do see Jesus is what we are doing – praise God!



CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE

CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE. THEY ARE THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIA AND THEY ARE ALSO THE FUTURE OF EASTERN EUROPE!

It is hard to comprehend hundreds of thousands of kids languishing in Children's Homes... but this is the reality in the field countries in which we work. Many children are orphans, but there are many others who live in these Homes because of poverty or neglect. The sadness expressed on their faces tears our heart strings, because the emotional scars of not knowing the constant love and care of a healthy family will stay with them for life. They are ostracised by society and their future is bleak. Not only will they experience their formative years in Homes where they are often not fed and cared for adequately, but their future after graduation is very bleak...

HOW IS MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS FACING THIS SITUATION, AND ARE WE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

We are making a very real difference, one child, one Children's Home at a time!

When you Sponsor a Child through our Child Rescue International, Child Sponsorship Program, you are supporting all the children in the Homes where they live. Some live in Homes with as many as 600 children, and others are now living in familial-type Homes in Romania, with varying success.

Their needs are many! The governments of our field countries simply do not have the resources to adequately feed, clothe, provide medically and educationally for the kids. Despite the poverty, the prices of food, clothing, footwear, all consumerables, have gone through the roof and these children are some of the greatest sufferers... and few are advocating for them... As governments only contribute a mere fraction of the funds needed, the Homes are constantly appealing to MWB for help. Through your giving

and the generosity of companies we are able to purchase and provide the resources they need. Food bolsters their diet, medical supplies are invaluable, clothing and footwear ward against the cold and education supplies and funds for renovations of dilapidated facilities produce amazing results!

When I toured a number of Homes in Moldova last year, the resounding

support for the future!" They were not asking for luxury, they were simply pleading for the basics...

Most children in the Homes own nothing... Some are fortunate to own a toothbrush and toothpaste. The facilities are often unspeakable and if the Homes were in Australia, they would have been condemned years ago. Imagine living in a Children's Homes with hundreds of kids and sharing a filthy, outdoor bathroom...

HOWEVER, OUR MINISTRY GOES BEYOND THE PHYSICAL...

The '5-DAY CLUB' sums up our aims for these kids.

"I made a good decision to attend the '5-DAY CLUB'. My knowledge about Jesus has grown enormously! I now understand about God's plan for creation and how I have never been alone... As we were shown Jesus' crucifixion, the music and description of those cruel events conjured up such a strong response in me; it felt like I was on Golgotha Hill when Jesus died on the cross for our sins... I want to give my heart to Jesus, because He died for my sins," said Mihail.

When these children come to the Home from their families, they often have little knowledge of social skills and can be a real handful. In the '5-DAY CLUB', run by MWB, they learn social skills, as well as

about God's Creation and their value as His Children. As a result of the Club, the regular Christian Input, Emotional Support Lessons and Bible Correspondence Courses they can participate in, great changes become evident in the children. The children and often older teenagers become more tender-hearted and choose to follow Christ. Prior to their involvement in the '5-DAY CLUB', many were afraid to discuss the



The 5-day Club ministry is having a wonderful impact

message from the Directors of the Homes was "Thank you! We simply could not do it without you! Our governments do not care about our children and do not provide the funds we need! We are simply forgotten! We need your continuous help! Thank you for everything you have done so far! Let us show you the results of our partnership so far and then we would love to show you how we need your comprehensive



Children are our Future

concept of God, but the course produces wonderful results of encouraging the kids to open up, share and learn.

was abandoned and why he had to suffer so much. A few years ago, Viorel's life changed when he heard about Jesus for the first time. In Craiova, the town where he was living,



Viorel preparing for Baptism

As we minister to children in the Homes, we see time and again, they are very easily influenced by others in their environment. They often become victims of violence and abuse, inside and outside of the Home, and as a result, more often than not, choose to join the perpetrators for survival's sake... Viorel Constantin is a young man who was raised in such a Children's Home. Most of the children in his Home were badly behaved and he became easily influenced by them. Now in his early twenties, he says he is not proud of many of the things he did in the past. Viorel was abandoned as a baby and knows nothing about his family. This fact had a tremendous impact on his life and as a result he became a real rebel. He couldn't understand why he

wonderful ministry sprung up from MWB and the local church, both with big hearts for teenagers like Viorel. Viorel started to attend the church and slowly he began to open up, to read God's Word and talk to God about his problemS. As a result, Viorel made the decision to close the book on his old life, give his life to Christ and turn his life around! Following graduation, he enrolled in MWB's Carpentry Course - and he has never looked back! The great thing about this Carpentry Course is the dedication to prepare these kids for life, not just give them practical skills. Viorel lapped up the Christian Input lessons, Bible studies and loved attending the local church. His life made a complete turn around!

There was a huge day of celebration when Viorel was baptised and also received the Diploma for his Carpentry Course. Since that time Viorel has managed to secure employment and is working toward providing for himself and finally marrying his sweetheart. She too grew up in the Children's Home, but for now is completing Mission Without Border's Sewing Course, so she too can start her adult life with the skills to be self-sufficient.

This story reflects the different facets of MWB's ministry. Here was a young boy, who felt abandoned, unloved and reacted in ways that were not appropriate. God reached out to Him through the local church and our ministry, providing healing for his wounds and now he has his life ahead of him with Jesus by his side and the prospects of a family life of self-sufficiency! Join with us as we continue to reach out to children like Viorel – through child sponsorship or donations to our general ministry-ensuring our Child Care ministry provides for the spiritual, emotional, educational and material needs of thousands of children who need to know someone cares...

Contact us if you are interested in Child Sponsorship:(02) 9793 8100 Email: australia@mwbi.org Or alternatively, fill in the coupon overleaf, or visit our website (WWW.MWB.ORG.AU) for children waiting for Sponsorship now! ■



the Home staff are thankful for all donations

Sharing God's love with the poorest of the poor in Eastern Europe



■ Can you find it in your heart to sponsor one of the children in our 'Child Rescue International' Child Sponsorship Program?

■ Or families in our Family-to-Family Program?

If you can, please contact us, or fill out the coupon below. Alternatively, if you visit our Website: www.mwb.org.au, you can see children and families waiting for sponsorship now! We have children and families who would love to know someone cared.

■ Or perhaps you have been inspired and would like to regularly support Vocational Training – through our Vocational Training Pledge Program

■ Or Scholarships through our regular Scholarship Fund Pledge Program

If so, please fill out the coupon below or contact us for details!



Yes! I would like to Support Mission Without Border's Ministry by joining one of the Pledge Programs:

I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A FAMILY THROUGH YOUR 'FAMILY-TO-FAMILY' PROGRAM (\$35/MONTH)

from Albania Bosnia Moldova Romania Ukraine

I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A CHILD THROUGH YOUR 'CHILD RESCUE INTERNATIONAL' PROGRAM (\$40/MONTH)

from Ukraine Moldova Romania
 Boy Girl

I WOULD LIKE TO REGULARLY SUPPORT YOUR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PLEDGE PROGRAM

for \$ _____ /month
OR contact me with details

I WOULD LIKE TO REGULARLY SUPPORT YOUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND PLEDGE PROGRAM

for \$ _____ /month
OR contact me with details



DONOR NUMBER (IF KNOWN) _____

I ENCLOSE MY FIRST SPONSORSHIP PLEDGE OF \$ _____ /MONTH

For a credit Card please fill in the details below

Amex Visa Mastercard

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Name on card (Print) _____

Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Please make your cheque payable to **Mission Without Borders**
PO Box 265 Bankstown NSW 1885
Phone: (02) 9793 8100
email: australia@mwb.org
www.mwb.org.au