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**16 March 2022**

**Benefact Group’s owner, Benefact Trust, announces £1m support package for charities in Ukraine**

**The charitable owner of Benefact Group has announced £1million emergency funding for five charities providing support for those affected by the devastating conflict in Ukraine.**

The Benefact Trust has released £250,000 with immediate effect to make a positive impact as fast as possible. A further £750,000 will be released in tranches over the coming months to provide ongoing support for longer-term projects in the country.

These grants are possible because of the Trust’s ownership of the Benefact Group, a family of financial services businesses, including Ecclesiastical Insurance and EdenTree, which gives all its available profits to charities and good causes.

By awarding £250,000 in grants to charity partners who are operating right now in Ukraine and other Eastern European countries, the Trust is responding to the urgent needs of individuals, families and children.

The board of trustees has agreed an immediate donation of £50,000 each to:

* **Depaul International** works primarily in Kharkiv, Odessa, Kyiv and Zalucha and is offering emergency shelter, medical care and food to refugees fleeing their homes or under siege in the cities.
* **World Vision** is supporting refugees and displaced people in Ukraine and Romania; providing food, water, hygiene kits and safe spaces for children to play, receive psychological First Aid, continue to learn and re-gain some normalcy in their lives
* **Tearfund** is following its call to ‘go where the need is greatest around the world’ – supporting partners to provide food, bedding and temporary accommodation to refugees
* **All We Can** is partnering with the Global Relationships Team of the Methodist Church in Britain, ensuring critical humanitarian assistance is there for those who need it
* **British Red Cross** is providing extensive assistance, from providing food to First Aid training, taking people to hospital, transporting medical supplies and helping at blood donation points

These charities are all experts in humanitarian aid and each specialises in different areas of disaster response. British Red Cross, World Vision and Tearfund are among the 15 members of The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC).

The UN now estimates two million people have already fled Ukraine, but the DEC estimates 18 million will eventually be affected by the escalating conflict. Four million people are expected to be displaced as the fighting continues. Benefact Trust has earmarked a minimum of an additional £750,000 to help Ukrainians as more is understood of their needs.

Mark Hews, Group Chief Executive at Benefact Group, said: “The conflict in Ukraine is having a devastating effect on innocent civilians. As a business committed to the greater good of society, both in the UK and abroad, I’m delighted our charitable owner Benefact Trust is able to support these five charities doing outstanding work in responding to this humanitarian disaster. This donation is only possible thanks to the support of all of our customers, partners and supporters across our family of businesses. On behalf of those beneficiaries, who are so much in need, thank you for your support.”

Mark McGreevy, Depaul Group CEO, said: “Depaul International would like to thank Benefact Trust for this incredibly generous gift towards our humanitarian work in Ukraine. Your generosity will help us to continue our work inside Ukraine to support the most marginalised and expand it to providing humanitarian aid – food, medicine and other goods – to support thousands of refugees fleeing their homes as well as those under siege in the cities.”

Lesley King-Lewis, Trust Director for Benefact Trust, said: “There is a growing humanitarian crisis happening in the Ukraine, with many innocent people experiencing unimaginable loss and suffering. We felt a sense of duty to step up and empower the organisations already on the ground - doing everything possible to help the most vulnerable during this devastating conflict.”

Benefact Group, previously Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, is the fourth-largest corporate donor to charity in the UK1 and gives all its available profits to good causes. It has committed to triple matching any donations made by employees to recognised Ukrainian support charities up to £50k.

**\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\***

**Notes to editors**

1. UK Guide to Company Giving 2021/2022

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**About Benefact Group**

1. ​​Benefact Group is an independent, specialist financial services group that exists to give all its available profits to charity.
2. Owned by a registered charity, Benefact Trust, Benefact Group’s family of businesses provide specialist insurance, investment management and broking and advisory services in the UK, Australia, Canada and Ireland.
3. Benefact Group is the fourth-largest corporate donor to charity in the UK, according to the UK Guide to Company Giving 2021/22. It has donated over £100m to charity since 2016 and is aiming to reach its target of giving £250m by 2025.
4. Many businesses say they are different. Benefact Group really is. Find out why here [www.benefactgroup.com](http://www.benefactgroup.com)
5. The Benefact Group family of brands includes:
   * Ecclesiastical UK
   * Ecclesiastical Canada
   * Ecclesiastical Ireland
   * Ansvar UK
   * Ansvar Australia
   * EdenTree Investment Management
   * SEIB Insurance Brokers
   * Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services
   * Ecclesiastical Planning Services Ltd
   * Lycetts Insurance Brokers
   * Lycetts Financial Services
   * Lloyd & Whyte